



TOWNSHIP OF

WELLESLEY

RECREATION MASTER PLAN
SPRING 2024

We acknowledge that the Township of Wellesley is situated on the land traditionally used by the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral peoples. We acknowledge the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge and philosophies of the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this land today.

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THE RECREATION PLAN – BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The Township of Wellesley completed a Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Master Plan in 2014. The plan provided recommendations with suggested priority rankings and potential timing, and the Township has made good progress on many of those items, and some remain ongoing given their continued relevance in 2023. The final recommendation at that time was to undertake an update to the Plan in ten years' time (2024), which reflects industry planning and policy best practice. Given the decision to build a new Recreation Complex, with a full suite of indoor and outdoor recreation amenities, it was prudent timing to launch the Master Plan in mid-2023 to assist in providing staff with direction and recommendations as they opened the new Recreation Centre and planned for its ongoing provision of service to the community.

The Township of Wellesley is a 'community of communities' with a strong focus on community involvement.

The Master Plan needs to recognize the vast geographic expanse of the Township, the small settlement areas, and the strong historic farming and agricultural life that all contribute to this thriving community. The Recreation Master Plan is intended to provide direction to management and Council on all aspects of Township operations pertaining to recreation infrastructure, and services. This includes parks, trails, recreational facilities, and community programming including the resulting impact on staffing and human resources. The plan broadly examines recreational opportunities that currently exist and/or have potential to be developed within the Township. It gathered community and stakeholder feedback to identify aspirations and gaps and developed an action framework to address future recreational needs.

- **Provides direction to Council and staff** on all aspects of Township operations pertaining to recreation infrastructure, and services.
- **Broadly examines opportunities** that currently exist and/or have potential to be developed.
- **Outlines mechanisms to continue to engage the community**, provide regular updates and reporting, and encourage broad volunteer and partner participation.
- **Includes a comprehensive Situational Analysis Report** as a 'point in time' summary of quantitative and qualitative evidence to support the directions in the Master Plan.
- **Includes the results of a comprehensive public survey** that provides responses to a variety of questions supporting overall plan direction, as well as identifying more detailed areas for actions and next steps as noted in the recommendations.

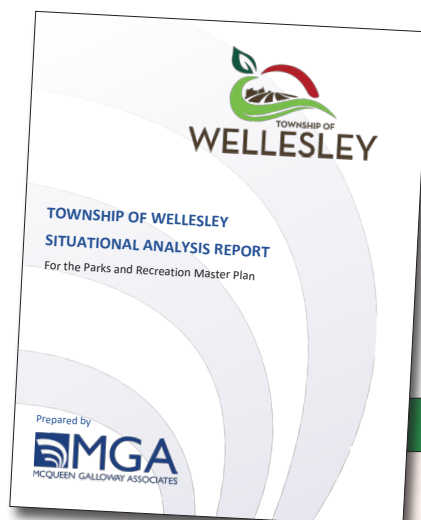
The Recreation Master Plan was undertaken in two consecutive phases. Phase one included the completion of a **Situational Analysis Report** (approved by Township staff December 13, 2023). The Situational Analysis Report summarizes all the qualitative and quantitative data and research that was collected during the first phase of the master planning process. It reflects a point in time prior to moving into the recommendations for the Master Plan. It provides staff with a benchmark for current parks and recreation facilities and services, placed in context for the unique needs of the Township of Wellesley. Most importantly, when considered comprehensively, the information collected has led to the development of “strategic themes.” These themes serve as the over-arching framework for the development of recommendations in the Master Plan.

The Situational Analysis Report is presented in two sections and includes several appendices.

The Situational Analysis Report is available on the Township website.

SECTION 1 focuses on service delivery (programming) and facilities (indoor and outdoor), community and stakeholder engagement and survey results, as well as organizational considerations. It concludes with the strategic themes.

SECTION 2 provides background research that, when taken together with the qualitative information from Section 1, supports the strategic themes. Each section includes observations and relevance for the Township.



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT		
SECTION 1	Service Delivery & Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programming & Events • Facilities • Parks, Trails, & Open space • Community and Stakeholder Engagement / Survey results • Organizational considerations • Strategic Themes
SECTION 2	Research & Policy Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth and Demographic Profile • Operating Budget Analysis • Capital Budget Analysis • Corporate Policy Review • National & Provincial Policy Review
	Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Official Plan Maps • 2014 Plan status • Sector and Societal Trends • User Fee Bylaw Review • Programming Matrix

KEY DRIVERS – SUMMARY OF THE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT

SECTION 1 – SERVICE DELIVERY

PROGRAMMING/EVENTS

- Township residents already participate in a wide variety of activities, both in the municipality and in neighbouring communities.
- The program survey completed by Township staff earlier in 2023 did not yield any strong indication of types of programs that could meet community demand, other than summer camp. It will take time to establish a summer camp program, including hiring and training seasonal staff, establishing policies and procedures to ensure a high-quality program, and developing a budget that ensures the program is both affordable and sustainable for the Township.
- The survey indicated the opportunity for the Township to add more special events, such as the outdoor movie night.

Given current staffing models, the Township will have to continue to recruit and retain volunteers to support these events and programs, based on the skills and interests of the volunteers. Other considerations for adding more special events will necessitate strengthening the expectations and role clarity for volunteers and the Township, including a risk assessment, training, adherence to standards and policies etc. An additional survey to narrow down choices and identify possible volunteer leadership would assist in decision making. Entering into agreements or using standard templates with groups and individuals would assist staff in streamlining the process while clarifying roles and responsibilities. It should also be noted that even events run by volunteers require support (human and financial resources) from the Township. Therefore, any expansion in this area will require complementary increases in staff and/or budget support.



PROGRAMMING PRINCIPLES

The following principles can be used to help the Township prioritize programming opportunities, whether offered by a partner or by the municipality.

1. SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

There should be a **range of activities** in programs and services that includes general interest, competitive and non-competitive sport, arts and culture and healthy living. There should also be opportunities for **residents of all ages**. Programs should continue to operate locally in each community, as well as in the new Bill Gies Recreation Centre, and outdoors using the park and facility space at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex. Within this principle, priority groups (such as under-served populations) can be prioritized.

Given the demographic and growth projection, the Township should continue to focus on children and youth, as well as older adults (with its existing partners) and then by using a gap analysis assessment to initiate new options. (i.e., young adults).

2. AFFORDABILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The needs of affiliated community groups will be balanced with principles of affordability, accountability, and sustainability. Acknowledge the need for a range of price points from low or no cost programs to full cost recovery.

3. PARTNERSHIPS

The Township should continue to **strengthen partnership**, while ensuring fiscal sustainability.

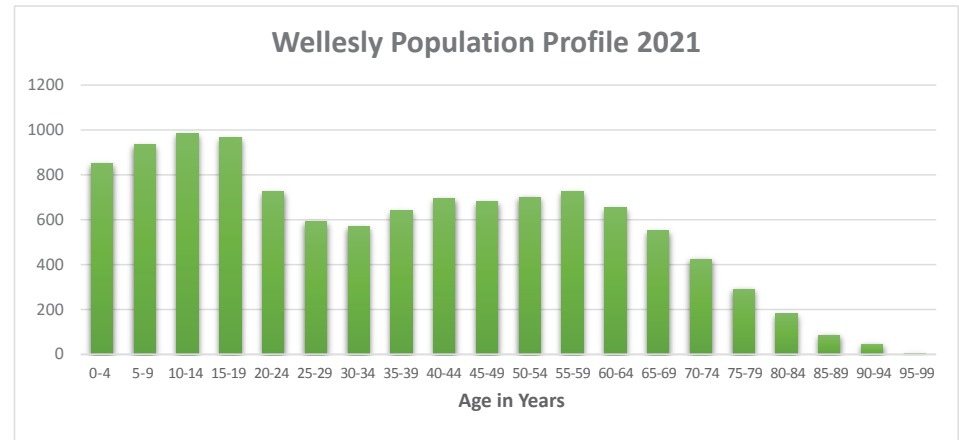


TABLE 1: Wellesley Population Profile, 2021 (Statistics Canada). This table shows that the Township has a growing number of families with children and youth.

4. SUSTAINABILITY

Taking an incremental approach to enhancing programming, while clarifying the role and importance of affiliated organizations, will allow the Township to create an operating **budget that is flexible but sustainable**. Where possible, a cost recovery model should be used for programs. This may require a 'phased in' approach.

5. QUALITY ASSURANCE

All programming requires **monitoring and adherence to additional legislation, new staff training and risk management policies**.

Ongoing evaluation will be essential to ensure continuous improvement and to justify service levels.

BUILDING CAPACITY FOR PROGRAMMING

It will take an incremental approach to build the capacity and internal resources for increased programming. A two-phase approach is an effective way to manage growth and budgets.

- **PHASE 1** – Maximizing Partnerships and Space Utilization
- **PHASE 2** – Establish a five-year business plan for programming.

FACILITIES

INDOOR:

- **Multi-use halls** are available in each community and are rented through permits with the Township.
- **Ice provision** is reasonable.
- The replacement of the **old Village of Wellesley rink** for all ice related activities, including curling, is intended to be met using ice in the new Bill Gies Recreation Centre and the St. Clements Arena.
- Replacement of the **fitness facilities in the old Village of Wellesley facility** will be met through a municipally operated fitness facility in the new Bill Gies Recreation Centre.
- **Branch library facilities** are operated independently by the Region of Waterloo but do provide programs and services for all ages.
- **The Bill Gies Recreation Centre** will provide space for an increased supply of programs and services for all ages.
- **St. Clements Arena** needs upgrades and cosmetic improvements in the short term, with more significant capital investment over the 10-year horizon. Further detailed study will be needed to consider any further investment after this time.
- **Hawkesville Community Centre** needs upgrades and accessibility improvements (with consideration for the proximity and relationship to the outdoor amenities).
- **Linwood Recreation Complex** is fully accessible and equipped to offer programs and events. In addition, the building is home to a branch of the Region of Waterloo Library.





