

Municipal Recreation Master Plan Report

Municipality of
Arran-Elderslie
26 February 2021



tractconsulting.com

TRACT

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Corrina Dawe / Gerhard Weiland

100 LeMarchant Road St. John's NL A1C 2H2

P. 709.738.2500 F. 709.738.2499

cdawe@tractconsulting.com / gweiland@tractconsulting.com

Acknowledgements

Many people were involved in the development of this Recreation Master Plan. The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie acknowledges and values the contribution of its residents, partners, and volunteers who contributed to the preparation of this Master Plan.

The consultants also thank the many community groups, volunteers and residents who attended meetings and completed surveys, and provided input and insights into recreation needs and service delivery in Arran-Elderslie.

Thank you as well to members of the Municipal Council, including Mayor Steve Hammel, Councillor Ryan Greig, and CAO Bill Jones for participating in the process. We also would like to thank staff for their time and valuable insights.

A final note of appreciation goes to the Manager of Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Carly Steinhoff, for spearheading this project, compiling all background information, organizing meetings, conducting facilities tours, and providing ongoing support and keeping the project moving forward at pace.

Executive Summary

The Municipal Recreation Master Plan for Arran-Elderslie is a Plan for renewal and growth. The Towns that came together in 1999 to create the Municipality brought with them a wealth of recreation facilities – community centres with ice arenas, curling rinks and program spaces, as well as athletic fields, parks, playgrounds and trails. Over the years, new amenities were added, many through the efforts of volunteers and service clubs dedicated to improving the lives of citizens in the Town. Today, in 2020, much of the infrastructure, similar to the situation in Canada and Ontario, is ageing. Typically, major reinvestment or replacement of recreation infrastructure occurs when facilities are 40-50 years old. Recommendations in this report are guided by the recognition that many facilities are in need of such reinvestment.

Recommendations also consider that the facilities typically would be considered a part of a network of facilities within a municipality. While this has been considered as much as possible, this Master Plan also recognizes that residents of Arran-Elderslie have a strong sense of identity with their individual town and place a high value on the amenities within it. For this reason, recommendations are guided by the principle that successful recreation services meet the demands of its community. Every community is distinct with specific needs and values.

Recommendations for the development of new, or renewed, amenities also consider that the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie is growing, with populations of young families and young children bringing the promise of long-term sustainability and opportunities, as well as increased demand for quality recreation services. The Bruce Power Plant Life Extension Program will bring many new families to the area – it will create 5,000 jobs annually throughout its investment program. Quality recreation facilities and services, and the social inclusion it brings, is an important factor in where people choose to live. This Master Plan also recognizes that recreation brings economic development and tourism opportunities that can be realized when quality facilities and services are available.

Finally, this Recreation Master Plan is developed also with a recognition that volunteers have been instrumental in the provision of facilities and services in Arran-Elderslie. Continued collaboration with these groups as well as the support of the community is essential to realizing the investments required to implement this plan.

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1. Approach and Methodology.....	2
2. EXISTING FACILITIES + SERVICES	6
2.1. Indoor Facilities	6
2.2. Outdoor Facilities	9
2.3. Programs and Service Delivery.....	12
3. IDENTIFICATION OF COMMUNITY NEEDS AND KEY ISSUES.....	16
3.1. Key Stakeholder Interviews.....	16
3.2. Public Meeting.....	16
3.3. Summary of Stakeholder Consultations and Public Meeting Findings	17
3.4. Public Survey	18
3.5. List of Needs Arising from Community Input	21
4. PLANNING CONTEXT	24
4.1. Demographic Profile of Arran-Elderslie.....	24
4.2. Age Composition	24
4.3. Household Characteristics.....	26
4.4. Gender Distribution.....	26
4.5. Household and Individual Income.....	28
4.6. Education Levels.....	28
4.7. Labour Force Status.....	28
4.8. Home Ownership.....	29
5. TRENDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS.....	32
5.1. Demographic Trends	32
5.2. Behavioral Trends.....	35
5.3. Organizational and Workplace Trends	38
5.4. Infrastructure Trends	38
6. VISIONS + STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS	40

- 7. COMMUNITY ISSUES, NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 42**
 - 7.1. Indoor Recreation Facilities..... 42
 - 7.2. Outdoor Recreation Facilities..... 47
 - 7.3. Program and Services Issues and Recommendations 71
 - 7.4. Operating Management Issues and Services 77
- 8. RECOMMENDATIONS, PRIORITIES, IMPLEMENTATION PLAN + COST 84**
- 9. POTENTIAL SOURCES OF FUNDING 86**
- 10. APPENDICES..... 88**

1

Introduction

1. Introduction

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie is a rural area of 6,800 residents, spanning 460 square kilometres in the heart of Bruce County. The Municipality is comprised of the Town of Chesley, Village of Paisley, Village of Tara and former Townships of Arran and Elderslie, which amalgamated on January 1, 1999 to form the present-day Municipality. The rural area of the municipality consists of active agriculture lands and hamlet areas.

The Municipality has numerous recreation facilities, including three arenas and curling rinks, sport fields, parks, playgrounds, trails, two outdoor pools and other amenities. And while new facilities have recently been developed, like so many other Canadian communities, many facilities are ageing and, in some cases, have approached or are approaching the end of their expected lifecycle.

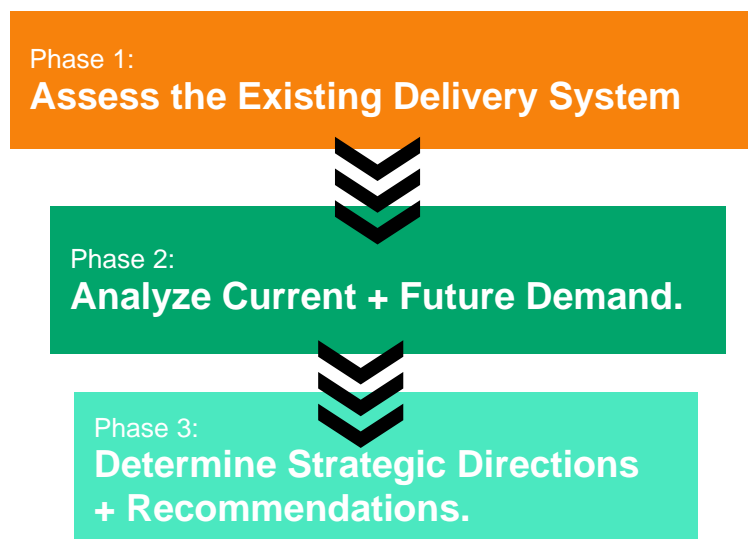
The Municipality recognizes the role of recreation in community economic development, sustainability and growth. It has undertaken this Recreation Master Plan to guide the strategic management, provision and direction of all parks and recreation services until 2031. The Plan identifies the appropriate level of service and standards for the sustainability of services and provides a vision for the future evolution of services and facilities.

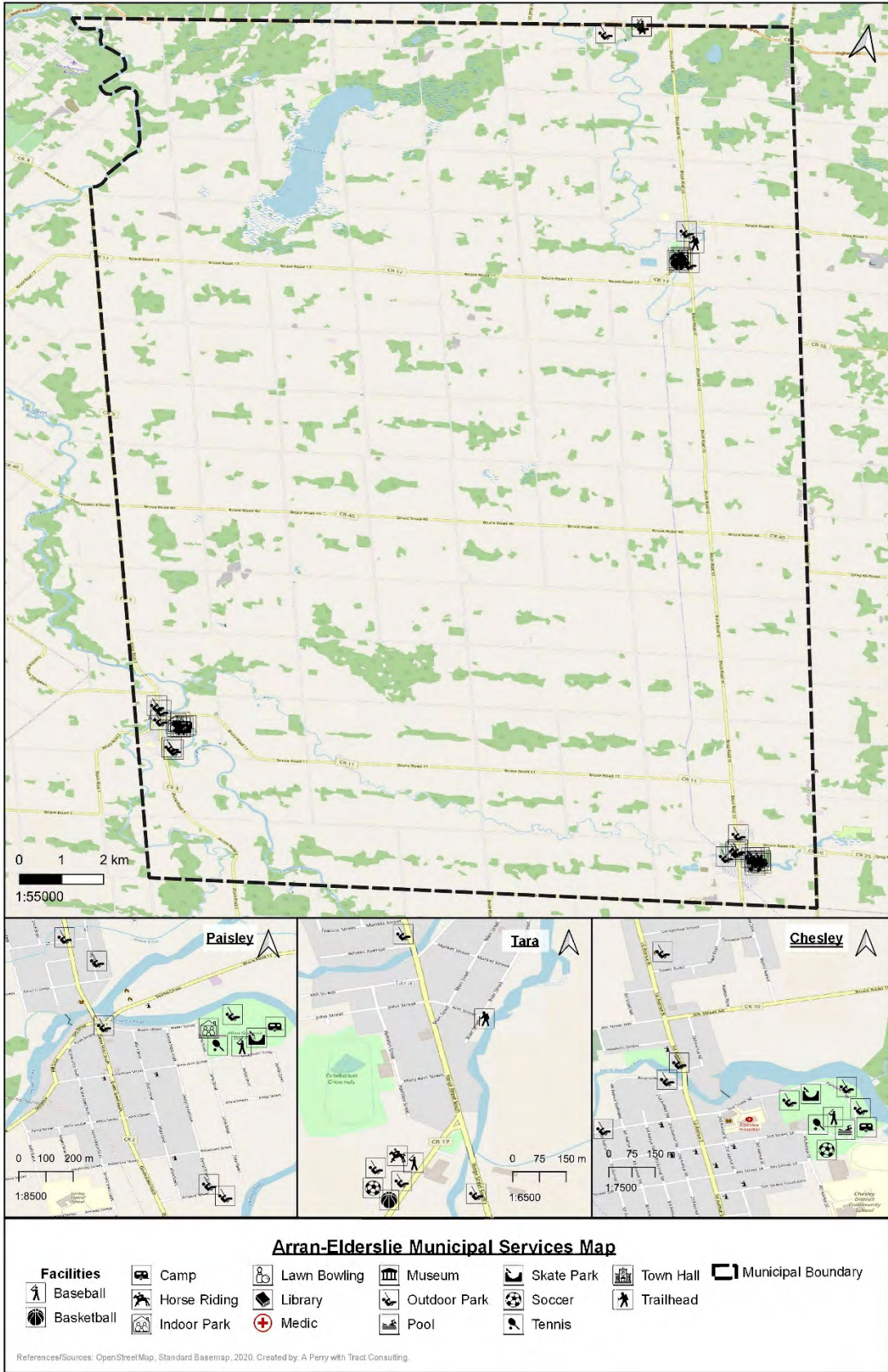
1.1. Approach and Methodology

Recommendations to meet community recreation needs have been developed in a manner that emphasizes and reflects practical solutions to the delivery of recreation in the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie. The study reflects current and future needs, as well as the overall goals of the Municipality, relative to the provision of recreation services and facilities in Arran-Elderslie.

The Recreation Master Plan presents a rationale for Council decision-making that is based on residents' demand for services and facilities, an analysis of regional and national trends, an assessment of the quality and capacity of services and facilities, and the cost to meet existing and future recreation needs in the Municipality. The Recreation Master Plan reflects the needs of all Arran-Elderslie residents -- children, youth, adults, seniors, and families and addresses these needs in the context of fiscal realities of the Municipality.

The consulting team used a three-phase approach to develop the Recreation Plan. These phases were as follows:





2

Existing
Facilities +
Services



2. Existing Facilities + Services

2.1. Indoor Facilities

The tables that follow provide a synopsis of existing facilities in the Municipality.

Type of Facility	Quantity	What Exists in Municipality of Arran Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Indoor Facilities			
<i>Ice</i>			
Arenas	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Community Centre Paisley Community Centre Tara-Arran Community Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All arenas were built in 1970s and based on the Asset Management Plan are at the end of their life expectancy. Arenas are not regulation size; dressing rooms are small. All require some level of capital investment. Paisley Arena may soon need a new ice plant. All arenas are in need of roof repair/retrofit. Costs and resulting roof life expectancy are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Arena \$300,000 (due 2024) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 yrs. life expectancy (2064) Paisley Arena 3/5 roofs @ \$754,500 (due 2020-2021) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 yrs. life expectancy (2061) Tara Arena (\$22,355) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 40 yrs. life expectancy (2029) 3 Lease Agreements in place for Chesley Arena: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Seniors, GB Highlanders AAA Hockey Organization. Arenas and Community Centres are quite important to residents of each community.
Curling Clubs	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Community Centre Paisley Community Centre Tara-Arran Community Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tara Curling Club owns the rink portion of the Tara-Arran Community Centre but has an agreement for shared usage with Municipality. Roof repairs needed over Tara's Curling Club hallway. Agreements in place with Chesley Curling Club and Paisley Curling Club. Paisley Curling Club plans to renovate lounge. All clubs are very active and provide programs to residents of all ages.

Type of Facility	Quantity	What Exists in Municipality of Arran Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Indoor Facilities			
Gymnasia	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arran Tara Public School • Chesley District Community School • Paisley Central School. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bluewater District School Board allows not-for-profit recreation groups and community organizations under a volunteer leader to use school facilities, including gymnasia, under the Community School Membership Fee (CSMF) Program. (Note the Municipality does not own nor is it responsible for booking school facilities.)
Fitness Centres	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Facilities only: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Definition Fitness, Paisley • The Vault, Tara 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definition Fitness provides a gym and physical fitness training. • The Vault provides resistance training equipment, weights, and other training and rehabilitation equipment.
Library	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chesley Library • Paisley Library • Tara Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All libraries are operated by Bruce County. Arran-Elderslie is obliged to provide facilities in each community. • Growth in all libraries; most in Tara and Paisley due to influx of young families. • Paisley library is in need of a new home; may be relocated to upper level of Paisley Community Centre (renovation for this purpose is under consideration).
Theatre	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bijou Theatre/Town Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement with Chesley Community Players (volunteer group) • Municipality owns this 75yr old building. • Community Players provide interior maintenance and upgrades: they have improved theatre accessibility (washrooms and entrance) and plan to improve seating.
Museum	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasure Chest Museum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run by volunteer Friends of the Museum. • Host social activities and offer programs. • Plan to expand to accommodate storage.
Kitchens	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chesley Community Centre • Paisley Community Centre • Tara-Arran Community Centre • Paisley Rotary Club Palace 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paisley Rotary Club operates the Palace: Agreement in place. • Kitchens can support economic development as well as programming: Walker Catering Co, a modern restaurant in Tara began its operations in the Tara Community Centre.

Type of Facility	Quantity	What Exists in Municipality of Arran Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Indoor Facilities			
Meeting Rooms	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Community Centre Paisley Community Centre Tara-Arran Community Centre Arkwright Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Happy Gang seniors group meet at Chesley Boardroom.
Halls + Public Event Space	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Community Centre Paisley Community Centre Paisley Town Hall (Legion) Paisley Rotary Palace Tara-Arran Community Centre Arkwright Hall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paisley Town Hall, Tara-Arran Community Centre and Arkwright Halls rented for public events. Private fitness classes held at Chesley and Paisley Halls. Plans to renovate Paisley spaces to accommodate new library. Paisley Legion Branch 295 rents its hall to raise revenue to support its mandate. Paisley Rotary Club operates the Palace: Agreement in place. Also has kitchen.
Medical Clinics	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Medical Clinic Paisley Medical Clinic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipality owns the buildings. Have Lease Agreements with Brockton and Area Family Health Team.
Other Municipal - Owned Buildings	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bijou Theatre / Town Hall Paisley Town Hall (Legion) Arkwright Hall Paisley LCBO Store /OPP Office Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Kinsmen and Kinettes meeting space, OPP office, apartment for locum doctors and theatre (as above) located in Bijou Theatre building. Bijou Theatre building roof recently replaced. Kinsmen and Kinettes repairs to ceiling and flooring needed, washroom and other upgrades ideal. Paisley Legion Branch 295 operates out of Paisley Town Hall. Arkwright Hall rented out for community use; low usage.

2.2. Outdoor Facilities

Type of Facility	No.	What Exists in Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Outdoor Facilities			
<i>Athletic Facilities</i>			
Soccer Pitches	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Soccer Field Chesley District Community School Soccer Field Paisley - Mary Cummings Park Tara Soccer Field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor soccer leagues only in Chesley and Tara. No soccer league in Paisley. Chesley Soccer Field constructed in 2018. Proximity of Tara soccer pitch to Ball Diamond 2 creates safety issues when both facilities used at the same time.
Softball Diamonds	7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Ball Diamonds x2 Paisley Ball Diamonds x 2 Tara Ball Diamonds x 2 Allenford Ball Diamond x 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley and Tara have minor and adult recreation leagues. Paisley has adult recreation league only; consisting of 3 teams. All diamonds require some level of improvement; Chesley requires less. Proximity of Tara soccer pitch to Ball Diamond 2 creates safety issues when both facilities used at the same time. Allenford Diamond operated by volunteer committee.
<i>Trails</i>			
Walking Trails	16 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruce County Rail Trail Town of Chesley Trail Chesley Heritage Trail Tara Pedestrian Trail Paisley Dyke Trails Paisley Grassed Walkways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipality maintains 7 km of trails. Bruce County Rail Trail – 80 km running through several municipalities. Tara Pedestrian Trail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former Rail Line. New Rotary bridge opened trail for pedestrians. Town of Chesley Trail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of trail types: multi-use paved trail and trail through natural areas wooded. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Heritage Trail – 4 km hard surface. Village of Paisley Trails <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grassed walkway. Paisley Dyke System. Bruce County Rail Trail Multi-use Trail.
Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Trails	15.5 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruce County Trail Network: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town of Chesley Heritage Trail #20 Paisley Trail #19 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See brucecountytrails.com. Paisley: 6 km linear. Chesley: 4 km linear. Bruce County Rail Trail: 5.5 km.
Snowmobile Trails	5.5 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ontario Federation Snowmobiling Club Trails District #9 pass through Arran-Elderslie. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.ofscdistrict9.ca/copy-of-where-to-ride-1. 5.5 km is the Paisley segment of the District #9 trail.
ATV Trails	5.5 km	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bruce County Rail Trail in Paisley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> See brucecountytrails.com. 5.5 km is the Paisley segment of the District #9 trail.

Type of Facility	No.	What Exists in Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Outdoor Facilities			
Playgrounds	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Main Park Hutchinson Park, Chesley Paisley Main Park, Paisley Dr. Milne Park, Paisley Mary Cumming Park, Paisley Tara Main Park Tara Rotary Park Tara Downtown Parkette Allenford Park Morrison Avenue Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some playgrounds have older equipment Hutchinson is an accessible playground fundraised and built by Chesley Kinettes in 2019. It has accessible equipment, but completion of ramp is required to enable accessibility to the structure. Dr. Milne Park is located on a former landfill site; it has issues with slumping, sinkholes and resurfacing of garbage. Allenford Park is operated by a volunteer group. Morrison Avenue Park has relatively new equipment installed in 2017.
Splash Pad	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Main Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Splash Pad built by Chesley Kinsmen Club, who also financially support ongoing costs.
Outdoor Pools	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Pool & Changehouse Tara Rotary Pool & Changehouse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal owned; operated from June-August. Both are aged facilities and not accessible, though well used by the community. Changerooms are small. Facility at Chesley is larger and newer than Tara.
Skateboard Park	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Skate Park Paisley Skate Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of ramps and skate amenities have impacted usage. Teens have stated need for this facility.
Tennis Courts	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Tennis Court x 2 Paisley Tennis Court x 2 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tennis courts are in need of resurfacing. Usage is low; most interest is in pickleball. Multi-courts may be a better option as they would serve a larger demographic.
Basketball Courts	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tara Basketball Court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 basketball nets on a cement pad.
Horse Rings	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paisley Main Park Tara Main Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paisley Horse Ring used once annually during the Paisley Fall Fair. Tara Horse Ring used monthly by Silver Spurs Saddle Club.
Lawn Bowling Greens	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Lawn Bowling Club and Greens Paisley Lawn Bowling Club and Greens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Renovations for Chesley Clubhouse planned for 2020. Agreement with the Chesley Lawn Bowling Club for Boardroom Usage.
Trailer Parks	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Trailer Park Paisley Rotary Trailer Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Trailer Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipally operated; season runs from May-October. Approx. 25 fully serviced sites. 5 un-serviced sites. Paisley Rotary Trailer Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreement with Paisley Rotary Club. Operated fully by the Club. Serviced and serviced sites.

