



Draft Report
Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Prepared by:
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in association with:
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February, 2016





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Mayor French and members of Springwater Township Council
2231 Nursery Road
Minesing, Ontario L0L 1Y2

Dear Mayor French:

We are pleased to submit this Draft **Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update** for the Township of Springwater, an initiative that represents over a year of work involving our consulting team and municipal staff – with valuable input from Township Council, service providers, recreation and culture user groups, and interested residents.

This Plan is an update of the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. It also updates the facility requirements and estimate of capital cost for the proposed community centre that was recommended in the 2008 Multi-Purpose Recreation Complex Feasibility Study. Also integrated into the analysis and recommendations is the 2014 Facility Needs Assessment for library facilities, the 2013 Development Charges Background Study, the 2012 Municipal Cultural Plan and the 2008 Trails Master Plan.

This Update, which looks out to 2030 and beyond, is founded on Vision 2030; the Belief Statement about the value of investing in parks, recreation and culture; fourteen Guiding Principles; and Planning and Provision Guidelines for parks and facilities. This is a 'transition' plan with detailed recommendations organized around: i) the recreation delivery system (including programming), ii) indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and iii) parks and open space. An implementation strategy ties the Plan together - focusing on phasing and first steps, costing, a financing strategy and a process to keep the Plan current.

If conditions change, the Master Plan has been designed to adapt, since most of the recommendations have been developed as flexible strategies. Facility and parkland requirements are tied to population growth thresholds and approximate dates.

It was a pleasure to work with Township Council, municipal staff, stakeholder groups and the citizens of Springwater Township to help shape the best possible leisure services system for your community.

Respectfully submitted,

The RETHINK GROUP, Leisure Services Planning and Management

Robert Lockhart

Robert Lockhart, Partner

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Summary of Recommendations

All of the **numbered** recommendations contained within the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update have been reproduced below. In most cases, each recommendation represents a **summary statement** of a more in-depth recommendation and/or provision strategy. Most recommendations are informed by an analysis of current conditions (provision, supply, distribution, utilization, facility condition, community profile, etc.), current and predicted demand, anticipated population growth and change, and other pertinent information. The

recommendations are founded on **Vision 2030**, the **Belief Statement** about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the **Guiding Principles**, and the **Planning and Provision Guidelines** – which establish the policy direction and philosophy for the Plan. The gap analysis identifies the most significant current shortfalls and anticipated future gaps in service.

The Gap Analysis - The following are the top challenges and gaps regarding leisure services in Springwater Township today.

- The disbursed nature of the population and the decentralized nature of facilities (leading to some duplication and inefficiency: e.g., ball diamonds and playgrounds).
- Although the quality of indoor and outdoor facilities is generally consistent with what most rural communities provide, it is considerably below urban standards. This is becoming an increasing challenge as Springwater continues to transition from rural to urban, especially in the southern part of the Township.
- Due to the long-standing dependence on surrounding communities, many culture and recreation facilities and services are deficient and underwhelming in Springwater (especially in the south).
- Most sports facilities in Elmvale are not located on Township property, due to the absence of a Community-scale sports park. This is posing significant limits on facility improvement.
- Five residential areas are deficient in Neighbourhood parkland.
- The need to acquire an adequate site to accommodate the proposed multi-facility community centre and main branch library in the South Service Area.
- The declining ability to attract and retain volunteers.
- The long-term viability of Recreation Service Boards and some of the community halls. How long can RSBs continue to sustain their roles?
- Gradual declining support for the current service delivery model, with its strong dependence on volunteers and other communities.
- The notable concern expressed about the high cost to participate, particularly in ice sports.
- There is under-served, unmet and increasing demand for: arenas and ice-based programs, fitness/wellness facilities and associated programs, trails and associated linear activities, multi-purpose space and associated programs, opportunities for older adults, indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities and programs, arts

and culture facilities and programs, gymnasias and gym sports, and higher quality facilities and programs - offered at convenient times.

- The inability of the existing complement of Township staff to service increasing and changing demand for leisure services (quantity of staff and the expanding skill set that will be required).
- The ability to fund desired facilities (capital and operating).
- There is no municipal gymnasium in the Township and very limited access to school gyms and opportunities for gym-based programming – although that will change in Elmvale with improvements to Elmvale District High School.
- There is limited availability of quality multi-purpose programmable space throughout the Township, especially in the South Service Area.
- Other than the outdoor fitness equipment in Doran and Bishop parks, there are no opportunities for equipment-based fitness programming, and only limited opportunities for aerobic fitness programs (see note above re: community centres).
- Although the cities of Barrie and Orillia, and the towns of Midland and Wasaga Beach have indoor aquatic facilities, and there is private pool operation offering lessons in Oro-Medonte, there is no opportunity for public indoor or outdoor swimming within the Township. As the population reaches 30,000, there should be sufficient demand for an indoor aquatic centre in Springwater.
- The current demand for arenas from Township residents, as well as expressed demand from the Barrie Minor Hockey Association and other Barrie-based groups, exceeds supply by at least one

ice surface. The Township does not currently offer instructional skating programs because of limited ice capacity and offers no hockey programs for females. Prime time public/recreational skating is limited. Township residents use arenas in Barrie and are registered in Barrie hockey and other skating programs.

Looking to the Future - Based on the assumptions about population growth and change (informed by the Medium Growth Scenario), as well as leisure trends and best practices (**Sections 2.4 and 2.9**), the following anticipated future gaps must be addressed in the analysis and recommendations.

- Based on an anticipated doubling of the population over the next 20 years, there will be a significant increase in demand for all types of culture and recreation facilities, and associated programming and events.
- This overall increase in demand will be further influenced by the upward trend in demand for many types of leisure activities and the downward trend for others - both driven by other forces such as the aging of the big Baby Boom and Echo generations, generally increasing expectations for quality, and other changing societal perspectives and values.
- Regardless of population growth, demand will continue to increase for leisure activities of interest to adults, especially older adults. Many new residents are middle age or older and looking to retire in the Township. If the rate of in-migration accelerates as expected, the percentage of children and youth, as well as young adults will increase to above the provincial average, tied to the predominance of in-migrating young families. And the overall population should become more ethno-culturally diverse.
- There will be a need for the Municipality to remain current with evolving best practices in service and facility provision.

Vision 2030

Vision 2030 has been created to provide a 'big picture' look ahead – to provide focus, inspiration and a target to aim for – with the goal of improved leisure services in Springwater that will have evolved as the Municipality grows and matures.

Since this is a 'transition' plan, significant change is reflected in this vision for the future. The transition is from where the Township and parks and recreation services were in 2005, the time of the last Parks and Recreation Master Plan - to 2030 and beyond – the timeframe of this Update. The transition is:

- from a largely rural and moderate-growth community toward a rural-urban community, with an increasing rate of growth.
- from child and youth-oriented facilities and programming toward meeting the needs of ALL ages.
- from rural expectations toward increasingly urban expectations.

Vision 2030 has been reproduced in full for this Summary of the Master Plan recommendations.

Imagine it's the Year 2030 and the following is the author's outline for an article being written about how parks, recreation and cultural resources and services have evolved in Springwater since 2015.

The story begins by noting that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update that was prepared in 2015 was based on the following roles that parks and recreation services play in our communities.

- To improve the personal health and wellbeing of citizens.
- To engage the community.
- To create proud and confident leaders.
- To build strong neighbourhoods and vibrant downtowns.
- To reduce crime and lower policing costs.
- To provide a cleaner, healthier environment.
- To grow the local and regional economy.

- To build strong families.
- To contribute to balanced human development – body, mind and spirit.
- To preserve and celebrate heritage and diversity.

Since 2015, there has been significant growth in Springwater, especially south of Horseshoe Valley Road, but also in Elmvale and Hillsdale. Although the Township is still largely rural, the Midhurst-Snow Valley-Centre Vespra area has become increasingly urban.

Elmvale has become a stronger northern service centre – with improved culture and recreation facilities – including a new community park; improved ball facilities; a full-size soccer pitch; a water play facility; a new high school gymnasium; an expanded trail system; and a new twin-pad arena, curling rink and community centre.

Over the years, the Township has gradually become less dependent on neighbouring communities for culture and recreation services. Throughout the Township, the public, non-profit and commercial sectors continue to work in harmony to provide leisure services.

A variety of high quality natural heritage sites are located throughout the Township, with many connected via an enhanced off-road multi-use trail system, and an expanding on-road cycling network. Local trails continue to be enhanced and new ones developed – with some connected to the principle trails, some of which extend north-south as well as east-west across the Township and connect to regional trails.

New neighbourhood parks are smaller and more focused on passive activities to meet the needs of 'close-to-home' recreation. Increased emphasis has been placed on acquiring good-sized Community and Township-wide/Regional sports parks where most of the highest order outdoor and indoor sports and associated facilities are clustered.

Improved and right-sized facilities are located in the more remote parts of the Township, including upgraded and new community halls.

Tree Nursery Sports Park is now complete, with the addition of two Senior lit ball diamonds, two full-size soccer fields, a playground and a picnic shelter.

Picnic pavilions, sport pads and outdoor rinks have been added as the population has grown. The first outdoor water play facility was introduced in 2017 in Elmvale. Since then, two more have been added in Midhurst and Snow Valley.

Doran has become an important Township-wide park – boasting trails and natural areas, a pavilion/outdoor rink, a skateboard facility, an expanded tennis facility and a water play facility.

Since 2015, opportunities to experience arts and culture in the Township have steadily improved and are better promoted. Local arts groups and organizations are better organized and flourishing. The value of the arts and culture sector to the community is now much better understood and better supported.

The Belief Statement

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is founded on a fundamental belief statement about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture.

We believe that an investment in parks, recreation and culture in Springwater Township is an investment in the beauty and appeal of our community; and the growth and development of our citizens, our community, our economy and our environment.

Volunteers are much more strongly supported by the Township, with an organization called Volunteer Springwater leading the effort to promote the value of volunteering, and to recruit, match, train and help retain volunteers.

As the population has increased, with more and improved parks, facilities and programs, the role of the Township has expanded to keep pace.

Phase One of the Springwater Centre for Learning and Leisure opened in 2023 on a prominent site in the South Service Area. Recently, Phase Two was completed. The facility now boasts:

- a twin pad arena,
- a double gymnasium/assembly hall/exhibition hall/performance space,
- multi-purpose program and meeting rooms,
- a fitness centre and elevated walking/running track,
- an aquatic facility,
- an ample lobby with a cafe and socializing spaces,
- a main branch library (built in two phases), and
- an outdoor public square with an artificial ice rink.

Research indicates that the results of this investment will include:

- Improved personal health and well being for our citizens.
- Greater citizen engagement.
- Proud and confident leaders.
- Strong neighbourhoods and vibrant downtowns.
- Reduced crime and lower costs for policing and justice.
- A cleaner and healthier environment s.
- Economic growth and prosperity.
- Building strong families s.
- Balanced human development – *body, mind and spirit*.
- Preservation and celebration of our cultural heritage and diversity.

The Guiding Principles

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is also founded on fourteen **principles** that are intended to provide the guiding philosophy and policy foundation for planning, service provision and decision making regarding leisure programming and related services, and municipal parks and leisure facilities in Springwater Township for now and into the future. Some of the principles are based on the **personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of parks, recreation, culture and the arts**. Others reflect **contemporary planning principles** and **best practices** for the provision of leisure facilities and related programs, activities, services and policies, adapted to Springwater Township. The principles also reflect the **Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario**. Although listed below in heading-form, each is described in more detail in Chapter Four.

Principle 1: Utilize the Benefits of Parks, Recreation and Culture and the Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario as the foundation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Principle 2: Ensure the Sustainability of Leisure Facilities, Programming, and Parks and Open Space.

Principle 3: Maintain a Community Development Approach.

Principle 4: Support an Active, Healthy and Engaged Community.

Planning and Provision Guidelines

These guidelines recommend the ideal service levels for which to strive for most types of culture and recreation facilities (refer to **Figure 7**). Also included is a calculation of current shortfall or surplus, as well as

Principle 5: Ensure Accessible and Inclusive Leisure Opportunities.

Principle 6: Support the Concept of 'Communities within a Community' – recognizing both established and emerging residential areas.

Principle 7: Complement Rather than Compete.

Principle 8: Continue to Evolve Partnerships between the Municipality, the Voluntary Sector and Others.

Principle 9: Gradually Lessen Dependence on Neighbouring Communities.

Principle 10: Base the Delivery of Leisure Services on a Four-Tiered Hierarchy of Parks, Open Space and Facilities.

Principle 11: Optimize Facility Use.

Principle 12: Cluster High Level Outdoor and Indoor Facilities.

Principle 13: Locate for Visibility, Prominence and Access.

Principle 14: Be Environmentally Responsible.

a calculation of the additional facilities that will be required by 2030 or for a population of 33,652 (Medium Growth Scenario).

Recommendation 14 Approve **Vision 2030**, the **Belief Statement** about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the **14 Guiding Principles**, and the **Planning and Provision Guidelines** to inform relevant policies and decision-making about service provision.

The Recreation Delivery System

As the Township continues to grow and mature, it is likely that two provision models will begin to evolve – where volunteers continue to play a significant role in service provision in the North Service Area and the hamlets (local service areas), and the Municipality becomes increasingly involved in direct service provision in the South Service Area. The increased involvement will initially be in programming, but will soon also increase in facility provision and operation. However, the Municipality’s role in support for volunteer-based groups and

activities across the Township will still be required and should increase.

The recommendations focus on: organization and staffing; partnerships and strategic alliances; Recreation Service Boards; volunteer engagement; programming; the Recreation Advisory Committee; planning and research (including performance measurements); and the service provision model.

Recommendation 1 Create a full-time position titled ‘Community Economic Development Officer’ – combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.

Recommendation 2 Amend the role of the Township’s Community Development Officer to focus fully on co-ordination of culture and recreation programming, and support to volunteers and volunteer-based groups – and report to the Director of Recreation, Parks and Properties.

Recommendation 3 Split the position of Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties into: Supervisor of Facilities (including the Elmvale Arena) and Supervisor of Parks and Properties.

Recommendation 4 As required, increase the number of staff required to maintain the expanding inventory of parkland and other public properties.

Recommendation 5 The Township should continue to develop new and enhance established partnerships and other strategic alliances in support of the provision of parks and recreation services to the community.

- Recommendation 6** The Township should continue to support Recreation Service Boards to optimize their roles, and to monitor those roles to ensure suitability and amend as required. Several new and enhanced initiatives by the Municipality are recommended in support of RSBs, including encouragement of increased communication, collaboration and sharing; increased partnering with the Municipality; improved communication; improved volunteer engagement; and improved policies and procedures (see above).
- Recommendation 7** Update By-law No. 2003-124 to acknowledge that the Township is now assuming the cost of structural, electrical and mechanical repairs, insurance premiums, SOCAN fees, and other mandated costs relating to community centres/halls.
- Recommendation 8** The Township should take the lead in enhancing support to volunteer-based groups and individual volunteers to optimize the opportunity of volunteers to provide community-based programming and other services. Specific recommendations include: i) establish a Township-wide support entity for volunteering (e.g., Volunteer Springwater); ii) raise the profile of volunteering in the Township and promoting the benefits; iii) establish a community-wide marketing and matching service to support volunteer engagement; iv) provide training and education in effective volunteerism; v) increase the role of the Township in support of volunteering; and vi) prepare a Volunteer Engagement Strategy.
- Recommendation 9** The Township should continue to facilitate others to provide culture and recreation programming, festivals and community events, but also increase its direct role in program provision where required to meet needs.
- Recommendation 10** The Recreation Advisory Committee should be involved in the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update to assist the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties - particularly with recommendations that are policy-oriented in nature and have broad implications for residents and service providers.
- Recommendation 11** The Township should maintain a database of statistics on facility use, program registration and user groups, as well as a current inventory and map of parks, open space and culture and recreation facilities. This data should be regularly analyzed in search of valuable trends and other demand indicators. Every three years, the community should be consulted via forums and a household survey.
- Recommendation 12** Although not able to be integrated into the Parks and Master Plan Update process, the Township should prepare a **Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Management and Performance Measurement Program** as a follow-up exercise. This initiative will result in an effective management tool to monitor and evaluate local service delivery.

Recommendation 13 The Township should maintain the current provision model for parks and recreation services that involves concentrating most high level facilities and programming within the North and South Service Areas, supported by local services in the hamlets. The Township should gradually increase its role in direct program provision, facility operation and support to volunteers. As the Municipality grows and matures and resident expectations increase, the Township should gradually reduce its dependence on neighbouring communities to provide facilities and programming.

Indoor Recreation Facilities

Indoor Ice Facilities

Recommendation 15 The Township should continue to monitor the level of use by Springwater residents of City of Barrie arenas.

Recommendation 16 The Township should continue to annually monitor registration and use patterns of the winter and summer customers of the Elmvale Community Arena, as well as evolving demand for prime and non-prime ice time from minor hockey, figure skating, men's hockey, girls and women's hockey, Ringette, sledge hockey, recreational skating (all ages), and skating lessons.

Recommendation 17 Strive for a service level of approximately one ice pad:10,000 population.

Recommendation 18 When additional ice pads are provided in the Township, they should comprise a multi-pad facility (when possible) and be co-located with other complementary facilities to increase operating efficiency, and to allow for greater user convenience and cross-programming.

Recommendation 19 As demand warrants over the next 20 years and based on a 2035 population of 40,380 (Medium Growth Scenario), provide four additional ice pads as follows to achieve a service level of 1 ice pad per 10,000 residents:

- When further capital investment can no longer be justified (anticipated in 15-20 years), replace the Elmvale Community Arena with a modern twin pad facility, along with complementary components (6-8 dressing rooms per pad, ample lobby, a new Elmvale Community Hall). If an appropriate site is not available at that time, replace the Elmvale Community Arena with a modern single pad facility at the current fairground site.
- Provide 2-3 ice pads at the multi-facility community centre, proposed for the South Service Area (the eventual number of pads at this facility will depend on growth in demand and if a twin-pad arena can be provided in Elmvale). The decision about whether to provide a single or twin pad within the first phase of arena development will depend on when the facility is expected to be available and the degree of growth in local and regional demand by that time. There are significant cost (capital and operating), design and functional advantages in providing a twin pad facility in one phase.

Recommendation 20 When additional ice pads are being contemplated, confirm demand and feasibility through a market study and business plan.

Multi-purpose Community Space

Recommendation 21 **Service Levels:** Strive for a service level of 0.6 square feet of adequate programmable **multi-purpose space** per capita. Strive for a service level of one **double gymnasium** per 10,000 population and one **single or elementary school size gymnasium** per 4,000 population. Continually monitor demand and facility utilization, and make adjustments in these provision guidelines as required.

Recommendation 22 **For the North Service Area**, continue to maintain and operate the Elmvale Community Hall until such time as a better opportunity arises. Continue to make the necessary ongoing investments to maintain the facility as a safe, accessible and functional community assembly hall. Continue to maintain the Springwater Room as an assembly hall and programmable space, as well as a facility to accommodate a limited fitness program for students from the Elmvale District High School (until such time as an in-school facility is available). When it is no longer feasible to maintain the Elmvale Community Arena (likely in about 15 years), consider replacing the arena with either a single-pad or preferably a double-pad facility. The opportunity for a double-pad arena will largely depend on the availability of a suitable site. The Community-scale park that is proposed for Elmvale would be the ideal location for new indoor facilities. When the arena is replaced, consider co-locating a new curling facility (number of sheets of ice to be determined at that time), and include sufficient multi-purpose programming space. At that time, it may be desirable to consolidate the Elmvale Community Hall with the proposed new arena facility, assuming a suitable site is available. In the near future, the Township should joint venture with the Simcoe County District School Board to replace the single gymnasium at Elmvale District High School with a double gymnasium, change rooms, a weight room, a commercial kitchen, replacement cafeteria and classrooms for cosmetology, drama, dance, art and family studies. The Township should administer afterschool use of the new facilities, as proposed by the School Board.

Recommendation 23 **For the South Service Area**, it is recommended that when the multi-facility community centre and library that is proposed for Midhurst becomes available (see **Section 5.4**), the Midhurst Community Centre should be retired. Within the new community centre, either the gymnasium or the largest of the multi-purpose rooms could be named 'Midhurst Hall'. Within this facility, the history of Midhurst Hall could be displayed and its story told.

Recommendation 24 **For the settlement areas** (Hillsdale, Phelpston, Anten Mills, Minesing, Centre Vespra and Grenfel), the medium range strategy should be to continue to maintain the four community halls/centres as safe, accessible and functional facilities until such time as there is agreement to retire one or more of the facilities due to insufficient use, unsustainable operating costs, insufficient interest from volunteers to help operate, and/or the required capital investments cannot be justified. An increasing and significant issue facing these facilities is accessibility limitations. If any of these facilities was to undergo

extensive renovation and/or expansion, the entire facility would have to conform to the new provincial accessibility requirements that came into effect January 1, 2015. Otherwise, the facilities are exempt from most current accessibility requirements.

If demand warrants and funding can be secured, consider replacing one or more of the older, smaller halls with larger, more functional and accessible facilities - to better serve the more remote parts of the Township (e.g., Grenfel).

Adult lifestyle communities (e.g., Springlakes) should provide their own community centres and on-site facilities to meet the interests of the residents of each of these communities.

Aquatic Facilities

- Recommendation 25** Strive for a provision guideline of one indoor aquatic facility:30,000 population. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in this service level as required.
- Recommendation 26** As the population reaches around 30,000, begin to plan for an indoor aquatic facility as a future phase of the multi-facility community centre and library proposed for the South Service Area (see **Section 5.5**). The facility could include a 25 metre, 6 or 8 lane lap pool, a therapeutic tank, a leisure pool with a water slide and a viewing gallery.
- Recommendation 27** Strive for a service level of one outdoor water play facility:10,000 population. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service level as required.
- Recommendation 28** By 2030, provide the first three water play facilities as follows:
- **North Service Area** – Proposed Elmvale Community Park or Bishop Park (2016-2020)
 - **South Service Area** – as part of the multi-facility community centre and library proposed for Midhurst (if the chosen site is suitable), and elsewhere in the South Service Area (consider a facility in the Snow Valley community). If the site of the multi-facility community centre is not suitable for an outdoor water play facility, select a suitable, high profile park somewhere in the Midhurst community.

Arts and Culture Facilities

- Recommendation 29** Implement the recommendations from the **Municipal Cultural Plan** that relate to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update; for example:
- Create a full-time staff titled ‘Community Economic Development Officer’– combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.
 - Create a cultural resources committee.

- Integrate culture into municipal planning and decision-making.
- Create a network of cultural organizations.
- Expand cultural marketing and promotion.
- Undertake a comprehensive inventory of cultural spaces and facilities.
- Investigate the potential for a multi-purpose 'cultural' facility (initially integrated into the proposed multi-facility community centre and library – multi-purpose program spaces with storage, gymnasium/assembly hall/exhibition space/performance space, administrative offices, lobby/assembly/display space, outdoor public gathering spaces).
- Develop a public art policy and program.
- Strengthen festivals.
- Develop and promote natural heritage routes.

The Proposed Multi-Facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library

- Recommendation 30** Provide a multi-facility community centre and main branch library in two or three phases over the next 20 or so years, as increasing population and growing demand warrants. The timing for Phase One should be determined by sufficient population and available resources. Recommended components and features, general phasing, estimate of size and principle location criteria are described in **Section 5.6.3**.
- Recommendation 31** Following the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, complete a feasibility study/business plan to further inform Phase One and subsequent phases of the planning, design and costing (capital and operating) for the proposed community centre and main branch library. The feasibility study should also include identification of the preferred site (see above for the recommended scope of the combined community centre and library feasibility study). The 2014 Library Facility Needs Assessment recommended that prior to the facility feasibility study, a staffing and operational review of the entire library system be completed, incorporating the understanding that the physical plant will be expanding.
- Recommendation 32** Research the suitability of the crown land that is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Highway 26 and Snow Valley Road. Environmental constraints may rule out this well-located site.

Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Ball Diamonds

- Recommendation 33** Strive for the following service levels for ball diamonds. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.
- Senior Lit 1 diamond: 5,000 population
 - Intermediate 1 diamond: 10,000 population
 - Junior 1 diamond: 4,000 population (school sites only)
- Recommendation 34** In future, cluster Municipal ball diamonds in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional sports-oriented parks, rather than following the practice of providing a single Junior or Intermediate level ball diamond in Neighbourhood parks. As noted in **Chapter 7**, it is recommended that future Neighbourhood parks be smaller in size and that more of the parkland dedication be allocated to Community-level parks, some of which can be developed for active recreation. This provision model will be particularly important for the continued development in the Midhurst, Elmvale and Hillsdale communities. The Township should focus on providing Intermediate and Senior level ball diamonds, leaving the school boards to provide Junior diamonds.
- Recommendation 35** If a Community-level sports-oriented park can be provided in Elmvale, provide two Intermediate-level or Senior lit ball diamonds in that park, with the size to be determined after a thorough assessment of current and future demand. If a Community park cannot be provided in Elmvale, an alternative solution may be to negotiate with the school board to see if, through a joint venture with the Township, two or three of the diamonds could be up upgraded to better support Elmvale Minor Ball.
- Recommendation 36** When community-based demand warrants, complete and light the two roughed-in Senior ball diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park to provide tournament capability and improved facilities to support Minesing Minor Ball and adult ball. Determine if there is sufficient demand for one of the facilities to be sized for hardball. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, another Senior lit diamond should be required by around 2028 as the population reaches 30,000 and a second by around 2031 when the population reaches 35,000.
- Recommendation 37** Due to underutilization and the continued cost to maintain in a safe condition, consideration should be give to taking several ball diamonds out of service. Examples: the two poorest quality Intermediate diamonds in Grenfel Park, and the Junior diamonds at Snow Valley Park, Valendar Park and Edenvale Conservation Area.
- Recommendation 38** Ensure that all ball diamonds are maintained in a safe and adequate condition for their intended level of use.

Playing Fields

- Recommendation 39** Strive for the following service level for playing fields. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.
- One full-size soccer pitch per 3,500 population
- Recommendation 40** Whenever possible, provide full-size soccer pitches in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks, and cluster facilities to better accommodate regular weekday play and tournaments.
- Recommendation 41** If there is room, develop two additional full-size soccer pitches at Tree Nursery Sports Park (or one full-size and two to four large Mini pitches).
- Recommendation 42** When demand warrants, lay out the roughed-in mini soccer pitches at Homer Barrett Park.
- Recommendation 43** When land is acquired for the proposed Community-level park in Elmvale, ensure that the site is large enough to accommodate a full-size soccer pitch. Grade and seed the area and retain as unstructured open space until demand warrants the pitch to be completed and programmed for use.
- Recommendation 44** Ensure that all playing fields are maintained in a safe and adequate condition for their intended level of use.

Outdoor Rinks, Sport Pads and Pavilions

- Recommendation 45** Strive for the following service levels for pavilions and sport pads. Based on these service levels, provide new facilities as the population increases. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.
- One pavilion:2,500 population (some pavilions may incorporate rink boards)
 - One sport pad:5,000 population
- Recommendation 46** Accounting for the pavilion proposed for Doran Park (2015), and based on the Medium Growth Scenario, one additional pavilion will be required by around 2024, and three more by around 2030. A pavilion is recommended for Tree Nursery Sports Park (2024) and the proposed Community park in Elmvale (2026). Two other Community or higher level parks will need to be selected for the pavilions that should be required by 2028 and 2030.
- Recommendation 47** Support the Phelpston community in their goal to install a roof over the outdoor rink in Valendar Park and to upgrade the adjacent washroom facility.

Playground Facilities

- Recommendation 48** Strive for a service levels of one play structure per 600 population. Based on this service level, provide new facilities as the population increases. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service level as required. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, 22 additional play structures will be required by 2030 when the population is projected to be 33,652.
- Recommendation 49** The Municipality should continue to ensure that play structures are regularly inspected and maintained to CSA standards, and the Municipality should replace and/or upgrade any structures that do not meet CSA standards - and where there is a demonstrated need for such facilities. An annual investment of \$30,000 in playground upgrades in various locations as required is recommended in the Township capital forecast for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- Recommendation 50** Appropriately-sized (smaller) play structures should be located in new Neighbourhood parks where there is a demonstrated need. In Community and higher level parks where sufficient families with children often frequent the parks, larger and more elaborate play structures should be provided (e.g., Tree Nursery Sports Park and the proposed Community park in Elmvale).
- Recommendation 51** For Community and higher level parks that have modest play structures and where there is sufficient demand, the existing play structure should be enhanced to match the scale of the park. Example parks include: Heritage, Grenfel, Doran, Anten Mills, Valendar and Hillsdale.
- Recommendation 52** The Township capital forecast identifies two accessible play structures be provided in 2016 and 2019 at undisclosed locations. Consider Tree Nursery Sports Park as one of the locations. Combine accessible and standard play structures.

Tennis Courts

- Recommendation 53** The Township of Springwater, the Midhurst Tennis Club and the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club should continue to monitor the demand for outdoor and indoor tennis facilities and specific programs, and share information on a regular basis.
- Recommendation 54** In co-operation with the Township of Springwater, the Midhurst Tennis Club and the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club should continue to promote the sport of tennis to Township residents.

Recommendation 55 A service level of 1 lit tennis court per 3,500 residents should be adopted and monitored. Based on that service level, an additional two-court facility should be required as the population approaches 28,000. Approaching that date, sufficient demand should be confirmed before additional courts are considered. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, the population would reach 28,000 by around 2026.

Tennis courts should be clustered at a minimum of two per location (and ideally four or more), and facilities should be located in Community-level or higher parks where parking is available and lights should not impact nearby residents. Based on anticipated population growth, the additional courts should be provided in the South Service Area. Adding to the Doran Park tennis facility should be considered as the first option. An alternative site for a tennis court cluster may be the site of the proposed multi-facility community centre (if the selected site is suitable – physical characteristics and location).

Recommendation 56 The tennis clubs should assist with future capital improvement projects such as improved lighting, fencing, court resurfacing, change rooms, etc. Major capital investment such as additional courts should be primarily financed by the Township.

Skateboard Facilities

Recommendation 57 Continue to rotate the mobile skateboard facility among the five parks currently identified, and monitor demand at each site.

Recommendation 58 Since the South Service Area does not have a permanent skateboard facility, the population is greatest in this part of the Township and this area is identified for the most future growth, it is recommended that a permanent skateboard facility be provided within the next three years. Given that Doran Park is currently the only high profile park in Midhurst, this park should be considered for this facility.

Outdoor Fitness Facilities

Recommendation 59 Utilization of the two existing outdoor fitness facilities should be monitored and significant use of outdoor fitness facilities established before consideration should be given for a third facility.

Recommendation 60 An interim service level of 1 outdoor fitness facility per 10,000 residents should be adopted, monitored for adequacy and adjusted as required. Based on that service level and the Medium Growth Scenario, a third outdoor fitness facility may be required by around 2028.

Recreational Trails

- Recommendation 61** Continue to improve existing trails (as required) and expand the trail network to support all types of non-motorized and motorized trail activities on trails and in areas suitable for each use. In most cases, multi-use trails are the preferred style, especially for major routes.
- Recommendation 62** The continued development of the trail network should be guided by the 2008 Trails Master Plan and additional recommendations contained in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update – based on the following Guiding Principle: *Provide an optimum, sustainable and environmentally sound mixed use trail system that is achieved through vision and partnership - one that fosters the many personal, health, social, economic and environmental benefits to be realized for residents and visitors.* Goals and objectives to support this Guiding Principle are also provided (see **Section 6.9.4**).
- Recommendation 63** In addition to improving and supporting the three main regional/provincial trails that pass through the Township, secondary and local trails should continue to be developed, expanded and improved. These supporting or secondary trails comprise site-specific trails and trail systems, connecting links, and community-based loops and trail/walkway routes. Specific recommendations are provided under **Section 6.9.4: Assessment and Provision Strategy**.
- Recommendation 64** The Trails Master Plan recommended that motorized trail activities be designated to a large east-west zone within the central part of the Township – comprising three groupings of County Forest tracts, connected by designated roads and unopened road allowances. See **Figure 3** in the Trails Master Plan report.
- Recommendation 65** Promote the personal, social, environmental and economic benefits of trails and trail use. See **Section 6.9.4** above.

Parks and Open Space

- Recommendation 66** The Township should adopt the revised four-tiered Parks/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines as outlined in the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update for the purposes of future park planning and development, including provision guidelines, location, site characteristics, size, functions and design requirements, connectivity, etc.
- Recommendation 67** Open Space policies in the Township of Springwater Official Plan should be amended to align with and incorporate the recommended Park/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

- Recommendation 68** As opportunities arise and/or can be initiated, strive to mitigate identified parkland deficiencies at the Neighbourhood and Community parkland levels, utilizing the recommended strategies presented in **Figure 16**. For example, immediately investigate the opportunity and viability of the provincial Crown Land, which is located at the northwest corner of Bayfield Street and Snow Valley Road as a candidate site for the multi-facility recreation centre and main branch library proposed for the South Service Area.
- Recommendation 69** Adopt the following provision guideline for Neighbourhood/Local parkland and Community-scale parkland:
- **Neighbourhood Parkland:** 2.5 ac./1 ha. per 1,000 population
 - **Community-level Parkland:** 5 ac./2 ha. per 1,000 population
- Recommendation 70** The Township should consider the four park properties that have been identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update as potentially surplus. Utilizing the recommended criteria, the Township should continue to evaluate other parks and any other municipal open space properties to identify any other sites that may become surplus.
- Recommendation 71** The Township should adopt a comprehensive policy statement governing the assembly of parkland in new residential development and areas of redevelopment. The policy should indicate when parkland and/or cash-in-lieu of parkland will be taken, and the general conditions relating to the type, condition and location of parkland to be assembled and otherwise acquired. The park/open space classification system and planning guidelines and other recommendations contained in this Master Plan Update should inform that policy.
- Recommendation 72** The Township should continue to demonstrate environmental responsibility through the development and adoption of environmentally sound policies and practices for use in planning, management and maintenance of parks, as well as culture and recreation facilities, wherever possible and practicable.
- Recommendation 73** The Township should continue to collaborate with the NVCA, other agencies, and environmental and community groups to identify priorities and implement a program for restoration of degraded natural areas.
- Recommendation 74** The Township should investigate and develop programs, strategies and materials for promoting public awareness and education on the values of urban ecological practices, responsible use of natural areas, public accountability and environmental stewardship, in collaboration with other departments and agencies.

The Implementation Strategy

The implementation strategy includes phasing and first steps, capital cost implications, operating cost implications, the general financing strategy, and the process to keep the Master Plan updated.

Recommendations have been organized around the following four time periods:

- 2016-2020,
- 2021-2025,

- 2026-2030 and
- Post 2030.

Although the RFP requested that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update cover the period to 2030, there are recommendations that extend beyond that date. The Medium Growth Scenario projects the population to 2036, and that date and population figure of 41,693 informs the post 2030 time period.

- Recommendation 75** Adopt the four time periods around which the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is structured (2016-2020, 2021-2025, 2026-2030 and post 2030).
- Recommendation 76** Initiate the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, commencing with the **15 ‘Immediate First Steps’** that have been identified, including the recommendation to approve **Vision 2030**, the **Belief Statement** about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the **14 Guiding Principles**, and the **Planning and Provision Guidelines** to inform relevant policies and decision-making about service provision.
- Recommendation 77** Utilize the estimate of capital costs – 2016-2030 and beyond (**Figure 17**) to inform and regularly update the Township’s Six-Year Capital Forecast.
- Recommendation 78** Utilize the operating cost implications discussed in **Section 8.4** to inform the annual operating budget of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties (2016 and beyond).
- Recommendation 79** Utilize the recommended Financing Strategy (**Section 8.5**) to optimize opportunities for funding the capital and operating costs estimated to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. It is estimated that 65% of the capital costs projected to 2030 for parks, recreation and libraries will be funded by Development Charges contributions, based on the Medium Growth Scenario. Fundraising, donations/bequeaths, sponsorships, partnerships, grants and the sale of surplus parkland will also contribute - along with almost \$3.3 million in capital reserves that can be applied.
- Recommendation 80** Follow the recommended process and specific steps (**Section 8.6**) to keep the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan updated.

Chapter One: Introduction

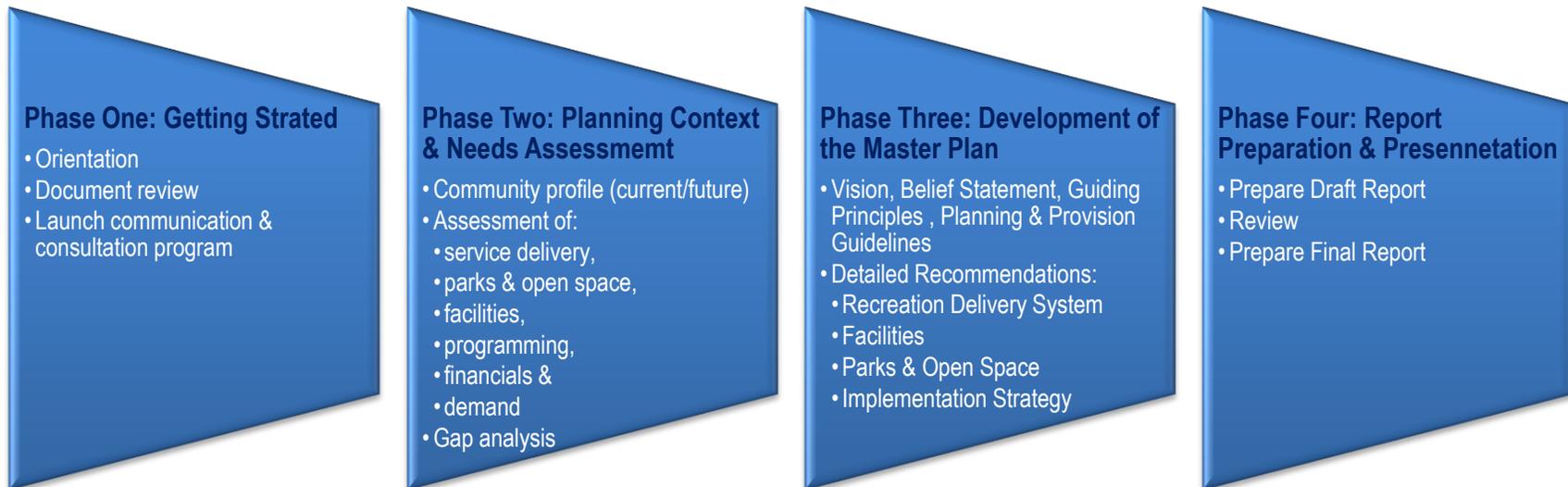
1.1 Objectives

The terms of reference identified the following objectives for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Update the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Study the characteristics and changing nature of the community.
- Assess current services and make recommendations (parks and open space, culture and recreation facilities, programs/events, and the way services are provided, relevant policies, partnerships and strategic alliances).
- Refine the requirement for a multi-facility recreation centre.
- Identify what's working well, opportunities, challenges and current and future gaps.
- Project current and future recreation needs.
- Develop a multi-year plan and implementation strategy to address current and future parks and recreation needs.

1.2 Study Process

The work plan was divided into four phases. See **Figure 1** below.



Community Consultation and Communication Program

The community consultation and communication program comprised the following:

- Project web presence (project description and regular updates throughout the process)
- Two Community Forums (North and South) (100 participants)
- User Group Survey (16 groups responded)
- Submissions from individuals and groups (several submissions)
- On-line Household Survey (299 responses)
- Mini Forum with the Recreation Service Boards (12 RSB representatives attended)

- Survey of volunteer-based groups (29 groups responded)
- Community-wide Review Forum (38 participants)

Two Recreation Advisory Committee meetings were held and the Draft Report was presentation to and discussed with Township Council in a special 'educational' session. Members of Township Council and the Recreation Advisory Committee were invited to and attended the two Community (input) Forums and the Community Review Forum.

Chapter Two: Planning Context Overview

2.1 Introduction

Key background and context information is provided in this chapter, including location and settlement pattern; community profile; anticipated changes in population; overview of the delivery system,

facilities and parks; overview of community consultation results; leisure trends; demand indicators and the gap analysis.

2.2 Location and Settlement Pattern

Springwater Township is one of 17 municipalities comprising Simcoe County. The Township is bounded by the City of Barrie on the south, the Township of Oro-Medonte on the east, the Township of Tiny and the Town of Wasaga Beach on the north, and the Township of Clearview on the west. See **Figure 1**.

The Township is large, comprising a land area of 536 square kilometres. In 2011, the population density was reported by Statistics Canada to be 34 persons per square kilometre, which was well below the County average of 92 persons per square kilometre.

The Township comprises nine urban settlement areas and over 20 minor rural settlement areas. The nine urban areas include: Midhurst, Elmvale, Hillsdale, Anten Mills, Minesing, Snow Valley, Centre Vespra, Phelpsston, and Orr Lake, with the largest being Midhurst and Elmvale. Most of the population is located south of Horseshoe Valley Road. With its established commercial core and full complement of land uses, Elmvale is the most complete settlement area. Although much larger in area and population, Midhurst can best be described

as a suburban community, since there is no central commercial area and few typical urban services. See **Figure 2**.

There is good north-south and east-west access throughout the Township, and excellent access to Wasaga Beach, Midland, Orillia, Barrie and points south.



Figure 2: Simcoe County

2.3 Community Profile

In 2011, the population of the Township was 18,223 (census). Accounting for official Statistics Canada undercount of 2.9%, the 2011 census population would be 18,751. The Long Range Financial Plan projected forward to 2015, based on housing starts since 2011 and a household size of 2.86 persons per unit – and has estimated the current population to be 18,545. That figure has been used throughout this Master Plan.

Between 2006 and 2011, the population increased by 767 or 4.4%, which was below the provincial and County averages, each at 5.7%. The BMA 2013 Municipal Study estimated that population growth in Springwater between 2011 and 2013 was 4.2%. The same report indicated that growth from 2006 in Springwater Township was above the average for the Simcoe/Muskoka/Dufferin region. At 4.2%, Springwater is at the lower end of high-growth communities across Ontario. Between 1991 and 2011, annual growth average 1.9%.

In 2011, the age profile of the Township's population differed from the provincial profile. In Springwater, the percentage was lower for pre-school children (age 0-4) and older adults, especially those age 70+, and much lower for young adults (age 20-44). The percentage was higher for children and youth (age 5-19), and much higher for mid-age adults and young senior adults (age 45-69). This profile defines a community with an above average proportion of families with children in school. The lower percentages of young adults can be partially explained by the above average number of this age group leaving for higher education and in search of employment. The lower percentage of older seniors reflects many having to leave the Township for suitable housing and the need for close proximity to health care.

In 2011, 47% of households had children living at home, which was well above the provincial average of 37%, but down from 50% in 2011. The family-oriented nature of the community is further

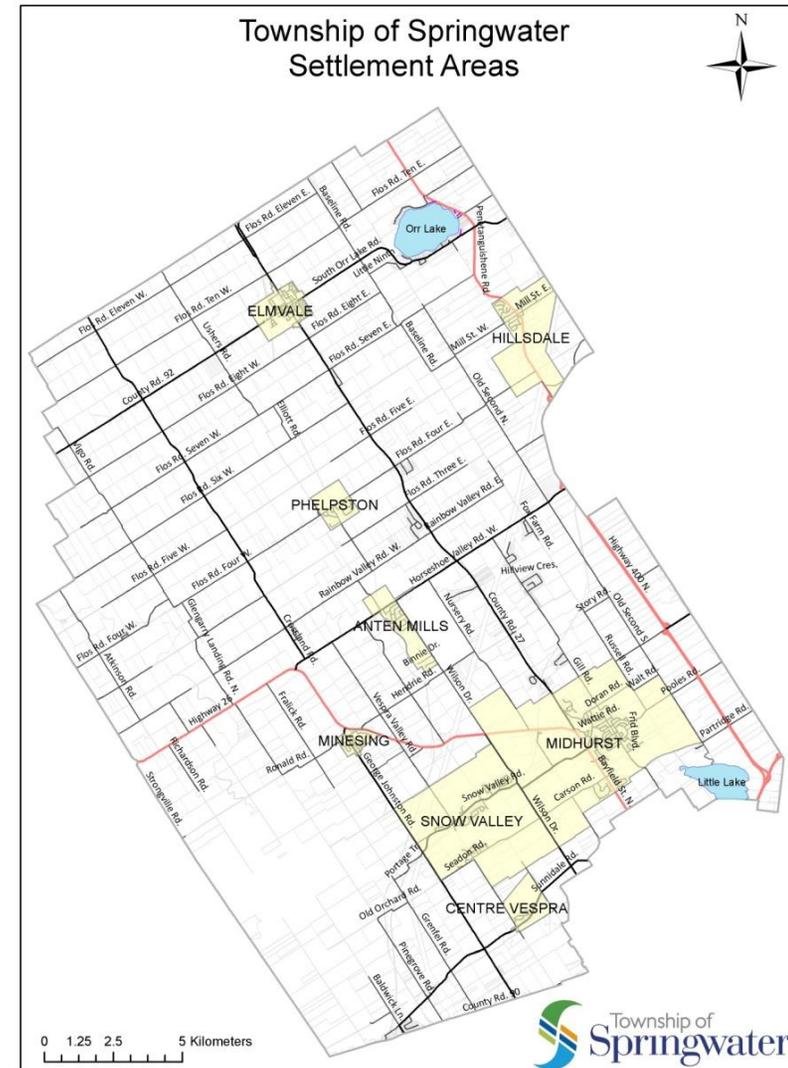


Figure 1

illustrated by the considerably higher than average number of persons per household reported in the 2011 census (2.9, compared to 2.6 for Ontario).

Even though the Township is family-oriented, the population is aging along with all slow to medium growth communities in Ontario. This is principally due to the aging of the large Baby Boom population (age 50-69 in 2015), which is not being counter-balanced by a large enough number of younger people moving into the Township. That is compounded by the above average number of young adults leaving the Township. Since 2011, the Echo generation (age 21-36 in 2015) has completely aged out of the minor sports market. That relatively large generation is being replaced by a much smaller generation of children and youth. The decline in the proportion of children and youth will continue until the Echo generation begins to have children in sufficient numbers to swell the size of that market again. Across Ontario, the population of children age 0-15 is expected to reach its lowest point in 2016, rise slightly between 2021 and 2029, and then decline again through 2036.

Therefore, the demand for child and youth activities should stabilize or continue to decline in the near term, while the demand for activities of interest to adults and older adults will continue to increase over the next decade and beyond. The expected decline in the proportion of children and youth could be partially or totally off-set if in-migration of new residents accelerates, leading to an above average percentage of young families moving into the Township. Refer to **Figure 4**.

It is anticipated that the age 65+ population in Ontario will more than double by 2036 and increase to around 24% of the population by that date (up from 14.3% in 2011). In regions outside of the high growth areas, the proportion of seniors will be above the 24% figure – to as high as 44% in some census divisions.

At an average of \$141,018 in 2012, households in Springwater Township had among the highest incomes in Ontario (provincial average: \$96,130; Barrie: \$88,498). Springwater was highest among communities in the Simcoe/Muskoka/Dufferin region where the average was \$90,342.

In 2011, 93% of the population in Springwater Township was English-speaking.

2011 Census, Township of Springwater **Figure 4**

Age Group	Springwater Township		Ontario
	#	%	
0-4	850	4.66	5.48
5-9	1,160	6.37	5.55
10-14	1,285	7.05	5.94
15-19	1,515	8.32	6.72
20-24	1,105	6.06	6.64
25-29	685	3.76	6.34
30-34	825	4.53	6.23
35-39	1,100	6.04	6.57
40-44	1,310	7.12	7.19
45-49	1,790	9.82	8.22
50-54	1,690	9.28	7.83
55-59	1,405	7.7	6.73
60-64	1,210	6.67	5.96
65-69	805	4.42	4.38
70-74	590	3.24	3.43
75-79	400	2.2	2.77
80-84	305	1.67	2.11
85+	200	1.1	1.58
Median Age	82.0		83.0
Above Average Percentage		Below Average Percentage	
Echo Generation in 2011 (age 17-32);		Baby Boom Generation (age 46-65)	

2.4 Population Growth and Change

Likely population growth and change, as well as changes in the settlement pattern of the Township over the next twenty years were informed by two sources, namely: i) the Township of Springwater Official Plan and ii) the 2015 Long Range Financial Plan.

