CITY OF Burlington

Live and Play Plan

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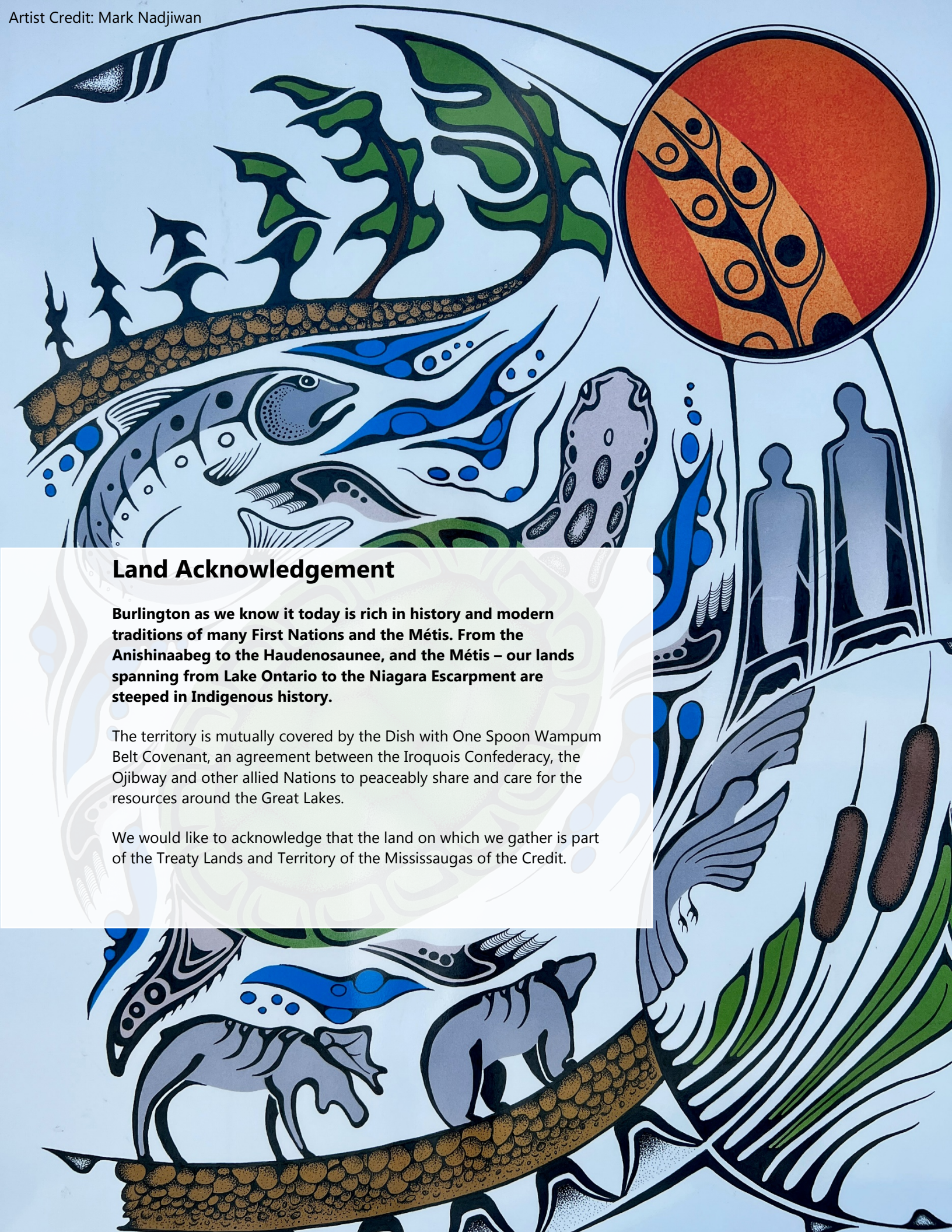
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Land Acknowledgement

Burlington as we know it today is rich in history and modern traditions of many First Nations and the Métis. From the Anishinaabeg to the Haudenosaunee, and the Métis – our lands spanning from Lake Ontario to the Niagara Escarpment are steeped in Indigenous history.

The territory is mutually covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy, the Ojibway and other allied Nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes.

We would like to acknowledge that the land on which we gather is part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

1. Introduction







1.1 The Live and Play Plan

The City of Burlington is a waterfront community in Halton Region on the picturesque shores of Lake Ontario between Toronto and Niagara Falls. The City offers an urban and rural lifestyle and its residents enjoy a diverse range of public amenities and services, housing options, and employment opportunities that make Burlington one of the most livable communities in Canada. The City is recognized for shorelines along Lake Ontario and the Niagara Escarpment, which is one of the country's most biologically diverse landscapes. These natural features are complemented by the City's diverse range of parks, recreation, and culture facilities. Some of these important community assets are provided with community partners to offer a wide range of parks, recreation, and cultural programs and services that enrich the lives of residents and visitors, contributing to building a strong community and Burlington's high quality of life.

To guide future investment and respond to Burlington's changing landscape, the Live and Play Plan ('the Plan') is designed to ensure that the City continues to grow as a sustainable, vibrant, and economically strong community. Preparing this Plan is timely as access to a high-quality parks, recreation, and culture system has never been more important as the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the benefits that these opportunities have on mental and physical health and their contribution to quality of life, sense of place, and social cohesion. The Plan will provide Burlington with direction to guide the provision of City-operated parks, recreation, and City-operated culture facilities over the next 10 years, with a longer-term outlook to 2051, and includes a review of:

- **Indoor recreation facilities** such as arenas, pools and gymnasiums;
- **Outdoor recreation** facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds; and
- City-operated **cultural facilities** such as music centres and student theatres.

The City has other parks, recreation, and culture facilities that are operated through partnership agreements, which are beyond the scope of this Plan. Excluded are major cultural facilities such as the Burlington Performing Arts Centre and the Joseph Brant Museum, and spaces provided by others such as the Burlington Public Library; guidance about the City's cultural assets will be considered as part of a future arts and culture strategy. Recreational trails are also out of scope, which are guided by the Integrated Mobility Plan and Rural Active Transportation Plan.

To provide a foundation for the Plan, and to satisfy the provincial requirement to have a "Parks Plan" in place as a requirement under the *Planning Act* (as amended), City Council approved a Parks Provisioning Master Plan (PPMP) in March 2023, to guide the development of parkland over the next 30 years. The PPMP will guide the City with respect to physical land base needs for parkland, while this Plan provides Burlington with direction on community needs for park assets and recreation and cultural facility needs. Updating these two documents concurrently, every five years, is encouraged to ensure that they are in alignment to respond to evolving community needs.

1.2 Aligning with the Framework for Community Recreation

The Recreation, Community and Culture Department is guided by its Framework for Community Recreation, which establishes a Vision, Values, Principles, and Goals that form the rules, ideas, and beliefs that staff align with daily. The Live and Play Plan was developed to align with this guiding document that recognizes that Burlington's parks, recreation, and culture facilities are highly valued and are places where people can participate and be physically active. They are safe and welcoming places where all residents can gather and connect with others, regardless of one's ability, income, orientation, and cultural background, as well as those that are new to Burlington and to Canada, and visitors to the community. As Burlington's community grows and becomes more diverse, there is a desire to ensure that the City's parks, recreation, and culture facilities continue to grow to respond to evolving community needs. The following is a summary of Burlington's Framework for Community Recreation.

Vision	**Enhance the quality of life for everyone, every day!**					
Values	Everyone has the Right to Play	Individual Well-being	Sense of Belonging			
Principles	Fundamentals First	Inclusive	Shared Responsibility	Evidence Based	Complementary	Affordability
Goals	Participation	Partnerships	Variety	Thriving Neighbourhoods	Utilization	Meaningful Engagement

1.3 Key Accomplishments

Burlington is proud of its parks, recreation, and culture facilities that contribute to the City's vibrant and high quality of life. In recent years, the City has made significant efforts in investing its parks, recreation, and culture assets.





Artist Credit: Jimmy Baptiste and Hans "HAKS180" Schmitter

Cultural Action Plan



Skyway Community Centre and Park



Mountainside and Nelson Pool Renovation



Robert Bateman Community Centre Development



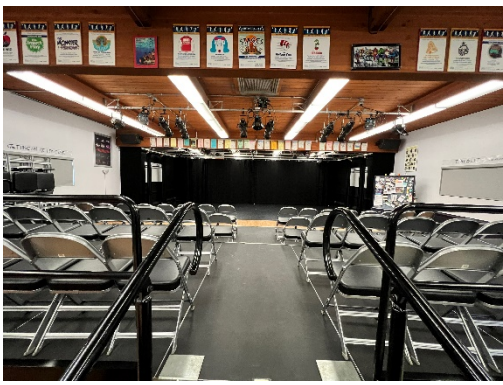
City View Park Development



Parks Provisioning Master Plan

1.4 Burlington's Parks, Recreation and Culture Assets







The City of Burlington's parks, recreation, and culture assets include:

- **11** ice pads at seven arenas
- **4** indoor pools
- **4** gymnasium locations that can program up to 14 individual spaces and 51 school gymnasiums that can be permitted outside of school hours for non-profit community organizations.
- **46** multi-purpose program spaces
- **1** dedicated seniors' centre
- **2** City-operated cultural spaces (Student Theatre and Music Centre)
- **77** rectangular fields, including school-permitted fields
- **58** ball diamonds
- **1** cricket field shared with ball diamonds
- **35** tennis courts, including 12 public courts and 23 club courts
- **20** pickleball courts (10 dedicated and 10 shared with tennis and ball hockey)
- **29** basketball courts, including 21 half courts and eight full courts
- **2** outdoor swimming pools and one wading pool
- **9** splash pads
- **6** skate parks, four skate zones and one dirt bike track
- **8** off-leash dog parks
- **5** community gardens with 231 plots
- **6** outdoor fitness equipment locations
- **105** playground locations, including sites on school property
- **2** outdoor bocce courts
- **1** seasonal disc golf course
- **1** outdoor skating rink

In addition, the City has other parks, recreation, and cultural facilities that are provided in partnership with others that are beyond the scope of this Plan. However, there may be opportunities to enhance these other facilities or strengthen relationships with partners based on the findings and recommendations identified in this Plan, such as working together to strengthen the use of facilities and spaces and making better use of existing spaces to respond to emerging interests.

1.5 Community Profile

Understanding who lives in Burlington now and who may be living here over the next 30 years is important to ensure that the City's parks, recreation, and cultural facilities respond to changing demographics. A review of community demographic information was undertaken that considered Halton Region's Official Plan Amendment 49 (ROPA 49) as Modified by the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Statistics Canada Census, Development Charges and Community Benefits Strategy Draft Growth Assumptions Report (F-25-23), and other material. As Burlington's population evolves and new data becomes available, evaluating the impact on parks, recreation, and culture assets will be needed through a five-year update to this Plan. Notable findings and assumptions are highlighted below.

- Burlington's **current 2024 population** is 194,100 residents (including census undercount).[1] The City's **forecasted population** is 217,400 by 2034, 240,050 by 2041, and 265,160 by 2051,[2] representing an overall growth of 71,060 persons (37%).
- The 2020 Official Plan (currently under appeal) identifies that population growth is primarily expected to take place within **Mixed Use Intensification Areas**, including the Burlington Urban Growth Centre/Burlington GO Major Transit Station Area (MTSA), Aldershot GO MTSA, Appleby GO MTSA, Mixed Use Nodes and Intensification Corridors. The Minister's modifications to ROPA 49 also included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington. Work is currently underway to establish a planning vision for these areas impacted by the Minister's decision, which will include the potential for future parks and open space. This work will be fully captured within the next update to the Live and Play Plan.
- Burlington has signed a **Housing Pledge** to demonstrate its commitment to accelerating the housing supply and taken the necessary actions to facilitate the construction of 29,000 units by 2031, which is guided by the City's Housing Strategy.[3]
- The City's **median age** in 2021 was 44.4 years, which was higher compared to Halton Region (40.8 years) and the Province (41.6 years). Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, the population of seniors (ages 70+) and older adults (ages 55 to 69) increased by 16% and 5%, respectively, while youth (ages 10 to 19) and adults (ages 20 to 34) increased by 2% each. All other age groups declined by up to 5%.
- Burlington's population is becoming more **culturally diverse**. The 2021 Census reported that 26% of residents are immigrants, which is lower than both Halton Region (34%) and Ontario (30%). Major countries of origin include the United Kingdom, India, Philippines, China, and Poland. Less than 2% of the population identifies as Indigenous Peoples.
- Burlington's **median household income** in 2020 was $110,000, which was lower compared to Halton Region ($121,000) but higher compared to the Province ($91,000). Burlington also has a slightly lower proportion of the population that are living below the low-income measure after-tax (LIM-AT) (6% compared to 7% in Halton Region and 10% in Ontario).
- Based on the Provincial rate, it is estimated that one-quarter of Burlington's population (or 48,525 residents) are living with a **disability**. This proportion is expected to grow as the population ages.

[1] City of Burlington. 2023. Appendix A to Development Charges and Community Benefits Strategy Draft Growth Assumptions Report (Staff Report F-25-23). Retrieved from https://burlingtonpublishing.escribemeetings.com.
[2] Halton Region Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 49. Retrieved from https://www.halton.ca/
[3] Ibid.

1.6 Key Trends to Consider

There are numerous parks, recreation, and culture trends that influence the types of facilities that are in demand or how they are provided in Burlington.



Responding to emerging recreation activities



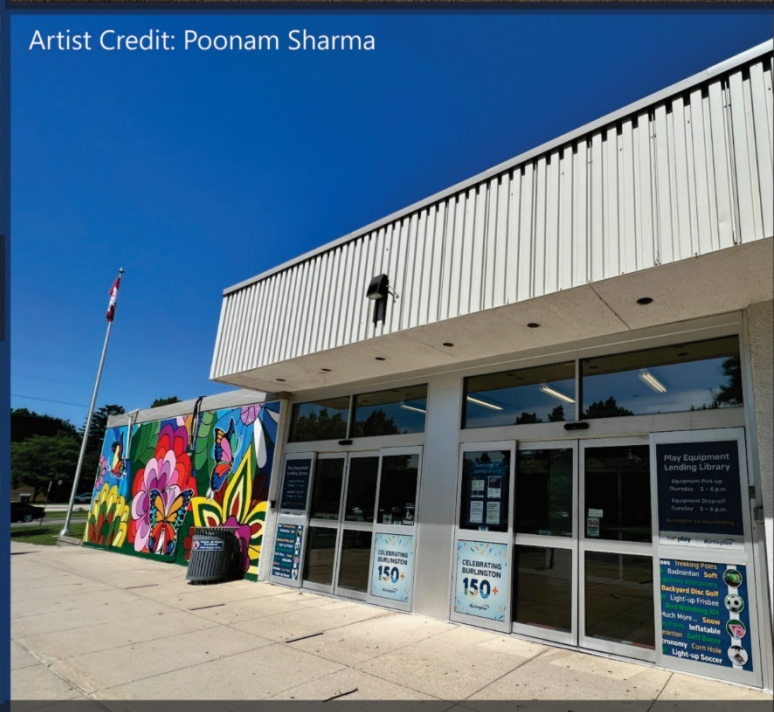
Creating community hubs and creative spaces to centralize activities



Providing inclusive and barrier-free spaces that are accessible to all



Designing facilities with a climate change and environmental sustainability lens



Artist Credit: Poonam Sharma



Increasing demand for casual and unstructured facility spaces, parks, and open spaces

Aging infrastructure requires renewal, replacement or repurposing

2. How We Engaged the Community



Engaging the community was an important component of the planning process to ensure that the Plan responds to the needs and priorities of the public. To guide this process, a Community Engagement Plan was developed outlining the consultation tactics for collecting input from residents, stakeholders, City staff, City Council, and others to ensure that their voices were heard. To support and raise awareness for the Plan, a project portal was created on Get Involved Burlington, along with other promotional tools, including social media, signage, handouts, and more.

The following consultation activities were held:

- Initial Public Input Sessions
- Community Survey
- Stakeholder Focus Groups
- Staff Workshops
- Council Interviews
- Final Live and Play Plan Feedback



The following are key themes we heard from the consultation process. These are **not** recommendations, but the comments received were considered in the development of the Plan.

- Burlington's **parks, recreation, and culture facilities are highly valued** by the community. Specific mentions were made to the waterfront and waterfront parks, trails, major parks (e.g., Central Park), and the range of indoor facilities that appeal to a variety of residents.
- Emphasis should be placed on **maximizing the use of existing parks and facilities**, which may require consideration for park and facility renewal.
- There is a desire for **enhanced park amenities** including, but not limited to, washrooms, trails, lighting, shade, seating, and water stations.
- Requests were made for **new or more facilities** including, but not limited to cricket pitches, pickleball courts, ball hockey courts, rugby fields, ice pads, expanded seniors' centre, and performing arts space.
- There is a demand for parks and recreation facilities for **casual and unstructured activities** such as open greenspaces, special events space, playgrounds, and outdoor skating.
- There needs to be a balance **addressing existing infrastructure through renewal of aging assets** and accommodating growth-related needs.
- The parks, recreation, and culture facility needs of newcomers, persons with disabilities, and an aging and diversifying community should be considered to ensure that facilities, programs, and services are **inclusive** for all.

3. Key Development and Revitalization and Strategies

This Plan identifies parks, recreation, and culture facilities that can be accommodated through new facility development to address growth related needs or by revitalizing or relocating existing assets to better meet the needs of an evolving or intensifying community. This section highlights some of these strategies and detailed rationale can be found in the appropriate sections of this Plan.

Park and facility development or redevelopment projects should be accompanied by public consultation, conceptual and detailed design, and business planning to confirm facility components and costing. Given the long-term nature of some of these strategies, reconfirming facility needs should be done through regular updates to this Plan.

3.1 Revisiting the Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan

Sherwood Forest Park is a major Destination Park that abuts the Appleby GO MTSA, which is expected to accommodate a significant portion of population growth to meet the Regional Official Plan Amendment (ROPA) 48 growth target of 120 people and jobs per hectare. This level of growth will have considerable implications on indoor and outdoor recreation facility needs, which could be partially accommodated at Sherwood Forest Park. Development of this site is currently guided by the 2016 Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan and the City recently made major investments on the east side of this park by upgrading the ball diamonds, playground, and other features.

There is merit in revisiting and updating the Revitalization Plan to recognize and address the priorities that have been identified in this Plan. As part of this process, rethinking the use of this site will need to be contemplated to shift its focus from a sports-oriented park to one that serves a broader purpose to address a wider range of needs. To achieve this, consideration will need to be given to redistributing some of the existing uses to other locations in Burlington, particularly sports fields, to accommodate:

- A dedicated cricket pitch;
- Sport courts for pickleball and basketball;
- Skate park;
- Splash pad;
- Leash-free dog park; and
- Community gardens.



In addition to outdoor recreation facility needs, planning for the redevelopment of the Sherwood Forest Community Centre continues to be supported to provide enhanced public access to indoor community space, as well as to implement necessary accessibility and greenhouse gas mitigation measures. The redeveloped facility should include a full-size gymnasium, indoor walking track, community program spaces (between three to four multi-purpose rooms), and space that is currently used by key user groups (e.g., Burlington Centaurs Rugby Club). Engaging community partners and the public to inform the design process is also recommended. As part of updating this Plan, developing a phased implementation plan should be undertaken.

3.2 Re-imagining Central Park

Central Park offers a range of parks, recreation, and culture amenities that appeal to many users, as well as special events that draw residents and visitors. This park is in an established area of Burlington and as one of the largest public spaces in this area, continuing to ensure that it serves the public will be critical.



There are aging facilities that are reaching their end of life or will require reinvestment during the planning horizon of this Plan, including, but not limited to, the Burlington Seniors' Centre, Music Centre, Central Park Arena, a washroom building and parks maintenance building, and several single use facilities that are operated by third parties through joint venture agreements. An opportunity exists to re-imagine this park to explore the feasibility of consolidating aging buildings as part of a new community centre, as well as a cultural hub for local artists, creatives, and performers on site. This would also provide an opportunity to construct other needed indoor facilities that were identified through this Plan. It would also provide the City with an opportunity to design with accessibility in mind to ensure that it is welcoming of all residents, as well as implement a host of energy measures to achieve low carbon or net carbon neutral status, consistent with the City's corporate climate change objectives.



A new facility would allow the City to reclaim vital greenspace to better serve the growing public and aligns with a desire for more outdoor park space. A summary of facility components that could be incorporated as part of a redesigned Central Park is summarized below. Existing joint venture facilities were not engaged at this time but assumes that facilities would be accommodated on site. Further consultation with individual groups is recommended to further define space needs and engaging new partners should be explored, where appropriate. For example, there may be opportunities to work in partnership with the YMCA or others to program or operate spaces to optimize the use of the new facility. Additional supporting studies may also need to be undertaken to confirm the appropriateness of the proposed redesign, such as undertaking transportation study, sound, and lighting study, etc.



In addition to the recommended facility components, accommodating sufficient parking on site will need to be considered. Given the high priority placed on greenspace and limited ability to provide new parkland in this area, efforts will need to be made to preserve any parkland that can be reclaimed through this redesign. Evaluating the feasibility to minimize surface parking should be explored, including underground parking. Park amenities should also be considered that may include, but not be limited to, walking pathways, lighting, shade structures, seating, drinking fountains/bottle filling stations, electric mobility charging, active transportation parking, public art (e.g., Indigenous art), and more.

Given the range of uses identified for the site and various facility conditions, developing a phased implementation plan is recommended as re-imagining of the site would be a long-term initiative. Based on the facility components identified for Central Park (Table 1), a high-level concept design has been developed (Figure 1). This renewed vision would set a pathway forward to ensure that the facilities and amenities that are provided would be in the appropriate locations to maximize the function of the site. Over the short (e.g., next ten years), there are opportunities to move forward with addressing more immediate needs (or at the very least begin planning for implementation) including:

- Replacement or redevelopment of the park maintenance building and associated yard, and washroom building;
- Relocating and/or expanding the community garden and increasing the number of raised garden beds; and
- Constructing a splash pad and skate park.

Addressing other indoor and outdoor facility components would need to be phased in over the medium and long-term, subject to reconfirming needs as part of regular updates to this Plan and working with community partners.

Table 1: Recommended Facility Components for Re-imagining Central Park

Indoor Facility Components	Outdoor Facility Components
• Twin pad arena (or a single pad arena with a covered outdoor skating rink) • 1 Community theatre • 5 to 6 Music Rooms • Multi-purpose spaces (dedicated daytime for residents ages 55+) • Dedicated spaces joint venture groups • Gymnasium • Indoor walking track • Potentially connected to existing library • Other joint venture space (e.g., curling) • Other combined or separate on-site structures may include a parks maintenance building and washroom	• 1 Outdoor bandshell • Open greenspace for gatherings and events • Community garden (with accessible beds) • 4 rectangular fields (potentially lit) • 2 ball diamonds shared with cricket (potentially lit) • 4 public pickleball courts • 1 basketball/ball hockey court • 1 splash pad • 1 skate park • Leash-free dog park • Outdoor fitness equipment • Joint venture spaces (e.g., tennis club and lawn bowling club) • Parks maintenance yard

Note: Facility components to be reconfirmed through consultation, discussions with joint venture groups, and prospective partners.

Figure 1: Conceptual Central Park Master Plan



Prepared by MJMA Architecture & Design

3.3 Renewal of Nelson Park

Nelson Park is an active park with multiple ball diamonds and rectangular fields with a number of support buildings, including two washroom facilities, changerooms (a portion of space is leased to the Burlington Minor Football Association and press box. These supporting buildings are aging and have various limitations in accessibility and functionality. An opportunity exists to consider the future of these buildings which may include consolidating buildings under one roof to serve both the hardball diamond and artificial turf field. To accommodate a new potential support building, there may be an opportunity to reposition the existing sports fields to optimize the functionality of the site, reclaim greenspace for passive uses, and potentially accommodate new uses.

3.4 Optimize Hidden Valley Park

Hidden Valley Park is recognized as one of Burlington's largest parks that serves residents across the City and visitors to Burlington. Large portions of the park are naturalized with passive spaces, trails, and connections to Grindstone Creek Valley and Royal Botanical Gardens. It also boasts a range of active recreation amenities, including a ball diamond, playgrounds, splash pads, joint venture facilities (Burlington Model Railway Club), leash free dog park, and open spaces that can be used for picnics and photos. As one of the few parks serving the South Aldershot community, Hidden Valley Park is a key asset to meeting the outdoor needs of residents. It will continue to play a key role in serving the surrounding community given its proximity to the Aldershot GO MTSA where future population growth is expected to occur over the next 30 years. Creating a long-term vision for this park will be important to ensure that it grows and evolves with the community in a manner that balances the preservation of natural features, while addressing active recreation needs identified in this Plan (or future needs to be determined through future updates to the Plan). As identified in this Plan, potential facilities that could be accommodated at Hidden Valley Park may include a disc golf course, outdoor fitness equipment, special events, and enhancing park amenities to create welcoming and comfortable outdoor spaces.



3.5 Addressing Needs for Additional Ice

The City has been experiencing pressure for additional ice pads for some time to accommodate arena users. The City currently provides 11 ice pads, and this Plan identifies the need to increase its supply by one pad over the next 10 years. The City should approach this cautiously because while utilization levels are strong and they have remained so for the past number of years, demand may soften over the long-term due to changing demographic factors such as aging of the population and cultural diversification that have impacted arena participation and usage levels, which is also being experienced in Burlington.

As a result, this Plan recommends that the City continue to monitor arena usage after the Skyway Arena is completed to understand the level of pent up demand (recognizing that user groups had reduced their ice allocations and have indicated that there is a demand for additional ice once Skyway Arena is completed), trends, participation levels, and reconfirm needs prior to constructing additional ice. While the City is monitoring these factors, investigating opportunities to increase access to ice pads should be

explored by working with the private sector or working with non-municipal arena providers to maximize ice use, particularly to accommodate adult ice needs. The outcome of exploring alternative solutions to meet ice needs should also be considered as part of reassessing ice needs.

Should it be determined there is a need for the City to construct additional ice, and if finding a partner or alternative solution to meet ice needs are not successful, the recommended strategy is to construct a twin pad arena to accommodate one new ice pad and to replace one of the City's aging single pad arenas. Both new pads should be NHL size, although an Olympic size pad could be considered for a wider range of uses (e.g., figure skating and hockey); this would replace the existing figure skating pad at Appleby Ice Centre, which could be reallocated back to hockey use.

The future twin pad arena would be constructed to serve community needs with supporting amenities such as spectator seating, viewing areas, changerooms, dryland training space and other features. Consideration should also be given to enhanced accessibility measures to welcome persons with disabilities from a spectator perspective (e.g., accessible viewing areas), as well as from a user viewpoint to accommodate inclusive programming such as sledge hockey, considering accessible ice surfaces, seating areas, dressing rooms, etc. Strategies to minimize greenhouse gas emissions should also be explored, including energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems. One of the following options are proposed to meet the City's future ice needs.

- **Option 1#:** Construct a twin pad arena as part of a multi-use community centre at Central Park, which would be part of re-imagining the site; alternatively, consideration could be given to constructing a single pad arena with a covered outdoor skating rink; or
- **Option #2:** Acquire a new site large enough to accommodate a twin pad arena, gymnasium, indoor walking track, multi-purpose spaces, and potentially an indoor pool. Developing a site concept should confirm site size requirements.

3.6 Maximizing the use of Sports Fields and Future Planning

Recent Provincial legislation (e.g., Bill 23) together with a shifting focus to higher density development has required the City to rethink its parks planning strategy. Over the planning period, it is expected that the City will only be able to negotiate smaller parcels of parks, which will need to be supplemented with land using acquisition tools described in the PPMP. This Plan identifies outdoor parks and recreation facilities that are needed to support the City's growing and diversifying population, particularly over the long-term. Based on the existing park supply, it will be a challenge to accommodate all facility needs within its parks, particularly sports fields (e.g., rectangular fields, ball diamonds, and cricket fields), while also ensuring that there is sufficient open greenspace for casual uses and park amenities.

To meet short-term sports field needs, this Plan speaks to investigating opportunities to maximize the use of Burlington's existing sports field supply by undertaking upgrades to enhance their desirability and ability for additional bookings. This may include, but not be limited to, assessing locations to add sports lighting to extend playing capacities and upgrading turf quality with irrigation and/or drainage improvements. To meet cricket field needs, this Plan also speaks to looking at the potential to accommodate a lit dedicated cricket field, potentially as part of reviewing the Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan, as well as constructing one at City View Park. There may also be opportunities to engage partnerships with others to meet sports field needs such as with school boards to expand the use of, or undertake upgrades to, school-owned sports fields, or working with community groups, the private sector, or other potential partners.

Continuing to monitor sports field needs is recommended by tracking field usage, particularly as the City implements field enhancements, development or partnerships to understand how utilization evolves, as well as looking at participation data, community demographics, and sports field trends. Should it be determined that medium to long-term demand for sports fields outweighs available supply opportunities, investigate acquiring lands that are suitable for constructing new fields with supporting amenities, potentially in partnership with others; redesignating land may be required. Long-term demand for sports fields and other recreational facilities will also be considered as part of future updates to the Live and Play Plan and other relevant reviews of the Burlington Official Plan.

3.7 Urban Parks and Spaces

With population growth increasingly being directed to occur within Burlington's Mixed Use Intensification Areas, particularly in MTSAs, outdoor space needs are primarily expected to be met through the City's Urban Parks. This is a new typology defined in the PPMP as parks that are designed and located to serve the recreational and open space needs of urban intensification areas of higher density neighbourhoods, such as MTSAs. They are dynamic spaces and function as a focal point to facilitate a limited range of active uses, passive opportunities or play a supporting role in complimenting surrounding land uses by providing places for people to meet, gather, socialize, and host special events and festivals. Integrating Urban Parks in Burlington's intensifying areas will become a key component in providing livable urban spaces for the community to come together, while also softening the streetscape with green features.

High quality Urban Parks will generate the greatest demand for socialization and active and passive activities; therefore, while providing the appropriate spaces to the community is important, so is designing and maintaining them to be flexible enough to accommodate a range of uses. Through the planning and design of Burlington's future Urban Parks, the City should evaluate the feasibility of incorporating a range of outdoor recreation amenities, particularly those that are traditionally provided within walking distance. While a full understanding of projected Urban Park supplies and specific locations that are intended to serve the City's Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) are not yet known, it is difficult to quantify the exact requirements for outdoor recreation facilities, although this could be explored further through an update to this Plan once additional information is available.

Examples of Urban Parks and Spaces





Based on the recommendations of this Plan together with consideration given to best practices in planning and designing urban spaces, the following facilities and features are permitted in Urban Parks serving Mixed Use Intensification Areas (as discussed in Section 5.18); availability may vary at each Urban Park subject to size and location, surrounding context, and other factors:

- Splash pads / spray features
- Skate zones
- Leash free dog parks
- Community gardens
- Outdoor fitness equipment
- Playgrounds (including natural playgrounds)
- Refrigerated outdoor ice rinks
- Special event space (including supporting infrastructure)
- Public art (e.g., Indigenous art, functional art, interactive art, etc.)
- Walking pathway / trail connections
- Unprogrammed open space
- Climate change and environmental sustainability features (e.g., tree canopy, pollinator gardens, permeable surfaces, rain gardens, etc.
- Park amenities (e.g., seating, shade structure, lighting, charging stations for electric mobility devices, landscaping, drinking / bottle filling stations, Wi-Fi, etc.)
- Parks maintenance building and yard

In addition to planning and designing urban parks and spaces, consideration will need to be given to the use of robust materials and the maintenance of these spaces. As it is expected that Urban Parks and the amenities within them will experience a greater intensity of use given the number of residents living in the City's Mixed Use Intensification Areas, it is expected that there will be a need for enhanced maintenance of urban spaces and assets. As a result, there will be a need to consider more frequent renewal, the provision of parks maintenance space, and other operational requirements such as staffing and funding.

Alternative facility provision models will also need to be considered to maximize opportunities to serve residents living in Burlington intensifying areas. This may include, but not be limited to, working with the development industry to create private amenity space, leasing space, POPS/strata parks, and providing facilities on rooftops.

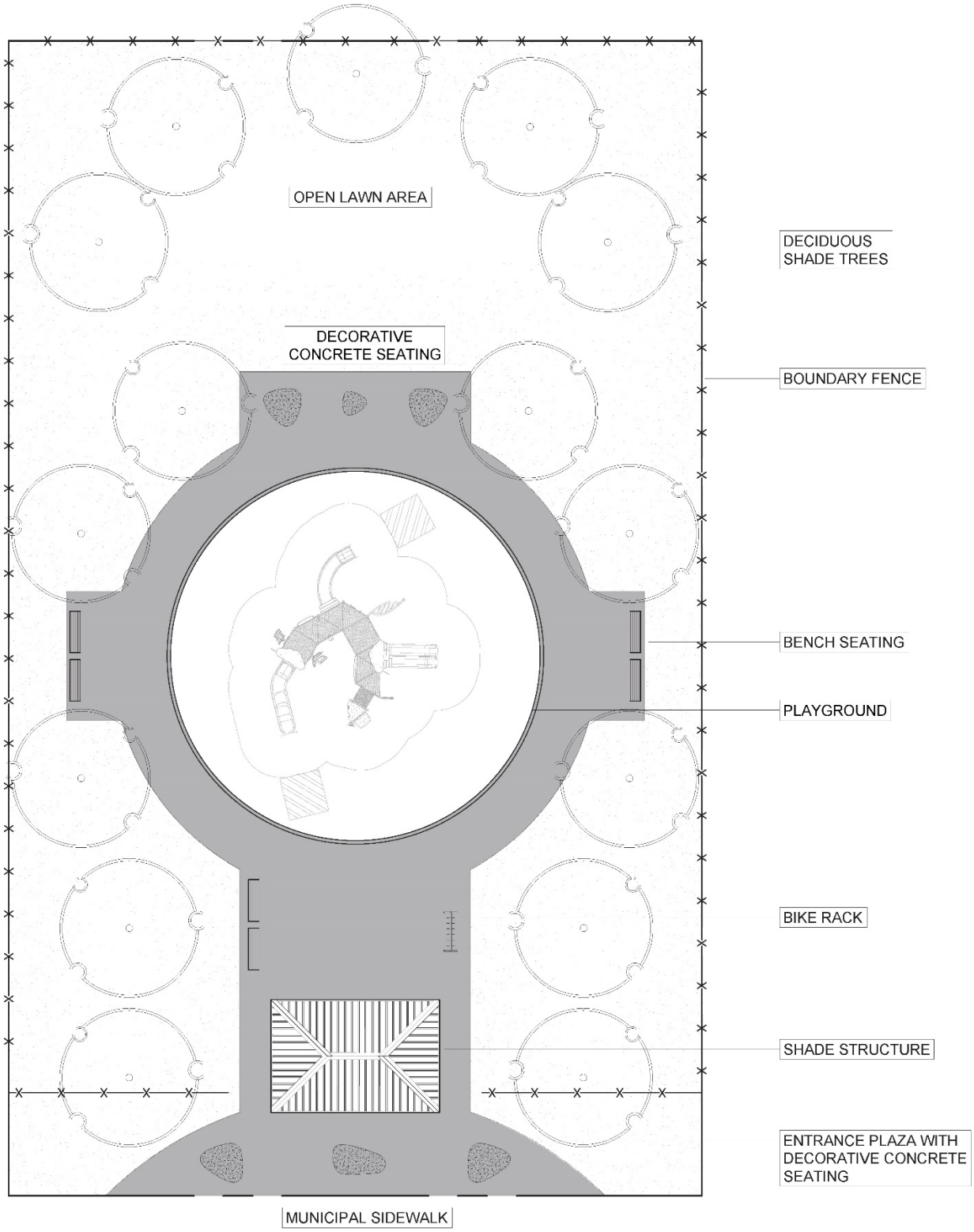
As part of this Plan, conceptual urban parks were developed to illustrate how urban parks and spaces can be designed to accommodate the recommended facility types that residents may expect, which are illustrated on the following pages including a playground, splash pad, leash-free dog park, and park maintenance building, yard and public washrooms. These concepts are not based on any specific site in the City of Burlington and actual designs will be subject to additional planning, including public consultation.

Examples of Urban Parks and Spaces



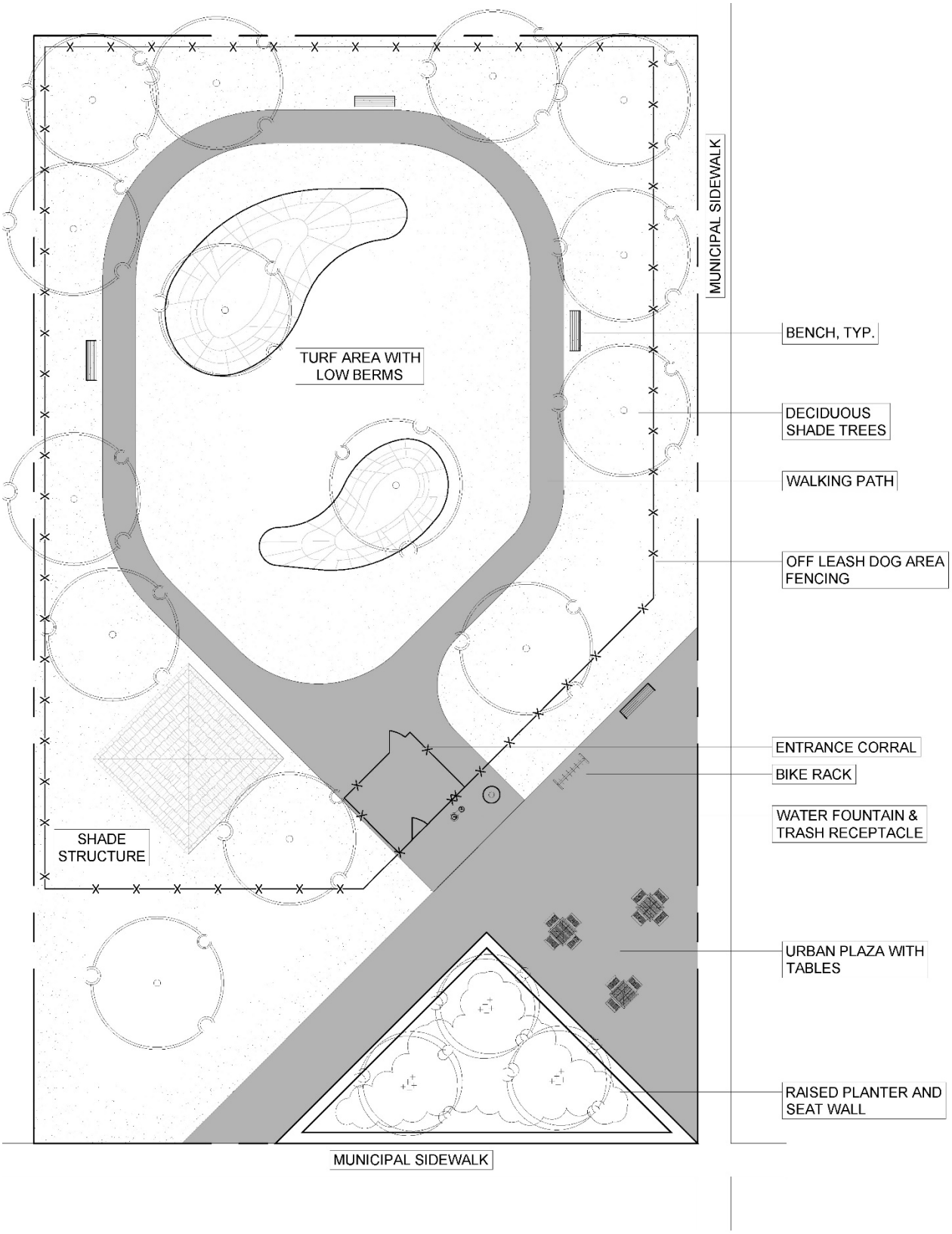


Figure 2: Conceptual Urban Playground Site



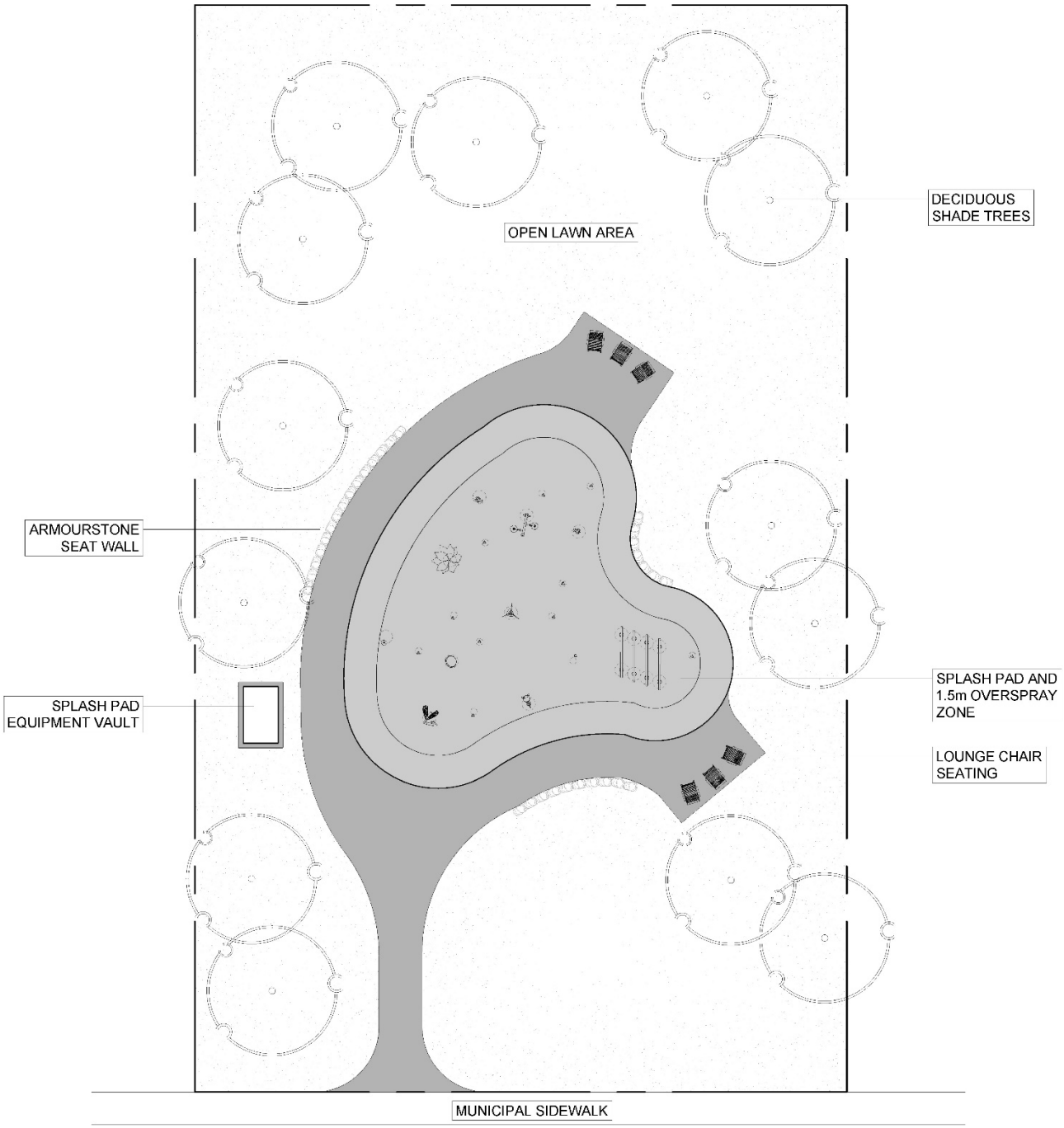
Prepared by Ron Koudys Landscape Architects

Figure 3: Conceptual Urban Leash-Free Dog Park



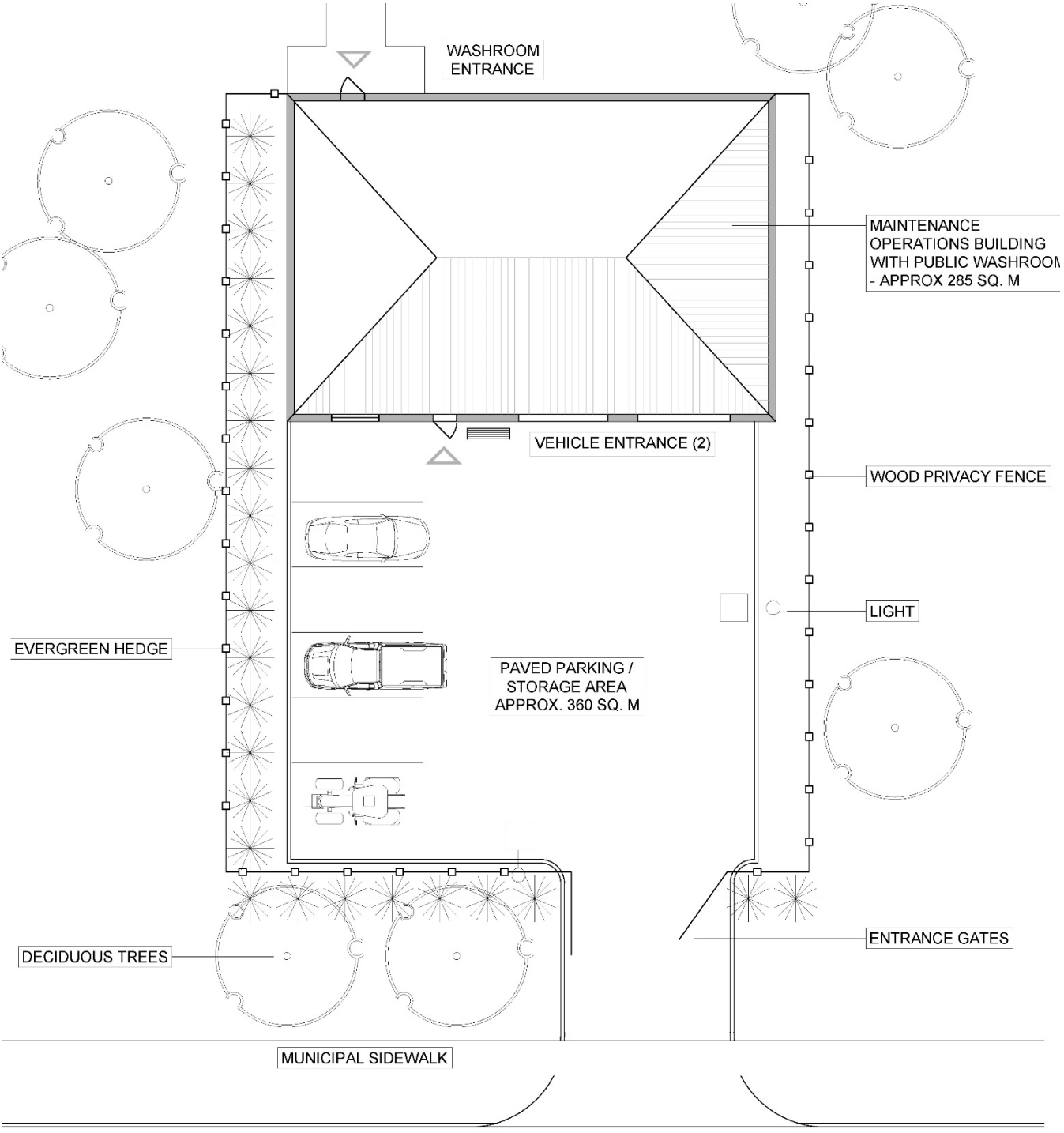
Prepared by Ron Koudys Landscape Architects

Figure 4: Conceptual Urban Splash Pad



Prepared by Ron Koudys Landscape Architects

Figure 5: Conceptual Urban Parks Maintenance Building, Yard and Washroom



Prepared by Ron Koudys Landscape Architects

3.8 Designing for Accessibility

The province estimates that approximately one quarter of Ontarians are living with some form of disability (e.g., physical, intellectual, sensory, and mental). Applying this provincial rate to Burlington's population suggests that there could be nearly 49,000 residents living with a disability. The City is committed to making its facilities barrier free as being inclusive is one of the six principles of the City's Framework for Community Recreation. All new facilities or renovations must align with Burlington's Accessibility Design Standards, which ensures that all residents are welcome within public spaces, regardless of ability. Burlington also works with its Accessibility Advisory Committee are committed to making its public facilities barrier free, where possible, through its Multi-Year Accessibility Plans, which identifies strategies for removing barriers and improving accessibility to City's facilities, as well as goods and services.