Type of Facility	No.	What Exists in Municipality of Arran-Elderslie	Synopsis of What Exists
Outdoor Facilities			
Pavilions	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Kinsmen Pavilion Chesley Rotary Pavilion Dr. Milne Pavilion, Paisley Roger Thorne Pavilion, Tara Tara Kinette Pavilion Allenford Pavilion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Kinsmen Pavilion located in Main Park; built in 2018 by Chesley Kinsmen Club; consists of washrooms and kitchen; kitchen upgrades continue. Chesley Rotary Pavilion also located in Main Park; consists of open space with picnic tables. Dr. Milne Pavilion underutilized due to sagging floor; used for storage. Roger Thorne Pavilion built by Tara Rotary Club; located at Riverside Rotary Park; open space, washrooms and storage. Tara Kinette Pavilion located in Main Park has a kitchen, washrooms and open space. Allenford Pavilion operated by volunteer group has concession, washrooms and open space.
Cenotaphs	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Cenotaph Paisley Cenotaph Tara Cenotaph 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chesley Cenotaph restored in 2017. Paisley Cenotaph structurally sound Tara Cenotaph restored within last 15 years.
Historic/Interpretation Park	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krug Park, Chesley Foundry Chimney, Willow Creek Park, Paisley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krug has Interpretive signs, seating area, walking path. Foundry Chimney is a historic site commemorating the Paisley Foundry and artist David Milne Brown. Restored in 2020.
Other Open Spaces/Seating Areas (not listed above)	5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverside Park, Chesley Elliott Park, Chesley Main Street Bridge Parkette, Chesley McTavish Park, Chesley Willow Creek Park, Paisley 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Riverside Park has trail access. Elliott Park features an historic fountain. Willow Creek located on site of Foundry Chimney.
Rivers	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sauble River Saugeen River North Saugeen River Teeswater River 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sauble River flows through Allenford and Tara. Sauble River flows through Paisley. North Saugeen River flows through Scone and Chesley. Teeswater River flows through Village of Paisley and runs into Saugeen River.
Vacant Lands			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous plots located throughout the municipality that it maintains.

2.3. Programs and Service Delivery

Type of Programs	What Exists in Arran-Elderslie
<p>Children and Youth Programs</p>	<p>Chesley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior Curling. ▪ Minor Ball. ▪ Minor Soccer. ▪ AE Minor Hockey. ▪ Hockey Skills. ▪ Tot Learn to Skate. ▪ Beavers, Cubs, Scouts. ▪ Sparks, Brownies, Guides. ▪ Pathfinders. ▪ Early On Playgroup. ▪ Chesley Kids Club. ▪ Chesley Nursery School. ▪ You are Loved Youth Program (Grades 9-12). ▪ Chesley Kids Club Before and After School Programs. ▪ Library Programs: Storytime, STEM Programs; Take Away Crafts. ▪ Summer Day Camp. ▪ Summer swimming lessons. ▪ Various independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey Recreation. ▪ Chesley District Community School Volleyball and Youth Basketball Teams.
	<p>Paisley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior Curling. ▪ AE Minor Hockey. ▪ Figure Skating. ▪ Lawn Bowling Youth League. ▪ Hockey Skills. ▪ Kids and Us Daycare Afterschool Programs. ▪ Paisley Youth Group (Highschool). ▪ Paisley Youth Group Gr. 7-9. ▪ AWANA – Immanuel Evangelical Missionary Church. ▪ Library Programs: Storytime, STEM Programs; Take Away Crafts. ▪ Various Independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey Recreation. ▪ Paisley Central School Pickleball.
	<p>Tara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junior Curling. ▪ Minor Ball. ▪ Minor Soccer. ▪ AE Minor Hockey. ▪ Figure Skating. ▪ Sparks, Brownies, Guides. ▪ Pathfinders. ▪ Library Programs: Storytime, STEM Programs; Take Away Crafts. ▪ Summer Day Camp. ▪ Summer Swimming Lessons.

Type of Programs	What Exists in Arran-Elderslie
Adults	<p>Chesley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curling. ▪ Fitness Classes. ▪ Tai Chi. ▪ Cardio-Strength Fitness Training. ▪ Men’s Pick-up Basketball. ▪ Lawn Bowling. ▪ Carpet Bowling. ▪ VON Smart Exercise. ▪ Walking Group. ▪ Crokinole. ▪ Chesley Solo Club Cards. ▪ Chesley Happy Gang-Cards. ▪ Drama and Theatre Participation. ▪ Numerous Volunteer Opportunities. ▪ Various independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey. ▪ Recreational Hockey. ▪ Recreational Softball/Baseball. <hr/> <p>Paisley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Badminton. • Saugeen Paddlers. • Curling. • Yoga. • Fitness Classes. • Lawn Bowling. • Carpet Bowling. • Crokinole. • Paisley Concert Choir. • Numerous Volunteer Opportunities. • Various independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey. • Recreational Hockey. • Recreational Softball. <hr/> <p>Tara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curling. • Cardio-Strength Fitness Training. • Tara Sunset Club 55+. • Tara Legion Cribbage. • Numerous Volunteer Opportunities. • Various independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey. • Recreational Hockey. • Recreational Softball/Baseball.
Families/ Programs available to all ages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various independent activities promoted by Play in Bruce Grey. • Special Events (listed below).
Special Events	<p>Chesley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break Bread Together Meals. • Kinettes National Day of KINdness Free Skates. • Chesley Nursery School Pancake Supper. • Kinettes Craft and Crop Day. • Kinettes Easter Egg Hunt.

Type of Programs	What Exists in Arran-Elderslie
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinettes Trivia Night. • Rotary Fish Fry. • Kinsmen July Fest. • Bruce County Beef Farmers Annual Beef Barbeque. • Fall Fair. • Darlene Gardhouse Memorial Kinspiel. • Santa Claus Parade. • Kinettes Breakfast with Santa. • Agricultural Society Jamborees.
	<p>Paisley</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bruce County Heritage Toy Show • Paisley Blues Fest. • Saugeen Paddlers Voyageur Race. • Antique & Steam Show. • Paisley Firefighters Annual Breakfast. • Fall Fair. • Santa Claus Parade.
	<p>Tara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rotary Yard Sale. • Ambassador Night. • Fall Fair. • Bruce County Beef Farmers Annual General Meeting. • 39th Annual Tara Festival of Crafts. • Santa Claus Parade.

3

Identification
of Community
Needs +
Key Issues

3. Identification of Community Needs and Key Issues

To identify current and future demand for leisure and recreational services, programs, and facilities in the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, the consultants facilitated several consultations with key stakeholders and community groups and held an online public meeting (via Zoom) with residents. An online survey was also posted on the Municipality's website and Facebook page in which residents could answer questions about recreational and leisure services in the municipality. The consultants also met with staff currently involved in the delivery of recreation and parks services.

3.1. Key Stakeholder Interviews

A total of 90 groups were identified and invited to attend meetings or focus groups. Thirty-three of these groups met with the consultants the week of September 21, 2020 to discuss what services they provide and what their needs are. Stakeholders represented sports, recreation and leisure organizations and service providers, and non-government agencies. Many stakeholders also provided a written submission via a completed questionnaire.

From the information collected through this process, the most important concerns, issues and needs were noted. These needs were summarized (see Appendix A) and informed the priorities and recommendations presented in this report; key themes from these meetings are presented below in Section 3.3.

3.2. Public Meeting

A public meeting was held on September 24, 2020 via Zoom. The goal of the public meeting was to engage the residents of Arran-Elderslie. This meeting was facilitated by the consultants and provided an opportunity for residents to discuss and highlight issues and concerns about recreational and leisure programs, services, and facilities in the Municipality.

A summary of the most significant comments and concerns raised at the public meeting is included in the concerns and issues noted below. Public meeting participants also informed the priorities and recommendations of the Recreation Master Plan.



3.3. Summary of Stakeholder Consultations and Public Meeting Findings

Key themes from the stakeholder interviews and public meeting are as follows:

Indoor Facilities

- Indoor Facilities are ageing and need at least some level of Improvement.
- Residents in Chesley, Paisley and Tara place very high value on their community centres, arenas, curling rinks and associated amenities.
- Community centres, arenas and curling rinks contribute greatly to the sense of community and community pride in Chesley, Paisley, and Tara.
- Residents appreciate having a community centre, arena and curling rink in their individual community; residents also appreciate having these facilities within walking distance of their homes.
- Some residents and stakeholders stated that replacing the three community centres with one new modern facility would be controversial and divisive: many would not support a new facility unless it was located in their community.
- Some residents felt community centre facilities, such as the kitchen, should be more available and more programs could be provided there.
- Accessibility is a concern.
- Transportation is a barrier to seniors and other groups; having access to nearby facilities and programs is essential.

Outdoor Facilities:

- Outdoor sport facilities, parks, trails and open spaces are valued by residents.
- Residents value having access to these facilities within their community.
- All athletic fields and outdoor amenities are in need of some level of improvement.
- More facilities are needed for youth, especially skateparks.
- Existing tennis and basketball courts should be converted to multi-sport courts and outdoor rinks.
- Parks need to be accessible for people with disabilities.
- Residents would like more splashpads and dog parks.
- Swimming pools are ageing, do not meet accessibility standards, are small in size but still very much valued by residents.
- Outdoor recreation facilities and programs can support tourism development.
- Downtown Paisley should be improved.

Programs

- Volunteers play a critical role in the provision of recreation services – in both facility development and program provision.
- Many volunteer groups are losing volunteers due to ageing.
- Administrative support and assistance with volunteer recruitment and retention from the Municipality would greatly benefit volunteer groups.
- Programs are needed for teens and families, as well as seniors and preschoolers.
- Better promotion of all recreation opportunities in the Municipality is critical.
- Promotion needs to be better timed, so events are promoted well.
- Programs should be given sufficient time to succeed, i.e., run programs with low enrolment longer.

Operations and Maintenance

- Day to day maintenance is very good.
- Residents recognize that many facilities are ageing and also need capital improvements/investment.



3.4. Public Survey

A total of 288 respondents participated in the survey which ran from September 22 to October 16, 2020. Respondents were asked questions regarding their opinions on and perceived need for additional and/or enhanced facilities and programs. (See Appendix B for a Summary of Public Survey Results.)

3.4.1. Summary of Public Survey Responses

Respondents were not required to answer all the questions, and some of the 288 respondents chose to skip some questions. Typically, however, more than 196 respondents answered each question. For the sake of simplicity, the text below does not state how many survey participants responded to each question. The percentages given are refer to those respondents who chose to answer the question.

A brief summary of select key public survey responses is presented as follows:

- The top two activities respondents participate in are walking (88%) and visiting parks and open spaces (75%).
- A youth centre (64%) and spaces for children's programs and activities (63%) are considered to be the most needed indoor facilities.
- Splash pads and dog parks are the top two outdoor facilities participants think are most needed.

- Fifty-eight percent (58%) of survey respondents think a new multi-purpose facility should be built to replace existing ageing facilities if it is feasible to do so. Conversely, 42% of respondents think the Municipality should continue maintaining existing facilities instead of building a new facility.
- Inconvenient hours of operation (24%), lack of facilities (23%) and lack of time (22%) are the three main reasons that limit respondents from becoming involved or more involved in recreational activities in Arran-Elderslie.
- Seventy percent (70%) of respondents would be motivated to use programs and services or use them more often if the quality of facilities were improved.
- Sixty-nine percent (69%) of respondents would be motivated to use programs and services or use them more often if a broader range of programs and services (69%) were offered.
- Programs for teens (74%) and families (72%) are considered the most needed.
- The top two types of programs respondents think the Municipality needs more of are recreational level sports (72%) and general interest programs (e.g., cooking, gardening) (71%).
- The top two facilities respondents think the Municipality should commit funding to parks, playgrounds and open spaces (71%) and indoor recreation facilities (70%).
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of respondents would be willing to pay an increase in their property tax or rent per year in order to help build or operate these facilities and programs.



3.4.2. Summary of Youth Survey Responses

A youth survey was also implemented as part of the public consultation process for this Master Plan. A total of 16 respondents participated in the survey which ran from October 01 to October 16, 2020. Youth respondents were asked questions regarding their opinions on and perceived need for additional and/or enhanced facilities and programs. They were also asked to rate the importance of select recreation benefits to them.

A summary of key youth survey responses is presented below. (A summary of the youth survey results is included in Appendix A.)

- The top two activities youth respondents participate in are walking (100%) and visiting parks and open spaces (88%).
- The top two benefits of recreation that are very important to youth are acquiring a better life balance (83%) and reducing stress (75%).
- The top two new indoor facilities youth think are needed are a multi-purpose facility with gymnasium, program spaces, fitness rooms, etc. (92%) and a walking/running track (83%).

3.4.3. Public Perception of Recreation Strengths

Respondents provided a statement about what they really like about facilities, programs and services in the Municipality. Common themes from the 240 responses are summarized as follows:

Strengths: A Summary of What Respondents Really Like about Parks and Recreation Facilities and Services in Arran-Elderslie	
Indoor and Outdoor Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of facilities in each community. • Each town has an ice rink and large recreation centre. • Well maintained facilities. • Cleanliness of arenas. • Proximity of facilities and spaces to residents. • Library, its staff and small-town atmosphere. • Abundance of outdoor space. • Easy access to river and natural spaces. • Playgrounds and trails.
Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Variety in each community. • Opportunity to meet and socialize with neighbors. • Excellent programs. • Variety of Programs.
Fees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable, accessible and inclusive. • Affordability of sports programs. • No non-resident fees.
Parks and Recreation Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of staff: cooperative, friendly, dedicated, committed. • Well organized, and well-maintained facilities. • Cooperation from all P&R staff to volunteer organizations.
Volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated, hard-working and fantastic volunteers. • Volunteers willing to run sports programs. • Volunteers and families fundraise to improve facilities.

3.5. List of Needs Arising from Community Input

Based on the results of the public survey, stakeholder and public consultations, the consultant's assessment of facilities, and discussions with municipal staff a total of 22 preliminary community leisure and recreation needs were identified and are summarized in the table below. Note these preliminary needs are not the recommendations; the recommendations will however arise from, and respond to, these needs. Note also that the preliminary needs are not ranked or prioritized.

Summary of Leisure and Recreational Needs	
Indoor Recreation Facility Needs	
1.	Improve community centres and ice rinks (for accessibility, safety, usability, aesthetics, comfort, and program spaces).
2.	Potential for new multi-purpose facility with a variety of spaces.
Outdoor Recreation Facility Needs	
3.	Improved sports fields (ball diamonds, soccer pitches - surface, fencing, dugouts).
4.	New multi-courts for basketball, pickleball, ball hockey, etc.
5.	New outdoor swimming pools and change rooms to replace ageing and inaccessible facilities.
6.	New outdoor skating rink to enhance winter recreation opportunities.
7.	Improved parks and playgrounds.
8.	New skateparks for teens/youth.
9.	New dog parks.
10.	New splash pads for children.
11.	Improved and expanded trail system including better connections, safe surfaces and defined multi-purpose sections.
12.	Enhanced boat launches.
Programs and Services Needs	
13.	Greater and more defined role for Municipality in leisure programming.
14.	More opportunities for general interest and arts and cultural programs.
15.	Better promotion of leisure and recreation opportunities in the Municipality.
Operational & Management Needs	
16.	Volunteer support and initiatives to respond to current decline in volunteer base.
17.	Increased coordination of service clubs in the planning and development of new facilities.
18.	Enhance staffing levels to meet facility operational needs.
19.	Increased maintenance and development standards for parks, playgrounds and open spaces.
20.	Evaluate, rationalize and reduce the level of effort to mow non-recreational sites and vacant spaces throughout the Municipality.
21.	Improved coordination between Parks and Recreation and Works Department to foster a better understanding of service provision and limitations. Adopt maintenance standards for outdoor recreational facilities.
22.	Reduce the level of non-recreational real estate the department maintains.

4

PLANNING
Context



4. Planning Context

4.1. Demographic Profile of Arran-Elderslie

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie has a population of 6,803 residents (Census, 2016), of which 4,026 (60%) live in the three communities of Chesley, Paisley and Tara.

Overall, the population of Arran-Elderslie grew by 0.23% per year over the past 15 years (four census periods: 2001 to 2016), but in the last two censuses, its populations declined slightly.

Nonetheless, the overall population is predicted to slowly increase in this next 5-year census period to 6,910 residents as illustrated below (Source: Townfolio).

For the purposes of this recreation master plan, a more detailed analysis of the trends in age groups over the past 10 years was carried out. A more detailed analysis allows recreational facilities and programming needs for each of these age groups to be assessed against existing local and regional resources so that recommendations can be made to meet potential future, as well as current, needs.



4.2. Age Composition

Although the difference in overall population between 2006 and 2016 is only 56 residents, it is the changes in the age groups that is most interesting from a recreation planning perspective.

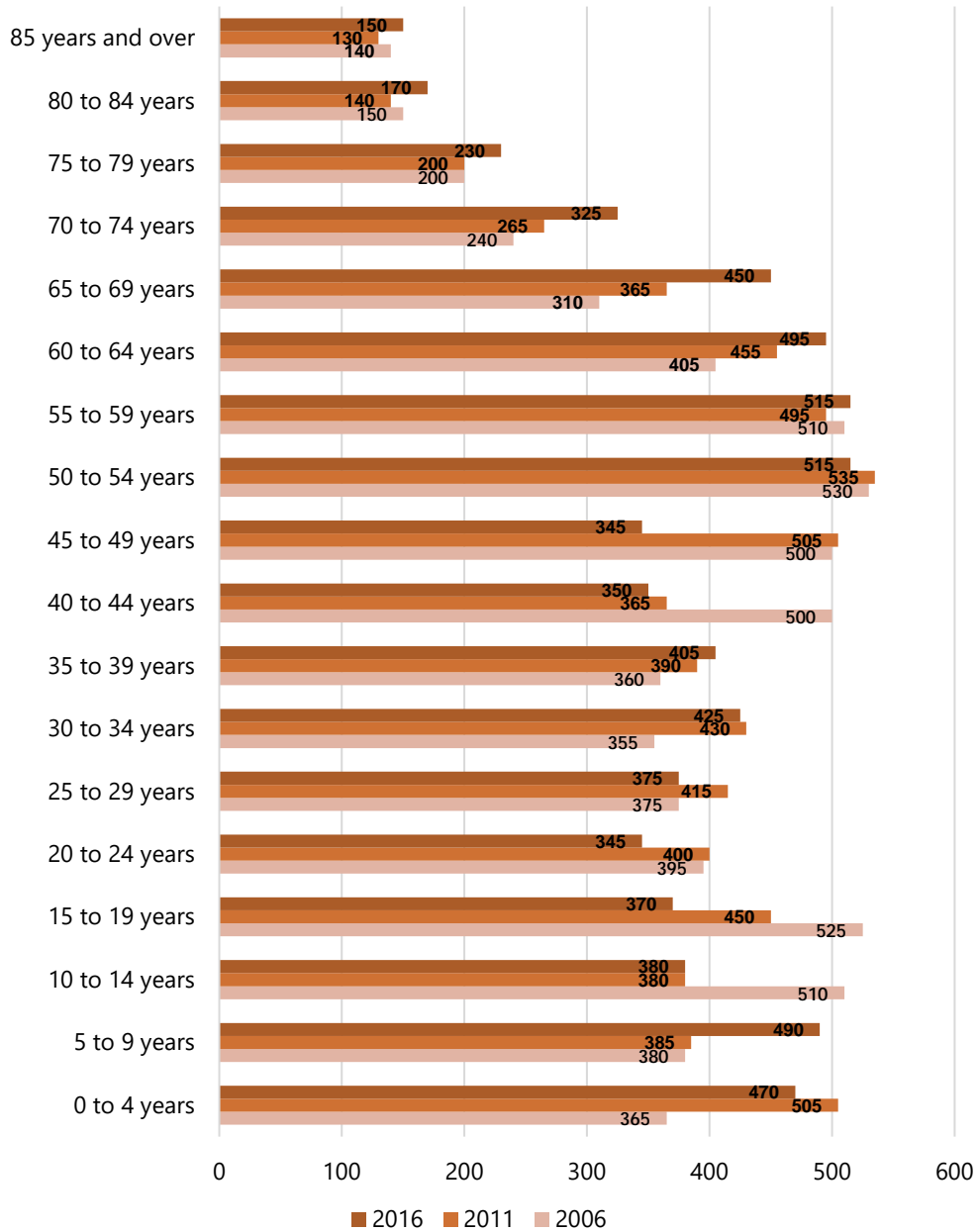
The 50-54 and 55-59-year age groups generally remained stable, but the 40-44 and 45-49-year age groups declined. This may explain the loss in the pre-teen (10-14) and teen (15-19) age groups as these groups may constitute a family unit.