2.4.1 The Township Official Plan

The Official Plan policies suggest the following:

Two thirds of growth will be targeted to recognized 'urban' settlement areas. Growth will be faster-paced than over the past 25 years (average annual growth rate of 1.77% since 1991). Settlement areas are divided into nine 'urban' settlement areas and 20 minor or 'rural' settlement areas. 'Urban' settlement areas are characterized as:

- agricultural area service centres,
- recreational/oriented lifestyle resort communities and
- dormitory residential communities.

The Orr Lake settlement area has minimum growth potential, while Minesing and Phelpston have low growth potential and Hillsdale, Anten Mills, Snow Valley and Centre Vespra have medium growth potential.

Elmvale and Midhurst are preferred locations for a significant amount of growth, due to the characteristics of these settlement areas, as well as the wider range of existing municipal services and facilities. Elmvale and Hillsdale are well positioned to capture a share of future growth due to the current state of existing servicing infrastructure and the amount of approved development.

Adult Lifestyle communities comprise a unique component of the residential growth envisioned over the next 20 years, with the size and origin difficult to anticipate.

The priority for residential development should be directed toward 'urban' settlement areas and away from rural areas. Major communities or expansion thereto are the preferred growth centres. Also having priority are settlement areas or expansion thereto, which have capacity to expand and accommodate additional growth. New adult lifestyle communities also have priority.

Rural residential development through the granting of consents shall be controlled on agricultural lands and strictly limited in rural areas to prohibit strip residential development. Residential development in 'rural' settlement areas will generally be limited to infilling.

2.4.2 The Long Range Financial Plan

In 2015, the Township initiated a twenty-year financial plan to project anticipated municipal investment, tied to anticipated population growth. In Plan, three growth scenarios were identified:

- i) **Low Growth Scenario** – growth is anticipated to proceed based on historical growth rates, with little or no development within the Midhurst Secondary Plan area.
- ii) **Medium Growth Scenario** – growth is anticipated to proceed at a faster rate than in the past. All 4,623 housing units that can be accommodated in the first 300 hectares of the Midhurst Secondary Plan (Phase 1) are projected to be constructed over the next 20 years from 2015 to 2034.
- iii) **High Growth Scenario** – growth is anticipated to proceed at a must faster rate than in the past. All 7,858 housing units proposed in the Midhurst Secondary Plan are projected to be constructed over the 20 years from 2015 to 2034.

Information Package #1 for Stakeholder Review (Growth Forecasts – Revised) – dated May 15, 2015 was prepared by Hemson Consulting Ltd. The report contains background information used to establish the revised growth forecasts over the 20 year period covered by the Long Range Financial Plan. Information in this report included: i) historical growth patterns in the Township; ii) the growth outlook under the Low Growth Scenario; iii) the growth outlook under

the Medium Growth Scenario; iv) the growth outlook under the High Growth Scenario; and v) the scale and location of current proposals for development in the Township. The allocation of housing units across the Township by year was revised in a Memorandum dated October 16, 2015. **Figure 5** captures key information from these two reports.

Population Projections – Three Growth Scenarios to 2036

Figure 5

Year	Low Growth Scenario		Medium Growth Scenario		High Growth Scenario	
	Population	Units	Population	Units	Population	Units
2011	18,223	6,258 (pr. dwellings)	18,223	6,258 (pr. dwellings)	18,223	6,258 (pr. dwellings)
2015	18,545	6,472	18,545	6,476	18,545	6,472
2020	19,426	6,909	20,288	7,148	20,951	7,382
2025	21,102	7,570	25,930	9,057	28,903	10,016
2030	23,324	8,377	33,652	11,602	40,433	13,789
2035	25,230	9,070	40,380	13,817	51,403	17,373
2036	25,598	9,203	41,693	14,252	53,690	18,122

2.4.3 Growth Scenario to Guide the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Given that Phase 1 of the Midhurst Secondary Plan has been approved by the Province of Ontario and there is no clear indication about the status of subsequent phases, and that there seems to be support for the level and location of residential development anticipated in the other parts of the Township, the Medium Growth Scenario has been selected to guide the update of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Projections of ‘need’ for all types of facility and parkland will be based on recommended service or provision levels and the anticipated growth in population by five year intervals (2016-2020, 2021-2025, 2026-2030, and 2030-2035 and beyond). If residential development exceeds the Medium Growth Scenario and/or if development is accelerated or delayed within any of the five-year intervals, facility, parkland and other requirements (e.g., programming,

staffing level, etc.) will have to be adjusted accordingly. Similarly, if residential development proceeds more slowly than anticipated in the Medium Growth Scenario, facility, parkland and other requirements will have to be adjusted.

The Medium Growth Scenario is projecting the population to grow at a rate similar to the last 20 years through to 2020 (average of 1.9% annually), then accelerate to an average of 6.8% annually to 2030 and 4.8% annually to 2036. It is likely that the majority of the new residents will be younger, more ethnically diverse and will be moving from urban centres - bringing with them higher expectations for municipal services, especially those moving into the South Service Area. It has been observed that expectations are already increasing for established residents.

Although Elmvale and Hillsdale will absorb some of the residential growth, 85% of the growth will be south of Horseshoe Valley Road.

2.4.4 Likely Changes in the Age Profile

Over the past decade, the proportion of children and youth in most communities has declined as the big Echo generation has aged through and out of this market. If the expected high rates of growth materialize, the average age of in-migrating residents will trend toward younger families, which will increase the percentage of children and youth to above the provincial average. And, within ten or so years the big Echo generation (now age 21-36) should begin to have children in sufficient numbers to begin to increase the proportion of pre-school children across the Province

For the next decade, the proportion of young adults will remain higher than in the past decade, influenced by the aging of the Echo generation into this market, and the expected influx of young families.

However, by around 2025, the proportion of young adults could begin to decline a little as the Echo generation ages out of the age 20-35 market.

As the big Echo generation ages, they will begin to increase the proportion and number of mid-age adults. That will begin in about 10 years when that generation will be age 31-46.

Regardless of the amount or rate of in-migration of new residents over the next 20 years, the older adult population in the Township will continue to increase in size until the big Baby Boom generation ages through (age 50-69 in 2015). Although, in 2011, the percentage of age 55+ residents in Springwater was the same as the provincial average (27%), there was a higher percentage of age 55-70 and a lower percentage of age 70+ residents in Springwater. That difference is partly attributable to the need for a significant number of the oldest seniors to seek supportive accommodation in a community like Barrie or Orillia, and to be closer to critical medical care.

2.5 Overview of the Parks and Recreation Delivery System

Most culture and recreation facilities, parks and leisure programming are provided by the Municipality through the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties. Other public, as well as non-profit and commercial providers support the efforts of the Municipality. Other public entities include: the Springwater Public Library, the Simcoe County District School Board, the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic School Board, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, the County of Simcoe, the City of Barrie, the Province of Ontario, and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit. Through the seven Recreation Service Boards and the many sports, arts and other community groups and associations, the non-profit/voluntary sector plays a very significant role in the provision of culture, recreation and sports

programming; and the provision, administration and operation of community halls and some associated outdoor facilities.

Through an agreement between the Township and the Flos Agricultural Society, two tennis courts, a senior lit ball diamond, a skateboard facility and the parking lot that supports the Elmvale Community Arena, the Curling facility and the outdoor facilities are located at the Elmvale fairground. The ball diamond is operated by the Ag. Society, with maintenance provided by the Township. The Township owns the 0.7 hectare footprint of the arena and curling rink.

Every four years (most recently in 2015), the Township renews the non-resident user fee agreement with the City of Barrie that allows

Township residents to access City recreation facilities and programming at the same fee as City of Barrie residents. Springwater Township also has a joint use agreement with Tiny Township that allows the residents of that municipality access to the Elmvale Arena, with the annual payment to Springwater Township based on the number of their residents using the facility.

The commercial sector is also involved in the provision of culture and recreation facilities and programming from golf, alpine skiing and horseback riding to dance, in-home fitness, Judo/Tai Chi, bowling, photography, and artisan studios and programs.

The Recreation Advisory Committee provides a vehicle for the Recreation Service Boards, culture and recreation groups, individual residents and Tiny Township to inform recommendations from the Committee to Springwater Township Council on capital projects via the annual capital budget.

2.6 Culture and Recreation Facilities Profile

The type and quality of facilities available in the Township of Springwater are typical of an Ontario rural community with a population of 15-20,000 that is located on the edge of a much larger community with full services. Because of close proximity, Springwater residents have made use of culture and recreation facilities and programs located in the City of Barrie, and the towns of Midland and Wasaga Beach, and to a lesser extent, the City of Orillia for many years. Some facilities that a community the size of Springwater would typically provide are absent because of the availability of these facilities nearby. As noted earlier, the Township has a formal agreement with the City of Barrie that allows Springwater residents to rent Barrie facilities and to register in Barrie culture and recreation programs at no additional fee. Township of Tiny, whose residents utilize the Elmvale Arena, have a cost-sharing agreement with the Township of Springwater.

Recognizing the Township's current and future settlement pattern with two major concentrations of population in Elmvale and Midhurst/Snow Valley, 'north' and 'south' service areas were identified in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The intent was to concentrate most parks and recreation services, especially the highest level facilities within these two areas. Since 2005, that has been the policy of the Municipality. Facilities in Elmvale are intended to meet most of the needs of residents in the northern portion of the Township, while the principle location of new high level sports facilities in the South Service Area has been Tree Nursery Sports Park and Doran Park – serving most of the needs in the southern part of the Township. Local service centres (e.g., Minesing, Grenfel, Hillsdale, Anten Mills and Phelpston) provide smaller scale parks and recreation facilities – supported, in part by the Recreation Service Boards.

The Township of Springwater does not have a municipal gymnasium, indoor or outdoor aquatic facilities, a fitness centre (weight training and aerobic fitness), a dedicated older adult centre, a dedicated youth centre, visual and performing arts facilities (other than a small outdoor amphitheatre located in Heritage Park in Elmvale), and large indoor multi-purpose activity and assembly spaces (other than the assembly hall in Elmvale and the Council chambers).

About half of Springwater households reported via the household survey that less than half of their family's culture and recreation needs are being accommodated within the Township, and that this limited availability of facilities is the greatest deterrent to participating in their favourite leisure activities as often as they would like. Another significant deterrent to participation was reported to be the low quality

or lack of desired programming, due in part to facility limitations (quality, functionality and location).

Due to the disbursed nature of settlement, parks and recreation facilities are widely distributed throughout the Township. Although not the most populous, Elmvale is the most complete settlement area, and is the most endowed with culture and recreation facilities. However, most of the recreation facilities in Elmvale are located on land that is not owned by the Township (schools and fairground). Similarly in Minesing, three of the four ball diamonds and the only playing field are located at Minesing Central elementary school.

Most rural communities with a population of close to 20,000 typically have more than one ice surface. Elmvale is home to the Township's only arena (single pad).

Although not all located on municipal land, Senior, Intermediate and Junior ball diamonds are well distributed throughout the Township. Playing fields are less plentiful and not as well distributed as ball diamonds, with five Senior pitches located in the southern part of the Township at Tree Nursery Sports Park, and one soccer/football field located at the high school in Elmvale. The other six facilities are small, lower quality facilities located at elementary schools (5) and Grenfel Park.

With the North Simcoe Rail Trail that runs north-south through the center of the Township, the Ganaraska Hiking Trail and Nine Mile Portage Trail in the south, and numerous smaller trails in County Forests, Conservation Areas, the Minesing Wetlands, the vicinity of Little Lake Park, the Old Penetanguishene Road Trail (Hillsdale), the Hunter Russell Nature Trail (Midhurst), Snow Valley trails, and trails in Springwater Provincial Park – the Township is already well endowed - with more trails and extensions of existing trails in the planning stage.

Other than the facility in Elmvale, the other five community halls and the Springwater Room (second floor of the Elmvale Arena) are small

(under 2,000 square feet of useable space, with four facilities under 800 square feet on any level). The newest facility was built in the 1970s. Small size, low ceilings, the type of flooring and accessibility issues greatly and increasingly limit the type of uses, as well as the customers that these facilities can accommodate.

Tennis courts are located in the most populated areas – in Midhurst at Doran Park (four lit courts) and in Elmvale at the fairgrounds (two lit courts). An air supported dome winterizes the Midhurst courts. Throughout the Township, there are 8 picnic/rink pavilions, 3 sport pads and 9 natural ice rinks (3 are associated with pavilions and 3 with sport pads) that support a variety of uses in all four seasons – from picnics and social gatherings to skating, ball hockey, box lacrosse, roller skating, skate boarding and summer children's camps. A ninth pavilion is being planned for Doran Park in Midhurst.

Most parks contain childrens' play equipment, most of which is either new or has been recently replaced to meet safety standards.

There are two outdoor fitness facilities, one in Midhurst at Doran Park and the other at Bishop Park in Elmvale.

A small permanent skateboard facility is located adjacent to the fairground in Elmvale and another is in the planning stage for the South Service Area. During July and August, the Township operates a mobile skateboard facility that is rotated among six parks that have sufficient hard surfaced areas to accommodate the structure (Midhurst, Phelpston, Hillsdale, Minesing, Anten Mills and Grenfel).

Households reported that satisfaction with culture and recreation facilities varied by category, with satisfaction highest for trails and pathways (61.4%), passive parks and open space (60%) and recreation facilities that support less active pursuits (48.2%). Satisfaction was lowest for indoor recreation facilities (31.3%), outdoor active recreation facilities (34.3%) and arts/cultural facilities (42%).

2.7 Parks and Open Space Profile

Each significant population centre/cluster in the Township has at least one park. The largest developed parks are located in the southern half of Township, with the only sizable parks in the northern half of the Township being Heritage and Hillsdale.

The five elementary school properties contribute to local open space and accommodate outdoor facilities in Elmvale, Midhurst, Hillsdale and Minesing. The secondary school is a significant open space in Elmvale. Open space provided by others contributes significantly to the large amount of public open space throughout the rural parts of the Township (e.g., 38 County Forest blocks, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority lands, and Springwater Provincial Park).

Most Local-scale parks are quality sites with good to excellent frontage, and are well shaped, developable properties. Some contain considerable tree cover. At 42 hectares (104 acres) and 2.3 hectares (5.6 acres) per 1,000 residents, there is more **Neighbourhood/Local parkland** than is required (or recommended). This is due in part to the larger than ideal size of close to 40% of the sites and the large number of residential communities and pockets of development throughout the Township that contain at least one Neighbourhood/Local park. However, although there is more Neighbourhood/Local parkland in total than required throughout the Township, five residential areas are deficient.

At 32.5 hectares (80.2 acres) and 1.8 hectares (4.3 acres) per 1,000 residents, the quantity of **Community Parkland** comes close to matching what is recommended. Four of the eight sites are within the recommended size range of 10-30 acres, and two of those sites are undeveloped. The remaining sites are smaller. Community parks are

fairly well distributed, with one located in each of Elmvale, Hillsdale, Orr Lake, Anten Mills, Minesing, Grenfel, Snow Valley (undeveloped) and Midhurst. The Midhurst site is consumed by the community hall and parking, resulting in undersupply of Community parkland in that community. However, two Township-wide/Regional-scale parks in Midhurst (Doran Park and Willow Creek Valley Park) help to mitigate the shortfall.

Eleven parks, other publicly available open spaces, including the three trail corridors and the fairground in Elmvale, have been classified as **Township-wide/Regional** in scale, comprising 136 hectares (335.8 acres). Only two of the sites are located in the northern part of the Township, although the North Simcoe Rail Trail runs north-south through the Municipality. Overall, the distribution of these highest level open spaces is reasonable relative to the settlement pattern. Within the Flos Agricultural Society Fairground is a 1.72 acre parcel of municipal land that contains the Elmvale Community Arena, Curling Rink and parking lot.

Seven open space properties have been classified as **Specialty Open Space**. Ranging from 0.11 to 0.85 hectares (0.26 to 2.1 acres) in size, all of the sites are small. Three properties are undeveloped and one is inaccessible. Two sites contain an historic sign or cairn.

Future municipal parkland has been identified for the Midhurst, Snow Valley, Centre Vespra, Elmvale, Hillsdale, Phelpston and Anten Mills, as well as in subdivision plans in other parts of the Township. Most of these planned future sites are classified as Neighbourhood/Local parks.

2.8 The Springwater Township Council Strategic Plan (2012-2014)

Even though the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan was developed by the last Council, it is important to understand the messages and priorities as they relate to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. To date, the new Council has not developed a Strategic Plan to guide decisions for their term of office. The current Strategic Plan comprises vision, mission, values, guiding principles and associated key working initiatives. Since the vision, mission and values are primarily intended to guide Council's broad actions and conduct, the guiding principles and associated key working initiatives have been examined in search of direction that can guide the Parks and Recreation Plan Update.

Vision: To actively promote Springwater Township as a municipality of unique communities with opportunities to cultivate, grow and prosper.

Mission: To provide accountable representation and maximize efficiencies.

Values: Accountability, Approachability, Integrity, Respect and Responsiveness

Guiding Principles

- Community Development
- Growth Management
- Infrastructure, Financial Management and Service Delivery
- Green Agenda
- Communication

Key Working Initiatives (associated with the guiding principles)

The following working initiatives most closely relate to and inform the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Under the Key Working Initiatives associated with the **Community Development** guiding principle, the following initiatives align with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Implement the Municipal Culture Plan;
- Enhance and promote recreational activities, facilities and trails; and
- Foster and promote volunteerism.

Under Key Working Initiatives associated with the **Growth Management** guiding principle, the following initiative aligns with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Council will manage growth allocation.

Under the Key Working Initiatives associated with the **Infrastructure, Financial Management and Service Delivery** guiding principle, the following initiatives align with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Continue development of lifecycle-based asset management and long term capital plans;
- Operations are to strive to balance affordability and ensure sufficient resources are in place for preventative maintenance activities to extend the life of facilities;
- Enhance financial reporting through: utilizing service delivery performance indicators and benchmarks, and monitoring success of achieving positive service delivery goals;
- Further enhance customer service; and
- Implement the master plan - as affordable and appropriate.

Under the Key Working Initiatives associated with the **Green Agenda** guiding principle, the following initiative aligns with the Parks and

Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Continue implementation of the Township's Sustainability Plan through: reviewing the potential of alternative energy for municipal buildings and infrastructure, and review of the potential reduction of the municipal carbon footprint within municipal operations.

2.9 Community Consultation and Key Results

Consultation initiatives included: an on-line household survey, two Community Forums, a Community Group Survey, a Mini Forum with the Recreation Service Boards, and submissions from individuals and

2.9.1 The On-line Household Survey

From October to early March, an on-line survey was posted on the Township web site and widely promoted, including a post card mailed to every household. The survey was also available in paper format at libraries and other public facilities. 299 surveys were completed. Below is an overview of responses.

- The **geography** of the Township is well represented in the responses with Midhurst, Elmvale, Snow Valley, Anten Mills and Minesing leading the way and representing 80.5% of responding households.
- Respondents represented a **full range of age groups**, with age 35-49 being the most frequent, followed by age 15-19, 10-14, 5-9 and 55-64.
- **Household income** appears to be representative of the much higher than average household income in the Township, with 55.5% of respondent households in the \$100,000+/year category, followed by the \$80,000-\$99,999 category (13.4% of respondent households). In 2012, the average household income in the Township was \$141,000.

Under the Key Working Initiatives associated with the **Communication** guiding principle, the following initiatives align with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update:

- Continue the Corporate Communications Policy and effort; and
- Encourage community engagement and educational promotion of municipal government.

groups. Later in the process, another Community Forum was hosted to solicit feedback on the emerging Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

- Responding households represented an **emphasis on families**, with 68% reporting three or more people living at home. That represents the family-orientated nature of the Township.
- The **top leisure activities** were reported to be 'linear' in nature, with walking/hiking and cycling/mountain biking, running/jogging and cross-country skiing at 75.5%, 48.3%, 35.4% and 24.5% respectively. Other popular activities included: ice hockey (47.5%), use of playgrounds (42.5%), casual/recreational skating (42.1%), attending a festival (35.7%), swimming (35.4%), tobogganing (34%), alpine skinning (33.7%), baseball/softball (32%), volunteering (30.6%), golfing (29.6%), visiting museums and historic sites (29.6%), aerobic fitness and weight training (24.5%) and nature appreciation (24.5%).
- For 47% of responding households, **less than half of their recreation needs are being met within the Township**, with swimming, theatre, hockey and casual/recreational skating leading the way. 43% reported that only 'some' of their needs are being met, and 19% reported that only half of their needs are being met. For 29.5% of respondents, most of their recreational

needs are being met within the Township, and for 2.7%, all of their needs are being met.

- 62% of responding households reported that they are **unable to participate in their favourite leisure activities** as often as they like, with ‘facility or program not available in Springwater Township’ the overwhelming reason (70.3%), and lack of personal time/too busy (28%), and ‘program not offered at a convenient time’ the second and third most frequently stated reasons (27.5%).
- The **top reason for residents participating in their favourite leisure activities outside of the Township** is ‘facility or program is not available in the Township’ (81%), followed by ‘quality of facility or program is better elsewhere’ (39%).
- Responding households identified many types of leisure activities for which they **have to leave the Township to participate**, with swimming leading at 56%, followed by attending theatre and concerts (29.3%), aerobic fitness (29.3%), ice hockey (26.3%), casual/recreational skating (22.2%), attending festivals (21.8%) and gymnasium sports (20.3%). ‘Unavailability of facilities and programs’, and ‘higher quality of facilities and programs elsewhere’ were noted as the top reasons.
- 56% of responding households stated that there are **programs that they would like to see offered in the Township**. The most mentioned programs were: tennis, swimming, park activities, ice hockey, trail activities, yoga, basketball and lacrosse.
- **All aspects of parks, recreation and culture are viewed as ‘important’ to ‘very important’**. Not including cultural facilities at a low of 47.3%, response ranged from 73%-86% for other types of indoor and outdoor facilities. 83% of households rated parks and open space as ‘important’ to ‘very important’.
- **Satisfaction varied by category of culture and recreation facility**, with satisfaction highest for trails and pathways (61.4%) and passive parks and open space (60%), and less active recreation facilities (48.2%). Satisfaction was lowest for indoor

recreation facilities (31.3%), outdoor active recreation facilities (34.3%) and cultural facilities (42%).

- Although not overwhelmingly strong for any type of facility, **the degree of support for additional municipal spending on improvements and new facilities** was above the 2.5 out of 5 score for all but skateboard facilities and cultural facilities. In ranked order, support was strongest for: trails, outdoor rinks/sport pads, nature parks, playgrounds, arenas, indoor pools, youth centres, fitness centres, picnic areas, ball diamonds, outdoor water play areas, and older adult centres (all scoring above 3 out of 5).
- Regarding the **multi-facility community centre** that has been under discussion for some time, 55.3% felt it was ‘important’ to ‘very important’ (with 38% stating ‘very important’). Although the response varied by area, support was also strong from the central and northern communities, as noted below. The number of respondents from the other areas was too low to significantly compare. The higher the household income, the more likely a household was to support the facility.

▪ Phelpston	(70.6%)	52.9% ‘very important’
▪ Snow Valley	(69.2%)	41.0% ‘very important’
▪ Anten Mills	(66.6%)	45.8% ‘very important’
▪ Midhurst	(57.4%)	41.2% ‘very important’
▪ Elmvale	(54.0%)	45.8% ‘very important’
▪ Minesing	(47.6%)	33.3% ‘very important’
▪ Average	(53.3%)	38.0% ‘very important’
- In order of preference, the **desired components** included:
 1. indoor swimming pool (72%),
 2. arena (indoor ice surface) (63%),
 3. equipment-based fitness gym (59%),
 4. gymnasias (53%),
 5. aerobic fitness studio (50%),
 6. outdoor public square/community focal point (could incorporate a water feature/outdoor skating rink, landscape features, sitting areas, and assembly area) (48%),

7. facilities to support older adult activities (45%),
 8. facilities to support youth activities (44%),
 9. an outdoor water play area (43%),
 10. small multipurpose rooms (36.7%),
 11. library (32.5%),
 12. assembly/banquet hall (29.6%),
 13. performance facility (to support music, dance, theatre, presentations and other types of shows) (27.9%),
 14. meeting rooms (27.5%),
 15. facilities to support the creative arts, handcrafts, photography, etc. (24.6%),
 16. outdoor fitness facility (22.5%),
 17. informal social space (22.1%), and
 18. child minding room (20%).
- Although support was strong for this facility, **respondents were not as willing to pay more to cover construction costs and to operate the centre**. Support was highest for increased or new rental and participation fees (47%), with higher income

households the most willing. Response to the questions about support for fundraising and increased taxes did not vary significantly by household income (support averaged 27% and 30% respectively).

- 92% of households felt that **parks and recreation should be a high priority** for the Township.
- 83% of households felt that **they are generally aware of what is available** – in terms of parks and recreation opportunities and facilities.
- 95% of households felt that the Township should **continue to partner** with others to provide parks and recreation services.
- 68% of households felt that there are **sufficient parks/open spaces in their area**.
- 70% of households felt that **the time it takes to get to their favourite parks, recreation facilities and programs is 'reasonable'**.

For more detail, refer to the **Household Survey Report** (under separate cover).

2.9.2 The Two Community Forums

36 people attended the Forum held in Elmvale on February 10, 2015 and 64 people attended the Forum held at the Township Administration Office near Midhurst on February 11, 2015.

The following were common responses and ideas that emerged from small table discussions across both Forums.

- Concern about losing local community facilities (e.g., Elmvale Community Arena, community halls).
- Support for enhancing an integrated trail system – year-round and multi-purpose.
- The issues of volunteer decline and burn-out.
- Sustainable funding sources to renovate, replace and/or build new recreation facilities (indoor/outdoor) to meet the future needs of the community.

- Partnership development and relationship-building within and outside of the Township – access to facilities and funding partnerships (e.g., school boards, City of Barrie, the corporate sector, special interest groups, government).
- Impact of growth on resident expectations, needs and the ability to pay for additional programs and services – affordability, impact on taxes, quality and type of facilities/location.
- Marketing and promoting of Township recreation facilities to attract new users and volunteers.
- The decline in enrolment in minor hockey.
- Liability and risk management – volunteers and the Township.
- Providing a variety of programs and spaces to meet the needs of an aging population, youth and families.
- Some rental fees are becoming unaffordable.

- Notable demand was expressed for additional arenas, improved halls, an adequate fitness/wellness facility, Wi-Fi in public facilities, aquatic facilities, and more ball diamonds.

2.9.3 The Mini Forum with the Recreation Service Boards

A session was facilitated for the seven Recreation Service Boards, often referred to as 'hall boards'. Discussion centred on: i) what is working well with the Recreation Service Boards and the facilities that they are responsible for; ii) the desired role of the RSBs; iii) what should be done differently; and iv) what the Parks and Recreation Master Plan should consider regarding Recreation Service Boards and the facilities that they manage.

What's Working Well

- The facilities that are the focus of the RSBs (halls/community centres, outdoor rinks, picnic pavilions, skateboard facility, library, bowling alley, ball diamonds).
- Programming and events supported by the halls/community centres and outdoor facilities.
- The current means of communication.
- Fundraising events and other sources of revenue to support board initiatives.
- Support of municipal staff.

Preferred Role of the Boards

- Community leadership: input into programming, community needs research, identify required facilities and improvements – provide a community voice; be innovative; set goals and track results.
- Organization of community and fundraising events.
- Outreach/bringing people together/connection with the local community.

For more detail, refer to the **Community Consultation Report** (under separate cover).

- Communication with Township staff and the community.
- Keeping traditions alive.
- Desire for the Township to oversee custodial/maintenance of facilities.

Suggestions for Improvement

- Increases networking, communication and collaboration among boards, the Township, the community and businesses.
- More partnerships with the Township.
- Improve facility accessibility and maintenance at Grenfell Park.
- Make better use of modern modes of communication for marketing events, raising awareness, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, etc.
- Elmvale: establish clear policies and procedures re: custodial care, improve administration and increase use of the hall.
- Phelpston: washrooms and a roof over the rink.
- Anten Mills: increase programming in the hall.
- Develop a campaign to recruit coaches and volunteers to help run programs and events.
- Attract more youth to programs.

In addition to the above suggestions, each Board identified specific priority initiatives to consider in the Master Plan.

For more detail, refer to the **Community Consultation Report** (under separate cover).

2.9.4 Community Group Surveys

16 groups completed this survey which asked questions about membership, trends, facilities used and their adequacy, unmet demand for current and additional programs, facility suggestions for the possible multi-facility recreation centre, suggestions for improved culture and recreation facilities across the Township, new/additional culture and recreation facilities and programs; and the potential to assist with fundraising.

Except for Elmvale Bears, Sledge Hockey, Minesing Minor Ball and Simcoe Ladies Slo-pitch, groups have experienced no appreciable growth in registration over the past five years – and the Minesing

2.9.5 Survey of Volunteer-based Groups

25 of 29 surveys sent to volunteer-based groups were completed in April, 2015. Questions included information about each organization, how they recruit and use volunteers, the number of volunteers used, the length of time that volunteers stay with each group, reasons for leaving, issues/challenges, type of assistance received from the Township, additional assistance that would be beneficial, and the reasons why some groups are having more success than others with recruiting and keeping volunteers.

2.10 Leisure Trends

Over the past decade, the demand from children and youth for sports and other culture and recreation programs and facilities gradually declined as the big Echo generation aged through and out of this market. For the next decade or so, the percentage of children in the Township is expected to remain relatively stable, unless there is significant increased in-migration of new residents, a population that

Anten Mills Goodtimes Seniors Club experienced a 10-15% decline. Over the next five years, five groups anticipate a small increase in registration, one anticipates a large increase and one expects a small decline. The other groups anticipate registration to be steady. Some groups were able to provide a rationale for these trends and most were able to provide specifics about additional time required and the facility improvements and expansion necessary to support their program.

For more details, refer to **Figure 1** in the **Community Consultation Report** (under separate cover).

The top issues/challenges were:

- burn-out;
- finding and retaining enough qualified, effective and dedicated volunteers; and
- understanding how to work with and support their volunteers to keep them engaged and effective.

For more detail, refer to the **Community Consultation Report** (under separate cover).

typically comprises an above average proportion of young families. Regardless, within ten or so years the big Echo generation (now age 21-36) should begin to have children in sufficient numbers to begin to increase the proportion of pre-school children. Even if the proportion of children and youth remains relatively static, the numbers will continue to increase due to some or substantial in-migration.

At the same time, demand for adult-oriented activities, especially those of interest to middle aged and older adults will continue to increase for at least the next forty years. Similarly, leisure activities of interest to young adults will increase as the big Echo generation ages through their thirties and into middle age.

Appendix C contains a report on generic trends in leisure and best practices in the leisure services field. Of note is the fact that for Springwater and other communities that could begin to grow at an above average rate, the predicted declines in participation in leisure activities of interest to children and youth will be muted somewhat due to the higher than average in-migration of a younger population. However, significant increases in demand for activities of interest to adults, especially middle aged and older adults will continue to increase. Other factors such as affordability, the leisure time deficit, the changing nature of work and family dynamics, the increasingly ethnicity of communities, evolving social values, the increasing desire for improved health and wellness, increasing obesity, and environmental concerns and associated costs will also influence demand for all leisure activities, the nature of facilities to adequately accommodate demand, and ability of service delivery systems to adequately meet needs.

Broad implications for the most prominent leisure facilities in Springwater Township are noted below.

For facilities like **arenas**, the market is shifting as the big Echo generation (age 21-36 in 2015) ages out of their minor sports years and into the young adult market. In 2012, enrolment in Hockey Canada teams was reported to be 572,000, down 200,000 from the peak. However, the participation rate and thus enrollment in girls and women's hockey has been increasing over the past decade. Participation in figure skating is down in both Canada and the United States. Although the number as small, special needs hockey has shown strong growth across the County. In-line hockey and ball

hockey are an increasingly popular summer activity, as is lacrosse in communities where that sport is historically strong. Women's flat track roller derby is also experiencing significant growth, with arenas as the venue of choice.

Elmvale Minor Hockey reported that registration has been steady over the past five years, and they expect that to continue over the next five years. The Elmvale Figure Skating Club reported that registration has been steady over the past five years and it could increase by up to 10% if they attract participants from nearby clubs where rates have been increasing. The Elmvale Bear's Sledge Hockey Club has experienced a 200% increase in registration over the past five years and is anticipating a 50% increase over the next five years. Lack of physical accessibility to benches and showers at the Elmvale Arena limits the local program. From the household survey, ice hockey was identified as the third most popular leisure activity, along with casual/recreational skating. From the same source, arenas were identified as a type of facility for which there was above average support for increased municipal investment.

High registration costs, increasing injuries, increasing ethnicity in the population, the skill level and physical ability required to skate, and fewer children from which to draw are key factors in the decline of minor hockey and figure skating across Canada. However, with the aging of the big Echo generation into the young and eventually mid-age adult markets, and the large Baby Boom generation still showing interest in adult hockey and recreational skating, demand from the adult market has been increasing and should remain quite strong over the next twenty years (until the Baby Boom generation ages out of their skating years). But adults do not utilize ice time on a per person basis as much as children and youth.

This should mean that overall demand for ice time may stabilize or continue to decline, but at a slower pace over the next decade, unless a significant number of non-skating families can be encouraged to join

ice sports and/or there is unmet demand within the region that seeks available ice time in a potentially expanding supply of Springwater Township facilities. By around 2021, it is anticipated that the number of children may begin to increase as the Echo generation begins to have children in increasing numbers. This upward trend is expected to last through 2031 and then decline in percentage to below the 2011 level. Communities that are growing at an above average rate will have a younger age profile, resulting in faster growth of this youngest age group. From the household survey, arenas were identified as a type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (5th highest).

Similarly for **ball diamonds**, there should be some shift in demand from children and youth to young and mid-age adults, but unless there is excess demand within the region and/or demand for ball is stimulated by a strong marketing campaign and improved local organizations, overall demand for ball should continue to decline over the next decade. In increasing numbers, young people continue to choose soccer over softball and baseball. From the household survey, baseball/softball was identified as the eleventh most popular leisure activities. From the same source, ball diamonds were identified as a type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (10th highest).

For **soccer**, demand has been growing in most communities over the past couple of decades, even as the number of children and youth has declined recently. That is because soccer has been able to capture an increasing share of the child and youth market, as well as the adult market. However, now that the Echo generation has aged right out of their minor sports years, even soccer may not be able to maintain growth or even the status quo over the next decade. From the household survey, playing fields were identified as a type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (13th highest).

For **tennis**, there is potential for renewed interest from a growing young adult market if there is a local organization to encourage, promote and otherwise support the activity, and facilities are of sufficient quality for adults. Nationally, participation has shown a slight increase in recent years. From the household survey, tennis courts were identified as a type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (14th highest).

Skateboarding is an activity that has been increasing in popularity and legitimacy over the past twenty years. It offers a preferred type of involvement for youth aged 10-17 – being unstructured and social, and providing a desired element of risk. Even though this age demographic has declined in number, the sport remains popular, especially where there are adequate facilities (permanent and portable).

Ultimate Frisbee and other disk sports continue to increase in popularity as a non-contact sport that stresses the importance of sportsmanship and fair play. Outdoor playing fields and indoor soccer venues are popular facilities for Ultimate Frisbee – which in some communities, is competing for prime time with traditional field sports. Disc Golf courses are developed in various environments and to various skill levels. Wooded settings are preferred.

Pickleball has exploded in popularity across North America in recent years, with the movement spreading west and north into Ontario. This easy-to-learn team sport, which is played in gymnasias and on tennis courts, is popular with middle age and older adults, as well as youth.

Demand for **fitness centres and fitness/wellness activities and formal programming** has been increasing over the past thirty years and is expected to continue to increase as especially the adult population increasingly understands the health/wellness benefits. Two recently installed outdoor fitness facilities are the only fitness/wellness facilities in the Township. In spite of that, aerobic

fitness programs and weight training was reported to be the fifteen most popular leisure activity (household survey). From the same source, fitness facilities were identified as a type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (9th highest).

Demand for **swimming and related aquatic activities** remains popular across Canada, especially with new Canadians who want their children to learn to swim. Nation-wide, demand is increasing for therapeutic pools and aquatic-based wellness and rehabilitation programming. Although swimming is very popular with Springwater residents, there are no aquatic facilities in the Township. However, there are facilities in Barrie, Orillia, Wasaga Beach, Midland and Oro-Medonte. From the household, an indoor aquatic facility was identified as the type of facility for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (6th highest). Outdoor water play areas ranked 11th.

Demand for **trails** of all types has been increasing steadily and will continue to increase as the population ages. Most of the types of activities that are supported by trails are increasing in popularity, driven in part by the desire of adults to maintain or regain good health. Pedestrian and cycling activities are the most popular. The most popular leisure activities of Springwater residents are 'linear' in nature (e.g., walking/hiking and cycling/mountain biking, running/jogging and cross-country skiing). The Township and the region both boast a significant network of off-road trails and on-road cycling routes. From the household survey, support was strongest for increased municipal investment in improvement to trails and expansion of the network.

Demand for the **performing arts** and the **creative arts** has been increasing and will continue to increase, fueled by the interests of a growing adult and older adult market. From the household survey, residents indicated they were most dissatisfied with cultural facilities in the Township. Attending theatre and concerts were identified as

activities for which residents had to leave the Township (second highest). Attending hand craft exhibitions were also activities for which residents had to leave the Township (11th highest). From the same source, support for increased municipal investment in performance facilities was second lowest and for facilities that support creative arts and hand craft activities, support was third lowest.

For **multi-purpose assembly halls and community centres**, demand and degree of utilization is mostly influenced by the nature and size of the facility, with the ones in the highest demand being physically accessible; well appointed and of high quality; that contain rooms that are suitable to support floor-based fitness programs, social events and gym-based activities; are part of larger a multi-purpose recreation centre; and are located within or near population centres. Demand is increasing from all age groups and for a wide variety of leisure and related interests for small to large multi-purpose spaces of adequate quality. Unfortunately, in Springwater Township, multi-purpose spaces are less than adequate for most of these types of activities (from gym sports to large-group assemblies, shows/performances, exhibitions, Pickleball, aerobic fitness, crafts and fine art programming, dance, children's programming, older adult programming, and many other types of similar activities). From the household survey, a gymnasium and multi-purpose activity rooms were identified as types of facilities for which there was positive support for increased municipal investment (15th and 16th highest respectively).

With interest in the out-of-doors and demand for nature appreciation, orienteering, camping and trail-based activities all on the increase, the demand for **nature-oriented spaces** (from wooded areas to wetlands and meadows) will continue to grow. Via the household survey, hiking, cycling, mountain biking, cross-country skiing and nature appreciation were identified as popular activities by Springwater residents. From the same source, satisfaction was highest for trails,

pathways, passive parks and leisure facilities in the Township that support less active activities.

Even with the growing prominence of the Internet, interest in and demand for **libraries** remains strong, although the role of libraries is changing. A number of factors are shaping the future of public

libraries, including continuing advances in digital media and technology, heightened competition, demographic transformation and financial constraints.

Appendix C reports of trends related to leisure facilities, parks and open space systems, as well as the leisure service delivery system.

2.11 Key Demand Indicators and Related Issues

Indicators of current and future demand and related issues emerged from a number of sources, including: trends in facility utilization, trends in sports group and program registration, community and stakeholder consultation, and leisure trends. Although reported in more detail under each facility category, the following are the key demand indicators:

- Township-wide, support was strongest for increased investment in the following types of culture and recreation facilities: trails, outdoor rinks/sport pads, nature parks, playgrounds, arenas, indoor pools, youth centres, fitness centres, picnic areas, ball diamonds, outdoor water play areas and older adult centres.
- Although one third of households reported that all or most of their culture and recreation needs are being met within the township, half reported that less than half of their household's needs are being met within the township - with swimming, theatre, fitness, hockey and casual/recreational skating, attending festivals and gymnasium sports leading the way. This was the most significant factor contributing to lower than desired participation rates.
- A shortage of quality culture, recreation and wellness programming within the Township was identified as the most significant barrier to participation. The most sought after programs were: tennis, swimming, park activities, ice hockey, trail activities, yoga, basketball and lacrosse.
- There is high demand for some the types of facilities that are not available in the Township, with an indoor aquatic centre, a fitness

centre, a gymnasium, facilities aimed at older adults and youth, and outdoor water play facilities leading the list.

- All aspects of parks, recreation and culture were viewed as 'important' to 'very important' by survey respondents.
- Satisfaction was highest for trails, passive parks and open space and the less active recreation facilities (picnic areas, playgrounds, pavilions, beaches, boat launches, arboretums).
- Satisfaction was lowest for indoor recreation facilities, outdoor active recreation facilities and cultural facilities.
- Most households felt that parks and recreation should be a high priority for the Township, that they are generally aware of what is available (in terms of parks and recreation opportunities and facilities), and that there are sufficient parks/open spaces in their area.
- Most households felt that the time it takes to get to their favourite parks, recreation facilities and programs is 'reasonable'.
- There was strong support for the Township continuing to partner with others to provide some parks and recreation services.
- There was concern about sufficient funding being available to improve existing and build new recreation facilities.
- There was strong, but qualified support for a multi-facility community centre. The most significant reservation was that such a facility could render some of the existing smaller halls/community centres, as well as the Elmvalle Arena obsolete. The most desired components for the complex included: an indoor

swimming pool, an arena, an equipment-based fitness gym, a gymnasium, an aerobic fitness studio, an outdoor public square/community focal point, older adult facilities, youth facilities and an outdoor water play area.

- Most sports and other recreation and community-based groups are struggling to maintain sufficient qualified volunteers to support their organizations and initiatives.
- The following are the big trends that are impacting demand for leisure in Springwater Township:
 - the shrinking proportion of children and youth (and therefore declining demand for activities of interest to this generation).
 - the increasing proportion of middle-aged and older adults (and therefore increasing demand for activities of interest to those generations).
 - increasing demand for trails, natural environment settings, arts and culture, programs and activities supporting wellness, lower impact and less physically demanding individual and teams activities, and festivals and sport tournaments.
 - declining demand for many types of high impact, physically demanding individual and team sports; and activities that require a significant amount of time in which to participate (e.g., golf).

- the absence of many types of in-demand culture and recreation facilities and programming in the Township.
- the below average quality and limited functionality of an increasing number of the culture and recreation facilities in the Township.
- the below average quality of many of the programs offered in the Township (influenced mostly by the type and quality of available facilities).
- The following are trends impacting leisure service delivery:
 - increasing demand for multi-facility complexes (indoor and outdoor), quality facilities and programming, shorter length programs, and convenience.
 - customers seeking the best value for their investment of money and time.
 - increasing support for partnerships.
- Notable demand was expressed at the two Forums for: additional arenas, improved halls, an adequate fitness/wellness facility, Wi-Fi in public facilities, aquatic facilities, and more ball diamonds.
- Notable concern was raised about increasing rental rates, particularly at arenas.

2.12 Gap Analysis

2.12.1 Current Challenges and Gaps

The following are the top challenges and gaps regarding leisure services in Springwater Township today.

- The disbursed nature of the population and the decentralized nature of facilities (leading to some duplication and inefficiency: e.g., ball diamonds and playgrounds).

- Although the quality of indoor and outdoor facilities is generally consistent with what most rural communities provide, it is considerably below urban standards. This is becoming an increasing challenge as Springwater continues to transition from rural to urban, especially in the southern part of the Township.
- Due to the long-standing dependence on surrounding communities, many culture and recreation facilities and services

are deficient and underwhelming in Springwater (especially in the south).

- Most sports facilities in Elmvale are not located on Township property, due to the absence of a Community-scale sports park. This is posing significant limits on facility improvement.
- The need to acquire an adequate site to accommodate the proposed multi-facility community centre and main branch library in the South Service Area.
- Five residential areas are deficient in Neighbourhood parkland.
- The declining ability to attract and retain volunteers.
- The long-term viability of Recreation Service Boards and some of the community halls. How long can RSBs continue to sustain their roles?
- Gradual, declining support for the current service delivery model, with its strong dependence on volunteers and other communities.
- The notable concern expressed about the high cost to participate, particularly in ice sports.
- There is under-serviced, unmet and increasing demand for:
 - Some of the types of facilities and programs that are currently provided in the Township (e.g., arenas and ice-based programs, fitness/wellness facilities and associated programs, trails and associated linear activities, multi-purpose space and associated programs, opportunities for older adults).
 - Some of the types of facilities and programs that are not currently provided in and by the Township (e.g., indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities and programs, arts and culture facilities and programs, gymnasia and gym sports).
- Higher quality facilities and programs, offered at convenient times.
- The inability of the existing compliment of Township staff to service increasing and changing demand for leisure services (quantity of staff and the expanding skill set that will be required).
- The ability to fund desired facilities (capital and operating).
- There is no municipal gymnasium in the Township and very limited access to school gyms (only the high school in Elmvale has a full size single gym); therefore, there is little opportunity for community-based gymnasium sports or municipal programming for children, youth, adults and seniors (e.g., basketball, volleyball, badminton, floor hockey, floorball, pickleball, indoor soccer). That situation will improve when the Elmvale District High School is expanded and improved.
- There is limited availability of quality multi-purpose programmable space throughout the Township, and especially in the South Service Area. Most of the programmable rooms in the six community centres are small, have low ceilings, and the floors are not sprung to adequately support high impact fitness programming. The Springwater Room has similar limitations.
- Other than the outdoor fitness equipment in Doran and Bishop parks, there are no opportunities for equipment-based fitness programming and only limited opportunities for aerobic fitness programs (see note above re: community centres).
- Although the cities of Barrie and Orillia, and the towns of Midland and Wasaga Beach have indoor aquatic facilities, and there is private pool operation offering lessons in Oro-Medonte, there is no opportunity for public indoor or outdoor swimming within the

Township. As the population reaches 30,000, there should be sufficient demand for an indoor aquatic centre in Springwater.

- The current demand for arenas from Township residents, as well as expressed demand from the Barrie Minor Hockey Association and other Barrie-based groups, exceeds supply by at least one ice surface. The Township does not currently offer instructional skating programs because of limited ice capacity and offers no hockey programs for females. Prime time public/recreational skating is limited. Township residents use arenas in Barrie and are registered in Barrie hockey and other skating programs.

2.12.2 Anticipated Future Gaps

Based on the assumptions about population growth and change (informed by the Medium Growth Scenario), as well as leisure trends and best practices described above (**Sections 2.4 and 2.9**), the following anticipated future gaps must be addressed in the analysis and recommendations.

- Based on an anticipated doubling of the population over the next 20 years, there will be a significant increase in demand for all types of culture and recreation facilities, and associated programming and events.
- This overall increase in demand will be further influenced by the upward trend in demand for many types of leisure activities and the downward trend for others - both driven by other forces such as the aging of the big Baby Boom and Echo generations, generally increasing expectations for quality, and other changing societal perspectives and values.
- Regardless of population growth, demand will continue to increase for leisure activities of interest to adults, especially older adults. Many new residents are middle age or older and looking to retire in the Township. If the rate of in-migration accelerates as expected, the percentage of children and youth, as well as young adults will increase to above the provincial average, tied to the predominance of in-migrating young families. And the overall population should become more ethno-culturally diverse.
- There will be a need for the Municipality to remain current with evolving best practices in service and facility provision.

Chapter Three: The Recreation Delivery System

3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on how parks and recreation services are provided, including the principle service providers and their roles.

Culture and recreation programming has been included in this chapter, along with the service provision model.

3.2 The Recreation Delivery System

As introduced in **Section 2.5**, most parks, culture and recreation facilities, and leisure programming in Springwater Township are provided by the Municipality through the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties. Other public, as well as non-profit and commercial providers support the efforts of the Municipality, with volunteer-based groups organizing most sports, culture and recreation groups, as well as festivals and other activities and events.

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties

The Department operates and maintains the Township's parks and outdoor recreation facilities and the Elmvale Community Arena. The Department oversees the buildings and property of the Township Administration Centre, the three branch libraries, the three works yards, the five fire and emergency stations, the Elmvale Sewage Treatment Plant, the Snow Valley Environmental Centre, 16 pump houses, and grass cutting of public boulevards in built-up areas and at all Township-owned properties. The Department also oversees the operation of community centres and outdoor recreation facilities operated by the seven Recreation Service Boards.