Burlington's current 2019 – 2023 Multi-Year Accessibility Plan outlines several actions that have relevance to parks, recreation and culture facilities including, but not limited to, park and school playground replacement, trail development, pathway lighting, accessible site furniture (e.g., picnic tables), and general park renewal to remove physical barriers, as well as removing barriers as part of facility redevelopment projects. The City is currently developing the next iteration of its Multi-Year Accessibility Plan to outline initiatives to remove barriers between 2024 to 2028. Continuing to remove barriers from the City's existing facilities, and construct new facilities that are barrier free, is supported by this Plan, with consideration given to Burlington's Accessibility Design Standards and Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.



Through these efforts, the City will be positioned to continue providing accessible sport and recreation to support opportunities such as wheelchair basketball and tennis, sledge hockey, and activities through groups such as Special Olympics Burlington. Support for making Burlington's parks and facilities accessible is referenced throughout this Plan such as providing accessible pathways within parks to ensure that there are clearly marked, firm and stable walking surfaces, shade and seating, drinking fountains, and designing new and updating existing facilities with an accessibility lens.

3.9 Climate Change Mitigation and Environmental Sustainability

Burlington declared a climate change emergency in 2019 to increase the priority of the fight against climate change and apply a climate lens to the plans and actions of the City of Burlington, including the Council strategic workplan and future budgets. Establishing sustainable, healthy, and low-carbon climate resilient communities is identified in the City's Vision 2040 Strategic Plan and Burlington's Plan: From Vision to Focus. The City has taken significant steps towards reaching this goal through approving its Climate Action Plan, Corporate Energy and Emissions Management Plan, Climate Resilient Burlington: A Plan for Adapting to Our Warmer, Wetter and Wilder Weather, Stormwater Management Design Guidelines, Sustainable Building and Development Guidelines, Corporate Energy and Sustainable Buildings Policy, Integrated Mobility Plan, Urban Forest Master Plan, Corporate Zero Waste Policy, and more. Carrying out the recommendations in these documents collectively help the city move towards the goal of becoming a low carbon climate resilient community.

Ensuring a climate lens is applied across Burlington's community facilities and parks is key to helping to meet climate change goals. Designing indoor community and recreation facilities to be low carbon and climate resilient involves the use of energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems, renewable and recoverable energy technology, and sustainable materials able to withstand our changing climate. Burlington's parks are also being designed and constructed with a climate lens. Park features such as shade shelters, drinking fountains, and outdoor aquatic facilities (e.g., outdoor pools and splash pads) help residents cool down during hot summer days. Green infrastructure can also be incorporated into parks such as pollinator gardens, community gardens, bioswales, rain gardens, use of permeable surfaces, shoreline restoration, and low maintenance, passive greenspaces. The development of active transportation infrastructure also helps reduce the number of vehicles to and from sites.

The City has demonstrated its commitment to minimizing its impact on climate through recent projects, such as the City View Park Pavilion, the City's first carbon neutral facility using all electric systems and no fossil fuels. In 2024, Skyway Arena and Community Centre will be the City's first low carbon arena that utilizes energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems, as well as a geothermal field and ice plant heat recovery to eliminate the use of fossil fuels in the building. The building is also designed to be solar ready. The city is also renovating the former Robert Bateman High School (now known as the Robert Bateman Community Centre) to be a low carbon facility. Plans for this adaptive re-use project include a range of energy efficient mechanical and electrical systems, including heat recovery technology and geothermal field, as well as enhanced insulation. In addition to these projects, the city has undertaken deep energy retrofit studies at community facilities, including at the Appleby Ice Centre and Brant Hills Community Centre with additional facilities planned in 2024 and 2025. Deep energy retrofits at Appleby Ice Centre and Brant Hills Community Centre will be phased in beginning in 2024. EV charging stations are also available at many of the City's recreation centres and municipal parking lots.

Given the importance of climate change (mitigation and adaptation) and the City's commitment to addressing it, the implementation of this Plan's recommendations through new facility development and redevelopment, as well as ongoing facility updates and retrofits, should align with Burlington's guiding climate change strategies. It is noted that there may be higher capital costs associated with providing low carbon or net carbon neutral facilities, particularly through retrofitting older facilities that were not originally designed to accommodate newer technologies, though operating costs could be lower. As a result, full lifecycle cost implications would need to be considered as part of the planning process, including the need to adapt to our warmer, wetter, and wilder weather, and additional funding may be required through the city or through external sources, such as senior levels of government (including grants) and community partners.

3.10 Renewal of Tansley Woods Community Centre



The Tansley Woods Community Centre was constructed in 1996 and over its lifetime, the City has reinvested in the facility to renew mechanical equipment, enhance accessibility (e.g., washrooms, signage, etc.), and repurpose underutilized spaces such as the addition of the indoor playground. The facility is reaching 30 years old and there is an opportunity to renew the aging facility to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of current and future residents, particularly as it is one of Burlington's busiest community centres. With this in mind, developing a renewal strategy for the community centre is recommended. Undertaking retrofits to and modernization of the indoor pool and associated features and amenities should be a priority given that it is the facility's most used asset. Other areas to consider include improvements and retrofits to multi-purpose spaces to maximize facility use, repurposing underutilized space, and working with partners to strengthen the use of their spaces to better meet community needs, including the Burlington Public Library Branch. Enhancements to outdoor spaces should also be explored.

Recommendations: Key Development and Revitalization Strategies

1. Update Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan to investigate the feasibility of redistributing existing uses on the west side of the park to accommodate other needs as identified in the Live and Play Plan to serve the surrounding area, including the Appleby GO MTSA, such as a dedicated cricket field, sport courts (pickleball and basketball), skate park, splash pad, leash free dog park, and community gardens. As part of the Revitalization Plan, proceed with planning for the redevelopment of the Sherwood Forest Community Centre to include a full-size gymnasium, community program spaces (between three to four multi-purpose rooms), and space to accommodate existing community partners (e.g., Burlington Centaurs Rugby Club). Develop a phased implementation plan as part of this process.
2. Re-imagine Central Park to consolidate aging and new indoor facilities to create a community centre and cultural activity hub, and reclaim greenspace for active and passive uses, which should include the components identified in this Live and Play Plan. Engaging existing joint ventures and prospective partners such as the YMCA should form part of this process, as well as developing a phased implementation plan. Initiate short-term opportunities including park maintenance building and associated works yard, and washroom replacement, community garden expansion, splash pad and skate park.
3. Create a plan for Nelson Park to develop a new park support building to consolidate and replace the existing support buildings on site to a new facility to serve the existing ball diamonds, artificial turf field, and other park functions. The new facility should continue to accommodate space for the Burlington Minor Football Association. As part of this plan, explore opportunities to reposition existing sports fields and park assets to improve functionality, reclaim greenspace, and potentially accommodate new park facilities.
4. Establish a vision for Hidden Valley Park to recognize its role in meeting the parks and outdoor recreation needs of current and future residents, particularly in relation to intensification of the Aldershot GO MTSA, while preserving natural features. New facilities that should be considered

Recommendations: Key Development and Revitalization Strategies

include a leash-free dog park, outdoor fitness equipment, disc golf course, space for outdoor festivals and events, and enhanced park features to support greater use.

5. Monitor arena utilization to assess the impact of the new Skyway Arena, participation levels of ice groups, arena trends, and community demographics, and investigate partnerships/alternative solutions with the private sector or non-municipal ice operators to meet ice needs, to confirm the need for a new twin pad arena. This facility would result in a net increase of one ice pad. Subject to confirming the need, the following options should be considered:
    a. Option #1: Construct a twin pad arena as part of a multi-use community centre at Central Park, which would be part of re-imagining the site; alternatively construct one single pad arena with a covered outdoor rink; or
    b. Option #2: Acquire a new site large enough to accommodate a twin pad arena, gymnasium, indoor walking track, multi-purpose spaces, and potentially an indoor pool. Developing a site concept should confirm site size requirements.
6. Monitor sports field usage as the City implements recommended enhancements as identified in this Live and Play Plan to understand how field utilization evolves, which should also include reviewing participation data, community demographics, and sports field trends, and investigate partnership opportunities to inform future sports field needs. Should it be determined that medium to long-term demand for sports fields outweighs available supply opportunities, investigate acquiring lands that are suitable for constructing new fields with supporting amenities, potentially in partnership with others; redesignating land may be required. Long-term demand for sports fields and other recreational facilities will also be considered as part of future updates to the Live and Play Plan and other relevant reviews of the Burlington Official Plan.
7. The design of urban parks and spaces should consider the small-scale and low impact amenities and features identified in this Live and Play Plan. Robust design materials and increased maintenance levels will be required in parks and public spaces serving Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) to reflect a higher intensity of use. Alternative facility provision models should be pursued to meet needs within intensifying areas, including working with developers to provide private amenity space, leasing space, POPS/strata parks, and rooftop facilities.
8. Future park and facility development and redevelopment should be designed with accessibility and climate change lenses with consideration given to the City's guiding corporate strategies.
9. Create a renewal strategy to guide future retrofits and modernization of the Tansley Woods Community Centre, focusing on priority areas including the indoor pool and associated features and amenities. Other areas to consider include improvements and retrofits to multi-purpose spaces to maximize facility use, repurposing underutilized space, and working with partners to strengthen the use of their spaces to better meet community needs, including the Burlington Public Library Branch. Enhancements to outdoor spaces should also be explored.

4. Indoor Recreation and Culture Facilities

4.1 Arenas





Current Supply

Burlington provides 11 ice pads at seven arena locations, including at Aldershot Arena, Appleby Ice Centre (4 – one of which is a dedicated figure skating pad), Central Arena, Mainway Ice Centre (2), Mountainside Community Centre, Nelson Arena, and Skyway Arena (currently under construction and planned for reopening in 2024). The City's ice pads vary in size, age, quality, and availability of amenities. The City's ice pad supply results in a service level of one per 17,600 residents. In addition to Burlington's arenas, there are five privately operated arenas with three full-size ice pads and two small pads.

Market Conditions

Ice sports are widely viewed as Canada's most popular activities; however, there are signs that participation in ice sports has been waning. Hockey Canada indicates that registration in minor hockey has been steadily declining since 2009. There was a slight uptick in the number of registrants for the 2018/2019 season, although participation in the sport was subsequently impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Prior to the pandemic, minor hockey registration was bolstered by an increase in girls/womens hockey. Hockey Canada reported that during the 2018/2019 season, girls/women made up 21% of registration among affiliated organizations in Ontario, which was an increase from 16% reported in the 2014/2015 season. The increasing popularity of female hockey has negatively impacted ringette, which has seen declining participation in some communities.

Growth in girls/womens hockey is driven by changing lifestyle and personal commitments, efforts to break free from stereotypical gender roles and promoting sport participation among girls/women. This trend has been disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic as a study conducted by Canadian Women and Sport found that nine in ten girls decreased or stopped participating in sports during the pandemic and one in four girls are not expected to return to sport post-pandemic.[4] Reasons for not returning include a lack of self-confidence and the lack of opportunities (e.g., organizations no longer active). The study identified strategies to ensure that there are opportunities available for females to remain in sport, including creating supportive environments that foster healthy social connections among participants and leaders.

Participation in figure skating has also declined from historic levels. While the number of figure skaters registered with Skate Canada and Skate Ontario are not at levels experienced in past decades, Skate for Life registrations reported for 2020 (which include CanSkate and PowerSkate) have grown by 2% nationally since 2014 and provincial figures have rebounded to reach 2014 registrations.

[4] Canadian Women & Sport. (2021). COVID alert. Pandemic impact on girls in sport. Retrieved from https://womenandsport.ca/

Overall, the decline in ice activities over the past decade was driven by the escalating cost of equipment and travel, the increasing cost of ice, time commitments, and immigration trends since the country's growth is being driven by newcomers arriving from countries that do not have strong ice sport programs or are not familiar with arena activities.[5] Research found that one of the top reasons for not playing the sport is due to safety concerns (e.g., concussion risk).[6] Despite declining participation in arenas, municipalities, including Burlington, have explored strategies to boost interest in skating through programming, including the City's Skate Lending Program.

Arena Usage is Strong During the Ice Season

Burlington's arena data for the month of November was analyzed to understand a typical ice usage during the prime-time period between 2019 and 2023.[7] In 2023, Burlington's arenas had a system-wide average utilization rate of 91% in November, which was slightly higher compared to 2019 (88%). This suggests that the City has recovered and exceeded pre-pandemic levels, and continues to demonstrate high demand for prime time ice. This level of use is indicative of an arena system that is operating at full capacity.

Figure 6: Total Prime Time Utilization of City Arenas, 2019 to 2023

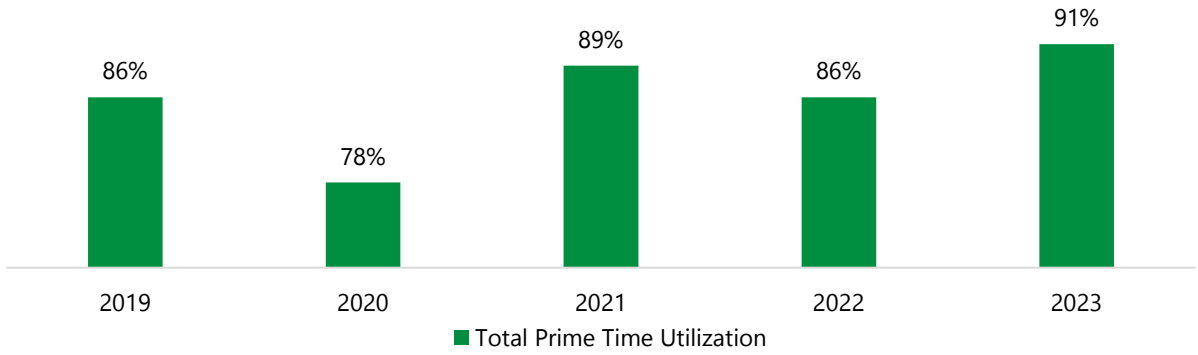
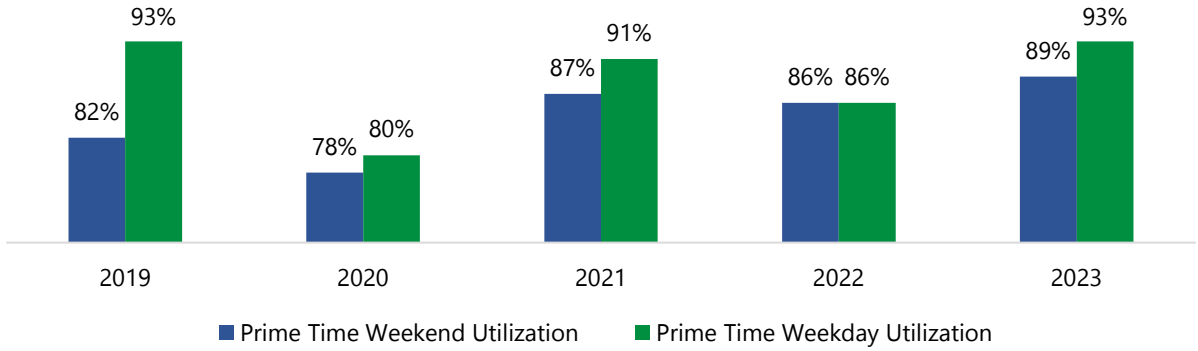


Figure 7: Prime Time Weekend and Weekday Arena Utilization of City Arenas, 2019 to 2023



[5] Urciuoli, A. (2020). Fewer Canadians are playing hockey, but does it matter? Retrieved from https://quickbitenews.com/

[6] Hockey Canada. (2013). Bauer Hockey, Hockey Canada research shows that growing the game is achievable. Retrieved from https://www.hockeycanada.ca/

[7] Prime time hours are defined as 5:00 pm to 11 pm between Monday to Friday and 7:00 am to 11:00 pm between Saturday and Sunday

Part of this high level of usage is due to the pressure created by the closure and redevelopment of the Skyway Arena, which is expected to be completed before the start of the 2024 and 2025 ice season. To accommodate the temporary closure of this arena, the City's ice groups had collectively reduced their prime-time ice allocation by approximately 5% to 6% to share time at the City's other arenas. Daytime ice usage is generally low, which is common in other municipalities. To minimize operating resources, some of the City's arena locations are closed during the daytime, which also allows daytime use to be directed to key locations to bolster usage levels and create management efficiencies.

Consultation with arena stakeholders found that there is a desire for more ice time from boys and girls ice groups, particularly during the prime-time period. This is partially because groups had to reduce their ice time to accommodate the closure of Skyway Arena, but also to accommodate the growth of their program. As a result, it was reported that some user groups are traveling outside of Burlington to adjacent communities to access additional ice, although these times are not always ideal as groups are not priority renters in other municipalities. It was also mentioned that some of Burlington's ice pads are undersized compared to modern standards and expectations. Requests were made for additional ice pads in Burlington that are NHL size with modern amenities including, but not limited to, spectator seating, parking, concessions, and a walking track. Requests were also made for an Olympic-sized ice pad to support the Burlington Skating Centre. Upgrading the City's existing arenas was also suggested, including change rooms, showers, and speaker systems.

Determining Future Ice Pad Needs

Ice pad needs are commonly assessed based on participant-based targets that range between one per 400 to 650 youth players or 700 to 800 youth and adult players. Like some municipalities, the City does not collect user group participation figures and in the absence of this data, a population based target can be used. Communities such as Oakville, Hamilton, and Richmond Hill target ice pads at a rate of one per 27,000 to 30,000 residents, which is lower compared to Burlington's current level of service (one per 17,600 residents). This is reflective of declining ice demand in these communities because of aging of the population and increasing cultural diversity.

Burlington has consistently maintained strong ice usage levels and there is a demand for more ice; however, the City must be cautious in increasing its supply. The City is expected to add more than 70,000 residents by 2051, which will generate some additional ice demand; however it is expected that future residents will be more diverse and as the population ages, it is not likely to generate the same level of ice demand. This is being experienced in adjacent municipalities and as a result, current pressure for ice may soften over the long-term.

Maintaining the current ice pad service level (rounded to one ice pad per 18,000 residents) is recommended. Based on this target, a total of 12 ice pads would be required by 2034, which is one more than what is currently provided. Prior to moving forward with increasing the ice pad supply, the City should reconfirm its ice pad requirements through a five-year update to this Plan, taking into consideration the impact of the new Skyway Arena, recognizing that user groups had to decrease their ice allocations during construction and they have identified that more ice time will be needed once it is completed. Monitoring ice use will be important to understand how Skyway Arena can respond to alleviate pressures and what the additional demand is, together with tracking arena user group participation rates, prevailing arena trends and community demographics. As part of the five-year update, consideration may need to be given to adjusting the recommended target if any of these factors have changed significantly, which would also impact long-term arena needs.

While the City is monitoring ice usage in the short-term, investigating potential partnerships with others is encouraged to meet current and future ice needs, potentially through working with the private sector to construct new arenas or working with non-municipal arena providers to maximize access to ice, particularly to accommodate adult ice needs.

Table 2: Recommended Arena Facilities, 2024 to 2051

Current Arena Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
11	1:18,000 residents	1*	1	To be defined through future updates *	

*Arena needs beyond 2035 to be defined through future updates to the Live and Play Plan subject to monitoring ice pad usage, participation, community demographics, trends, and adjustments to the recommended service level target.

Creating a Twin Pad Arena

Should there be a confirmed need for one additional ice pad over the next ten years, consideration could be given to expanding an existing single pad arena to add a second ice pad. However, a high-level review of Burlington's existing single pad arenas suggested that there are no viable locations to be twinned to add a second ice pad. The recommended strategy is to construct a new twin pad arena to accommodate the new ice pad and to replace one of the City's aging single pad arenas. This approach is common in other municipalities as co-locating ice pads together achieves efficiencies in facility construction, operations and management, and programming, including the potential to host tournaments and share amenities. Burlington's Appleby Ice Centre and Mainway Arena are two excellent examples of multi-pad arenas that collectively provide six ice pads.

At a minimum, new ice pads should be constructed to NHL ice pad standards (200' by 85'). Other design features to consider include accessibility features and measures to achieve low or net carbon neutral standards and climate resiliency. Unique design approaches may also be explored to meet ice needs, such as constructing one indoor single pad arena and one covered outdoor pad with the potential to be enclosed. Consideration could also be given to an Olympic size pad (200' by 100') in an appropriate location, for example, it could be accommodated as part of a new twin pad arena to provide enhanced opportunities for users (figure skating and hockey) or it could be incorporated as part of redeveloping a single pad arena to provide a dedicated facility for figure skating this would replace the dedicated figure skating pad at the Appleby Ice Centre; the existing pad could then be re-purposed back for hockey use, creating a four-pad hockey complex that would be better positioned for tournaments.

Potential locations to construct a new twin pad arena are limited as the City does not have surplus land available to accommodate this facility; it is also a common best practice to co-locate arenas with other indoor spaces to enhance user experiences and cross programming opportunities, which creates additional land needs. One opportunity may exist at Central Park, which currently has an aging single pad arena that is well used. This Plan speaks to re-imagining the entire Central Park site to consolidate aging facilities and increase access to outdoor park space. Exploring the feasibility of constructing a new twin pad arena at this location should be explored although balanced with the need to expand greenspace in the park and accommodate a wide variety of parks and recreation opportunities.

Should it be determined that constructing a twin pad arena at Central Park is not feasible or not a preferred direction, the City should acquire a site that is large enough to accommodate two ice pads, as

well as other indoor space components as identified in this Plan, including a gymnasium, indoor walking track, multi-purpose space, and potentially an indoor pool (which may be a longer-term need and subject to partnership discussions for expanded indoor pool in or near Central Park). The above noted options for meeting Burlington's ice needs should be re-visited as part of the recommended five-year update to this Plan (Refer to recommendation #5).

In addition to planning for a new twin pad arena, the City should continue to ensure that its existing locations are maintained in a state of good repair, including undertaking necessary accessibility and energy efficiency retrofits to reduce the City's carbon footprint, as well as undertake necessary updates to enhance user experiences. This may be informed by consultation with user groups to identify areas for enhancement, recognizing that some improvements may fall under the responsibility of user groups.

Opportunities for Dry Pad Uses

With the exception of four ice pads that are operated year-round, Burlington's arena floors are available for rentals during the spring and summer season between mid-April until mid-August for activities such as lacrosse. During this period, arena floor use is low with weekly usage levels at approximately 40% or less in 2023, which is slightly lower compared to 2019.

While there is capacity available for more arena floor use, consultation with user groups found that there is a desire for greater access to facility space, particularly at the beginning of the floor season. The challenge lies with the transition period in April when arenas are still being used for ice rentals and the surface is not ready for dry use, thereby delaying programming and resulting in unpredictable scheduling.

Requests were made for a year-round dry pad to support indoor activities. While the development of a dedicated dry pad is not being recommended at this time, greater access to dry pad space in the City is expected in the short term with the completion of the Skyway Arena. Additional dry pad supply would also be achieved should the City move forward with constructing a new twin pad arena.

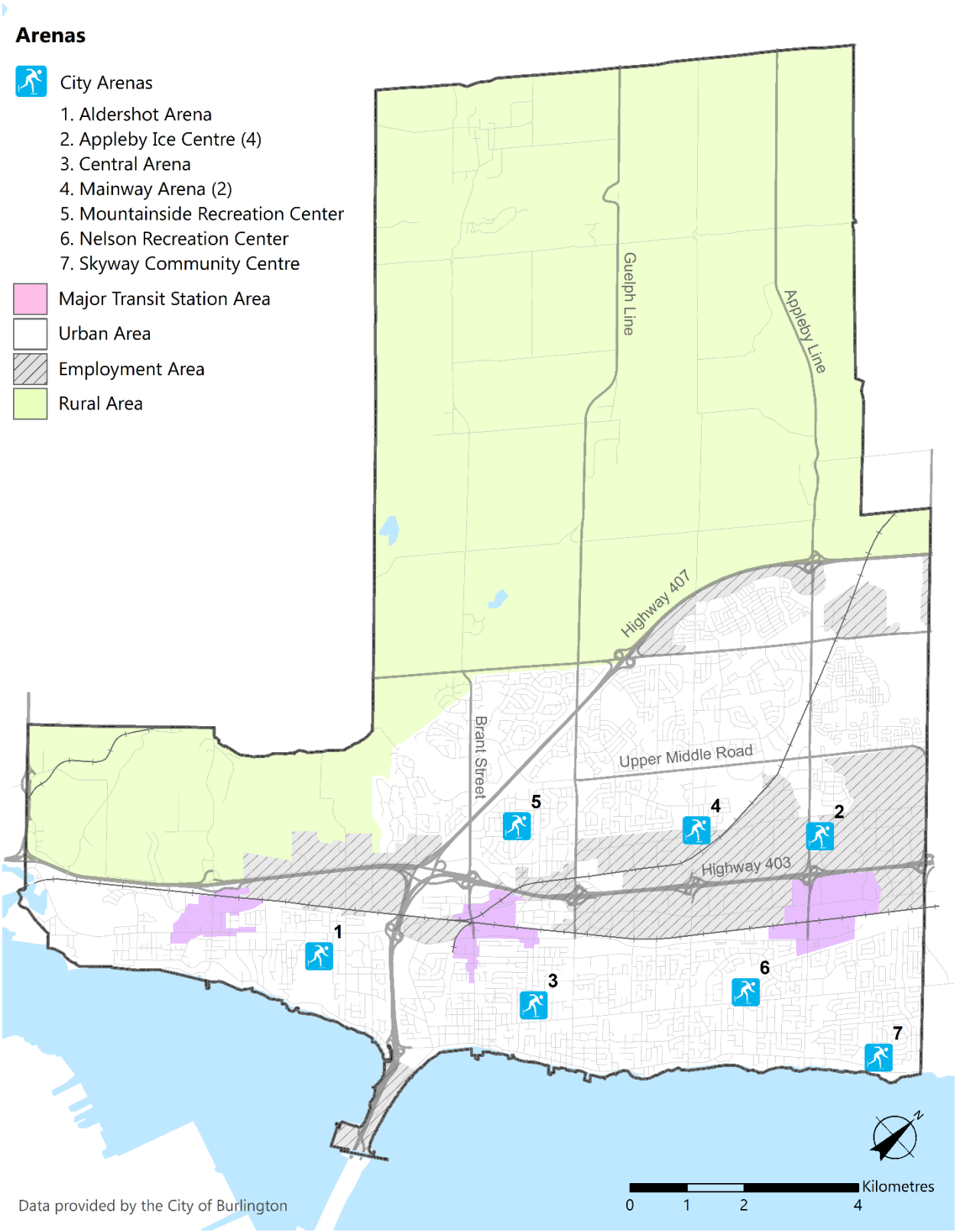
Recommendations: Arenas

10. The following strategy is recommended for arenas.

a. Explore partnership opportunities to meet current and future ice needs, potentially through new ice pad development with the private sector or increasing access to existing non-municipal ice operators.

b. In consultation with user groups, identify opportunities to enhance the use of existing ice pads through strategic improvements, some enhancements may be the responsibility of sport groups such as replacing certain equipment.

Figure 8: Geographic Distribution of Arenas



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

4.2 Indoor Pools

Current Supply

There are four indoor pools in Burlington – the Aldershot Pool, Angela Coughlan Pool, Centennial Pool, and Tansley Woods Community Centre. The Aldershot and Angela Coughlan Pools are located in high schools where the City has a reciprocal agreement with the Halton Board of Education to access these locations. The Centennial Pool is located at the future Robert Bateman Community Centre (formerly the Robert Bateman High School).



While each indoor pool location features a 25-metre, rectangular tank, supporting amenities and features vary at each location to offer a different aquatic experience. For example, the Angela Coughlan Pool has a rectangular tank, small teaching tank, and separate warming tank. Aldershot Pool is known as the warmest tank in the City. The pool at the Tansley Woods Community Centre has a connected leisure pool with a ramp entry and waterslide and separate warming pool. The Centennial Pools offers a rectangular tank which is ideal for competitive swim meets. The City's indoor pool supply results in a service level of one location per 48,525 residents. In addition, an indoor pool is located at Ron Edwards Family YMCA (located near Central Park), as well as at privately operated providers.



Market Conditions

Trends in pool construction and retrofitting have seen an evolution in public pool design influenced by local demographics and an increasing diversity of users, thereby raising the bar in facility quality. For example, older adults and seniors are driving the demand for warmer water and therapeutic pools, although cooler temperatures are more desirable for swim teams, aquatic leadership, and rentals. Young families desire smaller teaching pools for infants and young children. Municipalities are responding to user demands for modern amenities, including, but not limited to, family or gender-neutral change rooms, beach entries, spray features, updated viewing galleries, and universal design elements. Many of these amenities are found at Burlington's indoor pools.



Time and again, research has found that swimming is one of the most popular leisure activities as it is an essential life skill that can be pursued at all life stages (e.g., from infants to seniors). The importance of learning to swim further bolsters the popularity of the activity particularly in waterfront communities such as Burlington. A report on Canadian youth sports found that over 1.1 million youth between the ages of 3 and 17 were enrolled in a swimming program, making this the most popular organized recreation activity.[8] Burlington provides a range of aquatic programs such as learn to swim and aquafit, in addition to public swim. Due to the popularity of indoor pools, they are always in high demand, although they are among the most intensive and expensive recreation facilities to operate.

The community survey found that 43% of responding households have used an indoor swimming pool in Burlington, which is the most popular indoor recreation facility that was used. Over half (55%) of households supported investment in indoor pools, which was ranked 11th out of 36 facility types. Other specific requests for indoor pools and amenities included increasing the water temperature at Tansley Woods Community Centre and Centennial Pool to make swimming experiences more suitable for children. A request was also made for a new indoor pool in the north end of Burlington and to incorporate universal change rooms at all indoor pool locations, like what is available at the Angela Coughlan Pool.

Indoor Swimming Programming Has Recovered from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Burlington's pools generally offer an average of 100 hours per week and operate 49 weeks per year, which result in 4,900 hours per facility. Operating costs are related to regulations and are largely fixed. A cursory overview of indoor pool programming was undertaken to understand use, although it should be noted that participation statistics and the use of each location may not be directly comparable to previous years due to a range of factors such as pools being taken offline for maintenance and renovations, reallocation of programming to different pools, programming, and staffing availability.

In 2023, the City's aquatic programming had nearly 238,000 participants, which was on par with 2019. Other rentals and school use have also exceeded pre-pandemic participation figures. Use by swim teams has declined by 47% due to the City's efforts to reallocate time to community programming.

The Tansley Woods Pool was the City's most popular location, which accommodated nearly 40% of all participants in 2023 given that residents enjoy its leisure pool configuration and the fact that it is located as part of a multi-use facility where residents can also access other public spaces, while the City's school-based pools are older and do not offer the same aquatic experience. Like many other municipalities, the City has been experiencing a high demand for aquatic programming, particularly during the weekday evenings when pool use is at its peak, creating extensive waitlists. In 2023 alone, there were over 3,500 people on a waitlist for registered swim programs with the greatest pressure being experienced at the Tansley Woods Pool.

[8] Solutions Research Group Consultants Inc. 2014. Canadian Youth Sport Report. Retrieved from http://www.srgnet.com

Table 3: Participation in Indoor Swimming Programming, 2019 to 2023

Program Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
City Programs	238,811	48,944	62,339	174,051	237,992
Swim Teams	63,428	20,489	14,140	28,565	33,671
Rentals	1,605	7	0	2,364	3,461
School Use	1,974	349	981	1,686	2,979
Total	305,818	69,789	77,460	206,666	278,103

Note: Data may not be directly comparable to previous years due to factors such as closures and availability of staff and programming.

Table 4: Participation in Indoor Swimming Programming by Location, 2019 to 2023

Program Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Aldershot Pool	72,019	0	20,825	47,144	64,064
Angela Coughlan Pool	29,194	8,136	8,833	33,384	61,329
Centennial Pool	57,516	22,056	12,326	35,840	42,462
Tansley Woods Pool	147,089	39,597	35,476	90,298	110,248
Total	305,818	69,789	77,460	206,666	278,103

Note: Data may not be directly comparable to previous years due to factors such as closures and availability of staff and programming.

Growth is Driving the Need for Indoor Pools

Burlington's is currently providing indoor pools at a rate one location per 48,525 residents and continuing to maintain this level of service is recommended as it is similar to targets of other Greater Toronto Area municipalities, which range between one per 30,000 to 60,000 residents. Based on the City's projected 2051 population, there will be a need for five indoor pool locations by the end of the planning period, which is one more than what is currently provided.

Table 5: Recommended Indoor Pool Locations, 2024 to 2051

Current Indoor Pool Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
4	1:49,000 residents	1	0	0	1

A visual scan of the City's indoor pools revealed that there is a strong distribution across Burlington's urban area. With future population growth primarily being targeted to Burlington's MTSAs, there is a need to ensure that residents in these areas have access to community pools. While it is anticipated that some future condominium buildings may have indoor pools to serve owners and tenants, these amenities do not offer aquatic programming such as lessons that are offered at public aquatic centres. The Aldershot GO and Appleby GO MTSAs are served by existing City pools in the vicinity.

A gap exists around the Burlington GO MTSA, which is presently not served by a City-operated pool, but the Ron Edwards Family YMCA is located in this area, which is adjacent to Central Park. This location is an older facility that offers an undersized pool tank (25-yard) compared to modern standards with a separate therapy tank. Rather than providing a City-operated pool in this area, which would duplicate an existing service and be contrary to Burlington's Framework for Community Recreation, the preferred approach would be to continue to engage the YMCA in discussions with a focus on investigating the feasibility of enhancing and expanding the existing indoor pool to better meet the needs of current and future residents.

For example, YMCA parking needs could be met at Central Park, potentially through re-imagining of the site. This would allow the YMCA building envelope to be expanded to accommodate facility enhancements, which could potentially include increasing the length of the rectangular tank to 25-metres, enlarging the therapy tank or adding a leisure component, accessibility features, universal changerooms, and other modern amenities. Should it be determined that the feasibility of creating a partnership between the City and the YMCA, or expanding the facility, is not achievable, the City should look at other locations to construct an indoor pool, potentially at a new site with a twin pad arena and other facility components.

The Future of Indoor Pools in Burlington's High Schools

Over the past ten years, the City has made extensive reinvestment in Burlington's high school pools. Renovations were completed at Aldershot Pool in 2020 that included repairs to the pool tank and deck, tiling, and painting. The Angela Coughlan Pool was renovated in 2019 to renew aging mechanical systems, pool deck, tiling, lighting, and other infrastructure, in addition to the development of universal changerooms. Updates to the Centennial Pool were also made in 2014 to update and modernize viewing areas, changerooms, accessibility features, pool deck, and mechanical equipment.

These recent investments demonstrate the City's long-term commitment to continuing to operate these facilities and provide residents with a strong distribution of swimming opportunities across the City. Provided that these locations continue to be maintained in a state of good repair, including undertaking accessibility and energy efficiency retrofits, it is expected that these indoor pools will be adequate to meet the needs of residents over the short-term. The City should continue to plan and budget for future renewal requirements that will be required over the medium and long-term. As part of this, consideration should be given to incorporating modern amenities and features that may not currently exist at some of the City's high school pool locations such as adding or converting change facilities to universal changerooms, which were recently incorporated at Angela Coughlan Pool, and increasing water temperatures. The feasibility of incorporating other amenities at Burlington's pools should also be explored including, but not limited to, slides, dividing walls, spray features, beach entry, etc., recognizing that some locations may already provide some of these features.

There is a degree of risk involved with the City's partnerships agreement with the Halton District School Board to provide community access to these high school pools as they are contingent upon continuing to maintain its positive relationship with the Halton District School Board to ensure continued public access to high school pools. The City's relationship with the school board is strong and there is nothing to suggest that the current agreement is at risk, although there may be factors and scenarios that are beyond the City's control. For example, if schools become surplus, it could result in an uncertain future of one or more high school pools. This would result in a major loss to the community and the public may look to the City to step in to find a solution to ensure that swimming opportunities continue to be provided, or require the City to lower it's level of service, which would not be ideal. The acquisition and

adaptive re-use of the former Robert Bateman High School (now Robert Bateman Community Centre), which also has an indoor pool that continues to be operated by the City, is one example where there was a need to find a solution to preserve and enhance community access to space.

There are examples in other municipalities that have constructed new indoor pools as part of multi-use community centres to replace aging pools located in high schools, such as in Mississauga. The benefit of this was to strengthen existing facilities as community hubs and it provided an opportunity to design much larger indoor pools with modern features and amenities and allowing for greater programming capacity. There are currently no known opportunities for Burlington to explore this strategy given that there are no viable sites that are already publicly owned that are in proximity to the existing high school pools, to serve the same geographic area; however, it may be a potential strategy to explore over the long-term should land (or a suitable partner) becomes available. Until such time, maintaining current agreements, taking into consideration the benefits and risks (as discussed further in Section 6.3), to access and provide swimming opportunities at these locations continues to be supported.

