



ED&M

Parks and Trails Master Plan

October 2020

December 2020



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Town of Wasaga Beach

Parks and Trails Master Plan

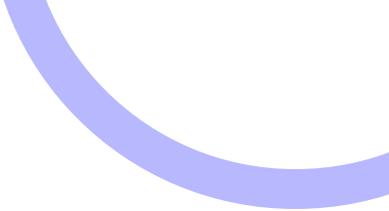
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Note about COVID-19:

This Master Plan is being prepared in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the beginning of the recovery phase. Given the rapid pace of change – as people find new ways of living, working, playing, and connecting – planning for an uncertain future is a challenge. This is uncharted territory. We must continually assess and adjust our expectations, practices, and norms.

We acknowledge that the pandemic could affect the long-term demand for and delivery of parks and trails services; however, we do not know the ultimate scope and scale of change. We are confident that the Town and everyone involved in the planning and delivery of public works and community services will work hard to address the new challenges presented by COVID-19. We firmly believe that long-term planning and strategic investment are vital to support the significant role that the parks sector plays in our personal, social, and economic recovery and revitalization.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank all of those who contributed to the development of the Parks and Trails Master Plan. This strategy is a product of the vision and dedication of the community, local stakeholders, the Master Plan Project Team, and Town Council. We also extend our thanks to the many residents and community groups of Wasaga Beach whose feedback has made the Plan a document that embodies the core values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 About the Master Plan

Wasaga Beach offers a unique quality of place and lifestyle amenities that promote outdoor activity and environmental appreciation – these are competitive advantages that encourage growth and economic development. A key contributor to a healthy and active community is a well designed, safe, connected and functional network of parks and trails. In Wasaga Beach, these assets are particularly important for attracting new residents, tourists, volunteers and businesses.

The Town of Wasaga Beach has initiated a Parks & Trails Master Plan project to identify priorities and guide future investment. The Master Plan is a comprehensive and inclusive document that examines the full scope of capital assets, policies and services and provides a 10-year vision for addressing current and future needs. This forward-looking and coordinated strategy that will support the Town in identifying and prioritizing improvements, land assembly, trail and park connectivity, wayfinding, and the management of a modern parks system that responds to emerging needs. Specifically, the Master Plan focuses on opportunities to maximize user experiences and increase participation in parks and trails activities through: town-wide provision of facilities / services; equitable distribution of parks and trails; an accessible and connected active transportation network; and efficient investment in growth and development.

Wasaga Beach has a strong and varied parks system consisting of lands owned and / or managed by the Town, Ontario Parks, private operators and others. Continued efforts to manage and link these rich green spaces will provide meaningful outdoor recreation experiences. As community needs evolve, it will be important to invest in outdoor spaces that residents and visitors value and that reinforce universal benefits to the whole community. For example, a key goal of the Framework for Recreation in Canada is to connect people to nature as opportunities to access high quality outdoor spaces and places are increasingly being sought by people of all ages. Well designed parks and trails also offer low and no cost opportunities that benefit all people and can help to educate them about the area's natural and cultural heritage features.

Directions in this Parks and Trails Master Plan related to parks and trails planning and operations are intended to supersede those in the Town's Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan (2012), Active Transportation Plan (2008) & Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (2010). This Parks and Trails Master Plan is also intended to inform the Town's ongoing Official Plan Review and Update.

1.2. Key Drivers

A variety of factors influenced the Town's decision to undertake this Master Plan project:

- a) **Long-Term Decision-Marking & Capital Forecast:** This Master Plan provides a 10-year roadmap for addressing operational and capital requirements, allowing the Town to update their long-range planning documents and working toward funding strategies that will support implementation
- b) **Population Growth & Placemaking:** The Town of Wasaga Beach has experienced steady population growth over the last twenty years and this is expected to continue into the future. Placemaking principles will help to ensure that the Town's assets and potential are purposefully designed to provide the growing base of residents and visitors with a place where they are able to live happy, healthy and well-connected lives.
- c) **Organizational Changes:** Responsibility for parks operations and maintenance was transferred to the Public Works Department in March 2017. This Master Plan presents an opportunity to establish baseline inventories, measures and policies for future parks and trails management.
- d) **Park & Playground Gaps:** It is clear that there are notable gaps in park and playground distribution in east and west Wasaga Beach. This plan will address those gaps and make recommendations for improved park and amenity distribution to effectively meet the needs of all residents and visitors.
- e) **Aging Infrastructure:** The Town's existing parks and outdoor recreation facilities are aging and many parks were designed for a different time. A critical component of this Master Plan will be to make recommendations for modern and functional park, trail and playground design.
- f) **Changing Legislation:** The recently introduced Bill 197 proposes amendments to the parkland dedication provisions within the Planning Act, as well as changes to how growth-related infrastructure is funded through the Development Charges Act. The Town of Wasaga Beach will need to consider potential implications through both the ongoing Official Plan Update and implementation of this Master Plan.
- g) **Past Master Plans:** The Town of Wasaga Beach does have an existing complement of master plans related to parks, facilities, trails, wayfinding and more. However, many of these plans have become dated and require review and update to meet the needs of Wasaga Beach residents now and in the future.

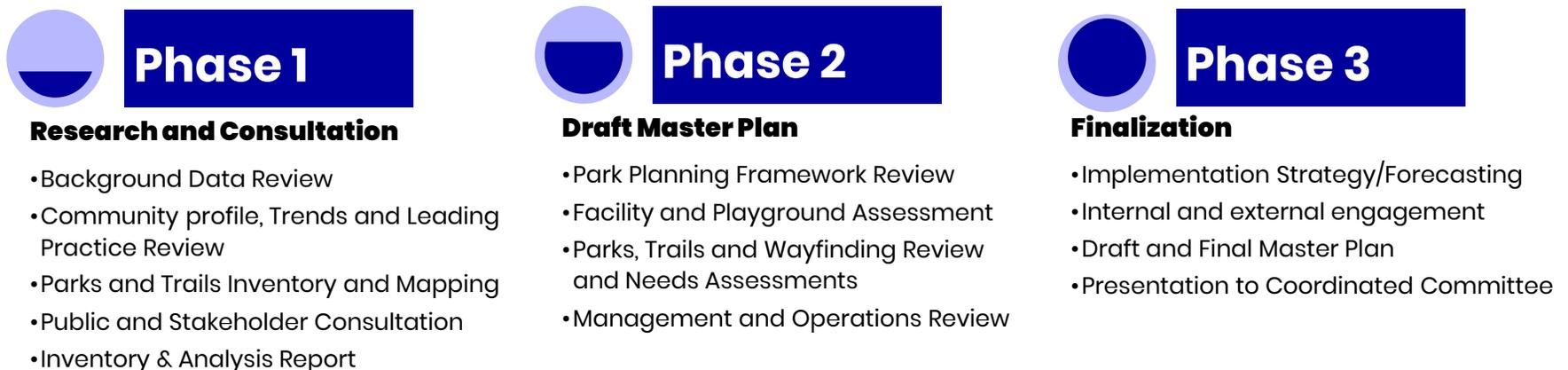
- h) **Classification System & Service Standards:** To help ensure that this Master Plan is a living document and that the recommendations contained within are useful tools for Town staff, it is critical that a parkland classification system and level of service standards be established. These pieces of the Master Plan will provide the Town with clear and defined guidelines to help navigate and plan for future park and trail development and maintenance.
- i) **Ontario Parks:** The Town of Wasaga Beach is uniquely located on an internationally significant ecosystem; largely owned, managed and protected by Ontario Parks. Over the years, the Town of Wasaga Beach and the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park have developed a strong relationship which includes many nuanced agreements. Although the Ontario Parks properties are outside the scope of this Master Plan, it is important to note that residents and visitors are served by these properties and that it is vital for the Town and Province to continue to work together to provide a cohesive parks and trails system.

In light of all these challenges and opportunities, the Town of Wasaga Beach Public Works Department has experienced success in some of their recent improvements to the local parks and trails system. A few examples include: numerous trail improvements; wayfinding sign installations; addition of a full-time Parks Operations employee; improvements to the tennis courts at Oakview Woods and McIntyre Creek; and installation of pickleball courts at the Wasaga Stars Arena Park.

1.3. Planning Process

Development of the Parks and Trails Master Plan has been divided into three phases: Research and Consultation; Draft Master Plan; and Finalization. Each phase was designed to accomplish a variety of tasks and also included internal meetings and reporting. Development of the Master Plan is guided by the Project Team and Public Works Department. Figure 1 identifies tasks in each phase.

Figure 1 Parks and Trails Master Plan Development Phases



1.4. Benefits of Parks & Trails

Parks and trails provide extensive benefits to individuals and communities. The value of these amenities is immense – parks and trails offer environmental, economic, social and health benefits while beautifying the urban landscape. Green spaces in urban areas provide places of respite, improved air quality, venues for physical activity, and conservation of natural and cultural heritage landscapes. Many studies and land development trends suggest that proximity to parks and open spaces can increase property values.

Depending upon size, location and functional characteristics, parks and trails have multiple applications and can act as:

- Facilitators of “placemaking” and high-quality urban design;
- Catalysts for community improvement and revitalization;
- Hubs for special events and social interaction;
- Venues for programmed or spontaneous forms of physical activity;
- Educators and stewards of the natural environment; and
- Spaces for gathering and relaxation.

Wasaga Beach’s urban structure has begun to change in recent years and the areas surrounding parks have also evolved. Adult lifestyle communities are being developed to attract retirees and higher density residential infill and intensification projects are beginning to emerge. The increasing integration of “places” and “destinations” through the Town’s urban design practices seeks to create comfortable, connected and sustainable streetscapes. Parks and trails are key contributors to the public realm and placemaking principles. They can increase the attractiveness and marketability of new development areas, while renewal of outdated public spaces can similarly act as a catalyst for revitalizing established neighbourhoods.

The following points – which have been excerpted from “*The Benefits of Parks: Why America Needs More City Parks and Open Space*” from The Trust for Public Land – summarize the many ways that parks contribute to personal and community wellness:

Health Benefits

“Parks and open space improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, and make our cities and neighborhoods more attractive places to live and work.” “Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more. Regular physical activity has been shown to increase health and reduce the risk of a wide range of diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes. Physical activity also relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, improves mood, and enhances psychological well-being. Beyond the benefits of exercise, a growing body of research shows that contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health.”

Social Benefits

“Parks also produce important social and community development benefits. They make inner-city neighbourhoods more livable; they offer recreational opportunities for at-risk youth, low-income children, and low-income families; and they provide places in low-income neighbourhoods where people can feel a sense of community. Access to public parks and recreational facilities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and, in particular, to reduced juvenile delinquency.” “Parks contribute to neighbourhood character and identity acting as gateways and landmarks. They can also enhance neighbourhood and community aesthetics by providing visual relief and landscape variation within the urban framework.”

Economic Benefits

“Numerous studies have shown that parks and open space increase the value of neighbouring residential property. Growing evidence points to a similar benefit on commercial property value. The availability of park and recreation facilities is an important quality-of-life factor for corporations choosing where to locate facilities and for well-educated individuals choosing a place to live.”

Environmental Benefits

“Green space in urban areas provides substantial environmental benefits. Trees reduce air pollution and water pollution, they help keep cities cooler, and they are a more effective and less expensive way to manage stormwater runoff than building systems of concrete sewers and drainage ditches.”

The Town is commended for recognizing these benefits and investing in the development of this Master Plan to guide decision-making relating to parks and trails in Wasaga Beach.

2.0 Community Profile

2.1. About the Town of Wasaga Beach

The Town of Wasaga Beach is located on the southern shore of Georgian Bay in Simcoe County, along the world's longest freshwater beach and the popular Wasaga Beach Provincial Park. The town's parks, trails and beaches provide unique opportunities to interact with nature and are home to a variety of wildlife and rare plant species. These environmental features are important parts of the town from an economic and tourism perspective. The Master Plan carefully considers how to balance protection, preservation and management of the natural environment while supporting appropriate growth and development.

As a waterfront municipality, local parks and trails contribute to the collective experience shared by residents and visitors to Wasaga Beach. The Master Plan recognizes the unique experiences of both permanent and seasonal residents and ensures they are provided with opportunities to explore their individual interests and interact with public outdoor spaces. The Town of Wasaga Beach's Public Works Department enhances local quality of life by facilitating the development of parks, trails and outdoor recreation opportunities for all.



2.2. Community Profile – The People who Live Here Now

Planning for parks and trails requires a strong grasp of socio-demographic factors. Wasaga Beach’s population in 2016 was 20,675 residents and the town continues to grow. This growth will result in a need to strike an appropriate balance and mix of parks and trails to respond to the needs of residents and visitors now and in the future.

Historic & Projected Population

The Town’s population has been steadily growing for the last 20+ years. Wasaga Beach saw significant growth between the 1996 and 2001 Census periods (43% population increase in 5 years) and has been consistently growing by 15% to 20% every Census period since.

Based on the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, the Town of Wasaga Beach’s population is expected to grow to 27,500 residents by the year 2031. This projection is based on the 2011 Census population figure of 17,537 and represents growth of nearly 10,000 residents over twenty years. Population forecasts to the year 2041 are available in the Growth Plan for the County but have not yet been allocated to each local municipality, a task that is being considered through the County’s Municipal Comprehensive Review. Findings from the Town’s Official Plan Review suggest that the 2031 forecasts are likely to be exceeded due to the pace of growth based on historic growth rates and residential development activity.

Figure 2 Town of Wasaga Beach Historic Population and Growth Projection

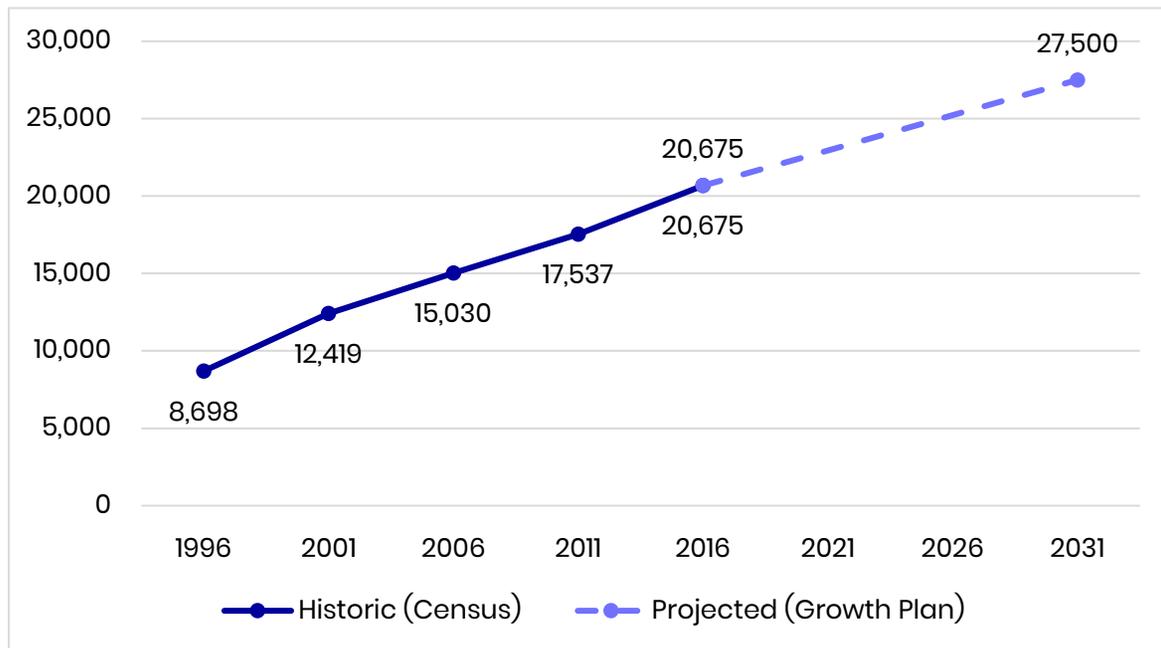
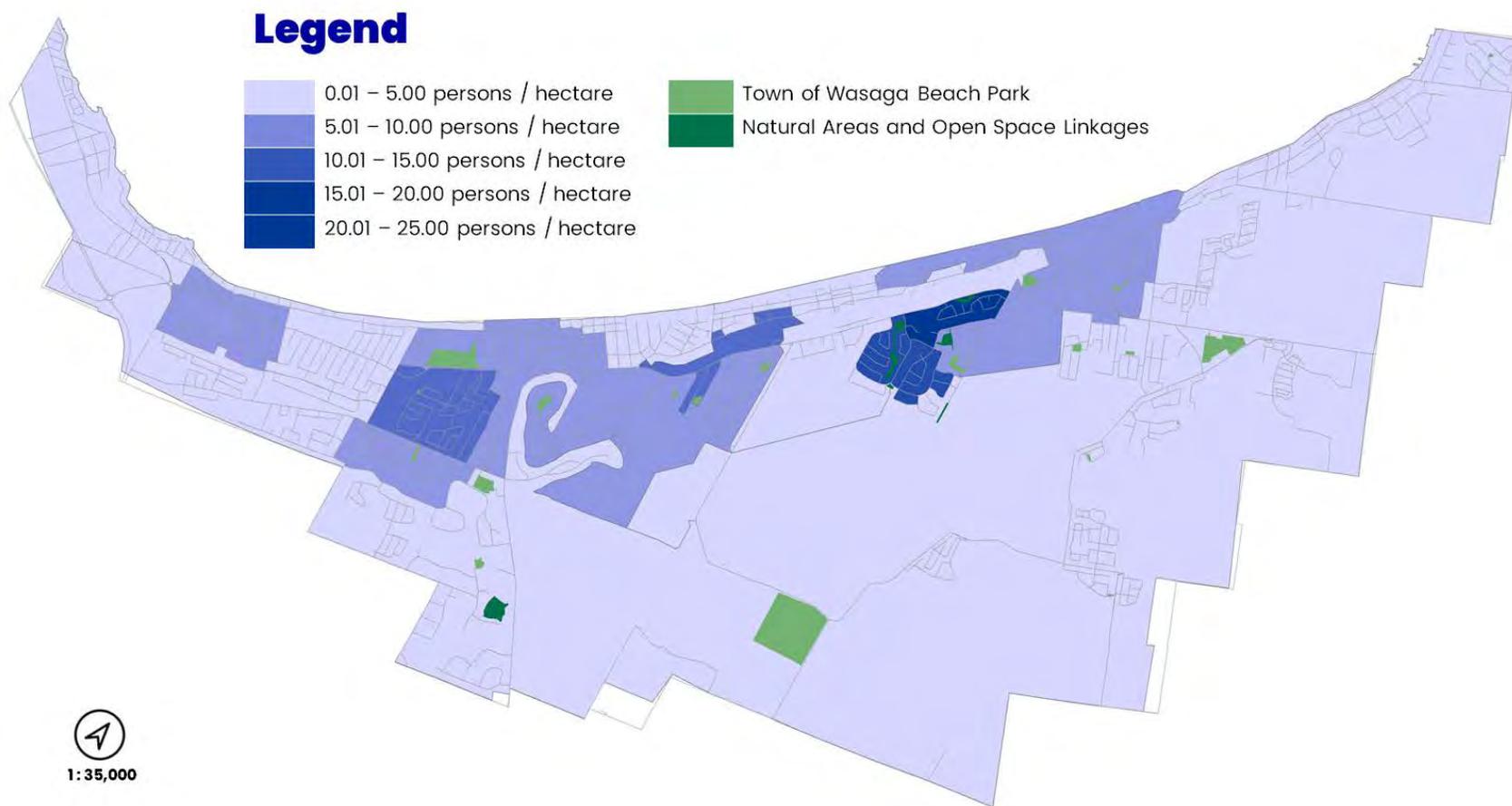


Figure 3 Town of Wasaga Beach Population Density (2016 Census)



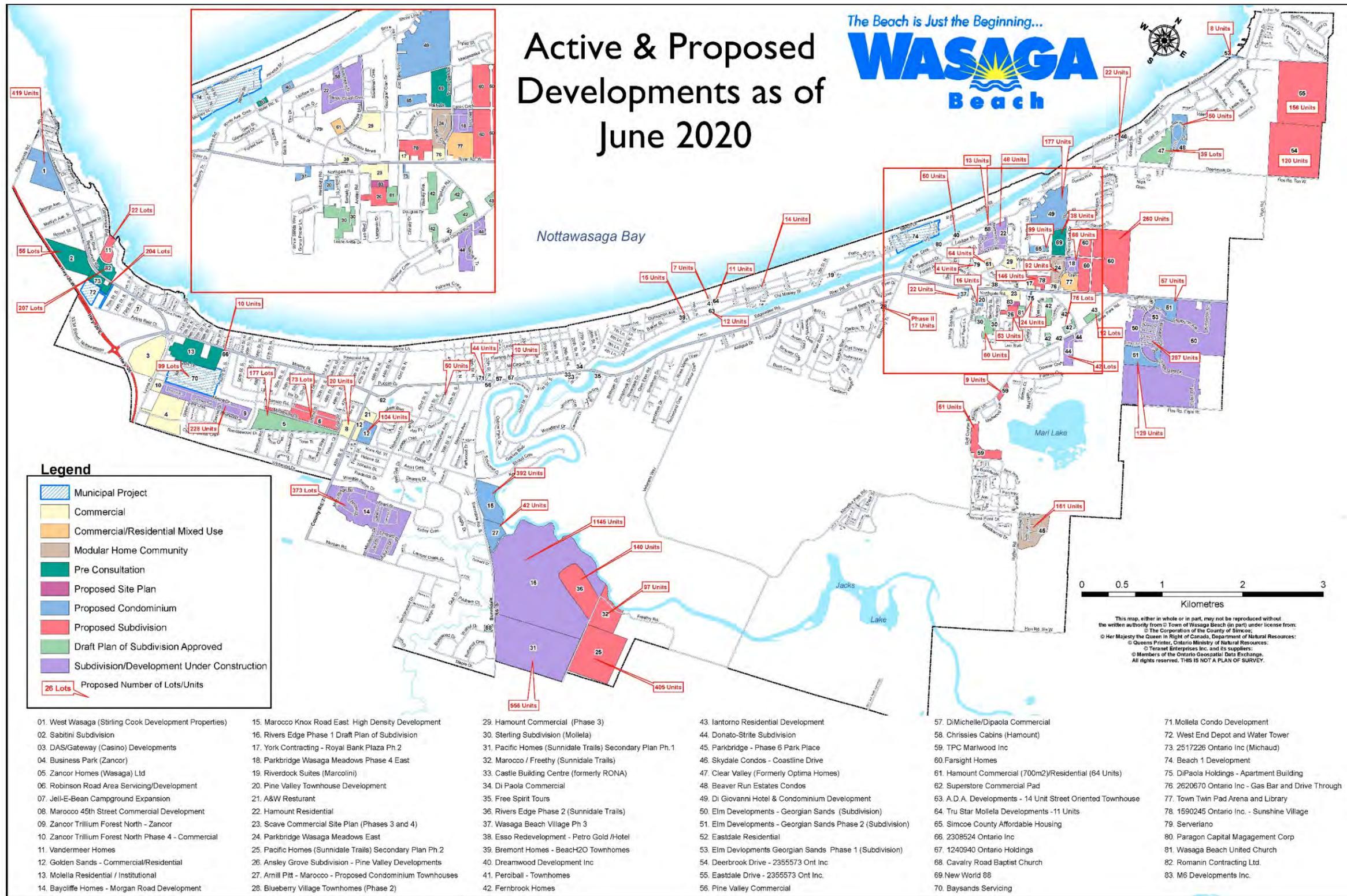
Residential Growth

Based on review of the Active and Proposed Developments in Wasaga Beach (see map on the next page; current as of June 2020), the following areas have been identified to accommodate shorter-term residential growth:

- **South-Central Wasaga Beach:** The area of Wasaga Beach generally south of Knox Road West will experience the largest amount of residential growth, with 3,150 new residential units currently in the pipeline. As of 2020, there were approximately 2,075 units approved or under construction (the majority in Sunnidale Trails) and an additional 1,075 units proposed.
- **East Wasaga Beach and Downtown:** More than 2,500 residential units (nearly 700 approved or under construction) are proposed east of Veteran's Way, which includes the Downtown and East End of Wasaga Beach. Several of these projects are higher density and/or mixed-use developments.
- **West Wasaga Beach:** This area of the town is expected to see considerable residential growth in the short-term. Nearly 1,100 residential units (many higher density) are expected for the area west of 45th Street, with approximately 500 of these currently within construction or approval stages.

Over time, the town is forecasted to see more medium and high-density residential development within the built-up area, with a focus on key nodes and corridors such as Downtown, River Road West, Old Mosley Village, 45th/Mosley Street, Hwy 26/Mosley Street, etc. With an aging population, lifestyle housing complexes may become more common; often these developments provide private or semi-public park and green spaces for resident use. The Town's ongoing Official Plan Review is examining policies to promote the establishment of mixed use, complete communities with a range of housing and employment options.

Figure 4 Wasaga Beach Active and Proposed Developments



Source: Town of Wasaga Beach

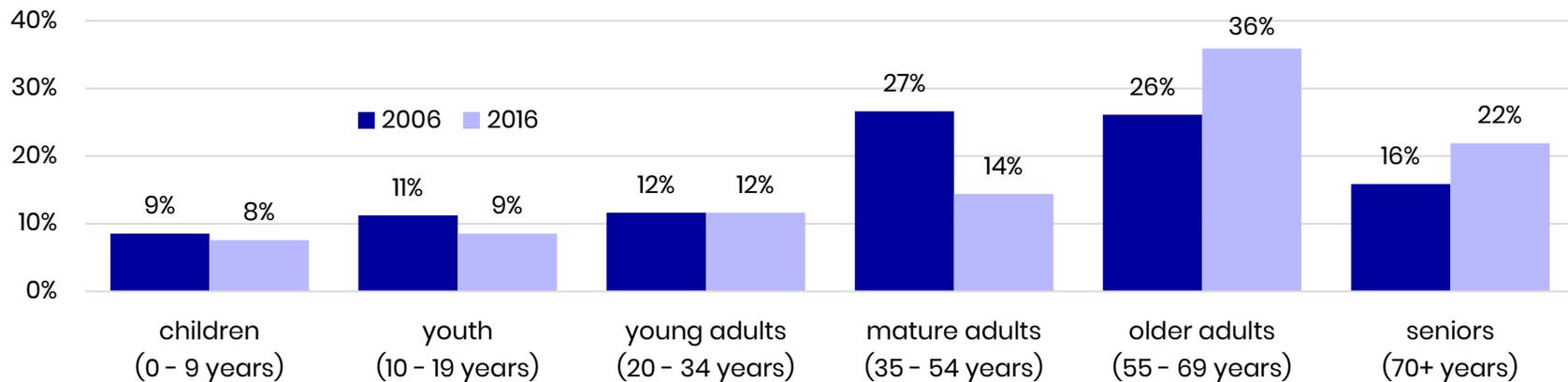
Age and Household Composition

As a general trend the population is aging, but the shift experienced in Wasaga Beach is more dramatic than provincial and national averages. This will be a critical factor in planning for and developing future parks and trails in the municipality as features such as comfort, barrier-free accessibility, safety, seating and shade will need to be maximized to accommodate the older age cohorts. In direct correlation to the increased representation of older adults and seniors, the median age of residents in Wasaga Beach has increased from 48.8 years in 2006 to 55.3 years in 2016, an increase of 6.5 years in only one decade. This is a function of both residents aging in place, and new residents moving to Wasaga Beach from elsewhere in retirement.

According to the 2016 Census, older adults (ages 55 to 69 years) and seniors (ages 70+) represent the largest segments of Wasaga Beach's population and also experienced the greatest proportion of growth over the last decade. The number of children, youth and young adults living in Wasaga Beach have remained fairly stable in the last ten years, but represent smaller proportions of the overall population. Representation of mature adults (ages 35 to 54 years) has decreased significantly from 27% in 2006 to only 14% in 2016 – this represents the bulk of the baby boomer population, which has since moved to the next age bracket (older adults ages 55 to 69 years increased from 26% to 35% since 2006). The proportion of seniors (ages 70+ years) also increased from 16% to 22% during the course of the last decade.

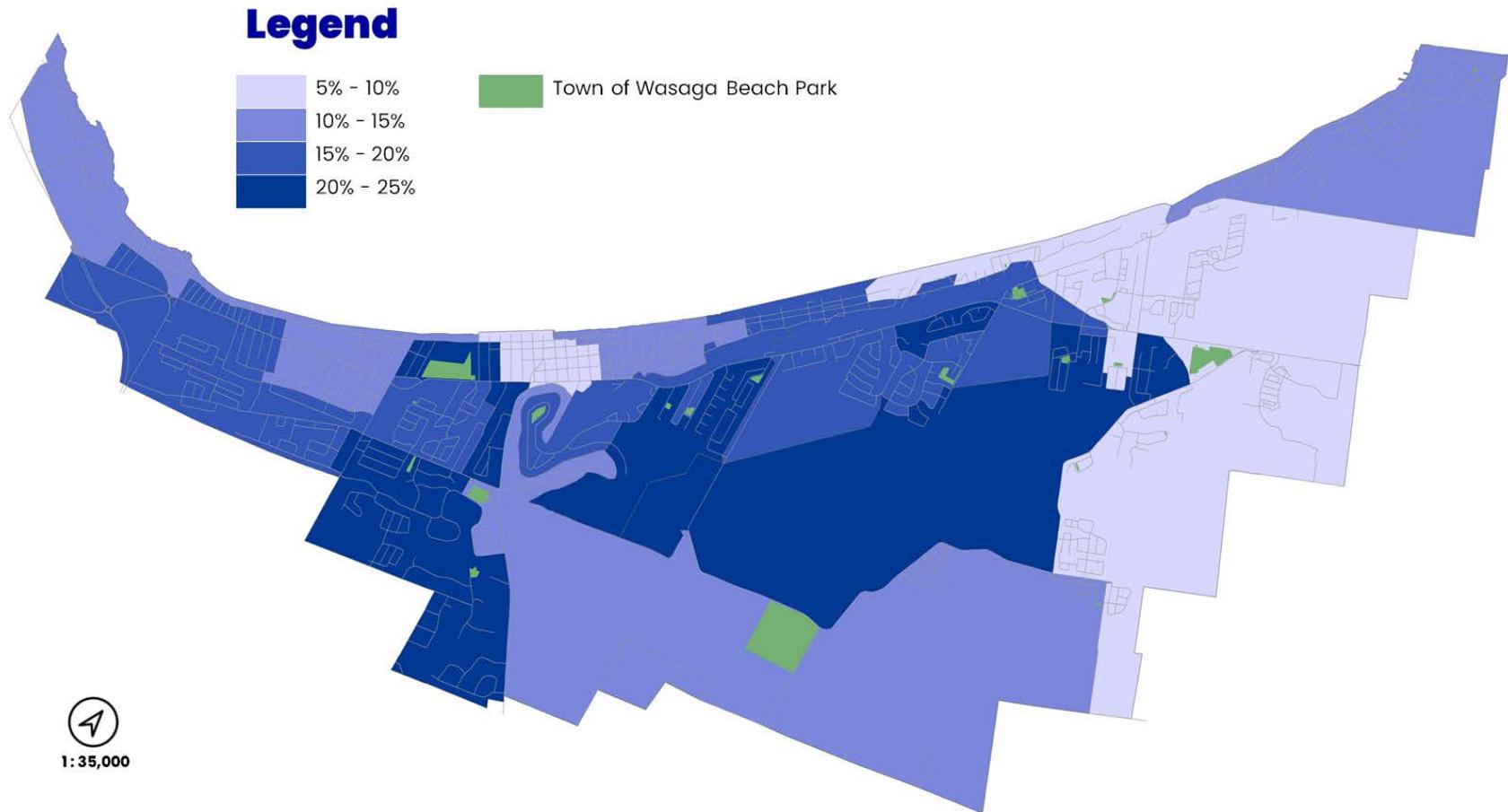


Figure 5 Town of Wasaga Beach Age Cohort Distribution (2006 and 2016 Census)



The following figure illustrates the concentrations of youth populations (ages 0 to 19) across the town as a proportion of total population. This information is particularly useful when considering locations for parkland and outdoor recreation amenities targeted toward children and youth, such as playgrounds and basketball courts.

Figure 6 Density of Youth Population (2016 Census)



Note: Natural areas and open space linkages not shown.

The average household size in Wasaga Beach was 2.3 persons per household in 2016, slightly lower than the County average of 2.6 persons. The majority of households include married or common-law couples (66.2%), which is higher than the County proportion (59.8%). Less than one-third (30.5%) of households contain children. Wasaga Beach is the largest community in Ontario without a high school, which may also be a contributor to the decline in households with children.

These findings support the finding that there is an above average proportion of older couples without children living in Wasaga Beach – and below average proportion of children – which suggests a non-traditional park system that places a greater emphasis on outdoor recreation opportunities for older adults and seniors.

Education, Income & Employment

Research has demonstrated that higher levels of education, income and full-time employment are positively correlated with greater participation in leisure activities. A variety of factors contribute to this but generally, people with higher levels of education are more likely to invest (and have the time to participate) in healthy activities such as visiting parks and participating in outdoor recreation. Additionally, households with higher incomes can more easily afford the costs associated with participation in recreational pursuits such as registration fees, equipment, transportation and time. Studies have also found that households with one or more parent who is employed full-time are more likely to participate in physical activities (e.g., outdoor play, team sports, swimming lessons, etc.) than families with lower employment rates.

Education

Wasaga Beach has strong levels of educational attainment for completion of high school (or equivalent), as well as Apprenticeship or trades certificates or diplomas (higher than the county and province for both). The largest gap between Wasaga Beach educational attainment levels and those reported for Simcoe County and the Province of Ontario is for attainment of University certificates, diplomas, or degrees at the bachelor level or above. For this level of post-secondary education Wasaga Beach Residents reported 11% attainment compared to 15% and 26% for the County and Province, respectively. This finding likely reflects the fact that the town has an older than average population, and university educations were less common when today's older adults and seniors were growing up.

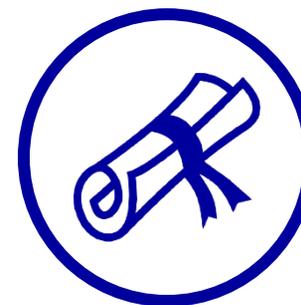
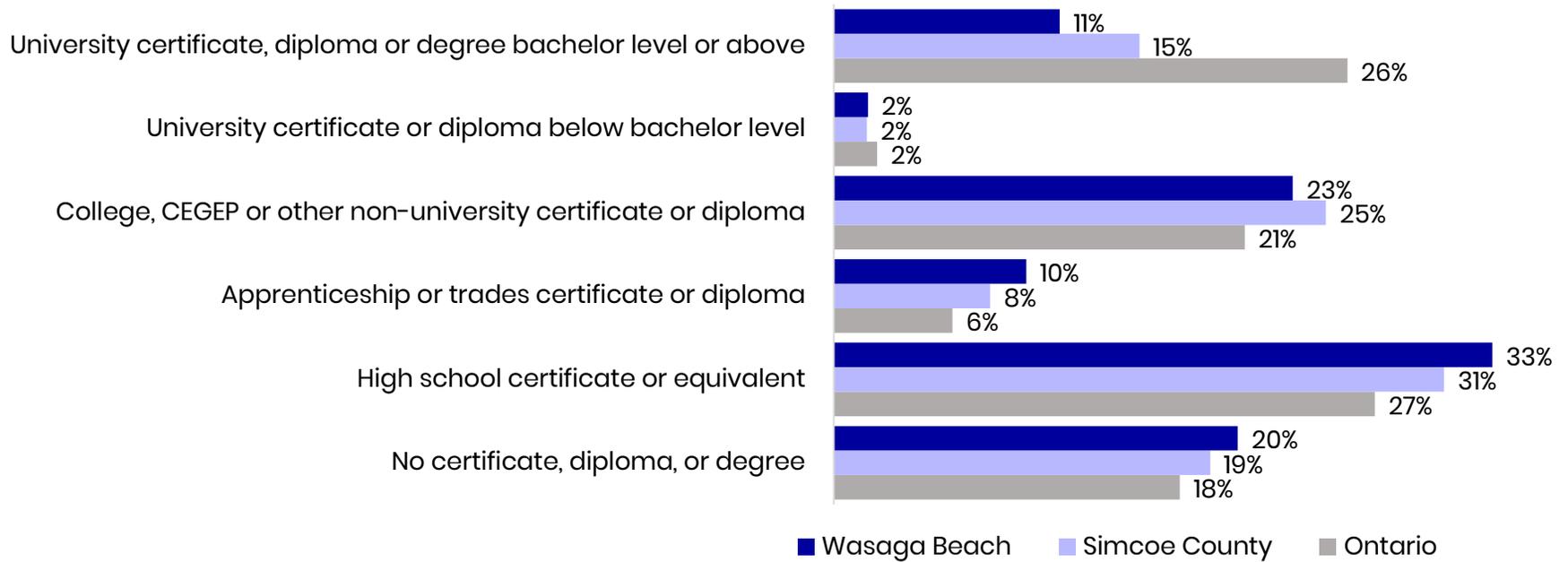


Figure 7 Educational Attainment Levels in Wasaga Beach, Simcoe County and Ontario (2016 Census)



Income

According to the 2016 Census, median after-tax household incomes in Wasaga Beach were lower than incomes in both Simcoe County and Ontario (19% and 16% lower, respectively). Wasaga Beach fared slightly better when examining individual after-tax household incomes; local resident earnings were only 12% lower than the county and provincial medians. The town’s higher median age levels are likely a contributing factor to these findings, as many residents are retired and do not have employment income.

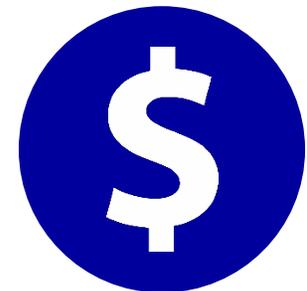
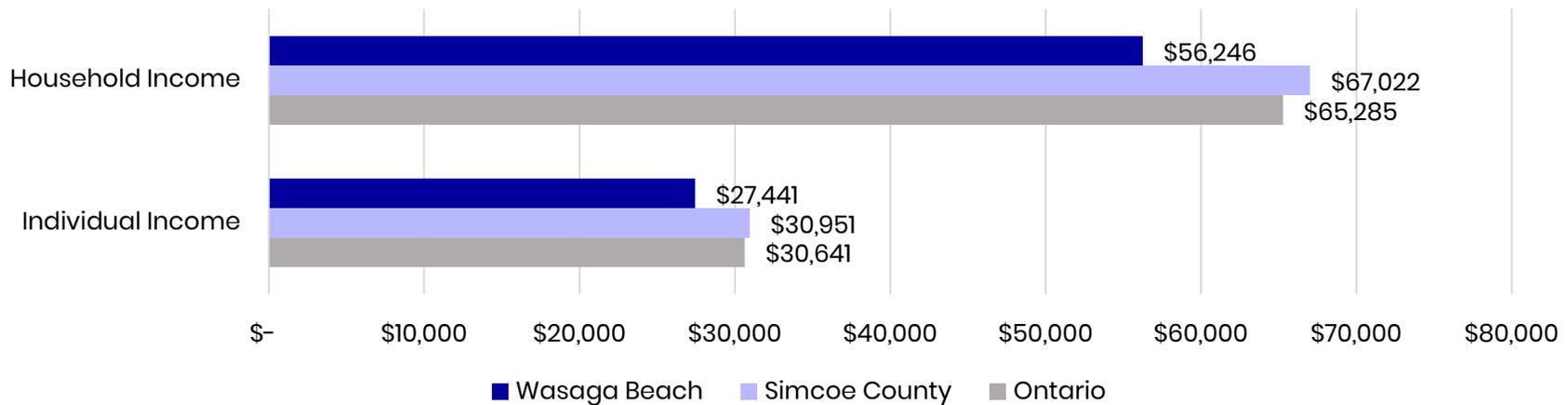
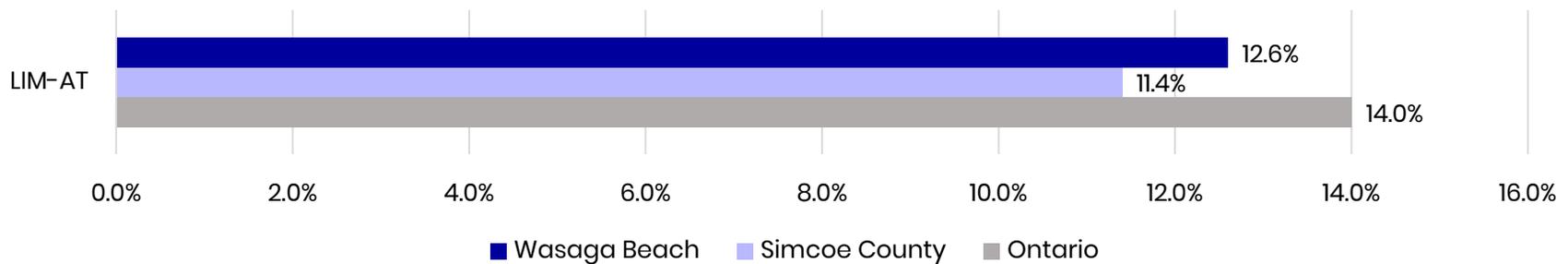


Figure 8 Individual and Household After-tax Income (2015; 2016 Census)



As a key goal of the Framework for Recreation in Canada, principles of **access and inclusion** are embedded throughout the Master Plan to promote participation within all population groups. As an example, 12.6% of Wasaga Beach’s population lived below Statistics Canada’s Low-Income Measure (LIM-AT) in 2015 which is similar to the rate in Simcoe County (11.4%) and slightly lower than the province (14.0%). Finding ways to provide persons facing income-related (and other) barriers with positive choices for physical and social activity will need to be considered.

Figure 9 Percentage of Population at or below the Low-Income Measure After-Tax (2016 Census)



Employment

According to the 2016 Census, sales (26%) and trades (20%) are dominant employment sectors, which is reflected in the local economy and educational attainment data. Additionally, a large proportion (70%) of Wasaga Beach residents commute outside of the town for work. This is notably higher than the rest of Simcoe County, where about 60% travel outside of the municipality for work. Housing affordability may be a contributing factor as Wasaga Beach remains one of the more affordable options in the surrounding region, though pricings are on the rise.