The Department directly provides an increasing portfolio of recreation programming, and works with many volunteer-based groups in the community, as well as the Recreation Service Boards to support their efforts in providing a wide array of sport, recreation and culture

programming, festivals and events. The Department is also responsible for facility, park and programming planning; budgeting and capital forecasting; interacting with the Recreation Advisory Committee, other committees, the Recreation Service Boards and other departments, as well as advising Township Council regarding parks and recreation matters.

The Department also provides garbage collection in the Elmvale commercial area, as well as maintaining hanging flags, flower pots and planters, benches and Christmas decorations.

The Department is led by the Director of Recreation, Parks and Properties and supported by the Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties, and a Community Development Officer. See **Figure 6**.

Under the Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties are three Recreation Assistants, two Outdoor Maintenance Workers (8-9 months, depending on snow fall), two Building Maintenance Assistants, one seasonal (summer) arena assistant and five (in 2015) summer students. This section of the Department is principally responsible for maintaining, administering and inspecting parks and properties as defined above.

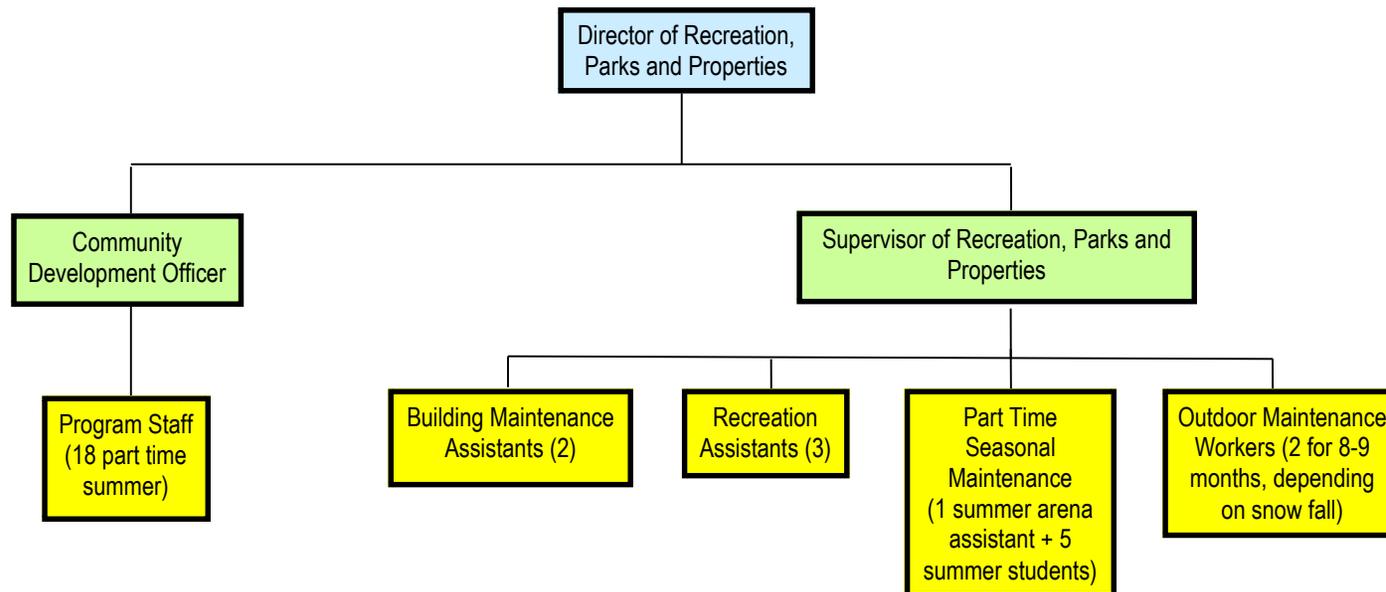
The Community Development Officer, who reports to the Chief Administrative Officer, is responsible for economic development (60%) and community development/recreation (40%). Under the community development/recreation portfolio, the Community Development Officer oversees program facilitators and a co-op staff. This section of the Department is principally responsible for recreation program development; recreation administration; special event development, execution and evaluation; community/volunteer development; community partnerships; and promotion and marketing.

In total, there are 9.15 full time equivalent staff and 23 summer students (5 in maintenance and 18 in recreation programming).

Facility booking, program registration and payments are the responsibility of customer service staff in the Treasury Department. Increasingly, marketing and promotion is becoming the responsibility of the Branding Advocate and Communication Officer, in close co-operation with the Community Development Officer.

Given the responsibilities of the Department, the size and nature of the community, expectations from the community for the higher quality and a wider array of leisure services, and increasing concerns about the ability of volunteers to maintain their traditional and evolving roles in the provision of leisure services, it is clear that the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties is under-staffed, particularly in the support to volunteer-based groups, recreation programming and supervision.

Figure 6: Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties



Other Public Entities

Other public providers providing service in the Township include the Springwater Public Library, the Simcoe County District School Board (four elementary and one secondary school), the Simcoe Muskoka Catholic School Board (one elementary school), the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (conservation areas and historic sites), the County of Simcoe (Simcoe County Museum and 38 County forests tracts), the City of Barrie (Barrie Community Sports Complex, Little Lake open space lands and Springwater resident access to City facilities and programming), Province of Ontario (Springwater Provincial Park, hydroelectric transmission corridors), and the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (health prevention programs).

The Voluntary Sector

Volunteering across the Country is under increasing stress, driven mostly by the changing nature of today's adults and older adults, compared to those who volunteered over the past few decades. Most groups who rely on volunteers have not adjusted their approach to recruitment, retention and utilization to match the expectations, skills and availability of the new generation of volunteers. In addition, required information resources and hands-on training to support volunteering is not being sufficiently accessed; and the voluntary sector has not sufficiently embraced available technology to promote the values of volunteering and to enhance the recruitment process.

In Springwater Township, volunteers play a crucial role in the delivery of culture and recreation services, including operation of some facilities and provision of many programs. As described above under Recreation Service Boards, facilities include the six community halls/centres. Volunteer-driven and non-profit programming includes minor hockey, figure skating, softball and baseball, soccer, curling, tennis, Karate, Tai Chi, seniors activities, horticulture, Bridge, wood carving, Girl Guides, Scouts, bowling, snowmobiling, music festivals, the Elmvale Fall Fair, farmers markets, studio tours, food and wine

tours, natural heritage tours and festivals/events, and seasonal celebrations.

Throughout this Master Plan Update, serious issues related to volunteering were constantly and widely noted. A higher profile, and a more co-ordinated and comprehensive approach is required to support the groups and organizations who utilize volunteers in the Township, and to develop new volunteer initiatives. The profile of volunteering must be raised and specific assistance to groups is required to increase the number of volunteers recruited and retained, and to also increase the effectiveness of volunteer-based organizations and their volunteers.

The Township is likely the only entity that can take on the critical leadership and community development role. However, the Township cannot and should not act alone; but rather it should be the catalyst to initiate and support a broadly-based community effort.

During the Master Plan process and particularly via the survey of groups who use volunteers, the following big issues and challenges facing volunteerism in the community were identified:

- burn-out;
- finding and retaining enough qualified, effective and dedicated volunteers; and
- understanding how to work with and support their volunteers to keep them engaged and effective.

Recreation Service Boards

Through the seven Recreation Service Boards and the many sports, arts and other community groups and associations, the non-profit/voluntary sector plays a significant role in the provision of culture, recreation and sports programming; and the provision, administration and operation of community halls and other parks and facilities identified in By-law No. 2003-124 (Schedules A to G).

By-law No. 2003-124 that created these RSBs for the administration and operation of recreation facilities requires updating to acknowledge that the Township is now assuming the cost of structural, electrical and mechanical repairs, insurance premiums, SOCAN fees, and other mandated costs (as recommended in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan). The balance of costs is covered by the RSBs via rental income and fund raising. All of the halls are owned by the Township, and all but Midhurst are booked through the Township booking system.

Members of RSBs are motivated by giving back to the community, creating a sense of belonging for their family, filling a need and socializing. However, an increasing issue is whether volunteers can continue to assume the significant responsibilities of facility maintenance, programming, fundraising, and in some cases, facility booking. Due to small size, moderate to poor quality and accessibility limitations, some facilities are increasingly challenging and costly to maintain, support programs of current interest, and support fundraising events.

There was a call from RSBs for: i) increased networking and collaboration among themselves; ii) more involvement and partnerships with the Municipality; iii) better use of evolving technology to improve communication, outreach, promotion, volunteer recruitment and fundraising; iv) definition of policies and procedures; v) increase programming; vi) increase the number of volunteers; and vii) involve youth.

The Boards saw their preferred roles as: social outreach to the community; organizing community events and bringing people together; providing a community voice; providing community leadership; making recommendations to the Township; communicating with Township staff and the community; and setting goals and tracking progress regarding their facility(s). Recreation Service Boards would like to focus more on programming rather than

also having to invest so much of their limited time and energy into fundraising to maintain their facility(s), and this trend is gaining momentum.

The Commercial Sector

The commercial sector is also involved in the provision of culture and recreation facilities and programming from golf, alpine skiing and horseback riding stables and related programs to dance studios and classes, in-home fitness studios and classes, Judo/Tai Chi studios and classes, a bowling alley, antique stores, art dealers, photography studios, artisan studios, and an artist studio.

Agreements with Others

Through a shared use agreement between the Township of Springwater and the Flos Agricultural Society, two tennis courts, a lit senior ball diamond, a skateboard facility and the parking lot to support the Elmvale Community Arena, the Curling facility and outdoor facilities are provided at the fairground in Elmvale. The Agricultural Society is guaranteed use of the arena and Springwater Room for the annual Fall Fair and associated meetings. An annual rental fee (indexed to inflation) is paid to the Township for the use of the arena for the Fall Fair. The Township is responsible for maintenance of the tennis courts and parking lot, as well as tennis court lighting, grass cutting, snow plowing, and leveling of the ball diamond infield. The Agricultural Society is responsible for maintaining the trees, and maintenance and operation of the ball diamond and associated lighting, the concession building, the storage facility, fencing, entrance gates and other amenities required for the Fall Fair. The Township owns the 0.7 hectare (1.72 acre) footprint of the arena and curling rink. The ten-year agreement was renewed in June 2014.

Every four years, the Township and the City of Barrie renew the non-resident user fee agreement that allows Township residents to access City facilities and programming at the same fee as City of Barrie

residents. Due to overlapping postal codes, it is difficult to determine the number of Springwater residents who register in City of Barrie culture, recreation and fitness programs – and register with the various sports programs. Only the Barrie Minor Hockey Association and Barrie Soccer have been able to determine the number of registrants from Springwater Township (approximately 150). The agreement was renewed in 2015.

Springwater Township also maintains a joint use agreement with Tiny Township that allows Tiny Township residents access to the Elmvale Arena, with the annual fee based on the number of their residents using the facility. In 1994, Tiny Township contributed \$100,000 to arena renovation and currently pays \$7,500 annually to assist with operating costs.

3.3 Culture and Recreation Programs, Festivals and Events

Culture and recreation programs, festivals and events are provided by the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties, the Springwater Public Library, the County of Simcoe, the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit volunteer-based/non-profit groups and the commercial sector.

The role of the Municipality to provide an increasing amount of direct programming and to work with others to provide additional programming and events is a relatively new and growing function that was recommended in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. That Plan also recommended that a full-time Recreation Co-ordinator position be established to support these responsibilities. Currently, the Township maintains a 0.4 full time equivalent community development staff position, which is insufficient to effectively support volunteer-based groups and events, as well as to co-ordinate culture

The Recreation Advisory Committee

This Committee provides a vehicle for the Recreation Service Boards, culture and recreation groups, individual residents and Tiny Township to inform recommendations from the Committee to Springwater Township Council on capital projects via the annual capital budget. Following the 1994 election, the Arena Advisory Committee was combined with the Recreation Advisory Committee. The RAC is comprised of two representatives from Council, one representative from Tiny Township for arena matters and five community members, all appointed for four years coinciding with the term of Council.

Marketing

Programs, festivals, events and facilities offered by the Municipality and others are primarily promoted via the semi-annual Recreation and Leisure Guide, the Township web site, print advertising, magnetic signs and social media.

and recreation programming for a growing community of nearly 20,000.

Types of scheduled programs, festivals and events include:

- organized sports (mostly for children and youth – e.g., hockey, figure skating, curling, baseball/softball, soccer, outdoor and indoor tennis, ball hockey);
- outdoor skating (10 locations) and family skating at the Elmvale Community Arena;
- day camps (e.g., summer camp for age 5-12, Summer Quest Day camps (field trips), six specialty camps for age 6-15, ladies hockey, winter break camps, March Break Hockey Camp, March Break Quest Camp - variety);
- Girl Guides and Scouts;

- older adult programs and events (e.g., Elmvale and District Sunshine Seniors, Elmvale Thursday Night Cards, Minesing Good Times Club);
- fitness/wellness programs (adult and senior adult: Kettlebells, Zumba and Zumba Gold, Pilates, Boot Camp, Stability Ball, Balanced Healthy Living, Intense Cardio, Yoga and Gentle Yoga, Mom and Me Fitness, Sculpt it Fusion, Fitness Buffet, Kick Boxing a running program);
- musical theatre;
- Bridge;
- Judo;
- Tai Chi;
- dance;
- bowling;
- art and artisan classes;
- library learning and related leisure programs and events (e.g., children, teen and adult: movies, handcrafts, book/social clubs, Pinterest Club, movies, themed events, handcrafts, magic shows, story time, scavenger hunt, reading program, photography, technology learning);
- trail and nature-oriented events;
- snowmobiling and ATV events;
- cycling events;
- Horticultural Society activities;
- historical events, including programs offered by the Simcoe County Museum;
- agricultural events (e.g., 4-H events, Elmvale Fall Fair),
- a food and wine tour (e.g., Savour Simcoe);
- gallery and studio tours (e.g., Midhurst Arts and Crafts Home Tour, Springwater Guild of Artists and Artisans Studio Tour);
- music festivals (e.g., Concerts in the Park Series at Heritage Park);
- natural and cultural heritage tours and events (e.g., Elmvale maple Syrup Festival, Elmvale Water Festival, Festival at the Fort); and

- seasonal celebrations (e.g., Canada Day celebrations, Family Day celebrations, Anten Mills Easter Egg Hunt, Phelpston Annual Horseshoe Tournament, Grenfel Corn Festival, Minesing Mini-fest, Midhurst Autumnfest, Sleigh Ride in the Village – Santa Clause parades in Elmvale and Anten Mills,).

The quality of some programs is limited by the quality and characteristics of available facilities, particularly the community halls (small capacity of most rooms, low ceiling height, unsuitable characteristics of floors and accessibility limitations). In addition, the type of culture and recreation facilities in the Township limits the range of programs that can be offered. Another limitation is the availability and capacity of volunteer-based groups and volunteer organizers, coaches and instructors who are willing and able to offer programs.

This situation is exacerbated by the time limitations of the Municipality's part-time Community Development staff to do anything other than provide support to *existing* groups. For example, it is known that there is demand for a youth baseball program in Hillsdale, but no group has stepped forward to initiate and co-ordinate the program. However, given these limitations, the range of program offerings by all who are involved is quite remarkable.

From the household survey, there were a number of indicators of issues, challenges and unmet or under-served needs regarding culture and recreation programming:

- The top reasons for residents to travel outside of Township to participate in their favourite leisure activities were that the facility and/or program was either not available or the quality was higher elsewhere.
- For 47% of households, less than half of their culture and recreation needs are being met in the Township.
- The top leisure activities that residents traveled outside of the Township to participate in included: swimming, attending theatre

and concerts, aerobic fitness, ice hockey, casual/recreational skating, attending festivals and gymnasium sports.

- Tennis, swimming, various outdoor park activities, ice hockey, trail activities, yoga, basketball and lacrosse were specific programs

that residents would like to see offered or offered more in the Township.

3.4 The Service Delivery Model

Recognizing the Township's current and future settlement pattern with two major concentrations of population in Elmvale and Midhurst/Snow Valley, 'north' and 'south' service areas were identified in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The intent was to concentrate most parks and recreation services and the highest level facilities within these two areas. Since 2005, the Municipality has followed that policy. Facilities located in Elmvale are intended to meet most of the needs of residents in the northern portion of the Township, while, to date, the principle location of high level sports facilities in the South Service Area has been Tree Nursery Sports Park and Doran Park – serving most of the needs in the south. Local service centres (e.g., Minesing, Grenfel, Hillsdale, Anten Mills and Phelpston) provide smaller scale parks and recreation facilities – supported by Recreation Service Boards and other volunteer-based groups.

Throughout the Township, the provision of culture and recreation services remains very dependent on volunteers, even though the role

of the Municipality in the provision and operation of parks and facilities, as well as programming has been steadily increasing. It is anticipated that as the population increases in the South Service Area, with many new residents being younger and from urban areas, support will gradually wane for a delivery system that is heavily dependent on volunteers.

It is likely that two provision models will begin to evolve – where volunteers continue to play a significant role in service provision in the North Service Area and the hamlets (local service areas), and the Municipality becomes increasingly involved in direct service provision in the South Service Area. The increased involvement will initially be in programming, but will also increase in facility provision and operation. However, the Municipality's role in support for volunteer-based groups and activities across the Township will still be required and should increase.

3.5 The Recommended Recreation Delivery System

3.5.1 Introduction

The recommendations focus on: organization and staffing; partnerships and strategic alliances; Recreation Service Boards; volunteer engagement; programming; the Recreation Advisory

Committee; planning and research (including performance measurements); and the service provision model.

3.5.2 Organization and Staffing

Although the Master Plan process did not include an operational review, the following organizational and staffing changes are recommended for consideration – to be supported by an operational review.

- Create a full-time position titled ‘Community Economic Development Officer’– combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.
- Amend the role of the Township’s Community Development Officer to focus fully on co-ordination of culture and recreation programming and support to volunteers and volunteer-based groups – and report to the Director of Recreation, Parks and Properties.

- Due to increasing workload, it is recommended that the position of Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties be split to create two positions: i) Supervisor of Facilities (including the Elmvale Arena) and ii) Supervisor of Parks and Properties.
- The number of maintenance staff will have to increase as more parkland and public properties are assumed. The Township requires a crew of 2 full time equivalent and 1 summer student for every 75 acres maintained (currently just under 150 acres maintained).
- If the proposed Multi-facility Community Centre is built, a full complement of supervisory, programming and maintenance staff will be required to operate and program the facility.

Recommendation 1 Create a full-time position titled ‘Community Economic Development Officer’ – combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.

Recommendation 2 Amend the role of the Township’s Community Development Officer to focus fully on co-ordination of culture and recreation programming, and support to volunteers and volunteer-based groups – and report to the Director of Recreation, Parks and Properties.

Recommendation 3 Split the position of Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties into: Supervisor of Facilities (including the Elmvale Arena) and Supervisor of Parks and Properties.

Recommendation 4 As required, increase the number of staff required to maintain the expanding inventory of parkland and other public properties.

3.5.3 Partnerships and Strategic Alliances

Continue to partner and maintain strategic alliances with the following groups and types of groups:

- City of Barrie (Non-Resident User Fee Agreement)
- Tiny Township (Springwater-Tiny Township Joint-Use Agreement – Elmvale Arena)

- Simcoe Muskoka District School Board (joint use agreements, expansion of Elmvale District High School)
- Recreation Service Boards
- Snowmobile, ATV and other trail-based groups/clubs

- Established volunteer-based sports, recreation and culture groups (programs, festivals and events)

Establish similar relationships with other groups such as:

- Simcoe Muskoka Catholic School Board
- Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (health promotion through culture and recreation)
- Simcoe County (use of County forests, Simcoe County Museum)

- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority (use and development of conservation areas and joint programming)
- Province of Ontario
- Community/neighbourhood associations and school councils
- New/emerging volunteer-based sports, recreation and culture groups (initially provide nurturing support to help create and establish new groups)
- Commercial entities that offer or could offer culture and recreation programming at their facilities or in Township facilities

Recommendation 5 The Township should continue to develop new and enhance established partnerships and other strategic alliances in support of the provision of parks and recreation services to the community.

3.5.4 Recreation Service Boards

Maintain the seven Recreation Service Boards and their current roles. Monitor those roles to ensure suitability and amend as required.

If it does not already, encourage the Phelpston RSB to include the expanding neighbourhood to the east (Maple Ridge and Fergusonvale Estates).

The Snow Valley community may want to form an RSB and include Centre Vespra.

Amend By-law No. 2003-124 that created these entities to acknowledge that the Township is now assuming the cost of structural, electrical and mechanical repairs, insurance premiums, SOCAN fees, and other mandated costs.

Encourage the RSBs to more regularly network, communicate and collaborate.

Encourage the RSBs to more effectively utilize modern modes of communication for marketing events, raising awareness, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, etc.

In concert with the proposed volunteer support entity tentatively called Volunteer Springwater and the Township Community Development Officer, each RSB should develop a campaign to recruit coaches and volunteers to help run programs and events, and to also attract more youth.

As suggested by the Elmvale RSB, each Board should establish policies and procedures re: custodial care; administration and marketing, fees/charges, and other areas of responsibility and activity as required.

Each RSB should seek more opportunities to partner with the Township.

It is recommended that the RSBs meet at least annually to discuss: i) what is working well and why; ii) opportunities; iii) any issues,

concerns and challenges; iv) to share any other information, and v) to socialize. The event should be organized and facilitated by the

Township Community Development Officer, with assistance from RSB members.

Recommendation 6 The Township should continue to support Recreation Service Boards to optimize their roles, and to monitor those roles to ensure suitability and amend as required. Several new and enhanced initiatives by the Municipality are recommended in support of RSBs, including encouragement of increased communication, collaboration and sharing; increased partnering with the Municipality; improved communication; improved volunteer engagement; and improved policies and procedures (see above).

Recommendation 7 Update By-law No. 2003-124 to acknowledge that the Township is now assuming the cost of structural, electrical and mechanical repairs, insurance premiums, SOCAN fees, and other mandated costs relating to community centres/halls.

3.5.5 Volunteer Engagement

The following are recommendations to enhance the volunteer service sector, particularly relative to culture and recreation.

Establish a Township-wide Support Entity for Volunteering

Initiated by the Municipality, a Township-wide 'umbrella' organization should be established that represents the full range of volunteer-based groups in the Township (recreation, health, education, social services, etc.). At the helm should be an effective champion who can help establish and nurture this group to be successful. The roles of this organization, which could be called '**Volunteer Springwater**', could include, but are not limited to:

- Meet regularly to share information and ideas and take on specific initiatives.
- Help to raise the profile of volunteering and citizen engagement, as well as to promote the personal and community values of volunteering.
- Organize and promote training for volunteers and volunteer-based groups.
- Host an annual Volunteer Fair.
- Take the lead to establish and maintain a web-based volunteer matching service (see below).

- Regularly poll volunteer-based groups in the community to remain current about issues, success stories, suggestions, resources, etc. (adapt the survey utilized for this Master Plan).
- Apply for grants to support volunteerism in the community.
- Host an annual volunteer appreciation event.
- Establish a connection with BAVA (Barrie Association of Volunteer Administrators).

Raise the Profile of Volunteering in the Township and Promote the Benefits

The following are initiatives that will help to raise the profile of volunteering.

- Promote the personal and community benefits of volunteering.
- Raise the profile of the organizations that use volunteers.
- Raise awareness in schools.
- Establish volunteer appreciation on a community-wide scale.
- Establish an annual Volunteer Fair.
- Increase the public appeal for volunteers.
- Create volunteer testimonials to use in marketing.
- Recruit a community advocate to help promote and sustain volunteering.

Establish a Community-wide Marketing and Matching Service to Support Volunteer Engagement

Establish a web site that reports on the type of volunteers required by all groups in the community who register (including a clear description of the task or position, the skills and experience required, the length of the commitment, the personal benefits derived from the volunteer activity, and how to connect with the group or service). Also, individuals would be able to register their volunteer interests, skills and experience that groups could examine in search of a match to their requirements.

The groups and organization that use the service would be responsible for maintaining/updating their information and sharing the costs associated with development, refreshing and hosting the web site. Once the site is developed, it may be possible for it to be maintained by high school students with an interest in website development. A partnership between the Municipality and one or more high school teachers could help to facilitate effective student involvement in this and other volunteer initiatives.

Provide Training and Education in Effective Volunteerism

Training can be provided in the form of workshops, webinars and resource materials (hard copy and digital). The following are the most popular topics:

- recruitment,
- retention,
- recognition,
- fundraising,
- event planning,
- trends in volunteering,
- leadership training (boards and committees),
- designing volunteer position descriptions,
- policies and procedures, and
- engaging youth as volunteers (engage schools and community service initiatives).

An Increased Role for the Township in Support of Volunteering

Since volunteers play such an essential role in the delivery of parks, culture, recreation and other services to Township residents, it is recommended that the Municipality increase and broaden its leadership, co-ordination and direct service roles in support of volunteer-based groups and volunteers in all sectors of service (culture and recreation, community service, education, health and social services). Specific roles would include:

- Increase and broaden the Township's capacity to support existing volunteer-based, non-profit groups and initiatives throughout the community (culture and recreation, community service, education, health and social services).
- Continue financial and other support to Recreation Service Boards (structural, electrical and mechanical repairs; partnering in capital projects; insurance; SOCAN; in-kind services; advisory, information, etc.).
- Continue to formally partner with non-profit groups and other groups and initiatives (e.g., Recreation Service Boards, Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit, Simcoe Muskoka District School Board, City of Barrie, County of Simcoe).
- Increase the Township's role in the initiation and nurturing of new volunteer-based, non-profit groups and initiatives.
- Promote the establishment and nurture the development of a Springwater Township volunteer support entity (see recommendation above).
- Through this group, encourage training and the provision of related resources, as well as help to raise the profile of volunteering in the Township and promote the benefits.
- Establish an annual community grant program to provide assistance to volunteer-based groups and initiatives.

Prepare a Volunteer Engagement Strategy

A comprehensive Volunteer Engagement Strategy should be prepared that builds on the research, analysis and recommendations developed for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Recommendation 8 The Township should take the lead in enhancing support to volunteer-based groups and individual volunteers to optimize the opportunity of volunteers to provide community-based programming and other services. Specific recommendations include: i) establish a Township-wide support entity for volunteering (Volunteer Springwater); ii) raise the profile of volunteering in the Township and promoting the benefits; iii) establish a community-wide marketing and matching service to support volunteer engagement; iv) provide training and education in effective volunteerism; v) increase the role of the Township in support of volunteering; and vi) prepare a Volunteer Engagement Strategy.

3.5.6 Programming

The Municipality should continue to facilitate service delivery by assisting other entities, including other public agencies, the commercial sector and volunteer-based groups to provide as wide array of culture and recreation programming, festivals and events as possible. However, as has been happening recently, the Municipality should increasingly assume a more direct role in program delivery, especially where there is sufficient demand, others are not involved and/or there are limitations on participation (e.g., membership, cost, distance, insufficient quality).

Council approved the following cost recovery policy for programs:

- programs for seniors 100%
- program for adults 100%
- programs for youth 65%
- programs of pre-school 55%
- camps 65%

As a facilitator, the Township’s role should involve the following (adapted from the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan):

- Continue to work with the Recreation Service Boards to increase the utilization of community halls with new programs and events.

- Continue to provide support and systems to support groups to offer high quality, consistent, cost-effective programs, festivals and events across the Township.
- Continue to foster the development of new community and activity-based groups, and work with new and existing groups to expand programming to respond to trends and expressed needs.
- Continue to encourage, support and provide training programs to improve the quality of leadership in recreation activities by staff and volunteers.
- Continue to serve as a liaison between school boards, the Springwater Public Library, the Nottawasaga Valley Conversation Authority, the County of Simcoe, the City of Barrie, other public groups and community organization regarding program provision.
- Expand marketing and continue to improve community awareness of parks, recreation and culture services.
- Continue to develop ways to assist groups to recruit and retain volunteers. (See **Section 3.5.5** above.)
- Continue to assist groups with grant applications and fundraising efforts.

Recommendation 9 The Township should continue to facilitate others to provide culture and recreation programming, festivals and community events, but also increase its direct role in program provision where required to meet needs.

3.5.7 The Recreation Advisory Committee

In addition to its existing activities, the Recreation Advisory Committee should assist the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, particularly with recommendations that are policy-oriented in nature and have

broad implications for residents and service providers – particularly since that this is a ‘transition’ plan with implications for evolving and enhanced service provision, and an increasing municipal role.

Recommendation 10 The Recreation Advisory Committee should be involved in the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update to assist the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties - particularly with recommendations that are policy-oriented in nature and have broad implications for residents and service providers.

3.5.8 Planning and Research

As was mentioned in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Township has limited capacity to monitor existing operations and anticipate future needs, except through regular updates to the Master Plan and the Township’s annual performance measurement program where limited information is collected about parks and recreation services (facility utilization rates, cost recovery targets for broad program categories, facility down-time targets, operating cost per resident, etc.). A solid information base is a prerequisite for informed and constructive decision-making by staff and Council. Since staff resources remain limited for this function, the following procedures and activities are recommended. They are similar to what was recommended in the 2005 Master Plan.

- Annually update the inventory of recreation facilities and parkland (chart and map). The Parks and Recreation Property Inventory, the data contained in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, the Municipal Cultural Plan, and the Parks, Open Space and Trails map provide a solid base from which to update.
- Implement a standard reporting system for RSBs and all groups who rent time at the Elmvale Community Arena, the Springwater Room, community halls, ball diamonds, soccer fields, pavilions and any other community facilities to annually collect vital statistics from user groups (membership/registration by age

category and gender, program(s) offered, anticipated hours required for next season and rationale, and resident/non-resident status).

- Data available from the Township’s booking software provides a picture of the amount of use of each facility by group/use. An analysis of facility utilization by year and group/use and trends over a number of years is now possible.
- Continue to annually track registration statistics for Township-run culture and recreation programs and analyze trends over a five-year period.
- Although overlapping postal codes is an issue, attempt to receive better usage data of City of Barrie facilities and programs by Springwater residents. The household survey indicated that a large percentage of Springwater residents make regular use of culture and recreation facilities and programs in neighbouring communities.
- Similarly, the use of the Elmvale Community Arena by Tiny Township residents must be better tracked to ensure fair compensation.
- Maintain current co-ordinates of all known community organizations that deliver or co-ordinate culture and recreation programs in the Township.

- As staff travel around the community performing maintenance and inspection activities, observe and record the unstructured use of playgrounds, tennis courts, sport pads, outdoor skating rinks, outdoor fitness facilities, trails, etc. Create a simple data recording sheet that can quickly and easily be used by staff to record use, time and date by facility.
- Monitor and apply national trends in leisure activities and best practices in service provision.

This information will provide a valuable up-to-date data base and trend lines that will be useful for planning and decision-making. As recommended in the 2005 Master Plan, it would also be valuable to host a community-wide forum for the north and one for the south every three years to hear from the community about what is working well, and any issues/challenges/shortfalls that need to be addressed. At the same time, it would be valuable to survey the community, utilizing relevant questions from the household survey that was employed for this Master Plan Update, providing current information and allowing trends to be tracked.

Performance Measurement

Basic research into performance measurements and their effectiveness was conducted during this Master Plan process. The Ontario Municipal Performance Measurement Program (MPMP) was established by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to collect statistics on a wide range of municipal services and resources. While this practice is valuable for some service areas, it is much less effective as a comparator tool for culture, recreation and parks. This is due to the type and level of data collected and the varying conditions in each community which renders it difficult to make useful comparisons. Fourteen performance measurements have been identified for parks and recreation, with ten that are moderately useful. A Background Paper on Performance Measurements for Parks and Recreation Services was prepared for the Township by the RETHINK GROUP and dmA Planning and Management Services. It described

the contemporary performance measurement program, the challenges in comparing communities and other findings and observations from across North America. The report examined the current practice of performance measurements in Springwater Township and recommended an approach to establish a more effective performance measurement system and improved planning and management approaches for parks and recreation.

The first step that was recommended is to clarify the Township's objectives for performance measurements for parks and recreation services. Performance measures can be used by a municipality for at least three purposes:

1. To compare key indicators of service delivery to other municipalities.
2. To provide a means to monitor and manage service delivery in the municipality.
3. To evaluate the extent to which service delivery is maximizing Council-approved outcomes.

They are somewhat mutually exclusive in so far as the measures and the methodologies required to operationalize the three types of performance measures differ. While a municipality could develop a performance measurement program to address all three objectives, this would be a major project requiring substantial resources. Consequently, it is important that the Township be clear in its objectives from the outset.

Objective One: Comparative Measures

This is the focus of the MPMP. While those behind the MPMP claim that these comparative measures address the local municipality's efficiency and effectiveness, this is not the case for parks and recreation services. However, if the Township wishes to develop a process for comparing their parks and recreation service delivery to other municipalities, this could be accomplished. But, this is only valuable if comparing 'apples to oranges' can be avoided. To do this, up to five other municipalities that have very similar community make-

up and recreation service delivery systems could be selected. Although MPMP measures could continue to be researched, 10-15 additional measures should be identified. These should be measures that parks and recreation departments can generally provide, but it would likely take some manipulation of internal databases. However, it is likely that five other municipalities could be found that are prepared to do this, in exchange for sharing results. Given that this only involves five municipalities, the time commitment for Springwater staff would not be too onerous.

While there would still be challenges in assembling truly comparable information of value, municipalities would be closer to comparing 'oranges to oranges', which would be a considerable improvement over the MPMP.

While this could be done, the Township should carefully weigh the value of this type of comparative information. Unlike many other areas of municipal service, there are no mandatory or optimum standards of service for parks and recreation. Ultimately, the level and quality of parks and recreation service in any municipality is almost entirely determined by Council's policies and decisions concerning core roles, priorities and resource allocation.

Consequently, comparative measures in the parks and recreation sector primarily illustrate Council policies and priorities. Are there types of customized comparative measures useful to Springwater Township Council? The Township will need to answer this question before additional time and resources are invested in developing a performance measurement project based on comparisons.

Objective Two: Monitoring and Managing Local Service Delivery

In this situation, performance measures are developed to monitor the extent to which parks and recreation services are meeting defined targets and policies (e.g., cost recovery, facility utilization, revenue, down time, maintenance levels, facility provision levels, etc.). These targets/policies are set by Council and are specific to Springwater. (Some are contained within a parks and recreation plan.)

Consequently, there is no need to make comparisons to other municipalities. While the measures can be changed or elaborated upon as Council refines its goals for parks and recreation services, the purpose is to identify a limited number of measures that address key goals that will be retained over time. This is important because these should be longitudinal measures, and a key part of the evaluation should be to monitor change (and hopefully improvement) over time.

This approach appears to be consistent with the 2012 Township of Springwater Performance Measurement Program.

This is a home-grown, Springwater-specific management tool for parks and recreation services, and a valuable and meaningful performance measurement approach.

Objective Three: Outcome Measures

Outcomes address the true benefits or products of a municipality's investment in parks and recreation services – such as striving to achieve a healthier and more physically active population, or striving to match service and facility provision to market demand. Furthermore, it is an actual, defensible measure of the desired outcome – which is not inferred from an output measure such as MPMP. For example, one does not assume that the population is more active or healthier just because the municipality offers 50 hours of Jazzercise programs. You have to measure the Body Mass Index or physical activity levels of program participants using pedometers. True outcome measurement is a significant research undertaking, which is why this is generally done at the provincial level. While, it would be possible to assemble information on outcomes, we expect some of this would need to be inferred from outputs and/or self-reported through a survey. This is a bit of a compromise, but likely the only reasonable approach at the municipal level. However, what is not clear is whether Springwater Township is interested in measuring these types of outcomes, and or is prepared to invest the resources that may be required to do so in meaningful manner.

Finally, with respect to outcome measurements, you require actual outcomes to measure. Springwater Township Council must formally identify outcomes for parks and recreation services. This is an important issue because the outcomes should be community-specific - and, given available resources, would need to be prioritized. For example, there are parks and recreation departments in Ontario that, with Council's implicit or explicit authorization, have become almost totally focused on tourism and economic development. They devote a considerable portion of total staff resources to organizing events, operating visitor venues, providing visitor information, hosting tournaments, etc. We would argue that these departments have largely re-focused on tourism with the result that outcomes such as healthy lifestyles became very low priority. One needs to know a municipality's priorities to measure outcomes. Also, there are never enough resources to pursue all possible outcomes, which is another reason why Springwater Council would need to set priorities.

Determining outcomes can be a very useful undertaking for Council. However, it is also complicated and has far reaching implications for all aspects of the parks and recreation system.

Determine Which Performance Measurement Objectives to Pursue

It is important that the Township provide clear direction about which of these performance measurement objectives they want to pursue. While it's possible to pursue all three, we question whether this is a wise use of Township resources, since it will be time consuming to implement a performance measurement initiative for parks and recreation that addresses all three objectives. In addition, we are not sure that it is necessary. In our view, the primary benefit of performance measurement is to assist with the planning, evaluation and management of local service delivery (Objective Two).

Identify the Planning, Research and Management Tools Necessary to Complement Performance Measurement

Assembling performance measures is not useful unless it leads to a response that can correct the problem identified by the measure. A performance measure alone is a lot like the light on your car's dashboard that indicates that your engine requires service. It points to a problem requiring corrective action, but doesn't tell you what to do. Knowing what to do requires a more in-depth diagnosis. Unfortunately, few municipal recreation departments in smaller communities have the necessary diagnostic tools.

If Springwater Township develops a performance measurement project for parks and recreation services, this will need to be accompanied by new and better planning, research and management procedures. This could involve a number of possible initiatives, including:

- i) having the resources to undertake occasional research activities;
- ii) monitoring publications on best practices;
- iii) new (or improved) customer service and community satisfaction research;
- iv) better utilization internal databases for service evaluation (e.g., CLASS or Book King); and
- v) agreeing to a stronger commitment to staff professional development and training.

Initiatives of this type are essential to complement performance measurement. They should be recommended as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan process if performance measurement is addressed.

Conclusion

The Township is to be complemented on their interest in developing a useful performance measurement system for parks and recreation. Given the changes that will occur in the community over the next decade and beyond, this is the right time to introduce improved planning and management approaches.

However, to move forward, clarification will be required about the Township's performance measurement objectives, along with agreement that the enhanced planning, research and management

tools that are necessary to implement such an initiative are to be included.

Recommendation 11 The Township should maintain a database of statistics on facility use, program registration and user groups, as well as a current inventory and map of parks, open space and culture and recreation facilities. This data should be regularly analyzed in search of valuable trends and other demand indicators. Every three years, the community should be consulted via forums and a household survey.

Recommendation 12 Although not able to be integrated into the Parks and Master Plan Update process, the Township should prepare a **Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Management and Performance Measurement Program** as a follow-up exercise. This initiative will result in an effective management tool to monitor and evaluate local service delivery.

3.5.9 Service Provision Model

It is recommended that the current North and South Service Area provision model be maintained - with a gradually increasing role for the Municipality in direct program provision, facility operation and support to volunteers. It is anticipated that residents who live outside of the South Service Area and the hamlets will be more willing than residents in the South Service Area to support the current level of dependence on volunteers for service provision. Therefore, it is likely that two provision models will begin to evolve – where volunteers continue the play a significant role in service provision in the North

Service Area and the hamlets (local service areas), and the Municipality becomes increasingly involved in direct service provision in the South Service Area. However, the Municipality's role in support for volunteer-based groups and activities across the Township will still be required and is recommended to increase (see **Section 3.5.5** above). As the Municipality grows and matures and resident expectations increase, the Township should gradually reduce its dependence on neighbouring communities to provide facilities and programming.

Recommendation 13 The Township should maintain the current provision model for parks and recreation services that involves concentrating most high level facilities and programming within the North and South Service Areas, supported by local services in the hamlets. The Township should gradually increase its role in direct program provision, facility operation and support to volunteers. As the Municipality grows and matures and resident expectations increase, the Township should gradually reduce its dependence on neighbouring communities to provide facilities and programming.

Chapter Four: Vision 2030, Guiding Principles, and Planning and Provision Guidelines

4.1 Introduction

To anchor the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, set the context, philosophy and policy direction, and provide long term direction – the following have been developed:

- Vision 2030,
- The Belief Statement - about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture,
- The Guiding Principles, and
- Planning and Provision Guidelines.

4.2 Vision 2030

Vision 2030 has been created to provide a 'big picture' look ahead – to provide focus, inspiration and a target to aim for – with the goal of improved leisure services in Springwater that will have evolved as the Municipality grows and matures.

Since this is a 'transition' plan, significant change is reflected in this vision for the future. The transition is from where the Township and parks and recreation services were in 2005 (the time of the last Parks and Recreation Master Plan) - to 2030 and beyond – the timeframe of this Update. The transition is:

- from a largely rural and moderate-growth community toward a rural-urban community, with an increasing rate of growth.
- from child and youth-oriented facilities and programming toward meeting the needs of all ages.
- from rural expectations toward increasingly urban expectations.

Imagine it's the Year 2030 and the following is the author's outline for an article being written about how parks, recreation and cultural resources and services have evolved in Springwater since 2015.

The story begins by noting that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update that was prepared in 2015 was based on the following **roles** that parks and recreation services play in our communities.

- To improve the personal health and wellbeing of citizens.
- To engage the community.
- To create proud and confident leaders.
- To build strong neighbourhoods and vibrant downtowns.
- To reduce crime and lower policing costs.
- To provide a cleaner, healthier environment.
- To grow the local and regional economy.
- To build strong families.
- To contribute to balanced human development – mind, body and spirit.
- To preserve and celebrate heritage and diversity.

Since 2015, there has been significant growth in Springwater, especially south of Horseshoe Valley Road, but also in Elmvale and Hillsdale. Although the Township is still largely rural, the Midhurst-Snow Valley-Centre Vespra area has become increasingly urban.

Elmvale has become a stronger northern service centre – with improved culture and recreation facilities – including a new community park; improved ball facilities; a full-size soccer pitch; a water play facility; a new high school gymnasium; an expanded trail system; and a new twin-pad arena, curling rink and community centre.

Over the years, the Township has gradually become less dependent on neighbouring communities for culture and recreation services. Throughout the Township, the public, non-profit and commercial sectors continue to work in harmony to provide leisure services.

A variety of high quality natural heritage sites are located throughout the Township, with many connected via an enhanced off-road multi-use trail system and an expanding on-road cycling network. Local trails continue to be enhanced and new ones developed – with some connected to the principle trails which extend north-south and east-west across the Township and connect to regional trails.

New neighbourhood parks are smaller and more focused on passive activities to meet the needs of ‘close-to-home’ recreation. Increased emphasis has been placed on acquiring good-sized Community and Township-wide/Regional sports parks where most of the highest order outdoor and indoor sports and associated facilities are clustered.

Improved and right-sized facilities are located in the more remote parts of the Township, including upgraded and new community halls.

Tree Nursery Sports Park is now complete, with the addition of two Senior lit ball diamonds, two full-size soccer fields, a playground and a picnic shelter.

Picnic Pavilions, sport pads and outdoor rinks have been added as the population has grown. The first outdoor water play facility was

introduced in 2017 in Elmvale. Since then, two more have been added in Midhurst and Snow Valley.

Doran has become an important Township-wide park – boasting trails and natural areas, a pavilion/outdoor rink, a skateboard facility, an expanded tennis facility and a water play facility.

Since 2015, opportunities to experience arts and culture in the Township have steadily improved and are better promoted. Local arts groups and organizations are better organized and flourishing. The value of the arts and culture sector to the community is now much better understood and better supported.

Volunteers are much more strongly supported by the Township, with an organization called Volunteer Springwater leading the effort to promote the value of volunteering, and to recruit, match, train and help retain volunteers.

As the population has increased, with more and improved parks, facilities and programs, the role of the Township has expanded to keep pace.

Phase One of the Springwater Centre for Learning and Leisure opened in 2023 on a prominent site in the South Service Area. Recently, Phase Two was completed. The facility now boasts:

- a twin pad arena,
- a double gymnasium/assembly hall/exhibition hall/performance space,
- multi-purpose program and meeting rooms,
- a fitness centre and elevated walking/running track,
- an aquatic facility,
- an ample lobby with a cafe and socializing spaces,
- a main branch library (built in two phases), and
- an outdoor public square with an artificial ice rink.

4.3 Belief Statement

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is founded on a fundamental belief statement about the value to the community of parks, recreation and culture.

We believe that an investment in parks, recreation and culture in Springwater Township is an investment in the beauty and appeal of our community; and the growth and development of our citizens, our community, our economy and our environment.

Research indicates that the results of this investment will include:

- Improved personal **health and well-being for our citizens** – recreation and active living lowers health care costs, improves quality of life and increases life expectancy.
- Greater **citizen engagement** - involvement in community organizations results in more civic engagement and ultimately a safer and more democratic community.
- **Proud and confident leaders** - involvement in recreation, parks, arts and culture builds important social skills and produces leaders that are better able to serve their community.
- **Strong neighbourhoods and vibrant downtowns** - recreation, parks and the arts can be a catalyst for building a strong and self-sufficient community, and rejuvenated neighbourhoods and downtowns.
- **Reduced crime and lower costs for policing and justice** - increased opportunities in recreation, sports and the arts will reduce self-destructive and anti-social behaviour, alienation and racism.

- A **cleaner and healthier environment** - parks and natural areas protect ecological integrity, improve air quality, help to purify our water and encourage stewardship ethics.
- **Economic growth and prosperity** - recreation, sports, festivals, and arts and culture can help create the economic and social environment necessary for business success – stimulating employment, increasing productivity and increasing our community's attractiveness to new residents, tourists, and new and existing businesses.
- **Building strong families** - families that play together – stay together. Recreation supports and strengthens families.
- **Balanced human development - mind, body and spirit** - involvement in recreation, play, sports, and arts and cultural activities can help children, youth and adults develop their full physical, social, creative, intellectual and spiritual capacity.
- Preservation and celebration of our **cultural heritage and diversity** - helps us to better understand ourselves, our neighbours and newcomers to our community.

These benefits of the investment in parks, recreation and culture were researched through a comprehensive study of the benefits of parks and recreation conducted by the RETHINK GROUP and sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario. The Benefits Catalogue, which documents the benefits and the substantial support evidence, was initially published in 1997 and is available from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. Our British Columbia office contributed to the update of this research and reformatting of the material and marketing messages into the 2010 interactive **Benefits Databank** - hosted by the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

4.4 Guiding Principles

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is also founded on fourteen **principles** that are intended to provide the guiding philosophy and policy foundation for planning, service provision and decision making regarding leisure programming and related services, and municipal parks and leisure facilities in Springwater Township for now and into the future.

Some of the principles are based on the **personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of parks, recreation, culture and the arts**. Others reflect **contemporary planning principles and best practices** for the provision of leisure facilities and related programs, activities, services and policies, adapted to Springwater Township. The principles also reflect the **Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario** which, in part, states that:

“Everyone in Ontario has a right to quality, accessible and inclusive recreation and parks services in their communities – services that are essential for the health of Ontarians, the quality of life in our communities, and the sustainability of our environment.”

“Every citizen in Ontario has the right and freedom to: participation, active living, access to nature and the outdoors, enriching experiences, a welcoming and inclusive community, and engagement.”

Principle 1: Utilize the Benefits of Parks, Recreation and Culture and the Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario as the Foundation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

The personal, social, economic and environmental benefits of parks, recreation and culture are becoming increasingly well documented

and widely known, and have become the credible foundation of contemporary leisure delivery systems. Published in 2009 by Parks and Recreation Ontario, the Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario identifies the *recreation and parks rights* of Ontarians, the *rationale for leisure services, goals for communities* and the *role of recreation and park leaders*.

The Benefits and the Charter are reproduced in **Appendix A** and **Appendix C** respectively.

Principle 2: Ensure the Sustainability of Leisure Facilities, Programming, and Parks and Open Space

Ensure that the capital and net operating costs associated with public culture and recreation facilities are affordable in the short term and sustainable for the future. Also ensure that culture and recreation programs and related services are aligned with the growing and changing needs and interests of residents - and are sustainable within the resources of our community. Responsible stewardship of nature’s capital, existing assets and taxpayers’ dollars is essential. An equitable, fair and affordable distribution of programs, services and facilities will be sought.

Principle 3: Maintain a Community Development Approach

Historically, Springwater has been most successful when a community development approach to service delivery has been utilized. Processes and resources must be in place to permit and encourage residents to be involved in determining priorities, developing plans, and implementing recreation opportunities that reflect the needs, interests and desires of citizens. The Municipality should ensure consistent policy and, when feasible – increased human and financial support to formally affiliated and other community-based organizations.