FACILITIES

OUTDOOR:

- Provision is generally acceptable for many amenities, however **the location in relation to patterns of use is challenging** as most people would use the amenities in their own community and not travel to another community to use amenities such as a multi-use court.
- **Amenities are spread throughout the Township, with more amenities in the higher density areas.**
- As such, **some facilities may be over-supplied** (baseball diamonds) **for solely local use** (as they are not currently being used for broad-based community scheduling).
- **The off-leash (dog) park** in the Village of Wellesley was intended to be temporary.
- **Other off-lease zones** may be desirable in other communities.
- **The multi-use courts** could provide a great opportunity to encourage pickleball play and other court sport play.
- While there are many amenities being provided in the communities, **accessibility challenges** would not provide easy access to all residents, affecting provision standards in that community (i.e., accessible play structures).
- **New outdoor facilities** at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex (which includes the Bill Gies Recreation Centre) will meet current standards for accessibility.



PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACE

Ongoing opportunities for enhancing and expanding the parks, trails and open space network exist.

These include:

- Continue to create a network of local trails and ensuring new developments are connected.
- Existing Development Standards Manual does not currently include standards for parks and trails.
- Continue to link trails where possible, entering into agreements with private landowners and Grand River Conservation Authority where possible.
- More on-road cycling facilities when roads are redeveloped by the Region of Waterloo (provided not in conflict with horse and buggy); need sufficient right-of-way to accommodate.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES/TRENDS IMPACTING PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE:

- Accessibility
- Physical Wellness
- Better amenities and standards to enhance user experience / reflect year-round use
- Connectivity
- Pet ownership
- Natural sustainable elements



SUMMARY OF OBSERVATIONS

- The Township does not have an established park classification or park standards framework.
- Currently the Township has an adequate supply of Township and Community Parks, however some amenities need replacement or upgrading.
- The Township is slightly deficient in Neighbourhood Parks
- The playgrounds do not all meet accessibility guidelines.
- There may be a lack of designated off-leash/dog parks in the hamlets within the Township of Wellesley.
- There is an adequate supply of sports fields to meet population growth however a strong capital program (forecast and budget) and aligned operating budget is needed for repair and replacement of sport amenities i.e., baseball netting, lining for multi-sport courts, hockey and basketball nets, etc.
- Rationalization of fields, while currently reflecting the historic geographic distribution within each village, should be reviewed over time to ensure the best use overall for the Township, and reflect their ongoing ability to maintain the required fields to support Township wide play.
- There are opportunities to create additional trails and/or walking loops around sports fields.
- There are limited opportunities in the Township to use road allowance for any future community or neighbourhood parks.



COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The community and stakeholder engagement section included discussions with the following:

- **WELLESLEY FALL FAIR POP UP** – interactive with all ages, especially the youth of the Township
- **PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE** (26 adults, 2 youth; representing Community Care Concepts, Woolwich Community Health Centre, Wellesley Lions Club, Agricultural Society, Theatre Wellesley, and Wellesley Minor Hockey).
- **TWO WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS** – one authored by two individuals specific to the Recreation Complex, and one authored by a youth with interest in an all-wheels park.
- **MAYOR AND THREE MEMBERS OF COUNCIL**
- **STAFF** including Director of Recreation, Recreation Supervisor, Facility Scheduling Administrator, Recreation Administrative Assistant, Facility Operators, Director of Finance, Director of Public Works, and Director of Planning (with GIS Contract personnel).
- **RECREATION SERVICES BOARD REPRESENTATIVES** of Linwood, Hawkesville and Wellesley
- **RESIDENT FROM ST. CLEMENTS** (member of ‘Mom’s group’).
- **WOOLWICH COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**
- **COMMUNITY CARE CONCEPTS** of Woolwich, Wellesley, and Wilmot.
- **WILMOT FAMILY RESOURCE CENTRE**

WHAT WE HEARD

WELLESLEY FALL FAIR

At the Fall Fair, individuals and families expressed their excitement and pride for the new arena and their hockey programs and their sportsfields. When asked or encouraged to write their thoughts down regarding opportunities for the Township the top three common themes were;

- Youth ‘hang out spaces’
- Indoor pool
- Additional trails



OPEN HOUSE

At the open house, people expressed their community pride, while recognizing the opportunities to enhance recreational opportunities.

A strong, vibrant community

- Quality and quantity of community organizations and volunteers
- Trails, parks, and greenspace are valued and important.
- Accessible, community-centred programs in all locations
- A new facility to enhance programs and events.

Aspirations for the future

- Enhanced trails; more parks and open space
- Ongoing facility maintenance and upgrades
- More varied programs/sports and events, engaging more volunteers.
- Transportation, especially for older adults
- Better communication: one point of contact for recreation

INTERVIEWS

Interviews with Township staff and elected officials focused more on specific operational and organizational themes.

Policy and Operations:

- **Strengthen policies and user agreements** to ensure equity and improve adherence.
- **Consider options for equitable access** (policy, funding).
- **Strengthen policies related to Recreation Services Boards**, grant programs, and fee reductions, and develop a comprehensive communication plan to explain financial impacts and the Township's supportive role.
- **Improve field maintenance scheduling** for user groups to ensure efficient operations.
- **Operational and financial considerations** highlight the need for fine-tuning procedures in the new Recreation Centre operating it like a business and adopting a policy-based approach in community engagement.

Community Development:

- **Consider alternative options** (parks, trails, programs) for all parts of the community and acknowledge the diversity of cultures in the Township.
- **Foster community development**, prioritize prompt responses to community needs, and collaborate with volunteers for after-school opportunities.

Staffing and Efficiency:

- **Optimize staffing** for the new facility, streamline administrative procedures with new software, and explore the transition of existing staff to enhance operational understanding.
- **Emphasize interdepartmental collaboration** for long-term budget forecasting, streamline processes between Recreation and Public Works, and explore opportunities to maximize shared staff and equipment.

Infrastructure and Maintenance:

- **Infrastructure-related suggestions** include maximizing facility and field usage, upgrades for St. Clements facilities, potential new dog parks, and the allocation of funds for a new facility in Hawkesville.
- **Community engagement and events** involve addressing volunteer challenges, promoting individual support for special events, exploring coordination opportunities (Township and volunteers), and connecting the Township as a 'community of communities'.
- **Address maintenance challenges** in specific areas due to resource limitations, prioritize downtown beautification, stormwater pond maintenance, and line painting, and continue to explore the efficient and shared use of Public Works equipment for enhanced park services.
- **Limited capital for much-needed retrofits.**
- **Clear communication on plans** for old Village of Wellesley facilities and site.

Interviews with the Recreation

Service Boards *(reflects consolidated comments from 3 – Linwood, Hawkesville and Village of Wellesley)*

- **Prioritize Playground Upgrade:** Plan replacement of the Linwood play structure by 2024, mainly funded by the Township with additional funds raised by the Recreation Services Board.
- **Diversify Recreational Amenities:** Expressed interest in adding a water feature like a modest splash pad and advocate for a water bottle filling station.
- **Optimize Soccer Field Usage:** Propose repurposing underutilized soccer fields, considering conversion to a dog park with potential fencing donation.
- **Address Sound System Needs:** Identify the need for a new indoor/outdoor sound system, already recognized in the Township budget.
- **Foster Collaboration:** Advocate for less siloed work, supporting a larger Board with representatives from all locations to encourage broader thinking and collaboration.
- **Enhance Play Facilities:** Await the arrival of a new play structure, with Township funding for the majority and the remainder held in a Township reserve fund.
- **Community Events and Renovation:** Host local events, express a desire to renovate or replace the community centre, and emphasize the popularity of the current facility for hosting events.
- **Promote Trail Connections:** Advocate for additional trail connections and loops, emphasizing the current reliance on road walking and cycling.
- **Sport Pad Usage and Winter Features:** Highlight the youth-led organization of sport pad activities and express interest in a roof over the sport pad to facilitate ice retention in winter.
- **Address Community Centre Impact:** Acknowledge the potential impact on adjacent property with the refurbishing or replacement of the community centre, suggesting consideration of an overall park plan for the area.
- **Past Fundraising and Advisory Role:** Historically, hosted a major Home Show as a fundraising event and expressed difficulty in volunteer recruitment. Transitioned toward becoming more of an 'Advisory Board.'
- **Future Planning and Roles:** Envision multiple roles for the potential new Services Board structure, emphasizing user engagement, potential funding programs, sourcing community partners, providing general input, and providing advice.
- **Community-Led Programs and Events:** Advocate for community-led programs and events, with a call out for community interest and a need for volunteer and corporate support.
- **Property Tax Impact:** Seek a clear understanding of the property tax impact if the Township expands its role.
- **Trail Development and Centre Utilization:** Emphasize the need for more trails and parks, ensuring development includes parkland, promoting walkability to the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex, and reviewing indoor facilities for potential renovation or retrofit.