Diversity & Immigration

The proportion of Wasaga Beach residents who identify as visible minorities has increased modestly over the last decade; from 2% in 2006 to 3% in 2016. According to the 2016 Census, 18% of Wasaga Beach's population is comprised of immigrants to Canada, although only 9% of this population has immigrated to Canada since 2001, suggesting that most are long-time citizens. Wasaga Beach's rates of cultural diversity and immigration are comparable to the rest of Simcoe County (7% visible minority and 13% immigrants), but much lower than those being experienced in many other Ontario municipalities (provincial averages are 29% for both visible minorities and immigrants to Canada). However, it is noted that many visitors to Wasaga Beach come from larger urban centres, many of which have higher rates of multiculturalism. Whether residents or visitors, it can be expected that diversity in Wasaga Beach will increase and, as a result, new parks and trails demands may emerge

Seasonal Population

According to a recent study, Wasaga Beach currently attracts just under 2 million visitors on an annual basis¹. It is estimated 20% stay overnight at local accommodations, campgrounds or seasonal cottages, while 80% of the visitors tend to be day-trippers. Seasonal population estimates range from 9,000 to 16,000 persons. It is possible that these figures will increase in response to development of the downtown and beach areas (as described above); visits are forecasted to increase to 2.2 million over the next 5 to 10 years.

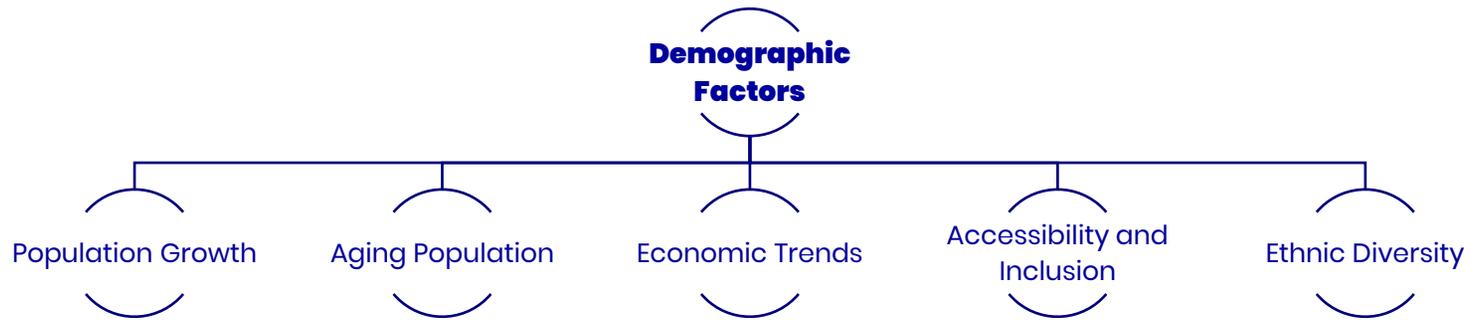


¹ CBRE Wasaga Beach Community Hub Economics Analysis, 2018.

3.0 Trends & Influencing Factors

This section provides an overview of emerging trends that are impacting the planning and development of parks and trails in communities across Ontario. These are just some of the factors that are considered throughout this Master Plan, with local implications discussed in subsequent sections. A summary of key supporting documents and policies is contained in **Appendix A**.

3.1. Demographic Factors



Population Growth (and Seasonal Residents)

The Town's population grew by 38% between 2006 and 2016 and is forecasted to grow 33% more by 2031. Wasaga Beach is also a popular summer destination with a seasonal population estimated at more than 9,000 people, plus tourists. This growth, combined with a seasonal influx of residents, will generate demand for new parks and facilities, expanded programming and may place strain on existing services and infrastructure.

Aging Population

Parks are no longer being designed primarily for children and youth. The aging of Canada's population is significantly influencing parks and recreation and – with a median age that greatly exceeds national levels – this change is quite evident in Wasaga Beach. This shift is being experienced through three distinct lenses: (1) healthy, physically-active and social adults wishing to remain active as they age (exemplified by growth in pickleball participation and the installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Wasaga Beach); (2) persons managing chronic illness, disease and / or old age that are seeking low-impact, therapeutic and rehabilitative

programs; and (3) growing interest in non-traditional experiential activities (e.g., festivals and events). In particular, requests for seating and shade are becoming more common within the parks system. In response to the “Age Friendly Communities” movement, many municipalities have established committees to support activity for residents of all ages.

Economic Trends

Income disparity is a growing issue in Ontario, which has caused a shift in leisure offerings to include more low-to-no cost alternatives. Participation rates are declining among many registered sports in response to increasing costs of participation, such as registration, equipment and travel. Municipalities and external agencies are working to alleviate economic barriers to participation by offering fee-assistance programs, subsidies to eligible residents and no / low fee opportunities. Parks and trails also respond directly to this issue as they (and most of their features) are free to use.

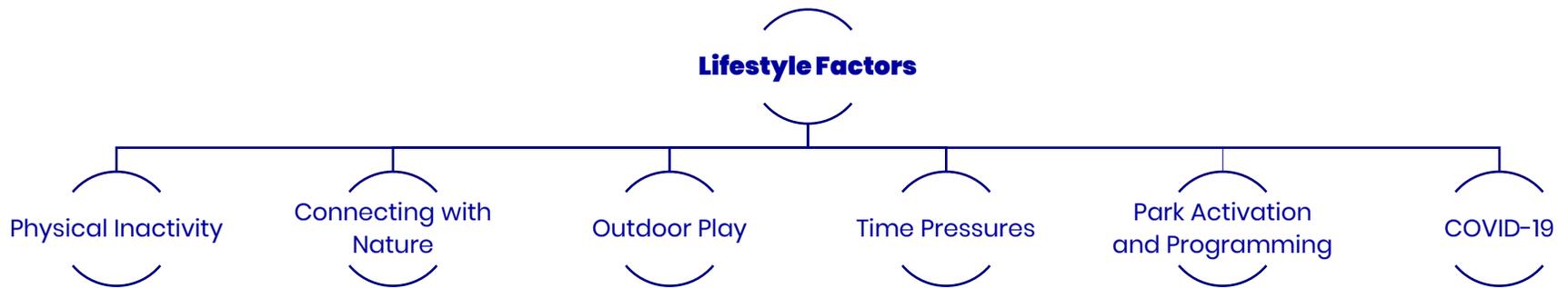
Accessibility and Inclusion

The 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability reported that approximately 6.2 million Canadians were living with a disability, amounting to 22% of the population. The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) was introduced in 2005. To comply with the AODA legislation, municipalities have renovated public spaces to meet barrier-free standards, provided AODA-specific customer service training and are continuously seeking opportunities to accommodate all residents (i.e., focus on inclusion for programs and services), regardless of ability. Municipalities have also begun to increase their focus on inclusive and welcoming spaces, including parks and trails, to ensure that residents of all backgrounds have access to a safe play to recreate. Some local examples of accessibility features in Wasaga Beach include Mobi-Mats available at the public beach areas, accessible playground features at 11 of 14 playground sites, and new trail development that meets or exceeds AODA standards.

Ethnic Diversity

Diversity of Canada’s population is expanding, particularly in larger urban centres and tourism destinations. This influx of new cultures, traditions and experiences has introduced new and emerging activities (e.g., cricket, rugby) and services (e.g., demand for French-language tours in Wasaga Beach) and as a result, demand for support facilities and community development interventions are growing. Some municipalities have accommodated this demand by repurposing existing facilities to accommodate multiple uses. Ethnic diversity in Wasaga Beach remains well below national averages, but is growing.

3.2. Lifestyle Factors



Physical Inactivity

The 2018 ParticipACTION report card on physical activity for children and youth in Canada graded overall physical activity levels a “D+”. Physical inactivity is a known risk factor for most chronic diseases and many other health conditions. Many recent health and wellness trends have emerged due to historically low physical activity levels, high reports of social isolation and the rise of sedentary behaviours. To combat this decline in physical activity, many service providers are working together to increase communications, modify programs and service levels, encourage participation, and support healthy lifestyles.

Connecting with Nature

A holistic and multi-faceted approach to health and wellness (including health promotion, socialization, mindfulness and management of stress and anxiety) is significantly influencing active living. For example, recent academic works highlight the benefits of interacting with nature, especially through “logging off” of electronic devices and participating in physical activity. Some ways that municipalities, including Wasaga Beach, have encouraged residents of all ages to spend time outdoors are through provision of community food gardens and establishing partnerships with environmental stewardship groups to educate the public on sustainability and ecologically-friendly activities.

Outdoor Play

Recent childhood and adolescent health research cite multiple benefits associated with “challenging play” and encourages opportunities for children to explore creative play. In response to this, many municipalities are providing natural play features and adventure playgrounds, encouraging children to stay and play outdoors longer.

Time Pressures

Lack of time – brought on by increasingly busy lifestyles – is frequently identified as the primary barrier to participating in leisure activities. The number and range of new activity options is also growing, offering people more choices. Unstructured activities that are easier to fit into busy schedules are becoming more popular (e.g., outdoor play), sometimes at the expense of traditional team sports.

Park Activation and Programming

Municipalities across Canada are experiencing increased demand for activation and programming in parks, such as social gatherings, community events, art displays, movie nights and more. Viewing parks as “outdoor living rooms” helps to expand the scope of use and engages a broader range of residents and visitors, leading to experiential learning, participation and community mobilization. Non-programmed facilities oriented to social interaction and gathering can also draw people from their homes and into the park setting.

COVID-19

Parks and trails play a critical role in the mental and physical health recovery of citizens – particularly those living in urban environments – and play an equally important role in community economic revival. 82% of Canadians said that parks have become more important to their mental health during COVID-19 and 70% indicated that their appreciation for parks and green spaces has increased during the pandemic.

Access to public spaces and programs is a fundamental service for Canadians, especially children, seniors, and marginalized populations. The pandemic will help to create a new and greater appreciation for the benefits of parks services, many of which provide respite from our growing social isolation. With the knowledge that many activities may be safer outdoors than indoors, we



are living in a time where we need more parks and public spaces, not less. To respond to the needs our citizens, investment in parks and trails must continue. The large majority (87%) of Canadians support increased spending on parks in particular.

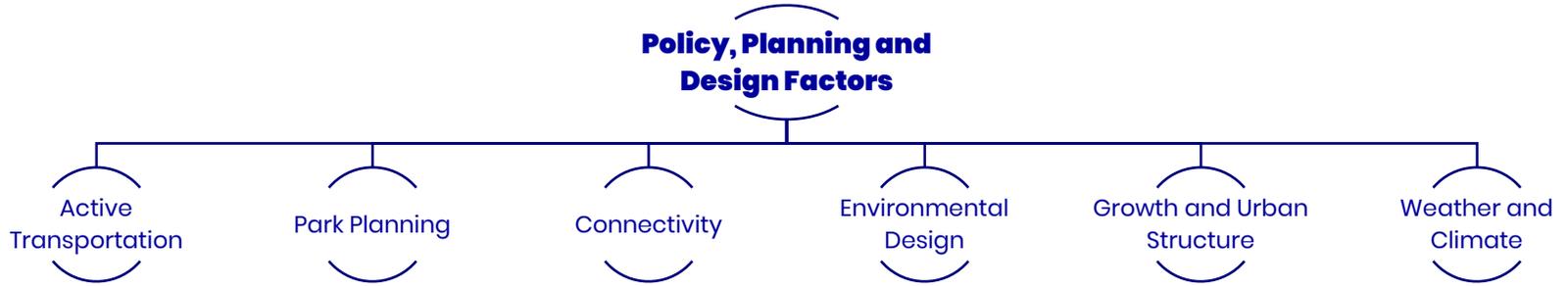
Recognizing that the situation is evolving and new information and guidance is emerging on a regular basis, municipalities must prepare for a wide range of scenarios. There may be new infrastructure needs in a post-COVID-19 setting, with a priority being placed on accessible, resilient, and human-scaled spaces that provide for adequate separation. Parks and trails excel in these areas. Non-traditional spaces such as car-free streets (or temporary street closures) may prove to be desirable places for creative programming and community interaction.

The pandemic has imposed a new lifestyle on participants and – while there is concern that overall physical activity levels have declined – many people are adjusting and finding new ways to stay active. Most notable are unstructured outdoor activities (e.g., walking, hiking, cycling, visiting natural areas, swimming in backyard pools, etc.) during all four seasons, often undertaken as a family. Maximizing outdoor play and learning, especially amongst children, has been a focus in recent years and should continue.

From a customer perspective, there may also be heightened interest in health/wellbeing services, active transportation, and food security, and moving “indoor” activities outside, which could lead to increased demand for items such as community gardens, trails and bike lanes, outdoor group activities, and interaction in nature. The increase in outdoor activity, along with restrictions placed on other sectors, has also underlined the importance of washrooms in parks and public spaces, which can be expected to be in even greater demand going forward.

A light is also being shone on the equitable distribution of public space as people seek localized opportunities. Now more than ever, municipalities have an obligation to target investment (e.g., engagement activities, programming, park renewal, facility development, etc.) within neighbourhoods without adequate access.

3.3. Policy, Planning and Design Factors



Active Transportation

More and more, active transportation is becoming a core requirement of complete communities. Human-powered modes of travel that are undertaken for utilitarian (day-to-day) purposes such as cycling, walking or skateboarding are common forms of active transportation. Examples of active transportation facilities may include dedicated cycling infrastructure, signed pathways and trails, or wayfinding and navigation assistance.

Park Planning

It is important for municipalities to provide a variety of parks with varying functions (including active and passive spaces) that are accessible to residents. There are many considerations that go into the planning, acquisition, design, management and funding of parks – several of which are examined in detail through this Parks and Trails Master Plan, including recent changes to provincial policy.

Creativity in park design is also important as this encourages unique spaces that foster a sense of place and community pride. Ensuring that parks provide attractive, safe and comfortable experiences to the user are paramount in ensuring successful utilization and attracting a broad range of uses. More and more, there is growing demand for larger and more inclusive parks that contain something for everybody, rather than smaller parks designed for more limited use.

Connectivity

Parks that are visible and accessible to the surrounding community are well used. All residents should have reasonable and equitable access to the system of parks and trails, including playgrounds which are a base feature of many parks. Investment should be reflective of broad objectives relating to healthy, active community designs that promote access and connectivity. Pathway systems within and between parks are also growing more popular and encourage walking and other active forms of transportation.

Environmental Design

Principles of environmental sustainability and environmentally-conscious designs are being ingrained in the sector. Common approaches help to guide investment and ensure that new infrastructure considers “green” design features (e.g., naturalization, low impact development practices, solar panels, etc.) that help to create carbon sinks, offer shade to park users and surrounding residences, provide habitat opportunities for select wildlife, and contribute to other environmental objectives. Accordingly, there is an opportunity to engage residents and leverage environmental initiatives within broader park improvement processes. By facilitating education, interests, and understanding of natural processes through stewardship opportunities, municipalities are able to show leadership, promote sustainable development, and reimagine public spaces.

Growth and Urban Structure

As the population grows, the requirements for complete communities also increases. Intensifying urban communities rely heavily on public open space and municipal parks because of limited access to personal greenery. Where possible, public green space, urban parks, public squares, connected trail systems, etc. are being provided to support recreation and socialization in the public realm.

Weather and Climate

Public parks are also being used to address variable climate conditions. As instances of extreme weather increase, park and facility resilience must be considered; this is evident in the recent high-water levels experienced in Georgian Bay and across the Great Lakes. Parkland helps to mitigate the impact of significant weather events through: reducing the urban heat island effect; mitigating flooding from extreme weather; removing carbon from the air; and providing space for people to come together.

Aging Infrastructure

Aging and outmoded infrastructure is a growing issue for most communities. There are many challenges with older parks, including (but not limited to) the following:

- many were designed to different construction and design standards;
- many have antiquated components and lack modern amenities;
- many are unable to accommodate evolving requirements and standards of play; and
- many may not be barrier-free for persons with disabilities.

Innovation in design and construction is a must. This may mean different things to different municipalities. In more progressive communities, this may manifest itself through continued advancements in the provision and design of resilient and environmentally sustainable park spaces.

4.0 Consultation

4.1. Community Engagement Strategy

A comprehensive community engagement strategy was devised to involve the public and stakeholders in the identification of needs and expectations related to parks, trails and outdoor recreation in Wasaga Beach. The strategy was structured to solicit input on the key objectives of the Master Plan.

The consultation program included both in-person and digital opportunities to discuss the Master Plan and provide feedback. These opportunities were promoted through word-of-mouth, email distribution lists, social media updates, promotional posters and local news outlets. A project page on the Town's online engagement platform (Let's Talk Wasaga Beach), was active throughout the course of the project and in-person sessions were facilitated by members of the Consulting Team.

The first phase of engagement was designed to generate comments about parks and trails in Wasaga Beach and commenced in Fall 2019. Future engagement occurred in Fall 2020 when a draft Master Plan was made available for public review and feedback.

Below is a list of community engagement tactics employed throughout the consultation process.

Community / External

- Let's Talk Wasaga Beach (Project Duration)
- Community Online Survey (Fall 2019) – 195 unique responses
- Public Information Centres (Fall 2019); conducted in-person – approximately 80 participants
- Public Information Centre (Fall 2020); conducted online due to pandemic restrictions – 4 public comments

Town / Internal

- Staff Workshops (Fall 2019)
- Presentations to Coordinated Committee (Fall 2019 & Fall 2020)

4.2. Community Survey

An online community survey was created to establish a broad picture of resident use of parks, trails and beaches, participation in outdoor recreation, as well as preferences for future investment, and other key topics. The survey was available for six weeks from September to October 2019 and took approximately 10 minutes to complete. The survey was posted on the Town's online engagement platform (Let's Talk Wasaga Beach) and was promoted through the local media, printed posters, community newsletters and on social media. Respondents were required to register on the Let's Talk Wasaga Beach website to participate in the online survey. A total of **195 unique responses** were registered and received; being a voluntary, self-directed survey, response rates vary by question.

Tabulated survey response data has been provided in **Appendix B**.

Demographics

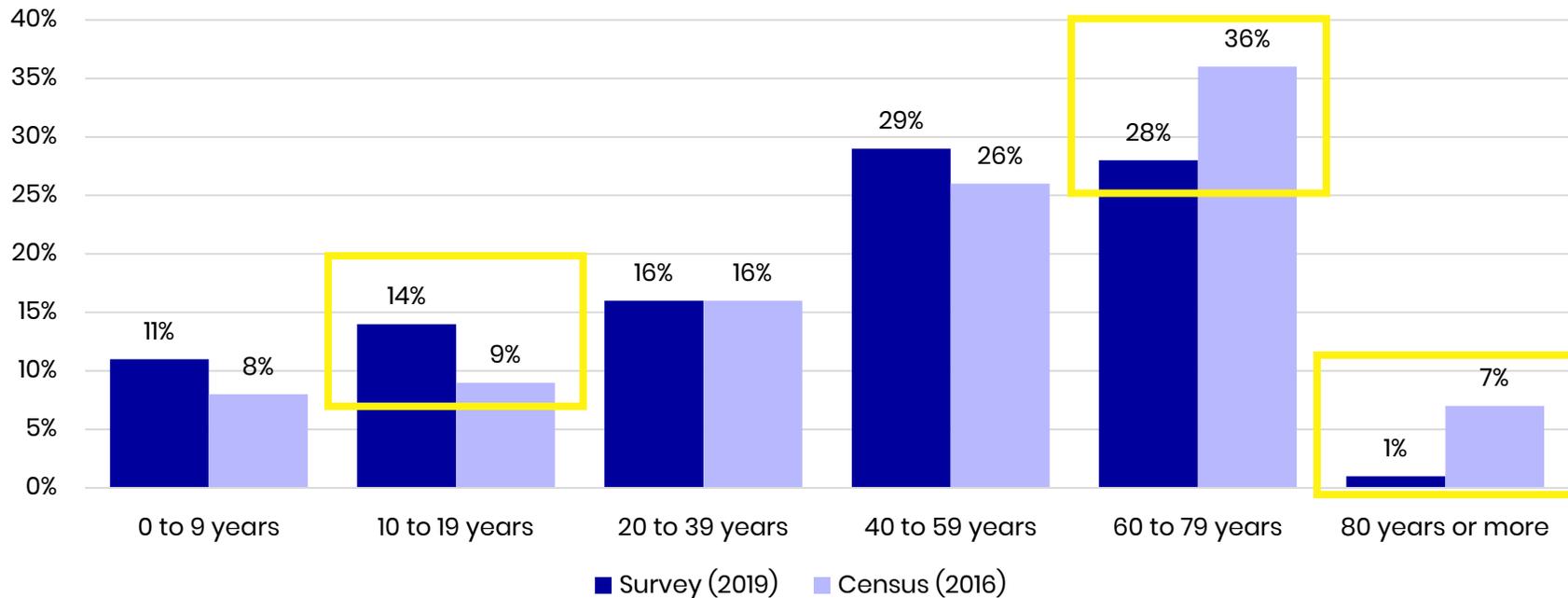
The vast majority (97%) of survey respondents were permanent or seasonal residents of Wasaga Beach. The remaining 3% either live outside the Town or did not provide a response. Of those living in Wasaga Beach, two-fifths (40%) live in the west end of the Town, 35% live in the east end, 19% live in central Wasaga Beach (south of River Road West / Mosley), and the remaining 8% live in central Wasaga Beach (north of River Road West / Mosley). When this distribution is compared against Statistics Canada population data (estimated based on postal codes and geographic boundaries), the east and west are overrepresented, while both north and south central are underrepresented. It is known that parkland provision in east and west Wasaga Beach is lower than other areas of the Town. Residents in those areas may have participated the survey to advocate for support in their neighbourhoods, resulting in higher response rates.



The average household size of survey respondents was 2.9 persons, slightly higher than the average Census household size of 2.3 persons in Wasaga Beach. The following figure illustrates the age distribution of household residents and compares against the same distribution using results from the 2016 Census. Compared to the Town's population, families with young and teenage children are most highly represented in the survey, while older adults and seniors are less so. This is common in self-selected surveys of this nature.

Nearly half (46%) of survey respondents indicated that they are between the ages of 45 to 64 years old; the census median age of 55.3 years falls directly within the middle of this range. Another 23% were between the ages of 25 and 44 years old and the remaining 31% were aged 65 years or older. This age distribution is fairly reflective of the Town's adult population distribution; noting that children and youth below the age of 24 were not represented in the survey respondents who chose to identify their age.

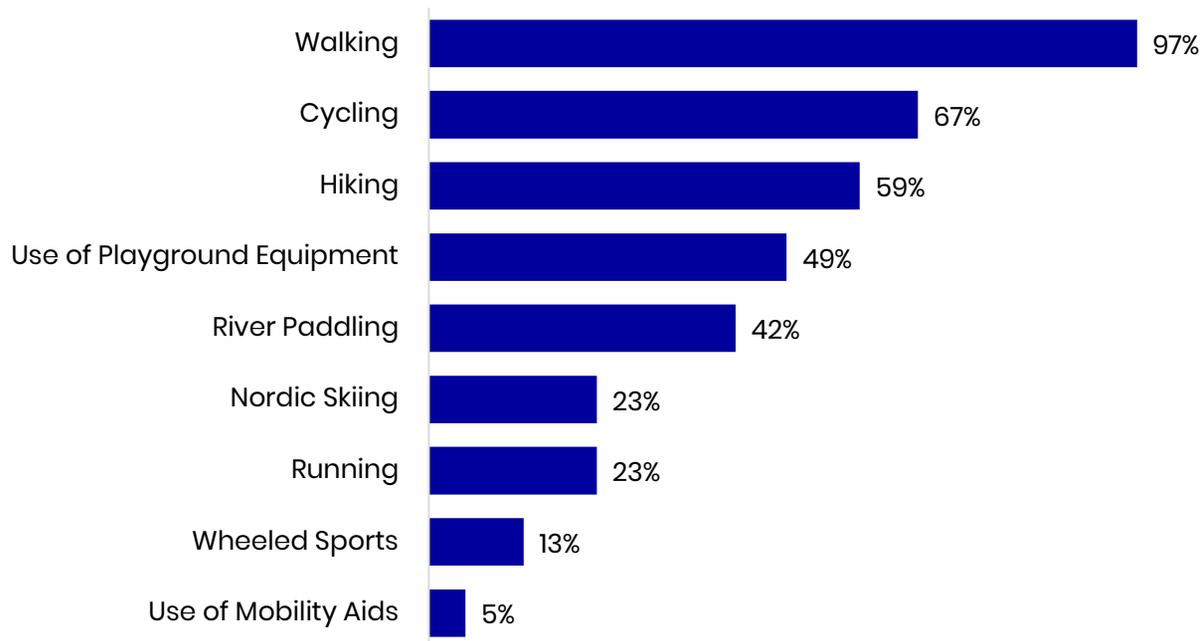
Figure 10 Household composition of survey respondents compared to 2016 Census (n = 195)



Participation & Usage – Park Activities

According to survey respondents, the most popular outdoor leisure activities were walking (97%), cycling (67%) and hiking (59%). Another popular activity was use of playground equipment, which nearly half (49%) of respondents indicated that they had done this within the last 12 months. Less popular activities included Nordic skiing (23%), running (23%), wheeled sports (13%), and use of mobility aids (5%).

Figure 11 Participation in parks-based leisure activities, last 12 months (n= 194)



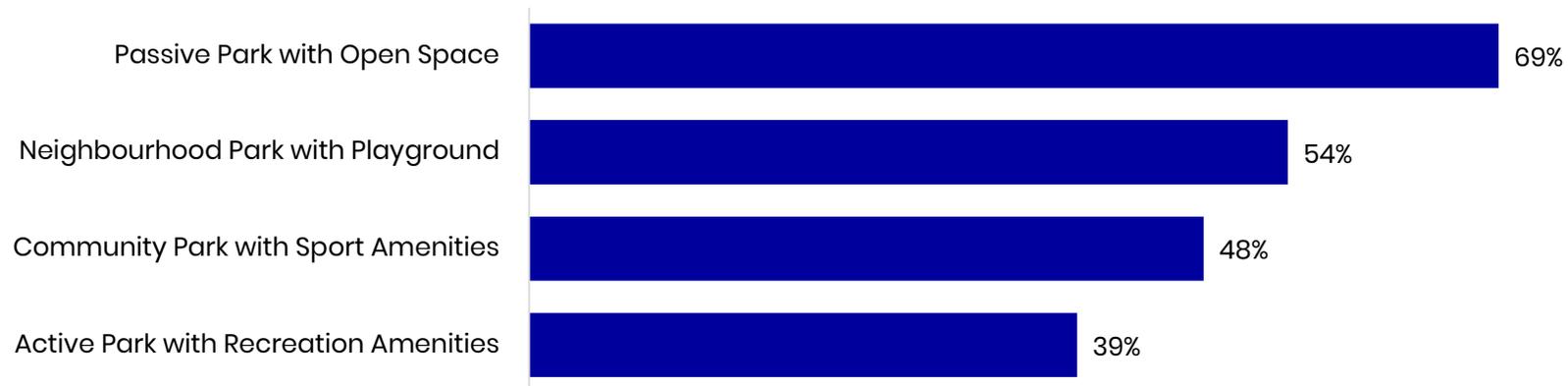
Passive parks with open space were used by more than two-thirds (69%) of survey respondents within the last 12 months, followed by neighbourhood parks with playgrounds (54%) community parks with sport amenities (48%) and active parks with recreation amenities (39%)

57%



indicated that they use **parks** in Wasaga Beach once a week or more.

Figure 12 Use of park amenities in Wasaga Beach, last 12 months (n = 132)



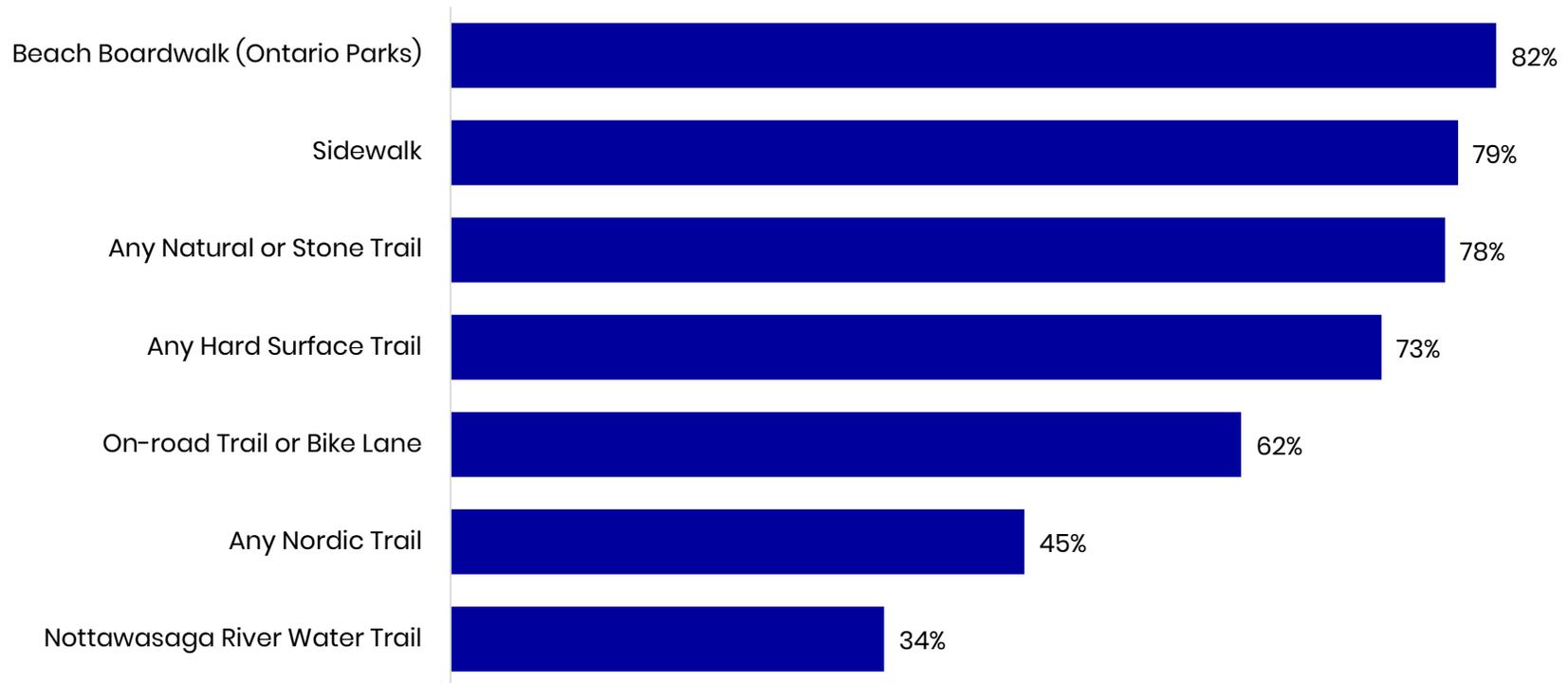
For 5% of respondents, parks in the Town of Wasaga Beach were used every day, while nearly one-quarter (24%) of survey respondents visit parks almost daily. Just over one-quarter (28%) use parks in Wasaga Beach once a week and 27% use them a few times a month. Only 4% use the parks monthly and 5% use them less than once a month. On average, respondents use parks in Wasaga Beach once a week.

The two primary reasons why people use parks in Wasaga Beach are for fitness or recreation (73%) and for nature appreciation (62%). Other popular reasons for visiting parks in Wasaga Beach include: to watch your children play (35%); to socialize / picnic (31%); to attend events (29%); and to participate in sports (25%).

Participation & Usage – Trail Activities

The beach boardwalk (82%) was the most used trail type in Wasaga Beach, followed closely by sidewalks (79%) and natural or stone trails (78%). Hard surface trails and rights-of-way such as paved pathways or bike lanes were used slightly less frequently, 73% and 62%, respectively. Nordic trails were used by 45% of survey respondents and the Nottawasaga Rover Water Trail was used by 34% of respondents. These responses highlight the value of natural paths and trails such as the waterfront and natural / stone trails but also recognize that convenience and safety are key, as seen through high use of sidewalks.

Figure 13 Use of trail amenities in Wasaga Beach, last 12 months (n = 195)



Survey respondents indicated that they use trails in Wasaga Beach (including Provincial park trails) on a regular basis. For 15% of respondents, local trails were used every day, while one-third (33%) use local trails almost daily. Just over one-fifth (21%) use trails in Wasaga Beach once a week and 23% use them a few times a month. Only 2% use the trails monthly and 4% use them less than once a month. On average, survey respondents use trails in Wasaga Beach almost daily.

69%



indicated that they use **trails** in Wasaga Beach once a week or more.

To better understand which trails are used most frequently, survey contributors were asked whether they visit municipal trails, provincial park trails or both when participating in trail-based activities. Just over two-fifths (42%) stated that they use both equally, just above one-quarter (26%) mostly visit the provincial park, and 19% mostly use Town-owned trails. Another 8% were unaware of land-ownership and 3% indicated that they do not participate in trail activities.

The top three reasons for using trails in Wasaga Beach are for fitness or recreation (89%), for nature appreciation (76%), and to access the beach (50%). Other less common reasons for using local trails included to access parks (37%), to go to the store (16%), to go to school (6%) and to go to work (3%). The survey responses indicate a strong desire to visit local trails for recreation and leisure purposes rather than utilitarian purposes such as travel between two destinations.

Barriers to Participation & Trail Use

Nearly three-quarters (72%) of survey respondents indicated that they are able to participate in trail activities as often as they would like. Similarly, when asked the same question about parks activities, another almost three-quarters (73%) indicated that they are able to participate as often as they would like. While these numbers indicate strong participation in parks and trails activities, they also highlight barriers to participation for one-in-four participants.

When respondents were asked why they are not able to participate in trail activities as often as they would like, the top three responses were: lack of personal time / too busy (29%); trails do not have necessary support amenities (15%); and trails do not connect to desired destinations (11%).

Comparatively, the top three barriers to participation in parks activities were: lack of personal time / too busy (55%), park is too far away (38%), and parks do not have necessary support amenities (29%). One key finding from these responses is the importance of proximity and convenience. It is likely that resident use of parks and trails may increase if opportunities are comfortable, safe and nearby.

Barriers to Participation

Parks & Outdoor Recreation



#1

Lack of personal time / Too busy



#2

Park is too far away



#3

Lacking support amenities

Trails



#1

Lack of personal time / Too busy



#2

Lacking support amenities



#3

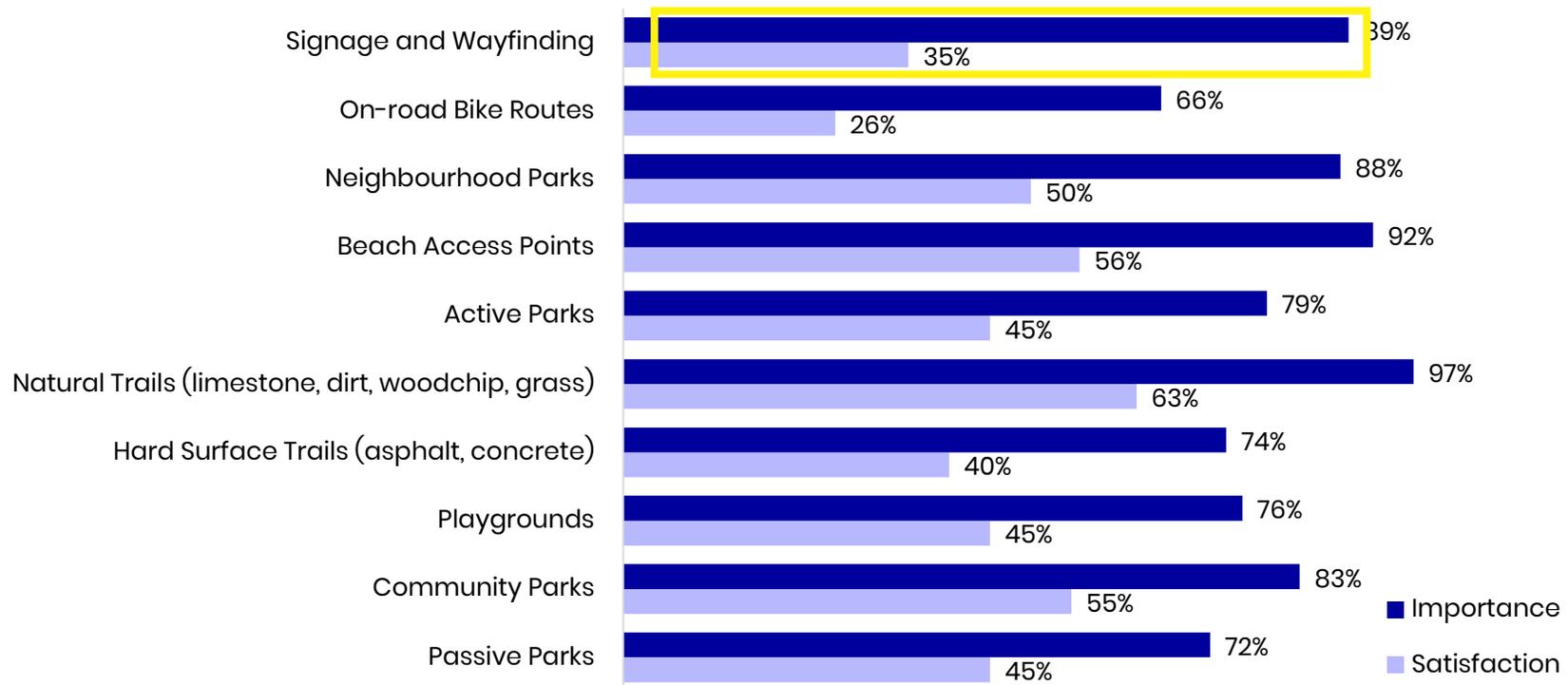
Lacking connections to desired locations

Importance & Satisfaction

Survey participants were provided with a list of ten park, trail and outdoor recreation facility types, then asked to indicate how **important** those facilities are to members of their household and to identify how **satisfied** they are with provision levels.

According to survey respondents, the three **most important** facility types were: natural trails (97%); beach access points (92%); and signage and wayfinding (89%). Levels of **satisfaction** were highest among natural trails (63%); beach access points (56%); and community parks (55%). Levels of satisfaction for all other listed facility types were 50% or lower.

Figure 14 Levels of importance and satisfaction with municipal parks, outdoor recreation and trail facilities (n = 65 to 95)



The figure above illustrates visible **gaps** between levels of importance and satisfaction with parks, trails and outdoor recreation facilities in Wasaga Beach. For all ten listed options, levels of importance were higher than levels of satisfaction, indicating a gap between expected and provided levels of service for these facilities. The gap is largest for signage and wayfinding (89% importance and 35% satisfaction).

Support for Investment

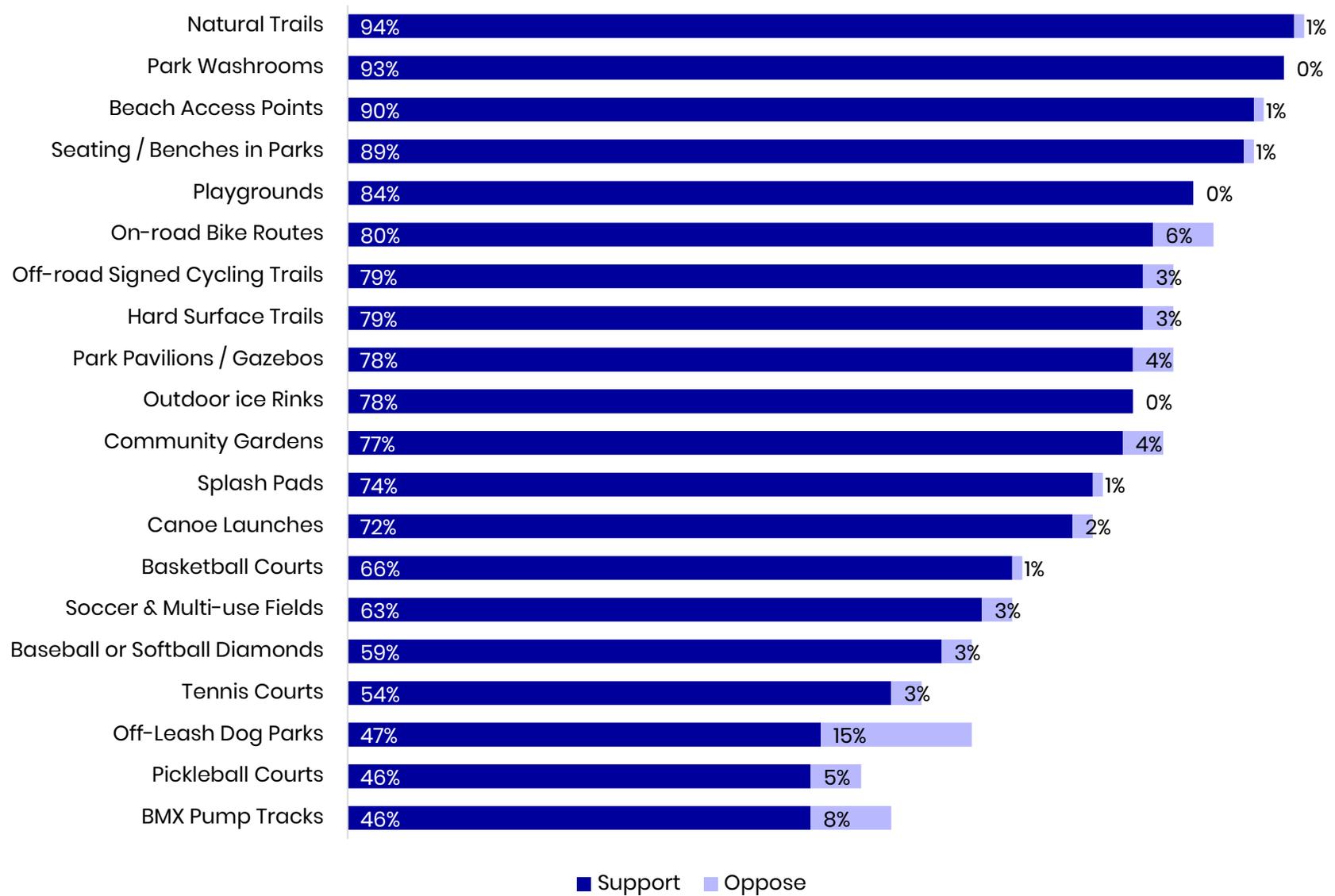
Survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for improvement in a variety of specific facilities. The full results of this question are illustrated in the following figure. Note: results do not include “neutral”, “don’t know” or skipped responses and therefore may not add to 100%.

The **top facilities** with support for additional investment are all associated with unstructured, casual and comfortable opportunities for recreation and received more than 80% support. These included: natural trails (94%); park washrooms (93%); beach access points (90%); seating / benches in parks (89%); and playgrounds (84%). Active transportation facilities also ranked highly among the listed options, receiving support from more than three-quarters of survey respondents: on-road cycling routes (80%); off-road signed cycling routes (79%); and hard surface trails (79%).

Conversely, the **lowest-ranked facilities** which received support from less than half of respondents are special interest or individually-focused. These included: off-leash dog parks (47%); pickleball courts (46%); and BMX pump tracks (46%).

It is interesting to note that facilities for **traditional sports** such as basketball, soccer and baseball / softball were ranked on the lower half of the list. This may be reflective of dedicated provision of these facilities at the Town’s sports park and suggests that these groups are fairly well-served with their current facilities, although geographic gaps may exist.