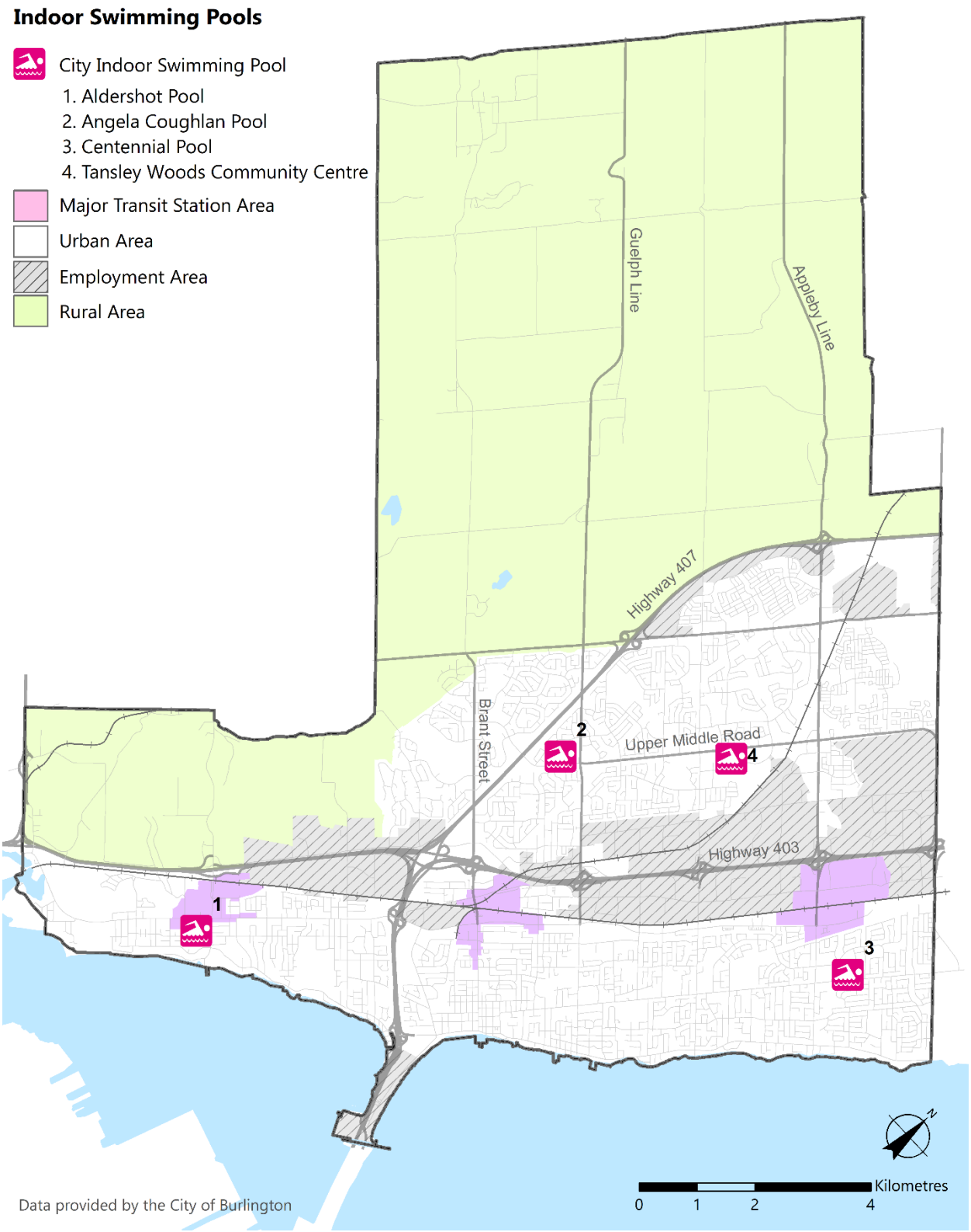
Recommendations: Indoor Pools

11. The following strategy is recommended for indoor pools.

a. Continue discussions with the YMCA to advance opportunities to enhance and expand the indoor pool facility at Ron Edwards Family YMCA to serve the existing and future populations within the market area. As such an enhancement and expansion would reduce on-site parking at the YMCA, the City should investigate opportunities to provide parking at Central Park. If a potential partnership or expansion to the building is not feasible, the City should look at other locations to construct an indoor pool facility.

b. Create a plan that explores the feasibility of retrofitting and incorporating modern amenities and new features at Burlington's indoor pools to enhance experiences. Amenities to consider include, but are not limited to, universal changerooms, slides, beach entry, spray features, dividing walls, and sport-friendly features, etc. Enhanced features may vary across the City's pools, recognizing that there are locations geared towards public swimming and lessons, and competition.

Figure 9: Geographic Distribution of Indoor Swimming Pools



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

4.3 Gymnasiums

Current Supply





Burlington provides four gymnasium locations at Brant Hills Community Centre, Haber Recreation Centre, Sherwood Forest Community Centre, and Tansley Woods Community Centre. These locations vary between single and double gymnasium sizes and feature hardwood flooring with lining to support various indoor recreation activities such as basketball, volleyball and pickleball. Other recreation-based activities also take place in the City's gymnasiums such as group fitness and summer camps. Each location can be divided into smaller gymnasium spaces to support simultaneous programming; taking this into consideration, Burlington can program up to 14 gymnasiums at once. The City's supply results in a service level of one gymnasium location per 48,525 residents (or one programmable gymnasium per 13,864 residents). The City is also in the advanced stages of completing renovations to the Robert Bateman Community Centre, which will add three single gymnasiums to the supply.

In addition to the City-owned gymnasiums, Burlington has a reciprocal agreement with school boards to permit 51 school gymnasiums for non-profit community organizations. Combined with City-owned gymnasiums, this would result in a service level of one programmable gymnasium per 2,986 residents. Other gymnasiums exist in Burlington such as at the Ron Edwards Family YMCA.

Market Conditions

Gymnasiums facilitate a variety of indoor sports and recreation opportunities that require a hard surface, large open space, and high ceilings. The primary purpose of gymnasiums is to support organized and drop-in recreation activities such as:

- **Basketball:** Compared to other sports such as hockey, basketball is affordable, easy to learn, safe, and can be played individually or in small groups. These factors have been driving the popularity of the sport. The Toronto Raptors winning the NBA Championship also boosted interest in the sport. The Ontario Basketball Association reported approximately 1,300 registered teams in 2022-2023, which is nearly double the number of registered teams in 2018-2019. Since 2015, the number of affiliated organizations has doubled from 484 to 900 teams.
- **Volleyball:** Volleyball is a popular activity among youth and young adults that combines high energy physical activity with socializing with others. It's a low-cost, easy to learn activity that can be played at all levels from recreation to competition. From an organized perspective, the Ontario Volleyball Association reported that participation levels have been stable in recent years, with nearly 11,000 indoor volleyball players, with planned efforts to bolster participation at the grassroots level to create lifelong volleyball players.
- **Pickleball:** While there is no recorded data on the number of indoor pickleball players, Pickleball Ontario reports that there are over 164,000 registered pickleball members, As the popularity and interest in the sport continues to grow, it can be expected that communities will continue will face

pressure for gymnasium time to accommodate indoor pickleball, particularly as increasingly hotter summers make it a challenge for some players to play outdoors. Recognizing that a large portion of pickleball players is ages 55+, indoor pickleball programming can be scheduled during the daytime, although trends suggest that there is an increasing segment of younger pickleball players taking up the sport, driving demand for the activity during traditional prime time periods.

- **Cricket**: With many communities experiencing a growing popularity in cricket, municipal and school gymnasiums are starting to be used as indoor venues to practices and play modified games such as tape ball cricket, which uses a tennis ball wrapped in tape.
- **Other general recreation activities:** Gymnasiums can be programmed for other active recreation uses such as group fitness, badminton, floor hockey, dodgeball, and a variety of public activities. The multi-use nature of gymnasiums highlights the need to ensure that they are flexibly designed to respond to a broad range of sport-friendly uses, recognizing that appropriate equipment also needs to be used to protect and preserve finishes to minimize damages, such as using plastic or rubberized equipment. Non-sport or recreation activities may also take place such as special events and large social gatherings, although these uses tend to be given lower priority to ensure that gymnasiums are used for its intended purpose and to protect the gymnasium from potential damage.

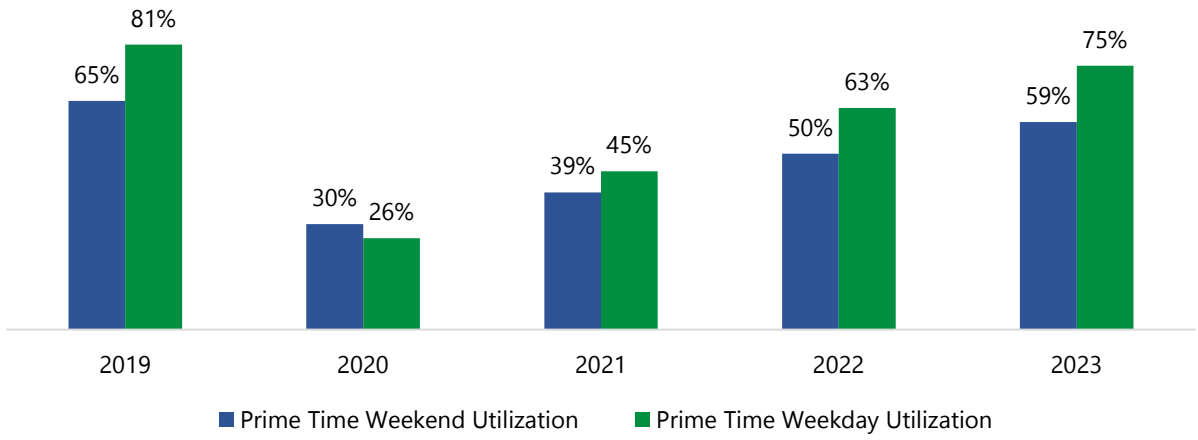
The municipal gymnasium supply is often bolstered by school boards that provide afterschool access to their gyms through the Province's Community Use of Schools initiative. There are a number of school gymnasiums across the Halton Region that the public can book through this program, although school boards have complete control over rentals and there is no requirement to provide local users with priority bookings. Burlington has maintained a strong relationship with the regional public and catholic school boards to access school gymnasium space and work collaboratively in joint-facility development projects.

Use of City Gymnasiums is Strong During the Weekday Prime Time Period

Use of City-owned gymnasiums is strong, particularly during the weekday prime time period when they are used the most. Over a four-week period in 2023, Burlington's gymnasiums had a usage rate of 75% during the weekday prime time period, which is a slight decline from 81% recorded in 2019. Usage levels were lower between 2020 and 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Gymnasium usage has not recovered back to pre-pandemic levels but given the City's efforts to increase use and strong public interest to get active and rediscover the City's programs, full recovery over the short-term is expected.

These findings suggest that there is some capacity to accommodate additional use, although available time that can be booked is later in the evening, which is less desirable than the early prime time period, which is currently under pressure as they are most ideal for running children and youth programming. There is also ample capacity for additional use during the weekends.

Figure 10: Prime Time Weekend and Weekday Utilization of City Gymnasiums, 2019 to 2023



Planning Gymnasiums at Future Community Centres

Municipalities such as Hamilton and Oakville incorporate gymnasiums as part of new community centres or facility redevelopment as they are viewed as core elements of multi-use facilities to ensure that there are flexible spaces for indoor sports and recreation programming. Over the short-term, the City of Burlington is expected to increase its supply by three gymnasiums with the completion of renovations to the Robert Bateman Community Centre. There are also additional opportunities to further strengthen the City's gymnasium inventory at future community centres, including at a future facility at Central Park and potentially as part of a future twin pad arena (see Recommendation #2 and 5.b) to support community programming and rentals. These gymnasiums may also support cross-programming opportunities with other facility components. For example, a gymnasium at Central Park could facilitate a wide range of activities (including pickleball), particularly if it is connected to seniors space. Co-locating a gymnasium with an arena could also provide dry-land training space, which is a common request among arena groups. Additionally, gymnasiums can support the provision of indoor walking tracks, which is supported by this Plan (see Recommendation #13.a).

As gymnasiums accommodate broad opportunities, they should be designed with flexibility in mind to meet community needs. While there is no standard template, gymnasiums are typically influenced by community needs. At a minimum, gymnasiums should be designed to be large enough to accommodate a full basketball court with adequate run-out areas. Other design elements that should be considered include high ceilings, spectator seating, audio and visual equipment, storage rooms, and changerooms. Where opportunities exist, the inclusion of a double size gymnasium with a dividing wall could be contemplated to further strengthen programming opportunities.

Enhancing Existing Gymnasiums

There are some City gymnasiums that have the potential for enhancements to improve programming and position them to meet future community needs. The biggest potential is located at the Sherwood Forest Community Centre where there is an undersized gymnasium that is aging. The gymnasium's constraints contributed to it being one of the least used gymnasiums in 2023. Over the long-term it is anticipated that this location will face growing pressure and demand for programming as it is located adjacent to the Appleby GO MTSA, which is expected to experience significant population growth through intensification. The City recognizes this gymnasium as an opportunity for enhancement as identified through the

Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan, which should continue to be a priority, taking into consideration the design guidelines identified above.

The Brant Hills Community Centre is another location that would benefit from gymnasium enhancements. Concerns have been identified about the ceiling height of the gymnasiums at this location that has limited the activities that can take place and impacted its desirability for rentals. A cursory review of this location suggests that there could be an opportunity to increase the ceiling height to support an expanded range of uses, although this would need to be confirmed through a feasibility study.

Maintaining Access to School Gymnasiums

In 2023, school gymnasiums permitted by the City were booked for over 6,200 hours (after school hours, which generally aligns with the prime time period), which is generally equivalent to four gymnasiums based on use of City-locations. Continuing to maintain the City's relationship with local school boards in providing gymnasium space is critical to ensure that the community has access to programs and services that are within walking distance of many neighbourhoods. This approach has been a successful way of offering localized programs based on localized needs and reduces pressure for the City to provide this facility space if these school gymnasiums were not available. With this in mind, there may also be opportunities to enhance community access to school gymnasiums at locations that are not currently being permitted by the City, such as at the Gary Allan Learning Centre and the former Lester B. Pearson High School.

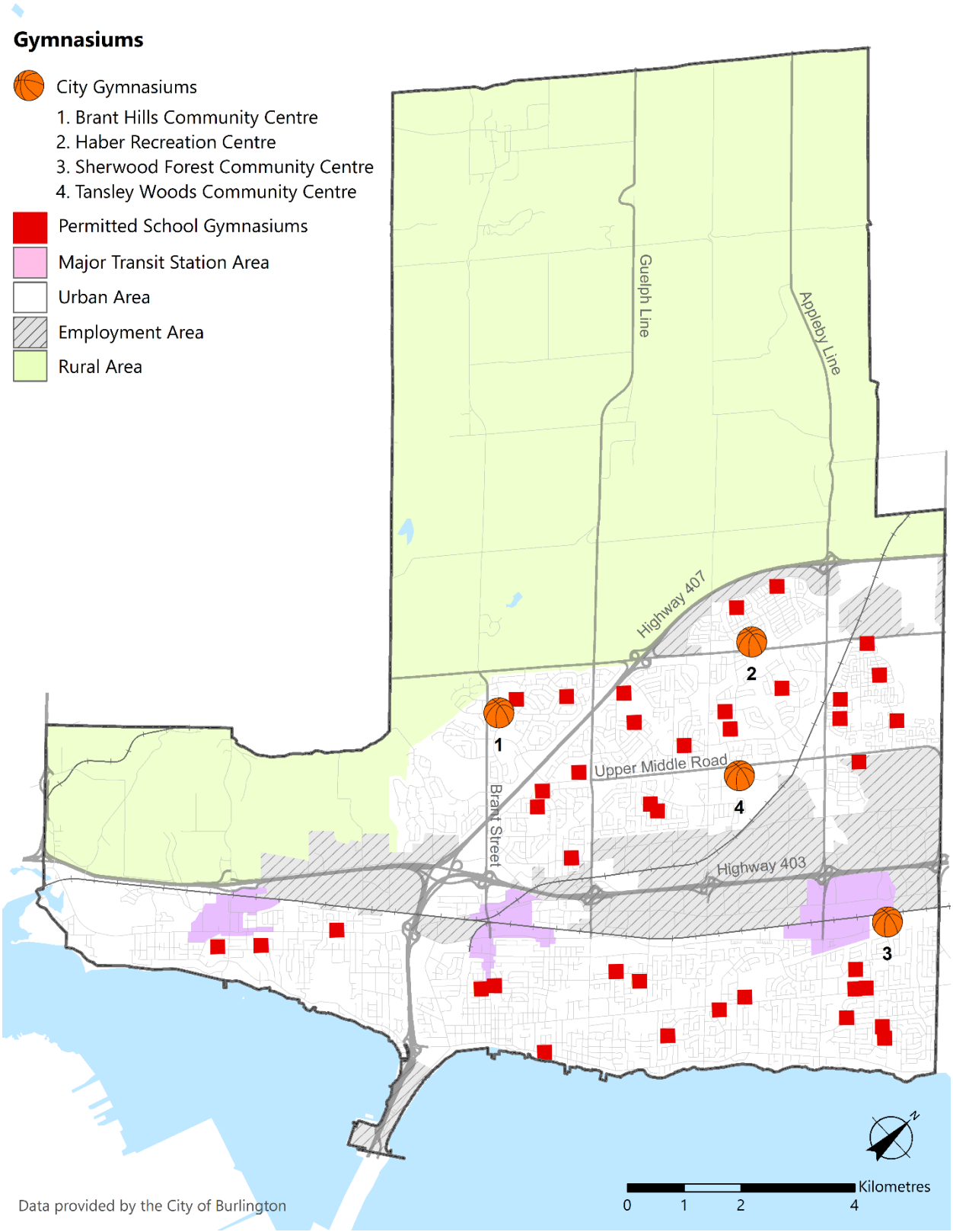
Recommendations: Gymnasiums

12. The following strategy is recommended for gymnasiums. All new gymnasiums should be designed to be full or double size with supporting amenities, including high ceilings, spectator seating, audio and visual equipment, storage rooms, and changerooms.

a. Explore the feasibility of increasing the ceiling height of the gymnasiums at Brant Hills Community Centre to support active sports and recreation activities such as volleyball, badminton, basketball, pickleball, floor hockey, etc.

b. Engage school boards to explore opportunities to access school gymnasiums that are not currently permitted by the City such as the Gary Allan Learning Centre and former Lester B. Pearson High School.

Figure 11: Geographic Distribution of Gymnasiums



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

4.4 Fitness Spaces and Indoor Walking Tracks

Current Supply

Burlington's Framework for Community Recreation encourages that the provision of recreation facilities should complement what is provided by other service providers. Recognizing the healthy supply of equipment-based fitness centres in Burlington, including at the Ron Edwards Family YMCA, the City focuses on delivering group fitness and wellness programming such as yoga, low impact training, indoor walking, stretch and tone, Pilates, conditioning and more, within multi-purpose spaces and gymnasiums at Brant Hills Community Centre, Burlington Seniors' Centre, Mountainside Community Centre, Tansley Woods Community Centre, and others. The City is also in the process of constructing its first indoor walking track at the new Skyway Arena.

Market Conditions

Physical fitness and individual wellness are top priorities among many Canadians, resulting in a greater emphasis being placed on personal health. This has translated into increasing use of both private and public sector fitness services, including active living programming centred on general health and wellness, weight-training, cardiovascular training, and stretching activities such as yoga and Pilates.

With greater emphasis being placed on health and wellness, group fitness programming has become one of the fastest growing segments of the fitness sector, more so than traditional weight-training, as these programs are designed to be fun and social activities. The desire for more active fitness programming was mentioned through the other consultation engagement activities, although no specific program types were mentioned. Municipalities are also keeping pace with fitness trends such functional training (e.g., TRX, Cross-Fit, and High Intensity Interval Training) based on scientific evidence documenting its benefits but also in response to client demands.

Focusing on Active Living and Wellness Opportunities within Multi-Purpose Spaces

Decisions to provide equipment-based fitness centres are based on several factors, including the corporate desire to offer this public service to provide access to affordable fitness opportunities, ability to be incorporated within a multi-use community centre with complementary facility components (such as an indoor pool), geography, and state of the private sector market. In alignment with the City's Framework for Community Recreation, which discourages directly competing with other service providers, it is recommended that the City continue to focus on providing fitness programming within its multi-purpose spaces and gymnasiums to ensure that residents have reasonable access to a range of active living choices in Burlington.

As the City continues to grow and intensify, it is anticipated that the supply of non-public fitness centres that offer equipment-based services will grow as it can be expected that these types of amenities will be offered within condominiums to owners and tenants. While direct entry into the fitness centre market is not recommended at this time, consideration could be given to opportunities to work in partnership with a third party.

Responding to the Demand for Indoor Walking Tracks

Surveys conducted across the country indicate that walking, jogging, and hiking for leisure are the most popular recreational activities pursued by individuals due to their self-structured nature and it can be pursued by most people. Sport organizations also benefit from indoor walking or running tracks for dryland training and from a broader perspective, they provide safe walking opportunities during periods of inclement weather. For these reasons, there has been a growing popularity in indoor walking tracks.

Many modern community centre templates incorporate indoor walking tracks typically encircling an arena, gymnasium, indoor turf field or are integrated with circulation areas (e.g., walkways in common areas, fitness centres, etc.). Walking tracks often have a minimum of two lanes with a rubberized or coated surface, the length of which is dependent on the design and intended use. Many communities with indoor tracks do not intend for them to recover their costs as the steady volume of use is viewed as achieving the intent of promoting physical activity while increasing the foot traffic of a community centre. In the absence of an indoor walking track, Burlington encourages residents to utilize the hallways and corridors of the City's community centres and through walking programs held in gymnasiums.

As a general guide, it is a best practice to include an indoor walking track as part of any new or developed facility. While there is a capital cost incurred with developing an indoor track, the operational impacts are nominal in the context of constructing a new or redeveloped facility and the track does not have to increase the physical footprint of the facility, particularly if it can be elevated and encircle an ice rink or gymnasium. Based on the facility development recommendations contained in this Plan, indoor walking tracks should be incorporated into a new facility at Central Park, at the redevelopment of Sherwood Forest Community Centre, and potentially as part of a new community centre that would include a new twin pad arena. Should the City move forward with constructing a new facility at Central Park, an indoor walking track should be considered as part of this design which could be elevated above a gymnasium as recommended in this Plan. An indoor walking track could also encircle one of the ice pads at a future twin pad arena.

Recommendations: Fitness Spaces and Indoor Walking Tracks

13. The following strategy is recommended for fitness spaces and indoor walking tracks.

a. Indoor walking tracks should be considered as part of future multi-use community centre developments, particularly those that would include an arena, gymnasium, or other complementary facility components. Based on the facility recommendations of the Live and Play Plan, indoor walking tracks should be incorporated into a new facility at Central Park, at the redevelopment of Sherwood Forest Community Centre, and potentially as part of a new community centre that would include a new twin pad arena.

4.5 Multi-Purpose Spaces

Current Supply

The City has 46 multi-purpose spaces at community facilities and properties across Burlington, including 30 community program rooms, two auditoriums, six small meeting rooms, five music rooms, and three hub rooms that are available to the community for free to deliver no-cost programs or services. These spaces vary in size and availability of amenities that may include, but not be limited to, storage, kitchens/kitchenettes, counters with sinks, tables and chairs, audio and visual equipment, mirrors and

more. The City's multi-purpose spaces are used for a variety of indoor activities, including, but not limited to, meetings, birthday parties, weddings, summer camps, special events, and other social gatherings. Complementing these community spaces are those offered by other service providers, including the Burlington Public Library, churches, schools, and private sector space providers such as golf courses and event venues.

Market Conditions

Incorporating multi-purpose space within community facilities has been an ongoing best practice in modern facility planning and design due to efficiencies in cross-programming, staffing, construction, and other factors. Considering the benefits associated with co-locating multi-purpose space in community facilities, the construction of new stand-alone program spaces is generally discouraged as they tend to be underutilized, have higher operational costs, and exhibit program limitations when compared to multi-purpose spaces within community centres. Municipalities that have historically provided stand-alone multi-purpose space are trending towards re-purposing opportunities to better utilize space or decommissioning them completely as they reach the end of their useful lifespan.

Enhancing the use of Multi-Purpose Spaces

Burlington's multi-purpose spaces generally have low to moderate usage levels. Multi-purpose spaces are commonly viewed as space that is provided as a community benefit to ensure that there are affordable, public meeting spaces that can also accommodate programs. In 2023, Burlington's multi-purpose spaces had more than 16,000 hours of programs and rentals, resulting in a City-wide usage rate of 11%; utilization levels vary weekly, as well as monthly and seasonal basis depending on the rentals taking place and the programs being delivered. For example, there are weeks when community program rooms are booked at 50% capacity, or they are not booked at all for other weeks.

The type of space also influences usage levels. The City's two auditoriums are two of the most consistently used multi-purpose spaces in Burlington. The City's community program rooms are also popular spaces that generally have moderate to high weekly usage levels that ranged between 10% and 65% in 2023. Spaces at the Burlington Seniors' Centre and the Music Centre are also well used. By contrast, the City's small meeting rooms have very low utilization rates, only accommodating occasional bookings with most rooms not used at all.

The City recognizes that there is capacity in its supply of meeting and program rooms and one of the goals of Burlington's Framework for Community Recreation is to maximize the use of its physical assets. The City has taken efforts to increase the use of its multi-purpose spaces through the creation of a new policy "Promoting Use of Underutilized Spaces in Recreation Facilities", approved April 16, 2024. According to this policy, it's objective is to provide opportunities to use underutilized spaces to provide benefits to the community through the use of these spaces at low cost (pay what you can), no cost during designated times, or through agreements with groups to use this space. Implementing this policy is supported by this Plan to maximize of use of the City's gathering spaces.

Incorporating Multi-Purpose Spaces in New and Redeveloped Facilities

Burlington's multi-purpose spaces achieve a strong distribution and provide rental and programming opportunities in most areas of the City. There is ample capacity to accommodate additional usage within the City's supply, however, incorporating multi-purpose space within future community centre development and redevelopment projects is recommended on the basis that they provide spaces for community programs and gatherings. Co-locating multi-purpose space within a community centre could

also facilitate cross-programming opportunities and furthermore, they are relatively low-cost to provide from a capital and operating perspective compared to other major facility components.

This Plan identifies future community centre opportunities where multi-purpose spaces should be included in the design such as a new Central Park community centre that would absorb aging buildings on site, including the Burlington Seniors' Centre and Music Centre, which are both well used facilities that are due for replacement. The Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan also identifies a new community centre that would include meeting space (among other spaces), although the City may wish to revisit this design to explore the feasibility of adding additional community programming space recognizing future population growth that is expected in the adjacent Appleby GO MTSA. Additionally, multi-purpose space should also be accommodated as part of a twin pad arena.

Flexibly designed multi-purpose spaces will be important to ensure that they can accommodate a variety of uses, which means they should be large enough to accommodate general programming at a minimum. As a best practice, three to four multi-purpose spaces are typically included as part of new or redeveloped facilities, although this may vary along with the size and configuration depending on site and space constraints and other factors such as cost. Supporting amenities may include, but not be limited to, countertops, sinks, storage cupboards, durable flooring, dividing walls, audio and visual equipment, and other features.

New Opportunities for Underutilized Spaces or Small Meeting Rooms

While capacity is available at the City's program rooms, continuing to maintain these spaces is recommended to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of indoor program and meeting rooms available. Access to these public spaces will be increasingly important in Burlington as the community continues to grow. However, there may be opportunities to reprogram the City's small meeting rooms, which have limited functionality resulting in them being underutilized. Some of these rooms have been underutilized since before the pandemic and as it is expected that they will continue to have no to low levels of use, there could be opportunities to explore alternative uses for these spaces. One option that could be explored is to dedicate the use of meeting space to community user groups and invite organizations to submit expressions of interest to use available meeting rooms.

The City could also expand its Community Hub program that offers space to the public free of charge for activities, meetings and small gatherings. This strategy aligns with the City's goal of increasing the use of community spaces as identified in its new Promoting Use of Underutilized Spaces in Recreation Facilities Policy. Burlington currently provides three Community Hub locations at the Appleby Ice Centre, Haber Community Centre, and St. Christopher's Catholic Elementary School. Other opportunities to create community hub spaces could be considered such as at Central Park to strengthen the distribution of no-cost spaces.

Multi-Purpose Spaces in Mixed Use Intensification Areas

Greater Toronto Area municipalities such as Richmond Hill have been working with the land development industry to explore integrating multi-purpose spaces within condominiums in strategic areas to secure meeting and program spaces in higher-density areas. Burlington's ongoing intensification efforts within planned MTSAs may yield opportunities to negotiate public space within private developments.

Lessons learned to date in other communities suggest that it is important to define the types of uses that will be delivered at the time multi-purpose spaces (or other public space) is being planned and negotiated with private partners to ensure sufficient size, convenient building access for public and staff, parking, and

that spaces are equipped with appropriate amenities. It would also be prudent to discuss capital and ongoing operational responsibilities between the City and its partners from the outset. In this way, negotiations and agreements can be carried throughout the development approval process and avoid unexpected challenges. While there can be limitations to these types of arrangements, public-private spaces such as multi-purpose spaces in condominiums can play an important role in providing locations for gatherings and programming in established areas where developable land is often scarce and opportunities for traditional community spaces are not feasible. Another strategy that could be explored is to lease space in Mixed Use Intensification areas (e.g., MTSAs) as population increases in these areas to provide enhanced community access to public space, or gymnasium-type facility, for programs and rentals, or a no-cost community hub.

Recommendations: Multi-Purpose Spaces

14. The following strategy is recommended for multi-purpose spaces.

a. New or redeveloped community centres should include between three to four multi-purpose spaces that are flexibly designed in a variety of sizes with amenities to accommodate a broad range of programs and rentals. Features include countertops, sinks, storage cupboards, durable flooring, dividing walls, audio and visual equipment, and other amenities.

b. To improve the use of the City's multi-purpose spaces, implement the Promoting Use of Underutilized Spaces in Recreation Facilities policy and explore opportunities to create additional community hub spaces, potentially at Central Park.

c. Monitor space needs in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) with consideration given to partnership opportunities with the development industry to incorporate multi-purpose programmable space within condominium buildings, which should have regard for public access, flexible and sufficiently sized spaces, parking accommodation, and supporting amenities such as storage spaces and countertops. As population increases in Mixed Use Intensification Areas, consideration may also be given to leasing space.

4.6 Dedicated Age Spaces

Current Supply

Burlington does not provide a dedicated youth space, although the City provides a range of youth-oriented programming at facilities across the community, which are complemented by outdoor parks and amenities that are geared towards this age group such as hard surface sport courts, sports fields, skate parks, recreation trails, and more. These amenities play an important role in fostering the healthy physical, mental, and emotional development of youth.

The Burlington Seniors' Centre is the local hub for the City's older adult residents (ages 55+) to gather, socialize and participate in activities. Originally constructed in 1979 and expanded in 2007, the facility features several multi-purpose and meeting rooms, auditorium, and bistro. The supply of dedicated older adult spaces yields a service level of one per 194,100 residents (or one per 67,935 older adults). In addition to the Burlington Seniors Centre, the City provides a range of older adult programming across Burlington, including in the auditoriums at the Mainway Recreation Centre and Central Arena, and in the gymnasiums at the Brant Hills Community Centre. Older adult activities are also offered at other community spaces, including at Tansley Woods Community Centre, Mountainside Recreation Center, and Haber Recreation Centre.

Market Conditions



Like Burlington, there are other municipalities that do not provide dedicated youth spaces, but promote casual gathering spaces and recreation facilities, as well as structured and drop-in programming. Certain municipalities have responded with the provision of dedicated or priority-based youth spaces that are casual drop-in spaces to accommodate broad interests. As research suggests that youth prefer unstructured activities, youth spaces can be flexibly designed to allow youth to participate in their desired activities on their own schedule. Additionally, they can be used for structured youth programs. Not only are youth spaces important to provide a safe meeting space, but they can also facilitate positive reinforcement to combat concerns surrounding mental and physical health among youth. The community survey found that more than half (54%) of respondents supported investment in youth spaces in Burlington, ranking 12th out of 35 facility types.

Research has found that older adults are more physically active than previous generations as many seek low impact and health and wellness activities such as fitness and pickleball, and programs that are centred around socialization, education, and cognitive stimulation. The Burlington Seniors' Centre provides a range of traditional activities and in 2023, their programs had more than 16,000 participants. These activities are complemented by a variety of parks, recreation and culture opportunities across the City that are geared towards residents ages 55+.

As a result of the many physical and social benefits provided by seniors' centres, these community assets are generally regarded as an important part of the health care and recreation sectors. However, research suggests that approximately 10% of Ontario's older adult population make use of their services. In general, older adult centres province-wide have been most successful in attracting individuals from lower- or middle-income brackets, including a very high portion of single women. Bolstering seniors' centre users and raising awareness about the benefits, programs, and services they provide is a goal for many communities as research suggests that people who use these centres tend to be healthier and have strong activity patterns that help them remain physically active compared to non-users (55% of users described their level of physical activity as fair/moderate, and 33% as good/excellent).[9]

The public identified that access to dedicated space for older adults was important. The community survey also found that in the past five years, 16% of respondents used the Burlington Seniors' Centre. Half of the respondents (50%) supported additional investment in this facility type. Public requests were made for additional facility space to accommodate older adult activities, particularly as this segment of the population continues to grow. Concerns were raised about 'younger' older adults participating in programs at the Burlington Seniors' Centre, which may have a different skill level and playing pace compared to others, particularly for activities such as pickleball.

A range of registered and drop-in programs are held at the Burlington Seniors' Centre during the daytime, including traditional activities such as cards, bingo, woodcarving, dancing, and arts and crafts, as well as low impact fitness and sports, including yoga, tai chi, badminton, table tennis, and pickleball. Programming levels at this location have generally recovered to pre-pandemic levels, which suggests that

[9] Older Adult Centres' Association of Ontario. 2010. Building Bridges to Tomorrow: User Profile of Older Adults Centres in Ontario. p.4, p.68.

there has been strong interest among facility users to engage in public with others. Facility rentals are still in recovery have been trending upwards since the facility fully re-opened in 2022.

Creating a Welcoming Place for All

There is commonly a stigma associated with a facility containing the term "senior" that may be preventing people of all ages from using seniors' centres. Like other communities, the City is making efforts to breakdown barriers by replacing the term "senior" with "older adults" to capture residents over the age of 55 and to recognize that this segment of the population has a wide range of interests. Aligning with this approach, exploring opportunities to rename the Burlington Seniors' Centre is recommended to select a name that reflects the City's vision and the intended purpose of the facility to create a place that is welcoming of everyone, recognizing that it is used by older adults during the daytime and to the broader community in the evenings. This is consistent with the City's desire to maximize the use of its community facilities.

Creating a New Activity Hub for Older Adults at Central Park

The Burlington Seniors' Centre has been an important focal point for older adults and as the City continues to age, the importance of providing space for this segment of the population will grow. At the same time, trends suggest that a sizable portion of the Baby Boom generation desire multi-generational settings that offer programs that are different from those pursued by previous generations of seniors. While there is a demand for traditional older adult activities such as shuffleboard, cards luncheons, there is a growing segment of younger older adults that are continuing to participate in active pursuits.

The Burlington Seniors' Centre serves a broad cross section of older adults and a wide range of programs. However, the Centre is under pressure and there is a desire for more space to accommodate new users and grow programming scope and capacity. For example, there is space at the Centre that can only accommodate a single indoor pickleball court and as a result, the court must be shared among all users, which can create conflicts given the amount of interest in the activity. The dining area is also under pressure, particularly for luncheons and larger gatherings. These are some examples of challenges that are currently being experienced and as the City's growing population continues to age, these pressures will continue to intensify.

With a new community centre proposed at Central Park, an opportunity exists to relocate seniors activities to this future facility that would build upon the strengths of the current Burlington Seniors' Centre that fosters social connections and healthy living. This would be enhanced with increased access to new and expanded spaces and programming. Being connected to a larger community centre also provides added and convenient access to other facility types.

It is envisioned that programming and gathering spaces would be accommodated through multi-purpose community spaces that would be used as dedicated older adult spaces during the daytime given that this segment of the community primarily uses space during this period, and then be available for broad community use during the evenings for all age groups, which is the current approach at the Burlington Seniors' Centre. This is consistent with the City's Framework for Community Recreation and Promoting Use of Underutilized Spaces in Recreation Facilities Policy to maximize the use of community assets to provide community benefits. Spaces would include multi-purpose community rooms for general programs (e.g., games, reading, arts and crafts, etc.), as well as other spaces such as a lounge, dining room and kitchen.

Age-Friendly Public Spaces for Youth and Older Adults

The City has made intentional efforts to keep older adults active, healthy, and engaged. One example is the City's Active Aging Plan that establishes a vision and action plan to ensure that Burlington is an age-friendly community. It specifically identifies strategies to make Burlington's public spaces more age-friendly and centres around "designing welcoming, attractive, safe and accessible public spaces that enhance the beauty and enjoyment of City life for all residents".

While a new dedicated older adult facility is recommended at Central Park, the City should also continue to offer its older adult programming at other Burlington facilities. This is also an opportunity to bolster the use of under-utilized multi-purpose rooms in the City. As per the City's Active Aging Plan, there will be a need to ensure that these spaces are designed with age-friendly comfort features, including rest spots, water refill stations and washrooms, as well as accessibility features.

Designing parks to be more age friendly is also encouraged such as incorporating amenities that appeal to older adults, including landscaping and gardens, trails, gathering areas, and water features. As part of new facility design or the redevelopment of existing facilities (which should also be extended to parks and outdoor spaces), having regard for age-friendly design is recommended and should reflect the actions articulated in the City's Active Aging Plan. Consultation with residents and key stakeholders should also form part of planning and design processes, including with older adults and the Seniors' Advisory Committee.

Opportunities for Youth

The City has not historically provided dedicated youth space as these tend to be used during a short period of time each day during the weekday evenings after school; these spaces would generally not be used during the daytime and weekends. The presence of library branches at some of Burlington's community centres, or within walking distance, has also been beneficial in accommodating youth as the library offers many amenities that youth seek beyond traditional books such as makerspaces, study and meeting space, computers and other resources and services.

This has allowed the City to focus on providing a broad range of drop-in and registered recreation activities within its community centres, including swimming, active living, sports, arts, and more. These are complemented with a variety of Burlington's organized and casual outdoor parks and recreation facilities that appeal to youth including, but not limited to, sports fields, outdoor fitness equipment, sport courts, outdoor swimming, and skateboarding and other wheeled action sports. While dedicated youth space is not being recommended, this Plan focuses on building upon existing youth opportunities and provides guidance on continuing to invest in youth-oriented facilities through strategic renewal and to bolster supplies, focusing on addressing geographic gaps to ensure that opportunities are accessible to youth.

Designing age-friendly spaces does not refer only to older adults, it also extends to youth. This segment of the population is often considered to be the most vulnerable segment of the community and as a result, creating welcoming and inviting spaces for youth is also important through strategies such as ensuring community facilities are accessible to youth (e.g., locating near schools or on public transit routes), designing open lobby areas to encourage and support casual gatherings, offering Wi-Fi, and accessing food, or spaces that allow food to be brought to and consumed. As with older adults, there is an opportunity to bolster utilization of multi-purpose rooms for youth-oriented activities.

Recommendations: Dedicated Age Spaces

15. The following strategy is recommended for dedicated age spaces.

a. Rename the Burlington Seniors' Centre to one that is welcoming for everyone, recognizing that the existing centre is already used by older adults during the daytime, and the general community during the evenings. Inviting signage and other advertising may be considered to promote activities and the welcoming of all age groups.

b. Relocate activities from the Burlington Seniors' Centre to multi-purpose space as part of a future community centre at Central Park. Multi-purpose spaces within this future facility should be dedicated to older adult programming during the daytime and feature age-friendly design to support activities such as reading, arts and crafts, casual gatherings, games (e.g., snooker), dining (including a kitchen), and other general programming.

c. Guided by the City's Active Aging Plan, indoor and outdoor public spaces should be designed with an age-friendly lens to create welcoming, attractive, safe, and accessible public spaces, including but not limited to, comfort amenities such as rest spots, water refill stations, accessibility features (including washrooms), and outdoor amenities that appeal to older adults including landscaping, gardens, trails, gathering areas and open spaces. Consultation with older adults and the Seniors' Advisory Committee is encouraged as part of facility and park design processes.

d. Consider strategies to create welcoming and inviting community spaces for youth, including ensuring facilities are accessible to youth, providing open lobby areas to encourage and support gatherings and offering Wi-Fi. Consultation with Burlington Youth Student Council should form part of facility and park design processes.

4.7 Indoor Artificial Turf Fields

Current Supply

There are three indoor soccer fields in Burlington, all located at Sherwood Forest Park, which are operated through a joint-venture partnership agreement with the Burlington Soccer Club. While Burlington's indoor artificial turf fields are operated by a third-party, they are an important part of the City's recreation infrastructure that is primarily programmed for minor sports activities, which alleviates pressure for the City to operate the facility as a direct service. This supply yields a service level of one per 64,700 residents.

Market Conditions

Indoor artificial turf facilities provide enhanced recreation experiences that complement its outdoor fields and responds to increasing demand for year-round play. While soccer groups are the primary users of artificial turf fields, they can also accommodate other field sports and activities such as rugby, lacrosse, football, team conditioning and training, and fitness pursuits. Indoor turf fields are typically provided by a municipality, the private sector, a community group, or a combination of two or more of these entities, which is what currently exists in Burlington and other municipalities, including Oakville.

The size of indoor turf fields varies considerably. Some municipalities have designed fields around the dimensions of an ice pad (including some that have converted surplus ice pads) while templates employed by other communities take the shape of a rectangular field. Even the size of an indoor

rectangular field differs by community as some provide a full-size field that can be divisible into four while others provide fields that can only be divisible in two (or are not divided at all).

Increasing Access to Indoor Turf Facilities

The City's joint use agreement with the Burlington Soccer Club achieves benefits with sharing financial and operating responsibility. However, the City has no influence in how the fields are booked or how rates are set to ensure that access is equitable and affordable for community groups and residents. As the indoor fields are operated and permitted by a third-party, utilization data is not available.

Municipalities tend to target the provision of indoor artificial turf fields at a rate of one per 75,000 to 100,000 residents. This target range would suggest that there may be a need for an additional indoor turf field over the long-term. The third-party organization operating the indoor artificial turf facility is growing, which is reducing the amount of time available for other users. As a result, requests have been made for an additional indoor artificial turf field.

Varying provision models exist in other municipalities as some communities such as Mississauga provide their own facilities; Oakville provides an indoor turf field through a partnership with the local soccer club. In the past, Burlington has partnered with a third-party to meet its indoor artificial turf needs and thus evaluating the feasibility of constructing an additional indoor artificial turf field with a partner is recommended. To maximize the use of existing assets, investigating the feasibility of converting an existing outdoor artificial turf field is recommended, which would involve partnering with a school board to provide opportunities to offer school programming to bolster daytime use. A high-level scan of potential locations suggests that the existing outdoor artificial turf fields at Corpus Christi Catholic Secondary School could be a viable candidate for a seasonal dome, although this would need to be confirmed through the feasibility study or if another location would be more suitable. Other partnerships could also be explored, including with community partners, private sector, or other interested parties. Consideration could also be given to the provision of a permanent indoor soccer facility, recognizing that there may be benefits in this approach such as mitigating greenhouse gas emissions; by comparison, operating seasonal domes require burning a large amount of natural gas, contributing to the community's emission output.

Recommendations: Indoor Artificial Turf Fields

16. The following strategy is recommended for indoor artificial turf fields.

a. Initiate discussions with the school boards to explore partnership opportunities to provide an indoor artificial turf field. A feasibility study should be undertaken to investigate the potential to construct a seasonal dome over an existing outdoor artificial turf field to facilitate year-round field sports, with Corpus Christi Secondary School being a candidate site. Other partnerships that could be explored include with community partners, private sector, or other interested parties. Consideration may also be given to the development of a permanent soccer facility, recognizing potential benefits over seasonal domes including, but not limited to, reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

4.8 Cultural Spaces

Current Supply



The City operates two cultural facilities that are included within the scope of the Plan, including the Student Theatre and the Burlington Music Centre. The Student Theatre is located at Optimist Park and includes a performance space with smaller rooms used to support activities associated with the main area such as change rooms and storage for production materials. The City provides a variety of performing arts programs at this location, including music, dance, and drama, as well as general recreation activities such as camps and fitness. Musical, plays, and concerts are also held at this location.

The Burlington Music Centre is the second City-operated facility, which is located at Central Park and home to several local music groups, including the Burlington Junior Redcoats Band, Burlington Teen Tour Band, Burlington Concert Band, and others that use this facility as their primary location for practices and performances. The Music Centre offers music programming spaces, as well as an outdoor band shell that is used for events such as the City's Concerts in the Park series.

In addition to these two City-operated facilities, Burlington owns other creative spaces that are operated by third-party organizations through joint-venture partnership agreements or local boards, including Drury Lane Theatre, Theatre Burlington, Art Gallery of Burlington, Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Ireland House Museum, and Joseph Brant Museum. The Burlington Public Library also provides seven library branches, four of which are co-located with Burlington community centres or at City parks, including at Haber Recreation Centre, Tansley Woods Community Centre, Brant Hills Community Centre, and Central Park. These facilities are beyond the scope of the Plan, although they provide important contributions to supporting and facilitating performing arts and cultural opportunities.

