



**TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN  
COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES COMMITTEE  
AGENDA**

**MEETING NO. FOUR**

**Monday, September 15, 2025, 6:30 p.m.**

**Township Administration Building**

**318 Canborough Street, Smithville, Ontario**

**NOTE TO MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC:** All Cell Phones, Pagers and/or PDAs to be turned off. Members of the public who are attending and participating virtually are reminded to keep their microphones muted until they are acknowledged to speak. Additionally, for your information, please be advised that this meeting will be livestreamed as well as recorded and will be available on the Township's website.

---

**Pages**

**1. CHAIR - Councillor Jason Trombetta**

Prior to commencing with the Community and Protective Services Committee meeting agenda, Chair Trombetta noted the following:

1. Comments can be made from members of the public for a matter that is on the agenda by advising the Chair during the "Request to Address an Item on the Agenda" Section of the agenda.
2. The public may submit written comments for matters that are on the agenda to [jpaylove@westlincoln.ca](mailto:jpaylove@westlincoln.ca) before 4:30 p.m. on the day of the meeting for consideration by the Committee. Comments received after 4:30 p.m. on the day of the Committee meeting will be considered at the following Council meeting. Comments submitted are included in the record.
3. This meeting will be livestreamed as well as recorded and available on the Township's website.

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT**

The Township of West Lincoln, being part of Niagara Region is situated on treaty land. This land is steeped in the rich history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. There are many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit from across Turtle Island that live and work in Niagara today. The Township of West Lincoln, as part of the Regional Municipality of Niagara,

stands with all Indigenous people, past and present, in promoting the wise stewardship of the lands on which we live.

**3. CHANGE IN ORDER OF ITEMS ON AGENDA**

**4. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND/OR CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

**5. APPOINTMENTS**

There are no appointments

**6. REQUEST TO ADDRESS ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

**NOTE: Procedural By-law Section 10.13(5) – General Rules**

One (1) hour in total shall be allocated for this section of the agenda and each individual person shall only be provided with **five (5) minutes** to address their issue (some exceptions apply). A response may not be provided and the matter may be referred to staff.

Chair to inquire if there are any members of the public present who wish to address any items on the Community and Protective Services Committee agenda.

**7. COMMUNICATIONS**

There are no communications.

**8. STAFF REPORTS**

**8.1 ITEM CPS17-25**

4

Director, Community and Protective Services (Cynthia Summers) and  
Director of Growth and Sustainability (Gerrit Boerema)

Re: Information Report CS-08-2025 - Draft Township of West Lincoln  
Parks and Recreation Plan

**POWERPOINT PRESENTATION**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That, Information Report titled “Draft Township of West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Plan” dated September 15, 2025, be received.

**8.2 ITEM CPS18-25**

115

Fire Chief (Tim Hofsink)

Re: Information Report WLFD-08-2025 - Monthly Update - August 2025

**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That, Information Report titled “Monthly Update – August 2025” dated September 15, 2025, be received for information.

**9. OTHER BUSINESS**

**9.1 ITEM CPS19-25**

Members of Council

Re: Other Business Items of an Informative Nature

**10. NEW BUSINESS**

**NOTE:** Only for items that require immediate attention/direction and must first approve a motion to introduce a new item of business. (Motion Required)

**11. CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**

There are no confidential matters.

**12. DISCLOSURE OF CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS**

**13. ADJOURNMENT**

The Chair to declare the meeting adjourned at the hour of [time]

**DATE:** September 15, 2025

**REPORT NO:** CS-08-2025

**SUBJECT:** **Draft Township of West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Plan**

**CONTACT:** Cynthia Summers, Director, Community and Protective Services and  
Gerrit Boerema, Director, Growth and Sustainability

**OVERVIEW:**

- McQueen Galloway Associates (MGA) and GSP have developed a draft Parks and Recreation Plan for the Township of West Lincoln that will provide a 25-year vision for the community.
- This draft Master Plan follows a period of Engagement and Research and is being presented to Council for further discussion and input prior to a further public engagement.
- At the September 15, 2025, Community and Protective Services Committee meeting there will be a presentation to Committee by MGA to provide an overview of the project's journey, the needs assessment conducted for West Lincoln, Recommendations and Program Service Models.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That, Information Report CS-08-2025 titled "Draft Township of West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Plan" dated September 15, 2025, be received.

**ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

**Theme #1**

- **Build a safe, connected, caring and active community**

**Theme #2**

- **Champion strategic and responsible growth**

## **BACKGROUND:**

The Township retained the consulting firms of McQueen Galloway Associates (MGA) and GSP group to develop a Parks and Recreation Master plan for West Lincoln. MGA and GSP have worked with other Niagara communities and understands communities like West Lincoln and the complexity of balancing community needs and financial sustainability for the Township's population growth.

Key components of the planning process included:

- Evaluating existing parks, open spaces, amenities and recreational facilities for condition, accessibility, design and capacity.
- Identifying future needs for all types of recreational spaces based on growth and trends profiles.
- Identifying gaps and duplication and making recommendations for efficiencies.
- Establishing a bold vision based on the values and aspirations of the community.

The timeline of the previous work to date has been:

**September 19, 2024:** User group interviews

**September 26, 2024:** Community engagement workshop

**March 25 - April 14, 2025:** Public survey

## **CURRENT SITUATION:**

The report has identified specific recommendations in recreational areas including Growth & Policies (3 recommendations), Finance (6 recommendations), Service Delivery Model (2 recommendations), Programs & Facilities (19 recommendations), Events (3 recommendations), and Parks & Outdoor facilities (19 recommendations). Each of these areas has been comprehensively reviewed leading to the recommendations found within the Plan, with recommendations broken into short, medium, and long-term timelines while also aligning those recommendations with other time and cost-saving projects.

## **NEXT STEPS**

- **September 15, 2025** - Initial Presentation of the draft Plan to Council
- Plan to be made available on the Township website welcoming public input
- **September 24, 2025** – Community Consultation 6-9 pm (MGA), lobby of the WL Community Centre
- Consultant to provide a grouping of the recommendations into short-, medium-, and long-term timelines, while also lining those recommendations with other time and cost saving projects.

- **October 27, 2025** – Final draft presentation to West Lincoln Council - 6:30 pm

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

A financial model will be developed with the adoption of the Parks and Recreation Plan to support the planning and delivery of new contemplated capital projects and service enhancements. The financial modelling will be incorporated into the 10-year capital plan and form part of the annual budgeting process for Council.

Currently, the Plan is being presented to Council in draft for initial comment and feedback.

### **CONCLUSION:**

This report is to inform Committee and Council of the Draft Township of West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Plan and seek input into the preliminary plan.

### **SCHEDULE(S)**

Schedule A - "West Lincoln Parks and Rec Plan – Recommendation Summary"

Schedule B - "PR Powerpoint"

### **Prepared & Submitted by:**

**Cynthia Summers**  
Director, Community  
And Protective Services

### **Approved by:**

**Truper McBride**  
CAO

# TOWNSHIP of WEST LINCOLN

## Parks and Recreation Plan



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
Benefits of a Long-Term Parks and Recreation Plan	2
Building the Parks and Recreation Plan	4
<b>GROWTH PROFILE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>COMMUNITY PROFILE</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL POLICY ALIGNMENT</b>	<b>8</b>
Operating Budget	9
Capital Budget	11
<b>SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS</b>	<b>13</b>
1. Direct Delivery Model	14
2. Partnership Model	15
3. Service Provider Model	16
4. Leased Space Model	17
5. Hybrid Service Delivery Model	19
<b>PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Programs</b>	21
<b>Facilities</b>	22
West Lincoln Community centre	22
Community Halls	31
Libraries	34
Indoor Pool	36
Indoor Turf Facility	37
<b>EVENTS</b>	<b>39</b>



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

41

### Overall Parks Strategy and Guiding Principles

41

### Classification & Standards

44

#### Parkland Classification System

44

#### Parkland Acquisition Standards

56

#### Outdoor Recreation Facilities Standards

60

#### Park Design Standards and Guidelines

73

#### Park Design Guidelines

75

#### Site Planning for Parks

81

#### Off-Leash Dog Park

84

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

TK

## INTRODUCTION

**The Parks and Recreation Plan (Plan)** for the Township of West Lincoln was commissioned in anticipation of the community's significant anticipated growth—from a current population of over 16,370<sup>1</sup> to an estimated 38,370<sup>2</sup> by 2051. This comprehensive plan will provide a 25-year vision, including new parks and facilities and service forecasts.

Recognizing the community's strong passion for parks, trails, sports, recreation and events, the Plan 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 current Strategic Plan, and addresses the evolving and diverse needs of residents, user groups, and visitors.

The Plan acknowledges that growth municipalities function in a complex and dynamic environment with ever changing legislative and financial pressures and increasing and diverse service demands from new residents. As a result, Township staff will need to continuously monitor their changing environment and remain flexible in addressing future community needs.

Led by the consulting firm **MGA—McQueen Galloway Associates**, and **GSP Group** we wish to recognize the support of the Mayor, Members of Council, Staff, Community Organizations, Service Clubs, and residents for their valued insight and contribution to this Plan.

1. Census of Population 2021

2. Township's Official Plan Amendments No.62.69 April 5, 2023.



# INTRODUCTION

## BENEFITS OF A LONG-TERM PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

A Parks and Recreation Plan is an investment in the people, facilities, environment, and future of West Lincoln. It is a strategic tool that ensures services are responsive, inclusive, and sustainable positioning the Township as a vibrant, healthy, and connected community for years to come.



### 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 10-year roadmap with phased implementation (<2 years, short-, medium-, and long-term), along with projections for future initiatives and considerations extending over the next 25 years. 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.

## INTRODUCTION



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

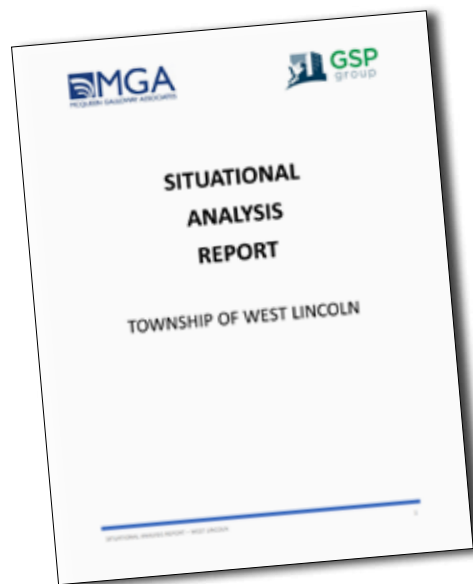
### 8. BOOSTS LOCAL ECONOMY

- 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.

# INTRODUCTION

## BUILDING THE PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

The development of this Plan involved three distinct Phases. The first Phase was comprised of background research to understand the Township's historical approach to the development of its parks and recreation services up to and including its current state. This Phase culminated in the development of a Parks and Recreation – Situational Analysis Report. This fulsome report should be viewed as a companion document to this Plan, and can be referenced on the [Township's website](#).

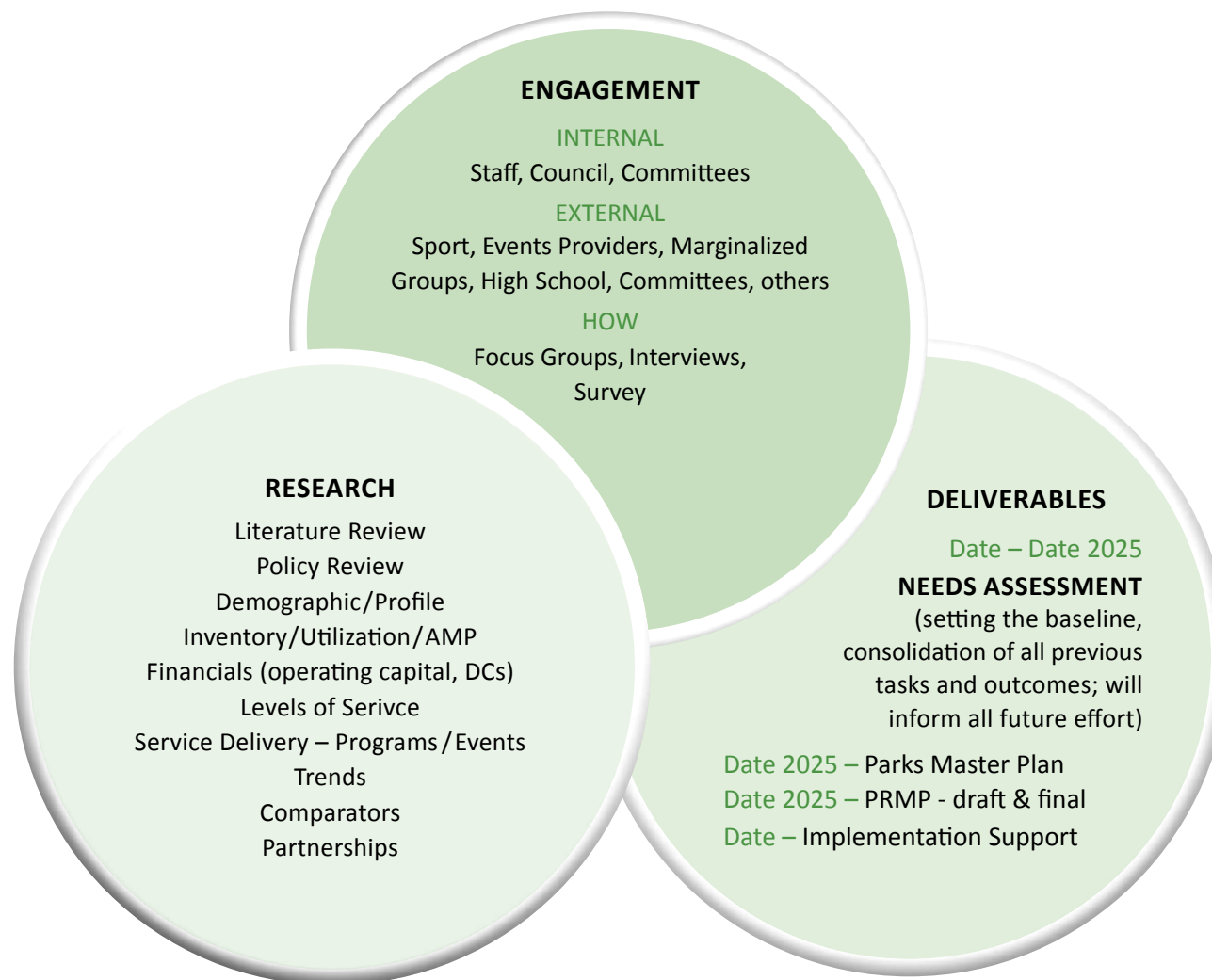


### SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS CONTENT

- Introduction
- Growth Profile
- Demographic Profile
- Corporate Policy Alignment
- National & Provincial Policy
- Trends
- Best Practices
- Parks Inventory
- Parks Conditions Analysis
- Facility Inventory
- Facility Conditions Analysis
- Operating Budget Analysis
- Capital Budget Analysis
- Rates and Fees Comparisons
- Program Review
- Events Review
- Community Engagement Results
- Community Survey Results

## INTRODUCTION

The second Phase included a robust community engagement strategy.



GROWTH PROFILE

The Township of West Lincoln is expected to experience consistent growth over the next 25 years. On average the Township is projected to grow by 733 residents annually between 2021 and 2051. This annual growth is greater than that the Township has experienced over any 5-year period since 2006.

Additionally, the adjacent municipalities of Grimsby and Lincoln are also anticipating significant growth. Considering the Township’s ice and field sports organizations who are organized in regional associations, it will be important for Township staff to continuously monitor growth within and outside of the Township.

Growth Profile 2006 – 2051



2006 – 2011 – Census Data  
2016 – 2051 – Township’s Official Plan Amendments No.62.69 April 5, 2023.

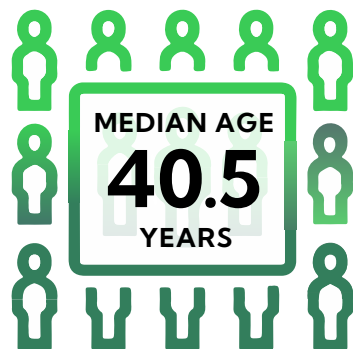


RECOMMENDATION

Monitor actual growth within the Township and the Region and anticipate impact on sport, recreation, and cultural activities and events on a continual basis.



## COMMUNITY PROFILE



### MEDIAN AGE

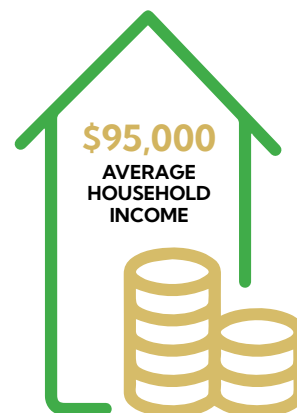
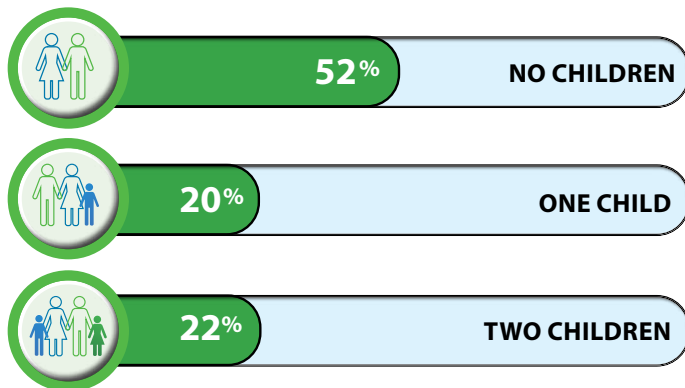
**40.5 Years** which is 5.3 Years above the provincial median age.

**WEST LINCOLN  
TOTAL POPULATION:**

**15,454**

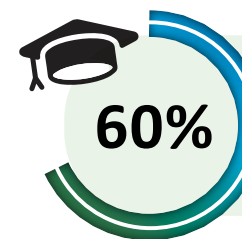
### HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

**52%** of households have no children.  
While 42% of households have 1-2 children.



### INCOME

The 2-person household income is slightly below the provincial average.



Percentage of residents with a post-secondary education.



### RECOMMENDATION

Monitor community demographics after each 5-year Census period to assess any change in direction/priorities/cultural shifts associated with parks and recreation services.