The greatest increases occurred in the 0-4 and 5-9-year groups with about 100 more children in each group. This may relate to the increase in 30-34 and 35-39 -years age group (+70 and +45 respectively).

Arran-Elderslie is aging much like the rest of Ontario and Canada with the 60–64-year group adding 90 more individuals, the 65-69-year group adding 140 individuals and 70-74-year group adding 85 more individuals between 2006-2016. Over 75 years of age, there were an additional 60 more people in total.

This points to the necessity of considering senior accessibility and specific programming needs in municipal service provision.

Ten-year demographic trend, by age groups, for Arran-Elderslie (2006, 2011, 2016)

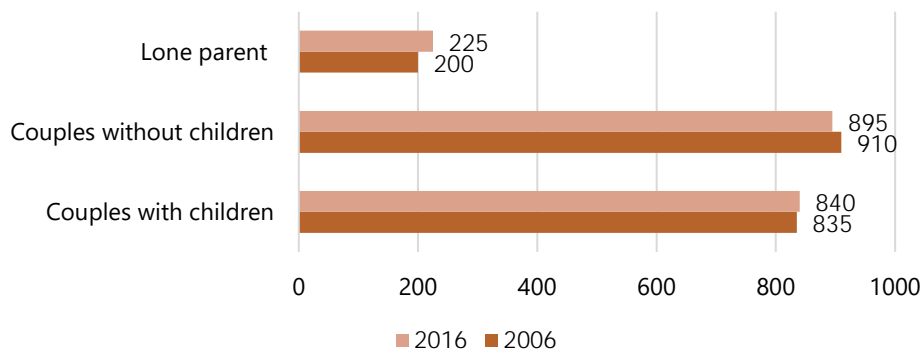


4.3. Household Characteristics

Of the 2,750 private households in the municipality, 70% consist of one-census family households; this translates into higher incomes per household as generally both individuals are employed. Of these 54% have children and 46% do not.

Of the non-census family households (815), 93% consist of one person and the remaining 7% are two or more people living together. This translates into higher incomes per household as generally both individuals are employed.

Household characteristics, by family type, 2006-2016



Regarding change in family types, in the past two census periods, they have generally remained stable for couple families, but with 25 more lone-parent families. About 47% consists of couples without children, 43% are couples with children, and 10% are lone parent families (compared to the rest of Canada at 16% or Ontario 20%). This speaks to the need to ensure recreation opportunities are inclusive and accessible to lower income families and youth.

4.4. Gender Distribution

The ratio of males to females may also have implications for facilities and programming.

Interestingly, in the past 10 years, there are 35 fewer females than males in the 5-9 age group, and 10 fewer in the 0-4 age group. In the 10-14 and 15-19 age groups, the difference flattened (both less than 5 individuals).

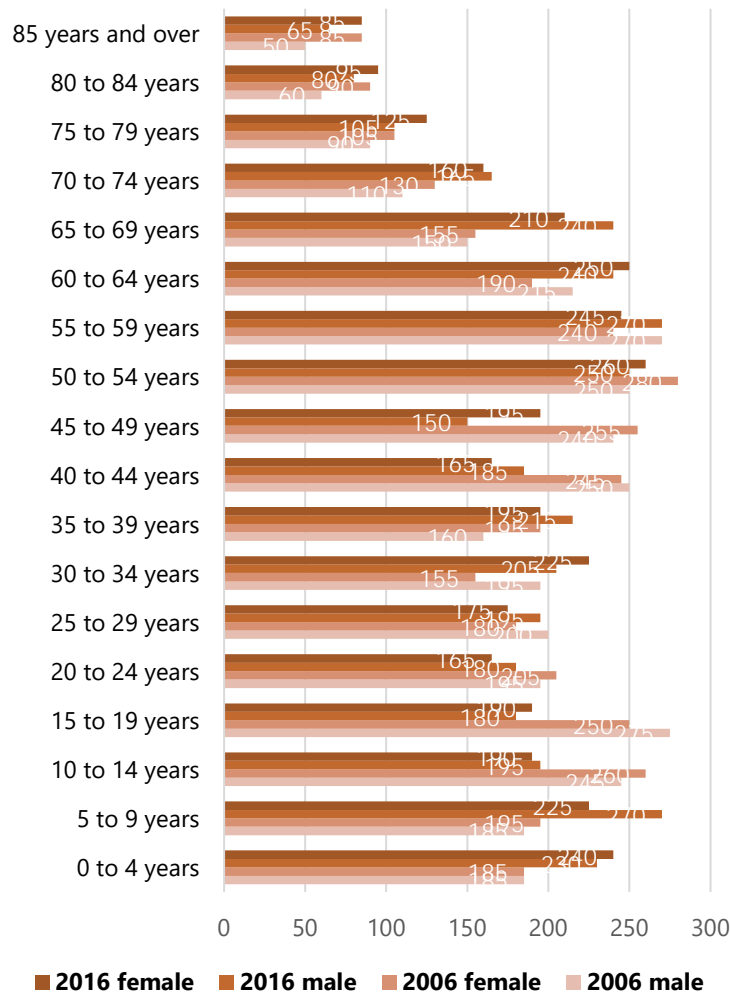
In the 30-34-year group, there was a loss of 40 males and a gain of 20 females; this might tie in with females being the primary parent in lone-family situations. However, in the 35-39-year group there was an increase in males and a decrease of females.

As the age groups go beyond traditional child-bearing years, for the next two age categories (40-44 and 45-49) which decreased overall during these 10 years, there were slightly more females than males.

In the 50-54-year group, there were slightly more males than females (+20). And for the 55-59-year age group, males and females declined in tandem.

For pre-retirement 60-64-year olds, there was an increase of 10 females to a loss of 25 males; but for the 65-69-year olds the change for both was 10 or less. As the population age groups age, the proportion of females is consistently greater than males.

Arran-Elderslie: Male/Female Ratio Trend between 2006-2016



Women participate less in sports than men. However, the Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries has made women and girls a top priority. Its goal is to ensure women and girls have equal access to opportunities to participate, develop skills and achieve excellence (*Game On-The Ontario's Government's Sport Plan. Year One Progress Report (2016)*). This may represent an opportunity for funding and enhanced programs to support women athletics in Arran-Elderslie.

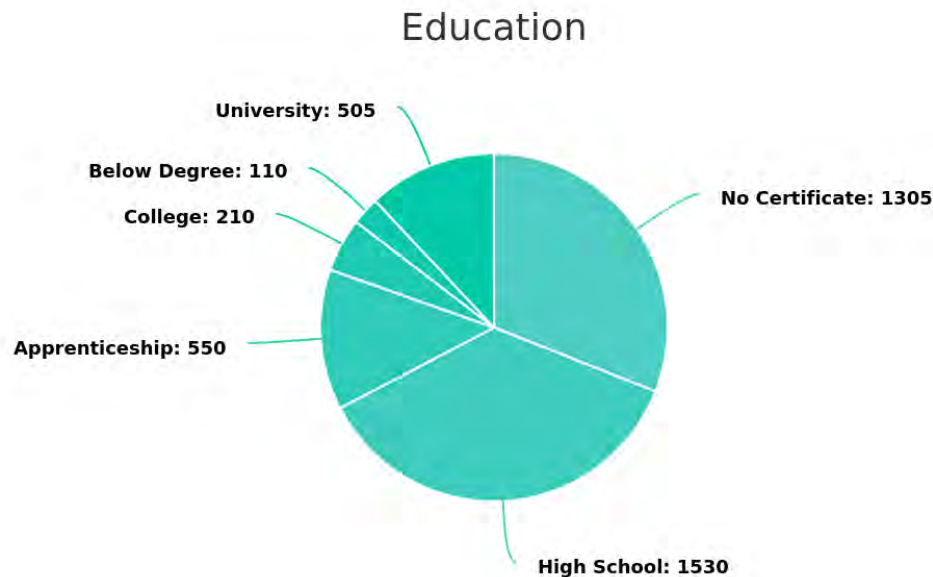
4.5. Household and Individual Income

According to the Census 2016, most inhabitants at Arran-Elderslie are above the low-income cut-off, or the income a person must earn to be part of the low-income group. The majority are also above the 2016 national median income of \$63,687 per year. Just over half the families (53%) have an income greater than \$60,000. Mainly lone parent families have less than the national median income; it should be noted that, of the lone income families, only 2.4% are seniors.

Sport Participation 2010 (Canadian Heritage) Research Paper reports that higher income earners are more likely to participate in sport. Fewer than one in ten individuals with a household income of less than \$20,000 participate in sport, compared to one in five with household incomes of \$30,000-\$79,999.

4.6. Education Levels

Regarding the educational level of the residents of Arran-Elderslie, 36% (1,530) have completed high school education; however, 31.0% have not completed any certificate. 550 people have completed an apprenticeship (13%) and 12% have a university education.



Canadian Heritage Sport Participation 2010 Research Paper found that, nationally, the higher the level of education the more likely an individual is to participate in sport. It is not known if this is a factor to participation in Arran-Elderslie.

4.7. Labour Force Status

Arran-Elderslie is considered a great place to live due to its proximity to major employers, such as the Bruce Power Plant (about 30 km away) as well as the rural lifestyle, small town safety and housing prices. Major industries within Arran-Elderslie include agriculture, retail, tourism, and construction.

However, overall, the employment rate in Arran-Elderslie, is declining at a rate of 0.11% per year over the past 15 years from 2001 to 2016. In the last two censuses, its employment rates declined by 4.6% (an average decline rate of 0.92% per year from 2011 to 2016). Employment rates present challenges for the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie when recruiting individuals for summer or part times positions.

On the other hand, the Bruce Power Plant began a Life-Extension Program on January 1, 2016. A major phase of this program, the Major Component Replacement (MCR) Project began with Unit 6 in January 2020 and is followed by Unit 3 in 2023 and Unit 4 in 2025. It is one of Canada’s largest infrastructure projects, and the company expects to hire about 22,000 people. While the plant is within easy driving distance for a daily commute, it is uncertain how the project will impact future population growth and employment participation.

4.8. Home Ownership

Regarding home ownership, 80% of the homes in the municipality are owned. About half the homes (51%) were constructed before 1960. Townfolio reports that building and home construction was also brisk between 1961 to 1980, where 560 homes were built over a 19-year period and, between 1981 to 1990, 270 of homes were built. While home construction has not recovered to pre-2011 levels, the recent numbers for 2020 indicate that home construction will most likely at least match the 2011-2016 period and remain steady at about 14 new homes per year.

Five-year Time Span	# of House Permits	10-year Totals
2001-05	110	295
2006-11	185	
2011-16	70	136
2016-June 2020	66 (so far)	

It should be noted that in 2019 there were 6 new commercial/industrial permits issued compared to only 1 or 2 per year for 2016-2020.



5

Trends +
Their
Implications

5. Trends and Their Implications

A review of trends related to provision of recreation and culture facilities and services can help identify leading practices and current issues in the delivery of recreation and culture services. It can also identify evolving interests at the local, provincial or national level that may be important to consider when identifying current and future facility and program needs.

The trends presented in this section are derived from a variety of publicly available sources. Where relevant, examples of how these trends align with service delivery in Arran-Elderslie are noted.

5.1. Demographic Trends

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie's demographic profile is provided previously in this section. This overview of demographic trends focuses on trends occurring in Canada and Ontario, and how they may be reflected in Arran-Elderslie.

Declining Birth Rate

The birth rate has declined steadily in Canada since the Baby Boom birth years of 1946 to 1965. From a high of 3.93 children in 1959, the Canadian birth rate declined to 1.49 in 2000, and grew back to 1.67 in 2009 and has decreased to 1.47 in 2019 where it still remains below the 2.1 children replacement rate. At the height of the Boom in 1959, there were 479,000 births in Canada; that is approximately 104,115 more births than annually occur now (2020).

It is important to note that the population of Arran-Elderslie children aged 0-4 and 5-9 between 2006 to 2016 increased by 22% (about 100 in each group). This would indicate that young families are moving into the area and that the Municipality needs to ensure services suitable for the pre-school and school age children are provided.

The Baby Boomers

This 19-year cohort, born between 1946 and 1965, makes up over one-third of the Canadian population. Significant increases in the birth rate, coupled with immigration after WW II, led to a swelling of the population over this period. The oldest Boomers turn 74 in 2020 and the youngest will be 55. Boomers are more affluent, tend to be more active than preceding generations, and think of themselves as younger than their parents at the same age.

As they age, Boomers are shifting from activities such as tennis and aerobics to less strenuous ones such as walking, cycling, tai chi and yoga. These activities are available in Arran-Elderslie in 2020; it will be important to ensure opportunities for less strenuous activities continue to be available in the municipality.

An Aging Population

Another significant shift in the Canadian population is that it is aging. The proportion of those 65 years and older was 16.9% in 2016, an increase from 14.8% in Canada in 2011. The 65+ population in Canada will not really peak until 2031 at 22.8%, and then grow more slowly to 25.5% by 2061 where it will level off (Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-311-X2011003). These new "seniors", however, may be quite different than preceding older generations in their leisure choices. It will be important to ensure seniors are provided the opportunity to participate in a variety of physical and leisure activities.

The Changing Family

In Canada, the mix of family types has shifted, especially over the last decade. Between 2006 and 2016, for example, the number of married-couple families grew by only 6%, lone-parent families went up by 14%, while common-law-couple families shot up by 27%. For Arran-Elderslie, in the 2016 Census, there were 840 couple census families with children and 895 without children, compared to 225 one-parent census families. Canada also saw a slightly higher growth of male-led as opposed to female-led lone-parent families, although female-led families still predominate.

Other Canadian trends were an increase of one-person households, and more young adults living with their parents. Just over one-third of young adults aged 20 to 34 in Canada live with their parents. Between 2001 and 2016, the share of young adults aged 20 to 34 who were living with at least one parent increased with each census. It rose from 30.6% in 2001 to 33.1% in 2006, stayed close to that level in 2011 at 33.3%, and rose again to 34.7% in 2016. This may also be occurring in Arran-Elderslie as employment opportunities at nearby Bruce Power plant could reduce movement of young people to centres of employment, which is typical of most northern rural communities.

Increasing Diversity

Communities, especially large urban centres, have become increasingly ethnically diverse. Statistics Canada projects that by 2031, 29% to 32% of Canada's population—between 11.4 and 14.4 million people—could belong to a visible minority group, which is nearly double the proportion (16%) and more than double the number (5.3 million) reported in 2006. In contrast, the rest of the population is projected to increase by up to 12%. Sustained immigration, slightly higher fertility and a young population will bolster the visible minority population's growth.



Allophones (people whose mother tongue is neither English nor French) accounted for less than 10% of Canada's population in 1981. By 2006, that proportion had risen to 20%; augmented by immigration, it could reach 29% to 32% by 2031. In other words, the number of allophones could rise 7 to 11 times faster than the rest of the population, to total between 11.4 and 14.3 million people.

The visible minority population in Arran-Elderslie is low. Of the 6,735 individuals included in the Census 2016 tabulation of 'mother tongue', 92% (6,195) indicated that English was their mother tongue, 25 indicated French, and 480 (7%) indicated a non-official language.

Of the non-official languages:

- 445 were Indo-European: Germanic-425, Slavic-10, Balto-slavic-10, and Ukrainian-5)
- 5 were Ojibway-Potawatomi
- 10 were Korean
- 10 were Chinese
- 5 were Filipino
- 5 were Hungarian
- 5 were Sign Language

The *Framework for Recreation in Canada 2015* recognizes that diversity “refers to any and all differences between and among people”. Service delivery should strive to include people from all socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. This includes involving Indigenous Peoples, who are disproportionately impacted by chronic disease in Ontario (*The Burden of Chronic Diseases in Ontario, 2019*).

Currently there does not seem to be a significant level of ethnic diversity based on language in Arran-Elderslie, indicating diversity would not be a significant determining factor when developing recreational activities and programs. The Municipality should nevertheless make every effort to ensure inclusion of diverse groups in its recreation service delivery.

Personal Economics - Growing Gap between Haves and Have-Nots

There has been a general shift in North America to a growing gap between the haves and the have-nots from a personal economic perspective. The gap is greater in the United States than Canada. Young families with children are now twice as likely to live in poverty as defined by the Low-Income Cut-off (LICO). Fee rates, however, still generally favour older adults (60 or 65+) more than young families. There is a need to re-examine accessibility and pricing policies, and to implement measures that support all individuals with low income, but especially young families and their children.

Regarding low-income residents in Arran-Elderslie, the Low Income Cut Off measure was used. A comparison of Arran-Elderslie to the rest of Bruce County, the province and the rest of Canada is provided on the following below:

Low Income Cut-Off, After-Tax (LICO-AT)					
	Arran-Elderslie		Bruce County	Ontario	Canada
Breakdown	Number	%	%	%	%
In low income based on the Low-Income cut offs after tax (LICO-AT) *	375	5.6	4.4	9.8	9.2
0-17 years	110	7	5.7	11.5	10.2
18-64 years	230	5.9	5.2	10.5	9.9
65+	30	2.4	1.4	5.1	5.1

The Low-Income Cut-Off, After-tax (LICO-AT) is one possible measure of low income. The LICO-AT refers to the level at which families or persons not in an economic family spend 20% or more than the average family on food, shelter and clothing.

While the number of individuals in Arran-Elderslie in the Low-Income Cut-Off category is higher than the rest of Bruce County, it is still well below the rate for the rest of Ontario and Canada. It can be speculated that the residents most likely to be in the Low-Income situation would be single parents or seniors; however, the statistics do not allow for such a detailed breakdown. Nonetheless, the Municipality will need to consider inclusion and access for low-income groups in recreation service delivery.