Complementing indoor spaces are outdoor parks and public spaces that are used for cultural gathering and special events such as at Spencer Smith Park, Civic Square, and other open greenspaces. Public art installations, including Indigenous art, and cenotaphs can also be found within Burlington's parks. The City is also home to many independent artists, cultural organizations, heritage sites and landmarks, and space providers.

Market Conditions



Creative and cultural spaces give artists the platforms and access to tools they need to succeed creatively. These spaces are about bringing people together – artists, cultural entrepreneurs, and organizations – to encourage collaboration, innovation, and development of creative skills and talents. These hubs are also key economic drivers to attract skilled labour and innovation.

Creative and cultural hubs can take the form of individual facilities that inherently become multi-use spaces, such as those found in Burlington. These spaces can also be incorporated into schools, community centres and parks, as well as through adaptive reuse of abandoned buildings or a cluster of underutilized areas to act as a catalyst to support revitalization through arts and culture venues, indoor vendor markets, and creative incubators. Adaptation of existing spaces allows access for various users without additional development in cities where land is limited or an emphasis on intensification is eminent. The provision of multi-use spaces is a solution undertaken by communities that undergo urban and suburban land use intensification and population growth.



Burlington is showcasing its alignment with best practices in a multitude of ways across the City, such as at Central Park which centralizes spaces, including the Central Branch library and Burlington Music Centre, and other locations such as the Burlington Student Theatre and joint-venture operated facilities, including the Burlington Performing Arts Centre. The City's recreation and community facilities, as well as parks and open spaces are also used for a variety of arts and cultural programming and outdoor special events such as along the waterfront.

There is a general desire from the public for more cultural spaces for programming and events as residents felt that it is important to recognize the broad interests of residents that go beyond traditional sports and recreation. The community survey found that in the past five years, the level of use of cultural spaces varies. For example, 73% have used outdoor special event space, 49% have used the performing arts centre, and 11% have used the music centre. 56% of respondents support additional investment for outdoor event and festival spaces, ranking 10th out of 35 facility types. The desire for enhanced access to affordable creative spaces for local artists to gather, create, perform and share was also heard.

Municipal Spaces for Creativity





Burlington's diverse community profile means that residents have a wide variety of interests. Recognizing that not everyone has an interest in sports and recreation activities, there is a heightened interest in meaningful experiences that celebrate and embrace performing arts, culture, history and heritage through special events and programs that are held within public facilities and spaces, as well as to recognize artists and craftspeople, and Indigenous Peoples. This pressure for high quality arts and culture is expected to continue over the life of the Plan as the City's population grows and diversifies.

To ensure that the City is well positioned to respond to public expectations, appropriate investments need to be made in community-based arts and cultural spaces. However, the ability for both the Student Theatre and Burlington Music Centre to meet community needs has been a concern for the City as both facilities have been under pressure for some time. Both facilities were constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s and while modest investments have been made to extend their life, including accessibility retrofits and expansions, they are aging facilities.

It is anticipated that there will be an increased need for physical space to support the needs of existing users and creative programming. Due to the types of uses and programming held within the City's two cultural spaces, a major constraint that users currently experience is access to adequate storage space, although they are making do with the space that currently exists. For example, the Student Theatre also utilizes an external storage building on site at Optimist Park, which is also an aging facility from the 1970s that was never designed for its current use for storing theatre props, costumes, and other materials. Various music equipment and materials are also being stored throughout the Burlington Music Centre facility, including within office spaces due to the lack of storage space.

This Plan advances a strategy to renew aging recreation facilities as part of a renewed vision for Central Park. An opportunity exists to incorporate arts and cultural space as part of this initiative to further position the proposed facility as a cultural hub for local artists, creatives, and performers. This would allow existing community-based arts and culture uses and activities that currently take place at the Student Theatre and Burlington Music Centre to be centralized at a single location to access modernized and enhanced spaces that's shared between users. With both uses relocated to new facility space in Central Park, it would allow for the remaining Student Theatre and Burlington Music Centre buildings to be repurposed for other uses, including being reclaimed as greenspace or other outdoor recreation facility uses in their respective parks, particularly given they are in high priority areas or have the potential to be reimagined to address needs.

Consultation with existing facility users is recommended to define specific space needs but it should include the types of spaces that are currently available at both locations. This should include, but is not limited to, an auditorium with a stage and theatre-style seating, dressing rooms, rehearsal hall, music

practice rooms, storage space, connected outdoor bandshell, and access to appropriate outdoor space to support programming, events, and practices.

While this new space would be positioned as a community-based, cultural hub, continuing to provide and support arts and culture opportunities across Burlington is encouraged, including at existing and future community facilities to ensure that arts and cultural activities are distributed throughout the City. This could be further enhanced through the adaptive re-use of the Robert Bateman Community Centre as suggestions were made for incorporating multi-use arts and performance space at this location, which is supported by this Plan to improve access to cultural facilities. Additionally, there may also be opportunities for enhanced collaboration with cultural entities in Burlington to enhance access to space, provide programming, and other ways to meet the cultural needs of the community. Such partnerships may include, but not be limited to, the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Art Gallery of Burlington, Ireland House Museum, Joseph Brant Museum, and others. Potential partnership opportunities could be explored further through a new Arts and Culture Strategy, discussed below.

Refresh the Cultural Report and Cultural Action Plan

Investing in the City's indoor facilities and parks will result in increased capacity for cultural opportunities, including special events, performing arts, public art installations featuring local and Indigenous art, and more. These and other aspects of local arts and culture are guided by the 2013 City's Cultural Report and Cultural Action Plan, which provided Burlington with a 10-year vision for raising the profile of culture. These documents are expected to be refreshed as part of the City's new Arts and Culture Strategy, which is planned to be undertaken in the short term. The Strategy should identify how the City's parks and spaces can be optimized from an arts and culture perspective, including to celebrate Indigenous Peoples and address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Recommendations: Cultural Spaces

17. The following strategy is recommended for cultural spaces.

a. Relocate the uses and activities from the Student Theatre and Burlington Music Centre to a future multi-use community centre at Central Park to provide access to modernized and shared spaces, which should include (at a minimum), an auditorium with a stage and theatre-style seating, dressing rooms, rehearsal hall, music practice rooms, storage space, connected outdoor bandshell, technical requirements (e.g., lighting, sound, etc.) and access to appropriate outdoor space to support programming, events and practices. Consultation with facility users should define specific space needs. This strategy would allow the land associated with the two existing facilities to be repurposed for other users, including being reclaimed as greenspace, to meet other outdoor recreation facility uses, and/or provide permanent or temporary parking.

b. Incorporate multi-use arts and performance space as part of the City's adaptive reuse of the Robert Bateman Community Centre.

c. As part of a new Arts and Culture Strategy, consider how arts and cultural opportunities can optimize the use of Burlington's parks and spaces, including to celebrate Indigenous Peoples and to address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. Enhanced partnerships with cultural entities such as the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Art Gallery of Burlington, Ireland House Museum, Joseph Brant Museum, and others should also be explored to increase access to cultural space for programs, events, activities, and other ways to meet the cultural needs of the community.

5. Outdoor Recreation Facilities

5.1 Rectangular Fields

Current Supply

The City has 64 physical rectangular fields that range in type, size, and amenities, which includes school fields that are permitted by the City, as well as fields that are used for football and rugby. Also included in the supply are fields that were temporarily taken offline due to maintenance and excludes fields that were permanently removed from the City's inventory. The City's rectangular field supply includes:

- 12 lit artificial turf fields;
- 5 lit Class A rectangular fields;
- 27 unlit Class B rectangular fields; and
- 20 unlit Class C rectangular fields.

Lit artificial and natural grass fields provide greater playing capacity over the season than natural grass fields and thus an equivalency factor has been applied where each lit grass field is counted as 1.5 unlit grass fields and each lit artificial turf field is counted as 2.0 unlit grass fields; unlit artificial turf fields are also counted as 1.5 unlit grass fields. In doing so, the City's effective supply of rectangular fields is 77 unlit field equivalents, resulting in a service level of one per 2,521 residents.

Market Conditions

Registrations in Ontario Soccer's affiliated organizations have been declining for well over a decade. The most recent data from Ontario Soccer found that there approximately 272,000 registered players in 2019, which was 28% below registrations from 10 years prior.[10] Ontario Soccer's declining registration is driven by factors such as aging demographic trends, growing competition from other sports and activities, and the emergence of elite soccer clubs and academies that are not affiliated with provincial governing body. Despite declining participation trends, soccer continues to be a popular sport due to its worldwide appeal, high fitness quotient, and relatively low cost to participate. The popularity of the sport drives the demand for soccer fields in most municipalities.

Since Ontario Soccer adopted its Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model, organizations have been evolving the delivery of their programs. With less emphasis on scoring and winning, LTPD focuses on improved coaching, fewer games, more ball time, and skill development. New standards specific to each age group were developed, which include varying coaching styles, number of players per team, playing time, field sizes, and other variables. Some of these new standards have a direct impact on the provision of soccer fields, particularly with respect to standards for field sizes and the number of players per team, which has influenced the demand for field time.

Interest in other rectangular field sports such as football and rugby tend to be cyclical although this can also vary depending on the strengthen of local sports organizations. Groups providing these sports can be challenged with securing adequate field time due to the need to preserve field quality, but this can be mitigated through the use of artificial turf fields or providing dedicated grass fields, which is the case in Burlington.

[10] Ontario Soccer Association. Annual General Meeting Reports.

Meeting Short-Term Needs for Outdoor Rectangular Fields

The City's current service level for rectangular fields of one per 2,521 residents is higher compared to other municipalities that provide fields at a rate of one per 2,600 to 4,300 residents. The current service level is also much higher compared to the recommended provision target established in the City's PPMP of one per 3,500 residents. This discrepancy was primarily because the PPMP did not factor in the City's supply of artificial turf fields, which is being considered as part of this analysis. While a target of one per 3,500 residents aligns with other municipalities, it is recommended that the City aim to provide fields at a rate of one per 3,000 residents, which is closer to the City's current service level and recognizes that there is capacity to accommodate additional use within the supply, although part of this oversupply is to allow the City to rotate use across different fields to allow for appropriate rest periods; some locations are also lower quality fields that may be undesirable for rentals.

Table 6: Recommended Rectangular Fields, 2024 to 2051

Current Rectangular Field Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
77 ULE	1:3,000 residents	11 ULE	0	3 ULE	8 ULE

ULE = Unlit equivalents. Lit grass fields are equivalent to 1.5 unlit grass fields. Lit artificial turf fields are equivalent to 2.0 unlit grass fields. Unlit artificial turf fields are equivalent to 1.5 unlit grass fields. Supply includes permitted school fields.

Burlington's rectangular fields are predominantly used during the weekday prime time period, which is common in many municipalities and provides an opportunity for natural grass fields to rest and recover during the weekend. During a typical four-week period in 2023, field usage rates ranged from 74% (Class A fields) to 16% (Class C fields) during the weekday prime time period; very limited use occurred during the weekends. Artificial turf fields (including school fields) had a usage rate of 55% during the weekday prime time period; although it is noted that some locations have higher usage levels than others depending on the week. For example, the artificial turf fields at City View Park were booked between 74% and 94% capacity during the weekday prime time period in July 2023, while other locations such as the Assumption Catholic Secondary School/Cumberland Park artificial turf field had a usage rate of 33% during the same period.

Based on the recommended target, the City is providing a surplus of rectangular fields, although this will decline over time as population growth will create demand and drive local rectangular field needs. Consultation with sports field users found that there was a desire for more field time to support the growth of their programs and increase participation. With capacity to accommodate additional use within the City's rectangular field supply, efforts should be made to increase field quality and playing experiences to improve usage levels within the existing inventory. One strategy to consider may include lighting existing fields to create additional capacity, particularly at multi-field parks or higher quality locations. This will be an important strategy to consider as there will be fewer future opportunities for new sports fields, emphasizing the need to enhance the intensity of how existing supplies are used.

The City should explore the feasibility of lighting select Class B fields, including those at Brant Hills Park (2), Ireland Park (2), Newport Park, Roly Bird Park (2), and Millcroft Park. Lighting these fields would add four unlit equivalent fields to the City's supply. Other locations could also be evaluated, such as at Central Park as part of re-imagining the site, and consideration should be given to minimizing the impact on adjacent uses, including meeting minimum setback requirements. Other opportunities may also exist to increase field quality through irrigation and operational requirements for enhanced turf management practices such as increasing the frequency of grass cutting, topdressing, overseeding and fertilizing.

Enhancing the quality and availability of amenities that support the use of the City's rectangular fields was also suggested, which could help bolster usage levels. Discussions with user groups revealed that there is a desire for amenities, to enhance the user and spectator experience, as well as to ensure that field access, use and enjoyment is accessible for persons with disabilities. Such amenities include, but is not limited to, washrooms, netting, pathways and seating, and parking (or additional parking). Additionally, there may be opportunities to engage partnerships with others to meet sports field needs such as with school boards to expand the use of, or undertake upgrades to, school-owned sports fields, or working with community groups, the private sector, or other potential partners.

By increasing capacity at existing outdoor rectangular fields, it may also allow the City to repurpose and reprogram other locations that may be better served to address other in-demand uses. For example, this Plan identifies that there is an immediate need for a cricket field, which could potentially be accommodated at Sherwood Forest Park by repurposing two rectangular fields; existing field users would need to be accommodated at other locations within the City's supply. The City also identifies two future rectangular fields at City View Park but given the surplus capacity and opportunities to enhance the use of existing locations, it is recommended that the City View Park location be shifted to a dedicated cricket field.

Planning for Future Outdoor Rectangular Fields

Based on what is known today, it is anticipated that the bulk of the rectangular field needs would not be required until beyond 2034, at which time Burlington will need to provide up to 11 unlit equivalent fields by 2051. The City should regularly monitor field usage and user group participation, including evaluating the impact of the recommended strategies to meet short-term field needs discussed above. Monitoring related factors that influence field use such as community demographics and rectangular field trends will also help inform future field needs, which should be reconfirmed through an update to this Plan. Based on these findings, the City should explore opportunities to accommodate future outdoor rectangular field needs at existing or future parks, either through new development or within the existing supply (potentially through enhancements). Should medium to long-term field demand outweigh available supply opportunities, consideration should be given to acquiring suitable lands to meet the City's field needs, potentially in partnership with others and co-located with other facilities (e.g., ball diamonds, cricket, etc.).

Football and Rugby Opportunities



While Burlington's rectangular fields are primarily used for soccer, they are also used by football and rugby users. Burlington provides five artificial and natural grass football fields across the City, which can also be used for soccer, as well as one dedicated rugby field on natural grass at Sherwood Forest Park.

Football is a sport where participation rates have been characterized by cyclical popularity. It is generally played by minor age groups under the age of 20, although football is a popular spectator sport for NFL, CFL and smaller leagues (including varsity). Greater concerns over head injuries have also been a limiting growth factor, although some groups have introduced flag football among younger age groups, which is a non-contact form of the sport. In 2023, Football Ontario reported that there were over 22,000 minor and adult players; approximately one-third of registrants played flag football and the remainder played tackle football.[11] Football Ontario reported that interest in the sport is growing due to a greater emphasis on grassroots programming, camps, and clinics to hone skills and foster a love for the game, as well as greater community engagement and outreach.

Football organizations are often challenged in securing field access largely due to certain soccer fields being "protected" from cleat damage that can occur in the fall, although artificial turf fields can help to mitigate field damage by shifting use away from grass fields. For this reason, football groups tend to appreciate the quality of synthetic surfaces and value these fields' resilience to inclement weather that can occur in the spring and fall.

There is generally no standard metric for football and rugby fields, although Oakville targets multi-use fields at a rate of one per 50,000 residents. This target would suggest that the City's existing football fields is sufficient, which is confirmed given the fact that there is ample capacity within the existing.

Rugby has been steadily growing in many parts of the Province as well as across Canada. Rugby Canada attributes membership growth to the introduction of grassroots programming (known as Rookie Rugby), as well as international exposure of the national Canadian team and interest driven by the Olympics. In 2022, Rugby Canada reported approximately 38,000 youth and adult rugby players registered with their affiliated clubs, which was a 28% growth from 2017; approximately one-third of all players reside in Ontario.[12] Similar to national trending, Rugby Ontario reported consistent growth at the introductory level (under age 11) over the past few years, though Junior programming (ages 12 to 19) has been stable and participation historically wanes as players get older due to the physical nature of the sport.

Burlington's rugby field is under pressure as it is the only location used by the City local sports group. The organization has approximately 300 members and input provided by the group revealed that there are challenges with accommodating everyone on a single field. Due to this constraint, this would limit the group's ability to attract new participants, grow their programming, attract tournaments, and remain competitive in their sport.

It would not be feasible to direct additional rugby use to another field at Sherwood Forest Park given that they are used by other groups; the rugby equipment may also cause damage to the playing surface.

[11] Football Ontario. 2022. Annual General Report. Retrieved from https://footballontario.net
[12] Rugby Canada. 2019. Annual Report. Retrieved from https://rugby.ca

Allocating field time at other parks in Burlington would also not be viable as their activities are centralized at Sherwood Forest Park, including their clubhouse which is located on site. Adding lighting to the existing rugby field is recommended to increase capacity and meet the organization's needs.

Monitoring Needs for Other Field Sports such as Lacrosse, Field Hockey and Ultimate Frisbee

There are field users in Burlington for other field sports, including, but not limited to, field lacrosse, field hockey, and ultimate frisbee that further enhance the range of outdoor recreation opportunities that are available to residents throughout the City.

Lacrosse is one of North America's oldest sports that was first played by Indigenous Peoples. There are three different types of lacrosse: box lacrosse (played indoors or outdoors on a hard surface), field lacrosse, and inter-lacrosse (an introductory level of lacrosse that is non-contact and uses modified equipment). Research found that between 2004 and 2019, the number of players affiliated with Lacrosse Canada grew modestly by 10% to 48,000 players, with growth attributed to the increase of field lacrosse players.[13] The Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) reported that there are approximately 33,000 people involved in the organization, which includes players, coaches, trainers, officials and volunteers.[14]

Ultimate Frisbee is a non-contact sport that emerged in the 1990s. While it continues to be a niche sport, it has experienced surging popularity, particularly among young adults (including social clubs). As a result, the sport has been recognized by international sporting organizations, including the International World Games Association and the International Olympic Committee. Ultimate Frisbee is currently being considered by the International Olympic Committee to be added to future Olympic Games.[15] The popularity of the sport is partly driven by the low cost to participate as well as the sport attracting players from other field sports who bring transferable skills to the game.[16]

It is important to recognize that interest in these field sports is growing and while some requests have been received for these types of amenities, there is currently insufficient evidence to suggest that there is a need for purpose-built fields. Given the capacity levels that currently exists at the City's rectangular fields, it is recommended that requests for field time be accommodated within the available supply. The demand for purpose-built fields for these types of sports should be monitored to inform future sport field planning.

[13] Filion, P. 2024. Can we really grow this game? Retrieved from https://www.thinklacrosse.ca
[14] Ontario Lacrosse Association. OLA's Heritage. Retrieved from https://ontariolacrosse.com/heritage
[15] Ultiworld. 2017. Ultimate's Olympic Hopes A Bit Brighter After Recent Announcements. Retrieved from https://ultiworld.com
[16] Blasiak, Nick. 2016. Ultimate Frisbee teams find early success. The Brock Press. Retrieved from http://www.brockpress.com

Recommendations: Outdoor Rectangular Fields

18. The following strategy is recommended for rectangular fields.

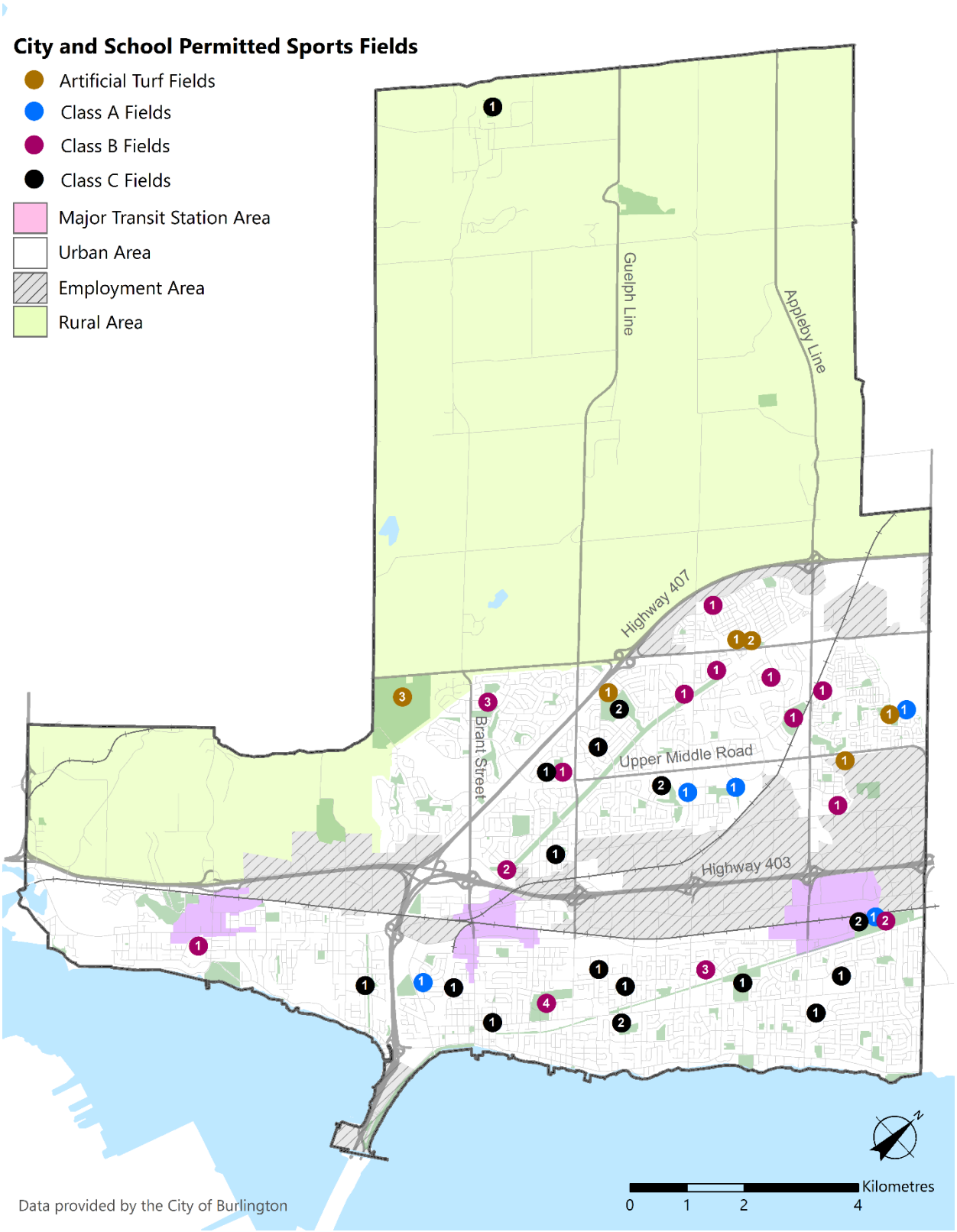
a. Explore the feasibility of lighting Class B rectangular fields, including at Brant Hills Park (2), Ireland Park (2), Newport Park, Roly Bird Park (2) and Millcroft Park to add four unlit equivalent fields to the supply. Consideration should be given to minimizing the impact on adjacent uses, including meeting minimum setback requirements.

b. As part of future park development or renewal, investigate the feasibility of redistributing existing rectangular fields in areas where there is a high demand for other outdoor recreation facilities. Redistributing some of the fields at Sherwood Forest Park could be considered as one opportunity to reprogram the space for other uses such as cricket.

c. Evaluate opportunities to enhance the quality of outdoor rectangular fields and supporting amenities at parks with permitted rectangular fields to accommodate increased field usage, including field irrigation, increased operational requirements for enhanced turf maintenance practices, the provision of permanent or temporary washrooms, netting, paved pathways for accessibility, spectator seating, and parking. Consultation with user groups is encouraged to identify and prioritize amenities and locations to consider.

d. Add sports field lighting to the rugby sports field at Sherwood Forest Park to increase playing capacity.

Figure 12: Distribution of Rectangular Fields



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.2 Ball Diamonds





Current Supply

Burlington provides 52 physical ball diamonds that range in type, size, and amenities including:

- 5 lit hardball diamonds;
- 7 lit Class A diamonds;
- 21 Class B diamonds; and
- 19 Class C diamonds.

Lit diamonds are counted as being equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds due to capacity for extended evening play, which results in an effective supply of 58 unlit equivalent diamonds and a service level of one per 3,346 residents. Excluded from this supply are ball diamonds that have been permanently removed from the City's inventory and closed diamonds due to field conditions.

Market Conditions

Baseball and its variations of softball, fastball, and hardball are experiencing a resurgence after being considered a sport in decline for the last two decades. The most recent participation data available from Baseball Ontario indicated that there were nearly 18,000 competitive participants in 2023, which was a growth of 45% compared to 2013,[17] though that figure excludes recreational/house leagues and non-affiliated ball groups (thus actual participation figures are greater). While the City does not track local ball diamond participation, the Central Ontario Baseball Association, which is the regional affiliate of Baseball Ontario, grew by 64% during the same period.

Interest in ball diamond sports is driven by factors such as a greater focus by Baseball Ontario to promote grassroots programs skill development to engage children and youth at a young age to participate in the sport. Such programs include distributing WinterBall kits within schools that introduces baseball to children, introducing Challenger Baseball to engage persons with disabilities, and other activities, including Rally Cap, Grand Slam, and My First Pitch. Baseball Ontario also reports that there is continued growth in girls/women's baseball and greater efforts are being made to promote the sport and foster corporate partnerships and leverage technology such as mobile applications to engage participants. The popularity of the Toronto Blue Jays is also a contributing factor. Since Baseball Canada adopted the Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model, organizations have focused on developing and honing skills and coaching styles, while fostering leadership. Suitable competition formats and facility types are also core components of the LTPD model, which has implications on ball diamond types and sizes that are required.

[17] Baseball Ontario. Annual General Meeting Reports.

There are also examples of communities working in partnership with others to provide ball diamond facilities. For example, some municipalities such as Windsor, Caledon, Toronto, Brampton, and others have worked with partners and the community to construct accessible ball diamonds - Challenger Baseball, which is an adaptive form of the sport that is inclusive of all users, regardless of ability. Challenger Baseball is offered in Burlington by the local ball diamond organization, although it is not played specifically at a dedicated accessible ball diamond such as in Brampton and Whitby.

Discussions with Burlington's ball diamond users found that there are challenges with booking sufficient diamond time for groups due to the number of competing users. Requests were made for more ball diamond time for younger age groups, as well as more hardball diamonds that are appropriately sized for older players. Challenges with making up rainouts were also reported. To address concerns, suggestions were made to increase the ball diamond supply, including developing hardball diamonds, considering the use of artificial turf, and providing washroom access (e.g., temporary washroom at a minimum).

Meeting Future Ball Diamond Needs

Burlington is currently providing ball diamonds at a rate of one unlit equivalent per 3,346 residents, which is on the higher end of the spectrum compared to other municipalities that target one per 3,000 to 5,000 residents. The City's PPMP provided a preliminary overview of ball diamond needs and recommended a target on the higher end of this range at one unlit equivalent per 3,000 residents; however, a review of ball diamond usage revealed that there is currently available capacity within the current supply, particularly at Class A, B, and C diamonds. For example, usage rates ranged from 71% (Class B diamonds) to 47% (Class C diamonds) during the weekday prime time period in 2023 and weekend use was minimal. Some ball diamonds were also not booked or were closed in due to various factors, including being closed for redevelopment, which has the potential to add even more capacity to the existing supply.

Given that there is available capacity within current ball diamond supply, it is recommended that the City adopt a target of one unlit equivalent per 3,300 residents to match its current service level. Based on this target, the City would require a total of 80 unlit equivalent ball diamonds by 2051, including seven unlit equivalent diamonds during the short-term by 2034.

Table 7: Recommended Ball Diamonds, 2024 to 2051

Current Diamond Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
58 ULE	1:3,300 residents	21 ULE	7 ULE	7 ULE	7 ULE

ULE = Unlit equivalents. Lit diamonds are equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds.

The City already has plans to construct new ball diamonds, or to recommission diamonds, including two new diamonds at City View Park, one of which will be lit, and new diamonds at Kinsmen Park and Skyway Park (to replace two former diamonds). These existing projects would add 3.5 unlit equivalent diamonds to the City's supply. While there are currently no other locations to construct new ball diamonds to meet the remaining balance of needs, opportunities to add capacity to existing diamonds could be considered by adding sports field lighting, potentially at unlit diamonds located in Brant Hills Park, Ireland Park, Roly Bird Park, Millcroft Park, and Sherwood Forest Park. These five locations collectively have seven unlit diamonds, which could add another 3.5 unlit equivalent diamonds to the City's supply over the short term.

Where possible, other opportunities to add capacity to existing diamonds through sports field lighting should also be explored such as at Central Park through future re-imagining of the site.

Ball Diamond Enhancement and Renewal Opportunities

Ball diamond design is a key consideration for many municipalities and user groups to ensure that facilities are appropriate for their intended use. The emphasis placed on training and advancements in equipment has resulted in increases in performance, particularly among younger age groups. This has resulted in players hitting the ball further beyond the outfield or foul ball fencing, potentially creating hazards for other park users. This has resulted in underutilized youth ball diamonds and diamonds with overlapping outfields as adult-sized diamonds can accommodate older youth players.

Location is also a key consideration as multi-diamond sites tend to be preferred among user groups where concurrent games and practices can take place at a single site. For example, parks with multiple diamonds may offer supporting amenities such as parking, lighting, spectator seating, change facilities and more. This approach also provides opportunities for tournaments and supports potential sport tourism and economic development, while reducing sports facility pressures within Burlington's parks system where compatibility challenges may be experienced with other park amenities and users. Ireland Park, Sherwood Forest Park, and the future diamonds at City View Park are examples of multi-diamond sites in Burlington.

Moving forward, the development of new ball diamonds will be significantly impacted due to the large amount of space required for such outdoor facilities. New ball diamond requirements may be accommodated through the upgrading of existing diamonds to increase use for a larger number of users, such as lighting diamonds as previously described or to increase the desirability of lower quality diamonds.

For example, Doug Wright Park has a lit Class A ball diamond that is well used, although there are concerns with outfield drainage that impacts use of the site. This location is also the only Class A location that does not have washroom or changeroom facilities. It is generally a best practice to provide a minimum of one temporary washroom at any park that has a permitted sports field. Other enhancements that could be undertaken to bolster ball diamond usage may include, but not be limited to, enlarging diamonds, addressing drainage, and consideration for artificial turf outfields, fencing, storage, lighting, netting, and more. As part of regular consultations or through future park renewal projects, user groups should be engaged to identify improvements to key sites that would result in greater usage of other ball diamonds, which should also include opportunities to enhance accessibility.

Strategically Refocusing and Redistributing the Ball Diamond Supply

Burlington's ball diamonds are primarily concentrated in Burlington's established areas with fewer diamonds serving the peripheries of the City's urban area, particularly in the north end, north of Dundas Street, and on the west side of the City's urban area. As established neighbourhoods mature, residents in these areas are generally older relative to newer communities located towards the outer edges of Burlington's urban area that tend to have younger households with residents who may be more likely to play ball diamond sports.

With new ball diamonds being added to the supply and enhancements made to existing locations, as previously mentioned, consideration may be given to rebalancing the ball diamond supply to improve geographic distribution. Shifting ball diamonds away from parks located in proximity to Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) would also create opportunities to repurpose and refocus these sites to

address other outdoor recreation needs, particularly at Optimist Park, which is one of the few parks located adjacent to the Burlington GO MTSA. Other locations could also be relocated, including those that are underutilized, serve a duplicate service area, or are in areas that have a high demand for other outdoor recreation facility needs such as LaSalle Park.

Hardball Diamonds

While the usage data suggests that there is capacity to accommodate additional use, the time that is available is generally at the City's softball diamonds. Conversely, the City's five hardball diamonds, which represents only 13% of Burlington's total supply, are well used. Over a four-week playing period in 2023, hardball diamonds had an average prime time usage rate of 90% during the weekday and 77% during the weekend. There are also occasional periods during the season where the hardball diamonds are booked at or near full capacity for tournaments. This usage profile represents a strong level of use compared to 2019 when the hardball diamonds had an average prime time usage rate of 85% during the weekday and 68% during the weekend.

This suggests that the City's hardball diamonds are under pressure. Competition for hardball diamond time is strong as requests for additional hardball diamonds were made through the consultation process. To meet short-term demand, it can be a best practice to convert existing softball diamonds to hardball, although a cursory review of the City's existing supply suggests that there are currently no opportunities to do so as hardball diamonds typically require a centre field distance of 400 feet or more, as well as supporting amenities, including, but not limited to parking, spectator seating, lighting, washroom facilities, concessions and other features. There may be opportunities to use a portable mound at some of the City's softball diamonds to support hardball play, although the field distance would still be undersized. In the short-term, the City should continue to encourage the use of existing hardball diamonds to maximize available time, particularly during the weekends.

Planning for Future Ball Diamonds

The recommended target suggests that Burlington would need to provide an additional 14 unlit equivalent diamonds to meet medium to long-term needs beyond 2034. Similar to the rectangular field strategy, the City should continue to monitor ball diamond usage, including the impact of the strategies recommended to be undertaken during the short-term (e.g., adding lighting) and other enhancements, together with user group participation, population growth, sports trends, and community input. This will provide the City with the information it needs to reconfirm its ball diamond needs through a five-year update to this Plan.

The City should explore opportunities to accommodate future ball diamond needs within its parks supply either through enhancing the use of existing ball diamonds or new construction. Where it may not be feasible to do so, acquiring land suitable to meet the City's ball diamond needs should be explored, potentially in partnership with others and co-located with other sports facilities for soccer, cricket, etc.

Recommendations: Ball Diamonds

19. The following strategy is recommended for ball diamonds.

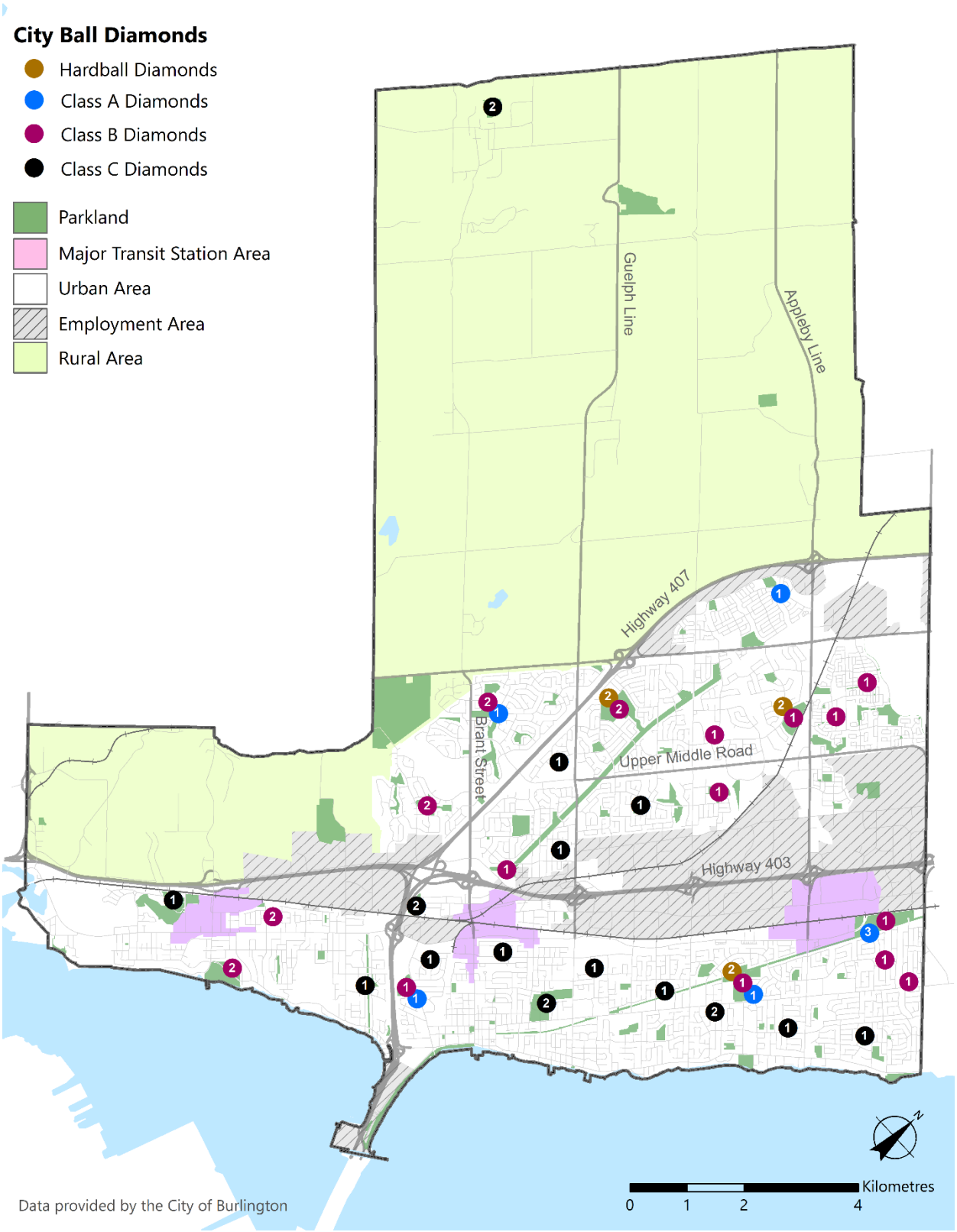
a. Add ball diamond lighting at Brant Hills Park, Ireland Park, Roly Bird Park, Millcroft Park, and Sherwood Forest Park or other locations to add seven unlit equivalent ball diamonds.

b. Undertake strategic ball diamond improvements to enhance playing experiences, and strengthen utilization and accessibility, including enlarging diamonds, addressing drainage and consideration for artificial turf outfields, fencing, storage, lighting, netting, and the feasibility of installing permanent or temporary washrooms. Potential candidates for enhancement may include Doug Wright Park, Central Park, and other locations that should be evaluated in consultation with user groups.

c. Rebalance the geographic distribution of ball diamonds with a particular focus on redistributing ball diamonds from established areas of Burlington to new or enhanced locations. Candidate sites that could be relocated include those that are located near MTSAs, are undersized or underutilized, duplicate service areas, and/or are in high demand areas for other park uses. Potential ball diamonds to consider redistributing include the ball diamonds at Optimist Park and LaSalle Park.

d. Investigate the feasibility of accommodating hardball activities at larger Class A diamonds using a portable mound, potentially at Doug Wright Park and Maple Park.

Figure 13: Geographic Distribution of Ball Diamonds



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.3 Cricket Fields

Current Supply

In response to community requests and with the support of an Ontario Trillium Fund grant, Burlington's first cricket field was constructed in 2015 at Central Park, which overlaps two ball diamond outfields.

Market Conditions



Interest in cricket has been growing across Canada, particularly in municipalities in the Greater Toronto Hamilton Area (GTHA) where growth is being driven by immigration from countries where the sport is played such as South Asia and the Caribbean.[18] Cricket Canada estimates that there are approximately 130,000 players and around 820 clubs across the country, with many based in the GTHA. There are multiple formats/styles of play that vary in rules in duration. The most common ones being long-format (most common for competitive games played over eight hours), short-format (most commonly in Canada played over one to four hours, usually in the form of T20/T25), and tape ball cricket (using a tennis ball wrapped in tape to increase weight and does not require the use of safety equipment).

The Existing Cricket Field is Under Pressure

Due to the shared nature of Burlington's cricket field at Central Park, groups are generally only able to book the fields on Fridays and during the weekends, with limited weekly evening use. Over the past five years, field bookings for cricket increased by 22% to 552 hours between 2019 and 2023. There is a desire from cricket groups for more time to support the growth of their organizations. For example, Cricket Burlington currently has 350 members, which is more than double their membership from 2005. They anticipate that their membership will continue to grow due to continued diversification of Burlington's population and the rising popularity of the sport, although they are challenged with the ability to grow due to constraints with accessing additional field time, which is partly because the current cricket field is shared with ball diamond users. Suggestions were made to construct a new cricket field, potentially at a new location or by re-purposing underutilized sports fields. Requests were also made for a location to play indoor cricket to support winter programming.

Addressing the Need for Cricket Fields

As municipalities across the GTHA become more culturally diverse and attract immigrants from cricket playing countries, interest in the sport and pressure to find suitable locations to play will continue to grow. This is expected in Burlington as historical usage trends demonstrated that field use for cricket is under pressure and growth is constrained because the field is being shared with other uses. GTHA municipalities such as Oakville provide cricket fields at one per 100,000 residents as do many others that are introducing cricket as a new level of service. It is recommended that Burlington adopt this target,

[18] Penticton Herald (2023). Cricket Emerges as Canada's Fastest Growing Sport. Retrieved from https://www.pentictonherald.ca/spare_news/article_9583b412-928a-5b3d-8461-7c37580afa72.html#:~:text=The%20number%20of%20registered%20cricket,5500%20matches%20across%20the%20country.

which is higher compared to the current service level to recognize strong usage levels, current field constraints and the potential for future local growth of the sport.

The recommended target indicates that there is a need for three cricket fields, which is two more than what is currently provided; however, the existing field at Central Park is not ideal as it is shared with ball diamonds and thus, the recommended strategy would be to find a location(s) for three dedicated cricket pitches. The City has planned for a multi-use field at City View Park for rectangular field sports and cricket, although this Plan found that with a current surplus of rectangular field capacity, it is recommended that the City View Park location be designed as a dedicated cricket field, preferably with lights to maximize playing capacity (subject to feasibility).

Table 8: Recommended Cricket Fields, 2024 to 2051

Current Cricket Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
1	1:100,000 residents	3	2	0	1

While timing for constructing City View Park is not defined, short-term solutions for cricket is needed given existing pressure and continued diversification of Burlington's population. To address this, investigating opportunities to re-purpose one or more rectangular fields should be pursued and in doing so, redirecting rectangular field use to other locations would be required. Given the dimensions of a regulation cricket field, the ideal location would be a major park with two abutting rectangular fields and supporting to amenities such as parking. A cursory view of existing locations suggests that repurposing two rectangular fields at Sherwood Forest Park could be a potential opportunity. It is recommended that the City explore this option or evaluate alternate sites to accommodate a lit dedicated cricket field.

Over the long-term, the recommended provision target suggests that there would be a need for a third cricket pitch after 2042. While the need for this third pitch would need to be confirmed through future updates to this Plan, the City would need to investigate opportunities to accommodate a third field at an existing park, potentially by repurposing underutilized assets, or acquire lands that would be suitable for accommodating the future field. Preference should be given to a lit cricket field to maximize playing capacity, subject to confirming feasibility. In the meantime, programming the existing shared field at Central Park should continue until dedicated field alternatives are identified.

Recommendations: Cricket Fields

20. The following strategy is recommended for cricket fields.

a. Explore the feasibility of converting two rectangular fields at Sherwood Forest Park to a lit dedicated cricket field. Existing rectangular field users should be accommodated at other locations within the City's supply.

b. Construct a dedicated cricket field at City View Park and explore the feasibility of lighting the field.