The fundamental energy and drive that creates the majority of our culture and recreation opportunities comes from the many hundreds of volunteers who, as part of their own leisure choices, create and sustain culture and recreation opportunities for the community. Their contribution must be celebrated and supported.

Principle 4: Support an Active, Healthy and Engaged Community

For our community to be strong, healthy and vibrant, efforts and resources must be focused on engaging citizens both physically and socially. A high quality of life supported by opportunities for involvement in recreation, sports and cultural pursuits needs to be in place. Emphasis will be placed on creating awareness of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, as well as the availability of leisure opportunities that support physical activity and social interaction.

Principle 5: Ensure Accessible and Inclusive Leisure Opportunities

Although the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and the Ontario Building Code have recently amended the requirement for existing public facilities to be fully accessible unless undergoing major renovation/expansion or they are new facilities, every reasonable effort should be made to improve the physical accessibility of all indoor and outdoor Township facilities. 'Accessibility' also infers ensuring that opportunities exist for integrated, accessible and supported programming, and that programs and other leisure opportunities are affordable and in harmony with the diversity of the community.

Principle 6: Support the Concept of 'Communities within a Community' – recognizing both established and emerging residential areas.

Since the Township is comprised of two principle and eight smaller settlement areas, the Master Plan recognizes that provision of culture and recreation services must be accessible to where people live today and in the future, and that unnecessary duplication should be avoided.

This principle is supported by the Township Strategic Plan. The Master Plan has identified two primary service centres: i) the **North Service Area** (Elmvale and area), and ii) the **South Service Area** (Midhurst/Snow Valley and area); and seven **Secondary Service Areas**. Although appropriate parks, facilities and programming will be provided in all of the Secondary Service Areas, most of the facilities and programming, including most of the highest level of facilities and parks, will be focused within the North and South Service Areas.

Principle 7: Complement Rather than Compete

Based on the philosophy of minimizing duplication and investment in services, this principle encourages the Township to complement rather than compete with what other providers can and are offering - and only provide similar facilities, programming and associated services when there is: i) under-serviced and/or growing demand not being met by others, ii) when the quality of 'other' services is substandard, iii) when the price of 'other' services is too high for less affluent members of the community, iv) when distance to 'other' services is deemed to be too far, and v) when the Municipality decides that it wants to become a principle service provider in a particular area.

Principle 8: Continue to Evolve Partnerships between the Municipality, the Voluntary Sector and Others

Following contemporary planning principles and in sync with Principle 7, continue to seek and improve upon desirable opportunities for the Municipality to partner with others to jointly provide parkland, culture and recreation facilities, and associated programming and events - particularly with the Springwater Public Library Board, the school boards, the conservation authority, Simcoe County, neighbouring municipalities, the Recreation Service Boards, volunteer-based sports and other community groups, and the commercial sector.

Principle 9: Gradually Lessen Dependence on Neighbouring Communities

Recognizing that the Township supports the philosophy of encouraging neighbouring communities to make their culture and recreation facilities and programs available to Springwater residents, acknowledging that this practice has resulted in significant facility and programming deficiencies within the Township, and recognizing that as the Township grows and matures into a more fully developed community, this practice will become less acceptable to an increasing proportion of the population - **dependence on neighbouring communities should gradually be lessened as the Township is better able to support an increased role.**

Principle 10: Base the Delivery of Leisure Services on a Four-Tiered Hierarchy of Parks, Open Space and Facilities.

- i) **Township-wide/Regional Parks and Open Space** (e.g., Tree Nursery Sports Park, Doran Park, the North Simcoe Rail Trail)
- ii) **Community Parks and Open Space** (e.g., Heritage Park, Anten Mills Community Park, Hillsdale Community Park, Midhurst Community Centre site, Grenfel Community Park)
- iii) **Neighbourhood/Local Parks and Open Space** (e.g., Bishop Park, Orr Lake Park, Green Pine Park, Wagner Park, Graham Macdonald Park, Foyston Park, Snow Valley Park)
- iv) **Specialty Open Space** (Minesing Station Park, Spruce Grove Park)

A key element of the four-tiered system is to **increase the linkage** among the various open space components and individual open spaces via an expanding network of trails and open space greenways.

Principle 11: Optimize Facility Use

Before providing new facilities or expanding and improving existing facilities, strive to ensure that use of existing facilities has been optimized to the degree possible – recognizing that sometimes the remote location of facilities and/or their characteristics and quality

limits utilization. This should be taken into consideration when deciding about additional investment in new and enhanced facilities. Facilities at the Township-wide/Regional level of provision should always be programmed for the highest and best use in prime time.

Principle 12: Cluster High Level Outdoor and Indoor Facilities

Following contemporary planning principles and striving for increased efficiency, programmability and opportunities for sport tourism, this principle encourages clustering compatible indoor and outdoor culture and recreation facilities in the two highest level of parks. That would ideally create clusters of senior- and intermediate-level ball diamonds, soccer fields and tennis courts in larger parks that are visible and accessible, and where lighting, parking and other support facilities and features can be provided. Examples include Tree Nursery Sports Park, Grenfel Park, Doran Park and the fairground in Elmvale. This principle also supports the concept of combining compatible indoor facilities into sizable complexes to create a ‘one-stop shopping’ environment, that can also incorporate facilities like libraries and municipal administration.

Principle 13: Locate for Visibility, Prominence and Access

Following contemporary planning principles, locate principle active sports parks and indoor culture, recreation and associated facilities/complexes in locations that are highly visible and accessible to the community, in order to optimize access, as well as to help promote and celebrate these facilities that are valuable community assets and sources of civic pride.

Principle 14: Be Environmentally Responsible

When facilities undergo major renovation, strive to improve energy efficiency where possible and economically feasible. For new construction, provide facilities that, through design and operation, embrace contemporary energy conservation technology and measures. Strive for at least a **LEED ‘Silver’ Certification** or equivalent for all new facilities, including the site and site

development, as well as other factors including support of alternative transportation, light pollution, recycling, optimum energy performance, and low emitting materials. LEED stands for: Leadership in Energy

and Environmental Design scoring system, as regulated by the Canadian Green Building Council.

4.5 Planning and Provision Guidelines

Figure 7 contains recommended provision guidelines for most leisure facilities. The guidelines are intended to assist with assessing current adequacy and projecting future facility requirements to the year 2030 (est. 33,652 population, based on the Medium Growth Scenario). For each type of facility, the provision guideline is based on a calculation of the adequate provision level to meet known current demand, tempered by any anticipated changes in demand over the next 10-20 years for the activities that utilize the facility. The service provision recommendations should be considered as *guidelines* rather than strict standards when determining current and calculating future facility requirements. Participation rates, facility utilization and local trends should be regularly monitored, and the service provision guidelines for each type of facility adjusted accordingly.

Facility provision by other providers (other public, non-profit and commercial) and their plans can influence whether a Township of Springwater facility will be required as projected. Degree of financial access for Springwater residents and other access restrictions, the

quality and suitability of 'other' facilities and associated programming, as well as location would be factors influencing 'degree of public availability'.

Figure 7 lists current supply and level of provision for selected types of facilities, the recommended service level or provision guideline for each type of facility, the current shortfall or surplus and the additional number of each type of facility that will be required by 2030 (or when the population reaches 33,652), based on the recommended provision guidelines.

As discussed in Chapter Two, the population target for 2030 represents the **Medium Growth Scenario** calculated for the Township of Springwater in the Long Range Financial Plan. If the population grows at a slower or faster pace, facility provision will need to be adjusted accordingly, based on the recommended provision guidelines that are tied to population thresholds.

Recommendation 14 Approve **Vision 2030**, the **Belief Statement** about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the 14 **Guiding Principles**, and the **Planning and Provision Guidelines** to inform relevant policies and decision-making about service provision.

Recommended Provision Guidelines (Service Levels) for Recreation Facilities, Township of Springwater, 2015

Figure 7

Facility Category	Current Supply (see notes re: what are included)	Current Level of Provision (based on est. 2015 population of 18,545)	Recommended Provision Guideline	Current (2015) Shortfall or Surplus (see notes re: what is included)	Additional Facilities Required for Projected 2030 Population of 33,650 (Medium Growth Scenario)
Indoor Ice Surfaces	1	1:18,545	1:10,000	Shortfall of 0.9	2.4 additional
Indoor Aquatic Facilities	0	-	1:30,000	Shortfall of 0.6	1.1 additional
Outdoor Water Play Facilities	0	-	1:10,000	Shortfall of 1.9	3.4 additional
Fitness Facilities:					
▪ Indoor	0	-	1:20,000	Shortfall of 0.9	1.7 additional
▪ Outdoor	2	1:9,273	1:10,000	Slight surplus	1.4 additional
Multi-purpose Space (see note #1 below)	7 facilities (11,850 sq. ft. of programmable space)	0.64 sq. ft./capita of programmable space	0.6 sq. ft./capita of programmable space (schools & municipal)	Slight surplus	8,340 sq. ft. of additional programmable space
Gymnasia:					
▪ Double	0	-	1:20,000	Shortfall of 0.9	1.7 additional
▪ Single/half-single (schools)	6	1:3,091	1:4,000	Surplus of 1.4	2.5 additional
Older Adult Social/Recreation Centres (see note #2 below)	0	-	1:10,000	Shortfall of 1.9	3.4 additional
Performance Facilities:					
▪ Indoor	0	-	1:30,000	Shortfall of 0.6	1.1 additional
▪ Outdoor	1	1:18,545	1:30,000	Surplus of 0.4	0.1 additional
Soccer Fields (see note #3 below):					
▪ Senior (1 is a soccer/football field - EDSS)	6	1:3,091	1:3,500	Surplus of 0.7	3.6 additional
▪ Large Mini	1	1:18,545	Strive for Sr. pitches (divide into smaller pitches as required)		
▪ Small Mini	7 (some overlapping ball diamonds)	1:2,649			
Ball Diamonds (see note #4 below):					
▪ Senior lit (all softball)	5	1:3,709	1:5,000	Surplus of 1.3	1.7 additional
▪ Intermediate	8	1:2,318	1:10,000	Surplus of 6.2	Surplus of 4.6
▪ Junior (2 in parks + 1 in a con. area + 11 at schools)	8 (programmable)	1:2,318	1:4,000	Surplus of 6.4	Surplus of 2.6
Tennis Courts (lit)	6	1:3,091	1:3,500	Surplus of 0.7	3.6 additional
Play Structures	34 parks with a play structure	1:545	1:600	Surplus of 3.0	22 additional
Skateboard Facilities	1	1:18,545	1:10,000	Shortfall of 0.9	1.4 additional
Pavilions (including pavilion planned for Doran Park, 2015)	9	1:2,061	1:2,500	Surplus of 1.6	4.5 additional
Sport Pads	3	1:6,182	1:5,000	Shortfall of 0.7	3.8 additional

Notes:

- Multi-purpose space:** all facilities have limitations (floor type, low ceiling, limited accessibility, small size rooms); 0.6 sq. ft./capita of programmable space reflects the recommended provision guideline for adequate facilities
- Older Adult Social/Recreation Centres:** could be stand-alone facilities or ideally, they would be co-located within multi-facility community centres
- Soccer fields:** not including the facilities at the Barrie Community Sports Complex
- Ball diamonds:** not including the facilities at the Barrie Community Sports Complex, and 6 of the Junior diamonds – due to poor condition (Edenvale Conservation Area, Valendar Park, Forest Hill Public Elementary School, Hillsdale Elementary School and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School) – some Junior diamonds share space with a soccer field.

Chapter Five: Indoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessment and Provision Strategy

5.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises provision strategies and other recommendations to address current and future **indoor** facility requirements. The analysis is based on the Planning Context (Chapter Two), and is guided by Vision 2030, the Belief Statement, the Guiding Principles, and the Planning and Provision Guidelines (Chapter Three), as well as the proposed Recreation Delivery Model (Chapter Four).

The principle Township of Springwater indoor recreation facilities include the Elmvale Community Arena and Springwater Room, and the six community halls/centres.

Although for the 2005 Parks and Recreation Plan, there was little expressed demand from organized recreation groups and residents for additional or improved indoor recreation facilities, the needs assessment for this update of the Master Plan identified significant interest in facilities such as an indoor swimming pool, a gymnasium, a fitness centre, another ice pad, and multi-purpose space to support a wide array of culture and recreation programming for all ages. Expressed demand would have been higher if not for the established pattern of use by Springwater residents of many types culture and recreation facilities located in the City of Barrie, the Town Midland and

the Town of Wasaga Beach. The high level of use of City of Barrie facilities and programs is influenced by the agreement with the City that allows Springwater residents to access City facilities and programs at the same cost as Barrie residents. For residents living in the northern part of the Township, it is closer to access facilities in Midland and Wasaga Beach than to drive to Barrie.

Since residents only have limited access to four quite small elementary school gymnasias and the single gym at the secondary school in Elmvale, no organized indoor sports leagues have formed in Springwater. It is likely that the demand for gymnasium-based sports is being served by leagues located in Barrie and other communities – at least for residents who live closer to Barrie.

There are three branch libraries in the Township and combined, they offer a limited range of informational, educational and social programming. The Municipality utilizes the Elmvale library for older adult aerobic fitness classes. In 2014, a Facility Needs Assessment for libraries was completed for the Springwater Public Library by Dysert & Jones Associates and dmA Planning and Management Services.

5.2 Indoor Ice Facilities

5.2.1 Supply and Utilization

The Elmvale Community Arena, which was built in 1950, has undergone numerous renovations over the years, the most recent in 1994. The facility comprises one ice surface (88' x 180'), concrete bleachers for 800 spectators, 6+1 dressing rooms, a snack bar, a pro shop and a second floor 4,400 square foot assembly hall with a kitchen and bar (the Springwater Room). Plans and underway to expand the lobby to incorporate two female dressing rooms and a Sports Heritage Hall of Fame.

Other arena facilities in the immediate area include 8 ice pads (five facilities) in the City of Barrie, a single-pad arena in the Township of Oro-Medonte (recently upgraded) a twin pad arena in the Town of Midland and a single-pad arena in the Town of Wasaga Beach – for 12 ice pads in total.

The Fall/Winter Ice Season

At The Elmvale Community Arena, the ice season is from the beginning of September to mid April (32 weeks for the 2014/15 season). During that time, the ice surface operates at near full capacity in prime time (approximately 95%). Within prime time, ice allocation is as follows (based on the weekly schedule of regular rentals – see **Figure 8**):

▪ Elmvale and District Minor Hockey	34.5 hours
▪ Elmvale (Figure) Skating Club	9.5 hours
▪ Men's Hockey (pick-up and leagues)	13.0 hours
▪ Public Skating	1.0 hour
▪ Sledge Hockey	1.5 hours
▪ Occasional Saturday evening rentals	<u>2.0 hours</u>
Total	59.5+ hours

On weekdays, rentals begin at 6:00 am and end at between 11:00 and 12:00 pm. On weekends, rentals begin at 6:00 am on Saturdays and 5:45 am on Sundays, and end at 11:00 pm on Sundays and 8:00 pm on Saturdays, with occasional rental of the 8:00 and 9:00 pm time slots by minor hockey and men's hockey.

Prime time is defined as 5:00 pm until close on weekdays and 8:00 am until close on weekends, which totals 67 hours/week. At 32 weeks for the 2014/15 fall-winter season, total available prime time would be 2,144 hours. From the weekly schedule, 62 hours are regularly rented which equates to a 92.5% utilization rate. With the occasional additional late evening rental, the actual utilization rate is closer to 95%. Looking back over the past six fall-winter seasons and not accounting for occasional rentals, the pattern has been similar, with prime time occupancy ranging from 85% to 92.5%, with the rate being highest in 2014/15 and 2011/12 (92.5%).

Non-prime time is defined by the 6:00 to 8:00 am period on Saturday and Sunday, and the 6:00 am to 5:00 pm period Monday to Friday - totaling 59 hours per week. At 32 weeks for the 2014/15 fall-winter season, total available non-prime time hours would be 1,888. 28.5 hours per week of non-prime time is regularly rented over the course of the fall-winter season. That equates to a utilization rate of 48.3%. Over the past six fall-winter season and not accounting for occasional rentals, the occupancy rate varied between 43.2% and 54.2%, with the rate being highest in 2012-13 (54.2%) and 2009-10 (52.5%).

Over the past five fall-winter seasons (2009/10 to 2013/14), total prime and non-prime time ice rented varied between 2,460 hours (2012/13) to 2,282 hours (2013/14). The predominant use has consistently been youth hockey, comprising 53-59% of total ice

rented. Over the past five seasons, total hours rented by that group ranged from 1,301 to 1,447.

In the 2013/14 fall-winter season, all uses included:

▪ Youth hockey	59.2%	1,350 hours (peaked in 2012-13 at 1,447 – hours rented in 2013-14 and 2009-10 are similar)
▪ Youth figure skating	21.4%	489 hours (after peaking in 2010/11, hours have trended downward)
▪ Men’s hockey	15.5%	353 hours (after peaking in 2010/11, hours have trended downward)
▪ Community groups	2.4%	55 hours (steady except for 99 hours in 2010/11)
▪ Family activities	0.57%	13 hours (ranged from 6.5 to 14 hours)
▪ Private rentals	0.55%	12.5 hours (ranged from 1.5 to 21 hours)
▪ Youth sports	0.42%	9.5 hours (ranged from 1.0 to 9.5 hours)

The majority of minor and adult hockey players are male. There is no girl’s or adult women’s hockey or Ringette programs in Springwater Township, which is likely influenced by insufficient ice time to support these programs. Girls and women’s hockey programs exist in most communities and the sport is increasing in popularity across Canada.

Spring-Summer Ice-out Use

The spring-summer ice-out season typically extends from mid April to mid August when preparations begin to install the ice. In 2014, uses of the arena floor included youth and ladies ball hockey (10 weeks), a

major fundraising dance, events for groups of over 250 people, North Simcoe Junior Farmers (14 hours), and Elmvale District High School (2 hours). The Township summer camp program uses the Springwater Room (118.5 hours).

Although data is not available, municipal staff indicated that most users of the Elmvale Arena are Springwater Township residents, with some customers coming from Tiny Township and the City of Barrie, due in part to the non-resident agreements with those municipalities.



Typical Weekly Ice Rental – Elmvale Community Arena, 2014/15 Fall-Winter Season

Figure 8

Time	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Time
5:00 AM								5:00 AM
6:00 AM	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	6:00 AM
7:00 AM	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	ESC	7:00 AM
8:00 AM	EMHA/SMH						ESC	8:00 AM
9:00 AM	SMH/MPH						ESC	9:00 AM
10:00 AM	MPH/Sledge	Pre-sch (10:30)					ESC	10:00 AM
11:00 AM	Sledge	Pre-School				Shinny (11:30)	ESC	11:00 AM
12:00 PM	Men's Pick-up	Home School				Shinny	EMHA	12:00 PM
1:00 PM	Public Skating	Adult Skate			Pre-school	Adult Skate	EMHA	1:00 PM
2:00 PM	EMHA	Adult Skate			Pre-sch (to 2:30)	Adult Skate	EMHA	2:00 PM
3:00 PM	EMHA						EMHA	3:00 PM
4:00 PM	EMHA	ESC	Ticket Ice	EDHS	ESC	FPMH	EMHA	4:00 PM
5:00 PM	EMHA	ESC	EMHA	EMHA	ESC	EMHA	EMHA	5:00 PM
6:00 PM	EMHA	ESC	EMHA	EMHA	ESC	EMHA	EMHA	6:00 PM
7:00 PM	EMHA	ESC	EMHA	EMHA	EDMRHL	EMHA	Men's Pick-up	7:00 PM
8:00 PM	EMHA	ESC/EMHA	EMHA	EMHA	EDMRHL	EMHA	OR	8:00 PM
9:00 PM	EMHA	EMHA/EDO35L	EMHA	EDO35L	EDMRHL	EMHA	OR	9:00 PM
10:00 PM	EMHA	EDO35L/MPH	EMHA	EDO35L	EDMRHL	EMHA		10:00 PM
11:00 PM	EMHA	MPH (to 11:30)			EDMRHL			11:00 PM

Shaded

EMHA

ESC

SMH

MPH

EDO35L

Prime Time

Elmvale Minor Hockey Association

Elmvale Skating Club

Sunday Morning Hockey (men's)

Men's Pick-up Hockey

Elmvale District Over 35 League

Ticket Ice

EDHS

EDMRHL

FPMH

OR

\$5/person (mostly figure skaters)

Elmvale District High School (boys)

Elmvale District Men's Recreational Hockey League

Friday PM Hockey (men's)

Occasional rentals by EMHA and private rentals (men's pick-up hockey)

For the period 2015-2020, \$670,000 is identified in the Township's six-year Capital Plan for repair, replacement and upgrade of the Elmvale Community Arena. The most costly items include:

- Steel roof retrofit \$325,000
- Replacement of tar and gravel roof with bitumen \$70,000
- Replace air/water conditioner \$65,000
- Replace inner tubes in chiller \$60,000
- Replace compressor #2 \$40,000

Facility Functionality

Although the facility was constructed in 1950, it has undergone numerous upgrades and has been well maintained. The lobby is small and contains a concession and two rows of accessible seating that face the ice surface. Bleacher seating along one side of the ice surface accommodates about 600. Within that seating area, there are numerous accessibility challenges. There are six dressing rooms, with two being on the small side. The facility also contains an office for the Elmvale Skating Club (figure skating). As noted earlier, plans and underway to expand the lobby to incorporate two female dressing rooms and a Sports Heritage Hall of Fame. Respondents to the household survey mentioned that the facility is very cold for spectators. A



heating system is in place, but the decision has been made not to activate it to save on operating costs.

Due to the single pad configuration, the facility cannot host large tournaments, competitions or other large scale events and activities that would require multiple arena floors and associated large spaces.

Operating Cost

Over the past five years, the Elmvale Community Arena (including the Springwater Room) has been operating at around a \$65,000 annual deficit, which is low for a single pad arena with a hall. This favourable operating deficit is aided by the high occupancy rate.

Curling

The Elmvale Curling Club operates a two-sheet curling rink in a facility that is attached to the Elmvale Community Arena. The Club, which is independent of the Municipality, utilizes the arena parking lot.



Outdoor Ice Rinks

As described in **Section 6.4**, there are eight picnic pavilions (six supporting ice rinks), three sport pads and three other locations where outdoor natural ice rinks are maintained throughout the Township – providing 12 ice rink locations. With another pavilion and ice rink planned for Doran Park in Midhurst in the near future, distribution of outdoor ice rinks throughout the Township is excellent.

5.2.2 Demand Indicators

As noted in **Chapter Two** and **Appendix C**, national trends indicate lower per-capita participation by males in minor hockey, as well as by both genders in figure skating, although that may stabilize at current levels. However, the participation rate for girls and women's hockey has been increasing over the past decade. Although participation rate declines with age, the aging of the big Echo generation into their young adult and eventually into mid-age adult years, should increase participation a little in adult hockey over the next twenty years.

An examination of the utilization of the Elmvale Arena notes several patterns that point to under-supply.

- Unusually early weekend and weekday rentals for minor hockey indicate demand in excess of supply. (Registration in Elmvale Minor Hockey has been 'steady' over the past five years and the Association anticipates registration to remain steady over the next five years.)
- Men's hockey has crept into the early hours on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings which, when combined with the early morning rentals for minor hockey, indicates more demand than one ice surface can handle.
- Total hours rented for youth figure skating and men's hockey have trended downward in recent years. For men's hockey, the slight downward trend may be due to pressure from minor hockey for prime ice time, with priority given to children and youth.
- As noted earlier, the absence of girls and women's hockey, a Ringette program, an instructional skating and a higher amount of prime time recreational skating is likely an indication of insufficient ice time.

From the household survey, ice hockey was the third most popular leisure activity reported (43.5% of responding households). Casual/recreational skating ranked fifth at 42.2%. Figure skating ranked 36th at 6.1%.

From the survey, household members reported travelling outside of the Township to participate in ice hockey (26%), casual skating (22%) and figure skating (0.75%). For ice hockey, part of this phenomenon is due to the requirement of residents in the southern part of the Township to register with the Barrie Minor Hockey Association (see below).

The top reason for residents travelling out of the Township to participate in favourite leisure activities was reported by 81% of survey respondents to be 'program and/or facility is not available in the township'.

31.3% of survey respondents are satisfied with indoor facilities in the Township (including arenas), while 27.2% are not satisfied. 35% are somewhat satisfied.

When asked about how municipal dollars should be invested in improving existing or building new facilities, arenas ranked fifth and outdoor rinks and sport pads ranked second.

When asked what types of facilities would be of interest in a new multi-facility community centre, an indoor ice surface ranked second (62.5%) and an outdoor public square that may include a skating rink ranked sixth (48.3%).

With the aging of the Baby Boom and the Echo generations, growth in demand for arenas will mostly be tied to population growth in the Township, which could increase more rapidly than in the past. The Medium Growth Scenario anticipates the Township's population to grow slowly to 2020 (20,288) and gradually accelerate to 25,930 by 2025, 33,652 by 2030 and 40,380 by 2035.

Due to Ontario Minor Hockey Association residency requirements, Springwater residents who live in the southern part of the Township are required to play in the Barrie Minor Hockey Association which utilizes City of Barrie and other arenas. This reduces the demand for the Elmvale Arena by Springwater residents. However, if an arena was available in the South Service Area, that facility would be within the Barrie catchment area and would service residents from the southern part of the Township as well as Barrie residents. Currently, approximately 150 Springwater Township residents are registered with the Barrie Minor Hockey Association that comprises approximately 2,000 participants and 136 teams.

In October, 2014, the Barrie Minor Hockey Association contacted the Township of Springwater to report that they would be able to utilize considerable prime time at a new arena, if it was located in the South Service Area of the Township. At that time, they indicated that they would utilize 53.5 hours of prime time per week Monday to Friday evenings from September 1st to the first weekend in March, and an undetermined amount of additional prime ice time for the remainder of March to support rep teams in play downs (OMHA and York Simcoe). The 53.5 hours per week represents 80% of available prime time over 27 weeks (1,444.5 hours/season) in a second ice pad. The Barrie Minor Hockey Association hosts three tournaments each fall/winter season - each comprising four days and requires multiple arenas (A/AE: 80 teams, AA: 88 teams and House League Select: 50 teams). That is in addition to their House League Championship Day which is held on the first Saturday of March. In total, that represents about 70% of all prime time available during the winter season in a second Springwater arena.

Springwater Township residents are entitled to participate in all instructional skating programs offered by the City of Barrie without paying a non-resident user fee. The Township of Springwater does not offer instructional skating lessons and only limited prime ice time is allocated to public/recreational skating (1:00-2:15 pm on Sundays).

Weekday non-prime time programs typically include: Pre-school Skating (3 hours/week), Home School Skating (1 hour/week), Adult Skating (4 hours/week), Shinny (1 and a quarter hours/week) and Ticket Ice (1 hour/week).

According to City of Barrie staff, the non-residential user fee agreement between Springwater Township and the City is mutually beneficial, although future renewal of the agreement will depend upon the sufficient supply of facilities and program capacity to meet the needs of Barrie residents. For arenas, sufficient supply will depend upon any planned arena expansion being implemented on schedule and if sufficient excess capacity is maintained. Currently, the ratio of ice pads to population in Barrie is well below the norm for the size of city at 1 ice pad:18,000 residents. If The City of Barrie increases supply, the projected utilization of a large amount of prime time ice by the Barrie Minor Hockey Association in a second Springwater arena will likely be greatly reduced.

5.2.3 Assessment and Provision Strategy

The need for additional indoor ice capacity is supported by the following facts and trends:

- The current arena service level in Springwater Township (1 ice pad: 18,545 residents) is well below the norm of around 1:10,000-12,000 for communities of similar characteristics and size.
- The Elmvale Community Arena is operating at full capacity in prime time during the fall-winter season and just under half capacity in non-prime time.
- Under the Medium Growth Scenario, the population would increase by 20,567 over the next twenty years, with approximately 85% of the growth south of Horseshoe Valley Road and 65% within the Midhurst Secondary Plan area.

- The Township currently relies on the City of Barrie to accommodate some of the indoor ice needs, particularly for residents living in the South Service Area, with uncertainty for how much longer the City can continue to accommodate increasing demand from Springwater residents. As noted earlier, the Barrie Minor Hockey Association is currently looking for 53.5 hours of prime ice time every week for 27 weeks (1,445 hours/season) plus additional hours in March for play downs, three tournaments and the House League Championship Day.
- The Township does not currently offer instructional skating programs because of limited ice capacity and offers no hockey or Ringette programs for females. Although the numbers are not nearly as large as for males, girls and women's hockey is popular and represents a growing trend.

Recommendation 15 The Township should continue to monitor the level of use by Springwater residents of City of Barrie arenas.

Recommendation 16 The Township should continue to annually monitor registration and use patterns of the winter and summer customers of the Elmvale Community Arena, as well as evolving demand for prime and non-prime ice time from minor hockey, figure skating, men's hockey, girls and women's hockey, Ringette, sledge hockey, recreational skating (all ages), and skating lessons.

Recommendation 17 Strive for a service level of approximately one ice pad:10,000 population.

Recommendation 18 When additional ice pads are provided in the Township, they should comprise a multi-pad facility (when possible) and be co-located with other complementary facilities to increase operating efficiency, and to allow for greater user convenience and cross-programming.

Recommendation 19 As demand warrants over the next 20 years and based on a 2035 population of 40,380 (Medium Growth Scenario), provide four additional ice pads as follows to achieve a service level of 1 ice pad per 10,000 residents:

- When further capital investment can no longer be justified (anticipated in 15-20 years), replace the Elmvale Community Arena with a modern twin pad facility, along with complementary components (6-8 dressing rooms per pad, ample lobby, a new Elmvale Community Hall). If an appropriate site is not available at that time, replace the Elmvale Community Arena with a modern single pad facility at the current fairground site.
- Provide 2-3 ice pads at the multi-facility community centre, proposed for the South Service Area (the eventual number of pads at this facility will depend on growth in demand and if a twin-pad arena can be provided in Elmvale). The decision about whether to provide a single or twin pad within the first phase of arena development will depend on when the facility is expected to be available and the degree of growth in local and regional demand by that time. There are significant cost (capital and operating), design and functional advantages in providing a twin pad facility in one phase.

Recommendation 20 When additional ice pads are being contemplated, confirm demand and feasibility through a market study and business plan.

5.3 Multi-purpose Community Space

For analysis purposes and to be consistent with the format of the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, multipurpose community space in the Township has been divided into the following geographic areas:

1. Community Centres within the settlement areas of Hillsdale, Anten Mills, Minesing and Grenfel
2. Multipurpose space in the South Service Area (Midhurst and area)
3. Multipurpose Space in the North Service Area (Elmvale and area)

All of the halls are owned by the Municipality, and all but Midhurst Hall is booked through the Township's booking system. The Township is responsible for any structural, mechanical and electrical maintenance and repair. Some operating costs are covered by the Municipality (insurance, pest control, SOCAN), with the balance paid by the Recreation Service Boards from rental income and fundraising.

5.3.1 Community Centres in the Settlement Areas

Community centres in Minesing, Anten Mills, Grenfel and Hillsdale provide multipurpose space suitable for community gatherings and other activities such as: public meetings, community festivals, weddings, dances and nightly recreation and social programs and other activities. Aerobic fitness programming is offered by the Township at the Hillsdale, Anten Mills and Minesing Community Centres. The Minesing facility contains a four-lane bowling alley in the basement. The community centres in Midhurst and Elmvale serve a similar purpose and are discussed in **Sections 5.3.2** and **5.3.3**.



Anten Mills Community Centre

Regular maintenance is performed by volunteers, associated with the Recreation Service Boards. When major improvements and/or expansion of one of the halls is approved, a cost-sharing arrangement between the RSB and the Township is negotiated. Use varies, depending on

the style and size of the facility and its location/proximity to population.

Programmable space ranges from 750 square feet to 2,100 square feet, as noted in **Figure 9**.

Schools in the settlement areas include:

- Minesing Central Public Elementary School, 7 Huron Street, Minesing - small (half) gymnasium
- Hillsdale Public Elementary School, 16 Albert Street East, Hillsdale - small (half) gymnasium – Because custodians are on rotation, overtime has to be paid to access evening use – making costs too high to host community recreation programs.



Minesing Community Centre



Minesing Com. Centre Bowling Alley



Hillsdale Community Centre



Grenfel Community Hall

Community Centres in the Settlement Areas, Township of Springwater, 2015

Figure 9

Facility	Size			Features	Use
	Total	Programmable	Capacity		
Minesing Community Centre (1897 with 1940 addition)	7,028 sq. ft.	2,100 sq. ft.	150 (hall) 60 (bowling alley)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> main floor hall with stage & kitchen; small library; lower level four-lane bowling alley ramp to main floor; basement & bowling alley not barrier-free 	Approx. prime time utilization: 82%
Anten Mills Community Centre (1892 with 2000+ addition)	1,704 sq. ft.	750 sq. ft.	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small main floor hall with kitchen & washrooms; lower level used for storage & future meeting room ramp to main floor, but access does not strictly meet code 	Approx. prime time utilization: 33%
Grenfel Community Centre	2,946 sq. ft.	Upper level: 700 sq. ft. Lower level: 500 sq. ft.	60	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> upper hall with platform stage & kitchen; lower level contains washrooms & storage building not barrier-free; stair access to basement washrooms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Booked by the RSB Prime time use is low (about 10-15%) Small social gatherings
Hillsdale Community Centre (late 1970s)	2,700 sq. ft.	Upper hall: 400 sq. ft. Lower hall: 1,200 sq. ft.	45 (upper) 90 (lower)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> small main floor hall with kitchen & larger lower hall one step above grade to main floor; basement access via stairs only 	Approx. prime time utilization: 18%

Utilization is highest at the Minesing Community Centre, followed by the Anten Mills Community Centre. Use of the Hillsdale and Grenfel

facilities is low. Utilization and the range of uses are influenced by facility size, characteristics, degree of accessibility and location.

5.3.2 Multipurpose Community Space in the South Service Area (Midhurst and area)

The only multipurpose programmable municipal spaces in the South Service Area (Midhurst) are the Midhurst Community Centre and the Township Administration Centre.

Originally the Town hall, the Midhurst Community Centre has a small lower hall with a kitchen and a larger upper hall with hardwood floor, a dance beam and a vaulted ceiling. This 1927 facility is 3,900



Midhurst Community Centre

square feet in size with 1,500 square feet of programmable space on the two levels. It has a capacity of 140 in the upper hall and 78 in the lower hall. Since all floors are accessed by stairs and washrooms are located on an intermediate level, this facility is not accessible for persons with physical disabilities, which limits some activities and users.

The facility is booked by the RSB and is well used most evenings and on weekends (over 300 times in 2014 - pot luck lunches, family gatherings, handcraft programs, service club meetings, weekly church service, local school gatherings). Township fitness programming is offered in the facility on Thursday evenings and Friday mornings. In 2014, the Children's Day Camp operated from the facility (43 nine-hour days). Prime time utilization is at about 80%.

Publicly available space in the Township Administration Centre includes the Council Chamber with adjoining gallery, a separate committee room and a smaller meeting room. These spaces are

mostly used for Council and other Township meetings. On occasion, the facilities are used by other government agencies and school boards for training and meetings. There have also been a few social events hosted at the Administration Centre.



Midhurst Community Hall Interior

Also in Midhurst is Forest Hill Public Elementary School (20 Doran Road) which has a small (half) gymnasium. The Simcoe County Museum has a large dividable hall and two activity rooms that are available to the community on Tuesday evenings only. The main hall is well used.

5.3.3 Multipurpose Community Space in the North Service Area (Elmvale)

In addition to the arena floor, there are two multi-purpose programmable municipal spaces in the North Service Area (Elmvale). See **Figure 10** for details. One is the Elmvale Community Centre, which is well used.

A high priority of the Simcoe County District School Board is to expand the Elmvale District High School to add a double gymnasium, change rooms, a weight room, a replacement cafeteria, a commercial kitchen and classrooms for cosmetology, drama, dance, art and family studies – and to convert the existing single gymnasium into a cafeteria. The school board has proposed a partnership with the Township whereby the Municipality would schedule afterschool use of these new facilities for school, community and commercial uses. A

component of the partnership would be for the Township to maintain the school sports field and allow continued school use of the Elmvale Community Arena for skating programs in non-prime time. A community fundraising goal of \$500,000 (backed by the Municipality)

is also part of the partnership. This initiative would help to offset the deficiency of indoor facilities and associated programming in the North Service Area of the Township.

Community Centres in the North Service Area/Elmvale, Township of Springwater, 2015

Figure 10

Facility	Size			Features	Use
	Total	Programmable	Capacity		
Elmvale Community Hall	5,110 sq. ft.	2,900 sq. ft.	220	Large hall with stage, kitchen & bar (washrooms near entrance); barrier-free	Approx. prime time utilization: 70%
Springwater Room	1,800 sq. ft.	1,800 sq. ft.	165	Hall with bar, kitchen and storage room. Located on upper level of the Elmvale Community Arena; elevator	High school students use this facility for fitness classes (& store equipment on-site)
Elmvale Arena floor	34,650 sq. ft. (total building)	15,500 sq. ft. (approx.)	1,400	Large unobstructed, high ceiling space with concrete floor	

Also in Elmvale are three schools.

- Elmvale District High School, 25 Lawson Avenue, Elmvale – full-size single gymnasium - not used much for Township programming and other community activities due to small size and difficulty to get regular time because of school activities
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic (elementary) School, 34 Kerr Street, Elmvale – small/half gymnasium
- Huronia Centennial Elementary School, 28 Simcoe St., Elmvale – small/half gymnasium, but larger than the one at Forest Hill Public Elementary School in Midhurst



Elmvale Community Hall



Interior of Elmvale Community Hall



Springwater Room, Elmvale Arena

5.3.4 Demand Indicators

Demand is increasing for good quality, adequately-sized and accessible multi-purpose program space (meeting rooms, small to medium size program rooms and gymnasias). Much of this increasing demand is coming from adults and older adults for a wide variety of activities from gym sports and aerobic fitness, to art and hand craft programs. This upward trend in demand is expected to continue, assuming adequate facilities are available. Multi-purpose space that is well lit, with medium-height ceilings (10-15 feet), a multi-purpose cushioned or sprung sport floor, storage and a water source can accommodate many types of activities. High quality retractable walls that link multiple spaces increase flexibility and utilization. Natural light is an asset.

5.3.5 Assessment and Provision Strategy

Assessment

Multi-purpose space that is suitable to support culture, recreation and other community activities is limited in the Township. Most facilities provide small spaces (under 2,000 square feet) with low ceilings, and none have sprung floors to support higher impact sport and fitness activities. Although the six community centres are well distributed throughout the Township, access to adequate multi-purpose space is particularly limited in Midhurst where demand is highest. Most of the facilities containing multi-purpose spaces also have accessibility limitations. Also, since the Municipality does not own a gymnasium and access is limited to mostly undersized school gymnasias, the opportunity to support community-based gym sports and other activities that a gymnasium can accommodate is almost non-existent. That limits the range of recreation and social activities that can be provided in the Township and the community, including many types of activities that are in high demand today and will be in the future (e.g., aerobic fitness programs, gymnasium-based sports, large social events, performances and exhibitions). Based on recreation trends

and increasing expectations for quality facilities and associated programming, the appeal, functionality and value of the five smallest halls will continue to diminish. Elmvale Community Hall should remain attractive mainly as an assembly hall. However, its value as a multi-functional programming space will continue to diminish as expectations increase for higher quality facilities and programming.

Response to the household survey indicated that satisfaction with indoor recreation facilities was low (27% were not satisfied, 35% were somewhat satisfied and only 31% were satisfied). Close to half of the households reported that less than half of their recreation needs are being met within the Township. 62% reported that members of their household are unable to participate in their favourite leisure activities as often as they would like, due mostly to the unavailability of suitable facilities and programs within the Township. 81% of households indicated that the top reason for traveling outside of the Township for recreation was that 'facilities and programs to support their leisure interests are not available in the Township', followed by the 'quality of facility or program is better elsewhere'. 43% of households indicated that indoor facilities are important to very important. At the two Community Forums, notable interest was expressed for improved community halls.

Provision Strategy

The provision strategy for multi-purpose space is to retain the existing community halls as activity and assembly facilities until such time as there may be agreement to retire one or more due to various circumstances as described below. If demand can be substantiated, and financing secured, consideration should be given to replacing one or more of the older and smaller halls with larger, more functional and accessible facilities. The Municipality should seek opportunities to increase access to school gymnasias for community programming and other uses (e.g., Elmvale District High School). The multi-facility community centre and library that is proposed for the South Service

Area should contain a double gymnasium that can also be used as an assembly hall and limited performance venue.

- Recommendation 21** **Service Levels:** Strive for a service level of 0.6 square feet of adequate programmable **multi-purpose space** per capita. Strive for a service level of one **double gymnasium** per 10,000 population and one **single or elementary school size gymnasium** per 4,000 population. Continually monitor demand and facility utilization, and make adjustments in these provision guidelines as required.
- Recommendation 22** **For the North Service Area**, continue to maintain and operate the Elmvale Community Hall until such time as a better opportunity arises. Continue to make the necessary ongoing investments to maintain the facility as a safe, accessible and functional community assembly hall. Continue to maintain the Springwater Room as an assembly hall and programmable space, as well as a facility to accommodate a limited fitness program for students from the Elmvale District High School (until such time as an in-school facility is available). When it is no longer feasible to maintain the Elmvale Community Arena (likely in about 15 years), consider replacing the arena with either a single-pad or preferably a double-pad facility. The opportunity for a double-pad arena will largely depend on the availability of a suitable site. The Community-scale park that is proposed for Elmvale would be the ideal location for new indoor facilities. When the arena is replaced, consider co-locating a new curling facility (number of sheets of ice to be determined at that time), and include sufficient multi-purpose programming space. At that time, it may be desirable to consolidate the Elmvale Community Hall with the proposed new arena facility, assuming a suitable site is available. In the near future, the Township should joint venture with the Simcoe County District School Board to replace the single gymnasium at Elmvale District High School with a double gymnasium, change rooms, a weight room, a commercial kitchen, replacement cafeteria and classrooms for cosmetology, drama, dance, art and family studies. The Township should administer afterschool use of the new facilities, as proposed by the School Board.
- Recommendation 23** **For the South Service Area**, it is recommended that when the multi-facility community centre and library that is proposed for Midhurst becomes available (see **Section 5.4**), the Midhurst Community Centre should be retired. Within the new community centre, either the gymnasium or the largest of the multi-purpose rooms could be named 'Midhurst Hall'. Within this facility, the history of Midhurst Hall could be displayed and its story told.
- Recommendation 24** **For the settlement areas** (Hillsdale, Phepston, Anten Mills, Minesing, Centre Vespra and Grenfel), the medium range strategy should be to continue to maintain the four community halls/centres as safe, accessible and functional facilities until such time as there is agreement to retire one or more of the facilities due to insufficient use, unsustainable operating costs, insufficient interest from volunteers to help operate, and/or the required capital investments cannot be justified. An increasing and significant issue facing these facilities is accessibility limitations. If any of these facilities was to undergo extensive renovation and/or expansion, the entire facility would have to conform to the new provincial accessibility requirements that came into effect January 1, 2015. Otherwise, the facilities are exempt from most current accessibility

requirements. If demand warrants and funding can be secured, consider replacing one or more of the older, smaller halls with larger, more functional and accessible facilities - to better serve the more remote parts of the Township (e.g., Grenfel).

Adult lifestyle communities (e.g., Springlakes) should provide their own community centres and on-site facilities to meet the interests of the residents of each of these communities.

5.4 Aquatic Facilities

5.4.1 Assessment and Provision Strategy

Assessment

Although there are no indoor or outdoor aquatic facilities in the Township (other than the unofficial beach at Orr Lake Park), there are indoor swimming pools in Barrie (3), Midland (1) and Wasaga Beach (1). Through the agreement with the City of Barrie, Springwater residents have access to Barrie facilities and associated culture and recreation programming, including aquatic facilities and programming. During the summer, Swim Safe – a Red Cross-based swimming school operates at a private outdoor pool in Oro-Medonte, just east of Orr Lake.

Although there was only a little interest expressed in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan for an indoor aquatic facility in Springwater, there was considerable interest expressed in the demand research for this update of the Master Plan. Swimming was

the most mentioned leisure activity for which residents travel outside of the Township (56% of survey respondents). 35% of survey respondents identified swimming as a favourite activity in their household. Swimming was identified as one of the top programs that residents would like to see offered in the Township. Of the types of facilities that residents would support additional municipal spending, an indoor swimming pool ranked sixth. When asked via the household survey about facilities to include in a new multi-facility community centre, an indoor swimming pool was well out in front - identified by 72% of households. Also, via the household survey, there was notable support expressed for outdoor water play facilities.

Although some small communities have long supported an indoor swimming pool (e.g., Cobourg, Bracebridge, Perth, Huntsville and others), a market size of 20,000 to 30,000 is more typical.

Provision Strategy

Recommendation 25 Strive for a provision guideline of one indoor aquatic facility:30,000 population. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in this service level as required.

- Recommendation 26** As the population reaches around 30,000, begin to plan for an indoor aquatic facility as a future phase of the multi-facility community centre and library proposed for the South Service Area (see **Section 5.5**). The facility could include a 25 metre, 6 or 8 lane lap pool, a therapeutic tank, a leisure pool with a water slide and a viewing gallery.
- Recommendation 27** Strive for a service level of one outdoor water play facility:10,000 population. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service level as required.
- Recommendation 28** By 2030, provide the first three water play facilities as follows:
- **North Service Area** – Proposed Elmvale Community Park or Bishop Park (2016-2020)
 - **South Service Area** – as part of the multi-facility community centre and library proposed for Midhurst (if the chosen site is suitable), and elsewhere in the South Service Area (consider a facility in the Snow Valley community). If the site of the multi-facility community centre is not suitable for an outdoor water play facility, select a suitable, high profile park somewhere in the Midhurst community.

5.5 Arts and Culture Facilities

5.5.1 Municipal Cultural Plan

In 2012, a Municipal Culture Plan for the Township of Springwater was published to provide a targeted strategy and implementation plan to capitalize on local assets and improve quality of life in the communities across the Municipality. The purpose was to leverage the cultural resources of the community in order to inform community development decisions, initiatives and investments.

The research identified that there is a wide variety of cultural resources in the Township, with a number of new and emerging groups. The initial cultural mapping exercise identified:

- 36 cultural industries,
- 35 cultural facilities and spaces,
- 15 festivals and events,
- 43 cultural heritage assets,
- 28 community organisations,
- 69 natural heritage assets,
- 14 tourism-based recreational assets, and

- 17 individual artists.

Appendix B of the Municipal Cultural Plan provides more detail on each category of cultural resources.

Several Township plans and strategies recognize the importance of cultural resources and activities. All of these plans and policies support a co-ordination role for the Township. Responsibility for implementing plans and policies requires effective alliances between the Township and its cultural, business and community partners. The County of Simcoe Economic Development Strategic Plan endorses regional economic development co-operation and sets the tone for future partnerships across the region. The community, through the engagement process, identified needs, values and aspirations for the Plan to address - including a shared vision and clear direction for cultural development throughout the Municipality, and new flexible multi-purpose facilities to support creative cultural enterprises, shared

meeting spaces and small performance venues. The community also called for:

- greater appreciation of the economic importance of culture,
- a larger leadership role for the Municipality,
- a cross-sectoral leadership group,
- stronger collaboration among groups,
- integrated and experience-based cultural tourism experiences,
- improved signage,
- better marketing promotion,
- enhanced volunteer resources,
- strategies to strengthen and sustain festivals,
- better connectivity and marketing of trails and natural assets,
- a stronger shared identity for the Municipality,
- redeveloped and revitalized commercial areas, and
- better knowledge and appreciation of the Municipality's rich history and heritage.

Key Elements of the Municipal Cultural Plan

Vision Statement

Celebrating and leveraging Springwater Township's unique cultural resources to build a shared identity and future prosperity.

Guiding Principles

- We see culture as integral to planning for a sustainable community, alongside social, economic and environmental considerations.
- We see our history and culture as a source of civic pride and shared identity that connects the Municipality.
- We see our combined natural and cultural environments as key to the quality of place that attracts people and investment.
- We see creativity and culture as a source of inspiration and innovation in a rapidly changing world.

- We see our cultural assets as essential to building vibrant downtowns that are the social and economic hubs of our communities.
- We see a Municipality in which cultural programs and activities are accessible throughout the community and all phases of life.
- We see a Municipality that values and supports strong cultural organizations working together toward shared goals.

