



Park



For park information please call 519.846.9691 x903

centrewellington.ca



# Centre Wellington

## PARKS & RECREATION PLAN

2025 - 2055





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## INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Recreation Plan (PRP) for the Township of Centre Wellington is being updated to address the community's significant anticipated growth—from a current population of 33,107 to an estimated 58,200 by 2051. This comprehensive plan will provide a 30-year vision, including capital and service forecasts extending to 2055.

Recognizing the community's strong passion for parks and recreation, the PRP will guide the development, enhancement, and delivery of indoor and outdoor facilities, programs, and services. It will serve as a strategic and actionable roadmap that reflects the Township's priorities, aligns with the 2023–2026 Strategic Plan, and addresses the evolving and diverse needs of residents, user groups, and visitors. Where relevant, it also references the Economic Development and Tourism Plan, the Active Transportation and Mobility Plan, the Culture Plan and the Community Engagement Strategy.

Led by consulting firm **MGA–McQueen Galloway Associates**, this multi-faceted project will include several foundational documents: a **Parks & Recreation Needs Assessment**, a **Parks Plan**, the **Parks and Recreation Plan**, and a **Multi-Use Recreation Facility Feasibility Study**. Together, these components will ensure Centre Wellington continues to grow as a vibrant, active, and connected community.





## KEY REASONS FOR DEVELOPING A PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

The Parks and Recreation Plan aligns with the Strategic Plan goal of "improving the activity, health, and wellness of our community." It is an investment in the people, facilities, environment, and future of Centre Wellington. It is a strategic tool that ensures services are responsive, inclusive, and sustainable—positioning the Township as a place to live, grow and thrive.



### 1. SUPPORTS HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Encourages physical activity, mental wellness, and healthy lifestyles.
- Reduces risk of chronic illness and promotes stress relief and relaxation.
- Recognizes that parks and recreation connect people, fostering a healthier, more active, and engaged community.



### 2. REFLECTS COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Informed by qualitative and quantitative data, including historical trends.
- Engages residents, user groups, and service providers through consultation.
- Assesses current and future recreation needs across all ages and demographics.



### 3. GUIDES STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING

- Aligns with the Township's corporate strategic priorities and other municipal plans.
- Outlines a clear and detailed roadmap with phased implementation (<3 years, short-, medium-, and long-term), along with projections for future initiatives and considerations extending over the next 30 years. It includes recommendations at each phase to guide decision-making and prioritization, as well as provisions for ongoing updates and refinements to ensure adaptability to emerging needs and trends.
- Identifies roles, responsibilities, and required resources for implementation.





## KEY REASONS FOR DEVELOPING A PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN



### 4. INFORMS BUDGET AND RESOURCE ALLOCATION

- Assists with setting priorities for capital and operating budgets.
- Ensures efficient and impactful use of financial and staff resources.
- Helps evaluate return on investment for recreation infrastructure and programming.



### 5. IMPROVES SERVICE DELIVERY AND EFFICIENCY

- Identifies service gaps and underutilized facilities.
- Recommends strategies to optimize operations and improve user experience.
- Tracks current participation trends to align programs with community interest and changing interests.



### 6. STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

- Builds inclusive spaces that foster social interaction and community pride.
- Supports events, programs, and facilities that encourage connection across all age groups.
- Enhances overall quality of life and promotes a sense of belonging.



### 7. ENHANCES ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP

- Protect and encourages resident participation in environmental education and conservation.
- Integrates sustainable practices into parks planning and maintenance.



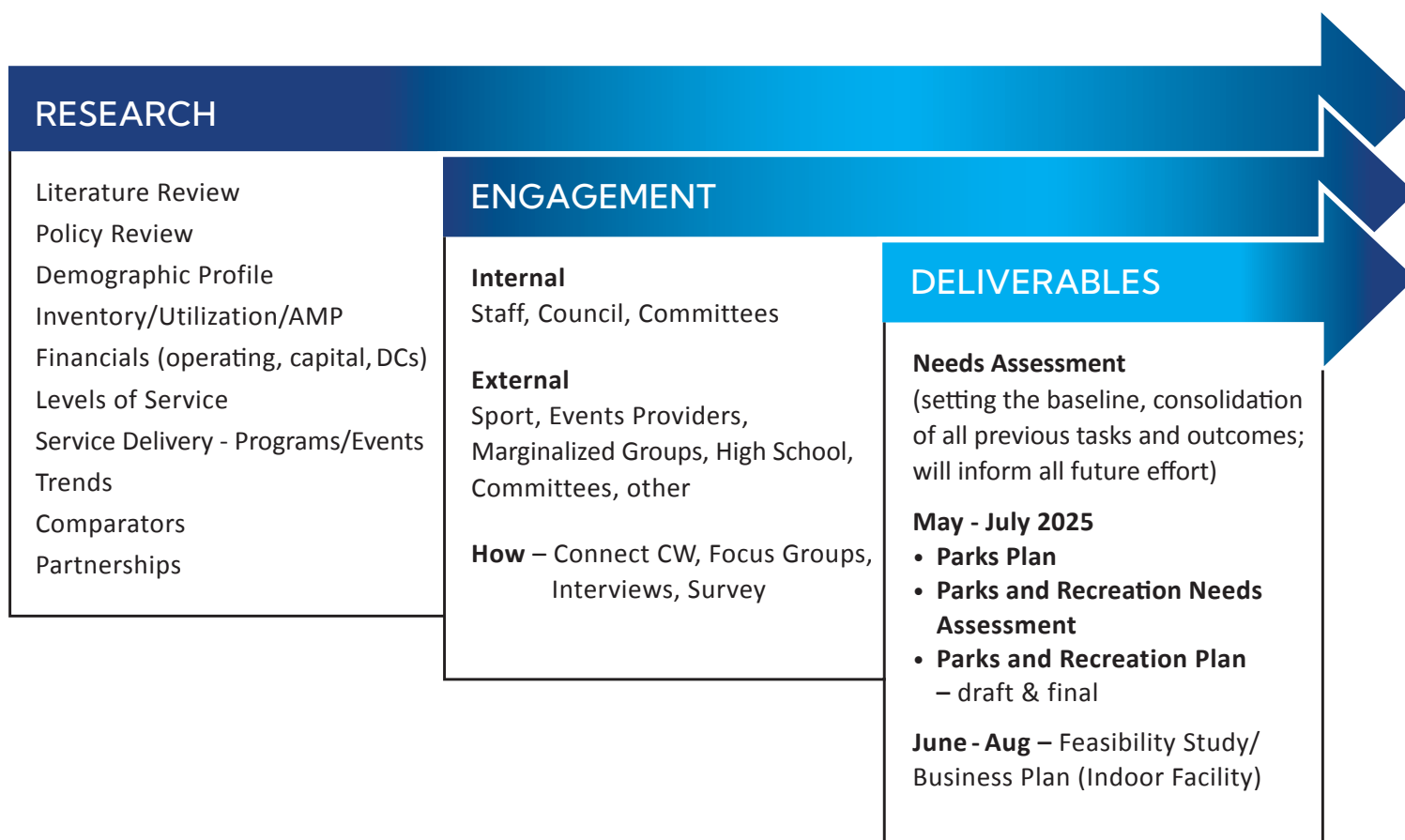
### 8. BOOSTS LOCAL ECONOMY

- Increases property values and makes neighbourhoods more attractive.
- Attracts visitors and supports local businesses through tourism and events.
- Creates jobs in maintenance, programming, culture, and recreation sectors.





## THE PLANNING PROCESS







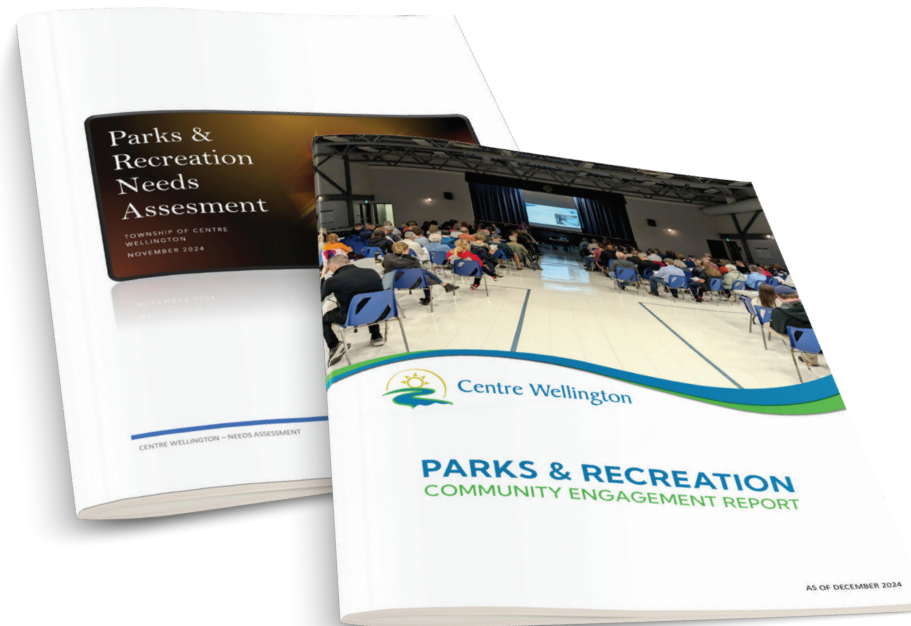
## THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

The Needs Assessment Report serves as a foundational component of the Parks and Recreation Plan by benchmarking how well the Township is currently meeting the recreation needs of its residents. This evidence-based report combines quantitative data—such as asset inventory, facility utilization, financial performance, demographics, and projected growth—with qualitative insights gathered through stakeholder engagement, policy review, emerging trends, and sound planning principles. The report identifies key findings, while also recognizing the areas where the Township is already well-positioned to meet community needs into the future.

Findings from the Needs Assessment and the Community Engagement Report directly informed the themes and recommendations in the Parks and Recreation Plan. Initiated in the summer of 2024, the planning process also considered previous studies, departmental capacity, and key external influences to guide a refined and strategic approach. The full Needs Assessment Report—spanning over 200 pages—is available on the Township’s website.

[www.connectcw.ca/parksandrecplan](http://www.connectcw.ca/parksandrecplan)

[www.centrewellington.ca](http://www.centrewellington.ca)





## PARKS PLAN

The Parks Plan is a foundational document that guides how the Township of Centre Wellington will plan and secure parkland to support long-term population growth and land development through to 2051. It assesses the current parkland supply and recommends how much additional land is needed to meet future needs.

As required by Section 42 of the Planning Act, municipalities must prepare a Parks Plan before adopting a Parkland Dedication By-law. This Plan enables the Township to use tools such as land conveyance or payment-in-lieu of parkland as conditions of development. It supports the Township's use of the "alternative requirement" under the Act and provides essential data for updating parkland policies and establishing a new Parkland Dedication By-law.

The Parks Plan also serves as a critical input into the broader Parks and Recreation Plan, which will address both indoor and outdoor recreation needs. In relation to parks and outdoor spaces, the Parks Plan will:

- Guide how cash-in-lieu funds can support parkland acquisition and development projects;
- Integrate community values and priorities into park planning and renewal;
- Offer strategies for the distribution and design of recreation amenities based on growth projections to 2051.





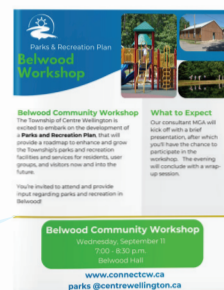
A comprehensive Community Engagement Framework was developed and implemented to gather input from a wide range of stakeholders, including residents, user and interest groups, municipal staff, Council, healthcare providers, school boards, and community partners.

A variety of engagement tools were used, such as community workshops, committee meetings, interviews, focus groups, online surveys, and a dedicated Recreation Sport Survey.

The project was actively promoted and updated through Connect CW, supported by radio interviews, media releases, advertisements, posters, digital signage, and targeted social media campaigns—particularly on Facebook. Word of mouth and Town Hall events also played a key role in community outreach.

A complete summary of the engagement results is available on the Township's engagement website at: [www.connectcw.ca/parksandrecplan](http://www.connectcw.ca/parksandrecplan)

This comprehensive analysis and in-depth engagement process generated valuable qualitative insights, capturing a meaningful “snapshot in time” of community needs and priorities. When integrated with the quantitative data from the Needs Assessment and Parks Plan, these findings form the foundation of the Parks and Recreation Plan.



### KEY ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES INCLUDED:

- Staff workshops and one-on-one staff interviews
- Meetings with advisory committees and boards, including DEI, Healthy Community, Belwood, and the Seniors Centre
- A high school workshop with local students
- Interviews with the Mayor and Councillors
- Collaboration with the County of Wellington Social Services
- Engagement with the Grand River Conservation Authority, health care professionals, and school boards
- A Recreation Sport Survey sent to user groups
- A statistically valid online survey – over 400 responses
- Written submissions
- A well-attended community workshop (over 150 participants)
- Two Town Hall events



## STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

The Parks and Recreation Plan consists of a series of recommendations, organized according to the various responsibilities of the Community Services Department:



Each of the recommendations is supported by a context/preamble that sets the context for the recommendation. The detailed background commentary and rationale, as well as the quantitative and qualitative evidence that supports the recommendation is included in the comprehensive Needs Assessment for Parks and Recreation. Each recommendation will be identified using the timing legend.

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

After the recommendation is a column that references, where relevant, a related strategy or plan, or another decision that may impact the recommendation. The following is an illustrated example of the Recommendation format.

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3yrs	<b>Implement the recommendations of the Park Plan</b> regarding Parkland Dedication, Payment-in-Lieu, and Parkland vs. Recreation Land by amending the Official Plan and adopting a new Parkland Dedication By-Law.	<b>Park Plan</b>

The Plan concludes with a summary of implementation recommendations.

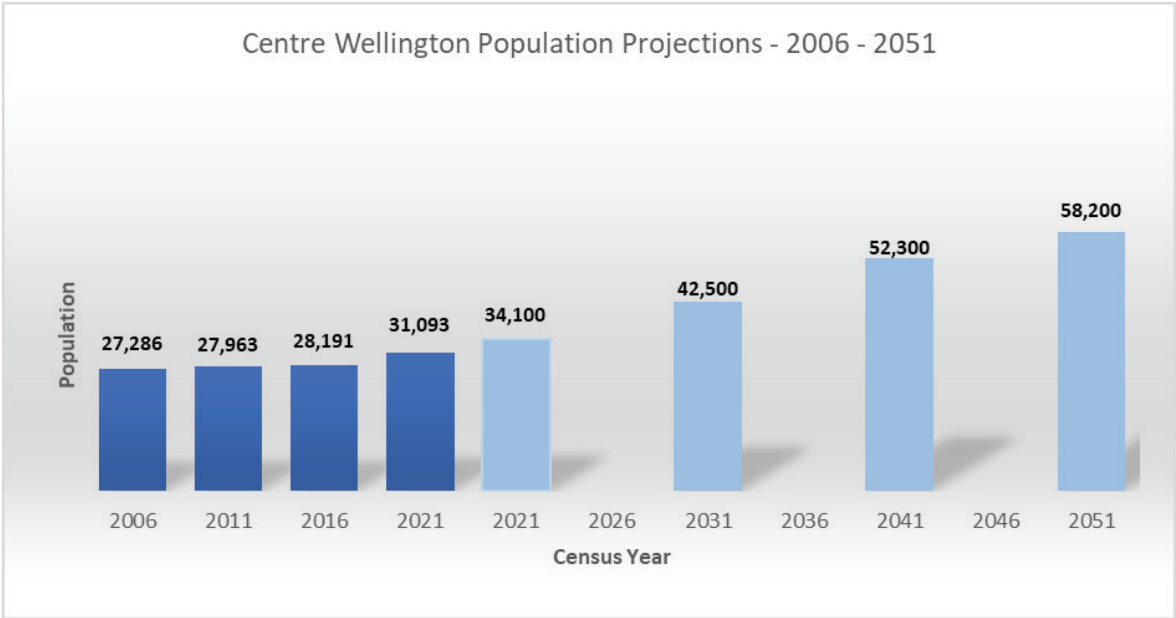


# HOW MUCH IS CENTRE WELLINGTON GOING TO GROW?

The Township's Growth Plan anticipates a population of 58,200 by 2051. This growth will come in phases influenced by several market and development cycles. The anticipated population increase to 2051 is estimated to be 21,580 net new residents. When they arrive and who arrives is a fundamental variable when projecting growth.