5.4 Outdoor Tennis Courts

Current Supply

Burlington provides 35 outdoor tennis courts, including 12 public tennis courts (six of which are multi-lined for pickleball), including the new tennis courts at Leighland Park and Palmer Park, as well as at 23 club courts. This supply results in a service level of one per 5,546 residents.

Market Conditions

Tennis has been experiencing a resurgence over the past several years. Tennis Canada reported that 6.6 million Canadians played tennis at least once in 2018, a growth of more than 23% since 2014. Nearly 3 million Canadians are frequent players – those who play at least once a week during the tennis season – which is twice as many compared to 2014. [19, 20]

The popularity of this sport can be traced to many factors, including the growing segment of baby boomers that seek social, and to some degree, lower impact activities. There is also a focus on promoting the sport at the grassroots level. Tennis Canada reported that in 2018, more than 200,000 children under the age of 12 were considered frequent tennis players, which was an increase of 40% compared to 2015.[21] Part of this growth can also be linked to the success of Canadian men and women competing at the professional level. The tennis-playing community has been working diligently to introduce the sport to new players. In 2017, Tennis Canada hosted Tennis Day across the country, which had activities such as clinics, lessons, exhibitions, and 'bring a friend' events. Following the event, Tennis Canada reported that 80% of tennis clubs reported an increase in participation.

The community survey found that in the past five years, 17% of responding households have used outdoor tennis courts Burlington. One-third (34%) of respondents supported additional investment in tennis courts, which ranked 29th out of 35 facility types. Requests for additional outdoor tennis courts were also heard through the other consultation activities, including adding lights to the tennis courts at Millcroft Park.

Increasing the Service Level of Tennis Courts

Burlington's current service level of one per 5,546 residents aligns closely with targets established in municipalities across Ontario that range between one per 3,000 to 5,000 residents. Continuing to maintain the current level of service would require the City to provide a total of 13 new tennis courts by 2051, including five courts within the short term (before 2034).

Table 9: Recommended Tennis Courts, 2024 to 2051

Current Tennis Court Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
35	1:5,500 residents	13	5	9	4

[19] Tennis Canada. 2018 Annual Report.
[20] Charlton Strategic Research. 2014 Canadian Tennis Brand Health Study.
[21] Ibid.

The City provides a strong geographic distribution of tennis courts across Burlington's urban area, as well as in the rural area that is served by courts at Kilbride Park. The primarily gap area is in the northeast corner of the City's urban area where there are areas that are not served by any tennis courts. Limited opportunities are available, potential candidates may include Breton Park, Orchard Park, Taywood Park, and at a future park in the northeast corner of the urban area.

There are also other areas of the City where there are no public courts, such as in the southeast and southwest part of Burlington's urban area. These areas are served to some degree by tennis club courts, although not all residents would be interested in joining an organized tennis group, particularly at the beginner and recreational level or if they face a financial barrier. Monitoring demand for public tennis courts in these areas is recommended to determine if there is a need to provide courts in these areas. Opportunities to provide tennis courts at parks serving MTSAs may also be explored.

Providing High Quality Tennis Experiences

The quality of tennis courts can influence the level of use and to facilitate tennis activities, strategic planning and design is encouraged. Public tennis courts are best located in groups of two, although one tennis court co-located with pickleball courts is also acceptable. The playing surface should be appropriate for the type of park it is in to create the desired user experience. For example, tennis courts at Destination and Community Parks should have an acrylic with a playing surface, while courts at Neighbourhood Parks should feature an asphalt surface. Other amenities should be considered including, but not limited to, lighting, pathways, seating, and shade. As one example, the tennis courts at Optimist Park would benefit from a refresh recognizing that it is located near the Burlington GO MTSA and will experience a greater intensity of use as the population growth occurs.

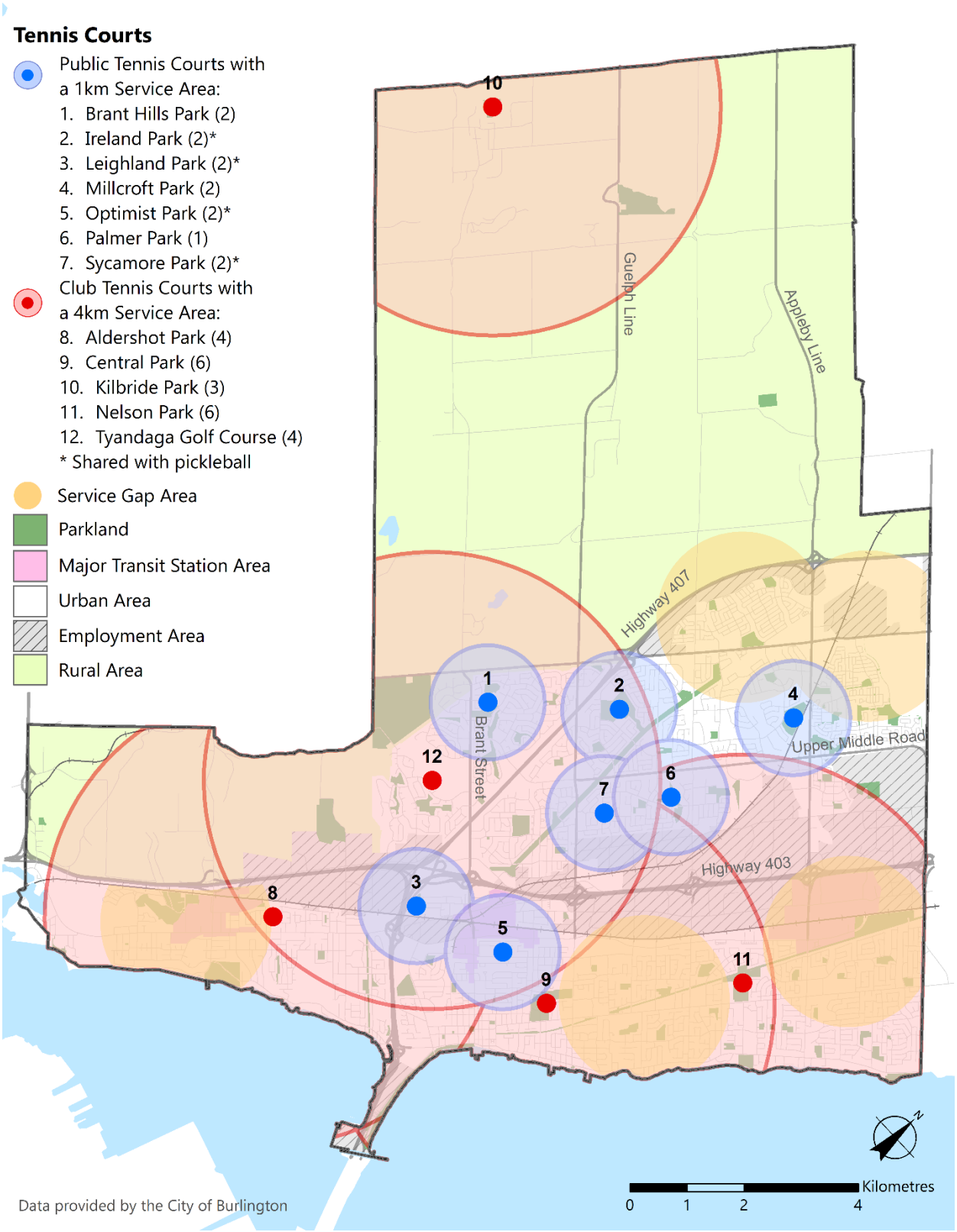
Recommendations: Outdoor Tennis Courts

21. The following strategy is recommended to construct 13 public tennis courts. As part of tennis court planning and development, consider high quality court design is encouraged, including surfacing (acrylic coating at Destination/Community Parks and asphalt at Neighbourhood Parks), lighting, accessible pathways, shade, and seating.

a. Construct five public tennis courts, focusing on addressing geographic gaps on the northeast of Burlington's urban area.

b. Monitor the need to construct eight public tennis courts to serve gaps and strengthen distribution, recognizing that these areas are served by tennis clubs. Long-term opportunities to provide tennis courts to serve Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) may also be explored.

Figure 14: Geographic Distribution of Tennis Courts



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.5 Outdoor Pickleball Courts

Current Supply

Burlington provides 20 outdoor pickleball courts, including 10 courts that are shared with tennis and ball hockey and 10 dedicated courts, including the new courts that are planned to be located at Palmer Park. All courts are open to the public, except for one club court at Central Park. This supply results in a service level of one per 9,700 residents.





Market Conditions

Residents seeking a lower intensity racquet sport have been taking up pickleball, which can be played on dedicated or multi-use courts that are shared with tennis (as well as in gymnasiums). Pickleball is an age-friendly sport that was popularized by adults 55+ and drove participation to levels where it is known as one of the fastest growing sports in Canada. There is strong interest in pickleball from other age groups, including adults who are seeking social recreation activities, as well as youth, recognizing that pickleball is played in schools. There are also national and international pickleball camps and clinics that serve skill levels from youth to 55+.

The provincial sport body – Pickleball Ontario - operates through a network of more than 59 clubs and 416 facilities, serving over 164,000 players as of December 2019 (pre-pandemic) and 2,555 paid members. [22] This represents 1.1% of Ontario's total population or 3.7% of Ontarians aged 50 to 74 years; if these figures were applied to Burlington, they would represent over 1,500 residents. Whereas Pickleball Canada recorded fewer than 500 pickleball courts in 2014, this number increased to more than 2,000 courts nation-wide in 2017.[23] To respond to local demand for pickleball, Burlington recently constructed two dedicated pickleball courts at Leighland Park and the two tennis courts at Palmer Park are being converted into four dedicated pickleball courts.

The community survey found that in the past five years, 10% of responding households used outdoor pickleball courts in Burlington. One-third (35%) of respondents supported additional investment, ranking 27th out of 35 facility types and requests were made for more courts, such as at Palmer Park (there are four dedicated courts planned), Maple Park and Central Park, as well as indoor pickleball courts at the former Robert Bateman High School.

[22] Pickleball Ontario. Adding Pickleball Facilities. 2020. https://pickleballontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Pickleball-Sales-Pitch-Resource-r2.pdf

[23] Pickleball Canada. April 2018 Newsletter. p.3

Increasing the Supply of Pickleball Courts

Burlington's pickleball court supply achieves a target of one per 9,705 residents, which is on the higher end compared to municipalities where targets range between one per 6,600 to 37,000 residents. Historically, municipalities have not provided pickleball courts based on a recommended target but rather provided courts on an as needed basis to respond to local demand, most commonly by multi-lining tennis courts to create shared facilities. Now that the sport has become well established and continues to demonstrate long-term growth, communities are beginning to adopt service targets to guide future needs.

Research undertaken by Pickleball British Columbia, which has been a pioneer in growing the sport that has resulted in a proliferation of courts in the Province, recommends a target of one pickleball court per 10,000 residents, which matches what Burlington is currently providing. However, local conditions must also be considered and in many cases, a target of one per 5,000 residents may be more appropriate to reflect the popularity of the sport, which is what some Ontario municipalities are adopting such as Halton Hills and Barrie. Oakville also recommends a target range of one per 5,000 to 10,000 residents. Recognizing the popularity of the sport and the demand for pickleball courts, a target of one per 5,000 residents is recommended for Burlington.

Table 10: Recommended Pickleball Courts, 2024 to 2051

Current Pickleball Court Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
20	1:5,000 residents	33	23	5	5

This target is effectively calls for the City to double it's current supply and it reflects the City's broader corporate strategic directions by providing opportunities to be participate in physical recreation activities and contributes to a high quality of life. The recommended service target also aligns with the target established for tennis courts and ensures that they are equally represented in the community. Based on the recommended target, there will be a need for 53 pickleball courts by 2051, 33 more than what is currently available.

Creating a Pickleball Complex

It is a common practice in many municipalities with established supplies to create outdoor pickleball complexes to align with the growing trend of constructing large scale, multi-court facilities. For example, Whitby is planning for the development of a 14-court complex, Hamilton, and Barrie each provide a 12-court complex, and Markham provides an eight-court complex. This approach not only addresses the users' desire for quality, club-based playing experiences (like what is offered through tennis clubs), but it also addresses challenges with finding appropriate locations for these types of facilities as communities are facing growing concerns with pickleball courts being located too close to residential areas due to noise and the social nature of the game.

Burlington should explore potential opportunities to establish a pickleball complex to address some of the projected court needs. This could consist of a combination of outdoor and indoor pickleball courts, to respond to the desire for year-round play, although the feasibility of providing indoor pickleball courts would need to be studied. As a best practice, this would ideally be an initiative that is pursued through a partnership similar to Burlington's other joint ventures where the City provides the land and facility, while the courts are operated by a third-party organization or community group. Consideration should also be given to supporting amenities that are commonly desired including, but not limited to, high quality acrylic surface coating, lighting, shade, seating, water refilling stations, fencing, noise abatement measures, accessible pathways, and more; opportunities for public access should also be considered. Some of the pickleball courts that would be located as part of the complex should be designed to accommodate wheelchair pickleball, which have a larger overall footprint compared to standard pickleball courts to account for wheelchair widths and turning radii. From a design perspective, wheelchair pickleball courts have the same dimensions as elite/competition courts.

Recognizing that establishing an outdoor pickleball complexes takes time to plan and construct, opportunities exist to establish pop-up pickleball courts as a temporary solution. Communities such as Richmond Hill and Markham have provided such facilities using underutilized public parking lots.

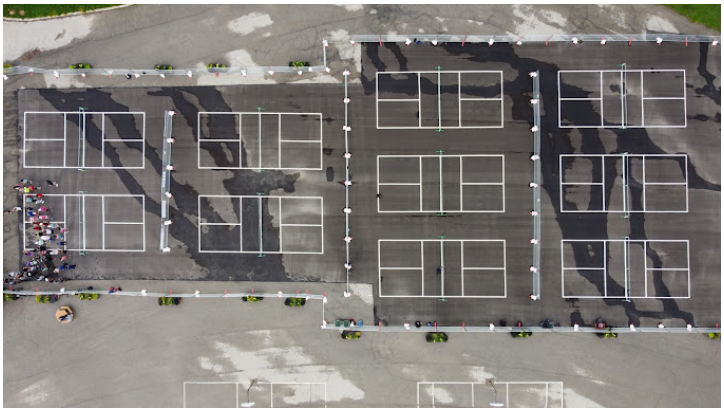


Photo credit: Nara Oeur



Photo Credit: Pictometry

Strengthening Pickleball Court Distribution and Design

Strengthening the geographic distribution of Burlington's pickleball courts is encouraged to ensure that they are well located across the City. As previously mentioned, many communities are facing public concerns over noise from the use of pickleball courts. To alleviate noise concerns, consideration needs to be given to appropriate setback distances. A review of facility design guidelines and best practices in other municipalities suggest that pickleball courts should be located between 20 to 30 metres from residential lot lines, although these guidelines predate the growing noise concerns.

The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association recommends setbacks based on the number of courts. For two pickleball courts, which is what is recommended for Neighbourhood Parks, the preferred minimum setback is 50 metres. The setback for four or more courts, which would be located at Community Parks would be 75 to 115 metres. Reduced setbacks are permitted if noise attenuation measures are used such as landscaping, berms, and noise dampening screens/panels. Encouraging the use of foam balls or "Green Zone" paddles that are recognized in the community as paddles that are designed to reduce playing noise are also encouraged, although this would be difficult for the City to enforce.

With these setback requirements in mind, opportunities to construct new pickleball court should be explored. Potential pickleball court locations could be Millcroft Park, Sherwood Forest Park, Aldershot Park, Central Park, Wellington Park, and at a future park serving the northeast corner of Burlington's urban area. Opportunities to provide new pickleball courts at future parks should also be explored.

In terms of court surfacing, municipalities have found that asphalt is the most common surface type used for outdoor pickleball courts, particularly at neighbourhood parks. Compared to other surface types, asphalt is relatively low cost to provide, is low maintenance, and has a long lifespan. An acrylic surface is also common at higher order parks to offer a higher quality playing experience. The benefit of using acrylic is that it provides a cushion layer to minimize the physical impact on players; the low impact nature of pickleball is one of the factors driving the popularity of the sport. By using an acrylic coating, high contrast colours can be selected to enhance accessibility, particularly players with a visual impairment. Consistent with best practices, outdoor pickleball courts should be designed with an asphalt surface at Neighbourhood Parks and acrylic surfaces at Destination/Community Parks to provide varied playing experiences. Supporting amenities should also be considered including, but not limited to, shade, seating, pathways; lighting should only be considered at Destination/Community Parks.

Relocating Shared Pickleball Courts

Early solutions to respond to pickleball demand was to paint playing lines on tennis courts to create shared courts, which has worked well to address needs quickly. There is a growing shift towards the development of dedicated to pickleball courts. While there are benefits with shared facilities, municipalities face growing pressure from tennis and pickleball users for dedicated facilities to minimize conflicts between the two sports and confusion between playing lines, especially given the growing base of pickleball players that is creating demand for more courts and playing times. On this basis, Burlington should only construct dedicated pickleball courts.

Burlington's shared courts are located at Bolus Gardens Parkette, Ireland Park, Optimist Park, and Sycamore Park. At the time of surface renewal, the City should investigate opportunities to remove shared playing lines and construct dedicated pickleball courts, preferably co-located with the existing tennis courts. Communities such as Oakville and London have constructed dedicated tennis and pickleball courts that are co-located together to satisfy needs for both users and to leverage supporting amenities such as shade structures and seating. Shared courts should only be considered where dedicated courts cannot be accommodated and to satisfy a need where parkland is limited, such as at a Neighbourhood Park.

Recommendations: Outdoor Pickleball Courts

22. The following strategy is recommended to provide 33 outdoor pickleball courts. New or redeveloped pickleball courts should be dedicated courts with consideration given to appropriate surface types (acrylic at Destination/Community Parks and asphalt at Neighbourhood Parks) and supporting amenities such as seating, shade, and pathways; lighting should only be considered at Destination/Community Parks. Shared pickleball courts should only be considered where dedicated courts cannot be accommodated and to satisfy a need where parkland is limited, such as at a Neighbourhood Park.

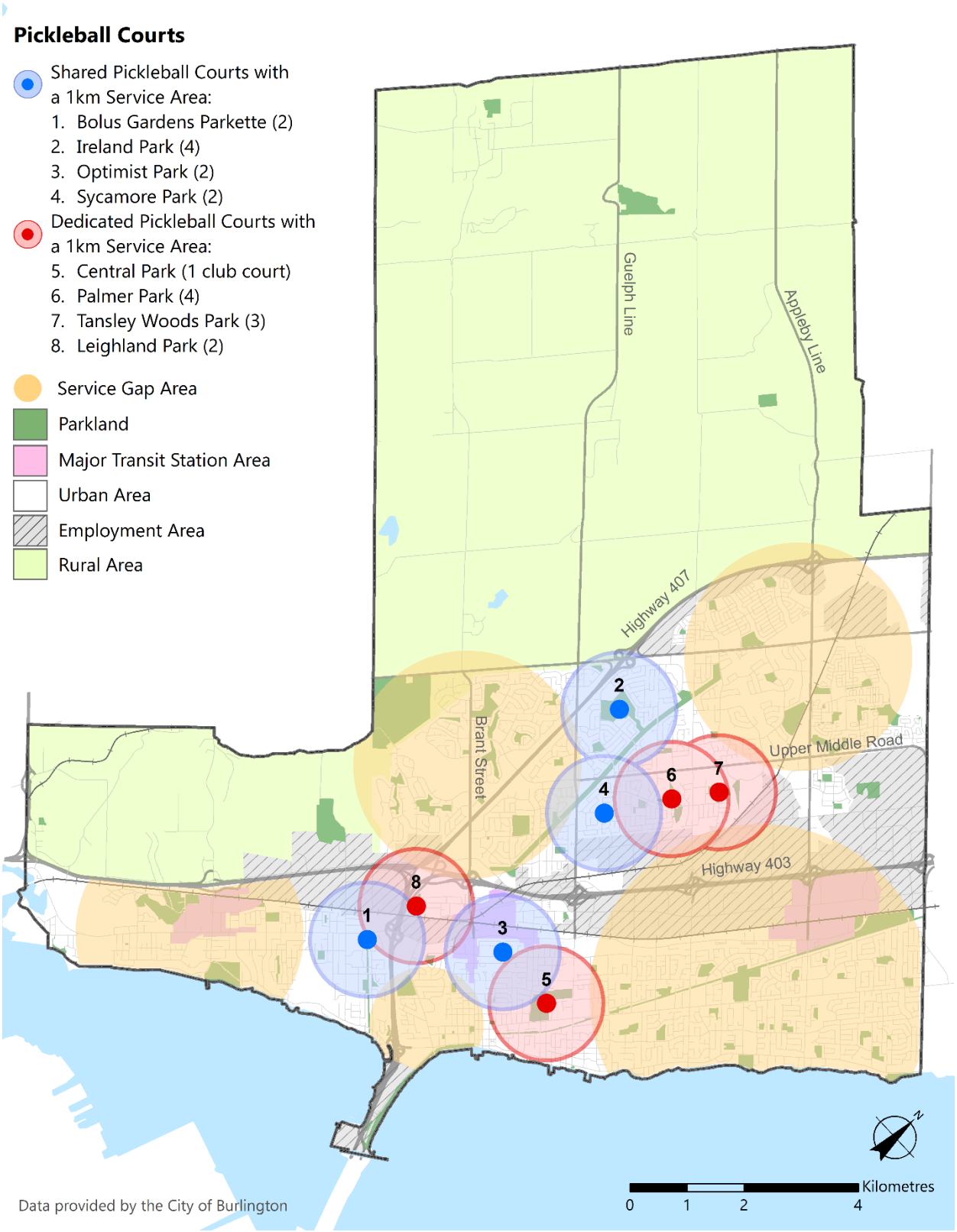
a. Explore potential joint venture opportunities to establish an outdoor pickleball complex to support high quality, club-based play at a Destination or Community Park. Some of the pickleball courts at this complex should be designed to accommodate wheelchairs, which have the same dimensions as elite/competition courts. The provision of indoor pickleball courts should be supported by a feasibility study. Consideration should be given to the provision of supporting amenities and public access.

b. Create pop-up pickleball courts using underutilized public parking lots to address short-term outdoor pickleball court needs.

c. Investigate the feasibility of incorporating outdoor pickleball courts at existing parks to ensure that there is a strong geographic distribution across the City.

d. Incorporate outdoor pickleball courts at future parks to strengthen geographic distribution, as opportunities become available.

Figure 15: Geographic Distribution of Pickleball Courts



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.6 Basketball and Ball Hockey Courts

Current Supply





Burlington has 29 hard surface courts at parks across the City, which includes eight full courts and 21 half courts. These courts tend to be considered multi-use courts because while they are primarily used for basketball, they can also accommodate other informal activities such as ball hockey and pickleball, such as the courts at Thorpe Park and Bolus Gardens Parkette. The City's supply results in a service level of one per 800 youth between the ages of 10 and 19, who are the primary users of these courts. In addition, the City's supply is complemented by school courts.

Market Conditions

The popularity of outdoor public basketball and multi-use courts can be attributed to factors such as their affordability and convenient access when they are in parks that are walkable for residents. While the popularity of basketball has increased pressure on indoor municipal gymnasiums, it has also driven the demand for outdoor basketball courts within parks, particularly at the neighbourhood level as they are most commonly used by youth who may be limited in the distance that they can travel.

The community survey found that in the past five years, 13% of responding households have used an outdoor basketball (or multi-use) court in Burlington. One-third (34%) of respondents supported additional investment in outdoor basketball and multi-purpose courts, ranking 28th out of 35 facility types. Requests for more basketball courts in Burlington were also heard from the other consultation activities with suggested locations, including Millcroft Park, Sweet Grass Park, and LaSalle Park.

Building up Burlington's Basketball Court Supply

Providing basketball courts at a rate of one per 800 youth (ages 10 to 19) is recommended in Burlington as it matches the City's current level of service and aligns with what other municipalities are targeting to achieve. Extrapolating the proportion of youth recorded in the 2021 Census found that approximately 12% of the City's population are between the ages of 10 and 19, who are the primary users of basketball courts. Applying this portion to the projected 2051 population suggests that there could be nearly 32,000 youth by the end of the planning period. Based on the recommended target, this would translate into a need for 40 basketball courts, which is 11 more than what is currently provided; four courts are required over the next ten years with the remaining seven courts required by 2051.

Table 11: Recommended Basketball Courts, 2024 to 2051

Current Basketball Court Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)

29	1:800 youth ages 10-19 and a 1km service area	11	4	3	4

Note: Current supply includes full and half basketball courts, and multi-use courts.

The distribution of Burlington's basketball courts must also be considered as they are often considered to be walkable, neighbourhood amenities. Applying a 1-kilometre service area to the City's existing courts found that there are service gaps in the northeast and west corner of Burlington's urban area, as well as on the west side, and along the waterfront. Some of these gaps may be served by basketball courts at schools, although they do not provide the same design and maintenance standards and the degree of public access provided is not the same as with a municipal court.

To address the City's gap areas, new basketball courts should be in Central Park, Sherwood Forest Park, Sweet Grass Park, and Bridgeview Park. Opportunities to provide a minimum of one basketball court at a future park in the emerging northeast corner of Burlington's urban area is also recommended. Other opportunities to reconcile gaps, as well as serve intensification areas (e.g., MTSAs), should be explored as part of future park development or redevelopment.

Where possible, all new basketball courts should be designed to be full size with multi-lining to support other activities that require a large, hard surface, as well as other features such as painted acrylic coatings. The newly developed court at Leighland Park is an excellent example of a multi-use court that can be used as a model at other locations in Burlington. Appropriate setbacks from residential areas will also need to be considered.

Continuing to Invest in Basketball Courts

Burlington has been investing in its basketball court supply by renewing aging locations such as at Leighland Park and enlarging undersized locations such as at Queensway Park and Lampman Park. Renewing and enlarging these provides enhanced playing experiences and can facilitate a greater level of use, particularly when it comes to accommodating multiple activities such as ball hockey and outdoor skating.

Continuing to examine opportunities to enlarge the City's smaller, undersized basketball courts is recommended at the time of renewal. Some locations may also have only one basketball post, but the playing surface may be large enough to accommodate a second basketball post/net to create a full court playing area. A high-level scan of Burlington's existing courts suggests that there could be opportunities to enlarge or enhance locations with a second basketball post/hoop at Berton Park, DesJardines Park, Doug Wright Park, Emerson Park, Longmoor Park, Palladium Park, Palmer Park, Sheldon Park, Taywood Park, and Orchard Park. Undertaking enhancements to Optimist Park to create a full court that could accommodate multiple activities should also be explored given its proximity to the Burlington GO MTSA.

Recommendations: Basketball and Ball Hockey Courts

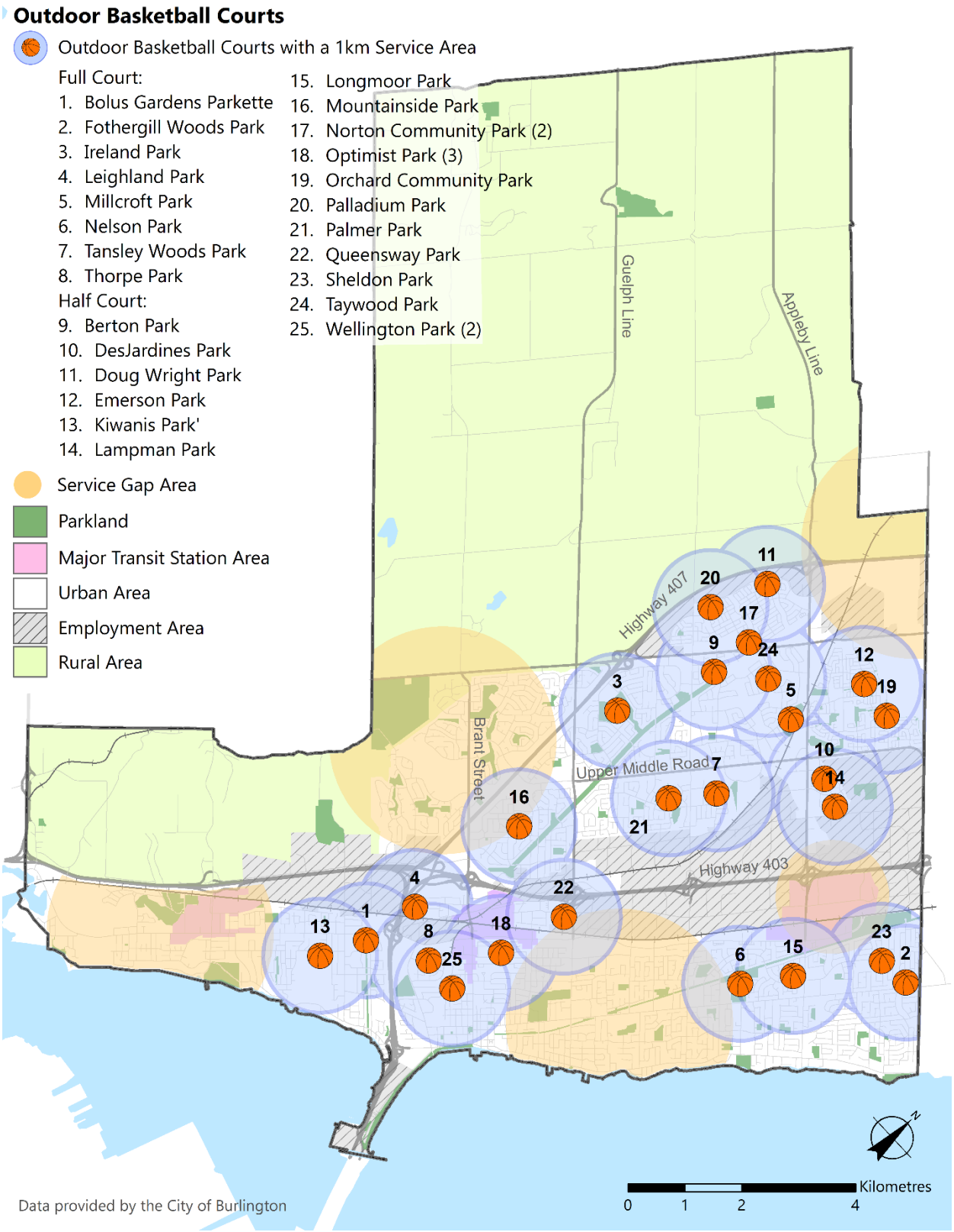
23. The following strategy is recommended to construct 11 hard surface courts for basketball and ball hockey. New courts should be multi-use for basketball and ball hockey with supporting amenities that may include lighting, shade, and seating.

a. Construct four to five courts in the short-term at Central Park, Sherwood Forest Park, Sweet Grass Park, Bridgeview Park, at one or more future parks in the northeast corner of the urban area.

b. Identify new or existing parks to construct up to seven courts, focusing on addressing gap areas in the northwest and west side of the urban area, and in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs).

c. At the time of renewal, evaluate the feasibility of enhancing existing basketball courts by enlarging playing surfaces, adding a second basketball post/hoop, lining for multi-use activities, and supporting amenities. Potential locations to examine include Berton Park, DesJardines Park, Doug Wright Park, Emerson Park, Longmoor Park, Palladium Park, Palmer Park, Sheldon Park, Taywood Park, Orchard Park, and Optimist Park.

Figure 16: Geographic Distribution of Basketball and Ball Hockey Courts



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.7 Outdoor Pools and Splash Pads

Current Supply



Burlington provides two outdoor swimming pools at Mountainside Park and Nelson Park, which underwent major renovations and modernization to replace aging lifecycle renewal and replacement. Each location features a 50-metre rectangular tank with an attached leisure component, beach entry, spray features, shade structures, climbing wall, water slide, washrooms and change rooms. An outdoor wading pool is also located at LaSalle Park.

There are also nine splash pads at parks that have a variety of spray features. Some locations such as DesJardines Park and Brant Hills Park offer thematic designs while other splash pad locations such as at Hidden Valley Park and Millcroft Park are concrete pads with integrated spray nozzles.

Burlington's outdoor aquatic facilities are weather respite facilities and areas that vary in user experiences and operations. For example, outdoor pools offer an average of 100 operating days a year, are weather dependant, and tend to have a high operating cost. Wading pools are also weather dependant and operate during the same time period, although they do not offer universal access and requires operational resources such as aquatic, operational and customer service staff. Wading pools provide an introduction to water an in some cases, a first touch to a water experience for young children. Splash pads are free for community use and are amenities that offer a range of experiences. They provide universal access from early morning to late evenings and require limited operational resources.

Market Conditions

Outdoor aquatic facility models have changed substantially over the past 20 years due to several factors such as the growing supply of indoor public pools and aging outdoor pool infrastructure, the financial investment required for a short operating season, and the increasing number of private backyard pools. Many outdoor public pools found in Ontario are over 50 years old, which tends to be considered the typical lifespan where major reinvestment is required. Municipalities such as Burlington have made decisions to reinvest in these amenities to ensure that outdoor swimming opportunities are available to residents, including those who may not have access to indoor swimming pools.

Some municipalities have explored phasing out aging outdoor swimming and wading pools in favour of splash pads. While they may not provide the same swimming experiences as outdoor pools, they are popular amenities for young families seeking affordable and accessible opportunities to cool down on a hot day. Splash pads play a role in responding to climate change as communities such as Burlington have been experiencing warmer summers. The City has recognized the importance of investing in splash pads, as well as other cooling facilities, particularly for vulnerable populations, as one initiative of Climate Resilient Burlington. From an operational perspective, splash pads have proven to be more cost effective to build and operate as they can be integrated into most park settings, are accessible, and do not require intensive staffing as there is no standing water to supervise.

The community survey found that 29% and 27% of responding households have used Burlington's outdoor pools and splash pads, respectively. More than half (51%) of respondents supported additional investment in splash pads, ranked 14th out of 35 facility types. 46% of respondents supported investment in outdoor pools, ranking 19th. Requests for additional outdoor pools were heard from the other consultation sessions as some residents felt that existing locations are too crowded. The desire for a splash pad at Central Park and in the Tyandaga area was also expressed.

Outdoor Pool Use is Strong

While year-over-year participation in outdoor pool program may not be directly comparable due to factors such as closures (e.g., renovations, maintenance, etc.) and availability of programming and staffing, a high-level review can provide insight into how well they are used. In 2023, Burlington's outdoor pools served nearly 99,000 people, which exceeds pre-pandemic participation levels. Part of the growth in participation was due to the renovations completed to the Mountainside Outdoor Pool, which boosted local interest in the facility and outdoor swimming activities. The wading pool at LaSalle Park has less participants compared to the City's two outdoor swimming pools, although it should be recognized that the scope of aquatic programming at LaSalle Park is limited to recreational swimming only.

Table 12: Participation in Outdoor Swimming Programming, 2019 to 2023

Program Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
City Programs	82,288	39,407	77,125	56,666	93,050
Swim Teams	5,382	973	2,367	1,560	3,030
Rentals	598	47	208	0	2,645
Total	88,268	40,427	79,700	58,226	98,725

Note: Data may not be directly comparable to previous years due to factors such as closures and availability of staff and programming.

Table 13: Participation in Outdoor Swimming Programming by Location, 2019 to 2023

Program Type	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mountainside	31,639	12,695	34,205	0	39,884
Nelson	56,047	20,785	34,066	47,717	47,259
LaSalle	582	6,677	9,153	10,509	11,582
Total	88,268	40,157	77,424	58,226	98,725

Note: Data may not be directly comparable to previous years due to factors such as closures and availability of staff and programming.

Maintaining and Enhancing Burlington's Outdoor Pools

There are few municipalities that have adopted service targets for outdoor pools given that most municipalities have not been constructing these types of facilities. Communities that do construct outdoor pools do so on the belief that the benefits of having outdoor swimming opportunities outweighs the investment required to provide this amenity for a short operating season, particularly to respond to the impact of climate change.

There are some municipalities that do provide outdoor pools based on an established target. For example, Oakville provides outdoor pools at a rate of one per 150,000 residents, although this is a strong departure

from Burlington's current service level (one per 64,700 residents when including the wading pool). This target would not be appropriate for Burlington as it would suggest that only one outdoor pool is required by 2051, especially when the City recently completed major investment at both outdoor pool locations.

Hamilton provides outdoor pools at a rate of one per 10,000 children and youth (ages 5 to 19) on the basis that this age group are the primary users of outdoor pools. Target skews slightly towards an aggressive side given Hamilton's large geography and the need to provide a good distribution of outdoor pools. Using this target in Burlington would suggest a total of five outdoor pools would be needed, which would not be feasible to achieve given other parks, recreation, and culture needs.

The recommended approach going forward is to continue to maintain the City's current inventory. With recent investments made to the Mountainside Pool and Nelson Pool, these amenities are expected to serve residents until 2051. With that said, there are opportunities to enhance supporting outdoor pool features at Nelson Park to ensure its continued enjoyment. The renovations at this location that were completed in 2017 did not include the indoor changerooms. An opportunity exists to modernize this space which should include a review to assess the feasibility of enlarging the changerooms to accommodate a more outdoor pool users, which should include accessibility and universal features, as well as climate change mitigation measures.

Renewing the LaSalle Park Wading Pool



The wading pool at LaSalle Park is aging and in need of renewal. In other municipalities, it is common to replace wading pools with a splash pad once it has reached the end of its life, although it is recognized that it does not provide the same user experience. This approach is not recommended for Burlington as it is one of the few outdoor water play facilities on the west side of Queen Elizabeth Way and it is an important community amenity in providing respite from the summer weather. Renewing the wading pool is recommended to ensure that it continues to serve the west side of Burlington. Meeting the outdoor aquatic needs of residents in this area will be increasingly important, particularly to reflect the growing Aldershot GO MTSA and to alleviate pressure currently being experienced at the Mountainside and Nelson Pools.

A feasibility study should be undertaken to explore opportunities to enhance the wading pool to meet current and future needs, such as potentially enlarging the size of the tank to accommodate additional users, and to respond to demands for modern amenities including, but not limited to, washrooms and changerooms, beach entry, spray features, accessibility features, and more. Investigating the ability to use the wading pool year-round is encouraged such as outdoor skating, recognizing consideration would need to be given to winter use such as tank design and refrigeration equipment. Communities such as Mississauga, Brampton, and Newmarket are some examples have shallow wading pools or "reflecting ponds" that can be used for respite during the summer and outdoor skating during the winter.

One obstacle to overcome prior to pursuing this major investment is over the ownership LaSalle Park. The property is owned by Hamilton and has been leased to Burlington since 1983. Since this time, Burlington has invested millions of dollars in maintaining and updating various facilities and amenities within the park. The long-term future of LaSalle Park should be determined prior to moving forward with a potential

outdoor pool at this location. Should the City proceed, it is likely that some existing outdoor park amenities may need to be relocated to accommodate an outdoor pool and associated amenities.

Increasing the Splash Pad Supply

Burlington provides a high level of service for splash pads at one per 2,200 children between the ages of 0 and 9, which is within range of what other municipalities target (one per 1000 to 3,000 children), taking into consideration geographic distribution. A service target of one per 2,000 children is recommended to guide splash pad needs, which is higher than the current service level, but it is appropriate recognizing the popularity of splash pads and the desire for continued investment in this area, highlighted in Climate Resilient Burlington.

Assuming the proportion of children remains the same, it is estimated that there will be approximately 19,410 children by 2051. Based on the recommended target, the City would require 13 splash pads, which is four more than what is currently provided; two splash pads would be required over by 2034 and another two locations would be needed by 2051. Much of this need would be addressed through planned projects as the City has identified that new splash pads will be provided at existing parks including Lansdown Park, Sherwood Forest Park, Leighland Park, and Burloak Waterfront Park, which would satisfy the projected need.

Table 14: Recommended Splash Pad Supply, 2024 to 2051

Current Splash Pad Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
9	1:2,000 children ages 0-9 and a 1km service area	4	2	1	1

A geographic analysis of Burlington's splash pads was also undertaken to identify gap areas where new installations should be considered. A one-kilometre service area was applied to Burlington's splash pads, which confirms the City's strong distribution, particularly in the north end of the urban area, though a minor gap area was observed in the northeast corner where a new splash pad could be accommodated at a future park.

While a gap exists in the southeast corner the City, this is expected to be addressed through planned locations at Burloak Waterfront Park and Sherwood Forest Park. Another gap is located in the south end of the City. Central Park is in this area, which could serve as a potential location for a new splash pad. This would result in a service level higher than the recommended target, but it is deemed to be appropriate to strengthen distribution and aligns with the City's Climate Resilient Burlington Plan that supports the development of splash pads. This could be a long-term priority as this Plan speaks to re-imagining the site to better serve the community.

The community should be engaged as part of the splash pad design process, with an emphasis placed on creating a unique, fun, and engaging water play experiences. From a technical perspective, there are three types of splash pads to consider. Freshwater (or flow through) systems that drain directly to municipal sewers, recirculating systems that filters, collects, treats, and reuses water, and greywater systems that collect water for other public uses such as irrigating sports fields, greenspaces, and gardens. Freshwater systems are generally the most cost effective to construct when compared to recirculation and greywater

systems that require infrastructure for filtering, treating, and storing water, as well as additional costs for purchasing chemicals.

While recirculating and greywater systems supports corporate initiatives to be more environmentally sustainable by reducing water consumption, greater oversight is required to ensure that water chemistry is maintained to allow for proper disinfection. Examples of different types of splash pads exist throughout the GTHA. Guelph and Halton Hills provide recirculating systems, while Pickering uses flowthrough systems. Brampton also has a Water Conservation Plan to minimize water consumption of its splash pads. As part of the design process for future splash pads, Burlington should evaluate the feasibility of using recirculation or greywater systems to reduce water use.

Cooling Spray Stations in Mixed Use Intensification Areas

With a growing emphasis on residential growth within Burlington's Mixed Use Intensification Areas, including MTSAs, providing outdoor waterplay spaces that are publicly accessible will be important to provide much needed relief from urban heat island effect. Small scale cooling spray stations should be accommodated at a minimum of one Urban Park in each MTSA, although multiple locations should be provided to ensure that they are located within walking distance of residents.

These small-scale cooling spray stations may have fewer spray features than Burlington's traditional splash pads given that the size of the installation will be influenced by the size of the Urban Park it is located in. For example, these cooling spray stations may have fewer spray nozzles or post that are integrated within a hardscape plaza or incorporated as part of a public art display, water fountains, boulders, or other feature.