Goals

The following is a summary of the goals that are recommended in the Municipal Cultural Plan. More detail is provided in the Plan.

Goal One: Broaden the Township's leadership role.

- Promote the Plan widely across the Municipality.
- Discuss and identify staff and administrative requirements to implement the Plan (e.g., a full-time staff titled 'Community Economic Development Officer' – combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture).
- Create a cultural roundtable or cultural resources committee.
- Convene a staff forum on the Municipal Cultural Plan.
- Convene a cultural summit or rally.
- Integrate culture into municipal planning and decision-making.

Goal Two: Build a strong and collaborative cultural sector.

- Strengthen cultural networks – beginning with regular networking sessions and a community-wide community calendar.
- Create a network of cultural organizations – collaborating and working toward shared goals.
- Expand cultural marketing and promotion.
- Address cultural facility needs.
 - Undertake a comprehensive inventory of cultural spaces and facilities.
 - Investigate the potential for a multi-purpose facility to serve a range of cultural activities such as exhibition and performance

spaces, meeting rooms, studio space for individual artists/artisans, and shared administration space for small cultural groups.

- Develop a public art policy and program.

Goal Three: Expand culture-led economic development.

- Develop more integrated experience-based tourism offerings.
- Grow creative cultural enterprises.
 - Convene 'creative minds' events.
 - Implement a program to support start-up enterprises in underutilized downtown spaces.
- Support youth engagement and retention.
 - Establish a youth apprenticeship and mentoring program.
 - Strengthen youth programming.

- Connect high school student volunteer requirements to cultural development.
- Strengthen festivals.
- Develop an integrated cultural and agi-tourism strategy.
- Support retail businesses.
- Continue cultural mapping.

Goal Four: Strengthen awareness of history and heritage.

- Develop a heritage master plan.
- Launch a community storytelling program.
- Launch a regional 'murmur' project (collects and records people's personal histories and anecdotes about specific places in neighbourhoods or communities).
- Develop and promote natural heritage routes.

Recommendation 29 Implement the recommendations from the Municipal Cultural Plan that relate to this Plan; for example:

- Create a full-time staff titled 'Community Economic Development Officer' – combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.
- Create a cultural resources committee.
- Integrate culture into municipal planning and decision-making.
- Create a network of cultural organizations.
- Expand cultural marketing and promotion.
- Undertake a comprehensive inventory of cultural spaces and facilities.
- Investigate the potential for a multi-purpose 'cultural' facility (initially integrated into the proposed multi-facility community centre and library – multi-purpose program spaces with storage, gymnasium/assembly hall/exhibition space/performance space, administrative offices, lobby/assembly/display space, outdoor public gathering spaces).
- Develop a public art policy and program.
- Strengthen festivals.
- Develop and promote natural heritage routes.

5.6 Proposed Multi-Facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library

5.6.1 Introduction

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan researched the market for a new multi-purpose recreation facility to be located in the South Service Area of the Township and provided an initial indication of the nature of the facility. In 2008, a follow-up study was completed to

5.6.2 Planning Context

2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan examined various provision/location options and identified the following components as Phase One for the proposed facility: a single pad arena, a public library, and multipurpose program space and common areas – comprising 56,400 square feet. It was also recommended that a future development allowance of 60-70,000 square feet be set aside for a second ice surface, an indoor aquatic facility and a gymnasium - as the population grows and demand warrants.

2008 Feasibility Study

The 2008 Feasibility Study recommended that the facility be located at Tree Nursery Sports Park. That location was consistent with the provision model for indoor facilities that was recommended in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan – where the northern part of the Township would be serviced by facilities primarily located in Elmvalle (North Service Area) and a new major recreation complex would be provided in the southern part of the Township (in the South Service Area of Midhurst). The feasibility study recognized that the market for a new major indoor recreation facility in the South Service Area will be driven by population growth, but that the demand assessment for such a facility is complicated by the relationship with the City of Barrie – whereby there is an established pattern of Springwater residents making significant use of culture and recreation

refine the market for such a facility, as well as its feasibility. **Section 5.6.3** updates recommendations about the need for a multi-facility community centre.

programming and facilities in the City, as well as belonging to sports and other community groups that are based in Barrie and other nearby communities.

The Feasibility Study recommended that the facility be developed in phases. Phase One would include the following components (comprising 53,800 square feet):

- Single pad arena (NHL-size ice surface, 6 change rooms, seating for 250, referee rooms, first aid room, music room, storage, service and maintenance components)
- Single gymnasium (with change rooms/washrooms, storage)
- Multipurpose program room (divisible into 2 rooms)
- Meeting/small program room (divisible into 2 rooms)
- Kitchen/bar (associated with multipurpose spaces)
- Lobby (with concession and skate sharpening)
- Facility management offices

It was recommended that future phases include a second ice pad and a community library.

The current population of almost 19,000 creates significant demand for culture and recreation services which is being met by parks, facilities and programs provided by the Township and others within the Township and in nearby communities. The Township population

is slightly younger than the provincial average, is more family-oriented, has a well above average household income, and most (93%) residents are English-speaking.

Although the population grew at a rate below the provincial average between 2006 and 2011, the annual rate of growth from 1991 to 2011 averaged 1.92% (considerably above the provincial average). The Medium Growth Scenario is projecting the population to grow at a similar rate to 2020 (1.9% annually), then accelerate to 6.8% annually to 2030, and 4.8% annually to 2036. If these high rates of growth materialize, the average age of in-migrating residents will be younger and the community should become more ethno-culturally diverse. It is likely that the majority of the new residents will be moving from urban centres and will bring with them higher expectations for municipal services. Expectations are already increasing for established residents.

Although Elmvale and Hillsdale will absorb some of the residential growth, 85% will be south of Horseshoe Valley Road.

The analysis of facility utilization indicated that the Elmvale Community Arena is operating at full capacity, and that there is considerable unmet demand from Springwater residents and ice sport groups, as well as from City of Barrie-based groups who would fully utilize an ice pad located in the South Service Area. Based on the utilization of the Midhurst Community Centre, even with its size and accessibility limitations, there is considerable excess demand in the most populated part of the Township for space to support a wide variety of culture and recreation programming to meet the interests of all ages. The next closest community centre is in Minesing and that facility is utilized about 80% in prime time, further underscoring significant demand for multi-purpose space in the southern part of the Township. There is also demand for higher quality fitness/wellness programming - requiring an adequate facility, which does not exist in Springwater.

The community consultation research reported that for about half of households, more than half of their culture and recreation activities are not being met by Springwater-based facilities and programs, due to either absence of in-demand facilities or below par quality. Swimming, the cultural arts, fitness, hockey, recreational skating, attending festivals and gymnasium sports led a long list of activities for which many residents have to leave the Township to participate. The most in-demand programs included tennis, swimming, park activities in general, ice hockey, trail activities, yoga, basketball and lacrosse. From the household survey, satisfaction was lowest for indoor recreation facilities throughout the Township.

When asked about the components that could be included in a multi-facility community centre, the following led the list (in ranked order): an indoor aquatic centre, an ice pad, a fitness centre, a gymnasium, an outdoor public square/community focal point, facilities to support older adults, facilities to support youth, an outdoor water play area, multi-purpose rooms, a library, an assembly/banquet hall, a performance facility, meeting rooms, facilities to support the creative arts, an outdoor fitness facility, informal social space and a child minding facility.

Notable demand was expressed at the two Community Forums for: additional arenas, improved halls, an adequate fitness/wellness facility, Wi-Fi in public facilities, aquatic facilities, and more and better ball diamonds.

The following are big trends impacting demand for leisure in Springwater Township:

- the shrinking percentage of children and youth over the past decade – although that trend will reverse if population growth accelerates - therefore stabilizing or increasing demand for activities of interest to this generation).
- an increasing proportion of mid-age and older adults (and therefore increasing demand for activities of interest to this generation).

- increasing demand for trails, natural environment settings for leisure, arts and culture, wellness, lower impact and less physically demanding individual and team activities, festivals and sports tournaments.
- declining demand for many types of high impact, physically demanding individual and team sports; and activities that require a significant amount of time in which to participate (e.g., golf).
- the absence of many types of culture and recreation facilities and programming in the Township that are in demand (e.g., indoor aquatic centre, fitness centre, gymnasium, facilities aimed at older adults and youth, and outdoor water play facilities).
- the below average quality and limited functionality of many of the culture and recreation facilities in the Township.
- the below average quality of many of the programs offered in the Township (influenced mostly by the type and quality of available facilities).

The following are trends impacting leisure service delivery:

- increasing demand for multi-facility complexes (indoor and outdoor), quality facilities and programming, shorter length programs, and greater convenience.
- customers seeking the best value for their investment of time and money.
- increasing support for partnerships.

In 2014, a Facility Needs Assessment for the Springwater Township Public Library was completed by Dysert & Jones Associates and dmA Planning and Management Services. The study recommended that 26,000 gross square feet of new library space be provided in two phases of approximate size to meet the needs of a total population of approximately 45,000 by around 2031 (the population target for 3031 at that time – the Medium Growth Scenario is projecting 35,571). The additional space would comprise a main branch library to be located in the South Service Area and would replace the Midhurst Branch Library. It was anticipated that Phase One should be ready to open in about four years.

5.6.3 Updated Recommendation for a Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library

The current planning context, residential growth and change projections and future trends continue to support a multi-facility community centre located in the South Service Area. Phase One of this proposed facility would be similar in concept to the one outlined in the 2008 Feasibility Study, but is recommended that Phase One include a few more components. **Figure 11** notes the recommended components and general priority, based on current expressed demand, expected market growth and leisure trends, the impact of nearby City of Barrie facilities and programs (current and future), and the ability of the Township to afford capital and operating costs. The

recommended facilities have been divided into two lists, with the first suggested for Phase One and the second to comprise one or more future phases. In **Section 5.2.3**, it was recommended that an assessment be undertaken to determine the advantages and disadvantages of including a twin-pad arena in Phase One, due in part to economy of scale and design/utilization benefits. If the fitness facility identified for Phase Two is included in Phase One, a significant revenue stream can be generated earlier in the life of the complex and memberships can be sold that focus on the fitness facility, gymnasium and running track.

Recommended Components of the Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library for the South Service Area, Township of Springwater

Figure 11

Phase One	Future Phase(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Single pad NHL-size arena – with seating for 200-300, 6-8 adult-size dressing rooms and other typical components and features of a modern arena (a case may be able to made to include a twin pad in Phase One) ▪ Multi-purpose space to support a wide variety of programs/activities and meetings (linked and with a sprung sport floor) ▪ Double gymnasium/assembly hall/exhibition space/performance space with elevated walking/running track around the top ▪ Main branch library (Phase One) ▪ Amble lobby with food services/cafe-style seating and social/gathering space ▪ Facility management offices ▪ Storage ▪ Outdoor square/community focal point (possibly including a water feature/outdoor artificial ice rink and outdoor water play area) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Aquatic Facility (25 metre, 6 or 8 lane pool, with a therapeutic tank and leisure pool with a water slide and viewing gallery) ▪ A second NHL-size ice pad with 6-8 dressing rooms and other typical components and features of a modern arena (seating TBD) – it may be justifiable to provide a twin-pad arena in Phase One. (If a twin pad arena cannot be provided as a replacement for the Elmvale Community Arena (in 15-20 years), three ice pads will be required at this South Service Area facility when the population reaches around 40,000 – anticipated around 2035.) ▪ Additional multi-purpose space to support a wide variety of programs/activities and meetings ▪ Fitness facility (aerobic and equipment-based fitness) – may be justifiable for Phase One ▪ Change rooms for gymnasium, fitness and aquatic customers (general male/female, adult/club male and female, family) ▪ Additional storage ▪ Child minding facility ▪ Expanded facility management offices, including aquatic ▪ Expanded lobby and food services ▪ Phase Two of the main branch library (as population reaches about 37,000, anticipated around 2032) ▪ A field house to accommodate indoor soccer and other indoor sports/other activities (will depend on the site selected and if it is more appropriate and feasible to locate this facility at Tree Nursery Sports Park)

Size

Figure 12 assigns an initial size allowance to each of the components proposed for Phase One of the community centre and library. These components and sizes will need to be confirmed in the recommended feasibility study update (see below), and again at the design stage. For example, it is initially assumed that Phase One multi-purpose space will be in the order of 3,000 square feet; however, more space could be included in the first phase. It is also assumed that the 13,000 gross square feet of library space would be equally allocated to Phases One and Two. However, it may be that Phase One will

have to be larger to accommodate sufficient ‘common’ spaces to support Phases One and Two. However, the multi-purpose and lobby space allocated to the main branch library may be able to be reduced through shared use of the multi-purpose and lobby space allocated to the community centre. If the fitness centre, associated change rooms and a second ice pad are included in Phase One, the facility will be significantly larger than estimated in **Figure 12**.

Location

The 2008 feasibility study identified Tree Nursery Sports Park as the preferred site for this facility. Since 2008, more information has become available about the amount, nature, location and timing of anticipated residential growth. Vehicular access to this facility from other parts of the Township and the City of Barrie should be optimized. Also, pedestrian and cycling access to the facility from nearby residential areas should be encouraged. The site should be of sufficient size to accommodate expansion of the facility. Since 2008,

a number of additional outdoor facilities and features have been identified for this Tree Nursery Park. All of these requirements and circumstances indicate a site much larger than what is left to be developed at Tree Nursery Sports Park. As well, the location of that park is not as ideal as a site that is closer to where most of the future population will be located. Additionally, the site of the proposed community centre and library should ensure good north-south and east-west access from all parts of the Township.

Preliminary Size and Cost Estimate

Phase One of the Proposed Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library

Figure 12

Component and Size	Square Feet	Cost (2015\$)
Single pad NHL-size arena – with seating for 200-300, 6-8 adult-size dressing rooms and other components and features typical of a modern arena	22,000	
Dressing rooms with seating over	6,000	
Lobby/food services/cafe-style seating/social/assembly space – combined for library and other functions and sized to accommodate facilities that will be included in a later phase (second ice pad, fitness facility, aquatic facility, additional multi-purpose space, child-minding room)	5,000	
Walking/running track around the top of the gymnasium	4,000	
Multi-purpose space (initial space allocation for programming & meetings)	3,000	
Double gymnasium/assembly hall/performance space (6,000 sq. ft. of programmable space + storage)	8,000	
Phase One of main branch library (500 sq. ft. of library lobby space allowance is incorporated into total lobby space above and 800 sq. ft. of the mechanical space allowance is incorporated into 'mechanical' below. Further reduction in size of the library component may be possible if multi-purpose space that is currently attributed to Phase One of the library can be shared)	11,700	
Facility management offices (non-library functions)	500	
Storage (non-library functions)	500	
Mechanical space allowance (total facility)	4,500	
Sub-total	65,200	
Gross-up (1.25)	16,300	
Total Gross Area	81,500	
Construction Cost @ \$300/sq. ft. (assumes LEED Silver Equivalency)		\$24,450,000
Furnishings, fittings & equipment (includes \$450,000 allowance attributed to the library)		\$850,000

Consulting fees and contingency (12%)		\$2,935,000
Site development costs (10%)		\$2,445,000
Total Project Cost		\$30,680,000

Feasibility Study

As a follow-up to this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, a comprehensive feasibility study should be completed to further research local and regional demand and supply (including the plans of others), confirm willingness to use and pay the required fees and membership costs, confirm and detail facility components and features that will be appropriate for the anticipated date of occupation (Phase One and subsequent phases). For Phase One, the feasibility study should identify the range of uses and programming, estimate annual revenue and expenses (prepare a five-year pro-forma operating budget), and prepare a funding and financing strategy (capital and operating costs), including a framework for a partnership and operating agreements between the Library Board and the Municipality). The study should also include a conceptual facility design and site plan, as well as an estimate of capital cost for Phase One and subsequent phases. The study should also identify site

selection criteria, determine site requirements, seek and evaluate candidate sites and recommend the preferred site (if possible).

The 2014 Library Facility Needs Assessment also recommended that a detailed feasibility study be completed, including a more in-depth space planning exercise using existing guidelines and standards from the Ontario Public Library Guidelines, other sources of information and library staff input to refine the functional areas within the library. The library study also recommended that prior to the facility feasibility study, a staffing and operational review of the entire library system be completed, incorporating the understanding that the physical plant will be expanding. This review will help to inform staffing requirements and estimate operating costs for a new main branch library.

If the two facilities are to be co-located, it would be prudent to combine the feasibility studies.

Recommendation 30 Provide a multi-facility community centre and main branch library in two or three phases over the next twenty or so years, as increasing population and growing demand warrants. The timing for Phase One should be determined by sufficient population and available resources. Recommended components and features, general phasing, estimate of size and principle location criteria are noted above.

Recommendation 31 Following the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, complete a feasibility study/business plan to further inform Phase One and subsequent phases of the planning, design and costing (capital and operating) for the proposed community centre and main branch library. The feasibility study should also include identification of the preferred site (see above for the recommended scope of the combined community centre and library feasibility study). The 2014 Library Facility Needs Assessment recommended that prior to the facility feasibility study, a staffing and operational review of the entire library system be completed, incorporating the understanding that the physical plant will be expanding.

Recommendation 32 Research the suitability of the crown land that is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Highway 26 and Snow Valley Road. Environmental constraints may rule out this well-located site.

Chapter Six: Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs Assessment and Provision Strategy

6.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises provision strategies and other recommendations to address current and future **outdoor** facility requirements. As was the case for indoor facilities, the analysis is based on the Planning Context (Chapter Two), and is guided by

Vision 2030, the Belief Statement about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the Guiding Principles, and the Planning and Provision Guidelines (Chapter Three), as well as the proposed Recreation Delivery Model (Chapter Four).

6.2 Ball Diamonds

6.2.1 Supply and Utilization

Ball facilities have been divided into three categories or levels as follows:

- **Senior ball diamonds** (15 in total - 14 are lit; four are located in Township parks; one is located in the fairground in Elmvale (owned by the Flos Agricultural Society); 10 are located at the Barrie Community Sports Complex; all are regularly scheduled)
- **Intermediate-level ball diamonds** (8 in total - none are lit; all are located in Township parks)
- **Junior ball diamonds** (14 in total - one is located at the Edenvale Conservation Area; one is located in Snow Valley Park, one is located in Valendar Park and the remainder are located on school properties)

Although Midhurst and immediate area is the best serviced part of the Township, ball diamonds are fairly well distributed throughout the Municipality, with:

- Senior lit diamonds are located in Elmvale (1), Hillsdale (1), and Midhurst and area (3 + 10 at the Barrie Community Sports Complex).

- Intermediate-level diamonds are located in Phelpston (1), Anten Mills (1), Minesing (1), Midhurst (1), and Grenfel (3).
- Junior diamonds are located at elementary schools in Elmvale, Hillsdale, Minesing and Midhurst (10); Snow Valley Park (1); Valendar Park (1) and Edenvale Conservation Area (1).

Note that only 14 of the 37 ball diamonds are located in Township parks (4 of the 10 Senior diamonds, the 8 Intermediate-level diamonds, and two of the Junior diamonds).

The current pattern of ball diamonds throughout the Township reflects the stronger demand for ball that existed in the past and the desire by most communities to have at least one ball diamond in their 'community' park. That was augmented by the tradition of one or more Junior ball diamonds being located in every school yard.

Only the diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park, Doran Park, Hillsdale Park, Harry Adams Memorial Park, Minesing Central Public Elementary School, and Huronia Centennial Public Elementary

School are booked by the Township. Due to poor quality and low demand, there is no scheduled use of the other diamonds.

The ratio of ball diamonds to population is noted below. Six of the Junior diamonds (Edenvale Conservation Area, Valendar Park, Forest Hill Public Elementary School, Hillsdale Elementary School and Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School) have not been included in the calculation due to their poor condition. Since the 10 Senior diamonds located at the Barrie Community Sports Complex are owned and scheduled by the City of Barrie, they have not been included in the calculation. Lit diamonds are considered to be equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds. The ratio is based on an estimated current population of 18,545.

- Senior lit (5) 1 diamond: 3,700 residents
- Intermediate (8) 1 diamond: 2,318 residents
- Junior (8) 1 diamond: 2,318 residents

Most of the diamonds that are scheduled by the Township are not used regularly on Friday evenings and weekends, except for the two diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park and the diamond at Hillsdale Community Park which receive regularly scheduled Sunday evening use.

There is considerable unused ball diamond capacity. Even the best facilities are only used between 30% and 75% of the time that groups consider to be prime time. Weekend use is very light. The large amount of use that is being made of the diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park by City of Barrie groups (61%



Grenfel Park Ball Diamond

by Barrie Minor Baseball, Barrie Slow-Pitch Association, Andrew Hunter Public School and a county-wide school tournament) indicates considerable excess capacity to meet demand from Springwater Township residents. In addition, Ball Diamond #2 was not used to capacity in 2014, with total hours used at well below that of Diamond #1. At 780.5 hours, use of these diamonds in 2014 was considerable below that of 2011-2013 which ranged from 603.5 hours in 2011 to 941 hours in 2012 and 931 hours in 2013.



Doran Park Diamond

The eight Intermediate level diamonds receive very little use, with the diamond at Harry Adams Memorial Park where there is a minor ball program used the most at about 25%. The 8 Junior diamonds that are regularly used by the community are also underutilized at around 25%.

The following organizations offer ball programs for Springwater Township residents:

- **Minesing Minor Ball Association** – serves south Springwater Township; age 4-20 in 7 age divisions; use the four diamonds at Minesing Central Public Elementary School and Harry Adams Memorial Park, as well as the diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park.
- **Elmvalle Minor Ball Association** – serves Elmvalle and north Springwater Township; age 4-19 in 7 age divisions; use the four diamonds at Huronia Centennial Public Elementary School and the lit Senior diamond one night per week in the later part of the season as the daylight lessons

- **South Simcoe Ladies Fast Pitch League** – serves Springwater Township, Wyevale and Barrie; age 17+; use facilities at Tree Nursery Sports Park (one night per week)
- **Springwater Masters Slow-Pitch** – no data available

Ball groups identified the following issues:

- The six junior ball diamonds in Elmvale that are located on school property, are small and not sufficiently maintained. They cannot support adult play. The request is for two larger lit diamonds on Township property (although the Township does not currently own suitable parkland in Elmvale to accommodate this request).
- The three Junior ball diamonds in Minesing are located on school property (one Intermediate diamond is located at adjacent Harry Adams Park). The school diamonds are too small for adults, and the infields are becoming overgrown and are poorly drained.
- The Intermediate softball diamond at Anten Mills Park requires repair (fencing and home plate) and as a result, is only used for practices.



Midhurst Community Park Ball Diamond

- The Senior lit softball diamond at Doran Park is adequate for regular play and can be used to supplement tournaments at Tree Nursery Sports Park (as three diamonds are required).
- The two Senior lit softball diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park are one diamond short to support tournaments. Since the diamonds are sized for softball, they are not suitable for fastball.

Some local teams play in leagues that use the diamonds at the Barrie Community Sports Complex, but the Township does not have information about the utilization of those facilities.

The regular season for most leagues averages 20 weeks.

The Township is responsible for cutting and dragging at all of the diamonds in Township parks. The Township only cuts the grass at the school diamonds that are scheduled for use by community groups when the school contractor does not cut them in a timely manner. The Township is responsible for all of the maintenance and repairs at all the diamonds except at the Barrie Community Sports Complex, the diamond at the Flos Agricultural Society Fairground in Elmvale and the school facilities. The Township pays for the electricity at the diamonds located in Tree Nursery Sports Park and Doran Park. Although the Township processes the payment for electricity use at the Hillsdale Park diamond, the fee is charged to the Recreation Service Board's operating expenses. The Hillsdale Board collects and retains all revenue from use of the facilities in that park.

Ball Diamonds, Township of Springwater, 2015

Figure 13

Location	Category/Level	Description	Use	Notes
Tree Nursery Sports Park (Midhurst)	2 Senior softball, lit	Well maintained, irrigated, outfield fences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diamond #1: 492 hrs. (2014) ▪ Diamond #2: 288 hrs. (2014) ▪ Combined use ranged from 604 to 941 hrs. (2011-2013) – recent adult focus ▪ In total, 70% used Sunday to Thurs., with 2 late time slots not used in 2014 ▪ Only a few tournaments in 2014 ▪ 478 hrs. used by Barrie groups (61%) 	Ample parking, adjacent service building, room for two more major diamonds (partially roughed in)
Doran Park (Midhurst)	1 Senior softball, lit	Moderate quality turf, outfield fence, bleachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use ranged from 135 to 301 hrs. (2009-2013) – mostly adult use ▪ 30% used - booked Mon. & Tues. evenings (both time slots) & the occasional Thurs. (one time slot) 	Parking adjacent
Hillsdale Community Park	1 Senior softball, lit	Moderate quality turf, outfield fence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Use ranged from 495 to 536 hrs. (2010-2013) – mostly adult use ▪ 75% used - booked every night except Wed. & Sat. 	Parking adjacent
Flos Agricultural Society Fairground (Elmvale)	1 Senior softball, lit	Moderate quality turf, outfield fence, diamond is oriented incorrectly, bleachers, service building & covered picnic area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 75% used - booked Mon. to Fri. evenings ▪ Elmvale Minor Ball has access one night/wk. 	Community use under agreement with the Flos Agricultural Society
Barrie Community Sports Complex	8 Senior softball (7 lit) 1 Senior hardball, lit 1 stadium, lit	All well maintained, outfield fences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scheduled by the City of Barrie 	Owned and scheduled by City of Barrie, adequate parking, service buildings
Midhurst Community Park	1 Intermediate	Moderate quality turf, small outfield, bleachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not scheduled by the Township ▪ Very little use 	
Grenfel Community Park	3 Intermediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ One is well maintained ▪ None have an outfield fence ▪ Two have overgrown infields 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not scheduled by the Township ▪ Very little use 	One of the poor diamonds overlaps a Small Mini soccer field
Snow Valley Highlands Park	1 Intermediate	Well maintained, no outfield fence, bleachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not scheduled by the Township ▪ Very little use 	
Harry Adams Memorial Park (Minesing)	1 Intermediate	Well maintained, no outfield fence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Used by Minesing Minor Ball Assoc. ▪ 25% used - games scheduled Mon. to Thurs. evenings 	
Anten Mills Park	1 Intermediate	Moderately maintained, no outfield fence, bleachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not scheduled by the Township ▪ Very little use – practices 	Fencing & home plate area require repair
O'Neil Park (Pheplston)	1 Intermediate	Well maintained, outfield fence, bleachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Not scheduled by the Township ▪ Very little use 	Adjacent storage building

Snow Valley Park	1 Junior		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	
Valendar Park	1 Junior, unlit	Poorly maintained, old wooden backstop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	
Edenvale Conservation Area	1 Junior, unlit	Poorly maintained, old wooden backstop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	
Minesing Central Public Elementary School	3 Junior	Skinned infields, moderate quality, poor drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used by Minesing Minor Ball Assoc. 25% used - games scheduled Mon. to Thurs. evenings, but only 1 or 2 diamonds are used 	Diamonds overlap a Small Mini soccer field
Huronion Centennial Public Elementary School (Elmvale)	4 Junior	Skinned infields, moderate quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Used by Elmvale Minor Ball Assoc. Used by Minesing Minor Ball Assoc. 25% used - games scheduled Mon. to Thurs. evenings, but only 1 or 2 diamonds are used 	Diamonds overlap a Small Mini soccer field
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elementary School (Elmvale)	2 Junior	Turf infields, poor quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	Diamond overlaps a Small Mini soccer field
Forest Hill Public Elementary School (Midhurst)	1 Junior	Facility is only defined by a backstop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	
Hillsdale Public Elementary School	1 Junior	Turf infield	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not scheduled by the Township Very little use 	

6.2.2 Demand Indicators

Ball was in much higher demand up to the mid 1990s when soccer began to increase in popularity. Today, there are only two minor ball associations operating in the Township. Although there is interest in Hillsdale, no one has stepped forward to establish an association.

Generally, across Ontario, participation in baseball and softball has declined over the past twenty years, especially as the Echo generation has recently aged out of their minor sports years. Over the past 30 years, interest in adult ball has increased, initially fueled by the large Baby Boom generation and the more recently by the Echo generation, now entering their young adult years.

Simcoe Ladies Fast Pitch indicated that fewer girls are playing fastball, with some former players drawn to soccer and slo-pitch. However, Minesing Minor Ball registration increased by 10% in 2015.



Tree Nursery Sports Park Diamonds

From the household survey, 32% of households listed softball and baseball as a favourite activity.

Support was positive for additional investment in ball facilities, with ball diamonds ranking tenth out of twelve types of facilities that scored 3 or higher out of 5.

With additional population anticipated for Elmvale and Hillsdale, some additional demand for ball may be generated in the northern part of

6.2.3 Assessment and Provision Strategy

For ball diamonds at all levels, there is considerable excess capacity throughout the Township, especially for Intermediate-level and Junior diamonds.

In the northern part of the Township, the issue is with inadequate quality and the small size of the school-based Junior diamonds (six in Elmvale and two in Hillsdale) that support the Elmvale Minor Ball program). Only one or two of the school diamonds are used regularly. Elmvale Minor Ball would like to see two lit diamonds provided by the Township, although currently, there is no suitable parkland in Elmvale.

The issues with the ball diamonds in Minesing, where the only other minor ball program exists, is with the quality and small size of the three Junior diamonds located at Minesing Central Public Elementary School. Although there are no adult-size diamonds in Minesing, two Senior lit softball diamonds are located at nearby Tree Nursery Sports Park, and underutilized Intermediate-level diamonds are located in Anten Mills, Midhurst, Snow Valley and Grenfel. The three school facilities and the Intermediate-scale diamond at Harry Adams Memorial Park in Minesing are utilized only 25% of the time.

Although having three Senior lit diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park would be beneficial for tournaments, the current level of use of those facilities and the Senior lit diamond in nearby Doran Park by

the Township over the next twenty years. With considerably more growth planned for the Midhurst/Snow Valley/Centre Vespra area, there should be additional demand generated for softball and hardball in the southern part of the Township over the next twenty years.



Hillsdale Community Park Diamond

Springwater residents does not justify the additional investment until the population increases significantly, along with sufficient local demand. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, another Senior lit diamond should be required by around 2028 as the population

reaches 30,000, and another by around 2031 when the population reaches 35,000.

Recommendation 33 Strive for the following service levels for ball diamonds. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.

- Senior Lit 1 diamond: 5,000 population
- Intermediate 1 diamond: 10,000 population
- Junior 1 diamond: 4,000 population (school sites only)

Recommendation 34 In future, cluster Municipal ball diamonds in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional sports-oriented parks, rather than following the practice of providing a single Junior or Intermediate level ball diamond in Neighbourhood parks. As noted in **Chapter 7**, it is recommended that future Neighbourhood parks be smaller in size and that more of the parkland dedication be allocated to Community-level parks, some of which can be developed for active recreation. This provision model will be particularly important for the continued development in the Midhurst, Elmvale and Hillsdale communities. The Township should focus on providing Intermediate and Senior level ball diamonds, leaving the school boards to provide Junior diamonds.

Recommendation 35 If a Community-level sports-oriented park can be provided in Elmvale, provide two Intermediate-level or Senior lit ball diamonds in that park, with the size to be determined after a thorough assessment of current and future demand. If a Community park cannot be provided in Elmvale, an alternative solution may be to negotiate with the school board to see if, through a joint venture with the Township, two or three of the diamonds could be up upgraded to better support Elmvale Minor Ball.

Recommendation 36 When community-based demand warrants, complete and light the two roughed-in Senior ball diamonds at Tree Nursery Sports Park to provide tournament capability and improved facilities to support Minesing Minor Ball and adult ball. Determine if there is sufficient demand for one of the facilities to be sized for hardball. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, another Senior lit diamond should be required by around 2028 as the population reaches 30,000 and a second by around 2031 when the population reaches 35,000.

Recommendation 37 Due to underutilization and the continued cost to maintain in a safe condition, consideration should be give to taking several ball diamonds out of service. Examples: the two poorest quality Intermediate diamonds in Grenfel Park, and the Junior diamonds at Snow Valley Park, Valendar Park and Edenvale Conservation Area.

Recommendation 38 Ensure that all ball diamonds are maintained in a safe and adequate condition for their intended level of use.

6.3 Playing Fields

6.3.1 Supply and Utilization

Playing fields have been grouped into three categories, based on size:

- **Senior/full-size soccer pitch** (60-70 x 100-110 metres) or **soccer/football field** (65 x 110 yards) (16 in total - 5 unlit soccer pitches at Tree Nursery Sports Park, 1 lit and 7 unlit soccer pitches at the Barrie Community Sports Complex, 2 at the Barrie FC facility off Highway 26, 1 unlit soccer/football field at Elmvale District High School) The high school field can be temporarily divided into smaller fields to support the minor soccer program.
- **Mini soccer pitch** (40-45 x 75-90 metres) (2 in total - 1 unlit pitch at Homer Barrett Park – unmarked field and 1 pitch at the Barrie FC facility off Highway 26)
- **Small Mini soccer pitch** (40 x 60 metres) (7 unlit small Mini pitches – 3 in parks and 4 at schools)

Not including the City of Barrie facilities, Senior/full-size playing fields are concentrated in the southern part of the Township with five of the six at Tree Nursery Sports Park. The smaller pitches are better distributed, with five in Elmvale (3 of which are only roughed-in), 1 in Hillsdale, 1 in Minesing and 1 in Grenfel. The four elementary school pitches and the one at Grenfel Park are overlapped by ball diamonds.



Tree Nursery Sports Park

Although Midhurst does not have a Mini pitch, the five Senior pitches at Tree Nursery Sports Park are nearby.

The ratio of playing fields to population is noted below. The unlit soccer/football field at Elmvale High School is included in the ratio of Senior fields. The eight Senior pitches located at the Barrie Community Sports Complex and the three pitches at the Barrie FC facility have not been included in the calculation. The three roughed-in pitches at Homer Barrett Park in Elmvale are included. The ratio is based on an estimated current population of 18,545.

- Senior fields (6) 1 pitch: 3,091 residents
- Large Mini pitches (1) 1 pitch: 18,545
- Small Mini pitches (7) 1 pitch: 2,649 residents

The Township is responsible for cutting the turf at all of the fields except at the Barrie Community Sports Complex and Barrie FC facility off Highway 26. The Township only cuts the grass at the school fields that are scheduled for community use when the school contractor does not cut them in a timely manner. The Township is responsible for all of the maintenance and repairs at the fields located in Township parks.

There is room at Tree Nursery Sports Park for two more Senior/full-size soccer pitches or one Senior and four Large Mini pitches.



Grenfel Community Park

Playing Fields, Township of Springwater, 2015

Figure 14

Location	Category/Level	Description	Use	Notes
Tree Nursery Sports Park (Midhurst)	5 Senior soccer, all unlit	Well maintained turf fields, irrigated Converted to Mini fields as required Portable nets stored on-site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Used mostly by Barrie & regional teams (Barrie teams: 52%; other regional teams: 8.6%; regional schools: 15.5%) ▪ South Springwater Soccer Assoc. is the principle local user (360 hrs./23.3% of total use in 2014). Mon.-Thurs. for 10 wks. ▪ School use is outside of the summer schedule ▪ Field 1: 405 hrs. (329 without schools) ▪ Field 2: 407 hrs. (349 without schools) ▪ Field 3: 315 hrs. (273 without schools) ▪ Field 4: 235 hrs. (194 without schools) ▪ Field 5: 189 hrs. (165 without schools) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can be divided into mini fields, depending on level of play ▪ Room for two more Senior pitches or one Senior and four Large Mini pitches
Barrie Community Sports Complex (Midhurst)	8 Senior soccer, 1 lit	Well maintained turf fields	Used mostly by Barrie & regional teams	
Barrie FC Facility	2 unlit Senior soccer 1 Large Mini soccer			
Elmvale High School	1 soccer/football, unlit	Can be temporarily divided into smaller fields to support minor soccer program	Used by Elmvale Minor Soccer Assoc. one night/week	Field surrounded by a running track
Grenfel Community Park	1 Small Mini soccer	Supported by portable nets	No longer scheduled use due to lack of volunteers to run minor soccer program.	Field overlaps ball diamond
Homer Barrett Park (Elmvale)	1 Mini soccer 2 Small Mini soccer	The park has been graded to support the 3 fields, but they are not yet laid out & marked	No scheduled use	
Huronian Centennial Public Elem. School (Elmvale)	1 Small Mini soccer		No scheduled use	Field overlaps ball diamonds
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Elem. School (Elmvale)	1 Small Mini soccer		No scheduled use	Field overlaps ball diamonds
Minesing Central Public Elementary School	1 Small Mini soccer		No scheduled use	Field overlaps ball diamonds
Hillsdale Public Elementary School	1 Small Mini soccer		No scheduled use	

The following organizations offer soccer programs for Springwater Township residents:

- **Elmvale Co-ed Cheezers Soccer Club** – serves North Simcoe area; house league; ages 2-16; season: May long weekend to end of July; use the high school field one night/week – have been discussions to move the program to Homer Barrett Park
- **South Springwater Soccer Association** – house league; season: May long weekend to end of July

Both soccer programs co-ordinate house leagues for children and youth, but do not provide competitive-level programs.

There is no adult soccer program originating in Springwater Township. For a number of years, an adult program was promoted, but there was insufficient response.

- **Barrie FC** – serves City of Barrie and region; programs (recreational/house league, All Star, Rep., BFC Development Centre, summer camps), registrants include Springwater residents

Other groups in the wider region that may register Springwater residents include:

- Barrie Flag Football,
- Huronia District Soccer League,

6.3.2 Demand Indicators

Nationally, interest in soccer has been increasing over the past twenty years, but growth should begin to stabilize with the big Echo generation recently aging out of their minor sports years. Interest in soccer continues into adulthood, but the participation rate slows greatly after around age 12.

Since none of the soccer groups in Springwater completed the community group survey, there is no indication of participation trends, past or future. It was observed that the South Springwater Soccer

- Huronia Under 13 Girls Rep. Soccer League, and
- Wasaga Soccer.

Scheduled fields are used mostly from Monday to Thursday in the evenings for regular play and on weekends for tournaments. In 2015, Barrie FC began using fields at Tree Nursery Sports Park on Friday and Sunday evenings. To date, there has been no demand for late evening use by adult leagues that would require lighting.

The South Springwater Soccer Association uses the fields at Tree Nursery Sports Park Monday to Thursday evenings for ten weeks. With 900 children registered in 2015 (up from around 800 in 2014), the Association could use all five fields. The recent increase in registration is likely influenced by current organizational problems at Barrie FC.

The Elmvale Co-ed Cheezers Soccer Club uses the field at Elmvale District High School by dividing the playing surface and turf areas outside of the playing surface into mini fields. It is not ideal, but that is the preference of the program organizer.

The Grenfel Recreation Service Board organized a minor soccer program one night per week for a couple of years, but had to cancel due to insufficient volunteers to organize and coach the program.

Association increased registration in 2015 by about 12%, but the increase was likely influenced by current organizational problems at Barrie FC.

To date, there has not been sufficient demand to offer an adult soccer program in the Township. Established adult leagues in the region could be meeting local demand. To date, there has not been a call for late night play at the Tree Nursery Sports Park fields, which is one indication of increasing demand from adults.

As noted, the large Echo generation has aged out of their child and youth minor sports years. A resurgence of the child and youth population is not expected for another decade unless the residential growth rate increases significantly in Springwater over the next few years, which is not anticipated.

Township staff indicated that there has not been demand for a soccer program from other parts of the Township. The household survey revealed the following about soccer:

- 19% of participating households noted soccer as a favourite activity (ranked 20th out of 41 named activities).
- 8.27% of households regularly travel out of the Township to participate in soccer.
- Preference for increased municipal spending on soccer facilities ranked 13th out of 34 types of facilities with a weighted average score of 2.97 out of 5.0 (the question included a five-point score from don't spend to definitely spend).



Tree Nursery Sports Park Soccer Fields

6.3.3 Assessment and Provision Strategy

With the soccer programs in Springwater Township focusing on children and youth and organized around the northern and southern parts of the Township, the current supply of facilities appears to be meeting local needs.

Much of the excess supply at Tree Nursery Sports Park is on Friday nights and weekends throughout the spring, summer and fall, and on weekday evenings after the minor soccer season. A good deal of that time is rented by soccer groups from Barrie and elsewhere in the region. To meet current registration, the South Springwater Soccer Association requires all five pitches at Tree Nursery Sports Park, but only for ten weeks on Monday to Thursday evenings. If registration continues to increase and is able to be maintained, additional time (used by other groups) or additional fields will be required. The additional capacity created by any new pitches will be available to other soccer groups in the region and other field uses such as Ultimate Frisbee, flag football, rugby, field lacrosse, etc.

The Elmvale Co-ed Cheezers Soccer Club appears to be satisfied with the Elmvale District High School field and additional capacity is available on other evenings at that facility, as well as at Homer Barrett Park where three roughed-in pitches could be readied for use. If a Community-level park is acquired and developed in Elmvale, it should be sized and designed to also accommodate a full-size soccer pitch to meet future use in the northern part of the Township if demand warrants.

When expanding soccer facilities, provide full-size fields whenever possible. That will allow the greatest flexibility and optimize facility utilization. A full-size field can be divided into various sizes of mini pitches with portable nets for the younger age groups, and will be available as a full-size pitch for youth and adult play. Whenever possible, provide full-size soccer pitches in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks, and cluster facilities to better accommodate regular weekday play and tournaments.

- Recommendation 39** Strive for the following service level for playing fields. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.
- One full-size soccer pitch per 3,500 population
- Recommendation 40** Whenever possible, provide full-size soccer pitches in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks, and cluster facilities to better accommodate regular weekday play and tournaments.
- Recommendation 41** If there is room, develop two additional full-size soccer pitches at Tree Nursery Sports Park (or one full-size and two to four large Mini pitches).
- Recommendation 42** When demand warrants, lay out the roughed-in mini soccer pitches at Homer Barrett Park.
- Recommendation 43** When land is acquired for the proposed Community-level park in Elmvale, ensure that the site is large enough to accommodate a full-size soccer pitch. Grade and seed the area and retain as unstructured open space until demand warrants the pitch to be completed and programmed for use.
- Recommendation 44** Ensure that all playing fields are maintained in a safe and adequate condition for their intended level of use.

6.4 Outdoor Rinks/Sport Pads/Pavilions

6.4.1 Supply and Utilization

Throughout the Township, there are pavilions, sport pads and outdoor natural ice rinks that support a variety of uses in all four seasons – from picnics and social gatherings to skating, ball hockey, box lacrosse, roller skating, skate boarding and summer children’s camps.

There are **eight pavilions** and a ninth is planned for Doran Park in 2015. Three of the pavilions are substantial steel structures and are used primarily as covered natural ice rinks, but can be used as sheltered areas for picnics, social gatherings, summer children’s camps, etc. As noted below, two of those facilities have rink boards and all are lighted. Photos are in order of mention.

- Grenfel Park pavilion - rink boards – ice use is scheduled.
- Memorial Park pavilion (Minesing) - rink boards – ice use is scheduled.
- Hillsdale Park pavilion – no rink boards.



Five are primarily picnic pavilions:

- Homer Barrett Park pavilion is a small wood structure facility with a concrete base.
- Heritage Park pavilion is a substantial wood structure facility with a concrete base and a support building (storage, washrooms, prep kitchen).
- Bishop Park pavilion is a small wood structure facility with a concrete base – flooded for skating in winter.
- Anten Mills Park pavilion is a medium size wood structure with a gravel-base.
- Minesing Station Park pavilion is a very small but substantial wood and steel structure with a concrete base – flooded for skating in winter.



There are **three sport pads** located in parks, as noted below, and all are flooded for skating in winter:

- Green Pine Park – concrete lighted pad with four basketball hoops
- Glen Huron Park – concrete lighted pad with two basketball hoops
- Homer Barrett Park - concrete lighted pad

Other Outdoor Rinks:

- Valendar (boarded and lit outdoor ice rink)
- Snow Valley Park
- Snow Valley Highlands Park

The distribution of pavilions, outdoor rinks and sport pads is excellent, especially in the more rural area parts of the Township. Based on an estimated 2015 population of 18,545, the ratio of ice rinks to population is 1:2,060. When the pavilion in Doran Park is available, the ratio will be approximately 1 rink per 1,855 residents.

The ratio of pavilions and sport pads to population is:

- One pavilion:2,061 (accounting for the planned Doran Park facility)
- One sport pad:6,182

All of the outdoor rinks are maintained by volunteers (Recreation Service Boards and other community groups). All of the outdoor rinks are well used, with the busiest being the Grenfel Park and Memorial Park facilities.

All of the pavilions were funded through a combination of community fundraising and Township contributions. Typically, the Township fronts the initial cost and the communities repay their contribution over a number of years. Wear and tear and ongoing operational costs are funded by the community. Anything structural, mechanical or electrical is covered by the Township. Any additional major capital investments may require the community to fundraise or a cost sharing arrangement with the Township may be considered.



Valendar Park, Phelpston



Green Pine Park



Barrett Park



Glen Huron Park

6.4.2 Demand Indicators

From the household survey, outdoor rinks and sport pads were rated second after trails as facilities with strong support for additional investment by the Municipality. Picnic areas and pavilions were also

strongly supported for additional investment by the Township. Another indication of support for pavilions is the desire by Midhurst residents to provide such a facility in Doran Park and by the

Recreation Service Board in Phelpsston to be fundraising to erect a roof over the outdoor rink in Valendar Park to create a pavilion.

These are the types of facilities with which a large segment of the population can identify and see themselves using.

6.4.3 Assessment and Provision Strategy

Current provision levels for sport pads and pavilions should guide the recommended service level for future planning and provision. As is the case currently, outdoor rinks should be provided, utilizing picnic pavilions and sport pads - as demand warrants and volunteers are interested in maintaining the facilities. Additional outdoor rinks should be provided in parks where demand warrants, volunteers are available and a sport pad or pavilion is not available.

Recommendation 45 Strive for the following service levels for pavilions and sport pads. Based on these service levels, provide new facilities as the population increases. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service levels as required.

- One pavilion:2,500 population (some pavilions may incorporate rink boards)
- One sport pad:5,000 population

Recommendation 46 Accounting for the pavilion proposed for Doran Park (2015), and based on the Medium Growth Scenario, one additional pavilion will be required by around 2024, and three more by around 2030. A pavilion is recommended for Tree Nursery Sports Park (2024) and the proposed Community park in Elmvale (2026). Two other Community or higher level parks will need to be selected for the pavilions that should be required by 2028 and 2030.

Recommendation 47 Support the Phelpsston community in their goal to install a roof over the outdoor rink in Valendar Park and to upgrade the adjacent washroom facility.

6.5 Playground Facilities

Children’s play structures are located in most (34) Township parks. Principle exceptions include: Tree Nursery Sports Park, John E. Brown Memorial Park, O’Neil Park, Minesing Station Park, Spruce Grove Park and the rough-graded park site in Fergusonvale. There are no playgrounds at the Edenvale Conservation Area and at the Flos Agricultural Society Fairground in Elmvale. Over the past decade or so, many installations have either been replaced or upgraded to meet CSA standards. Therefore, most play structures are new to relatively new, with the oldest installed in 1988 - but most since around the year 2000. Beginning in 2016, new playgrounds must meet accessibility standards. Play structures are also available for public use at elementary schools.

The Township capital forecast identifies the playgrounds in Green Pine, Grenfel, Bishop and Forests of Hillsdale parks for upgrade in 2016. Also recommended for 2015 is replacement of sand to rubber surfaces.

Most municipalities provide play structures on two levels, with smaller installations located in Neighbourhood parks and larger, more elaborate structures located in higher level parks that draw most of

their visitors from much further away (e.g., Community, Township-wide, Regional and Specialty parks). However, play structures are not always required in higher level parks, depending on the role, size, features, as well as the principle draw of the park (e.g., John E. Brown Memorial Park). Springwater Township has not followed this philosophy in every case, since play structures in Community and higher level parks are quite similar in scale to what is found in most Neighbourhood parks.

When there is a demonstrated need for a playground and there is no suitable Neighbourhood park within the catchment area of an elementary school, the Township should cost-share in the development of a playground structure with the appropriate school board - in recognition of the shared community-school use of school yards and outdoor facilities.