PUBLIC SURVEY

A PUBLIC SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED BETWEEN DECEMBER 11, 2023, AND JANUARY 3, 2024, YIELDING 571 RESPONSES

(72% completed the entire survey) from all Wards in the Township. While not proportionately representative by Township ward boundary population, it does demonstrate a very strong response rate for the Township overall and provides significant insight into the findings and future directions. Results of the survey have been summarized below and have been considered in a review of the Strategic Themes as well as the recommendations. The complete survey results are available in **Appendix A**.



PREAMBLE

The timing for the distribution and completion of the survey was somewhat coincident with the partial opening of the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, arena component. Several responses and comments were directly focused on the amenities within the partially completed facility and should be considered in that light. In other words, as the indoor facility and outdoor amenities (including trails) are fully completed and the balance of the Centre is open for the public, the reaction and response focus may shift. It should also be noted that the immediacy of this exciting new facility, following the reaction in the Township to the tax increase that in part, supported the cost to deliver this new recreation opportunity, may have affected the nature of the responses.

The responses provide a good benchmark on several key metrics that should be considered by staff for future public survey data collection opportunities. It is being recommended that regular surveys, public engagement sessions and other feedback options be provided and tracked to measure results year-over year, at minimum. The responses and follow up actions can provide a good tool for staff to ensure proactive implementation reporting, as well as to know when to communicate with the public on ‘why’ some items and issues identified cannot be done within the timeline recommended.

Finally, it should be noted that the response rate for the questions on facilities and parks in Linwood and Hawkesville were quite low and did not allow for any meaningful observations or follow up recommendations.

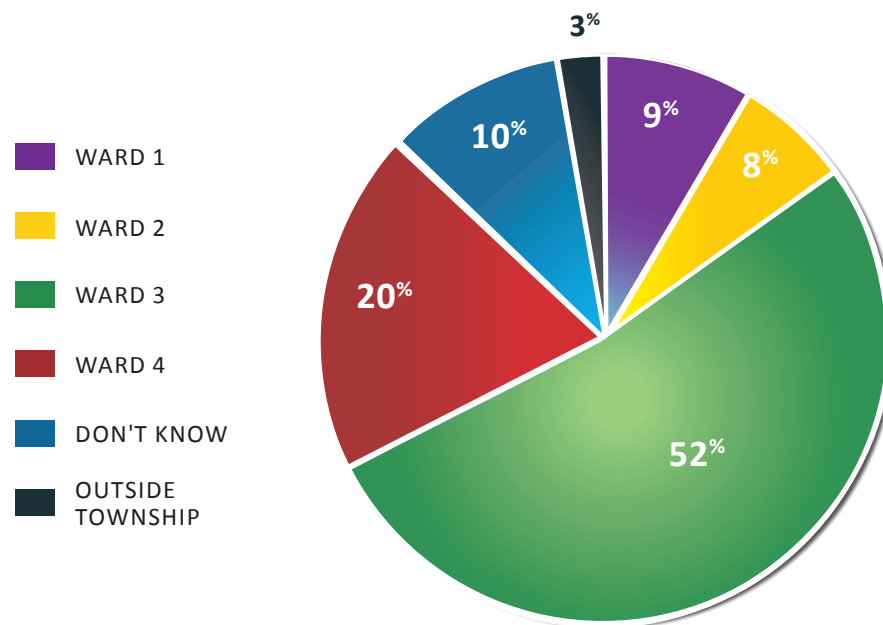
WHO RESPONDED TO THE SURVEY?



RESPONDENT AGE



REPRESENTATION FROM ACROSS THE TOWNSHIP

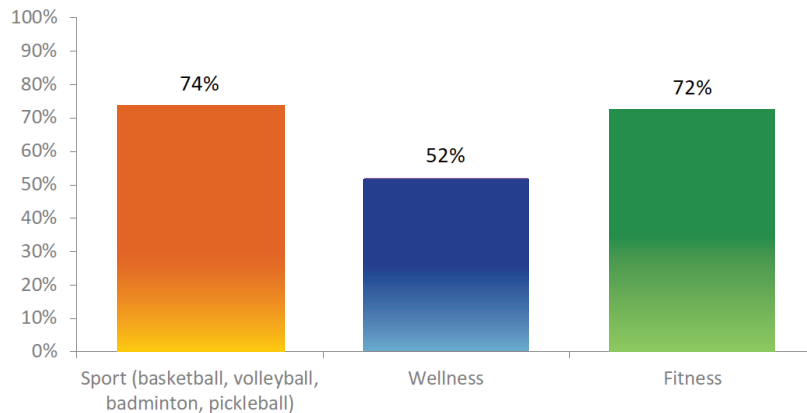


**SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS:
PROGRAMMING**

75%

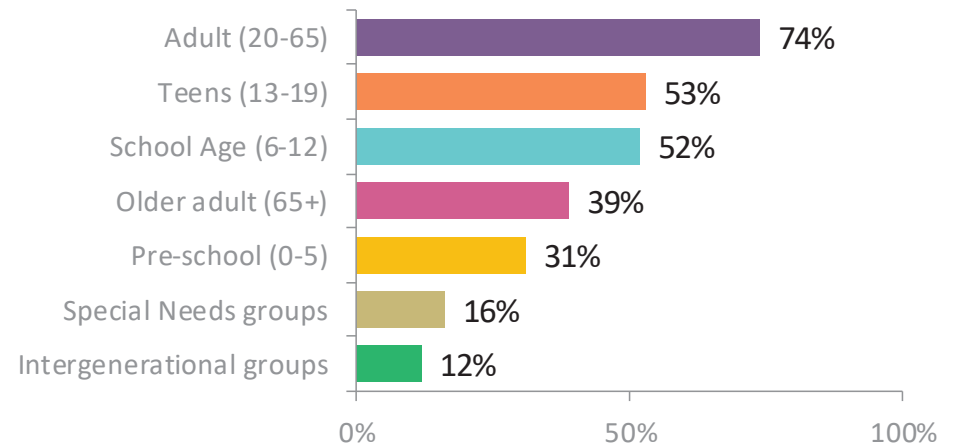
A convincing number **FEEL MORE PROGRAMMING SHOULD BE OFFERED WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP**, either by the municipality or other service providers.

**WHAT TYPES OF PROGRAMS WOULD YOU LIKE
TO SEE IN THE TOWNSHIP?**



Sport Programs (74%), Fitness Classes (72%) and General Wellness Programs (52%) WERE THE MOST POPULAR TYPES OF PROGRAMS RESPONDENTS WANTED TO SEE IN THEIR COMMUNITY.

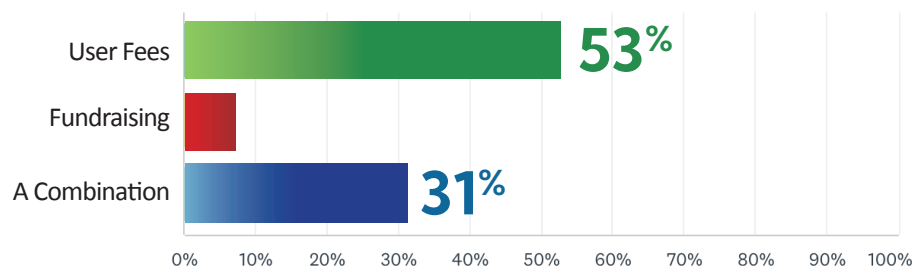
**RESPONDENTS WANTED TO SEE MORE
PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGE GROUPS.**



There was a very strong preference (75%) for programs to be offered by a combination of different providers (municipal, not-for-profit, community groups).



How you think new programs or activities should be funded?



53% OF RESPONDENTS FELT PROGRAMS SHOULD BE FUNDED THROUGH PARTICIPANT REGISTRATION/USER FEES

compared to

31% THAT FELT THAT PROGRAMS SHOULD BE FUNDED THROUGH A COMBINATION of user fees, property taxes and grants/fundraising.



There were other comments that favoured a combination of programs funded through registration/user fees and through grants or fundraising (17 respondents). This included **9 MENTIONS THAT PROGRAMMING SHOULD NOT BE SUPPORTED THROUGH INCREASED PROPERTY TAXES** (but through full cost recovery). Other responses included offering specialized programs for a fee to help subsidize other free programs.

EVENTS

JUST OVER HALF OF RESPONDENTS (51%) WANTED MORE EVENTS IN THE TOWNSHIP.

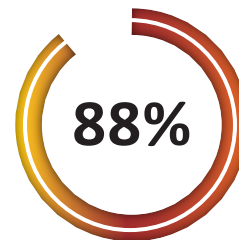
The most popular types of events suggested were:

- Music festivals/concerts (60)
- Parades (27)
- BBQs/Food Festival (46)
- Outdoor movie nights (30)

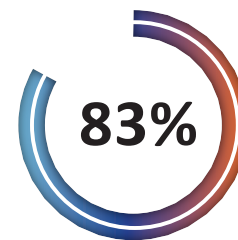


FACILITIES AND PARKS

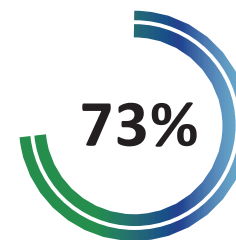
Survey respondents were asked about the importance and level of satisfaction with facilities and parks in the Township. Overall, the results show that respondents feel that the facilities and parks are important assets for community life. In general, respondents were also satisfied with parks and facilities. The response rates for the questions about parks and facilities in Linwood and Hawkesville were too low to provide any specific recommendations.



88% feel the Wellesley Recreation Complex Arena is very important or important.
69% are currently somewhat or very satisfied with the arena.