### LANGUAGE MOST SPOKEN AT HOME

**92% – ENGLISH**



## NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL POLICY ALIGNMENT

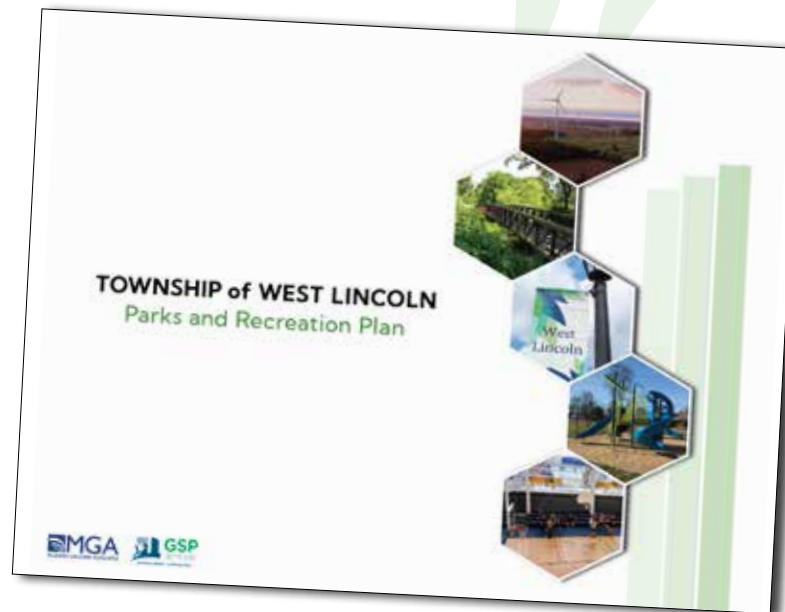
Township staff will be well served by referencing key policy frameworks related to parks and recreation service delivery as they offer sector resources and guidelines for staff to align service delivery.

- Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing 2024
- Canadian Sport Policy 2012
- A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let's Get Moving
- Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians Policy Framework
- Parks for All
- Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)
- AODA: Design of Public Spaces
- Ontario Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.13



### RECOMMENDATION

Continue to reference key sector policy frameworks to ensure the Township maintains alignment with best practices in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services.



## OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET

The Township utilizes a unique approach to reporting its annual operating budgets. This was discovered in the Situational Analysis Report. More specifically, the Township presents its annual operating budget as a comparison to the previous years budget only. Absent from this presentation is the previous years actuals. Typically, municipalities present the previous years budget along with the previous years actuals to better understand budget performance.

### OPERATING BUDGET

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township include year-end actuals for parks and recreation services as part of its future operating budget reporting for transparency and budget performance assessments.

The existing cost centre reporting structure for facilities consolidates all revenues into “User Fees”. This makes it difficult for analysing revenue changes from various sources such as ice revenues, floor revenues, gymnasium rentals, program fees, room rentals, vending and concessions.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township expand its revenue cost centre reporting to include distinct line items for (i) ice revenues, (ii) floor revenues, (iii) Gymnasium Rentals/fees, (iv) room rentals, (v) concessions.



The results of the rates and fees review among comparator municipalities revealed that in many areas the Township fees were lower than its comparator municipalities. Some of the more notable areas included gymnasium rentals, summer camps, non-prime-time ice rentals for minor sports, halls and auditorium rentals, drop-in gym fees, tournament day rates for playfields. Many of these rates can result in significant yields in additional annual revenues and should be adjusted accordingly.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township increase its user fees in areas identified in the Situational Analysis Report to be more in line with comparator municipalities.



### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township conduct rates and fee reviews on an on-going basis (every 2 years) to ensure remains aligned with neighbouring municipalities.



## OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET

### CAPITAL BUDGET

The recent construction of the Community Centre and Library in Smithville resulted in a significant change in the Township's overall facility conditions assessment. Like most municipalities, the Township has capital repair and replacement requirements beyond its annual capital budget capacity.

Most residents support the notion of investing in existing infrastructural renewal over building new facilities, which makes good economic sense in most cases. We note that the three community halls will play an increasing role in the provision of future recreation and cultural programming. This is discussed in detail in the "Facilities" section of this Plan.

The most recent building audits for the community halls identified building renewal and replacement needs in the amount of over \$1.4 million in today's dollars as detailed in the chart below.

FACILITY	SHORT-TERM NEEDS	LONGER TERM NEEDS
	2020 - 2025	2026 - 2040
Caistor Community Centre	\$263,000	\$252,000
Silverdale Community Centre	\$124,400	\$206,725
Wellandport Community Centre	\$373,500	\$250,000

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Treasurer develop a financial strategy to fund the necessary future repairs to the community halls in order that they be maintained in good operating condition and modernize to facilitate growing community use.



### CULTURE AND RECREATION FACILITIES

- 73% of Culture and Recreation Facilities in West Lincoln are found to be in "very good" condition; 20% of facilities are in "fair" condition, and 5% are in "poor" condition.



OPERATING AND CAPITAL BUDGET

With regard to parks and recreation services, the Township’s Asset Management Plan identified that there is a shortfall \$2.3 million of annual capital funding allocated to facilities, a shortfall of \$52,000 of annual capital funding allocated to rolling stock, and a shortfall of \$251,000 of annual capital funding allocated to parks. Apart from capital funding for parks, it is noted that the shortfall in facilities and rolling stock is corporate wide. The Township should continue to address these shortfalls to maintain current levels of service.

Given that the West Lincoln Community Centre is still relatively new and in very good condition, we support the Township’s strategy in establishing an annual contribution to capital in the Community Centre operating budget. This strategy should be maintained monitored over time to ensure that annual contributions are sufficient to maintain the facility in good working order. Larger capital requirements will likely commence beyond the ten-year point.

RECOMMENDATION

Continue the annual contributions to capital in the Community Centre operating budget, and monitor annually to assess its capacity to address future major capital requirements based on facility conditions assessments.



COMMUNITY CENTRE  
FACILITY SIZE

FACILITY	SQUARE FEET
West Lincoln Community Centre	57,951
Caistor Centre Community Centre	4,592
Wellandport Community Centre	6,106
Silverdale Community Centre	1,653
TOTAL	70,302





## SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

The Township of West Lincoln has several viable options for delivering recreation programs and services to the community. These include the Direct Delivery, Partnership, Service Provider, and Leased Space models. Each approach offers unique benefits and risks and plays a strategic role in delivering high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable programming.

Increasingly, Ontario municipalities are adopting hybrid models that blend these strategies to maximize community impact, operational efficiency, and cost-effectiveness.

The purpose of this section is to offer a summary of these models for the Township's interest and future consideration as the community grows, service demands evolve, and capacity of community service providers increase.



### 1. DIRECT DELIVERY MODEL

In this model, the municipality—typically through its Recreation Department—directly operates programs and manages facilities, employing municipal staff to deliver services.

#### BENEFITS

- **Control:** Ensures alignment with Township priorities, values, and policies (e.g., HIGH FIVE standards).
- **Alignment:** With program design, staffing and customer service to goals of the community
- **Consistency:** Standardized staff training promotes quality, safety, and customer satisfaction.
- **Equity & Access:** Township can offer low-cost or subsidized programs to increase participation among vulnerable populations.
- **Data-Driven Planning:** Easier to track participation, collect feedback, and adjust services accordingly.
- **Responsive to Local Needs:** Programs can be modified quickly based on community feedback or emerging trends.
- Ability to build relationship with community organizations and volunteers

#### RISKS

- **Costs:** Expenses related to staffing, training, and facility operations can strain municipal budgets.
- **Staffing Challenges:** Difficulty recruiting and retaining qualified staff, especially for seasonal or specialized roles.
- **Operational Inflexibility:** Slower to innovate or adapt due to municipal processes and limited staff specialization.
- **Liability and Compliance:** The Township bears full responsibility for risk management, safety, and regulatory compliance.
- **Resource Misalignment:** Risk of underutilized programs or facilities if participation is low and adjustments are not made quickly.
- **Public Expectations:** High community expectations for low-cost, high-quality programs may be difficult to sustain.

#### EXAMPLES

- Township-run senior fitness classes
- Community-wide events or festivals
- Drop-in and registered youth programs
- Municipal summer day camps

### 2. PARTNERSHIP MODEL

This model involves co-delivery of programs and services through collaboration with schools, non-profits, health organizations, or agencies like the YMCA.

#### BENEFITS

- **Shared Resources:** Reduces costs through shared staff, space, and funding.
- **Enhanced Community Engagement:** Partners bring local knowledge, trust, and relevance to program design.
- **Specialized Expertise:** Access to professionals in mental health, sport development, cultural programming, etc.
- **Greater Reach:** More locations can be used, reducing transportation barriers.
- **Volunteer Capacity:** Partners often come with trained volunteers to support programming.

#### RISKS

- **Accountability:** Partners are accountable to their chain-of-command, and the municipality is second in line which can lead to political frustration on latent communications.
- **Reduced Control:** The Township may have less influence over program quality, staff training, inconsistent service delivery, or alignment with municipal goals and policies.
- **Communication:** Misaligned expectations, unclear roles, or lack of coordination can impact program success, often staff at programs do not have authorizations to make decisions.
- **Dependency:** If a partner withdraws, lack of staff or changes priorities, service gaps may occur.
- **Liability and Risk:** Unclear agreements may create confusion over responsibilities for safety, insurance, and compliance.
- **Equity:** Programs may prioritize the partner's target group (ie. seniors) over broader community access or needs.

#### EXAMPLES

- YMCA delivering after-school programs in a Township facility
- Minor sport organizations using school gyms
- Mental health organizations co-hosting wellness programs for youth



### 3. SERVICE PROVIDER MODEL

In this model, external providers (e.g., private instructors, sport groups, local businesses) run programs using municipal spaces under a permit, rental, or license agreement.

#### BENEFITS

- **Reduced Expenditures:** No staffing or program development needed by the Township.
- **Program Variety:** Providers can offer specialized or trend-based classes (e.g., coding, Zumba, meditation) without undergoing scrutiny by other providers.
- **Reduced Liability:** Providers manage their own operations, staffing, insurance, and marketing.
- **Revenue:** The Township earns rental income or commissions.
- **Flexible & Scalable:** Programs can be adapted based on demand and availability.

#### RISKS

- **Quality Control:** The Township has minimal oversight of program content, customer service, or instructor qualifications, prices.
- **Inconsistent Branding:** Programs may not reflect municipal values, priorities, or standards (e.g., inclusion, safety, HIGH FIVE).
- **Access & Equity:** Providers may set prices or target markets that exclude lower-income or marginalized residents without corresponding fee subsidy programs.
- **Reputation:** Poor provider performance can reflect negatively on the municipality, even when they are not directly responsible.
- **Administrative Oversight:** Requires staff time to manage permits, agreements, and ensure basic compliance (e.g., insurance, safety).

#### EXAMPLES

- A yoga instructor renting space for weekly classes
- A local soccer club running seasonal leagues
- A contractor offering STEM or dance workshops

### 4. LEASED SPACE MODEL

Under this approach, the Township leases a dedicated space to a major service provider—typically a YMCA—which operates independently and manages all program delivery and revenue. A local example is the YMCA at the Vale Health & Wellness Centre in Port Colborne.

#### BENEFITS

- **Professional Program Delivery:**
  - ◇ YMCA brings expertise in child/youth programs, wellness, and fitness.
  - ◇ Offloads staffing and operational duties from municipal departments.
- **Operational Efficiencies:**
  - ◇ Uses established systems for scheduling, safety, and member management.
  - ◇ Potential cost savings due to scale and experience.
- **Access to National Networks:**
  - ◇ Residents access proven YMCA programs and financial aid for low-income users.
- **Reduced Municipal Risk:**
  - ◇ Municipality avoids direct HR, union, or legal responsibilities.

#### RISKS

- **Cost Control:** The Township may contribute significant operating funds to sustain the model, with limited control over how those funds are allocated.
  - **Limited Control Over Operations**
    - ◇ The Township loses input on program types, scheduling, and priorities.
    - ◇ Reduced hours or changes in program focus may conflict with community needs.
  - **User Conflicts**
    - ◇ Local clubs or instructors may lose access or face competition.
    - ◇ Some programs (e.g., pickleball) may require a YMCA membership.
  - **Long-Term Contractual Constraints:** Agreements can be difficult to alter or exit, even if needs or priorities change over time.
  - **Equity Concerns**
    - ◇ Despite available subsidies, membership fees may deter participation from lower-income residents.
    - ◇ Residents may feel that public funds are supporting an external brand rather than enhancing local services.
- (continued...)*

### 4.

#### LEASED SPACE MODEL (CONTINUED)

- **Brand Dilution**
  - ◇ Services may be identified with the YMCA rather than the Township.
  - ◇ The facility may no longer feel like a “Township asset” if the branding, programming, and customer experience are primarily controlled by an external organization. This could impact community pride and engagement.
- **Loss of Community Connection:** Programs may feel less tailored to the local population, reducing the sense of ownership and community identity that typically comes with municipally delivered services.
- **Reduced Flexibility to Respond to Trends:** The Township may have limited ability to introduce new or niche programs quickly if they must go through the third-party provider’s internal processes.
- **Staffing and Volunteer Displacement:** Existing Township staff or community volunteers may see reduced roles or be displaced entirely, which can impact local employment and engagement.
- **Perceived Privatization of Public Space:** Residents may view the facility as “privatized” if access is controlled by an external membership-based organization, potentially reducing public trust or satisfaction.

#### POTENTIAL KEY FACILITY USERS (NOT LIMITED TO):

- YMCA or local childcare providers
- Youth sports leagues (e.g., soccer, basketball)
- Dance and gymnastics programs
- Service clubs and cultural groups
- Older adult fitness and social clubs
- Private instructors (e.g., martial arts, art programs, yoga)
- Public health and wellness partners
- Library or education outreach programs
- Volunteer-led community events and fundraisers



### 5. HYBRID SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

As identified previously, many municipalities in Ontario are opting to use a hybrid approach to service delivery which incorporates any combinations or mix of the above noted models. By example the Town of Parry Sound is a contributing partner to a regional multi-use recreation facility that is to be operated by the YMCA and will continue to operate its Arena and Community Centre and waterfront programs directly, while its performing arts facility is operated by Town staff through a community advisory Board.

There is no specific set of circumstances that determine which model to employ and when. In most cases there is a series of variables that come into play that lead to an opportunity to explore a given model. One of the

fundamental or foundational conditions to explore a different service model is the capacity of service providers to meet the municipality's current and growing needs. The Township of West Lincoln currently offers a combination of "direct" programs such as pickleball and summer camps, and "service provider" programming with ice user and playfield user groups renting facilities.

The Township has yet to take a pro-active role in promoting its interest in engaging potential service providers or partners to (i) offer services to meet community needs, and (ii) optimize the use of its new Community Centre and Community Halls. The ensuing program and facility section is premised on the Township exploring a more robust and proactive Hybrid Model.

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township explore a more robust Hybrid Service Delivery Model by proactively engaging community service providers and partnerships to address existing and growing community needs through optimizing current facility space at the Community Centre and Community Halls.



## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Municipalities play a central role in providing valuable recreation programs and facilities that both meet the needs of residents and enhance quality of life. The West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Department oversees the provision of parks, facilities, recreational opportunities, programs, and events.

Sport and Recreation programs and events are cornerstones for a vibrant and healthy community. Programs offer numerous benefits to participants, families and the community, including enhancing mental and physical wellbeing, combatting social isolation, and building civic engagement.

Notwithstanding the service delivery models discussed in the previous section, the focus of this section assumes that the Township will continue to provide a distinct leadership role in the provision of facilities, programs, and services in the immediate term. Given the long-term duration of this Plan, the Township should continue to assess different delivery models when opportunities benefit the Township, residents, and the service provider.



### PROGRAMS

To address the diverse and growing demand for recreation opportunities in West Lincoln, the Township should develop a balanced program mix that includes both direct program delivery and partnerships with third-party providers (Expanded Hybrid Model). This dual approach will ensure core community needs—such as youth drop-ins, adult fitness, adaptive programming, and expanded use of facilities—are met even when municipal capacity is limited.

Presented in random order, residents had the following programming interest, resulting in short-term program recommendations:

- **Program options at Caistor and Wellandport Community Centres.**
- **Additional year-around programs.**
- **Increased drop-in gymnasium time for youth and teens** for various sports.
- **Increased use of the arena floor during the non-ice season** for ball hockey, roller hockey and dodgeball leagues, pickleball, and summer sport camps.
- **Promote inclusion** of program opportunities for people with disabilities.
- **Fitness classes for adults and older adults** including aerobics, dance, pilates, yoga, stretching and toning.
- **Adaptive programming** for people with disabilities.
- **Neighbourhood ice rinks.**
- **Programs or spaces for more passive recreation** such as art classes, knitting, cooking, and gardening.
- **RFP for third parties** – analysis of what they can do first

#### RECOMMENDATION

Conduct a program gap analysis to identify which priority programs the Township has the capacity to deliver directly and initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to engage third-party providers for specialized or resource-intensive programs that fall outside municipal capacity.





### FACILITIES



#### WEST LINCOLN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The West Lincoln Community Centre, which opened in phases between 2019 and 2020 amid a global pandemic, has quickly become a vibrant, modern hub for recreation and community activities. The facility remains in excellent condition and continues to be well-used and appreciated by the community.

##### FACILITY COMPONENTS:

- Public Library
- Indoor Walking Track
- NHL sized, Single Pad Arena (450 spectator seats)
- Gymnasium
- Three Multi-purpose Community Rooms

This Centre replaced an older arena on the fairgrounds and provides a strong sense of civic pride and satisfaction.





### ICE USAGE AND TRENDS

The single-pad arena is heavily used between September and March, primarily by:

- West Niagara Minor Hockey Association (WNMHA)
- West Lincoln Skating Club
- Adult recreational leagues

In 2019, West Lincoln Minor Hockey, Grimsby Minor Hockey, and Lincoln Minor Hockey amalgamated into the West Niagara Minor Hockey Association (WNMHA), which now uses ice time across three municipalities:

- Grimsby (2 ice pads)
- Lincoln (1 ice pad)
- West Lincoln (1 ice pad)

Staff time is dedicated to gather and maintain statistics for the West Niagara Minor Hockey Association as well as participants from West Lincoln in the WNMHA. This practice should be maintained in order that the Township can monitor resident involvement in the WNMHA for the purpose of planning for future ice needs. Staff also maintains statistics for the West Lincoln Figure Skating Club.

The common standard for determining ice needs is based on “one ice pad for every 450 minor ice sport participants”. The chart below illustrates the total number of minor sport participants from West Lincoln as well as their respective growth (increasing or decreasing) over the past 3 years.

PARTICIPANTS	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
West Lincoln Minor Hockey Players in WNMHA	278	288	291
West Lincoln Skating Club	151	156	141
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>429</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>432</b>



PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

Minor ice sport registration for West Lincoln residents has remained relatively stable in the past three years. The current uptake, however, is very close to full capacity of the current ice pad at 96% capacity utilization in 2024/25 for minor participants.

The population growth projections will inevitably lead to an increase in youth and a corresponding demand for ice sports which will go beyond 100% capacity utilization signalling the preliminary need for an additional ice pad. West Lincoln also maintains a significant demand for adult ice use which will continue to place demands on ice requirements.

REGIONAL ICE PROVISION - ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATION

As noted previously, minor hockey in West Lincoln is part of the West Niagara Minor Hockey Association. The league has access to 4 municipal ice pads to play from. This would translate to a regional (West Niagara) capacity of 1,800 minor ice participants. During the 2024/25 ice season the WNMHA assumed 72% of the available ice among the 4 regional ice pads. This does not include ice utilization for figure skating or other minor ice sports such as sledge hockey, speed skating or ringette.

PARTICIPANTS	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025
West Lincoln Minor Hockey Players in WNMHA	1259	1239	1292

As a further point of reference, the West Lincoln Figure Skating Club currently uses 32% of the available ice in West Lincoln. If the figure skating clubs in Lincoln and Grimsby have a similar ice utilization rate as West Lincoln, this would mean that the regional ice provision is near capacity. In the same manner that West Lincoln is anticipating significant growth, both Grimsby and Lincoln are in a similar position.