From the household survey, playgrounds were strongly supported as facilities in which additional municipal investment should be made, ranking fourth out of 19 types of facilities. 42.5% of households identified use of playgrounds as a favourite family activity.



Bishop Park



Cherry Park



Foyston Park



Grenfel Park

- Recommendation 48** Strive for a service levels of one play structure per 600 population. Based on this service level, provide new facilities as the population increases. Constantly monitor demand and facility utilization, and make necessary adjustments in the service level as required. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, 22 additional play structures will be required by 2030 when the population is projected to be 33,650.
- Recommendation 49** The Municipality should continue to ensure that play structures are regularly inspected and maintained to CSA standards, and the Municipality should replace and/or upgrade any structures that do not meet CSA standards - and where there is a demonstrated need for such facilities. An annual investment of \$30,000 in playground upgrades in various locations as required is recommended in the Township capital forecast for the years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020.
- Recommendation 50** Appropriately-sized (smaller) play structures should be located in new Neighbourhood parks where there is a demonstrated need. In Community and higher level parks where sufficient families with children often frequent the parks, larger and more elaborate play structures should be provided (e.g., Tree Nursery Sports Park and the proposed Community park in Elmvale).
- Recommendation 51** For Community and higher level parks that have modest play structures and where there is sufficient demand, the existing play structure should be enhanced to match the scale of the park. Example parks include: Heritage, Grenfel, Doran, Anten Mills, Valendar and Hillsdale.
- Recommendation 52** The Township capital forecast identifies two accessible play structures be provided in 2016 and 2019 at undisclosed locations. Consider Tree Nursery Sports Park as one of the locations. Combine accessible and standard play structures.

6.6 Tennis Courts

The Township provides four lit tennis courts at the Doran Park and two lit courts at the fairground in Elmvale.

The Doran Park Facility

From October 1 until April 30, the courts in Doran Park are covered with an air supported dome. The dome is owned by the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club. They also paid for the fourth court. The Club shares costs associated with upkeep of the outdoor courts with the Township, and assumes all expenses associated with operation and maintenance of the dome and the club house. Any required repair or replacement of nets, fencing, lighting, court resurfacing and painting is shared between the Township and the Club. When the courts have to be replaced or if the facility is expanded, the cost sharing arrangement will be negotiated. The courts were resurfaced in 2015 and the lighting upgraded.

During the summer, the Midhurst Tennis Club, through an agreement with the Township, rents three of the courts between 6 pm and 11 pm every



Doran Park Facility, Midhurst

evening from May to the end of August. For this period, the fourth court remains open for general public use during operating hours, as is the case with the other three courts during the daytime (before 6 pm). All four courts are available to the public during early September (before the dome is erected). The adjacent clubhouse contains washrooms and change rooms, a lounge and a pro shop.

The membership-based Barrie North Winter Tennis Club is home of the Springwater Tennis Academy that offers development, recreational and competitive training; the Skyhawks competitive interclub team (under 14 and under 18); a Junior House League; private lessons; camps; round robin tournaments; weekly clinics; singles and partners programs; inter-club matches; members socials and private parties. The Club also offers programs to schools and non-members. The facility also hosts City of Barrie Parks and Recreation Department programs for juniors and adults.

Township records indicate summer utilization at about 33% for the three club courts and 15% for the public court.

The Fairground Facility

Two Township-owned tennis lit courts are located at the Flos Agricultural Society Fairground in Elmvale. The tennis facility was built by the Elmvale Lions Club. Regular maintenance, major repairs and the cost for lighting are assumed by the Township. With no tennis club, use is unscheduled and reported to be low.

Although demand for tennis has been in decline for a couple of decades as the big Baby Boom generation aged out of the sport, there is potential for increased



Fairground Facility, Elmvale

demand as the Echo generation ages into their young adult years. However, increasing demand will be influenced by the availability of

adequate facilities and local tennis clubs to promote the sport, and provide lessons and an appealing social atmosphere.

From the household survey, 16% of households identified tennis as a favourite leisure activity. 13.5% of households noted that they travel outside of the Township to play tennis. In the 'additional comments' section of the survey, there was considerable mention of a desire for tennis courts in the Snow Valley community. Support for additional spending on tennis courts ranked 14th out of 19 facility types, with 32% of households supporting additional spending and 38% not supporting additional investment. Given the moderate popularity of the sport, below average support for additional investment is not surprising.

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan supported a delivery model whereby the provision of tennis court facilities would only be in response to demonstrated localized demand and an ongoing commitment from a member-based tennis club. This is the arrangement that the Township has with the Midhurst Tennis Club and the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club. These arrangements appear to be mutually beneficial and also appear to be satisfying most of the known demand for tennis in the Township.

Based on an estimated 2015 population of 18,545, the current ratio of lit courts to population is 1:3,091.

Recommendation 53 The Township of Springwater, the Midhurst Tennis Club and the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club should continue to monitor the demand for outdoor and indoor tennis facilities and specific programs, and share information on a regular basis.

Recommendation 54 In co-operation with the Township of Springwater, the Midhurst Tennis Club and the Barrie North Winter Tennis Club should continue to promote the sport of tennis to Township residents.

Recommendation 55 A service level of 1 lit tennis court per 3,500 residents should be adopted and monitored. Based on that service level, an additional two-court facility should be required as the population approaches 28,000. Approaching that date, sufficient demand should be confirmed before additional courts are considered. Based on the Medium Growth Scenario, the population would reach 28,000 by around 2026.

Tennis courts should be clustered at a minimum of two per location (and ideally four or more), and facilities should be located in Community-level or higher parks where parking is available and lights should not impact nearby residents. Based on anticipated population growth, the additional courts should be provided in the South Service Area. Adding to the Doran Park tennis facility should be considered as the first option. An alternative site for a tennis court cluster may be the site of the proposed multi-facility community centre (if the selected site is suitable – physical characteristics and location).

Recommendation 56 The tennis clubs should assist with future capital improvement projects such as improved lighting, fencing, court resurfacing, change rooms, etc. Major capital investment, such as additional courts, should be primarily financed by the Township.

6.7 Skateboard Facilities

There is one permanent Township-owned outdoor skateboard facility of moderate quality located in Elmvale, adjacent to the fairground on the north side. The facility is located on Township land, but is accessed through the fairground.

During July and August, the Township operates a mobile skateboard facility that is rotated among five parks that have a sufficient hard surfaced area to accommodate the structure (Midhurst, Phelpston, Hillsdale, Minesing, Anten Mills and Grenfel).

A second permanent facility was approved in the 2014 budget, but it was not built. Township Council is awaiting a recommendation from the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

The popularity of skateboarding and skateboard facilities has been strong for a couple of decades. However, with the large Echo generation aging into their twenties and thirties, the popularity of this rugged sport may begin to wane a little, with fewer people in the prime age group available to participate. Demand should be monitored.

From the household survey, 7.5% of households indicated skateboarding as a favourite leisure activity with 5% travelling outside

Recommendation 57 Continue to rotate the mobile skateboard facility among the five parks currently identified, and monitor demand at each site.

Recommendation 58 Since the South Service Area does not have a permanent skateboard facility, the population is greatest in this part of the Township and this area is identified for the most future growth, it is recommended that a permanent skateboard facility be provided within the next three years. Given that Doran Park is currently the only high profile park in Midhurst, this park should be considered for this facility.



of the Township to participate. Support for municipal investment in skateboard facilities was the lowest of all facility types. However, given the specialized nature of this sport, that is not surprising.

If the Township is striving for increased fitness levels among young people, sports like skateboarding should be encouraged through adequate facilities.

6.8 Outdoor Fitness Facilities

In 2013, the Township installed an outdoor fitness facility in Doran Park (Midhurst). A second facility was provided in Bishop Park (Elmvale) in the fall of 2014, with completion in the summer of 2015. Local fundraising was not required for this facility.

The location of these two facilities provides access to residents in the two most populated communities in the Township, and also provides balance with one in the South and the other in the North Service Area.

Demand is strong for fitness facilities and programs/activities in Springwater Township, as expressed in the household survey where 24.5% of households identified fitness/wellness as a favourite leisure activity. 29% of respondents noted that members of their household



Doran Park Facility



Bishop Park Facility

had to leave the Township to participate in fitness programs/activities. Survey respondents expressed strong support for increased municipal investment in fitness facilities (ranking 9th of 19 types of facilities).

Recommendation 59 Utilization of the two existing outdoor fitness facilities should be monitored and significant use of outdoor fitness facilities established before consideration should be given for a third facility.

Recommendation 60 An interim service level of 1 outdoor fitness facility per 10,000 residents should be adopted, monitored for adequacy and adjusted as required. Based on that service level and the Medium Growth Scenario, a third outdoor fitness facility may be required by around 2028.

6.9 Recreational Trails

6.9.1 Introduction

In 2008, a Trails Master Plan was prepared for Springwater Township by the GSP Group. The document provided information about trail trends, providers and policy; described the trail system as of 2008; identified issues, opportunities and trail benefits; and recommended an overarching guiding principle, goals and objectives; the proposed trail network; potential partnerships and funding; and implementation. That report, along with other information collected for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan informed this section on trails.

6.9.2 Supply

The following are the various trails within Springwater Township, supporting the full range of linear recreation activities, including walking, hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding, canoeing (via waterways), snowmobiling, ATVing and motorcycling. Although low impact summer and winter activities are allowed on most trails, motorized uses are restricted to fewer sites and trails.

North Simcoe Rail Trail (NSRT)

Within Springwater Township, this trail extends for 30 kilometers from just north of County Road 90 (east of Verpra Downs) north through the Fort Willow Conservation Area, Minesing Station Park, Anten Mills, Phelpston (through Valendar Park), and Elmvale (through Heritage Park) to the southern border of Tiny Township, where it becomes the Tiny Trail. The trail crosses through various County Forest tracts. Since the former Township of Flos and the former Village of Elmvale did not exercise their right to purchase the rail right-of-way, some sections in the north were sold to private land owners. To circumvent this section of the former rail right-of-way that is in private ownership, the trail route follows Flos Road Seven, Ushers

Road and Flos Road Eight. The trail also detours at Flos Road Ten. The southern section is composed of granular screenings and is fairly level, while the northern section consists of a double dirt trail, north of Flos Road 6. The North Simcoe Rail Trail is part of the Trans Canada Trail. At Fort Willow Conservation Area, the NSRT intersects with Nine Mile Portage Trail and the Ganaraska Hiking Trail. Activities

allowed on the NSRT include hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, and seasonal (May to November) horseback riding. Snowmobiling is officially the only motorized use allowed, and only on certain sections of the trail. Due to their former ownership of parts of the trail route, the Sno Voyagers Snowmobile Club has an agreement in place to use specific sections of the trail.



NSRT through Minesing Station Park and the Trans Canada Trail Kiosk

Ganaraska Hiking Trail

The section of this trail that traverses through Springwater Township enters from the east and Oro-Medonte Township at Horseshoe Valley Road. It winds south through private lands and County Forest tracts, and along roadways into Midhurst through the Midhurst Community Centre site, along Doran Road and into Doran Park at Belmont Crescent. The trail then routes west through the 'Museum' County Forest Block and into Springwater Provincial Park. The trail then traverses west along Snow Valley Road and turns south along George Parkway and its unopened right-of-way to Seaton Road, where it intersects with the Nine Mile Portage Trail. They route west in parallel along Seaton Road to Grenfel Road where the trails turn north to Fort Willow Conservation Area. The Ganaraska Trail then parallels the North Simcoe Rail Trail south to Miller County Forest Block and then traverses southwest to County Road 90 and then south out of the Township along the 6th line to 30th Sideroad and west through Angus. Although mainly a hiking trail, other approved uses include biking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.

Minesing Wetlands

No land-based trails are allowed in this 6,000 hectare International Ramsar Wetland. The Ganaraska Trail and snowmobile trails skirt around the wetland to the east, south and west. Within the Wetlands is a canoe route along the Nottawasaga River, Willow Creek and their tributaries. There is a short interpretive trail called Meadow Mouse along the levees of Willow Creek at George Johnson Road.

Nine Mile Portage Heritage Trail

This trail, which is suitable for walking and cycling, extends from Memorial Square in Barrie to Fort Willow Conservation Area. It follows as closely as possible, the historic route which was part of the Nottawasaga route used by aboriginals, explorers, traders and missionaries for trade and transportation. It was also used during the War of 1812 to link Georgian Bay and Lake Ontario. The Nine Mile Portage Heritage Committee intends to link the trail to other

established trail systems, and is seeking landowner permission to reconstruct a walking route that follows the exact location of the original Historic Nine Mile Portage. As noted earlier, Nine Mile Portage Trail meets the Ganaraska Trail at Seaton Road and parallels it to Fort Willow Conservation Area.

Old Penetanguishene Road Trail

This short local trail utilizes the unopened Penetanguishene Road allowance along the western edge of Hillsdale. The trail is used for walking, hiking and cycling in the spring, summer and fall; and for cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling in the winter. Due to conflicts with adjacent landowners, off-road vehicle use was prohibited in 2006. Recently, the section from Robert Boulevard north to Penetanguishene Road received a heritage designation.

Little Lake Trails

Trails exist within some of the parcels of parkland that partially circumvent Little Lake. Although the parkland parcels are owned by the City of Barrie, a golf course forms part of open space that abuts the lake. Little Lake is located in the southeast corner of the Township on the border with the City.

Simcoe County Forest Trails

Many of the 38 County Forest blocks within Springwater Township contain informal mixed use trails. As well, there are agreements with the Ontario Federation of Trail Riders, the Central Ontario All-terrain Vehicle Club and North Simcoe ATV to operate within certain forest tracts, particularly in the central and northeastern parts of the Township. The Old Quarry Trail is located in the forest tract that contains the Simcoe County Museum.

Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority Trails

Low impact trail activities such as hiking, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are supported on internal trails located within the conservation areas that are located within Springwater Township, and canoeing is supported at the Minesing and Edenvale Conservation Areas. As noted above, the North Simcoe Rail Trail, the Ganaraska Hiking Trail and the Nine Mile Portage Trail converge at the Fort Willow Conservation Area, which means that cycling is supported at this location.

Snowmobile Trails

Trails developed and maintained by the Ontario Federation of Snowmobile Clubs traverse the Township in all directions, including the two main provincial 'Trunk' trails. They are supported by second level 'Feeder' trails from the south, a third level 'Connector' trail and numerous 'Club' trails.

Other Trails

A number of shorter, site-specific 'local' trails have been developed within the Township. Some were noted above, including the Little Lake Park trails, Meadow Mouse Trail, Old Quarry Trail and Old Penetanguishene Road Trail. Others include:

- The Springwater Provincial Park trail system
- Mayer's Marsh Trail
- Hunter Russell Nature Trail - this 1.5 km. trail traverses the length of Willow Creek Valley Park in Midhurst. There is potential to link this trail south to Little Lake Park and its trail network, and north into Doran Park and the Ganaraska Trail.
- The granular screenings trail that is developing along the north side of Snow Valley Road in the vicinity of the Snow Valley community.

Hydroelectric Transmission Corridors

A major hydroelectric transmission corridor traverses the southern two-thirds of Township in a northeast-southwest direction. The Sno

Voyageur Snowmobile Club has been utilizing four small sections of the corridor (3.5 kms in total) which comprise sections of the OFSC 'C' Trunk Trail and 'B103' Feeder Trail. The Township agreed to enter into an agreement with Infrastructure Ontario to allow use of the corridor, but everything was put on hold due to a review of the Provincial Secondary Land Use Program that is underway.



NSRT within Heritage Park, Elmvale

Simcoe County Policies

Numerous policies contained in the County Official Plan support recreation and tourism, including the conversion of abandoned rail lines and unopened road allowances into trails, as well as the creation of new trails within the County and connections to other communities through land use development. Additionally, the Forest Recreation Policy identifies the objectives of the County Forests which establish criteria for analysis of recreation activities that may be suitable within County forests. Criteria include minimal environmental impact, low

impact on other forest uses, compatibility with forestry operations, liability concerns, and low levels of staff intervention for administration or policing.

Recently, Simcoe County began requiring trails to support active transportation in all new residential developments, and is providing 50% funding to a maximum of \$30,000 of eligible expenses for approved projects.

Springwater Township Policies

The Open Space policies in the Township of Springwater Official Plan support:

- provision of a wide range of leisure activities;
- provision of visual and physical access to recreation areas, parks, open space and public facilities (including easements and agreements);
- protection of pathways, greenways, travel corridors and trails – to preserve historic travel routes, promote active transportation; allow access to open space, promote healthy living, and preserve and protect natural heritage features; and
- rails to trails initiatives.

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended the development of a comprehensive trails master plan (completed in 2008); and identified the benefits of a comprehensive trail system.

6.9.3 Demand Indicators

As the many social, health, economic and environmental benefits of trails become better and more widely understood, interest in and support of trail development and improvement by many jurisdictions has increased. As lands are planned for development and redevelopment, the value and importance of creating and enhancing trail connections and open space greenways is also becoming widely accepted. An increasing proportion of developers see the added

value of linear connectors and trails to their communities, and many are making the additional investment in providing the open space linkages and constructing trails and walkways.

Most linear recreation activities are increasing in popularity - and as more trails are created, an increasing proportion of the population is encouraged to use them, particularly for walking and cycling within urban areas. Unlike some recreation activities, most trail uses are low cost and represent a life-long activity that can be participated in even by people with limited mobility. Trails are facilities that provide very high value for the investment - and are of interest to virtually every resident. There is every reason to believe that most linear recreation activities will continue to increase in popularity, particularly walking, running and hiking for pleasure and fitness; as well as cycling (manual and electric assist).



Trail Along Snow Valley Road

Results from the household survey conducted for this Master Plan indicated the following about linear recreation and trails:

- 75% of respondents walked or hiked at least once a month, 48% cycled or biked, 30% ran or jogged, and 25% cross-country skied.
- Most respondents reported that they could participate in favourite linear recreation activities within the Township (much higher than for most other leisure activities).
- Two-thirds of respondents strongly agreed with increased municipal investment in trails (the highest of all facility categories).

6.9.4 Assessment and Provision Strategy

The 2008 Trails Master Plan identified a number of issues that are summarized below. Those resolved since 2008 are not listed. The issues and opportunities noted below have been amended to incorporate initiatives since 2008, and findings and conclusions emerging from this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Issues

- Who should be responsible for development and management of local trails and encouraging new trails and linkages?
- The need for a trail committee to monitor and deal with trail issues.
- Maintaining private agreements and primary trails for snowmobiling.
- Various off-road vehicle issues (support of growing demand; unauthorized use of roads, highways, road allowances, private lands, public forest tracts, and utility corridors; disruption of enjoyment of private property; environmental impact; increasing accident and injury rates; and different regulations for on-road use throughout Simcoe County).

Opportunities

The opportunities outlined in the Trails Master Plan have been adapted and updated as follows.

- Where appropriate, there are opportunities to establish and improve linkages between the three principle trail systems and some of the conservation areas and County forest tracts, as well as Springwater Provincial Park.
- If provincial policy allows (currently under review), there is also opportunity to utilize hydroelectric transmission corridors as trail routes and to improve linkage to conservation areas and County forest tracts.
- Future development and redevelopment in established communities should provide opportunities to continue to evolve the local trail, walkway and sidewalk system within those residential areas, and to establish or improve linkages to the inter-community trail network (North Simcoe Rail Trail, Ganaraska Trail, Nine Mile Portage Trail and OFSA snowmobile trails).
- There may be an opportunity to establish a hiking trail along the historic route of the Nine Mile Portage Trail.
- Build on the Township's natural and built heritage assets via development of destination points and local trails.
- There is potential to expand on water trail routes.
- There is Provincial momentum to increase/improve trail systems and related funding.

Benefits

The benefits outlined in the Trails Master Plan have been adapted and updated as follows.

- Improve opportunities for non-motorized and motorized trail users.
- Encourage active living and improve the physical health and wellbeing of Township residents.
- Enhance the appreciation of open space, natural heritage resources and the natural environment, in part, to increase support for preservation, stewardship and reduced environmental impact.
- Provide for alternative active transportation corridors and linkages, reducing transportation costs and the environmental impact of motorized vehicles.

- Contribute to economic development through increased tourism activities associated with an improved local and regional trail system and associated assets.
- Promote community pride through enhancement of the trail system and increase utilization.
- Improve community interaction through increased and wider-spread trail activities.

The Guiding Principle (adapted from the Trails Master Plan)
Provide an optimum, sustainable and environmentally sound mixed-use trail system that is achieved through vision and partnership - one that fosters the many personal, health, social, economic and environmental benefits to be realized for residents and visitors.

- Goals** (adapted from the Trails Master Plan)
1. Provide the greatest public benefit without fees or charges wherever possible.
 2. Accommodate the greatest number of uses and trail experiences, with multi-use trails preferred over single-use.
 3. Accommodate the greatest number of users, including Township residents and visitors.
 4. Encourage the greatest exposure to and awareness of the Township's social and natural heritage features and resources.
 5. Maximize the opportunity for connections to trail networks in adjacent communities and throughout the region.
 6. Ensure that all of the benefits of a comprehensive, Township-wide trail system are understood and realized.
 7. Provide for the safest user experience that can be reasonably attained.
 8. Encourage trail use by visitors to the Township, balanced with the interests and needs of local residents.
 9. Provide for stable, ongoing and sufficient funding to expand and maintain the Township-wide trail system.
 10. Continue to seek partners and strategic alliances in the ongoing development and maintenance of the trail system.

Objectives

The Trails Master Plan identified 18 objectives in support of the Plan's Guiding Principle and the ten goals. These objectives, which provide direction about improvements to and expansion of all types of trails, as well as implementation, have been incorporated into the recommendations in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.



NSRT route north of Valendar Park, Phelpsston

Trail Categories

The Trails Master Plan recommended two categories of trails.

Non-motorized Trails – to support walking, hiking, running, cycling, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, nature appreciation and associated activities. Activities such as equestrian, in-line skating and snowmobiling may be accommodated on this category of trail where appropriate and the surface permits. Access to these trails is generally provided free of charge; therefore, trails are dependent on municipal government funding, senior government grants, donations, and volunteers for development and maintenance.

Motorized Trails – motorized trails may be permitted within travelled portions of the road allowance or motorized trails may be developed

on the non-traveled portions of road allowances, as well as utilizing unopened road allowances. Other public lands and trails may also be considered for motorized activities. Motorized uses include snowmobiling, all-terrain vehicles, motorcycles (green- and blue-plated), and AWD trucks. Not all motorized uses may be permitted. These trails are generally fee-based and are developed by Off-Road Vehicle organizations who receive funding through memberships and permits. Use of Township lands and resources will be subject to a thorough evaluation process to ensure minimal impacts to the community. As of July 1, 2015, the Province of Ontario is allowing two-up ATVs, side-by-side ATVs and utility-terrain vehicles (UTVs) to ride on public roads. Riders must hold at least a G2 or M2 driver's license, and their vehicle must be registered and insured.

Trail Hierarchy

The Trails Master Plan recommended the following trail hierarchy for Springwater Township, including trail width, clearing height and surface.

- Hiking Trails,
- Multi-use Trails,
- Rail Trails,
- Motorized Trails, and
- Water Trails.

Trail Features

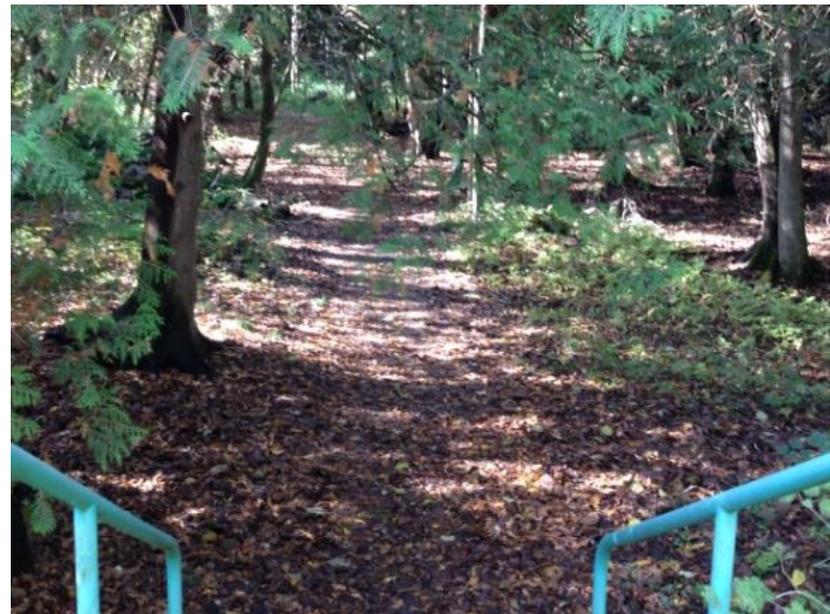
The Trails Master Plan recommended the following four trail features:

- Midblock crossings,
- Trail entrance gates,
- Signage, and
- Trail heads.

Trail Safety (adapted from the Trails Master Plan)

Trails, whether they are for single or multiple uses, seek to provide a high quality recreational experience in a safe and predictable manner. Trail safety is a primary concern for trail managers and must be

balanced with the desires for aesthetic or athletic experiences of trail users, as well as environmental and other constraints. Some activities entail an element of risk versus hazards which are unknown dangers. All reasonable effort should be made to eliminate hazards in the trail system. If a trail involves some risk, provide such elements at the beginning of a trail (steep slopes, natural surface, narrow width, etc.). Some activities may provide a hazard when combined on a trail. Therefore, single use or separated trails may be required. Other, more specific recommendations regarding trail safety are included in the Trails Master Plan.



Link from Holloway Park to Hunter Russell Nature Trail, Midhurst

Recommended Specific Initiatives

The Trails Master Plan provided general recommendations as noted above, as well as recommendations that were specific to residential communities, each of the three major trail systems, and site-specific and connecting trails. Furthermore, the Trails Master Plan organized the more specific recommendations into short and long term. These

recommendations have been updated and augmented from the results of research and analysis conducted for this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Non-Motorized Trails and Loops

- **Little Lake Park to Midhurst Link** – There is potential to link the parkland being assembled and the trail system being developed around Little Lake by the City of Barrie with the current and future trail system associated with the Midhurst Community (see more on this below). This recommended link will also connect the Little Lake network to the Ganaraska, Nine Mile Portage and North Simcoe Rail trails.
- **Little Lake Park to the North Simcoe Rail Trail** – The Trails Master Plan recommended that a trail link be created between Little Lake Park and the NSRT along a route just north of the City of Barrie border, incorporating the natural heritage system of watercourses and woodlands. The final leg is proposed to route through Grenfel Community Park.
- **North Simcoe Rail Trail to Essa Township Link** – As the opportunity arises, extend this trail 2 kilometers from the Essa Transfer Station to Simcoe County Road 90, creating a direct link to the City of Barrie.
- **North Simcoe Rail Trail Between the 7th and 8th Concessions and Between Flos Road Ten West and Highway 27** – Seek to obtain agreements with landowners (or purchase the rights-of-way) to allow public access along the original rail route between the 7th and 8th concessions and between Flos Road Ten West and Highway 27 to create a direct and safe route that does not involve use of roadways. Upgrading is completed to Floss Road 6.
- **North Simcoe Rail Trail Improvements – Anten Mills to the Tiny Township Boundary** – It was recommended in the Trails Master Plan that the northern section of the trail be upgrade to the same standard as the southern section. It was also recommended that the same uses continue to be permitted on the northern section (hiking, cycling, cross-country skiing, seasonal horseback riding, and snowmobiling).
- **Nine Mile Portage Trail** – It was recommended in the Trails Master Plan that the initiative to create a walking-only trail along the actual Nine Mile Portage Heritage Route be supported. Within the Yorkwood subdivision, there is the opportunity to route this trail off Dobson Road north of Sunnidale Road through future parkland and the adjacent hydro corridor and back to Dobson Road.
- **Hillsdale Loop** – as development takes place in this community, create open space linkages and a loop trail that extends around the current built-up area, incorporating the Old Penetanguishene Road Trail and the natural and heritage features of the area. Hillsdale Community Park should also be connected to the Hillsdale Loop.
- **Elmvale Loop** - Within Elmvale, there is potential to create an open space corridor and trail loop around the community that incorporates the Wye River corridor (Environmental Protection Category 1), extending southeast from Heritage Park along the western and southern edges of the current built-up area (when the remainder of the southwest quadrant is developed). It may also be possible to extend the trail north through a system of future linear parks and open space connections to loop around the southern and eastern edges of the current built-up area and connect back to the North Simcoe Rail Trail (if the area south and east of the current full build-out boundary is identified for future development). The immediate priority would be to create a nature-oriented linear park and trail southeast from Queen Street to Yonge Street, incorporating the Wye River valley with a link to Elmvale District High School.
- **Phelpston Loops** – There may be potential to create a two-sided trail loop that incorporates the North Simcoe Rail Trail and Valendar Park, and the water course to the west of Saint Patrick's Drive and behind St. Patrick's Church and cemetery and back to the NSRT. The loop may be able to be extended east and south

back to the NSRT via O’Neil Park and existing residential streets or through a future open space network that could be created if there is development east and south of the built-up area. There is also an opportunity to link the NSRT west to the Phelpsston County Forest Block and other forest blocks in the vicinity.

- **Marni Lane Community Connections, Fergusonvale** – Walkways from the new park in the Maple Ridge subdivision to the east and west sections of Marni Lane will create an east-west connection within the community. If the opportunity presents, an open space linkage and trail connection should be established to the Toner County Forest Block to the south of the current built-up area.



Walkway near Marni Lane Park, Fergusonvale

- **Anten Mills Connections** – Other than by residential streets and crossings over Wilson Drive, there is currently no opportunity to create a trail loop within the Anten Mills community that would link the NSRT to the Hendrie Main County Forest Block. However,

two walkways exist from Pinery Drive (and Hendrie Ridge Park) and Ghibb Avenue to the NSRT. If the opportunity arises, open space and trail connections should be created between the NSRT and Binnie Dive and Pinehurst Lane in south Anten Mills, where no linkages currently exist.

- **Minesing Connections** – Currently, there is no obvious opportunity to create a trail loop within the Minesing Community. However, there is an opportunity to strengthen the connection between Harry Adams Memorial Park/Minesing Elementary School and Foyston Park via Maple Avenue and the mid-block storm water management right-of-way that connects both sides of Foyston Park Circle.
- **Snow Valley Trails** – The Ganaraska Hiking Trail and the Nine Mile Portage Trail traverse through parts of the Snow Valley Community. These two trails converge at Seadon Road and extend west to the NSRT at Fort Willow Conservation Area. The NSRT comprises part of the Trans Canada Trail. A municipal trail is developing in parallel along the north side of Snow Valley Road in the vicinity of Orchardview Street and the vicinity of Heron Blvd. The opportunity exists to extend this trail through the linear open space network within the Black Creek subdivision.



Trail along Snow Valley Road

- **Midhurst Open Space and Trail Network** - Within Midhurst, the Hunter Russell Nature Trail can be extended south along the valley to Little Lake and its emerging trail network, and north through Doran Park to Tree Nursery Sports Park and beyond to the west and north. This route and new trails have been conceptually laid out in the Midhurst Secondary Plan – within the extensive natural heritage system identified as Environmental Protection Areas 1 and 2 – creating four northwest to southeast spines with several cross connections. These principle valley and woodland trail routes can be linked to parkland within existing Midhurst neighbourhoods and to new parks that will be provided within the three new neighbourhoods identified in the Midhurst Secondary Plan. This greatly expanded trail system will create a stronger link to the Ganaraska Trail that winds through Midhurst and then west to link with the northern and southern residential areas within the Snow Valley community. At Seadon Road, the Ganaraska Trail intersects with the Nine Mile Portage Trail and they route west to Fort Willow Conservation Area to link with the North Simcoe Rail Trail.
- **Midhurst to Minesing Link** – The Trails Master Plan recommended that a trail link be created between the Midhurst trail network north and west to the community of Minesing along the watercourse north of Tree Nursery Sports Park and the Barrie Community Sports Complex to intersect with the NSRT near Mayer’s Marsh and on into Minesing through the woodlands to the south of the built-up area.

Motorized Routes

The Ontario Trails Strategy and the Ontario Trails Council promote the right for citizens to pursue any manner of recreational enjoyment within reasonable limits. This does not mean that all activities are allowed on all trails, but that each use shall have an opportunity of access to some trails, where appropriate. Nor does it mean that all types of trail use will be free. Off-road vehicle (ORV) users, in addition to conducting their activities in a safe and environmentally

responsible manner, will need to avoid infringement on the right of residents to quiet and peaceful enjoyment of their properties.

The Trails Master Plan recommended the following:

1. Aid and promote the establishment of ORV organizations to provide rider education and trails for their members and associated activities.
2. ORV organizations must prove their ability to conduct their activities in a sustainable and responsible manner, as well as provide a deterrent to rogue riding.
3. The Plan endorsed an initiative where access to Township roads and unopened road allowances may be considered for a specific area (the large central forest complex of Phelpston, Hendrie and Orrock). Refer to **Figure 3** in the Trails Master Plan. To link these forest complexes, the conditional permitting by the Township of designated roads and unopened road allowances (URAs) for ORV use was recommended, as well as the development of parking areas and signage.
4. For this access to be granted, an application must be submitted by an organization recognized under the County Forest Recreational Policy, the applicant must meet certain criteria, and if met, the proposal must go through a public review. Designation of any roads and URAs that are granted and shall be renewed annually. Should such designations achieve the desired outcomes, designation of other roads or URAs may be considered in other areas of the Township, subject to the same conditions.

The Trails Master Plan also contains recommendations regarding partnerships, funding and implementation. Implementation recommendations included:

- roles and responsibilities of Springwater Township, the Trail Development Committee, surrounding municipalities, conservation authorities, local agencies, and volunteer groups and organizations;
- a review process for new trails; and

- enforcement strategies for off-road vehicles, off-road motorcycles and snowmobiles.

Recommendation 61 Continue to improve existing trails (as required) and expand the trail network to support all types of non-motorized and motorized trail activities on trails and in areas suitable for each use. In most cases, multi-use trails are the preferred style, especially for major routes.

Recommendation 62 The continued development of the trail network should be guided by the 2008 Trails Master Plan and additional recommendations contained in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update – based on the following Guiding Principle: *Provide an optimum, sustainable and environmentally sound mixed use trail system that is achieved through vision and partnership - one that fosters the many personal, health, social, economic and environmental benefits to be realized for residents and visitors.* Goals and objectives to support this Guiding Principle are also provided (see **Section 6.9.4** above).

Recommendation 63 In addition to improving and supporting the three main regional/provincial trails that pass through the Township, secondary and local trails should continue to be developed, expanded and improved. These supporting or secondary trails comprise site-specific trails and trail systems, connecting links, and community-based loops and trail/walkway routes. Specific recommendations are provided above under **Section 6.9.4: Assessment and Provision Strategy**.

Recommendation 64 The Trails Master Plan recommended that motorized trail activities be designated to a large east-west zone within the central part of the Township – comprising three groupings of County Forest tracts, connected by designated roads and unopened road allowances. See **Figure 3** in the Trails Master Plan report.

Recommendation 65 Promote the personal, social, environmental and economic benefits of trails and trail use. See **Section 6.9.4** above.

Chapter Seven: Parks and Open Space - Assessment and Provision Strategy

7.1 Introduction

The parks and open space assessment and provision strategy comprises the following: i) a recommended parkland/open space classification system and standard of provision; ii) analysis of parkland/open space supply and distribution; iii) a parkland and open space development strategy, iv) recommendations re: disposal of surplus parkland, and v) park and open space policies. These areas of focus are derived from what is typical of most parks and recreation master plans and specific topics noted in the terms of reference for this Master Plan.

As with the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, we were guided by the following principles in conducting the analysis and making recommendations.

1. To the greatest extent possible, parks should be fully developed and provide opportunities for multiple activities, consistent with the roles defined for each type of park – to encourage maximum use and enjoyment by residents and visitors to the Township.
2. Parks and publicly available open spaces should be developed and maintained in a manner that provide safe environments and protects the interests of the Township.

3. In planning for the overall parks and open space system, the following considerations must be balanced: meeting the demonstrated and attainable needs of residents and visitors, the quality of park development, value for capital investment, functionality of parks and associated facilities, equitable distribution/access to parks and recreation opportunities, maintenance costs, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.
4. All major parks should be developed in accordance with a site master plan that defines and locates appropriate uses, facilities and functional areas; and protects environmentally sensitive areas and natural heritage assets – in the best possible layout and most cost-effective manner to optimize the value and potential of each site.
5. To the extent possible, greenways, trails and walkways should link parkland, other open spaces and community features (e.g., residential areas, schools, places of work, shopping areas, etc.) to promote linear recreation activities and active transportation, create wildlife corridors (where desirable), promote healthy living, encourage tourism, and protect natural heritage features and associated resources.

7.2 Parkland/Open Space Classification System and Standards of Provision

Prior to the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Township had not established a means of defining and organizing the various types of parks and open spaces (as well as the corresponding types and levels of facilities) within the Municipality. It is good planning practice to establish a park and open space hierarchy to categorize

parks/open spaces, as well as culture and recreation facilities. One benefit is to be able to set standards of provision or service levels for the various types of parks/open space, which helps with the evaluation of adequacy, and to negotiate with the development industry to acquire adequate amounts and quality of parkland and

associated public open space. It also ensures that the park and open space system is developed in a consistent manner and that it meets community needs in the most effective and efficient manner. Finally, a parks and open space hierarchy helps to ensure that the appropriate scale of facilities are matched up with the appropriate level of park, and that highly developed sports parks are not negatively impacting on residential areas.

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended the following three-tiered parks and open space classification and hierarchy:

- Local Parks
- Community Parks
- Special Open Space Areas

With the significant role that parks like Tree Nursery Sports Park and Doran Park have assumed and with the likelihood of additional parks being created that will service multiple neighbourhoods, as well as the entire Township and customers from beyond the municipality, it is recommended that a fourth tier (Township-wide/Regional) be added to the park/open space classification system. It is also recommended that 'Special Open Space Areas' be renamed 'Specialty Open Spaces'. This new category will incorporate other prominent sites and facilities that are provided by others – that draw from beyond the Township (e.g., County forest blocks, conservation authority sites, Springwater Provincial Park and the Ganaraska Hiking Trail).

As the Township population continues to increase and the southeastern quadrant continues to attract most of the new growth and become more urbanized, the role of municipal parks and associated open space will continue to evolve. Most sports facilities should be clustered and located in Community and Township-wide/Regional parks with appropriate support facilities and on-site parking. This will change the role of Neighbourhood parks and reduce the need for sites larger than 1.25 hectares (3 acres). The Neighbourhood/Local park category can include parkettes as small as 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres). That will provide opportunities to convert some of the land that would have been allocated to larger Neighbourhood/Local parks into walkway-based open space connectors within neighbourhoods – linking local parkland to schools and other parkland, environmental open spaces and landscaped storm water management areas. It should also free up some parkland dedication to contribute to Community-scale and Township-wide/Regional parks.

The following is the recommended park/open space classification system for Springwater Township (see **Figure 15** for sizes, functions and characteristics - planning guidelines):

- Neighbourhood Parks and Open Space
- Community Parks and Open Space
- Township-wide/Regional Parks and Open Space
- Specialty Open Space



Park/Open Space Classification	Preferred Size	Functional Requirements and Characteristics (Planning Guidelines)
<p>Neighbourhood Parks and Open Space</p> <p>Provision Guideline: 2.5 ac./1 ha. per 1,000 population</p>	<p>0.25 – 3.1 ac. (0.1 – 1.25 ha.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provided in residential neighbourhoods where there is sufficient population and where other publicly available open space cannot meet the needs defined for a neighbourhood park. ▪ The scale, size and appeal of the parks/open spaces and facilities within this category are intended to attract <i>mostly</i> nearby residences (within 5 minute walking distance or 600-800 metres), predominantly for less organized, passive leisure activities. Children should not have to cross a busy street to access a neighbourhood park. ▪ This category includes: neighbourhood parks; elementary schools; church sites with turfed and usable open space; and associated open space linkages and walkways. ▪ Where possible and desirable, combine parks and schools into a jointly planned and developed park-school campus with shared indoor and outdoor facilities – with no fencing between jurisdictions. It is appropriate to also incorporate a church with a usable and accessible yard into an open space campus (with or without a school). ▪ Public open space in this category should incorporate outdoor facilities that suit the scale of the park (e.g., a play structure, drinking fountain, sitting areas, internal pathway(s), a gazebo/sun shelter, a sports pad/natural skating rink). ▪ For the type and scale of recommended facilities and uses, parking is typically not required in a Neighbourhood/Local park. ▪ Ensure that playgrounds, sitting/viewing areas and picnic areas are well shaded. ▪ Whenever possible, Neighbourhood/Local parks and open spaces should be linked into the municipal trail system. ▪ Ensure that a <i>minimum</i> of 25% of the perimeter of the site fronts onto a street, and most of the park is visible from the street(s). ▪ Unless required for safety, the street perimeter should not be fenced. ▪ Most of the site should be table land quality. ▪ Development of Neighbourhood/Local parks should be supported by a park master plan.
<p>Community Parks and Open Space</p> <p>Provision Guideline: 5 ac./2 ha. per 1,000 population</p>	<p>10-30 ac. (4-12 ha.) larger sites are acceptable</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Community-level parks are intended to serve a number of neighbourhoods or a significant settlement area within the Township (e.g., Midhurst, Snow Valley, Elmvale, Hillsdale) - similar to the catchment area of a secondary school within an urban area. ▪ The focus of this scale of park is typically on outdoor sports facilities (predominantly lit and unlit Intermediate and Senior in scale). However, Community-level parks can also accommodate a community hall, an intermediate or senior-scale playground, a skateboard facility, a pavilion, a sports pad, a picnic area(s), a gazebo, multiple lit tennis courts, an outdoor fitness facility, pathways/trails, parking, and other facilities suitable to the site and its characteristics. ▪ A secondary school or elementary school (or both) are sometimes located adjacent to a Community park – and ideally, the sites are developed into a joint open space campus where facilities are shared between the school and the community. ▪ Although most Community parks should be predominantly or entirely table land to support the primary focus on active recreation, some sites (or parts of sites) can incorporate wooded areas and hedgerows, watercourses, valley lands and hills - especially suitable for nature appreciation, tobogganing, linear recreation activities, and to provide visual and topographic relief. ▪ Whenever possible, Community parks should be linked into the municipal and regional trail/greenway system. ▪ If not resource- or historic-based, the location should be driven by criteria such as good road access and high visibility. ▪ Sports facilities within the park (especially lit) should not directly abut residences. ▪ Ensure that playgrounds, sitting/viewing areas and picnic areas are well shaded. ▪ Development of Community parks should be supported by a park master plan.

Park/Open Space Classification	Preferred Size	Functional Requirements and Characteristics (Planning Guidelines)
Township-wide/Regional Parks and Open Space	As large as possible, especially if intended for major sports facilities and/or a major community centre (75 to 125 acres is not uncommon)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The scale, size and appeal of the parks/open spaces and associated facilities in this category are intended to attract most visitors from across the municipality and beyond. ▪ This category includes municipal parks, conservation areas, County forests, Crown land, provincial parks, golf courses, ski resorts, major trails, and other similar open spaces. ▪ Generally, this category of park/open space should incorporate outdoor and indoor facilities that are Intermediate and higher in scale and quality such as: lit Senior ball diamonds, multiple lit tennis courts, Senior/full-size soccer pitches, arena(s), a major community centre, a picnic area(s), a major playground, a service building (washrooms, change facilities, food concession), a large floral garden(s), an outdoor fitness facility, pathways/trails, parking, an outdoor performance venue, and other suitable and specialized facilities. It is also appropriate to incorporate other municipal functions, either on-site or on an adjacent site (e.g., a public library, a municipal office, a fire hall, a police station, etc.). ▪ Typically, this level of park/open space attracts day-use activities, but could include a campground. ▪ If the focus of a Township-wide/Regional park/open space is active recreation, the site should be predominantly table land. However, this level of park can also incorporate a wooded area and/or hedgerow, a watercourse, valley lands and steeply sloped lands that are especially suitable for nature appreciation and tobogganing, and to provide visual and topographic relief. ▪ Generally, Township-wide/Regional parks/open spaces should be large sites, but can include smaller sites such as a civic square. ▪ Whenever possible, Township-wide/Regional parks/open spaces should be linked into the municipal and regional trail/greenway system. ▪ If not resource- or historic-based, the location should be driven by criteria such as good road access and high visibility. ▪ Sports facilities within the park (especially lit) should not directly abut residences. ▪ Ensure that playgrounds, sitting/viewing areas and picnic areas are well shaded. ▪ Development of Township-wide/Regional parks/open spaces should be supported by a park master plan.
Specialty Open Space	Size not specified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Specialty Open Space sites may be of various sizes and could incorporate civic, historic/heritage, floral, cultural and natural heritage resources. ▪ This category of open space includes cemeteries. ▪ Sites can include urban squares and other spaces intended as attractive amenity spaces - as well as places to support local and community-wide culture, recreation and social activities (e.g., linear recreation, outdoor skating, art shows, performances, community celebrations and associated events, public assemblies, quiet reflection, etc.). ▪ Sites are often resource-based and may include waterfront lands, valley/ravine lands, wetlands, forested area, Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI), areas with scenic value, utility easements/corridors, etc. ▪ For natural heritage and environmentally sensitive sites, educational and restricted recreation activities may be permitted, depending on carrying capacity. Pedestrian access may be permitted if compatible with the biological and physical resources. ▪ Ownership: Township of Springwater, County of Simcoe, boards of education, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Province of Ontario, Government of Canada, foundations and land trusts, and commercial enterprises. ▪ Development of Specialty Open Spaces should be supported by a park master plan.

Since many parks were acquired before the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, there was no policy direction to create a parks system modeled on the recommended hierarchy from that plan. Consequently, not all parks fit easily into one of the three types in the classification system. Many fell somewhere between a local and a community park. And since, in 2005, there was no Township-wide/Regional category, no parks were classified as such. Even with the four categories that are now recommended, the challenge of

allocating all parks into one of these categories remains the same. Although all parks have been allocated into one of the four categories, many do not fully meet the functional requirements and characteristics recommended for each category (see **Figure 15** above). Many parks have been classified based on size, type and scale of facilities, overall character - and from how far away most visitors are regularly attracted to the site. See **Figure E-1** in **Appendix E**.

- Recommendation 66** The Township should adopt the revised four-tiered Parks/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines as outlined in the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update for the purposes of future park planning and development, including provision guidelines, location, site characteristics, size, functions and design requirements, connectivity, etc.
- Recommendation 67** Open Space policies in the Township of Springwater Official Plan should be amended to align with and incorporate the recommended Park/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

7.3 Parkland/Open Space Supply and Distribution

Distribution

- Each significant population centre/cluster has at least one park.
- The northwest agriculture-oriented corner of the Township has no parkland.
- The largest developed parks are located in the southern half of Township (Tree Nursery Sports Park, Doran Park, the Edenvale Conservation Area/Ball Diamond/Community Park complex and Willow Creek Valley).
- The only sizable parks in the northern half of the Township are Heritage Park in Elmvale and Hillsdale Community Park.
- The eastern portion of the Midhurst community is deficient in developed parkland of any category.
- The five elementary school properties contribute to local-scale open space and host outdoor facilities in Elmvale, Midhurst, Hillsdale and Minesing. Elmvale District High School is a significant open space site in that community and is classified as Community-level open space. Of note is the fact that most publicly available outdoor recreation facilities in Elmvale are located on school sites, a situation that creates a significant challenge for improving and adding outdoor sports facilities, as well as indoor culture and recreation facilities. A particular deficiency in Elmvale is the absence of a Community-level park of sufficient size and characteristics to accommodate sufficient competitive-level ball diamonds and soccer fields, as well as a replacement arena facility, community centre and curling rink when required.
- Open space provided by others contributes significantly to the large amount of public open space in the Township (e.g., 38 County Forest blocks, Nottawasaga Conservation Authority lands and Springwater Provincial Park).