Figure 15 Support for investment in parks, outdoor recreation and trail facilities (n = 93 to 98)



Of the options listed, survey respondents were **most supportive** of:

- continuing to partner with Ontario Parks to improve parks and trail connectivity (92% support); and
- respondents also believe that investment in parks and trails should be a high priority for Town Council (85%).

These results highlight the importance of parks and trails to residents of Wasaga Beach.

Conversely, statements which received the **lowest levels of support** from survey respondents included:

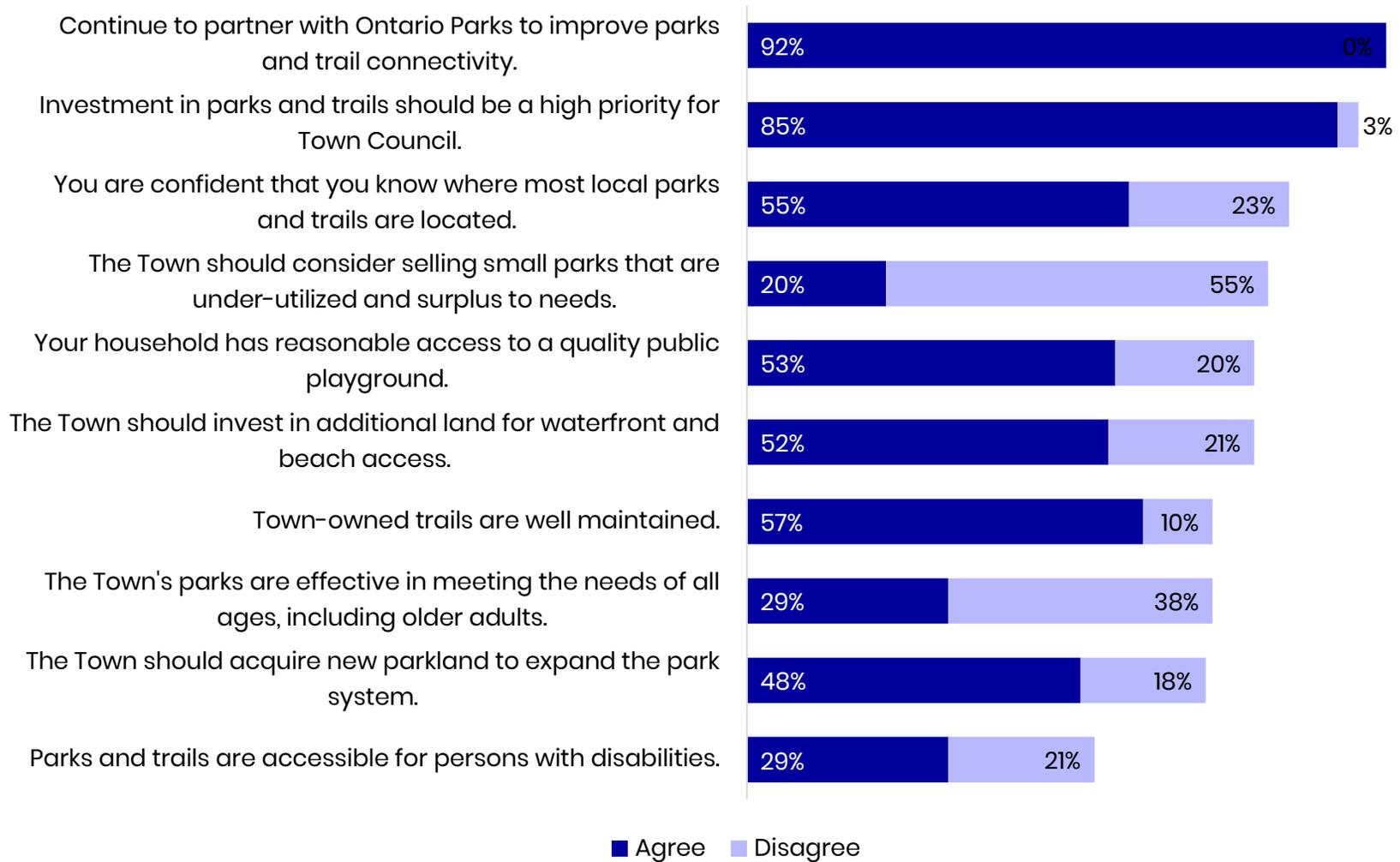
- the assertion that the Town's parks are effective in meeting the needs of all ages, including older adults (29% support, 38% oppose);
- the belief that parks and trails are accessible to persons with disabilities (29% support, 21% oppose); and
- the prospect of selling small parks that are under-utilized and surplus to needs (20% support, 55% oppose).

These results indicate that survey respondents believe the Town could do more to provide parks that are designed to address the needs of all residents throughout the municipality, including for marginalized or under-represented populations.

Agreement & Perceived Support

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for a series of statements regarding the provision of parks, trails and outdoor recreation in Wasaga Beach. The full results of this question are illustrated in the following figure.

Figure 16 Perception of the Town’s ability to provide parks, trails and outdoor recreation services (n = 92 to 95)



Note: Neutral or 'Don't Know' responses are not shown

4.3. Stakeholder Workshops

Five stakeholder workshops were arranged to support the development of the Parks and Trails Master Plan. The purpose of the sessions was to engage key user groups, agencies and clubs, create awareness of the Master Plan, and seek feedback on challenges and priorities related to parks, trails and outdoor recreation in Wasaga Beach. The sessions took place on November 7 and December 5, 2019 and featured similar content and information.

Each session began with an overview presentation outlining the Master Plan process and additional opportunities for organizations, their members and others to get involved and share feedback. Following the presentation, participants took part in facilitated discussions guided by a series of questions related to the role of their organization, participation trends, challenges, needs, and opportunities to work together. At the end of each session, the consultant thanked participants for their time and feedback and provided them with a brief overview of next steps in the process.

This summary represents the input of 22 organizations as well as municipal departments supporting parks, recreation and trails in Wasaga Beach.

Table 1 Stakeholder Attendance and Participation

Attended Session	Town Staff Attendees
Age Friendly Advisory Committee	Public Works
Free Spirit Tours	Recreation, Events & Facilities
Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association	Economic Development
Healthy Community Network Committee (Committee of Council)	Planning Department
Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority	Older Adult Programs
Ontario Parks	Recreation Programs
Prime Time Club	Special Events
Seniors Active Living Centre	Youth Programs
Seniors Social Club	
Stonebridge Cycling Club	
Wasaga Beach Chamber of Commerce	
Wasaga Beach Public Library	
Wasaga Beach YMCA	
	Provided Written Input
	Advisory Committee on Tourism
	Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

The following high-level summary synthesizes common themes that emerged from stakeholder feedback, organized by subject area.

Parks & Outdoor Recreation

Many stakeholder attendees stated their appreciation for the Town's many **well-kept parks and trails**. They also recognized the value of the **Wasaga Sports Park** for provision of sport-based recreation as well as various other **active park sites** for their contributions to public-access outdoor recreation facilities. It is believed that youth and adult sport / recreation leagues are well-served in the community

Stakeholders also discussed the importance of designing and providing parks that encourage use by all ages, but particularly **youth and older adults**. It was suggested that use of parks and outdoor recreation amenities by these populations could be increased through animation / activation of these sites. Some examples of this included coordinating a Town employee to facilitate a "how to use outdoor fitness equipment" exercise session for interested adults, promoting participation in geo-caching, or installing of Wi-Fi at key park sites for youth seeking opportunities to use technology or app-based recreation while outdoors.

Parkland Development & Design

When discussing the distribution of existing facilities and opportunities for future development, many stakeholder representatives identified provision **gaps in the east and west** ends of the Town. The majority of existing neighbourhood and community parks in Wasaga Beach are somewhat clustered around the centre of the Town. It was suggested that the Town seek to **secure additional parkland** through future development whenever possible to help address this provision gap.

Further discussion about opportunities for improvement or considerations for future development focused on the **multi-use and multi-generational** nature of modern park designs. Many stakeholders discussed a desire for more informal or social spaces for passive recreation (e.g., gazebos, picnic sites, etc.) and opportunities for all ages, interests and abilities to enjoy the same space. Some suggested examples include installation of features such as a looped walking path, playground components, outdoor fitness equipment, splash pad or hard-surface courts to accommodate multiple uses.

Comfort and safety features were also identified as appreciated components of local parks and outdoor recreation facilities. Many attendees identified demand for additional seating, shade, waste receptacles, and washroom facilities along trails and within parks.

These features are particularly valuable for young children, older adults and seniors who are more susceptible to environmental factors such as extreme heat or cold.

The consultants also met with staff from the Town's **Planning Department** to discuss upcoming development, opportunities for parkland acquisition, the ongoing Official Plan review, development of a parkland hierarchy, opportunities for acquisition of parkland, collection of cash in lieu, new legislation and recommended policy framework, etc. Input from this session has been considered throughout the development of this Master Plan.

Trails

Stakeholders were universally appreciative of the Town's bountiful trails network (including Ontario Parks) and opportunities to use the river system for active transportation and leisurely paddling. Most were supportive of keeping the majority of **trails naturalized** to encourage interaction with nature and opportunities for exploration. There were some suggestions that **paved pathways or multi-use trails** would be beneficial such as looped networks within parks or function as linkages between destinations (e.g., connect a residential area to commercial area or school zone) and that these should be designed with universal accessibility in mind.

Increasing **connectivity** and blazing **new trails** was discussed by multiple attendees as well. Many discussed the value of creating connections between key sites such as the RecPlex, proposed arena and library, commercial areas, as well as Beach Areas 1 and 2. To further support this, stakeholders also noted that cycling infrastructure is lacking in some areas and that active transportation can be difficult to navigate with the existing facilities, especially along the Shore Lane Trail where it transitions from on-road to off-road and reconnects a few blocks further.

Stakeholder representatives were pleased to discuss the Nottawasaga River as a water trail and hope to encourage greater use of this nature amenity. Regarding future investment in trails, it was suggested that the Town consider opportunities for **additional launch sites** to access the river. The existing site at the sports park is well-used by those who are aware of it, but could be better promoted to increase use. It was suggested that additional locations for launching and retrieval of watercraft would be appreciated, such as downstream sites for disembarking. Some attendees noted that many watersport participants use two vehicles and coordinate launching up-river and disembarking at a later point down-stream. Multiple launch sites would help encourage use and facilitate this type of self-propelled water craft use.

Awareness & Promotion

Signage and wayfinding were identified as a key area for improvement at each of the stakeholder sessions. Attendees identified a lack of signage in some areas and opportunities for improvement in others. Overall, it was suggested that the Town (as well as Tourism, Ontario Parks and others) invest in updated **signage and wayfinding** amenities. Future installations should provide clear, consistent and recognizable messaging to assist with awareness and promotion of parks and trails in the Town. Other more detailed suggestions included development of “you are here” points along trails (particularly in heavily wooded areas), consideration of sign and post height for pedestrians and cyclists, clear identification of beach access points, and promotion of all-season use of trails.

Many stakeholders also suggested that even local residents are not always aware of the multitude of parks, trails, beach access points and recreation destinations available in the Town. To further support the suggestions for increased wayfinding and signage, it was suggested that the Town (or other third-party organizations) host **guided tours or trail activities** and events to encourage use of existing facilities.

Installation of **interpretive signage** was also discussed by many attendees. Wasaga Beach is fortunate to be home to a wide variety of unique flora and fauna as well as some rare species. Many stakeholders supported the idea of developing informational displays to highlight the local environment, historic features or other interesting points about the Town.

Policies, Partnerships & Collaboration

Stakeholder attendees suggested that the Town continue to work in **partnership with Ontario Parks** to increase and improve provision of parks and trails. Many recognized that the general park and trail users are often not aware of land-ownership and expect the same level of service regardless of the service provider. It will be important for the Town to continue to collaborate with Ontario Parks throughout the Master Plan process and beyond to coordinate development, operations and maintenance of public outdoor recreation amenities such as parks and trails.

Representatives from **Ontario Parks** (Wasaga Beach Provincial Park) also participated in the stakeholder consultation process. Discussions focused on opportunities to build upon the existing relationship with the Town, trends in usage of Ontario Parks properties (e.g., Sand Dunes, Public Beach, Nordic Trail, etc.), and current projects / initiatives within the park (e.g., updating signage to align with all other Provincial Parks).

It was also suggested that the Town seek opportunities to collaborate with service clubs and agencies to promote use of parks and trails in Wasaga Beach. For example, it appears that multiple different groups have attempted to map local trail routes to support

walking, hiking, running and cycling in the area. However, individual efforts have resulted in a series of maps and trail resources that provide various levels of information. The Town’s Planning Department is currently working with groups to create one **comprehensive map / resource document** to support trail use in Wasaga Beach.

4.4. Public Information Centres

In addition to the community survey, the public was invited to participate in the study at two points: Phase 1 of the Master Plan (to provide information and ideas); and Phase 3 (to review the draft Master Plan). Summaries of these events are provided below.

Phase 1 – Information Gathering

Two public information centres were hosted in October 2019, both held in Council Chambers at Wasaga Beach Town Hall. Each session was facilitated by representatives from the Project Team (Town Staff and Consultants) and it is estimated that nearly 80 residents attended the sessions to share their input on the Master Plan.

The sessions were structured to elicit feedback from Wasaga Beach residents using a variety of methods including hand-outs, display boards, question and comment sheets, maps, and opportunities to converse with the Project Team. Results from the various consultation tools are summarized below with detailed feedback and a copy of the display boards provided in the Appendices.

A set of informational handouts and display boards were provided for review and comment. The boards provided information on: the consultation process; Master Plan process and scope; preliminary results from the online survey; maps of municipal parks and trails; and opportunities for questions / comments. A total of 126 unique comments were provided through the two sessions. These comments were reviewed and categorized into common themes. Feedback from comments and conversations has been summarized below.

Topic	Comments
Parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doing Well: parks are well-maintained, residents appreciate events and activities available• Improvements: invest in waterfront parks, consider multi-use and multi-generational designs• Gaps: neighbourhood parks in the east and west, comfort amenities such as seating and shade

Topic	Comments
Trails	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing Well: natural trails in Wasaga Beach are well-used, beautiful and plentiful • Improvements: continue to develop new trails and link to existing paths and destinations • Gaps: north-south connections to the major east-west trail connections
Outdoor Recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing Well: pleased with the collection of amenities available at the sports park • Improvements: additional washroom facilities at active sites, playground replacement program • Gaps: requests for more outdoor fitness equipment, skateboard parks, outdoor ice and tracks
Signage & Wayfinding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doing Well: trail maps and signage are present along some major trail routes • Improvements: increase signage and wayfinding with consistent and recognizable installations • Gaps: trail markers, interpretative signage, comprehensive mapping, additional sign posts

Phase 3 – Review of Draft Master Plan

Due to the public gathering restrictions related to the pandemic, the draft Parks & Trails Master Plan and summary presentation was posted on the Town’s public engagement website for a three-week commenting period in October to November 2020. The Plan was publicized through Wasaga Beach’s “Let’s Talk” website, emails to website subscribers, and social media posts.

The virtual open house hosted on the project webpage garnered nearly 500 views (“aware visitors”), with 260 persons browsing the site (“informed visitors”, including 165 downloads of key documents) and four persons providing written comments (“engaged visitors”). Written comments were also submitted by Ontario Parks. The public comments are summarized below:

- suggestion to provide unique and inclusive playground designs;
- request for additional outdoor basketball courts (captured in draft plan);
- suggestion for more and improved trail signage and promotion (captured in draft plan); and
- comment that the draft Master Plan is comprehensive, but also needs to tie into a long-term vision for the town as a whole

4.5. Internal Consultation

Parks Staff Workshop

Wickens Greenspace Consultants engaged with key members of the Town's Parks Division through an action-planning workshop on November 5, 2019. The purpose of the session was to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and constraints related to service levels standards, policies, long-term needs, usage rates, participation and emerging trends.

Input from this session is not published within this report but has been used to inform the development of the Master Plan.

Council & Coordinated Committee

A presentation was made to Coordinated Committee on November 14, 2019. The purpose of the session was to introduce the Master Plan and present a summary of feedback gathered to date. This included key themes from the community survey, stakeholder workshops and public information centres. Members of Coordinated Committee were provided an opportunity to share their insight on what makes Wasaga Beach unique and identify key priorities to be considered through the Master Plan.

A second presentation was made to Coordinated Committee on October 8, 2020 to present the Draft Master Plan and seek municipal input prior to releasing the draft for public comment.

Input from Council and Committee consultations have been used to inform the development of the Master Plan.

4.6. Community Consultation Summary

The Community Engagement Strategy employed through the Master Plan process used a variety of digital, hard-copy and in-person methods to consult with both internal and external groups. The list below summarizes some of the key themes that emerged from the multiple consultation methods including responses from: Let's Talk Wasaga Beach, the community survey, stakeholder workshops, public information centres, internal consultations, site visits and project team meetings. Themes are not listed in priority order.

1. **Parkland Distribution:** Provide more parks / Address gaps in west and east ends of Wasaga Beach.
2. **Playground Replacement and Distribution:** Improve playgrounds through repair, replacement or installation of new components and increase playground distribution.
3. **Trails:** Address trail gaps / construct more trails; promote active transportation and continue to focus on trail maintenance; consider increased all-season maintenance and access to municipal trail networks.
4. **Signage and Wayfinding:** Improve trail / park signage, wayfinding and brochures; coordinate with other trails-focused organizations to collaborate and share knowledge / resources.
5. **Park and Facility Improvements:** Focus on trail / park maintenance (e.g., clear debris, repair broken components, etc.); Increase the provision of comfort and safety amenities such as washrooms, seating and shade.
6. **Outdoor Recreation Amenities:** Install additional outdoor recreation amenities such as a second splash pad, outdoor ice surface or additional outdoor fitness equipment (preferably along trails or within other active parkland).
7. **Water Access:** Continue to promote use and appreciation for the Nottawasaga River as an outdoor recreation amenity.
8. **Connections with Nature:** Emphasize the value of Wasaga Beach's natural heritage and significant biosphere through education, promotion and installation of interpretive signage.
9. **Programming and Activation:** Increase promotion of parks, trails and facilities through increased programming, activation and promotion of municipal assets.
10. **Partnerships and Collaboration:** continue to work with community partners and agencies to improve provision of parks and trails in Wasaga Beach. The relationship with Ontario Parks is of particular importance due to significant presence of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park.

5.0 Park Planning Framework

Public parks are important places for building a sense of community, social belonging, and retaining and attracting residents and visitors. To ensure that the Town keeps pace with land-based demands, this section examines the Town of Wasaga Beach's parks and open space system, along with future requirements and policy considerations.

Specifically, key goals addressed in this section include:

- a) Updating Park Policy, Dedication and Development Practices
- b) Addressing Gaps in Park Distribution
- c) Right-sizing the Park System and Disposing of Surplus Park Properties
- d) Maximizing the Potential of Parks through Strategic Renewal and Programming
- e) Designing Parks and Trails to Respond to a Growing and Aging Population (accessibility, safety, comfort, etc.)
- f) Protecting and Enhancing Green Spaces
- g) Rationalizing Waterfront, Riverfront and Beach Access
- h) Nurturing Partnerships and Optimizing Public Access

5.1. Parkland Classification

Guiding principles and strong policies are fundamental in creating a cohesive and consistent park development and redevelopment strategy. The core element of park planning is the parkland classification system. A classification system defines the range of characteristics found in municipal parks, such as their size, form, function and/or level of amenity. Such definition encourages a broad range of park types and facility combinations that enables a consistent management approach that can be tailored to respond to community needs. The identification of common elements also helps to ensure compatibility with neighbouring land uses, while providing the community, developers and planners with an understanding of what new or redeveloped parks may include.

Wasaga Beach's current Official Plan does not contain a formal parkland classification to assist the Town in defining the functional hierarchy of its municipal-wide parks and open space system. It appears that informal hierarchies have been created for specific internal applications, but have not been widely or consistently applied. Service levels across the parks system are also inconsistent, though an approved park classification system can be used to rationalize and respond to the unique needs of specific park types; updated levels of service are a focus of this Master Plan.

To establish a consistent and town-wide approach that reflects the evolving role of parks in the Town – including a greater emphasis on events, passive uses and accessibility – an approach for classifying parks has been established. This model blends the effective elements of past approaches with one that is based on park functions and experiences, where all parks have a clear purpose and work together as a system to complement each other and reduce duplication. This will enable the Town to direct its financial and operational resources where they are needed most.

Moving forward, it is recommended that the Town consider the following proposed parkland and open space classification system; a map illustrating municipal parks and open spaces by type is included in the following section:

1. **Parkland Types:** Community Park; Neighbourhood Park; Parkette; and Urban Plaza.
2. **Open Space Types:** Natural Area; and Open Space Linkage.

Table 2 Proposed Municipal Parks and Open Space Classification Hierarchy

Classification	General Description / Function / Design	Service Area	Current Town-wide Provision Level	Target Park Size
PARKLAND				
Community Park	Community Parks are used by groups of residents and tourists for community events, festivals and active recreation. They may contain athletic amenities for organized recreation (such as sports fields, support buildings, and community-wide recreation amenities), as well as pathways, pavilions and/or unique elements that make the park a “destination”. Full services (water, sanitary, etc.) are generally required. <i>Example: Wasaga Sports Park</i>	Town-wide and beyond	2.11 hectare per 1,000 population	4.0 hectares or more
Neighbourhood Park	Neighbourhood Parks primarily support children’s play activities and are often situated within subdivisions to promote walkability. Neighbourhood Parks contain playgrounds, local-level play features, and/or passive open space intended to serve the immediate area. Unlike community parks, most do not have off-street parking, though they may be coordinated with school sites. <i>Example: Wasaga Village Park</i>	Surrounding neighbourhood (800-metre radius)	0.41 hectares per 1,000 population	0.5 to 4.0 hectares

Classification	General Description / Function / Design	Service Area	Current Town-wide Provision Level	Target Park Size
Parkette	<p>Parkettes are generally smaller and less developed than neighbourhood parks. Their primary purpose is to provide access to green space and respite for nearby residents and travelers. They may contain seating areas, pathways, floral / ornamental gardens, shade trees, etc. Most will not contain playground equipment unless there are no suitable options nearby.</p> <p><i>Example: Golfview Park</i></p>	Localized service area (500-metre radius)	0.07 hectares per 1,000 population	0.5 hectare or less
Urban Plaza	<p>Urban Plazas are publicly-owned lands that are located in highly visible and accessible locations, typically in gateways or higher density urban areas. They serve to support the Town's social and cultural fabric and create a sense of place, and may contain elements of historic or cultural significance that are of local importance. They are typically characterized by hardscaped areas for events and gatherings, public art, seating areas, related civic uses, etc.</p> <p><i>Example: Beck Square; planned park in Sunnidale Trails (Pacific Homes / Rivers Edge)</i></p>	Town-wide	0.01 hectares per 1,000 population	0.5 hectare or less
OPEN SPACE				
Natural Area	<p>Natural Areas are municipal open space and natural properties used for conservation and/or passive recreational activities (e.g., walking, nature appreciation, education). These lands will be largely undeveloped and contain open space or natural heritage features such as woodlots, wetlands, conservation habitat, etc.</p> <p><i>Example: Pridham Park</i></p>	Variable	0.37 hectares per 1,000 population	Variable
Open Space Linkage	<p>Open Space Linkages – typically comprised of trails, linear parks or open space parcels – provide connections within the open space system (for habitat) and between local points of interest (for pedestrians and/or cyclists). They consist largely of unimproved open space and/or trail infrastructure. They may be Town-owned or controlled (e.g., easement, agreement, etc.) and may include waterfront access points.</p> <p><i>Example: Dyer Drive Parkette; Beach Access Points, Carly Patterson Memorial Trail</i></p>	Variable	0.03 hectares per 1,000 population	Variable (minimum 7.5 metre width)

Table 3 Suitability of Potential Amenities by Park Type

Facility/Amenity	Parkland				Open Space	
	Community Parks	Neighbourhood Parks	Parkettes	Urban Plazas	Natural Areas	Open Space Linkages
Recreation Facilities						
Ball Diamond	●					
Basketball / Multi-use Court	●	●				
Community Garden Plot	▸	▸	▸		▸	
Off-Leash Dog Park	▸				▸	
Outdoor Pool	●					
Outdoor Rink	●					
Pavilion / Shelter	●	▸	▸		●	
Playground	●	●	▸	▸	▸	
Recreational Trail	●	●	▸	▸	●	●
Skateboard / Bike Park	●					
Soccer Field – full size	●					
Soccer Field – mini	●	●				
Splash Pad	●					
Tennis / Pickleball Court	●					
Park Amenities						
Bike Rack	●	●	▸	▸		
Casual Play Area / Open Space	●	●	▸	▸	▸	
Naturalized Areas	●	▸	●		●	▸
Parking Lot	●	▸			▸	
Pollinator Gardens	●	▸	●		●	▸
Potable Water Source	●			▸		
Seating (fixed or portable)	●	●	●	●	●	▸
Washrooms	●					

● = Permitted; ▸ = Conditional/Limited

Note: This table identifies potentially suitable uses by park type and is to be used as a guideline only. Site-specific analysis is required to inform park planning and design.

Recommendations

1. Use the Master Plan's **parkland classification hierarchy** to guide the development or redevelopment of parks and open spaces according to park type, size, service level and the amenities that they provide. Incorporate the parkland classification hierarchy within the Town's Official Plan Review and Update.

5.2. Parkland and Open Space Inventory

Parks and open space provide the land base that supports recreation and sport amenities, preserves environmental features, connects people to nature, and enhances Wasaga Beach's overall quality of life. As of January 2020, the Town of Wasaga Beach owns and maintains 31 public parks and open spaces, which are listed in the following table. These properties total a minimum of **79.54 hectares**, of which 68.75 hectares are categorized as parkland and a minimum of 10.79 hectares are categorized as open space. Profiles for each park are contained in **Appendix C**.

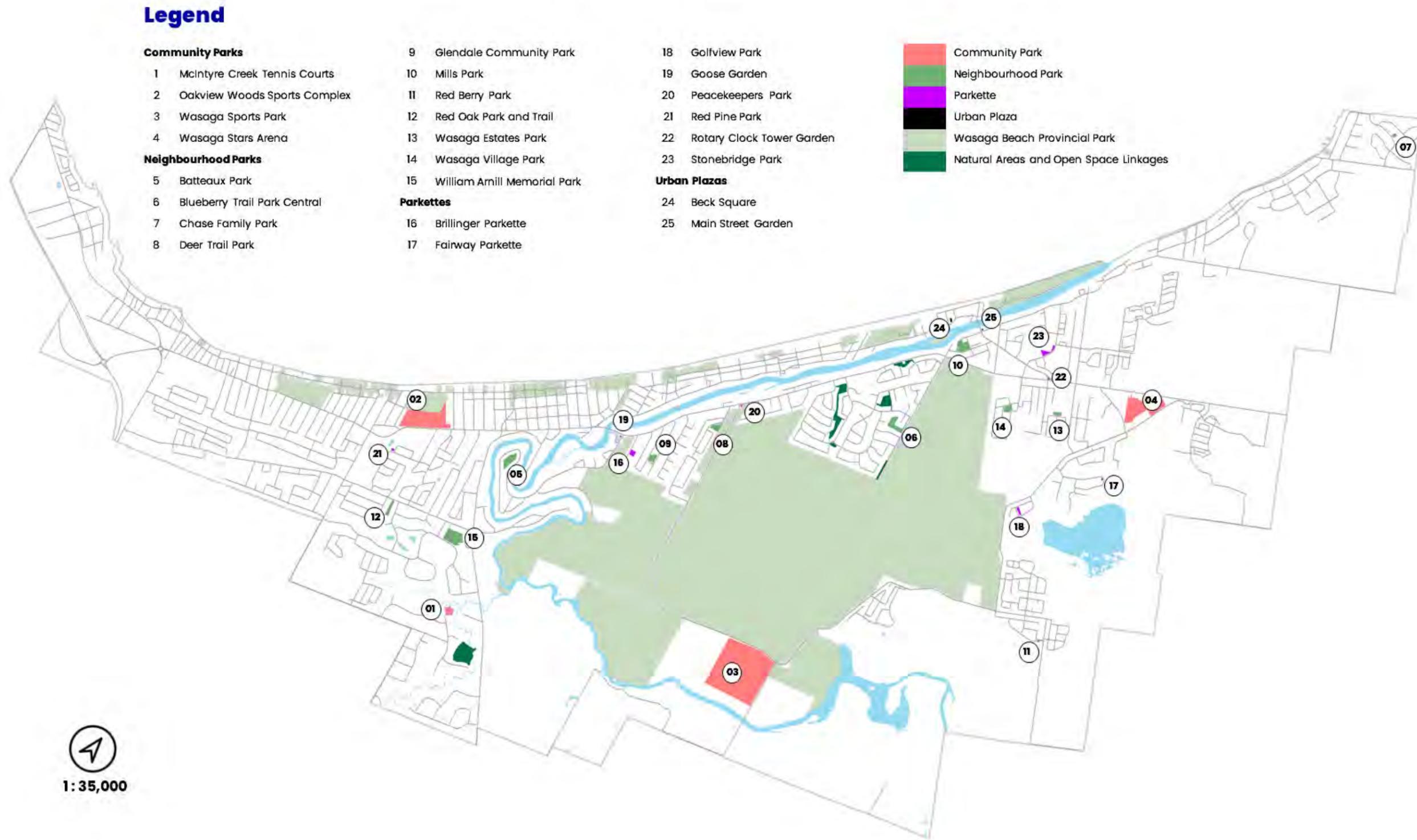
Table 4 Wasaga Beach Parkland Inventory

Park Name	Proposed Classification	Size (ha)
Batteaux Park	Neighbourhood Park	1.44
Beck Square	Urban Plaza	0.09
Blueberry Trail Park Central	Neighbourhood Park	1.64
Blueberry Trail Park North	Natural Area	1.59
Blueberry Trail Park South	Natural Area	0.51
Brillinger Parkette	Parkette	0.35
Carly Patterson Memorial Trail	Open Space Linkage	n/a
Chase Family Park (formerly Sunward)	Neighbourhood Park	0.17
Deer Trail Park	Neighbourhood Park	0.73
Dyer Drive Parkette	Open Space Linkage	0.89
Fairway Parkette	Parkette	0.05
Glendale Community Park	Neighbourhood Park	0.66
Golfview Park	Parkette	0.24
Goose Garden	Parkette	0.24

Park Name	Proposed Classification	Size (ha)
Main Street Garden	Urban Plaza	0.07
McIntyre Creek (Jim Ramage) Tennis Courts	Community Park	0.88
Oakview Woods Sports Complex ²	Community Park	9.92
Peacekeepers Park	Parkette	0.06
Pridham Park	Natural Area	4.46
Red Berry Park	Neighbourhood Park	0.15
Red Oak Park and Trail	Neighbourhood Park	0.67
Red Pine Park	Parkette	0.10
Rotary Clock Tower Garden	Parkette	0.04
Silver Birch Central and Trail	Natural Area	3.11
Silver Birch Park South	Natural Area	0.23
Stonebridge Park	Parkette	0.52
Mills Park (Town Hall)	Neighbourhood Park	1.49
Wasaga Estates Park	Neighbourhood Park	0.36
Wasaga Sports Park	Community Park	36.78
Wasaga Stars Arena Park	Community Park	8.44
Wasaga Village Park	Neighbourhood Park	0.68
William Arnill Memorial Park	Neighbourhood Park	2.98
Subtotal Parkland	25 sites	68.75
Community Parks	4 sites	56.02
Neighbourhood Parks	11 sites	10.97
Parkettes	8 sites	1.6
Urban Plazas	2 sites	0.16
Subtotal Open Space	6 sites	10.79
Natural Areas	5 sites	9.9
Open Space Linkages	2 sites	0.89+
Total Municipal Parkland and Open Space	31 sites	79.54
Wasaga Beach Provincial Park (Ontario Parks)	--	1,844.3

¹Oakview Woods property is leased to the Town from Ontario Parks

Figure 17 Distribution of Municipal Parkland by Class (as of March 2020)



Note: Carly Patterson Memorial Trail (open space linkage) is not shown, but is considered within the trails section of this report.

In addition to these municipal parklands, residents and visitors also benefit from a number of parks, open spaces and beaches owned and/or managed by others, including Ontario Parks, schools, and the private sector. Note: some may have limited access.

- **Ontario Parks Properties:** Publicly-accessible properties include the Nordic Trail and Sand Dunes property (50 km of trails through a wooded area), Schooner Town Park and Nancy Island, Public Beaches including Beach Areas 1 through 6, New Wasaga Beach, and Allenwood Beach (14 km of shoreline access). In addition, there are several provincially-owned properties within Wasaga Beach that are not currently part of the provincial park.
- **Schools:** Birchview Dunes Elementary School, Worsley Elementary School, and St. Noel Chabanel Catholic School.
- **Private Parks:** campgrounds, private subdivision/condo parks (e.g., Georgian Sands), privately-owned open spaces, etc.
- **Other Municipal Properties:** undeveloped properties and stormwater management ponds outside of parks (e.g., the pond between 51st and 52nd Street South) may also provide some passive recreational and environmental features, while unopened road allowances leading to the beach or river also provide access for many residents.

Recommendations

2. Update the parks and trail **inventory database and mapping** annually to assist in the assessment of land requirements. Through this process, rectify park naming conventions (and associated signage) to reduce confusion caused by several parks having different names, internally or externally.

5.3. Park Policy

There are several provincial and municipal regulations, policies and guidelines governing the acquisition and location of parkland. The Ontario Planning Act establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and possible alternatives. The Town's Official Plan sets out objectives for parks and open spaces, along with policies for parkland dedication and development.

Specifically, the Town's Official Plan (policies 6.3.3, 7.3.11, 8.3.6 and 11.5.1) identifies that the Town may require the dedication of parkland in accordance with the Planning Act for residential, commercial and industrial developments or redevelopments. Presently, when all development is proposed, the Town's Official Plan policies allow for three possible options:

- 1) Taking 5% (residential) or 2% (commercial, tourism, industrial) of developable land for parkland dedication;
- 2) Accepting cash-in-lieu of the parkland dedication (funds are kept in a reserve and can be spent on the purchase of lands elsewhere or on the improvement of parkland); or
- 3) Determining a partial dedication where less than the 2% or 5% of land is taken and the remainder is accepted as cash-in-lieu.
- 4) The alternate parkland rate – one hectare of parkland per 300 dwellings units (or 1 hectare per 500 units when accepting cash-in-lieu), if greater than the 5% requirement – is currently applied within the Sunnidale Trails Secondary Plan area (as per Section 21.5.5 of the Official Plan).
- 5) For lands zoned Residential Type 3 (R3) – specifically townhouse developments with more than eight dwellings – the Town's Zoning By-law requires provision of a "play area" (private amenity space) comprising a minimum of 5% of the overall lot area; this is in addition to the parkland dedication requirement under the Official Plan.

"Open Space" Objectives (Town of Wasaga Beach Official Plan, Section 11.1)

- To provide for a range of leisure activities for all age and interest groups;
- To preserve and improve the natural features of the Town;
- To maintain a municipal public open space system in conjunction and coordinated with the open space provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources both in terms of area and uses;
- To maintain and extend a multi level recreational trails system to service both local and regional interests;
- To maintain and enhance scenic vistas; and,
- To maximize public waterfront accessibility and to develop the beach and riverfront for recreational and complementary uses.

Note: In 2019, the Province passed Bill 108 (More Homes, More Choice Act), introducing changes to the Planning Act and several other pieces of legislation. Several provisions of this Act were subsequently repealed in 2020 through the passing of Bill 197 (COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act). As of writing, the Bill 197 amendments allow for municipalities to continue to require parkland dedication provisions as per Sections 42 and 51.1 of the Planning Act. Additional provisions relating to a community benefits charge (CBC) have been enacted for developments that involve buildings with five or more storeys and 10 or more units, subject to passing of a CBC strategy and by-law, which the Town is not currently pursuing.

The Town's typical practice within residential subdivision applications has been to take the 5% of land, no matter the size of the parcel and whether the area is over- or under-supplied with parkland. Official Plan policies 5.3.5 and 11.5.3 encourage Council to accept small parcels of land and seek options to purchase adjacent lands to enlarge the park; however, this enlargement seldom occurs. The alternative – requiring cash-in-lieu of parkland – may be more suitable in smaller development areas (including areas of infill or redevelopment) where the size of the dedication would not allow for the assembly of an adequately-sized park or there is already sufficient parkland in the vicinity. The Town is strongly encouraged to evaluate needs for local parkland on a case-by-case basis prior to deciding whether to accept land or cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication.

A parkland dedication by-law is also recommended to allow the municipality to value cash-in-lieu contributions at the day before building permit (as per Planning Act Section 42); the current practice is value contributions on the day before draft plan approval (as per Section 51.1). This Parks & Trails Master Plan may be used to form the basis for a parks plan and official plan amendments required to enact such a by-law, recognizing that additional consultation will be required.

The Town lacks formal practices for evaluating and tracking parkland dedications. With the Public Works Department now being responsible for parks operations, additional protocols and (potentially) resources may be required to clarify the Department's role

It is recommended that the following criteria be considered in evaluating when to take cash-in-lieu payments:

- a) where the area being developed or redeveloped has sufficient parkland (or land capable to being developed as parkland) to accommodate existing residents and needs (as well as projected population growth) and/or it is preferable to use the cash-in-lieu to expand or enhance existing parks directly serving the area;
- b) where the Town identifies land in a more appropriate or accessible location that has been, or is to be, acquired by the Town;
- c) where the site cannot provide land that is either usable or functional (e.g., not large enough, not of sufficient quality, not tableland, etc.) for parkland purposes; and/or
- d) where the taking of parkland from the site may reduce the number of dwelling units such that it renders the development or redevelopment unfeasible.

in the planning and budgeting process, in coordination with the Planning and Treasury Departments. The tools and recommendations in this Master Plan provide guidance relating to overall parkland needs, gaps, design, and more and should form the basis – in concert with the Official Plan – for future parks and trails planning decisions.

Lastly, under the Town’s current Official Plan, all municipal parkland is designated as “Open Space”, the same designation used for provincial park lands, cemeteries, agricultural lands, commercial operations such as golf courses and nurseries, etc. Over time, uses under this designation have broadened from what was originally intended to represent active and passive recreational and conservation uses. The inclusion of private commercial uses can be particularly problematic. This is a matter that should be examined further through the Town’s ongoing Official Plan Review and Update. Through this process, the Town is also encouraged to review the parkland policies in light of the tools presented in this Master Plan, and ensure that these policies are easily sourced within the Official Plan.

Recommendations

3.	Integrate the parkland tools and considerations identified in this Master Plan (e.g., targets, classifications, open space designation, etc.) and address the changes imposed by Bill 197 within the Town’s Official Plan Review and Update .
4.	Develop a parkland dedication by-law to maximize cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication as per the provisions of the Town’s Official Plan and applicable legislation (most notably section 42 of the Planning Act).
5.	In areas where the supply of parkland is adequate, prioritize the use of cash-in-lieu for parkland improvements , ideally in the vicinity of the development that generated the contribution.
6.	Review protocols to involve the Town’s Public Works Department in the determination and tracking of parkland requirements and dedications , including when development applications are received and approved. Review Departmental resources to ensure that parks and trails planning functions (including special projects) are adequately addressed. (note: this would be a function addressed by the Parks and Active Coordinator position that is recommended later in this plan – see Section 8.3)

5.4. Parkland Needs

Parks and open spaces are key components of a community's health as they provide places where people can recreate, connect and congregate for social interaction. In turn, an appropriate level of parkland provision is critical to ensuring a high quality of life and supporting an equitable distribution of amenities that achieve community objectives.

The focus of this Master Plan is on the provision and management of "parks", which are differentiated from "open spaces" in several ways. This emphasis is not intended to discount the impact of open space properties such as portions of the Blueberry and Silver Birch woodlots (or similar sites), which include well used trails and help the Town meet its environmental conservation objectives. It is expected that the Town will continue to secure and/or protect select open space properties where there is a municipal mandate and community will to do so, although open space parcels will typically be acquired (where required) outside of the parkland dedication protocol.

Most municipalities use population-based targets to calculate and plan parkland supply. A parkland target is particularly important because it is becoming more complex and costly to secure quality parcels for parkland within new higher density forms of development. Intensification generates less parkland per capita than traditional greenfield development, making it very difficult to accommodate the desired sports fields and other recreational activities residents have come to expect. Fortunately, the Wasaga Sports Park is able to accommodate all foreseeable needs for sports field or community-wide recreation infrastructure, either on existing lands or through the adjacent lands (which are municipally-owned, but excluded from this inventory as they are not developed).

For the purposes of this Master Plan:

"Parkland" refers to all lands owned, leased and/or managed by the Town and classified as Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks, Parkettes and Urban Plazas. Parkland typically consists of tableland suitable for the development or installation of built recreational or civic amenities (such as sports fields, playgrounds, courts, gardens, etc.) that may be used for both organized and unorganized activities, although these parks may also incorporate natural features.

"Open Space" refers to all lands owned, leased and/or managed by the Town (and sometimes other public entities) and classified as Natural Areas and Open Space Linkages. These sites generally have no to low development potential and are primarily designated for purposes such as environmental protection/conservation, stormwater management, buffers, etc. the Town may choose to assume open space lands, they should not generally be accepted as part of the parkland dedication requirements.

The Town's current parkland provision rate is **3.3 hectares per 1,000 permanent residents**, excluding open space parcels. Comparable urban/rural municipalities typically strive to achieve provision rates in the range of 2.2 to 3.0 hectares per 1,000 residents to meet their active recreational needs associated with sports fields, playgrounds, courts and more. Wasaga Beach is slightly above this range due to the influence of the Town's three largest parks (Wasaga Sports Park, Oakview Woods, and Wasaga Stars Arena), which account for 80% of the total municipal parkland supply.

Park demand is influenced by several factors, such as distribution and proximity to residential areas, non-municipal providers, urban density, population composition, amenity needs, existing park types, community objectives, and public input. For example, Wasaga Beach's population has a much lower proportion of children, youth and young adults, thus the demand for land-intensive park amenities such as sports fields is lower, suggesting that a conservative provision target is in order. Conversely, community input indicates that the parks system is highly valued by residents and efforts should be made to ensure that provision levels remain appropriate – 48% of survey respondents agreed that the Town should acquire new parkland to expand the park system.

Further, as equity and accessibility are key elements of any parks system, it is recommended that the Town continue to strive to provide parkland in populated areas that are void of any park facilities. A review of parkland distribution finds that the Town's parks system provides good geographic coverage in the Town's central areas, although some gaps exist. The linear nature of Wasaga Beach contributes to these inequities, as well as residential growth in recent years.