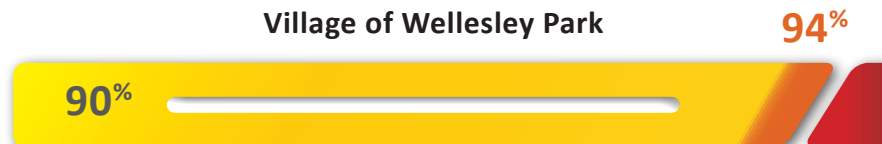


83% feel the St. Clements Community Centre Arena is very important, but only **65%** are very or somewhat satisfied.



73% of respondents feel the playground at the St. Clements Community Centre Arena is important, but the satisfaction rating was 10 points lower.

Village of Wellesley Park



94% feel the playground at the Village of Wellesley Park is important and over **90%** are somewhat or very satisfied with this amenity.

THE MOST POPULAR ACTIVITIES ON TOWNSHIP PARKS AND TRAILS WERE:

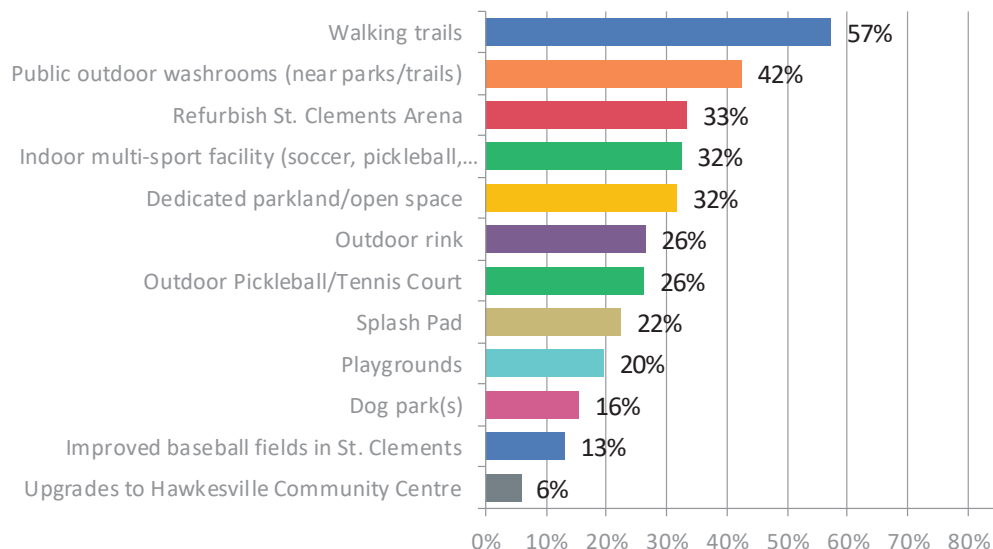
- Walking or running
- Biking
- Enjoying nature
- Sports



THE TOP 4 AMENITIES THAT PEOPLE WANTED TO SEE IN PARKS AND ON TRAILS WERE:

- Public Washrooms
- Drinking water
- All season trails
- Multi-court sports pad

WHEN ASKED WHAT THE TOWNSHIP SHOULD INVEST IN OVER THE NEXT 10 YEARS, **WALKING TRAILS WAS THE TOP CHOICE:**



Response options were provided by the survey with an opportunity to add 'other' answers

OTHER THEMES:

Several themes emerged through the open-ended responses to the survey.

1. Financial accountability and transparency.
2. No additional property tax increase.
3. Better communication, and community engagement.
4. Invest in what the Township has in each community through renovation and retrofit.
Improve overall maintenance of outdoor assets.
5. Improve accessibility (removing all types of barriers to participation).
6. Strong desire for a pool.

"Thank you
for all you
do for us!!"

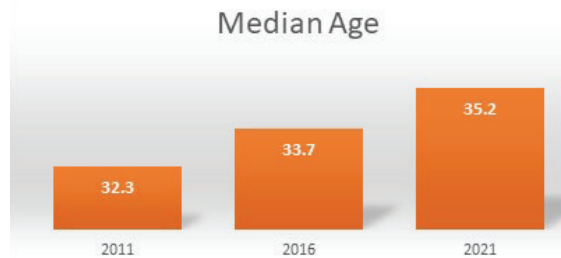
"Thank you for
continuing to strive to
create a community
where all can be
engaged!"

SUMMARY OF THE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT

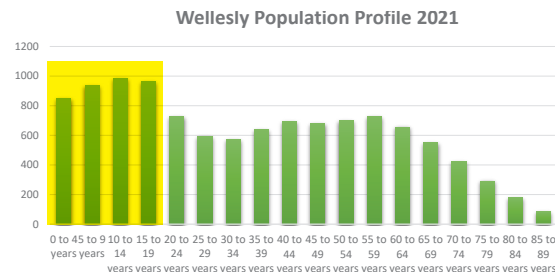
SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND RESEARCH, TRENDS AND DATA ANALYSIS

TOWNSHIP GROWTH AND DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

- “The Region of Waterloo is projecting a population growth rate in the Township of approximately 14% between 2021 and 2051, resulting in approximately 1,700 new residents (Source: Regional Official Plan Amendment No. 6, 2023).” (For reference, 2021 population is 11,900 and projected 2051 population is 13,600).
- The median age of residents in the Township is getting increasingly older and remains consistent with the Province of Ontario at 35.2 years of age.

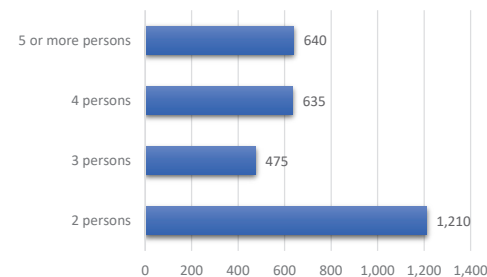


- The highest population age cohorts are between 0 to 19 years. Since children represent the main driver of structured sport, culture, and recreation programs, the Township can anticipate a sustained demand for children and youth programming and facility utilization.



- Most residents are under the age of 65 years who enjoy increasingly active lifestyles and will continue to look for both structured and moreover unstructured leisure pursuits within the Township.
- Majority of households have at least 3 or more persons.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE 2021

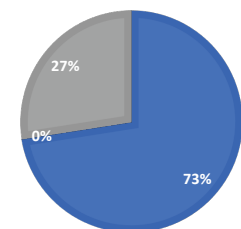


- 73% of households speak English.

Of the remaining 27% of residents who do not speak an official language, 95% speak Germanic languages at home, consistent with the significant Mennonite population.

LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME 2021

■ English ■ French ■ Non-Official Languages

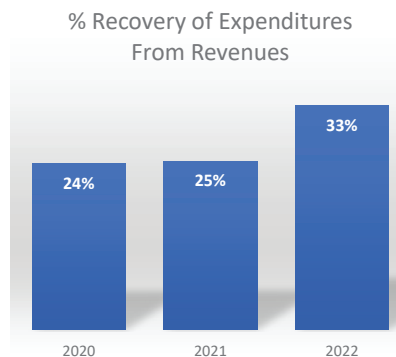


- The Township has a higher-than-average after-tax household income at \$115,200 (compared to the Provincial average of \$112,200).
- The Township has a relatively low incident of residents living in Low-income cut-offs (LICO) compared to the provincial average.

OPERATING BUDGET ANALYSIS

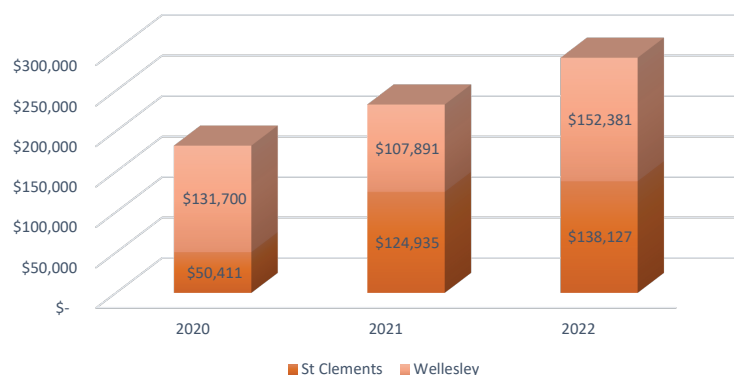
**Should be noted that COVID played a part in revenues and usage being lower in 2020 and 2021*

- **The Township is experiencing a favourable expenditure recovery trend** based on data from 2020, 2021 and 2022.



- **The Township revenues consist of a combination** of user fees, advertising, concession sales, vending, grants, and contributions from reserves.
- **The Township has a central recreation cost centre** which contains revenues from grants and contributions from reserves, as well as staff for the entire recreation services budget.
- **Arena/Ice revenues have experienced a steady increase** in revenues over the past three years.

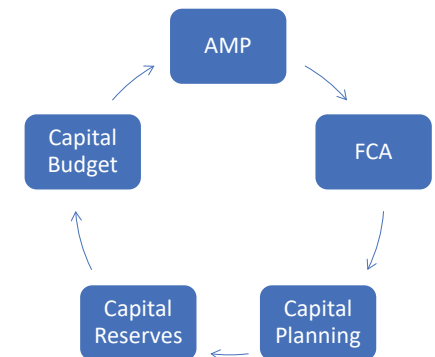
Arena/Ice Revenues 2020 - 2022



- **Facility rentals were generally consistent** in 2020 and 2021, with an increase noted in 2022.
- **Playfield revenues have increased** over the past three years, with income from Waterloo Minor baseball reflected in 2022.
- **Concession/Vending revenues have decreased substantially** between 2021 and 2022.