Characteristics (size/shape/frontage/quality/development potential)

- Neighbourhood parks range in size from 0.2 to 7.85 acres (0.08 to 3.18 hectares). Sites in the range of 0.25 to 3.1 acres (0.1 to 1.25 hectares) are recommended.
- Community parks vary from in size from 0.59 to 23.11 acres (0.24 to 9.36 hectares). At 23.11 acres (9.36 hectares), Black Creek subdivision linear park comprises the largest site in this category. Sites in the range of 10-30 acres (4-12 hectares) (or larger) are recommended.
- Township-wide/Regional parks/sites range in size from 0.25 to 69.0 acres (0.1 to 27.95 hectares).
- Most Neighbourhood parks are quality sites with good to excellent frontage, and are well shaped and developable sites. Some contain considerable tree cover. Sites with inadequate frontage and visibility include: Homer Barret, Orr Lake, Snow Valley, Crystalwaters and Holloway parks, as well as the undeveloped park site in Hamelville and Park Trail Hilltop Park (undeveloped site) in Midhurst.

Quantity and Distribution of the Four Categories of Parkland

The calculation of quantity in relation to population of the four categories of parkland is based on estimated 2015 population of 18,545, and is as follows:

- Neighbourhood parks (5.6 ac./2.26 ha. per 1,000 pop.)
- Community parks (4.33 ac./1.75 ha. per 1,000 pop.)
- Township-wide/Regional parks (18.12 ac./7.34 ha. per 1,000 pop.)
- Specialty Open Space (0.38 ac./0.15 ha. per 1,000 pop.)
- All Township parkland (26.96 ac./10.92 ha. per 1,000 residents)
- All open space categories (28.4 ac./11.5 ha. per 1,000 residents)

Refer to **Figure E-1** in **Appendix E** for a table that lists and describes all park sites within the four recommended parkland categories.

At 103.6 acres (41.96 hectares) and 36 sites, there is more **Neighbourhood parkland** per 1,000 residents than is required (or

recommended), due in part to the larger than ideal size of close to 40% of the sites and the large number of residential communities and pockets of development throughout the Township that contain at least one Neighbourhood park. However, although there is more of this level of parkland in total than required throughout the Township, the following five residential areas have been identified as **deficient**:

- **The eastern half of the Midhurst Community** - Two large, undeveloped Neighbourhood park sites are located in this part of Midhurst. Sherwood Park, with access off Rosewood Avenue, Frid Boulevard and Deamicis Crescent has poor access and visibility, and slope constraints - and as a result, offers low development potential. Park Trail Hilltop is a site with limited access off Park Trail Road, resulting in poor access and visibility - although it may have increased value when the area to east develops. It also has slope constraints.
- **The southwest quadrant of Elmvale** - This area contains only Robinson Park, which is located west of the North Simcoe Rail Trail and is remote from the current built-up area, which is east of the Wye River.
- **The southeast quadrant of Elmvale** - This area contains only Elmvale Meadows Park (0.25 acres) - although Huronia Centennial Elementary School provides some open space relief.
- **The northeast quadrant of Hillsdale** - Although there is no parkland, Hillsdale Elementary School provides some open space relief.
- **The southeast quadrant of Phelpston** - Although O'Neil Park is nearby, it is on the north side of Flos Road Four West and has not been developed with Neighbourhood park appeal. Valendar Park is located west of this residential area, but not directly linked to it.

At 80.22 acres (32.49 hectares), the quantity of **Community parkland** comes close to matching the recommended provision guideline. Four of the eight sites are within the recommended size range of 10-30 acres (4-12 hectares), with two of those sites undeveloped. The remaining sites are smaller.

The eight Community parks are fairly well distributed, with one located in Elmvale, Hillsdale, Orr Lake, Anten Mills, Minesing, Grenfel and Midhurst. The Midhurst site is consumed by the community hall and parking, resulting in undersupply of Community parkland in that community. However, two Township-wide/Regional-scale parks in Midhurst (Doran Park and Willow Creek Valley Park) help to mitigate the shortfall. As noted above, although Elmvale contains Heritage Park, the community is deficient in Community-level parkland that can accommodate outdoor sports facilities, and indoor culture and recreation facilities. As the Midhurst community continues to grow, more community parkland will be required. As will be discussed later under 'future parkland and open space', none of the subdivision plans that have been submitted so far within the Midhurst Secondary Plan show any individual parks sites that meet the criteria for Community parkland.

Eleven parks and other publicly available open spaces, including the three trail corridors and the fairground in Elmvale, have been classified as **Township-wide/Regional** in scale, comprising 335.8 acres (136 hectares). Only two of the sites are located in the northern part of the Township, although the North Simcoe Rail Trail runs north-south through the Municipality. Overall, the distribution of these highest level open spaces is reasonable - relative to the settlement pattern. Within the 5.5 hectare Flos Agricultural Society Fairground is a 0.7 hectare parcel of municipal land that contains the Elmvale Community Arena, Curling Rink and parking lot.

Since they do not fit well into the other three categories, seven properties have been classified as **Specialty Open Space**. Ranging in size from 0.2 to 2.1 acres (0.08 to 0.85 hectares), all of the sites are small. Three properties are undeveloped and one is inaccessible. Three sites contain an historic sign or cairn.

Other Public and Publicly Available Open Space

Other categories of public and publicly available open space include:

- Two school boards (five elementary and one secondary school),
- 38 Simcoe County forest tracts,
- Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority lands (Minesing Wetlands Conservation Area and International RAMSAR wetland – numerous tracts comprising 6,000 hectares, Fort Willow Conservation Area and Edenvale Conservation Area),
- Flos Agricultural Society Fairground,
- three public and two private golf courses,
- Springwater Provincial Park,
- the Barrie Community Sports Complex,
- the Barrie Soccer Club site,
- Little Lake properties – City of Barrie,
- Snow Valley ski resort,
- Five equestrian centres,
- hydroelectric transmission corridors, and
- the Old Penetanguishene Road Trail (Hillsdale).

County Forests, are available for hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, horseback riding and dog walking. Other uses are permitted in some tracts (hunting, snowmobiling, ATVing, and trail ridding). Uses are informed by the Forest Recreation Policy, including Criteria for Analysis of Recreational Activities. Various low impact recreational uses may be considered in County Forests provided that the Code of Conduct for users is followed. The County also has criteria to evaluate and approve motorized activities on a site-specific basis.

Conservation Areas are available for picnicking, canoeing, cross-country skiing, hiking and snowshoeing. Hunting is allowed in some CAs. At Fort Willow CA, the focus is the heritage museum - and cycling is allowed.

Future Parkland and Open Space

As of June, 2015, there were 35 plans of subdivision that were in various stages of advancement within the Township – from 'pending

applications' (no approvals) to 'registered subdivisions' (building permit eligible). The two areas of the Township with the most plans of subdivision are Midhurst (18) and Elmvale (9). However, there are also plans in Hillsdale (2), Fergusonvale (2), Anten Mills (2), Snow Valley (3), Centre Vespra (1) and two rural estate developments. All of these developments and potential developments will provide parkland, cash-in-lieu of parkland or a combination of both. Eight of the developments are registered and under construction in Elmvale (1), Fergusonvale (2), Anten Mills (1), Snow Valley (1), Midhurst (1), Ravines of Matheson Creek (1) and Stonemanor Woods (1).

For **Elmvale**, only about half of the defined urban area has been built out. The oldest development is in the central area, with the most recent development located in the eastern half of the community.

Nine plans of residential development that pre-date amalgamation have been submitted, with only one being a Registered Subdivision (building permit eligible). Three are Draft Plan Approved, while the remainder are not, but are Official Plan Amendment complete. A portion of the western half of Elmvale does not have any development applications. This provides an opportunity to acquire adequate linked parkland in these areas, once development is facilitated in this location.

Currently, 455 residential units are identified via these developments, plus an undetermined number of townhouse units and a block planned for an older adult facility in the Gallo development. At 2.9 persons per unit, that will generate over 1,320 additional residents, bringing the population of Elmvale to over 3,320 (plus additional population to be generated by additional future development in the western quadrants). Although the majority of the larger developments have already provided parkland, a review of the current development applications indicates that no additional Neighbourhood or higher level parkland will be provided.

Based on the policy recommendations in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, a population 3,320 would require 8.3 acres (3.32 hectares) of Neighbourhood parkland and 16.6 acres (6.7 hectares) of Community-level parkland. Those numbers will increase when the remainder of the community develops. Although there are already 7.84 acres of Neighbourhood parkland in Elmvale (4 parks), most of it is located in the northern half of the community, with Homer Barret Park comprising almost three quarters of the total (5.6 acres). There are only two small Neighbourhood parks totalling 1.14 acres in the southern half of the community, where (to date) two-thirds of the future development is planned. Most recreation facilities in Elmvale are located on school properties and at the fairground.

There does not appear to be an opportunity to acquire additional Neighbourhood parkland in the southeastern quadrant of Elmvale. As the northwest and southwest quadrants develop further, all or most of the lands within the Wye River Valley that are identified as Environmental Protection Category I should be acquired as public open space.

Although there is one 7.45 acre park in Elmvale that is categorized as Community-level, there is a need for a Community-level sports-oriented park to accommodate required indoor and outdoor culture and recreation facilities. If the fairground ever becomes available, the Municipality should acquire it as Community-level parkland.

See **Figure 16** for specific recommendations to address parkland deficiencies in Elmvale.

For **Midhurst**, seven of the 14 plans of subdivision are Draft Plan Approved and one (Carson Ridge Estates) is registered and under construction. That represents only a portion of the area identified as the Midhurst Secondary Plan. Most of those development areas are included in Neighbourhood Design Plans for Neighbourhoods One, Two and Three. The parks and open space plan represented in those

Neighbourhood Design Plans identifies the layout of municipal parkland, Environmental Protection Areas, storm water management areas and other public open spaces.

To date, the following parks/open spaces have been identified via the Neighbourhood Design Plans and plans of subdivision for the three neighbourhoods comprising part of the Midhurst Secondary Plan.

- 36 municipal parkland sites, walkways and trail connections (63.19 ac./25.62 ha.)
- 12 open space sites (15.45 ac./6.08 ha.)
- Undetermined amount of Ontario Hydro Easement in Neighbourhoods One and Three
- 3 school properties (19.77 ac./8.0 ha.) – one site is designated school/mix use
- 8 Environmental Protection Areas blocks (99.26 ac./40.2 ha.)
- 12 storm water management ponds/areas (49.52 ac./20.04 ha.)

The park sites range in size from 0.67 to 9.33 acres (0.27 to 3.78 hectares), and all are considered to be Neighbourhood parks. Six of the 36 sites are larger than recommended for Neighbourhood parks in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, with three of the sites considerably larger than recommended. The second largest site will become even larger when an adjacent area of future development is incorporated into Neighbourhood One. However, four of those above average-size parks contain one or more hedgerows, which reduces the amount of useable/programmable open space. In total, ten parks and walkway sites contain one or more hedgerows. None of the parks are smaller than recommended. Six parks are neighbourhood gateways that provide visual relief and may be aesthetic in character, but should be classified as 'open space' rather than 'parkland'. Two parks are co-located with a storm water management area which, if developed to create an aesthetically pleasing, nature-oriented environment, will enhance the neighbourhood and may provide recreation value.

Although municipal parks are fairly well distributed throughout the three neighbourhoods, there are a few areas that will have no Neighbourhood parkland, and for a few others, the amount of parkland identified for the expected population and size of the area will be insufficient. The Neighbourhood Design Plan indicates that the northern half of Neighbourhood Three will be particularly deficient in parkland, with only one small neighbourhood park shown. This should be addressed through future development considerations. For Neighbourhood One, the area south of the hydro right-of-way and east of Anne Street should have a small Neighbourhood park. The Carson Trail subdivision located in Neighbourhood One will provide no parkland or any other public open space. This should be addressed through the consideration of applications for development.

Although 36 parks sites are identified in the three neighbourhoods, none are large enough to be considered Community or higher level parks. In Neighbourhood Three, the centrally-located over-sized neighbourhood park is co-located with a storm water management site and a 4.7 hectare site designated as a 'heritage' site to comprise a combined site of 24.67 acres/10 hectares. East of and adjacent to the 'heritage' site and the storm water management area is an Environmental Protection Area. Together, these four sites create a significant open space block, but only the site designated as parkland appears to be developable. A hedgerow runs through the middle of the park from west to east, which provides aesthetic character, but places limitations on the usability of the site for active recreation.

Given the population that can be accommodated within the Midhurst Secondary Plan area and other residential growth that is anticipated elsewhere in the Township, additional Community-level and Township-wide/regional parkland that can accommodate major sports fields, indoor facilities and other major/specialty outdoor culture and recreation facilities will need to be secured somewhere in the Township when the population outgrows existing Community-level and Township-wide/regional parks. Ideally, some of that parkland can be secured within the Midhurst Secondary Plan area. Tree Nursery

Sports Park (a Township-wide/Regional Park) can accommodate two more senior lit ball diamonds and two more full-size soccer fields. Although not well located in relation to future population growth, Hillsdale Community Park can accommodate one more senior ball diamond. In addition to what can be accommodated at Tree Nursery Sports Park, 1.6 additional full-size soccer fields will be required by around 2030 when the population is expected to surpass 33,000. The Plan recommends that one senior soccer field be provided for every 3,500 additional residents and one senior lit ball diamond be provided for every 5,000 additional residents beyond 33,000.

Sixteen blocks are designated as 'open space' and function as access to Environmental Protection areas and hydroelectric easements, gateways to residential areas, hedgerows and undevelopable sites. Six of the open space sites are co-located with a storm water management area. If these sites, including the storm water management areas, are developed into aesthetically-pleasing properties, they will contribute to the open space attributes of the community. If the school/mixed use site is not developed as a school, additional parkland should be acquired to compensate for the loss of public open space.

Three elementary school sites have been identified. However, the school site in Neighbourhood One has been designated school or mixed use, so it may not become a school site. The two school sites in Neighbourhood Two have each been co-located with a Neighbourhood park which provides the opportunity for joint development of minor-level sports facilities, a playground and other complementary components. So far, no school sites have been identified in Neighbourhood Three.

A number of linear connections have been identified in the development plans, including: the hydroelectric corridor that traverses Neighbourhoods One, Two and Three; an unopened road allowance within Neighbourhood One; contiguous groupings of parks, walkways, storm water management areas, natural environment lands (valleys,

watercourses and wooded areas); and other public open spaces that are not designated as municipal parkland. There is potential to create a local trail/walkway/sidewalk network within Neighbourhood One, although (if permission is given) utilizing the hydro corridor for part of the network is not ideal. The north-south unopened road allowance north of Carson Road West and the valley corridor provide much better settings. In Neighbourhood Two, the hydro corridor provides an east-west route through the southern part of the neighbourhood, with the same reservations for public use as noted above. The parkland containing some of the hedgerows in Neighbourhood Two will provide an opportunity for a short local trail, but it will dead end at Doran Road to the north and Russel Road to the east. There is an opportunity for another short local trail from Gill Road east into the interior of the neighbourhood, ending at Street 'C'. Between the John's subdivision and the Midhurst Heights subdivision, an east-west open space corridor is planned from Russell Road to Gill Road - linking with a park identified as Blocks 232 and 1092. For Neighbourhood Three, the only open space linkage is the same hydro corridor that runs through Neighbourhoods One and Two (if permission is given for recreational use). If sidewalks are strategically located within Neighbourhoods Two and Three, access to the Ganaraska and Hunter Russell Nature Trails will be improved.

Three other subdivision plans have been submitted that are within the Midhurst Secondary Plan area. **Midves II** is a small subdivision located directly south of Pooles Road and Neighbourhood Two. Although no parkland has been identified, the development contains two open space blocks (10.97 acres/4.44 hectares), a large Environment Protection Area (32.72 acres/13.25 hectares) and a hydro easement. Most of the residential portion of the **Walton** subdivision is located within the southern-most portion of Neighbourhood Three. The remainder of the subdivision extends south and comprises the remainder of the residential units along with a 76.1 acre/30.82 hectare Environmental Area. No parkland is provided in the Walton subdivision. This will need to be determined

pending the development review process. Located northwest of Neighbourhood One, the **Delfina** subdivision is a 22-unit development of larger lots. Although it does not contain any parkland, it does identify five open space blocks comprising 5.44 acres/1.57 hectares).

For **Hillsdale**, there are two plans of subdivision in the northeast quadrant of the community, north of Albert Street. The creek valley just west of Scarlett Line is identified as open space. A 0.95 acre (0.38 hectares) Neighbourhood park is identified centrally within the proposed residential area north of Hillsdale Elementary School, along with a 0.5 acre (0.19 hectare) block of parkland along the eastern edge of the school yard. A 0.7 acre (0.29 hectare) block of parkland

provides access to an open space area defined as an infiltration bed that extends east to the creek valley.

For **Anten Mills**, there are two plans of subdivision. One is a small infill of 15 single development units within the built-up area. The other is a 76-unit residential development between Springwater Golf Course and Wilson Drive. The proposed 0.35 acre (0.15 hectare) parkette provides access to a 'Y' shaped Natural Environment Area comprising 4.15 acres/1.68 hectares. Although the park is small, the large lots provide the opportunity for home-based amenities that will help to mitigate the need for a larger park.

7.4 Parkland and Open Space Development Strategy

The development of the park and open space system should be based on the concept of concentrating most culture and recreation facilities and programming within the North and South Service Areas. Some right-sized parks and facilities of a scale that is appropriate to the population should be located within the other notable pockets of residential development such as Anten Mills, Hillsdale, Minesing, Phelpston, Grenfel and Orr Lake. That means that additional major lit outdoor facilities and large indoor recreation and culture facilities should not be located outside of the two principle service areas.

The park and open space system should also be shaped by the recommended Park/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines, which recommends a four-tiered park classification system (**Figure 15**). Those planning guidelines recommend that future Neighbourhood parks be smaller in size and that development of those parks support mostly passive recreation activities. Higher level and often lit outdoor sports facilities, as well as indoor culture and recreation facilities should be concentrated in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks such as Tree Nursery Sports Park,

Doran Park, the site of the proposed multi-facility community centre and main branch library, the proposed Community park in Elmvale, and other future sports-oriented parks.

The park and open space planning guidelines recommend increased connectivity among as many parks and open spaces as possible - within residential areas and throughout the rural parts of the Township. An integral component of a linked open space system is the many natural heritage sites and greenway corridors that lace the Township. Since all of these lands will not be able to be in public ownership, private land owners should continue to be encouraged to retain as open space at least the areas identified as Natural Heritage Category 1 and 2 in the Township Official Plan. As areas of the Township are identified for development, these valuable natural areas should be retained as open space (either public or private lands) and sufficient measures taken to protect their environmental quality and significance and/or sensitivity. Simcoe County, the NVCA, and other agencies should be encouraged to continue to acquire, enhance and

protect valuable natural heritage areas throughout the Township, such as County Forests, conservations areas and provincial parks.

A number of Neighbourhood and Community-level parkland deficiencies were already noted in **Section 7.3**. Every effort should be made to mitigate those shortfalls. See **Figure 16** for recommendations.

Due to poor quality and low development potential, several developed and undeveloped park properties are identified in **Section 7.5** as surplus, and should be offered for sale.

7.5 Strategy to Address Parkland Deficiencies

In **Section 7.3** above, five residential areas were identified as deficient in Neighbourhood parkland.

Deficiencies in higher level parkland include:

- the requirement for a sports-oriented Community-level park in Elmvale;
- additional Community-level parkland in Midhurst; and
- the requirement for a site to accommodate the multi-facility community centre and main branch library proposed for the South Service Area.

As a guideline for future planning, it was recommended earlier in this chapter that the Township adopt the following provision levels as guidelines for Neighbourhood and Community-level parkland. Provision guidelines are not required for Township-wide/Regional parks and Speciality Open Space, due to their resource-based nature and unique characteristics that in themselves will influence provision levels.

Neighbourhood Parkland: 2.5 ac./1 ha. per 1,000 population

Community-level Parkland: 5 ac./2 ha. per 1,000 population

The analysis of **future parkland and open space** identified potential Neighbourhood and higher level parkland deficiencies in future development areas. A strategy to address most of those deficiencies was provided.

See **Figure 16** (pages 143-145) for the strategy to address deficiencies in existing communities.

Areas of Parkland Deficiency and Strategies to Address Deficiencies

Figure 16

Areas of Deficiency	Strategies to Address Deficiencies
<p>The eastern half of the Midhurst Community Two large, undeveloped Neighbourhood park sites are located in this part of Midhurst. Sherwood Park, with access off Rosewood Avenue, Frid Boulevard and Deamicis Crescent has poor access and visibility, is heavily treed, contains slope constraints and has low development potential as a result. Park Trail Hilltop is a site with limited access off Park Trail Road, resulting in poor access and visibility. It also has slope constraints.</p>	<p>For the fully developed residential area serviced by Sherwood Hill Park, there is no obvious solution since this site has such low development potential as a Neighbourhood Park. Leaving it in its natural state or rezoning the site to residential and offering it for sale appear to be the only options.</p> <p>For the residential area serviced by Park Trail Hilltop Park, improved access to the site should be created when the area to the east develops and road access is created along the eastern border of the park. If that happens, the site should be developed to meet Neighbourhood park functions and shared with the residential community to the east.</p>
<p>The southwest quadrant of Elmvale This quadrant contains only Robinson Park (0.89 acres/0.36 hectares), which abuts the North Simcoe Rail Trail along the eastern edge of the park. Future residential development is planned for the areas east and west of the Wye River. However, no additional Neighbourhood parkland is being provided through those developments. Currently, there are no development plans for the southern half of the area east of the Wye River. Elmvale District High School provides some open space relief, and the joint-use agreement between the Township and the public school board for shared use of the playing field and soon to be expanded and improved indoor facilities is excellent.</p>	<p>When the lands south of the Wye River Estates development are planned, two or three Neighbourhood parks should be acquired, with one located along the northern edge to help service the Wye River Estates development which is not providing any Neighbourhood parkland.</p> <p>By acquiring the undeveloped land between Robinson Park (west and south) and the Gallo development, there is an opportunity to triple the size of the park. Lot 17 in the Wye River Estates development should also be acquired to improve access to the rail trail and Robinson Park from that future neighbourhood. This will allow Robinson Park to be accessed via the rail trail, as well as from Queen Street.</p> <p>The portion of the Wye River valley contained within this quadrant should be acquired as Environmental Protection Category 1 lands. Neighbourhood parkland should be linked (via trails/walkways/sidewalks) to the valley lands and the North Simcoe Rail Trail.</p>
<p>The southeast quadrant of Elmvale This area contains only Elmvale Meadows Park (0.25 acres/0.1 hectares). Huronia Centennial Elementary School provides some open space relief.</p>	<p>With all of land either developed or approved, there is no obvious solution to address the shortfall of Neighbourhood parkland in this area. To compensate, the Township should attempt to partner with the public school board to create a park-like setting within Huronia Centennial Elementary School - in the vicinity of the existing playground (which should be replaced with a higher quality facility).</p>

Areas of Deficiency	Strategies to Address Deficiencies
<p>The northeast quadrant of Hillsdale, east of Highway 93 This area contains no Neighbourhood parkland. Hillsdale Elementary School provides some open space relief.</p>	<p>Future residential development that may occur in this part of Hillsdale should be required to provide suitable Neighbourhood parkland to meet the needs of the development area and to augment the shortfall in this part of Hillsdale.</p>
<p>The southeast quadrant of Phelpston Although O’Neil Park is nearby, it is on the north side of Flos Road Four West and has not been developed with Neighbourhood park appeal. Valendar Park is located west of this residential area, but not directly linked to it.</p>	<p>There is no obvious solution to the absence of Neighbourhood parkland in this fully developed residential area. Valendar Park will have to meet the Neighbourhood park needs of Phelpston, especially for the residents who live south of Flos Road Four West.</p>
<p>Community-level Park in Elmvale It is recommended that a Community–level sports-oriented park be acquired in or nearby the Elmvale community - to accommodate 2-3 Intermediate to Senior ball diamonds, a full size soccer pitch, a playground, a picnic shelter - and potentially an arena facility (single or twin pad), an assembly hall, multi-purpose program space, a curling rink & parking.</p>	<p>A site of at least 25 acres (10 hectares) will be required for this park. Suitable land on the edge of the built-up area of Elmvale will have to be acquired by the Township. A location to the south of the community would provide the best access to most residents of the Township. Although it would not meet the full requirements for this proposed Community park, if the fairground ever became available, it is recommended that the Township acquire this important property.</p>
<p>Community-level Parkland - Midhurst Community The only Community-level parkland in this community is the 0.59 acre/0.24 hectare site that accommodates the Midhurst Community Centre and parking lot (providing no open space relief). Doran Park and Willow Creek Valley Park (considered Township-wide/Regional parkland) provide considerable open space relief and complement the Neighbourhood parkland in the community. The current development plans within the Midhurst Secondary Plan have not identified parkland that can be considered ‘Community-level’, even though several Neighbourhood parks are considerably over-sized for their defined purpose. At a recommended provision level of 5 acres/1,000 residents and with approximately 35,000 residents projected to reside south of Horseshoe Valley Road by</p>	<p>Within the Midhurst Heights development and the John’s Property development, Blocks 1092 and 232 will combine to create a 10.18 acre/4.12 hectare park with considerable street frontage. Although at the lower end of the size range for a Community-level park, this irregularly shaped site with a hedgerow running through the southern half may provide an opportunity for the development of one or more higher level facilities than would be appropriate for a Community park (type and scale of facilities to be determined, based on Township-wide needs and site potential).</p> <p>Within the Coutts-Jones development, a 9.33 acre/3.78 hectare park (initially categorized as Neighbourhood-level) is adjacent to an 11.56 acre/4.68 hectare ‘heritage’ site and a 3.78 acre/1.53 hectare storm water management site – creating a 24.67 acre/9.99 hectare open space block that should be able to be developed into an interesting active-passive Community-level park (type and scale of facilities to be determined, based on Township-wide needs and site potential).</p>

<p>around 2036, 175 acres (71 hectares) of Community-level parkland will be required in the southern half of the Township.</p>	<p>Additional Community-level parkland, including one or more sites that can accommodate major outdoor and indoor sport facilities will be required as the Midhurst Secondary Planning Area develops further. It will be important to alert land owners of this requirement, which was not included in the park and open space policies of the 2008 Midhurst Secondary Plan (the policies did not define a requirement for Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks – and defined Neighbourhoods parks as 0.5 – 3.5 hectare sites (larger than ideal), as well as Parkettes/Urban Squares with a minimum size of 0.25 hectares).</p>
<p>A suitable site to house the multi-facility recreation centre and main branch library proposed for the South Service Area Size and location is to be determined through the recommended update of the feasibility study for this facility.</p>	<p>When the feasibility study for this facility is updated, a key investigation will to determine site size and the criteria for site evaluation, the identification and evaluation of candidate sites, and select of the preferred location. Given the role and draw of this Township-wide facility, key location criteria should include a site that is central to where most of the population in the Township will live - with high visibility and excellent east-west and north-south access to all parts of the Township and surrounding region.</p> <p>A potential site has been identified – that being the provincial Crown Land, which is located at the northwest corner of Bayfield Street and Snow Valley Road. It should meet the criteria for size, location and visibility – but due to possible environmental constraints, it may be eliminated as a candidate site. Further investigation is recommended.</p>

Recommendation 68 As opportunities arise and/or can be initiated, strive to mitigate identified parkland deficiencies at the Neighbourhood and Community parkland levels, utilizing the recommended strategies presented in **Figure 16**. For example, immediately investigate the opportunity and viability of the provincial Crown Land, which is located at the northwest corner of Bayfield Street and Snow Valley Road as a candidate site for the multi-facility recreation centre and main branch library proposed for the South Service Area.

Recommendation 69 Adopt the following provision guideline for Neighbourhood/Local parkland and Community-scale parkland:

- **Neighbourhood Parkland:** 2.5 ac./1 ha. per 1,000 population
- **Community-level Parkland:** 5 ac./2 ha. per 1,000 population

7.6 Disposal of Surplus Parkland

As noted earlier, although the quantity of Neighbourhood parkland exceeds what is recommended by more than a factor of two, the disbursed nature of the population and the over-sized nature of many Neighbourhood parks somewhat off-sets this over-supply. In areas of new development, the supply of Neighbourhood parkland should be more in line with what is recommended. And although several residential areas have been identified as deficient in this level of parkland, there are a good number of neighbourhoods that have surplus Neighbourhood parkland.

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended the following criteria to help determine if parkland is surplus. These criteria have been adapted for this Update as follows.

Current Use: A central consideration in identifying parks for possible disposal is the extent of use. Parks that are not receiving much or any use should be considered as surplus, unless the lack of use is due to other factors such as poor quality of development, and inadequate promotion of their existence (sometimes influenced by poor access and visibility).

Development Potential: Properties with sufficient potential to be developed for their intended purpose to meet current and future needs should generally be retained, unless there is sufficient similar parkland in the area to meet current and future needs. Development potential is influenced by size of site, quality of access and visibility, site conditions, presence of unique features and suitability - and value as a linkage to other compatible land uses.

Future Demand: As noted above, some currently underused or unused park sites may have value to meet the needs generated by future development. An example is Park Trail Hilltop Park in Midhurst (currently undeveloped and unused), which although it has poor

access, it will likely be made much more accessible if future residential development occurs to the east.

Once sites are identified and approved as surplus, they should be offered for sale at market value and the proceeds invested into the purchase of other parkland and/or into development and improvement of other parkland.

Specific Recommendations

Even though there will be other properties that may eventually be identified as surplus, (parks and other municipal properties), the following sites have been identified as potentially surplus.

1. **Marni Lane Park:** Decommission and sell this 0.7 acre/0.28 hectare site, move the playground to the new nearby larger park that is under development within the community (Maple Ridge subdivision), and invest the proceeds of the sale into further development of the new park.
2. **Sherwood Hill Park (Midhurst):** This site with poor access and steep slopes has very limited development potential for a Neighbourhood park. It is also much larger than required for a Neighbourhood park.
3. **Crystalwaters Park:** This oversized Neighbourhood park has extremely poor access and virtually no visibility from either of the two streets that abut the park. If the site is suitable and Crystalwood Lane could either be extended around to intersect with Hillview Crescent or dead-ended within the park and several residential lots created, a smaller park could be developed with excellent frontage and visibility.

4. **Hamellville Vacant Park Property:** This is a heavily treed lot with two narrow access points plus a small amount of Nottawasaga River frontage, resulting in a site with poor access

and visibility. The residential lots in this community are large and the families are less likely to require or use the facilities typically provided in a Neighbourhood park.

Recommendation 70 The Township should consider the four park properties that have been identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update as potentially surplus. Utilizing the recommended criteria, the Township should continue to evaluate other parks and any other municipal open space properties to identify any other sites that may become surplus.

7.7 Park and Open Space Policies

As was introduced in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Township should adopt or revise policies to guide decision making regarding park planning, land acquisition, park development and

naturalization/environmental practices. Relevant policies are recommended below.

7.7.1 Township of Springwater Official Plan

The park and open space policies in the Township Official Plan have been reviewed. **Appendix F** contains a summary of those policies. Generally, the Official Plan policies are consistent with the policies and intent of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. However, recommendations contained in this Parks and Recreation

Master Plan Update and commentary provided in **Appendix F** should influence revision of these policies when appropriate. The recommended Park/Open Space Classification System and Planning Guidelines, and the Park and Open Space Development Strategy are most important to consider when revising Official Plan policies.

7.7.2 Standard of Provision for Municipal Parkland

As introduced earlier, the standard of provision for municipal parkland will focus on two of the four categories in the recommended parks/open space classification system, those being: **Neighbourhood**

and **Community parks**. For the other two categories, a standard of provision is less relevant, as explained below.

Neighbourhood Parks	2.5 acres/1.0 hectare per 1,000 residents	Ideal size: 0.25 – 3.1 acres (0.1 – 1.25 hectares)
Community Parks	5.0 acres/2.0 hectares per 1,000 residents	Ideal size: 10 – 30 acres (4 – 12 hectares) – larger if possible

Township-wide/Regional Parks: A set amount of open space per thousand residents cannot be predicted or prescribed for this category of open space since the amount is mostly dependent on the natural heritage resources that are available in each community and the land holdings of the Municipality, as well as lands owned by County, provincial, federal, commercial and other entities like conservation authorities, land trusts and nature conservancies. Township-wide/regional open space sites can vary from small, usually historically-centred sites to very large sites usually containing important natural heritage features. For parks containing major indoor and outdoor culture and recreation facilities, sites are typically 30 or more acres in size, and parks of 100 or more acres are not uncommon.

7.7.3 Parkland Assembly in Residential Developments

The 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan recommended policies that should be adopted to deal with the acquisition of parkland through the development and redevelopment process. These policies identify when the Township should take land for park purposes and when to take cash-in-lieu of parkland, as well as the conditions under which properties will be conveyed to the Township. The policies ensure that the Township will receive functional and well located park sites that are consistent with the park/open space classification system and the planning guidelines that are recommended in this Master Plan Update, as well as guidelines for the condition of the land at the time of conveyance. The following considerations should be incorporated into a policy statement/strategy for parkland assembly in new developments and redevelopment.

The Township will favour the conveyance of Neighbourhood parks in proposed plans of subdivision where the proposed parkland is consistent with the park/open space classification system and planning guidelines recommended in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, and if the Township determines that parkland

Specialty Open Space: A set amount of open space per thousand residents cannot be predicted or prescribed for this category of open space since this type of open space is mostly dependent on the number of usually historical resources that are typically accommodated in parks and other public open spaces of this nature, such as an historic cairn or plaque, an historic building or other historic feature. In addition, open spaces that do not fit well within the other three categories are allocated to this 'specialty' category.

Refer to **Figure 15** for a description of the recommended park/open space classification system.

within the vicinity of the proposed development is insufficient in quantity, quality and/or location to also meet the needs of future residents within the nearby area of new development or redevelopment.

Cash-in-lieu of parkland should be accepted when the Township determines:

- that adequate Neighbourhood parkland and/or other open space and recreation facilities in or near the proposed development is adequate to meet the needs of the residents in the new development area;
- when the development is too small to generate a park site that is large enough to consider as adequate (sometimes it is desirable to combine the park dedication from two or more contiguous developments to create an adequate park);
- when the proposed Neighbourhood park site is inadequate in terms of quality, shape, frontage, location, etc., - and no adequate alternative site can be identified or agreed upon); and

- when more Neighbourhood parkland is being provided than is required and/or the proposed park is larger than required. In this case, the partial cash-in-lieu payment can be used to help fund parkland development in the vicinity and/or put into a parkland acquisition reserve.

Further to the above, land conveyed to the Township for park purposes, under the Ontario Planning Act, should be accepted only when the Township is satisfied that the land is suitable for park purposes and is in an adequate location. Further, the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties should work with Department of Planning and Development to determine appropriate parkland to be dedicated, including location.

Land must be conveyed in a condition that is satisfactory to the Township – utilizing the municipal development standards document that identifies the conditions required of developers for the development of open space, including drawings and plans that describe the overall parks and open space concept such as parks, trails and other recreation lands dedicated or otherwise deeded to the Municipality. The development standards document outlines requirements for general development conditions, general landscape specifications, top soil, seeding/sodding, plant material, walkways, fencing, lighting, water supply and responsibility for damages.

Public open space that is intended mostly for passive uses, including linear open space to support trails, and to contain and protect

Recommendation 71 The Township should adopt a comprehensive policy statement governing the assembly of parkland in new residential development and areas of redevelopment. The policy should indicate when parkland and/or cash-in-lieu of parkland will be taken, and the general conditions relating to the type, condition and location of parkland to be assembled and otherwise acquired. The park/open space classification system and planning guidelines and other recommendations contained in this Master Plan Update should inform that policy.

watercourses, valley lands, significant wood lots, and lands identified in the Township Official Plan as Category 1 and 2 Natural Heritage Lands should be acquired, where possible, through partnership agreements; conservation easements; agreements with the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Simcoe County, land trusts and nature conservancy organizations; bequests; sponsorships and expenditures of cash-in-lieu. Acquisition of these lands should be over and above the parkland required for active recreation, and should not be acquired through the park dedication process, except where it is determined that additional parkland for Neighbourhood/Local and higher level *active* parks is not required in a specific community. Every effort should be made to acquire these lands to augment and enhance the natural heritage open space system, as well as other parkland throughout the Township.

The parkland dedication process typically focuses on providing sufficient, high quality Neighbourhood parkland, with little or no parkland able to be earmarked from this process for Community-level and Township/Regional parkland, especially parkland that is suitable to accommodate high level sports facilities and recreation centres. To acquire sites for this purpose, it is likely that the Township will have to purchase them. One example is a site for the multi-facility recreation centre and main branch library that is proposed for somewhere in the South Service Area. Another example is a site for a Community-level sports park in Elmvale.

7.7.4 Naturalization/Environmental Practices

As was recommended in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the Township should continue to demonstrate environmental responsibility through planning, management and maintenance practices. The maintenance and management of the municipal parks and open space system should incorporate ecological practices such as naturalization and reforestation programs, reduced mowing, use of native species, and employment of environmentally sound park maintenance techniques that will continue the enhancement of the natural heritage system. Some of those strategies may also result in cost savings that can be transferred to other aspects of parks and open space development and operations.

The success of some of these initiatives will depend on fostering public awareness and support. While these environmental practices are widely understood and accepted within natural environment areas, public perceptions of neglect and abandonment may prevail when some traditionally manicured lands are left to naturalize and regenerate. It will be important to identify and implement a program of education using printed literature, signage, the municipal web site, social media and verbal presentations to promote the benefits of ecological practices and environmental enhancement initiatives. In this regard, the support and involvement of other like-minded agencies and environmental interest groups should be sought.

- Recommendation 72** The Township should continue to demonstrate environmental responsibility through the development and adoption of environmentally sound policies and practices for use in planning, management and maintenance of parks, as well as culture and recreation facilities, wherever possible and practicable.
- Recommendation 73** The Township should continue to collaborate with the NVCA, other agencies, and environmental and community groups to identify priorities and implement a program for restoration of degraded natural areas.
- Recommendation 74** The Township should investigate and develop programs, strategies and materials for promoting public awareness and education on the values of urban ecological practices, responsible use of natural areas, public accountability and environmental stewardship, in collaboration with other departments and agencies.

Chapter Eight: The Implementation Strategy

8.1 Introduction

This chapter informs the implementation of the Master Plan, including phasing and first steps, capital cost implications, operating cost implications, the general financing strategy, and the process to keep the Master Plan updated.

8.2 Phasing and First Steps

Time Periods

Recommendations have been organized around the following four time periods:

- 2016-2020,
- 2021-2025,
- 2026-2030 and
- Post 2030.

Although the RFP requested that the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update cover the period to 2030, there are recommendations that extend beyond that period. The Medium Growth Scenario projects the population to 2036 and that date and population figure of 41,693 informs the post 2030 time period.

Immediate First Steps

Following approval in principle of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, the following initiatives have been identified as immediate first steps, corresponding to late 2015 and into 2016.

- Approve Vision 2030, the Belief Statement for parks and recreation, the Guiding Principles, and the Planning and Provision Guidelines that are recommended in the Master Plan - to inform relevant policies and decision-making about service provision.
- Approve the parks and open space policies recommended in the Master Plan, including the revised Parks/Open Space

Classification System and Planning Guidelines, and the provision guideline for Neighbourhood parkland and Community-level parkland.

- Amend the Township Official Plan to reflect the parks and open space policies recommended in the Master Plan.
- Initiate discussions with developers regarding recommended parkland policies and proposed parkland dedications in unapproved and future plans of subdivision, as per the directions of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.
- Amend the Township's Six-Year Capital Plan to reflect the capital cost implications of the Master Plan, and utilize recommendations in the Master Plan to inform the 2016 capital budget.
- Begin the process of collecting and tabulating pertinent user group membership/registration, facility use and program registration data.
- Update By-law No. 2003-124 to acknowledge that the Township is now assuming the cost of structural, electrical and mechanical repairs, insurance premiums, SOCAN fees, and other mandated costs relating to community centres/halls.
- Initiate creation of a Township-wide support entity for volunteering (Volunteer Springwater).
- Prepare a Volunteer Engagement Strategy.
- Seek an appropriate site for the proposed Community Park in Elmvale.

- Investigate the suitability of land at the northwest corner of Highway 26 and Snow Valley Road as a possible site for the proposed Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library.
- Prepare a Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Management and Performance Measurement Program.
- Create a full-time staff titled ‘Community Economic Development Officer’– combining responsibilities for economic development, tourism and culture.
- Redefine the role of the Township’s Community Development Officer to focus fully on co-ordination of culture and recreation programming and support to volunteers and volunteer-based groups – and report to the Director of Recreation, Parks and Properties.
- Split the position of Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties into two: Supervisor of Facilities (including the Elmvale Arena) and Supervisor of Parks and Properties.

8.3 Capital Cost Implications

As many of the recommendations from this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update as possible that will incur capital investment have been included in **Figure 17**. Not included are vehicles and park

maintenance equipment. Pricing is in mid 2015 dollars and does not account for inflation.

Estimate of Capital Cost by Phase and Projected Population (Based on the Medium Growth Scenario)

Figure 17

Item	Phasing and Projected Population Growth (Medium Growth Scenario)			
	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288	2021-2025 2025 pop.: 25,930	2026-2030 2030 pop.: 33,652	Post 2030 2036 pop.: 41,693
Elmvale Community Arena				
▪ Identified repairs/upgrades/replacements	670,000			
▪ Enlarged lobby, two additional dressing rooms, Sports Hall of Fame - allowance	400,000			
Elmvale District High School	500,000			
Township contribution to new gymnasium & other facilities at Elmvale District High School (this figure will be reduced by contributions from fundraising)				
Elmvale Community Park				
▪ Park Master Plan		30,000		
▪ Two lit ball diamonds (Intermediate or Senior - TBD)		750,000		
▪ One Senior/Full-size soccer pitch (unlit)		200,000		
▪ Playground (priced under playgrounds)				
▪ Water play facility (priced under water play facilities)				
▪ Picnic pavilion (priced under picnic pavilions)				
▪ Site development		50,000		
▪ Replacement arena facility (single or twin pad - TBD)				12-25,000,000
▪ Replacement curling rink (number of sheets TBD – assume 4 sheets)				5,000,000
▪ Multi-purpose space & possible replacement facility for the Elmvale Community Hall				1,500,000

Item	Phasing and Projected Population Growth (Medium Growth Scenario)			
	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288	2021-2025 2025 pop.: 25,930	2026-2030 2030 pop.: 33,652	Post 2030 2036 pop.: 41,693
Tree Nursery Sports Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Two Sr. lit ball diamonds (complete roughed-in facilities) ▪ Two Senior/Full-size unlit soccer pitches (or one full-size and 2-4 Large Mini pitches) ▪ Playground (larger in scale than Neighbourhood park playgrounds) (priced under playgrounds) ▪ Picnic pavilion (priced under picnic pavilions) ▪ Complete site development – parking, landscaping, trails/walkways (allowance) 	50,000	50,000	500,000 200,000 50,000	
Community Halls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Replace Grenfel Hall (3,000-4,000 sf) ▪ Decommission Midhurst Community Centre & incorporate into the multi-facility community centre & library proposed for the South Service Area ▪ Decommission the Elmvale Community Hall & incorporate into the proposed replacement of the Elmvale Community Arena ▪ Other unassigned investments in the remaining facilities (allowance of \$20,000/yr.) 	100,000	1,000,000 Included in costing for CC & library 100,000	Incl. in the costing for new arena 100,000	120,000 (to 2036)
Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Twin pad arena (three ice pads will be required if a twin-pad arena is not feasible as a replacement for the Elmvale Community Arena in 15-20 years) ▪ Double gymnasium/assembly hall/performance facility with elevated walking track ▪ Multi-purpose program space ▪ Fitness centre (weight training & aerobic fitness) ▪ Aquatic facility (potentially a 25 metre, six- or eight-lane pool, a leisure tank & a therapeutic tank) ▪ Main branch library (in two phases) ▪ Common areas ▪ Outdoor facilities & site development, including reflecting pond & outdoor skating rink 			30,680,000	TBD
Outdoor fitness facilities (one more facility by around 2028 – if sufficient demand)			30,000	
Trail development and upgrades (annual allowance of \$50,000/year)	250,000	250,000	250,000	300,000 (to 2036)
Update park signage	200,000			
Picnic Pavilions (7 facilities)		200,000	200,000	300,000
Outdoor water play facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elmvale (1 facility) ▪ South Service Area (2 facilities) 	400,000	400,000	400,000	
Tennis courts: Provide two more lit courts (preferred site is Doran Park)			300,000	
Playgrounds (replacements, upgrades, new – including two that are accessible) – average allowance of \$70,000/year.	350,000	350,000	350,000	420,000 (to 2036)
Skateboard facility – Doran Park	150,000			

Item	Phasing and Projected Population Growth (Medium Growth Scenario)			
	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288	2016-2020 2020 pop.: 20,288
Land Acquisition: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elmvale Community Park (25+ acres) ▪ Site for the proposed Multi-facility Community Centre & Main Branch Library ▪ Enlargement of Robinson Park 	150,000 TBD TBD			
Studies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Multi-facility Community Centre & Main Branch Library Feasibility Study (not including the staffing & operational review of the library system that was recommended in the 2014 Library Facility Needs Assessment) ▪ Volunteer Engagement Strategy ▪ Prepare a Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Management and Performance Measurement Program 	90,000 10,000 15,000			
Annual Community Grant Program – toward programs, events and facilities – and initial ‘seed’ money to help establish new groups and programs (\$50,000/year)	250,000	250,000	250,000	300,000 (to 2036)
Totals	3,585,000 + cost for the site of the proposed CC & Library	3,630,000	2,230,000 + \$30,680,000 (Phase 1 of CC & Library)	19,940,000 – 32,940,000 + Phase 2 of CC & Library (cost TBD)

Notes: Pricing is in mid 2015 dollars and does not account for inflation. See **Figure 12** (page 97) for details re: cost estimate for Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library.

Average Cost per Year: Not including the cost of Phase 1 of the proposed Multi-facility Community Centre and Main Branch Library, the average cost per year of recommended capital investments for the period 2016-2030 is **\$656,333**. That figure will be reduced by fundraising, donations/bequeaths, sponsorships, partnerships, in-kind-

services, grants, sale of surplus parkland, facility rental surcharges, etc. Development charges contributions derived from new development will help to substantially offset the cost of qualifying projects.

8.4 Operating Cost Implications

As the parks and recreation system expands and improvements continue to be made, there operating costs will increase incrementally – staffing, equipment, supplies, utilities, etc. Although the scope of

the Master Plan does not allow for a detailed accounting and extrapolation of all of these costs, the following information is provided.

Staffing and Associated Costs

Figure 18

Staffing	Associated Annual Costs (2016)
Community Economic Development Officer - responsible for economic development, tourism and culture	\$66,000
Split the Supervisor of Recreation, Parks and Properties position into: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Supervisor of Facilities and ▪ Supervisor of Parks and Properties. 	\$75,000
Every 75 acres of maintained parkland and other municipal properties requires a crew of two full time equivalent staff and one summer student. Each crew requires one truck and trailer, one wide-area mower, one zero turn trim mower and hand equipment (value of \$150,000 to \$175,000). Currently, about 150 acres are being maintained.	Average cost per acre: \$46.00

There will be other operating cost implications of an expanding and improving parks and recreation system. For example, if the Recreation Service Boards reduce their role in facility maintenance and program/event scheduling, there will be implications for municipal staffing, equipment and other expenses. Similarly, as maintenance of trails transition from volunteers to paid staff and the kilometres of trails continue to increase, maintenance costs will increase. When Phase One of the proposed Community Centre and Main Branch Library is operational, expenses will exceed revenues for this type of facility. Once the components and facility characteristics are finalized, a five-

year operating plan can be developed to estimate anticipated annual net operating costs. Many factors will influence net operating cost, including the overall size of the facility and associated components and features, the fee structure and other revenue and other income streams, programming and overall level of use, hours of operation, etc. The new, larger community centre recommended for Grenfell will cost more to operate than the current facility. As new and improved outdoor recreation facilities are provided in parks, increased maintenance will be required, increasing the average cost per acre for maintenance of parkland and other municipal properties.

8.5 Financing Strategy

A combination of the following sources comprise the financing strategy for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update (capital and operating costs):

Capital Investment

- municipal reserves
- development charges contributions on residential and non-residential development
- annual tax-supported investment in capital projects (major repairs and upgrades to culture and recreation facilities, as well as new projects; annual contributions to specific reserve funds)

- fundraising for capital projects (community and corporate)
- donations/bequeaths
- sponsorship (e.g., naming rights on buildings and components of facilities, such as an activity room, a gymnasium, etc.)
- services-in-kind to help offset capital costs for new construction and upgrade of facilities
- partnerships (with other public entities, Recreation Service Boards, other non-profit groups and the commercial sector to share in the cost and benefits of facility construction, upgrade and operation, hosting programs and events, marketing initiatives, training, research and planning, bulk purchasing, etc.)