The following maps illustrate: (a) the current parkland per capita ratio on a neighbourhood-level, using Census dissemination areas as the base; and (b) geographic coverage based on an 800-metre service area (the same metric used to assess playground distribution). Additional parkland acquisition and/or development is recommended in gap areas, recognizing that opportunities may be limited (potential strategies are discussed further in the next subsection). The most notable shortfalls can be found in:

Priority #1: West Wasaga

Description: west of 45th Street, along the Mosley Street / Beachwood Road corridor

Rationale: this area currently has no public parks (though some are proposed through planned residential development) and is home to over 3,100 residents in 2016 (accounting for 15% of the town's population); additional growth is forecasted; the area also has a notable child and youth population (see Figure 6 in Section 2.2)

Priority #2: East Wasaga

Description: New Wasaga Beach area, between Zoo Park Road and Allenwood Beach along River Road East

Rationale: this area has one public park (Chase Family Park, located at the far east end in Allenwood Beach) and is home to over 2,300 residents in 2016 (accounting for 11% of the town's population); additional growth is forecasted

Figure 18 Municipal Parkland per 1,000 Residents (2016 Census population; March 2020 parkland inventory)

Legend

- 0.01 ha – 5.00 ha
- 5.01 ha – 10.00 ha
- 10.01 ha – 15.00 ha
- 15.01 ha – 35.00 ha
- Town of Wasaga Beach Park
- Natural Areas and Open Space Linkages

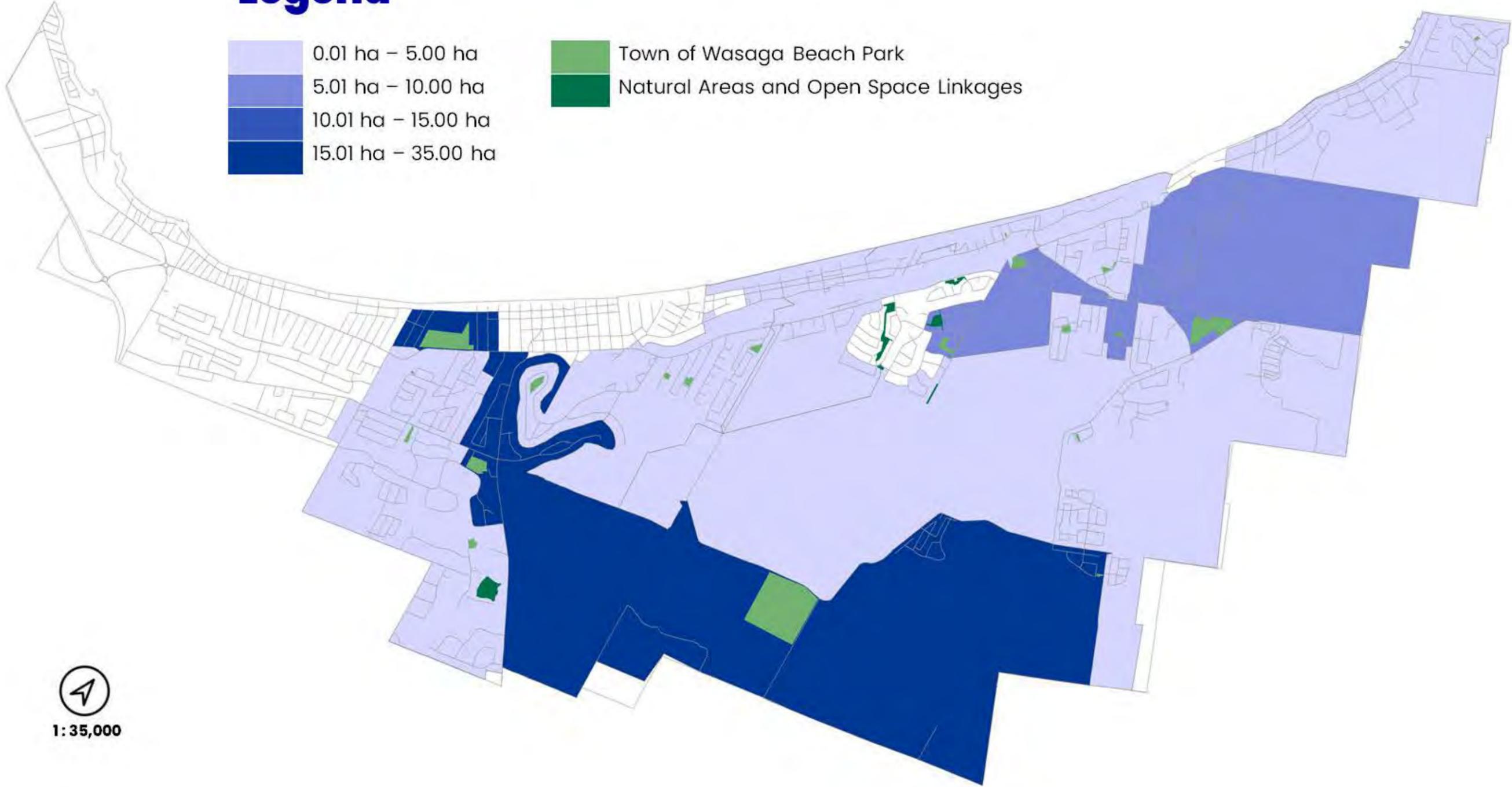


Figure 19 Municipal Parkland Service Area (800m walkability radius) (as of March 2020)

Legend

Community Parks

- 1 McIntyre Creek Tennis Courts
- 2 Oakview Woods Sports Complex
- 3 Wasaga Sports Park
- 4 Wasaga Stars Arena

Neighbourhood Parks

- 5 Batteaux Park
- 6 Blueberry Trail Park Central
- 7 Chase Family Park
- 8 Deer Trail Park

- 9 Glendale Community Park
- 10 Town Hall Park
- 11 Red Berry Park
- 12 Red Oak Park and Trail
- 13 Wasaga Estates Park
- 14 Wasaga Village Park
- 15 William Arnill Memorial Park

Parkettes

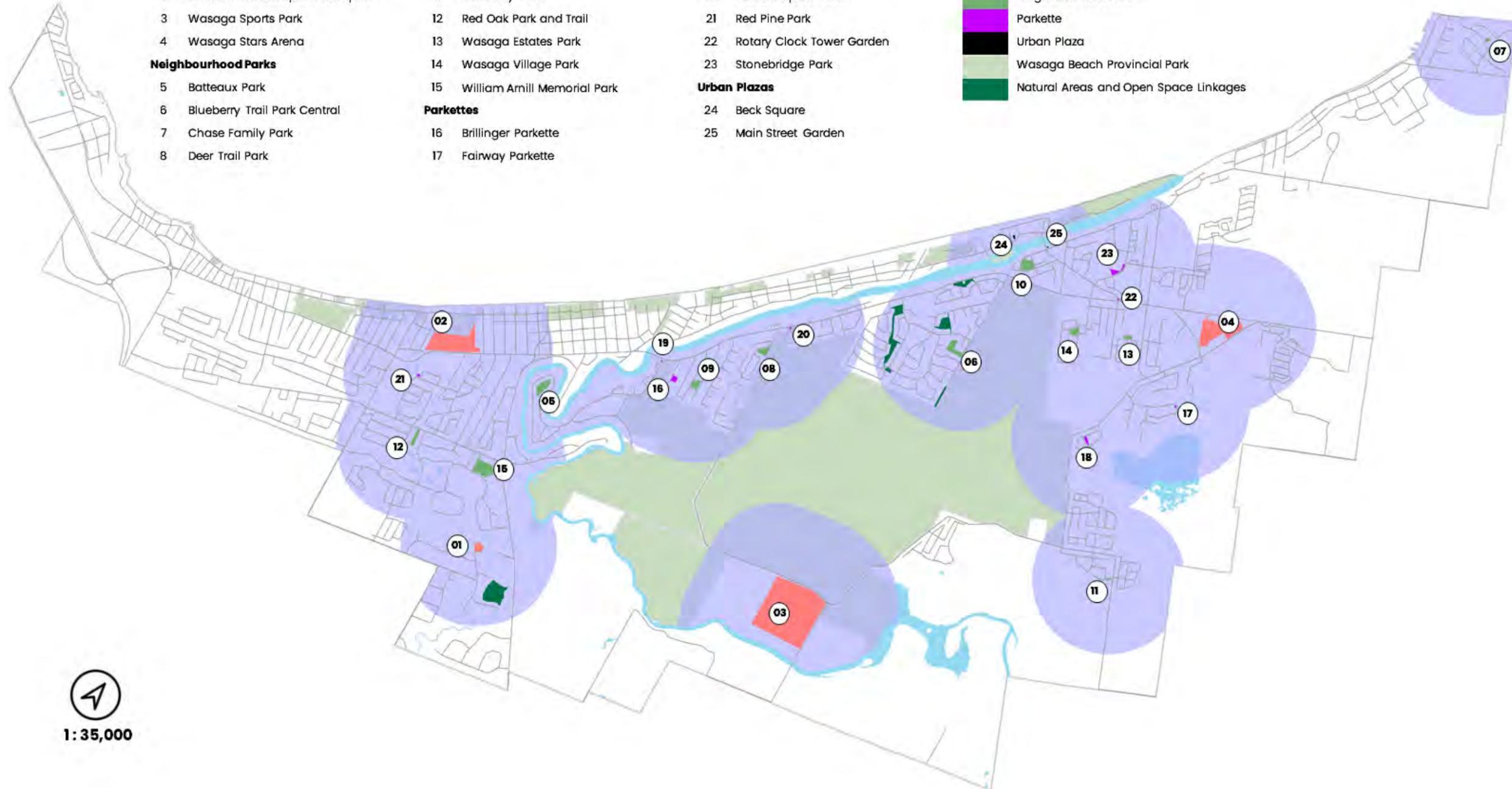
- 16 Brillinger Parkette
- 17 Fairway Parkette

- 18 Golfview Park
- 19 Goose Garden
- 20 Peacekeepers Park
- 21 Red Pine Park
- 22 Rotary Clock Tower Garden
- 23 Stonebridge Park

Urban Plazas

- 24 Beck Square
- 25 Main Street Garden

- 800m Service Area Buffer
- Community Park
- Neighbourhood Park
- Parkette
- Urban Plaza
- Wasaga Beach Provincial Park
- Natural Areas and Open Space Linkages



Aside from these noted gap areas, all indicators are that the Town’s overall provision of parkland is meeting current needs. In fact, there may be a modest over-supply of parkland at present; guidelines for evaluating surplus parkland are provided later in this section.

To help guide future needs, a minimum Town-wide target of **3.0 hectares of parkland per 1,000 residents** (excluding open space lands) is recommended. Although the Town has a target for parkland provision in its Official Plan, this figure is based on a different definition and should be updated through the ongoing review process.

Based on this parkland target, demand for parkland is projected to increase by **13.7 hectares by 2031** (for a total of 82.5 hectares). Strategies to address these needs are discussed further throughout this section of the Master Plan.

Table 5 Current and Projected (2031) Parkland Needs

Current Parkland Supply, excluding open spaces	68.8 ha
Estimated Population (2016)	20,675 persons
Parkland Per 1,000 (2016)	3.3 ha/1000
Estimated Population (2031)	27,500 persons
Total Parkland Needs (2031), based on 3.0 ha/1000	82.5 ha
Future Parkland Needs (2031)	13.7 ha

Most of these needs will be addressed through the development process, such as new subdivisions. As previously noted, the Town of Wasaga Beach prepares a map of Active and Proposed Developments, but does not have a formal tracking protocol for future parkland dedications. Developing an inventory of approved future land dedications requires reference to individual planning approvals; responsibility for tracking should reside with the Public Works Department (in coordination with the Planning Department).

Moving forward, it is recommended that additional parkland be secured to:

- a) address gaps and meet growth-related needs, with a focus on equity and accessibility;
- b) establish urban parks within newly developing and intensifying communities, where required;
- c) enhance public access to the waterfront and river;
- d) establish linear/trail connections vital to creating a comprehensive active transportation network; and/or
- e) expand existing parks where necessary to install additional recreational amenities, based on demonstrated needs.

At this time, the Town anticipates that parkland will be dedicated in the short-term from development in the following locations:

- Zancor Homes, Trillium Forest North (two parkettes) and Ramblewood (1ha neighbourhood park) – this will be the first Town parkland established west of 45th Street
- Pacific Homes / Rivers Edge, Sunnidale Trails (three 1.6ha neighbourhood parks adjacent to schools, plus an additional 7.8ha)
- Elm Developments, Georgian Sands (one community park and additional private parkettes)
- Baycliffe Homes, Villas of Upper Wasaga (one parkette)

Figure 20 Town of Wasaga Beach Planned Parkland (dedications)



Recommendations

7. Establish a **parkland target** of 3.0 hectares per 1,000 permanent residents to guide future provision. Given that the current supply of parkland is adequate, the acquisition of parkland – **approximately 13.7 additional hectares by 2031** – should only be supported to:
- a) address gaps and meet growth-related needs, with a focus on equity and accessibility;
 - b) establish urban parks within newly developing and intensifying communities, where required;
 - c) enhance public access to the waterfront and river;
 - d) establish linear/trail connections vital to creating a comprehensive active transportation network; and/or
 - e) expand existing parks where necessary to install additional recreational amenities, based on demonstrated needs.

5.5. Parkland Acquisition Strategies

Much of the Town's future parkland requirements will be addressed through the land development process. However, there have been several changes to Planning Act that have affected parkland dedication in recent times. These changes have the result of reducing the amount of land and/or funding available for parkland dedication and are leading to a decline of parkland provision levels across the province. To maintain or increase this provision level over time, the Town may need to apply methods beyond the land development process, particularly in under-served areas with limited growth potential, such as the parkland gaps identified in West and East Wasaga Beach.

Section 11.5 of Town's Official Plan identifies several alternative acquisition measures, some of which are identified within the options below:

- a) municipal purchase from park reserves (cash-in-lieu), general reserves, or donations;
- b) reallocating surplus municipal lands to park use;
- c) leasing of non-municipal lands;
- d) land exchanges or swaps (provided that land is available), particularly if development is to occur in natural areas highly valued by the community; and
- e) partnership / joint provision of lands with community partners.

The following strategies are the most likely options for addressing the parkland gaps in West and East Wasaga Beach, generally listed in order of priority:

- 1) Evaluate other municipal or public lands (not currently designated as parks) within these areas for their ability to be used as parkland or – at a minimum – accommodate a public playground. A listing and map of municipally-owned sites are included in **Appendix D**, with a focus on lands that:
 - are owned by the Town of Wasaga Beach, but are not actively occupied with permanent municipal uses;
 - are generally 0.5 hectares or larger (the minimum recommended size for a neighbourhood park);
 - are not designated for commercial or industrial uses;
 - are not designated as Natural Hazard or Natural Heritage Systems; and
 - are not largely land-locked, have poor visibility or are of poor configuration.
- 2) On an ongoing basis, evaluate proposed development applications within these areas for future park dedication and connectivity opportunities (e.g., sidewalks, trails, etc.).
- 3) Consider improvements to nearby parks (e.g., Oakview Woods – subject to approval from Ontario Parks, etc.) to enhance active and passive recreational opportunities in the vicinity.
- 4) Monitor real estate opportunities and seek to purchase one or more properties that could be developed as a municipal park. This may be the highest cost option and would require additional discussion and resources.

The suitability of potential park sites should be evaluated using the following criteria. As identified in the Official Plan, the location and configuration of land conveyed is determined at the sole discretion of the Town.

Table 6 Potential Park Site Evaluation Criteria

Criteria	Description
Site Conditions	Consider topography (tableland is required), parcel configuration (square or rectangular), drainage, and soil conditions (e.g., free of environmental contaminants).
Size	Should meet or exceed minimum standards established for park classification (see Section 5.1).
Centrality	Proximity to the population to be served, in keeping with the service radius and population targets of the park type.
Land Use Impacts	Compatibility of adjacent land uses; conformity with Official Plan or Secondary Plan (if applicable).

Criteria	Description
Connectivity	Integration of trail and open space linkages or corridors.
Accessibility	Site has a minimum of 50% frontage on a public road, reasonable access to public transit and/or sidewalks (in urban areas), etc.
Partnerships	Potential joint use with school sites or other municipal assets.
Visibility	Ability to create a local focus.
Natural Features	Park site is not encumbered by wooded areas or features of cultural or natural significance.
Added Value	Access to the waterfront, viewpoints or vistas.
Constructability	Parks should not be built in floodplains, stormwater overflow areas, valleylands, hydro corridors, easements, environmental lands, etc.
Services	Site has full municipal services (or the potential for full services, including water, storm sewers, and electrical services; sanitary servicing may be required for some higher-order parks) to the property line.
Availability	Timing of parcel availability should coincide with preferred timing of park development.
Cost	Reasonable land valuation (if applicable); publicly-owned lands offer the greatest potential.

Recommendations

8. Establish a strategy to improve access to parkland in under-served areas, including **West and East Wasaga Beach**, with consideration of alternative acquisition tools (e.g., reallocation of surplus municipal lands, purchase/lease, land exchanges, partnerships, etc.).
9. Where necessary to supplement municipal parks and open spaces, **work with area school boards and other recreation service providers to maximize community access** to quality outdoor parks and recreation amenities on non-municipal sites.

5.6. Park Acceptance, Design and Development Process

Many decisions regarding parkland requirements and conditions for acceptance, design and development rest with the Town, as governed by applicable legislation and policies. The Town does not have a Parkland Development or Design Manual to guide these decisions. The following information should be used as a foundation to create such a manual or set of principles that will guide the development of new parks and renewal of existing ones.

Parkland Acceptance and Conveyance Conditions

When parkland dedication is required pursuant to the Planning Act or development agreements, the designated blocks will be identified on the development plans with enough detail to identify lot grading, drainage, landscaping, access and other information as may be required. Through subdivision agreement, developers will complete the necessary works as identified by the Town.

The design and site preparation of the parkland and open space will take into account the intended and future passive and/or active recreational uses in accordance with this and other Master Plans as required. General requirements for parkland preparation and conveyance are identified below. The Town may amend these requirements from time to time; additional requirements may apply to developer-built parks.

Parkland Acceptability

- a) Size, topography, and configuration of the park must be acceptable to the Town to satisfy the standards for grading, drainage, setbacks, fencing and other municipal requirements.
- b) The Town retains the right not to accept the conveyance of land as parkland that is considered unsuitable, such as but not limited to hazard or flood-prone lands, natural heritage or valley lands, stormwater management facilities, lands containing easements or rights-of-way, etc. Land will be conveyed free and clear of any physical encumbrances above and below grade.
- c) If land required for a park and its anticipated program exceeds the available parkland dedication from development under policy, the Town may seek to acquire the balance at market values for unserviced developable land.
- d) Park location must be deemed appropriate by the Town for the population the park is intended to serve. To create an adequately sized parcel, this may require land consolidation between development phases or multiple ownerships.

Generally, the Town should avoid developing or accepting Neighbourhood Park parcels of less than 0.5 hectares in size unless it has determined that there is a need to fill a gap and other options are inadequate.

- e) Parks will have access to public roads. It is preferable for parks to have a minimum of 50% open frontage on abutting streets.
- f) Where applicable, the Town will seek to locate neighbourhood and community parks adjacent to proposed school sites. Co-location of parks with other community facilities is also encouraged.
- g) Parks are encouraged to be in highly visible locations and near the population the park is intended to serve, with strong pedestrian, cycling or transit connections.

Parkland Conveyance Conditions

- a) The developer will develop grading and drainage plans acceptable to the Town. The developer will complete pre-grading, drainage, fine grading, and seeding (4-inches of topsoil) to the satisfaction of the Town. No topsoil will be removed from the site. All costs associated with these requirements will be the sole responsibility of the developer and will not be taken out of Development Charges.
- b) As part of the general subdivision development in areas with public services, the developer will be responsible for installing storm sewers serving the park, as well as electrical and water services 2.0 metres into the park property. In privately serviced areas, the developer must include an open ditch, culvert and driveway in the road allowance; a well, constructed as per applicable regulations; and hydro service 2.0 metres into the park property. Sanitary servicing may be required for higher-order community parks. Access for park maintenance will also be incorporated into the design.
- c) The developer will be responsible for all pathway, trail, and/or sidewalk connections to park blocks. These connections do not comprise part of parkland dedication.
- d) The developer will be required to post and maintain signage at all park locations indicating that the site will be a future park and that it may have playground equipment installed.
- e) Any site work and designs will pay special attention to the care and preservation of natural wetland and dune areas, where applicable.
- f) Stormwater management (SWM) facilities will be integrated into parkland and open spaces, where applicable (not part of legislated parkland dedication). Low maintenance vegetated buffers will be required around the pond perimeter.

- g) All projects will comply with the Design of Public Space Standards under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, such as where walkways or trails are required through parklands. Multi-use trails will be a minimum width of 3.0 metres, with a 3.0 metre buffer area on each side.
- h) The developer will install permanent fencing around the park perimeter where property lines are shared with residential/commercial land uses or protected/hazard lands, to the specifications approved by the Municipality, where required.
- i) Plantings will comply with municipal tree planning standards, with an emphasis on native and non-invasive species. Opportunities for tree preservation should be discussed with the Municipality prior to undertaking any site works; a detailed Park Tree Preservation Plan may be required.
- j) Municipal property preserved as open space or intended for parkland development will not be used for the purposes of temporary stockpiling or storage of earth, construction supplies, debris or any other materials without express permission of the Town.
- k) The timing of conveyance of parkland in accordance with the *Planning Act* will be stipulated in the Subdivision Agreement. The Town will typically require conveyance be completed during registration of the first phase of a subdivision. Parks will generally be constructed by the Town upon 25% to 50% occupancy of a residential subdivision.
- l) At the Town's discretion, the developer will engage the professional services of a registered Landscape Architect to prepare Detail Design/ Technical Drawings to fully describe the construction of all park features. The price proposal from the Landscape Architect should be mutually agreed upon in advance and include a minimum of three concepts, cost estimation, detailed design, contract documents/specifications, contract administration, inspection, and acceptance/warranty. The costs of such professional services are attributable to the park development costs assigned to the park project through Development Charges.
- m) Park construction will include the installation of permanent signage, including park identification signs, regulatory signs, interpretive signs and trails signage, as specified and located by the Town.

Park Design Considerations

Designing parks requires a strong understanding of community needs, contemporary design practices, operational requirements, and programmatic considerations (i.e., end use). These elements require adequate forethought in the planning of the park parcel itself, well in advance of conveyance and detailed design; thus, several factors impacting park design have been discussed in the previous subsection.

The following are best practices that the Town of Wasaga Beach may adopt in designing new or redeveloped parks. Several of these are supported by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), which provided input to this Master Plan through their role in supporting healthy and safe lifestyles, including recreation opportunities.

Only **29%** of survey responses agreed with the statement that “The Town’s parks are effective in meeting the needs of all ages, including older adults.” (38% disagreed and 33% offered a neutral response)

- a) Promote **universal accessibility** in all parks, such as wheelchair access, ramps to play structure areas, etc.
- b) Provide both junior and senior play opportunities in parks with **playgrounds**. Use engineered wood fibre surfacing for play structures, to an appropriate depth for the fall-height of the equipment. Ensure appropriate sight lines to play areas.
- c) Consider activities and programming for the growing **older adult population**, including increased daytime use and emerging activities such as pickleball.
- d) **Unstructured space** within a park that allows for a wide variety of **active and passive uses** is considered an asset. SMDHU supports recreational opportunities **throughout all seasons**.
- e) Locate **shade structures and trees** central to amenities to protect users from the harmful effects of the sun. SMDHU recommends shade pavilions, shade structures over playground equipment and tree planting be incorporated as part of park and trail development.
- f) Provide informal **seating** opportunities. Locate seating in shaded areas, along accessible routes, and in proximity to active amenities.
- g) Maintained **pathways** should be a minimum of 3.0m wide, unless otherwise required. Provide clearance along pathways (waste receptacles, benches, trees, bike racks, etc.) for maintenance vehicles.
- h) Locate **waste and recycle receptacles** close to park entrances to facilitate maintenance.

- i) Select **materials and equipment** (e.g., park furniture) that are not easily vandalized and can be easily sourced for repair and/or replacement.
- j) Provide **consistent branded signage** at all public parks identifying the park name, address and Town emblem. Additional signage should include emergency contact information and regulatory requirements (e.g., non-permitted uses, park hours, etc.). Wayfinding signage is discussed further in Section 7.0.
- k) Encourage **public art** within appropriate park locations and in keeping with relevant municipal guidelines.
- l) Use non-invasive native species in all **plantings**.
- m) Follow **CPTED** (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design) principles to enhance community security and safety features.
- n) Include **buffer space** between pathways and adjacent lot lines (minimum of 5.0 metres when abutting a residential property and 2.0 metres when abutting other land uses), as well as high-activity zones and residential lot lines.
- o) Provide **naturalized buffers** adjacent to natural features.

Consulting with the public regarding new and redeveloped parks is essential. Engaging the community early and often can build a sense of ownership, help ensure parks that meet true community needs, and support sustainable management of park assets.

Park Development Process

The following outline for parks presents one approach that the Town may consider in planning, designing and developing new or redeveloped municipal parks. For municipally-built parks, the Public Works Department will be the lead agency unless otherwise noted. For developer-built parks, the developer will be responsible for most steps, with the approval of the Public Works Department or designate.

1) Planning and Approval Stage

- a) Park Block Identification (triggered by development application or municipal land acquisition; site must meet conditions for acceptance) – shared task with Planning Department
- b) Confirm Development Process – municipal or developer-built park
- c) Prepare Preliminary Fit Plan (based on high-level needs assessment conducted by Town)
- d) Estimate Timing and Preliminary Budget (establish work plan and schedules, integrate into long-term capital budget and DC Study, monitor application/growth)
- e) Park Conveyance, where applicable (clearance of conditions, install temporary signage, etc.)

2) Design Stage

- a) Establish Project Schedule
- b) Site Investigation (review existing conditions, topographic survey, grading, tree preservation, soil testing, etc. – where applicable)
- c) Design Award (issue and award park design RFP/contract to landscape architect)
- d) Concept Development (identify required and potential facilities, AODA/CPTED considerations, develop concept and drainage plans, preliminary costing, etc.)
- e) Public Consultation
- f) Selection of Preferred Concept and Council Approval
- g) Tender and Construction Drawings

3) Development Stage

- a) Construction Tender and Award (confirm schedule, issue and award construction RFP/contract)
- b) Site Preparation (grading, erosion/sediment control, servicing connections, etc.)
- c) Park Construction (monitor construction, progress updates, etc.)
- d) Inspections (rectify deficiencies)
- e) Municipal Acceptance and Takeover

Recommendations

10.	Formalize the conditions and processes proposed in this Master Plan for parkland acceptability, conveyance, design and development through a Park and Trail Design and Development Guidelines Manual .
11.	Maintain a commitment to universal accessibility, safety and comfort within the Town's parks and trails system. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Regularly consult with the Town's Accessibility Advisory Committee and ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), recognizing that some parks and trails may include areas of natural terrain that are more difficult to access.b) Undertake and incorporate accessibility audits into the Town's asset management planning to identify a multi-year strategy for addressing barrier-free compliance.c) Engage local police services to undertake a review of all parks and trails using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to identify safety concerns relative to access and sightlines (surveillance).
12.	Emphasize the provision of amenities such as benches/seating areas, bike racks, shade (structures, tree canopy, etc.), and washrooms in appropriate park types and along trails to address the needs of all age groups.
13.	Provide a balance of active and passive spaces within the parks system to support all-season recreation and sports, casual use and unstructured play, special events and cultural activities.
14.	Review/update the Town's commemorative programs and establish a park and trail adoption program to support community engagement, civic pride and stewardship.

5.7. Surplus Parkland

The Town's historic approach to parkland development has not been coordinated by any one strategy, partially due to the size and relative accessibility of the Provincial Park which has addressed many local needs. This has left the Town with several isolated small park parcels that have limited use and connectivity to trail systems. Nearly half of the Town's parks are less than 0.5 hectares, the minimum recommended size for many park types.

The 2012 Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan also noted that many existing parks are extremely small, are lacking amenities and are not up to today's standards. Many are disconnected and have small frontages, and in some cases are not visible from the road, making them costly to operate and maintain because of inefficient deployment of resources. Sub-optimal locations and park configurations restricts public benefit and use and can also lead to overlapping service areas, resulting in duplication of service. Changes to demographic composition and neighbourhood activity/amenity needs further exacerbates these challenges.

Despite this, the community survey found little support for the disposal of parkland. 55% of survey respondents disagreed with the statement that "The Town should consider selling small parks that are under-utilized and surplus to needs" (20% agreed; the remainder offered neutral responses). Nevertheless, the Town has a higher than average supply of parkland, although population growth and new opportunities may help to maximize parks over time.

Should the Town consider declaring any park parcels surplus and disposing of them, this should follow a prescribed process and be evaluated using a set list of criteria, which may include:

- an assessment of the recreational value/need for the site and its requirement to meet parkland accessibility targets;
- the potential to relocate amenities/activities to other Town-owned lands, as well as the operational benefits to be achieved through consolidation;
- past investment in the site and the condition of existing amenities, vegetation and landforms;
- development potential, adjacent uses and applicable land use policies; and
- community input.

A preliminary evaluation of municipal parkland yields the following potential candidates for further consideration as surplus lands

– further investigation is required to determine if the potential sale of these or other properties is feasible:

- a) Brillinger Parkette (0.35 hectares)
- b) Fairway Parkette (0.05 hectares)
- c) Red Pine Park (0.1 hectares)

Any revenue generated from the sale of surplus parkland should be kept in reserve and reinvested in priority parks and recreation projects. As a general principal, properties fronting on the lake or river should not be disposed of.

Recommendations

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| 15. | Establish criteria and a process for identifying, evaluating and disposing surplus park properties that are no longer required to meet current or long-term community needs. Further consider the merit in declaring surplus the candidate sites identified in this Master Plan (Brillinger Parkette, Fairway Parkette, Red Pine Park) or other sites meeting the criteria. |
| 16. | Redirect proceeds and operational savings from the sale or disposition of parkland to other high priority projects within the parks system. |

5.8. Park Renewal

The size, use and location of each park is vitally important to its function and value. The role parks play must be understood in order to determine if there are gaps or overlaps in service. Some of the key roles a park can play include support for community gatherings, athletics, passive recreation, open space buffers, green space and habitat conservation, beautification and more.

The public consultation program and the evolution of the Town's parks system support a broadening of the range of recreation opportunities within local parks. Although new parkland will be required to serve future residents or improve distribution, the focus should be on making the best use of existing park sites, keeping parks relevant considering changing demographics, and improving connectivity within the Town.

Most of Wasaga Beach's parks are in good condition, however, improvements and enhancements are necessary to respond to growth pressures, changing neighbourhood demographics, age of parks, availability of funding, volunteer initiatives, etc. The possibilities for parkland renewal are limitless, but may include enhanced landscaping, provision of shade structures and other comfort amenities, improved parking, facility upgrades and more.

Strategic parkland renewal and redevelopment projects should be accompanied by public consultation, park-specific master plans, facility fit diagrams and business planning to obtain accurate costing associated with any capital works. The timing of these projects will be based on the Town's discretion, and influenced by needs determined through consultation, demand indicators and the availability of funding. Although feasibility and funding of potential improvements will require additional investigation and resources, a minimum of \$250,000 to \$500,000 should be budgeted per park to allow for full renewal of site works and amenities (including design, engagement, project management, construction, etc.).

Based on public input, past studies, trend information, and the consultants' assessment, the following parks are strong candidates for renewal:

- **Glendale Park** (highest priority) – complete park redevelopment, including playground area, seating, gardens and other amenities appropriate for neighbourhood parks
- **William Arnill Park** – partial park redevelopment, including updated playground and uses focusing on the dry pond area (e.g., perimeter trail, seating, etc.)
- **Oakview Woods** (Ontario Parks property) – minor park renewal, including re-planning of visitor kiosk area and addressing lifecycle maintenance throughout
- **Blueberry Trail Park Central** – minor park renewal, including enhancements to open space area

Recommendations

17. Through the Town's asset management plan and long-term capital plan, identify and plan for **park renewal and redevelopment projects** that address aging infrastructure and capital improvements. Candidates for consideration in the short to medium-term include **Glendale Park, William Arnill Park, Oakview Woods** (subject to Ontario Parks approval), **and Blueberry Trail Park Central**. Engage stakeholders and the public when designing new and redeveloped parks and trails.

5.9. Park Programming and Events

Traditional park uses include organized activities (such as sports) and unorganized pursuits (such as walking, picnicking and informal play). Increasingly, communities are animating their park spaces through programming and new forms of community engagement. Some examples include (but are not limited to) fitness in the park, food trucks, and cultural events such as music,

concerts, and theatre. Viewing parks as “outdoor living rooms” helps to expand the scope of use and engages a broader range of residents and visitors, leading to experiential learning, participation, and community mobilization.

Collaboration with community agencies and volunteer organizations will also be crucial to the success of the parks system. At present, the Town benefits from its strong partnerships with event organizations, as well as service clubs that have fundraised for many of the assets within area parks. These and other partnerships should be established and supported. Enhanced public access to existing sites and facilities – such as schools, provincial parks and others – will help to increase participation for residents and visitors.

“People need a reason to come to the park and stay there in order to benefit from its social environment. Park quality, amenities like playgrounds, and, critically, events and activities help create the conditions that draw people out to meet each other... Community-led initiatives that improve the physical and social environments of parks are crucial.”

- Park People. *Sparking Change*. 2017.

While Beach Areas 1 and 2 will continue to be a premier destination for many summertime events, the Town also relies on its large community parks to accommodate a variety of programs and events. Some examples include Jazz & More in the Park and BluesFest at the RecPlex / Oakview Woods, as well as tournaments and sky diving competitions at Wasaga Sports Park. Many of these initiatives are coordinated by the Town’s Recreation, Events and Facilities Department in cooperation with Public Works. While the Public Works Department does not charge for event support (e.g., set-up, take-down, etc.) – an increasingly common approach in other municipalities – large-scale events often cause staff to be reallocated from other assigned duties, impacting workflows and completion of other projects. Now that responsibilities for parks has been transferred to the Public Works Department, it is recommended that the roles and responsibilities identified within the Town’s Special Events Strategy (2011) be revisited and updated to ensure that they represent the most effective use of resources.

Community engagement can also extend to programs that involve residents in the beautification of their parks system. For example, Wasaga Beach has a program for commemorative features, such as benches and trees. Installation and/or adoption of these features offers an opportunity to honour the memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special event. The gift is a legacy that benefits the community as a whole by enhancing parks, open spaces and trails. Such installations are typically provided at cost to the individual, in accordance with regulations established by the municipality. As noted earlier, it is recommended that the Town review its commemoration program/policy to ensure that it is effective and well promoted in the community.

Recommendations

18. Continue to **support expanded park use and programming** by local volunteers through community development activities and special event coordination. Seek opportunities to integrate themes of healthy living and arts/culture/heritage into park designs, activities and events.
19. Revisit the **departmental roles and responsibilities for special event support** (identified in the Town's Special Events Strategy) to ensure that they represent the most effective use of resources.

5.10. Open Space Planning and Acquisition

Wasaga Beach is blessed with an extensive array of significant environmental lands, including sand dunes, wetland systems, areas of natural and scientific interest, river valleys, and a variety of other natural heritage landscapes. Open Space lands (e.g., natural areas, open space linkages, etc.) serve numerous functions: they protect and conserve natural features; they preserve habitat for various species, including threatened and endangered species; they provide buffers to development (protecting people and property from damage); they provide visual breaks within an otherwise urban/suburban landscape; and they enhance air and water quality.

Many of these lands are managed by Ontario Parks and/or are in private ownership, although the Town has also taken ownership of such lands in the past. As noted earlier, these lands are excluded from parkland dedication requirements. Where appropriate, open space lands may be conveyed to the Town or other appropriate public authority at no cost (gratuitous conveyance). Additional options for the securement of open space and environmentally significant lands include land exchange, donation/land trusts, conservation easement/purchase of development rights, leasing, purchase, and partnerships. Conservation easements are particularly useful when protecting open space lands as they allow title to the land to remain in private ownership, but development rights to be restricted based on the specific conservation requirements. However, not all lands need to be publicly owned in order to be permanently protected. Environmental policies and practices at the municipal, regional and provincial levels are in place to manage sensitive areas.

Within the context of this Master Plan, a key priority for open space conservation are those lands that provide connections between parks and other public areas. Passive maintenance and development (e.g., soft surface trails) of these lands is anticipated, as directed by site-specific management plans (often in partnership with other agencies).

Opportunities to encourage residents to learn more about their parks and protected areas should also be sought. This can be achieved by establishing walking trails within or surrounding key open space lands (while respecting policies relating to the protection of sensitive wildlife and natural habitat). Open space lands also offer tremendous opportunity for experiential learning and cultural interpretation, which can assist with educating the public about the need for active conservation and restoration.

Recommendations

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| 20. | Continue to use the Official Plan and available conservation tools to guide the protection of open space , including natural areas and environmentally sensitive areas. |
| 21. | As opportunities arise (e.g., development applications), evaluate the potential to secure and/or protect open space lands that provide important connections between parks and other public areas. |
| 22. | Support initiatives that enhance outdoor education and recreation (e.g., interpretive displays/signs and learning opportunities, compatible forms of public access and trails, etc.) within the open space system in conjunction with partners such as the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority. |

5.11. Wasaga Beach Provincial Park

Wasaga Beach is unique in that the Town is not the predominant provider of open space lands. Though the Town owns many parks and manages some beachfront properties, Ontario Parks is the primary owner of public open space lands and all activities on these lands must comply with the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, Ontario Parks policies, and the park's management plan. Wasaga Beach Provincial Park – which is made up of many non-contiguous blocks of land – includes most of the town's Georgian Bay shoreline, various natural heritage sites (including the large Dunes Area containing the Nordic Centre and trails), and several cultural heritage sites (e.g., Nancy Island, etc.). In addition to drawing tourists, Wasaga Beach Provincial Park is used year-round by residents, although many consulted for this Master Plan felt that the Nordic Centre and interpretive centre are under-

utilized assets. The “recreation class park” contributes significantly to the culture, identity and economy of the Town of Wasaga Beach and is guided by its own Management Plan (which is currently being updated).

The Town of Wasaga Beach has a good working relationship with Ontario Parks and the two agencies communicate regularly, particularly surrounding operational matters. For example, the Town has agreements in place for the operation of the recreational facilities at Oakview Woods. The Town also benefits from the use of the Provincial Park and Welcome Centre for various special events and tourism initiatives.

This is a vital partnership that is supported by residents – 92% of respondents to the Master Plan survey agreed that “the Town should continue to partner with Ontario Parks to improve parks and trail connectivity” (0% disagreed; 8% offered neutral responses). Opinion polls completed by the Provincial Park underscore this finding, noting that users view the Park as important because it provides recreation opportunities for activities like hiking, swimming, enjoying the beach and viewing nature. Special events, educational programming and outreach are among other well received recreational services at Wasaga Beach Provincial Park. In many ways, it functions in a similar manner to a municipal park.

The lack of capital re-investment in the Provincial Park is a concern given its high level of use, aging infrastructure, and changing expectations of visitors. The Town has in the past expressed its frustration in the limited resource allocation (staffing and capital) from the Province to operate and maintain the Provincial Park, which has presented a barrier to operations and improvements to infrastructure and recreational amenities, such as trails, playgrounds, picnic areas, and related signage. Given how closely intertwined the Provincial Park is within the community, it is difficult for the Town to advance strategic projects without their cooperation. For example, the Town recently completed improvements to the Shoreline Trail between 6th and 12th Streets and was compelled to fully fund the project with municipal dollars despite it being on provincial lands. A similar approach has been taken in the past regarding playground improvements (e.g., Beach Area 2) and, although the playgrounds at Beach Areas 4 and 5 are approaching end of life, Ontario Parks has indicated that they have insufficient financial resources for replacement at this time.

Recommendations

23. Maintain regular dialogue with Ontario Parks to strengthen the relationship between the Town and **Wasaga Beach Provincial Park**, with the common goal of providing diverse recreational and educational experiences for residents and visitors.

5.12. Beach and River Access

Wasaga Beach is defined by its shoreline, which – at 14 kilometres – is the longest freshwater beach in the world and a highly popular destination for residents and tourists alike (over one million visitors per year). From east to west, public beaches include Allenwood Beach, New Wasaga Beach, and Beach Areas 1 through 6. Most of the shoreline (aside from lands in the extreme west end of town) is provincially owned and maintained. As the shoreline is part of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park and is regulated under the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act, specific directions regarding beachfront improvements are outside the scope of this Master Plan. Additional direction can also be found in the 2017 Wasaga Beach Provincial Park Beach Management Secondary Plan.

There are several access points to the beaches spanning the length of the Town. These properties are not classified as parks, but are valued for their waterfront access, which is strongly supported by residents. Most are on Town-owned lands or easements, such as road ends / rights-of-way, of which there are approximately 50. These (generally narrow) access points are typically sand or concrete surfaced; a small number have accessibility mats providing access directly to hard packed sand at the water's edge. The majority are maintained by Ontario Parks, although the Town is responsible for others. Improvements to these beach access points has been identified as a priority by the Town and Wasaga Beach residents. Guidance is needed to further understand the state of such public properties, as well as future options for their care.

In addition to the Georgian Bay waterfront, the Nottawasaga River transects the town and feeds into the Bay. It is valued by residents and tourists for its natural beauty, angling opportunities, and water-based recreation such as canoeing, kayaking and boating. The Town currently provides one municipal canoe launch site along the southern border of Wasaga Sports Park (on lands owned by Ontario Parks), though there are other access points on municipal lands and road allowances along the river's edge.

It is recommended that the Town devise a comprehensive strategy for the management and improvement of beach and river access points. Ontario Parks – which has an interest in minimizing damage resulting from access paths through sensitive ecosystems, while continuing to provide convenient shoreline access for park visitors – should be a key stakeholder in this process. Through this strategy, an emphasis should be placed on enhancing accessibility for all, including persons with disabilities. Specifically, the water point access strategy should, at a minimum:

- include a baseline profile of each water access point, including ownership, size, amenities, condition, environmental impact, adjacent uses, signage, nearby parking, etc.;
- develop a framework for evaluating access points, with the intent of prioritizing candidates for improvement;

- include consultation with the public, adjacent landowners and stakeholders;
- establish strategies for access improvements, such as widening (3.0 metres where possible), surface treatments, signage, promotion, etc. that enhance accessibility for all; and
- consider initiating a pilot project and expanding to other access points as funding allows.