The chart below is intended to provide a visual account of how the Township is projected to grow through to 2051. The period between 2006 to 2021 reflect population counts from Statistics Canada – Census of Population and are denoted with a darker shade. The periods

denoted in the lighter shade are reflective of the County's Best Planning Estimates. The County has projected their growth in 10-year increments, and therefore the intermittent 5-year increments have been left blank to offer comparison consistency.



Years 2006 to 2021 are based on Statistics Canada – Census Data.  
The parallel 2021 and 2051 population counts are Best Planning Estimates from Wellington County

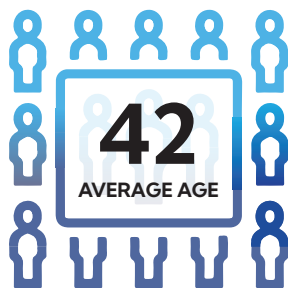


## CENTRE WELLINGTON POPULATION PROJECTIONS:

The actual growth between 2011 and 2021 Census was 11.19%. By comparison the projected growth from the 2021 Census to the 2031 projected growth is 36.69%. By 2051 the Township is projected to grow by 87.1% from the 2021 Census population.



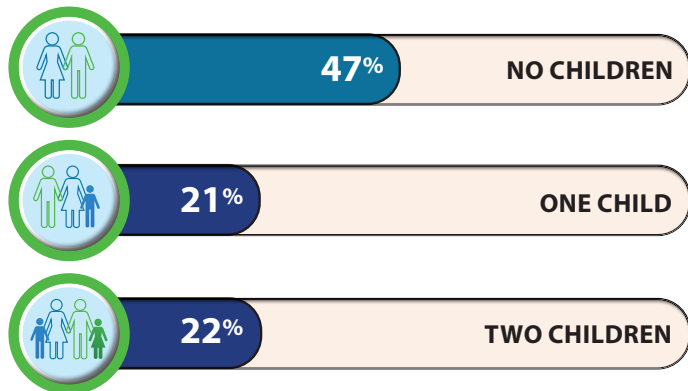
## WHO LIVES IN CENTRE WELLINGTON?



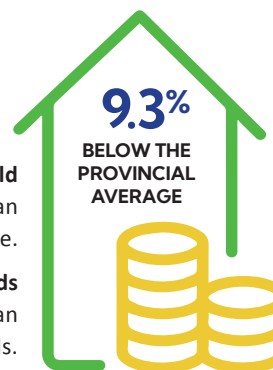
**POPULATION:**  
APPROX. 36,000

### HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

53% of households have one or more children representing a slight increase and higher than the provincial average.



After tax household income is lower than the provincial average. Single-parent households make \$40,000 less than two-parent households.



Percentage of residents with a post-secondary or trades certification.



### LANGUAGE MOST SPOKEN AT HOME

90% – ENGLISH



## CENTRE WELLINGTON



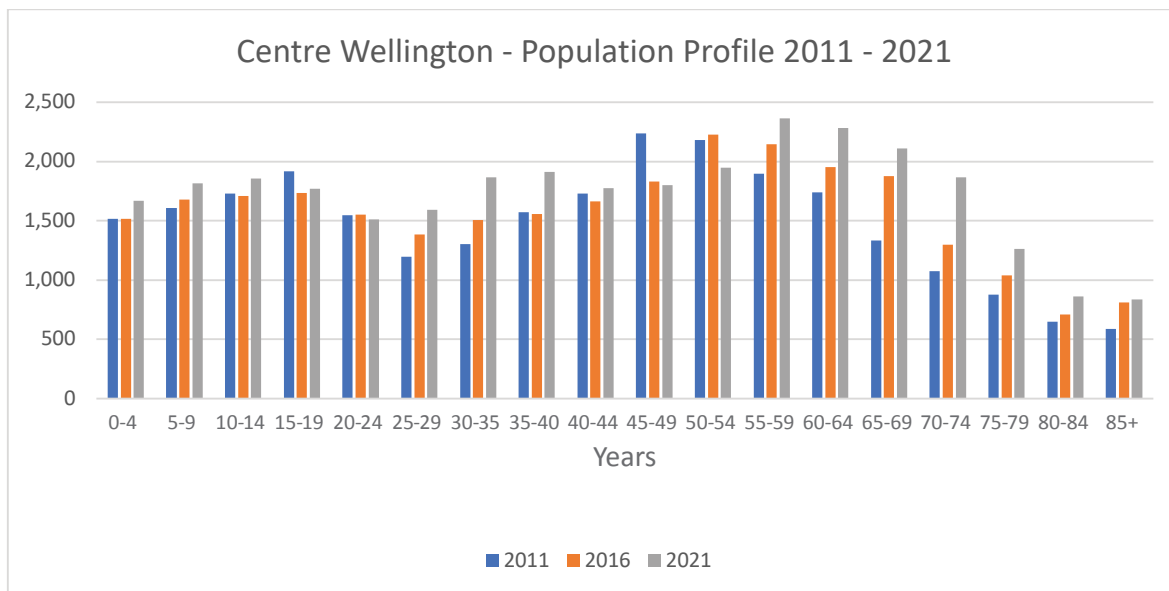
### POPULATION DEMOGRAPHICS:

- Visible minorities have seen an increase to 15% of the population from 12% in 2016 although significantly lower than the provincial average of 29.3%.
- South Asian, Chinese, and Black residents make up the majority of visible minorities.



## HOW IS CENTRE WELLINGTON CHANGING?

The chart below illustrates the Township of Centre Wellington age distribution in 5-year increments from the Census years 2011, 2016, and 2021. There are nuances to be interpreted from each age cohort. Since the Township has grown between 2011 and 2021 one might expect to see each cohort increasing gradually between each of the 5-year census periods. When a given age cohort is relatively stable or decreasing, this means that this age cohort is decreasing proportionately. When there is a dramatic increase in a given age cohort, this represents a proportionate increase in that age cohort.



In summary the greatest proportionate increases in age cohorts include adults aged 55 - 79 years and 30 to 39 years, while the age cohorts that are experiencing a proportionate or actual decrease include 15 - 24 years, and 45 - 54 years. All remaining age cohorts are experiencing an increase.





## FUNDING OF THE PLAN CAPITAL FUNDING

To fund the capital project costs recommended in this plan, it is recommended that the Township utilize growth-related revenue tools to the extent allowable under applicable legislation.

The main revenue tools the Township can utilize are:

- Development Charges – authority provided via the Development Charges Act, 1997;
- Parkland Dedication – authority provided via the Planning Act, 1990; and
- Community Benefit Charges – Parkland Dedication – authority provided via the Planning Act, 1990

Utilizing these revenue tools will assist the Township in recovering growth-related costs from new development, consistent with the principle of “growth pays for growth”. Note that due to recent changes in the applicable legislation, full use of these revenue tools will still require funding from the tax base due to mandatory exemptions, discounts, and reductions.

**DEVELOPMENT CHARGES** may be utilized for growth-related needs for parks and recreation services, except for land for parks. This includes funding of parkland development (e.g. landscaping, fencing, signage, drainage, etc.), parkland amenities (including playgrounds, splashpads, etc.), trails, vehicles, and equipment, and recreation facilities (e.g. arenas, community centres, etc.). In addition to the above, the Township may consider utilizing development charges to recover the costs of recreation land. This can be explored through the next development charges background study and by-law process.

**PARKLAND DEDICATION** can be utilized to receive physical land, or payment-in-lieu of the land. The payment should be the equivalent value of the land. This can be used to purchase new parkland as well as rehabilitation of existing parks and vehicles/equipment. The Township should consider maximizing use of this revenue tool to minimize impact to the taxpayer. Note, this is being considered as part of the parks plan.

**COMMUNITY BENEFIT CHARGES** are a new revenue tool for municipalities to recover growth-related capital costs from high-density development where there are at least 10 residential units and at least 5 storeys. With the anticipated growth to 2051, the Township may see increased demand for high-density developments. Capital costs related to growth that cannot be funded with development charges can be funded with Community Benefit Charges (e.g. deficit in parkland to be recovered through parkland







## FUNDING OF THE PLAN CAPITAL FUNDING

dedication). The Township should conduct a high-level feasibility assessment to determine if implementing a Community Benefit Charge would be beneficial.

For capital needs that include a component of replacement, rehabilitation, or address existing service deficiencies, these portions of the capital projects must be funded from non-growth revenue tools (i.e. taxes or tax-supported reserves). As part of the development charges background study and/or community benefit charge strategy process, the detailed capital projects will be reviewed and the growth/non-growth components will be analyzed.

Other than the above revenue tools, the Township can explore grant opportunities with upper levels of government. With respect to growth-related grant opportunities, these may be limited in the coming years as a main focus of the Provincial and Federal government is housing. Recent grant opportunities relate to housing-enabling infrastructure such as water and wastewater. There are some existing grant programs including the Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (Ontario) which provides funds to repair or upgrade existing sport and recreation facilities (Stream 1)

and to building new and transformative sport and recreation facilities (Stream 2). Intake for Stream 1 has closed, but intake for Stream 2 is open. It is recommended that the Township explore grant funding opportunities wherever possible to support both growth and non-growth-related capital expenditures.

To fund non-growth-related expenditures, it is recommended that the Township continue to utilize reserve contributions through the tax levy to “build-up” reserves to fund capital costs.





## PARTNERSHIPS AND AGREEMENTS

**Municipalities across Ontario and Canada are increasingly turning to partnerships to maintain and enhance public services while managing capital and operating costs.**

These collaborations span both traditional entities, such as upper tier governments and school boards, and non-traditional partners, including health providers, hospitals, hospices, conservation authorities, YMCAs, and private organizations.

Joint initiatives between local governments and external partners have a strong track record of success. Many communities have developed facilities and expanded services through cooperative efforts. For example, the Haber Recreation Centre in Burlington was created through a partnership between the municipality, the school board, and the public library. Similarly, the Cambridge Joint Use Campus integrates resources from the Cambridge Library, Waterloo Region District School Board, and Waterloo Catholic District School Board. Another example is the Wellesley Township Recreation Centre, which partnered with the Woolwich Community Health Centre to enhance community health and recreation services.

Partnering with adjacent municipalities to address access to facilities during periods of high use at Centre Wellington facilities (i.e., ice, sports fields, gymnasiums, pool, other) should be considered. Smaller adjacent municipalities may be able to accommodate additional recreation facilities for use by Centre Wellington organizations when nearing or beyond capacity at local facilities and before new facilities are constructed.

In addition to facility development, partnerships have also transformed service delivery. The YMCA has taken on the management of recreation centres in several municipalities, providing aquatic programs, childcare, and wellness services where local governments once operated alone. Likewise, cities such as London, Goderich, and Petrolia have collaborated with private operators to manage arenas, aquatic facilities, and community spaces—ensuring high-quality programs remain accessible to residents.

There is no universal approach to municipal partnerships. Each collaboration must align with local needs, priorities, and resources. However, as these joint ventures become more common and refined, municipalities are gaining a deeper understanding of best practices for maximizing service while minimizing costs. This shift has encouraged more local governments to explore alternative service and facility models, leveraging strategic partnerships to develop new amenities and expand community services in a financially sustainable way.



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



During in-person engagement in Centre Wellington, partnership emerged as a key strategic theme. The community is eager to collaborate with partners to reduce barriers to recreation, enhance access to school board facilities and Grand River Conservation Authority amenities, and find creative ways to improve future projects. Developing programs through strong partnerships remains a priority.



## PARTNERSHIPS AND AGREEMENTS



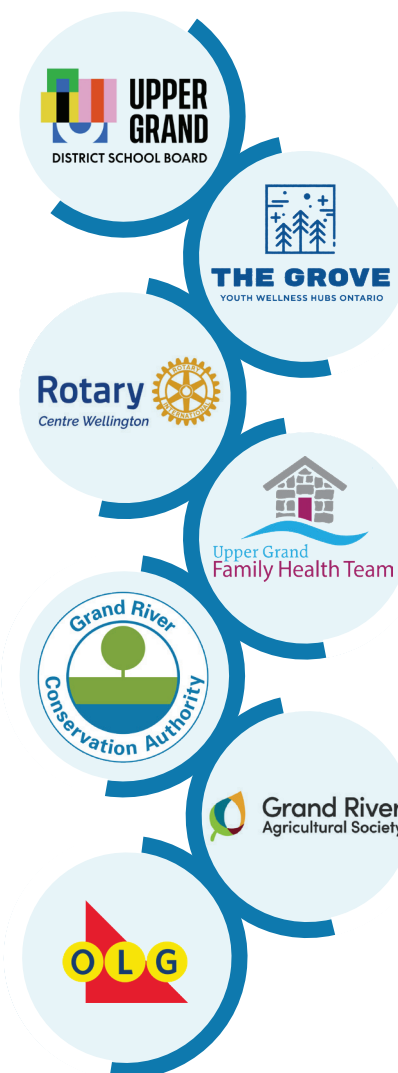
### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



*"Continue to work with partners to minimize barriers to recreation/ participation for all."*

### POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

- **School Boards** – (Upper Grand District School Board, Wellington Catholic District School Board)
- **County of Wellington** – Land for facilities, social service programs, and transportation (RideWell)
- **Hospitals & Health Providers** – Partnering with Groves Memorial Community Hospital, The Grove Hub, and Upper Grand Family Health Team
- **YMCA/YWCA** – Childcare, fitness, and programs
- **Local Businesses & Private Operators** – Hotel and business operators
- **Sports Groups, Service Clubs & Community Organizations and Philanthropic entities** – (Rotary, Lions Club, Optimist Club, minor sports organizations, private businesses/donors)
- **Conservation Authorities (GRCA – Grand River Conservation Authority)**
- **Grand River Agricultural Society (GRAS)**
- **Ontario Lottery & Gaming Commission (OLG)**
- **Adjacent Municipalities**





## PARTNERSHIPS AND AGREEMENTS RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<b>District School Boards</b>		
<3 yrs	<b>1.1 Initiate dialogue with senior administration at both School Boards</b> to assess the state of 'readiness' to continue more detailed discussion that provides best alignment on timing. Develop a strategic partnership/strategy with school boards and senior Township leaders to collaborate on site selection criteria for new schools, ensuring the inclusion of high-quality indoor and outdoor recreation amenities. Work with School Board representatives to assess options to consider through potential shared use agreements. This could include gymnasiums, playfields and multi-use spaces. If the School Board discussions are not successful, the Township will have to develop these facilities on their own, and as such, they have been identified within the individual facility categories as growth-related needs.	<b>Dependent on</b> School Board discussions
<3 yrs	<b>1.2 Take advantage of the current School Board administration's view</b> that there is potential to move away from 'cookie cutter' schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Modern elements for community use including gyms, turf fields, community use of other indoor and outdoor school amenities, outdoor classrooms, childcare and creative approaches to maximize school and community use including football, soccer, rugby, field hockey, basketball, pickleball etc.</li></ul>	<b>Dependent on</b> School Board discussions
SHORT	<b>1.3 Investigate the possibility of shared recreation facilities at school sites;</b> shared lands for schools and recreation centres. Options can be considered with future school and/or recreation facility development for mutual benefit. Collaborative facilities at shared locations could be advantageous for both parties.	<b>Dependent on</b> agreement options and School Board discussions



## PARTNERSHIPS AND AGREEMENTS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN / IMPACT OF DECISION
<b>Grand River Conservation Authority</b>		
<3yrs/ ONGOING	<b>1.4 Communicate with the public on decision making process and ensure transparency when access or public desire cannot be met.</b> Ongoing requests for access to various GRCA properties cannot always be met for financial or risk management considerations. Sharing the decision-making process can help to educate the public in this area.	<b>Community Engagement Strategy</b>
ONGOING	<b>1.5 Continue dialogue to maximize access to GRCA properties,</b> while respecting the role of the Conservation Authority for watershed management and the need to assess precedent setting projects that are sustainable for both parties. There are examples of access that could be explored as ‘best practices’ (i.e., Orangeville access to Island Lake through a purchase service agreement with the Credit River Conservation Authority).	<b>Community Engagement Strategy</b>
<b>Public/Private Partnerships</b>		
SHORT	<b>1.6 Explore options with other entities to access property that could support public/private partnerships for shared use,</b> including indoor and outdoor facility possibilities.	
SHORT	<b>1.7 Continue to invest in the Township Community Partnership Program.</b> Although many facilities have been supported by sponsorship contributions over time (including facility naming rights), there are opportunities to explore continued sponsorship. A third-party review of all assets (indoor and outdoor) could be undertaken to assess value and align with local business and industry. Given the uncertainty of the timing for these kinds of partnerships, the Township should continue to plan for its own assets to meet growth related needs.	<b>Economic Development and Tourism Plan</b>
MEDIUM	<b>1.8 Collaborate with adjacent municipalities to identify the potential to share/pool resources or enter into reciprocal agreements to maximize facilities and services that provide mutual benefit.</b> In the longer term, assess interest in supporting the development of county-wide facilities (i.e., future multi-use recreation facility, indoor air supported structures, other).	
MEDIUM	<b>1.9 Work with economic development staff as new hotel developments are considered.</b> The potential for shared public amenities could be considered (i.e., indoor pool, fitness facilities).	