5.2. Behavioral Trends

Toward Informal and Individual Activities

There has been a clear shift from formal and organized activities to more individualized and informal pursuits. People are increasingly choosing activities that can be done individually or in small groups, at a time of the individual's choosing, and often near or at the individual's home. There is an increased interest in outdoor activities. New trail development consistently ranks at or near the top of public surveys in terms of preferred new facilities. Young families are also looking for inexpensive, informal activities that can be enjoyed as a family unit, including community events and festivals.

Changing Preferences and Expectations

Another clear trend is the shift toward the experiential aspect of activities. People are seeking personal growth and meaning in the activities they choose. People not only have high expectations for achieving personal benefits, but also that there will be a high quality of service in terms of quality of instruction, customer service, and facility cleanliness and appearance. As people age, they will continue to have an interest and commitment to being active but will turn away somewhat from more strenuous activities such as aerobics and jogging to more moderate activities such as walking, water fitness and yoga. Boomers are also showing an increased interest in culture, both in terms of attending performances, visiting cultural and heritage venues, and in actual participation in art activities.

Time Crunch

Authors have noted the general feeling that many people feel rushed, and that their discretionary time is available in smaller chunks. Research conducted by Parks and Recreation Ontario, reported in *The Use and Benefits of Local Government Recreation and Parks Services, 2009*, found that Ontarians have less time for leisure and that only 21% never feel rushed to the things they need to do. Additionally, those with less time also reported lower life satisfaction, happiness and poorer health.

A Provincial Report on Wellbeing, Canadian Index of Wellbeing. How are Ontarians Really Doing? (2014) concluded that the “time crunch” will persist and may only worsen in the coming years. The report noted that while people can choose how to spend their time, their choices are often shaped and constrained by economic circumstances, work and family obligations, and social expectations about appropriate behaviour for women and men during different life stages.

It will be interesting to see if COVID-19 will result in a societal shift that will change some of these circumstances. More people with the flexibility of “working home”, for instance, will give people more time to pursue leisure activities.



Volunteerism

The volunteer rate in Canada is decreasing, although the total number of hours Canadians volunteered is remaining stable. The 2015 Statistics Canada report, *Spotlight on Canadians, Results from the General Social Survey - Volunteering and Charitable Giving in Canada* reported that in 2013, 12.7 million Canadians or 44% of people aged 15 years and older did volunteer work; this was lower than 2004 (45%), 2007 (46%) and 2010 (47%). Adolescents and young adults (15-10 years) are most likely to do volunteer work, followed by middle-aged adults (35-44 years) who are often parents of school-aged children. These volunteers devoted about 1.96 billion hours to their volunteer activities, equivalent to about 1 million fulltime jobs.

The population of volunteers is aging with more and more volunteer hours contributed by seniors and older Canadians. In 2013, 28% of all Canadian volunteers were aged 55 and older, compared to 23% in 2004. Volunteers are also becoming more educated: from 2004 to 2013, the percentage of volunteers aged 25 to 64 with a university degree rose by 4 percentage points to 39%. The report findings on ageing volunteers echo the age profile of volunteers in Arran-Elderslie: many organizations are challenged by the loss of members due to ageing and need the Municipality’s assistance with volunteer recruitment.

Wellness and Chronic Disease

People are increasingly aware of the health benefits of activity and nutrition. This interest in personal wellness is reflected in the proportion of Canadian adults who are active enough to achieve health benefits. While Canadian adults are generally more active, they are also becoming more overweight; approximately 27% of the adult population is now obese, which has stabilized over the past 10 years (see infographic from Statistics Canada below). A lack of activity, coupled with fast foods and trans-fats intake, are responsible; community wellness initiatives will need to include a healthy eating component along with physical activity.

Ontarians are very close to the national average for obesity: 26.1% of residents are classified as obese (Health Fact Sheets, Stats Canada. Catalogue no. 82-625x). Inactivity costs healthcare billions of dollars.

In Ontario, total direct and indirect healthcare costs due to physical inactivity are estimated to be \$2.6 billion (*The Burden of Chronic Diseases in Ontario: Key Estimates to Support Efforts in Prevention (2019)*). Community wellness initiatives will need to include a healthy eating component along with physical activity.

OVERALL CANADIAN RESULTS FOR BODY MASS INDEX, 2016



Children and Youth Inactivity

Inactivity levels for children and youth are considered to be a greater problem. The Ontario Medical Association estimates that Canadian children are 40% less active than 30 years ago. *The Burden of Chronic Diseases in Ontario* reported that in 2015/2016, 72% of youth in Ontario reported physical activity levels that did not meet national guidelines. *The Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for Children and Youth (ages 5 to 17)* recommends that youth ages 12 to 17 accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily. What's more, the *ParticipACTION Report Card (2020)* gives children and youth a D+ for Overall Physical Activity and a D+ for Sedentary Behaviours.

This challenge will require a coordinated effort by recreation, health, education and parents. Inactivity and obesity levels in children and youth are resulting in the increasing early diagnosis of chronic diseases in the young, potentially resulting in a lower life expectancy than the current levels.

Type 2 Diabetes among youth is a special concern to the health profession. After school programs are a key opportunity to improve activity levels.

Nature Deficit

Several researchers have noted the growing disconnect between children and nature. Fewer children are playing outside in natural settings for a number of reasons. These include parental fears of allowing children out of their direct supervision and a trend toward increasing amounts of sedentary screen time, (computers, hand-held devices, and video games). Many children are losing their connection with nature and the creativity, imaginative play, physical activity and other benefits that occurs from spending time in outdoor settings.

5.3. Organizational and Workplace Trends

Partnering

Parks and Recreation has always functioned within a mixed delivery system model and has worked closely with other voluntary sport, culture and recreation organizations in the delivery of services. The most significant shift is the extension of these partnerships beyond the voluntary sector. Newer partners include the health system, social services, justice, education, the corporate sector, and community service agencies. This reflects both a broader interpretation of the mandate of parks and recreation agencies, and the increased willingness of other sectors to work together to address community issues. The relationship with health is vital in promoting wellness.

There has also been growth in internal partnerships within municipalities. There are closer relationships with police departments around public safety and youth initiatives, as well as with planning and engineering departments in the development of greenway and active transportation systems. Many municipalities are increasingly forming partnerships that can enhance service levels and leverage public funds. Examples of partnerships include facility naming and sponsorship arrangements, lease/ contract agreements, the contracted operation of facilities, or delivery of programs. The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie has some of these types of agreements already in place.

Technology

Parks and Recreation has embraced greater use of technologies. This includes bar-coded entry systems for pass holders, computer and web-based program registration systems, user tracking systems, and enhanced communications with both users and colleagues, including social media such as Twitter and Facebook. These high-tech capacities will compliment, but never replace the need for human contact and personal attention.

In the parks area, the use of digitized aerial photography has changed mapping systems and has allowed for easier overlays of GIS mapping levels. Many of these maps, including trails, are becoming available to the public on interactive websites. Another technology that is viewed with some resistance is the use of recreational drones in park settings. Fears of privacy intrusions and safety violations are valid concerns, while their usefulness in public safety missions and security are also recognized.

5.4. Infrastructure Trends

Aging Infrastructure and Funding

Many of Canada's recreation and park facilities are aging. Many early facilities were built as Centennial projects in 1967, while others were built in a second wave of facility construction in the 1980's. Many older facilities are deteriorating more rapidly than necessary because of limited preventative maintenance programs. These facilities now have envelope, code, mechanical, and slab problems. The multi-purpose recreation centres built in the 1980's and 90's is in better shape, but need work, particularly in the pool's component. Many of the older facilities are high energy users and are expensive to operate. This trend is also true for Ontario, where between 30% and 50% of the infrastructure is at, or approaching, its useful life, and for Arran-Elderslie, where its three community centres/arenas were built in the 1970s.

6

Visions +
Strategic
Directions



6. Visions + Strategic Directions

Based on the findings throughout the recreation master planning process, the following vision and strategic priorities are presented. This vision and strategic priorities have guided the recommendations that follow.

VISION

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie recognizes the importance of recreation and leisure to its citizens and to its continued growth and success.

The Municipality will promote and foster a fun, healthy and active lifestyle, and will strive to ensure all citizens have reasonable access to a variety of attractive and well-maintained recreation and leisure programs and facilities.

Based on the findings in this study, the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie should commit to the following four Strategic Priorities:

- ❖ Enhance/upgrade existing outdoor facilities, parks, and trails.
- ❖ Ensure programs and facilities are provided to meet leisure needs of all residents.
- ❖ Strengthen the volunteer base in the Municipality.
- ❖ Promote and communicate all recreation and leisure programs, services, and facilities that are available in Arran-Elderslie and educate residents on the full benefits of leisure and recreation activities.



7

Community
Issues, Needs +
Recommendation

7. Community Issues, Needs and Recommendations

The following section describes the community issues and recommendations to meet the demands identified throughout the plan process. The recommendations respond to the strategic priorities listed above.

7.1. Indoor Recreation Facilities

7.1.1. Improve Community Centres and Ice Rinks (for Accessibility, Safety, Usability, Aesthetics, Comfort, and Program Spaces)

There are three community centres in the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie, each with an ice surface, curling rink and lounge. Each centre also has a meeting room, hall, kitchen and concession. The Municipality owns all these facilities except for the curling rink in the Tara-Arran Community Centre, which is owned by the Tara Curling Club. The Chesley arena is the largest arena, and Tara is the smallest. None of the arenas' ice surfaces are regulation sized (200' x 85').

All community centres are ageing, having been built in 1976, 1977 and 1978. The condition of the community centres in Arran-Elderslie is consistent with that of many recreation facilities in Canada, including Ontario, where the majority of which were built between 1956 and 1980. Such ageing facilities require significant capital investment for renovations or replacement. The 2007 report *Investing in Healthy and Active Ontarians through Recreation and Parks Infrastructure* (https://www.prontario.org/public/policy/Infrastructure_Report_Jul07.pdf) noted that:

“

all communities in Ontario will be required to significantly retrofit or replace up to 55% of their community centers in the near future.

”

All three community centres in Arran-Elderslie require varying degrees of capital improvements i.e., restoration and repairs. Additionally, stakeholders and residents identified other improvements that are either necessary or ideal – i.e., those that would enhance overall user satisfaction. The following provides a summary description for each facility.

Chesley Community Centre and Arena

Chesley Community Centre opened in 1977 and is regarded by many residents to be the better facility in the Municipality. Its mechanical systems are in good condition as they have been replaced within the last 20 years. While it is the largest arena in the Municipality, it is not an official size hockey rink. Spectator accessibility in the arena is an issue, though there are long-term plans to address this limitation. Currently, there are fairly significant capital improvements necessary to undertake. A roof report completed by Garland Canada Inc. identified the need to replace the roof: the estimated (2024) budgeted cost for this is \$373,750; however, with federal and provincial funding, it will cost the Municipality approximately \$99,679. Other improvements, such as heating, fans, and items identified in the 2020 budget are estimated to cost \$100,000.

Several other issues were identified through the consultation process. The following improvements would increase user satisfaction: more and larger dressing rooms with better temperature control, improved accessibility of curling club and spaces, a larger meeting room and more storage space in the community centre.

Paisley Community Centre and Arena

This Community Centre opened in 1978; it needs an immediate roof retrofit at an estimated cost of \$770,000, which with an ICIP grant will cost the Municipality \$205,360. Additionally, the facility needs a new dehumidification system estimated at \$50K (planned for installation Nov 2020). Plans for renovating the second level spaces are also underway. The Municipality is currently exploring floor plan options and the feasibility of relocating the Bruce County Paisley Library to the Community Centre. As well, the Paisley Curling Club is planning to renovate its lounge at their own expense. The estimated cost of renovating the 2nd floor of the community centre could reach \$1.2M. With grants and the Curling Club contribution, the cost is approximately \$146,000. The Municipality will replace the arena lights with LED lights, an upgrade that is scheduled for 2021 at an estimated cost of \$11,000.

Eventually, another significant capital investment will be needed. *The Asset Management Plan (2016)* (AMP) identified the ice plant as past its useful life. This assessment is based only on equipment age and life expectancy and has not been confirmed with an actual inspection. The ice plant has been well maintained and its replacement can possibly be delayed a few years longer, though it is impossible to predict by how much. The cost to replace an ice plant will need to be confirmed.

Several other capital improvements for the Paisley Community Centre, Arena and Curling Rink have been put forward by user groups. These include temperature control in dressing rooms and, on the second level, repairs to prevent water from infiltrating into the curling rink from the exterior wall; electrical updates in the kitchen; increased storage; better sound system and water bottle filling station for the Skating Club; expanded dressing rooms and updated benches in the change rooms; and reconfigured meeting rooms/hall to better utilize the space. Users also want the flooring upstairs to be fixed.

Paisley Community Centre and Arena has a moderate level of accessibility, as it has a lift to the second floor and accessible washroom. Regarding scheduling access, such as length of evening opening hours and season, one user group would like both to be extended.

Tara-Arran Community Centre and Arena:

The Tara-Arran Community Centre is the oldest centre, having opened in 1976, and is the smallest arena in the Municipality. The roof was replaced 12 years ago (the new roof was built over the old one) and therefore requires very little repair and maintenance (\$22,000); as well its mechanical systems have been

replaced within the last 10 years. Nevertheless, a minimum of \$165,000 has been budgeted for upgrades and a dehumidification system.

This arena is used by hockey teams from outside municipalities: a Chatsworth hockey team, while they await a new facility and a Keady Broomball team, use Tara as an overflow facility. Tara arena is home to Tara Festival and Crafts which draws 6000 visitors annually. Residents would like the Tara Community Centre to be equivalent to Chesley and Paisley.

Specific issues users identified to improve their satisfaction and experience include:

- Repair the Curling club roof and modify the outside entrance overhang to prevent ice forming on the asphalt.
- Improve seating and comfort by improving temperature (arena is too cold).
- Improve general maintenance (for example the leaky pipe in change room).
- Provide new heated and accessible spectator space.
- Improve and increase size of dressing rooms.
- Community Hall is inadequate for its usage, and
- Decommission and replace arena.

Recommendations regarding these issues are presented at the end of this Section 7.1.2.



7.1.2. Evaluation of Potential for New Multi-Purpose Facility with a Variety of Spaces

As reported in the *Asset Management Plan (2016)* (AMP) all three arenas are beyond their life expectancy. Based on the AMP all three arenas will need to be replaced by 2019-2020. It is, however, important to note that the reported service life remaining is based solely on age and life expectancy. The AMP recommends that the Municipality have its engineers, operational staff, or architects also complete maintenance requirements, rehabilitation and replacement requirements reports.

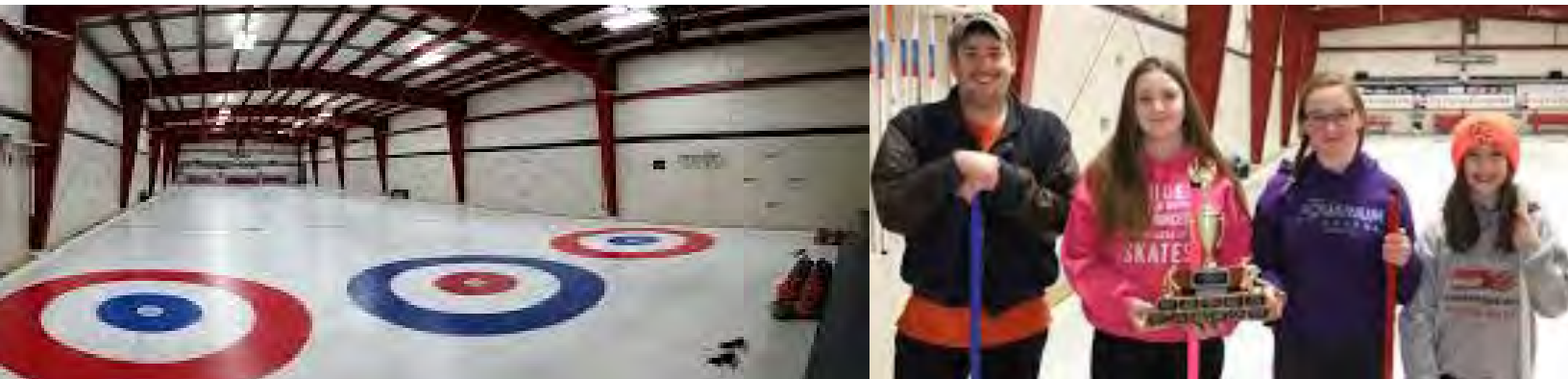
As these facilities approach the end of their lifecycle, the Municipality will need to make decisions regarding their replacement. Currently, the community centres fill a very important role in community life and in the well-being of its residents. Stakeholder feedback suggests that users are satisfied overall; they appreciate having these facilities in their community and near their homes.

Nevertheless, the facilities are ageing. And as such, they are more expensive to operate than a new facility. Typically, older facilities require more energy and thus contribute more to greenhouse gases. As stated in the AMP, deterioration accelerates the older a facility gets. It currently costs the Municipality an

average of \$176,607.67 to operate each of the three community centres (this includes all amenities-curling rinks, arenas, program space). The total net cost is \$529,823 or 53% of the Recreation Departments net operating budget.

What is more, Chesley arena is operating at 71% of prime-time capacity and in 2019 had 438 hours of unused prime time. Paisley arena is operating at 57% prime time capacity with 523 hours of unused primetime hours in 2019. This compares with Tara arena, which is operating at 62% of prime-time capacity and in 2019 had 460 hours of prime time not used. All total, there are 1,421 hours of prime time currently not being consumed in the municipality: this is almost the equivalent of total prime time hours available per year for Chesley arena (it has 1450 of available prime-time hours) and more than the prime-time hours offered at each of Paisley Arena and Tara Arena. The municipality, based on excess capacity, does not need three arenas but it does appear to need two ice surfaces.

If we look at *The National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) 2020 Agency Performance Review* and its benchmarking metrics (includes US and Canada data), typically municipalities of less than 20,000 would have one arena per 8,148 residents, and one community center per 8,916 residents. However, the NRPA also notes that no two recreation agencies are the same-- every community is unique, serving different residents with different needs, desires, and challenges (this is why NRPA has stopped publishing National Standards). This is certainly the case for Arran-Elderslie.



Fifty-eight (58%) of public survey respondents support replacing the ageing facilities with one new multi-purpose facility if it is feasible to do so. This compares with 42% of respondents who prefer to continue maintaining existing facilities. 92% of youth think a new multi-purpose facility is needed in Arran-Elderslie. Many views were expressed in the open-ended questions of the public survey regarding keeping existing facilities versus building one new modern facility. Opinions were expressed (almost equally) both in support of keeping existing facilities and against. Additionally, 70% of survey respondents would be motivated to use recreation services more often if better facilities were available.

As well, stakeholders and residents stated they would support a new facility provided they do not lose their existing facilities. Stakeholders also stated that if they lost existing arenas to a new facility built outside their town, they would use a closer facility in another municipality, rather than travel the extra distance to a new facility in Arran-Elderslie. A feasibility assessment would have to confirm to what extent such action would impact the viability of a new facility.

The Canadian Heritage *Sport Participation 2010 Research Paper* found that ice hockey is still among the top ten most frequently played sports in Canada. However, while hockey was the second most popular sport, in 2010 there was a decline in the percentage of sport participants choosing hockey. Furthermore, the International Ice Hockey Federation reports the number of registered hockey players in Canada decreased in 2014/2015 from 721,504 to 621,026 in 2018/2019. Regardless, as noted above, hockey remains a popular sport, with a national and provincial push to increase participation in the sport, which

includes a demonstrated interest by the Governments of Canada and Ontario to build the sport of hockey for girls.