Recommendations

- 24.** Prepare a **Water Access Point Strategy** to guide decisions relating to properties and road allowances that provide public access to the beach and river, with the goal of strengthening public access to the water and riverfronts, enhancing accessibility, and ensuring maintenance practices.
-

6.0 Playground and Recreation Facility Assessment

Public parks provide the land area for recreational activities, thus it is important to consider the range of facility needs within the parks system. Examples include sports amenities such courts and fields within Oakview Woods Sports Complex and Wasaga Sports Park, as well as smaller neighbourhood-based facilities such as playgrounds. While overall guidance on the provision of recreation amenities is presented in the Town's 2012 Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan, this Parks and Trails Master Plan contains a high-level assessment of related considerations for the parks system.

The key goals addressed in this section include:

- a) Developing a Plan for Playground Replacement and Facility Improvement
- b) Considering Long-term Recreational Needs in Designing the Town's Parks System

6.1. Playgrounds

Current State

Inventory

Playgrounds are one of the most desirable recreation amenities as they can be accommodated in most park types, stimulate outdoor play, promote inclusivity, and support family-friendly neighbourhoods. The Town provides public playgrounds within 13 municipal parks.

Municipal playgrounds are supplemented by other providers such as the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park (Beach Areas 2, 4 and 5), local elementary schools (Birchview Dunes Elementary School, Worsley Elementary School, and St. Noel Chabanel Catholic School), and some private developments. While non-municipal playground sites may be beneficial to their direct users (students, residents of a particular development), unless there is an appropriate agreement in place with the Town, they are not equivalent to a fully-public municipal playground due to restricted access and a lack of municipal oversight regarding their maintenance and use (e.g., inspections, repairs, replacement, appropriate use, etc.). Thus, non-municipal playgrounds are not considered in the inventory or gap analysis.

An assessment of the provision and condition of playgrounds was undertaken to ensure that Wasaga Beach's playgrounds continue to serve the needs of existing and future residents. This assessment considers: geographic distribution of existing and planned

playgrounds; provision of non-municipal playgrounds; playground design features; compliance with accessibility standards; and long-term development plans and strategies.

The 2016 Census reported that there were 1570 children under the age of 10 years in Wasaga Beach, which is the primary playground-user demographic. The number of children increased by 14% (from 1375 children) since the 2011 Census. This demonstrates the need to strategically plan and manage municipal playgrounds to ensure that they continue to provide accessible service to children and families in Wasaga Beach.

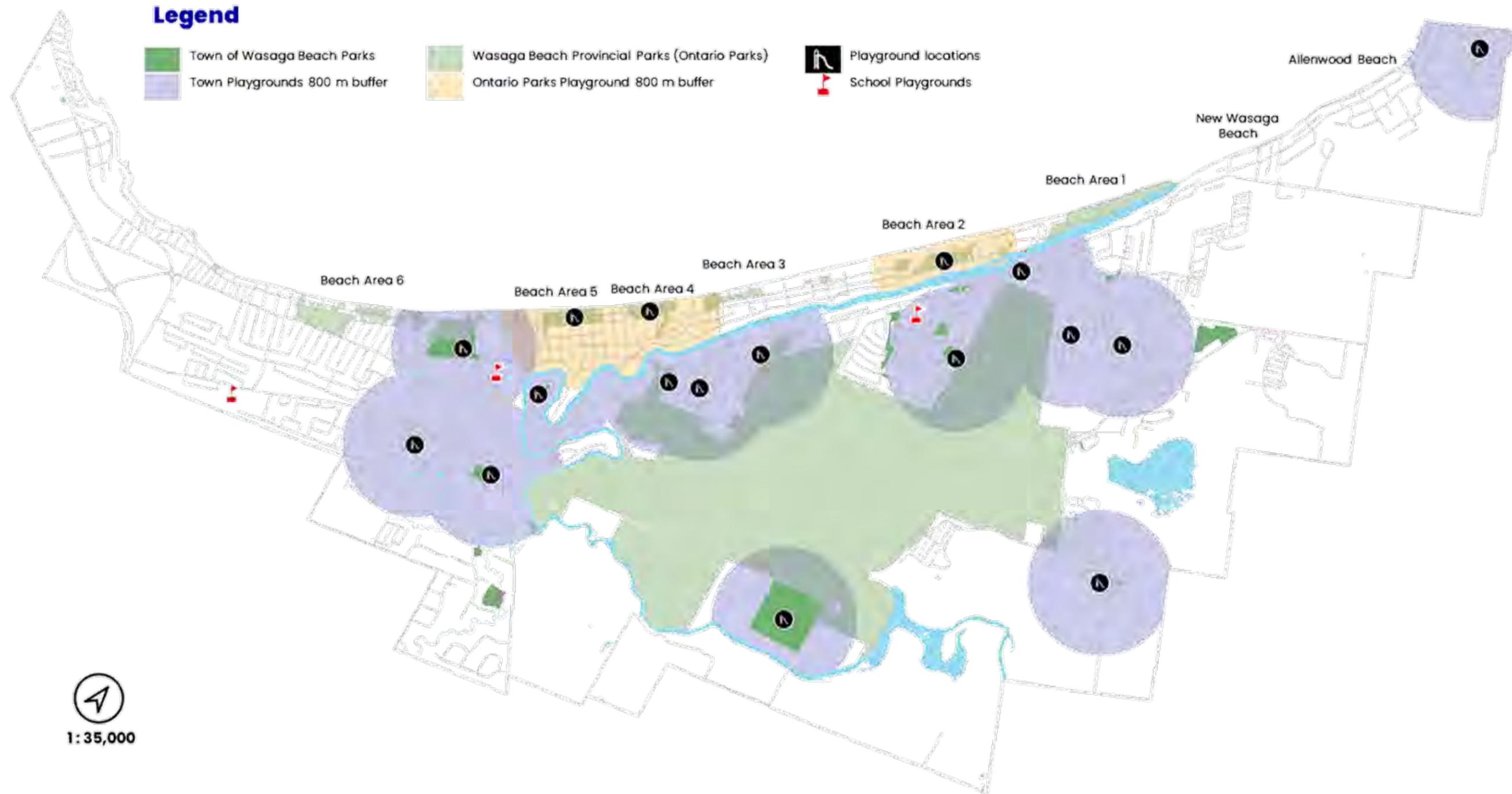
Distribution

The following map illustrates the geographic accessibility of public playgrounds using an 800-metre service area buffer within urban areas, unobstructed by waterways (which is a common metric based on a 10-minute walk, and was recommended in the 2012 Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan).

School sites have been identified on the playground distribution map using red school icons, but a walkability buffer has not been applied as the Town has little control over access to or provision of these sites. Conversely, the three Wasaga Beach Provincial Park playground sites have been included in the walkability buffer and are represented as orange bubbles. The Wasaga Beach Provincial Park sites are unique in that the Town invested in the installation of the playground in Beach Area 2 in 2008 and has expressed a desire to improve additional playground sites. The Town has a vested interest in these facilities as the Provincial Park is publicly available and a premier destination within the town. Where necessary, future development of playgrounds should be done in partnership with Ontario Parks (e.g., New Wasaga Beach, Allenwood Beach) to ensure that residents and visitors of Wasaga Beach are provided with adequate play spaces.

The 800-metre measure promotes walkability and ensures that playgrounds are accessible for residents, particularly for young families and households without a vehicle. A number of service gaps have been identified in established areas of Wasaga Beach, such as East Wasaga (New Wasaga Beach) and West Wasaga. Some of these needs may be partially addressed by access to school playgrounds (illustrated as red school icons) and / or playgrounds provided at Wasaga Beach Provincial Park Properties.

Figure 21 Wasaga Beach playground distribution with 800m buffer (as of March 2020)



Condition Assessment

Review of playground inspection notes and site visits to each of the Town's 13 playground locations (excluding those on Wasaga Beach Provincial Park lands) found that the majority of the Town's playground installations are aging and lack variety in their designs. The average playground is 13 years old. Four (4) playgrounds were installed more than 15 years ago and are in need of replacement in the short-term (Glendale Park, Mills/Town Hall Park, Wasaga Estates Park, and Deer Trail Park). Another six (6) are more than 10 years old and should be repaired / replaced in the medium term. This supports a replacement program consisting of approximately one playground per year for the next ten years.

The following priority levels for replacement have been defined:

- **Priority 1:** Critical (e.g., potential safety concerns, play structures deteriorating)
- **Priority 2:** Poor (e.g., play structures in modest to poor shape, surfacing is typically sand)
- **Priority 3:** Fair (e.g., generally installed within the last 10 years, play structures in fair condition, woodchip base)
- **Priority 4:** Good (e.g., recently installed, accessible components, variety in design, etc.)

The table below summarizes each of the playground sites and includes details on the original manufacturer, installation date, priority level (based on condition assessment and site visits), components available at each site, and the base material provided (as of summer 2019) as well as a representative photo of the playground equipment.

Table 7 Town of Wasaga Beach Playground Condition Summary

Playground Site	Component Details		Park Pictures
Batteaux Park	Address	Oxbow Park Drive	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2011	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	
Blueberry Trail Central	Address	Blueberry Trail	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2009	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	
Chase Family Park	Address	Sunward Drive	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2007	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	

Playground Site	Component Details		Park Pictures
Deer Trail Park	Address	Fernbrook Drive	
	Manufacturer	Henderson	
	Installation Date	2003	
	Priority Level	2 – Poor	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings and spring toys	
	Base Material	Sand	
Glendale Park	Address	Glen Eaton Road	
	Manufacturer	Unknown	
	Installation Date	Older – Installation Tag Not Available	
	Priority Level	1 – Critical	
	Components	Play structure, bay swings, spring toys, teeter totter	
	Base Material	Sand	
Mills Park (Town Hall)	Address	Glenwood Drive	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2005	
	Priority Level	2 – Poor	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	

Playground Site	Component Details		Park Pictures
Oakview Woods Sports Complex	Address	Mosley Street	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2006	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair to 2 – Poor	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings and spring toys	
	Base Material	Woodchips	
Red Oak Park	Address	Knox Road West	
	Manufacturer	Henderson	
	Installation Date	2008	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	
Redberry Park	Address	Meadowood Drive	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2013	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Woodchips	

Playground Site	Component Details		Park Pictures
Wasaga Estates Park	Address	Leo Boulevard	
	Manufacturer	Henderson	
	Installation Date	2001	
	Priority Level	2 – Poor	
	Components	Play structure with bay swings	
	Base Material	Sand	
Wasaga Sports Park	Address	Klondike Park Road	
	Manufacturer	Playpower	
	Installation Date	2012	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure	
	Base Material	Wood chips	
Wasaga Village Park	Address	White Sands Way	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2009	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair	
	Components	Accessible play structure with spring toys	
	Base Material	Wood chips	

Playground Site	Component Details		Park Pictures
William Arnill Memorial Park	Address	Wasaga Sands Drive	
	Manufacturer	Recreation Playsystems	
	Installation Date	2006	
	Priority Level	3 – Fair to 2 – Poor	
	Components	Accessible play structure with spring toys	
	Base Material	Wood chips	

Playground Features & Design Considerations

In the pursuit of providing engaging play experiences for children, the design of municipal playgrounds has evolved over time. Where traditional play equipment typically consisted of swings, slides and other basic elements, the design of modern playgrounds has led to the emergence of unique play structures to facilitate creative play and allow children to use their imagination to create more enjoyable playing experiences. This may include a broad range of design-elements such as the use of vibrant colours, interactive play components, thematic designs (e.g., pirates, music, woodland, etc.), and sensory stations.

There are a host of other playground trends that have encouraged municipalities to reconsider the way playgrounds are planned and designed to maximize usability. Some of these trends are identified below, which should be considered as part of future playground development strategies.

Natural / Adventure Playgrounds and Risky Play

Adventure and nature playgrounds are a new (or re-emerging) trend in play equipment that is becoming more popular across the world. They move beyond traditional play structures and use landscape features, provide creative options and daring opportunities, and use natural materials such as wood, logs, rope, stones and large boulders. Adventure and nature playgrounds are often custom-made for a specific project or location, creating more unique play experiences.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit noted that integration of features from the natural environment into playground design as this will help stimulate free-form, creative and social play. These play experiences strengthen the opportunity for children to develop their physical literacy skills.

These playgrounds are designed to appear more precarious and facilitate the concept of “risky play”, which encourages children and youth to take more risks through climbing, exploring, moving vigorously, and creating their own activities while using their own imagination. Studies have shown that encouraging children to take more risks results in a number of benefits including improved co-ordination, creativity and social skills.

As the risky playground concept continues to gain traction, a number of strategies have emerged that municipalities can adopt to minimize risk and liability. Some of these strategies include designing playgrounds with safety in mind (to CSA standards), such as erecting signage identifying potential risks and outlining what users can do to minimize risk, as well as undertaking more frequent playground inspections compared to traditional creative playgrounds. The Canadian Public Health Association has developed a “Risk, Hazard, and Play: What are Risks and Hazards?” toolkit to help municipalities and other playground providers to better understand the balance of potential hazards and safeguards that should be in place.

Playground Surfaces

Options for playground surface treatments include engineered woodchips, sand, pea gravel, rubber and artificial turf. In Wasaga beach, woodchip surfaces are most common (77% of municipal playgrounds) as it has lower maintenance requirements compared to sand, has high impact attenuation, is an accessible surface and is more affordable to install than synthetic surfaces such as rubber. While sand is another common surface treatment (found at 23% of local playground sites), it is not used for new playgrounds given that it is not an accessible surface and requires extensive maintenance (e.g., frequent rototilling) compared to alternatives. The Town should continue to replace sand surfaces with woodchip materials.

Accessible Playground Components

The design of new or redeveloped playgrounds must have regard for the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA), including the Design of Public Spaces (DOPS) Standard. The DOPS establishes that new or redeveloped playgrounds must incorporate accessible playground features and ensure that outdoor play spaces have a firm and stable surface. Consultation with the appropriate groups (e.g., accessibility advisory committee and persons with disabilities) is also required. Currently, 10 of the Town's 13 playgrounds include accessible features (Batteaux Park, Deer Trail Park, and Wasaga Estates Park are not).

Accessibility for persons with disabilities is also a factor to consider in planning for and developing municipal playgrounds. Compliance with AODA will ensure that play spaces are safe, accessible and inclusive for Wasaga Beach Residents. As older playgrounds are repaired, replaced, or removed, the Town will need to ensure that accessible features are a top priority.

Pop-up Playgrounds

Pop-up playgrounds are an emerging trend that builds from adventure playgrounds and risky play themes. Unlike permanent traditional play structures, pop-up playgrounds consist of utilizing a broad range of simple materials and movable objects within an open outdoor (or indoor) space such as boxes, tires, ropes, containers, balls, fabrics, blankets and more. These playgrounds introduce users to basic elements of risk and allow them to use their imagination to create their own adventure. It is recognized that pop-up playgrounds may have operational implications on staffing, storage and costs.

Variety in Design and Unique Experiences

Municipalities are faced with increasing demands for comfort / support amenities in parks of all sizes and along trails. Commonly requested amenities include features related to the safety and accessibility of park sites, such as lighting; garbage and recycling receptacles; and visibility from the street. Comfort and socialization features are also commonly sought in parks and facilities, particularly for children and older adults.

Because technology is readily available in so many forms, it has also become an integral part of the public realm. Some municipalities now provide public access to Wi-Fi in parks and public facilities, encourage technology-focused participation, and use tech to monitor usage levels. Many public parks and facilities support and even encourage use of technology. Some children's playgrounds include smart phone app technology that can be used to enhance the play experience, and other parks use GPS devices to support geo-caching participants.

Analysis of Wasaga Beach playgrounds found that multiple sites display repetition in their design. Many of the existing playground installations used the same or very similar components and were installed around the same period. This lack of variety may decrease resident interest in visiting those playscapes. Residents expect high-quality playground features that facilitate unique experiences, particularly at key destination parks.

Playground Development Plans & Strategies

All of the Town's playgrounds were installed prior to 2014 and are aging. To ensure that Wasaga Beach is well-equipped to plan and provide for current and future residents, it is critical that an adequately funded **playground replacement / renewal program** (approximately \$100,000 per site) be established. It is recommended that the Town establish consistent annual funding in its capital budget to address playground replacement. With 13 municipal sites (and growing) and an average lifecycle of 15 to 20 years, the Town should be targeting nearly one replacement playground per year for the next ten years or more.

Repair and replacement strategies, condition evaluations and rehabilitation management techniques are important aspects of a responsible asset management system. The physical condition of the Town's playgrounds is deteriorating over time and the backlog of deferred maintenance is growing. Underfunding of capital repairs and replacements can:

- Create risk and liability by posing threats to public health and safety;
- Lead to quality deficiency and customer service issues;
- Increase the potential for unexpected closures, leading to increased social costs and negative press;
- Lead to more expensive repairs than if the maintenance project was undertaken in a strategic manner;
- Reduce the overall lifespan of playground due to lack of proper maintenance, causing the municipality to consider replacement or divestiture as it may be more cost-effective to replace than to repair; and
- Create redundancy in the system (i.e., oversupply), as multiple underperforming or under-sized playgrounds are required to deliver the same level of service as fewer, but higher functioning playgrounds.

Looking ahead, future playgrounds will be needed to serve **growth areas**. It is expected that a playground will be installed as part of a community park in the Sunnidale Trails neighbourhood, but the Town should seek to establish playgrounds within the East Wasaga (New Wasaga Beach) and West Wasaga **gap areas** to provide accessible play opportunities across Wasaga Beach.

Recommendations

25.	Initiate a playground replacement / renewal program through annual dedicated capital funding, focusing on those sites that are in the highest need of repair in the short-term, such as Glendale Park, Mills Park (Town Hall), Wasaga Estates Park, and Deer Trail Park. The goal should be to replace one playground per year for the next ten years.
26.	Reconcile gaps in service by providing new playgrounds within East Wasaga (New Wasaga Beach) and West Wasaga, as well as growing communities (e.g., Sunnidale, etc.) based on an 800m service area radius within urban areas.
27.	Ensure that new and replacement playgrounds consider barrier-free components, surfaces, and creative and challenging play structures with varying designs.

6.2. Other Outdoor Recreation Facilities

The following assessment of outdoor recreation facility needs is based on: overall supply per capita (provision targets); geographic distribution; expressed public input; socio-demographic trends; participation patterns (where available); and park-specific observations such as condition, design, and accessibility.

The following table summarizes the location and supply of the Town's outdoor recreation facilities Plan, as well as the provision target from the Town's 2012 Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan and the current provision rate.

Table 8 Town of Wasaga Beach Outdoor Recreation Facility Inventory

Type	Quantity	Location	2012 Provision Recommendation	Current Provision
Ball Diamonds	5	Wasaga Sports Park	1: 3,000	1: 4,120
Basketball Courts	2.5	Wasaga Stars Arena (1.0), McIntyre Creek Tennis Courts (0.5), Youth Centre (1.0 - undersized)	1: 1,000	1: 8,240
BMX Pump Track	1	Oakview Woods Sports Complex	1: 350,000	1: 20,600
Canoe Launch	1	Wasaga Sports Park (Ontario Parks)	N/A	1: 20,600
Community Garden ¹	1	River Road West and Fernbrook Drive	1: 20,000	1: 20,600
Horseshoe Pits	6	Wasaga Sports Park	N/A	1: 3,433

Type	Quantity	Location	2012 Provision Recommendation	Current Provision
Off-Leash Dog Parks	2	Oakview Woods Sports Complex, Wasaga Sports Park	1:100,000	1:10,300
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	3	Mills Park (Town Hall), Wasaga Sports Park, Wasaga Stars Arena	not assessed	1:6,866
Outdoor Ice Rinks	1	Oakview Woods Sports Complex	1:20,000	1:20,600
Pickleball Courts	13	McIntyre Creek Tennis Courts (8 – shared with tennis; some require portable nets), Mills Park (Town Hall) (1 – shared with tennis), Wasaga Stars Arena (4)	not assessed	1:1,585
Playground Locations	13	Batteaux Park (2011), Blueberry Trail Central* (2009), Deer Trail Park (2003), Glendale Park* (<i>unknown- older</i>), Wasaga Sports Park* (2012), Oakview Woods* (2006), Red Berry Park* (2013), Red Oak Park* (2008), Chase Family Park* (2007), Mills Park (Town Hall)* (2005), Wasaga Estates Park (2001), Wasaga Village Park* (2009), William Arnill Memorial Park* (2006) * <i>accessible</i>	1:2,800	1:1,585
Sand Volleyball Courts	2	Wasaga Sports Park	not assessed	1:10,300
Skateboard Parks	1	Oakview Woods Sports Complex	1:100,000	1:20,600
Soccer Fields	16	Wasaga Sports Park (14 – configuration varies seasonally), Deer Trails Park (mini), Glendale Community Park (mini)	1:1,800	1:1,288
Splash Pads ²	1	Beach Area 1	1:35,000	1:20,600
Tennis Courts	8	MyIntyre Creek Tennis Courts (3), Oakview Woods Sports Complex (4), Mills Park (Town Hall) (1)	1:5,000	1:2,575
Notes	¹ The Recreation, Events and Facilities Department is responsible for administration of the Wasaga Beach Community Garden ² Maintenance and operation of the splash pad is done by the Recreation, Events and Facilities Department			

Sports Fields

All sports fields in Wasaga Beach (for organized use) are located at Wasaga Sports Park. This includes a supply of 5 ball diamonds and 14 soccer fields (configuration varies seasonally). Mini soccer fields are available for casual play at Deer Trail Park and Glendale Community Park, but they are not actively programmed.

According to staff and stakeholder consultation, the Town's five existing **ball diamonds** are well-used and leagues are reaching capacity for regular season play. Some participants also indicated interest in a mounded diamond to facilitate tournament play and fastball games and noted that participation in adult leagues has increased in recent years. The Town has invested in land assembly and has wisely positioned Wasaga Sports Park for expansion and intensification to meet current and future outdoor sport demands. Future development of ball diamonds in Wasaga Beach should respond to demonstrated demand and be verified in consultation with local stakeholders, with consideration of lighting and mounded diamonds.

Wasaga Sports Park is also well-supplied with **soccer fields**. The site normally accommodates 14 fields of varying sizes and orientations. The majority of the intermediate and mini pitches can be reconfigured as needed to accommodate local needs. According to staff and stakeholders, the existing facilities are able to meet local soccer needs for the current registration base and have capacity to support growth in the sport. Should soccer experience significant growth and require additional fields in the future, this may be accommodated through expansion of the Wasaga Sports Park site onto the Town-owned lands to the west. Future soccer field development should respond to demonstrated demand and be verified in consultation with local stakeholders, with consideration of full-size lighted fields.

Outdoor Fitness Equipment

As the population ages, more adults are seeking opportunities to get outside and be physically active. These pieces of equipment provide low-impact, bodyweight activities that focus on mobility, flexibility and strength training – great exercise options for older adults and seniors.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides outdoor fitness equipment at three sites: Mills Park (Town Hall); Wasaga Sports Park and Wasaga Stars Arena. The Wasaga Stars Arena and Mills Park sites both provide equipment that is near end-of-life and should be removed or replaced in the short-term. The equipment at Wasaga Sports Park is relatively new and in good condition. No additional installations are recommended.

Feedback received from staff and community consultations found interest in these facilities, but noted that the existing pieces are not well used and many residents and visitors are not aware of them. Best practices in provision of outdoor fitness equipment suggest that these are best designed in a cluster of components to promote use and incorporate visual prompts for use (i.e., instructional signage). Further, use of new and existing outdoor recreation equipment may be increased through activation and / or programming such as a drop-in sessions or events facilitated by Town staff or in partnership with a local fitness provider.

Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Tennis and pickleball are popular racquet sports, most often played by adults and seniors (particularly pickleball) with some child and youth play. Both sports can be played outdoors or indoors and have recently experienced a surge in popularity. Pickleball, as a newly emerging sport, has grown tremendously within Canadian municipalities over the last decade. Participation in tennis has also increased recently, partially in response to success of Canadian professional players and a growing population of older adults and retirees.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides outdoor tennis and pickleball courts at a variety of locations throughout the municipality: McIntyre Creek (3 tennis, 8 pickleball - shared); Oakview Woods Sports Complex (4 tennis,); Wasaga Stars Arena (4 pickleball); and Mills Park (1 tennis, 1 pickleball - shared). The courts are well-used by local clubs and the Town has been pro-active in providing pickleball facilities where appropriate. Based on community consultation and discussions with staff, additional tennis and pickleball courts are not required at this time, though demand should be monitored.

Basketball Courts

Basketball courts are most popular among youth as they provide unstructured, unscheduled outdoor recreation that is free of charge. The predominant use of these hard-surface courts is for basketball, but some can be multi-purpose to accommodate informal and unstructured activities requiring a hard-surface (i.e., ball hockey, outdoor ice, etc.). Multi-use designs facilitate spontaneous opportunities for active play and appeal to a larger user base.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides three basketball court surfaces: two hoops (full size court) at Wasaga Stars Arena; another two hoops (undersized court) at the Youth Centre; and a single hoop (half court) has been installed at the McIntyre Creek Tennis Court site. To improve spatial distribution of these facilities, the Town may consider development of additional hard-surface multi-use courts in future park development. This recommendation is supported by the Town's Youth Strategy and was suggested by multiple consultation participants. Development should consider co-location with complementary facilities and uses (e.g., sports

parks, playgrounds, etc.), walkability (i.e., easily accessed by children and youth), and proximity to neighbouring land uses (i.e., courts can be loud when directly beside neighbouring homes).

Sand Volleyball Courts

Beach volleyball is a popular activity among youth and young adults, particularly in waterfront communities. These facilities can be operated in a variety of ways; either rented to user groups in advance and nets installed at time of play (i.e., leagues and tournaments), or nets are intact for the entire operating season fostering unstructured play.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides two sand volleyball courts at Wasaga Sports Park and facilitates play on Beach Areas 1 and 2. Through discussions with community members, stakeholders and staff, it was suggested that there is demand for additional courts. The Town may explore opportunities to expand the provision of sand volleyball courts at Wasaga Sports Park to a 4-court design. This would support tournament and league play in a format that is not currently available. Further consultation with local volleyball clubs and leagues is encouraged.

Skateboard and BMX Parks

Skate and bike parks are now a standard level of service in most municipalities, large and small. They respond to increasing interest in unstructured, low-cost activities and support physical activity. Participation in these sports has a broad appeal to both youth and young adults, as well as an emerging market for young families.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides one BMX pump track and one skateboard park, both located at Oakview Woods Sports Complex. Consultations with staff and the community found insufficient interest in additional action sport facilities at this time. To provide a safe, reliable, and robust skateboarding experience, consideration may be given to replacing the modular skate park components with more permanent facilities in the future, subject to suitable funding and / or fundraising.

Splash Pads

Splash pads are interactive water play features that activate using motion sensors and buttons. They are highly sought-after amenities for young families and are often located in destination parks (i.e., community parks). They have no standing water and are unsupervised sites, but can attract large numbers of children and youth looking to cool off on a warm day. They can vary in size and be designed using a range of different features, providing unique experiences throughout the parks system.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides one splash pad at Beach Area 1. The splash pad is maintained and operated by the Recreation, Events and Facilities Department. Public consultation found that there is demand for a second splash pad in Wasaga Beach. A high-traffic location with complementary recreation amenities (e.g., playground, sports fields, etc.) and close proximity to residential areas is preferred. Consideration should also be given to the geographic distribution of splash pads to ensure that geographic access is equitable across the town. One possible location to be considered further is one of the new parks proposed for Sunnidale Trails.

Off-Leash Dog Parks

Dog parks are becoming increasingly popular park spaces, particularly in urbanized areas where residents may not have access to private open space for their pets to run freely. Dog exercise is not only beneficial for pets, the activity also provides owners with an opportunity to get outside and socialize; this is particularly true for older adults and seniors who often find pet ownership helps to prevent social isolation and encourages outdoor activity.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides two off-leash dog parks, one at Oakview Woods Sports Complex and a second at Wasaga Sports Park. Beach Area 3 within the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park also includes a dog beach area. The existing facilities are well-used and distributed evenly across the town. Consultation with community members and staff did not find demand sufficient enough to warrant development of additional off-leash dog parks at this time.

Winter Activity Zones and Amenities (outdoor ice rinks/skate trails, toboggan hills, winter trails)

Outdoor ice rinks and skating trails help to improve access to skating opportunities for residents seeking low to no-cost winter activities. They are also helpful in establishing multi-season use of municipal parks, particularly if coordinated with successful winter events such as FUNderland or Snowman Mania. The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides one refrigerated outdoor ice rink at the Oakview Woods Sports Complex. Public consultation revealed interest in an additional outdoor ice surface either as an artificial outdoor ice pad (similar to Oakview Woods) or natural ice skate trail (similar to the facility located at Arrowhead Provincial Park). While natural outdoor ice rinks are unreliable due to variable weather conditions, artificial / refrigerated rinks are much more costly to build and operate, though all ice rinks / trails require considerable staff / volunteer resources and safety measures. The Town may consider locating an outdoor ice surface or trail at Wasaga Sports Park or a future park at Sunnidale Trails if it has ample parking, water source, facility to store equipment, etc. Design of an outdoor ice rink or skating trail should be multi-functional. The preferred design would be a hard-surface court (i.e., basketball, ball hockey, etc.) or paved multi-use trail in the warm-weather months that can be converted to an ice surface (natural or artificial) in the winter.

Consultation also found that residents of Wasaga Beach frequent William Arnill Memorial Park to use the sloped edges of the dry stormwater management pond as a **toboggan hill** in the winter months. Residents and staff noted that the town's relatively flat and sandy landscape does not provide many natural landscapes for tobogganing and that interest exists for a man-made hill, given an appropriate site and source of fill. Should the Town decide to further develop sports amenities at Wasaga Sports Park, there may be an opportunity to establish a second toboggan hill at that location.

Wasaga Beach Provincial Park's Nordic and Trail Centre offers an extensive network of winter **snowshoe trails** (10 kilometres) and groomed **cross-country ski trails** (over 30 kilometres), which are regarded among the best in Central Ontario. For a fee, the Park offers a jackrabbit ski lesson program, equipment rentals, light refreshments, and warm-up and outback ski shelters.

Canoe Launches

Residents and tourists benefit from the Nottawasaga River, providing a winding watercourse for paddling and boating. The Town currently provides one designated municipal canoe launch site along the southern border of Wasaga Sports Park (on lands owned by Ontario Parks). The site includes a turnaround point for vehicles, dock to launch self-propelled watercraft (i.e., canoes, kayaks, paddleboards), and structure for storing canoes / kayaks. Additional unimproved canoe launches are also known to be used at various points along the river.

Community consultation found interest in providing additional designated and signed access points along the river, particularly for paddlers seeking one point for entry into the water and a secondary stop further downstream to disembark. One site that was commonly mentioned is parallel to the southern edge of River Road West (owned by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry), just west of Schooner Town Park. Through the recommended Water Access Point Strategy, the Town should explore the enhancement of this and other sites (focusing on unopened rights-of-way that extend to the river's edge) and should work in consultation with local paddle sport enthusiasts, tour groups, and land owners if / when another launch or exist point is developed in the future.

Community Gardens

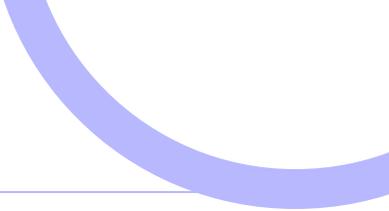
Community gardens are small plots of land that are collectively maintained by a group of people or stewardship organization to produce fruit, vegetables, and / or flowers. These gardens may be established on dedicated parcels of land (as is the case in Wasaga Beach) or may be incorporated into existed parks and open spaces. Community gardens not only provide aesthetically-pleasing park spaces, they also support community improvement, improve physical and mental well-being, enhance food security, and encourage social interaction among gardeners and visitors.

The Town of Wasaga Beach currently provides one dedicated community garden at the corner of River Road West and Fernbrook Drive (in close proximity to Peacekeepers Park). The Recreation, Events and Facilities Department is responsible for administration (e.g., managing available plots and maintaining waitlist spaces, etc.) of the Wasaga Beach Community Garden. As the Town's population continues to grow in size and density, additional community gardens may be established at appropriate sites, such as undeveloped municipal parcels or within existing parks (with access to water), preferably in close proximity to high-to-medium density residential areas. Many municipalities seek proposals of support from local community groups or service clubs to assist with oversight and management of any future gardens.

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit supports the development of additional community gardens in municipal parks. The Health Unit suggested consideration of edible plants in and around the parks as well as raised beds for accessibility.

Recommendations

28. Maintain **Wasaga Sports Park** as the town's primary venue for **sports fields** and organized beach volleyball. New or enhanced amenities should be identified in consultation with user groups and consider opportunities for full-size, lit fields as well as prospects for expanded **beach volleyball** and **winter activities** (e.g., toboggan hill, skating rink/trail, etc.).
29. Assess the removal or replacement of **outdoor fitness equipment** at the Wasaga Stars Arena and Mills Park (Town Hall) when they reach end-of-life. No additional installations are recommended. Explore initiatives to increase awareness, education and usage of outdoor fitness sites.
30. Consider installing hard-surface **multi-use courts** (e.g., basketball, ball hockey, outdoor ice, etc.) and a **splash pad** in appropriate future park developments, with consideration to a location(s) within Sunnidale Trails.

- 
- 31.** Devise a long-term maintenance / replacement plan and funding strategy for the **skateboard park** (which is currently comprised of modular equipment) at Oakview Woods Sports Complex (subject to Ontario Parks approval).
 - 32.** Through the recommended Water Access Point Strategy, examine opportunities to improve access and egress to the Nottawasaga River for **flatwater activities** (e.g., canoes and kayaks), including a location to disembark near Schooner Town Park.
 - 33.** Evaluate opportunities to establish additional **community gardens** at appropriate sites, such as undeveloped municipal parcels or within existing parks (with access to water), preferably in close proximity to high-to-medium density residential areas. Community sponsorships should be encouraged.

7.0 Trails and Wayfinding Assessment

The analysis and recommendations provided in this section build upon the 2008 Active Transportation Plan (ATP) and the 2010 Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (ATWMP) studies to provide guidance for the creation of a connected and sustainable trails network that will improve active living and recreation opportunities for residents and visitors. In addition, this section serves as a point of reference for best practices in trail planning and design standards for the Town's planning professionals, helping to guide the improvement and expansion of the Town's trail network.

The key goals addressed in this section include:

- a) Enhancing Connectivity and Design of Trails
- b) Improving Wayfinding and Signage for Residents and Visitors

7.1. Trail Infrastructure & Wayfinding Inventory

Inventory & Analysis of Existing Trails & Wayfinding

This section establishes an inventory of existing trails and active transportation wayfinding system within the Town as the trails are an essential component of the Active Transportation Plan for the Town of Wasaga Beach. This exercise is critical to the gap analysis, providing further insight into the extent of implementation of previous ATP and Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan.

Trail site visits were conducted on September 10 and October 24, 2019. Nearly 500 photographs were recorded during, serving as instrumental tools in documenting the findings and observations.

Municipal trails have been described in the following table. Findings and observations are then discussed for each trail network, along with the identification of potential issues, challenges, and opportunities for trail enhancement and development. Finally, an overview of issues and opportunities pertaining to the entire trail network infrastructure and the existing wayfinding system is provided at the end of this section.

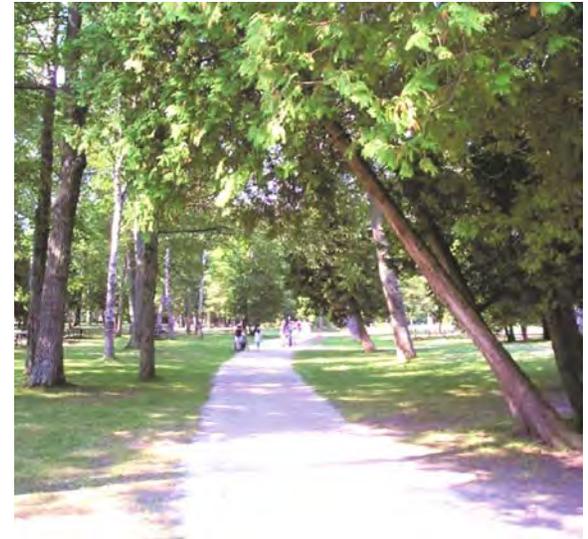


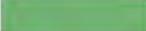
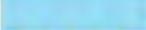
Table 9 Inventory of Existing Municipal Trails in Wasaga Beach

Trail Name	Length	Surface Material	Signage	Use / Activity	Amenities
Carly Patterson Memorial Trail Loop	11 km	Stone dust, natural, hard surface; most sections follow municipal roadways	Mixed signage; some consistent with ATWMP with limited implementation	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	Washrooms, parking and picnic tables are available at Beach Area 6, outdoor learning / educational signage – the Storybook Trail
Fitness Trails (Arena)	1.5 km	Natural	No signage	Walkers, hikers	Bike racks, benches, a picnic table, a portable toilet & a waste receptacle
Lois Koval Trail Loop –off-road sections are on Ontario Parks property	3.7 km	Natural, hard surface; most sections follow municipal roadways	No signage	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	No amenities
Marl Lake Trail	1.4 km	Stone dust, natural, hard surface	Regulatory signage only	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	No amenities
Oakwood Trails (Oakview Trail) – Ontario Parks land	1.1 km	Predominantly natural; hard surface	Signage not consistent with ATWMP; in poor condition	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	Washrooms, parking, waste receptacles & picnic tables provided at the adjacent Recreation Complex
Shore Lane Trail – traverses Ontario Parks property	14 km	Stone dust, natural, hard surface; most sections follow municipal roadways	Mixed signage; some consistent with ATWMP	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	Washrooms, parking, waste receptacles & picnic tables available
Silverbirch Trail Loop	4.4 km	Stone dust; some sections follow municipal roadways	Regulatory signage only	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	Outdoor learning / educational signage – the Storybook Trail
Stonebridge Trail Loop (Silhouette Trail)	2 km	Stone dust and hard surface	Regulatory signage and other existing signs which are not consistent with ATWMP	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	Outdoor community bulletin boards, waste receptacles, interpretive signage – Savannah Trail
Sunnidale Trails (McIntyre Creek Trail) <i>unassumed by Town</i>	4.1 km	Stone dust at entry points and natural along trails	Signage not consistent with ATWMP; in poor condition	Walkers, hikers, cyclists	No amenities
Wasaga Dunes Bike Loop	14 km	Asphalt; follows municipal roadways	Signage not consistent with ATWMP	Cyclists	No amenities

Note: Excludes trails on lands owned by Ontario Parks, unless otherwise indicated.

Figure 22 Town of Wasaga Beach Trails Inventory

Legend

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|------------------------|---|------------------------|
|  | Town of Wasaga Beach Parks |  | Carly Patterson Memorial Trail |  | Marl Lake Trail |  | Stonebridge Trail Loop |
|  | Wasaga Beach Provincial Parks |  | Fitness Trail |  | Oakwood Trails |  | Sunnidale Trails |
|  | Water Bodies |  | Local Links |  | Shore Lane Trail |  | Wasaga Dunes Bike Loop |
|  | Boardwalk Trails |  | Lois Koval Trail Loop |  | Silverbirch Trail Loop |  | Water Trail |



1:35,000

Carly Patterson Memorial Trail Loop

Carly Patterson Memorial Trail is a 11-kilometre loop trail located on the west end of the town that features a great forest setting. However, most sections of the trail follow municipal roadways and quiet streets. The trail provides important connections within the community, and offers an important alternative route for the residents in the neighbourhood to schools, community centres and commercial areas. Notably, the trail features special stands that display children's book pages at different intervals along the path. This section of the trail, called the Storybook Trail,

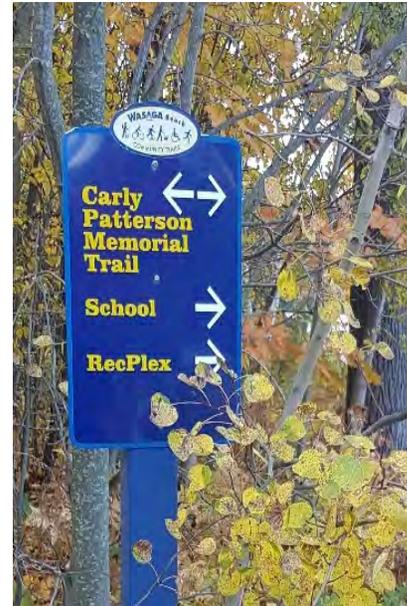


starts at the corner of 40th Street South and Cardinal Way, and then follows the Carly Patterson Trail all of the way to Meadowlark Boulevard. Providing a unique outdoor learning experience, the trail creates a safe trail link for school children to Worsley Elementary School.

Trail Amenities: Washrooms, parking and picnic tables are available at Beach Area 6 and the adjacent Wasaga Beach RecPlex. It is important to note that these amenities are not clearly identified. In addition to interpretive/educational signage on the Storybook Trail, up-to-date signage consistent with ATWMP is also provided. It appears however, sporadic in its roll-out.



Issues and Challenges: There is a strong need for more trail amenities (i.e. parking, bike racks, benches, and waste receptacles), maintenance and signage. The up-to-date signage is sporadic in its roll-out and implemented only to a limited extent. We were unable to locate some proposed signs in their recommended locations provided in Appendix 'C' (Sign Location Maps) of the ATWMP. Importantly, the signage is either in disrepair or damaged and difficult to identify in many locations due to vegetation encroachment. The placement of wayfinding signage was also found to be an issue. Signs should be installed facing the direction of travel. And arguably there are apparent issues with vandalism. Another important issue is the sharp curves and blind corners along the trail. There are a few places where the trail narrows at blind corners where encountering a fast-moving cyclist can be potentially dangerous. This is notable because there are many accidents on trails every year across Canada that cause significant injuries. Another common issue we observed for all trail networks across the town is the absence of an AODA compliant trail identification signage.

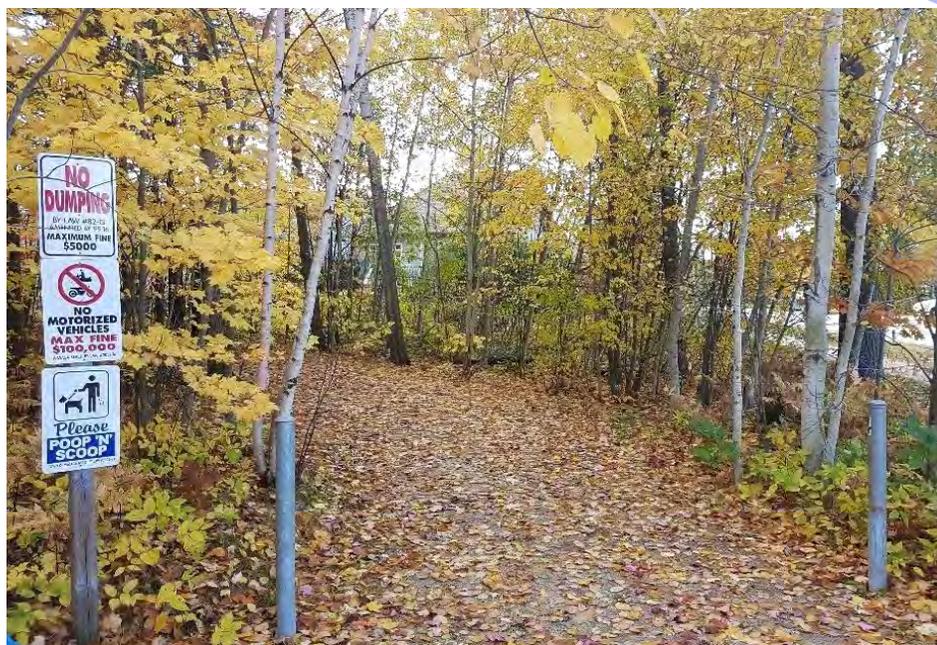


Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is a provincial legislation that was passed in 2005. The intent of the Act is to create an accessible Ontario for people with disabilities by identifying and removing barriers to universal accessibility. According to AODA legislation, the sign should indicate the length of each trail, the slope, cross slope, trail surface and any amenities along the way so that persons with disabilities can easily understand the difficulties they will encounter before setting out on that particular trail.