## PARTNERSHIPS AND AGREEMENTS

### RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<b>Public/Private Partnerships</b>		
MEDIUM	<b>1.10 Work with the Grand Valley Trails Association to consider partnerships.</b> This could include discussion on partnerships, maintenance agreements, funding models and operational considerations such as access, EMS requirements, improved signage, etc.	<b>Align with</b> Active Transportation and Mobility Plan (ATM)
MEDIUM	<b>1.11 Connect with and monitor an ongoing framework for volunteers to support Parks and Recreation services.</b> As is common in the sector, parks and recreation services are supported by volunteers in many areas of service delivery. Volunteers should be seen as community partners. Ensuring that there is a robust pool of volunteers in many areas of service (sport, events, seniors/older adults etc.) is critical to providing seamless provision of a wide range of park and recreation programs and activities. Proactive planning for volunteers (recruitment, training, recognition etc.) will assist in meeting this need over time.	<b>Cultural Action Plan</b> (as it relates to volunteerism)
MEDIUM	<b>1.12 Continue to monitor the provision of private sector initiatives (donors, health providers, recreation opportunities) and proactively work for public access</b> through the development of agreements or shared land use as realistic options arise.	<b>Economic Development and Tourism Plan</b>
ONGOING	<b>1.13 Ensure participation in all discussions for the Wellington County properties</b> for county-wide facilities (i.e., shared facilities that support public/preventative health approaches).	<b>Predicated on</b> mutually beneficial business imperatives



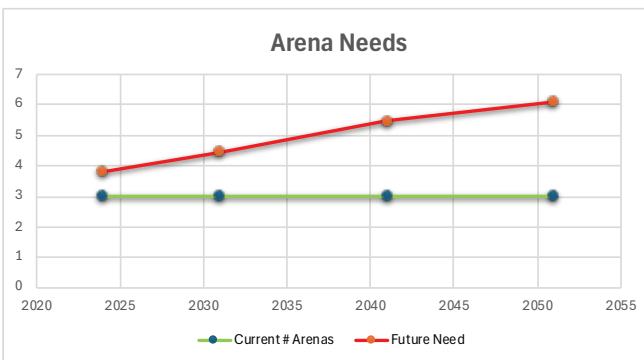
## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES ARENAS

Centre Wellington has three ice pads: one at the Jefferson Elora Community Centre (JECC) and two at the Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex (Sportsplex). These facilities are in good condition, with recent upgrades completed at JECC, including a concrete ice pad replacement, new arena boards, refrigeration and mechanical room updates, AODA compliance modifications, and a renovated lobby. The new lobby was strategically renovated to support the expansion of an additional ice pad.

While ice usage is declining nationally, Centre Wellington has experienced increasing demand, particularly in girls' hockey, due to its high number of young families and relatively low demographic diversity. Current utilization data shows an approximately 99% usage rate across three operational arenas, with user groups expressing urgent capacity concerns due to recent growth in the Township.

The Township has 1,713 minor participants in ice sports and based on the standard provision of one ice pad per 450 minor registered youth participants, Centre Wellington faces a shortfall of 0.81 ice pads currently. Additionally, to ensure equitable access, 10–15 hours of prime-time ice should be allocated weekly for community programs.

Population growth projections from census data and Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. study, 2024 Population Projection, indicate that demand for ice facilities will continue to rise significantly over the next 30 years.



\* For complete chart details see Needs Assessment Report



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

All ice user groups, particularly hockey, have reported challenges in expanding their programs due to limited ice availability and allocation processes. The Township has also stated that the shortage of ice time prevents the expansion of community programs during prime hours. According to an online survey of active ice sport participants, 54% believe there are too few arenas to meet demand, while only 4% feel there are too many.



# INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES ARENAS

YEAR	YOUTH (5-18 yrs) POPULATION	TAKE-UP RATE	ICE USER PARTICIPATION	ICE PAD DEFICIENCY
2024*	6,356	26.9%	1,713	0.81
2031**	7,438	26.9%	2,001	1.45
2041**	9,153	26.9%	2,462	2.47
2051**	10,185	26.9%	2,740	3.1

\* 2024 Population Projection (Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.)

\*\* Wellington County Best Planning Estimates

It should be noted that the deficiency does not include community program hours (a minimum of 10-15 hours per week) or tournament play needs.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

According to an online survey of active sport participants, 44% believe there are too few arenas for summer floor sports.





## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### ARENA RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN / IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>2.1 Work with adjacent municipalities to secure ice access.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with senior staff and adjacent municipalities to obtain <b>block bookings of prime-time ice</b> until a new ice pad is operational.</li> <li>Until additional capacity is available, girls' hockey and minor hockey organizations may need to <b>cap registrations</b>.</li> </ul>	
SHORT	<b>2.2 Update policies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Revise Ice Allocation Policy:</b> Reevaluate the current ice allocation framework to address the number of hours designated for private use and ensure fair distribution among user groups. Ensure key user groups are part of the process to provide a transparent view to decision making for any policy changes. Review recent research and best practices (Ontario and Canada) regarding gender equity in allocation policies.</li> <li><b>Amend Affiliation Policy:</b> Require ice user groups to submit a verified list of resident and non-resident participants, using postal codes or other methods that protect personal information and allow scheduling decisions to prioritize local use.</li> </ul>	<b>Implement when</b> additional ice pad is available
SHORT	<b>2.3 Retain an architect, cost estimator and any other subject matter experts to plan for the second ice pad to be built at the JECC.</b> This arena would be required to meet growth related demand and would be anticipated to be funded with Development Charges.	<b>Outcome of:</b> Feasibility study, Curling assessment, relocation potential for ball diamond
SHORT	<b>2.4 Optimize ice allocation through organizational mergers.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage the <b>Elora and Fergus Skating Clubs</b> to merge, similar to other Centre Wellington minor sports organizations.</li> <li>This consolidation could free up at least 5 additional ice hours for new programs such as synchronized skating, power skating, and expanded CanSkate sessions.</li> </ul>	



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### ARENA RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
MEDIUM	<b>2.5 Expand public skating &amp; drop-in activities.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase availability of public skating and drop-in programs, including stick &amp; puck sessions, shinny hockey for all age groups, family skate, adult skate, speed skating, learn to play programs, and para programs.</li><li>• Offer additional ice time on PD days, school breaks, and statutory holidays.</li></ul>	<b>Align with</b> new ice surface
LONG	<b>2.6 Conduct a feasibility study to identify the optimal site location for a future twin-pad arena</b> to meet community needs by 2051. Consider zoning, servicing, proximity to urban centres, community impact and locational synergies, potential co-location with existing recreational, educational or community facilities. Plan for multipurpose and sustainable energy and design to ensure year-round use as an arena, and include cultural and community rooms and event hosting capabilities. The future twin pad arena is required due to growth anticipated to 2051 to meet the recommended level of service for the Township. This project should be included in the Township's next development charges study. Re-evaluate the need through ongoing needs assessment prior to investing in a future twin pad.	<b>Efficiencies</b> to operate twin pad
ONGOING	<b>2.7 Modernization of ice-user amenities.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to engage with the user groups to confirm detailed needs to upgrade change rooms, install water-filling stations, improve sound systems, add rubberized flooring, increase storage space, and designate skater's warm-up areas.</li></ul>	



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### CURLING

Unlike some municipalities, Centre Wellington has not traditionally included curling facilities as part of its core recreational services. However, both the Elora and Fergus Curling Clubs are located on Township-owned land and the Township has a long-term land lease with each of the clubs whereby the clubs are responsible for the operation, maintenance and capital cost of the buildings. While some neighbouring municipalities, such as the Township of Wellesley, share ice surfaces with curling users, and the Town of Minto continues to operate municipal curling clubs, Centre Wellington has not taken the same approach.

With future expansion plans for both the JECC and Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex, a long-term strategy for curling facilities is necessary. The Elora Curling Club's location is required to maximize the future JECC development and parking expansion and has an aging building, while the Fergus Curling Club sits on prime downtown land and has an aging refrigeration system and the floor and roof are in need of repair. Both buildings would require a large investment to bring into AODA compliance. These factors highlight the need for a proactive plan regarding the future of curling in the Township that will maximize access to modern accessible curling facilities while ensuring strategic investment in existing and future infrastructure.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



The online survey did not include specific questions about curling facilities. During public engagement sessions, there were some comments advocating for investment in curling, but the topic did not emerge as a major theme among residents.

Curling representatives noted concerns with infrastructure and provided updated registration data through the sports survey response.





# INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

## CURLING RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
MEDIUM	<b>2.8 Township staff should engage in discussions to evaluate the current capital and operational status of both curling clubs</b> and develop a long-term plan that meets the community’s curling needs, whether as two separate clubs or a merged entity.	<b>Dependant on</b> future JECC and Sportsplex expansion
LONG	<b>2.9 Explore opportunities to divest of the properties and consider alternate uses on the sites</b> , including sale for revenues to support needed infrastructure in these locations.	





## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES FITNESS CENTRES

The Fitness area within the Sportsplex was designed with two distinct components when first developed – area for group classes and a weight/equipment-based section. When first established it was intended to meet a wide range of fitness needs including group exercise, cardio training, equipment-based training and stretching. It was a needed asset at that time meeting an expressed community need. Patrons have the option to register for membership or drop in to participate in group exercise classes or use the cardio and weight machines.

Currently, the weight room and group exercise memberships result in less than approximately 50% utilization of the available space. Several factors may have contributed to this decline, including outdated equipment, the need for improved fitness class offerings, and increased competition from private-sector gyms and fitness studios that were not available in the Township when the facility was originally developed.

The Needs Assessment identified three significant findings for Township consideration with regard to the Fitness Centre including;

- a) The annual “fill rate” for group exercise has moderated around 53% of its total program capacity.
- b) The annual operating budget is operating in a deficit position when operating costs are allocated to the fitness centre space.
- c) There is a substantive and growing number of private fitness operators in Centre Wellington that offer similar services.

These findings combined should cause the Township to look at divesting itself from the equipment-based fitness service and revitalizing this space and the Fitness Studio Program Room for expanded multi-purpose programming opportunities and other needs.

As part of this divestment, the Township may consider a grandfathering process (phase-out program over time) to assist members facing affordable access challenges to migrate to options in the community offered by private sector operators.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



In the online survey, only 29% of residents reported being satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the Fitness Studio Program Room, and just 23% were satisfied with the weight room. However, when asked about the availability of indoor fitness spaces, over 50% of respondents indicated that there were too few. During public engagement sessions, there was limited feedback on the Fitness Studio Program Room and Weight Room, aside from staff comments suggesting that the space might be better utilized for administrative space and meeting rooms rather than fitness activities.



# INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

## FITNESS CENTRES RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs    **SHORT** = 3-10yrs    **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs    **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>2.10 The Township should divest its role in the provision of equipment-based services</b> and revitalize this space for expanded multi-use programming opportunities and other operational needs.	
SHORT	<b>2.11 Review the use of Fitness Studio Program Room to reimagine or renovate this space for multi-use programming needs.</b>	







## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES GYMNASIUMS

The Township does not operate a fully functional gymnasium. The closest gymnasium-like facilities are the multipurpose spaces at the Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex and Jefferson Elora Community Centre, which host pickleball, basketball, martial arts, dance, trade shows, and special events.

Many municipalities typically rely on school gymnasiums, churches, and private schools for gym space, avoiding capital costs but facing issues like last-minute cancellations and limited weekday availability. Changing event trends at the Sportsplex have reduced the use

of the hall's kitchen and stage. To address gym demand, the Township has installed basketball standards in the hall, supporting youth basketball but reducing pickleball availability. School gymnasiums remain fully booked for youth and adult programming.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



Through our community engagement efforts, we consistently heard that the development of indoor gymnasium sports – such as volleyball, badminton, pickleball, basketball, martial arts, and others – is being held back due to the difficulty of securing space through the school boards. A dedicated Township-owned gymnasium facility would provide much-needed access and scheduling flexibility, allowing these programs to fully develop. This would support the growth of local sport organizations, encourage active living, and ensure year-round opportunities for residents of all ages.



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### GYMNASIUMS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>2.12 Maximize existing and new school infrastructure through better policies, improved access and proactive, communication.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish a partnership to define terms for gym usage, scheduling and maintenance responsibilities.</li> <li>Create a streamlined booking system for community groups and recreation programs.</li> <li>Explore cost-sharing agreement to offset custodial and operational expenses.</li> <li>Collaborate with school board in the early planning stages for new school development to ensure there is municipal input on potential shared recreation spaces.</li> </ul>	<b>Tied to Partnerships</b>
<3 yrs	<b>2.13 Implement retrofitting the hall at JECC and Belwood Hall to function similarly to the hall at the Sportsplex</b> to accommodate multi-use spaces, and other community interest sports/activities.	
SHORT	<b>2.14 Plan to supply a minimum double gymnasium.</b> This should be considered in the context of a School development, or as a component to a new Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility. Funding for the double gymnasium, if provided by the Township, will be eligible for Development Charges funding.	<b>Pending discussions</b> with District School Boards and/or completion of the Feasibility Study and Business Plan for MURF
LONG	<b>2.15 Monitor gymnasium usage (system wide – schools and Township)</b> and consider the need for another double gymnasium to meet growth related needs.	



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES YOUTH CENTRES

There are currently no municipally operated, dedicated youth centres in the Township.

The closest youth hub is The Grove Youth Wellness Hub, located in Fergus, which provides counseling, support services, career guidance, and youth programming. Additionally, access to youth sports and recreation has declined by 17% in Ontario over the past year, with affordability and social isolation being key barriers. Presently, the Township offers recreational programming, such as skating, swimming and camps.