Since the major ice user is structured as a regional minor hockey association, the Township of West Lincoln will need to coordinate its planning around future ice pad expansion, while balancing local demands on ice.



COMMUNITY  
ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

ONLINE SURVEY:

- The ice pad was ranked in the top three recreation facilities used by residents.

TARGETED USER ENGAGEMENT:

- Ice users expressed strong satisfaction with the existing arena
- Key user interests:
  - ◇ Extended seasonal ice time (i.e. earlier installation in August and/or operation into April)
  - ◇ Interest in summer ice options for training and camps
  - ◇ Concerns about ice allocation policies, particularly around priority for youth-serving organizations



### JUNIOR HOCKEY

There has been growing interest from community leaders, including members of Council, in exploring the potential benefits of attracting a Junior Hockey team to the community. This is seen as an opportunity to generate revenue, foster local pride, and provide a unifying spectator experience for residents.

This also represents a distinct challenge to the Township regarding the current ice provision scenario. Prime-time ice utilization is nearing capacity. The Township's draft Ice Allocation Policy rightly prioritizes youth-serving and not-for-profit organizations to ensure equitable access for grassroots development. Introducing a Junior Hockey team would place additional pressure on the prime-time ice schedule.

It is not recommended that the Township displaces existing prime-time ice for minor hockey, figure skating, or learn-to-skate programs. This would challenge staff to determine if there is prime-time ice available for a Junior Hockey program that may displace a current existing adult group which would create its own adverse consequences. Staff would need Council support in prioritizing Junior Hockey over an existing long-term user.

When a fifth ice pad is built within the West Niagara Region, there would likely be a more favourable opportunity to displace minor ice for Junior Hockey.

### RECOMMENDATION

(i) That staff update Council on the existing allocation of prime-time utilization by minor hockey, figure skating, learn-to-skate, public skate, and other users, (ii) That staff provide options to accommodate prime-time ice for a Junior Hockey Team, and which non-minor users would be impacted or displaced for Council's consideration.



### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township of West Lincoln establish a future ice needs strategy in cooperation with the Town of Grimsby and the Town of Lincoln to determine the order in which additional ice should be introduced to the West Niagara area.



In addition to the broader recommendation above regarding ice provision within the West Niagara Region, the following recommendations should be regarded in the short-term.

### RECOMMENDATION

Explore installing ice in August and maintaining it into April to support camps, training programs, and longer seasons for adult and youth leagues.



### RECOMMENDATION

Review and Revise the Ice Allocation Policy to ensure priority access for youth-serving, and not-for-profit organizations during prime hours.



### RECOMMENDATION

Continue annual tracking of WNMHA and Skating Club participation, with a focus on adult league growth and West Lincoln's share of regional users.





### RECOMMENDATION

Review its permitting and rental processes to ensure they align with staff capacity, service expectations, and cost recovery. This includes improving how new or non-standard rentals and events are communicated across departments, establishing a process to flag when additional staffing or logistics are required, and determining whether such uses fall within the current Rates & Fees By-law.



### RECOMMENDATION

Undertake a feasibility and cost-benefit analysis to assess the potential for adding a second ice pad at the West Lincoln Community Centre to accommodate future growth.







### GYMNASIUM

There are no specific standards for the provision of municipal gymnasiums. This is largely due to school boards providing community access to both elementary and secondary school gymnasiums. While West Lincoln no longer has access to the former secondary school. They benefit greatly from community minded Christian Schools.

The recent addition of a full-sized gymnasium at the West Lincoln Community Centre provides the Township with a strong foundation for indoor recreation, as few municipalities of comparable size offer such a facility. However, the gymnasium is currently underutilized. To maximize its potential, the Township should prioritize the development of targeted programming and actively pursue rental opportunities with community groups and service providers. Further recommendations related to this strategy are outlined in the Programs and Events section.



## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

### COMMUNITY ROOMS

Similar to the gymnasium, the community rooms at the West Lincoln Community Centre are currently underutilized. To realize the full potential of these spaces on a daily basis, the Township should expand its own programming and seek partnerships with external service providers to deliver regular activities, programs, and rentals.

FACILITY TYPE	CURRENT SUPPLY	SIZE	2024 - 2034	2034 - 2044	2044 - 2054
Ice Pad	1	NHL		✓	
Gymnasium	1	Full Gym (2 halves)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Walking Track	1	2 Lanes (arena perimeter)	n/a	n/a	n/a
Multi-Purpose Rooms	3	41' x 21' (each) Options to double or triple in room size.	n/a		

### WALKING TRACK

The indoor walking track at the West Lincoln Community Centre is a highly valued and well-utilized facility. It sees consistent use throughout operating hours and, notably, was ranked as the most-used recreation facility by residents in the online survey. Its accessibility, year-round availability, and suitability for all ages make it an important asset for promoting physical activity in the community for all ages.



### RECOMMENDATION

Introduce structured programs that appeal to individuals who enjoy social interaction and group activities. These could include:

- Social Walking Clubs with scheduled times and group leaders to foster community connections.
- Themed Walks such as "Wellness Walks," "Mom & Baby Walks," or "Senior Strolls" with added wellness tips or guest speakers in the community rooms.
- Seasonal Step Challenges to motivate residents and promote regular use of the track.
- Partnership Programs with health providers or local organizations to incorporate light fitness or health education components.



### WHAT THE COMMUNITY IS SAYING ABOUT THE INDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

**Community engagement results indicate a strong level of satisfaction overall with indoor recreation facilities across all age groups.**

This was evident in stakeholder interviews and reinforced by survey responses, where residents consistently expressed positive views about the quality and satisfaction level, especially the 6–12 age cohorts and adults.



### COMMON SPACES AT THE WEST LINCOLN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The West Lincoln Community Centre was intentionally designed with ample natural light and open, flexible spaces to create a welcoming atmosphere. These areas currently lack activity and interaction, particularly for families and youth waiting between programs. By activating or “animating” these common spaces with casual, self-directed activities, the Township can enhance the user experience, encourage lingering, and create a more vibrant social environment.

For example, the upper level could feature engaging and low-maintenance games like foosball, ping pong, jenga, or cornhole to foster a family-friendly atmosphere. The downstairs lobby could support quieter activities such as chess and checkers on café tables, cards, majong, or video games like Xbox, appealing to a broader range of ages and interests. This investment will encourage informal recreation, strengthen community connections, and make better use of underutilized space throughout the facility.



### RECOMMENDATION

The Township should establish an annual budget to support the purchase and rotation of interactive games, furniture, and programming supplies that animate the common spaces at the West Lincoln Community Centre.



### COMMUNITY HALLS

Much of the Township's ability to expand programs and services relies on access to existing tax supported facilities beyond the West Lincoln Community Centre. More specifically the Township needs to have a more proactive and strategic access to additional and available facility space. The following section will highlight necessary recommendations the Township must achieve first before they can meet current and future community demand in a more strategic manner.

Apart from an ice pad discussed previously, the Township has an adequate supply of facility space for the next 10 years and beyond. We note however that except for the Community Centre, **the remaining tax-supported facility space is not readily accessible for the Township to use.**

The three community halls (Silverdale, Wellandport, and Caistor) are operated by separate Hall Boards/Committees. The Hall Boards manage the halls for their own events and activities and rentals of the hall space from residents or groups. The Township is responsible for capital repairs and replacements, system operations, and utility cost not covered by rental revenues.

Beyond Hall Board use of the facilities, all three remain relatively under-utilized based on staff and resident observations. It would be prudent for the Township to use existing Township assets to meet the expanded needs for programming within the broader community of West Lincoln.

We support the Township's direction to proceed with a "sustainability audit" of the Hall Boards to determine the respective Boards' capacity and capability to maintain their historic roles. This audit will offer a more distinct analysis of the future of the Hall Boards. While the results of the "sustainability audit" will be tabled with Council in a future year, **we recommend that the Township needs to secure "block booking" times for general community programming at all three halls.**



## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

It is recommended that the **Township assume a more proactive leadership role** in introducing new and varied programs whether they be operated directly or through a third-party service provider. In either case, **the Township would need to work more closely with the respective Hall Boards to establish seasonal or annual “block booking” of Hall spaces.**

A best practice that the Township could look to is a proactive community use of school model. This model has the school blocking off school time use of schools as a priority and then providing blocks of school time use (usually during weeknights and weekends) to the municipality to schedule programming and rentals to community groups. In this model the municipality serves as the central point of contact for the rental of all facility space whether it be in Township facilities or in schools. This model promotes a “one stop shop” for individuals, groups, or Township staff wanting to rent facility space, and it allows for the strategic scheduling of available facility space to optimize use of space.

It is recommended that the Township adopt a similar model with the respective Hall Boards so that these same benefits can be realized. A subsequent advantage to implementing this model is that there would be subsequent access to hall space during the day (normal school hours) whereby schools are not available to rent for programs.

We acknowledge that this model represents a change in scheduling practices for Hall Boards, however at a time of increasing financial pressures, and growing demand for program space, it just makes good economic sense.

### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township of West Lincoln staff work proactively with the existing Hall Boards to develop a model of hall use that optimizes utilization by accommodating community programming, whilst maintaining the core use of the Hall for Hall Board events and activities.



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In the online survey, when respondents were asked which types of facilities they or their household members use for recreational activities, Caistor, Wellandport and Silverdale community centres ranked among the least utilized spaces.

HALL	CAPACITY
Caistor Community Centre	150
Wellandport Community Centre	184
Silverdale Community Centre	85



### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township assume full responsibility and resources for booking all community halls under its ownership to ensure consistent scheduling, equitable access, and streamlined facility management.

The three smaller community centres in West Lincoln—Wellandport, Caistor, and Silverdale—provide suitable space for family reunions, small receptions, and private events. Notably, Wellandport is co-located with recently updated library branch offering additional community value. Despite this, the centres remain underutilized. Bookings are managed independently by volunteer clerks rather than through the Township's central system.



### RECOMMENDATION

Pursue opportunities to maximize the use of underutilized community halls in West Lincoln through strategic partnerships, enhanced programming, and alternative uses while increasing these facilities awareness throughout West Lincoln.

- Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify potential partners interested in leasing or operating the facilities.
- Explore expanding successful programs—such as summer camps—by introducing niche offerings in arts, theatre, dance, music, and outdoor adventure, particularly utilizing the Caistor and Wellandport Community Centre and other underutilized spaces.
- Assess the potential for child care, Montessori, or faith-based preschool programs to operate out of the halls.
- Evaluate whether any of the community halls should be declared surplus and considered for sale.
- Improve promotion of the venues, consider integrating them into a centralized booking system, and explore options to support or enhance their condition and daily programming.

## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

### LIBRARIES

The Township of West Lincoln has the benefit of having two of the library branches operating adjacent to Township facilities. These include the library branch at the Community Centre and the library branch at the Wellandport Community Centre.

It is understood that the branch libraries are operated by the West Lincoln Public Library Board. There are several opportunities to expand general recreation and cultural programs and services through the library branches that should be continuously explored. Additionally, there is opportunity for the Township to use programming space in the library branches whether the library is open or not.

While the operating hours of the library branches are in some cases constrained through budget pressures, it does not preclude the use of this space for revenue generating programs that would recover the cost of having this space available for programming purposes. This model would also represent a change in current practice. While the library branches, for resource lending purposes are not permitted to charge a fee, there are no such restrictions fee restrictions for the use of library spaces for rental purposes. Staffing of the library branch for rental purposes could be provided by either existing library staff or Township staff whose wages and benefits would be offset by program fees.

The residents of West Lincoln generally do not differentiate tax-supported community facilities whether they be halls, community centre, schools, libraries, parks, trails, or conservation areas. Throughout the engagement process, residents, community leaders, Council Members, and staff referenced that notion of libraries being under utilized. It is once again prudent for the Township to take a leadership role with the West Lincoln Public Library to work o solutions to make library branches spaces more available for recreation and cultural programming demands.



## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES



### RECOMMENDATION

That the Township of West Lincoln engage the West Lincoln Public Library Board to revise the current operating model to allow for community use of library branch space (beyond normal operating hours) on a full cost recovery basis to the library operation.



### RECOMMENDATION

West Lincoln collaborate with the public library to deliver programs not currently offered by the Township—such as Home Alone courses, First Aid, and Babysitting training—to expand community access to essential skill-building opportunities.



### RECOMMENDATION

What the Township work in collaboration with the Library to align operating hours with events and programs taking place at the West Lincoln Community Centre, enhancing convenience and access for participants and visitors.



## PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

### INDOOR POOL

The current standard for the provision of an indoor pool for communities is one pool per 30,000 residents. Notwithstanding this provision standard there are communities with less than 10,000 residents with an indoor pool, and some communities over 30,000 residents do not.

There are numerous factors that can influence the provision of an indoor pool. These include proximity to neighbouring municipalities with indoor pools, opportunities for partnerships with private or non-profit providers, and the financial capacity of the community to support both the capital investment and ongoing operational costs.

In the case of West Lincoln, residents currently have access to indoor aquatic programming through the Niagara West YMCA in Grimsby, as well as facilities in St. Catharines and Hamilton. While indoor pools are valuable community assets, they require significant financial investment in capital construction and on-going annual operational funding.

There is an emerging trend among smaller municipalities to explore regional-based indoor facilities including such amenities as indoor pools, ice, and gymnasium space. On the one hand, this approach offers a more sustainable and cost-effective solution while providing access for residents across multiple communities. On the other hand, developing a regional facility strategy involves a complex level of trust, shared leadership, pro-rated capital and operating contributions, location analysis, and partnership agreement with shared risk and shared benefits.







### RECOMMENDATION

West Lincoln should undertake a feasibility study to assess the community demand, capital and operating costs, and the potential impact on the municipal tax levy associated with developing an indoor pool. This study should include public engagement and consider long-term financial sustainability.



### RECOMMENDATION

West Lincoln should initiate the formation of a regional indoor pool committee in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities to explore the potential for a jointly funded and operated regional indoor aquatic facility.





### INDOOR TURF FACILITY

Indoor turf facilities are increasingly in demand among field sport user groups, particularly as they seek opportunities for year-round training and competition. Sports such as soccer, flag football, ultimate frisbee, lacrosse, and cricket benefit significantly from indoor turf, allowing programs to operate regardless of weather conditions and extending their seasons.

West Lincoln is home to a very active and engaged minor and adult soccer organization, indicating strong local interest and potential use for such a facility. As the community continues to grow, there is also potential for cultural shifts that could further increase demand, particularly in sports like soccer and cricket, which are widely played in many newcomer communities.

#### RECOMMENDATION

West Lincoln include a feasibility study for an indoor turf facility within the Master Plan of the LeisurePlex. This study should assess community demand, potential partnerships, capital and operating costs, and the facility's role in meeting year-round recreation needs for field sports such as soccer, lacrosse, and cricket.



#### RECOMMENDATION

Township explore the development of an indoor turf facility from a regional perspective by establishing a committee with neighbouring municipalities. This committee would assess the potential for shared investment, usage, and long-term sustainability, ensuring the facility meets the broader needs of the surrounding communities.





## EVENTS

West Lincoln hosts a variety of special events throughout the year, including both municipally led events and community-organized events held on municipal property. These events bring residents and visitors together, fostering a strong sense of community and celebration.

From seasonal festivals to recreational activities and holiday events, West Lincoln offers many opportunities for people of all ages to engage, connect, and enjoy local traditions. The Municipality plays a key role in supporting and facilitating these events by providing venues, promotional support, resources, and logistical assistance to ensure their success.

### WEST LINCOLN LED COMMUNITY EVENTS:

- Family Day
- Easter Egg Hunt
- Earth Day
- Music, Market and Park It
- Movies in the Park
- Harvest Routes
- Santa Claus Parade
- Canada Day (Leisureplex Township Park)

Although there is no formal events process or policy currently in the municipality, it is a consideration for future as the community grows, and events continue to grow on both municipal and private property. An application process that streamlines both internal and external processes will better serve the community, increase customer satisfaction, while ensuring compliance and proper permitting.

West Lincoln has benefited from a dedicated contract events staff member, which proved to be an effective model for delivering high-quality municipal led events. Reinstating a dedicated event staff member would enhance the Municipality's ability to facilitate and expand community events, ensuring their long-term success while allowing other staff to focus on their core responsibilities.



## EVENTS



### RECOMMENDATION

West Lincoln develop a formal volunteer management strategy to actively engage, monitor, support, and train volunteers across all recreation, events and community programs. This strategy should include clear roles and responsibilities, onboarding procedures, ongoing training opportunities, and recognition efforts to ensure volunteers feel valued and equipped to contribute effectively. Streamline facility booking and event application processes by integrating them into a single, unified application system with dedication event meetings prior and post event.



### RECOMMENDATION

Township actively seek partnerships with third-party groups and service clubs to lead the delivery of community events, while providing administrative support to assist with logistics, promotion, and permitting.



### RECOMMENDATION

Township allocate additional resources toward event management, specifically to support the processing of event applications and the promotion of events.



### PARKS AND OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES

#### OVERALL PARKS STRATEGY AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The overall strategy for the Township's parks builds upon the objectives and policies set out in the Township's Official Plan, best practices in parks planning and delivery, and input received from the community through the engagement process undertaken in support of this Plan and through other related previous plans and initiatives such as the Smithville Master Community Plan.

The strategy is summarized in a series of Guiding Principles and collectively these are intended to serve as an overall directional framework expressing the values of the community and the desired outcomes with which parks-related investments, initiatives, policies and decision-making should be aligned and evaluated.



#### PRINCIPLE

### 1. EQUITABLE ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

Parks are well-distributed and designed to be easily accessible and well-connected to their service areas, by diverse transportation modes, offering a variety of recreational facilities and amenities ensuring that people of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can reach and enjoy them. Trails, bike lanes, cycling routes, transit (where/when available), pedestrian pathways, linkages and other corridors and greenspaces link created a linked open space network. Where possible, parks are creatively integrated and connected or co-located with natural areas, schools and/or indoor recreation facilities, as well as other open space areas such as stormwater management facilities, infrastructure and utility corridors where public safety is protected.

#### PRINCIPLE

### 2. FLEXIBLE, ADAPTIVE AND DIVERSE RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Parks offer a balanced mix of park types and recreational facilities, from quiet green spaces and natural areas to active sports fields and event grounds. This diversity of facilities supports year-round, multi-generational use, supporting individual and collective community health and well-being, social gathering and engagement, and active living. Parks include both user-fee based facilities that support organized programs and free outdoor recreation spaces for spontaneous play, reflecting the varied cultural, social, and physical activity needs and interests of the community. Flexible, multi-use spaces enable parks to evolve with community needs over time.

### PRINCIPLE 3. SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT AND ADAPTIVE DESIGN

Park design and management practices prioritize environmental sustainability by using native plants, low-impact development practices, renewable energy sources, and water-sensitive landscaping. Parks function as part of the green infrastructure system that enhances biodiversity, improves air and water quality, reduces the urban heat island effect, and contribute to establishing a linked natural heritage system. Parks support climate resilience and long-term adaptability through design that can withstand flooding, heat, and extreme weather, while also serving as emergency gathering spaces when needed.