CAPITAL BUDGET ANALYSIS

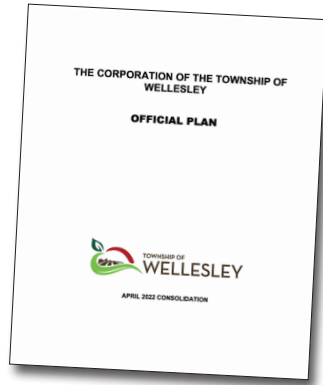
- **The Township has a well-structured capital reserve system** to support the Departments capital requirements.
- **Most of the dedicated reserves maintain stable balances.**
- The Department will be in a much better capital planning position once Phase 2 of the (Asset Management Plan) AMP is completed.
- **The 15-year capital planning framework for park equipment and fleet is strong.**
- **The Department facility capital planning framework** should model the park equipment and fleet framework.
- **Annual Capital works are expectedly increasing.**



CORPORATE POLICY REVIEW

OFFICIAL PLAN

- Includes general policies related to parkland acquisition, linking open spaces and trails, cycling routes, and supporting the Kissing Bridge Trail.
- Absence of parkland classifications, sizes, or parkland targets ex. 4 hectares/1,000 residents.



STRATEGIC PLAN

- Parks and Recreation services have direct leadership accountability for Corporate Strategic Priorities in “Health Promotion, “Opportunities for Youth & Seniors,” and “Recreation, Community Facilities and Programs.”
- Parks and Recreation has shared responsibility with Public Works to address the Corporate Strategic Priority of “Infrastructure Improvement and Management.”

PARKS AND RECREATION STRATEGIC PLAN (2014)

- Residents have a favourable view of the importance of parks and recreation services (2014).
- Status of recommendations addressed from the 2014 Parks and Recreation Master Plan are included in the full Situational Analysis Report that reflected staff and council priorities at that time.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

- Parks and Recreation facilities will be subject to the next phase of the Asset Management Plan.

DEVELOPMENT CHARGE BYLAW

- The 2014 Development Charge Bylaw identified capital dollars for future recreation projects including a dog park.

NATIONAL AND PROVINCIAL POLICY REVIEW

The focus here is to offer insight into national policy frameworks and/or provincial legislation that has specific relevance to the planning of future recreation and park services.

A summary of the relevant policies or legislation is offered, and the specific relevance to the Township of Wellesley is outlined. The specific frameworks and legislation contained in this report are as follows.

- Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing
- Canadian Sport Policy Canadian Sport Policy 2012
- A Common Vision for increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living in Canada: Let’s Get Moving
- Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians Policy Framework (2009) – Parks and Recreation Ontario
- Parks for All
- Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)
- More Homes, Built Faster Act (2022) (commentary as of summer 2023)



STRATEGIC THEMES

THE SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS REPORT IS DESIGNED TO CREATE A BENCHMARK with respect to how the Township is currently meeting the parks and recreation service needs of its residents. This benchmarking exercise is evidence-based. It includes qualitative information through stakeholder engagement, survey results, policy alignment, trends and best practices and sound planning principles. It is further informed by quantitative data and information through a review of the current inventory of assets, utilization rates, financial performance, demographics, and growth projections.

The following have emerged as Strategic Themes that serve as the over-arching framework for the recommendations in the Master Plan.

1.0 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Formalized capital budget forecast
- Operating budget and methods for tracking metrics
- Cost recovery strategies
- Alternative revenue streams
- Written contracts with partners
- Service level and standards review

2.0 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

- Formalized agreements with Service Clubs, Community organizations and Partners
- Bi-annual meetings and planning meetings
- Volunteer development and support
- Role clarity for staff and volunteers

3.0 FACILITIES & SPACE ALLOCATION

- Rationalization of sports fields
- Review and tracking resident and non-resident use
- Facility distribution – indoor and outdoor
- Year-round facility and program opportunities
- Events
- Meeting new and emerging needs
- Long term facility needs

4.0 PARKS, TRAILS, & OPEN SPACE

- Levels of service and standards for maintenance
- Park classification system
- On-road, off-road trail connectivity
- Dog park/s
- Environmental sustainability and natural preservation

5.0 TOWNSHIP ADMINISTRATION

- Health and safety
- Space allocation, Affiliation, Cost Recovery Policy
- State of Good Repair – procedures
- Education and Awareness
- Formalized training and development of staff and volunteers
- Staffing Plan
- Facility rationalization, re-purposing, and revival
- Measuring, monitoring, and reporting

6.0 COMMUNICATION

- Regular update meetings with partners and volunteer groups
- Engagement opportunities
- Reporting and sharing results
- Customer satisfaction
- Digital promotion



RECOMMENDATIONS

THE RECOMMENDATIONS HAVE BEEN POPULATED UNDER THE SIX STRATEGIC THEMES AND INCLUDE SUGGESTED TIMING FOR THEIR IMPLEMENTATION. A key consideration for all recommendations will be the capacity (financial and human) to undertake the recommended actions either as stand-alone or as part of a series of linked actions. A review by staff is recommended that would permit adjusting the timing and/or the expected outcome based upon changing needs and external influences, trends, capacity, grant opportunities, etc.



THEME 1 – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

CONTEXT

The Township is entering into a new sphere of complexity regarding its facility, program, and event operations with the opening of the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex. The Township is a ‘community of communities’ and providing continuing support for services across the Township will continue to require proactive financial planning and ongoing work with partners. Consideration of many financial policies and procedures will need review, updating, and/or development. Both the capital ‘state of good repair’ and lifecycle budget planning and forecasting for the building structural elements, and FFE (furniture, fixture, and equipment) is needed, as is a more detailed and focused operating budget with clear cost centres that can be used for tracking purposes. The Township Treasurer will play a key role in working with Department staff to ensure alignment within the corporate budgeting and account framework.

The community was faced with a sizeable property tax increase to offset debt incurred to finance the construction of the Township of Wellesley

Recreation Complex. Resident sentiment toward additional increases in property taxes was negative and many expressed a desire to access the facilities ‘free of charge’ given the financial contribution they feel they have already provided. Existing and new users and uses at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex will require a thoughtful, and perhaps phased in, approach to partial or full cost-recovery for facility rentals, program registrations and membership-based fees and charges.

Finalizing existing arrangements with formal agencies (Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Health Centre and Community Care Concepts) as well as volunteer led community groups and service clubs in all villages across the Township will assist in managing the investment of Township resources as well as identifying possible sources of revenue.

A review of levels of service and standards provided for indoor and outdoor facilities will need to be undertaken to gain efficiencies and manage ‘budget creep’ as public expectations grow.





THEME 1 – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
1.1.a	Develop a ten-year capital budget forecast that includes all capital items required at the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex (informed by the project manager and Contractor). In conjunction with the Treasurer, identify the year in the forecast with the associated funding source identified.				
1.1.b	Populate the ten-year capital budget forecast to include results from the recently updated Asset Management Plan, feedback from staff, inspection report data, public feedback, assessments by others etc. (see 1.11)				
1.2.a	Format the account structure (cost centres) in a manner that readily includes all expenditures and associated revenues by key facility components at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex to inform/support on-going performance measurement and management. (i.e. arena ice, arena floor, concessions, meeting rooms, gymnasium, halls, fitness centre, outdoor amenities, etc.). Include facility related costs for the adjacent Health Centre.				
1.2.b	Format the account structure (as noted in 1.2. a), for all facilities at all locations in the Township to inform/support on-going performance measurement and management and to assist in determining cost recovery where user fees are collected.				
1.3	Identify all costs for direct program delivery to assist in refining user fees in future, including a sliding scale of 10-100% recovery through user fees. Consider a 'grandfathered' approach where users must adjust from no-low cost to user fee model.				
1.4	Identify all opportunities to increase revenue including sponsorship, naming rights, expanded food and beverage, digital advertising, etc.				



THEME 1 – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

		SUGGESTED TIMING										
#	RECOMMENDATION	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG								
1.5	Develop service delivery contracts with Partner Organizations* that clearly reflect the true costs borne by the Municipality and that outline future fees that could be paid by the users/partners. This should include all costs for facility operation by room, administrative costs, promotion, etc. to demonstrate that no use of space is “free” and to indicate the level of support the Township is providing. Work with the Partners to determine their respective access to grant funding, fundraising, or registration fees/drop-in contributions, to assist with revenue generation for the Township. Monitor results annually. * Partner Organizations for this recommendation include Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Care Concepts and Woolwich Community Health Centre.			<div></div>								
1.6	Work with Operations staff to develop written levels of service for maintenance of all indoor and outdoor facilities and ensure that these are reviewed annually as budgets are developed to identify potential cost savings, efficiencies. Ensure community user groups understand the levels of service regarding maintenance activity and overall aesthetics for each facility. Consider adjusting user fees (where applicable) to groups using facilities that reflect various levels of service or ‘class’ of facility (i.e. A diamond, B diamond etc.)			<div><div>2023 PROGRAM SURVEY SAID..</div><div><p>How you think new programs or activities should be funded?</p><table><thead><tr><th>Funding Method</th><th>Percentage</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>User Fees</td><td>52%</td></tr><tr><td>Fundraising</td><td>10%</td></tr><tr><td>A Combination</td><td>31%</td></tr></tbody></table></div></div>	Funding Method	Percentage	User Fees	52%	Fundraising	10%	A Combination	31%
Funding Method	Percentage											
User Fees	52%											
Fundraising	10%											
A Combination	31%											
1.7	Work with the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex Capital Campaign volunteer personnel to assess the opportunity to continue a fund-raising campaign to be dedicated to an Operating Fund – fund could be drawn upon annually to offset operating costs until revenue streams are increased from ongoing use of the Centre (programs, rentals etc.) (i.e., five-year plan).											
1.8	Review the current approach working with the Village of Wellesley and St. Clements soccer organizations and assess options that provide a consistent approach to field space allocation and user fees payable to the Township. While the fees have historically been waived due to volunteer or third-party lining of fields, the Township costs for grass cutting and other maintenance services should be recovered in part through user fees.											