### YOUTH RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>2.16 Pilot a youth activity drop in program at the JECC and the Sportsplex offering a variety of ‘try it’ programs</b> such as corn hole, foosball, and assess interest in maintaining/expanding youth offerings outside of The Grove.	
SHORT	<b>2.17 Expand youth programming</b> with activities such as personal training, youth boot camps, dodgeball, outdoor adventure programs, on-ice pickleball, and paddleboarding in the pool.	Access to staff/volunteers
SHORT	<b>2.18 Identify potential locations for a youth drop-in space</b> , such as the Sportsplex, Senior Centre, Rugby Fieldhouse, or future indoor facilities.	
SHORT	<b>2.19 Partner with The Grove Youth Wellington-Guelph to expand youth programming within Township facilities</b> , leveraging their expertise in youth engagement and support services.	
MEDIUM	<b>2.20 Consider a dedicated youth space as a component of the Multi-Use Indoor Recreation Facility.</b> Work with Service Clubs (i.e. Optimist) to assess interest in helping with program and volunteer coordination.	



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



During high school engagement sessions, students emphasized the need for dedicated spaces where they could gather and socialize. Many expressed that having a place of their own would contribute to a healthier and more connected community.





## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES VICTORIA PARK SENIOR CENTRE



The Township operates one 12,000 square feet Senior Centre offering a variety of programs for individuals 55+, though all registered programs are open to adults of **any age**. Senior membership has declined by 17.7% from 949 members in 2019 to 781 in 2024, indicating available capacity.

The Centre closes at 4:30 p.m., leaving valuable evening and weekend space unused. This space could support expanded programming for all ages, including additional older adult programs during evenings and weekends. Other older

adult programs are also available at JECC, the Sportsplex, and local churches. With the 50-59 age group being the largest demographic in 2021, the demand for older adult programming is expected to grow in the future.

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

At a public engagement session at the Senior Centre, attendees highlighted the need for larger program spaces and more offerings but were surprised to learn that membership has declined since 2019. Overall, seniors were satisfied with the Centre and saw opportunities to expand programs at the Rugby Field House. Notably, younger 'older adults' expressed a preference for Township-wide programming rather than being limited to the Senior Centre.



In the online survey, **55%** of residents reported being **somewhat or very** satisfied with Victoria Park Senior Centre, with **less than 1%** expressing strong dissatisfaction.



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### VICTORIA PARK SENIOR CENTRE RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>2.21 Provide incentives and maximize options to participate in drop-in programs:</b> Introduce flexible participation options, including drop-in programs and membership incentives, to encourage seniors and older adults to stay active and engaged throughout Centre Wellington.	
SHORT	<b>2.22 Expand operating hours:</b> Extend the Senior Centre's hours to include evening and weekend programming, catering to the needs of younger, working older adults or other age groups whose programming needs can be accommodated.	
MEDIUM	<b>2.23 Decentralized programming:</b> Offer more variety of older adult recreation and fitness programs at additional locations across the Township, such as the JECC, Rugby Fieldhouse, Sportsplex, and Belwood Hall, to improve accessibility during daytime hours and broaden program reach.	<b>Subject to accessibility improvements at the Rugby Fieldhouse and Belwood Hall.</b>
MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>2.24 Provide program and meeting space for older adults within all new indoor multi-use recreation facilities.</b> Ensure some space is open and flexible to meet changing needs and interests, while providing some specific spaces to host relevant programs (i.e., cooking classes, programs in relevant technology trends, etc.). Engage older adults in decision making and design.	







# INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES AQUATICS

Centre Wellington is home to a well-used aquatic centre featuring a 25-metre, six-lane pool and a leisure pool equipped with a water slide, interactive play elements, and hot tub. The facility attracts approximately 95,000 visitors annually, offering a wide range of aquatic programs, including swim lessons and competitive training through the Flippers Swim Team. Its popularity extends beyond the Township, drawing participants from adjacent communities and school boards.

For a community of Centre Wellington’s size, investing in an aquatic centre was a significant achievement, and it continues to be a valued asset. The recommended service standard for municipal pools is one per 30,000 residents, highlighting the importance of maintaining and optimizing this facility to meet growing demand. However, the current layout presents challenges. The East wing of the Sportsplex, which houses the aquatic facility and administrative offices, lacks sufficient space for modern amenities.

There is a pressing need for improved family and accessible change rooms, gender-neutral options, and dedicated administration space for aquatic staff. To accommodate population growth and the strong demand for aquatic programs, Centre Wellington must proactively plan for a re-imagined aquatic facility. Expanding and modernizing the space will ensure the community continues to have access to high-quality aquatic services for years to come.



During in-person engagement sessions, residents emphasized the **NEED FOR IMPROVED PROGRAM SCHEDULING** to support a greater diversity of aquatic offerings and better facility utilization. Many also highlighted the importance of **upgrading the change rooms to enhance overall satisfaction** with the aquatic centre.

Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex  
Aquatics Schedule  
July 1, 2024 - September 1, 2024

Swim lessons will be offered from Monday, July 1, 2024, through Friday, September 1, 2024. All lessons are held in the 25m pool. For more information, visit [www.cwcommunitysportsplex.ca/aquatics](#). All programs are subject to change without notice. Please check the schedule regularly for any updates.

AQUATIC TYPE	Central Aquatics	Community Aquatics	University Aquatics
MONDAY	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	
TUESDAY	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	
WEDNESDAY	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	
THURSDAY	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	
FRIDAY	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	8:00am - 8:30am 10:00am - 10:30am	

**Aquatics Descriptions**  
General Aquatics: One for residents to swim in. Held in a 25m pool. Includes a hot tub. The option of a pool is available for those who wish to use it.  
Swim and Waterpolo Aquatics: These classes are held in the 25m pool. Includes a hot tub. The option of a pool is available for those who wish to use it.  
Swim and Waterpolo Aquatics: These classes are held in the 25m pool. Includes a hot tub. The option of a pool is available for those who wish to use it.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Feedback from the online survey indicates that while 49% of respondents are satisfied with the indoor aquatic centre, only 35% expressed satisfaction with the change rooms. Additionally, less than 1% believe there are too many indoor aquatic facilities in the township, whereas 43% feel there are too few.





## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### AQUATICS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<b>Enhancing Aquatic Centre Access and Programming</b>		
<3 yrs	<b>2.25 Optimize pool scheduling &amp; allocation:</b> Refine the pool scheduling framework and allocation policy to maximize available pool time for lessons, public swims, and specialty programs.	
SHORT	<b>2.26 Continue to expand lifeguard recruitment:</b> Develop a targeted marketing and incentive program to attract and retain daytime and part-time lifeguards. Work with adjacent municipalities to assess options to strengthen the staff pool using shared resources, if necessary.	
SHORT	<b>2.27 Monitor the prioritization of local residents:</b> Ensure swim lessons are offered to Centre Wellington residents first before opening registration to non-residents.	<b>Align with</b> revised Policy for residency-first
SHORT	<b>2.28 Introduce new aquatic programs:</b> Expand programming to include options like water polo, resistance swimming, and other specialized aquatic activities.	
SHORT	<b>2.29 Align swim club &amp; municipal needs:</b> Engage with the local swim club to balance competitive training schedules with municipal program and lesson requirements.	
SHORT	<b>2.30 Facility upgrades:</b> Invest in change rooms, storage, viewing areas, and pool equipment (e.g., pool toys, resistance training tools) to enhance the overall swimming experience.	<b>Align with</b> expanded pool facility
SHORT	<b>2.31 Continue to track the growth of aquatic programming and community demand with a plan to assess the option to expand the aquatic facilities at the Sportsplex</b> (interior or exterior expansion).	
MEDIUM	<b>2.32 Assess the need for the expansion of the current Aquatic Facility, or a new aquatic facility.</b> Include timing and best option for servicing the need and operational efficiencies.	<b>Align with</b> Sportsplex Space Needs Analysis <b>Recommendation 2.41</b>



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES ADDITIONAL INDOOR FACILITIES

Throughout the Needs Assessment, Survey, Sports Survey and Community Engagement process, additional facilities were noted as being important to the community. Walking, and access to year-round walking options, was a high priority. Indoor Turf was identified as being needed for existing sports to extend season play and provide year-round training spaces, as well as expanding play for a number of sports. The growing interest in pickleball has previously been identified and will continue to take advantage of indoor gymnasium space and other multi-use space (provided ceiling heights and floor space is sufficient) as well as use of arena floors during non-ice periods. Hosting events and ensuring suitable indoor space to become feature space, or as supportive spaces for outdoor events and festivals, will continue to be a priority. These identified needs should be considered in future facility planning.



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In the online survey the most desired amenities for a new indoor facility were:

- Walking Track – 61%
- Gymnasium – 37%
- Pickleball Courts – 30%
- Hosting Events – 24%
- Turf Field – 23%



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### ADDITIONAL INDOOR FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>2.33 Include an elevated walking track within the MURF above the gymnasiums.</b> If the gymnasiums are provided at a School campus, the track may need to be considered in future Municipal indoor facilities. An indoor track can also be developed surrounding indoor turf, however the footprint becomes very large and conflict in usage can occur (an elevated walking track can also be considered above an ice pad facility).	<b>Pending discussions</b> with School Boards
SHORT	<b>2.34 The indoor turf facility can be developed in partnership with the School Board/s</b> and/or it should be considered within the development of the Indoor MURF. Commitments from user groups, in writing, should be a requirement prior to proceeding with this feature to ensure operating viability.	
SHORT	<b>2.35 Gymnasium space as previously noted, should be considered pending discussions with School Boards.</b>	
MEDIUM	<b>2.36 Indoor space required to host festivals and events should be considered in the context of the following:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall outdoor plan for the Sportsplex Expansion lands</li> <li>• Re-imaged use of the Sportsplex including the arena floors during non-ice periods</li> </ul>	<b>Align with</b> Cultural Plan and design considerations for Sportsplex expansion lands
LONG	<b>2.37</b> Additional indoor facilities that meet new and emerging program and activity needs will emerge with population growth, changing demographics and financial pressures/affordability. <b>Further study is recommended after 10 years</b> to assess needs, land availability, status of previously recommended facility development and other influences that will affect implementation.	



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES COMMUNITY HALLS/COMMUNITY CENTRES

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



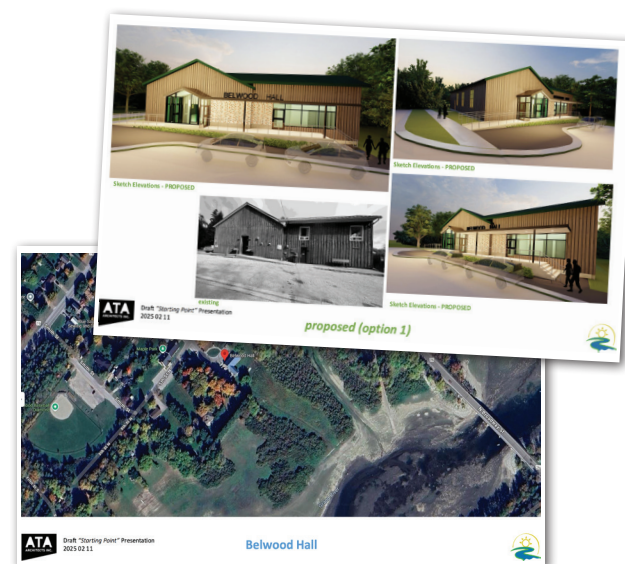
The online survey did not directly address community centres, but rather focused on individual amenities within them. However, the top two priorities for recreation and park investment were repurposing underused facilities for new purposes (34%) and building more recreation facilities that offer a variety of programs beyond arenas and pools (32%), which are the primary functions of community centres. During public engagement, there was strong support for flexible, multi-purpose spaces that can serve a range of interests. Many participants also emphasized the need for investment in existing facilities, advocating for modernizations and increased funding for maintenance of indoor spaces. In particular, participants at the Belwood engagement session noted the need for improved aesthetics, new flooring, features that support program delivery for all ages, user fees aligned with value and generally a desire to increase year-round use of the hall supported by a more modern facility.

The Township has three community halls: Belwood Hall, Jefferson Elora CC Hall, and the Sportsplex Hall. Belwood and JECC Hall currently have capacity for additional use, as there is no significant demand for regular bookings. Two of the three halls are located within Community Centres and are therefore supported by other adjacent amenities (JECC and Sportsplex). JECC Hall's potential use is still being explored by staff beyond its traditional role. Belwood Hall, however, is in poor condition and requires modernization to attract more diverse programs or renters. The Victoria Park Seniors Centre and, to a lesser extent, the Highland Rugby Fieldhouse adjacent to the Seniors Centre, both have some capacity to expand their role as rentable space.

Township staff are already underway with a project to update and re-imagine the Belwood Hall with an architect firm to develop concept plans and construction budgets. The project is reviewing renovations to the washroom, front entrance, kitchen, hall and stage/storage area.

The Sportsplex Hall is at full capacity with pickleball, special events, and youth basketball most recently with the installation of basketball standards. The demand for the Sportsplex Hall is primarily driven by pickleball, events, and soon youth basketball. The hall is effectively functioning as a gymnasium, highlighting the need for additional gym space. The Sportsplex has limited multi-purpose and meeting room space; one of its two meeting rooms is designated for staff administration space, leaving limited rooms available for other meetings.

Multi-use community centres remain essential in Centre Wellington, serving as hubs for community activity.





## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### COMMUNITY HALLS/COMMUNITY CENTRES RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>2.38 Reallocate and reconfigure administrative space at the Sportsplex to accommodate the current staff and services</b> (i.e., the Cemetery Office should be in a more private and discreet location).	
<3 yrs	<b>2.39 Consider a full-sized double gymnasium as an anchor amenity to the New Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility or in the redesign of the Sportsplex</b> (pending consideration and timing for a new School campus).	<b>Align with</b> Feasibility Study Business Plan and <b>Pending</b> school board discussions
<3 yrs	<b>2.40 Enhance maintenance protocols:</b> Implement adequate maintenance protocols to improve the condition of facilities, ensuring higher satisfaction among renters and users, which could lead to increased bookings and utilization.	
SHORT	<b>2.41 Conduct an indoor space Sportsplex needs assessment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centre Wellington should hire an architect/engineer/cost estimator to complete an indoor options report that re-imagines the space needs for the Sportsplex to ensure its facilities align with current and future community needs. This assessment should evaluate administrative space requirements, enhancements to aquatic changerooms, aquatic tank expansion including interior and exterior options, and the optimization of multi-purpose and faith spaces.</li> <li><b>This review should also be considered in the option to expand the pool facilities on the interior of the existing footprint through the removal of the hall, kitchen and fitness area.</b> This option will have to be balanced with a review of administrative staff needs in the short-medium term. Ensure staff input with respect to administrative/maintenance requirements and storage needs.</li> <li>The review should also explore whether a future pool would be better located adjacent to the existing aquatic centre exterior wall.</li> <li>Consideration for funding options regarding re-purposing of existing space, vs building new space will need to be a priority when conducting the needs assessment (re: use of Development Charges funding).</li> </ul>	<b>Align with</b> Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility and Sportsplex Expansion plans <b>Recommendation 2.32</b>

## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### COMMUNITY HALLS/COMMUNITY CENTRES RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<b>Other Recommendations for Community Halls/Community Centres</b>		
SHORT	<b>2.42 Request for Expressions of Interest for third-party providers for spaces within the Township</b> The Township should issue a Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) to attract third-party providers interested in renting space at the Belwood Hall, Sportsplex, and Jefferson Elora Community Centre. Potential providers could include healthcare services, childcare and daycare operators, social service agencies, and organizations supporting seniors and youth. This initiative could optimize facility use, generate revenue, and expand community access to essential programs and services.	<b>Align with</b> Belwood Hall improvements and re-imagined use of space at the Sportsplex
SHORT	<b>2.43 Repurpose multi-purpose spaces:</b> Explore the potential of repurposing spaces, such as Belwood and JECC Hall, to accommodate purpose-specific activities, including active programming, while ensuring appropriate storage and meeting all necessary requirements.	
SHORT	<b>2.44 Leverage under-utilized centres for new programming:</b> Investigate successful programming at under-utilized centres, such as offering summer camps or hosting “try-it” sessions, to engage the community and attract more use.	
MEDIUM	<b>2.45 Modernize and renovate Township buildings to ensure full compliance with AODA standards</b> (i.e., Highland Rugby Fieldhouse, Belwood Hall).	
LONG	<b>2.46 Consider the need for independent halls</b> (Belwood) based on an ongoing assessment of use, cost/benefit and alternative options for the property.	







## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### SUMMARY

The importance of the indoor recreation facility components and their interrelationship cannot be stressed enough. Although they may appear to be separate and unrelated, they are very much contingent on decision points, funding, relationships with others and the overall plan for the Sportsplex Expansion lands (indoor and outdoor facilities). The following reflect an order to be considered to assist with decision making:

- a) **SHORT – Complete the Feasibility Study and Business Plan for the Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility** with consideration for all feedback received to date regarding priorities.
- b) **As this process progresses, discuss in parallel with the District School Boards to assess their timing in relation to a new Schools** that may include facilities that can be shared with the Township (gymnasiums, indoor meeting space, turf, other). Timing may need to be accelerated or delayed for the MURF depending on Ministry of Education funding for Schools, if the discussions lead to a comprehensive public campus with a variety of shared amenities.
- c) **Assess the indoor space needs of the Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex** for the re-configuration

of the indoor aquatic space, hall/ kitchen/stage, administrative offices and fitness area.

- d) **MEDIUM – As the ice needs study for a new twin pad moves forward, assess options for another Multi-Use Recreation Facility**, or expand at current location, that could include ice, aquatic facilities, gymnasiums and multi-use program spaces (20 year horizon).
- e) **Ensure appropriate studies are undertaken to assess the structural integrity of the major components at the Sportsplex** (pool tanks, ice) and ensure replacement and/or renovation improvements are undertaken as needed to extend their useful life.



- f) **LONG – Ensure all facility needs studies are updated** to assess participation data, take-up rates, trends, Facility Conditions for existing assets, land, partnerships etc. to position future facility needs into appropriate incremental time periods over the balance of the growth projections.



## INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

### INDOOR MULTI-USE RECREATION FACILITY STUDY AND BUSINESS PLAN

A component of the broader project, the Township tasked the consulting team to develop a Feasibility Study and Business Plan for a new Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility. This was a recommendation from the previous Parks and Recreation Plan, and Township Council and staff strategically aligned it with a revised Needs Assessment to determine key facility components.

The Feasibility Study and Business Plan should be viewed as a companion report to the Needs Assessment and the Parks and Recreation Plan (PRP). At this time, the main facility components included in the Feasibility Study are as follows:

- Turf field to accommodate a variety of sports/activities
- Community room and meeting space
- Washrooms
- Change rooms
- Walking track
- Field viewing area
- Lobby and seating area
- Storage and utility room
- Based on the outcomes of the Needs Assessment and the PRP, other requirements to be considered may include:
  - Indoor tennis
  - Indoor pickleball
  - Gymnasium to accommodate a variety of sports/activities
  - Multi-purpose space
  - Arena/dry pad
  - Event Space

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## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The online survey results indicated the top five desired new indoor facilities were:

- Walking Track
- Gymnasium
- Senior Program Areas
- Pickleball Courts
- Youth Centre



# INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

## INDOOR MULTI-USE RECREATION FACILITY STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs    **SHORT** = 3-10yrs    **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs    **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs/ SHORT	<p><b>2.47 Centre Wellington should support the findings of the Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility Study.</b></p> <p>This facility will provide much-needed multi-use indoor spaces and event venues, benefiting the entire Township. Investing in this project will enhance community programming, improve access to recreational opportunities, and address growing space demands.</p>	<p><b>Dependant on</b> alignment between Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility Study, Sportsplex expansion/reimagined plans</p>





## INDOOR MULTI-USE RECREATION FACILITY STUDY AND BUSINESS PLAN SUMMARY

**This study will assess the state of readiness for all components identified to date.**

It is understood that discussions with potential partners (public and private) will likely overlap with the completion of this study. That said, the following should be considered:

**SHORT – Using best assumptions and financial projections available,** ensure that the Multi-Use Recreation Facility study yields the highest use and best financial return for the Township.

**SHORT – Pending completion of the Multi-Use Recreation Facility Study, identify further studies or actions needed** to address outstanding facility needs.

**SHORT/MEDIUM – Ensure that ongoing investment as recommended and forecasted is undertaken** to continue to make future development charges applicable for future facility needs.



## PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Similar to many municipalities, Centre Wellington offer a range of programs, events and festivals as both a direct provider and in partnership with many community organizations. Support can take the form of direct operation, services in-kind, grant funding and organizational liaison and support. There is a wide range of offerings for all ages and interests, using many indoor and outdoor facilities.

### PROGRAMS

The recreation and leisure program area is primarily focused on the Sportsplex with aquatics, drop-in (i.e., pickleball, ice programs) and school-aged programming/camps being the primary program offerings. There is interest in expanding programs to all areas of the community, including trying new, pop-up ideas both indoors and outdoors. Program delivery for seniors is offered at the Victoria Park Seniors Centre and Community Halls, offering a very busy schedule. Partner organizations currently provide complimentary program choice to residents (i.e., gymnastics, dance, martial arts, sports, etc).

In the online survey **91%** of Centre Wellington residents have participated in at least 1 indoor recreation activity in the past 12 months.

However, the primary reason for not using indoor facilities is a **lack of interest in current programs, cited by 19% of residents**, as well as limited awareness of recreation opportunities and inconvenient facility hours (11%).

91%



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



There was a range of feedback provided through the engagement process. Youth were interested in more unstructured options and a place to 'hang out'. Many residents of all ages were looking for new and different program choices, with the municipality taking the lead and then looking for volunteers or partner organizations to continue to provide the service, if sustainable. Options for membership choices were desired, and cost may be a barrier to some as well as considering options to engage newcomers with long-term residents in a program setting ('Play and Grow Together' concept).



## PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

### PROGRAMS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<p><b>3.1</b> Develop and deliver <b>‘try-it’ programs and diverse camp options, especially in the under utilized community centres</b>, to introduce young people to new activities and sports. As popularity and participation grows, work with interested volunteers to create organizational support and move towards self-sufficiency.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During the community engagement process, there was a consistent message conveyed that too much investment goes into supporting more traditional activities and sports (hockey and lacrosse), with the opportunity to launch new programs to meet new and emerging needs limited.</li> <li>• Introducing ‘try-it’ options can test out new programs while building a volunteer corps to provide organizational support over time.</li> <li>• Working with people from different cultural backgrounds and areas of interest can grow support and engagement and broaden non-traditional program choice over time. The Township should work with its DEI Committee to help create various diverse programs and seeking out community support to help operate.</li> </ul>	
<3 yrs	<p><b>3.2</b> Building on the ‘try-it’ programs assess camp and year-round ‘out of school’ program choices to meet current areas of interest and creative options for all ages. Ensure staffing levels commensurate with new camp choices, including an ongoing leadership development program and adherence to quality assurance training and program development.</p>	<p><b>Dependant on</b> available suitable indoor space</p>
<3 yrs	<p><b>3.3</b> Offer more options for art and culture programs, with a focus on broad based areas of interest (i.e., photography, digital arts).</p>	<p><b>Align with</b> Cultural Action Plan</p>
SHORT	<p><b>3.4</b> Offer outdoor programs and active living/fitness choices along trail system and in parks. Install fitness equipment and outdoor amenities to support planned options for various types of activities along active transportation routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Year-round interest in use of parks and trails grew significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic and have continued to be desirable in most communities.</li> <li>• Providing a range of active living and physical activity options along trail systems and in select parks can encourage a focus on healthy active living year-round.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Align with</b> Active Transportation and Mobility Plan (ATM)</p>





## PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

### PROGRAMS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>3.5 Improve program scheduling and choice to reduce barriers to participation.</b> Survey results indicated that program times and options may not align with resident/commuter schedules or reflect diversity of choice that is becoming more desirable.	
SHORT	<b>3.6 Provide programs for seniors/older adults in facilities outside of the Victoria Park Seniors Centre.</b> Expand options at the Jefferson Elora Community Centre, Belwood Hall and in outdoor spaces such as parks and play fields. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As the community grows and the percentage of older adults increases, there will be increased demand for programs and services not delivered at a dedicated Seniors Centre. Blending programs into other facilities and offering new and different programs in indoor and outdoor locations will start to expand the range of programs for an older age cohort.</li><li>• There is an opportunity to offer more programs at the Belwood Hall and the JECC working with existing and new volunteers to promote and/or deliver programs (i.e., yoga, leisure activities, shuffleboard, drop-in options).</li></ul>	<b>Align with</b> Hall improvements
ONGOING	<b>3.7 Work with horticultural, gardening and environmental groups and clubs</b> to expand programs and classes to share knowledge and encourage interest in the natural environment. Hosting open workshops and 'learn about' sessions can encourage the community to engage with the strong volunteer core that exists in Centre Wellington and is committed to a strong environment consciousness. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Growing interest in caring for and investing in environmental sustainability is a high priority for many residents.</li><li>• Enhanced education on how to care for outdoor spaces and grow public support will assist in gaining community wide support for non-traditional maintenance practices over time.</li><li>• Support in this area can achieve many mutually beneficial results, including expanded understanding of new approaches to outdoor maintenance activity while assisting in reducing maintenance costs for more traditional turf, tree, garden and boulevard care.</li></ul>	<b>Align with</b> internal climate/ environmental staff resources



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



Volunteers involved with hosting events noted the need for continued support for events to continue to be a priority, seeking efficiency where possible (i.e., stage, storage, grants/ funding, sharing of lessons learned). There was interest in increasing downtown events that are vehicle free. Some concern was noted with respect to 'noise pollution' that music festivals bring.

Community survey results suggested a need for more amenity supports such as washrooms (46% gap), water filling stations (36% gap) and picnic shelters (22% gap).

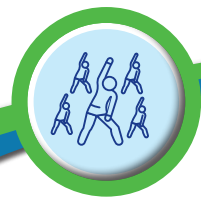
### EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

Events and Festivals are a strong component to the heritage and fabric that contributes to defining Centre Wellington. This strategic imperative was also noted in the Cultural Action Plan and is a priority in terms of dedicating resources and supporting events and festivals.

Similar to other municipalities in Ontario, Centre Wellington has a long, strong history of hosting an annual event that draws residents and visitors from far and wide. The annual Scottish Festival and Highland Games is a prime example of this kind of event that provides community enrichment, economic development and exposure to Centre Wellington as a welcoming community. Many other events of various size and focus are also strong indicators of the importance of events being held throughout the community and engaging volunteers from all backgrounds and areas of interest.







PROGRAMS, EVENTS AND FESTIVALS

EVENTS AND FESTIVALS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs    **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs    **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs    **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>3.8 The Township should create an internal team to align event and festival priorities for recommendations from the Cultural Plan and the Economic Development and Tourism plan</b> that addresses resource allocation, annual priority setting, opportunities to share resources, enhance communication options and a strengthened commitment to working collaboratively across various Township departments. Results and measurement criteria should be a part of this joint, annual planning process.	<b>Align with</b> Cultural Action Plan and Economic Development/ Tourism Plan
<3 yrs	<b>3.9 Ensure coordination with the outcomes of the Multi-Use Indoor Facility Study</b> to ensure maximal use of the property, particularly when all spaces are being used (parking access/egress, relocation needs etc.) Host a pre-season annual meeting with Event hosts to review options to address resource sharing, lessons learned, process simplification and other opportunities to proactively engage volunteers in their efforts to provide events and festivals in the community.	<b>Align with</b> Cultural Action Plan and Community Engagement Strategy
SHORT	<b>3.10 Develop an overall landscape (softscape and hardscape) plan for the newly acquired Sportsplex Expansion lands</b> to support and accommodate new events space and amenities, outdoor sports fields, gathering areas, trails, parking, etc. to accommodate future growth requirements. Review current conflicting event space adjacent to residents for relocation. These capital costs should be incorporated into the future Development Charges study.	<b>Include in</b> Multi-Use Recreational Facility plans and Sportsplex expansion plans







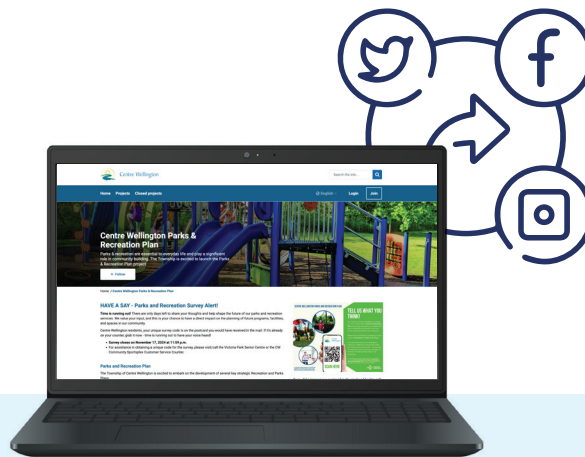
## 2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

It is not uncommon for sector leaders in all municipal service areas to become complacent in the need for a proactive approach to how they communicate with their constituents in a meaningful way, and to proactively acknowledge the need for review of administrative practices to ensure continuous improvement. Growth communities in particular, face an ongoing challenge to meet existing resident needs while responding to a fast-paced changing landscape that necessitates a need to move out to their 'comfort zone' to ensure responsive and progressive service delivery.

### 2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION

The Township is committed to engaging its residents in a transparent and meaningful way, and in ensuring that they hear from a variety of stakeholders, including those that may not normally provide feedback. A recently released project plan to strengthen community engagement for all services indicates a strong corporate priority in this area.

Streamlining processes and ensuring the public understand the rationale behind decisions and administrative requirements is key to working in tandem with the community and reducing concern about perceived Township 'bureaucracy'. Establishing and regularly reviewing written policies, procedures and guidelines and repeatedly sharing them with users and contact personnel is necessary to manage expectations. With volunteer turnover being a given in the sector, it is important to share this information regularly.



Survey results noted that **most residents favour digital communication methods**, such as email/e-newsletter (51%), social media (48%), and the Township website (44%), over traditional in-person meetings (5%) or posters in community centres (10%), **suggesting the importance of maintaining a strong online presence**. Event hosts continue to support regular meetings, however, in order to share meaningful two-way dialogue with Township staff, particularly as personnel (staff and volunteers) change over time resulting in loss of institutional knowledge.

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community responses noted the need to continue to improve opportunities to reach all community members – user friendly and proactive approaches, enhanced use of digital tools and hosting regular meetings with users, hosts and 'like organizations'. Educating and communicating levels of service and the need to balance expectations was noted. A focus on reviewing and updating policies and procedures was noted; including registration policies, allocation policies, and processes for event hosts were a few noted examples.

At the youth engagement session, it was clear that younger residents do not see Centre Wellington as "Fergus and Elora", but as one community.