Recommendations: Outdoor Pools and Splash Pads

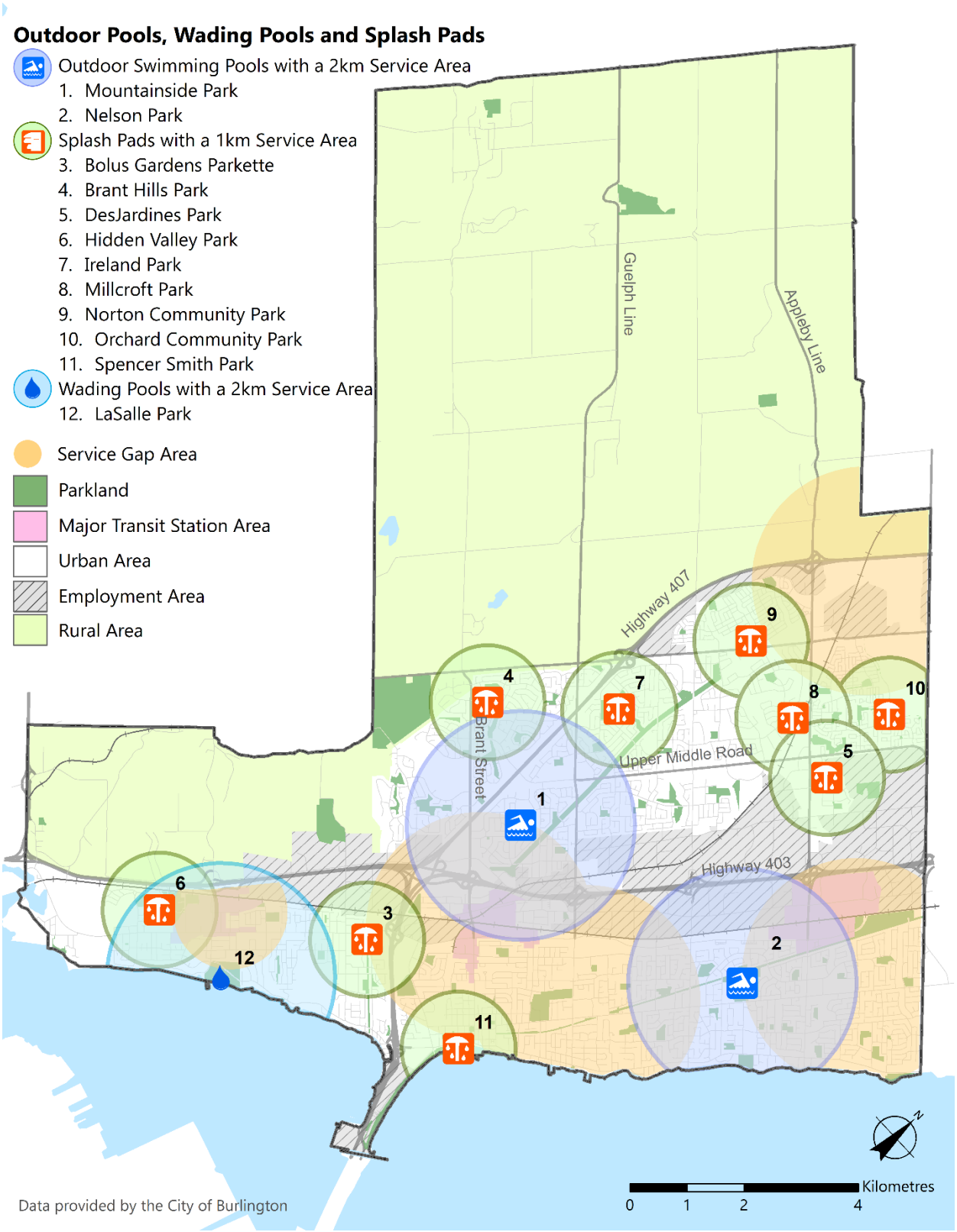
24. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor pools and splash pads. The design of future outdoor pools and splash pads facilities should include community input form part of the design process to create a unique, fun, and engaging water play experience. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of using recirculation or greywater systems to reduce water consumption.

a. Assess the feasibility of enlarging and modernizing the changerooms at the Nelson Park outdoor pool to support greater use and modernize, with consideration for accessibility and universal features, as well as climate change mitigation measures.

b. Subject to determining the future of LaSalle Park, undertake a feasibility study to renew the wading pool, with consideration given to opportunities to enlarge the size of the wading pool and incorporate modern amenities including, but not limited to, washroom and changeroom facilities, beach entry, accessibility features, spray features, and more. Designing in a manner to allow for year-round use such as outdoor skating could also be explored.

c. Provide a minimum of one cooling spray station in each MTSA; multiple locations are recommended to support walkability. Cooling spray stations could feature a limited number of spray nozzles integrated into the hardscape or as posts, or incorporated as part of a public art display, water fountains, boulders, or other feature.

Figure 17: Outdoor Pools, Wading Pools and Splash Pads



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.8 Skate Parks and Dirt Bike Tracks

Current Supply



Burlington's six skate parks are located at Brant Hills Park, Kilbride Park, Maple Park, Nelson Park, Norton Community Park, and Orchard Community Park. Each location features a range of amenities, including bowls, rails, ledges, stairs, and other components, as well as other supporting amenities such as seating, shade, and lighting; amenities vary by location. Burlington also provides one dirt bike track at Nelson Park. In addition, the City provides four small skate zones at DesJardines Park, Kiwanis Park, Mountainside Park, and Palladium Park that have a limited number of components such as ledges and rails that are co-located with basketball courts at neighbourhood parks.

Market Conditions

Skate parks are now considered to be a core recreation facility in most municipalities across Ontario, known for their ability to provide youth and younger adults with a positive place to participate in skateboarding, rollerblading, scootering, biking, and other wheeled action sports. Historical perceptions of skateboard parks are commonly associated with negative youth behaviour, although skate sports have become very mainstream. Skateboarding was introduced as part of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics for the first-time lending further credibility to the sport. This has the potential to drive interest and participation in skateboarding even higher which, in turn, could lead to greater demands for future spaces for skate sports and venues. Skate parks are opportunities through which to encourage greater physical activity among children and youth – particularly since these activities are typically viewed as affordable physical opportunities and social activities that can be pursued as part of 'hanging out' with friends.

Dirt bike tracks are niche amenities that are speciality courses that are used by cyclists to enjoy off-road cycling. They provide free and safe spaces for users to develop and hone their skills and connect with others within a purpose-built environment, deterring property damage from illegal biking in environmental areas and nature trails.

Well-designed dirt bike tracks offer a diversity of progressive and technically challenging features generally consisting of berms, rollers, ramps, and/or similar features, although it is notable that different designs appeal to different ride groups. Like skate parks, dirt bike tracks primarily appeal to youth, although they can also draw children and young adults.

The community survey found that in the past five years, 12% of respondents have used skate parks in Burlington. One quarter (26%) of respondents support additional investment in skate parks, ranking 30th out of 35 facility types. Positive comments from the public were heard about the skate park at Norton Park, with specific mentions to the large size and lighting. Installing lighting at other skate parks in Burlington was suggested such as at Maple Park; comments were also received requesting shade at this park. Additional skate park zones were also requested at Kinsmen Park or Brant Hills Park with more seating for spectators. A request was also made for a dirt bike track.

Investing in Skate Zones

Burlington is currently providing skate parks at a rate of one per 3,900 youth between the ages of 10 and 19, which is in the mid-range on the target spectrum as many municipalities aim to provide a service level of one per 3,000 to 5,000 youth. Recognizing that Burlington currently provides the highest level of service compared to benchmark municipalities, it is recommended that the City maintain it's current service level (one per 3,900 youth) to guide future needs.

If the existing proportion of the youth population remains the same over the planning period, it is estimated that there will be a need for two new skate parks during the planning period, including one by 2034 and a second location by 2051. A two-kilometre service area was applied to existing locations, which revealed service gaps in the centre of the urban area and on the west. A scan of these areas revealed that there are limited locations within the existing parks supply to construct a new skate park, without compromising access to greenspace for passive use.



As a result, enhancing the City's existing skate parks is recommended, which is discussed further on the following page. This strategy should be combined with investing in the supply of small-scale skate zones with basic components and features at neighbourhood parks being recommended to complement the City's major skate locations. This strategy would enhance the distribution of walkable skate opportunities and provide a place for beginners to develop their skills prior to moving on to the City's major skate parks. Consistent with the City's current provision model, co-locating skate zones with basketball courts is continued to be encouraged. Potential opportunities to consider may include, but not be limited to, Millcroft Park, Longmoor Park, Queensway Park, Optimist Park, Sheldon Park, and Palmer Park. Co-locating skate zones with future basketball courts is also recommended, as well as exploring future opportunities to locate skate zones in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs).

As part of a five-year update to this Plan, the City should re-investigate the need to increase its skate park supply and potential park opportunities, focusing on locations that are accessible by youth and young adults with similar park amenities geared towards this segment of the community. Long-term options for skate parks may include Central Park and Sherwood Forest Park, which could be explored as part of their site-specific planning processes (see Recommendation #1 and 2).

Table 15: Recommended Skate Parks, 2024 to 2051

Current Skate Park Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
6	1:3,900 youth ages 10-19 and a 2km service area	2	1	0	1

Note: Current supply and recommended facilities exclude the provision of skate zones.

Enhancing Existing Skate Parks

There may be opportunities to undertake enhancements at existing skate parks to enhance the user experience and accessibility. The public expressed that Norton Park is a well used location given its large size and range of amenities (including lighting) that could be used as inspiration to renew and enhance the City's other locations. A high-level scan of existing skate parks found that some locations are much smaller in size and have fewer features compared to skate park at Norton Park, such as at Maple Park and Nelson Park. Exploring the feasibility of enlarging these locations and adding more skate features is recommended, which may also include repositioning the skate parks within the existing site.

Maintaining Dirt Bike Tracks

The dirt bike track at Nelson Park was created in the 1990s through a joint venture until the City assumed full responsibility in 2007 when the track was opened for the general public to use unsupervised. With the help of volunteers and local users, the dirt bike track underwent renewal in 2010 and it continues to be an excellent venue for residents and visitors to enjoy. It's location adjacent to a skate park and basketball court, as well as other park and recreation amenities creates a strong gathering hub for youth and other users to gather and participate in physical activity.

Dirt bike tracks tend to be provided to respond to localized demand, rather than to meet an established service level. There is limited evidence at this time to suggest that there is a need for additional dirt bike tracks and, as a result, it is anticipated that the current location is sufficient to meet needs during the planning period, meaning that maintaining the existing venue in a state of good repair will be important. Continuing to monitor community requests for additional dirt bike tracks is encouraged.

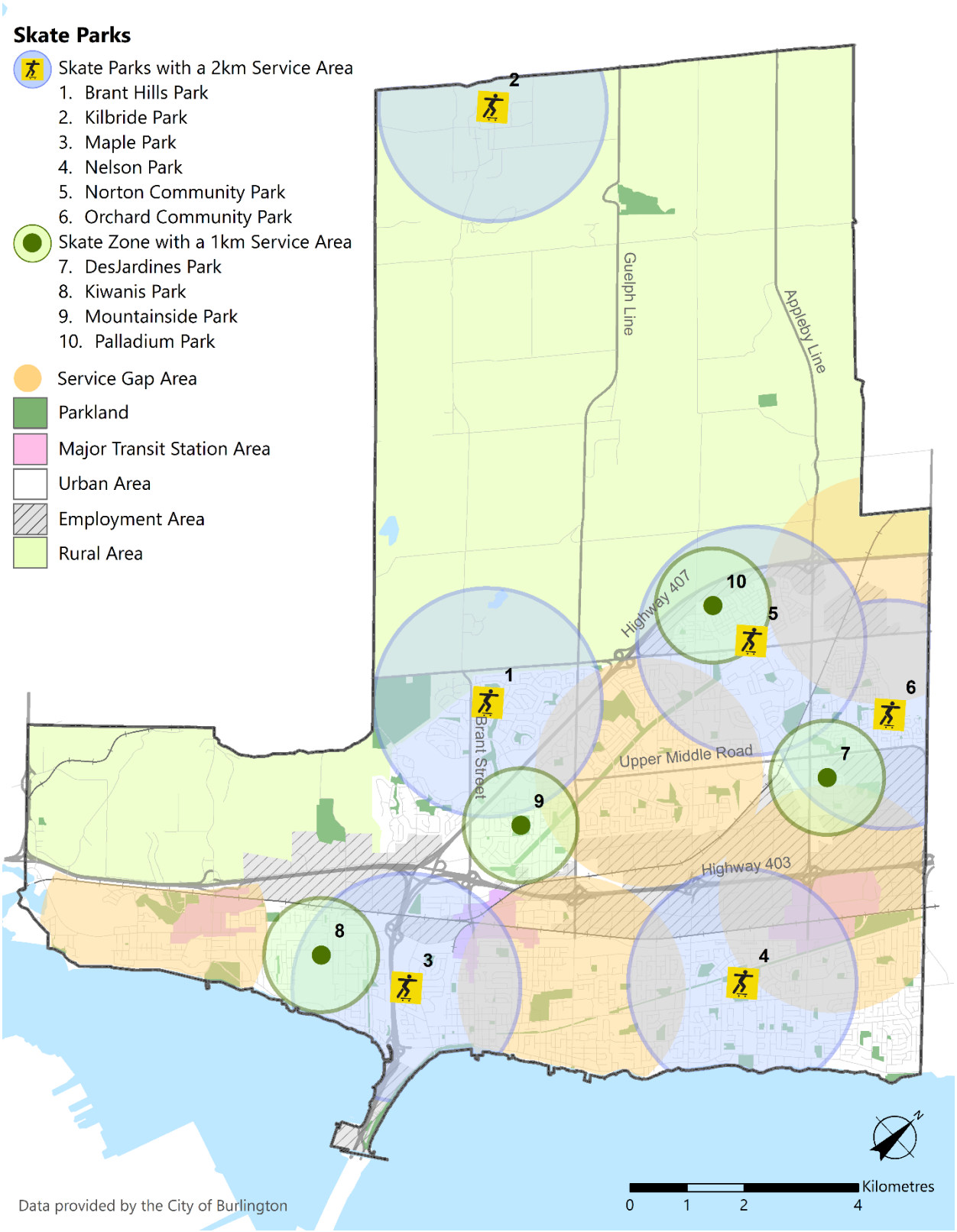
Recommendations: Skate Parks and Dirt Bike Tracks

25. The following strategy is recommended for skate parks.

a. Construct skate zones adjacent to existing and future basketball courts to strengthen geographic distribution and augment the City's skate parks.

b. Improve existing skate parks to provide an enhanced user experience and improved accessibility, which may include adding supporting amenities and enlarging and/or repositioning skate parks such as at Maple Park and Nelson Park.

Figure 18: Geographic Distribution of Skate Parks



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.9 Leash Free Dog Parks

Current Supply



There are eight leash free dog parks in Burlington at Bayview Park, Central Park, Colin Alton Parkette, Norton Park, Roly Bird Park, and Leighland Park, as well as at Pathfinder Park and Hidden Valley Park, both of which are currently under construction. Each location features a fenced perimeter with supporting amenities. Some locations also have designated areas for large and small dogs.

Market Conditions



With by-laws regulating the use of leashes, dog parks provide owners with an opportunity to exercise and socialize with their dogs in a controlled area. Dog parks do not only benefit pets as best practices also suggest that they benefit residents and community interaction among those who share the common interest. Dog parks have proven to be successful, particularly in highly urbanized communities that tend to have such facilities as opportunities for dogs to run freely may be limited within intensified residential areas. The demand for this type of amenity is expected to grow as research undertaken by the Canadian Animal Health Institute found that the population of dogs has been increasing, which grew from 7.7 million to 7.9 million dogs between 2020 and 2022.[24]

The community survey found that 18% of responding households have used leash free dog parks In Burlington over the past five years. 39% of respondents supported additional investment in this type of amenity, which ranked 26th out of 35 facility types. Specific requests were made for more dog parks in established neighbourhoods of Burlington such as in the north and east end of the City. Enhanced monitoring and enforcement to ensure that leash free dog parks are being used appropriately was suggested as well as ensuring that amenities are available including, but not limited to, environmentally friendly dog waste receptacles, water, lighting, and shade.

[24] Canadian Animal Health Institute. 2023. Latest Canadian Pet Population Figures Released. Retrieved from https://www.cahi-icsa.ca

Enhancing the Distribution of Leash Free Dog Parks

The City recognizes the importance of providing leash free dog parks and the benefits they provide in allowing dogs and their owners to socialize together. This was demonstrated through recent investments that doubled the supply of leash-free areas including at Central Park, Colin Alton Parkette, Leighland Park, and Pathfinder Park.

There is no standard guiding the provision of leash free areas but as the population of dogs and the number of dog owners is expected to continue, there will be a need to strengthen the geographic distribution of these important public amenities. A one-kilometre service area is applied to the City's existing off-leash dog parks, which generally represents a reasonable walking distance for dogs and their owners. The most notable gap is in the southeast corner of Burlington and portions of the north end of the urban area. Smaller gaps also exist in the south end of Burlington.

In 2019, the City engaged the community to revise its site selection criteria to reflect the shifting dynamic of dog parks and the growing interest in this type of park amenity. The revised criteria identify that:

- Leash free areas must be on City property and enclosed with permanent fencing;
- Destination leash-free areas should be a minimum of 3,300 square metres;
- Neighbourhood leash-free areas should be a minimum of 500 square metres;
- Parking will be determined based on overall park usage, leash-free area size, and walkability;
- Leash-free areas should have a minimum setback of 15 metres from other park amenities and adjacent land uses; and
- Leash-free areas should be accessible to the public year-around and should not be located at the waterfront.

New leash-free areas should be established to reconcile the previously noted gap areas with consideration given to the City's revised site selection criteria. Potential parks in these gap areas that could be evaluated include Sherwood Forest Park, Central Park, Optimist Park, and City View Park, and at a future park in the northeast corner of Burlington's urban area, as well as utilizing the hydro corridor (coordination with Hydro One would be required). Supporting amenities should be provided including signage, waste receptacles, seating, shade, and water.

Serving Pet Owners in Mixed Use Intensification Areas

With future population growth being directed towards Burlington's Mixed Use Intensification Areas, it can be expected that there will be a need for more walkable off-leash dog parks in these high-density areas as residents will have limited private personal space to exercise and socialize with their dogs. As transit-oriented developments become more prevalent in Burlington, a greater share of the City's population may not own private vehicles and thus traditional leash free dog areas may not be accessible for some urban residents.

The City will need to be strategic in where and how new leash free dog parks are provided to meet the needs of residents in Burlington's Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSA). At a minimum, the City should provide at least one leash-free area in each MTSA where most growth will occur, although multiple sites are encouraged as opportunities become available to encourage walkable neighbourhoods and the growing number of dog owners.

One of the challenges that the City will experience is finding suitable locations in high-density areas that are adequately sized for a leash free area, particularly given the intensity of expected use and associated maintenance requirements. The City's revised site criteria for leash free areas identifies that the minimum size should be 500 square metres. This may be difficult to provide in Burlington's Mixed Use Intensification Areas as there are also other outdoor recreation facility amenities that will need to be provided to serve residents. As a result, leash free areas within these areas will need to be smaller in size. It is therefore recommended that the City amend its leash free area criteria to incorporate a compact leash free area category to serve Burlington's intensification areas. To complement these leash free areas, encouraging private developers to create pet-friendly spaces for residents is also recommended.

Recommendations: Leash Free Dog Parks

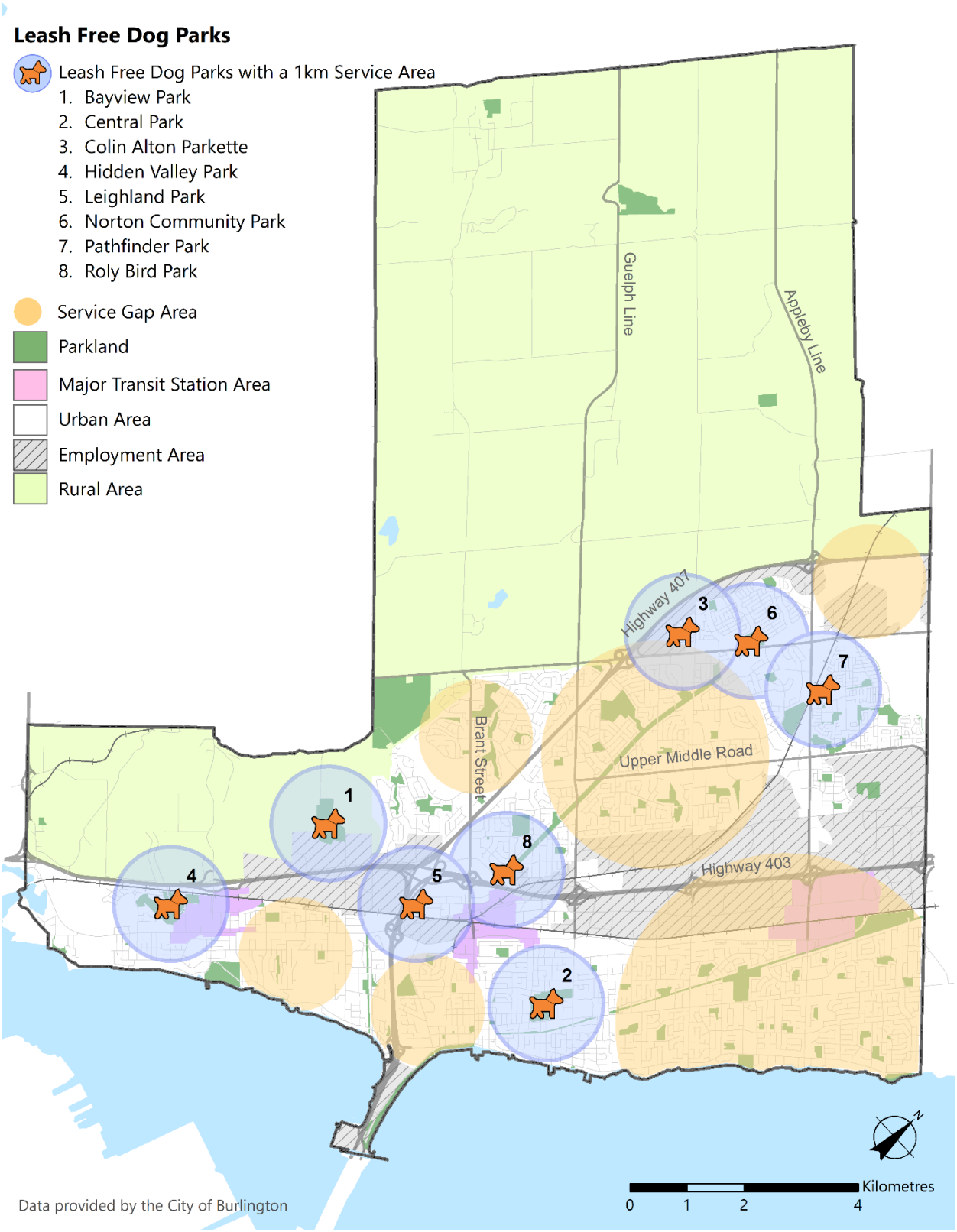
26. The following strategy is recommended for leash free dog parks. All leash free areas should include amenities such as signage, waste receptacles, shade, seating, and water.

a. Amend the City's leash free area criteria to incorporate a compact leash free area category to serve Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs).

b. Using the City's site criteria for leash-free areas, evaluate opportunities to provide leash-free dog parks at existing or future City parks, as well as utilizing the hydro corridor.

c. Provide a minimum of one leash free area in each MTSA, which may include working with private developers in these areas to create pet-friendly spaces. Additional leash free areas in Mixed Use Intensification Areas are encouraged as opportunities become available to encourage walkability, subject to demand and availability of appropriate sites.

Figure 19: Geographic Distribution of Leash Free Dog Parks



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.10 Community Gardens

Current Supply





Burlington has five community gardens that provide 231 plots. Community gardens are found at Amherst Park (33 plots), Central Park (55 plots), Francis Road Trail (36 plots), Ireland Park (43 plots), and Maple Park (64 plots). Thirteen of the City's community garden plots have raised garden beds for persons with disabilities and eight are used by the Burlington Food Bank and Next Door Social Space, which grows and prepares food to be distributed to those in need. A new community garden with 37 plots has been proposed for Nelson Park.

Burlington's community gardens are complemented by locations provided by other organizations such as churches, including Bethel Church, St. Christopher's Anglican Church, and North Burlington Baptist Church (the latter location is located on land that has been identified for development), as well as at condominium buildings. A temporary community garden is also located in the west corner of Brant Street and Ghent Avenue, which will eventually be redeveloped. Community gardening opportunities are also located at schools, although they are typically provided for student education. For example, a food garden was created at Maplehurst Public School to encourage healthy eating and educate students about food production and waste. A food garden is also located at Holy Rosary Catholic Elementary School.

Market Conditions

Community gardens are popular outdoor amenities in highly urbanized areas that are experiencing intensification where residents may not have access to personal gardening space. A greater emphasis being placed on social justice and food security, healthy eating, increasing physical activity, and providing a healthy and sustainable food source are also driving the popularity of these amenities. Research conducted in diverse communities revealed that community gardens allow residents to cultivate, preserve and prepare cultural produce. Moreover, community gardens foster social interaction and horticultural educational.

While the importance of community gardens cannot be understated, strategic planning and careful consideration needs to be undertaken given the finite amount of park space available, particularly in areas of intensification, as well as the cost to acquire new parkland. Municipalities must make efficient use of land when it comes to developing park facilities and amenities and explore innovative approaches to meeting needs. For example, Kitchener works with Waterloo Region in the Waterloo Region Community Gardening Network, that brings together representatives from various parties to promote and support healthy and inclusive communities. This initiative helps communities and organizations create, manage, and operate community gardens, which may also take place on non-municipal land. The creation of rooftop gardens is also an emerging trend gaining traction in highly urbanized municipalities such as in Toronto.

Public requests were made for more community gardens in Burlington, particularly in locations that are close to condominiums and locations with limited private, outdoor space. The community survey found that 12% of responding households have used a community garden in Burlington over the past five years. Half (51%) of the respondents supported additional investment in community gardens, ranking 13th out of 35 facility types.

Expanding Community Gardens

There has been a strong demand for community gardens in Burlington since the first location launched in 2012. Each year the City has consistently received more applicants than there are gardening plots and as a result, only a portion of applicants could be accommodated. For example, the City received 431 community gardening applicants and with 223 available plots (excluding ones for the Burlington Food Bank and Next Door Social Space), only 52% of applicants were accommodated. To ensure that the allocation of gardening plots is fair, gardening permits are issued based on a lottery system.

There is no standard guiding the provision of community gardens as they are best provided based on local demand. Based on the number of gardening applicants, the City would need to double its existing supply in order to accommodate the current demand. A cursory review of existing community gardening sites was undertaken to evaluate expansion opportunities. Central Park is the City's most popular community garden location; there are 55 plots at this location and 125 applicants in 2024, resulting in a ratio of 2.3 applicants per plot. There are currently no opportunities to expand its current footprint given that it currently abuts other park amenities; however, as previously discussed in this Plan, reimagining Central Park to create a new vision for the site may create potential opportunities to expand the number of gardening plots, which should include raised garden beds, to provide much needed relief.

The community garden at Ireland Park Is also under pressure. With 43 plots and 80 applicants in 2024, this location has a ratio of 1.9 applicants per plot. A visual review of the site suggests that there could be opportunities to expand the community garden to the north towards the existing parks building, as well as south towards the parking lot, which could potentially double its existing footprint; raised garden beds should be considered as part of the expansion. While the City's other community gardens are also under pressure, there did not appear to be any potential opportunity for expansion.

Accessible Community Gardening

There are opportunities to enhance community gardening for persons with disabilities. The City offers 13 raised gardening beds (between two to four beds per location), which equates to approximately 5% of Burlington's community gardening plots. However, one-quarter of Ontarians are living with some form of disability and by this metric, the City is undersupplied with accessible community gardening beds. While there is no data to quantify the number of residents who require the use of a raised gardening bed, it can be expected this need will grow as the population increases. As a result, planning and designing new, or expanding existing community gardens, should consider increasing the number of accessible gardening beds. To ensure that community garden locations can be accessed by persons using mobility aids or those requiring a firm and stable surface, a designated pathway should also be provided, which is the City's current practice.

Potential Community Gardening Locations to Consider

Strengthening the distribution of community garden locations will also be important to ensure that they are walkable amenities. A one-kilometre service area was applied to existing locations, which found that there are gaps in the east and west side of the urban area. The City has previously investigated new community gardening sites and recommended a new location at Nelson Park that would have 37 plots. This location continues to be supported by this Plan given that it is in proximity to Central Park would alleviate pressure at the City's most popular location.

The need for community gardens in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) will also continue to grow as Burlington shifts towards more compact and higher density development where residents may not have access to private gardening space. Ensuring that residents in these areas have access to community gardening locations should be a priority. A temporary urban farm (which is used by the Burlington Food Bank) currently serves the Burlington GO Station MTSA / Urban Growth Centre, although it is located on privately-owned land that has been identified for future development.

While there is currently no parkland within the City's MTSAs, opportunities to establish community gardens in each of these priority areas should be explored as future parks are established. The northeast corner of Burlington's urban area is less of a priority due to the anticipated type of development, although community gardens to serve this area should be explored as opportunities become available. There are existing parks located within proximity to Mixed Use Intensification Areas that could be potential candidates for new community gardens including:

- **Optimist Park** to serve the Burlington GO Station / Urban Growth Centre MTSA. This park is a prime candidate for renewal given its proximity to the MTSA and its potential to be reimagined to serve current and future residents in this growth area, which could include a community garden.
- **Sherwood Forest Park** to serve the Appleby GO MTSA. While this park is primarily oriented towards sports activities, it can be expected that this park will also draw users from the abutting MTSA who may be seeking more passive, non-sport pursuits such as community gardening. The Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan does not identify a community garden location, but one could be established within open space areas, or it could be incorporated along the abutting Centennial Trail (coordination with Hydro One may be required).
- There are limited opportunities to establish a community garden to serve the Aldershot GO MTSA. Potential sites could include **LaSalle Park** or **Aldershot Park**, although there may be constraints at these locations that would render the sites being unsuitable for a community garden such as the intended use and function of the park and the need to repurpose or relocate other park facilities, although their merits should be investigated further. **Greenwood Park** could also be a potential location, but it may require relocating the existing soccer field.

There is no standard on the number of plots that should be provided at each community garden location as this is dependent on space available. The City currently provides an average of 46 plots per location (or approximately 750 square metres), which should be the target to strive for, although smaller locations may be considered depending on site constraints, particularly in MTSAs. As the City investigates the viability of future community gardens at these and other park locations, candidate sites should consider the following criteria:

- Proximity to Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) or opportunity to address a gap area;
- Soil quality is suitable for gardening;

- Sufficient sun exposure;
- Level grade;
- Adequate drainage;
- Access to a water source;
- Access to parking, transit, and active transportation; and
- Free from hazards.

Alternative Strategies to Meeting Community Gardening Needs

The City has made intentional efforts to alleviate pressure for community gardens through working with other landowners and organizations to establish gardening plots such as at churches, schools, developers, and condominium properties. Continuing to work with these and other groups is encouraged to strengthen access to community gardening opportunities and offer the benefits of urban farming through opportunities such as leasing land or partnering with other landowners. With higher density development expected to take place, there will be greater opportunities to work with the development industry to encourage the development of rooftop gardens, which is supported by the City's Climate Resilient Burlington Plan. As previously identified, engaging Hydro One to explore opportunities to create community gardens along the utility right-of-way is also encouraged, provided suitable locations can be identified.

Recommendations: Community Gardens

27. The following strategy is recommended for community gardens.

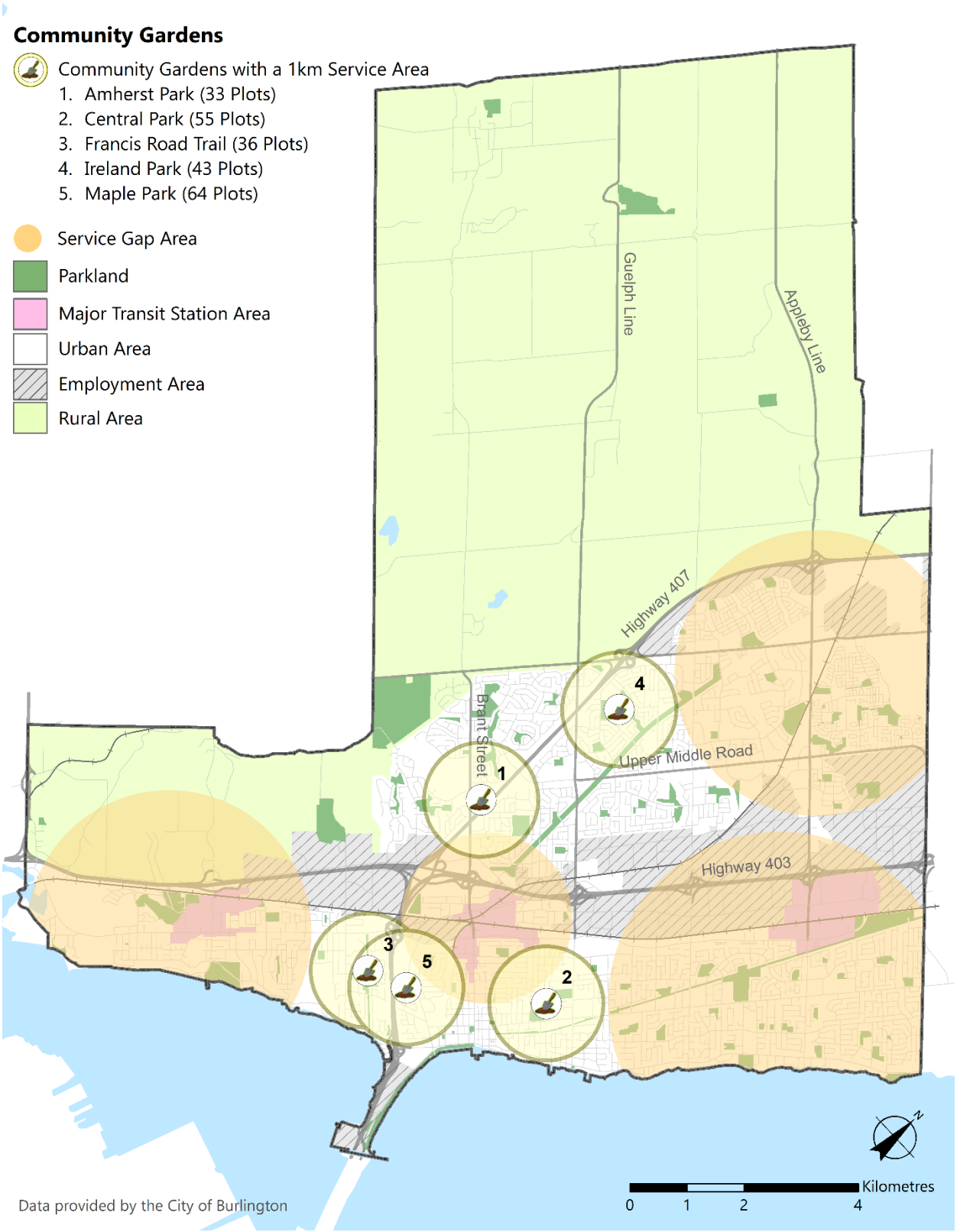
a. Proceed with establishing a community garden at Nelson Park. Consideration should be given to an enhanced supply of raised garden beds.

b. Investigate the feasibility of expanding the number of community garden plots (including the number of raised garden beds) at Ireland Park and Central Park.

c. Establish new community gardens with a priority on serving high growth areas by providing at least one community garden in each MTSA and at parks in proximity to Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs). Consideration should be given to the site criteria identified in this Plan.

d. Continue to work with others to create community gardens on non-public lands, including leasing land, partnering with others, and encouraging the development industry to create rooftop gardens.

Figure 20: Geographic Distribution of Community Gardens



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.11 Outdoor Bocce Courts

Current Supply

The City provides two outdoor bocce courts at LaSalle Park.

Market Conditions

Outdoor bocce ball is mainly played by adults 55+ and the Italian Canadian community. There are currently no trends that suggest that there is an increase in youth participation. Decommissioning and re-purposing outdoor bocce courts has been the trend over the past decade.

There is interest from Special Olympics Burlington for additional outdoor bocce courts at LaSalle Park. The community survey found that in the past five years, 2% of responding households have used an outdoor bocce court in Burlington. 14% of respondents supported additional investment in outdoor bocce courts, which ranked last among all 35 facility types.

Monitor the Demand for Outdoor Bocce Courts

Historically, public outdoor bocce courts are provided in response to demonstrated demand rather than a quantifiable target. Most recently, demand for outdoor bocce courts has generally been low and some municipalities have been reducing their supplies, particularly in communities with multiple outdoor bocce court locations such as in Hamilton and Richmond Hill. While Burlington has received a request for additional outdoor bocce courts at LaSalle Park, it is difficult to rationalize constructing additional courts at this time until more details are known about how many courts the group is seeking, the extent of the programming they are looking to offer or duration of use, number of users, and potential partnership opportunities, to help the City make an informed decision.

Recognizing that this could present an opportunity to enhance the availability of recreation amenities for persons with disabilities, the City should engage Special Olympics Burlington to better understand their outdoor bocce court needs based on the above considerations to determine adjustments to the existing supply. As an alternative, the use of portable bocce courts should be explored.

Recommendations: Outdoor Bocce Courts

28. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor bocce courts.

a. Investigate a partnership with Special Olympics Burlington for the future provision and maintenance of outdoor bocce court needs and associated amenities for the organization and others interested in the activity.

5.12 Disc Golf Courses

Current Supply

The City established a nine-hole disc golf course during the COVID-19 pandemic at the Tyandaga Golf Course, which is available during the winter outside of the golf playing season. This location complements other regional disc golf courses such as at Bronte Creek Provincial Park and Christie Lake Conservation Area.

Market Conditions

Disc golf is a century old game that originated in Canada in the early 1900s and it is now played recreationally and competitively around the world. The sport of disc golf involves players throwing a flying disc on a course consisting of between 9 and 18 baskets, combining elements of both golf and Frisbee. It has become increasingly popular as people continue to seek more casual and active outdoor physical activities that are social. It is also an inexpensive, safe, and affordable activity for users of all ages.

The Professional Disc Gold Association (PGDA) is the governing body for disc golf, reporting a worldwide total of 150,000 professional and amateur members in 2021. [25] Among this group are nearly 3,600 Canadian players, which is an increase of 127% compared to the number of players reported in 2019.[26]

Some requests for disc golf courses were heard through the consultation process. The community survey found that 4% of respondents played disc golf in the past five years and 16% felt that it should be a priority for additional investment, ranking 33rd out of 35 facility types.

Finding a Permanent Home for Disc Golf

Disc golf continues to gain in popularity since the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the desire for a broader range of affordable, unstructured, outdoor recreation activities beyond traditional sports. This has raised the profile of emerging activities such as disc golf and over time, it can be expected that the City will experience increased use of the seasonal disc golf course during the winter season and a desire for a year-round location.

Monitoring the use of the seasonal disc golf course is recommended to understand how well it is used, although it is recognized that this may not illustrate the full picture of usage as some may not play during the wintertime. Nevertheless, it will allow the City to quantify the local market demand to make informed future decisions. Should the City move forward with establishing a permanent location, an ideal site would be one that is large enough to accommodate multiple disc golf baskets to encourage small casual games, like the nine-hole course that is currently provided at Tyandaga Golf Course. The availability of other associated amenities should also be considered such as parking and shade. Potential locations could include, but not be limited to, City View Park, Bayview Park, Hidden Valley Park, Zimmerman Park, Lowville Park, or another location identified by staff. Augmenting the City's disc golf opportunities by encouraging the use of courses beyond Burlington's borders is also encouraged, including at Bronte Creek Provincial Park and Christie Lake Conservation Area.

Recommendations: Disc Golf Courses

29. The following strategy is recommended for disc golf courses.

a. Monitor the use of the seasonal disc golf course at Tyandaga Golf Course to inform decisions to provide a year-round location.

[25] Sports Illustrated. 2021. Paige Pierce Is Taking Disc Golf To the Moon. Retrieved from https://www.si.com
[26] PDGA Canada. 2022. 2021-2022 PDGA Canada Annual Report. Retrieved from https://www.pdga.com

5.13 Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Current Supply

Six outdoor fitness parks are located at Central Park, Colin Alton Parkette, Burloak Waterfront, Leighland Park, Sherwood Forest Park, and Tansley Woods Park to engage users in a variety of strength and cardio-based exercises.



Market Conditions

Municipalities have been incorporating outdoor fitness equipment within parks in response to the growing demand for affordable outdoor recreation opportunities, including activities that center on physical activity and health and wellness. It is common for municipalities to work alongside the community to develop outdoor fitness equipment locations through fundraising and partnerships. Locally, the Burlington Seniors Community Inc. donated $50,000 to the City towards outdoor fitness equipment at Burloak Waterfront Park, which was installed in 2020. The City received another donation in 2023 for Central Park.

Positive comments were heard from the public about the outdoor fitness equipment at Sherwood Forest Park and public requests were received for more installations in Burlington's parks. Outdoor fitness equipment was identified as providing for year-round activities for a variety of age groups. Nearly half (49%) of responding households to the community survey support additional investment in outdoor fitness equipment, ranking 17th out of 35 outdoor facility types.



Expanding Outdoor Fitness Opportunities

The integration of outdoor fitness equipment is typically considered where opportunities exist as part of park design or renewal, as well as to respond to public requests. As a best practice, outdoor fitness equipment is typically provided in prominent locations to encourage physical activity and fitness such as at major parks that have other active recreation amenities or along trails and pathways – either co-located together in a single location such as at Central Park or through fitness trails to facilitate interval training such as at Leighland Park. This should continue to be the recommended approach going forward to expand the City's supply of outdoor fitness equipment to respond to public demand and ensure that there are no cost outdoor opportunities to get active.

Applying a one-kilometre service area to existing outdoor fitness locations revealed that the City is providing a good level of distribution. Future development opportunities should be concentrated in gap areas. Potential locations may include, but not be limited to, Hidden Valley Park, Lowville Park, Zimmerman Park, Orchard Park, Nelson Park, Ireland Park, Optimist Park, and other high traffic locations adjacent to community centres, along the waterfront, and in parks with the opportunity to support outdoor fitness programming. Additional consideration should also be given to locating at least one outdoor fitness equipment installation in each MTSA. Like how the outdoor fitness equipment was funded at Central Park and Burloak Waterfront Park, the City could seek donations or other in-kind contributions to fund these projects,

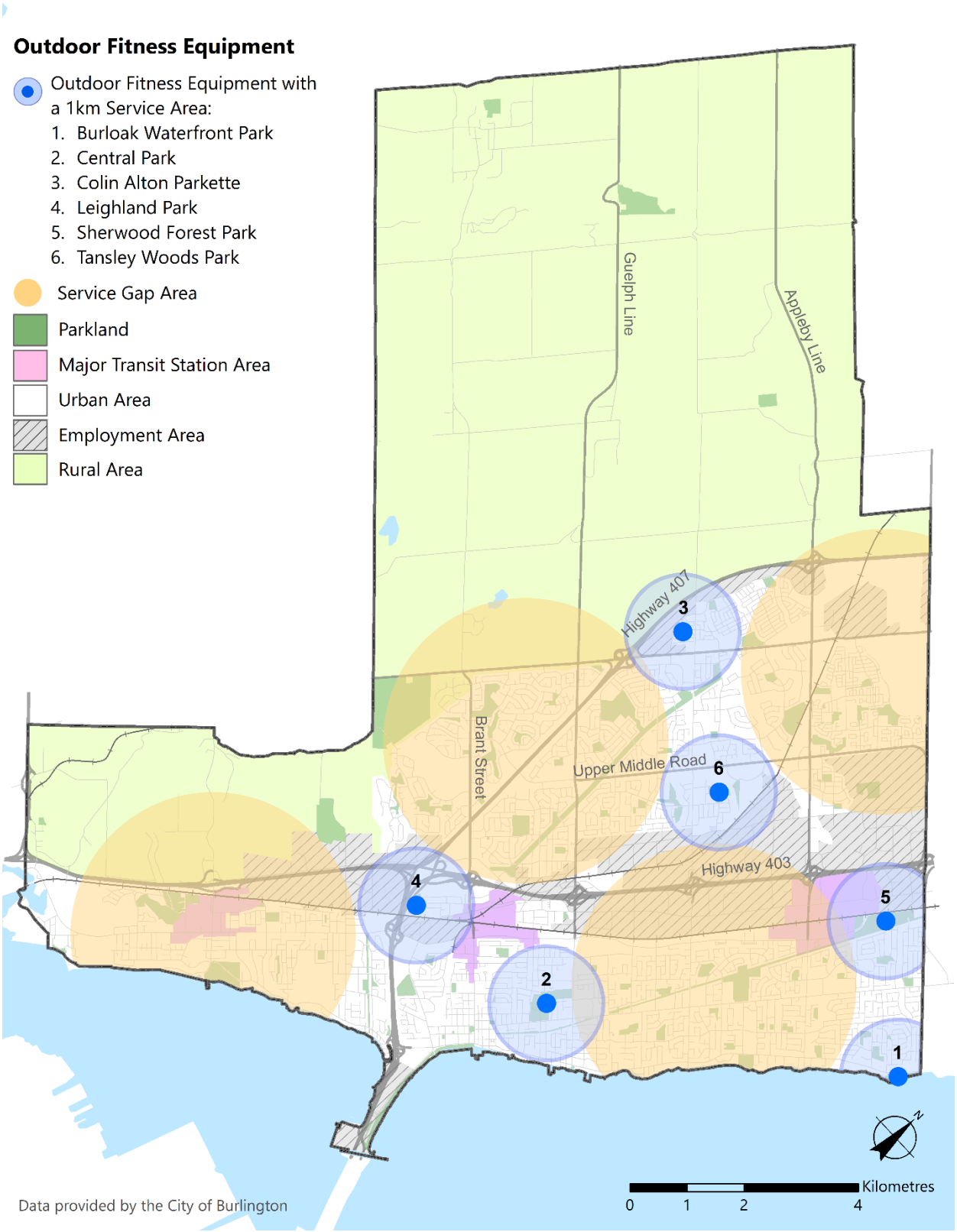
Recommendations: Outdoor Fitness Equipment

30. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor fitness equipment.

a. Install outdoor fitness equipment in high traffic areas, including along the waterfront and at major parks, adjacent to community centres, and in locations that can support outdoor fitness programming, which could potentially be funded through donations or other in-kind contributions.

b. Provide a minimum of one outdoor fitness equipment location in each MTSA and within designated corridors.