THEME 1 – FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING		
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
1.9	Explore the potential to develop a Community Fund that is criteria based for groups to apply for funding through the Township budget, thus minimizing (and eventually eliminating) the need for groups and organizations to come directly to Council to request funds and /or fee waivers.			
1.10	Categorize events hosted in the Township and identify those that require substantial Township investment (including staff time, use of Township equipment, tables & chairs etc.). Work with service clubs and partner organizations to set priorities, streamline event management, or adjust how they are directly supported by the Township to reduce costs and contribute to event financial sustainability and ongoing community pride in events.			
1.11	<p>Develop a 10-year capital forecast that considers input from a variety of sources.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facility condition assessments on indoor and outdoor facilities that includes needed repairs, replacements, or improvements. • Results of the Asset Management Plan findings for Parks and Recreation Assets. • Input from operations staff. • Feedback from the Accessibility Advisory Committee (or staff liaison with this function). • Feedback from the Recreation Services Board/s. <p>The cost estimates should align with identified sources of funding including reserves and reserve funds, grants, fundraising, other.</p>			<p>10-YEAR CAPITAL FORECAST</p>
1.12	To respond to the growing interest by Township residents in accessing aquatic programs and services (swimming lessons) in neighbouring communities, initiate discussions regarding options to continue to provide access. This could include working on staff recruitment strategies, improving communication regarding available time slots, potential to assist with funding contributions etc. The intent would be to increase Township access to aquatic programs in adjacent communities that have existing indoor aquatic facilities with available registration slots or times for non-resident use.			<p>WOOLWICH TOWNSHIP</p> <p>Wilmot TOWNSHIP OF</p>



THEME 2 – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

CONTEXT







The Township is fortunate to have a robust volunteer rich community, willing to assist with hosting events, coordinating program delivery, and launching fund-raising campaigns for community assets. There is an existing network of three service delivery agencies (* Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Care Concepts and Woolwich Community Health Centre) that provide services across the Township for all ages, with a primary focus on health care, social services and ‘wrap around’ services for families. To assist in

streamlining the relationships with these groups and agencies, more formalized agreements will need to be updated or developed to ensure role clarity and to outline expectations for both parties regarding ‘who does what’, cost sharing, ownership etc. Over time, embarking on direct program delivery as a Township will need a strong volunteer corps with leadership from full-time or part-time Township staff to ensure policies, procedures and risk management considerations are at the forefront.

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
2.1.a	<p>Create a staff position that reflects responsibilities for volunteer coordination and community development in the Township. This can be a .5 FTE to launch and grow as resources permit. Duties could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer recruitment and coordination including maintenance of a database, updating a list of volunteer opportunities, etc. • Communication portal • Training sessions • Ensuring consistency in policies and procedures • Monitoring adherence to risk management protocols • Celebrating success 				
2.1.b	Grow position to full-time to continue to offer programs in the Township either through direct delivery or in conjunction with volunteer groups.				









THEME 2 – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
2.2.a	Develop and adopt an Affiliation Policy in conjunction with major user groups to confirm roles and expectations for use of Town facilities and assets. As affiliated groups and organizations are identified, enter into specific contracts or partner agreements where it may be necessary to further outline unique roles or specific deliverables for both parties.				
2.2.b	Ensure not-for-profits and Registered Charities groups submit financial statements annually as part of their application and renewal process. Work with the Treasurer to ensure that the level of detail for financial information required aligns with Township needs to assess organizational stability and sustainability, identifies use of funds, includes registration data and income, outlines reserves and their purpose etc. Only not-for-profits and Registered Charities would be eligible for funding.				
2.3	Develop a template to be used to enter Annual contracts with Service Clubs to outline roles and identify space and Township services that will be available to the Clubs to run their programs and events. Advance Council approval of the templates should assist in gradually reducing the need for groups to attend Council individually to seek support.				
2.4	Develop Partner Agreements (as noted in 1.5) that includes a full outline of roles and responsibilities, reporting requirements, financial support, areas of focus, communication needs, etc. Partner Organizations for this recommendation include Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Care Concepts and Woolwich Community Health Centre.				 <p>75%.</p> <p>WANT A COMBINATION OF DIFFERENT PROVIDERS FOR NEW PROGRAM OFFERINGS</p>


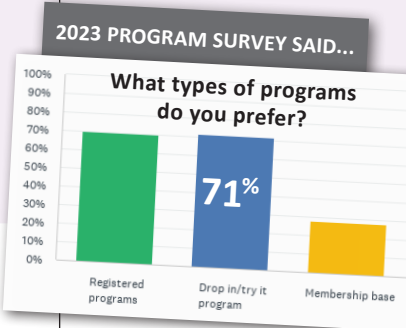


THEME 2 – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
2.5.a	<p>Host a Programs 'table or committee' for all program providers to discuss quarterly planning and proactively look ahead. Agenda could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a year look ahead calendar. • Maximizing use of facility space. • Assessing gaps in program delivery. • Coordination of staff training. Identification of funding sources. • Shared marketing and promotion. • Customer satisfaction surveys. • Lessons learned. <p>Consider existing partners as well as the Waterloo Region Library, Recreation Service Boards, community volunteers.</p>				
2.5.b	<p>Commit to attending and becoming an active member of the existing 'Rural Collaborative' to discuss plans, share ideas and network with other service providers. Engage this group (or members as needed) in the Programs Committee (as noted in 2.5.a) to further maximize and leverage resources of all organizations.</p>				
2.5.c	<p>Develop a longer-term vision or strategy with key partners to identify opportunities to maximize resources, achieve a shared commitment to the quality of life in the Township, reduce duplication and ensure ongoing communication.</p>				
2.6	<p>Host an initial meeting with the Recreation Service Board (3) representatives to discuss opportunities to streamline volunteer involvement and share best practices. Discuss options to merge into one Township Recreation Services Board within a one-year time horizon, with sub-committees representing Hawkesville, Linwood, St. Clements, and the Village of Wellesley. Over time, future consideration for their role could include Trails planning and coordination.</p>				



THEME 2 – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & PARTNERSHIPS

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
2.7.a	Work with volunteers to develop a survey to assess options within the Township identifying opportunities to enhance services for various ages throughout the Township. (ball tournament event, kids' activities, options for families). Build on results of Program Survey undertaken in 2023 with more detailed questions regarding programs, events, and locations.				 
2.7.b	Work with partners to ensure full time summer camp is being offered in the Township of Wellesley commencing in 2025. Pilot direct program delivery using Township resources to assess capacity to expand.				
2.7.c	Promote offering "Try-It" programs at the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex to allow residents of all ages to try new activities for a short period of time (3 visits), including Basketball, volleyball, floor hockey, badminton, pickleball, skateboarding, etc. Gauge interest from participants to enlist volunteers to establish sport organizations to continue growth and development in areas meeting with high interest in continuing.				
2.7.d	Working with the Wilmot Family Resource Centre, ensure that youth friendly spaces are available to encourage youth participation within the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex (space spaces, seating areas, pilot 'coffee house' type events etc.)				
2.8.a	Work with existing arts and cultural groups and volunteers to assess plans and priorities for future growth of public art and arts and culture programs in the Township.				42% WANT FUTURE GROWTH OF ARTS & CULTURE PROGRAMS
2.8.b	Offer a similar "Try-It" programs for art and cultural programs including drawing, photography, cooking, digital media, cartooning, etc. Gauge interest from participants to establish community organizations to continue growth and development in areas meeting with high interest in continuing.				

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
2.9	Adopt the Program Framework (outlined in the Situational Analysis Report) and set priorities to implement into annual workplans for staff as resources permit.				
2.10	Host an annual 'Volunteer Recruitment and Celebration Fair' at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre. Work with groups and agencies to provide a full range of volunteer information, recruitment opportunities, celebratory events, access to training and networking.				
2.11	Work with local organizations and volunteers to develop a Township of Wellesley recognition area in the Bill Gies Recreation Centre – include Athletes, Coaches, Builders, etc.				



THEME 3 – FACILITIES AND SPACE ALLOCATION
CONTEXT

The Township is fortunate to be delivering the completion of the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex in Q4 2023 and into 2024. This will allow them to offer continuing use of an ice pad and community facilities, while providing new additional indoor and outdoor amenities. There will be increased demand for use of space, coupled with competing interest in the same space. Having an updated space allocation policy would be beneficial to staff to assist in scheduling challenges.

Ensuring all villages have opportunity for indoor and outdoor play that meets residents’ needs is important in providing access to recreation, park, and trail activities year-round. Given the geographic expanse and












location of the villages in the Township, rationalization of the number of sport features (baseball, soccer, hard courts) becomes challenging, as residents prefer to have access to these facilities in their own village and are less willing to drive to participate in a chosen activity. Ongoing costs to maintain all locations will continue to be a financial challenge while trying to balance fairness and equity of access.

Monitoring use and demand for existing indoor facilities will be necessary to plan for future budget requirements to improve and enhance facilities (and/or replace if needed) to ensure that future planning provides a long-term view of facility needs in the Township.