Opportunities: Consolidation of regulatory signs and information, presents an important opportunity to reduce visual and physical clutter on all trails. Removing redundant infrastructure or outdated signs is always a good practice as it will enhance the natural environment and increase the overall enjoyment of trails use.

In the process of upgrading existing trail identification signage to create an AODA compliant wayfinding system, the above-mentioned regulatory signs may also be combined into one coherent trail identification sign to eliminate clutter. The new consolidated and AODA compliant sign may also include other relevant information such as destinations, distances, trail etiquette, pre-visit information (web), and emergency number.



Notably, provision of emergency phone numbers (including police, fire and ambulance) which can be called for the reporting of trail issues, vandalism, or other concerns will convey a sense of ownership and responsibility.

Another important issue is the sharp curves and blind corners along the trail, such as those off Lyons Court. There are a few places where the trail narrows at blind corners where encountering a fast-moving cyclist can be potentially dangerous. This is notable because there are many accidents on trails every year across Canada that cause significant injuries.

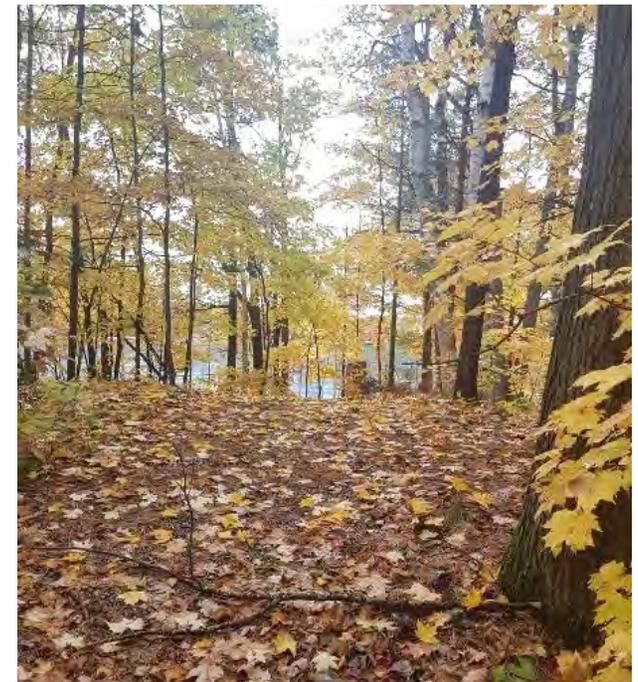
Fitness Trail

The Fitness Trail is a natural surface trail with narrow tread and challenging terrain winding through a wooded area located near Wasaga Stars Arena.

Trail Amenities: Bike racks, benches, a picnic table, a portable toilet and a waste receptacle are provided at the trailhead adjacent to the existing outdoor pickleball courts. Parking is also available at the nearby Wasaga Stars Arena.

Issues and Challenges: This trail currently does not provide any maps, trail identification or wayfinding signage making it difficult to find and navigate. Minor issues with small branches and broken twigs being all over the trails.

Opportunities: Trailhead signs and maps should be used at all major access points on all managed trails to orient users. Branches, limbs and other debris should be disposed of in bush or piled out of sight from the trail to encourage wildlife use.



Lois Koval Trail Loop

The Lois Koval Trail follows local roads and leads to two separate wooded off-road sections of trail, one that crosses Veterans Way between Antigua Drive and Fernbrook Drive and another between Antigua Drive and Indianola Crescent. The off-road sections of the trail on both sides of Veterans Way are within the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park.

Trail Amenities: The trail network has no amenities.

Issues and Challenges: The trail – which crosses Ontario Parks property – currently does not provide any maps, trail identification or wayfinding signage. The entrance to the off-road section of the trail at Deer Trail Park is quite difficult to find as there is no signage. Branches needs to be cut to eliminate sightline obstructions or encroachments that could impact on trail users.

Opportunities: There is a strong need for more trail signage, amenities, and trail maintenance. Trailhead signs and maps at all major access points should be used to orient trail users. Maps and signs need to communicate where you are on a trail, how long a trail experience will be, how much longer to go, how to get out of the trail. A lack of awareness may discourage users.

Importantly, there may be an opportunity to expand the network to the east to connect with the existing Silver Birch Trail and Blueberry Trail Recreational Trail Loop proposed in the AT Plan.



Marl Lake Trail

Marl Lake Trail, located on the South-east end of Wasaga Beach, consists of a mix of paved, stone dust, and natural surfaces.

Trail Amenities: The trail network has no amenities. Only regulatory signage is provided at the trail access points.

Issues and Challenges: Aside from the regulatory signage, the trail currently does not provide any maps, trail identification or wayfinding signage. Bollards should be designed and spaced to permit wheelchair passage but to prohibit unauthorized motor vehicular passage. Wide openings at trail access points may fail to prevent unauthorized access.

Certain sections of the trail feel overgrown. Branches and tall grasses should be cut to eliminate sightline obstructions or encroachments that could impact on trail users. Trails should have minimum head room clearances of 2,100 mm so that they are free of obstacles overhead. Lateral clearance widths, however, vary depending on the trail classification. A 1,000 mm clearance width should be maintained along multi-use trails and 500 mm along secondary trails.



Where gates, bollards or some other form of trail entrances are used, they should have a clear opening between 850 – 1000 mm to allow passage by wheelchair users on universally accessible trails.

Opportunities: Trail identification signs, consistent with the AT Wayfinding Master Plan, should be used at all major access points to the trail. There is a strong need for more trail amenities (e.g., benches, trash receptacles, etc.) and trail maintenance. Consolidation of regulatory signs is needed to reduce clutter.

There may be an opportunity to expand the trail to the northeast towards Marl Lake, from where it can potentially extend further up to the proposed site for the Town's new arena and library. This may require a thorough environmental impact study to minimize negative environmental effects on ecologically sensitive areas and extensive coordination with Ontario Parks.

Oakwood Trails (Oakview Trail)

Oakwood Trails are comprised of a kilometre of paved and natural surface pathways winding through the Oakview Woods, owned by the Province of Ontario.

Trail Amenities: Outdated signage only. Washrooms, parking, waste receptacles and picnic tables are provided at the adjacent Oakview Woods Outdoor Recreation Complex which also hosts one of the community trail gateways.

Issues and Challenges: The network currently does not provide any maps, trail identification or trailhead features. The existing signage is not consistent with the ATWMP. Downed trees need to be cleared. A lack of signage for directional wayfinding seems to be an issue within the trail which may discourage some trail users. Maps and signs need to communicate where you are on a trail.

Recognizable signage in strategic locations such as curves and intersections enable trail users to make informed decisions and prevent confusion as they navigate through the trail. Some trail networks have multiple names creating confusion for those unfamiliar with the area.

Opportunities: Trailhead signs and maps at all major access points should be used on all managed trails to orient users. Branches, limbs and other debris should be disposed of in bush. We noted a strong need for more trail amenities (e.g., benches, trash receptacles, washrooms, etc.) and trail maintenance. Ontario Parks maintenance standards would apply to this property as the Province owns this trail.



Shore Lane Trail

This waterfront trail extends the length of Wasaga Beach providing over 14 kilometres of linear trail on quiet local streets and pathways along the shoreline to link each Beach Area. Trail surface varies widely from asphalt streets and stone dust paths through forested areas, to sandy beach area and even includes a wide boardwalk along the beach located on Provincial Park lands.

Trail Amenities: Washrooms, parking, waste receptacles, and picnic tables provided on Provincial Park lands through Beach Area 1 to Beach Area 6 not so far from the trail. However, these amenities are not always clearly identified. Wayfinding added to the trail should indicate directions to existing facilities. In addition to outdated signs shown, up-to-date signage consistent with the ATWMP is provided.

Issues and Challenges: Although signage consistent with the AT Wayfinding Master Plan seems to be provided, there is definitely a need for more trail signage. In addition, there is no mapping provided along the trail to orient users. Similarly, the proposed Major Beach Identification (WBCT.1) and Large Beach Directional and Identification Signs (WBCT.3 & 4) do not seem to have been implemented neither along the trail nor the beach areas yet.

In order to present a unified identity for the trail networks in the town, it is important that signage and other trail amenities have a unified look and feel. Critical to that goal is the implementation of a standardized signage system consistent with the ATWMP on all managed trails in the town. Old signage needs to be updated to maintain consistent visual style and eliminate clutter.



Opportunities: As we learn from the Wasaga Beach Shoreline Biodiversity Study, published in 2017 by WILD Canada Ecological Consulting for the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, the dune systems along Wasaga Beach’s shoreline are home to “regionally, provincially, and globally rare vegetation communities”. These systems provide important shoreline protection, aesthetic and natural heritage functions along the shoreline.

As such, the Shore Lane Trail has a great potential for additional features, such as public art installations and improved educational signage that would add interpretive qualities to the trail experience and raise public awareness on the dune systems along Wasaga Beach’s shoreline. The study encourages Wasaga Beach Provincial Park and the Town of Wasaga Beach to work together to provide expanded interpretive signage to better inform the public of “the sensitive nature of dune systems, and the need for adoption of proper management and use protocols”.

An equally important consideration concerns the lack of trail signage inventory. Establishing a sign inventory that lists the type, location and date of installation would be very helpful in maintaining a signage log that updates the following information on a monthly basis: type of sign requiring replacement, location of sign and reason for replacement (e.g., vandalism, deterioration), cost of replacement and timing of replacement.



Silverbirch Trail Loop

Located on the east end of the town near Birchview Dunes Elementary School, Silverbirch Trail Loop consists of a mix of paved, stone dust, and natural surfaces. The trail mostly follows local roads and leads to a wooded off-road section following through a linear park in the Silver Birch Subdivision.

Similar to the Carly Patterson Memorial Trail Loop, Silverbirch Trail Loop is part of the Storybook Trails that features special stands that display children's book pages spaced out along the path providing a unique outdoor learning experience while creating a safe trail link for school children to Birchview Dunes Elementary School. This section of the trail is located on the wooded off-road section of the trail running from the eastern entrance of Silver Birch Avenue and River Road West, to the intersection of Bush Street and Silver Birch.

There is a strong need for more trail signage and amenities such as trash receptacles, benches, etc. Trail signs and maps should be used at all major access points and in strategic locations such as curves and intersections to help trail users to make informed decisions. Trail signage plays an indispensable role in any outdoor recreation experience. It provides users with comfort and confidence in navigating the trail network.

Trail Amenities: Aside from the special stands displaying children's book pages, the trail network has no amenities. Regulatory signage seems to be provided at some of the access points and along the trail.



Issues and Challenges: The trail currently does not have any trail identification or wayfinding signage in line with the ATWMP. We were unable to locate the proposed signs in their recommended locations provided in Appendix 'C' (Sign Location Maps) of the ATWMP.

The display panel located at the intersection of Bush Street and Silver Birch features an outdated version of the Wasaga Beach Community Trails Map which appears to be water-damaged and faded. This map illustrates the entire trail network in the Town; it is not specific to Silverbirch Trail Loop.

Opportunities: There may be an opportunity to expand the network to the northeast to connect with Stonebridge Trail Loop. No doubt, the need for improved signage will be even more pronounced when we factor in the potential network expansion to neighbouring trails, most notably Lois Koval Trail and Stonebridge Trail Loops, thereby creating a larger and arguably a more comprehensive trail network on the east end of the town.

Stonebridge Trail Loop (Silhouette Trail)

Stonebridge Trail Loop is a network of stone dust and paved pathways that loops around Stonebridge Boulevard on the east end of Wasaga Beach. The trail provides important connections within the community, and offers a good alternative route for the residents in the neighbourhood to the Stonebridge Town Centre commercial area through the patches of wooded areas, which includes several stormwater management ponds.



Trail Amenities: Trash receptacles are available at different intervals along the loop. We have identified outdoor community bulletin boards at least in two locations. In addition to the regulatory signage, we observed trail identification signs at some entry locations. Notably, this trail network features interpretive signage along the trail system that provides trail users with a natural history of Wasaga Beach. Aptly named Savannah Trail, the interpretive signage focuses on the importance of natural areas within the local landscape. The style of the interpretive signage is similar to the stands that display children’s book pages along the Carly Patterson Memorial Trail Loop.

Issues and Challenges: The existing trail identification signage is sporadic and not consistent with the ATWMP. The trail network – which is currently unassumed – does not currently have any wayfinding signage or trail maps to orient users. As is the case with other trails in the town, signage that is not consistent with the Town’s adopted signage system should be updated to maintain a consistent visual style and unified look on all trails across the town. Similarly, consolidation of regulatory signs should be considered to minimize visual clutter at all access points to enhance the natural environment. In addition, the materials presented on the interpretive signage panels are faded and very difficult to read especially in bright sunlight. Location and placement of interpretive signs are critical to their effectiveness. And finally, this trail network has multiple names creating confusion for those unfamiliar with the local geography.

Opportunities: As noted earlier, there may be an opportunity to extend the network to the west to connect with Silverbirch and Lois Koval Trail Loops, thereby creating a more comprehensive trail network on the east end of the town.



Sunnidale Trails (McIntyre Creek Trail)

The Sunnidale Trails extend south along Sunnidale Road then cut through the forested parabolic dune at the water tower. Past the dunes, the trail runs through the Wasaga Sands subdivision and enters the Wasaga Sands Golf Course (private property). The trail winds south next to the golf course fairways along McIntyre Creek then enters a forested valley that extends to the south trailheads at Maple Drive and Blake Court.

Trail Amenities: We did not observe any amenities during the site visit.

Issues and Challenges: Signage at Sunnidale Trails are inadequate or missing; and stylistically, they are not consistent with the ATWMP. At many trailheads and decision-making points along the trail, the proposed signs are absent. Importantly, the trails travel through significant topographic features (erosion is an issue) meandering along McIntyre Creek. Without the guidance of adequate and recognizable signage located in strategic locations, such as curves and intersections, unmarked paths can be very confusing to trail users. The site contains public and private pedestrian bridges traversing the creek. Some of these bridges are now condemned, which may discourage residents from using the trail.

Wayfinding signage is indispensable in complex trail networks, such as the Sunnidale Trails, or areas where the trail may be obscured by vegetation. Importantly, we also noted a strong need for more trail amenities (e.g., benches, drinking fountains, trash receptacles) and trail maintenance. Large fallen trees blocking the trail need to be cleared. Alternatively, downed trees (such as the one shown) or large branches and trunks, obtained from maintaining the forested area, can be used to help define trail edges in certain sections that do not offer a natural distinction as to what is the trail and what is not. It will work in conjunction with the wayfinding signage to keep people on the right path.



Opportunities: Appendix 'D' (Individual Trail Maps) of the ATWMP document indicates that "Rainbow Trout and White Suckers can be observed in McIntyre Creek during the spring and a variety of wildflowers can be seen within the dunes and forested valleys". Thus, the trails provide an excellent opportunity for the introduction of interpretive signage. The interpretive opportunities encourage trail users to take further interest in their surroundings.

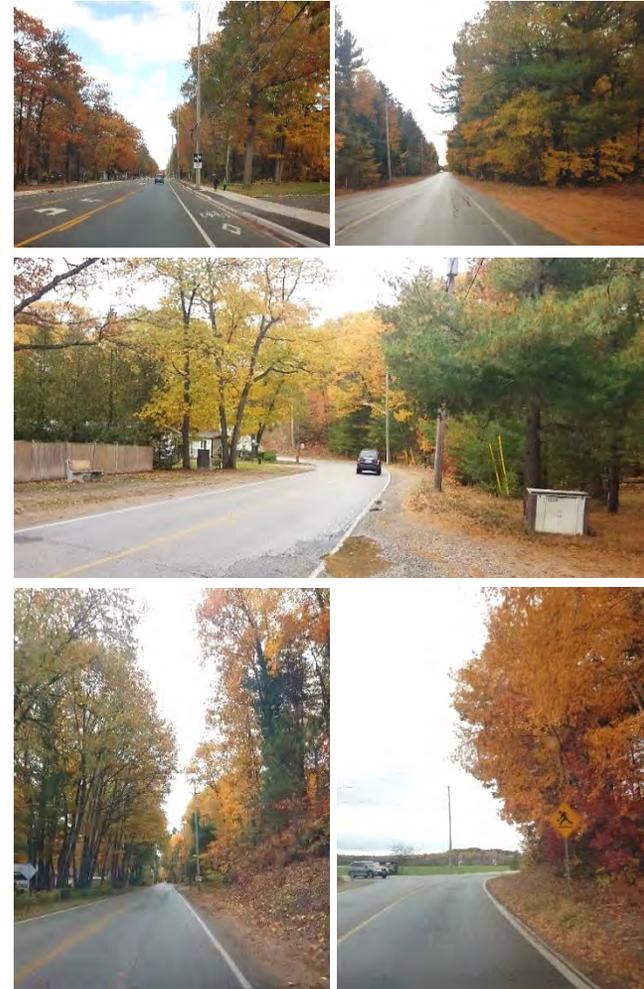
Wasaga Dunes Bike Loop

This trail loop follows 14 kilometres of roads using paved shoulders and bicycle lanes. The loop circles the 'Dunes' area of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park following River Road West, Zoo Park and Golf Course Roads, and Veterans Way.

Trail Amenities: We did not observe any trail amenities during the site visit.

Trail Issues and Challenges: Overall, the trail markings and surface appear to be in fair condition in the sections where proper on-road active transportation lanes are established. There are large sections along the trail, however, that use paved shoulders with no signage or surface marking to indicate their use as lanes for hikers and bikers. This practice can create conflict between motorists and cyclists due to motorists' propensity to use the paved shoulder as a parking or passing lane. In addition, there are numerous spots along these paved shoulders where water is pooling due to poor surface conditions (note: sections of this road are scheduled for reconstruction in 2020/21). Trail users seeking to avoid the wet conditions might fall into the path of oncoming traffic. Similarly, paved shoulders are too narrow or non-existent in some locations, forcing cyclists into traffic. These issues pose a significant safety concern for trail users.

Opportunities: Significantly, we found the lack of signage along the trail to be an issue. Bicycle routes should be signed consistent with the ATWMP as the on-road bicycle system is expanded. Currently, signage along Wasaga Dunes Bike Loop is sparse at best. The use of similar design elements and consistent trail signage presents a significant opportunity; it becomes a strong identifier and unifier, and immediately recognizable by the trail user.



Overview of Trails Barriers and Opportunities

Through user engagement, observations and extensive site visits, the following issues and gaps were identified relative to the existing trail networks in Wasaga Beach. The intent of this gap analysis is to highlight the deficiencies in the existing system and help guide the planning for future improvements.

Connectivity

From our site visits and analysis, we identified many locations where trails are disconnected or lacking, both in general and in proximity to critical infrastructure and key destinations. Poor connectivity is the greatest challenge facing the trail network, and presents a host of problems for safety, accessibility and simple functionality of the trails as the key component of the active transportation network.

Specifically, through our site visits, we identified major gaps in the implementation of bike/hiking lanes on Mosley Street, River Road West, Klondike Park Road, and Veteran's Way. Large sections of these on-road lanes, for example, use paved shoulders with no signage or surface marking to indicate their recommended use. This practice can create conflict between motorists and cyclists due to motorists' propensity to use the paved shoulder as a parking or passing lane.

Significantly, Chapter 11.0: Phasing Strategy of the ATP provides recommendations on the implementation, including the construction of new pedestrian bridges over Nottawasaga River to the beach areas. A Class EA was completed for these projects in 2015, suggested a phased approach over the next thirty years. The eventual implementation of any of these bridges, particularly the pedestrian bridge suggested for the north end of Blueberry Trail (within approximately 10 years' time), would provide greater accessibility to the beach areas, effectively establishing an invaluable linkage between the trails located in the north and south portions of the Town.

Accessibility

As with all trail networks, Wasaga Beach should strive for not only connectivity, but accessibility as well. Trails should be designed to be accessible to all levels of ability, where possible and practical. We have identified several accessible design barriers at various locations along the trails. In particular, steep slopes are one of the most significant barriers for those with physical disabilities. Similarly, we observed several trail access points where bollards are spaced to hinder wheelchair passage. Other major obstacles identified are uneven surfaces, slipping hazards and low vertical clearances in many locations.

Personal Security

Personal security of trail users should not be compromised by design. This includes security from both perceived and actual danger. Therefore, areas of concealment should be minimised in line with the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) to reduce the opportunity for unlawful activity. Improving sight lines and eliminating hiding places will arguably discourage potential crime and vandalism issues. In addition, there are a few places along the trails where the path narrows at blind corners where encountering a fast-moving cyclist can be potentially dangerous. This is notable because there are many accidents on trails every year that cause significant injuries.

Importantly, trail users should have the ability to obtain help when using trails. Signs at the trailheads, for example, should provide emergency phone numbers (including police, fire and ambulance), which can be called for the reporting of trail issues, vandalism, or other concerns.

Maintenance

A maintenance program is a critical component of every successful trail system. Maintenance should be carried out on a regular basis by the Town staff to prevent the trails from falling into disrepair. Signs, for example, should be highly visible. Therefore, their maintenance or lack of maintenance leaves the user with a positive or negative impression about the trails. Many signs along the trails are in disrepair, fading, or are overgrown with vegetation. We identified apparent issues with vandalism. Unresisted vandalism may encourage more nuisance activity. Trail vandalism and graffiti should be dealt quickly to discourage repeat occurrences. We also established several locations where trails are blocked by large fallen trees or obscured by vegetation.

In addition, there are numerous spots along on-road active transportation lanes, most notably Wasaga Dunes Bike Loop, where water is pooling due to poor surface conditions. As part of regular maintenance, signage replacement, periodical pruning, and trail surface repair should be carried out to maintain the safety of the trails and create a pleasant experience for the trail user.

Lack of Amenities

There is a strong need for more trail amenities. Consistent with our observations, many stakeholders listed a lack of trail amenities. Though critical, trail facilities are an often-overlooked element of trail system design. Trail users need to feel comfortable and safe, and they should have access to adequate parking and amenities at strategic locations. Typical amenities to be considered at appropriate sites include benches or tables, portable washrooms, bike racks and waste receptacles. Additional services may include an air pump, shelter and waste bag dispensers. And finally, when trail amenities are provided, they should conform to

accessibility requirements. For example, in cases where it is not reasonably possible to provide AODA-compliant permanent washrooms, wheelchair-accessible portable toilets may be considered.

Nomenclature Issues

Nomenclature issues were identified with several trails in the Town. Through the GIS database information, maps, and background documents provided by the Town staff, we found that three trail networks carry dual names. These trails are Oakwood Trails (Oakview Trail), Stonebridge Trail (Silhouette Trail), and Sunnidale Trails (McIntyre Creek Trail).

Using consistent naming is important and should not go overlooked. Variability and inconsistencies often lead to error and create administrative inefficiencies. And more importantly, the dual names can cause confusion for emergency responders and those unfamiliar with the local geography.

Wayfinding Overview

Based on our site visits and observations, it would be fair to conclude that the Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (ATWMP) was implemented only to a limited extent. Above all, the implemented signage systems are sporadic and fragmented, lacking integration and coherence. The ATWMP compliant signage seems to be installed only along the Carly Patterson Memorial Trail Loop and the Shore Lane Trail. Even along these trails, however, the proposed wayfinding system appears to be sporadic in its roll-out.

In many cases, we were unable to locate the proposed signs in their recommended locations provided in Appendix 'C' Sign Location Maps, including the proposed Major Beach Identification and Large Beach Directional Signs. Similarly, of the four planned Community Trail Gateway Locations, which are shown in the ATWMP (pg.15) and listed as Medium-Term Priority Project on page twenty, only two of them seem to have been implemented.

In order to present a unified identity for the trail networks in the town, it is important that signage and other trail amenities have a unified look and feel. Critical to that goal is the implementation of a standardized signage system consistent with the ATWMP on all managed trails in the town. Old signage needs to be updated to maintain a consistent visual style and to create a cohesive identity. The unified wayfinding system becomes immediately recognizable by the trail user and can become a branding element.

Aside from the implementation of ATWMP, we found the following issues concerning the existing wayfinding system.

Lack of Information

A lack of signage for trail identification, including mapping and other relevant information such as destinations, trail etiquette, and emergency number, was observed as one of the most important issues to be addressed. Amenities such as washrooms, parking, and picnic tables, for example, are provided through Beach Area 1 to Beach Area 6 not so far from the Shore Lane Trail. However, these amenities are not always clearly identified. In cooperation with Ontario Parks, wayfinding added to the trail should indicate directions to existing facilities, informing the user. Similarly, a strong need for more trailhead signage was noted.

Accessibility

A common issue we observed for all trail networks across the town is the absence of an AODA compliant trail identification signage. Current wayfinding system contains no accessibility-oriented information.

According to AODA legislation, the sign should indicate the length of each trail, the slope, cross slope, trail surface and any amenities along the way so that persons with disabilities can easily understand the difficulties they will encounter before setting out on that particular trail.

And most importantly, AODA guidelines recommend the use of Sans serif fonts for wayfinding; (e.g., **S** vs. **Œ**). The Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (ATWMP), however, suggests the use of Futura Regular & Bold and Rockwell Regular & Bold fonts thus rendering the proposed wayfinding system effectively non-compliant with AODA. The recommended font can be seen in Appendix 'A', Graphic Standards document of the ATWMP.

Clutter

In many cases, signage is frequently added to locations as issues arise. Not surprisingly, this practice results in the inconsistent and ineffective use of enforcement signage and creates unnecessary visual clutter along the trails. This is often the case in the use of signs such as “pick up litter” or “no dumping”. We located several trail access points cluttered with these types of regulatory signage. These signs are typically ineffective and often decrease the overall impact of signs that hold a positive message or provide interpretation. Negative signage should be avoided as it invites vandalism. Where possible, signs should offer positive guidance and explain why a particular behaviour is requested, rather than lists of “don’ts”.

Location / Placement

Location and placement of signs are critical to their effectiveness. Signs should be placed so that they face the anticipated direction of traffic and are unobstructed by vegetation, fences and other obstacles. We found that many signs along the trails are overgrown with vegetation.

7.2. Trail Linkage and Development Strategy

Guiding Principles

The following principles are intended to provide the Town of Wasaga Beach a set of blueprints to guide the development and operation of the Town's trail network. Information included in these guidelines is based on trail development trends and currently accepted design practices in North America and should be referred to when recommended trail route options are being considered and improvements to the existing trail system are being planned.

1. Connectivity

Utilization and effectiveness of any trail network is largely affected by the network's completeness. Therefore, connectivity should be considered a key principle for the development and expansion of the trail network in Wasaga Beach. The trail network should support recreational and active transportation opportunities by providing access to both existing and future key destinations (described later in this section) throughout the Town and connections to surrounding municipalities. Importantly, the network should be strategically planned to provide linkages to surrounding municipalities or other regional trails networks.

2. Accessibility

Trails should be designed to be free of barriers to enhance accessibility and be inclusive of persons with disabilities, where possible and practical. Steep slopes are one of the major barriers for individuals with physical disabilities. Designing trails to be within the threshold (5% slope) for universal access will not only overcome this barrier but it will also help to reduce potential trail surface erosion.

3. Personal Security

Trails should be designed to allow users to feel comfortable, safe, and secure. Principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) should be considered and applied to help address security issues concerning trail use, particularly in locations where

trails are infrequently used, isolated or in areas where security problems have occurred in the past. CPTED can help to reduce crime and fear through natural surveillance, activity support, hierarchy of space, access control, and maintenance.

4. Cost-Effective

Trails and the trail network should be affordable and appropriately scaled in relation to the Town's resources. Where feasible, coordinating trails with other public infrastructure projects will provide cost efficiencies. Creating an Active Transportation / Parks Coordinator position to assist the Public Works Department with the planning, design, development and operations of the Town's growing trails network is recommended.

5. Natural and Cultural Resources

Trails should provide opportunities for users to experience and learn more about Wasaga Beach's natural and cultural heritage features. Thoughtful placement of trail corridors can highlight the unique attributes of the Town. Each site's characteristics should be carefully considered when the alignment is refined and design details are being developed.

6. Visibility

Trails should be a visible component of Wasaga Beach's recreation and transportation system and clearly identified through signage. As well, the trail network should be promoted within the Town and surrounding municipalities to ensure that residents and visitors are aware of the recreational options in Wasaga Beach.

7. Partnership Possibilities

Opportunities for partnerships with other agencies and organizations should be considered to assist in offsetting costs. Relationships with new and existing community partners and land owners should be encouraged in the expansion, maintenance, and promotion of the trail network.

8. Sustainability

Sustainability will be a major consideration in the design and selection of materials for the trail network. Trails should be designed and maintained in the most sustainable ways possible by accommodating existing and anticipated volumes of users and strategically placing amenities such as benches, garbage receptacles, and bicycle parking at trail nodes and major destinations where they can be easily serviced.

9. Environmental Protection

As many trail systems exist within sensitive natural environments, it is important that the design, construction, use, and maintenance of these facilities minimize impacts and disruptions in the areas adjacent to the trail corridor.

Trail Design Guidelines

The success of this Master Plan relies heavily on continuity and cohesiveness throughout the trail system. A set of guidelines for trail planning and development is important, not only for the Town, but for potential trail users. The following trail standards, specifications and best practices set out in this report are intended to guide the planning, design, and ongoing development of Wasaga Beach's trail network and be considered and used as appropriate.

Trail Classification

The following table establishes a Town-wide trail classification system for the existing and proposed inventory of recreational trails in Wasaga Beach. With the proposed trail classification system, the previous trail classification system outlined in the 2008 ATP has been refined to reflect current standards and best practices. This trail type and rating classification system adapted for the Town of Wasaga Beach is based on several trail standard sources including Parks Canada, the Ontario Traffic Manual (OTM) Books 18 and 15, Ministry of Transportation (MTO) Bikeway Planning and Design Guidelines, and guidelines and best practices from other municipalities and jurisdictions. Information within each classification directs design, construction, maintenance, and the use of trails and tracks. Therefore, moving forward, it is recommended that the Town consider the following proposed trail classification system.

Table 10 Recommended Trail Type Classification

Trail Classification Type	User Group	Surface	Width	Recommended
<p>Multi-Use Trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Links key destinations such as community centres and commercial areas within the Town promoting the use of active transportation systems - Allows for side-by-side travel and easy passing - Collects traffic from secondary trails 	Walking, hiking, cycling and other non-motorized forms of transportation	Asphalt, concrete, limestone screening, or another firm and stable surface	3.0 m to 4.5 m (add width in high traffic areas or at curves)	Trailhead, washrooms, parking, signage, seating, trash receptacles
<p>Secondary Trail</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Located in areas that may be distant from a destination point and/or have rugged terrain - Serves as connectors to multi-use trails and active transportation routes - Local connections 	Walking, hiking and cycling	Asphalt, concrete, limestone screening, or another firm and stable surface	1.5 m to 1.8 m	Signage and seating

Accessibility and AODA Requirements

Trails should be designed to be accessible to all levels of ability, where possible and practical. It must be recognized however, that not all trails throughout the system can be fully accessible. At the provincial level, Ontario Regulation 191/11 under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) includes accessibility standards for recreational trails in built environments that are to be followed by the province and the municipalities. To improve accessibility trails should limit grade; maximize width and be hard surfaced. Multi-Use trails, for example are considered to be fully accessible and are generally in areas where there is a high density of urban activity and the trails offer a high level of connectivity.

Steep slopes are one of the most significant barriers for individuals with physical disabilities. Designing trails to be within the threshold (5% slope) for universal access will not only overcome this barrier but it will also help to reduce potential trail surface erosion. However, when site conditions make it impossible to establish a trail with accessible slopes, signage at trail entrances and published trail maps should indicate the non-accessible area, how long and how steep it is, and where the nearest accessible

entrances and exits to the trail are found. Where possible, trail designers should seek to provide a parallel facility or detour that meets accessibility criteria.

Table 11 Summary of AODA Standards for Recreational Trail Development

Criteria	Standard Description
Boardwalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear width of 1000 mm (minimum) • Provide a clear height of 2100 mm (minimum) • Ensure that openings must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm • Provide edge protection height of 50 mm (minimum) if the boardwalk is located adjacent to water or a drop-off • If the running slope is steeper than 1:20 (5%), the running slope must meet the requirements for ramps
Clearance Width	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain a clear width of 1000 mm along all sides of Multi-use trails • Maintain a clear width of 500 mm along all sides of Secondary trails
Cross Slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure cross slopes are as gentle as possible, as permitted by the terrain, to provide an even surface for diverse users, including people using mobility aids • <u>Best practice</u>: Where cross slopes exceed 1:20 (5%), provide level rest areas, 1800 mm by 1800 mm (minimum), every 30 m
Edge Protection	<p>Where recreational trails are constructed adjacent to water or a drop-off, edge protection should be provided with the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitute of an elevated barrier that runs along the edge of the recreational trail to prevent users from slipping over the edge • Have the top of the edge protection at 50 mm (minimum) high above the trail surface • Be designed so as not to impede the drainage of the trail surface

Criteria	Standard Description
Ramps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide running slope no greater than 10% • <u>Best practice</u>: Maintain running slope under 6.67% wherever possible • Provide cross slope no greater than 2% • Provide a clear width of 1100 mm (minimum) • Ensure individual ramp sections are no longer than 9000 mm • Provide landings: at top and bottom of ramp; where there is any directional change; and between each ramp section where overall length of ramp exceeds 9000 mm • Provide handrails on both sides of the ramp • Provide a wall or guard on both sides of the ramp
Rest Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rest areas at intervals of 30 m are recommended • Rest areas should be located to one side of walkways, be at least 1200 mm deep and include space for a bench, wheelchair, or scooter • <u>Best practice</u>: provide rest areas at viewing areas or other points of interest
Running Slope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a running slope that is as gentle as possible, as permitted by the terrain, to minimize amount of strength and stamina required to use the trail • <u>Best practice</u>: Where running slopes exceed 1:20 (5%), provide level rest areas, 1800 mm by 1800 mm (minimum), every 30 m
Trail Amenities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails should be supported by trail amenities such as parking, seating, and bike racks • Benches, Bicycle Lock Ups, and Trash/Recycling Containers should all be made by the same manufacturer and be of the same colour to maintain a unified look and visual style
Trail Entrance, Exit Points & Bollards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide 850 mm to 1000 mm clear opening whether entrance includes a gate, bollard or other entrance design to allow passage by wheelchair users • Ensure entrances are maintained and clear of obstructions that can reduce the clear width of the entrance

Criteria	Standard Description
Trail Surface	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure surface is firm and stable • Ensure that openings must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm (13 mm diameter preferred), and that any elongated openings are oriented approximately perpendicular to the direction of travel • Ensure resistance to damage by normal weather conditions, with ability to sustain typical wear and tear between planned maintenance cycles • Ensure type of surface used and expected conditions that may change over time are identified in information signage provided at trailhead
Trail Width	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Use Trails: 3.0 m to 4.5 m (add width in high traffic areas or at curves) • Secondary Trails: 1.5 m to 1.8 m
Trailheads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure designated trailheads with information signage are integrated as part of the trail design, at key entrance and exit points along the trail, intermediate areas on lengthy trails or decision points (e.g., changes in elevation or where there is option to go in multiple directions) where required • Typically, a case by case review and analysis is required, based on trail type, location and other conditions • <u>Best practice</u>: provide amenities and comfort features (e.g., parking, signage, seating, waste receptacles, temporary washrooms, bicycle racks, contact information) at trailheads that encourage trail use
Vertical Clearance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a clear height of 2100 mm above grade (minimum)

For more detailed guidance on trail surface design and slope requirements for unique conditions, refer to “Ontario’s Best Trails Guidelines and Best Practices for the Design Construction and Maintenance of Sustainable Trails for All Ontarians” resource document. The following resources provide more information on AODA standards:

- O. Reg. 191/11: Integrated Accessibility Standards: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191>
- Accessible Recreational Trails in Ontario: <https://aoda.ca/accessible-recreational-trails-in-ontario/>

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Principles

Safe spaces are more enjoyable and attractive to a greater range of users. With patrons' safety in mind, new and existing trails should be designed through the application of CPTED principles. The basic principle of CPTED is that good design of the environment can reduce the prevalence of fear and crime. The following CPTED strategies are most relevant to the design and implementation of trail facilities:

- Configure landscaping design and other physical elements so as to maintain sight lines and avoid blind spots;
- Provide the ability to find and obtain help – signage tells users where they are along the trail system;
- Provide trailhead parking in highly visible areas;
- Minimize routing close to features that create hiding places such as dense shrubs and fences;
- Providing good visibility by others by having routes pass through well used public spaces; and
- Signs near entrances to isolated areas can be used to inform users that the area is isolated and suggest alternative routes.

Recommendations

- 34.** When implementing the trails network, the underlying principles of **CPTED** should be considered including natural access control, natural surveillance, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance.

Making Connections

An important goal of this Master Plan is to identify gaps in the current trail system. Issues with the existing trail network were identified by defining the key destinations, active and proposed developments within the Town, identifying the best route(s) to those destinations and projected developments, and then determining if the trail system provides an obvious, accessible, and efficient route.

Current and Future Destinations

One of the primary objectives of the trail master plan is to develop linkages which provide connections from residential communities to key public destinations and attractions such as major commercial and community centres, arenas, schools, as well as parks, natural heritage and recreational areas. With input from the Town and other stakeholders, and from the existing active

transportation documents, the following locations were identified as the major destinations points for the trails and active transportation system in the Town of Wasaga Beach.

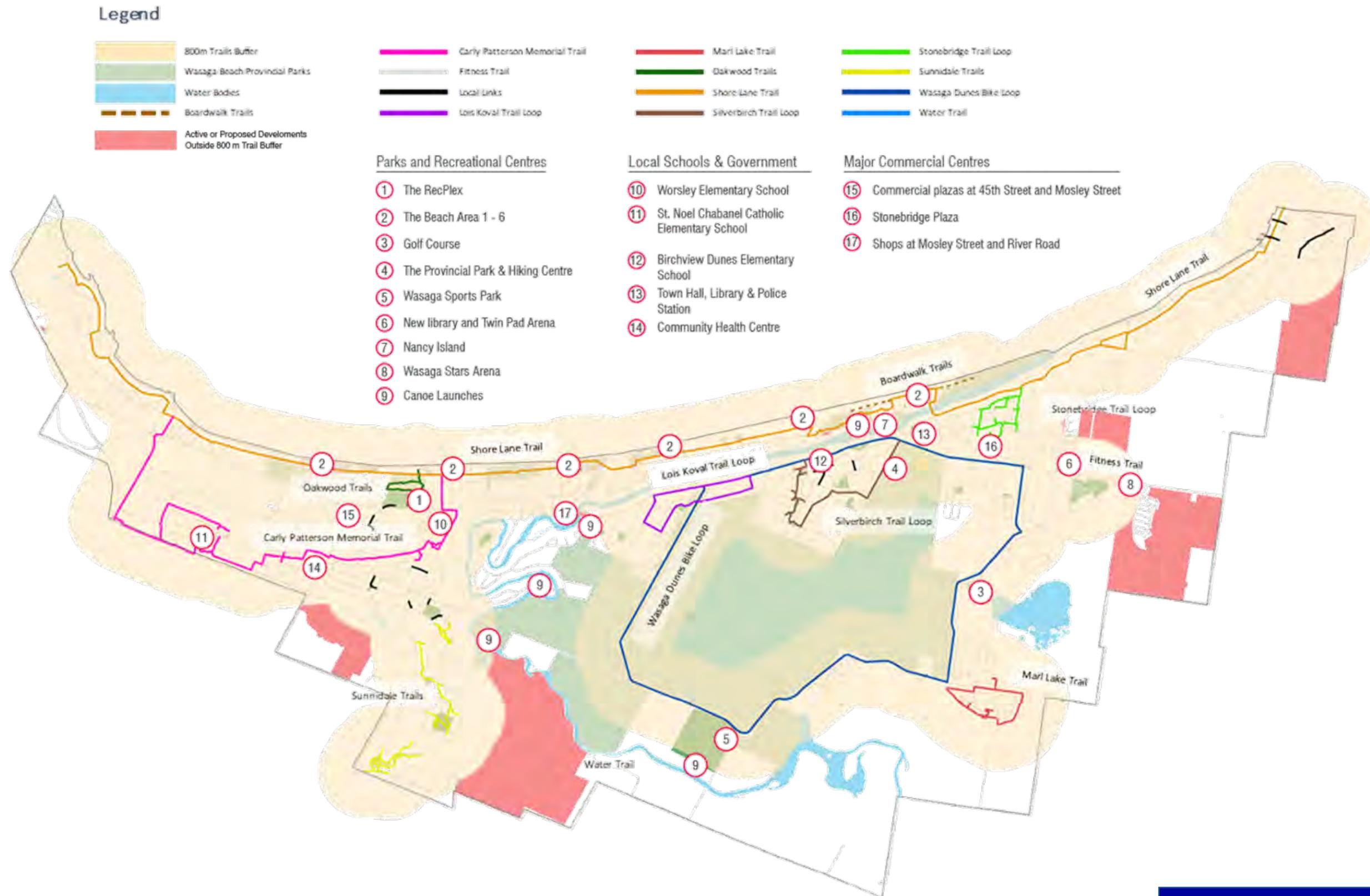
Table 12 Current and Future Destinations in Wasaga Beach

Parks & Recreational Centres	Local Schools & Government	Major Commercial Centres
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The RecPlex - The Beach Area 1 – 6 & Parking for the Beaches - Golf Course - The Provincial Park & Nordic Centre - Wasaga Sports Park - New library and twin pad arena (544 River Rd West) - Nancy Island - Wasaga Stars Arena - Canoe Launches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worsley Elementary School - St. Noel Chabanel Catholic Elementary School - Birchview Dunes Elementary School - Town Hall, Library & Police Station - Community Health Centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The commercial plazas adjacent to 45th Street and Mosley Street - The shops along Main Street (Stonebridge Plaza) - The shops adjacent to the intersection of Mosley Street and River Road West (Riverbend)

Geographic Accessibility of Trails in Wasaga Beach

The existing trail network was analyzed for the level of connectivity between trails and above-mentioned destinations served. Arguably, trails that are located close to these destinations, such as local schools, parks, recreational facilities, major commercial and employment centres, are more likely to be used more frequently. The following map illustrates the geographic accessibility of trails using an 800-metre buffer (the same distance used to assess park and playground gaps) in relation to the active and proposed developments. It becomes clear that there are still some areas within the Town that are not well-served by the existing trail system, particularly when we factor in the active and proposed residential developments.