Curling is trending downward in Canada. The *Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute's 2016 - 2018 Physical Activity Monitor* found that among the 25% of the population who participate in sport, only 7% participate in curling. However, the curling clubs in Arran-Elderslie are actively engaged in providing sport to members of all ages and play an important role in the social fabric of the community as well. Curling can support spontaneous activities for all ages, and offers a fun family activity, for which community members have stated a great need.

Regarding indoor program space, it is not clear how much future programming space will be required, as this will depend on the Municipality's (future) role in program development. The Municipality should consider its program needs as per this Recreation Master Plan and determine how existing space in the community centres can be utilized for more leisure programs.

Some Metrics to Consider (2020 NRPA Performance Review)

- Recreation agencies in jurisdictions of less than 20,000 people typically have a median operating expenditure of \$96.77 per person but can be as high as \$199.86 per person. The operating expenditure of Arran-Elderslie is \$230 per person.
- Recreation agencies in jurisdictions of less than 20,000 people typically generate \$27.00 in per capita revenue per resident. Arran-Elderslie generates \$83.09 in per capita revenue per resident.
- The typical recreation agency recovers 25.9% of its operating revenue from non-tax revenues. Arran-Elderslie recovers 36% of its operating revenue from non-tax revenues.

Some Points to Consider

- The existing community centres are very important to a large percentage of the community. Closing the centres would be hugely divisive in the community.
- The actual life expectancy of the community centres or arenas - i.e., when they will have to be decommissioned – is unknown.
- The population of young families in the Municipality is growing, especially in Paisley and Tara. There is a need to provide modern amenities and positive experiences to attract more families, as well as to satisfy current residents.
- Many residents support a new facility only if they do not lose their existing community centers and ice.

The consultants recommend that the Municipality assess the feasibility of the following three options:

- **Option A:** Replace each of the three community centres (phased approach) with a similar facility.
- **Option B:** Continue renovations and repairs to extend the life of existing facilities and to meet community programming needs.
- **Option C:** Replace all three community centres with one multi-purpose facility if the facilities are no longer feasible to operate.

Note: A SUN Times article (December 18, 2019) reported that in 2019 the Town of Chatsworth applied for federal and provincial funding to replace its 55-year-old arena with a new community centre (the arena was deemed to have structural issues and deficiencies too costly to repair). The new community centre, which includes one full size ice surface and other spaces, will cost an estimated \$15M. The Town's contribution is \$4.1M.



Recommendation #1: Continue to carry out community centre renovations and capital improvements as planned.

Recommendation #2: Conduct a full engineering and architectural assessment of each community centre including structural, electrical and mechanical components to determine actual life expectancy and replacement costs, as per the 2016 Asset Management Plan. Include an assessment of the potential and cost to extend life expectancy and the feasibility to maintain and operate all three arenas.

Recommendation #3: Once the assessments are complete, evaluate the feasibility of building a new multi-purpose centre if it is no longer feasible to operate existing community centres/arenas.

7.2. Outdoor Recreation Facilities

7.2.1. Improved Sports Fields (Ball diamonds, soccer pitches - surface, fencing, dugouts)

Ball Diamonds

There are seven ball diamonds within the Municipality -- one ball diamond for every 971 residents. Chesley, Paisley and Tara each have two ball diamonds, owned, and maintained by the municipality; Allenford has one field, operated by a volunteer group with occasional assistance from the municipality.

Chesley and Tara have strong minor teams while Tara also has an adult league. Paisley does not have a minor team and has only three adult teams. In 2017 two Paisley teams used the ball diamonds 3 hours each week.

In 2018 there were 28 teams using the diamonds 38 hours per week. This compares to 2017 when there were 26 teams using the diamonds, indicating growth in the sport.

All seven diamonds need some level of capital investment. In 2019 ball diamonds cost the Municipality \$23,831 (\$3.50 per resident).

A detailed discussion of needs regarding each diamond follows:



Allenford Ball Diamond

The ball diamond at Allenford is operated by a volunteer group, the Allenford Ball Diamond Committee. Users have stated that the ball diamond requires improvement: the lights are old and operate intermittently, and both the infield and left field drainage is poor. The ball diamond may need to be re-graded in areas to enhance drainage, aerated, top-dressed, reseeded and/or re-sodded in select areas.

Allenford ball diamond is used by teams from Tara as well as Allenford. Users believe the field needs to be managed and maintained to the same standard as the Tara diamonds. The Municipality should work with the Allenford Ball Diamond Committee to confirm what is required to fix the drainage and wiring issues and partner with the committee to enhance the quality of this field if it is feasible to do so.

Chesley Ball Diamonds

In Chesley there are currently 130 minor softball players. This has grown from one team five years ago to 11 teams in 2019. The group of volunteer leaders is active, committed and engaged; besides growing the sport, these volunteers have partnered with the Municipality to improve the quality of the Chesley ball diamonds. The increased participation in Chesley is undoubtedly the result of volunteer commitment and enhanced quality of the diamonds and amenities. There were 250 events and games posted on the Chesley Minor Ball Schedule in 2019 between the months of April and August; the vast majority of these were Chesley Minor Ball events (a few listed were ladies' events). The Chesley Minor Ball league is interested in hosting future Ontario Rural Softball Association, Ontario Amateur Softball Association, and other league tournaments in partnership with the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

A small number of improvements are required to enhance the quality of the Chesley ball diamonds to the standard requested by users. These are:

In the short term:

- Move the fence inward on Diamond 2/B to support minor softball games and tournaments.
- Initiate a tree planting program to provide shade at the south side of Diamond B, and at Diamond A to succeed the old trees.

In the long term:

- Replace the ageing bleachers at Diamond 1/A.
- Building a new 20x20 storage shed for ball equipment.
- Improve Main Park entrance with signage that includes identifying the park as Home of the Colts, and landscape beautification – flowers, etc.

Paisley Ball Diamonds

Demand for the Paisley ball diamonds from within the community of Paisley is low: there are only three adult teams in Paisley and a minor league does not exist. Nevertheless, 30% of public survey respondents think improvements are needed to the Paisley ball diamonds. As well, stakeholders identified the need to replace the infield soil on Diamond #1 with screened soil. The Municipality has budgeted \$12,500 to do this; however, the project was deferred in the 2018 and 2019 budgets.

Ball Diamond #2 is not well used for playing ball; it is however used by some residents as a dog park, and perhaps for other purposes as well. For this reason, the Municipality should consider decommissioning

Diamond #2 and re-purposing the space to meet other community needs, such as a dog park, skate park, etc. For the next two years, the Municipality should also monitor usage of Diamond #1, including informal usage by residents, including youth, either for pick-up games or other free-play activities, and for its importance in supporting tournaments. If usage does not warrant an ongoing operational burden, the field should also be decommissioned and repurposed. A redevelopment plan should be prepared for the Paisley Main Park that accommodates new uses for the entire space, including decommissioned ball diamond(s), in an attractive and functional manner that meets community needs.

Tara Ball Diamonds

Tara also has a dedicated group of volunteers leading the minor ball program. In 2019 there were approximately 170 minor softball players between the ages of 3-16 in Tara (the 2020 season was impacted slightly with a decrease to 140 members due to COVID), with the league experiencing steady growth over the last five years. The minor league also intends to add an U18 team when the U16 move up. Additionally, the Tara CoEd Slo Pitch league was established in 2020 and has 100 registered players between the ages of 16-65 (the league however had to restrict its number of players for the 2020 season to 50 due to COVID-19 guidelines). There is also an informal group of adult players that typically plays 12 games per season. Six ball tournaments per year are hosted in Tara, each lasting 2-3 days each.

The minor league uses the Tara diamonds and occasionally the Allenford diamonds; it also uses the Keady diamonds (a neighbouring municipality) as overflow for practice. The adult league mostly uses the Diamond A in Tara, but also uses the Allenford diamond.

Improvements required to enhance quality of Diamond A include:

In the Short Term:

- Upgrade the infield surface with red clay to be consistent with other fields in the Municipality
- Upgrade the outfield turf
- Install a new screen
- Permanently fix the wiring for the lights (currently requires repair every year)

In the Long Term:

- Add a pitching screen/batting screen.

The biggest issue with Tara Ball Diamond B is that it abuts the soccer field, creating a safety issue for soccer players due to fly balls. Relocation of the soccer field is required to solve this user conflict. Proximity of the soccer field to the ball diamond is preventing Tara Minor Softball from accessing \$130,000 Blue Jays Funding.

Other upgrades requested by users of Diamond B include adding a new fence and lights and upgrading the turf/outfield. Note that the only improvement the Tara CoEd Slo Pitch league has requested is for the lights to be repaired.



Recommendation #4: Upgrade Allenford, Chesley and Tara ball diamonds in partnership with the organized sport groups.

Recommendation #5: Decommission Paisley ball diamond #2.

Recommendation #6: Prepare a redevelopment plan for Paisley Main Park that repurposes spaces to address parking, safety, functionality, and optimal locations for all amenities and uses, with consideration of the Annual Fall Fair.

Recommendation #7: Monitor usage of Paisley ball diamond #1 and repurpose it if usage does not justify long term operational and capital cost. If usage is deemed to be adequate, replace infield soil with screened soil.

Soccer Pitches

The *Canadian Heritage Sport Participation 2010 Research Paper* identified several trends pertaining to participation in specific sports. The study found that soccer is the most played sport by Canadian children aged 5 to 14 and attracts almost twice as many kids as the second and third most popular sports - swimming and ice hockey. Additionally, soccer is one of the sports both men and women are likely to participate in on a regular basis, although this is not the case in Arran-Elderslie, where an adult soccer league does not exist.

The minor soccer program is growing in Arran-Elderslie, as is the population of young children. Both Tara and Chesley have a strong minor soccer program; currently there is no minor soccer program in Paisley. Tara Minor Soccer Association has 200 players, down from 300 five years ago. Chesley has 97 minor players and a local travel team for players 7 years of age and older.

The soccer pitch in Tara Main Park is not regulation sized, and as described above, abuts Ball Diamond B: flyballs pose a safety hazard when both facilities are used concurrently. Tara Minor Soccer also uses a second soccer field at the school for the U12 and younger players. The school facility is not regulation size and has ongoing drainage issues, but the Association regards this facility as acceptable. Tara Minor Soccer Association would like to have a full-size regulation soccer pitch that does not interfere with the Ball Diamond.

The only regulation sized pitch in Arran-Elderslie is in Chesley Main Park. This pitch is new, as it was built in 2018 by the Soccer and Track Association in partnership with the Municipality. The Chesley Minor Soccer Association has stated that if the program continues to grow, it will need another soccer pitch to meet scheduling demands. Based on the US Soccer Foundation guidelines (The Soccer Field Handbook,



2007 US Soccer Foundation <https://assets.usarugby.org/docs/club/USSF-The-Soccer-Field-HANDBOOK-1-.pdf>), Arran-Elderslie will know it is time to build a second soccer field when:

- There are not enough practice and playing time slots for the number of players.
- Players cannot sign up and have to be turned away.
- Fields are not getting the “rest” they need to stay safe and playable.
- Teams cannot participate in your tournaments because your field is maxed out.
- Adult soccer has been squeezed out of the existing field space because it is considered “too hard” on the limited field space.
- Lights on existing fields have added evening hours to the schedule, but it hasn’t solved the scheduling problem.
- You’re in a growing community with the expectation of new families with children moving in.

The Municipality will need to continue monitoring field usage and condition, participation levels and unmet demand to determine when the quantity of soccer fields in Arran-Elderslie should be increased.

In the meantime, the more immediate need of Chesley Minor Soccer is for an on-site storage shed for equipment. The same request was made by the Chesley Minor Ball, suggesting an opportunity for these two groups to partner on this development.



There is one soccer pitch located in Paisley - a minor soccer pitch in Mary Cummings Park. A second soccer pitch (300' x 177') was once located at Paisley Main Park but this was abandoned due to lack of use. It was noted during the inventory assessment phase of this report that the soccer goals are movable; it is recommended for safety reasons that these goals and all others in the municipality be anchored in place where appropriate. There have

been many serious injuries and fatalities caused by unanchored goals in the US and Canada. Guidelines for Movable Soccer Safety can be found in the Soccer Field Handbook referenced above.

Other safety issues raised during the consultations is that of vehicles parked along the track surrounding the sports fields in Chesley and Tara. These vehicles pose a hazard to young children running around the park during events. Every effort should be made to keep vehicles out of Chesley and Tara parks and in designated parking areas.

On a municipal-wide basis, the Municipality does not currently need to increase the quantity of its soccer fields. However, due to the safety issue with the fly balls from Tara Ball Diamond B and given the high number of minor soccer players with a dedicated volunteer base ensuring the success of the minor soccer program, it is recommended that the Tara Main Park Soccer Pitch be relocated away from the Ball Diamond. It is further recommended that the new replacement soccer pitch be built to regulation size.

Recommendation #8: *In partnership with user groups and service clubs, build a new regulation sized soccer pitch and associated amenities in Tara Main Park at a location away from hazards associated with Ball Diamond B.*

Recommendation #9: *Before building a new soccer pitch, prepare a redevelopment plan for Tara Main Park to address parking, safety, functionality, and optimal locations for all amenities and uses, with consideration of the Annual Fall Fair.*



7.2.2. New Multi-Sport Courts for Basketball, Pickleball, Ball Hockey, etc.

Currently in Arran-Elderslie there are four tennis courts (two each in Chesley Main Park and Paisley Main Park) and one basketball court (Tara Main Park). All tennis courts are in need of resurfacing; the tennis courts are otherwise in fair condition. The Municipality has recently added lines to enable residents to play the game of pickleball, which is growing in popularity nationally and is quite popular locally.

Tennis courts in Arran-Elderslie are generally underutilized for tennis, a trend seen in many municipalities. The Municipality should consider converting its tennis courts and basketball court into multi-sport courts that offer a greater variety of activities and can serve a larger audience, including youth, a group that is currently underserved in the community. Ninety two percent of youth who responded to the youth survey think multi-purpose courts are needed.

Multi-sport courts can be developed to provide sports such as basketball, ball hockey, tennis, futsal, volleyball, Pickleball®, dodgeball, among other activities, and in winter can be flooded to make outdoor ice rinks. Fifty percent of survey respondents think youth parks and outdoor skating areas are needed in Arran-Elderslie.

Spontaneous use amenities are a leading trend and very much in demand; additionally, they support all ages and abilities. During the recreation master plan consultations, the Kinettes, Kinsmen and Rotarians expressed interest in supporting implementation of the plan's recommendations. The Municipality should therefore engage the support of service groups in the development of multi-courts. However, before proceeding with this initiative, youth should be consulted more widely, as the sample of youth who participated in the survey was very small (16 in total).

Recommendation #10: *In partnership with its service groups, repurpose all existing tennis courts and basketball court to multi-sport courts to accommodate a wider variety of activities, especially for youth.*



7.2.3. New Outdoor Swimming Pools and Change Rooms to Replace Ageing and Inaccessible Facilities

There are two outdoor pools with changehouses in Arran-Elderslie- the Chesley Pool and Changehouse and the Tara Rotary Pool and Changehouse. Chesley is a newer and larger facility though both facilities are ageing: Tara Pool and Changehouse is over 50 years old and the Chesley facility is over 40 years old. The *2016 Asset Management Plan for the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie* places both facilities at the end of their service life, though this is based solely on facility age, and not on a professional conditional assessment. Residents expressed general satisfaction with the pools, though survey respondents (32%) consider Tara Rotary Pool to be one of the top two outdoor facilities requiring improvements, and 50% of respondents think new outdoor swimming pools are needed in Arran-Elderslie.

Both pools are very well used, with 326 aquatic lesson registrants plus 80 hours of public programming in 2018. Wages are the most significant expense to pool operations. It costs the Municipality approximately \$50,000 annually to operate the Chesley Pool and \$43,300 to operate the Tara Pool. (That is roughly \$7.35 and \$6.36 per resident per year respectively.)

Aquatics are the most important recreation service a municipality can provide. Aquatic programs deliver a broad range of benefits ranging from skill development, rehabilitation, fitness and fun. Aquatics also serve a broad cross-section of the community from infants to older adults, and also can meet the demand for accessible and inclusive recreation.

In Canada, outdoor pools are among the recreational assets in the worst condition (*The Canadian Infrastructure Report Card 2019*) with more than 30% of them rated as either fair, poor, or very poor condition. While the pools in Arran-Elderslie are still functional, they do exhibit deficiencies.



The greatest concern in Arran-Elderslie is that the pools are not accessible, the changerooms are small and also not accessible. The Municipality could provide mobile accessible features such as pool lifts, access ladders and steps, but the changerooms are unable to fully meet accessible requirements due to their small size. Regarding replacement of the pools, the Municipality should begin discussions with its service club partners regarding their willingness to raise funds to support development of new larger accessible pool facilities. A new outdoor pool and changerooms should be built in Tara, since the existing

facility is older and smaller than the pool in Chesley and should be built on a large site that can accommodate adequate and accessible parking.

In the meantime, the Municipality should continue to repair and refurbish the existing pools and changehouses until the pools reach the end of their functional lifespan or a new replacement pool is built. Eventually Chesley pool and changerooms will also reach the end of its life. At this time, a decision will have to be made on whether a new pool is required to replace it or whether demand is being met with the newer pool in Tara. However, if federal, provincial, or partner funding becomes available to build a new pool facility that meets accessibility requirements, the Municipality should consider the feasibility of replacing Chesley Pool and Changehouse with a new facility, and if it is feasible, it should proceed.

Recommendation #11: *Replace Tara pool and changerooms with a modern larger accessible facility on an appropriate site. The Municipality should also consider building a splash pad at this outdoor aquatic facility.*

Recommendation #12: *Consider replacing the Chesley pool and changerooms with a larger, accessible facility, in the long term, if it is feasible to do so.*



7.2.4. New Outdoor Skating Rink to Enhance Winter Recreation Opportunities

Fifty percent (50%) of public survey respondents and 83% of youth survey respondents think a new outdoor skating rink is needed in Arran-Elderslie. An outdoor rink is among the top five new outdoor facilities residents think are needed in the Municipality. The demand for outdoor skating rinks is trending upwards, as is the demand to participate in spontaneous leisure winter activities.

The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie currently does not provide outdoor rinks. Outdoor rinks range from less expensive natural rinks to artificial skating trails, that can cost upwards of \$1M to build and \$40,000 to operate annually. The downside of natural outdoor ice rinks is that they are weather dependent, but even with the additional effort required to maintain an ice surface, the low cost makes this type of amenity an ideal option for the municipality. Additionally, many municipalities engage volunteers to maintain the outdoor rinks, thus eliminating the need for extra staff resources. The City of Kitchener for example engages more than 350 community volunteers to build and maintain over 30 outdoor rinks at schools and parks around the City. The Municipality of Arran-Elderslie can follow the same model, though of course on a much smaller scale, to provide outdoor rinks to its residents.

Outdoor rinks support a broad cross section of residents, including families and youth and are free and accessible to residents of all socio-economic circumstances. It is recommended that the Municipality create one natural rink in Chesley, Paisley and Tara, using its existing tennis and basketball courts. New multi-courts can be designed to accommodate conversion to natural outdoor skating rinks.

Recommendation #13: *That the Municipality work with volunteers in each town to provide natural outdoor skating rinks in Chesley, Paisley and Tara on existing and new multi-sport courts.*



7.2.5. Improved Parks and Playgrounds

Parks and playgrounds are very important to residents of Arran-Elderslie. Visiting parks and playgrounds is the second highest activity survey respondents (75%) participate in. Beautiful parks and playgrounds are among the features residents really like about Arran-Elderslie. Residents do however recognize that some improvements are needed, and stated the need to update all parks, improve maintenance, update playground equipment, add more benches and ensure consistent standards in each town.