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
3.1	Establish a tracking system to validate use of all Township facilities (i.e., ice time, sport fields, other) during peak and off-peak times, year-round, by resident and non-resident groups. Ensure tracking is consistent to monitor year-over-year metrics. Ensure Township staff are in control of, or fully involved with, decision making regarding use of Township facilities.				
3.2a	Monitor use of St. Clements Arena in conjunction with a facility lifecycle review and results of the most recent Asset Management Plan assessment, to assess future investment needed.				



THEME 3 – FACILITIES AND SPACE ALLOCATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
3.2.b	Given expressed interest in other indoor facilities, (dry floor activities such as ball hockey, pickleball, roller-skating, off-season indoor sport training, aquatics, other) conduct a Feasibility and Needs Study to assess the potential to consider options for an indoor facility. Undertake study in conjunction with a review of the lifespan remaining for St. Clements Arena to consider continued or alternative uses at this location.				
3.3	Ensure that facility improvements, major required capital investment as well as aesthetic improvements are undertaken at the St. Clements Arena to maintain the facility in a good state-of-repair / demonstrate pride in all Township facilities, until such time as a Feasibility Study is undertaken to assess future facility needs, including the future of the St. Clements Arena. (after 10 years – end of period for the Master Plan).				
3.4	Confirm ongoing intention to ensure that a variety of outdoor facilities are available within each village (Hawkesville, Linwood, St. Clements, Village of Wellesley) to promote local community access to sport and recreation. This could include a combination of sport fields, trails, play structures, multi courts and will require the Township to budget accordingly in conjunction with the local volunteers and their fund-raising capacity.				
3.5a	Review options for year-round access to outdoor recreation options throughout the Township. Work in conjunction with the Programs Working Table to balance indoor and outdoor opportunities.				
3.5b	Identify amenities or improvements needed at existing outdoor facilities to support year-round use (roof over court sport pads, winterized outdoor washrooms, outdoor fixed fitness equipment, winter maintenance of trails, ongoing support for volunteers for outdoor ice provision, hosting events etc.)				










THEME 3 – FACILITIES AND SPACE ALLOCATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
3.6	Conduct a safety audit of outdoor sports fields to ensure they meet current standards, are not in conflict with local residential enjoyment of parks, promote appropriate use of the fields (size, type of sport etc.). Address any immediate health and/or safety concerns.				
3.7	Assess space available in the Bill Gies Recreation Centre to offer 'try-it' programs for drop-in basketball, pickleball, volleyball, arts, and cultural programs etc. and continue to assess opportunities to work with volunteers to continue offering these programs in the Bill Gies Recreation Centre. (noted in 2.7.c. and 2.8 b.)				<p>71%</p> <p>PREFER DROP-IN & 'TRY IT' PROGRAM OFFERINGS</p>
3.8	Monitor plan regarding access to the Fitness Centre within the Bill Gies Recreation Centre and ensure Risk Management personnel are involved in a review of security, health and safety, use of CCTV monitoring and developing emergency procedures that address staffed and non-staffed use of all facilities.				
3.9.a	Continue meeting with ice users annually to review proposed ice allocation plans and engage users in settling any issues with setting priorities for use of ice during prime and non-prime times for local and non-resident groups. Establish tracking system for user groups to submit usage by gender and residency in addition to other data metrics being collected.				
3.9.b	Director to work with area Municipalities (and their respective Minor Hockey, Junior Hockey, and Skating organizations = all ice users) to monitor future planning for ice facilities, to ensure proactive planning and potential joint-venture agreements are considered.				
3.9.c	As need arises, expand this coordinated tracking and monitoring discussion for other sport and recreation facilities (curling, indoor sports, gymnasiums, aquatics, other).				



THEME 3 – FACILITIES AND SPACE ALLOCATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
3.10	Adjust utilization tracking methodology to only include 'rentable hours' for facilities (remove unavailable times, maintenance blocks, statutory holidays (where relevant), system checks etc.) to ensure that % use is being tracked over time with realistic data.				
3.11	Engage operations staff (indoor and outdoor) to plan for future equipment and staffing needs to ensure efficiencies and maximize staff resources. Have pre-season planning meetings to discuss current issues and identify mechanisms to deal with communication between staff, users, and volunteers.				
3.12	Assess the interest in and demand for curling to ensure best use of ice for various ice activities. Consider moving curling program to St. Clements Arena to address growth related needs in this program area.				
3.13	Track data that identifies costs for the early installation of ice at the two arenas (when earlier than the historically identified start date). Ensure contracts are signed by users to pay for ice time during these earlier time slots and do not permit cancellations without payment.				



THEME 4 – PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES

CONTEXT

The Township has several centrally located community parks within most villages. Neighbourhood parks, smaller parkettes and a variety of trails contribute to the park and Open Space network. Classifying parks and developing standards of maintenance, including reviewing financial impacts to maintain these standards, will assist in future planning as

well as scheduling of active playing fields within the parks. Dog Park use in the Village of Wellesley village is high, although this location was intended to be temporary, suggesting the need for an alternate location. Protecting natural areas and respecting the large rural properties in the Township are of high importance to residents.

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
4.1	Adopt the recommended parkland classification system and amend the Official Plan to reflect the parkland classification system, including parkland targets. Ensure policies that reference existing parkland legislation are updated, as well as policies that recommend the co-location of parks with other open space, stormwater management areas and school properties. Work with Planning staff to ensure monitoring of current legislation affecting parks planning and development, growth impacts and other external influences are proactively identified as they may impact the Township.				

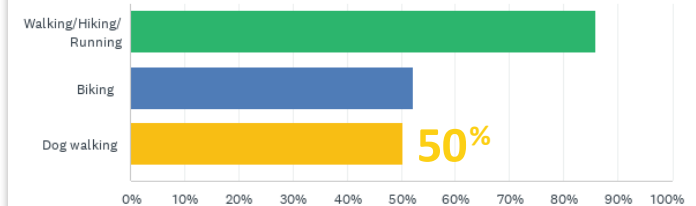


THEME 4 – PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING		
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
4.2	<p>Develop a Dog Park strategy that considers impacts for re-locating existing and/or creating new Dog Parks within the Township.</p> <p>The Strategy could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of volunteers and feedback from users of the Village of Wellesley dog park • Adjacencies to natural areas, water course • Options for suitable surfaces • Maintenance expectations • Lighting, access, and fencing • Signage requirements • Parking • Options for large and small dogs • Features for dogs and owners (shade, water, seating). • Best practices from other jurisdictions. <p>In the short term consider relocating the Dog Park in the Village of Wellesley to the lower soccer fields pending completion of the new soccer fields at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex.</p> <p>Assist Linwood with implementing the Dog Park in Linwood and monitor use and involvement of volunteers at these two locations (Village of Wellesley and Linwood) as future expansion is considered.</p>			
4.3	<p>Investigate the opportunity to engage the previous Trails (and/or Active Transportation) Committee volunteers into the new Committee or Board in conjunction with the Recreation Service Boards to provide comprehensive and organized feedback into all Township parks, trails, program, and facility needs.</p>			

2023 PROGRAM SURVEY SAID...

What activities do you or members of your household participate in within the parks/trails/outdoor facilities in the Township?





THEME 4 – PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
4.4	Develop standards to ensure the ongoing preservation of natural areas within the Parks and Open Space system, while considering options to expand naturalized areas where appropriate and where it may reduce maintenance costs. Ensure public communication is robust and educational to assist in promoting naturalization, environmental sustainability and continued support for trees and the natural environment. Include any existing volunteer organizations and the Grand River Conservation Authority where appropriate.				
4.5	Assess the maintenance level of service being provided to baseball diamonds and soccer fields and align with actual scheduled use (practices vs games) and level of use (permitted vs pick-up and casual play).				
4.6	Review the allocation for use of soccer fields and baseball diamonds to ensure maximizing use in coordination with maintenance schedules. Institute user fees consistent with Township maintenance activity for all fields (baseball and soccer) and reflect field classification (if implemented).				
4.7	Ensure regular discussions with Planning staff and Township GIS resources to proactively identify opportunities for land acquisition, trail connectivity etc. Keep data up-to-date and review annually.				
4.8	Monitor the timing for the expansion of the cycling lane on Queen's Bush Road to ensure timely linkage to the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex. Continue working with Regional staff to assess off-road cycling routes in the Township.				



THEME 4 – PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACES

		SUGGESTED TIMING			
#	RECOMMENDATION	SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
4.9.a	Working with residents, create a walking trail loop around the open space at the rear of the Linwood Recreation Complex and around any underutilized sports fields in the Township. Consider fixed fitness equipment along trails.				<div>2023 PROGRAM SURVEY SAID...</div> <div>In your opinion, what are the top 3-5 things that the Township should invest in over the next 10 years?</div> <div><div>Walking trails</div><div>57%</div></div> <div><div>Dedicated parkland/open...</div><div></div></div> <div><div>Playgrounds</div><div></div></div> <div><div>Outdoor Pickleball/T...</div><div>26%</div></div> <div><div>0%</div><div>10%</div><div>20%</div><div>30%</div><div>40%</div><div>50%</div><div>60%</div><div>70%</div></div>
4.9.b	Consider offering a pedometer ‘lending program’ or programs with others (Library, community groups) to promote easy to access use of the trails – walking/running groups, nature walks, ‘walk and talk’ days, etc.				
4.10	Complete a Parks Master Plan and a capital forecast for all Township Community and Neighbourhood Classified Parks, to look at opportunities to improve outdoor amenities and general park improvements.				
4.11	Seek public input to implement ideas regarding the commitment to the ‘greening’ and beautification of the Township parks.				
4.12.a	Enhance the outdoor pavilion in St. Clements to support year-round options for play. Confirm that the pavilion location in St. Clements and Village of Wellesley and the outdoor court locations in Linwood and Hawkesville are meeting local needs for natural outdoor rinks.				
4.12.b	As part of the review in St. Clements, undertake a Township wide outdoor ice strategy that assesses existing and future locations including access to water, need for a strong volunteer corps, suitable support amenities (benches, roof covering, parking, lighting, safety, other), impact of climate change and interest in outdoor skating and shinny trends.				
4.13	Ensure development applications identify lands for park dedication and trail connections and use all available legislative tools to acquire.				