Figure 23 Current/Future Destinations and Active/Proposed Developments vs. 800-metre Trail Buffer



Recommendations

- 35. Provide residents and visitors with **connections to important destinations and attractions** within the Town through the active transportation network.
- 36. Prioritize active transportation connections to and within **new development areas**.

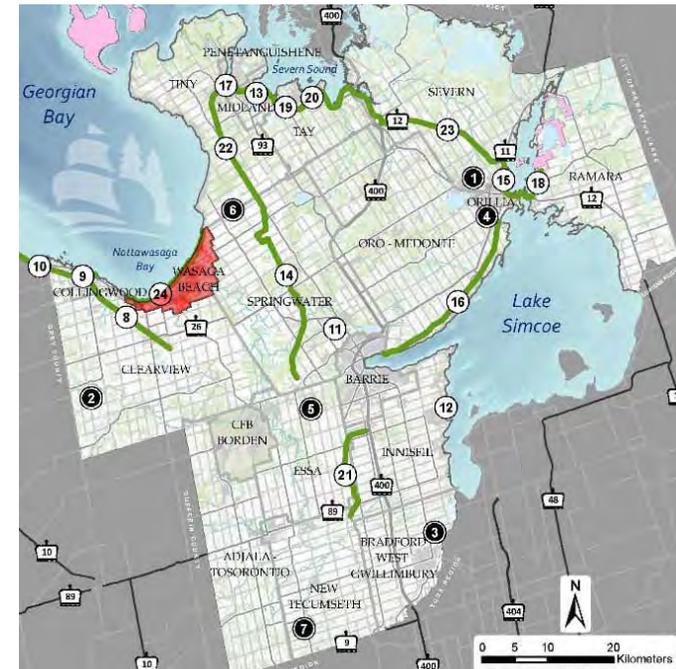
Connections to Regional Trail Network

As described above, the focus of the Trails Master Plan and the first priority is to better connect local systems together and to expand trails into newly developing areas to ensure that the system of comprehensive. The longer-term objectives should explore the potential of new trails into currently undeveloped areas and to connect inter-regionally through special projects for which partnerships and other funding partners should be secured. Arguably, linking Wasaga Beach’s Trail system to the larger regional network in Simcoe County will provide higher benefit for local communities; it will promote tourism across the broader region creating economic opportunities for the residents.

Recommendations

- 37. Link the Town’s trail network to **surrounding municipalities** by way of regionally significant trail routes identified in the Simcoe County Trails Strategy.

Figure 24 Regional Trail Network in Simcoe County



- ① Grant’s Woods Loop Trail
- ② Nottawasaga Bluffs Loop Trail
- ③ Scanlon Creek C.A. Loop Trail
- ④ Scout Valley Loop Trail
- ⑤ Tiffin Centre C.A. Loop Trail
- ⑥ Tiny Marsh Loop Trail
- ⑦ Tottenham C.A. Loop Trail
- ⑧ Clearview-Collingwood Train Trail
- ⑨ Collingwood Waterfront Trail
- ⑩ Georgian Trail
- ⑪ Hickling Trail
- ⑫ Innisfil Beach Park Trail
- ⑬ Midland Rotary Waterfront Trail
- ⑭ North Simcoe Rail Trail
- ⑮ Orillia Millennium Trail
- ⑯ Oro-Medonte Rail Trail
- ⑰ Penetanguishene Trail
- ⑱ Ramara Trail
- ⑲ Route Champlain Trail
- ⑳ Tay Shore Trail
- ㉑ Thornton-Cookstown Train Trail
- ㉒ Tiny Trail
- ㉓ Uhthof
- ㉔ Wasaga Beach Shore Lane Trail

Recommended Trail Development and Improvement Opportunities

This section presents specific opportunities to upgrade existing trails, add new trails, and improve linkages to key destinations throughout the town. Creation of a well-connected trail system will further encourage active commuting and alternatives to personal vehicles.

Trail Development Opportunities

- a) Continue to develop new trails and link to existing destinations that are not well-served by the trail system.
 - o Require all new subdivisions, commercial and public areas to connect their on-site pedestrian routes to trail access points.
 - o Where feasible, ensure that appropriate right-of-way widths for all existing and proposed roads are provided to accommodate and allow for maximum public access to the Town's active transportation network. The typical road right-of-way should incorporate a 2-metre (including buffer zone) one-way directional path for a bike lane and 1.8-metres for a sidewalk on one side of the street.
 - o Promote trail expansion and encourage active transportation in higher density, mixed use infill development areas.
- b) Given the strong need to improve north-south connections, consider a multi-use trail to connect Wasaga Sports Park to The RecPlex Complex.
 - o This requires further design development, consultation and a traffic impact study, as well as coordination with planned road works and re-paving projects.
- c) Strive to continually improve connectivity for pedestrian and bicycle travel through local neighbourhoods.
 - o Notably, there may be an opportunity to expand Lois Koval Trail Loop to the east to connect with the existing Silver Birch Trail and Blueberry Trail Recreational Trail Loop proposed in the AT Plan.
- d) Consider potential options for pedestrian bridges crossing the Nottawasaga River near Veterans Way in the long term.
 - o The eventual implementation of any of these bridges would provide greater accessibility to the main commercial area of the town and beach areas on the north effectively establishing an invaluable linkage between the trails located in the north and south sections of Wasaga Beach.
 - o Explore in depth land ownership, necessary approvals and pertinent processes associated with implementing this action.

- e) Connect existing trails within Wasaga Beach into a cohesive system of looping or circular routes over the next five to ten years.
 - o In the long-term, extend Stonebridge Trail to the west to connect with Silverbirch and Lois Koval Trail Loops, thereby creating a more comprehensive trail network on the east end of the town.
- f) Connect the new library and twin pad arena (544 River Rd West) to the existing trail network.
 - o During the land subdivision phase, a trail network could be incorporated into the plan to maintain linkages and provide a trail connection to this important destination.
- g) Extend the Marl Lake trail to the northeast towards Wasaga Stars Arena from where it can potentially extend further to the proposed site for the Town's new arena and library.
 - o This linkage arguably would offer many unique opportunities for natural interpretation as Marl Lake area is classified as a Provincially Significant Area of Natural and Scientific Interest.
 - o This may require a thorough environmental impact study to minimize negative environmental effects on ecologically sensitive areas and extensive coordination with Ontario Parks.
- h) Adopt a Provision of Sidewalks Policy which will enable the Town to install sidewalks where they are missing to complete gaps in Wasaga Beach's walking network, and help all residents and visitors connect to transit, schools and other neighbourhood amenities.
- i) Provide more bike racks across the town, especially at trailheads and major commercial developments.
 - o It is recommended that this be addressed in the short-term to demonstrate the Town's commitment to active transportation initiatives and trail development.

Trail Improvement Opportunities

- a) Consider opportunities to partner with Ontario Parks to retain a Shoreline Engineer to review and recommend remedial measures to mitigate against existing/ongoing flooding impacting the waterfront area, especially the existing boardwalk.
- b) Shore Lane is an important active transportation corridor extending across the Town from east to west; consider a reduction in the speed limit to 30 km/h along Shore Lane.
- c) Continue to improve accessibility along existing trails, whenever feasible and possible.
 - o Ensure that bollards at trail access points are designed and spaced to permit wheelchair passage but to prohibit unauthorized motor vehicular passage; wide openings at trail access points may fail to prevent unauthorized access.

- Provide a clear width of 850 mm to 1,000 mm space between bollards or other entry elements to allow passage by wheelchair users.
 - Where possible, ensure there are accessible washrooms near trailheads; in cases where it is not feasible to provide accessible washrooms, wheelchair-accessible portable toilets may be considered.
 - Strive to eliminate steep slopes, especially along the trails that has multi-use designation; these types of trails are considered to be fully accessible.
 - Designing multi-use trails to be within the threshold (5% slope) for universal access will not only overcome this barrier but it will also help to reduce potential trail surface erosion.
 - Identify trails that require additional benches and resting areas; many older adults and individuals with physical disabilities require these supportive amenities.
 - Consider providing rest areas with benches, spaced no more than 30 metres apart, to maximize the usability of the trails for people with reduced stamina.
 - Benches with backs and arm rests should be strategically placed, preferably in the shade, along all major trails.
- d) Consider realigning the Carly Patterson Trail off of Lyons Court so as to eliminate blind corners and improve sight lines in line with the principles of CPTED; this is significant, because:
- Fast-moving cyclists can be potentially dangerous to pedestrians at blind corners; and
 - Minimizing areas of concealment and improving sight lines can reduce the prevalence of fear and crime.
- e) Continue with upgrades and improvements on existing trails throughout the town.
- Provide more signage and trail amenities such as trash receptacles and parking, whenever possible.
 - Certain sections of the trail feel overgrown; branches and tall grasses should be cut to eliminate sightline obstructions or encroachments.
 - Continue to improve on maintenance practices so as to eliminate other major obstacles that could impact on trail users such as uneven surfaces, slipping hazards and low vertical clearances.
 - Provide a clear height of 2100 mm above grade (minimum).
 - Maintain a lateral clearance width of 1000 mm along multi-use trails and 500 mm along secondary trails.

Recommendations

38.	Continue to develop new trails and link to existing destinations that are not well-served by the trail system.
39.	Given the strong need to improve north-south connections, consider a multi-use trail to connect Wasaga Sports Park to The RecPlex Complex .
40.	Strive to continually improve connectivity for pedestrian and bicycle travel through local neighbourhoods .
41.	Consider potential options for pedestrian bridges crossing the Nottawasaga River near Veterans Way in the long term.
42.	Connect existing trails within Wasaga Beach into a cohesive system of looping or circular routes over the next five to ten years.
43.	Connect the new library and twin pad arena (544 River Rd West) to the existing trail network.
44.	Extend the Marl Lake trail to the northeast towards Wasaga Stars Arena from where it can potentially extend further to the proposed site for the Town's new arena and library.
45.	Provide more bike racks across the town, especially at trailheads and major commercial developments.
46.	Consider opportunities to partner with Ontario Parks to retain a Shoreline Engineer to review and recommend remedial measures to mitigate against existing/ongoing flooding impacting the waterfront area, especially the existing boardwalk .
47.	Consider a reduction in the speed limit to 30 km/h along Shore Lane.
48.	Continue to improve accessibility along existing trails, whenever feasible and possible.
49.	Consider realigning the Carly Patterson Trail off of Lyons Court so as to eliminate blind corners and improve sight lines in line with the principles of CPTED.
50.	Continue with upgrades and improvements on existing trails throughout the town.

Land Acquisition Strategies for Trails

It is fair to assume that the majority of the recommended trail linkages will be on lands that are currently or will be in public ownership.

To realize the full build-out of the network and complete the connections across these lands, however, the Town may require permission for access or in some cases a strategy to secure ownership. A range of options are available to achieve this, from handshake access agreements to municipal purchase of these lands. Each technique has its advantages and disadvantages with respect to ease of achieving an agreement, cost, and level of control that the Town can exert. Since the conditions associated with each different parcel are unique, the range of techniques should be considered at the early stages of the process so that an appropriate and effective technique can be tailored to individual situations.

Below is a summary of some of the land securement techniques that could be considered by the Town of Wasaga Beach to acquire lands to facilitate route connectivity for the town-wide trails network.

Property Purchase

The most commonly used method of land securement is fee-simple purchase. This option may be the simplest and most commonly used, but it can prove costly. It could also require reaching agreements with multiple landowners, particularly if the trail corridor is routed through private lands.

Land Exchange / Land Swap

The Town may make an exchange or swap of lands with a private land-owner for lands that may lie within the proposed trail route with other parcels the Town owns elsewhere.

Dedication through Plan of Subdivision

As identified by Section 51 of the Planning Act, this policy allows municipalities to acquire land for trail corridors through the subdivision and development application approval process. This method will prove to be the most appropriate in developing trail linkages in new portions of the Town's growing settlement areas.

Easements

An easement is a right to use another person's real estate for a specific purpose; in this instance trail development. Easements can be negotiated with private landowners as well as with public entities, such as the Town or utility companies. Because the land is not being purchased, the cost is typically less than a purchase agreement. This formal agreement is registered on the title of the property and the right to access the lands remains through the length of the agreement even if the ownership of the property change. Access easements are one of the most effective land acquisition strategies for securing lands for the purposes of creating trail connections. The Town is encouraged to undertake an appraisal exercise to determine the easement values of privately owned lands located along the proposed trail corridors. Access easements are particularly useful when planning and developing trail networks as they allow title to the land to remain in private ownership, but development rights to be restricted based on the specific easement requirements.

Land Donations and Land Lease

A landowner can donate property to an agency or organization. Tax credits may be available for land donated for conservation purposes. In the case of a land lease, the land is rented from the landowner for a set amount of time. Leases can come from a variety of sources, including railroads, utility companies and land-owners. This form of agreement does not bind future land-owners. Therefore, this option should generally be discouraged.

Eminent Domain and Expropriation

Property, or parts of property, can be forcibly taken from the landowner for use by the general public. This method is not typically recommended because it can create resentment toward the trail by the former landowners.

Unopened Road Allowances

Unopened road allowances (including beach access routes) and utility corridors are examples of linear corridors that provide excellent opportunities for trail route development.

Utility Corridors

Similarly, utility corridors in rural areas may be owned by the utility company or leased from the landowner. In the case of corridors that are owned by the utility company, there may be an excellent opportunity to develop an active transportation route.

Recommendations

51. Thoroughly examine the potential to use **unopened road allowances** as potential trail and active transportation routes prior to disposing of them/selling them to adjacent land owners. The Town should also consider and investigate the potential to use utility corridors (wherever possible), as well as other potential strategies, and use them as a starting point for developing a **securement policy for key trail connections**.

7.3. Wayfinding Strategy

Considerations and Best Practices

Information and wayfinding are an important aspect of a successful trail network as it offers a base level of information that provides guidance to the user, explicitly lists the rules and etiquette, underpins risk management, and adds to the enjoyment of the walk or ride. Through our site visits and assessment, as well as public consultation process, it became clear that – as the Town of Wasaga Beach trail system advances – the Town's existing trail wayfinding system outlined in the 2010 Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (ATWMP) study requires refinement. This includes, but is not limited to, trail style, use, accessibility, length, and directional information. To that end, and consistent with our inventory assessment and stakeholder feedback, the existing trail wayfinding program outlined in the ATWMP should be updated to ensure compliance with current industry norms, standards, and best practices.

The following considerations and best practices will help the Town in improving the existing wayfinding system:

- a) Signage stylistically not consistent with the ATWMP should be updated to maintain a consistent visual style and to create a cohesive identity. The unified wayfinding system becomes immediately recognizable by the trail user and can become a branding element.
- b) Trail users should have the ability to obtain help when using trails. Signs at the trailheads, for example, should provide emergency phone numbers (including police, fire and ambulance), which can be called for the reporting of trail issues, vandalism, or other concerns.

- c) Trailhead signs and maps at all major access points and particularly in locations such as curves, intersections, and heavily wooded areas should be used to orient trail users. Maps and signs need to communicate where you are on a trail, how long a trail experience will be, how much longer to go, how to get out of the trail, etc. A lack of awareness may discourage users.
- d) Regulatory signage should be incorporated into trail signage at trailhead locations to minimize physical clutter and enhance the natural environment.
- e) Signage should be placed so as to face the anticipated direction of traffic and are unobstructed by vegetation, fences and other obstacles.
- f) Correct names should always be used to ensure consistency with other communications media and to enhance visitor understanding.
- g) A trail signage inventory should be established that lists the type, location, and date of installation information. This would be helpful in maintaining a signage log that updates the following information periodically: type of sign requiring replacement, location of sign and reason for replacement (e.g., vandalism, deterioration), cost of replacement and timing of replacement.

Accessibility and AODA Requirements

Whenever possible, signs should be situated in a manner accessible to persons with disabilities. Factors such as viewing distances, angles of sign faces, and heights of signs should be addressed in the planning stages in order to achieve universal accessibility. Trailhead signs for example, should communicate the level of accessibility so users can make informed decisions about using various trails. Ontario Regulation 413/12 of the Accessibility for Ontarians With Disabilities Act (2005) specifies that each trailhead along recreational trails should provide signage with the following information:

- Length of the trail;
- Type of surface of which the trail is constructed;
- Average and minimum trail width;
- Average and maximum running and cross-slopes;
- The location of amenities, where provided; and
- Extreme or unique conditions (e.g., steep slopes, obstacles or narrow widths).

The AODA regulations also specifies that the text on the signs must have a high tonal contrast with its background in order to assist with visual recognition. A sans serif font is required. In typography and lettering, a sans-serif letter form is one that does not have extending features called "serifs" at the end of strokes. Importantly, if other media, such as park websites or brochures, are used to provide information about the recreational trail, beyond advertising, notice or promotion, the media must provide the same information as mentioned above. As discussed previously, the existing wayfinding system is not compliant with the AODA regulations as it uses Rockwell font.

Figure 25 Example Accessible Trailhead Signage

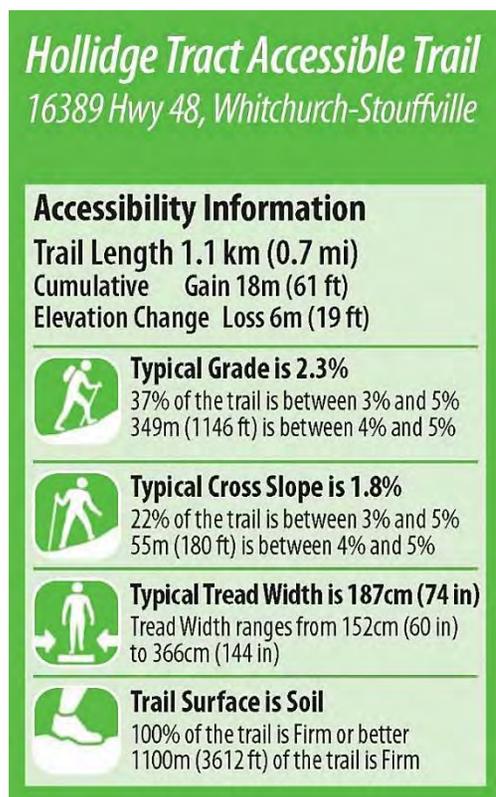


Figure 26 Rockwell font on existing signage (top) and AODA complaint Sans Serif Font Examples (bottom)



Nottawasaga River Trail Wayfinding

The Town of Wasaga Beach seeks to develop planning of orientation and destination signage along sections of the Nottawasaga River between Klondike Sports Park and the mouth of Nottawasaga Bay. A comprehensive wayfinding system is crucial in guiding the public as they paddle along the water trail. In order to provide cohesive and visually recognizable wayfinding signage on the Nottawasaga River Trail, a model has been developed as a guideline for the Town of Wasaga Beach. It is recommended that the Town follow a hierarchical approach for developing a signage system for the Nottawasaga River. Further detail is contained in **Appendix E**.

Wayfinding Partnership Opportunities

Partnerships and coordination with Ontario Parks, Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority, Simcoe County, Regional Tourism Organization 7 (RTO7), and tourism businesses and organizations would be beneficial to address some of the key issues throughout the trail system such as improving access to Ontario Parks trails/destinations and improving wayfinding system for residents and visitors.

Moving forward, coordination with regional jurisdictions and organizations should be a key element of wayfinding development endeavours. The Town is encouraged to continue to work in partnership with RTO7 and Ontario Parks in the provision of supporting signage to maintain consistency in signage design, colour, type face, and other branding requirements while supplying designs that are compliant with current industry standards (including AODA regulations).

RTO7, for example, is an organization dedicated to the promotion and advancement of tourism-based opportunities within Bruce, Grey, and Simcoe counties and has developed a signage strategy to be implemented across these counties. RTO7 has developed wayfinding standards to address primary and specific tourist-based requirements and to promote the use of a uniform system of signs across the broader geographic area. The use of a consistent system of wayfinding signs across community, county or regional boundaries will be instrumental in promoting tourism across the broader region. Importantly, RTO7 provides funding opportunities for municipalities who take part in this initiative. To be eligible for RTO7 funding the proposed signs must be consistent with RTO7 Tourism Wayfinding Signage Standards. It is important to note however, RTO7 standards allow a certain amount of flexibility to customize signs to suit the need of each participating municipality.

Recommendations

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 52. | Refine and begin to implement an improved and consistently branded trail wayfinding program which takes into account the wayfinding standards of all pertinent regional partners (e.g., RTO7), complies with current AODA standards, and complies with current industry norms and best practices. Refer to the key considerations identified in Section 7.3 of this Parks & Trails Master Plan. |
| 53. | Upgrade construction details of parking lots and trailheads to include more signage that recognizes the need for AODA compliance . |
| 54. | Implement the recommended hierarchical approach for developing a signage system for the Nottawasaga River Trail . |

8.0 Management and Operations Review

This section focuses on recommendations for the future management and maintenance of parks, trails and other green spaces within the Town of Wasaga Beach. These recommendations are based on a review of current management practices and maintenance levels and include consideration of regulatory requirements, benchmarking, best practices, user and staff safety, liability and generally accepted standards for parks maintenance.

The key goal addressed in this section is:

- a) Reviewing and Updating Services Levels for Maintenance of Parks and Trails

8.1. Current Park Management and Maintenance

From discussion with staff and based on the results of the Master Plan community survey, there are some local maintenance concerns dealing with specific parks, however there do not appear to be significant Town-wide maintenance issues. Having said that, site visits to a cross-section of trails and parks in Wasaga Beach reveal a wide variation in the type and standard of maintenance being carried out. In addition, there are some locations or specific amenities where maintenance levels are below that of comparable municipalities or do not adhere to generally accepted industry practices. This would suggest a somewhat ad hoc approach to maintenance at present; as the Town grows and the needs of the population changes, this approach will likely prove to be untenable and will lead to dissatisfaction with maintenance levels and increased pressure on staff. In order to proactively deal with this eventuality, it is necessary to take a more planned approach levels of service, especially if increased resources to deliver future services are being sought.

8.2. Park Management and Maintenance for the Future

In order to meet the Town's needs for parks management and maintenance for the future, it is important that Wasaga Beach implement a systematic approach, which can be adjusted to address future growth, changes in usage levels, and the inclusion of new activities and amenities. Experiences in other small municipalities suggests that informal determination of maintenance priorities and practices – while adequate in the past – will become overwhelmed by a growing resident and tourist population and increased sophistication and expectations of parks and open space users.

Methods

In developing Parks Operations Levels of Service for the Town of Wasaga Beach, the following methods were used:

- A review was carried out of current Levels of Service both formal or informal, and of work currently performed in parks and other town spaces through discussions with management and a front-line staff workshop.
- Current staffing in Parks Operations (by number, season, position) and the Parks Operations organizational structure, equipment inventory and the Parks operating budget were reviewed.
- Current overtime levels and practices were reviewed.
- Park hierarchy and classifications were considered in concert with work being carried out as part of this Master Plan.
- Existing park inventories and amenity assessments were reviewed.
- A cross-section of parks and facilities were visited to determine their current condition.
- Discussion with staff took place to determine any problems delivering service or areas of complaint from the public or other stakeholders.
- Draft Levels of Service for each Park Service including a definition of the service, target conditions, frequency of actions, and response times were established.
- These Levels of Service for Wasaga Beach were compared to benchmark municipalities, industry norms, and requirements related to safety and liability, regulations or legislation.

Levels of Service Structure and Scope

The activities carried out by Parks Operations are diverse. Accordingly, Levels of Service have been structured using a hierarchy which outlines the type of work done, the service levels as determined by the type of amenity or park involved, and the specific actions taken. This hierarchy consists of:

“Service” refers to the type of work done. Examples include grass cutting, waste management, sports fields maintenance, etc.

“Location / Amenity” refers to various sites, or specific amenities within sites where the Service is performed.

“Target Condition” is the desirable state for the amenity or site if the Service is being performed to standard.

“Action” refers to the specific work that is performed. This may be cyclical maintenance carried out regularly on a set schedule or may be demand maintenance in response to an inspection or resident request.

“Notes” and **“Recommendations”** include comments specific to the Parks Service Area along with recommendations for related to maintenance practices or management of the service area.

The Levels of Service detailed below incorporate the activities carried out by Parks Operations, including work in areas which are not parks (for example planters along roadways, street trees, and landscapes adjacent to Town buildings). Levels of Service apply to repair and maintenance only, and do not address replacement, redevelopment or major maintenance of Town assets.

Levels of Service

Table 13 Service - Turf Maintenance

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
“A” Sites (include Cemetery, Town Buildings)	Grass cutting, trimming, fertilizing, aeration, topdressing, overseeding.	Healthy turf cut to a maximum 3” height. Areas around structures, beds trees and hard surfaces area consistently trimmed.	Grass is cut and trimming carried out once per week from mid-April to mid-October. Aerating a minimum of two times per year. Fertilizing a minimum of two times per year.	Top dressing and overseeding, as required to repair damaged or worn areas and help to control weeds.
“B” Sites (includes Community and Neighbourhood Parks)	Grass cutting and trimming.	Healthy turf cut to a maximum 3” height. Areas around structures, beds trees and hard surfaces area consistently trimmed	Grass is cut and trimming carried out every two weeks from mid-April to mid-October.	n/a
All Sites	Leaf Cleanup – Blowing and vacuuming.	Sites are free of fallen leaves.	Each spring and fall.	n/a
Trails (includes Open Space Linkages)	Grass cutting.	Turf adjacent to trails cut one mower width to 3” height.	Grass or other vegetation is cut and trimming carried out every three weeks in season or as required to a maximum of eight cuts.	n/a

Notes:

- Turf maintenance for sports fields is outlined below.
- Parks staff feel they are generally keeping up with park turf cutting, including during spring growing season.
- Turf cutting usually continues until Thanksgiving.

Recommendations

55. Undertake **regular cutting adjacent to trails** to ensure adequate sight lines, meet CPTED objectives and improve user safety.

Table 14 Service – Sports Fields

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Soccer A and B	Preparation and maintenance of Town soccer fields to ensure safety and playability.	Healthy turf providing a safe and consistent field of play appropriate for the level of player. Field amenities in a good state of repair.	Inspection weekly. Lining weekly. Aeration and seeding spring and fall. Top dressing annually in spring. Grass cutting 2 times per week to a 3” height.	Soil testing as required. Sodding and patching of high wear areas in fall or as required. Paint and repair field amenities (goals, benches) as required.
Soccer – Mini	Preparation and maintenance of Town “mini” soccer fields to ensure safety and playability.	Healthy turf providing a safe field of play appropriate for the level of player.	Inspection, lining, grass cutting every 10 days to a 3” length.	n/a

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Ball Diamonds	Preparation and maintenance of Town ball diamonds to ensure safety and playability.	Healthy turf provides a safe and consistent outfield. Infield and warning track are level and drain properly with a smooth transition to turf. Field amenities are in a good state of repair.	Inspection weekly. Lining for all games. Infield grooming daily or as required for bookings. Warning track grooming weekly and weed removal in fall. Fencing inspect and repair as required in fall.	Home plate - rake area as required; repair or replace plate as required. Infield lip repair and turf edging 2 times per season or as required.

Notes:

- The condition of Town fields appears to be good. This may be partially the result of moderate levels of use as compared to fields in other municipalities.

Recommendations

56.	Consider installation of irrigation for A fields if the level of use of Town fields increases (especially soccer).
57.	Reference Ontario Soccer Association Field Organization Guide to ensure that full-sized fields and fields for younger age groups are meeting OSA guidelines.

Table 15 Service – Litter Pickup and Waste Disposal

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Exterior of Town Buildings; Neighbourhood and Community Parks	Pickup and removal of litter from all park areas. Emptying of waste receptacles.	Park areas are free of litter. Receptacles are emptied when more than 50% full.	Litter pickup prior to grass cutting and Monday and Friday – May to October. Waste disposal Monday and Friday.	More frequent pickup as required for events and tournaments. Pick-up of recycling as required at the Sports Park.
Parkettes	Pickup and removal of litter from all park areas. Emptying of waste receptacles.	Park areas are free of litter. Receptacles are emptied when more than 50% full.	Litter pickup prior to grass cutting and Monday and Friday – May to October. Waste disposal Monday and Friday.	n/a
Open Space Linkages and Natural Areas	Pickup and removal of litter including dumped material.	Areas are free from litter or dumped material.	Litter pickup and removal spring and fall or as required.	Pickup of reported dumped material within one week of report.

Notes:

- Recycling receptacles are currently provided at the Sports Park only. Separation of recyclable material in all locations is becoming an industry norm in municipal parks.
- More winter use of parks in the future may require litter and waste management in some parks during the winter months.

Recommendations

58. Consider provision of **recycling receptacles** in parks, in particular those with heavy use and which support events.

Table 16 Service – Horticulture

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Greenhouse	Propagation and growing of plant material for Town use.	Sufficient healthy plant material for the Town’s needs is produced.	Plant propagation – late winter. Maintenance of plants, transplanting in spring.	n/a
Hanging Baskets and Planters	Installation and maintenance of hanging baskets and flower boxes.	Baskets and planters are attractive with plants in good condition.	Inspect 2 times per week. Water 2 times per week or as required.	Remove any dead plant material; replace plants if required.
Annual Beds	Planting and maintenance of annual beds.	Beds are mulched and weed free; plants are healthy and properly spaced.	Water weekly or as required. Edge beds monthly. Mulch beds annually. Weed weekly or as required.	Remove dead plants and replace as required.
Perennials and Shrub Beds	Planting and maintenance of perennial beds, maintenance and pruning of shrub beds	Beds are healthy and attractive, weed free and mulched. Shrubs are pruned for maximum health and appropriate shape. Sightlines are maintained. Perennials are divided to be appropriately spaces.	Inspect beds weekly. Edge beds monthly. Mulch beds annually. Weed weekly or as required. Shrubs pruned during June and July as required.	Water as required. Divide and relocate perennials as required. Remove and replace dead plants as required. Deadhead perennials as required.

Notes:

- Hand weeding of beds is on a continuous cycle during the growing season.

Recommendations

- 59.** Locations for **horticultural displays** should be mapped against park classifications developed as part of the Master Plan. Using this information, the Town should review the extent and quality of horticultural displays in the inventory going forward to ensure that displays can be adequately maintained given staff resources, and that beautification is carried out in areas where it will have the greatest impact.

Table 17 Service – Play Amenities

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Play Structures	Inspection of playgrounds; repair and maintenance of play structure components and surfaces.	All play structures and surfaces meet CSA safety standards; no glass or other hazards on playground surfaces.	Monthly documented inspection by certified playground inspector. Weekly visual inspection. Annual report on playground condition completed including an assessment of lifecycle and need for replacement.	Based on regular inspection or concern from the public, repair or replacement of any damaged component within 3 days; safety concerns to be addressed immediately. Repair to surface as required; sift engineered wood fibre or sand as required. Blow off or sweep surface or top up engineered wood fibre as required.
Spray Pad Note: shared responsibility with Recreation, Events and Facilities Dept.	Inspection, repair and maintenance of spray pad components and surrounding surfaces.	All spray pad components are fully functioning; surfaces are clean and free of hazards.	Inspection and cleaning daily. Seasonal start-up and shut down (Spring and Fall).	Component repair or replacement. Surface repair. Repair within 3 days of report.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
BMX Park	Inspection, repair and maintenance of BMX park features and surfaces.	All components of the equipment are fully functional. No graffiti. No hazards present.	Documented inspection of BMX park every month.	Based on regular inspection or concern from the public, repair, removal/closure or replacement of any damaged component within 3 days; safety concern addressed immediately.
Skate Park	Inspection, repair and maintenance of skate park features and surfaces.	All components of the equipment are fully functional. No graffiti. No hazards on surfaces.	Documented inspection of skate park components and surfaces every month.	Based on regular inspection or concern from the public, repair or replacement of any damaged component within 3 days; safety concerns addressed immediately.
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	Inspection of outdoor fitness equipment; repair and maintenance of equipment components and surfaces.	Equipment is safe and functional. Surface is safe and in good repair.	Monthly documented inspection. Weekly visual inspection.	Based on regular inspection or concern from the public, repair or replacement of any damaged component within 3 days; safety concerns to be addressed immediately. Repair to surface as required.

Notes:

- Spray pad at Beach 1 is currently maintained and operated by the Recreation, Events and Facilities Department. Parks Operations assists with seasonal opening and closing.

Recommendations

60. Review **winter use of playgrounds** and consider regular inspection of playgrounds during the winter months.

Table 18 Service – Sports Courts, Boat Ramp and Rink

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Tennis / Pickleball / Basketball Court	Inspection, maintenance, sweeping, surface repair of sports courts.	Court surfaces are level, free of cracks and debris; lines are visible; nets/goals are in good state or repair and adjusted for tension. Perimeter fencing is in good state or repair; lighting is functioning.	Inspect court monthly in season. Adjust lighting timer to allow for play from dusk to 11:00 pm throughout the season (May to mid-November). Install and remove tennis nets spring and fall. Replace lighting timer supplemental battery in spring.	Remove debris, adjust and repair nets and basketball goal and backboard, repair surfacing and fencing, report non-functioning lights as required based on inspection or user concern.
Outdoor Rink	Inspection and maintenance of outdoor rink.	Ice surface to be smooth and free of debris. Ice surface to be maintained at a minimum of 2 inches thick.	Ice inspection daily. Flood and scrape ice as required. Compressor readings every two hours during rink operating hours.	Snow removal at an accumulation of 2 inches or more. Closure if rink is unsafe due to ice condition.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Canoe Launch (Ontario Parks property)	Inspection and maintenance of canoe launch.	Canoe launch is functional, safe and accessible for vehicles.	Inspect canoe launch monthly in season (June to September). Installation and removal of docks – spring and fall.	Repair or maintenance of docks, or canoe shelter as required based on inspection, user concerns or changes to water levels.

Notes:

- Hours of rink operation are being reviewed for 2020, with a view to expanding access.

Recommendations

n/a

Table 19 Service – General Maintenance

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Park and Trail Signs	Repair and replacement of entrance, information and regulatory signs.	All signs are legible, graffiti-free and in good condition.	Inspection of park signs on a weekly basis as part of litter pickup. Inspection of trail signs as part of trail inspection (see Trails).	Replacement or repair of signs. Within one week of inspection for regulatory signs; within six months for information or entrance signs.
Fencing	Repair or replacement of Town owned boundary or other fencing in parks, SWM ponds, or natural areas.	Fencing is safe and in good repair.	Inspection of all fencing spring and fall.	Repair of damage to fencing within one month of inspection or concern from a user. Replace fencing or sections of fencing as required based on inspection.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Park Furniture	Repair or replacement of park furniture (bench, picnic table).	Park furniture is safe and in good repair.	Annual inspection of all park furniture.	Repair of damage to furniture within one month of inspection or concern from a user. Replace or install additional park furniture based on inspection or user request.
Irrigation and Park Water Services	Inspection, maintenance and repair of Town-owned water services in parks and irrigation systems.	All water services functioning with no loss of water through leaks. Irrigation systems are in good repair, functional, and providing optimal amounts of water for healthy growth with no leaks or misaligned heads.	Monthly inspection. Seasonal startup and shutdown of systems (annually). Monthly testing of irrigation controllers and systems.	Repair as required based on inspection or reported malfunction. Repair irrigation system leaks or controller issues as required. Calibration, adjustment of heads and resetting of timers as required.
Washroom cleaning – parks and related facilities	Inspection and cleaning of park washrooms.	Washrooms and facilities are clean, free of litter and functional; paper products and other supplies are stocked.	Washrooms open cleaned and stocked prior to 8:00 am. Washrooms inspected hourly during tournaments and events.	Respond to washroom cleanliness, stocking or vandalism concerns based on inspections or as reported by users as required. Response throughout the day on weekends or during events; by 8:00 am the next day at other times.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Equipment and vehicle maintenance	Inspection and scheduled and seasonal maintenance of Parks vehicles and equipment.	Vehicles and equipment are functional, safe and equipped with required attachments for seasonal work.	Daily inspection of vehicles and equipment (including circle checks) prior to use. Seasonal switchover of equipment attachments spring and fall	Equipment and vehicle maintenance as per manufacturer recommendations; repair as required.

Notes:

- Washrooms are open daily May 1 to Sept 30, 8:30am to 11:00pm, and until October 15 for permitted functions.

Recommendations

61. Investigate the feasibility of providing **year-round washroom access** in selected locations (e.g., Community Parks), recognizing that washroom availability is an important concern for older users and those with small children.

Table 20 Service – Park Pathways and Walkways

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Asphalt / Hard Surfaces	Inspection, maintenance and repair pathway surface.	Pathways have an even, trip free surface with no ponding.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Annual spring sweeping.	Repair to potholes, washouts or other hazards as determined by inspections or user concerns.
Pavers	Inspection, maintenance and repair of pathways with pavers.	Pathways have an even, trip free surface with no ponding or weeds.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Sweeping annually. Treatment of weeds monthly in season.	Repair to pavers and leveling or hazards as determined by inspections or user concerns.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Limestone Screenings/ Stone Dust or Gravel	Inspection, maintenance and repair of pathways with pavers.	Pathways have an even, trip free surface with no ponding, weeds or potholes.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Addition of granular material and grading in spring or as required.	Repair to potholes, washouts or other hazards as determined by inspection or user concerns.

Notes:

- Pathways are areas designated for walking or cycling within parks and are distinct from trails which link sites and destinations.

Recommendations

- 62.** Ensure that **pavers** are weeded monthly or consider the installation of alternate surfaces.

Table 21 Service – Winter Maintenance

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Snow Clearing	Plowing, sweeping or blowing of snow following winter storm events.	Parking lots, walkways, trails and building entrances are free of snow and ice.	Mobilization of winter maintenance crews based on weather predictions.	Clearing of snow when accumulation is greater than 2 inches.
Ice Control	Ongoing ice control due to freeze and thaw or mixed precipitation.	Parking lots walkways, trails and building entrances are free of ice and slippery patches.	Inspection of parking lots, walkways and building entrances daily when icy conditions are possible.	Application of salt and/or sand as required to meet target conditions.

Notes:

- Winter maintenance is provided by Parks Operations for all Town buildings including select parking lots, pedestrian walkways and building entrances; maintenance routes address building in priority order using two shifts (3 am and 7 am); there is no specific target or standard at present for the completion of snow clearing.
- Winter maintenance (snow blowing) is provided on some trails which link specific destinations.

Recommendations

63.	Develop a more comprehensive winter maintenance policy similar to Public Works Roads Operations and a set of criteria for selected trails, walkways, and parking lots to receive winter maintenance.
64.	Develop and document a maximum time for completion of snow clearing activities following a storm event to assist with liability concerns (e.g., target condition will be met within 'x' hours of the end of a snow event). Document snow clearing and ice control activities for liability reasons (see discussion of Maintenance Management System below).

Table 22 Service – Urban Forestry

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Park Trees	Maintenance, pruning, pruning, removal and replacement of trees in Town parks.	Trees are healthy, safe and provide for appropriate sight lines.	Mulch trees annually. Inspect trees annually.	Deadfall cleanup and property pruning or removal of hazard or dead trees within 5 days based on inspection or user concern. Stumping and replacement of removed trees within one year.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Actions	Demand Actions
Street Trees	Maintenance, pruning, pruning, removal and replacement of trees on Town road right of way.	Trees are healthy, safe and provide for appropriate sight lines.	Inspect trees every 5 years. Block pruning of street trees every 5 years.	Deadfall cleanup and priority pruning or removal of hazard or dead trees within 5 days of report Non-hazardous pruning or removal within 180 days of report. Tree replacement and stumping spring and fall.
Woodlots / Natural Areas	Maintenance of natural areas, woodlands, and areas adjacent to watercourses and SWM ponds.	Trees in natural areas are maintained or removed to allow for safe access of the public and protect public and private structures. Downed trees or branches are left on site where possible. Invasive or harmful plants are controlled.	Inspection of Target Areas (pathways or other areas of public access, or structures or other assets which may be impacted falling trees or branches) spring and fall.	Priority pruning or removal of hazard or dead trees in target areas within 5 days of report. Invasive or harmful plant removal or placement of warning signage based on staff or user report.

Notes:

- This service applies to Town owned and maintained trees only.
- Town trees are not currently being consistently inspected and maintained. Levels of service as outlined above are important from a liability perspective.

Recommendations

65. Implement a system of regular inspection and maintenance for all **Town trees**, using contractors if appropriate.

Table 23 Service – Event Support

Location / Amenity	Description	Target Condition	Scheduled Maintenance	Demand Maintenance
Special Events	Support for large annual events operated by outside groups or the Town.	Delivery and setup of required amenities is completed on time and as agreed with event organizers. The site remains clean and in good operational condition during the event. Final cleanup, takedown and site remediation is completed promptly.	Delivery and setup of amenities as required. Takedown and final park cleanup and remediation as required. Monitoring of site during event for required cleaning, waste removal or assistance to event organizers.	Additional cleanup or emptying of waste receptacles during event. Turf rehabilitation of other repairs as required post-event.
Minor Events	Support for routine event bookings including sports bookings, tournaments, group picnics and weddings.	Required setup is completed on time. Park furniture is clean and in good condition. Sufficient waste receptacles are in place and emptied as required. Any post-event takedown or cleanup is completed promptly.	Delivery, setup, takedown as required, final park cleanup.	Follow up any site deficiencies or user requests based on staff availability.

Notes:

- Responsibilities for event set-up and tear down are shared with the Recreation, Events and Facilities Department and Roads Operations staff.

Recommendations

- 66.** Document the time and cost for Parks Operations staff to support **events**, with a view to reviewing options for providing this service without impacting other services. At present, staff involved in supporting events are pulled off other work or brought in on overtime.

Table 24 Service – Cemetery Interments and Monument Installation

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Maintenance	Demand Maintenance
Interments	Digging and restoration of graves; interments of remains; disinterments if required.	Graves site shall be appropriately located as per documentation of interment rights; grave to be dug so as to avoid damage to surrounding area; restoration of grave site.	n/a	Interment as required within 48 hours of notice from the rights holder. Restoration of the site as weather and soil conditions permit.
Monument Installation	Preparation of the site for monuments/markers and installation.	Monument/marker correctly positioned.	n/a	Installation of monuments or markers as required. Repair or leveling of monuments as required.

Notes:

- The above services are in addition to regular landscape and horticultural maintenance of the cemetery described under other Service Areas.