Figure 21: Geographic Distribution of Outdoor Fitness Equipment



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.14 Playgrounds

Current Supply



Burlington maintains 105 playground locations, which includes 91 structures at 85 parks; some of the City's larger parks have two playgrounds on site such as at Central Park and Hidden Valley Park. The remaining 20 playgrounds are located on school property.

Market Conditions

Playgrounds are neighbourhood-level amenities that benefit early childhood development, foster cognitive development and social skills, and encourage physical activity. Playground designs have evolved over time from traditional play equipment (e.g., swings, slides, etc.) to creative structures that facilitate environments that encourage imagination to create unique play experiences. This may include design elements such as vibrant colours, interactive play features, thematic designs, and components that are barrier free and stimulate the senses, as well as accessible surface treatments such as engineered wood fibre and rubber.

The survey found that in the past five years, 41% of responding households have used a playground, which was the second most popular outdoor facility type used. Nearly two-thirds (61%) of respondents also supported additional investment in playgrounds, which ranked 8th out of 35 facility types. The consultation process revealed that there is a desire for more variety between playground locations, natural playgrounds, and more senior playgrounds that are appropriate for older children and youth, particularly in the south end of Burlington. A suggestion was also made to consider reducing the number of playground locations, particularly at locations that serve the same residential area.

Addressing Playground Gaps

Playgrounds are considered neighbourhood-level amenities that should be accessible non-motorized forms of movement such as walking. As a result, comparable municipalities provide playgrounds based on geographic distribution at a rate of one playground location within 400 to 800 metres of residential areas – equal to a 5-to-10-minute walk – unobstructed by major barriers such as arterial roads, highways, and railways. Some of these communities can provide a higher level of service (e.g., one location per 400 to 500 metres) as they are already providing a strong geographic distribution.

Burlington's Parks Provisioning Master Plan recommended a range of service levels based on location and are highlighted below:

- City-wide Service Target: 80% of residents are within 400 metres of a playground
- Burlington GO UGC/MTSA, Aldershot GO MTSA, Appleby GO MTSA, Downtown Urban Centre, Plains Road and Fairview Street Corridors: 100% of residents are within 400 metres of a playground
- Uptown Urban Centre: 95% of residents are within 400 metres of a playground
- Designated Greenfield Areas: 60% of residents are within 400 metres of a playground
- Remaining Built-up Areas: 85% of residents within 400 metres of a playground
- Rural Areas: 10% of residents within 400 metres of a playground

The service targets for the City's Mixed Use Intensification Areas generally align with the approach in other municipalities. While it is the intent of the Parks Provisioning Master Plan to encourage walkability to the City's parks and amenities, providing playgrounds within 400 metres of residents outside of Mixed Use Intensification Areas would be a challenge in established areas where there may not be existing parks to reconcile service gaps.

The recommended strategy going forward is to apply a City-wide target of one playground within 500 metres of residential neighbourhoods in the urban area. This is a modest departure from the target set in the PPMP for Mixed Use Intensification Areas, but it continues to be appropriate recognizing the constraints with providing parkland in these areas and the need to also provide other recreation amenities to resident needs. The provision of playgrounds in the rural area should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis subject to considerations including, but not limited to, park type and intended function, level of expected use, etc. This approach is consistent with best practices in surrounding municipalities.

Based on the adjusted service targets, the most notable gap areas are located within the City's designated growth areas, including the City's three MTSAs. While these areas are not immediately served by parks, the Parks Provisioning Master Plan has identified these locations as high priority areas for future parkland acquisition. As this occurs, the inclusion of playgrounds within new parks that serve families within Mixed Use Intensification Areas is recommended. Upgrading playgrounds within parks that are in proximity of intensifying areas should also be considered at the time of renewal with consideration given to structures that are larger, more engaging, and unique, with robust materials, recognizing that a higher level of investment may be required. A geographic gap also exists in the one of the City's remaining undeveloped greenfield areas that is designated for residential in the northeast corner of the urban area. This location is expected to be reconciled through the development of playground(s) at future parks to serve this area. Parkland may not currently exist in other established residential areas but may be locations to consider as infill opportunities emerge.

Natural Playgrounds

Playground design has continued to evolve as more municipalities are developing natural playgrounds that are a departure from metal and plastic materials that are used in many playgrounds seen today. Natural playgrounds strive to introduce natural materials (e.g., logs, boulders, etc.) to the play experience, which can also offer enhanced sensory plan through materials that have movement or textures. Natural materials can be arranged in various ways to create obstacles, climbing structures, and balance beams. This type of natural equipment is designed to be more challenging than traditional playground equipment, and it encourages children to use their imaginations to explore and play. [27] With the rise in physical inactivity and screentime, there are benefits with connecting with nature in mental health, social development, and physical activity. The use of natural materials is also supportive of corporate initiatives in many municipalities that aim to be more environmentally friendly.



Source: Earthscape Collections 2024

[27] Bienenstock Playgrounds. Natural Playground Equipment and Their Benefits. Retrieved from https://www.bienenstockplaygrounds.com

Safety is often a key concern with respect to natural playgrounds, which comes down to thoughtful design use of materials, and proper use and maintenance. Like traditional playgrounds, natural playgrounds can be designed to meet CSA standards and incorporate accessible features. Research has also found that an added benefit of natural playgrounds is that they can help children evaluate risks more effectively compared to traditional playground structures.

Best practices have found that natural playgrounds are best suited in prominent locations in high traffic areas such as at destination parks that draw local and regional users. There are many examples of natural playground installations at major parks across Ontario, including at Paul Coffee Park in Mississauga, David Hamilton Park in Richmond Hill, Exhibition Park in Guelph, and more. Costs can vary considerably depending on the size and scale of the natural playground and the site work required (e.g., 15% increase in capital costs and 25% increase in maintenance costs). The life expectancy can also vary depending on the intensity of use.

Considering the local context is also a key factor to evaluate as natural playgrounds could also be considered in neighbourhood parks and parkettes that already have natural features that could be easily incorporated, or if there is local interest from residents for this type of play feature. For example, residents in Windsor advocated for a natural playground in a local neighbourhood park to bring awareness to the threatened Monarch butterfly. Windsor worked with the community to create a unique playing experience that incorporates a butterfly theme. London's Neighbourhood Decision Making program, which allows residents to vote on various community enhancement projects, also resulted in the development of new natural playgrounds. In Burlington's context, the provision of natural playground should be located in areas where children may have limited access to traditional parks and greenspaces such as at urban parks. The use of natural materials would assist with connecting children with the outdoors, helping to address nature deficit disorder.

Figure 22: Comparison of Traditional Playgrounds and Natural Playgrounds





Source: Earthscape Collections 2024

Playground Design

The level of playground design should fit within the type of park that it is located. For example, Neighbourhood Parks may feature a creative playground with junior and senior components and basic accessibility features such as firm and stable surfaces (e.g., engineered wood fibre) and ramps. Community or Destination Park playgrounds may be larger in scale and feature a range of play features, including unique installations and thematic designs, as well as enhanced accessibility features such as rubberized surface, sensory play (e.g., interactive games, sounds, braille, musical instruments), adaptive swings, etc. following playground design considerations are recommended for each park type:

Park Type	Playground Description
Destination or Community Parks	One large playground (servicing the entire park) • Large pre-fabricated equipment • 50% elevated play components accessible via both ramp and transfer stations • 80% ground level components accessible to promote play equity • Rubber safety surface only **OR** Two medium playgrounds (in different areas of the park) • Medium pre-fabricated equipment • One location with rubber safety surface and one location with engineered wood fibre
Neighbourhood Park	Offer medium pre-fabricated equipment and engineered wood fibre safety surface.
Urban Park	Natural playground and/or one large feature such as a giant climber. Alternatively, incorporate unique play features into courtyards or plaza spaces – such as in-ground trampoline pods, climbable sculpture features, varying ground planes with play features, etc.
Linear Park / Greenway	Small standalone play feature (e.g., adult teeter-totter) in linear parks and no playgrounds in greenways.
Ecological Park	Small standalone play feature, if applicable.

A higher level of playground design could also be constructed in strategic locations to create a signature playground that focuses on inclusivity, accessibility, creative play and play equity and includes supporting amenities such as seating and shade. A signature playground exists at Spencer Smith Park, which serves the southern area of the City, as well as regional visitors to the waterfront. A location serving residents in the north end of Burlington's urban area is recommended, with Ireland Park being the ideal location given the availability of supporting amenities such as washrooms, parking, shade, and transit, and its ability to accommodate summer programming; it is also due for replacement and could be a strategy to implement in the short-term.

Minimizing Playground Service Duplication

The recommended service target identified that there are several areas that are served with more than one playground location. Investigating opportunities to reduce service duplication is recommended to ensure that the City's resources are being deployed effectively and efficiently, particularly when it comes

to constructing, inspecting, maintaining, and replacing playground structures. In areas that are served with more than one playground location, the City should identify and evaluate potential candidates for removal and consider factors including, but not limited to, playground condition, usage level, socio-economic factors (e.g., income), safety and site limitations, repurposing opportunities, etc.

The property ownership of the playground should also be an important criterion that should be evaluated. While Burlington has historically invested in the renewal of playgrounds owned by the Halton District School Board, many of these school playgrounds are serving the same catchment area as City playgrounds, particularly in locations where a public park is located adjacent to a school site. In the past, the City has removed playground structures from City-owned parks that were located adjacent to a school playground. In consultation with the Halton District School Board, continuing this practice is recommended at strategic locations with the goal of reducing service duplication and ultimately cost. Based on a cursory review of school playgrounds, the following locations were identified as a service duplication given the presence of a City-owned playground at an adjacent or nearby park, which should be a candidate for removal once they have reached the end of their lifespan:

- Brant Hills Public School
- Central Public School
- Florence Meares Public School
- Glenview Public School
- Kilbride Public School
- King's Road Public School
- Lakeshore Public School
- Lester B. Pearson High School
- Maplehurst Public School
- Paul A. Fisher Public School
- Pauline Johnson Public School
- Pineland Public School
- Rolling Meadows Public School
- Tom Thomson Public School

Playgrounds for Youth and Teenagers

It is common in communities to hear that there is a lack of playgrounds geared towards youth and teenagers, which was heard through the consultation process for this Plan. Play structures tend to be designed for children between the ages of 18 months and 12 years old and as a result, youth may not feel welcome at existing playgrounds, or they may not find them challenging enough.

Youth seek more challenging and risky play opportunities and there are certain play components that could be integrated within parks to respond to this age group. Examples include climbing boulders (such as at Central Park), climbing rope structures, spinners, balance beams, and musical instruments, as well as unique play features such as ziplines (such as at Spencer Smith Park) and ninja warrior obstacle courses. These youth and teenager-oriented play features could be incorporated as part of playground designs or as standalone features that replace a typical playground installation to provide a unique, fun, and engaging play experience. Brant Hills Park is one example of a playground that is suitable for small children to youth and pre-teens. Potential locations where playground equipment for youth and teenagers should be considered include parks that are located adjacent to elementary or secondary schools, such as Ireland Park, Norton Park, Nelson Park, Champlain Park and Wellington Park, and others identified by staff.

This Plan recognizes that Burlington also provides a wealth of other outdoor recreation facilities that are geared towards youth (and teenagers) such as outdoor fitness equipment, basketball/ball hockey courts, skate parks/skate zones, and public art (e.g., interactive art, designated graffiti walls, etc.), which complement a range of indoor recreation and cultural opportunities. Strategies to continue investing in these assets are recommended through this Plan to ensure that there is a range of choices available to support the healthy development of local youth and teenagers.

Indoor Playgrounds

Burlington is one of the few municipalities that provides an indoor playground at the Tansley Community Centre. Similar examples exist at community centres in Markham, Niagara Falls, and Windsor and the size and scale of the playground varies at each location, as well as the level of use; admission rates may also apply. Burlington's indoor playground is available free of charge and is well used by the community, which is primarily geared towards young children. The City recently renewed its indoor play space in 2019 that included updating equipment and flooring.

Over the past number of years, there has been an increase from the private sector in the adaptive reuse of large commercial spaces to create indoor playgrounds, including a number that are found in Burlington; some YMCA locations also offer this amenity. The indoor playground market is well served in the City, although there could be future opportunities where the provision of additional indoor playgrounds could be provided at a community centre in an effort to expand the availability of no-cost opportunities to play, which would be beneficial for families during the winter or when the weather conditions are not favourable for being outdoors, particularly as Burlington continues to experience hotter summer temperatures. Indoor playground opportunities should be considered as part of new facility development or if there are adaptive reuse opportunities, particularly in spaces where an indoor playground would complement other facility uses or activities geared towards children and families.

Recommendations: Playgrounds

31. The following strategy is recommended for playgrounds.

a. Provide playgrounds within 500 metres of new residential neighbourhoods without crossing major barriers, particularly in the northeast end of Burlington's urban area, which has been identified as a gap, as well as in MTSAs.

b. Provide one signature playground at Ireland Park, with an intentional focus on inclusivity, accessibility and creative opportunities that promotes play equity. Include seating and shelter for caregivers. Following construction, monitor playground use for consideration of future signature playgrounds.

c. Ensure high play value (e.g., accessibility and experience) by incorporating a range of creative and unique components through the adoption of the following playground guidelines for design for each park type. All playgrounds or features should strive to meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations.

    i. Destination (City Parks) or Community Parks

        1. One large playground (servicing the entire park)

            a. Large pre-fabricated equipment

            b. 50% elevated play components accessible via both ramp and transfer stations

            c. 80% ground level components accessible to promote play equity

            d. Rubber safety surface only

        OR

Recommendations: Playgrounds

2. Two medium playgrounds (in different areas of the park)
    a. Medium pre-fabricated equipment
    b. One location with rubber safety surface and one location with engineered wood fibre

ii. Neighbourhood Park should offer medium pre-fabricated equipment and engineered wood fibre safety surface.

iii. Urban Park – Natural playground and/or one large feature such as a giant climber. Alternatively, incorporate unique play features into courtyards or plaza spaces – such as in-ground trampoline pods, climbable sculpture features, varying ground planes with play features, etc.

iv. Linear Park/Greenway – Small standalone play feature (e.g., adult teeter-totter) in linear parks and no playgrounds in greenways.

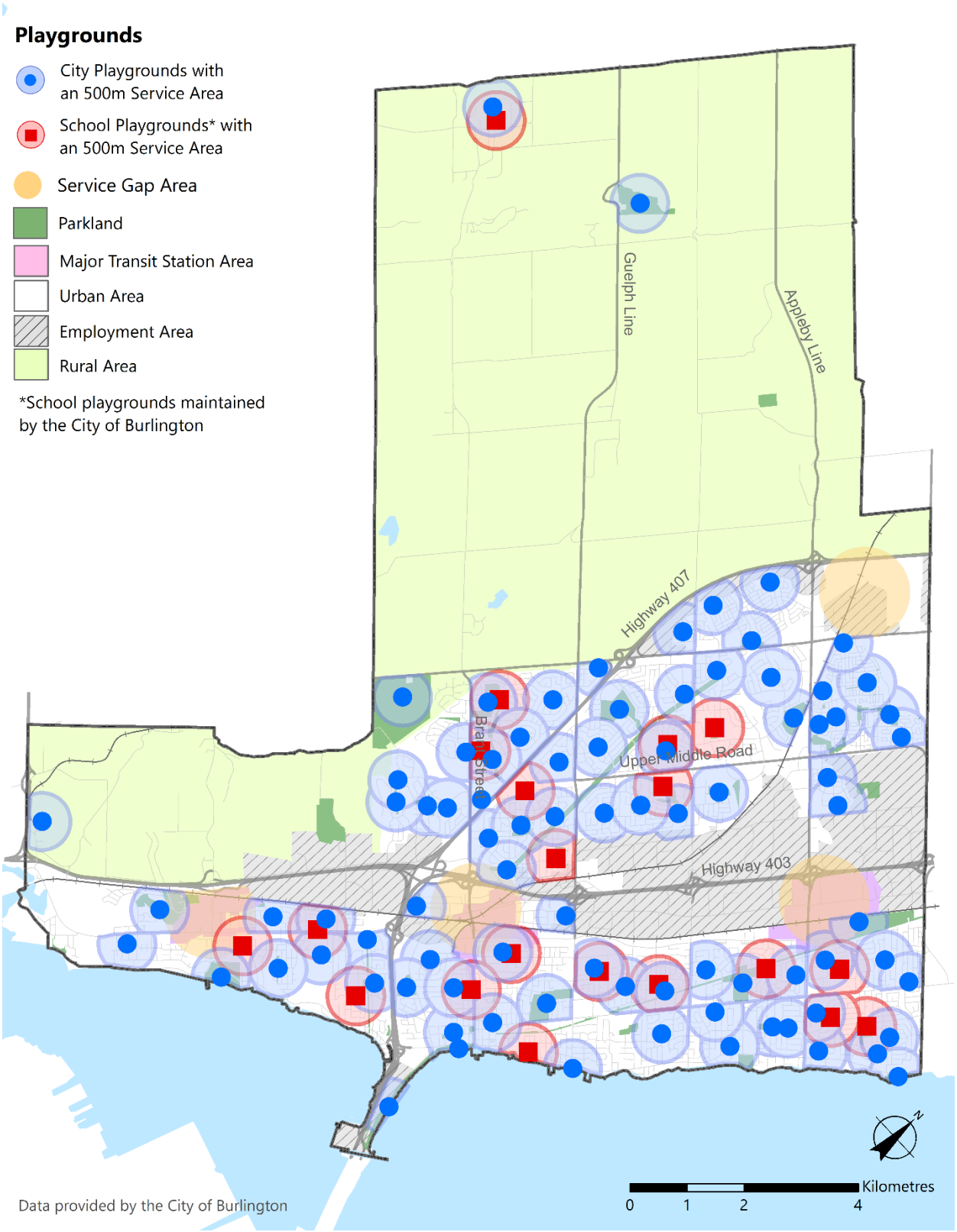
v. Ecological park – Small standalone play feature, if applicable.

d. Work with the Halton District School Board to build a transition plan and a formal agreement related to the future maintenance and renewal of school playgrounds with the intent to minimize service duplication, with consideration given to the candidate playground sites for removal identified in this Live and Play Plan.

e. Incorporate playground equipment for youth and teenagers at parks adjacent to public and secondary schools to provide a fun and engaging experience, with consideration given to components such as climbing boulders and rope structures, spinners, balance beams, musical instruments, ziplines and ninja warrior obstacle courses.

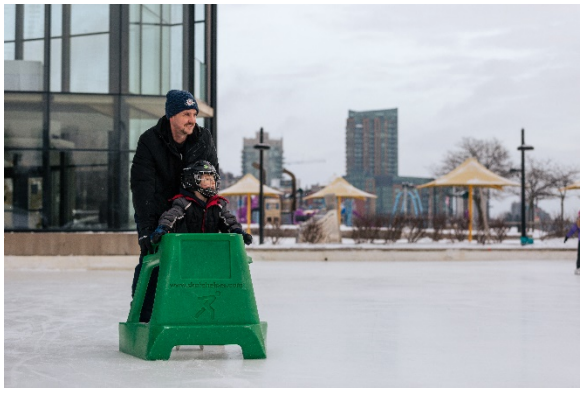
f. Indoor playgrounds should be considered as part of new facility development or reuse of City spaces and facilities, particularly in locations that would be complementary to other facility uses and activities geared towards children and families.

Figure 23: Geographic Distribution of Playgrounds



Note: Map does not reflect Minister modifications to ROPA 49 that included new urban lands and converted lands from the Region's Employment Area in Burlington and should be updated as part of a five-year review to this Plan.

5.15 Outdoor Ice Rinks and Trails





Current Supply

The Burlington Rotary Centennial Pond in Spencer Smith Park is the City's refrigerated outdoor ice rink during the winter skating season, which is available for free to all users (weather permitting). The City works with volunteers to provide natural skating rinks at neighbourhood parks, although the availability of these rinks varies year-to-year and is subject to the number of volunteers and weather conditions. Through these initiatives, the City is responsible for installing boards, rink liner and hose, while volunteers are responsible for daily maintenance. The number of neighbourhood skating rinks vary each year depending on the number of volunteer groups and weather conditions.

Market Conditions

Outdoor skating has been a Canadian tradition for many generations and its popularity was further heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic as it was one of the few outdoor recreation activities that could take place during the wintertime in communities across Ontario. The ability to maintain outdoor rinks has become increasingly difficult due to climate change. Leading municipalities have considered and installed refrigerated rinks and/or covered roof systems that can add cost but reduce day to day operations. Capital and operating costs for both natural and refrigerated rinks can vary widely depending on the size and scale of the design, as well as the winter conditions.

The community survey found that in the past five years, 11% of responding households have used outdoor artificial ice rinks in Burlington. Nearly two-thirds (59%) of respondents supported additional investment in outdoor skating rinks, which ranked 9th out of 35 facility types. Requests for outdoor ice rinks were heard from the public, particularly for those that could be used to play outdoor hockey/shinny.

Supporting Outdoor Skating and Placemaking

Burlington is currently in the process of planning for the renewal of the outdoor skating rink at Spencer Smith Park to undertake lifecycle replacement of mechanical equipment, as well as locate supporting infrastructure. This initiative will ensure that there continues to be outdoor skating opportunities along the waterfront for residents and visitors.

To respond to local requests for this popular winter activity, additional outdoor skating opportunities should be pursued. City-operated outdoor skating facilities should be refrigerated to recognize the challenges associated with maintaining natural skating surfaces. There are few municipalities that provide outdoor skating venues based on a service target as they could be provided where opportunities exist within a park or to support civic placemaking initiatives. The City of Hamilton provides artificial outdoor skating rinks at a rate of one per 146,000 residents, although this could be higher in Burlington to respond to the popularity of this activity, such as one per 100,000 residents. This would suggest that there is a need for three refrigerated outdoor skating surfaces in Burlington by 2051, two more than what is currently provided.

Table 16: Recommended Refrigerated Ice Rinks, 2024 to 2051

Current Refrigerated Outdoor Ice Rink Supply	Provision Target	Recommended New Facilities (2024 – 2051)	Short Term (2024 – 2034)	Medium Term (2035 – 2041)	Long-Term (2042 – 2051)
1	1:100,000 residents	2	1	0	1

Given that the City's south end is currently well served with outdoor skating at Spencer Smith Park, a new location, which should be a rink or trail, should be provided at a major park in the north end of Burlington's urban area to bolster geographic distribution. Preference should be given to locations where an outdoor skating rink or trail can be accommodated on flat land at a Community or Destination Park that has access to supporting amenities such as washrooms, parking, public transit, etc. A preliminary review of potential sites revealed that there could be opportunity for an outdoor skating rink or trail at Millcroft Park, Norton Park, and Ireland Park, although other suitable sites should be evaluated. The City's refrigerated outdoor skating opportunities should continue to be complemented by natural rinks that are operated by volunteers to support neighbourhood-level skating opportunities.

Over the long-term, other major Community or Destination Park locations could be considered such as at Central Park (see Recommendation #2). As the City's MTSAs become more developed, there may also be opportunities to provide additional refrigerated outdoor skating rinks to serve residents living in each of these areas, which could potentially be accommodated in prominent public spaces such as civic plazas or other gathering spaces.

Recommendations: Outdoor Ice Rinks and Trails

32. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor ice rinks and trails.

a. Provide one refrigerated outdoor skating rink or trail in the north end of Burlington's urban area at a Destination or Community Park that has access to supporting amenities such as washrooms, parking, public transit, etc.

b. Provide refrigerated outdoor skating venues within each MTSA.

c. Continue to support community-driven natural outdoor skating rinks that are maintained and operated by volunteer residents.

5.16 Outdoor Special Event Spaces

The City hosts a variety of festivals and special events that bring residents together to celebrate civic pride, cultures, talents, important events, and holidays throughout the year. The City directly delivers festivals including Canada Day (which features local artists, celebrities and musicians including the Teen Tour Band), Movies Under the Stars and the Santa Claus Parade. These events complement numerous community-led initiatives. In 2023, the City supported 79 community events, that were collectively attended by more than 850,000 residents and visitors, including Sound of Music Festival, Remembrance Day, National Indigenous Peoples Day, and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The City also encourages small-scale, community-driven events (less than 250 people) to help neighbours create and strengthen connections through Burlington's Love My Neighbourhood Program. Not only do these events bring people together, but they can also create economic development opportunities.

The City is in the process of developing a Festival and Events Policy to create a framework for the types of events that take place, including their intended purpose. While Spencer Smith Park is the City's primary location for hosting major events, other parks are also used as a venue, including Civic Square, Central Park, Norton Park, LaSalle Park, and Burloak Waterfront Park. Ensuring that the necessary infrastructure exists at these locations, or at other Destination, Community, and Urban Parks, will be important to ensure the success of festivals and events. These locations provide a good distribution of large, special event space across the City and complement Burlington's small-scale events that are held at neighbourhood parks, including those provided through the Love My Neighbourhood.





Planning and Designing Spaces for Outdoor Special Events and Festivals

Having places for special events and festivals is important to the community and with a greater desire to be outdoors, suitable event space is a priority. The community survey found that 56% of respondents supported investment in outdoor event space, which ranked 10th out of 35 facility types. With future population growth being directed to Burlington's MTSAs, there will be a need to create flexible, multi-purpose outdoor spaces that are suitable for public gatherings and events such as festivals and markets. Civic Square in the Burlington GO MTSA currently serves this purpose, which is currently undergoing renewal to refresh this space to create a vibrant, and exciting outdoor space for people to gather and connect with others.

Designing parks with flexibility in mind is critical to ensure that they can be used by residents daily, as well as for the City's important special events and festivals. From an asset perspective, parks that are used for special events and festivals require parking (on site or in proximity) and access to transit or active transportation infrastructure, appropriate servicing, including water and electrical, washrooms (permanent or temporary), and other amenities to create strong user experiences and enhanced accessibility such as shade shelters and seating. Purpose-built structures such as amphitheatres also need to be contemplated; two currently exist in Burlington, including at Central Park and Norton Park.

Through the recommended Central Park visioning exercise, opportunities to enhance this site to increase its existing functionality for accommodating special events and festivals is encouraged, considering the above noted suggestions. This will be particularly important given that Spencer Smith Park is under immense pressure as it is a popular destination for casual gatherings and special events, particularly during the weekends in the summer. Spencer Smith Park, and Burlington's waterfront, is one of the City's greatest assets that is enjoyed by residents and regional visitors, but its success is also one of its challenges as the popularity has raised concerns about overcrowding, parking, and general overuse of the park that can limit one's enjoyment of the waterfront.

Directing special events and festivals away from Spencer Smith Park to the City's other locations will not only help alleviate pressure from this popular area, it provides an opportunity to showcase, use and enjoy other parks and spaces that the City provides In addition to the City's existing supply of special event

space, another location to consider for special events includes Hidden Valley Park, which already offers event-type amenities, including a gazebo, picnic areas, open space, washrooms and parking, and it is in proximity to the Aldershot GO MTSA. The use of these parks and spaces for special events should be explored further as part of the City's upcoming Arts and Culture Strategy (see Recommendation #17.c).

Recommendations: Outdoor Special Event Spaces

33. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor special event spaces.

a. To alleviate pressure from Spencer Smith Park, direct special events and festivals to Destination, Community or Urban Parks, including Central Park, Civic Square, Burloak Waterfront Park, LaSalle Park, Norton Park, and Hidden Valley Park. Ensuring that the appropriate infrastructure to support special events and festivals at these locations will be required.

b. Incorporate outdoor space that is suitable for outdoor special events and festivals as part of a Central Park visioning exercise that includes an amphitheatre and necessary servicing.

c. Designate a minimum of one urban park in the Appleby GO MTSA and Aldershot GO MTSA that would be suitable for hosting outdoor special events and gatherings.

5.17 Casual Open Greenspaces



While not a direct focus of this Plan, the importance of open greenspaces cannot be understated. They are important public amenities that support special events and festivals, casual gatherings, socialization, outdoor enjoyment, community programming, and more. Access to passive open space is also associated with positive cognitive, mental, and physical health of individuals. This was further heightened during the COVID-19 pandemic as many municipalities experienced greater use of parks, open spaces, and trails as people sought respite through the outdoors.

Municipalities, including Burlington, play a vital role in providing access to the outdoors. In fact, one of the five key goals of the Framework for Recreation in Canada is "connecting people with nature". Burlington provides a range of open greenspaces within its parks system, including along the waterfront, and other notable parks such as, but not limited to, City View Park, Hidden Valley Park, and LaSalle Park, and others that can be flexibly used by residents.

Balancing Active and Casual Spaces in Burlington's Parks System

Time and again, the desire for enhanced access to open spaces is one of the most common public requests, which was also heard in Burlington. The community survey for this Plan found that nearly three-quarters (73%) of respondents supported additional investment in open greenspaces, which ranked 5th out of 35 facility types. There is also a public desire for more community greening, including planting of native species, initiatives that minimize the effects of climate change and environmental sustainability (e.g., green technologies such as solar panels, water conservation, community gardens, education, etc.), and tree plantings to increase the City's canopy cover.

While this Plan identifies a broad range of active recreation facilities that are required to serve the needs of current and future residents, there is also a need to recognize the fact that the community places a high priority on providing, protecting, preserving, and maintaining access to casual open greenspaces for passive enjoyment. The City's PPMP also highlights the need to enhance connections between residents and the parks and open space system, including working with partners such as Conservation Halton and the Bruce Trail Conservancy.

Greenspaces Serving the Rural Area



It is important to recognize the parks, recreation, and culture needs of residents residing in the rural area. Recognizing the nature of the rural landscape, it is expected that the rural community drives to the majority of their services, including meet their parks, recreation, and culture needs offered by the City or in neighbouring municipalities. The supply of rural parks is limited and thus it will be important to ensure that they are used efficiently and provide a range of amenities to meet community needs. Parks such as Kilbride Park and City View Park offer a variety of active uses and other locations connect residents and regional visitors to nature including Lowville Park and Bayview Park; City View Park also provides connections to trails and natural heritage areas.

Opportunities exist to strengthen access to rural parks at Zimmerman Park, which is an underdeveloped greenspace that has the potential to serve the rural area. This Plan recommends several low impact park uses that could be incorporated at this site, including outdoor fitness equipment and disc golf, which should also include trails, a playground, and space for picnics and gathering. The development of this park could also assist with alleviating pressure currently being faced at other rural parks in Burlington such as at Lowville Park.

Recommendations: Casual Open Greenspaces

34. The following strategy is recommended for casual open greenspaces.

a. Park planning, design and development, as well as renewal of existing parks, should ensure that there is a balance between the provision of active recreation facilities and passive open spaces to ensure that residents have access to both outdoor facilities to engage in physical activity and greenspaces for social gatherings, special events and casual, unprogrammed uses.

b. Create a plan to develop Zimmerman Park that may include the amenities identified in this Plan, including trails, playground, outdoor fitness equipment, open space for picnics and gatherings, and potentially a disc golf course.

5.18 Permitted Park Facilities and Amenities

The PPMP provides a new park classification system to provide direction on the role and function of different park assets, which includes six park types that are summarized below. The PPMP provides details about the function, key features, and sizes for each park type.

- **Destination Parks** are designed to serve the leisure needs of all Burlington residents and also draw users from outside the City. These parks usually offer unique features and receive a higher level of maintenance.
- **Community Parks** are large parks designed and located to serve the outdoor recreational needs of several neighbourhoods within a larger residential district.
- **Neighbourhood Parks** provide local level park access to residents.
- **Urban Parks** are designed and located to serve the recreational and open space needs of urban intensification areas of higher density neighbourhoods, such as MTSAs.
- **Linear Parks and Greenways** are manicured parks that function as active transportation corridors and connections between open spaces, community facilities, and/or neighbourhoods with potential bump-out recreation/amenity opportunities. Greenways provide similar active transportation corridors but are more natural looking.
- **Ecological Parks** are areas of parkland that are predominantly in a natural state and/or provide ecosystem services, as well as unprogrammed, passive recreation opportunities.

Recommended Park Facilities and Amenities by Park Type

The PPMP provides a high-level summary of the program and function of each park, as well as key features that could be included within them. This Plan proposes a matrix of facility uses that are appropriate in each of Burlington's new park types to provide the City with direction on planning and developing its parks and open spaces. Guidance on the provision of amenities that support park use is also provided, which are also very important features. The community survey for this Plan found that investment in park amenities were highly supported by the public, including park washrooms (80% support), pathways and trails (80%), lighting (76%), drinking fountains/bottle filling stations (74%), shade shelters (70%), and seating (67%).

The matrix proposed on the following page can also be used as a tool to help the public understand what types of facilities and amenities may be expected in different types of parks and help the City respond to public requests in a consistent and transparent manner. The following matrix builds upon the information contained in the PPMP and has been informed by what currently exists in Burlington's parks and open space system, as well as best practices in other GTHA municipalities. This matrix should be used as a guide to inform future park planning and development (or redevelopment) as it is recognized that some flexibility may need to be considered to account for site constraints (e.g., size, location, terrain, etc.) or other unique factors.

Table 17: Recommended Park Facilities and Amenities by Park Type ● = Mandatory ○ = Optional

Park Facilities and Amenities		Destination	Community	Neighbourhood	Urban	Linear Park
Rectangular Field	Lit Artificial Turf	○	○			
	Unlit Class A	○	○			
	Unlit Class B/Class C		○	○		
Ball Diamond	Lit/Unlit Hardball/Class A	○	○			
	Unlit Class B/Class C		○	○		
Cricket Grounds	Hardball	○	○			
	Tape Ball		○	○		
Sport Courts (Tennis, Pickleball, Basketball, etc.)		○	○	○		
Outdoor Pools		○	○			
Splash Pads		○	○	○		
Spray Features				○	○	
Skate Parks	Major Skate Park	○	○			
	Skate Zone			○	○	
Pump Tracks		○	○			
Leash Free Dog Parks		○	○	○	○	○
Community Gardens		○	○	○	○	○
Disc Golf Courses		○	○			
Outdoor Fitness Equipment		○	○	○	○	
Playgrounds		○	○	○	○	
Outdoor Ice Rinks	Refrigerated	○	○		○	
	Natural			○	○	
Special Event Space (including infrastructure)		○	○	○	○	
Parking Lot		●	●			
Park Seating		●	●	●	●	●
Park Shade Structure		○	○	○	○	
Park Washrooms	Permanent*	●	●			
	Temporary**			○		
Public Art (e.g., Indigenous art)		○	○	○	○	
Bicycle Parking		●	●	●	●	●
Wi-Fi Connectivity		●				
Walking Pathway / Trail Connection		●	●	●	●	●
Drinking Fountains / Bottle Filling Station		●	●		○	
Unprogrammed Open Space		●	●	●	●	●
Landscape Gateway Feature		●	●	○	●	
Naturalized Greenspace		○	○	○	○	○
Climate Change / Environmental Sustainability Features		●	●	●	●	●

*Standalone permanent washroom or within an on-site community facility.

**A temporary washroom may be provided if there is a permitted sports field or diamond.

Recommendations: Permitted Park Facilities and Amenities

35. The following strategy is recommended for permitted park facilities and amenities.

a. Use the recommended park facilities and amenities matrix contained in the Live and Play Plan to guide the planning and design of new parks and the revitalization of existing parks according to Burlington's new parks classification system.

5.19 Other Parks, Recreation and Culture Facilities

Burlington may receive requests for parks, recreation, and culture facilities that are not currently provided through its core service mandate. The City must be prepared to respond appropriately to requests subject to prevailing market conditions with consideration given to Burlington's evolving community profile, emerging sports and activities, future participation trends and preferences, funding and partnership opportunities, and other demands that may arise for existing facilities.

When requests are brought forward for investment in new, non-traditional, emerging and other non-core municipal facilities, the City should evaluate these needs on a case-by-case basis, which should involve an examination into (but not limited to):

- Local, regional and provincial trends pertaining to usage and popularity of the activity/facility;
- Examples of delivery models in other municipalities;
- Local demand for the activity/facility;
- The ability to accommodate the new service within an existing City facility;
- The feasibility of the City to provide the service and/or facility as a core service, and be able to do so in a cost-effective manner;
- The willingness and ability of the requesting organization to provide the service and/or operate space if provided with appropriate municipal supports, with consideration given to sound business planning;
- Available funding sources, including financial contributions from the potential partner; and
- The availability of City resources (e.g., staffing) to deliver or to assist with the delivery of the new service or facility without impacting existing obligations, or understanding the scope and scale of new resources that would be required.

As the City monitors and responds to requests for new parks, recreation, and culture facilities to address emerging needs and gaps, there may be merit in considering future provision as part of an update to this Plan. This may also include existing facilities that were outside the scope of this iteration of the Plan. For example, the City recently completed a review of the Tyandaga Golf Course, which determined that it should remain as an 18-hole golf course, although there may be future opportunities to incorporate new or expanded outdoor recreation opportunities on a year-round basis (including winter). Consideration should also be given to year-round use of the clubhouse for year-round programming and rentals. The merits of future uses would need to be studied through future processes.

Recommendations: Other Parks, Recreation and Culture Facilities

36. The following strategy is recommended for other parks, recreation, and culture facilities.

a. Public requests for new parks, recreation, and culture facilities should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to proponent led business planning, trends, examples in other municipalities, local demand, the feasibility of using existing public space, the willingness of an organization to partner in providing the facility or service, availability to allocate City resources without negatively impacting existing service levels, and other relevant factors as may be determined to be appropriate.

b. Through a five-year update to the Live and Play Plan, reconfirm the use of Tyandaga Golf Course as an 18-hole course and consider opportunities to increase year-round (including winter) outdoor recreation opportunities, as well as use of the clubhouse for indoor rentals and programming, to respond to community needs.

6. Implementation

6.1 Monitoring, Reviewing and Updating the Plan

This Plan is based on the most recent data and trends that exist today, as well as input from residents, stakeholders, and City representatives. These influencing factors may change over the life of this Plan and thus it will be important for the City to regularly review, assess, and periodically revise the recommendations of the Plan, or the timing of implementation, to ensure that they are reflective of local conditions and responsive to evolving needs in Burlington. This will require monitoring population growth, particularly as Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) are developed and park spaces and facility opportunities are identified. A focus will also need to be given to identifying parks, recreation, and cultural facility needs to serve new urban lands and converted lands as identified by Modifications to ROPA 49. Work is currently underway to establish a planning vision for these areas, which will help inform future needs. Tracking the use of City parks and facilities, and regular dialogue with the community is also encouraged; requiring sports groups that use City facilities to submit registration data will also assist with determining needs. Understanding these metrics will assist the City with undertaking an update to the Plan every five years (next update in 2029).

Reviewing the Plan requires a commitment from all staff involved in the financing, planning, designing, developing, and operations of parks, recreation, and culture assets, as well as Council, stakeholders, and the public. The following steps are recommended to conduct a regular review of the Plan, which could be undertaken during the annual budget process:

- Review of the past year, including recommendations implemented, capital projects underway/ongoing, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, etc.;
- Identification of issues impacting the upcoming year such as anticipated financial and operational constraints, emerging opportunities, updated population data and forecasts, etc.; and
- Prepare a staff report to identify recommendations planned to be implemented in the coming year with consideration given to the timing recommended in this Plan, which may be adjusted based on funding capacity or external funding opportunities, community input, partnership potential, etc.

Recommendations: Monitoring, Reviewing and Updating the Plan

37. Regularly monitor implementation of the Live and Play Plan, including tracking population growth and demographic changes, development of Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) and new urban areas and converted lands as a result of ROPA 49 (modified by the Minister), monitoring facility and park use, and regular dialogue with the community. Prepare annual reports to recognize achievements and work plans to identify recommendations to implement over the coming year.

38. Undertake an update to the Live and Play Plan every five years (next update in 2029). Timing may be adjusted depending on the pace of implementation or changes to the community, particularly as new parks and facility opportunities are identified within Mixed Use Intensification Areas (MTSAs) or new urban areas and converted lands as a result of ROPA 49 (modified by the Minister).

6.2 Financial Considerations

This Plan calls for continued financial investment in Burlington's parks, recreation, and culture infrastructure and it outlines a series of priorities for new infrastructure to meet growth related needs, as well as to upgrade, modernize or renew aging assets to better respond to community expectations. Burlington has limited resources, and it cannot afford to do everything that the community desires, underscoring the importance of undertaking this Plan. Although the City may experience various challenges in meeting the required financial and human resources to achieve the recommendations identified in this Plan, it is expected that the City will make every effort to implement these strategies through appropriate means. Full implementation of this Plan will require the development of a funding strategy that includes the consideration of:

- Developing charges;
- Parkland cash-in-lieu reserves;
- Community benefit charge reserves;
- Fundraising, donations and sponsorships;
- Increasing user fees and surcharges towards capital reserves;
- Leasing space from other property and/or facility owners;
- Dedicated recreation facility development fund;
- Endowment fund;
- Debenture financing; and
- Grants and other funding programs.

Recommendations: Financial Considerations

39. Use the Live and Play Plan as a resource to inform the City's annual budgets, Development Charges Background Studies, and related studies. Where appropriate, alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches should be considered, including (but not limited to), fundraising, grants, private-public partnerships, sponsorships, surcharges and user fees, capital reserve contributions, endowment fund, leasing space from others, and other strategies to provide the best value to residents.

40. Conduct feasibility studies and business plans (with public input) prior to undertaking major capital projects to ensure that projects are aligned with community needs and financial capabilities, and considers partnership opportunities (e.g., joint venture agreements).