2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT,  
ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs    **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs    **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs    **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>4.1 Promote Centre Wellington as a single, cohesive, progressive community</b> poised for growth to meet existing and growth-related needs. Work with youth groups and school youth advisory representatives, to reinforce Centre Wellington as ‘one’, moving away from a ‘Fergus/Elora’ view.	
SHORT	<b>4.2 Provide staffing resources to work with Community Services to provide current data and projections on trends, data tracking (usage, participation, wait lists, service responses), demographics, project completion, adjacent community/County decisions, etc.</b> This resource should be dedicated to providing management with information to make informed decisions and to provide Council with the most researched and appropriate recommendation, including external influences that affect decision making. With existing staff expected to be fully engaged meeting current resident needs and responding to growth, this added resource will assist in staying current and ensuring wise investment decisions.	
ONGOING	<b>4.3 Work with all local sport and activity organizations to rotate displays</b> of various activities, programs and sports in the Community Centre display areas. Expand focus for visual display options that take place beyond the Community Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Display cases focus on sports that take place within the facility. <b>Providing exposure to other activities and sports</b> can assist in growing interest for program offerings that take place outside of the facility walls, including non-sport interests.</li></ul>	



2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<p><b>4.4 Consult with major user groups, event hosts and stakeholder organizations at least 2X per year.</b> Recognize synergies between volunteers working with parks, recreation, culture, use of facilities, public art, heritage etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharing changes in participation rates, play quality, procedures, fees or expectations for all parties is key to working in cooperation with the strong volunteer base that supports community-based offerings.</li><li>• Transparency about how CW defines success, makes decisions and monitors usage and participation is key for decision making.</li><li>• Align with the recommendations of the Community Engagement Strategy being undertaken in 2025.</li><li>• Ensure that Engagement Activities follow a full cycle of (i) feedback received, (ii) actions that will be taken, (iii) actions that can't/won't be taken and corresponding rationale.</li><li>• Policy review including but not limited to, space allocation, user fees, sport tourism, partnerships, volunteer policies, other.</li></ul>	Cultural Action Plan and Community Engagement Strategy







## 2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

### REVENUE

The Township follows the financial principal of “growth pays for growth” and the Township should utilize growth-related revenue tools to the extent allowable under the legislation (Development Charges, Community Benefit Charges, Parkland Dedication). However, as a municipality, Centre Wellington has limited revenue tools to assist in maintaining property taxes at an acceptable level while providing and growing the services expected in the community. Recent legislative changes have also impacted the ability to grow revenues to

provide certain services. It is imperative that the Township continue to consider a variety of options to drive revenue for capital projects, and to offset costs that would otherwise be borne on the property tax base. As the community grows, this will become more important and new projects and services will be expected. This expansion will be accompanied by inherent ongoing operating costs, and proactive planning to address this over time will need to be built into all financial decisions.



### FUNDING FACILITY ENHANCEMENTS



65%

INCREASE  
TAXES/FEEs



20%

MAINTAIN EXISTING  
TAXES/FEEs

Survey results noted that **a majority of resident support increasing taxes or fees to enhance or add facilities (65%),** or to maintain existing ones (20%) **showing a willingness to invest in community recreation.**

Among those who support increasing taxes or fees, user fees are the preferred funding method (48%).



48%

PREFERRED FUNDING  
METHOD – USER FEES



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



Internal feedback noted a need to include staff in decisions and priorities regarding equipment and operating needs, lifecycle and maintenance priorities and overall scheduling to help address financial challenges and maximize resource allocation. There was interest in reviewing how to collect and distribute revenues (i.e., potential future MAT tax, parking revenue, lottery proceed distribution etc.). There was interest in expanding the opportunity for input to the annual budget process by community groups and the general public.



## 2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

### REVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>4.5 Review contract with retail partnership operators</b> in Sportsplex and assess options to gradually introduce rent using a sliding scale based on revenues.	
SHORT	<b>4.6 Work with finance to implement a costing system or improved budget tracking system to identify cost allocation, and other data</b> that can assist with decision making and resource allocation.	
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>4.7 If the Township implements a Municipal Accommodation Tax (MAT), assess the policy direction for implementation of the municipal share</b> , ensure allocation reflects the impact that tourism activity (current and future) places on parks and recreation facilities and resources.	<b>Economic Development and Tourism Plan</b>
MEDIUM	<b>4.8 Consider re-investment potential for any property disposition</b> (i.e., Fergus Curling Club) to assist in financing a new multi-use facility that could incorporate many indoor space needs.	
MEDIUM	<b>4.9</b> As new projects are identified that may include a community fundraising campaign, <b>develop the target budget to include the capital component as well as a percentage of the ongoing operating costs</b> to maintain and operate the facility. This approach allows the Township to direct fundraising funds annually to a reserve fund that can be drawn upon to offset property tax impacts as municipalities continue to face revenue challenges in all service areas. This approach also assists in educating the community that, notwithstanding robust volunteer support to provide new facilities, that there is an ongoing financial obligation to ensure their status in a 'state of good repair' in future.	
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<b>4.10 Biannually conduct a user fee analysis</b> with surrounding municipalities to ensure that fees for playfields and facilities are in the median or higher percentile. Ensure internal costing and tracking mechanisms are accurate to identify costs that should be recovered through user fees. Ensure users understand the impact that increased levels of service for maintenance activities can have a commensurate impact on user fees.	



## 2-WAY OPEN COMMUNICATION, ENGAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND REVENUE

### REVENUE RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
ONGOING	<b>4.11 To inform the Township's Asset Management Plan, continue to complete parks and recreation indoor and outdoor Facilities Building Audits on a 5-year cycle, inclusive of structural analysis.</b>	<b>Asset Management Plan</b>
ONGOING	<b>4.12 Explore opportunities for Township to maximize funding for Parks and Recreation Capital Projects through the following policies and strategies:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development Charges</li><li>• Community Benefit Charges</li><li>• Ontario Lottery and Gaming Corporation (OLG) Proceeds</li><li>• Community Partnerships (sponsors and naming rights)</li><li>• Dedicated Parks and Recreation service and rental user fees for Parks and Recreation capital</li><li>• Grant Opportunities</li><li>• Asset Management Plan recommended funding for Parks and Recreation non-growth related costs</li><li>• Community fundraising campaigns</li></ul>	
ONGOING	<b>4.13 Through the recommendations in the Parks Plan, monitor cash-in-lieu reserve to maintain adequate levels to address any additional future park needs.</b>	<b>Parks Plan</b>
ONGOING	<b>4.14 Continue assigning a dedicated Capital Project Manager to work on large, complex Parks and Recreation capital projects.</b> This can assist with timely implementation and financial monitoring of larger parks and recreation capital projects (i.e. new arena, gymnasium etc.).	





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES RECTANGULAR PITCHES

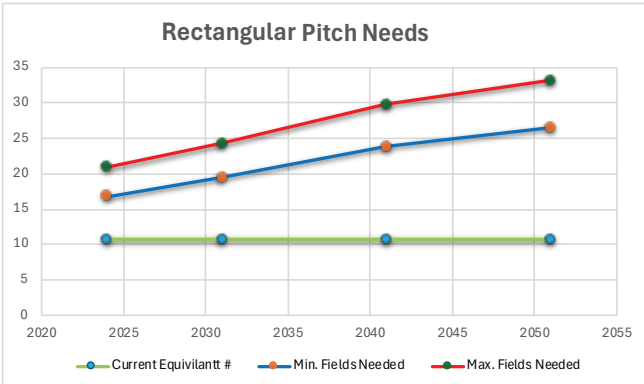
Soccer is seeing a significant growth in Canada with increased youth participation, the expansion of North American professional leagues, and the World Cup being hosted in Canada, Mexico and the United States in 2026. Similarly, rugby is experiencing a growth in Canada and in particular in youth and women’s rugby. There are approximately 29,000 registered participants across Canada. Flag Football is going to become a demonstration sport at the 2028 Los Angeles Summer Olympic Games, which is driving interest in flag football (all ages/genders) in many jurisdictions (municipalities, colleges/universities).

There are 1,351 youth and 322 adult participants in soccer and 416 youth and 219 adult participants in rugby. The Township has an equivalent of 10.75 rectangular pitches located throughout the community which provide facilities for various sports organizations to play soccer and rugby. The pitches also provide the community with open space for unprogrammed activities for various individual and groups. Three pitches, including one soccer pitch, one rugby pitch and one shared pitch, are located at Victoria Park, Fergus which is adjacent to the Highland Rugby Club Fieldhouse.

Various amenities are located adjacent to these pitches to support the field programming including lighting, seating, parking, and washrooms.

The Asset Management Plan noted most of the pitches are in “Fair” condition.

Due to world popularity of soccer, interest and growth in other sports using rectangular fields, and the population growth projections from the census data and the Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. study, indications are that there is demand for rectangular fields that will continue to rise notably over the next 30 years.



\*For complete chart details see Needs Assessment Report



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

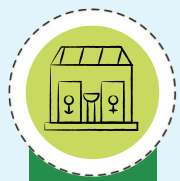
In the online survey, 45% of active users said there were too few fields, however 51% said there were just the right number of fields.

In the community engagement feedback, there were suggestions that the fields should be designed and lined for multiple sports; field hockey, lacrosse, rugby in addition to soccer.



## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES RECTANGULAR PITCHES

### OUTDOOR RECREATION TOP 2 REQUESTS



**60%**  
Washrooms



**50%**  
Water  
Filling  
Stations

Feedback from local sports organizations noted the field maintenance is not to their standard and would like the Township to increase maintenance operations including leveling the fields, turf management, and replacing goal posts.

Field users felt the majority of the fields were in fair to good condition with the Southridge field needing maintenance as it was in poor condition and several other fields needed

drainage improvements. They also noted more lighting and a variety of lines on fields would help field availability as would more fields to host tournaments including field hockey, lacrosse and rugby. They also mentioned that an outdoor artificial turf field would extend the season for all users, and an indoor turf facility would provide for all seasons play and better training programs.

### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



The online survey noted the top two outdoor recreation requests were washrooms (60%) and water filling stations (50%). In the community engagement feedback, there were suggestions that the fields should be designed and lined for multiple sports; field hockey, lacrosse, rugby in addition to soccer.





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### RECTANGULAR PITCHES RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>5.1 Establish formalized rectangular pitch maintenance standard</b> and include regular field audit reporting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure fields are not overused by scheduling field use throughout the summer and developing a sufficient rectangular pitch inventory to allow fields to be out of rotation for part of the summer to recover and address maintenance needs.</li> <li>Increase funding in operations budget to add staff resources and equipment.</li> <li>Include regular staff training on maintenance standards for outdoor pitch maintenance.</li> </ul>	
SHORT/ MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>5.2 Plan, fund, and construct 16-23 new rectangular pitches (Class A &amp; B) to meet growth needs by 2051.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider developing several pitches at the new Sportsplex lands to provide opportunities for tournament opportunities.</li> <li>Future need of 9-14 additional pitches by 2031, 4-5 additional pitches by 2041 and 3-4 pitches by 2051.</li> <li>Level of Service of outdoor fields to include the following: seating, washrooms, water-filling stations, shaded areas (trees &amp; pavilions) and parking for all the new planned pitches.</li> <li>Work with local school fields for joint use and maintenance agreements to improve the quality of the fields to permit for community use.</li> </ul>	
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<b>5.3 Engage with local sports organizations on a bi-annual basis</b> to ensure agreed upon maintenance standards, rental rates, plan for upgrades to existing fields, plan for new rectangular pitch development to meet future growth, review allocation policies, and review increasing rates for premier fields.	<b>Review</b> as part of regular User Fee Analysis
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<b>5.4 Install water filling stations in park locations with sports fields.</b>	
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<b>5.5 Annually monitor pitch user registration numbers</b> to plan future needs of the number of pitches to develop.	
<3 yrs/ ONGOING	<b>5.6 Field user groups need to expand their use of fields to less desirable times</b> (i.e., Friday, Saturday and Sunday) to accommodate increasing registration numbers.	





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES BALL DIAMONDS (SOFTBALL/BASEBALL)

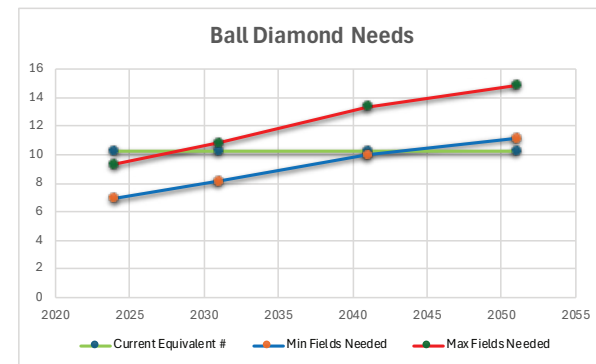
Softball Canada has recently released their 2025–2029 strategic plan setting out their vision for the future of softball in Canada. The organization is focusing on athlete development, coach education, safe practices, umpire development, and international competition success. “Softball Canada membership shows a 58% female and 42% male” and they host several national and international events each year and in 2028 softball will be part of the Summer Olympic Games. *(Source – Softball Canada Website)*

Centre Wellington has an active softball community, with 700 registered participants (youth and adult), whereby the baseball community has had its participation rates see ups and downs over the years. This is consistent with trends in baseball in many communities that have risen and fallen with the success of the Toronto Blue Jays. Baseball, while relatively inexpensive as a youth sport option, is more challenging to master and participants may leave for other sports such as soccer, softball. The Township has an equivalent of 10.25 ball diamonds with 7.5 Class A ball diamonds, 2 Class B diamonds, and

0.75 Class C diamond, located in six different park locations. Highland Park, Fergus is home to 5.75 diamonds and 2 diamonds are grouped together adjacent to the Elora Jefferson Community Centre, and one diamond in Belwood.

Five of the ball diamonds have lights and all the ball diamonds have backstop screens, washrooms (adjacent or nearby), spectator seating, and parking. All but 4 fields have outfield fencing and warning tracks.

The Asset management plan noted the conditions of many of the diamonds is fair to poor and requiring additional maintenance.



\*For complete chart details see Needs Assessment Report

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Sports organization and the site inspections noted many of the ball fields were in need of additional field maintenance to address overgrowth in warning tracks, leveling of infields, turf management, lighting getting old and dim, bleachers broken, etc.

CWMSA noted the need for additional diamonds as they will outgrow the allotted times in the next year. They would also like to see the addition of batting cages, pitching cages and space for training and meetings.



## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### BALL DIAMONDS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>5.7 Establish formalized diamond maintenance standards</b> which are written and include regular field audit reporting. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase funding in operations budget to add staff resources and equipment.</li> <li>• To include regular staff training on maintenance standards for outdoor facilities.</li> </ul>	
<3 yrs	<b>5.8 Engage with local sports organizations on a bi-annual basis</b> to ensure agreed upon maintenance standards, rental rates, plan for upgrades to existing fields, plan for new diamond development to meet future growth, and review allocation policies.	<b>Community Engagement Strategy</b>
<3 yrs	<b>5.9 Field user groups need to expand their use of diamonds to less-desirable hours</b> (i.e., Friday, Saturday and Sunday) and less-preferred locations to accommodate increasing registration numbers. Township should review possible incentives to encourage use.	
SHORT	<b>5.10 Prepare for the relocation of the ball diamond at the Jefferson Elora Community Centre</b> to other lands.	<b>JECC Arena Expansion Recommendation 2.6</b>
LONG	<b>5.11 Plan, fund, and construct 1-5 new ball diamonds (Class A &amp; B) to meet growth needs by 2051.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Level of Service of ball diamonds to include the following: seating, washrooms, water-filling stations, shaded areas (trees &amp; pavilions) and parking for all the new planned diamonds. Provision of optional features such as batting cages should be considered in partnership with user groups, including cost-sharing.</li> </ul>	
ONGOING	<b>5.12 Annually monitor diamond user registration numbers</b> to plan future needs of the number of fields to develop.	



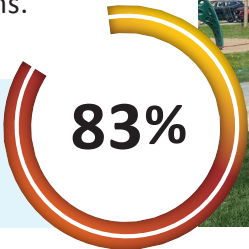
# OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES WASHROOMS

The Township operates 11 public washrooms (buildings) in local open spaces and in the two downtown areas.