### PRINCIPLE 4. INTEGRATED PARK DESIGN AND OPERATIONS

Parks are well-resourced with the necessary operational capacity and equipment for ongoing maintenance and renewal to accommodate maximized community benefits and use through functional, flexible, safe and welcoming public spaces. Operational resources are increased as needed to keep up with the development of new parks and as recreation facilities are added. Effective and efficient park operations are achieved through integrating park maintenance needs as part of the park planning and design process and by facilitating and leveraging volunteer capacity, partnerships, community engagement initiatives and joint use and maintenance opportunities.

### PRINCIPLE 5. SENSE OF PLACE, COMMUNITY GREENING & BEAUTIFICATION

Parks incorporate community-led greening and beautification projects and showcase public art, local heritage / history, significant landforms and natural features (e.g., karst) and other interpretive and educational elements that build civic pride and foster a sense of place and community. While the design of parks is guided by applicable standards and targets, each park is unique and anchored into its landscape setting through integrating park concept plans with urban design, creating visual landmarks, community focal points and memorable places. Park signs and naming contribute to connecting parks with local identity.



### 6. MAXIMIZING USE OF AVAILABLE TOOLS, ALIGNING INVESTMENTS

New parkland is acquired and new parks are developed to maintain service levels for the increasing population primarily through the use of growth-related land acquisition and funding tools to ensure “growth pays for growth”. Partnerships, grants, fundraising, donations and events support expansion and renewal of parks and facilities to meet growing and changing recreational needs and capacity, reducing reliance on taxbased funding. Multi-municipal and regional partnerships and similar opportunities are fully explored for major parks and outdoor recreation facility investments where mutual benefits can be achieved to better serve the population.

### 7. ALIGNING INVESTMENTS IN PARKS WITH LOCAL NEEDS AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Township’s investments in park resources are focused on servicing Township residents as the primary users to encourage their participation in outdoor recreational activities and to promote healthy, active lifestyles. Within this broad overall mandate, a key priority is to support the specialized needs of targeted populations, such as those with disabilities, seniors, young children, teens, low-income households, and new Canadians. Additionally, where possible investments in parks will align with the Township’s other strategic initiatives, such as community beautification and greening, economic/tourism development, achieving a robust and linked Natural Heritage System and public open space network, climate change mitigation/adaptation, and active transportation.



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Overall, online survey respondents were satisfied with the quality of parks for all ages. The age cohorts that respondents felt parks were least satisfactory for were individuals with disabilities (22%) and teens (18%).

Connectivity to trail networks and Multi-use courts were both chosen by survey respondents as top priorities for parks (31% each). Survey results reveal a three-way tie for a third ‘top priority’ between Upkeep/Maintenance/Beautification, Outdoor Skating Rink and All Season Trails (28%).





### CLASSIFICATION & STANDARDS

This section summarizes the recommended parkland classifications intended as an organizational framework to guide the effective planning of parks including a mix of park types and sizes offering a diverse range of facilities which are appropriately located and geographically distributed to optimally address the outdoor recreational needs of residents within defined service areas such as neighbourhoods, communities and Township-wide.

In addition, this section recommends municipal provision standards to guide planning for future outdoor recreation facilities based on population growth, participation and marketbased factors, and other indicators of facility needs.

### PARKLAND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

As summarized in the Situational Analysis Report (SAR), the Township currently has two different classification systems for parks including three park categories which are described in the Official Plan and four categories set out in the 2010 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The SAR concluded that these categories should be updated and refined to create a new, consolidated Parkland Classification System. The recommended parkland classifications are detailed in Table 1.



**Table 1: Parkland Classification System**

DESTINATION PARKS	
<p><b>Destination Parks</b> are larger multi-use, multi-facility and sport parks that are intended to serve Township-wide needs, often featuring both active play and passive recreational areas, and may be co-located with community centres and indoor recreation facilities or other similar venues.</p>	
<b>Primary Draw:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Significant multi-use outdoor recreational venue</li> <li>• Large, space extensive and/or specialized unique features for formal and informal outdoor recreation, major events and large gatherings</li> <li>• Examples of key primary facilities: formal sports fields including multi-field/ multi-sport facilities, multi-use/sport courts and/or flexible space and related supports for events and gatherings (e.g. pavilion and/or bandshell, spectator seating, picnic area), skatepark or similar features, splashpad, playground(s), community garden(s), trails / pathways</li> </ul>
<b>Key Supporting Facilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Washrooms</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Benches/seating area(s)/picnic table(s)</li> <li>• Pavilion/shelter/shade (trees and/or structures)</li> <li>• Accessible pathways</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Waste receptacles</li> </ul>
<b>Access/Location:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking/cycling/driving; Public transit route (if/when available or planned)</li> <li>• Along or near main road, street frontage</li> <li>• Connected to trail network</li> <li>• May be adjacent to / co-located with community centre, indoor recreation facilities or similar venues</li> <li>• May be adjacent to / integrated with natural areas</li> </ul>

DESTINATION PARKS	
<b>Service Area:</b>	Township-wide with potential opportunities for regional/tourism draw associated with events, tournaments and/or programming
<b>Optimal Size:</b>	Typically large (5 ha+), varies based on functional space needs for events, tournaments and programming, area context, and the number and range of facilities offered
<b>Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 locations / 26.3 ha (1.4 ha / 1,000 population)</li> <li>• Leisureplex Township Park (20.2 ha); West Lincoln Community Centre Park (6.1 ha)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Level Target:</b>	1.4 ha / 1,000 population
<b>Future Parkland Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (population 25,530): +9.4 ha</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (population 31,240): +8.0 ha</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (population 38,370): +10.0 ha</li> <li>• Total New Destination Park Area (2025-2051): +27.4 ha</li> </ul>
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 1: EXPAND LEISUREPLEX TOWNSHIP PARK</b></p> <p>The Township-owned property where the Leisureplex Township Park is currently located has a total land area of 45.9 ha (including the existing park area of 20.2 ha) which is sufficient land area to fulfill most of the future parkland need via expansion of the existing Leisureplex.</p> <p><b>OPTION 2: NEW DESTINATION PARK</b></p> <p>As the Leisureplex property is located within the Smithville Urban Area and is partially designated for long-term servicing and development in the Smithville Master Community Plan, consideration should be given to the eventual re-imagining the existing park area as a Community Park and planning for a new multi-field / multi-sport Township-wide Destination Park outside of (but near to) Smithville. Proceeds from the development of the land north of the existing park area should be allocated to the acquisition and establishment of the new Destination Park. As one potential option for further review and study in the future, consideration should be given to a location adjacent to or near the West Niagara Agricultural Centre &amp; Fairgrounds which is also across the road from Southward Community Park in Grimsby.</p>

DESTINATION PARKS	
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 2: NEW DESTINATION PARK</b> <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>Transportation access via multiple travel modes is a key consideration for this location or any alternative locations assessed in the future. Notably, this location is along Regional Road 73 which is identified as part of the Regional Cycling Network in the Region's Transportation Master Plan and Bikeways Master Plan. There are no fixed public transit routes within West Lincoln currently; however, Niagara Region Transit offers on-demand, shared Microtransit services. Planning for a new Destination Park in the future should ideally prioritize a location that is served by existing or planned public transit services in the area at that time, if possible.</p>
<b>Design Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sports fields should be oriented with consideration to sun/shade impacts, multi-field/ multi-use configuration, lighting, safety, land and operational efficiencies, tournament readiness, parking and ease of access</li> <li>• Mix of natural, manicured and hard-surface areas</li> <li>• Shade/rest areas</li> <li>• Visual landmarks/entrance features and signage</li> <li>• Support universal/barrier-free design and user safety</li> <li>• Sustainability features</li> <li>• Site layout, design and development should be based on individual park site plan and phasing plan</li> </ul>
<b>Programming and Use Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use for a range of active and passive activities</li> <li>• May include fee-based/reserved facilities and nonprogrammed spaces that are free for public use</li> <li>• Sports tournament and event venue</li> <li>• Varied flexible spaces for events and community use</li> <li>• Year-round use opportunities where appropriate</li> </ul>

COMMUNITY PARKS	
<p><b>Community Parks</b> provide a range of facilities that serve multiple neighbourhoods within Smithville or an entire hamlet area, or parks with specialized facilities that may draw users from beyond the local area.</p>	
<b>Primary Draw:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use and/or specialized facilities and areas for formal and informal outdoor recreation, events and gathering</li> <li>• Examples of key primary facilities: formal sports fields, multi-use/sport courts and/or flexible space and related supports for small to medium-sized events and gatherings (e.g. pavilion and/or bandshell, spectator seating, picnic area), skatepark, splashpad, playground(s), community garden(s), trail(s)/pathway loop(s))</li> </ul>
<b>Key Supporting Facilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking</li> <li>• Washrooms</li> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Benches/seating area(s)/picnic table(s)</li> <li>• Pavilion/shelter/shade (trees and/or structures)</li> <li>• Accessible pathways</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Waste receptacles</li> </ul>
<b>Access/Location:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking/cycling/driving</li> <li>• Along or near main road or collector road, street frontage</li> <li>• Connected to trail network</li> <li>• May be adjacent to/co-located with indoor recreation facilities/community hall/school(s)</li> <li>• May be adjacent to / integrated with natural areas</li> </ul>
<b>Service Area:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smithville: multiple neighbourhoods or entire community</li> <li>• Hamlets: entire hamlet and surrounding area</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Size:</b>	Minimum 2 ha for new Community Parks

COMMUNITY PARKS	
<b>Inventory:</b>	<p><b>Smithville:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 locations / 4.6 ha (0.5 ha / 1,000 population in Smithville)</li> <li>• Hank MacDonald Park (0.4 ha) and Rock Street Park (4.2 ha)</li> </ul> <p><b>Hamlets and Rural:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 locations / 13.7 ha (1.5 ha / 1,000 population in rural area/hamlets;</li> <li>• Caistor Community Park (Abingdon Community Park) (3.7 ha); Caistorville Library Park (0.9 ha); Old Bridge Park (Wellandport) (0.1 ha); Silverdale Community Park (0.3 ha); Twenty Park (St. Ann's) (1.2 ha); Wellandport Community Park (7.6 ha)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Level Target:</b>	Smithville: 0.5 ha / 1,000 population
<b>Future Parkland Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (population 14,270): +2.5 ha</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (population 21,940): +3.9 ha</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (population 29,030): +3.5 ha</li> <li>• Total New Community Park Area (2025-2051): +9.9 ha</li> </ul>
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 1: NEW COMMUNITY PARKS IN SMITHVILLE MCP</b></p> <p>The Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP) designates three areas for future Community Facilities for a range of potential indoor and/or outdoor recreational facilities and/or other public and community uses. The Community Facilities designation in the north and south community areas is adjacent to a future Neighbourhood Park, providing an opportunity to potentially create a larger Community Park in these locations, co-located with future indoor recreation facilities and/or schools.</p> <p><b>OPTION 2: RE-IMAGINING LEISUREPLEX TOWNSHIP PARK</b></p> <p>The third area designated for Community Facilities is located in the west area within the Leisureplex property and is the largest of the three designated areas. Re-imagining the existing Leisureplex park as a Community Park over the long term presents an opportunity to meet the overall need for additional parkland in this category co-located with potential indoor recreational facilities, a school or other community facilities.</p>

## PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES

COMMUNITY PARKS	
<b>Design Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sports fields should be oriented with consideration to sun/shade impacts, multi-field/multi-use configuration, lighting, safety, efficiency, parking and ease of access</li><li>• Mix of natural, manicured and hard-surface areas</li><li>• Shade/rest areas</li><li>• Support universal/barrier-free design and user safety</li><li>• Sustainability features</li><li>• Site layout, design and development should be based on individual park site plan and phasing plan</li></ul>
<b>Programming and Use Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Multi-use for a range of active and passive activities</li><li>• May include fee-based/reserved facilities and nonprogrammed spaces that are free for public use</li><li>• Year-round use opportunities where appropriate</li></ul>

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS	
<b>Neighbourhood Parks</b> provide a range of facilities that serve multiple neighbourhoods within Smithville or an entire hamlet area, or parks with specialized facilities that may draw users from beyond the local area.	
<b>Primary Draw:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Playgrounds and similar spontaneous play features and local scale amenities meeting basic outdoor recreation needs for the neighbourhood</li><li>• Examples of key primary facilities: playground(s), multi-use court/basketball court, open/informal play areas or greenspace/commons area</li></ul>
<b>Key Supporting Facilities:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bike racks</li><li>• Benches/seating area(s)/picnic table(s)</li><li>• Shelter/shade (trees and/or structures)</li><li>• Accessible pathways</li><li>• Waste receptacles</li></ul>



NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS	
<b>Access/Location:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking/cycling</li> <li>• Along or near local road, street frontage</li> <li>• Connected to trail network</li> <li>• May be adjacent to or near school(s)</li> <li>• May be adjacent to / integrated with natural areas</li> </ul>
<b>Service Area:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smithville: local residential neighbourhood</li> <li>• 400-500m (5-10 minutes walking) preferred</li> <li>• 600-800m (15-20 minutes walking) maximum</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Size:</b>	Minimum 0.5 ha / up to 2 ha, for new Neighbourhood Parks
<b>Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 locations / 2.8 ha (0.3 ha / 1,000 population in Smithville)</li> <li>• Alma Acres Park (1.2 ha); Anastasio Park (0.7 ha); Dennis Drive Park (0.5 ha); Harvest Gate Park (0.2 ha); Streamside Park (0.2 ha)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Level Target:</b>	Smithville: 0.5 ha/1,000 population
<b>Future Parkland Needs:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (population 14,270): +2.5 ha</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (population 21,940): +3.9 ha</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (population 29,030): +3.5 ha</li> <li>• Total New Neighbourhood Park Area (2025-2051): +9.9 ha</li> </ul>
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 1: PLANNED NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS</b></p> <p>Several new Neighbourhood Park locations are planned in new development areas of Smithville including three park blocks within draft plans of subdivision in the NW Quadrant Secondary Plan totalling approximately 1.9 hectares of parkland (plus related blocks for trails totalling approximately 0.5 hectare), and in the East Smithville Secondary Plan which designates a conceptual location for a future Neighbourhood Park of approximately 0.7 hectare in size. Additionally, a total eight conceptual locations for Neighbourhood Parks are designated in the Smithville MCP which would provide approximately 8 to 10 hectares of parkland.</p>

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS	
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 1: PLANNED NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS</b> <i>(continued)</i></p> <p>Acquisition of these planned parklands through mandatory dedication requirements as a requirement of development of the land for residential and other land uses will fulfill the calculated land need for future Neighbourhood Parks based on the forecast population growth in Smithville to 2051.</p> <p><b>OPTION 2: INTEGRATION WITH COMMUNITY PARKS, SCHOOLS AND STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITIES</b></p> <p>If some of the land designated for future Neighbourhood Parks in the Smithville MCP is needed for Community Parks as contemplated under Option 1 for Community Parks, some additional parkland may be required to achieve the total estimated parkland need for Neighbourhood Parks to 2051. To supplement the supply of public open space and enhance access, consideration should be given to the potential co-location of appropriately-scaled and located facilities near or adjacent to stormwater management areas where public safety can be adequately protected. Additionally, opportunities for playgrounds and other appropriate outdoor recreational facilities as part of future school sites should be explored with the applicable School Board where joint use and community access and other mutual benefits and efficiencies can be achieved where possible.</p>
<b>Design Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mix of natural, manicured and hard-surface areas</li> <li>• Shade/rest areas</li> <li>• Support universal/barrier-free design and user safety</li> <li>• Sustainability features</li> <li>• Site layout, design and development should be based on an approved concept and park development plan</li> </ul>
<b>Programming and Use Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi-use for a range of active and passive activities</li> <li>• Non-programmed spaces that are free for public use</li> <li>• Year-round use opportunities where appropriate</li> </ul>

LINEAR PARKS AND GREENSPACE CORRIDORS	
<p><b>Linear Parks and Greenspace Corridors</b> include trails, pathways and other open space corridors that connect to parks and/or provide walking and cycling routes as part of the broader on- and off-road active transportation network.</p>	
<p><b>Primary Draw:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking, jogging, running, hiking and/or cycling/mountain biking, for recreation, fitness or active transportation</li> <li>• Convenient access to community destinations and the outdoors/nature and related recreational activities</li> <li>• Examples of key primary facilities: paved multi-use trails, access pathways/linkages, nature trails, seasonal trails, trail loops, outdoor fitness equipment/fitness stations</li> </ul>
<p><b>Key Supporting Facilities:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike racks</li> <li>• Benches/seating/rest areas</li> <li>• Trailheads, markers</li> <li>• Regulatory and wayfinding signage</li> <li>• Lighting</li> <li>• Educational and interpretive elements, as appropriate</li> <li>• Waste receptacles</li> </ul>
<p><b>Access/Location:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Off-Road Primary Trail</b> – multi-use, connections to major destinations, support moderate to high levels of use, no significant environmental constraints, where possible full accessibility and/or winter maintenance</li> <li>• <b>Off-Road Secondary Trail</b> – support recreation opportunities for the local community, such as dog-walking or an evening stroll, corridors and linkages where adequate access and visibility can be provided for regular walking, limited cycling may also be accommodated</li> <li>• <b>On-Road Primary Corridor</b> – within or adjacent to arterial road right-of-way, such as sidewalks, roadside multi-use trails and bike lanes, provide connections to major destinations and/or link off-road trails</li> <li>• <b>On-Road Secondary Corridor</b> – within or adjacent to collector or local road right-of-way, provide local connections to On-Road Primary Corridor</li> <li>• <b>Nature Trails</b> – within and along the edges of natural areas and linkages where low levels of use are expected and can be sustained</li> </ul>

LINEAR PARKS AND GREENSPACE CORRIDORS	
<b>Service Area:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary routes intended for Township-wide or community-wide access/use and connectivity</li> <li>• Secondary routes provide local neighbourhood or community routes and/or connections</li> <li>• Nature Trails provide loops or linkages for limited use</li> </ul>
<b>Optimal Size:</b>	Based on trail type and location (see Smithville Trails and Corridors Master Plan – to be updated in 2026)
<b>Inventory:</b>	See Map #
<b>Provision Level Target:</b>	See recommended trail improvements and new trails
<b>Future Parkland Needs:</b>	As required to implement planned new trails/connections
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 1: EXPANSION OF SMITHVILLE TRAILS NETWORK</b></p> <p>Within Smithville, extension of existing trails and new trail connections and other linear parks and greenspace corridors are planned within Secondary Plan areas and are to be implemented in draft plans of subdivision for new developments. New trail corridors are included within the draft plans for new residential subdivisions in the Northwest Quadrant Secondary Plan area, and conceptual locations for potential trail connections are identified in the East Smithville Secondary Plan. Additionally, the Smithville MCP identifies several conceptual trail routes to further expand and connect the trails system and is based upon creating a linked system of public open spaces and natural areas.</p> <p><b>OPTION 2: NEW DESTINATION PARK TRAIL ROUTE</b></p> <p>If land for a new Designation Park is acquired as contemplated in Option 2 under that park category, consideration should be given to planning for on- and off-road routes connecting Smithville to the new Destination Park to facilitate walking and cycling access. The West Niagara Agricultural Centre &amp; Fairgrounds is located approximately 6 kilometres from the northwest limit of Smithville via roadways (approximately 20 minutes cycling time) or approximately 4 kilometres in a straight-line distance.</p>

LINEAR PARKS AND GREENSPACE CORRIDORS	
<b>Options and Directions:</b>	<p><b>OPTION 3: SMITHVILLE LAGOONS NATURE PARK &amp; TRAILS</b></p> <p>During the Smithville MCP process it was noted that a potential opportunity exists for public outdoor recreational opportunities at the lagoons located to the south-east of Smithville, including potential onwater and waterside activities. Based on air photo review of the site, it appears that there may be opportunities for nature trails and/or multi-use pathways within the greenspace corridors located between the lagoons. With appropriate supporting amenities such as picnic tables, shelters, a trailhead and route mapping/markers, docks, small craft/boat launches and other supports for water access for boating, fishing and other compatible activities, as well as birdwatching and other passive recreational activities, present the opportunity for a significant nature park destination.</p>
<b>Design Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards vary based on trail type and location</li> <li>• Incorporate clearly defined access points, seating/rest areas and wayfinding/signage</li> </ul>
<b>Programming and Use Considerations:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-programmed spaces that are free for public use</li> <li>• Outdoor education and nature appreciation</li> <li>• Year-round use opportunities where appropriate</li> </ul>

## RECOMMENDATION

Adopt the Parkland Classification System as an overall framework and guidelines for the categorization and acquisition of parkland, determining the appropriate locations and geographic distribution of future parks in new development areas, the type and range of outdoor recreation facilities and supporting amenities, park design and renewal considerations, as well as park programming and uses.