THEME 5 – TOWNSHIP RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

CONTEXT












With the opening of the indoor and outdoor facilities at the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex, additional policies and procedures will assist staff in balancing existing and new demands for efficient use of space, provide for enhanced health and safety considerations, and outline policy frameworks in consultation with stakeholders. Support for volunteers, including training and development opportunities, will assist in continuing to proactively engage the large volunteer

commitment in the community for programs and events. A review of the staff structure will help the Township prepare for existing and future demand. Gathering data and baseline metrics will assist in establishing annual targets and reporting to the community and elected officials on many areas of operation, as well as ensuring ongoing communication on these items remains a priority.

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
5.1.a	Work with Human Resources to identify training and development opportunities for all full-time staff that align with the primary job responsibilities.				
5.1.b	Work with Finance staff to support new areas of financial analysis and modelling, tracking systems, identification of costs for service delivery, potential impact for revenue generation etc. Maximize use of existing technology to streamline processes.				
5.2.a	Amend the position description for the Administrative Assistant to include a % of time (recommend .5 FTE to start) dedicated to volunteer support and community development (including a focus on options for implementing new program delivery). Convert to full-time as budget permits or as new revenue is generated to offset any incremental costs.				










THEME 5 – TOWNSHIP RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
5.2.b	Create a new position to develop revenue strategies for the Township. Identify existing revenue streams, work with user groups regarding cost recovery targets, identify potential for growth, new opportunities, alignment with Township priorities, coordination with local business and industry. Set revenue targets and track annually.				
5.3	Increase facility and park operator complement. Work with staff to prepare the best mix of maintenance, cleaning, and technical staff, including the potential to turn part-time staff into FTEs. Consider funding from increased revenues. Engage existing staff in discussions regarding the best staffing model.				
5.4	Include facility and park operator staff in scheduling indoor and outdoor facility maintenance plans to maximize efficiencies and identify gaps. Ensure available software and/or training is in place to support this increased involvement and focus on efficiencies. Use data collected from facility monitoring plan that tracks use of the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex (space, time of day, time of year etc.) as well as scheduling data for outdoor facilities.				
5.5	Continue ongoing and regular discussion with Public Works staff to identify efficiencies for staff, use of fleet and lead role for various maintenance and operational responsibilities.				
5.6	Complete an exercise to see what responsibilities best align with each Department i.e. Special Events, Beautification of Township, season 'cross over' activities, facility maintenance and capital improvements, other.				
5.7	Develop 5-year staffing plan that considers succession planning, training and development needs, ability to meet growth needs and emerging program demands from the community.				



THEME 5 – TOWNSHIP RECREATION ADMINISTRATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING		
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
5.8.a	Develop a Township Affordable Access Policy in conjunction with access and subsidy policies offered by 3 major program partner organizations. (Wilmot Family Resource Centre, Woolwich Community Care Concepts and Woolwich Community Health Centre).			
5.8.b	Over time, consider options to develop a single point of contact for access to subsidy as needed, through pooling of various resources and identifying a seamless approach to the subsidy process for the community.			
5.9	Undertake a follow-up Program Survey (modelled after the one completed in 2023) after the Township of Wellesley Recreation Centre has been operational for 8-12 months to test the assumptions, conduct more detailed assessment into needs. Ensure arts and culture are considered.			
5.10	Implement current standards and 'best practices' for training regarding program and service delivery that enhance quality for the Township. (HIGH FIVE, ORFA Facility Training, other).			



THEME 6 – COMMUNICATION

CONTEXT

The importance of regular communication with stakeholders, volunteers and partner organizations is critical to maintain a responsive service delivery network in the Township. During the engagement sessions with the public and groups, the desire to connect with staff on a regular basis and to contribute to decision making and setting

priorities was noted. Periodic surveying of the public regarding customer satisfaction for programs and services, including those offered by third parties, will help in measuring the performance of the various models of delivery, allowing changes to be made where necessary.

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
6.1	Conduct annual 'customer satisfaction surveys' for users of the Township of Wellesley Recreation Complex (indoor and outdoor users).				
6.2	Working with the Recreation Services Boards (or newly established Board), conduct periodic surveys to assess needs and priorities.				
6.3	As part of a broader corporate branding exercise, work with community partners to ensure the Township logo is visible in all communication materials. This should include signage, staff uniforms, and social media posts that reflect either direct (financial) or indirect (use of facilities, staff time, equipment loan) support of the Township to demonstrate visible and recurring support for community events and programs. Develop consistent uniforms for facility, park, program, and administrative staff that is easily identifiable by the public as part of the broader visual identity program.				

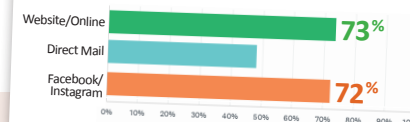


THEME 6 – COMMUNICATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING		
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG
6.4	Maximize existing social media platforms and other use of technology (QR codes) to engage the community and share information on what is going on (What's Up Facebook pages in each village, QR codes on posters in village, within the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, other). Work with a third-party provider to develop a digital promotion campaign in the Bill Gies Recreation Centre that promotes events and programs while generating revenue for the Township.			
6.5	Prepare an annual report to Council that provides details on number of users at the Bill Gies Recreation Centre, utilization of all available space for all Township rental space, results of customer satisfaction surveys, 'testimonials' from partners etc. to promote the value and importance of providing strong recreation services to the entire community.			
6.6	Host Departmental meetings quarterly and include all staff in setting the agenda. Continue to promote cross-section communication and coordination (administration, facilities, parks).			
6.7	Host Township wide Open Houses, Public Meetings, Council Meetings in the Recreation Centre to encourage traffic from all residents in the Township. (Promote attendance with 'free public skate' coupon, or 'try-it' coupons and / or other incentives).			
6.8	Working with all partners, host a 'Signature Event' for all ages to encourage full and widespread use of the new Township of Wellesley Recreation Centre for all residents.			
6.9	Prepare a visual summary (i.e., pie chart) of how resident property taxes are used to support service delivery and ensure that ongoing operating costs are clearly identified as distinct from the capital costs to build the new recreation infrastructure (increased awareness that the tax increase to pay debt charges are different than the ongoing costs to operate the facility).			

2023 PROGRAM SURVEY SAID...

What are the best ways for the Township to share information about Parks, Facilities and Recreation Programs and Services?





THEME 6 – COMMUNICATION

#	RECOMMENDATION	SUGGESTED TIMING			
		SHORT	MEDIUM	LONG	
6.10.a	Working with the Health Centre, host a youth special event at the all-wheels park. Discuss options to continue open dialogue with youth to ensure their needs are being met for indoor and outdoor recreation and parks opportunities. Promote youth activities at the new Youth Centre within the Bill Gies Recreation Centre and at existing youth events (i.e., movie nights).				
6.10.b	Discuss the need for, and interest in, the creation of a Youth Advisory Committee.				
6.11	Discuss options with the staff team to ensure that the community is aware of 'major' changes regarding facilities, programs, and services in advance. This could include communication regarding the future of the community centre and arena in the downtown core of the Village of Wellesley.				
6.12	Continue to work with the Mennonite community to identify options to ensure communication is ongoing regarding opportunity to expand their use of Township space where possible, including meeting space, sports fields, ice etc.				
6.13	As part of a broader communication strategy, continue consistent messaging within the community that reinforces that an investment in recreation is an investment for future generations. This will require a commitment to adhere to new policy direction and phase away from historical approaches that may not provide efficient or fair access to service (free use, protection of previous use of space etc.)				
6.14	Work with social service agencies to assess changing demographics and develop strategies to engage all residents recognizing an increasingly diverse community and the impact on recreation needs and trends.				

SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

The successful implementation of the Recreation Master Plan will be predicated on its adoption and integration into annual workplans, annual operating and capital budgets and forecasts, and a continued commitment by staff to monitor and report on results.

IMPLEMENTATION

- **ASSIGN LEAD STAFF** person for each recommendation,
- **INTEGRATE** into annual workplans and performance expectation documents.
- **REVIEW CAPITAL BUDGET** and forecast annually and monitor required financial investment;
adjust timing if needed.
- **CONTINUE ONGOING COMMUNICATION** with users, stakeholders, the 'Program working group' and other interested partners.
- **TRACK DATA** regarding utilization, registration, revenues, customer satisfaction and other metrics to measure results and provide regular updates to Township Council.
- **IDENTIFY PROJECTS REQUIRING FURTHER STUDY AND ANALYSIS** and identify timing in future budget forecast (i.e., Park and Community Centre plan for Hawkesville, trails and cycling network in conjunction with development, the Region and private landowners, St. Clements Community Centre feasibility study, etc.)
- **ENSURE THE MASTER PLAN IS IDENTIFIED FOR UPDATING NO LATER THAN 2033** and earlier if external influences or trends that may affect service delivery in a significant way (grant funding, population growth, changes to facility utilization due to regional impacts, other).





APPENDIX A – WELLESLEY SURVEY RESULTS