This following discussion deals with parks and playground elements (note there is some duplication of the issues discussed above).

Playgrounds

Allenford

There are two playgrounds in Allenford, one located at Allenford Community Park and one on Morrison Avenue. Allenford Community Park playground is run by volunteers. Both playgrounds have relatively modern play structures.

Morrison Avenue Playground is located within a developing residential neighbourhood, on municipal owned land. The playground could be in a more ideal location, as it seems to be a little out of the way and appears to be a part of the adjacent homeowner's property. This playground, like the majority in the municipality, should have a protective surface that meets CSA Standards. The Municipality should confirm how well this playground is utilized; if utilization rate is very low, consider repurposing it, perhaps to meet the needs of an older or other more prominent demographic.



On a policy note, the less -than- ideal location of the playground may speak to the importance of the Municipality adhering to its Official Plan for Urban Areas policies on parkland dedication. This policy, Policy 3.5.5.1, enables the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie to acquire parkland dedication for all subdivision developments, redevelopments, and plans based on a set of defined criteria. The Municipality can acquire either land for municipal parkland or cash-in-lieu of parkland (which is used for development of parkland within the community). What Morrison Avenue Playground demonstrates is the benefit of using the Official Plan for Urban Areas to acquire appropriate land for parks in new subdivisions. It is also noteworthy that parkland dedication does not have to be limited to playgrounds. It is better, and more cost efficient from a maintenance perspective, to develop neighbourhood parks, as per the Official Plan, that provide recreation opportunities for all residents.

Chesley

There are two playgrounds in Chesley: one at Chesley Main Park and one at Robert Hutchinson Memorial Park. The playground at Chesley Main Park has older equipment and needs resurfacing to meet CSA safety standards. (The Canada Safety Council <https://canadasafetycouncil.org/playground-safety/> states that playground surfaces should have a soft surface such as wood chips, shredded rubber or sand, and that it should be close to twelve inches deep and surround equipment on all sides at least out to six feet). The playground at Robert Hutchinson Memorial Park is a new playground provided by the Chesley Kinettes and opened in the summer of 2019. The playground equipment is accessible; but completion of the ramp is required to enable accessibility to the structure. The park itself has multiple right of ways connecting to the surrounding neighborhood. The Municipality should consider enhancing these neighbourhood connections, as this will improve park use, and create a better sense of community ownership of the park.

Paisley

There are three playgrounds in Paisley: Paisley Main Park, Dr. Milne Park and Mary Cumming Park. The equipment at Main Park is sun faded: residents have requested the Municipality update the old play structures with new equipment. While there are no issues with the equipment at Doc Milne Park, the park is located on a former landfill site, which has serious issues with slumping, sink holes and resurfacing of landfill items. Consideration should be given to relocating this playground and repurposing the site to avoid hazards and potential liability. (Other recommendations for Dr. Milne Park will be discussed under Parks.)

The playground equipment at Mary Cumming Park is dated. There is the potential to better integrate the play area into the park by removing the fence that encloses the play equipment, and to relocate play equipment away from the neighboring residence. This playground requires the installation of protective surfaces.

Tara

Three playgrounds are located in Tara: Tara Main Park, Tara Rotary Park and the Downtown Parkette. The surface of all three playgrounds should be updated with a protective surface as soon as possible. The play structure equipment at the Downtown Parkette is quite old and ideally would be updated. There are also safety issues due to the slide being too close to the new picnic shelter.



It was said during the consultations that Tara has the youngest population and is experiencing population growth due to Bruce Power Life Extension Program. It was also stated that there is a boom in 1-3-year old's, and a significant new subdivision with 30-40 new houses in the north end of Town. We have also heard that the population of Paisley is growing. We know from Statistics Canada 2016 Census that there is an increase of 100 children in the 0-4 age category as well as an increase of 100 children in the 5-9 years old age category in Arran-Elderslie. This certainly confirms the need to provide quality play amenities for young children. The need to improve playgrounds generally and to provide structures for toddlers and preschoolers, as well as benches for parents and caregivers, was expressed throughout the consultations.

With the infusion of young families, playgrounds are important. Ideally, playgrounds would be incorporated into larger community parks due to the cost of maintaining stand- alone playgrounds. This is something to consider as the municipality grows.



Recommendation #14: *The Municipality should, as a priority, continue with its plans to upgrade all playground surfaces to CSA safety standards.*

Recommendation #15: *The Municipality should work with its service club partners to replace older playground equipment with newer elements.*

Recommendation #16: *The Municipality work with land developers in the collaborative planning of parks, and trail connections, within new subdivisions without giving up the option of taking cash in-lieu for all or a portion of the park dedication requirement.*

Parks

Chesley

Elliott Park is an attractive park situated along the river. The park commemorates the site of a foundry first built in 1880, and its subsequent developments. The park features a cast iron fountain that once adorned the house of John Elliot, Chesley's first Reeve. The park offers seating and lovely horticultural planting. The only improvements recommended would be to improve accessibility and to open the view to the river.

Krug Park celebrates a piece of the Town's heritage- that of the former Krug Furniture factory, owned by Krug Bros. Co. Ltd. from 1886-1987. The park provides lovely views of the river and connects to the Chesley Heritage Trail and trestle bridge. Krug Park features artifacts and interpretive signage. The Municipality has plans to delineate and add signage for an accessible parking spot. No other improvements are necessary at this park.

Chesley Main Park – recommendations for this park are included under the discussion of its specific elements (e.g., athletic fields, ball diamonds, splash pads). The only recommendation to be emphasized here regards parking. The Municipality should discourage vehicles from accessing the park via the track. A vehicle-free park is more conducive to a park setting and is supportive of park activities.



Riverside Park consists of open space and an attractive trail set along the river and connecting to Krug Park. The park includes interpretative signage. The only suggestion for this park is to consider making the trail accessible where possible. Recommendations specific to trails are discussed more in Section 7.2.9.

Recommendation #17: Continue to implement the Multi-year Accessibility Plan 2020-2025. Additionally, ensure all new recreation facilities, including those built by the Municipality's partners (service clubs, volunteers, other agencies, etc.,) are fully accessible.

Recommendation #18: Aim to keep motor vehicles out of the Chesley and Tara Main Parks by developing new designated parking areas in safe locations.



Paisley

Dr. Milne Park was discussed above under Playgrounds. As noted, there are several challenges:

- It is situated on a previous landfill site that was decommissioned in the 1970s.
- The sloping ground is difficult to mow although the setting provides scenic views to the river.
- Sections of a woodland trail system running along the bottom of the park have been abandoned; connecting stairs are in very poor condition.
- The park's retaining walls are failing and should be removed.
- Sinkholes appear throughout the park, and garbage regularly resurfaces.
- The Rotary pavilion is dated and currently used for storage; its structural condition should be assessed.



The use of Dr. Milne Park as a playground and other outdoor recreational uses may be deemed to be a sensitive use and incompatible with the former landfill site. Current provincial legislation would not permit a former landfill site to be used as a park. The Municipality should therefore determine as soon as possible if the site is safe and if it is suitable for use as a park. The park should be closed to the public until this assessment has been completed. If it is determined that the park is unsafe, the Municipality should investigate the feasibility of relocating the playground equipment to another location, possibly to replace older play structures in an existing playground.

Recommendation #19: Undertake an Environmental Site Assessment of Dr. Milne Park as soon as possible to confirm the safety and suitability of continuing to use this site for parkland.

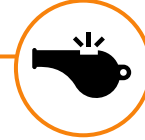


Mary Cummings Park has been discussed under soccer pitches and playgrounds. In addition to those amenities, the park has a considerable lawn/open play area and connects to the Dyke Trail -- though there are no stairs, and the slopes are very steep. The park space could be better configured to define areas and create visual and functional interest. To realize the potential of this park, the Municipality:

- Could consider a naturalization and planting program.

- Integrate the Dyke Trail into the park through grading and improved access.
- Investigate the opportunity to work with the SVCA to plant along the dyke.
- Install park signage at the street entrance to identify the park.

Recommendation #20: Prepare a design concept for Mary Cummings Park that includes integrating and connecting into the Dyke Trail.



Paisley Main Park is an attractive park along the Saugeen River. In addition to the discussion in previous sections, the park contains the following features:

- Rotary River Palace -- a facility in excellent condition that is used for hosting the annual agricultural fair and other events.
- Horse ring – an amenity that is rarely used; its removal should be considered, and the site repurposed for amenities more in demand.
- Asphalt skate park pad, located on west side of James Street, has no skate equipment. An alternative site for a skatepark should be considered (see Section 7.2.6) and the Municipality should consider designating this parcel of land for residential use.
- Boat launch – this river access point, the Saugeen River Access #9A, is in poor condition, it is too steep, and it is not accessible. The Municipality should seek to partner with SVCA to implement launch improvements (See Section 7.2.10 for more discussion and the recommendation).
- Mown trail connecting to Dr. Milne Park. (This will be discussed under the trails section, Section 7.2.9).

As discussed in the above sections for other amenities, Paisley Main Park should be redesigned to accommodate new uses and repurpose spaces no longer in demand.

Paisley Cenotaph is situated in a prominent site in the downtown. The Cenotaph and town square site is an attractive space that warrants updating and redesign. The Municipality should consider developing a pedestrian riverside connection from the plaza, along Water Street to Rotary Park (see Section 7.2.9). This strengthens the sense of place for residents and supports tourism development in the town.

Willow Creek Park is an inviting green space along the town's main street. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada commemorates David Brown Milne on this site, which also features the historic and monumental Paisley Foundry Chimney. As well as being a lovely space for residents to reflect and contemplate, this park supports the tourism product and town brand. Opportunity for improvements include:

- Creating an accessible connection to Dyke Trail.
- Possibly creating a plaza space and gathering area in front of the chimney.
- Planting along the dyke edge to add visual interest; and
- Extending Dyke Trail should community interest warrant.

Recommendation #21: Work with partners, such as the Paisley Royal Canadian Legion Branch 295 and service groups, to redevelop the Paisley Cenotaph and town square site.

For Recommendations regarding trail connections, see Section 7.29.



Tara

Riverside Rotary Park is a very well-maintained park at the entrance to Tara. This park is lovely as it is, with a picnic pavilion, gazebo, play structure, and horticultural plantings. However, if the Municipality wanted to further enhance this park, views and access points could be opened to the river. For example, platforms could be added to support shoreline fishing and picnicking by the river.

Downtown Parkette is uniquely located in the downtown. The parkette has a picnic shelter and, as discussed under playgrounds, older play structure elements that require updating, and improved safety.

Main Park Tara is a large municipal park hosting agricultural events and multiple sports fields. The park has considerable undesignated open space that takes a long time to mow. In addition to amenities already discussed, the park also has a:

- Horse track that receives little recreational use. Removing this track would open considerable space to allow for better spatial arrangements of sports fields.
- Basketball court.
- Pavilion
- Horse Ring.



Effort should be made to keep vehicles out of the park. This can be accomplished by providing additional parking north of the arena building. The Municipality should consider developing a master development plan for the grounds should interest in redevelopment warrant it.

Recommendations for Tara Main Park are included in Section 7.2.1.

7.2.6. New Skateparks for Teens/Youth

Stakeholders and public survey respondents have stated the need for improved skateparks in the municipality. Survey respondents (52%) consider youth parks with BMX and skateparks to be the third most needed outdoor facility in the municipality. The skatepark in Chesley and Paisley Main Park are in poor condition. These amenities are of no interest to potential users and should be replaced with modern elements as soon as possible.

Skateboard participation is typically strong where amenities exist. Skateparks provide many benefits for youth. They provide a place for youth to go and are recognized as not only a fitness activity but also an

esteem-building activity that helps youth build confidence. Skateparks build civic pride and leadership skills: youth acquire leadership when they are engaged in the development of this amenity. Additionally, when these parks are built with skater input and involvement, youth develop a sense of ownership and pride; they become in essence effective managers and police of *their* facility.

Skateboarding brings all ages of the community together from very young children, teenagers and older skaters who still enjoy the sport. Skateparks work best in public recreation areas where there are other amenities such as baseball and soccer fields, playgrounds, picnic areas and other outdoor amenities. The Main Parks are thus an ideal potential location for skate parks.

It is interesting that 42% of the youth agreed that skateparks are needed and 42% of youth think they are not needed. Because the sample was quite small, more consultation with youth will be required to confirm the need.

Recommendation #22: *Develop a new skatepark in Paisley Main Park as part of the Redevelopment Plan in partnership with service club partners and in consultation with youth.*

Recommendation #23: *Develop a small skatepark facility in partnership with service clubs in Tara if the population of young people continues to grow, and if interest warrants it.*



7.2.7. New Dog Parks

The Municipality does not currently have an off-leash dog-park, but residents are requesting the creation of one. Dog parks was the second highest outdoor facility survey participants think is needed in Arran-Elderslie; over half (59%) of public survey respondents felt that an off-leash dog park is needed in Arran-Elderslie. Several requests for an off-leash dog park were stated in the public meeting and stakeholder interviews.

Currently, the development of municipal dog parks is on the rise in Canada. As this trend continues, many municipalities are developing dog-parks to accommodate and include dog-owners in recreational planning. Some municipalities, such as the City of Hamilton, offer free running areas. A trail or park in Arran-Elderslie could be temporarily designated and scheduled for off-leash running.

Successful dog parks are those that are fenced with several gates/opening to prevent bottlenecks and confrontations with other dogs, and separate areas for larger and smaller breeds of dogs. They also provide open areas for dogs to be able to run and play, but also areas of shade for resting. Well-planned dog parks have such amenities as a water source for dogs and their owners, benches or picnic tables, and waste bins.

Proposed Developments:

- Develop a leash-free dog park in Paisley Park; include a separate fenced area for smaller dogs and one for medium and large sized dogs.
- Include amenities such as a drinking water source, benches, waste bins and doggie poop bags, and shaded areas for resting.

The Municipality should monitor success of this park and determine the need to develop a dog park in the other towns based on success of this park. In the meantime, the Municipality should offer rotating free running areas/events.

Recommendation #24: *That the Municipality develop an off-leash dog park in Paisley, as part of the park reconfiguration. In the meantime, the Municipality should consider scheduling free running areas.*



7.2.8. New Splash Pads for Children

There is only one splash pad in the municipality, located in Chesley. This splash pad was built several years ago by the Chesley Kinsmen Club, who also financially support ongoing costs. The splash pad is aged, in poor condition and in need of replacement. Typically, older splash pads (also called spray pads) do not meet user expectations: users generally expect larger more modern splash pads with supporting amenities (washroom facilities, change rooms).

Residents in Paisley and Tara have requested a splash pad. It is the outdoor facility considered to be most needed by participants of the public survey (60%). Splash pads are among the most sought- after recreation amenities; they provide respite from summer heat, and a fun water experience. The amenity also has the potential to provide a destination attraction. A modern facility will cost approximately \$300,000 - \$500,000 or more. The Municipality should only develop additional splash pads if the cost of developing and operating this facility is undertaken by the volunteer service groups.

Recommendation #25: *In partnership with the service clubs, replace the Chesley splash pad with a larger more modern facility that serves all the Municipality. In the long term the splash pad can be combined with a new outdoor swimming pool and changerooms in Chesley.*

Recommendation #26: *In partnership with the service clubs, develop a splash pad in Tara as part of the outdoor pool redevelopment.*

Recommendation #27: *Develop a splash pad in Paisley, in partnership with service clubs.*



7.2.9. Improved and Expanded Trail System including Better Connections, Safe Surfaces and Defined Multi-Purpose Sections

Arran-Elderslie Trails

Recreation trails are a valued part of any park and open space system. Trails provide opportunities for passive non-structured outdoor experiences and create connections between community destinations such as shopping areas, parks and residential neighbourhoods.

Trail development within Arran-Elderslie has focused largely on individual settlement areas versus establishing broader regional connections. The Bruce County Rail Trail through Paisley is one exception which links this community to Mildmay in the south and Port Elgin in the west – a great resource for long distance trail users.

In August 2020, the County of Bruce launched a Master Transportation Plan Study which aims to determine the County's transportation needs. The study will include:

- Review of walking and cycling demand through public survey.
- Identify need for the connectivity of active transportation routes.
- Investigate how trails might support tourism and economic objectives.
- Access active transportation facilities design best practices.

With the regional transportation study underway, the municipality should continue to support community-based trail expansion efforts while at the same time actively participating in the County's plan to potentially establish broader active transportation connections.

Opportunities

Rivers

In addition to the community-based trails, the Municipality's settlement areas are fortunate to have a number of waterways that provide significant open space and recreation opportunities. Access to the rivers was noted as a key recreational strength in consultations and surveys; paddling was noted as one of the top six activities survey respondents participated in. The Official Plan for the Urban Areas of Chesley, Paisley and Tara/Invermay identifies as a key action to:

“

Encourage the use of the Main Saugeen, North Saugeen, Teeswater and Sauble rivers for the recreational and passive enjoyment of area residents and visitors. This should include trail linkages, functional links between the river and the downtown and accessibility for canoeing, fishing and passive recreation.

”

Road Allowances

The many unopened road allowances represent opportunities to create linkages to parks and other trails within communities. An “unopened road allowance” as defined by the Municipal Act is a public highway that has not been opened and assumed for maintenance purposes by the municipality. Where an unopened road allowance currently has some form of use it is referred to as an existing or public right of

way. With some exceptions, as further specified in the Municipal Act (2001), a local municipality has jurisdiction over:

- All road allowances located in the municipality that were made by the Crown surveyors.
- All road allowances, highways, streets and lanes shown on a registered plan of subdivision; and
- A municipality may, by bylaw, assume an unopened road allowance made by the Crown surveyors and all road allowances, highways, streets and lanes shown on a registered plan of subdivision for public use.

Within Arran-Elderslie, and as indicated on the Bruce County GIS mapping, there are numerous unopened roads and right-of-ways, particularly within the urban areas. These have great potential to support trail development either where they are or as a resource for negotiating land trades.



Tara Community Trails and Recommendations Diagram

- Trail
- Recommendation
- Municipal Boundary
- Property Parcel
- Major Park

The Need for Trails

As with many of Arran-Elderslie's recreation facilities, the community is generally quite satisfied with the existing trails. According to the survey, the existing community trails are well used: walking ranked as the number one activity by respondents (88%); cycling (56%) and paddling and hiking (53%) ranked very highly. Notably, 51% felt that more trails were needed and the need to improve existing trails was mentioned frequently.

General Trail Recommendations

1. Expand Community-Based Trails. The Municipality should continue to focus on and support efforts to improve and expand trail systems within each community. Trail systems within each community should aim to create continuous loops while making connections to local destinations such as shopping areas, libraries and community centres.
2. Regional Trail Connections. The Municipality should play an active role in the development of Bruce County's Transportation Master Plan and promote the need for the connectivity of active transportation routes between Arran-Elderslie communities and its neighboring municipalities. As there are significant distances between communities, multi-modal (e.g., ATV, snowmobile, horse and buggy) connections should be considered.

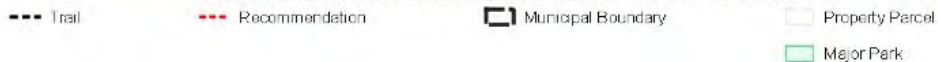


3. Enhance Existing Trails. While the existing trails are well used within the Municipality, many would benefit from investment in physical upgrades. Arran-Elderslie should undertake the development of a trails master plan that outlines expansion opportunities, development standards and necessary enhancements such as:
 - a. **Accessibility:** As much as possible, trails should be designed to be free of barriers to be inclusive of persons with disabilities.
 - b. **Trail Hierarchy:** Defining a range of trail types creates different trail experiences appropriate to the environment and potential trail users with varying levels of ability.
 - c. **Amenities.** The trail enhancements should include consistent wayfinding signage, rest areas planting and parking, to better serve trail users.
 - d. **Safety.** Trails should be designed and maintained to reduce risk to users by locating trails through existing parks and open spaces, reducing conflict between different types of trail users, ensuring clear sightlines, providing a high level of maintenance, and other best practices.