## RECOMMENDATION

As part of the Township's next Official Plan Review, update the Park and Recreation Hierarchy in Section 9.4 to be consistent with this Recreation and Parks Plan.





### PARKLAND ACQUISITION STANDARDS

The Planning Act enables the Township to require the dedication of land for parks or other public recreational purposes, or cash-in-lieu thereof, as a requirement of land development for certain types of land uses. This is guided by the Township's Official Plan and By-law No. 2019-87 which prescribes a flat fee for cash-in-lieu of parkland for rural lots while the cash-in-lieu amount for hamlet lots and urban lots is based on 5% of the appraised value or 2% for commercial/industrial land.

The Planning Act enables municipalities to require the dedication of parkland or a payment in lieu for up to 2% of the land for industrial or commercial uses and 5% of the land for residential and other uses. An alternative parkland dedication rate of 1 hectare per 600 residential units may be used to determine the amount of parkland required, or the cash-in-lieu equivalent of 1 hectare per 1,000 residential units, if the municipality has prepared and made publicly available a "Parks Plan" that examines the need for parkland in the municipality. It is expected that the 5% parkland dedication requirement will generally yield the most parkland from development based on the anticipated density of future residential development in Smithville and throughout West Lincoln more generally. This document is intended as the Township's Parks Plan under the Planning Act for the purposes of enabling the alternative standards for parkland and cash-in-lieu thereof for any residential developments proposing a density that would yield more parkland using the alternative standard than the application of the standard 5% land dedication requirement.

Most new park locations will be acquired within the Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP) area as the primary new development area for accommodating planned population and housing growth to the year 2051. The MCP identifies the conceptual locations for eight new Neighbourhood Parks centrally located within each of the



future neighbourhoods planned for the north, south and west community areas, each having an identified 400-metre primary service area with the objective of providing future residents with access to a local park within a 5-minute walking distance where possible. The MCP also provides the policy framework for establishing more detailed Block Plans which may refine the park locations, and directs that the new Neighbourhood Parks shall be centrally located with highly visible street frontage on at least one adjoining street along at least one quarter of the park perimeter, adjacent to schools and/or other community facilities where possible, and where the street layout and walkways support direct access for pedestrians and cyclists. A minimum parkland size of one hectare is required for each Neighbourhood Park, up to three hectares to support a range of facilities and amenities, and the MCP also enables the Township to consider small parkettes in addition and supplementary to the required Neighbourhood Parks to enhance access and supporting the achievement of the target parkland provision level.

As Block Plans, plans of subdivision/condominium and site plans are developed and implemented for the MCP area, some development parcels/plans may not have sufficient land area to yield the required parkland to achieve the required parkland

area for the planned Neighbourhood Park for that area of the MCP. As such, the Township may need to acquire more parkland from certain development parcels than the mandatory dedication requirements of the Planning Act prescribe, through land purchase. Through cash-in-lieu of parkland sourced from other developments, the Township should establish a reserve to fund these lands purchases to ensure that the number, location, size and distribution of new Neighbourhood Parks aligns with the MCP. This approach is based on the principle that, in general, from a community benefit and operational maintenance perspective, it is preferable to establish larger and more centralized Neighbourhood Parks as envisioned by the MCP rather than several smaller park or parkette locations limited by the amount of parkland dedication from each individual subdivision/condominium/site plan development. The MCP Block Plan process is intended to provide the means for coordinating parkland dedications and provisioning by establishing an integrated and coordinated plan that is not limited to the boundaries of an individual development parcel.

Additionally, the MCP illustrates the conceptual locations for new trails and active transportation corridors which are intended to be required over and above parkland dedication requirements utilizing Planning Act section 51 (25)(b) to require pedestrian and bicycle pathways and by locating trails within required servicing and utility corridors where possible and within components of the natural heritage system where appropriate and permitted by the policies of the MCP.



### RECOMMENDATION

Prepare and adopt a comprehensive Parkland Dedication By-law in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning Act to establish the Township's regulatory requirements for the dedication of land for parks or other public recreational purposes and to maximize the amount of parkland that the Township may acquire under the legislation in order to best meet community needs and increasing demands associated with planned growth and development.



### RECOMMENDATION

As part of the Township's next Official Plan Review, update the parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu or parkland policies in Section 9 to align with current legislative requirements under the Planning Act, this Recreation and Parks Plan, and related best practices. The policies should also be updated to distinguish between parkland dedication and land requirements for trails. Where possible, the dedication of rights-of-way for pedestrian pathways and bicycle pathways should be required under section 51 (25)(b) over and above mandatory parkland dedications.



### RECOMMENDATION

Plan for the acquisition of parkland via mandatory dedications augmented by land purchase using cash-in-lieu reserves where necessary to acquire the amount of parkland needed for each new Neighbourhood Park planned for the MCP area based on the service areas and park location, size and other related criteria set out in the MCP. The MCP Block Plan process should be used to establish where additional parkland is required over and above the dedication requirements of the individual development parcel where the park will be located.



### RECOMMENDATION

Acquire land for trails over and above the mandatory parkland dedications in the MCP area by utilizing Planning Act section 51 (25)(b) to require pedestrian and bicycle pathways and by locating trails within other land required for Township purposes or other conveyances and easements such as required servicing and utility corridors and components of the natural heritage system where appropriate and permitted pursuant to the MCP.



### OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS

Future investments in outdoor recreation facilities within parks should be based on a consideration of facility provision standards. This helps to ensure that provision levels are appropriate, achievable and sustainable in consideration of the size of the community with the continued growth of the Township's population and that the level of investment is balanced with the level of community benefit that will be achieved. Other influencing factors that should also be considered include evolving demographics, participation rates, and recreational trends. Table 2 summarizes the current inventory of existing outdoor recreation facilities, recommended provision level standards, future needs and related considerations.

**Table 2: Outdoor Recreation Facility Standards**

SOCCER FIELDS	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisureplex: 1 senior field with lights; 3 senior fields (no lights); 2 junior field (no lights); 2 mini fields (no lights)</li> <li>• Rock Street Park: 2 junior fields (no lights)</li> <li>• Caistor Community Park: 1 junior field (no lights)</li> <li>• <b>Total: 10 fields (9.5 senior field equivalents)</b> (plus 1 practice field / greenspace at West Lincoln Community Centre Park)</li> </ul>
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smithville Public School: 1 junior field (no lights)</li> <li>• St. Martin Catholic Elementary School: 1 junior field (no lights)</li> <li>• Caistor Central School: 2 junior fields (no lights)</li> <li>• Gainsborough Public School: 1 junior field (no lights)</li> <li>• John Calvin School: 2 senior fields (no lights)</li> <li>• Cairn Christ School: 1 junior field (no lights)</li> <li>• Former school sites (Margaret St., College St.): 2 junior fields (no lights)</li> <li>• <b>Total: 9 fields (7.25 senior field equivalents)</b></li> </ul>

SOCCER FIELDS	
<b>Field Utilization Profile:</b>	<p>For the 2025 season, typical weekly field bookings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A total of 18.25 hours of weekday evening bookings of the one senior field with lights (Field #2)</li> <li>• A combined total of 18.5 hours of weekday evening bookings of the three senior fields (no lights) (Fields #1, #3, and #4);</li> <li>• A combined total of 8.25 hours of weekday evening bookings of the two junior fields (Fields #5 and #8);</li> <li>• A combined total of 10 hours of weekday evening bookings of the two mini fields (Fields #6 and #7).</li> <li>• The fields are not typically used on weekends except for two weekend tournaments and one to two Saturdays for the end of season soccer jamboree;</li> <li>• The practice field / greenspace area at the West Lincoln Community Centre Park is typically booked for 9.75 hours total in the weekday evenings including sport ball, touch football and soccer.</li> <li>• User groups have noted limited parking as a constraint to greater utilization of the Leisureplex fields and that field at the West Lincoln Community Centre Park is preferred from a parking perspective.</li> </ul>
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<p>Municipal Fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 field : 2,060 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 field : 1,060 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 field : 60 participants (West Lincoln Youth Soccer Club)</li> </ul> <p>Municipal and Non-Municipal Fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 field : 1,105 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 field : 675 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 field : 34 participants (West Lincoln Youth Soccer Club)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	<p>Municipal Fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 field: 1,500 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 : 100 registered participants (children and youth)</li> </ul>

SOCCER FIELDS	
Future Needs:	<p>Smithville:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2025-2031 (population 14,270): +0.75 field</li><li>• 2032-2041 (population 21,940): +5 fields</li><li>• 2042-2051 (population 29,030): +4.75 fields</li><li>• Total New Soccer Field Needs (2025-2051): +10.5 fields</li></ul> <p>Participant-based Projection of Future Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2025-2031 (982 registered participants): +0.25 field</li><li>• 2032-2041 (1,509 registered participants): +5.25 fields</li><li>• 2042-2051 (1,997 registered participants): +5 fields</li><li>• Total New Soccer Field Needs (2025-2051): +10.5 fields</li></ul>
Options/Strategies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to monitor field usage and growth/change in the number of participants annually</li><li>• Optimize scheduling/availability in consultation with user groups</li><li>• Work with schools to maximize opportunities for community access to school fields, plan for joint use facilities with new school developments where possible</li><li>• Consider lighting and other upgrades to existing fields where this will contribute to meeting increased capacity needs/hours of play</li><li>• Consult with Town of Grimsby regarding potential availability of ball diamonds capacity at Southward Park</li></ul>





BASEBALL DIAMONDS	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leisureplex: 2 senior ball diamonds with lights</li> <li>• West Lincoln Community Centre Park: 1 senior ball diamond (with lights)</li> <li>• Caistor Community Park: 1 senior ball diamond (with lights); 1 junior ball diamond (with lights)</li> <li>• <b>Total: 5 ball diamonds (7 senior ball diamond equivalents)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	John Calvin School: 2 informal/practice diamonds (no lights)
<b>Ball Diamonds Utilization Profile:</b>	<p>For the 2025 season, typical weekly ball diamond bookings include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A combined total of 32 hours of weekday evening bookings of the two senior ball diamonds with lights at the Leisureplex (16 hours each per week) for slo-pitch;</li> <li>• A combined total of 5 hours of weekend (Sunday evening) bookings of the two senior ball diamonds with lights at the Leisureplex (2.5 hours each per weekend) for slopitch;</li> <li>• A combined total of 32 hours of weekday evening bookings of the two ball diamonds with lights at Caistor Community Park (16 hours each) for the programs run by the Caistor Minor Softball Association;</li> <li>• No weekend bookings for the ball diamonds at Caistor Community Park;</li> <li>• No bookings of the senior ball diamond with lights at West Lincoln Community Centre Park (not used for organized ball programming).</li> </ul>
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<p>Municipal Ball Diamonds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 ball diamond : 2,650 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 ball diamond : 2,070 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 ball diamond : 27 participants (Caistor Minor Baseball &amp; T-Ball)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	<p>Municipal Ball Diamonds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 ball diamond: 3,000 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 : 100 registered participants (children and youth)</li> </ul>

BASEBALL DIAMONDS	
<b>Future Needs:</b>	<p>Smithville:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (population 14,270): +0 ball diamonds</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (population 21,940): +2.75 ball diamonds</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (population 29,030): +2.5 ball diamonds</li> <li>• Total New Ball Diamond Needs (2025-2051): +5.25 ball diamonds</li> </ul> <p>Participant-based Projection of Future Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (306 registered participants): +0 ball diamonds (surplus of nearly 4 ball diamonds)</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (1,509 registered participants): +0 ball diamonds (surplus of 2.25 ball diamonds)</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (1,997 registered participants): +0 fields (surplus of 0.75 ball diamonds)</li> <li>• Total New Ball Diamond Needs (2025-2051): +0 ball diamonds (surplus of 0.75 ball diamonds)</li> </ul>
<b>Options/Strategies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor ball diamond usage and growth/change in the number of participants annually</li> <li>• Optimize scheduling/availability in consultation with user groups</li> <li>• Consider lighting and other upgrades to existing fields where this will contribute to meeting increased capacity needs / hours of play</li> <li>• Consolidate / cluster new ball diamonds for operational efficiencies, shared facilities and tournament-readiness</li> <li>• Consult with Town of Grimsby regarding potential availability of ball diamonds capacity at Southward Park</li> </ul>

MULTI-USE COURTS, TENNIS/PICKLEBALL, BASKETBALL COURTS	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellandport Community Park: 2 tennis courts</li> <li>• Basketball halfcourt at Fort Smithville Youth Centre (0.5 full court equivalent)</li> </ul>
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gainsborough Public School: 1 basketball court</li> <li>• Caistor Central School: 1 basketball court</li> <li>• St. Martin Catholic Elementary School: 1 basketball court</li> <li>• John Calvin School: 1 basketball court</li> <li>• Smithville Christian High School: 3 tennis courts</li> <li>• Former school site on College Street: 2 basketball courts</li> </ul>
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<p>Municipal Facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tennis court : 9,275 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• (no municipal tennis or pickleball courts in Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 basketball court : 37,110 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 basketball court : 18,635 residents (Smithville)</li> </ul> <p>Municipal and Non-Municipal Facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tennis court : 3,710 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 tennis court : 3,105 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 basketball court : 2,855 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 basketball court : 2,070 residents (Smithville)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	<p>Municipal Tennis / Pickleball Courts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 court : 5,000 residents (Smithville)</li> </ul> <p>Municipal Basketball Courts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 court : 1,000 youth ages 10-19 (Smithville)</li> </ul>

MULTI-USE COURTS, TENNIS/PICKLEBALL, BASKETBALL COURTS	
<b>Future Needs:</b>	<p>Smithville:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (population 14,270): +2.75 tennis/pickleball courts and +1.25 basketball courts</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (population 21,940): +1.5 tennis/pickleball courts and +1 basketball court</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (population 29,030): +1.5 tennis/pickleball courts and +0.75 basketball court</li> <li>• Total New Multi-use / Sport Court Needs (2025-2051): +5.75 tennis / pickleball courts and +3 basketball courts</li> </ul>
<b>Options/Strategies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For tennis / pickleball, priority should be given to a membership-based facility funded and programmed by a volunteer-based club with facilities clustered at one primary location within Smithville, with some regular open play hours for free public use</li> <li>• Basketball / multi-use courts (which may also be useable/designed for ball hockey and other hardcourt activities) should be planned in Community Parks (typically full courts or multi-courts where possible) and Neighbourhood Parks (half-courts)</li> <li>• Continue to coordinate planning for tennis/pickleball and basketball/multi-use courts with existing and new schools to maximize community access while avoiding duplication of facilities in the same service area</li> </ul>



SPLASHPAD FACILITIES	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	One splashpad at West Lincoln Community Centre Park
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 splashpad : 18,554 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 splashpad : 2,491 children ages 0-9 (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 splashpad : 9,318 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 splashpad : 1,321 children ages 0-9 (Smithville)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	1 splashpad : 3,000 children ages 0-9 (Smithville)
<b>Future Needs:</b>	Smithville: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (0-9 population 2,022): +0 splashpads</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (0-9 population 3,110): +0 splashpads</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (0-9 population 4,114): +0.4 splashpads</li> </ul>
<b>Options/Strategies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on the provision standard, the need for a second splashpad location is a long-term perspective.</li> <li>• Monitor and track utilization of the existing location and opportunities to improve/ add capacity as needed, including additional supporting facilities (e.g. seating, shade/ shelter, additional waterplay features).</li> <li>• The Leisureplex is a potential long-term option for a second location as the west expansion area of Smithville developments in the future.</li> <li>• Consider smaller scale water play features as part of new parks to provide geographic access/distribution within the south and east community areas of Smithville as those areas develop.</li> </ul>

PLAYGROUNDS	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	Twelve (12) existing parks have playgrounds including: Alma Park, Anastasio Park, Caistor Community Park (Abingdon), Caistorville Library Park, Dennis Drive Park, Harvest Gate Park, Leisureplex Township Park, Rock Street Park, Silverdale Community Park, Streamside Park, Wellandport Community Park and West Lincoln Community Centre Park
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• John Calvin School Playground (Smithville)</li> <li>• Cairn Christian School Playground (Smithville)</li> <li>• Former school site on College Street – Playground (Smithville)</li> <li>• Gainsborough Public School Playground</li> <li>• Caistor Central School Playground</li> </ul>
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<p>Municipal Playgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 playground : 1,546 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 208 children ages 0-9 (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 1,165 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 165 children ages 0-9 (Smithville)</li> </ul> <p>Municipal and Non-Municipal Playgrounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 playground : 1,091 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 147 children ages 0-9 (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 847 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 playground : 120 children ages 0-9 (Smithville)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	1 playground within 400 metres of the majority of residential homes within new neighbourhoods (800m acceptable as secondary service area)



PLAYGROUNDS	
<b>Future Needs:</b>	<p>Smithville:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New playgrounds should be planned within the future Neighbourhood Parks including the NW Quadrant Secondary Plan (3 locations), East Smithville Secondary Plan (1 location), and the Smithville Master Community Plan (8 locations)</li> </ul>
<b>Options/Strategies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renew/replace the existing playground at the Leisureplex Township Park</li> <li>• Determine whether to replace the existing playground at Silverdale Community Park</li> <li>• Develop a playground replacement/renewal program for all other existing municipal play equipment</li> <li>• Consider adult-oriented/multi-generational fitness station in one existing or future park location or along a trail used for running/jogging</li> <li>• Provide barrier-free path of travel to existing playgrounds and as part of all new/ replacement playground installations</li> <li>• Consider fixed concrete curbing around existing and new playground installations to contain safety surface materials, with curb ramp/depression at accessible entry point</li> <li>• Consider developing one fully accessible playground with rubberized or synthetic turf surfacing at West Lincoln Community Centre Park or Leisureplex</li> <li>• Incorporate at least one accessible play component within each new and renewed playground</li> <li>• Consider theming and naming opportunities to provide variety and promote unique and innovative play features differentiated by park and neighbourhood</li> </ul>



SKATEPARK	
<b>Current Inventory:</b>	One (1) location at West Lincoln Community Centre Park (Smithville)
<b>Non-municipal Inventory:</b>	N/A
<b>Existing Provision Level:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 skatepark : 18,554 residents (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 skatepark : 2,443 youth ages 10-19 (Township-wide)</li> <li>• 1 skatepark : 9,318 residents (Smithville)</li> <li>• 1 skatepark : 1,140 youth ages 10-19 (Smithville)</li> </ul>
<b>Provision Standards:</b>	Ranges between 1 : 6,000 youth and 1 : 13,000 youth
<b>Future Needs:</b>	Smithville: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2025-2031 (10-19 population 1,746): +0 skateparks</li> <li>• 2032-2041 (10-19 population 2,685): +0 skateparks</li> <li>• 2042-2051 (10-19 population 3,552): +0 skateparks</li> </ul>
<b>Options/Strategies:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue to monitor usage and condition of existing skatepark/equipment. If need/demands are evident for more or renewed equipment, consider the opportunity to incorporate new features with the existing skatepark.</li> <li>• Consider smaller scale skatepark features as part of new parks to provide geographic access / distribution within the south and east community areas of Smithville as those areas develop.</li> </ul>





### RECOMMENDATION

Plan for the future needs for outdoor recreation facilities to meet the demands of growth and development based on consideration of the provision-level standards and option/strategies outlined herein for each type of facility.