- senior government grants
- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- sale of surplus parkland/public open space
- municipal debenture

Operating Costs

- facility rental, including surcharges on upgraded and new facilities
- program revenues
- advertising revenues
- annual and short term program grants from senior levels of government
- contributions from other sources for programs and community events (e.g., Canadian Tire 'Jump Start' program; sponsorship of programs, community events, sports teams)
- services-in-kind to help offset the operating costs of facilities, programs and community events
- community fundraising to offset operating costs and to contribute to capital investments
- cost sharing for programs and facility operation from partners (e.g., Tiny Township annual contribution to the operation of the Elmvale Community Arena)

Municipal Reserves

The following amounts are in municipal reserve accounts that relate to parks and recreation (September 30, 2015).

▪ Development Charges Reserve Fund	
▪ Indoor recreation facilities	\$1,756,056
▪ Parks and outdoor recreation	\$ 103,224
▪ Cash-in-lieu of Parkland Reserve Fund	\$ 681,000
▪ Recreation Equipment Reserve Fund	\$ 181,000
▪ Arena Capital Reserve Fund	\$ 38,000
▪ Tennis Court Repairs Reserve Fund	\$ 11,750
▪ Recreation Facility Reserve Fund	<u>\$ 494,000</u>
Total	\$3,265,030

Approximately \$530,000 per year is received via the Gas Tax transfer to municipalities.

Development Charges

The proportion earmarked from Development Charges for capital investment in indoor recreation facilities, parks and outdoor recreation facilities, and libraries varies by unit type as noted below. An annual increase in fees is tied to the rate of inflation. The following figures are for 2015.

▪ Singles/Semis	\$2,892 + \$1,597 + \$691 = \$5,180
▪ Rows/other multiples	\$2,424 + \$1,339 + \$580 = \$4,343
▪ Apartments (2+ bedrooms)	\$1,818 + \$1,004 + \$434 = \$3,246
▪ Apartments (1 bedroom)	\$1,126 + \$ 621 + \$269 = \$2,016

The following projection of potential fees from development charges for indoor and outdoor recreation facilities/development and expansion of libraries was calculated, based on the projection of residential units contained in the Medium Growth Scenario for the years 2030 and 2036 (based on 2015 rates and not indexed to inflation).

- **by 2030:** approximately \$26.5 million
- **by 2036:** approximately \$39.9 million

The calculations are based on an estimate of 5,237 residential units by 2030 x an average of \$5057/unit, and an estimate of 7,908 residential units by 2036 x an average of \$5,046/unit (2015 rates).

To 2030, anticipated development charge fees would cover approximately 65% of approximately \$40.5 million estimated for capital investment in parks, recreation and libraries. That includes a \$30.7 million allowance for Phase One of the proposed Community Centre and Main Bach Library (as described in **Section 5.6.3**). To 2036, anticipated development charge fees would cover approximately 39% to \$44% of approximately \$90.5 to \$103.5 million estimated for capital investment in parks, recreation and libraries.

That would include a \$30 million allowance for Phase Two of the proposed Community Centre and Main Bach Library (as described in **Section 5.6.3**). All figures are in 2015 dollars and not indexed to inflation.

As service provision levels improve with the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Library Facility Needs Assessment, the value of parks, recreation and library facilities will

8.6 Process to Keep the Master Plan Current

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update should not be a static document. Circumstances and conditions can change quickly or gradually over the life span of the Plan. Because of that, it is important to continually gather and analyze pertinent information, and make required adjustments to the Planning and Provision Guidelines, other policies and individual recommendations re: facilities, programming, parks, the service delivery model, and the implementation strategy.

For example, if demand begins to trend upward or downward for a particular leisure activity, the recommended provision guideline will have to be adjusted to provide more or fewer facilities per 1,000 residents. If activities that are new to the community emerge in sufficient numbers that this impacts the use of certain facilities that are already provided in the Township or if an activity that is new to the community requires its own facility, adjustments will have to be made. For example, if sufficient demand for Pickleball emerges in Springwater (as it has recently in other communities), it will put pressure on the use of gymnasias and tennis courts, and create its own demand for indoor and outdoor facilities. If Cricket was to become popular in Springwater, a cricket pitch would have to be considered. If arena facilities were to expand in the Township, the increased availability of ice time will likely generate local demand for girls and

increase – leading to a calculation of higher Development Charges in future. Therefore, the percentage of capital investment covered by Development Charges should increase over time. If the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update and Library Facility Needs Assessment were available in 2013 to more accurately project future capital costs, the current Development Charges available for parks, recreation and libraries would likely be higher.

women's hockey and Ringette, as well as increased interest in causal skating, adult pick-up hockey and seniors skating. That may require a change in the recommended provision guideline for arenas. When improved multi-purpose space becomes available, demand will increase for a wide variety of leisure activities by all age groups. That may require a change in the provision guideline for multi-purpose space and an increase in programming to meet growing demand. These types of changes can easily happen within the fifteen life span of the Master Plan.

If population growth significantly accelerates or slows, compared to what the Plan was based on, the need for recommended facilities, parkland, programming and staffing will have to be adjusted accordingly. That is why provision guidelines have been included that tie facility requirements to specific population targets or thresholds.

Every five years or so, Vision 2030 should be examined and refreshed to account for what has been accomplished, as well as evolving demand, other trends and changing circumstances. Another five years should be added to that 'big picture look ahead'.

Section 3.5.8 recommended various planning and research activities to assist with short and longer term planning and decision-making. Those recommendations are summarized below.

- Annually update the inventory of recreation facilities and parkland (chart and map).
- To monitor participation trends, annually collect pertinent information from all groups who use Township facilities and register for programs. Also, tabulate and track facility use data.
- Monitor use of City of Barrie facilities and programs by Springwater Township residents.
- Monitor use of the Elmvale Community Arena by Tiny Township residents.

- Monitor the use of unscheduled Township facilities.
- Regularly monitor trends in leisure activities and best practices in service provision.
- Every few years, host a community-wide forum and administer an on-line survey to solicit input from residents and user groups about culture and recreation in Springwater.
- Prepare a Parks and Recreation Service Delivery Management and Performance Measurement Program as a follow-up exercise to this Master Plan. This initiative will result in an effective management tool to monitor and evaluate local service delivery.

Recommendation 75 Adopt the four time periods around which the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update is structured (2016-2020, 2021-2025, 2026-2030 and post 2030).

Recommendation 76 Initiate the implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update, commencing with the **15 ‘Immediate First Steps’** that have been identified, including the recommendation to approve **Vision 2030**, the **Belief Statement** about the *value to the community* of parks, recreation and culture, the **14 Guiding Principles**, and the **Planning and Provision Guidelines** to inform relevant policies and decision-making about service provision.

Recommendation 77 Utilize the estimate of capital costs – 2016-2030 and beyond (**Figure 17**) to inform and regularly update the Township’s Six-Year Capital Forecast.

Recommendation 78 Utilize the operating cost implications discussed in **Section 8.4** to inform the annual operating budget of the Department of Recreation, Parks and Properties (2016 and beyond).

Recommendation 79 Utilize the recommended Financing Strategy (**Section 8.5**) to optimize opportunities for funding the capital and operating costs estimated to implement the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. It is estimated that 65% of the capital costs projected to 2030 for parks, recreation and libraries will be funded by Development Charges contributions, based on the Medium Growth Scenario. Fundraising, donations/bequeaths, sponsorships, partnerships, grants and the sale of surplus parkland will also contribute - along with almost \$3.3 million in capital reserves that can be applied.

Recommendation 80 Follow the recommended process and specific steps (**Section 8.6**) to keep the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan updated.

Appendix A: The Benefits of Parks, Recreation and Culture

Introduction

Beyond the obvious benefits of providing more and better leisure facilities and program opportunities for residents, there are many other important and lasting benefits of parks, recreation and the arts.

Below is a **summary** of the **personal, social, economic and environmental** benefits of parks and recreation, much of which relate directly to the recommendations in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. It should help put into perspective the value of additional investment in parks, open space, and leisure facilities, programs and services for Springwater Township. Refer to the Guiding Principles recommended in **Section 3.3**.

These benefit statements have come from a comprehensive study of the benefits of parks and recreation conducted by the RETHINK GROUP and sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Federation of Ontario. The Benefits Catalogue which documents the benefits and the substantial support evidence was published in 1997 and is available from the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. Our British Columbia office contributed to the update of the 'benefits of parks, recreation and culture' research and reformatting the material and marketing messages into the 2010 interactive '**Benefits Databank**' - hosted by the Alberta Recreation and Parks Association.

Personal Benefits

- i) Physical recreation and fitness contributes to a **full and meaningful life**.
- ii) Regular physical activity is one of the very best methods of **health insurance** for individuals.
- iii) Relaxation, rest and revitalization through the opportunity of leisure are **essential to stress management** in today's busy

- iv) and demanding world.
- v) Meaningful leisure activity is an essential **source of self-esteem and positive self-image**.
- vi) Leisure provides the opportunity to lead **balanced lives, achieve our full potential and gain life satisfaction**.
- vii) **Children's play is essential to the human development process**.
- viii) Leisure opportunities for youth provide **positive lifestyle choices and alternatives** to self-destructive behaviour.
- ix) Parks and open space bring beauty to an area while **giving people satisfaction and improving their quality of life**.

Social Benefits

- i) Leisure provides leadership opportunities that **build strong communities**.
- ii) Community recreation reduces **alienation, loneliness and anti-social behaviours**.
- iii) Community recreation **promotes ethnic and cultural harmony**.
- iv) Recreating together **builds strong families**, the foundation of a stronger society.
- v) Leisure provides opportunities for **community involvement, and shared management and ownership of resources**.
- vi) **Integrated and accessible leisure services** are critical to the quality of life of people with a disability and disadvantaged individuals.
- vii) Leisure opportunities, facilities and the quality of the local environment are the **foundations of community pride**.
- viii) Leisure services enrich and complement protective services for **latchkey children** through after-school and other recreational services.

Economic Benefits

- i) Pay now or pay more later! Investment in recreation as a **preventative health service** makes sense.
- ii) A fit work force is **a productive work force**.
- iii) Small investments in recreation yield **big economic returns**.
- iv) Parks and recreation services motivate **business relocation and expansion** in your community.
- v) Meaningful leisure services **reduce the high cost of vandalism and criminal activity**.
- vi) Recreation and park services are often the **catalyst for tourism**, a growing sector of our economy.
- vii) **Investments in environmental protection** through the provision of parks and open spaces **pay for themselves**.

Environmental Benefits

- i) Through the provision of parks, open spaces and protected natural environments, recreation can contribute to the **environmental health** of our communities. This is an essential, life sustaining role.
- ii) The public is often prepared to pay for **environmental**

protection and rehabilitation in their communities, and to support parks and recreation organizations that play a lead role in that provision.

- iii) **Investing in the environment** through parks and the provision of open space in residential areas, leads to an increase in neighbourhood property values through accessibility to environmentally-friendly green spaces and associated recreation opportunities.
- iv) The trend toward natural environment-based leisure activities is **insurance for a new and improved environmental future**.

Conclusion

What this shows is that the proposed parks, open space, facilities programs and related services further **all** of the personal, social, economic and environmental benefits. Of particular note are the **quality of life and community, health, safety/security and economic** benefits that will directly balance the recommended capital and ongoing operating investments outlined in this Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Appendix B: The Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario

Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario



Everyone in Ontario has a right to quality, accessible and inclusive recreation and parks services in their communities – services that are essential for the health of Ontarians, the quality of life in our communities, and the sustainability of our environment.

Recreation and Parks Rights of Ontarians

Every citizen in Ontario has the right and freedom to:

- **Participation**
Participate in safe, affordable and quality recreation programs that are in harmony with the diversity of the community.
- **Active Living**
Be physically active through participation in both organized and informal sport and recreation activities.
- **Access to Nature and the Outdoors**
Experience nature and access open spaces within their communities.
- **Enriching Experiences**
Experience the arts, cultural, heritage, sport and recreation activities in their communities.
- **A Welcoming and Inclusive Community**
Be included in activities that build strong communities, engaged citizens and a healthy family life.
- **Engagement**
Be engaged in the planning of recreation and parks in their communities and to participate in volunteer activities.

Recreation and parks can help us to overcome the significant challenges facing our communities today, including physical inactivity and the rising cost of health care, a rise in youth violence and the protection of our environment.

GOALS for Ontario Communities

To fulfill the Recreation and Parks Rights of Ontarians, every community provides these opportunities and services:

- Active transportation opportunities – i.e. accessible and inclusive human-powered forms of travel that enable people to walk or bike safely around their community.
- Safe, accessible and sustainable facilities, parks, trails and natural spaces.
- Programs (formal and informal), that are responsive to and inclusive of community needs.
- Events that bring people together and build community pride and spirit.

To achieve these goals, every community:

- 1) Has a partnership for action supported by grassroots champions and professional competence (staff and/or volunteer).
- 2) Develops and implements a viable, comprehensive recreation and parks strategy as a vital part of a healthy, active community strategy.
- 3) Exhibits strong collaboration among recreation, education, health, social and other human services.
- 4) Develops and implements policies and standards that exceed current regulations in each of the following areas of parks and recreation services:
 - Affordable access to recreation
 - Infrastructure and lifecycle replacement of parks and rec facilities
 - Screening and training of recreation and parks staff and volunteers
 - Healthy child development based on the UN Charter on the Rights of the Child
 - Learn life skills, such as swimming
- 5) Ensures a sustainable recreation and parks system through continued capital and operating investment, in cooperation with the public and private sectors (i.e. municipal, not-for-profit, foundations, and industry).
- 6) Has the capacity to measure and account for its progress and performance.

The ROLE of Ontario's Recreation and Park Leaders

To support the Goals for Ontario Communities, the recreation and parks sector takes responsibility to:

- Be a strong voice in shaping and influencing public policy.
- Use effective systems for recruiting and developing the qualified human resources necessary to plan and deliver programs.
- Improve public awareness of the importance and benefits of recreation and parks in order to enhance the position of parks and recreation on the public agenda.
- Provide effective and timely applied research that supports the understanding of how recreation and parks contributes to inclusive, healthy, and sustainable communities.
- Be recognized as an active and valued partner in cross-sectoral collaborations.
- Undertake innovative and evidence-based approaches.

Why this Charter is Important

Recreation and parks services contribute to the quality of life in our communities, the health of Ontarians and to the sustainability of our environment. In every community, recreation and parks makes a real and measurable impact on the lives of Ontarians. Research has shown that recreation and parks contributes to physical and mental health, acts as a protective factor for youth-at-risk and helps improve the circumstances for those living in poverty.

We must ensure that there is equitable access for all Ontarians, that our infrastructure and programs are responsive to community needs, and that our parks are protected.

This is why a “Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario” was created. While every community in Ontario is unique, there are common goals that all communities should strive to achieve to ensure that all of their citizens are able to enjoy the significant benefits provided by recreation and parks.

This charter supports a community’s commitment to ensuring that their citizens’ right to recreation and parks services is met.

Charter Development: Background

Senior leaders of recreation and parks services, representing small and large communities from across Ontario, have identified common issues and challenges facing municipalities. The number one priority identified is the need to ensure that the significant values and benefits of recreation and parks are:

- a) clearly understood as a significant contributor to healthy, sustainable communities; and
- b) realized by all Ontarians through effective infrastructure and delivery of services.

A task force was commissioned to work in cooperation with the boards of organizations in parks and recreation to develop a charter to:

- provide a common vision that communities can use to support and raise awareness of the value and benefits of recreation and parks; and
- provide common goals that can help to guide recreation and parks service delivery and evaluation.

In February 2008, the task force presented a “Draft Charter” to the delegates of a provincial Senior Managers’ Institute. Their review, revisions and subsequent ratification provided the basis for the content of this Charter for Recreation and Parks in Ontario.

Glossary of Terms

Accessible: Citizens are able to access (recreation and parks) services without having to surmount undue obstacles or barriers.

Active living: A way of life in which physical, social, mental, emotional and spiritual activities are valued and are integrated into daily living.

Active transportation: Active transportation is any form of self-propelled (i.e. non-motorized) mode of transportation that uses human energy, such as walking, cycling or in-line skating.

Cross-sectoral collaboration: Different sectors (e.g. health, social services, economic development) working together to solve a common problem or achieve a common objective.

Facilities: Built or enclosed structures used for community recreation and leisure. May include multi-purpose recreation/fitness facilities, soccer fields, ball diamonds, arenas, pools as well as recreation centres, seniors’ centres and community buildings.

Inclusive: Creating an environment where everyone, regardless of circumstance, is able to participate fully in their community to the best of their abilities and desires. Inclusive communities, programs and services are (to the greatest extent possible): accessible to those who cannot afford to pay; barrier free; able to accommodate special needs; safe and hate-free; and include activities that value and incorporate diversity in culture, race, language and sexual orientation; and that support gender equality.

Natural environment: The air, land and water, or any combination or part thereof, that occurs naturally within an area. May include lakes, rivers, forests, ravines and grasslands.

Parks and open space: Includes all outdoor open spaces that provide opportunities and benefits for active, passive and organized community recreation and leisure; contribute to the preservation and protection of open space and the environment; and are generally accessible to the public. May include parklands, trails, forests, wetlands and beaches.

Recreation: Includes all of those activities in which individuals choose to participate in during leisure time. Activities are not confined solely to sports and physical recreation programs, but include artistic, creative, cultural, social and intellectual activities. Defining attributes of recreation include: physical and artistic experiences; activities freely chosen by participants (non-mandatory and occurring out of school); opportunity for progressive skill development and fun.

Sustainable: Can be continued in the future and uses natural and human resources in a way that does not jeopardize the opportunities of future generations.

Contact

For further information about the Charter:

Parks and Recreation Ontario • 416-426-7142 • www.prontario.org • pro@prontario.org

Appendix C: Leisure Trends and Best Practices in Service Provision

Due to the moderate growth that the Township has experienced over the past several decades and is anticipated at least into the next few years, the generic/provincial leisure trends will generally apply to the community. It is important to remember that the influence of the values and interests of the big Baby Boom generation (age 50-69 in 2015) and the smaller, but still quite large Echo generation (age 21-36 in 2015) will strongly influence demand for leisure by younger and older adults, as well as service expectation and the way in which services should be provided.

If the rate of population growth excretes significantly, as projected by the Medium Growth Scenario (see **Section 2.4** in Chapter Two), the upward and downward trends will be muted a little, since the overall age of the population will gradually become younger than average Ontario. Communities that grow rapidly, especially those that are

suburban in nature, tend to attract young families and a more culturally diverse population.

Additional influences will come from the above average income and education levels of the Township's population.

Interest is increasing the most for linear activities, fitness/wellness pursuits, arts and culture, intellectually-stimulating and learning-based activities, low impact physical activities, life-long pursuits (such as swimming and walking), and a wide variety of nature-based pursuits. Participation is stabilizing or declining for all manner of child and youth activities, as well as strenuous sports and recreation pursuits. **Figure C-2** provides a summary of the upward and downward trends in leisure activities that are expected over the next decade or two.

Upward and Downward Trends in Leisure Activities - based on: Provincial Trends and the Influences of the Current and Anticipated Future Characteristics and Growth Potential of the Local Population

Figure C-2

Leisure Activities Trending DOWNWARD	Leisure Activities Trending UPWARD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ most arena activities - especially minor hockey and figure skating as the Echo generation ages into their young adult years, and eventually into older adult hockey as the Baby Boom generation ages out – However, there should continue to be an increase in girls hockey until the participation rate peaks (but the numbers will be relatively small compared to the decline in child and youth male participation) – and there should be an increase in young adult hockey as the Echo generation ages into their young adult years – but their participation rate will be lower than for minor hockey ▪ child and youth softball ▪ hardball ▪ children's camps (except for specialty camps) ▪ Scouting and Guiding ▪ swimming lessons for children (except in younger and ethnically diverse communities) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ nature appreciation/nature study activities, orienteering/adventure travel and eco-tourism ▪ gardening ▪ visiting botanical/display gardens and related facilities ▪ reading ▪ walking, hiking and backpacking ▪ tennis, racquetball and squash (although the trend in these sports has been down for a decade or two, if the Echo generation is encouraged to take up tennis, racquetball and squash, and adequate facilities are provided and promoted, demand could grow) ▪ cross-country skiing on shorter and gentler trails (influenced by an aging population) ▪ alpine skiing (although the trend has been down for a decade or two, if the Echo generation is encouraged to take up alpine skiing, demand could grow) ▪ going on self-guided/directed tours (local and travel-oriented) ▪ lacrosse (varies by community and is influenced by recent increasing interest in professional lacrosse) ▪ fitness and related activities that support health and holistic wellness – mental and physical well-being ▪ fitness/wellness programs for all ages

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ badminton ▪ volleyball ▪ basketball ▪ golf ▪ curling ▪ mountain biking ▪ long distance bicycling ▪ water skiing ▪ tobogganing ▪ snowmobiling (<i>unless the sport can find ways to retain enough of the aging market through sled design and other attractions</i>) ▪ hunting ▪ attending sporting events (<i>except for horse racing which will be driven by the growing appetite for gambling</i>) ▪ watching sporting events on TV ▪ volunteering (<i>the Baby Boom generation is less likely to participate in the way that the current older adult market has, and they will participate less than when they were younger – unless volunteer engagement practices change dramatically to entice this and younger generations into sustained volunteering</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ swimming for pleasure ▪ therapeutic and health-related aquatic programs ▪ outdoor soccer (<i>across Canada, the participation rate is peaking – youth participation appears to have peaked, but there is still some growth in girls and women’s soccer and participation by men</i>) ▪ indoor soccer (<i>demand is increasing dramatically from competitive youth and adults, house league children and youth, and adult recreational, especially women – demand will be driven by the availability of facilities</i>) ▪ Ultimate Frisbee (<i>a relatively new sport with growing interest – demand will be driven by the availability of indoor soccer facilities and excess time at suitable outdoor fields</i>) ▪ in-line hockey (<i>relatively new sport with growing interest</i>) ▪ recreational in-line skating (<i>relatively new sport with growing interest</i>) ▪ attending theatre and concerts ▪ participating in creative art and hand craft activities ▪ attending multi-cultural events/festivals ▪ attending handcraft exhibitions/shows ▪ visiting art galleries/attending art shows ▪ visiting museums and historic sites ▪ attending historic re-enactments and heritage festivals ▪ bowling (<i>if up-scaled and packaged with other complimentary facilities/activities that also appeal to people in their 40s and 50s</i>) ▪ pickleball (<i>relatively new sport of interest to older adults, but also youth</i>) ▪ cricket (<i>culturally-based</i>) ▪ casual/recreational skating, especially in attractive, amenity-rich outdoor settings ▪ dancing (<i>ballroom, line, square, Scottish, etc.</i>) ▪ bicycling ▪ fishing and fishing tournaments ▪ camping ▪ boating ▪ eating out ▪ driving for pleasure ▪ computer and Internet use ▪ gambling
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Other Related Trends

There are other **trends in facility and open space planning, and service provision** that are shaping the future of open space and facility provision, and leisure delivery systems in communities across Canada. These trends are responding to the shifts in demand, the role of service providers, the economy, and community values and attitudes. They are also responding to:

- the desire for increased operational efficiency and revenues;

- the need for improved programmability and usability;
- increasing desire for one-stop-shopping for facilities, information, registration, etc.;
- increasing understanding of the value of creating a higher physical profile for public leisure facilities (location, visibility and critical mass);
- increasing desire for extended-season and year-round participation in some sports;

- heavy promotion to potential young participants for some sports (e.g., softball 'Blast Ball', baseball, slo-pitch, lacrosse, rugby, tennis);
- increasing demand for activities that require large nature-oriented spaces;
- increasing desire to protect lands that are environmentally sensitive, and the trend toward ecosystem-based planning that acknowledges the link between natural systems, communities and people;
- the need to create open space networks and greenway corridors to support healthy ecosystems and low-impact linear recreation activities;
- increased understanding that integrated open space systems can provide essential environmental and health benefits; and
- increased understanding that park systems and other leisure services provide valuable personal benefits, are essential to a high quality of life, help to build strong, attractive communities; and help to grow and sustain the economy.

Key Leisure Facility Trends

- Toward multi-purpose indoor leisure facilities and away from single-purpose facilities.
 - Toward the co-location of complementary facilities such as a library, health and public service centres with leisure-oriented complexes.
 - Toward clustering of similar major (often lighted) outdoor facilities into a multi-facility complex with appropriate support facilities (e.g., ball diamonds, soccer fields and tennis courts).
 - Toward a greater percentage of natural turf outdoor sports facilities being irrigated and lighted to support increased frequency of use and to survive severe summer weather and the trend toward pesticide-free maintenance. However, many minor sports groups cannot afford the associated higher rental fees.
 - Toward increasing use of artificial turf for playing fields to extend the playing season and allow various sports to utilize the facilities.
- Since aquatic facilities continue to be one of the most requested facilities and it has become clear that most people like to swim for pleasure *and* fitness, pool designs have become more supportive of the wider range of swimming interests, including leisure swimming, health/wellness programs and the needs of the less mobile. Aquatic facilities that cater well to a wide range of needs generate more revenue than traditional designs. Another trend that will continue to gain momentum is the increasing demand for a therapeutic tank and associated rehabilitation and wellness programming within an aquatic facility.
 - Interest in cultural facilities and spending on the arts has been growing, supported, in part by growing awareness, and an increasing adult market that is better educated and more affluent. Arts and culture have a positive impact on the economy of a community and help to increase the overall appeal of a community to business and residents. With the reduction of arts programming in schools, responsibility is shifting to other public, community and commercial providers to ensure balance in the growth and development of children and youth.
 - Gymnasiums are increasingly being provided by municipal leisure service agencies as part of larger multi-purpose complexes. This has been influenced in part by continued difficulty in accessing school facilities in a way that is consistent and affordable to many traditional customers. In addition, municipal leisure service agencies are appreciating the flexibility of a gymnasium to accommodate a wide variety of leisure and other activities, as well as the benefit of having programming control at all times.
 - Emerging sports are demanding more and different types of facilities. For example, sports such as Ultimate Frisbee, organized ball hockey, in-line hockey, recreational in-line skating, floor ball, cricket, field hockey, pickleball, roller derby, rugby, and indoor soccer are gaining in popularity. Some of the emerging sports are able to utilize existing facilities in 'slow' or off-season times, while others are placing increased prime time pressure on already heavily utilized facilities (e.g., Ultimate Frisbee, field hockey, field

lacrosse, rugby, roller derby, box lacrosse). Some activities require new types of facilities.

- Toward an increasing number of revenue-generating ancillary spaces in public community centres (e.g., arcades, ATM machines, food and drink dispensers, enhanced food services, licensed food services and pro shops).
- Throughout Ontario, there are many leisure facilities that were built in the 1960s and 1970s that are inaccessible or have limited accessibility, outdated, inefficient and large consumers of energy, and are in need of considerable repair and refurbishing or replacement.

Key Park and Open Space System Trends

- Toward increased linking of parks, other public open spaces and other complementary land uses to create open space networks and open space greenways – at the local, community and municipality-wide/regional levels.
- Increased desire to protect and enhance natural heritage resources such as wetlands, woodlots, valley lands, Environmentally Significant Areas, and Areas of Natural and Scientific Interest. There is an increasing desire to include/protect 'locally significant' natural heritage assets into the public open space system in urban areas.
- Toward increased habitat protection and naturalization of parkland.
- Increased desire to acquire and/or protect or restore as open space, waterfront lands along lakes and rivers in urban areas.
- Toward locating major community leisure facilities and sports-oriented parks on high profile, visible sites with good frontage, rather than hiding them away on lower cost, less visible sites, sometimes with little street frontage.
- Toward creating large sports parks that can accommodate clusters of high quality, lit outdoor and indoor facilities – supported by ample parking, service building(s) and amenities (e.g., picnic area, a playground, water play feature, walkways, ponds).

- Changing role for neighbourhood parks with less emphasis on junior/minor sports facilities and tennis courts – leading to smaller sites with more parkland allocated to larger community and higher level parks (see above).

Key Leisure Delivery System Trends

- Toward an increasing number of facility, operational and programming partnerships and other types of strategic alliances among municipal and other leisure-oriented providers, health organizations, educational institutions, organizations serving older adults, commercial operators, etc.
- Toward increased and improved promotion of community leisure opportunities, and more joint ventures among leisure service providers to promote leisure opportunities and enhance the concept of an 'integrated single point of information'.
- Toward an increasing role in facilitation/indirect provision, and a return to community development and fostering 'healthy communities'.
- Toward fewer combined parks and recreation departments and a lower profile for leisure service operations (in many communities, traditional parks and/or recreation operations are being incorporated into departments such as community services, people services, environmental services, public works, and operational services).
- Even though recreation demand may be stabilizing or declining for younger age groups, many municipalities are still playing catch-up to bridge the gap between demand levels and current supply for many types of facilities.
- Increasingly, residents are expecting higher quality in programming, facilities and parks - influenced in part by higher rental rates and program fees.
- There is an increasing need for specially trained staff that are experienced in research and planning, fund development, volunteer engagement, special events and marketing.
- Toward a more professional and better funded approach to

volunteer engagement, founded on contemporary philosophy and best practices.

- Toward non-traditional and more aggressive revenue-generating initiatives, as well as fund development programs such as 'adopt-a-park', program and facility sponsorship, naming rights, advertising in public buildings and on equipment, gift catalogues, planned giving, etc.
- Toward an increasing appreciation of the significant economic and

social benefits of sports tournaments and regional/provincial Olympic events; major cultural, seasonal and arts events; major leisure-oriented trade shows; and the development of leisure venues that are of a scale to support sports tourism.

- Toward an understanding that the annual net operating costs associated with parks and leisure facilities are an ongoing *investment* in our communities and the local economy, rather than thinking about these ongoing costs as a *deficit*.

Appendix D: Background/Resource Documents

The following reports, plans and other documents were reviewed to inform the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update.

Municipal Study, BMA Management Consultants Inc., 2013.

Parks and Recreation Property Inventory, Township of Springwater, 2014.

Municipal Performance Measurement Program, Summary of 2011 Results.

Midhurst Secondary Plan, Schedule 'A' to By-Law 2880-106, Township of Springwater, October, 2008.

Neighbourhood Design Plan, Midhurst, Carson Neighbourhood 1, MBTW Group and Watchorn Architect Inc., June, 2014.

Neighbourhood Design Plan, Midhurst, Doran Neighbourhoods 2 and 3, MBTW Group and Watchorn Architect Inc., June, 2014.

Anticipated Residential Growth, Fire Department Emergency Plan, September, 2014.

Corporation of the Township of Springwater, Official Plan, Ext Office Consolidation, October, 2014.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan, dmA Planning and Management Services, 2005.

Township of Springwater Culture and Recreation Master Plan Planning Context Report, dmA Planning and Management Services, 2005.

Multi-Purpose Recreation Complex Feasibility Study, dmA Planning and Management Services, 2008.

Facility Needs Assessment, Springwater Public Library, Dysart & Jones Associates and dmA Planning and Management Service, 2014.

Township of Springwater Assessment of Community Centres, Trow Associates Inc., 2005.

Showcase Springwater – Celebrating Our Culture - Municipal Culture Plan, Miller Dickinson Blais, 2012.

Development Charges Background Report, Township of Springwater, Hemson Consulting Ltd., 2013.

Township of Springwater Trails Master Plan, 2008, GSP Group.

Long Range Financial Plan, Township of Springwater, Information Package #1 for Stakeholder Review (Growth Forecasts – Revised), HEMSON Consulting Ltd., May 15, 2015.

Memorandum to Information Package #1, Follow-up to Issues Discussed at Meeting of 21 September, 2015 with Midhurst Landowners, HEMSON Consulting Ltd., October 16, 2015.

Appendix E: Parks and Open Space Inventory

Township of Springwater Parks and Open Space, 2015

Figure E-1

Site	Size		Location	Ownership	Facilities, Features and Notes
	Acres	Hectares			
Township-wide/Regional Parkland and Open Space					
Tree Nursery Sports Park	69.0	27.95	Rural	Township	2 Sr. lit softball diamonds, 5 Sr. unlit soccer fields, service building, parking
Edenvale Conservation Area	13.0	5.3	Rural	NVCA	Canoe launch, picnic tables, outhouses
Edenvale Community Park	.25	0.1	Rural	Township	Site of the former Edenvale Community Centre – demolished in 1996
Edenvale Park Diamond	2.03	0.82	Rural	Township	Jr. ball diamond (poor condition)
Elmvale Arena/Curling Rink site	1.72	0.7	Elmvale	Township	Within the boundaries of the Flos Agricultural Society Fairground
Flos Agricultural Society Fairground	13.72	5.55	Elmvale	Flos Agr. Soc.	Sr. lit softball diamond with bleachers, pavilion/concession, 2 lit tennis courts, agricultural buildings & facilities & parking
Doran Park	35.0	14.2	Midhurst	Township	Sr. lit softball diamond with bleachers, playground, outdoor fitness equipment, four lit tennis courts (domed in winter), plans for picnic pavilion/concession/washrooms (2015), park does not connect to Finlay Mill Rd.
Willow Creek Valley Park	18.0	7.3	Midhurst	Township	Contains the 1.5 km. Hunter Russell Nature Trail which intersects with the Ganaraska Trail; there are six points of access from adjacent parks & connections to residential streets (due to the irregular shape, size is approx.). The first 165 ft. of the trail north of Finlay Mill Rd. is on private property, accessed through an agreement.
North Simcoe Rail Trail	160.6	65.0	Rural	Township	From just inside the southern boundary of the Township to the northern boundary & beyond where it becomes the Tiny (Township) Trail
Nine Mile Portage Recreational Trail	14.5	5.87	Rural	Township	From Barrie to Fort Willow via unopened road allowance, open roads & private property
Nine Mile Portage Heritage Corridor	8.0	3.24	Centre Vespra	Township	Through Stone Manor Woods residential area
Total Township-wide/Regional Parkland	335.82	136.03			
Community Parks					
Heritage Park	7.45	3.02	Elmvale	Township	Picnic pavilion with concession, storage & washrooms; amphitheatre; playground; NSRT
Midhurst Community Centre site	0.59	0.24	Midhurst	Township	Accommodates the community hall & parking
Grenfel Community Park	18.08	7.32	Grenfel	Township	Small community hall, pavilion/outdoor rink (with boards), 1 Intermediate unlit softball diamond, 2 Jr. Ball diamonds (poor condition), 1 Small Mini soccer field with portable nets (potential to expand), playground, parking

Anten Mills Community Park	4.4	1.78	Anten Mills	Township	Community hall, Inter. softball diamond, pavilion/outdoor rink, playground
Hillsdale Community Park	11.4	4.62	Hillsdale	Township	Community hall (newer), Sr. lit softball diamond, picnic pavilion/outdoor rink, playground, parking
Minesing Community Centre and Memorial Park	1.16 0.2	0.47 0.08	Minesing	Township	Developed as one contiguous site, community hall, picnic pavilion/outdoor rink (with boards & two adjacent buildings), outhouse, water towers/pump house)
Black Creek subdivision linear open space	23.11	9.36	Snow Valley		Municipal open space surrounds the development on east, north & west sides; County land also exists along south & east, in addition to NVCA lands along the west
North Orr Lake Road site	13.83	5.6	Rural	Township	Undeveloped, large site with limited access at the end of North Orr Lake Rd., narrow water access, located within a Provincially Significant Wetland
Total Community Parkland	80.22	32.49			
Neighbourhood Parks					
Homer Barret Park	5.6	2.27	Elmvale	Township	Old established park with poor access & visibility, small picnic pavilion, playground, toboggan hill, large & flat turfed area (could accommodate 2 Mini & one Intermediate soccer fields)
Bishop Park	1.1	0.45	Elmvale	Township	Playground, small picnic pavilion/outdoor rink, bridge over creek to northern extension of Heritage Park & the NSRT, outdoor fitness equipment, parking, pumping station
Robinson Park	0.89	0.36	Elmvale	Township	Playground, parking, NSRT parallels the park on the east
Elmvale Meadows Park	0.25	0.1	Elmvale	Township	Playground, walkway connecting south to Knox Dr.
Midhurst Community Park	1.8	0.73	Midhurst	Township	Well established older park, Intermediate unlit softball diamond with bleachers, playground, street parking
Green Pine Park	4.0	1.6	Midhurst	Township	Sport pad/skating rink with 4 basketball backstops, playground, pathway through adjacent valley lands
Cowdray Park	1.0	0.41	Midhurst	Township	Playground; good frontage, size & shape
Cherry Park	1.4	0.57	Midhurst	Township	Playground, pleasant setting, link between St. Vincent St. & Idlewood Dr., abuts hydro corridor along southern border – creating a link to a walkway & Golden Oak Dr. to the south
Holloway Park	6.0	2.43	Midhurst	Township	Playground, trail to west to bridge over creek in willow Creek Valley Park, poor frontage
Glen Huron Park	2.01	0.81	Midhurst	Township	Playground, sport pad/outdoor skating rink with 2 basketball back stops, excellent frontage
Paddy Dunn Park	1.0	0.41	Midhurst	Township	Playground, treed backdrop, very pleasant park, well treed
Park Trail Hilltop	3.16	1.28	Midhurst	Township	Vacant site, limited access off Park Trail Rd. (poor access & visibility, & slope constraints – may have increased value if the area to the east develops)

Sherwood Hill	5.18	2.1	Midhurst	Township	Vacant site, access off Rosewood Av., Frid Blvd. & Deamicis Cres. (has poor access & visibility, is heavily treed & has slope constraints – low development potential)
Wagner Park	1.7	0.69	Anten Mills	Township	Playground, pump house & wells
Hendrie Ridge Park	1.04	0.42	Anten Mills	Township	Playground, treed boarder, walkway through park & to Laddie Lane
Graham Macdonald Park	1.01	.41	Hillsdale	Township	Playground, mail boxes, adjacent to a SWM site which could be improved & incorporated into the park as a passive/natural area
Highlands of Hillsdale Park	0.82	0.33	Hillsdale	Township	Small playground, very small site
Harry Adams Memorial Park	1.94	0.79	Minesing	Township	Located between the Minesing Central Public Elementary School on the west (relatively large site) and a storm water management site to the east (relatively level and useable site of similar size to the park that is usually wet only in the spring)
Foyston Park	4.4	1.78	Minesing	Township	Playground, parking, eastern half is wooded
O'Neil Park	3.6	1.46	Phelpston	Township	Intermediate softball diamond with bleachers, no parking lot
Valendar	3.12	1.26	Phelpston	Township	Outdoor rink with boards but no roof, playground, NSRT/Trans Canada Trail along eastern border, old wooden backstop
Snow Valley Park	3.1	1.26	Snow Valley	Township	Playground, Jr. ball diamond, narrow entrance from west
Snow Valley Highlands Park	5.2	2.1	Snow Valley	Township	Intermediate softball diamond, playground
Black Creek subdivision park site	0.5	0.2	Snow Valley	Township	Playground
Stonegate Park	3.57	1.46	Centre Vespra	Township	Playground, largely wooded, walkway through to Sunnidale Rd.
Stone Manor subdivision site – Phase 1	7.85	3.18	Centre Vespra	Township	Currently undeveloped
Stone Manor subdivision site – Phase 2	4.91	1.99	Centre Vespra	Township	Currently undeveloped
Vespra Downs Park	1.28	0.52	Vespra Downs	Township	Playground, good frontage, utility building on east side, would benefit from trees
Orr Lake Park	0.52	0.21	Orr Lake	Township	Developed along unopened road allowance to Orr Lake, playground near water, unofficial beach/shallow water, very pleasant, parking lot
Undeveloped park site	2.7	1.09	Hamelville	Township	Treed, two narrow access points plus a small amount of Nottawasaga River frontage (poor access & visibility)
Marni Lane Park	0.7	0.28	Fergusonvale	Township	Playground, no trees
Maple Ridge subdivision park site	7.56	3.06	Fergusonvale	Township	Under development (2015); reasonable frontage on Flos Rd. Four E. with 3 walkway access points to adjacent streets; largely a wooded site; open area at north end seeded & walkways installed; to include playground equipment in future
Pinehill Estates Park	2.59	1.05	Pinehill Estates	Township	Playground, significant unstructured turf area, treed backdrop – although no trees in open portion of park
Crystalwaters Park	5.64	2.28	Rural subdiv.	Township	Hidden park due to unopened road allowance along west side, 2 points of access to Hillview Cres. (east & north), playground
Ravines of Matheson Creek Park	3.21	1.3	Rural subdiv.	Township	Playground & woodlot
Apto Glen Park	3.25	1.32	South of Fergusonvale	Township	Playground
Total Neighbourhood Parkland	103.6	41.96			

Specialty Open Space					
Jodies Lane undeveloped site	2.1	0.85	Midhurst	Township	Inaccessible site, comprising cedar swamp adjacent to Willow Creek – will remain in natural state
Orr Lake Boat Launch	0.75	0.3	Orr Lake	Township	Boat launch to Orr Lake
John Brown Memorial Park	0.2	0.08	Elmvale	Township	Monument identifying former water tower, commemorative trees, benches, utility building
Spruce Grove Park	2.0	0.81	Rural	Township	Roadside picnic site & rest area
Minesing Station Park	1.0	0.41	Minesing	Township	NSRT parking & staging area, Trans Canada Trail Kiosk/picnic pavilion
Binnie Drive roadside site	0.33	0.13	Anten Mills	Township	Passive, undeveloped site in turnaround at end of Binnie Dr.
Finlay Mill-Wattie Rd. roadside site	0.26	0.11	Midhurst	Township	Historic sign depicting site of Midhurst Mill
Hamilton Inn, Hwy 93 roadside site	0.4	0.16	Rural	Township	Historic cairn depicting the site of the 1st Township of Flos council mtg.
Total Specialty Open Space	7.04	2.85			
Total Parks and Open Space	526.68	213.33			
Total Township-owned Parkland	499.96	202.48			

Appendix F: Park and Open Space Policies in the Township Official Plan

Policies relating to parks and open space are contained in the Township of Springwater Official Plan under the sections noted below. Generally, these policies are consistent with the policies and intent of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update. Recommendations contained in **Chapter 7** of the Update and commentary provided below in **bold text** should influence revision of these policies, when appropriate.

Section 3: General Development Policies

- encourages public authorities and private individuals to develop parks and recreation areas.
- notes that environmentally significant lands, including wetlands will be valued and protected.

Section 7: Community Design

Policies speak to:

- design excellence, desirable image, sense of place
- create identifiable landmarks
- encourage multi-purpose buildings
- retain and enhance distinctive built and natural features within the rural area
- site significant buildings at important locations to enhance their visual and functional use and contribute to Springwater's image
- protect, enhance and integrate important natural features, as well as ecological and hydrological functions
- subdivisions with have well developed pedestrian environments, including the use of sidewalks where possible

Section 8: Settlement Areas

- Several sections in the Official Plan deal with specific settlement areas and include policies that reference parks, linear connectors, active transportation, storm water management open space, environmentally sensitive areas and natural heritage resources.

- In Section 8.3.7 (the **Centre Vespra** Community Plan), specific open space and parks policies are provided.
- Section 8.6 provides policies for the **Midhurst Settlement Area** and recommends that a Secondary Plan and supplemental studies be prepared (Secondary Plan completed October 29, 2008). Subsequently, Neighbourhood Design Plans were prepared for the three neighbourhoods comprising the Midhurst Secondary Plan (June, 2014).
 - Public parks, Environmental Protection Areas 1 and 2, and the storm water management system are to combine into an extensive and inter-connected greenlands system.
 - Parks shall include lands within the following categories:
 - Neighbourhood Parks (0.5 – 3.5 ha./1.25 – 8.64 ac.) – within a 5-minute walk – intended to accommodate major community and recreational facilities, connected to trails within the natural heritage system – **The Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update recommends a four-tiered hierarchy of parks/open space. See Figure 15 and Recommendations 66 and 67 in Chapter 7. The Master Plan recommends that Neighbourhood parks assume a lower profile and more passive role than intended by the Secondary Plan policy, and that they be smaller in size (0.1 - 1.25 hectares/0.25 - 3.1 acres). Major recreation facilities would be accommodated in Community-level and Township-wide/Regional parks.**
 - Parkettes/Urban Squares (min of 0.25 ha./0.62 ac.) – parkettes within residential neighbourhoods, urban squares within neighbourhood centres – **Parkettes/Urban Squares would be incorporated into either the Neighbourhood parkland category or Specialty Open Space.**

- The Secondary Plan includes a highly interconnected system of environmental features to preserve ecological functions. These lands (that will not all be in public ownership) will provide the opportunity for the Township to greatly expand the system of trails and pathways within the Midhurst area.

Section 15: Open Space Policies

- The following is a summary of the Open Space policies contained in Section 15 of the Official Plan. **There are no policies in the Official Plan that are specific to a parks and open space classification system/hierarchy, nor are there service standards for the various categories of parkland/open space, as recommended in the 2005 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and this 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update (See Figure 15). However, related policies are contained in the Midhurst Secondary Plan as noted and commented on above.**
- Section 15 Open Space Policy Objectives:
 - i) To provide a range of leisure activities for all ages and interest groups.
 - ii) To preserve and improve the natural features of the Township.
 - iii) To maintain and enhance scenic vistas.
 - iv) To conserve beaches, wooded lands and other distinctive topographical features.
- Open space lands should be used for active and passive recreational and conservation uses.
- Open space lands should be developed as they are acquired so that residents will be encouraged to use the open space areas.
- Visual and physical means of access shall be provided. **Suggest adding the adjective ‘adequate’ to ‘visual and physical’.**
- Parking areas shall be established. **Parking is not required for Neighbourhood parks.**
- Cash-in-lieu of land dedication for parkland may be accepted when the parkland dedication is not desirable.

- The Township may obtain easements and/or enter into agreements with private land owners and public or private agencies for the use of lands for park purposes (particularly to accommodate trails).
- The Township contains significant natural greenways and historic paths and trails, some situated along former rail line rights-of-way (e.g., Ganaraska Trail, Nine Mile Portage, North Simcoe Rail Trail, and numerous snowmobile trails).
- **The Official Plan focuses on health and recreation uses of greenways, but does not mention their natural system uses and benefits (e.g., animal movement).**
- It is a Township priority to continue to acquire surplus rail routes and utility corridors, and may enter into agreements with others to facilitate this.
- Retention of Willow Creek valley lands, along with appropriate adjacent lands is mentioned re: the Midhurst settlement area.

Section 16: Natural Heritage (Environmental Protection) Policies

- The Natural Heritage policies provide six objectives (see the Official Plan), which describe the natural heritage system and provide direction for the Township.
- Two categories of natural heritage features and areas are defined:
 - **Category 1 Lands** – characterized as undeveloped natural areas of high environmental quality and significance and/or sensitivity (typically will be both publicly and privately owned) (International, provincial and locally significant wetlands, ANSIs, significant habitat that are endangered and threatened, and significant natural watercourses and ravines)
 - **Category 2 Lands** - characterized as areas of lesser environmental significance and/or sensitivity, although areas of high environmental quality may also be present within Category 2 Lands. Category 2 Lands can also contain lands and/or waters previously altered or impacted, as well as developed areas which exhibit a variety and mix of existing

uses. (lands situated adjacent to provincially and locally significant wetlands and other Natural Heritage (Environmental Protection) Category 1 Lands; unique and significant biologically sensitive wildlife habitat; forests and woodlots; natural connections through valley corridors or other linkages between core areas of the Natural Heritage System; groundwater recharge and discharge; aquifer and shoreline areas; and natural fish habitat)

- **Constraint and Hazard Lands** are also defined:
 - Based on defined Fill Regulation Areas/the most current fill line mapping (floodplain mapping is not extensive and has not been undertaken for the majority of the Township).
 - These lands may be defined as including: those areas which may possess characteristics such as organic soil, soil of bedrock instability, high ground water tables, steep slopes, or lands which may be susceptible to flooding events and erosion hazards.
 - Uses that may be permitted within a floodplain include: parks and passive open space, and non-habitable accessory structures.

Section 27: Heritage Policies

- To conserve, preserve and maintain the Township's physical cultural heritage (archeological sites of historic and prehistoric origins; buildings and structural remains of historical and architectural value; rural, village and urban areas of development which are of historic and scenic interest; and identified heritage districts and cultural heritage landscapes).