Many of the community parks with sports fields and splash pads provide washrooms for participants and spectators i.e., Victoria Park (Fergus), Sportsplex, Jefferson Elora Community Centre, South Ridge Park, Bissell Park, Highland Park, Hoffer Park, O'Brian Park, Tourism, and Fergus Weigh Scale. Seasonal Porta Potties are used at other Sport Fields and/or busy park locations.



83% of respondents noted washrooms were a top priority for improvement.



## WASHROOMS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>5.13 Evaluate the location of future washrooms in new community park development</b> to serve sports fields, trail linkages, splash pad, and community gathering spaces.	
LONG	<b>5.14 Continue to monitor trends and technological improvements in providing improved outdoor washroom facilities</b> that consider self-cleaning, fee-for-service, improved security and other concepts that minimize ongoing costs/vandalism issues with stand alone outdoor washroom facilities.	
ONGOING	<b>5.15 All new washroom buildings (accessible and gender neutral)</b> should include water filling stations.	

## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The online survey noted washrooms were important (83%) as well as water-filling stations (76%) as top priorities for improvement. The largest adequacy gaps observed in the online survey were for washrooms (46%) and water filling stations (38%). Washrooms also received the highest level of dissatisfaction (76%).





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES BASKETBALL/MUTI-USE PADS



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



Unstructured play was one of the top amenities marked as too few (81%) when asked about outdoor recreation amenities in Centre Wellington. Similarly, basketball multi-use pads were very high when the high school students were engaged and asked about the outdoor recreation gaps. User group also echoed the gap of basketball amenities.

The Township has only three basketball/multi-use pads located in the community that are in 'fair' condition. One in Douglas Park, Bissell Park, and one at Jefferson Elora Community Centre. Multi-use pads are popular not only for basketball but other unstructured activities, especially during the shoulder seasons when turf areas are wet or are covered in snow.

With the growth in basketball due to the Toronto Raptors, high school and University programs, low cost, and new 3 on 3 sports at the Olympics the sport is growing in Canada and locally. The local minor basketball organization (Celtics) program is growing significantly at indoor facilities and the development of outdoor pads would help to provide locations for unstructured play, individual skill development, and awareness about the sport. It will also meet the expressed need for youth options to gather and socialize.



### BASKETBALL/MUTI-USE PADS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>5.16 Consider planning and developing new multi-use pads</b> in existing and new parks.	
<3 yrs	<b>5.17 Improve maintenance and conditions at all multi-use pads.</b>	
SHORT/ MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>5.18 Plan and develop new half-court multi-use pads</b> within new neighborhood and community parks being developed within new subdivisions or during park redevelopment projects.	



OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES  
DOG PARK

There is only one formal leash-free dog park in Centre Wellington, located on Glengarry Crescent in Fergus. It is an unfenced park on Township lands and operated in partnership with volunteers and Township staff. There is an established path around the entire park, dog agility play stations, and trees and a large open turf area. The park is located with adjacent parking, and a water tap. The adjacent farm property does allow individuals and dogs onto their property, making the park seem even larger.

As in many communities, dog owners use existing parks and sports fields, in particular fenced ball diamonds, to exercise their dogs.



DOG PARK RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>5.19 Establish a dog park in Elora</b> which can be fenced and provide similar amenities to the Fergus Dog Park, conditional on a similar community volunteer model to the one in Fergus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Level of Service: all dog parks should be fenced; consider adjacent sections with gates, for small dogs and large dogs, and a water source.</li></ul>	
SHORT	<b>5.20 Formalize an agreement with the adjacent property to the existing Fergus dog park to increase size of the park.</b> Confirm barrier between the pending adjacent trail (parking lot, multi-use trail, and future business park) and Fergus Dog park for cohesive shared use.	
MEDIUM	<b>5.21 Lions Park could be re-purposed for an additional dog park and overflow parking for JECC expansion.</b> A safe pedestrian crossing would be required at County Road 7 and David Street.	



COMMUNITY  
FEEDBACK



Strong voices on improvements to dog parks were received during the community engagement process. The survey results were split 29% too few with 26% just right.





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES PLAYGROUNDS

Playgrounds are becoming increasingly defined as areas that support a variety of play and community activities for all ages and ability. Parks are no longer limited to typical age-based structures for children aged 18m–12yrs and new amenities for youth. They now meet the needs of all ages and abilities, while incorporating new and unique features such as youth attractions (zip lines, corn hole, climbing areas), options for older adults (chess/checker boards and fitness equipment) and unique approaches to natural features.

Centre Wellington has 31 playgrounds with varying conditions, ranging from newly built, and accessible play structures to older, overgrown, and worn-out equipment. Key concerns include:

- **ACCESSIBILITY VARIATIONS:**  
Differences in pathway materials, curb heights, and ramps, with limited barrier-free design features.
- **MAINTENANCE & OVERGROWTH:**  
Inconsistent upkeep, with some playgrounds well-maintained and others in decline.
- **RENEWAL NEEDS:**  
Most issues can be addressed through routine maintenance, partial component replacements, or full revitalization where necessary. The Township does have an annual replacement program set and funded for all Township playgrounds.



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



In the online survey, residents identified unstructured play areas as the most lacking outdoor amenity, with 54% stating there were too few. Playgrounds and play structures were also highlighted, with 42% indicating an insufficient supply. Despite this, 39% of respondents expressed overall satisfaction with existing playgrounds and play structures.





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES PLAYGROUNDS

There are limited naturalized play features that provide opportunities for sustainability, environmental education, and diverse play experiences. Integrating logs, boulders, climbing structures, and sensory play elements into parks that can promote imaginative, unstructured, and educational play would be an enhancement and would

be consistent with environmental and natural play considerations, which may be challenging to provide accessibility to all.

The Township's level of service is to provide play structures within an 800m walking distance and in the majority of the community this standard is being met (*see Playground Map in the Needs Assessment*).



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK



During public engagement sessions, strong feedback emphasized the need for playgrounds that cater to all ages, including teenagers and seniors, with a focus on varied activities and opportunities for risky play (wall climbing, ziplining) for youth and leisure games (bocce, outdoor chess and checkers, cornhole) that can be played by all ages and abilities including seniors. Additionally, community members voiced concerns about maintenance levels and suggested improvements, including:

- More benches and shaded areas for comfort.
- Better parking access near playgrounds.
- Improved washroom facilities to enhance visitor experience.



## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### PLAYGROUNDS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>5.22 Establish park standards for new or renewal playgrounds &amp; accessibility</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure pathway upgrades, safety improvements, connectivity, and environmental considerations are incorporated into all playground and park revitalizations.</li> <li>• New or redeveloped outdoor play spaces (playgrounds) must be accessible with a minimum of 20% of the features being accessible (Level of Service standard for Municipalities), as well as a level surface area.</li> </ul>	
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>5.23 Align maintenance &amp; capital renewal with park classification.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allocate funding based on park function, usage levels, and classification to ensure high-priority and highly-used playgrounds receive necessary improvements.</li> </ul>	
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>5.24 Establish new playgrounds in identified geographic neighbourhoods of South Elora, East Fergus, North-Central Fergus, North-East Salem as identified in the Needs Assessment report.</b>	
LONG	<b>5.25 Work towards a municipal best practice of a 400m walking distance (8 minute walk) for location of playgrounds.</b>	
ONGOING	<b>5.26 Implement a data-driven approach for investment prioritization to new parks and or refurbish parks that will diversify play for all ages.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use park usage counts, booking permits, program attendance, maintenance work orders, and resident feedback to guide decisions.</li> <li>• Look at trends for valued features by the community for all ages i.e., outdoor fitness area, outdoor washroom, water filling stations, leisure games (outdoor chess, bocce), risky play.</li> </ul>	
ONGOING (OVERTIME)	<b>5.27 Expand naturalized play features around playgrounds</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify opportunities to integrate natural elements into playgrounds.</li> <li>• Reduce maintenance costs while enhancing biodiversity and environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>	
ONGOING	<b>5.28 Engage the community in playground &amp; park design</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct surveys, school workshops, and design competitions to align upgrades with neighborhood preferences.</li> </ul>	<b>Community Engagement Strategy</b>





# OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

## SPLASH PADS



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Community feedback indicated support for splash pads, with some residents also expressing interest in an outdoor pool. In the online survey, 39% of respondents reported being somewhat or very dissatisfied, while 28% were somewhat or very satisfied.

Splash pads serve as community-level cooling stations, offering accessible and cost-effective water play for local communities while accommodating a high volume of users. The Township of Centre Wellington currently has two splash pads, located at O’Brien Park in Elora and Millburn Park in Fergus. Both facilities are in good condition and provide a fun and refreshing experience for children and youth during warm weather. Splash pads also provide a great location to meet community members and engage parents, grandparents and caregivers in community building.

Splash pads can be designed in a variety of sizes and configurations, incorporating diverse water features to create unique play experiences throughout the Township’s parks. As Centre Wellington grows, future developments should consider incorporating additional water play facilities to enhance recreation opportunities for residents.



### SPLASH PADS RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING		ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT/ MEDIUM	5.29	Integrate splash pads into new developments by allocating land for community parks in subdivisions, particularly in high-density family neighbourhoods. Utilize demographic data to ensure these amenities are strategically placed to best serve the needs of the community (i.e., North Fergus).	
LONG	5.30	Monitor trends related to splash pads and/or other forms of water-based play to identify options that may provide a more enticing experience or cost-effective option to include water into park and playground designs.	



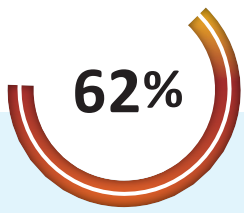


## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES INDOOR AND OUTDOOR TRACKS

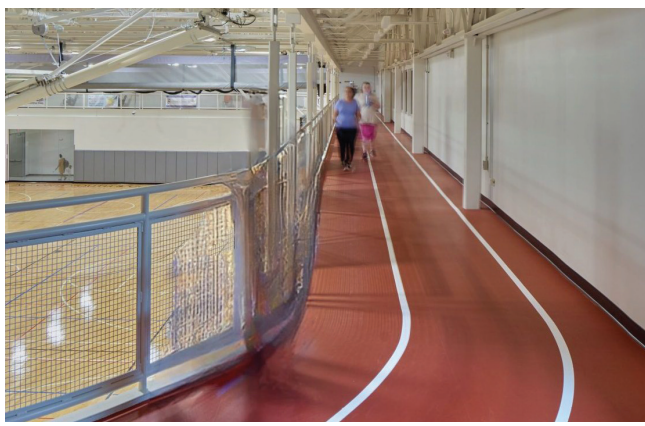
Walking, both indoors and outdoors, is growing in popularity across the province as residents look for safe and accessible spaces to stay active year-round. In Centre Wellington, the gravel track at Victoria Park is currently in poor to fair condition, highlighting the need for improved walking infrastructure.

An indoor walking track is a designated pathway generally located within a municipal facility, typically built around arenas, gymnasiums, or indoor turf fields. These tracks provide a safe, climate-controlled environment for walking and light exercise, making them especially valuable during the winter months. Track lengths vary based on

their intended use, with shorter tracks designed for recreational walking and longer tracks accommodating both walking and running for fitness training. As demand grows, integrating indoor walking tracks into community facilities can enhance year-round recreation and sport specific training opportunities for all ages.



In the online survey, walking emerged as the most popular indoor recreation and leisure activity, with 62% of respondents walking at least once a week or more.



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

In the online survey, walking emerged as the most popular indoor recreation and leisure activity, with 62% of respondents walking at least once a week or more. In the online survey 67% felt there was too few running tracks. Additionally, during youth engagement sessions, a rubberized competitive track was frequently mentioned as a desired facility, highlighting interest in both recreational and performance-based walking and running opportunities.



# OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

## INDOORS AND OUTDOOR TRACKS RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>5.31 Partner with school boards for enhanced amenities</b> The Township should explore opportunities to collaborate with local school boards to enhance existing amenities, such as adding a rubberized competitive track. This partnership would benefit both the school community and the broader public, providing a high-quality track for recreational use and athletic training.	<b>Pending discussions</b> with District School Boards
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>5.32 Consider an indoor track in future facility redesigns</b> (previously noted in indoor facility section and walking track component of additional indoor facilities section). As part of future facility developments, the Township should consider incorporating an indoor walking or running track in the redesign of the next municipal indoor facility. This would provide year-round recreational opportunities and meet the growing demand for indoor spaces for walking, running, and other activities, especially during winter months.	<b>Indoor Multi-Use Recreation Facility considerations</b>
MEDIUM	<b>5.33 The Township should invest in paving the track at Victoria Park to improve accessibility and inclusivity.</b> A paved track would provide a smoother, safer surface for a wider range of users, including families with strollers, older adults, cyclists, rollerbladers and runners and be able to be used all year round. Additionally, it would result in lower long-term maintenance costs compared to the current gravel surface.	





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS

The Township has a number of volunteer operated natural outdoor winter ice rinks in neighbourhood and community parks. The Township provides the water service, lighting, and equipment to operate the ice rink and volunteers flood and maintain the surface throughout the winter. With climate change, weather fluctuations are making it more challenging to keep ice consistently throughout the winter.

Bissell Park also has an ice rink operated by volunteers on the existing multi-purpose pad. The Township has plans to upgrade this ice rink and multi-use pad with a new refrigeration system to maintain the ice longer throughout the winter. The Township has applied for grant funding to complete this update at Bissell Park.



**54%** of respondents felt there are **TOO FEW** outdoor rinks



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The online survey responses identified that 54% felt there were too few outdoor ice rinks and 44% felt there were just the right amount of ice rinks.





# OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

## OUTDOOR SKATING RINKS RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	5.34 Plan to replace and upgrade the Multi-Use Pad at Bissell Park.	Pending grant outcome
SHORT	5.35 Continue to work with local volunteers to establish a neighbourhood rink program.	
MEDIUM	5.36 Explore locations and development of skating trails and skating rinks in parks.	
LONG	5.37 As climate change continues to impact the ability to provide outdoor natural ice surfaces for winter recreational activities, pilot other options to engage the community in meaningful, active living all-age options that are able to sustain changing weather patterns (hiking, orienteering, disc golf, geocaching); engage the community as changing external influences affect traditional options.	
ONGOING	5.38 Continue to install water and electrical supplies into all new neighbourhood and community parks.	
ONGOING	5.39 Continue to support and provide required equipment to local volunteers to operate and maintain outdoor ice rinks.	



## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES TENNIS COURTS

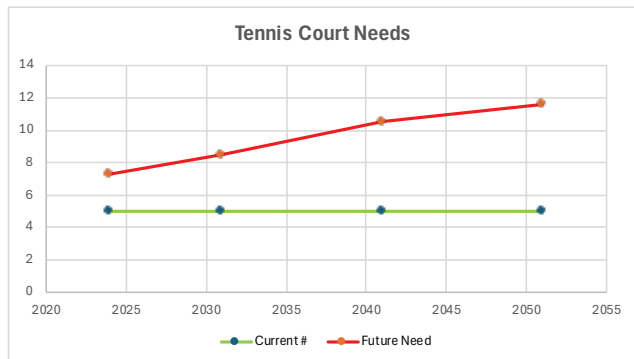


### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

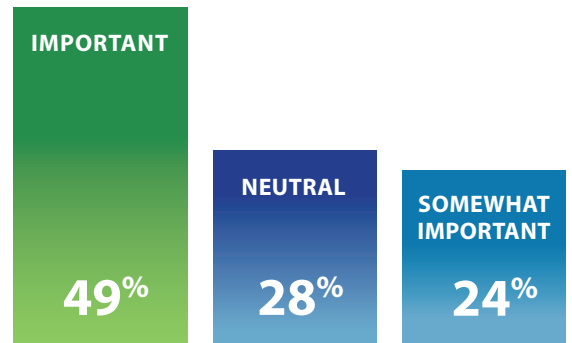


The online survey responses identified that 48% felt there were too few tennis courts and 46% felt there were just the right amount of tennis courts, while 3% felt there were too many tennis courts. The survey also noted that 28% of people were very or somewhat dissatisfied, 51% neutral, and 20% were somewhat or very satisfied with their satisfaction of tennis courts provided within the Township.