### RECOMMENDATION

Continue to obtain program participation data from user groups and record/track this data as part of annual monitoring and to support periodic updates to the future needs forecast for outdoor recreation facilities.



### RECOMMENDATION

Review and monitor population growth and estimate actual growth annually based on building permits and other available data to support the ongoing assessment of outdoor recreation facility needs and track population changes to update the future needs forecast. Acquire and review census data to verify/refine annual estimates every 5 years. The future needs forecasts should also be updated to reflect any future changes to the projected population growth and as the planning period is extended.



### RECOMMENDATION

Consult with user groups and the public on an ongoing and periodic basis to obtain input to future outdoor recreation facility needs, timing, location options and strategies, funding, partnerships and implementation plans.



### RECOMMENDATION

Where a clear and sustained need has been demonstrated for additional capacity, look firstly to optimize the scheduling and availability of existing facilities, secondly to opportunities for accommodate the increase in need via available or planned non-municipal facilities or joint/multi-municipal facilities, thirdly to upgrades to existing municipal facilities, and lastly to the development of new municipal facilities.



### RECOMMENDATION

If demands are identified for a new type of facility (e.g. cricket pitch, bocce courts) that is not currently provided in the municipality, and the need has been adequately demonstrated, consideration should be given to an interim facility location on a pilot basis to determine actual utilization levels and sustainability of the program(s) and to assist with planning and design for a potential permanent facility. Multi-use opportunities should be accommodated wherever possible.



### PARK DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

There are a number of trends and practices that influence the design and development of parks, such as standards and guidelines for accessibility, safety, crime prevention, sustainability, connectivity, signage/wayfinding, operations/maintenance, site conditions/surrounding context and local history, landforms and significant natural features, flexible and adaptive facilities to support multi-use opportunities, choice of materials and surfacing, landscape treatments and use of native plantings, “placemaking” and other factors.

The Township’s Official Plan provides some overall direction for parks design, directing that new parks shall be sited in visually prominent locations, provided with basic service requirements and developed in accordance with the Township’s parkland standards. For Neighbourhood Parks, the Official Plan seeks a mix of active (80%) and passive (20%) recreation spaces and directs that the land should be relatively flat and well-drained while allowing for up to 20% of each site to be developed with contour variations to create attractive park-like settings. A similar level of design direction is provided for District Parks (re-classified as Community Parks or Destination Parks in this Plan) with larger formal recreation facilities provided for organized sports/programming including night-lighting, with peripheral contour variations and berms/plantings separating different types of facilities. For Linear Parks and Greenspace Corridors, the Official Plan directs that these locations should be primarily designed for pedestrian and cycling trails and pathways to connect parks and recreation facilities, take advantage of natural features and follow the contours of the land, and be clearly identified with lighting preferably provided.







### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### PRIORITIES HIGHLIGHTED IN ONLINE SURVEY RESPONSE COMMENTS:

- Expanded/Linking & Year-Round Trails and Paths
- Naturalization & Increased Tree Canopy
- Public Access to Natural Areas and Ponds
- More Parking
- Gardening Spaces/Plots for hobby/volunteer sustenance gardening
- More Neighborhood Parks & Improved Park Security and accessibility
- Picnic/Benches and accessible walkways at Playgrounds
- Enhance splashpad areas and connect to sports fields (e.g., Rock St, Leisureplex).

The Township's Urban Design Manual (2016) provides further design guidance for parks as part of the broader public streetscape and open space areas of Smithville specifically, recognizing that parks do not exist nor function in isolation but rather are intrinsically linked with other elements of the public realm and with the natural heritage system. The Urban Design Manual also highlights the place-making role of parks, noting that they "anchor development by providing character and identity to a neighbourhood." The Urban Open Space Guidelines seek to ensure that parks and other open spaces complement built form and architecture, meet accessibility standards, create areas and opportunities for all ages, incorporate durable and interactive public art or water features, use a variety of soft landscaping as well as decorative and permeable surface paving, provide shade and pedestrian-scale lighting, include historical and interpretive elements and attractive site furnishings, and offer nature-viewing opportunities. Walkway and Trail Guidelines promote the use of natural surfaces complementary to the setting, wayfinding and trail markers as well as shade and lighting, and the use of fencing delineate the public/private property limits and protect sensitive natural areas. Notably, the Township is in the process of updating and aligning the Urban Design Manual for the expanded urban area of Smithville by creating the Smithville Master Community Plan (MCP) Urban Design Guidelines. The new Guidelines, once finalized and adopted, will provide design direction for future improvements to the Leisureplex Township Park, the future Neighbourhood Parks, Multi-Use Trails and Stormwater Management Facilities identified in the MCP.

This Recreation and Parks Plan is intended to complement and align with the Township's planning policies and design guidelines summarized above by establishing the overall parks strategy and guiding principles as set out in Section 1 and providing further design considerations for each park type as outlined in Section 2.1, Parkland Classification System. Additionally, a series of park design considerations and guidelines are recommended as summarized below.



### PARK DESIGN GUIDELINES

<b>General Park Design Direction/Strategy</b>	<p>Ensure that all new park design and renewal plans comply with applicable accessibility and safety standards, with priority to universal design and access.</p> <p>Provide a range of functional and flexible areas and facilities for a range of multi-use and multi-generational recreation opportunities, promote high-quality urban form and maximize aesthetic benefits, integrate with the natural environment, local and historical context, and address operational requirements to ensure long term sustainability.</p>
<b>“Green” and Efficient Parks Design</b>	<p>Consider park designs that will reduce energy, water use and environmental impacts, and that integrate recycled/environmentally-friendly materials and landscape treatments that support reduced maintenance requirements and sustainable operations. The Township may want to consider incentives such as enhanced park designs and developments to assist projects in meeting relevant sustainability standards such as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighbourhood Development (LEED-ND) certification, subject to further policies and criteria as may be established in the Official Plan.</p>
<b>Comprehensive Design Approach, Place-making, and Unique Identity</b>	<p>Ensure a comprehensive approach to designing parks built upon an understanding of local needs, site context and a full range of influencing factors as part of the design process, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historic and forecast population growth, demographic characteristics and planned development within the park service area;</li> <li>• Current parkland and facility supply/provision levels and available land supply in the service area;</li> <li>• Evolving demographic, recreational and design trends;</li> <li>• Current demand and forecast growth in participation in sports and other programmed activities;</li> <li>• Partnership opportunities and the role of other service/facility providers (e.g. school boards);</li> <li>• Input from the public, stakeholders and Township departments;</li> <li>• Geographic deficiencies and gaps/overlaps in facility and service provision;</li> <li>• Park location and landscape context, history, surroundings, significant landforms and natural characteristics;</li> <li>• Park and facilities branding / naming and the use of design themes and unique elements to create identity and memorable places and avoid “cookie-cutter” design.</li> </ul>

<b>Safe and Visible Parks</b>	Consider applying the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) in the design of parks to maximized public safety and prevent undesired behaviour by the elimination or modification of design features that potentially contribute to crime and disorder, through natural surveillance. Parks should be visible from the street frontage/entrances and/or parking areas.
<b>Sun and Wind Exposure and Shade/Shelter</b>	All parks should have areas which are shaded by tree canopy during the summer. As outlined in the Parks Classifications System, structures designed to provide shade/shelter are key supporting facilities that should be considered where necessary to offer users of outdoor recreation facilities respite from the sun. Pavilions and other shelters are also important facilities for picnic areas, gatherings and special events. New playgrounds should include at least one shade component. Certain facilities such as sports fields, tennis and basketball courts, bandshells, amphitheatres and other outdoor performance and gathering areas have specific orientation considerations relative to sun and wind. Hedgerows and fencing can assist to provide wind breaks where necessary. For park facilities such as outdoor ice rink and other areas intended for year-round use, the prevailing wind direction and impacts of drifting snow are location and design factors to consider. Tree canopy and wind impacts should also be considered when siting facilities such as splashpads and multi-use sport courts to avoid leaf litter accumulation within these active play areas and reduce related maintenance resource needs.
<b>Incorporate Arts, Culture and History</b>	<p>Integrate a balance of active and passive facilities and flexible spaces that can support special events and a wide range of social and cultural activities.</p> <p>Consider opportunities for including appropriate forms of public art and historical elements, with priority to locally- or regionally- sourced works, such as: functional pieces that support the park use; civic landmarks, memorials and monuments that recognize and celebrate local heritage and culture and honour local achievements; and, inspirational, thought-provoking and interpretive art that highlights local or parks-related themes (e.g. nature, health, sustainability, active living, sports, etc.).</p> <p>The location and scale of public art, historical and similar features should be appropriate to the classification of park (Destination, Community, Neighbourhood, Linear) and the visibility of the available space to support these elements.</p>

<b>Slopes and Topography</b>	In general, flat and well-drained parkland is safer and provides greater flexibility for a range of outdoor recreation facilities and programming, is more accessible and is easier to maintain, as compared with sloped, uneven or undulating topography. Sloped areas should be avoided in heavy use areas and where universal accessibility is paramount. Some sloping in limited areas is typically necessary for grading and drainage purposes and where possible this should be directed away from the primary facilities and park entrance(s) to the park periphery where necessary to match grades of adjoining land. Low berms may be appropriate and can be incorporated into park designs to separate and delineate different types of facilities and to create interest. Where accessibility standards apply and compliance can be achieved, sloped areas may be incorporated into certain types of play facilities such as playgrounds and hill slides. If considered and permitted by Township policy, toboggan hills should be limited in number and with preference to longer and gently sloping hills over steeply sloped areas, only where ample run-out space can be provided at the bottom and hazards such as parking areas, roads and water can be avoided. Warning/advisory signage should be posted. Large / high retaining walls should not be located in parks.
<b>Four Season Design</b>	Incorporate accessibility features and operational standards in parks and to ensure a balance of seasonal and year-round recreational opportunities and support the widest possible range of users, ages, abilities and interests.
<b>Native Species and Surface Cover Variety</b>	Prioritize native plant species (where applicable and practical) in conjunction with non-invasive and low-maintenance species and landscape treatments/surfaces within parks. Resilient and salt-tolerant species should be considered where appropriate along park edges adjoining roads and adjoining trails that are maintained year-round.
<b>Public Gardens and Horticulture, Local Food</b>	Continue to work with Niagara West Community Gardens, the Smithville Garden Club and other organizations and interest groups to integrate community gardens in existing and new parks where appropriate to support community greening and beautification, pollinators, local food production and availability, social gathering, low- or volunteer-based maintenance and stewardship opportunities, resilient and sustainable parks, and other objectives.

<b>Lighting</b>	<p>Appropriate lighting should be considered in parks based on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Neighbourhood Parks and Linear Parks Greenspace Corridors, consider pedestrian-scale, landscape level lighting at park entrances and along trails/pathways where needed to support the use of park facilities intended for year-round use during the normal operating hours of parks and where appropriate for multi-use trails and connecting pathways, student walking routes, etc.;</li> <li>• In Community Parks and Destination Parks, lighting should be provided to meet illumination requirements for parking areas, and for major sports fields and event facilities, while avoiding light spillage beyond the park limits where possible.</li> <li>• Energy efficient, full cut-off, dark-sky compliant park lighting should be used where possible. Some locations and facilities may require otherwise to in order to meet the required safe minimum illumination level for the applicable area/activity.</li> <li>• Timed, user-activated or motion-activated lighting should be considered where appropriate for facilities that only require illumination during active use (e.g. multi-use courts, outdoor ice rinks, etc.) with activation only possible during permitted park operating hours.</li> </ul>
<b>Park Identification, Naming and Signage</b>	<p>Develop and adopt standard park signs and naming protocols to ensure parks are easily identifiable with consistent and welcoming signage and information, applicable regulations, wayfinding and contact/incident-reporting information, and for emergency access/identification, while supporting the unique and creative branding of parks to promote local identity and sense of place</p>
<b>Stormwater Management Facilities</b>	<p>The co-location and integrated landscape design of adjacent parks and stormwater management facilities presents an opportunity to create a well-linked and more expansive, contiguous open space system in new development areas. Careful consideration is required to ensure adequate safety measures are taken to avoid or mitigate risks associated with stormwater management facility hazards and changing water levels. This includes landscaping and other measures to limit access to the pond edges and deep/steeply sloped areas, inlets/outlets and other hazardous areas, clearly delineating public access and use areas such as paved multi-use trails, adequate emergency access, warning/advisory and regulatory signage, good visibility, incident reporting systems, and public education initiatives.</p>

<b>Fencing/Delineation</b>	Fences (typically chain link or a similar type that meets Township engineering standards) should be located to delineate the limits of the park boundary where it shares a common boundary with adjoining private property, and to enclose facilities such as sports fields or other booked facilities intended for use on a user-fee/rental basis. Where fencing is considered along street frontages and/or near park entrances, a low-maintenance, long-lasting decorative type of fence should be used. Where fencing park boundaries is too costly or impractical due to the length, topography, trees or other factors, demarcation monuments evenly spaced along the park property boundary should be provided.
<b>Natural Areas</b>	The design and integration of parks with adjoining woodlands, wetlands, meadows, significant landforms and other natural, geologic and topographic features should be based on a determination of whether the features can support public access, the type, location(s) and extent of public access that can be supported, accessibility requirements, emergency access, buffering, edge treatments/plantings and transitional/successional planting areas, signage and other measures to delineate and regulate acceptable public use areas and corridors, opportunities for interpretive and educational features, rest areas, lookouts, points of interest and other amenities. Environmental Impact Studies, Natural Areas Management Plans and similar assessments should be used as the basis for establishing whether public access is appropriate and measures to mitigate potential adverse impacts to the feature and its ecological functions while protecting public health and safety. Within Smithville there are potential opportunities for the integration of Karst features with parks – this should be based on more detailed study of the applicable features to determine if and where public access and/or interpretative elements may be considered, to ensure public safety and provide accurate and complete information about the feature(s) present and their formation, hazards and similar context.

<b>WIFI in Parks</b>	Some municipalities have installed WIFI access points in certain public parks, typically larger multi-use parks, parks colocated with indoor recreation facilities, or where there are special events facilities, amphitheatres, picnic pavilions or similar gathering spaces. Where this is considered, the use of tall or unsightly antenna structures or communication-style towers should be avoided and access points should be located where the greatest signal coverage can be provided in higher use areas of the park and where ease of access for maintenance can be provided. Signage should be provided with a QR code and/or instruction for connecting to the network. Partnerships with organizations that provide public WIFI service should be explored to minimize costs and provide expertise and maintenance resources.
----------------------	--

**RECOMMENDATION**

Adopt the Park Design Guidelines of this Plan as a basis for the future design of new and renewed parks and outdoor recreation facilities.



**RECOMMENDATION**

Finalize and adopt the Master Community Plan Urban Design Guidelines to establish the design direction for the Leisureplex Township Park, planned Neighbourhood Parks, Multi-use Trails and Stormwater Management Facilities as part of the integrated public realm design in the developing Smithville MCP area.



**RECOMMENDATION**

As part of the Township’s next Official Plan Review, update the park design policies for each type of park to align with the Parkland Classification System and recommended park design direction of this Plan.







### SITE PLANNING FOR PARKS

The Design Considerations outlined for each category of the Parkland Classification System in Section 2.1 include direction for the type of planning and design activities that should take place in advance of park development. As noted, the site layout, design and development of parks should be based on an individual park site plan for each park. In addition, for larger parks with multiple primary facilities and/or which will be developed in stages over time, a phasing plan should be established. For the design of new or renewed Neighbourhood Parks, a detailed site plan for the entire park may not be necessary and a more generalized park concept plan can be considered to guide the overall park development with more detailed “Issued for Construction” drawings developed as part of the design and development process, Requests for Proposals (RFPs) and project tender packages. At the time that new parkland is identified and proposed for dedication to the Township as part of a draft plan of subdivision, condominium or site plan, a facility fit plan should be provided to demonstrate that the types of facilities and amenities appropriate to the applicable park category should be required.

This section recommends a procedure to guide the future design of new and renewed parks. Opportunities for the community’s participation in park design, development and renewal projects should be considered to obtain public input during the planning and design process. This stage of the process also presents and opportunity to explore partnerships and joint ventures in park development/ renewal, and to promote awareness of park projects and initiatives through effective public communications. Consideration should be given to formally establishing staff/departmental roles, responsibilities, procedures and protocols for community engagement in park projects in further mapping out the Township’s park design and development process.

## PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES

### PARK SITE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

<b>Project Initiation &amp; Awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define the work plan, schedule, roles and responsibilities, and external services required</li> <li>• Coordinate with project partners, where applicable</li> <li>• Notify residents and key interest groups/participants</li> </ul>
<b>Site Investigation/ Acceptance of New Parkland</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and document existing conditions, including topographic and boundary surveys, surface/subsurface characteristics, drainage, and surroundings/interface</li> <li>• Review service area population and demographics, linkages, servicing</li> <li>• Acceptance of new parkland into Township ownership and responsibility for park development and maintenance</li> </ul>
<b>Concept Development &amp; Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop optional park layouts, facilities/amenities (based on Parkland Classification System)</li> <li>• Preliminary costing of options, review supply-readiness and operational requirements/resources</li> <li>• Review and consult with community and interest groups, confirm needs/preferences, identify preferred option</li> </ul>
<b>Finalize Concept</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adjust preferred option(s) to develop final concept based on selected components</li> <li>• Refine preliminary costing</li> <li>• Identify any permits/approvals required to be obtained through detailed design and construction</li> </ul>
<b>Detailed Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare landscape, grading/drainage/SWM, servicing, lighting and other plans and details as required</li> <li>• Establish detailed cost estimates, finalize budget as a basis for evaluating construction quotes</li> </ul>
<b>Project RFP/Tender for Construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare and issue construction tender/RFP/addenda</li> <li>• Evaluation of submissions</li> <li>• Selection of contractor(s), supplier(s) and award of contract</li> </ul>
<b>Site Preparation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure erosion/sediment controls, staging areas, security/safety measures, on-site notifications are in place</li> </ul>

## PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES

<b>Pre-construction</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish communication protocols, emergency contacts, schedule inspections and progress meetings, project management roles/structure</li> <li>• Review and confirm detailed design and construction requirements, schedule, hours of work and noise restrictions, scope, provisional items, notification</li> </ul>
<b>Construction and Contract Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports and certificates, inspections, resolve deficiencies, completed work, log any issues/complaints;</li> <li>• Hold regular progress meetings with designers and contractor(s), record changes/ instructions, monitor, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Acceptance and Commissioning/ Public Opening</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Certifications of completed work, ensure rectification of any deficiencies, commence maintenance/warranty periods, monitoring, final site inspections, as-built documents, verify safety/compliance, removal of temporary construction and safety measures, municipal take-over</li> <li>• Public notification, media awareness, website and brochure updates, ribbon-cutting and grand opening event, photographs and promotion</li> </ul>

### RECOMMENDATION

Adopt and refine the Park Site Planning & Development Procedures of this Plan as a guide for new parks and for any significant changes/renewal/replacement or new facilities in existing parks.



### RECOMMENDATION

For proposed new draft plans of subdivision and condominium, require the submission of a facility fit plan for the parkland (where applicable / required) to demonstrate that the proposed park can accommodate the range of facilities anticipated based on the Parkland Classification System and Park Design Guidelines of this Plan. Conditions of final approval of new plans of subdivision and condominium should require the preparation and submission of a detailed landscape design and preliminary grading plan for the park block.





### OFF-LEASH DOG PARK

Many municipalities have incorporated leash-free areas for dogs within one or more municipal parks. Providing an off-leash dog park within a municipal park offers numerous benefits for residents and their dogs while potentially reducing off-leash incidents and compliance issues in other park areas and trails. Dog parks can also help to promote responsible pet ownership by offering a safe, enclosed environment where dogs can exercise, socialize, and release energy without disturbing other park users, potentially improving dog behavior through socialization. As gathering locations, dog parks also help to foster social interaction among residents, encourage outdoor activity, and improve the overall use and cleanliness of shared public spaces.

The Township does not currently provide a designated leash-free area; however, there is interest in establishing a location within Smithville. A variety of types, sizes and operational models exist for off-leash dog parks. Some municipalities (e.g. Brant County) have worked with the community to establish a volunteer-run, membership fee-based dog park where the municipality's primary responsibility is to provide the land area for the dog park while the volunteers/operators manage access, memberships and maintenance. This model can help to reduce municipal operational resource requirements and costs while creating buy-in for a well-maintained facility. However, membership fees can impact utilization and may not be for everyone. Some municipalities offer off-leash dog parks that are free to use.



There are several important location and design factors to consider for a future dog park in the Township, including:

- **Proximity to residential neighborhoods** for easy access.
- **Adequate space to allow dogs to run freely** without overcrowding.
- **Separate areas for small and large dogs** to ensure safety.
- **Secure fencing and double-gated entry** to prevent escapes.
- **Shaded areas and seating** for owner comfort.
- **Accessible water sources** for dogs and people.
- **Durable, low-maintenance surfaces that drain well** (e.g., mulch, gravel, turf).
- **Waste disposal stations and signage** promoting clean-up.
- **Lighting** for early morning or evening use.
- **Noise and traffic buffer zones** to avoid disturbing nearby homes.



Based on the above, dog parks should be located within a larger Community Park or Destination Park, rather than a Neighbourhood Park. Potential location options within existing Destination and Community Parks include:

### WEST LINCOLN COMMUNITY CENTRE PARK:

The existing field area including the unused ball diamond and adjoining greenspace is a large open area that could accommodate fenced off-leash areas for large and small dogs while providing separation from residential uses and other existing park uses. There is a large paved parking area for the Community Centre nearby and in addition to the main access there is a pathway connection Swayze Court in the east and Westle Drive to the east, making this a walkable location from the adjoining neighbourhoods. Washrooms and water are available within the Community Centre. However, depending on the size of the off-leash area(s), a dog park could displace some other uses of the field area which is currently used for Movie in the Park events, the annual Easter event, sport ball, summer camps and youth soccer. West Lincoln Youth Minor Soccer uses the field for 9.75 hours weekly (in 2025) during their playing season and also for extended playing season use. Further review and consideration of this location should be undertaken including initial concept development and consultation with the potentially impacted field users to determine how much space the off-leash areas would need and whether some of the existing uses could still be accommodated. As an example of a municipal comparator, the Town of Shelburne opened a new off-leash dog park in 2022 including separated large and small dog areas having a combined area of approximately 3,500 square metres. With a total area exceeding 14,500 square metres, it appears that the north field area should be large enough to accommodate a dog park without displacing the existing uses of that space.



### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

#### ONLINE SURVEY:

- 18% of residents chose a Dog Park as a desired top priority for the Township.
- Dog-Friendly Amenities – not necessarily dog parks, but support for dog walkers. (i.e., waste bins, water) – was also listed as valued features at the parks in West Lincoln.



### ROCK STREET PARK:

The existing open space areas south of the existing junior soccer fields could potentially accommodate one or two smaller off-leash areas. There are no existing washrooms or drinking water access points in Rock Street Park, and with the limited land area available there could be a conflict with the use of the existing soccer fields. This location has less parking, is not as walkable and does not as multi-use as the West Lincoln Community Centre Park.



#### RECOMMENDATION

Develop an initial concept plan for an off-leash dog park location in the north field area of the West Lincoln Community Centre Park and consult with existing user groups of the space to determine if there are any impacts and potential opportunities to avoid or reduce those impacts through a final design.



#### RECOMMENDATION

If the impacts of locating a leash-free dog park area in the north field area of the West Lincoln Community Centre Park are deemed to be too detrimental to the existing uses of that greenspace, explore the potential for an alternative location for a leash-free dog park at Rock Street Park and/or undertake a further review to determine other potentially suitable sites within existing parks, new parks or other municipally-owned lands.



# TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN **Parks and Recreation** RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY



RECOMMENDATION	
<b>GROWTH</b>	
1	<b>Monitor actual growth within the Township and the Region</b> and anticipate impact on sport, recreation, and cultural activities and events on a continual basis.
2	<b>Monitor community demographics after each 5-year Census period to assess any change in direction/priorities/cultural shifts</b> associated with parks and recreation services.
<b>POLICY ALIGNMENT</b>	
3	<b>Continue to reference key sector policy frameworks</b> to ensure the Township maintains alignment with best practices in the delivery of Parks and Recreation services.
<b>OPERATING BUDGET</b>	
4	<b>That the Township include year-end actuals for parks and recreation services as part of its future operating budget reporting</b> for transparency and budget performance assessments.
5	<b>That the Township expand its revenue cost centre reporting to include distinct line items</b> for (i) ice revenues, (ii) floor revenues, (iii) Gymnasium Rentals/fees, (iv) room rentals, (iv) concessions.
6	<b>That the Township increase its user fees in areas identified in the Situational Analysis Report</b> to be more in line with comparator municipalities.
7	<b>That the Township conduct rates and fee reviews on an on-going basis (every 2 years)</b> to ensure remains aligned with neighbouring municipalities.
<b>OPERATING BUDGET</b>	
8	<b>That the Treasurer develop a financial strategy to fund the necessary future repairs to the community halls</b> in order that they be maintained in good operating condition and modernize to facilitate growing community use.
9	<b>Continue the annual contributions to capital in the Community Centre operating budget</b> , and monitor annually to assess its capacity to address future major capital requirements based on facility conditions assessments.
<b>SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS</b>	
10	<b>That the Township explore a more robust Hybrid Service Delivery Model by proactively engaging community service providers and partnerships to address existing and growing community needs</b> through optimizing current facility space at the Community Centre and Community Halls.

## RECOMMENDATIONS – PROGRAMS AND FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATION	
<b>PROGRAMS</b>	
11	<b>Conduct a program gap analysis to identify which priority programs the Township has the capacity to deliver directly</b> and initiate a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to engage third-party providers for specialized or resource-intensive programs that fall outside municipal capacity.
<b>FACILITIES – ICE</b>	
12	<b>(i) That staff update Council on the existing allocation of prime-time utilization by minor hockey, figure skating, learn-to-skate, public skate, and other users, (ii) That staff provide options to accommodate prime-time ice for a Junior Hockey Team,</b> and which non-minor users would be impacted or displaced for Council’s consideration.
13	<b>That the Township of West Lincoln establish a future ice needs strategy in cooperation with the Town of Grimsby and the Town of Lincoln</b> to determine the order in which additional ice should be introduced to the West Niagara area.
14	<b>Explore installing ice in August and maintaining it into April</b> to support camps, training programs, and longer seasons for adult and youth leagues.
15	<b>Review and Revise the Ice Allocation Policy</b> to ensure priority access for youth-serving, and not-for-profit organizations during prime hours.
16	<b>Continue annual tracking of WNMHA and Skating Club participation,</b> with a focus on adult league growth and West Lincoln’s share of regional users.
17	<b>Review its permitting and rental processes to ensure they align with staff capacity, service expectations, and cost recovery.</b> This includes improving how new or non-standard rentals and events are communicated across departments, establishing a process to flag when additional staffing or logistics are required, and determining whether such uses fall within the current Rates & Fees By-law.
18	<b>Undertake a feasibility and cost-benefit analysis to assess the potential for adding a second ice pad at the West Lincoln Community Centre</b> to accommodate future growth.
<b>FACILITIES – WALKING TRACK</b>	
19	<b>Introduce structured programs that appeal to individuals who enjoy social interaction and group activities. These could include:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Social Walking Clubs</b> with scheduled times and group leaders to foster community connections.</li> <li>• <b>Themed Walks</b> such as “Wellness Walks,” “Mom &amp; Baby Walks,” or “Senior Strolls” with added wellness tips or guest speakers in the community rooms.</li> <li>• <b>Seasonal Step Challenges</b> to motivate residents and promote regular use of the track.</li> <li>• <b>Partnership Programs with health providers or local organizations</b> to incorporate light fitness or health education components.</li> </ul>
<b>FACILITIES – COMMON SPACES AT THE WEST LINCOLN COMMUNITY CENTRE</b>	
20	<b>The Township should establish an annual budget to support the purchase and rotation of interactive games, furniture, and programming supplies that animate the common spaces</b> at the West Lincoln Community Centre.

## RECOMMENDATIONS – INDOOR FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATION	
<b>FACILITIES – COMMUNITY HALLS</b>	
21	That the Township of West Lincoln staff work proactively with the existing Hall Boards to develop a model of hall use that optimizes utilization by accommodating community programming, whilst maintaining the core use of the Hall for Hall Board events and activities.
22	That the Township assume full responsibility and resources for booking all community halls under its ownership to ensure consistent scheduling, equitable access, and streamlined facility management.
23	<p>Pursue opportunities to maximize the use of underutilized community halls in West Lincoln through strategic partnerships, enhanced programming, and alternative uses while increasing these facilities awareness throughout West Lincoln.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) to identify potential partners interested in leasing or operating the facilities.</li> <li>• Explore expanding successful programs—such as summer camps—by introducing niche offerings in arts, theatre, dance, music, and outdoor adventure, particularly utilizing the Caistor and Wellandport Community Centre and other underutilized spaces.</li> <li>• Assess the potential for child care, Montessori, or faith-based preschool programs to operate out of the halls.</li> <li>• Evaluate whether any of the community halls should be declared surplus and considered for sale.</li> <li>• Improve promotion of the venues, consider integrating them into a centralized booking system, and explore options to support or enhance their condition and daily programming.</li> </ul>
<b>FACILITIES – LIBRARIES</b>	
24	That the Township of West Lincoln engage the West Lincoln Public Library Board to revise the current operating model to allow for community use of library branch space (beyond normal operating hours) on a full cost recovery basis to the library operation.
25	West Lincoln collaborate with the public library to deliver programs not currently offered by the Township – such as Home Alone courses, First Aid, and Babysitting training – to expand community access to essential skill-building opportunities.
26	What the Township work in collaboration with the Library to align operating hours with events and programs taking place at the West Lincoln Community Centre, enhancing convenience and access for participants and visitors.
<b>FACILITIES – INDOOR POOL</b>	
27	West Lincoln should undertake a feasibility study to assess the community demand, capital and operating costs, and the potential impact on the municipal tax levy associated with developing an indoor pool. This study should include public engagement and consider long-term financial sustainability.
28	West Lincoln should initiate the formation of a regional indoor pool committee in collaboration with neighbouring municipalities to explore the potential for a jointly funded and operated regional indoor aquatic facility.

RECOMMENDATION	
<b>FACILITIES – INDOOR TURF FACILITY</b>	
29	<b>West Lincoln include a feasibility study for an indoor turf facility within the Master Plan of the LeisurePlex.</b> This study should assess community demand, potential partnerships, capital and operating costs, and the facility's role in meeting year-round recreation needs for field sports such as soccer, lacrosse, and cricket.
30	<b>Township explore the development of an indoor turf facility from a regional perspective</b> by establishing a committee with neighbouring municipalities. This committee would assess the potential for shared investment, usage, and long-term sustainability, ensuring the facility meets the broader needs of the surrounding communities.
<b>EVENTS</b>	
31	<b>West Lincoln develop a formal volunteer management strategy to actively engage, monitor, support, and train volunteers across all recreation, events and community programs.</b> This strategy should include clear roles and responsibilities, onboarding procedures, ongoing training opportunities, and recognition efforts to ensure volunteers feel valued and equipped to contribute effectively. Streamline facility booking and event application processes by integrating them into a single, unified application system with dedication event meetings prior and post event.
32	<b>Township actively seek partnerships with third-party groups and service clubs to lead the delivery of community events,</b> while providing administrative support to assist with logistics, promotion, and permitting.
33	<b>Township allocate additional resources toward event management,</b> specifically to support the processing of event applications and the promotion of events.
<b>PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – PARKLAND CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM</b>	
34	<b>Adopt the Parkland Classification System as an overall framework and guidelines for the categorization and acquisition of parkland,</b> determining the appropriate locations and geographic distribution of future parks in new development areas, the type and range of outdoor recreation facilities and supporting amenities, park design and renewal considerations, as well as park programming and uses.
35	<b>As part of the Township's next Official Plan Review, update the Park and Recreation Hierarchy in Section 9.4 to be consistent with this Recreation and Parks Plan.</b>



## RECOMMENDATIONS – PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATION	
PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – PARKLAND ACQUISITION STANDARDS	
36	<b>Prepare and adopt a comprehensive Parkland Dedication By-law in accordance with Section 42 of the Planning Act</b> to establish the Township’s regulatory requirements for the dedication of land for parks or other public recreational purposes and to maximize the amount of parkland that the Township may acquire under the legislation in order to best meet community needs and increasing demands associated with planned growth and development.
37	<b>As part of the Township’s next Official Plan Review, update the parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu or parkland policies in Section 9 to align with current legislative requirements under the Planning Act, this Recreation and Parks Plan, and related best practices. The policies should also be updated to distinguish between parkland dedication and land requirements for trails.</b> Where possible, the dedication of rights-of-way for pedestrian pathways and bicycle pathways should be required under section 51 (25)(b) over and above mandatory parkland dedications.
38	<b>Plan for the acquisition of parkland via mandatory dedications augmented by land purchase using cash-in-lieu reserves where necessary to acquire the amount of parkland needed for each new Neighbourhood Park planned for the MCP area based on the service areas and park location, size and other related criteria set out in the MCP.</b> The MCP Block Plan process should be used to establish where additional parkland is required over and above the dedication requirements of the individual development parcel where the park will be located.
39	<b>Acquire land for trails over and above the mandatory parkland dedications in the MCP area by utilizing Planning Act section 51 (25)(b)</b> to require pedestrian and bicycle pathways and by locating trails within other land required for Township purposes or other conveyances and easements such as required servicing and utility corridors and components of the natural heritage system where appropriate and permitted pursuant to the MCP.
PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS	
40	<b>Plan for the future needs for outdoor recreation facilities to meet the demands of growth and development</b> based on consideration of the provision-level standards and option/strategies outlined herein for each type of facility.
41	<b>Continue to obtain program participation data from user groups and record/track this data as part of annual monitoring</b> and to support periodic updates to the future needs forecast for outdoor recreation facilities.
42	<b>Review and monitor population growth and estimate actual growth annually based on building permits and other available data to support the ongoing assessment of outdoor recreation facility needs and track population changes to update the future needs forecast.</b> Acquire and review census data to verify/refine annual estimates every 5 years. The future needs forecasts should also be updated to reflect any future changes to the projected population growth and as the planning period is extended.
43	<b>Consult with user groups and the public on an ongoing and periodic basis to obtain input to future outdoor recreation facility needs, timing, location options and strategies, funding, partnerships and implementation plans.</b>
44	<b>Where a clear and sustained need has been demonstrated for additional capacity, look firstly to optimize the scheduling and availability of existing facilities, secondly to opportunities for accommodate the increase in need via available or planned non-municipal facilities or joint/ multi-municipal facilities, thirdly to upgrades to existing municipal facilities, and lastly to the development of new municipal facilities.</b>

## RECOMMENDATIONS – PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES

RECOMMENDATION	
<b>PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITIES STANDARDS</b>	
45	<b>If demands are identified for a new type of facility (e.g. cricket pitch, bocce courts) that is not currently provided in the municipality, and the need has been adequately demonstrated, consideration should be given to an interim facility location on a pilot basis to determine actual utilization levels and sustainability of the program(s) and to assist with planning and design for a potential permanent facility. Multi-use opportunities should be accommodated wherever possible.</b>
<b>PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – PARK DESIGN STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES</b>	
46	<b>Adopt the Park Design Guidelines of this Plan as a basis for the future design of new and renewed parks and outdoor recreation facilities.</b>
47	<b>Finalize and adopt the Master Community Plan Urban Design Guidelines to establish the design direction for the Leisureplex Township Park, planned Neighbourhood Parks, Multi-use Trails and Stormwater Management Facilities as part of the integrated public realm design in the developing Smithville MCP area.</b>
48	<b>As part of the Township's next Official Plan Review, update the park design policies for each type of park to align with the Parkland Classification System and recommended park design direction of this Plan.</b>
<b>PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – PARK SITE PLANNING &amp; DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES</b>	
49	<b>Adopt and refine the Park Site Planning &amp; Development Procedures of this Plan as a guide for new parks and for any significant changes/renewal/ replacement or new facilities in existing parks.</b>
50	<b>For proposed new draft plans of subdivision and condominium, require the submission of a facility fit plan for the parkland (where applicable / required) to demonstrate that the proposed park can accommodate the range of facilities anticipated based on the Parkland Classification System and Park Design Guidelines of this Plan. Conditions of final approval of new plans of subdivision and condominium should require the preparation and submission of a detailed landscape design and preliminary grading plan for the park block.</b>
<b>PARKS AND OUTDOOR FACILITIES – OFF-LEASH DOG PARK</b>	
51	<b>Develop an initial concept plan for an off-leash dog park location in the north field area of the West Lincoln Community Centre Park and consult with existing user groups of the space to determine if there are any impacts and potential opportunities to avoid or reduce those impacts through a final design.</b>
52	<b>If the impacts of locating a leash-free dog park area in the north field area of the West Lincoln Community Centre Park are deemed to be too detrimental to the existing uses of that greenspace, explore the potential for an alternative location for a leash-free dog park at Rock Street Park and/or undertake a further review to determine other potentially suitable sites within existing parks, new parks or other municipally-owned lands.</b>