4. *Incorporate River Systems.* As with many rural Ontario communities, it was the rivers that originally drew settlers to the area, first as a means of transportation and later as a source of energy. As such, it is appropriate that an enhanced and expanded trail system should seek to capitalize on a community's waterway. The Municipality should work with local conservation authorities, community partners and landowners to upgrade river access points and trail connections along the rivers.
5. *New Development Areas.* Where residential, commercial or industrial developments are being proposed, new trail links should be incorporated wherever possible especially along rivers, to park spaces and other community destinations.



Paisley Community Trails and Recommendations Diagram





Community Specific Trail Recommendations

The communities of Paisley, Chesley and Tara each have varying levels of trail components in place, but none have established a community-wide system. The following section outlines short-term community-based trail development recommendations. The expansion or redevelopment of community trails should take place in the context of additional community consultations and the development of a trails master plan.

Paisley. The village of Paisley has one of the larger trail systems in place including approximately three kilometers of paths built in the early 80's on flood control dykes and along the river's flood plain. The key recommendations to enhance the trail system is to focus on creating a complete trail loop around and through the town. Work should include redevelopment of sections of sidewalks along Queen Street to strengthen pedestrian connection to the downtown; seek to extend walks along the dykes and provide new connections between the Bruce Rail Trail and Dr. Milne Park.

Currently, many of the community's walks are simply mown grass paths. In time and with increased use, some sections of trail may need to be resurfaced with a more durable material and additional rest areas provided along the trail.

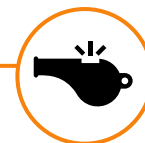
Providing a prominent link from Rotary Park to the downtown along the river will be a particularly beneficial pedestrian connection. A redesign of the town square and cenotaph site to better support community activities is recommended.

Chesley. A well-developed section of trail in Chesley's Riverside Park provides the basis for an expanded trail network in the community. Recently additional paths have extended to newly established Krug Park and further connections have been made with the Heritage Trail. Trail standards, however, vary along the various sections. The Chesley trail system would benefit from a uniform identity and development standard. This would be reinforced throughout the community with a municipality-wide trail signage standard.

Effort should be placed on creating links between existing trail sections and recreational facilities. For example, while property ownership may be a challenge, creating a pedestrian connection along the north side of the river to connect Elliot Park with Krug Park would be very well received. Additional sidewalk and trail connections are needed to complete a trail loop to Chesley's main park.

Tara. Only a short section of rail trail has been developed in Tara but with the recent installation of the new Anne Street Rotary pedestrian bridge over the Sable River, trail use and demand are expected to grow. An expanded trail system should aim to connect Tara Rotary Park with the Anne Street bridge. A new trail section along the open space following the Sauble River will make an attractive connection to the town centre. In planning for new trails in Tara, perhaps through the Transportation Master Plan process currently underway, the opportunity to expand trail connections along the old rail bed connecting to Allenford should be considered.

Recommendation #28: *That the Municipality undertake the development of a trails master plan that outlines expansion opportunities, development standards and necessary enhancements, costs and implementation schedule.*



7.2.10. Enhanced Boat Launches

There was one boat launch assessed for this plan: The Saugeen River Access #9A located in Paisley Main Park. The boat launch site is in very poor condition, the site is steep, eroded, and generally inaccessible.

Fishermen have asked the Municipality to improve the boat launch. Survey respondents have also identified the need to improve river docks at Dr. Milne Park and well as those behind the old firehall in Paisley.

River traffic increased greatly – by 300% - during COVID-19, as more people were drawn to outdoor recreation. Boat launches support outdoor recreation and the outdoor recreation tourism product. The *Explore the Bruce Economic Impact of Tourism Report (2018)* reported that 2.5 million people visited Bruce County in 2018. The economic impact of tourism in the County is worth \$299M. The largest visitor expenditure was in recreation and entertainment.

The *Economic Impact of Tourism Report* also found that most visitors to Bruce County are less likely to visit Arran-Elderslie. However, those who do visit the municipality are more likely to be full-time residents of Bruce County and to have children. This suggests an opportunity to develop recreational opportunities to attract families to the municipality. At least one business already offers such a product: the Saugeen Paddlers, Canoe and Kayak Club is a private enterprise that operates out of Paisley Main Park, next to the boat launch.

Recommendation #29: Partner with the SVCA to implement boat launch improvements that provide accessible and safe access to the rivers.



7.3. Program and Services Issues and Recommendations

7.3.1. Greater and More Defined Role for the Municipality in Leisure Programming

The Department of Facilities, Parks and Recreation currently plays a minimal role in program development outside of summer day camp and learn to skate programs. There is, however, a desire for more leisure opportunities/programs in the community, including outdoor and nature-oriented activities, recreational level sports, general interest programs and special events, fitness and arts and crafts. While the Municipality does not have to directly offer these programs, it should nevertheless assume a greater and more defined role in program development, working with community providers to ensure this need is met.

Arran-Elderslie currently has one recreation program coordinator responsible for creating new programs, among many other tasks. What is required to enhance recreation and leisure programming is adequate programming staff. The Department should review the program coordinator's workload to determine if the capacity to coordinate additional programs exists with current staffing levels. If it does not, the Municipality should hire a Program Coordinator Assistant. The Program Coordinator or Assistant can identify partners in the communities, such as volunteer organizations, businesses, and other partners, to develop and implement programs. It is not necessary that the Municipality offer the programs, the role of the Municipality is to ensure that programs are provided.

It is also important to note that 70% of survey participants would be more likely to use leisure and recreation services if a broader range of programs and services were offered. Residents have stated that

more programs are needed for children, teens, families and adults (see below for more discussion on teens). Programs for seniors is also critical to their mental and physical health, and to address issues of isolation among this age group. Through adopting a greater and more defined role in leisure and recreation programming, the Department can align the capacity of its own department and that of its community partners with existing facilities to meet the recreation needs of all its citizens.

Recommendation #30: *That the Municipality hire one (1) full-time Program Coordinator Assistant to ensure community leisure and recreation programs needs are met.*



7.3.2. Increased Focus on Teens and Youth

Most programs in Arran-Elderslie, including most youth programs, are focused on sports, as can be seen by the list of children and youth programs in Section 2 of this recreation plan. The Municipality recognizes the importance of youth to the long-term sustainability of the community and with this in mind the Department of Economic Development has recently established a Youth Advisory Council Group. The Advisory Council currently consists of nine individuals from various socio-economic backgrounds and who range in age between 14-25 years of age. The Council holds bi-weekly meetings that rotate between Chesley, Tara and Paisley. It also plans to host Youth Hangout events monthly in the arena/community centre spaces and in other available spaces in the community.

Generally, programming for youth should strive to:

- Eliminate barriers to participation.
- Promote safety and wellness.
- Ensure access to facilities, and recreation and cultural activities they value.
- Provide opportunities to develop skills, contribute ideas, make connections and try new things.

These objectives are consistent with feedback provided from youth during the process of developing this plan. The top five benefits that are very important to youth in Arran-Elderslie are:

- Better life balance (83%)
- Reduce stress (75%)
- Learn Life skills (cooking, managing finances, etc.) (58%)
- Opportunity to socialize with peers (50%)
- Opportunity to try new things (50%)

As much as possible, the Municipality should identify partners in the community, such as volunteer organizations and businesses to develop and implement programs. As noted above, it is not necessary that the Municipality offer the programs; rather its role can be to ensure that programs are available to youth. It is also suggested that where possible the Municipality help youth to access programs of interest that are available throughout the Bruce County. The Municipality could work with its sponsors and partners to provide group transportation (e.g., bus transportation) to events and programs where sufficient demand warrants.

Recommendation #31: *That the Municipality continue to engage youth through the Youth Advisory Council and engage community partners to ensure a wide variety of programming is available to youth in Arran-Elderslie and throughout Bruce County.*



7.3.3. Increased Focus on Inclusion and Affordable Access for All

Breaking down barriers for populations that face constraints to participation is recognized as a key function of public recreation service providers. *The Framework for Recreation in Canada 2025, Pathways to Wellbeing* identifies inequities as one of the most significant challenges to building pathways to wellbeing. Individuals and families with lower incomes, for example, typically face fewer opportunities for recreational experiences. The Framework's Goal for inclusion and equitable access ensures all representations of Canada's diverse populations have the same access to recreation opportunities, and includes socioeconomic status, age, culture, race, Aboriginal status, gender, ability, sexual orientation, or geographic location.

As shown in the trends section of this plan, there are individuals in Arran-Elderslie in the Low-Income Cut-Off category. In order to ensure the Municipality aligns with current national and provincial practices, goals and funding opportunities, including the national *Framework for Recreation in Canada 2025, Pathways to Wellbeing* and *The Affordable Access to Recreation for Ontarians Policy Framework*, the Municipality should ensure recreation service provision are inclusive for all. It is therefore recommended that the Municipality develop policies and strategies which ensure no families or individuals in the community are denied access to recreation opportunities and that the Municipality assumes a leadership role in encouraging and promoting inclusive and accessible recreation opportunities.

Access to free services and facilities is critical to inclusion of youth and families. Some suggestions for improving access to low-income youth are:

- Identify all funding and program partners that can support inclusive programs for low-income youth, young families, seniors and other groups who may face barriers to participation.
- Consult with youth to determine their interests. Ensure youth have the opportunity to learn a variety of skills and develop leadership abilities.
- Offer equipment swaps and donation days where residents can donate sports equipment, bicycles, skates, and clothing.
- Continue to work with partners to sponsor free events, such as a free skate night.

Recreational programs and services for low-income families and youth have several beneficial outcomes for both the individual, family, and the community, including improved health and the potential to break the poverty cycle. For more information, see the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association website for publications and toolkits on making recreation more accessible for low-income children and families.

Recommendation #32: *Implement policies to support inclusion and affordable access for all residents. Continually evaluate and monitor the success of the programs.*



7.3.4. Increased Focus on People with Disabilities

The *Pathways to Recreation Learning about Ontario's Accessibility Standard for the Design of Public Spaces (2014)* Parks and Recreation Ontario (www.prontario.org) reported that:

- About 1.85 million people in Ontario have a disability: that is 15.5% of Ontario's population, or 1 in 7.
- As the population ages, the number of Ontarians with a disability will increase to 1 in 5, as will the need for accessibility.
- The number of seniors aged 65 and over in Ontario is projected to more than double from 1.7 million in 2008 to 4.1 million by 2036.

In keeping with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Municipality has prepared the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan and performed an informal site audit to assess barriers and identify required actions and timelines to remove them. It has implemented several measures to remove barriers in its buildings and recreation facilities.

Service clubs and other partners, much to their credit, are on-board to make the municipality more accessible. For example, the Chesley Kinettes have built an accessible playground and the Tara Rotary Club have completed an accessible pedestrian bridge over the Sauble River. Community volunteers are to be commended for undertaking the fundraising and construction of these facilities: ongoing communication with the volunteer sector will ensure they have a clear understanding of how to implement the Design of Public Spaces Standard, which is a legislative requirement under the *Ontario Disabilities Act*.

Recommendation #33: *The Municipality work closely with service clubs and other partners that develop recreation facilities and amenities to ensure Design of Public Spaces Standards are met.*



7.3.5. More Opportunities for General Interest and Arts and Cultural Programs

Recreational programming is not just about physical activities and sports programs; it also includes activities that encourage an active mind, skill development and leisurely respite. Artistic, cultural and special interest programs are an important component of leisure services. These types of programs allow for continued education and skill building, socialization with peers, and engagement of all segments of the population.

Public survey results showed that the majority of respondents think more programs are needed: 71% are interested in more general interest programs such as cooking and gardening, and 56% in arts and crafts. As well, 69% of respondents think the Municipality needs more special events, which are often culturally themed (concerts, festivals, etc.). Almost half (46%) of the respondents indicated that the Arran-Elderslie should commit extra funding to arts and cultural programs.

Paisley is branded as the Artist River Village, hosts art festivals, has a hand-crafted natural soap shop and a pottery shop. Shops in Paisley, including The Elora Soap Shop Company and the Natural Mill Works, display the work of local artisans (art, jewelry, woodworking, crafts, glass, local books, etc.). The Community Players is a volunteer organization that offers theatrical opportunities to residents. All this suggests there is a large pool of skilled artists and organizations to draw upon to support and/or provide

leadership for special interest programs in the community. The role organizations and local artists and artisans are willing to play in delivering programs to the community will need to be confirmed.

There are several spaces in Arran-Elderslie where residents can and do participate in special interest programs – community centres (including kitchens), public libraries, the museums, and school spaces. The community centres have underutilized spaces that can potentially support a wide variety of activities and special interest programming in the community, while providing increased cost recovery opportunities for the Municipality. Some renovations may be required. The Municipality should review its spaces, especially before renovating the Paisley Community Centre Hall and spaces, to confirm if existing spaces can meet program needs and if not, what renovations are required.

There are many benefits to providing artistic and cultural programs within a community. Arts and culture programs can stimulate economic activities through the sale and consumption of cultural products such as crafts and performances. Artistic and cultural activities can also strengthen a community's sense of place and showcase their identity in a distinct and meaningful manner. This in turn encourages active citizenship and builds and a sense of community ownership. Such programs can also unite a community by bringing together different cultures and marginalized segments of the population as a means to include them in recreational and leisure activities within the community.

Recommendation #34: *That the Municipality provide program space in the community centres. Liaise with community groups to ensure cultural, artistic and special interest programs are offered.*

Recommendation #35: *Develop arts and cultural programs in Paisley to support economic development initiatives and branding. Evaluate the potential to develop program space in Paisley Community Centre as part of the second level renovations.*



7.3.6. Better Promotion of all Leisure and Recreation Opportunities

Better promotion and communication of all leisure and recreation opportunities in the Municipality is essential to increasing participation. Stakeholders and residents have stated the need for better promotion of programs. Residents have also stated that they often do not learn of events in a timely manner, sometimes until after the event has taken place. A Community Guide is printed once a year, but more is needed to promote events that are scheduled after its distribution. The Municipality also publishes and distributes a single page double-sided quarterly newsletter, but it does not have enough space to promote recreation.


The public survey results show that 54% of respondents would be motivated to use programs and services in Arran-Elderslie, or to use them more often, if there is more advertising/promotion. The survey also found that 60% of respondents are somewhat familiar with recreation programs, services, and facilities in Arran-Elderslie, and that only 25% of youth are very familiar with recreation programs, services, and facilities in Arran-Elderslie (75% of youth are somewhat familiar), indicating that better promotion and advertising is needed. Seniors too have stated that promotion of services is very important.

In today's digital world, people expect to be notified of what's happening via social media. Residents want to know all recreation and leisure opportunities that are available in the Municipality, including programs and services offered by all other private and public organizations. The top three ways respondents would like to learn about recreation programs and services in Arran-Elderslie are:

- Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) (79% public; 90% youth).
- Town Website (70% public; 90% youth).
- Recreation Activity Guide (printed) 78%.

Many residents would like to have continued access to the printed Community Guide. While this document and its electronic version is beneficial, it does not focus specifically on recreation, and does not identify all services that are available, and when and where they are offered. If a fuller slate of programs is offered, two more basic program brochures will be needed annually. These are combined brochures for Fall/Winter and Spring/Summer that would announce both Municipality- provided programs and those by all other providers. The brochures ideally would have more graphic appeal and more focus on the information to be conveyed, rather than paid advertising. Printed versions are needed to serve seniors who may have limited access to computers and rural residents who do not have adequate internet services.

The recreation department is considering printing an older adults' monthly newsletter to reach seniors.



Recommendation #36: *Develop an electronic program brochure to promote all program offerings available in Arran-Elderslie in the Spring/Summer, and Fall/Winter seasons. Make printed copies available to ensure it is available to all residents, such as seniors and rural residents without access to computers or adequate internet services.*

Recommendations #37: *Promote all programs and services on the Municipal website and social media sites, including those scheduled after distribution of the Parks, Recreation and Leisure Service Guides.*

Recommendation #38: *To ensure all available programs in the Municipality, including those added after printing of the brochure, are promoted to seniors, the Municipality should proceed with publishing a newsletter for older adults.*

7.4. Operating Management Issues and Services

7.4.1. Volunteer Support and Initiatives to Respond to Current Decline in Volunteer Base

Recreation programs in Arran-Elderslie are mainly provided through the indirect approach whereby opportunities are offered by non-profit groups and volunteers. Many facilities historically were developed by service groups (Rotary, Kinsmen and Kinettes, etc.) and this service to the community continues today. Volunteers also offer leisure, cultural and sports programs, and participate in fundraising to improve facilities.

Residents recognize the value of volunteers, describing them as the backbone of our community, and have expressed appreciation for their dedication and hard work. Residents would like the Municipality to do more to support and recognize efforts of volunteers.

Volunteers have stated the need for more support. Many are ageing; others are burning out: some programs are no longer available due to ageing of volunteers. Organizations and user groups would like assistance with:

1. Recruitment and training.
2. Administration and organizational duties.
3. Reaching out to new residents to become volunteers.
4. Breaking down barriers for groups to get started –e.g., insurance, banking.

The Department's assistance to volunteers will strengthen the delivery system and build capacity. The Municipality should begin by meeting with all its community organizations and volunteers to identify the needs of the organizations and groups, and provide direct assistance where applicable, with for example registration, promotion, administration, training or facilitating training. It is also recommended that the Municipality host networking sessions to bring similar groups of volunteers together to provide the organizations an opportunity to share their challenges and see how they can assist one another.

In the long term the Municipality should develop a volunteer recruitment and retention strategy to support its organizations. Volunteer Canada has many resources on engaging volunteers that will help with this, including how to engage citizens from all walks of life and demographics. The role of developing the volunteer recruitment and retention strategy can be led by the new program coordinator assistant.

Regarding recognition of volunteers, the *2013 Volunteer Recognition Study* by Volunteer Canada and Investors Group found that volunteers would like to be recognized or thanked by the organization they volunteer for by hearing about how their work has made a difference or by being thanked in person on an ongoing, informal basis. Most did not want to be thanked by banquets, formal gatherings, and public acknowledgment in newspapers, radio or television.

(https://volunteer.ca/vdemo/engagingvolunteers_docs/2013%20Volunteer%20Recognition%20Study.pdf).



Recommendation #39: *Meet with volunteers annually to determine how the Municipality can assist volunteers and their organizations. It is further recommended that the Municipality host annual or bi-annual networking sessions to give all volunteers an opportunity to meet and determine how they can help each other.*

Recommendation #40: *That the Municipality develop a volunteer recruitment and retention strategy in partnership with its current volunteers.*

7.4.2. Increased Coordination of Service Clubs in the Planning and Development of New Facilities

As discussed above, service-clubs are significant partners in the delivery of recreation services and have funded, developed and operated several facilities in the Municipality, including:

- Chesley Tennis Courts (Chesley Rotary Club, build).
- Chesley Splash Pad (Chesley Kinsmen Club, build and operate).
- Chesley Kinsmen Pavilion (Chesley Kinsmen Club, build and operate).
- Hutchinson Park Playground (Chesley Kinettes).
- Paisley Rotary Trailer Park (operated by Paisley Rotary Club).
- Paisley Rotary Palace (built and operated by Paisley Rotary Club).
- Roger Thorne Pavilion (built and operated by Tara Rotary Club).
- Tara Rotary Park (built and operated by Tara Rotary Club).
- Tara Cenotaph (restored by Tara Legion).
- Allenford Ball Diamond, Pavilion, and Park (operated by volunteers).