The Township has a use agreement with the Fergus Tennis Club who maintain and operate three lit tennis courts in Fergus for members only. There are an additional two tennis courts at the Sportsplex for Fergus Tennis Club and community use.



\*For complete chart details see Needs Assessment Report



IMPORTANCE OF TENNIS COURTS  
AS OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL AMENITIES

Indoor year-round tennis courts are typically owned and operated by private sector organization. There are examples where Municipalities have partnered with organizations to provide indoor tennis facilities in larger Municipalities.

Through the organization group survey and sports groups workshop tennis players advised they felt there was a shortage of tennis courts. It was also noted that **the Tennis Club is interested in developing an indoor year-round tennis facility which they would fund the capital and operational costs and the Township may consider a land lease** (could be similar to other models with air-supported facilities or could be purpose built in the longer term).





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### TENNIS COURTS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10 yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>5.40 Monitor tennis participation and assess the best use of existing tennis courts and their court sport lines</b> to explore shared courts with pickleball.	
SHORT	<b>5.41 Monitor club membership and track participation numbers playing on outdoor municipal courts.</b> Ensure local clubs monitor registration numbers and all types of play (drop-in, leagues, ladders, tournaments) to track actual use of publicly funded courts and ongoing interest in tennis.	
MEDIUM	<b>5.42 Monitor growth and interest in court sports and assess options to plan and develop appropriate courts</b> in new community parkland development areas to address any court deficiencies. This process should include regular monitoring of participation, trends, best use of land and opportunity to maximize outdoor play for all.	<b>Continued assessment</b> to share outdoor courts for tennis/ pickleball
MEDIUM	<b>5.43 Begin discussions with the Fergus Tennis Club to investigate a potential partnership</b> whereby the Township leases lands to the Club to build, maintain, and operate an indoor tennis dome (seasonal or permanent) which can be accessed by members, and pay-as-you play individuals. Monitor interest in all court sports to assess options for additional partnerships that maximize investment and the opportunity for participation for all ages and court interests.	<b>Consider outcome</b> of Multi-Use Indoor Facility study, consider plans for Sportsplex expansion lands
SHORT/ MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>5.44 Explore new locations for courts and construct 4 new additional courts by 2031, 2 more by 2041, and 1 additional court by 2051.</b>	
ONGOING	<b>5.45 Meet annually with tennis club members and pickleball user/organizations to assess shared use of facilities,</b> and to identify issues and opportunities. This will assist in monitoring interest in both court sports and assist with best use of facilities (dedicated and shared).	





## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### PICKLEBALL

Currently, outdoor pickleball in Centre Wellington is played on shared-use tennis courts at the Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex. These courts are managed under an agreement between the Fergus Tennis Club and the Township, outlining public access hours. This arrangement supports a cooperative approach to court use and ensures that both tennis and pickleball players have fair and equitable access to the public facilities.

There is no standardized provision model for pickleball nationally, as neither Pickleball Canada nor Pickleball Ontario has adopted formal benchmarks for the number of courts per capita or levels of service. Instead, many municipalities – including Centre Wellington – work closely with local pickleball players to collect statistics on indoor play and to better understand community needs. This includes tracking participation levels, assessing skill levels, evaluating court time availability, and identifying potential sites for new purpose-built or shared courts.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Pickleball has experienced rapid growth in popularity across Ontario and Canada, and Centre Wellington is no exception. The sport’s accessibility for a wide range of ages and skill levels, combined with its social and recreational benefits, has made it one of the fastest-growing activities in the community.



OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES  
PICKLEBALL RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3yrs	<b>5.46</b> Pickleball has predominantly been played indoors in Centre Wellington and <b>the MURF study will be reviewing the inclusion of indoor pickleball courts as part of the new MURF.</b>	
SHORT	<b>5.47 Establish a formal relationship</b> (including working with volunteers to move their status from an ad-hoc group to a not-for-profit organization) <b>with local pickleball leaders.</b> Monitor participation and develop plans for changing needs for both indoor and outdoor play.	
SHORT	<b>5.48 Monitor Township’s Recreation Registration booking software for indoor pickleball participants</b> and municipal court use. Include such metrics as registering in advance, and keeping attendance counts, etc.	
SHORT	<b>5.49 Develop 4-6 dedicated pickleball courts when implementing new tennis courts.</b> This will maximize use of all courts for tennis and pickleball, providing both dedicated and shared facilities to meet needs as they arise (using temporary nets on tennis court surfaces), while providing court sport players with playing options.	
MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>5.50 Work with pickleball players to identify possible locations for new outdoor pickleball courts in Centre Wellington</b> (private/public/Township) partnership.	



## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

### OUTDOOR SKATEBOARD PARKS & BMX ALL WHEEL TRACKS

#### SKATEBOARD PARK

Skateboarding continues to be a popular action sport among the youth, but other sectors of the population also skateboard. The sports made its debut in the 2021 Tokyo Summer Olympics and the annual summer Olympics continue to showcase the sport to the world. The sport also became very popular during COVID-19 as it was an outdoor activity.

Centre Wellington has two skateboard parks that serve the community. The newest park is a Concrete Skatepark at the Jefferson Elora Community Centre and was developed with local youth and supported with community fund raising. The Sportsplex facility has been in place for many years and is in poor condition due to its age and popularity of use and is in need of replacement. The Sportsplex Skateboard Park is also located adjacent to existing residents which over the years has caused various complaints about noise, traffic, etc.



#### BMX ALL WHEEL TRACK

BMX All Wheel Tacks are dirt tracks, typically outdoors, where individuals cycle over a dirt racetrack with various changes in grade and curves. The sport continues to grow in popularity, especially with youth, due to its exposure in the summer Olympics since 2008.

The only BMX track in Centre Wellington is in Harper Park, in northwest Fergus, and was developed with the assistance of community volunteers. The track is located behind the Gartshore Street water tower and is buffered from adjacent residents by a planted woodlot.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

The Community Online Survey notes that 16% of respondents felt there were too few skateboard/all wheel parks available, with 10% responding there just the right number, and 55% didn't know.

The survey also noted that 27% were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with skateboard park/all-wheel park, 54% were natural, and 20% were somewhat or very satisfied.

Finally, overall perceived importance of skateboard park/all wheel park, 38% feel they are very to somewhat unimportant, 32% neutral, and 38% somewhat to very important.





# OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

## OUTDOOR SKATEBOARD PARKS & BMX ALL WHEEL TRACKS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
SHORT	<b>5.51 Explore relocating the Sportsplex Skateboard Park</b> , when it is to be replaced through the equipment replacement budget, to another location at the sportsplex or other community park in Fergus.	
SHORT	<b>5.52 Engage the youth community on the relocation of the Sportsplex Skateboard Park</b> and the revitalization of a new Skateboard Park with various jumps, rails, etc. Consider a permanent poured concrete park with bowls and ramps, pending input from users.	
MEDIUM	<b>5.53 Monitor trends, community support, and youth needs for the implementation of additional BMX/All Wheel and/or pump tracks</b> in locations where youth have easy access.	





## OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CONNECTIVITY AND TRAILS

Centre Wellington is fortunate to be supported by a robust connectivity and trails system that reflects a very positive level of support from the community. It is also one of the key attributes that attracts visitors to the area, taking advantage of on-road and off-road connections. The opportunity to explore the natural environment while taking in the beautiful surroundings as provided by the Grand River, is unique and to be protected for future generations.

There were several recommendations to ensure alignment between the recommendations from the Active Transportation and Mobility Plan with the Parks and Recreation Plan. Strong community feedback was received to ensure proactive planning for future residential growth, ensuring connectivity for many modes of transportation across the community. Enhancing existing trails and support amenities (signage, support features including washrooms and parking, garbage receptacles etc.) was noted as a priority. Proactively **working with the Grand River Conservation Authority to expand and enhance access to the waterfront** was mentioned as a priority at several consultation events.



## COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Survey results noted that walking/trail walking is the most popular activity, with nearly half (49%) walking more than once a week and only 12% not participating at all. Fewer residents agreed that parks are accessible for individuals with special needs. A key survey response highlighted washrooms and water filling stations as top priorities for improvement generally related to outdoor recreation facilities.



## OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

### CONNECTIVITY AND TRAILS RECOMMENDATIONS

#### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3 yrs	<b>5.54 Ensure internal staff teams collaborate to align recommendations and timing with the Active Transportation and Mobility Plan.</b> This should include the development of a workplan that coordinates priorities for trails and includes annual resource allocation (human and financial).	<b>ATM Plan</b>
<3 yrs	<b>5.55 Identify key trail and trail head locations that attract visitors and assess the opportunity to support and improve the visitor experience</b> while considering impact to local residents, impact on parking and general implications of a high volume of visitors.	<b>Economic Development and Tourism Strategy</b>
<3 yrs	<b>5.56 Assess gaps in existing connections</b> that link parks, recreation centres, trails and safe on-road connections. Set budget priorities to address gaps over time.	<b>ATM Plan</b>
SHORT	<b>5.57 Improve maintenance and accessibility to link Confederation Park with the downtown core, residents, and other trail connections/links.</b> Formalize trail surface and signage to improve safety.	<b>ATM Plan</b> Township has planned engagement and design work in 2025
SHORT/ MEDIUM	<b>5.58 Ensure close coordination with Engineering Services</b> to ensure connections are proactively identified in growth areas.	
ONGOING	<b>5.59 Include an investment program in the annual budget that improves support amenities</b> for trail heads (parking, signage, water filling, washrooms, bike racks etc.)	





# OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

## ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Centre Wellington should see itself as a leader in this sphere. There is a growing body of research and general community sentiment to support the ongoing need to respect the environment at many levels, and community interest in addressing climate change/action continues to grow. As the community is faced with growth related population projections, and new residents come from other communities, a heightened focus on municipal leadership in this area will also grow. While not the sole responsibility of the parks and recreation service area, there are many opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor environment to prioritize actions that reflect progressive approaches and respond to community interest.

There is expressed interest in ensuring that all new builds have green roofs, green walls and sustainable energy systems, where possible. Local organizations continue to advocate for food security options (Food Forests, Community Food/Veggie Gardens, Pollinator

Gardens). Community feedback suggested that additional investment in staff training and awareness related to technical expertise needed to address alternative approaches to maintenance activities (grooming fields and boulevards, tree care etc) is needed.



### COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

Survey results indicated open park space and naturalized areas as key areas to maintain in outdoor recreation amenities. 16% of people supported incorporating environmentally friendly facility design as a top priority for Recreation and Parks facilities.



## OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP AND CLIMATE CHANGE RECOMMENDATIONS

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
ONGOING	<b>5.60 Ensure energy considerations are a priority when considering the best options to build and coordinate indoor facilities (ice, pool).</b> Existing investment in this regard should be a priority when looking at best practices for grouping indoor spaces that maximize energy resources.	Indoor Facility Study, Sportsplex Expansion Plans
ONGOING	<b>5.61 Support initiatives to share best practices with visual examples</b> using social media or on-site signage to assist in educating the public in any new approaches (low, no-mow areas, pollinator gardens, etc).	
ONGOING	<b>5.62 Continue to identify opportunities to design and develop indoor and outdoor facilities that reflect progressive approaches to climate change, while also seeking out upper levels of government funding</b> (i.e. Use of alternative energy sources, pursuing LEED design, changing maintenance practices for outdoor spaces). Ensure staff training is part of this approach and work with local community groups and organizations to seek their expertise, particularly in outdoor spaces. (food security, outdoor maintenance activity, investment in tree canopy, other).	ATM Plan
ONGOING	<b>5.63 Township to implement a formalized Invasive Species Control Program/Policy for parkland.</b>	
ONGOING	<b>5.64 Continue to invest in the Township's Forestry Program to preserve the Tree Canopy.</b>	Township's Public Tree Policy (2018)
ONGOING	<b>5.65 Conduct an annual 'walkabout'</b> with community groups, the Township's Climate Change Coordinator, and maintenance staff to collaboratively identify options to change maintenance practices over time. Include new options in annual staff training programs.	





# OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

## PARK PLANNING

The Centre Wellington Community Sportsplex consists of a large indoor recreation facility with twin pad arena, aquatic centre, hall, and fitness centre. The existing 24.25 ha (59.92 acres) of land surrounding the Sportsplex consist of parking, event space, tennis courts, sports fields, skate park, washrooms, woodlot, camping, greenhouses, and storage buildings.

Recently the Township purchased 36.4 ha (89.9 acres) of land adjacent to the Sportsplex property to address future growth needs. The combined properties now require a landscape plan to create a long-term development plan for possible expansions of the indoor Sportsplex, additional parking, expanded event space, community space, additional sports fields, and natural area protection.







# OUTDOOR PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

## PARK PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

### TIMING LEGEND

<3 yrs   **SHORT** = 3-10yrs   **MEDIUM** = 11-20 yrs   **LONG** = 21+ yrs

TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
<3yrs	<b>5.66 Retain external consultant resources (landscape architecture, facility planners, community engagement specialists, cost consultants) to develop a facility plan for the Sportsplex property,</b> and recently added lands, to establish short, medium and long term development plans including parking, washrooms, sports fields, event space, indoor facility additions, etc. to maximize the future opportunities for the community.	<b>Consideration of Multi-Use Recreation Facility Study</b>
SHORT/ ONGOING	<b>5.67 Adopt and implement the Parks Plan and integrate recommendations regarding funding and land acquisition options</b> (parkland dedication, payment-in-lieu, funding for park land and lands used for recreation), amend the Official Plan and adopt a new Parkland Dedication By-law. Reference to the plan should be ongoing to ensure that all park development opportunities are maximized going forward.	<b>Parks Plan</b>
MEDIUM/ LONG	<b>5.68 Continue to assess implementation activity related to the development and/or redevelopment of the Sportsplex</b> to adjust timing, funding, partner agreements etc., and ensure that the property plans and investment maximize use for future needs.	



### MAINTAINING RELEVANCE GOING FORWARD

It is important to acknowledge that every planning document must be adaptable and serve as a living resource. Over a 30-year period, numerous internal and external factors will inevitably influence the direction and implementation of the Parks and Recreation Plan. These factors may include the availability of infrastructure funding, shifts in population growth and demographic trends, evolving recreation interests and community priorities, changes in Council direction, and opportunities for collaboration through public-private partnerships.

To remain effective and relevant, the Plan must be revisited regularly and updated to reflect new realities, emerging opportunities, and to align

with the Township's strategic vision. As this vision may be refined with existing and subsequent terms of Council, regular review is necessary.



TIMING	ACTION	RELATED PLAN/ IMPACT OF DECISION
ONGOING	<b>6.1 Review the plan as part of the annual operating and capital budget process</b> to ensure alignment on priorities, funding sources and monitoring results.	<b>In conjunction with</b> ATMP, Culture Plan, Economic Development/ Tourism Plan
ONGOING	<b>6.2 Establish a 10-Year Planning and Review Cycle</b> Implement a formal 10-year update cycle for the Plan, with a scheduled review to monitor progress and realign priorities. Using data, trends and environmental scan data compiled by the staff responsible for monitoring external influences, adjust the “Timing” column and the “Related Plan/Impact of Decision” columns to provide direction for the next cycle.	
ONGOING	<b>6.3 Secure Council Support in Principle and Budget</b> It is recommended that Council formally endorse the Plan in principle and commit to its implementation through ongoing financial support. To reinforce this commitment, the Plan should be referenced regularly on all departmental reports/updates to Council. This will help ensure accountability, enable proactive planning, and facilitate the allocation of resources necessary to deliver on key initiatives and capitalize on partnership opportunities over the lifespan of the Plan.	