## Township of West Lincoln Parks and Recreation Plan

### Committee Presentation

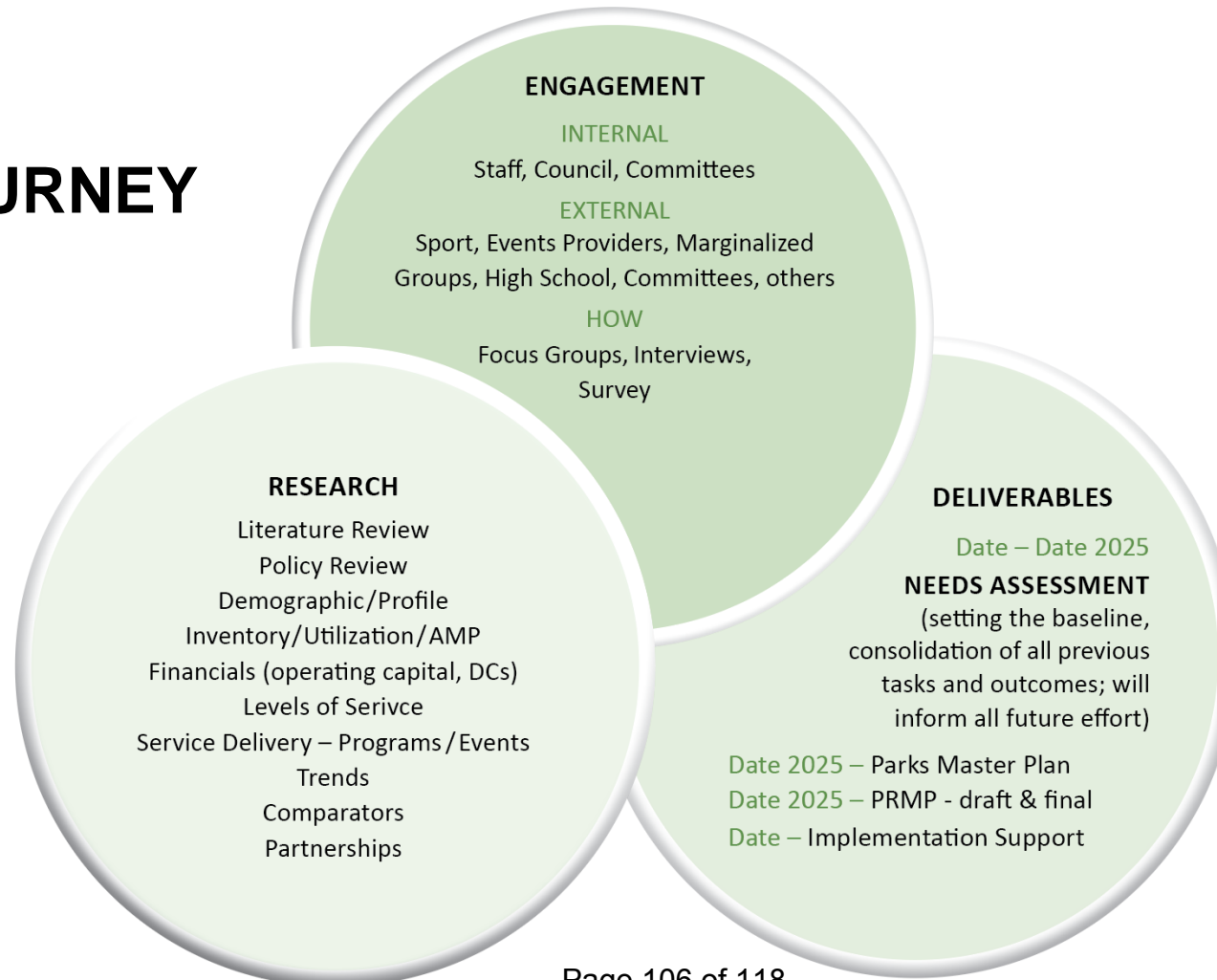
September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025



## **CONGRATULATIONS ON COMPLETING A PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN**

1. Supports health and well-being
2. Reflects community needs
3. Guides strategic decision-making
4. Informs budget and resources allocation
5. Improves service delivery and efficiency
6. Strengthens community connections
7. Enhances environmental stewardship
8. Boost local economy

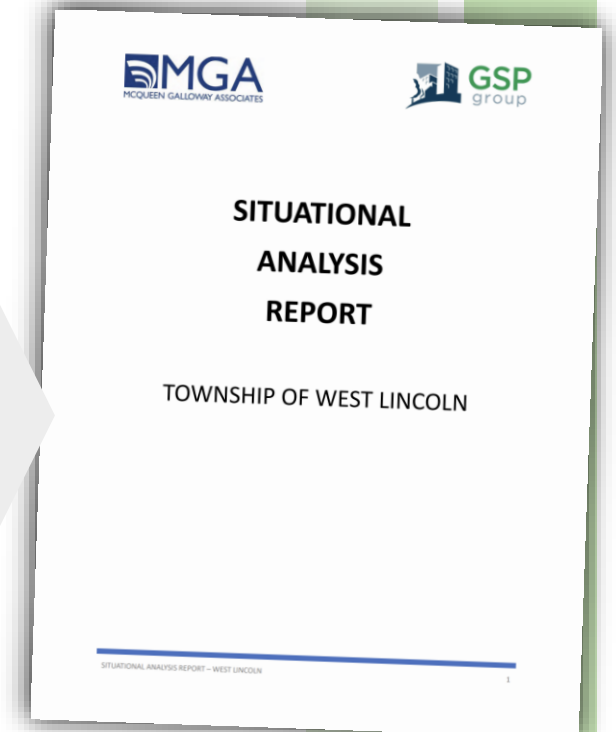
## PROJECT JOURNEY



## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### Situational Analysis Content

- Introduction
- Growth Profile
- Demographic Profile
- Corporate Policy Alignment
- National & Provincial Policy
- Trends
- Best Practices
- Parks Inventory
- Parks Conditions Analysis
- Service Delivery Models
- Facility Inventory
- Facility Conditions Analysis
- Operating Budget Analysis
- Capital Budget Analysis
- Rates and Fees Comparisons
- Program Review
- Events Review
- Community Engagement Results
- Community Survey Results





## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN

- **Growth and Policies** → 3 recommendations
- **Finance** → 6 recommendations
- **Service Delivery Model** → 2 recommendations
- **Programs and Facilities** → 19 recommendations
- **Events** → 3 recommendations
- **Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities** → 19 recommendations

## Growth and Policies

3 recommendation

## Finance

6 recommendations



## Program Service Models

2 recommendations

## Programs and Facilities

19 recommendations

## Events

3 recommendations



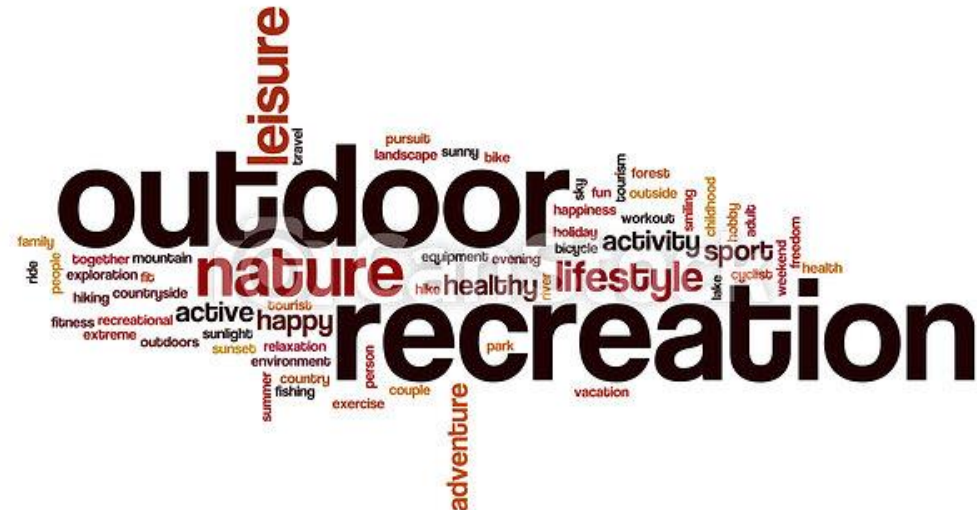
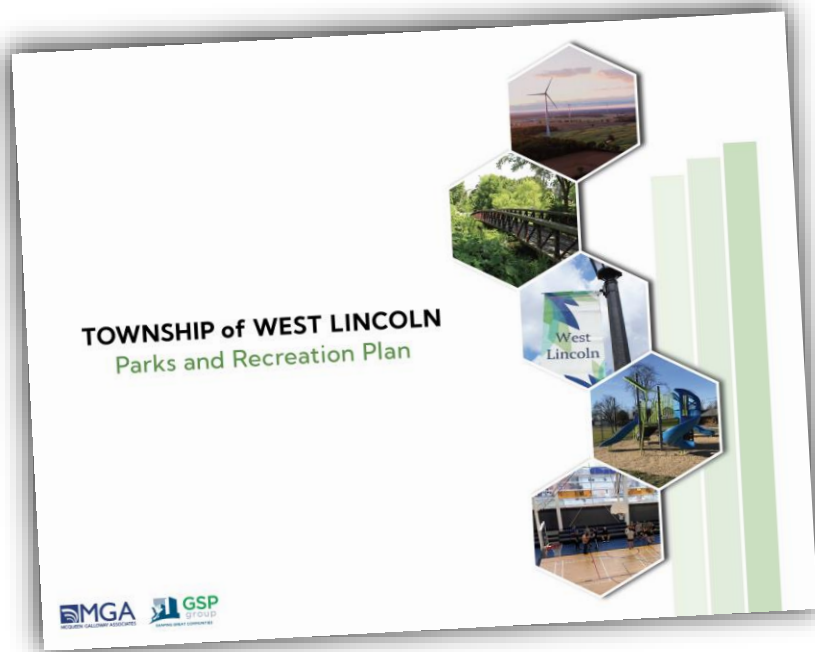
## **Parks and Outdoor Recreation Facilities**

19 recommendations





## THE PARKS AND RECREATION PLAN



## **NEXT STEPS...**

### COMMITTEE's & COUNCIL'S ROLE IN PLANS

- Plan to be posted on website
- Public Open House – September 24<sup>th</sup>
- October 27<sup>th</sup> to Council for final approval

### COUNCIL NEEDS TO SUPPORT THE PLANS



## Questions?

**Tracey McQueen – MGA**

[tracey@mgagroup.ca](mailto:tracey@mgagroup.ca)

**Steve Wever – GSP**

[swever@gspgroup.ca](mailto:swever@gspgroup.ca)

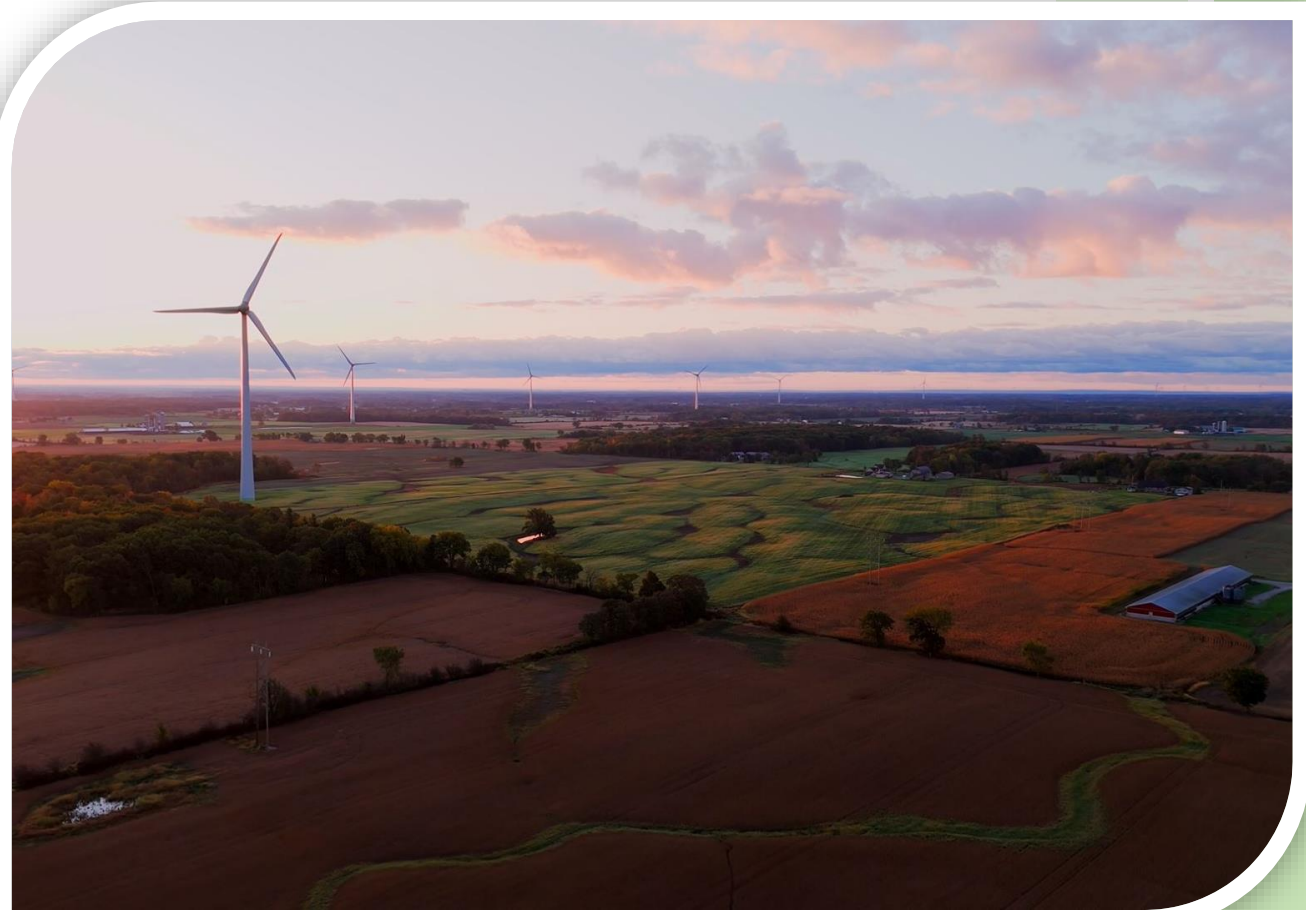
### **PROJECT SPONSOR**

**Gerrit Boerema**

Manager of Planning

Tel: 905-957-3346 ext.5131

Email: [gboerema@westlincoln.ca](mailto:gboerema@westlincoln.ca)



**DATE:** September 15, 2025  
**REPORT NO:** WLFD-08-2025  
**SUBJECT:** Monthly Update – August 2025  
**CONTACT:** Tim Hofsink, Fire Chief

**OVERVIEW:**

- This report will address August 2025 fire responses and activities.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That, Information Report WLFD-08-2025 titled “Monthly Update – August 2025” dated September 15, 2025, be received for information.

**ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:**

**Theme # 1 and # 4**

- **Build** – a safe, connected, caring and active community
- **Advance** – organizational capacity and effectiveness

**CURRENT SITUATION:**

**Emergency responses Calls:**

See Attached Schedule "A" for August's calls.

**New Recruits:**

The recruit class had the summer off from their recruit studies following their successful first round of exams in June. They will be picking up their studies in September, moving on with NFPA 1001 LVL 2 training. This is expected to run until roughly the end of 2025, with Hazardous Materials Awareness and Operations training following that in the new year. The group has successfully started emergency call responses and have been issued the green volunteer firefighter lights for their vehicles.

**Retirement:**

None

**Promotions:**

No promotions have been carried out. Work is progressing on the promotional process to fill one Captain vacancy.

**Training:**

Training included tours for the crews, one at a large local manufacturing facility, another at a local farm. These tours provide valuable knowledge of building stock and challenges associated with large agricultural buildings and machinery, as well as complex building structures ensuring that they are properly prepared for emergencies that may occur there.

**Fire Prevention / Public Education**

Public Education activities were limited for the summer months. Inspections were carried out at several occupancies in the municipality. Planning is being carried out for the Fire Department Open Houses, being held on Saturday, Sept. 27 at both Stations 1 and 2, breakfast at Station 2 and a lunch barbeque at Station 1.

**Apparatus Fleet**

Regularly scheduled maintenance continues on the fleet. In August fire pumps and ladders were tested. Work is progressing on our replacement pumper.

**Fire Services Activities**

Firefighter certification, legislated by the province to be in place by July 2026, is well underway in West Lincoln. Outstanding areas needing attention are being identified and addressed.

A total fire ban was in place in West Lincoln for a large portion of August due to excessively dry conditions. The ban was enforced, with several unauthorized burns attended by WLFD personnel. Residents are reminded to ensure that they don't burn during a fire ban, and that they are compliant with the terms of the Open-Air burning by-law when the bans are lifted.

**Station 2**

Several items are being addressed with the contractors at Station 2, taking care of some outstanding items.

**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:**

This report was reviewed by the Director of Corporate Services/CFO, CAO and Clerk.

**CONCLUSION:**

This report is to inform Committee and Council of the August 2025 operations of West Lincoln Fire and Emergency Services.

**SCHEDULE(S):**

Schedule A – August Monthly Calls

**Prepared & Submitted by:**

Tim Hofsink  
**Fire Chief**

**Approved by:**

Cynthia Summers  
**Director, Community and Protective  
Services**

Truper McBride  
**CAO**

Jurisdiction

WEST LINCOLN

## 2025 MONTHLY DISPATCHES BY DETERMINANT

Determinant Group	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Total
+ Burning Complaint	1			1		3	1	9					15
+ Carbon Monoxide						2							2
+ Emergency Assistance		1		1	1	2	1						6
+ Grass/Tree/Brush Fire			2	4	1	2	6	1					16
+ Hazmat				1									1
+ Medical	8	5	6	8	4	4	12	6					53
+ MVCs	2	9	4	6	11	3	7	7					49
+ Non-Emergency Assistance			1	2	1								4
+ Non-Emergency Medical	1	1					1						3
+ Other Fire					1	2		1					4
+ Preliminary Assignment	1				1								2
+ Remote Alarm	3	1	2	3	7	3	5	1					25
+ Rescue													
+ Structure Fire	1		1	4	1	1	3	2					13
+ Unknown 911													
+ Vehicle Fire	2		1	2	1	2	1	1					10
+ Water Rescue													
<b>Total Responses within Municipality</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>28</b>					<b>203</b>

WEST LINCOLN

36

Year-to-Date Responses Out of Area

203

Total Events This Year