6.3 Partnership Development

Maximizing meaningful partnership opportunities is a key goal of Burlington's Framework for Community Recreation to fully engage its residents in providing parks, recreation, and culture opportunities. While the City is responsible for providing and operating facilities, as well as the programs and services within them, it also works collaboratively with partners such as school boards and joint ventures with community organizations through formalized agreements where a third-party is responsible for operating a City-owned facility. Such joint ventures partners include, but not be limited to:

- Aldershot Tennis Club
- Appleby Tennis Club
- Bubble Tennis Club
- Burlington Centaurs Rugby Club
- Burlington Curling Club
- Burlington Lawn Bowling
- Burlington Little Theatre
- Burlington Minor Football Association
- Burlington Tennis Club
- Burlington Youth Soccer Club
- Drury Lane Theatrical Productions
- Nelson Youth Centres
- North Burlington Tennis Club
- Tyandaga Tennis Club

There are many benefits to these partnerships including, but not limited to the following:[28]

- Sharing resources and responsibilities;
- Providing new or maintaining existing public infrastructure;
- Enhancing customer service;
- Acquiring access to specialized expertise and knowledge;
- Reducing municipal resources including capital and operational costs;
- Providing groups with new sources of capital; and
- Optimizing and providing access to public facilities and spaces.

Burlington enjoys many of these benefits, but it is important to recognize the risks associated with partnerships. For example, through joint venture agreements, the City has reduced control over program quality, space allocation, setting of fees, or service interruptions, and although these services maybe provided by a third-party, City may be on the receiving end of concerns or complaints. There may also be the possibility of partners who may not be able to continue operating a facility or providing their program/service, requiring the City to have to step in to respond quickly to assume responsibilities, which would have implications on staffing and operational costs. Another risk is that if a facility, program or service declines in utilization or it is no longer feasible to provide, it may result in a loss in service to the community or neighbourhood.

Evaluating the benefits and risks of the City's partnerships will be important to ensure that existing and future facilities, programs, and services continue to be provided in a manner where resources are shared, rather than relying on the City to meet all of the community's needs. The City recognizes the importance of continuing to strengthen its relationships, as identified in the Framework for Community Recreation and through initiatives such as the Accountability Framework for Agencies, Boards and Commissions and Joint Venture Organizations. Pursuing new partnership opportunities is also encouraged, such as working with other municipalities for joint venture investment and joint use agreements to meet community demand. The following criteria should be considered when evaluating new, or renewing existing, partnership opportunities, which may also be supported be a feasibility study:

[28] Town of Richmond Hill. 2016. A Guide to Partnerships

- The purpose of the proposed partnership and how it aligns with City and Department goals, mandate and philosophies;
- The role of the City in providing the proposed facility;
- Whether there is a quantifiable or justified need for the facility in the community;
- If there is a cost-benefit to establishing a partnership to provide the facility;
- How the facility can be appropriately accommodated within the City's long-term capital and/or operating resources;
- If the partner is sufficiently capable/qualified to operate the facility and deliver the program/service over the long-term and in compliance with legislative policies and municipal standards;
- That the level of risk is acceptable to both parties and there is a plan in place to manage that risk;
- Whether the potential partner can provide the program or service on a sole basis; and
- There is a full agreement of the terms, conditions, standards, and responsibilities for all parties involved.

Recommendations: Partnership Development

41. Where appropriate, implementation of the Live and Play Plan should consider partnership opportunities with community organizations, private sector, school boards, and others, taking into consideration benefits and risks of the partnership, which may also be supported by feasibility studies.

6.4 Implementation Strategy

This section contains a summary of the recommendations contained within this Plan. By approving the Plan, the City is not bound to implementing every recommendation and providing the facilities in the order, amount, or timing indicated; rather this Plan provides Burlington guidance on community priorities and sets a general course for action to meet the needs of residents as they are presently defined.

The timing of the recommendations proposed in this Plan recognizes the need for phased implementation, partnerships, and/or outside funding sources as some recommendations are based upon what is needed and not necessarily what may be financially achievable at the present time. The timing of initiatives is organized into the following categories:

- Short-term (2024 to 2034)
- Medium-Term (2035 to 2041)
- Long-Term (2042 to 2051)

Once this Plan has been approved or endorsed by Council, City staff will prepare a detailed implementation strategy that prioritizes how and when each recommendation is brought forward. This may be based on several criteria, which may include but not be limited to:

- **Alignment with Strategic Plan/Corporate Goals and Initiatives** such as the City's 2040 Strategic Vision.

- **Meeting Current and Future Facility Needs** such as the ability to meet projected short, medium, or long-term population.
- **Filling in Gaps** taking into consideration geographic gaps, community demographics, access to increase equity, etc.
- **Increasing Capacity to Serve** that considers utilization levels, waitlists, hours used, pent-up demand, etc.
- **Serving MTSA Areas** by providing facilities within or in proximity to MTSAs to promote walkable communities.
- **Community Survey** to recognize the top facilities supported by survey respondents.
- **Alignment with Public/User Group Input** from the consultation activities including open houses and focus groups.
- **Alignment with Leading Trends** in the parks, recreation, and culture sector.
- **Capital Cost to the City** to guide funding decisions and support annual budgets.
- **Potential Opportunity for Partnership/Shared Responsibility** for operating facilities and/or providing programs/services or providing other support such as in-kind donations (e.g., sponsorships).

As part of the annual budget process, this Plan will need to be reviewed to identify areas where the availability of resources may affect the timing of implementation. Analysis of implementation options and capital/operating budget implications should be undertaken prior to approving major projects, as well as various funding sources, and partnership opportunities. As part of a five-year update to this Plan, reviewing the timing of implementation should also be undertaken.

To guide the annual budget process, high level capital costs have been identified for applicable recommendations, which have been reviewed and confirmed by City staff. These costs are intended to be a guide only and City staff will need to reconfirm and/or refine these estimates as recommendations are brought forward with consideration given to operating impacts to maintain service delivery or respond to enhanced service levels. It is expected that the City will make decisions on individual projects and funding sources annually at budget time.

The following is a summary of recommendations in the order that they appeared in the Plan.

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
1. Update Sherwood Forest Park Revitalization Plan to investigate the feasibility of redistributing existing uses on the west side of the park to accommodate other needs as identified in the Live and Play Plan to serve the surrounding area, including the Appleby GO MTSA, such as a dedicated cricket field, sport courts (pickleball and basketball), skate park, splash pad, leash free dog park, and community gardens. As part of the Revitalization Plan, proceed with planning for the redevelopment of the Sherwood Forest Community Centre to include a full-size gymnasium, community program spaces (between three to four multi-purpose rooms), and space to accommodate existing community partners (e.g., Burlington Centaurs Rugby Club). Develop a phased implementation plan as part of this process.	Short (Initiate Design)	Cost to retain a consultant: $200,000 to $500,000 (excludes construction costs)
2. Re-imagine Central Park to consolidate aging and new indoor facilities to create a community centre and cultural activity hub, and reclaim greenspace for active and passive uses, which should include the components identified in this Live and Play Plan. Engaging existing joint ventures and prospective partners such as the YMCA should form part of this process, as well as developing a phased implementation plan. Initiate short-term opportunities including park maintenance building and associated works yard, and washroom replacement, community garden expansion, splash pad and skate park.	Medium	Cost to retain a consultant: $500,000 to $1M (excludes construction costs)
3. Create a plan for Nelson Park to develop a new park support building to consolidate and replace the existing support buildings on site to a new facility to serve the existing ball diamonds, artificial turf field, and other park functions. The new facility should continue to accommodate space for the Burlington Minor Football Association. As part of this plan, explore opportunities to reposition existing sports fields and park assets to improve functionality, reclaim greenspace, and potentially accommodate new park facilities.	Short	Cost to retain a consultant: $500,000 to $1M (excludes construction costs)
4. Establish a vision for Hidden Valley Park to recognize its role in meeting the parks and outdoor recreation needs of current and future residents, particularly in relation to intensification of the Aldershot GO MTSA, while preserving natural features. New facilities that should be considered include a leash-free dog park, outdoor fitness equipment, disc golf course, space for outdoor festivals and events, and enhanced park features to support greater use.	Short (Initiate Design)	Cost to retain a consultant: $100,000 to $200,000 (excludes construction costs)

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
5. Monitor arena utilization to assess the impact of the new Skyway Arena, participation levels of ice groups, arena trends, and community demographics, and investigate partnerships/alternative solutions with the private sector or non-municipal ice operators to meet ice needs, to confirm the need for a new twin pad arena. This facility would result in a net increase of one ice pad. Subject to confirming the need, the following options should be considered: a. Option #1: Construct a twin pad arena as part of a multi-use community centre at Central Park, which would be part of re-imagining the site; alternatively construct one single pad arena with a covered outdoor rink; or b. Option #2: Acquire a new site large enough to accommodate a twin pad arena, gymnasium, indoor walking track, multi-purpose spaces, and potentially an indoor pool. Developing a site concept should confirm site size requirements.	Short	Cost to retain a consultant: $3M to $20M (excludes construction and site acquisition)
6. Monitor sports field usage as the City implements recommended enhancements as identified in this Live and Play Plan to understand how field utilization evolves, which should also include reviewing participation data, community demographics, and sports field trends, and investigate partnership opportunities to inform future sports field needs. Should it be determined that medium to long-term demand for sports fields outweighs available supply opportunities, investigate acquiring lands that are suitable for constructing new fields with supporting amenities, potentially in partnership with others; redesignating land may be required. Long-term demand for sports fields and other recreational facilities will also be considered as part of future updates to the Live and Play Plan and other relevant reviews of the Burlington Official Plan.	Medium	Staff time
7. The design of urban parks and spaces should consider the small-scale and low impact amenities and features identified in this Live and Play Plan. Robust design materials and increased maintenance levels will be required in parks and public spaces serving Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) to reflect a higher intensity of use. Alternative facility provision models should be pursued to meet needs within intensifying areas, including working with developers to provide private amenity space, leasing space, POPS/strata parks, and rooftop facilities.	Best practice	Staff time and subject to specifics of project
8. Future park and facility development and redevelopment should be designed with accessibility and climate change lenses with consideration given to the City's guiding corporate strategies.	Best practice	Staff time and subject to specifics of project

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
9. Create a renewal strategy to guide future retrofits and modernization of the Tansley Woods Community Centre, focusing on priority areas including the indoor pool and associated features and amenities. Other areas to consider include improvements and retrofits to multi-purpose spaces to maximize facility use, repurposing underutilized space, and working with partners to strengthen the use of their spaces to better meet community needs, including the Burlington Public Library Branch. Enhancements to outdoor spaces should also be explored.	Short	High-level concept: $60,000 to $75,000
10. The following strategy is recommended for arenas. a. Explore partnership opportunities to meet current and future ice needs, potentially through new ice pad development with the private sector or increasing access to existing non-municipal ice operators. b. In consultation with user groups, identify opportunities to enhance the use of existing ice pads through strategic improvements, some enhancements may be the responsibility of sport groups such as replacing certain equipment.	Short Best practice	Staff time
11. The following strategy is recommended for indoor pools. a. Continue discussions with the YMCA to advance opportunities to enhance and expand the indoor pool facility at Ron Edwards Family YMCA to serve the existing and future populations within the market area. As such an enhancement and expansion would reduce on-site parking at the YMCA, the City should investigate opportunities to provide parking at Central Park. b. Create a plan that explores the feasibility of retrofitting and incorporating modern amenities and new features at Burlington's indoor pools to enhance experiences. Amenities to consider include, but are not limited to, universal changerooms, slides, beach entry, spray features, dividing walls, and sport-friendly features, etc.	Short-Medium	Staff time High-level concept per site: $40,000 to $50,000
12. The following strategy is recommended for gymnasiums. All new gymnasiums should be designed to be full or double size with supporting amenities, including high ceilings, spectator seating, audio and visual equipment, storage rooms, and changerooms. a. Explore the feasibility of increasing the ceiling height of the gymnasiums at Brant Hills Community Centre to support active sports and recreation activities such as volleyball, badminton, basketball, pickleball, floor hockey, etc. b. Engage school boards to explore opportunities to access school gymnasiums that are not currently permitted by the City such as the Gary Allan Learning Centre and former Lester B. Pearson High School.	Best practice Short	High-level concept: $40,000 to $50,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
13. The following strategy is recommended for fitness spaces and indoor walking tracks. a. Indoor walking tracks should be considered as part of future multi-use community centre developments, particularly those that would include an arena, gymnasium, or other complementary facility components. Based on the facility recommendations of the Live and Play Plan, indoor walking tracks should be incorporated into a new facility at Central Park, at the redevelopment of Sherwood Forest Community Centre, and potentially as part of a new community centre that would include a new twin pad arena.	Best practice	To be determined based upon facility design
14. The following strategy is recommended for multi-purpose spaces. a. New or redeveloped community centres should include between three to four multi-purpose spaces that are flexibly designed in a variety of sizes with amenities to accommodate a broad range of programs and rentals. Features include countertops, sinks, storage cupboards, durable flooring, dividing walls, audio and visual equipment, and other amenities. b. To improve the use of the City's multi-purpose spaces, implement the Promoting Use of Underutilized Spaces in Recreation Facilities policy and explore opportunities to create additional community hub spaces, potentially at Central Park. c. Monitor space needs in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) with consideration given to partnership opportunities with the development industry to incorporate multi-purpose programmable space within condominium buildings, which should have regard for public access, flexible and sufficiently sized spaces, parking accommodation, and supporting amenities such as storage spaces and countertops. As population increases in Mixed Use Intensification Areas, consideration may also be given to leasing space.	Best practice	To be determined based upon facility design Staff Time Staff time

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
15. The following strategy is recommended for dedicated age spaces. a. Rename the Burlington Seniors' Centre to one that is welcoming for everyone, recognizing that the existing centre is already used by older adults during the daytime, and the general community during the evenings. Inviting signage and other advertising may be considered to promote activities and the welcoming of all age groups. b. Relocate activities from the Burlington Seniors' Centre to multi-purpose space as part of a future community centre at Central Park. Multi-purpose spaces within this future facility should be dedicated to older adult programming during the daytime and feature age-friendly design to support activities such as reading, arts and crafts, casual gatherings, games (e.g., snooker), dining (including a kitchen), and other general programming. c. Guided by the City's Active Aging Plan, indoor and outdoor public spaces should be designed with an age-friendly lens to create welcoming, attractive, safe, and accessible public spaces, including but not limited to, comfort amenities such as rest spots, water refill stations, accessibility features (including washrooms), and outdoor amenities that appeal to older adults including landscaping, gardens, trails, gathering areas and open spaces. Consultation with older adults and the Seniors' Advisory Committee is encouraged as part of facility and park design processes. d. Consider strategies to create welcoming and inviting community spaces for youth, including ensuring facilities are accessible to youth, providing open lobby areas to encourage and support gatherings and offering Wi-Fi. Consultation with Burlington Youth Student Council should form part of facility and park design processes.	Short Medium-Long Best practice Best practice	Staff time
16. The following strategy is recommended for indoor artificial turf fields. a. Initiate discussions with the school boards to explore partnership opportunities to provide an indoor artificial turf field. A feasibility study should be undertaken to investigate the potential to construct a seasonal dome over an existing outdoor artificial turf field to facilitate year-round field sports, with Corpus Christi Secondary School being a candidate site. Other partnerships that could be explored include with community partners, private sector, or other interested parties. Consideration may also be given to the development of a permanent soccer facility, recognizing potential benefits over seasonal domes including, but not limited to, reduced greenhouse gas emissions.	Short	Staff time

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
17. The following strategy is recommended for cultural spaces.		
a. Relocate the uses and activities from the Student Theatre and Burlington Music Centre to a future multi-use community centre at Central Park to provide access to modernized and shared spaces, which should include (at a minimum), an auditorium with a stage and theatre-style seating, dressing rooms, rehearsal hall, music practice rooms, storage space, connected outdoor bandshell, technical requirements (e.g., lighting, sound, etc.) and access to appropriate outdoor space to support programming, events and practices. Consultation with facility users should define specific space needs. This strategy would allow the land associated with the two existing facilities to be repurposed for other users, including being reclaimed as greenspace, to meet other outdoor recreation facility uses, and/or provide permanent or temporary parking.	Medium-Long	To be determines as part of re-development of facility
b. Incorporate multi-use arts and performance space as part of the City's adaptive reuse of the Robert Bateman Community Centre.	Short	To be determines as part of re-development of facility
c. As part of a new Arts and Culture Strategy, consider how arts and cultural opportunities can optimize the use of Burlington's parks and spaces, including to celebrate Indigenous Peoples and to address the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action. Enhanced partnerships with cultural entities such as the Burlington Performing Arts Centre, Art Gallery of Burlington, Ireland House Museum, Joseph Brant Museum, and others should also be explored to increase access to cultural space for programs, events, activities, and other ways to meet the cultural needs of the community.	Short	Staff time

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
18. The following strategy is recommended for rectangular fields.		
a. Explore the feasibility of lighting Class B rectangular fields, including at Brant Hills Park (2), Ireland Park (2), Newport Park, Roly Bird Park (2) and Millcroft Park to add four unlit equivalent fields to the supply. Consideration should be given to minimizing the impact on adjacent uses, including meeting minimum setback requirements.	Short	Unlit Rectangular Field: $200,000 to $500,000
b. As part of future park development or renewal, investigate the feasibility of redistributing existing rectangular fields in areas where there is a high demand for other outdoor recreation facilities. Redistributing some of the fields at Sherwood Forest Park could be considered as one opportunity to reprogram the space for other uses such as cricket.	Best practice	Lit Rectangular Field: $300,000 to $800,000
c. Evaluate opportunities to enhance the quality of outdoor rectangular fields and supporting amenities at parks with permitted rectangular fields to accommodate increased field usage, including field irrigation, increased operational requirements for enhanced turf maintenance practices, the provision of permanent or temporary washrooms, netting, paved pathways for accessibility, spectator seating, and parking. Consultation with user groups is encouraged to identify and prioritize amenities and locations to consider.	Short	Add Lights to Existing Field: $150,000 to $300,000
d. Add sports field lighting to the rugby sports field at Sherwood Forest Park to increase playing capacity.	Short	

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
19. The following strategy is recommended for ball diamonds. a. Add ball diamond lighting at Brant Hills Park, Ireland Park, Roly Bird Park, Millcroft Park, and Sherwood Forest Park or other locations to add seven unlit equivalent ball diamonds. b. Undertake strategic ball diamond improvements to enhance playing experiences, and strengthen utilization and accessibility, including enlarging diamonds, addressing drainage and consideration for artificial turf outfields, fencing, storage, lighting, netting, and the feasibility of installing permanent or temporary washrooms. Potential candidates for enhancement may include Doug Wright Park, Central Park, and other locations that should be evaluated in consultation with user groups. c. Rebalance the geographic distribution of ball diamonds with a particular focus on redistributing ball diamonds from established areas of Burlington to new or enhanced locations. Candidate sites that could be relocated include those that are located near MTSAs, are undersized or underutilized, duplicate service areas, and/or are in high demand areas for other park uses. Potential ball diamonds to consider redistributing include the ball diamonds at Optimist Park and LaSalle Park. d. Investigate the feasibility of accommodating hardball activities at larger Class A diamonds using a portable mound, potentially at Doug Wright Park and Maple Park.	Short Short Short-Medium Short	Unlit Ball Diamond: $200,000 to $600,000 Lit Ball Diamond: $350,000 to $900,000 Adding Lights to Existing Diamond: $100,000 to $200,000
20. The following strategy is recommended for cricket fields. a. Explore the feasibility of converting two rectangular fields at Sherwood Forest Park to a lit dedicated cricket field. Existing rectangular field users should be accommodated at other locations within the City's supply. b. Construct a dedicated cricket field at City View Park and explore the feasibility of lighting the field.	Short Short-Medium	$350,000 to $900,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
21. The following strategy is recommended to construct 13 public tennis courts. As part of tennis court planning and development, consider high quality court design is encouraged, including surfacing (acrylic coating at Destination/Community Parks and asphalt at Neighbourhood Parks), lighting, accessible pathways, shade, and seating. a. Construct five public tennis courts, focusing on addressing geographic gaps on the northeast of Burlington's urban area. b. Monitor the need to construct eight public tennis courts to serve gaps and strengthen distribution, recognizing that these areas are served by tennis clubs. Long-term opportunities to provide tennis courts to serve Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) may also be explored.	Short Medium-Long	$390,000 to $450,000
22. The following strategy is recommended to provide 33 outdoor pickleball courts. New or redeveloped pickleball courts should be dedicated courts with consideration given to appropriate surface types (acrylic at Destination/Community Parks and asphalt at Neighbourhood Parks) and supporting amenities such as seating, shade, and pathways; lighting should only be considered at Destination/Community Parks. Shared pickleball courts should only be considered where dedicated courts cannot be accommodated and to satisfy a need where parkland is limited, such as at a Neighbourhood Park. a. Explore potential joint venture opportunities to establish an outdoor pickleball complex to support high quality, club-based play at a Destination or Community Park. Some of the pickleball courts at this complex should be designed to accommodate wheelchairs, which have the same dimensions as elite/competition courts. The provision of indoor pickleball courts should be supported by a feasibility study. Consideration should be given to the provision of supporting amenities and public access. b. Create pop-up pickleball courts using underutilized public parking lots to address short-term outdoor pickleball court needs. c. Investigate the feasibility of incorporating outdoor pickleball courts at existing parks to ensure that there is a strong geographic distribution across the City. d. Incorporate outdoor pickleball courts at future parks to strengthen geographic distribution, as opportunities become available.	Short-Medium Short Short-Medium Medium-Long	$150,000 to $450,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
23. The following strategy is recommended to construct 11 hard surface courts for basketball and ball hockey. New courts should be multi-use for basketball and ball hockey with supporting amenities that may include lighting, shade, and seating. a. Construct four to five courts in the short-term at Central Park, Sherwood Forest Park, Sweet Grass Park, Bridgeview Park, at one or more future parks in the northeast corner of the urban area. b. Identify new or existing parks to construct up to seven courts, focusing on addressing gap areas in the northwest and west side of the urban area, and in Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs). c. At the time of renewal, evaluate the feasibility of enhancing existing basketball courts by enlarging playing surfaces, adding a second basketball post/hoop, lining for multi-use activities, and supporting amenities. Potential locations to examine include Berton Park, DesJardines Park, Doug Wright Park, Emerson Park, Longmoor Park, Palladium Park, Palmer Park, Sheldon Park, Taywood Park, Orchard Park, and Optimist Park.	Short Medium-Long Short-Medium	$100,000 to $150,000
24. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor pools and splash pads. The design of future outdoor pools and splash pads facilities should include community input form part of the design process to create a unique, fun, and engaging water play experience. Consideration should be given to the feasibility of using recirculation or greywater systems to reduce water consumption. a. Assess the feasibility of enlarging and modernizing the changerooms at the Nelson Park outdoor pool to support greater use and modernize, with consideration for accessibility and universal features, as well as climate change mitigation measures. b. Subject to determining the future of LaSalle Park, undertake a feasibility study to renew the wading pool, with consideration given to opportunities to enlarge the size of the wading pool and incorporate modern amenities including, but not limited to, washroom and changeroom facilities, beach entry, accessibility features, spray features, and more. Designing in a manner to allow for year-round use such as outdoor skating could also be explored. c. Provide a minimum of one cooling spray station in each MTSA; multiple locations are recommended to support walkability. Cooling spray stations could feature a limited number of spray nozzles integrated into the hardscape or as posts, or incorporated as part of a public art display, water fountains, boulders, or other feature.	Short Short Medium-Long	$5 Million to $10 Million $100,000 to $150,000 $200,000 to $300,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
25. The following strategy is recommended for skate parks. a. Construct skate zones adjacent to existing and future basketball courts to strengthen geographic distribution and augment the City's skate parks. b. Improve existing skate parks to provide an enhanced user experience and improved accessibility, which may include adding supporting amenities and enlarging and/or repositioning skate parks such as at Maple Park and Nelson Park.	Short-Medium Short	$200,000 to $300,000 $300,000 to $500,000
26. The following strategy is recommended for leash free dog parks. All leash free areas should include amenities such as signage, waste receptacles, shade, seating, and water. a. Amend the City's leash free area criteria to incorporate a compact leash free area category to serve Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs). b. Using the City's site criteria for leash-free areas, evaluate opportunities to provide leash-free dog parks at existing or future City parks, as well as utilizing the hydro corridor c. Provide a minimum of one leash free area in each MTSA, which may include working with private developers in these areas to create pet-friendly spaces. Additional leash free areas in Mixed Use Intensification Areas are encouraged as opportunities become available to encourage walkability, subject to demand and availability of appropriate sites.	Short Short Medium	$75,000 to $200,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
27. The following strategy is recommended for community gardens. a. Proceed with establishing a community garden at Nelson Park. Consideration should be given to an enhanced supply of raised garden beds. b. Investigate the feasibility of expanding the number of community garden plots (including the number of raised garden beds) at Ireland Park and Central Park. c. Establish new community gardens with a priority on serving high growth areas by providing at least one community garden in each MTSA and at parks in proximity to Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs). Consideration should be given to the site criteria identified in this Plan. d. Continue to work with others to create community gardens on non-public lands, including leasing land, partnering with others, and encouraging the development industry to create rooftop gardens.	Short Short Short-Medium Best practice	$175,000 to $200,000 $50,000 to $100,000 $175,000 to $200,000
28. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor bocce courts. a. Investigate a partnership with Special Olympics Burlington for the future provision and maintenance of outdoor bocce court needs and associated amenities for the organization and others interested in the activity.	Short	Cost to be determined based on design
29. The following strategy is recommended for disc golf courses. a. Monitor the use of the seasonal disc golf course at Tyandaga Golf Course to inform decisions to provide a year-round location.	Best practice	$500 to $1,000 (per basket) Additional costs for design
30. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor fitness equipment. a. Install outdoor fitness equipment in high traffic areas, including along the waterfront and at major parks, adjacent to community centres, and in locations that can support outdoor fitness programming, which could potentially be funded through donations or other in-kind contributions. b. Provide a minimum of one outdoor fitness equipment location in each MTSA and within designated corridors.	Short Medium	$50,000 to $100,000

31. The following strategy is recommended for playgrounds. a. Provide playgrounds within 500 metres of new residential neighbourhoods without crossing major barriers, particularly in the northeast end of Burlington's urban area, which has been identified as a gap, as well as in MTSAs. b. Provide one signature playground at Ireland Park, with an intentional focus on inclusivity, accessibility and creative opportunities that promotes play equity. Include seating and shelter for caregivers. Following construction, monitor playground use for consideration of future signature playgrounds. c. Ensure high play value (e.g., accessibility and experience) by incorporating a range of creative and unique components through the adoption of the following playground guidelines for design for each park type. All playgrounds or features should strive to meet or exceed the minimum requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and its regulations. i. Destination (City Parks) or Community Parks 1. One large playground (servicing the entire park) a. Large pre-fabricated equipment b. 50% elevated play components accessible via both ramp and transfer stations c. 80% ground level components accessible to promote play equity d. Rubber safety surface only 2. Two medium playgrounds (in different areas of the park) a. Medium pre-fabricated equipment b. One location with rubber safety surface and one location with engineered wood fibre ii. Neighbourhood Park should offer medium pre-fabricated equipment and engineered wood fibre safety surface. iii. Urban Park – Natural playground and/or one large feature such as a giant climber. Alternatively, incorporate unique play features into courtyards or plaza spaces – such as in-ground trampoline pods, climbable sculpture features, varying ground planes with play features, etc. iv. Linear Park/Greenway – Small standalone play feature (e.g., adult teeter-totter) in linear parks and no playgrounds in greenways. v. Ecological park – Small standalone play feature, if applicable.	Best practice Short Best practice	Creative Playground: $100,000 to $300,000 Signature Playground: $500,000 to $750,000 Natural Playground: $200,000 to $500,000

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
d. Work with the Halton District School Board to build a transition plan and a formal agreement related to the future maintenance and renewal of school playgrounds with the intent to minimize service duplication, with consideration given to the candidate playground sites for removal identified in this Live and Play Plan.	Short	
e. Incorporate playground equipment for youth and teenagers at parks adjacent to public and secondary schools to provide a fun and engaging experience, with consideration given to components such as climbing boulders and rope structures, spinners, balance beams, musical instruments, ziplines and ninja warrior obstacle courses.	Best practice	
f. Indoor playgrounds should be considered as part of new facility development or reuse of City spaces and facilities, particularly in locations that would be complementary to other facility uses and activities geared towards children and families.	Best practice	
32. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor ice rinks and trails.		
a. Provide one refrigerated outdoor skating rink or trail in the north end of Burlington's urban area at a Destination or Community Park that has access to supporting amenities such as washrooms, parking, public transit, etc.	Short	$1M to $1.5M
b. Provide refrigerated outdoor skating venues within each MTSA.	Short-Medium	$1M to $1.5M
c. Continue to support community-driven natural outdoor skating rinks that are maintained and operated by volunteer residents.	Best practice	$10,000 to $20,000
33. The following strategy is recommended for outdoor special event spaces.		
a. To alleviate pressure from Spencer Smith Park, direct special events and festivals to Destination, Community or Urban Parks, including Central Park, Civic Square, Burloak Waterfront Park, LaSalle Park, Norton Park, and Hidden Valley Park. Ensuring that the appropriate infrastructure to support special events and festivals at these locations will be required.	Best Practice	Costs to be determined on a case-by-case basis
b. Incorporate outdoor space that is suitable for outdoor special events and festivals as part of a Central Park visioning exercise that includes an amphitheatre and necessary servicing.	Medium	
c. Designate a minimum of one urban park in the Appleby GO MTSA and Aldershot GO MTSA that would be suitable for hosting outdoor special events and gatherings.	Short-Medium	

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
34. The following strategy is recommended for casual open greenspaces. a. Park planning, design and development, as well as renewal of existing parks, should ensure that there is a balance between the provision of active recreation facilities and passive open spaces to ensure that residents have access to both outdoor facilities to engage in physical activity and greenspaces for social gatherings, special events and casual, unprogrammed uses. b. Create a plan to develop Zimmerman Park that may include the amenities identified in this Plan, including trails, playground, outdoor fitness equipment, open space for picnics and gatherings, and potentially a disc golf course.	Best practice Short	n/a Cost to retain a consultant: $100,000 to $150,000
35. The following strategy is recommended for permitted park facilities and amenities. a. Use the recommended park facilities and amenities matrix contained in the Live and Play Plan to guide the planning and design of new parks and the revitalization of existing parks according to Burlington's new parks classification system.	Best practice	Staff time
36. The following strategy is recommended for other parks, recreation, and culture facilities. a. Public requests for new parks, recreation, and culture facilities should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with consideration given to proponent led business planning, trends, examples in other municipalities, local demand, the feasibility of using existing public space, the willingness of an organization to partner in providing the facility or service, availability to allocate City resources without negatively impacting existing service levels, and other relevant factors as may be determined to be appropriate. b. Through a five-year update to the Live and Play Plan, reconfirm the use of Tyandaga Golf Course as an 18-hole course and consider opportunities to increase year-round (including winter) outdoor recreation opportunities, as well as use of the clubhouse for indoor rentals and programming, to respond to community needs.	Best practice Short	Staff time
37. Regularly monitor implementation of the Live and Play Plan, including tracking population growth and demographic changes, development of Mixed Use Intensification Areas (e.g., MTSAs) and new urban areas and converted lands as a result of ROPA 49 (modified by the Minister), monitoring facility and park use, and regular dialogue with the community. Prepare annual reports to recognize achievements and work plans to identify recommendations to implement over the coming year.	Best practice	Staff time

Recommendation	Timing	Estimated Capital Cost (Per Project)
38. Undertake an update to the Live and Play Plan every five years (next update in 2029). Timing may be adjusted depending on the pace of implementation or changes to the community, particularly as new parks and facility opportunities are identified within Mixed Use Intensification Areas (MTSAs) or new urban areas and converted lands as a result of ROPA 49 (modified by the Minister).	Short	Cost to retain a consultant: $200,000 to $225,000
39. Use the Live and Play Plan as a resource to inform the City's annual budgets, Development Charges Background Studies, and related studies. Where appropriate, alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches should be considered, including (but not limited to), fundraising, grants, private-public partnerships, sponsorships, surcharges and user fees, capital reserve contributions, endowment fund, leasing space from others, and other strategies to provide the best value to residents.	Best practice	Staff time
40. Conduct feasibility studies and business plans (with public input) prior to undertaking major capital projects to ensure that projects are aligned with community needs and financial capabilities, and considers partnership opportunities (e.g., joint venture agreements).	Best practice	Staff time and potentially consultants, as required
41. Where appropriate, implementation of the Live and Play Plan should consider partnership opportunities with community organizations, private sector, school boards, and others, taking into consideration benefits and risks of the partnership, which may also be supported by feasibility studies.	Best practice	Staff time and dependent upon partnership opportunities

Appendix A: Facility Service Level Benchmarking

A facility service level comparison was undertaken with surrounding municipalities and those that are similar in population size and demographic make up including Hamilton, Kitchener, Markham, Milton, Oakville, Oshawa, Richmond Hill and Whitby. This comparison reflects municipal supplies only. It is important to recognize that service levels may vary in other municipalities as their approach to facility provision may differ compared to Burlington.

Arenas

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	25	1 : 23,360
Kitchener	256,885	11	1 : 23,353
Markham	338,500	10	1 : 33,850
Milton	132,979	6	1 : 22,163
Oakville	213,759	13	1 : 16,443
Oshawa	175,400	10	1 : 17,540
Richmond Hill	202,000	7	1 : 28,857
Whitby	138,501	11	1 : 12,591
Average	**255,253**	**12**	**1 : 21,957**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	11	1 : 17,645

Indoor Pool Locations

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	19	1 : 30,737
Kitchener	256,885	5	1 : 51,377
Markham	338,500	7	1 : 48,357
Milton	132,979	3	1 : 44,326
Oakville	213,759	5	1 : 42,752
Oshawa	175,400	4	1 : 43,850
Richmond Hill	202,000	6	1 : 33,667
Whitby	138,501	3	1 : 46,167
Average	**255,253**	**7**	**1 : 39,270**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	4	1 : 48,525

Gymnasium Locations (Some locations may have multiple gymnasiums; excludes access to school gymnasiums)

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	6	1 : 97,333
Kitchener	256,885	8	1 : 32,111
Markham	338,500	8	1 : 42,313
Milton	132,979	4	1 : 33,245
Oakville	213,759	6	1 : 35,627
Oshawa	175,400	2	1 : 87,700
Richmond Hill	202,000	6	1 : 33,667
Whitby	138,501	2	1 : 69,251
Average	**255,253**	**5**	**1 : 48,620**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	4	1 : 48,525

Dedicated Youth Spaces

Municipality	2021 Youth Population (Ages 10 to 19)	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	62,270	0	n/a
Kitchener	29,375	12	1 : 2,480
Markham	41,315	4	1 : 8,281
Milton	21,570	7	1 : 2,847
Oakville	32,950	0	n/a
Oshawa	20,020	2	1 : 10,225
Richmond Hill	26,160	2	1 : 8,773
Whitby	19,730	3	1 : 5,437
Average	**31,674**	**4**	**1 : 8,446**
Burlington (2024)	23,292	0	n/a

Dedicated Older Adult Spaces

Municipality	2021 Population (Ages 55+)	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	183,290	12	1 : 15,274
Kitchener	68,965	1	1 : 68,965
Markham	109,275	5	1 : 21,855
Milton	25,080	1	1 : 25,080
Oakville	61,540	5	1 : 12,308
Oshawa	51,920	5	1 : 10,384
Richmond Hill	64,350	1	1 : 64,350
Whitby	38,620	2	1 : 19,310
Average	**75,380**	**4**	**1 : 18,845**
Burlington (2024)	67,935	1	1 : 67,935

Rectangular Fields

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply (ULE)	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	190	1 : 3,074
Kitchener	256,885	59	1 : 4,354
Markham	338,500	117	1 : 2,893
Milton	132,979	51	1 : 2,607
Oakville	213,759	83	1 : 2,575
Oshawa	175,400	65	1 : 2,698
Richmond Hill	202,000	52	1 : 3,885
Whitby	138,501	53	1 : 2,613
Average	**255,253**	**84**	**1 : 3,048**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	77	1 : 2,521

Ball Diamonds

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply (ULE)	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	195	1 : 2,995
Kitchener	256,885	72	1 : 3,568
Markham	338,500	60	1 : 5,642
Milton	132,979	29	1 : 4,585
Oakville	213,759	54	1 : 3,959
Oshawa	175,400	58	1 : 3,024
Richmond Hill	202,000	40	1 : 5,050
Whitby	138,501	37	1 : 3,743
Average	**255,253**	**68**	**1 : 3,747**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	58	1 : 3,346

Cricket Fields

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	2	1 : 292,000
Kitchener	256,885	1	1 : 256,885
Markham	338,500	3	1 : 112,833
Milton	132,979	2	1 : 66,490
Oakville	213,759	1	1 : 213,759
Oshawa	175,400	1	1 : 175,400
Richmond Hill	202,000	0	n/a
Whitby	138,501	1	1 : 138,501
Average	**255,253**	**1**	**1 : 185,639**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	1	1 : 194,100

Tennis Courts

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	79	1 : 7,392
Kitchener	256,885	36	1 : 7,136
Markham	338,500	61	1 : 5,549
Milton	132,979	17	1 : 7,822
Oakville	213,759	58	1 : 3,686
Oshawa	175,400	23	1 : 7,626
Richmond Hill	202,000	93	1 : 2,172
Whitby	138,501	33	1 : 4,197
Average	**255,253**	**50**	**1 : 5,105**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	36	1 : 5,546

Pickleball Courts

Municipality	2021 Population	Dedicated Supply	Shared Supply	Total Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	12	24	36	1 : 16,222
Kitchener	256,885	3	4	7	1 : 36,698
Markham	338,500	8	8	16	1 : 21,156
Milton	132,979	14	3	17	1 : 7,822
Oakville	213,759	30	11	41	1 : 5,214
Oshawa	175,400	8	4	12	1 : 14,617
Richmond Hill	202,000	1	2	3	1 : 67,333
Whitby	138,501	0	21	21	1 : 6,595
Average	**255,253**	**10**	**10**	**19**	**1 : 13,347**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	9	11	20	1 : 9,705

Basketball and Ball Hockey Courts

Municipality	2021 Youth Population (Ages 10 to 19)	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	62,270	107	1 : 582
Kitchener	29,375	29	1 : 1,013
Markham	41,315	24	1 : 1,721
Milton	21,570	18	1 : 1,198
Oakville	32,950	24	1 : 1,373
Oshawa	20,020	27	1 : 741
Richmond Hill	26,160	32	1 : 818
Whitby	19,730	36	1 : 548
Average	**31,674**	**37**	**1 : 853**
Burlington (2024)	23,292	29	1 : 803

Outdoor Swimming and Wading Pools

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	10	1 : 58,400
Kitchener	256,885	4	1 : 64,221
Markham	338,500	2	1 : 169,250
Milton	132,979	1	1 : 132,979
Oakville	213,759	5	1 : 42,752
Oshawa	175,400	2	1 : 87,700
Richmond Hill	202,000	0	n/a
Whitby	138,501	0	n/a
Average	**255,253**	**4**	**1 : 92,550**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	3	1 : 64,700

Splash Pads

Municipality	2021 Children Population (Ages 0 to 9)	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	59,975	69	1 : 869
Kitchener	29,755	17	1 : 1,750
Markham	33,125	26	1 : 1,274
Milton	19,930	14	1 : 1,424
Oakville	22,155	20	1 : 1,108
Oshawa	20,450	13	1 : 1,573
Richmond Hill	17,545	15	1 : 1,170
Whitby	16,310	19	1 : 858
Average	**27,406**	**24**	**1 : 1,136**
Burlington	19,410	9	1 : 2,157

Skate Parks

Municipality	2021 Youth Population (Ages 10 to 19)	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	62,270	8	1 : 7,784
Kitchener	29,375	4	1 : 7,344
Markham	41,315	6	1 : 6,886
Milton	21,570	2	1 : 10,785
Oakville	32,950	5	1 : 6,590
Oshawa	20,020	3	1 : 6,673
Richmond Hill	26,160	2	1 : 13,080
Whitby	19,730	4	1 : 4,933
Average	**31,674**	**4**	**1 : 7,453**
Burlington (2024)	23,292	6	1 : 3,882

Leash Free Dog Parks

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	12	1 : 48,667
Kitchener	256,885	3	1 : 85,628
Markham	338,500	2	1 : 169,250
Milton	132,979	2	1 : 66,490
Oakville	213,759	7	1 : 30,537
Oshawa	175,400	2	1 : 87,700
Richmond Hill	202,000	2	1 : 101,000
Whitby	138,501	2	1 : 69,251
Average	**255,253**	**4**	**1 : 63,813**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	8	1 : 24,263

Community Gardens

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply (Locations)	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	14	1 : 41,714
Kitchener	256,885	14	1 : 18,349
Markham	338,500	1	1 : 338,500
Milton	132,979	3	1 : 44,326
Oakville	213,759	4	1 : 53,440
Oshawa	175,400	5	1 : 35,080
Richmond Hill	202,000	8	1 : 25,250
Whitby	138,501	1	1 : 138,501
Average	**255,253**	**6**	**1 : 40,840**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	5	1 : 38,820

Outdoor Bocce Courts

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	39	1 : 14,974
Kitchener	256,885	0	n/a
Markham	338,500	0	n/a
Milton	132,979	0	n/a
Oakville	213,759	2	1 : 106,880
Oshawa	175,400	1	1 : 175,400
Richmond Hill	202,000	5	1 : 40,400
Whitby	138,501	0	n/a
Average	**255,253**	**12**	**1 : 84,413**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	2	1 : 97,050

Disc Golf Courses

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	0	n/a
Kitchener	256,885	2	1 : 128,443
Markham	338,500	0	n/a
Milton	132,979	1	1 : 132,979
Oakville	213,759	0	n/a
Oshawa	175,400	0	n/a
Richmond Hill	202,000	0	n/a
Whitby	138,501	0	n/a
Average	**255,253**	**2**	**1 : 130,711**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	1	1 : 194,100

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	9	1 : 64,889
Kitchener	256,885	21	1 : 12,233
Markham	338,500	20	1 : 16,925
Milton	132,979	1	1 : 132,979
Oakville	213,759	3	1 : 71,253
Oshawa	175,400	1	1 : 175,400
Richmond Hill	202,000	9	1 : 22,444
Whitby	138,501	4	1 : 34,625
Average	**255,253**	**9**	**1 : 30,030**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	6	1 : 32,350

Playgrounds

Municipality	2021 Children Population (Age 0 to 9)	Supply (Locations)	Service Level
Hamilton	59,975	256	1 : 234
Kitchener	29,755	152	1 : 196
Markham	33,125	155	1 : 214
Milton	19,930	58	1 : 344
Oakville	22,155	138	1 : 161
Oshawa	20,450	113	1 : 181
Richmond Hill	17,545	127	1 : 138
Whitby	16,310	95	1 : 172
Average	**27,406**	**137**	**1 : 200**
Burlington (2024)	19,410	105	1 : 185

Outdoor Refrigerated Ice Rinks

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply	Service Level
Hamilton	584,000	3	1 : 194,667
Kitchener	256,885	0	n/a
Markham	338,500	1	1 : 338,500
Milton	132,979	2	1 : 66,490
Oakville	213,759	1	1 : 213,759
Oshawa	175,400	0	n/a
Richmond Hill	202,000	3	1 : 67,333
Whitby	138,501	0	n/a
Average	**255,253**	**1**	**1 : 204,202**
Burlington (2024)	194,100	1	1 : 189,900