Service clubs are dedicated to their community and are committed to continuing to contribute to the development of recreation facilities. The clubs also recognize that new facilities result in an added operational burden due to maintenance requirements and costs.

The Municipality is currently faced with an abundance of ageing infrastructure, and the need to invest significant resources into facility renewal or replacement. Service clubs consulted for this recreation master plan expressed interest in taking on renewal/restoration projects identified as priorities in this master plan.

To align Municipal priorities with those of the clubs, it is recommended that the Municipality host bi-annual networking sessions to bring similar groups of volunteers together so that the Municipality can share its recreation priorities with them based on this Recreation Master Plan, (and as stated in the previous recommendation, this will also create the opportunity for organizations to share their challenges and see how they can assist one another).

Recommendation #41: *The Municipality facilitate bi-annual networking/information sessions with all service clubs to communicate the Municipality's recreation facility development/restoration priorities and to identify partnership opportunities.*



7.4.3. Enhance Staffing Levels to Meet Facility Operational Needs

Fall is the busiest time when employees are preparing the ice surfaces while at the same time closing outside facilities. If one staff member is off on unscheduled leave, (due to illness, for example) there is a labour shortfall since the Municipality does not have staff resources to replace the worker during this unscheduled leave.

An additional employee would be beneficial to fill the gap also created when full time staff take annual leave (one person is off every week from mid-June to Labour Day). Since arena part-time (seasonal) staff are terminated when the ice comes off in March/April, it was suggested by staff that a (winter) seasonal staff member could fill in for the employee on annual leave. Furthermore, it was suggested that rather than hiring an extra full-time seasonal staff person in the summer, a seasonal arena employee could be called in as needed. It was also suggested that this staff person could be shared between the three towns.

Recommendation #42: *The Municipality increase facility staffing levels during the spring | summer | fall months by rehiring one existing winter seasonal worker to be shared between the three towns.*



7.4.4. Evaluate, Rationalize and Reduce the Level of Effort to Mow Non-Recreational Sites and Vacant Spaces Throughout the Municipality

Mowing grass is a significant burden for the Municipality. The Municipality is responsible for maintaining 16 parks totaling approximately 70 acres. Besides the parks, recreation staff also mow playgrounds, and athletic facilities, vacant lots, cenotaphs, roadsides, municipal buildings, open spaces and parkettes. The Department thus maintains 64.27 acres of developed open space, and 26.27 acres of undeveloped land (this includes roadsides, and undeveloped space within the parks).

Mowing in the Municipality takes a tremendous amount of time: according to the Municipality's Pictogram, staff spend 224 hours per week just mowing grass on parks and green spaces. As an example, there are 58 vacant plots in the Village of Paisley that are mowed, while an open space on the west side of Tara Main Park, behind a subdivision, requires frequent mowing consuming eight hours of staff time with a 6-foot-wide mower.

The Municipality should develop an open spaces management plan that includes a complete inventory and GIS map of all the open spaces in the municipality. The plan should also identify existing and future housing development areas and identify future lands that should be preserved for parkland to serve new housing developments. The plan should also identify all the open spaces that are not needed for parkland or other recreation purposes: The Municipality should sell these lands and reserve the acquired revenue for parks and recreation facility improvements or replacements. Lands that are not saleable, should be assessed for naturalization or other purposes, such as community led community gardens.

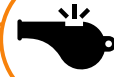
Recommendation #43: *Develop an Opens Spaces Master Plan that identifies all existing open space lands, and their value to the park system: those that should be disposed of, as well as lands that should be preserved for future parkland.*

All areas for naturalization should be identified in the Open Spaces Master Plan.



Public Works is also responsible for mowing sites in the Municipality. Recreation staff would like to have better coordination of mowing activities between the departments of recreation and public works. A coordinated mowing schedule between Recreation and Works for sites abutting recreation facilities will ensure a consistent maintenance regime. Additionally, the departments should also coordinate efforts to better rationalize areas to be maintained: all sites should be mapped, and areas identified for naturalization. Finally, some sites should be turned over to the Department of Works for mowing.

Recommendation #44: *Develop an annual grass cutting schedule that identifies the sites each department is responsible for. Consider agreeing with the Department of Works their taking over sites that are more applicable to its mandate.*



7.4.5. Equipment Needs

Staff have stated a need for new equipment to enable them to work more effectively and improve efficiency. It is noted that the capital budget for 2020 included a tractor, trailer, and water truck; a priority should include smaller pieces of equipment as well. The list of required new equipment is as follows:

Chesley:

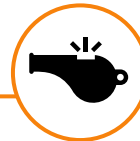
- A groomer for the infield to manage the ruts created by run-off.
- A new tractor to replace the existing model and that cannot handle the finishing mower.

Tara:

- A new weed eater/grass trimmer.
- More storage for tables and chairs for rentals and equipment.

Paisley:

- Need additional tractor and mower.

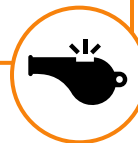


Recommendation #45: *Purchase new equipment for recreation maintenance staff as soon as it is possible to do so.*

7.4.6. Improved Coordination Between Parks and Recreation and Works Department to Foster a Better Understanding of Service Provision and Limitations

Internal partnerships within municipalities are becoming more of the norm. Recreation maintenance staff have stated that cooperation between the Facilities, Parks and Recreation and the Public Works Departments is not ideal. Recreation is challenged to get things done by these departments, and each department essentially operates in isolation of the other. This isolation can have an impact on the quality of maintenance, where different schedules for grass cutting, for instance, creates the appearance of an inadequately maintained site. What is required is better communication and cooperation between departments to foster a better understanding within the municipality of the limitations of each department as they strive to provide optimum service.

Recommendation #46: *Hold annual workplace sessions to bring staff from the Departments of Facilities, Parks and Recreation and Public Works together to discuss goals, challenges and schedules for the outside season.*



7.4.7. Adopt Maintenance Standards for Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Facility maintenance issues identified by staff, user groups and residents have been discussed throughout this Recreation Plan. This section addresses the operational side of outdoor recreational facility maintenance: it suggests maintenance standards and processes the Municipality can adopt to ensure consistency in the frequency and quality of maintenance applied to recreation facilities. The standards are a tool to help staff and in no way implies their work is substandard. In fact, facilities are very well maintained on a day-to-day basis.

To ensure outdoor recreation facilities are maintained to a consistent standard, based on a prescribed maintenance procedure, it is recommended that Arran-Elderslie create an outdoor recreation facility maintenance manual. The manual supports the maintenance management of assets by identifying maintenance elements and tasks and applying prescribed standard of maintenance for all municipal facilities.

The manual describes in a step-by-step fashion, the appropriate maintenance procedure. The labour, equipment, materials, and safety equipment required to undertake each maintenance task is identified and the frequency and timing of each maintenance task are provided to aid in on-going maintenance planning and annual budgeting.

The manual describes the work that would regularly be completed by maintenance crews and will assist staff in on-going maintenance. The manual acts as a procedural guide for maintenance crews to ensure appropriate and consistent maintenance procedures are followed.

Maintenance procedures should be presented in a clear and direct fashion that is easily followed by maintenance crews and can be also used to orient new staff and seasonal workers.

Maintenance activities are categorized by various elements (inspection, surfaces, landscape structures, litter and debris, turf care, signage, etc.). These elements are further broken down into specific maintenance tasks. The proper maintenance procedure for each task is then outlined. For example: Maintenance Elements (Turf Care), and Tasks (mowing, sodding, seeding, aeration, over seeding, etc.). A schedule is then prepared for completion of each task.

Maintenance Manual Benefits

- Mitigates risk and liability by demonstrating that the Municipality regularly schedules and performs maintenance of facilities.
- Ensures consistency in level of quality.
- Can be used to estimate annual maintenance costs associated with new outdoor facilities developed by the Municipality.
- Minimizes training required for new and seasonal staff.

Maintenance Impact Statement

The operational burden increases as facilities age and as new infrastructure is added to the system. The Department would benefit from a maintenance plan which will, at a minimum, provide a framework to document important requirements for all its facilities. As well as a maintenance plan, the Municipality should prepare a Maintenance Impact Statement that specifies the dollar costs of operating and maintaining proposed facilities (splash pads, pavilions, trails, etc.). The Department can then determine with its partners if the new development is warranted; if maintenance and operating costs are unsustainable, the project should be put on hold until it is feasible to proceed.

Recommendation #47: *Develop an Outdoor Recreation Facility Maintenance Manual.*

Recommendation #48: *Prepare a Maintenance Impact Statement that outlines operational and maintenance costs of all proposed facilities before proceeding with their development.*



7.4.8. Reduce the Level of Non-Recreational Real Estate the Department Maintains

The Municipality currently rents Arkwright Hall, a community heritage building, to residents who use it mainly for family events. The actual number of rentals is small: the total revenue earned from rentals in 2019 was \$651. Expenses for the building in 2019 were \$4059 for a net expenditure of \$3408. Given that Arkwright Hall offers minimum recreation opportunity, and that the nearby Tara-Arran Community Centre could meet the need for community hall rental space, the Municipality should sell this building as there is no recreation benefit to operating it.

Recommendation #49: *The Municipality consider selling Arkwright Hall.*



8

Recommendations,
Priorities,
Implementation
+ Costs

8. Recommendations, Priorities, Implementation Plan + Cost

Summary of Recreation & Leisure recommendations and priorities are contained on the following pages.

In the table below, the final recommendations have been categorized as either facility recommendations or operations recommendations, and then prioritized for implementation. These priorities have been assigned and cost to implement. Priority timelines are as follows:

Highest – Year 1-3

- High -- Year 4-6
- Medium – Year 7-10
- Low – Year 10+

Three criteria influenced establishment of priorities:

- How well the recommendations improved safety and reduced liability.
- How well the recommendation met the needs of youth in the Community; and
- How well the recommendations contributed to community growth and sustainability.

Where appropriate, the order of magnitude cost to implement each recommendation has been included.

Summary of Final Recreation and Leisure Priorities	Type	Priority	Estimated Costs (Order of Magnitude)
Facilities			
1. Continue to carry out Community Centre renovations and capital improvements as planned.	Facilities	Ongoing	\$750,000-\$1M (2021 estimates)
2. Upgrade Allenford, Chesley and Tara ball diamonds in partnership with the organized sport groups.	Facilities	Ongoing	\$20,000-\$35,000 each (TBD)
3. The Municipality should, as a priority, continue with its plans to upgrade all playground surfaces to CSA safety standards.	Facilities	Ongoing	Engineered Wood Fibre \$80/m2
4. The Municipality should work with its service club partners to replace older playground equipment with newer elements.	Facilities	Ongoing	\$75,000-125,000 each play structure
5. Develop a new skatepark in Paisley Main Park as part of the Redevelopment Plan in partnership with service club partners and in consultation with youth.	Facilities	Highest Year 1	\$50,000-\$250,000
6. Conduct a full engineering and architectural assessment of each Community Centre including structural, electrical and mechanical components to determine actual life expectancy and replacement costs, as per the 2016 Asset Management Plan. Include an assessment of the potential and cost to extend life expectancy and the feasibility to maintain and operate all three arenas.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3 (one per year)	\$10,000-\$15,000 each
7. Once the Community Centre Assessments are complete, evaluate the feasibility of building a new multi-purpose centre if it is no longer feasible to operate existing community centres/arenas.	Facilities	TBD Pending outcome of Community Centre Assessment	\$80,000
8. Decommission Paisley Ball Diamond #2.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	\$ 20,000 (TBD)
9. Prepare a Redevelopment Plan for Paisley Main Park that re-purposes park spaces to address parking, safety, functionality, and optimal locations for all amenities and uses, with consideration of the Annual Fall Fair.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	\$15,000 Inc. concepts and preliminary costing
10. Aim to keep motor vehicles out of the Main Parks by developing new designated parking lots at the park entrances.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	In House
11. Prepare a Redevelopment Plan for Tara Main Park to address parking, safety, functionality, and optimal locations for all amenities and uses, with consideration of the Annual Fall Fair.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	\$15,000

Summary of Final Recreation and Leisure Priorities	Type	Priority	Estimated Costs (Order of Magnitude)
Facilities			
12. In partnership with user groups and service club, build a new regulation sized soccer pitch and associated amenities in Tara Main Park, at a location away from hazards associated with the Ball Dimond B.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	\$175,000-\$250,000
13. In partnership with service groups, repurpose all existing tennis courts and basketball court to multi-sport courts to accommodate a wider variety of activities especially for youth.	Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	\$60,000 each
14. Develop a splash pad in Paisley, in partnership with service clubs.	Facilities	High Year 4-6	\$300,000-\$500,000
15. Develop an off-leash dog park in Paisley, as part of the park reconfiguration. In the meantime, the Municipality should consider scheduling free running areas throughout the municipality.	Facilities	High Year 4-6	\$50,000
16. Undertake the development of a Trails Master Plan that outlines expansion opportunities, development standards and necessary enhancements, costs and implementation schedule.	Facilities	Medium Year 7-9	\$30,000-\$35,000
17. Develop a small skatepark facility in partnership with service -clubs in Tara if the population of young people continues to grow, and if interest warrants it.	Facilities	Medium Year 7-9	\$50,000
18. In partnership with the service clubs, replace the Chesley spray pad with a larger more modern facility that serves all of the Municipality of Arran Elderslie.	Facilities	Medium Years 7-9	\$300,000-\$500,000
19. In partnership with the service clubs, develop a Splash Pad in Tara as part of the Outdoor Pool redevelopment.	Facilities	Low Year 10+	\$300,000-\$500,000
20. Replace Tara pool and changerooms with a modern larger accessible facility on an appropriate site. The Municipality should also consider building a splash pad at this outdoor aquatic facility.	Facilities	Low Year 10+	\$4-5M
21. Consider replacing the Chesley pool and Changerooms with a larger, accessible facility, in the long term, if it feasible to do so.	Facilities	Low Year 10+	\$4-5M
22. Prepare a design concept for Mary Cummings Park that includes integrating and connecting into the Dyke Trail.	Facilities	Low Year 10 +	\$5000

Summary of Final Recreation and Leisure Priorities	Type	Priority	Estimated Costs (Order of Magnitude)
OPERATIONS			
1. Monitor usage of Paisley Ball Diamond #1 and repurpose it if usage does not justify long term operational and capital cost. If usage is deemed to be adequate, replace infield soil with screened soil.	Operations Facilities	Ongoing	\$15,000 for clay soil
2. Continue to engage youth through the Youth Advisory Council and engage community partners to ensure a wide variety of programming is available to youth in Arran-Elderslie and throughout the Bruce County.	Operations Programs	Ongoing	In-House
3. Implement policies to support inclusion and affordable access for all residents. Continually evaluate and monitor the success of the programs.	Operations Programs	Ongoing	In-House
4. Meet with volunteers annually to determine how the Municipality can assist volunteers and their organizations. It is further recommended that the Municipality host annual or bi-annual networking sessions to give all volunteers an opportunity to meet and determine how they can help each other.	Operations	Ongoing	In-House
5. Work closely with Service Clubs and other partners that develop recreation amenities in Arran-Elderslie to ensure <i>Design of Public Spaces Standards</i> are met, and that all new facilities follow the <i>Municipal Accessibility Plan 2020-2025</i> .	Operations	Ongoing	In-House
6. The Municipality work with land developers in the collaborative planning of park and trail connections within new subdivisions without giving up the option of taking cash in-lieu for all or a portion of the park dedication requirement.	Operations	Ongoing	In house
7. Continue to implement the Multi-year Accessibility Plan 2020-2025. Additionally, ensure all new recreation facilities, including those built by the Municipality's partners (service clubs, volunteers, other agencies, etc.,) are fully accessible.	Operations	Ongoing	TBD
8. Facilitate bi-annual networking/information sessions with all service clubs to communicate the Municipality's recreation facility development/restoration priorities and to identify partnership opportunities.	Operations	Ongoing	In-House
9. Increase facility staffing levels during the spring summer fall months by rehiring one existing winter seasonal worker to be shared between the three Towns.	Operations	Ongoing	In-House

Summary of Final Recreation and Leisure Priorities	Type	Priority	Estimated Costs (Order of Magnitude)
10. Hold annual workplace sessions to bring staff from the departments of Facilities, Parks and Recreation and Public Works together to discuss goals, challenges and schedules for the outside season.	Operations	Ongoing	In-House
11. Prepare a Maintenance Impact Statement that outlines operational and maintenance costs of all proposed facilities before proceeding with their development.	Operations	Ongoing	
12. Partner with the SVCA to implement launch improvements that provide accessible and safe access to the rivers.	Operations Facilities	Highest Year 1	SVCA
13. That the Municipality work with partners and volunteers in each town to provide natural outdoor skating rinks in Allenford, Chesley, Paisley and Tara on existing and new multi-sport courts.	Operations Facilities	Highest Year 1	\$38,000
14. Undertake an Environmental Site Assessment of Dr. Milne Park as soon as possible to confirm the safety and suitability of continuing to use this site for parkland.	Operations Facilities	Highest Year 1	Phase 1- \$3,000-5,000
15. Develop arts and cultural programs in Paisley to support economic development initiatives and branding. Evaluate the potential to develop program space in Paisley Community Centre as part of the second level renovations.	Programs Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	In-House
16. Provide program space in the Community Centres. Liaise with community groups to ensure cultural, artistic and special interest programs are offered.	Programs Facilities	Highest Year 1-3	Unknown
17. Develop an electronic program brochure to promote all program offerings available in Arran-Elderslie in the Spring/Summer, and Fall/Winter seasons. Make printed copies available to ensure it is available to all residents.	Operations	Highest Year 1	In-House plus printing costs
18. Promote all programs and services on the Municipal website and social media sites, including those scheduled after distribution of the Parks, Recreation and Leisure Service Guides.	Operations	Highest Year 1	In-House
19. To ensure all available programs in the Municipality, including those added after printing of the brochure, are promoted to seniors, the Municipality should also proceed with publishing a newsletter for older adults.	Operations	Highest Year 1	In-House
20. Develop a Volunteer Recruitment and Retention Strategy in partnership with current volunteers.	Operations	Highest Year 1-3	In-House
21. Hire one (1) full-time Program Coordinator Assistant to ensure community leisure and recreation programs needs are met.	Operations Programs	Highest Year 1	\$40,000-\$50,000 plus benefits

Summary of Final Recreation and Leisure Priorities	Type	Priority	Estimated Costs (Order of Magnitude)
22. Develop an annual grass cutting schedule that also identifies the sites each department is responsible for. Also consider agreeing with the Department of Works their taking over sites that are more applicable to its mandate.	Operations	Highest Year 1-3	In-House
23. Purchase new equipment for recreation maintenance staff as soon as it is possible to do so.	Operations	Highest Year 1	In-House
24. Develop an Outdoor Recreation Facility Maintenance Manual.	Operations	Highest Year 1-3	In-House
25. Consider selling Arkwright Hall as it has minimum recreation value.	Operations	Highest Year 1-3	In-House
26. Develop an Open Spaces Master Plan that identifies all existing open space lands, their value to the park system, those that should be disposed of, as well as lands that should be preserved for future parkland. Include areas for naturalization.	Operations	High Year 4-6	\$25,000
27. Work with partners, such as the Paisley Royal Canadian Legion Branch 295 and service groups, to redevelop the Paisley Cenotaph site.	Operations Facilities	Medium Year 5-7	\$5000 Concept Design