Recommendations

n/a

Table 25 Service - Trail Maintenance

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Maintenance	Demand Maintenance
Asphalt / Hard Surface	Inspection, maintenance and repair of trail surface and right of way.	Trails have an even, trip free surface with no ponding. Right of way provides for safe sight lines and appropriate width to accommodate traffic. Markings and lining on trail surfaces are legible.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Annual spring sweeping. Annual pruning of vegetation adjacent to the trail.	Repair to potholes, washouts or other hazards as determined by inspections or user concerns. Removal of deadfalls or other debris as determined by inspection or user concerns. Re-lining or marking of trail surfaces as required.
Limestone Screenings/ Stone Dust or Gravel	Inspection, maintenance and repair of trail surface and right of way.	Trails have an even, trip free surface with no ponding, or potholes.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Addition of granular material and grading in spring or as required. Annual pruning of vegetation adjacent to the trail.	Repair to potholes, washouts or other hazards as determined by inspection or user concerns.

Location / Amenity	Description of Service	Target Condition	Scheduled Maintenance	Demand Maintenance
“Natural” (Sand, Soil, Turf)	Inspection, maintenance and repair of trail surface and right of way.	Trails have an even, trip free surface with no ponding, or potholes.	Inspection a minimum of once per year. Leveling or grading in spring or as required. Annual pruning of vegetation adjacent to the trail.	Repair to potholes, washouts or other hazards as determined by inspection or user concerns.
Bridges and Boardwalks	Inspection, maintenance and repair of bridges and boardwalks.	Bridges have safe, even surface for pedestrian and cycle travel; railings and abutments are in good state for repair and are safe for required loads. Boardwalks have a safe even surface; boards are in place and in good condition; stringers are in good repair and can support required loads.	Inspection a minimum of twice per year. Detailed structural assessment every 5 years.	Debris removal, handrail, decking repair or replacement; stringer replacement based on inspection or user concern.

Notes:

- See the sections on Turf Maintenance and Winter Maintenance for additional services provided to trails.
- Levels of Service for trails on Town roads have not been included.

Recommendations

67. Investigate upgrading of **trail surfacing** where traffic warrants so as to improve safety and user experience.
68. Consider temporary installation of **trail counters** at strategic locations in order to assess use and prioritize areas for trail upgrades.

8.3. Parks Staffing and Equipment

Current Staffing and Equipment

Parks Services are delivered by a group of staff reporting to the Operations Manager of the Public Works Department. The Parks Operations staff complement current includes:

Table 26 Current Staffing Complement, Town of Wasaga Beach Parks Operations

Position	Status	Employees
Parks Foreman	Full Time	1
Parks Labourers	Full Time	3
Town Gardener	Full Time	1
Casual Labourers	6-8 Month Contract	4
Summer Students	Approximately 3 months - Contract	7

While staff have indicated that the current complement is able, for the most part, to keep up with scheduled and demand maintenance, the Levels of Service proposed above will require additional person-hours. In addition, development of additional park spaces in the Town and improvements such as new amenities will add to the current maintenance requirements. Further review based on tracking of actual person-hours to carry out activities will be required to determine the resources needed for Levels of Service and new park development.

The Vehicle and Equipment inventory used by Parks Operations includes:

- Eight trucks, including three fitted with snow plows, one with salt unit and one with a water tank, plus summer rental vehicles
- Two utility vehicles
- Five turf, utility and dump trailers (plus three event related trailers)
- Six ride-on mowers
- Three tractors
- Various implements, hand tools and walk-behind mowers

Staff have indicated that the present vehicle and equipment inventory is adequate to carry out required work in parks, but that some of the equipment is near the end of its useful life and will require replacement. There is a need to ensure consultation with Fleet prior to the purchase of new or replacement equipment to confirm that the specifications meet the needs of all users.

Recommendations

- 69.** Establish a **new Parks and Active Transportation Coordinator position** within the Public Works Department (reporting to the Director of Public Works) responsible for capital planning, public and partner engagement, project management, and special projects. This position would take the day-to-day lead in implementing the recommendations contained within this Master Plan, including policy development, tracking and commenting on Departmental interests in development applications, leading park renewal and development projects, and more.

Resourcing Required for Delivery of Levels of Service

The Levels of Service included in this report recommend some new activities and that some existing maintenance work be carried out more frequently. The following are activities or areas where additional resources (or reallocation of resources) may be required to meet the Levels of Service:

- **Waste Disposal** – expansion of recycling in parks and extending waste removal into the winter months would require additional staff and perhaps equipment
- **Inspection** – inspection of play amenities (in addition to playgrounds), trails, signs, water systems and park furniture will require staff resources and generate additional demand maintenance

- **Town Trees** – inspection, demand pruning and mulching of park, woodland and street trees will require additional staff and perhaps equipment; contracting of maintenance of Town trees is also an option
- **Trail Maintenance** – cutting and pruning of areas adjacent to trails will require staff resources and may require additional equipment

Implementation of Levels of Service

Maintenance Management System

At present the Town of Wasaga Beach uses spreadsheet software to track costs and resources used to carry out maintenance of the various park-related spaces and amenities under its care. If the implementation of Levels of Service is to be successful, it is important for the Town to know whether the standards are being met, what resources are being used, and where deficiencies are (or areas where service exceeds standards). In order to do this, implementation of a more comprehensive Maintenance Management System (MMS) is recommended.

Such a system would involve the tracking for each of the activities outlined in the Levels of Service including:

- Frequency (dates) of scheduled maintenance
- Response time for demand maintenance
- Location of maintenance
- Person-hours involved, including cost
- Equipment time, including operating cost
- Material costs (if applicable)

These parameters can be recorded through a paper-based system or through a variety of software applications designed for this purpose. Once a full cycle (or more) of records has been compiled, it will be possible to determine whether Levels of Service are being met, and where additional resources (or a shift of resources) are required.

Ongoing Revisions to Levels of Service

Over time, circumstances, user needs and preferences in Wasaga Beach are likely to change. In addition, analysis of information generated by the MMS will highlight where Levels of Service are being met, and possibly where these are being exceeded. With this in mind, it is recommended that Town Levels of Service be reviewed regularly, and adjustments be made to ensure consistency of service and to meet the needs of park users. MMS information will also help to determine areas where service is deficient due to a lack of resources or where resources need to be reallocated.

Recommendations

70. Establish a **Maintenance Management System (MMS)** for Parks Operations to track the activities included in the Levels of Service. Use the MMS to identify locations or services where Levels of Service are not being met or where service exceeds standards.
71. **Review the Levels of Service** at least every two years based on MMS information, or identify needed resources to meet the Levels of Service (staffing, vehicles and equipment, or contracted assistance).
72. Develop a formula to ensure that new park developments or redevelopments are provided with **adequate operating funds and resources**. These needs should be considered as part of the overall approval of new development or capital improvements.
73. Ensure that Parks Operations staff provide input into the specifications for **specialized parks and trails equipment** that are ordered through Fleet.

9.0 Implementation

This Master Plan is a multi-year phased plan to guide the actions, responsibilities and budget decisions of the Town regarding parks and trails services, policies and improvements. This section establishes a clear action plan for implementing the Parks and Trails Master Plan. All recommendations are summarized herein, along with priorities, timelines, and high-level costs. Potential funding sources are discussed, and a process for monitoring and updating the Master Plan has been outlined.

9.1. Priorities and Timelines

Throughout the body of this Master Plan, recommendations have been identified at the end of each subsection or topic area. By approving this Plan, the Town is not bound to implementing every recommendation or providing facilities/services in the order, amount or timing indicated; rather, this Plan provides guidance on community priorities and sets a general course for meeting the needs as they are presently defined.

The timing of the projects proposed in this Master Plan recognizes the need for phased implementation and/or outside funding sources as some recommendations are based upon what is needed and not necessarily what is financially achievable by the Town at the present time. As part of the annual budget process, this Plan will be reviewed to identify areas where the availability of resources may affect the timing of implementation. Analysis of implementation options and budget implications should be undertaken prior to approving major projects.

The Town has limited resources and cannot afford to do everything that the community desires; this is one of the primary reasons for undertaking a Master Plan in the first place. Although Wasaga Beach may be challenged in providing the appropriate financial resources to meet the Master Plan's recommendations, the Town should make every reasonable effort to implement these strategies through appropriate and acceptable means. The full implementation of this Plan will require the use of development charges, grants, fundraising and/or collaborations with community partners.

Determining priorities is an exercise that should be revisited each year prior to the Town's capital and operating budget development exercise. **It is expected that the Town will make decisions on individual projects and funding sources annually through the budget process.**

In addition to funding availability, factors that might change priorities year to year may include:

- capital lifecycle and considerations of safety;
- legislation and mandated requirements;
- changes to service standards;
- public input and community interests;
- emerging trends and changes in participation rates;
- availability of alternate providers; and
- socio-demographic changes and growth forecasts.

Priority is often, but not always, synonymous with timing – the higher the priority, the sooner the recommendation should be implemented. Priority has been determined based on an assessment of need, as identified throughout the planning process (including public engagement, trend and demographic analysis, assessments of amenities and services, etc.). Generally, municipalities seek to address the widest range of needs and achieve maximum community benefit through the efficient use of resources.

Within the tables that follow, the priority and timing of recommendations are organized into the following categories:

Priority

- **High Priority:** Immediate attention is recommended during the timeframe recommended.
- **Medium Priority:** Attention is required when high priority recommendations have been initiated or completed, or when suitable partners have been identified for funding.
- **Lower Priority:** Attention is required when high and medium priority recommendations have been initiated/completed.

Timing

- **Short-term:** 2020 to 2023
- **Mid-term:** 2024 to 2027
- **Longer-term:** 2028 and beyond
- **Ongoing:** Guidelines and practices to be followed on a continual basis

Potential Cost Impacts

(note: all cost estimates to be confirmed through future study)

- **Minor (\$):** estimated at \$100,000 or less
- **Moderate (\$\$):** estimated to be between \$100,000 and \$500,000
- **Major (\$\$\$):** estimated at \$500,000 or more

Note: In the following tables, the recommendations are numbered according to the order in which they are presented in the body of the Master Plan. They are not listed in priority order.

Table 27 Implementation Strategy: Town of Wasaga Beach Parks and Trails Master Plan

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
Park Planning Framework (Section 5)				
1. Use the Master Plan’s parkland classification hierarchy to guide the development or redevelopment of parks and open spaces according to park type, size, service level and the amenities that they provide. Incorporate the parkland classification hierarchy within the Town’s Official Plan Review and Update.	High	Ongoing	n/a	See also recommendation 3
2. Update the parks and trail inventory database and mapping annually to assist in the assessment of land requirements. Through this process, rectify park naming conventions (and associated signage) to reduce confusion caused by several parks having different names, internally or externally.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
3. Integrate the parkland tools and considerations identified in this Master Plan (e.g., targets, classifications, open space designation, etc.) and address the changes imposed by Bill 197 within the Town’s Official Plan Review and Update.	High	Short-term	n/a	Consider through the Official Plan Review and Update

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
4. Develop a parkland dedication by-law to maximize cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication as per the provisions of the Town's Official Plan and applicable legislation (most notably section 42 of the Planning Act).	High	Ongoing	n/a	
5. In areas where the supply of parkland is adequate, prioritize the use of cash-in-lieu for parkland improvements , ideally in the vicinity of the development that generated the contribution.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
6. Review protocols to involve the Town's Public Works Department in the determination and tracking of parkland requirements and dedications , including when development applications are received and approved. Review Departmental resources to ensure that parks and trails planning functions (including special projects) are adequately addressed.	Medium	Short-term	n/a	This would become a responsibility of the recommended Parks and Active Transportation Coordinator position
7. Establish a parkland target of 3.0 hectares per 1,000 permanent residents to guide future provision. Given that the current supply of parkland is adequate, the acquisition of parkland – approximately 13.7 additional hectares by 2031 – should only be supported to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) address gaps and meet growth-related needs, with a focus on equity and accessibility; b) establish urban parks within newly developing and intensifying communities, where required; c) enhance public access to the waterfront and river; d) establish linear/trail connections vital to creating a comprehensive active transportation network; and/or e) expand existing parks where necessary to install additional recreational amenities, based on demonstrated needs. 	High	Ongoing	Further Study Required	See also recommendation 3; Review adequacy of parkland dedications and cash-in-lieu to determine need for additional acquisition

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
8. Establish a strategy to improve access to parkland in under-served areas, including West and East Wasaga Beach , with consideration of alternative acquisition tools (e.g., reallocation of surplus municipal lands, purchase/lease, land exchanges, partnerships, etc.).	High	Short-term	Further Study Required	Monitor parkland dedications and real estate availability to determine need for additional acquisition
9. Where necessary to supplement municipal parks and open spaces, work with area school boards and other recreation service providers to maximize community access to quality outdoor parks and recreation amenities on non-municipal sites.	Lower	Ongoing	n/a	
10. Formalize the conditions and processes proposed in this Master Plan for parkland acceptability, conveyance, design and development through a Park and Trail Design and Development Guidelines Manual .	High	Short-term	n/a	See details in Section 5.6
<p>11. Maintain a commitment to universal accessibility, safety and comfort within the Town’s parks and trails system.</p> <p>a) Regularly consult with the Town’s Accessibility Advisory Committee and ensure compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), recognizing that some parks and trails may include areas of natural terrain that are more difficult to access.</p> <p>b) Undertake and incorporate accessibility audits into the Town’s asset management planning to identify a multi-year strategy for addressing barrier-free compliance.</p> <p>c) Engage local police services to undertake a review of all parks and trails using Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles to identify safety concerns relative to access and sightlines (surveillance).</p>	High	Ongoing	Minor (\$)	Potential cost for accessibility audits if contracted out

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
12. Emphasize the provision of amenities such as benches/seating areas, bike racks, shade (structures, tree canopy, etc.), and washrooms in appropriate park types and along trails to address the needs of all age groups.	High	Ongoing	n/a	Improvements to be identified through park renewal projects within long-term capital budget
13. Provide a balance of active and passive spaces within the parks system to support all-season recreation and sports, casual use and unstructured play, special events and cultural activities.	High	Ongoing	n/a	Improvements to be identified through park renewal projects within long-term capital budget
14. Review/update the Town's commemorative programs and establish a park and trail adoption program to support community engagement, civic pride and stewardship.	Medium	Mid-term	n/a	
15. Establish criteria and a process for identifying, evaluating and disposing surplus park properties that are no longer required to meet current or long-term community needs. Further consider the merit in declaring surplus the candidate sites identified in this Master Plan (Brillinger Parkette, Fairway Parkette, Red Pine Park) or other sites meeting the criteria.	Lower	Mid-term	n/a	
16. Redirect proceeds and operational savings from the sale or disposition of parkland to other high priority projects within the parks system.	High	Ongoing	n/a	See recommendation above

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
<p>17. Through the Town’s asset management plan and long-term capital plan, identify and plan for park renewal and redevelopment projects that address aging infrastructure and capital improvements. Candidates for consideration in the short to medium-term include Glendale Park, William Arnill Park, Oakview Woods (subject to Ontario Parks approval), and Blueberry Trail Park Central. Engage stakeholders and the public when designing new and redeveloped parks and trails.</p>	High	Ongoing	Major (\$\$\$)	Additional consultation and design required to determine options, costs and timing
<p>18. Continue to support expanded park use and programming by local volunteers through community development activities and special event coordination. Seek opportunities to integrate themes of healthy living and arts/culture/heritage into park designs, activities and events.</p>	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	Coordinate with Recreation, Events and Facilities Department
<p>19. Revisit the departmental roles and responsibilities for special event support (identified in the Town’s Special Events Strategy) to ensure that they represent the most effective use of resources.</p>	Medium	Short-term	n/a	Coordinate with Recreation, Events and Facilities Department; see also recommendation 66
<p>20. Continue to use the Official Plan and available conservation tools to guide the protection of open space, including natural areas and environmentally sensitive areas.</p>	High	Ongoing	n/a	
<p>21. As opportunities arise (e.g., development applications), evaluate the potential to secure and/or protect open space lands that provide important connections between parks and other public areas.</p>	High	Ongoing	n/a	

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
22. Support initiatives that enhance outdoor education and recreation (e.g., interpretive displays/signs and learning opportunities, compatible forms of public access and trails, etc.) within the open space system in conjunction with partners such as the Nottawasaga Valley Conservation Authority.	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	Seek/foster external partnerships
23. Maintain regular dialogue with Ontario Parks to strengthen the relationship between the Town and Wasaga Beach Provincial Park , with the common goal of providing diverse recreational and educational experiences for residents and visitors.	High	Ongoing	n/a	Coordinate with Ontario Parks
24. Prepare a Water Access Point Strategy to guide decisions relating to properties and road allowances that provide public access to the beach and river, with the goal of strengthening public access to the water and river, enhancing accessibility, and ensuring maintenance practices.	High	Short-term	Minor (\$)	External consulting services may be required; coordinate with Ontario Parks
Playground and Recreation Facility Assessment (Section 6)				
25. Initiate a playground replacement / renewal program through annual dedicated capital funding, focusing on those sites that are in the highest need of repair in the short-term, such as Glendale Park, Mills Park (Town Hall), Wasaga Estates Park, and Deer Trail Park. The goal should be to replace one playground per year for the next ten years.	High	Short-term to Mid-term	Moderate (\$\$)	Capital budget per playground location estimated at \$100,000
26. Reconcile gaps in service by providing new playgrounds within East Wasaga (New Wasaga Beach) and West Wasaga, as well as growing communities (e.g., Sunnidale, etc.) based on an 800m service area radius within urban areas.	High	Short-term	Further Study Required	See also recommendation 8

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
27. Ensure that new and replacement playgrounds consider barrier-free components, surfaces, and creative and challenging play structures with varying designs.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
28. Maintain Wasaga Sports Park as the town's primary venue for sports fields and organized beach volleyball. New or enhanced amenities should be identified in consultation with user groups and consider opportunities for full-size, lit fields as well as prospects for expanded beach volleyball and winter activities (e.g., toboggan hill, skating rink/trail, etc.).	Medium	Mid-term	Further Study Required	Feasibility and demand for capital improvements to be examined further
29. Assess the removal or replacement of outdoor fitness equipment at the Wasaga Stars Arena and Mills Park (Town Hall) when they reach end-of-life. No additional installations are recommended. Explore initiatives to increase awareness, education and usage of outdoor fitness sites.	High	Mid-term	Minor (\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
30. Consider installing hard-surface multi-use courts (e.g., basketball, ball hockey, outdoor ice, etc.) and a splash pad in appropriate future park developments, with consideration to a location(s) within Sunnidale Trails.	High	Mid-term	Moderate (\$\$)	Costs to be identified in park development budget
31. Devise a long-term maintenance / replacement plan and funding strategy for the skateboard park (which is currently comprised of modular equipment) at Oakview Woods Sports Complex (subject to Ontario Parks approval).	Lower	Mid-term	Further Study Required	Consult with skate park users; seek approval of Ontario Parks
32. Through the recommended Water Access Point Strategy, examine opportunities to improve access and egress to the Nottawasaga River for flatwater activities (e.g., canoes and kayaks), including a location to disembark near Schooner Town Park.	High	Short-term	Further Study Required	See also recommendation 24

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
33. Evaluate opportunities to establish additional community gardens at appropriate sites, such as undeveloped municipal parcels or within existing parks (with access to water), preferably in close proximity to high-to-medium density residential areas. Community sponsorships should be encouraged.	Lower	Ongoing	Minor (\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
Trails and Wayfinding Assessment (Section 7)				
34. When implementing the trails network, the underlying principles of CPTED should be considered including natural access control, natural surveillance, territorial reinforcement, and maintenance.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
35. Provide residents and visitors with connections to important destinations and attractions within the Town through the active transportation network.	High	Ongoing	n/a	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
36. Prioritize active transportation connections to and within new development areas .	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	Incorporated into Site Plan Process
37. Link the Town's trail network to surrounding municipalities by way of regionally significant trail routes identified in the Simcoe County Trails Strategy.	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
38. Continue to develop new trails and link to existing destinations that are not well-served by the trail system.	Lower	Ongoing	n/a	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
39. Given the strong need to improve north-south connections, consider a multi-use trail to connect Wasaga Sports Park to The RecPlex Complex .	Medium	Mid-term	Moderate (\$\$)	External consulting services may be required;

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
40. Strive to continually improve connectivity for pedestrian and bicycle travel through local neighbourhoods .	Medium	Long-term	n/a	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
41. Consider potential options for pedestrian bridges crossing the Nottawasaga River near Veterans Way in the long term.	Medium	Mid-term	Major (\$\$\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
42. Connect existing trails within Wasaga Beach into a cohesive system of looping or circular routes over the next five to ten years.	Medium	Mid-term	Moderate (\$\$)	External consulting services may be required
43. Connect the new library and twin pad arena (544 River Rd West) to the existing trail network.	Medium	Mid-term	Minor (\$)	Costs to be identified in park development budget
44. Extend the Marl Lake trail to the northeast towards Wasaga Stars Arena from where it can potentially extend further to the proposed site for the Town's new arena and library.	Lower	Long-term	n/a	Costs to be identified in park development budget
45. Provide more bike racks across the town, especially at trailheads and major commercial developments.	Medium	Ongoing	Minor (\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
46. Consider opportunities to partner with Ontario Parks to retain a Shoreline Engineer to review and recommend remedial measures to mitigate against existing/ongoing flooding impacting the waterfront area, especially the existing boardwalk .	High	Short-term	Minor (\$)	External consulting services may be required
47. Consider a reduction in the speed limit to 30 km/h along Shore Lane.	Medium	Short-term	Minor (\$)	Consultation with area residents is recommended

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
48. Continue to improve accessibility along existing trails, whenever feasible and possible.	Medium	Ongoing	Minor (\$)	Costs to be identified in park development budget
49. Consider realigning the Carly Patterson Trail off of Lyons Court so as to eliminate blind corners and improve sight lines in line with the principles of CPTED.	High	Short-term	Moderate (\$\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
50. Continue with upgrades and improvements on existing trails throughout the town.	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	Costs to be identified in park development budget
51. Thoroughly examine the potential to use unopened road allowances as potential trail and active transportation routes prior to disposing of them/selling them to adjacent land owners. The Town should also consider and investigate the potential to use utility corridors (wherever possible), as well as other potential strategies, and use them as a starting point for developing a securement policy for key trail connections .	Medium	Long-term	n/a	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs
52. Refine and begin to implement an improved and consistently branded trail wayfinding program which takes into account the wayfinding standards of all pertinent regional partners (e.g., RTO7), complies with current AODA standards, and complies with current industry norms and best practices. Refer to the key considerations identified in Section 7.3 of this Parks & Trails Master Plan.	High	Ongoing	n/a	External consulting services may be required
53. Upgrade construction details of parking lots and trailheads to include more signage that recognizes the need for AODA compliance .	High	Short-term	Minor (\$)	Seek grants or partnerships to offset costs

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
54. Implement the recommended hierarchical approach for developing a signage system for the Nottawasaga River Trail .	Medium	Mid-term	Moderate (\$\$)	Coordinate with Ontario Parks for cost-sharing
Management and Operations Review (Section 8)				
55. Undertake regular cutting adjacent to trails to ensure adequate sight lines, meet CPTED objectives and improve user safety.	High	Short-Term	Minor (\$)	Acquisition of new or additional cutting equipment may be required
56. Consider installation of irrigation for A fields if the level of use of Town fields increases (especially soccer).	Lower	Mid-Term	Further study required	Installation can be phased based on field usage levels
57. Reference Ontario Soccer Association Field Organization Guide to ensure that full-sized fields and fields for younger age groups are meeting OSA guidelines.	Medium	Mid-term	Minor (\$)	Should be discussed with field users for youth soccer
58. Consider provision of recycling receptacles in parks, in particular those with heavy use and which support events.	Medium	Short-Term	Minor (\$)	Can be phased based on demand and park use levels
59. Locations for horticultural displays should be mapped against park classifications developed as part of the Master Plan. Using this information, the Town should review the extent and quality of horticultural displays in the inventory going forward to ensure that displays can be adequately maintained given staff resources, and that beautification is carried out in areas where it will have the greatest impact	High	Short-Term	Minor (\$)	May result in efficiencies in terms of horticultural maintenance
60. Review winter use of playgrounds and consider regular inspection of playgrounds during the winter months.	High	Short-Term	Minor (\$)	

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
61. Investigate the feasibility of providing year-round washroom access in selected locations (e.g., Community Parks), recognizing that washroom availability is an important concern for older users and those with small children.	Medium	Mid-Term	Moderate (\$\$)	Costs would depend on the conclusions of the feasibility study
62. Ensure that pavers are weeded monthly or consider the installation of alternate surfaces.	Medium	Short-term	Minor (\$)	
63. Develop a more comprehensive winter maintenance policy similar to Public Works Roads Operations and a set of criteria for selected trails, walkways, and parking lots to receive winter maintenance.	High	Short-term	n/a	
64. Develop and document a maximum time for completion of snow clearing activities following a storm event to assist with liability concerns (e.g., target condition will be met within 'x' hours of the end of a snow event). Document snow clearing and ice control activities for liability reasons (see discussion of Maintenance Management System below).	High	Short-term	n/a	
65. Implement a system of regular inspection and maintenance for all Town trees , using contractors if appropriate.	High	Ongoing	Moderate (\$\$)	Costs will depend on established inspection and maintenance standards
66. Document the time and cost for Parks Operations staff to support events , with a view to reviewing options for providing this service without impacting other services. At present, staff involved in supporting events are pulled off other work or brought in on overtime.	High	Short-term	n/a	See also recommendation 19

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
67. Investigate upgrading of trail surfacing where traffic warrants so as to improve safety and user experience.	Medium	Mid-term	Further study required	
68. Consider temporary installation of trail counters at strategic locations in order to assess use and prioritize areas for trail upgrades.	Medium	Mid-term	Minor (\$)	
69. Establish a new Parks and Active Transportation Coordinator position within the Public Works Department (reporting to the Director of Public Works) responsible for capital planning, public and partner engagement, project management, and special projects. This position would take the day-to-day lead in implementing the recommendations contained within this Master Plan, including policy development, tracking and commenting on Departmental interests in development applications, leading park renewal and development projects, and more.	High	Short-term	Salaried position	Position is vital to the full implementation of this Master Plan.
70. Establish a Maintenance Management System (MMS) for Parks Operations to track the activities included in the Levels of Service. Use the MMS to identify locations or services where Levels of Service are not being met or where service exceeds standards.	Medium	Short-term	Further study required	Costs dependent on method used for tracking
71. Review the Levels of Service at least every two years based on MMS information, or identify needed resources to meet the Levels of Service (staffing, vehicles and equipment, or contracted assistance).	High	Ongoing	n/a	
72. Develop a formula to ensure that new park developments or redevelopments are provided with adequate operating funds and resources . These needs should be considered as part of the overall approval of new development or capital improvements.	High	Mid-term	n/a	

Recommendations	Priority	Timing	Costs	Comments
73. Ensure that Parks Operations staff provide input into the specifications for specialized parks and trails equipment that are ordered through Fleet.	Medium	Ongoing	n/a	
Implementation (Section 9)				
74. Where appropriate and consistent with municipal policies and priorities, consider alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches such as (but not limited to) surcharges, fundraising, grants, sponsorships, and various forms of collaboration to provide the best value to residents.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
75. Begin contributing toward annual lifecycle reserves to offset the repair and replacement costs associated with parks and trail infrastructure. Annual funding amounts should be increased over time to achieve fully funded status.	Medium	Short-term	Further Study Required	Consider through future Asset Management planning
76. Work collaboratively with other Town Departments and Advisory Committees to achieve the recommendations within this Master Plan.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
77. Use this Master Plan as a resource in developing the Town's annual budget documents, Development Charges, secondary plans and related studies.	High	Ongoing	n/a	
78. Implement a system for the regular implementation, monitoring and review of the Parks and Trails Master Plan.	High	Short-term	n/a	
79. Undertake a comprehensive review and update of the Parks and Trails Master Plan no later than 2030.	High	Longer-term	Minor (\$)	

9.2. Potential Funding Sources

To assist with implementation, several potential funding opportunities – in addition to direct taxation – have been identified below.

Development Charges

Development charges (DC) are fees that are collected through the building process in order to address the growth-related infrastructure needs of a community, such as new or enhanced park facilities (but not parkland acquisition). Through Bill 197, eligible capital projects may be fully funded through development charges (this amount was previously 90%, which remains in place until the prescribed date of the proposed regulations). Funding limitations include replacement portions of facilities, historical service level deficiencies, or excess capacity as a result of the pre-emplacment of facilities. Some of the items identified in this Master Plan are partially or fully growth-related, thus will be eligible for Development Charge funding.

Parkland Cash-in-Lieu

The Planning Act establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and possible alternatives, with implementation policies identified through official plans. One such alternative to land dedication is the conveyance of cash-in-lieu of parkland generated by development or redevelopment (up to 5% of residential lands or 2% of commercial/industrial lands). At the Town's discretion, cash-in-lieu may be used to purchase parkland, to acquire associated machinery or equipment and/or for parkland development. Despite some changes, these powers are proposed to remain in place through the recently introduced Bill 197 (COVID-19 Economic Recovery Act). Bill 197 also allows municipalities to establish a community benefits charge by-law to collect funds to acquire land for parks for higher-density development over a certain threshold. It is not anticipated that this tool is required in Wasaga Beach at this time.

Municipal Reserves

On occasion, municipalities may decide to set aside monies accrued from tax dollars or other revenue sources for special projects, such as the development or expansion of a specific community facility or park. In addition, annual lifecycle reserves that are earmarked to fund the maintenance and state-of-good-repair of existing facilities are becoming more common. Industry standards suggest that 2% of the capital value of assets be put into a reserve annually. An asset management plan serves to identify all capital assets, their current condition, and when the asset or components should be refurbished or replaced. Parks and trails infrastructure should be included as part of the Town's next asset management plan.

Fundraising, Donations, and Sponsorships

The capital and ongoing operational costs of constructing parks and trails are substantial and will inherently place pressures on the municipal budget. Seeking assistance from the community to contribute resources towards the construction and/or operation of parks and trails can be an effective way to provide services and spaces that are truly desired by residents. In the past, many local user groups and service clubs have collected donations and/or participated in fundraising for new facilities and this practice is expected to continue. The Town has a community grant program that provides guidance in this regard.

User Fees and Surcharges

User and rental fees for most parks and trails – particularly those that are for broad public use – are minimal as they exist to promote physical activity, social interaction and community benefits. Fees are in place for some dedicated-use spaces or amenities (e.g., sports fields, pavilions) that benefit specific groups or individuals. Increases in user fees – such as through a project-specific surcharge – can be used to offset the costs associated with capital upgrades.

Debenture Financing

In cases where alternate sources of funding are unavailable, some municipalities have shown a willingness to finance a portion of major capital expenditures. Depending on the municipality's credit rating, this can be a more expensive funding alternative and can impact the future borrowing rate and fiscal capacity.

Ongoing Government Programs

One example of an ongoing government program is the Federal Gas Tax Fund, which provides municipalities with a long-term funding stream that can be used for the construction and rehabilitation of core public infrastructure, including roads, bridges, drinking water and wastewater infrastructure, and leisure facilities (e.g., trails, on-road lanes, etc.).

One-Time Grants

Municipalities often seek financial support from senior levels of government for major municipal capital projects. In 2017, the Federal budget made commitments towards infrastructure investments through the "Investing in Canada" Plan and – in partnership with the Provincial Government – the Community, Culture and Recreation Infrastructure funding stream opened in 2019 (amounting to over \$700 million across Ontario over 10 years, with up to 73.33% support for eligible municipal projects). While the presence of an approved Master Plan is often a requirement to securing grant funding, additional staff resources may be required to assist with monitoring and applying for grants.

Partnerships

To maximize benefits to the community, the Town may consider engaging in collaborations or partnerships with the private sector, non-profit sector, or other levels of government to develop and/or operate various facilities and services. The Town has had great success working in partnership with others in the past, such as Ontario Parks, event organizations, and service providers.

Cooperation between Municipal Neighbours

Cooperation between municipalities is important to the effective delivery of parks and trails services, particularly those services or systems that transect political boundaries. Throughout Ontario, municipalities benefit from various types of cooperation, including joint services agreements that allow cost-efficient access to services by residents in another municipality.

Recommendations

74.	Where appropriate and consistent with municipal policies and priorities, consider alternative funding and cost-sharing approaches such as (but not limited to) surcharges, fundraising, grants, sponsorships, and various forms of collaboration to provide the best value to residents.
75.	Begin contributing toward annual lifecycle reserves to offset the repair and replacement costs associated with parks and trail infrastructure. Annual funding amounts should be increased over time to achieve fully funded status.
76.	Work collaboratively with other Town Departments and Advisory Committees to achieve the recommendations within this Master Plan.
77.	Use this Master Plan as a resource in developing the Town's annual budget documents, Development Charges, secondary plans and related studies.

9.3. Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

The Town should regularly review and assess, and periodically revise the recommendations of the Parks and Trails Master Plan to ensure that they remain reflective of local conditions and responsive to the changing needs of the community. This will require monitoring of activity patterns, tracking user satisfaction levels, regular dialogue with community organizations, annual reporting

on implementation and short-term work plans, and undertaking a detailed ten-year update to the Plan. Through these mechanisms – or as a result of other internal or external factors – adjustment of resource allocations and priorities identified in this Plan may be required.

Reviewing the Plan requires a commitment from all staff involved in the planning, financing, and delivery of parks and trails services, Council and the public. An appropriate time for this is prior to the annual budgeting process. The following steps may be used to conduct an annual review of the Master Plan:

- a) review of the past year (recommendations implemented, capital projects undertaken, success/failure of new and existing initiatives, changes in participation levels, issues arising from the public and community groups, etc.);
- b) identification of issues impacting the coming year (anticipated financial and operational constraints, emerging opportunities, etc.);
- c) cursory review of the Plan for direction regarding its recommendations;
- d) preparation of a staff report to indicate prioritization of short term projects and determination of which projects should be implemented in the coming year based upon criteria established by staff (e.g., financial limitations, community input, partnership/funding potential, etc.);
- e) communication to staff and Council regarding the status of projects, criteria used to prioritize projects and projects to be implemented in the coming year; and
- f) budget requests/revisions as necessary.

Recommendations

78. Implement a system for the regular **implementation, monitoring and review** of the Parks and Trails Master Plan.

79. Undertake a **comprehensive review and update** of the Parks and Trails Master Plan no later than 2030.

Appendix A – Existing Policies and Background Documents

Background documents and relevant materials relating to the Master Plan have been reviewed for use throughout the planning process, including those prepared by the Town and partner agencies. The summaries below capture key directions relating to municipal parkland development, management and operations in Wasaga Beach. Other background data such as community demographics, secondary plans, future parkland opportunities, promising practices, budgets, internal policies and procedures, and corporate and staff reports have been reflected throughout this report and have been used to inform development of final Master Plan.

Town of Wasaga Beach Reports and Plans

Active Transportation Plan (2008) & Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (2010)

With the completion of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) study in August 2008, and the Active Transportation Wayfinding Master Plan (ATWMP) study in October 2010, the Town of Wasaga Beach embarked on a planning process to improve non-motorized travel modes and to implement a unified and coherent Wayfinding System for non-motorized transportation in the town.

With this in mind, the ATP study prepared by Meridian Planning Consultants identifies ways to improve non-motorized transportation through enhancing existing walking, hiking and cycling infrastructure that would make pedestrians feel more comfortable and safer. There are many specific methods and recommendations provided in the Plan to improve non-motorized transportation: new bike lanes, trail linkages, crosswalks, sidewalks, and canoe launches by Nottawasaga River; proposed pedestrian bridges across the river; improved public transit opportunities; and parking facilities to support the pedestrian and cycling systems. The Plan also encourages the Town to work with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry to implement an integrated wayfinding system to be used throughout the town and the Provincial Park. Significantly, the Master Plan provides design guidelines for proposed facilities, including examples of best practices across the world, and recommendations on phasing, implementation and policies that would complement the Active Transportation initiatives proposed in the Plan. In addition, the study points at the potential challenges in incorporating the bicycle and/or multi-use trails into the existing or planned streetscape because of right-of-way width restrictions.

The ATWMP study, produced by PLAN by DESIGN and A+a Design Inc. in October 2010, proposes a set of sign types and standards to facilitate non-motorized travel modes and provides an implementation plan along with a list of priority projects. Importantly, the wayfinding projects are divided into three categories in the Master Plan according to urgency and importance: short term; medium term; and longer-term priority projects. One of the main goals outlined in the 2008 ATP study is the expansion of the Town's walking

and cycling networks by utilizing existing off-road trails, and on-road bike lanes. Thus, an assessment of existing trails, bike routes, and related wayfinding system is critical to properly address the proposed expansion of walking and cycling infrastructure in the Town.

Parks, Facilities & Recreation Master Plan (2012)

The consulting team of Dunbar and Associates, David A. Clark Consulting Inc., Lifetime Consulting, and John G. Lohuis and Associates collaborated in 2012 to develop the Wasaga Beach Parks, Facilities and Recreation Master Plan. The process involved an inventory and assessment of facilities, parks and programs, literature review, trends analysis and community consultation. Six key themes were identified in the 2012 Plan: deliver exceptional client experiences; develop the Town's capacity; take fiscal responsibility; thrive on partnerships; recast the Town's image; and the Town is ready for change.

Many of the issues noted in the previous Master Plan remain high priority items and are addressed through this Master Plan process. For example, the Master Plan notes the following: "Most existing parks are extremely small. Many lack amenities and do not meet today's standards. These small land parcels, which are disconnected and have small frontages, and in some cases are not visible from the road, are costly to operate and maintain because of inefficient deployment of resources ... This past practice in acquiring and developing parkland has left the Municipality with some unconnected subdivisions and isolated small park parcels which have limited use and connectivity to trail systems." The recommendations of the 2012 Master Plan have been reviewed and are used to inform this Parks and Trails Master Plan.

Town of Wasaga Beach Official Plan (2003)

The Town of Wasaga Beach Official Plan is a legislative and policy tool that sets out the vision for where and how Wasaga Beach will grow. Multiple sections of the Official Plan (adopted in 2003, consolidated most recently in 2020) discuss policies, provision standards and objectives for parks, trails and open space in Wasaga Beach. The Official Plan is currently undergoing a comprehensive review.

Existing policies relating to parks, trails and open space are contained in Section 11 (Open Space) as well as various subsections and secondary plans. Key objectives for Open Space lands include:

- To provide for a range of leisure activities for all age and interest groups;
- To preserve and improve the natural features of the Town;
- To maintain a municipal public open space system in conjunction and coordinated with the open space provided by the Ministry of Natural Resources both in terms of area and uses;
- To maintain and extend a multi level recreational trails system to service both local and regional interests;
- To maintain and enhance scenic vistas; and,
- To maximize public waterfront accessibility and develop the beach and riverfront for recreational and complementary uses.

Additional policies relating to parkland dedication and trails can be found in Section 5 (Residential) and 16 (Transportation).

Leading Sector Resources

Parks for All (2017)

Published in 2017, Parks for All is An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community. The project was a result of collaboration between the Canadian Parks Council and the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. This document aligns with and supports Connecting Canadian with Nature as well as the Framework for Recreation in Canada, particularly the Framework's third goal "Connecting People and Nature".

The Action Plan focuses on how all Canadians benefit from healthy parks and natural areas and shares the community's vision and goals for our parks. Parks for All includes a variety of perspectives that helped form a distinct set of responsibilities and practices moving forward.

Parks for All is intended to unite the parks community and provide specific actions, priorities and strategic directions. Some specific actions that may be considered through this Master Plan include:

- **Collaborate:** Reach out to unconventional partners and organizations that could creatively contribute to the Parks for All vision.
- **Connect:** Forge connections between community parks and less accessible wilderness parks by sharing information and coordinating activities and campaigns; and support the creation of new parks and the expansion of current parks to offer more opportunities for local connections.
- **Conserve:** Share expertise and best practices among the parks community; and champion the economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits provided by healthy ecosystems. Ensure these are accounted for in decision-making as contributing to stronger economies.
- **Lead:** Invest time and money in employees for the development of high-performing, dynamic, and caring leaders.

Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015)

In 2015, the Framework for Recreation in Canada (FRC) was developed by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association together with Provincial / Territorial Governments and their supporting Parks and Recreation Associations. The Framework supports coordinated policies and practices in recreation and related sectors in Canada. Its aim is to improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities, and the built and natural environments. The goals and related actions of the Framework should be considered by the Town of Wasaga Beach in the establishment of its strategic actions and decision-making related to parks and trails services. Several municipalities are formalizing the goals of the FRC through their Master Plans.

The goals of the Framework for Recreation in Canada are listed below:

- **Active Living:** Foster active living through physical recreation.
- **Inclusion and Access:** Increase inclusion and access to recreation for populations that face constraints to participation.
- **Connecting People and Nature:** Help people connect to nature through recreation.
- **Supportive Environments:** Ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and build strong, caring communities.
- **Recreation Capacity:** Ensure the continued growth and sustainability of the recreation field.

Other Notable Reports and Policies

Age-Friendly Community Plan (2016)

The Town of Wasaga Beach Age-Friendly Community Plan (AFCP), developed by Shercon Associates Inc., was completed in April 2016 and focuses on the services and structures related to physical and social environments designed to support and enable older residents of Wasaga Beach. To ensure that older adult and senior residents of Wasaga Beach are provided with a secure environment where they are able to enjoy good health and participate fully in the community, the AFCP serves as a blueprint for ongoing community relationship building and collaborative planning.

The Plan establishes a set of goals and objectives related to: town infrastructure; housing; services and supports; health care; and leadership and engagement. Strategies to achieve the goals and next steps for implementation are embedded throughout the report. Parks, trails and outdoor recreation are identified as valuable resources for helping to offer older adults and seniors with opportunities to engage in physical activity, connect with nature and benefit from social interaction.

Youth Strategy (2019)

Prepared by the Students Commission of Canada, the Town of Wasaga Beach Youth Strategy was developed in 2019 to guide youth services in Wasaga Beach. The combination of research, consultation, analysis and review by staff, stakeholders and the public provided the Youth Strategy with an informed understanding of current service needs, strengths and weaknesses.

The Strategy focuses on three recommendation areas: build a sense of community; develop programs and services; and improve accessibility. From a parks, outdoor recreation and trails perspective, the strategy highlights demand for a network of skate parks, interest in a new or improved youth centre (or youth-friendly community centre), and recommends new programs and services where needed (including development of unstructured play-spaces across Wasaga Beach). This report, along with multiple leading sector documents, focus on the importance of providing youth with safe and comfortable spaces for social interaction, physical activity and unstructured play – many of which are supported by municipal parks and trails.

Additional Background Documents Considered

National, Provincial and County Documents

- County of Simcoe Trails Strategy (2014)
- County of Simcoe Transportation Master Plan (2014)
- Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2018)
- Healthy Parks Healthy People – The Green Prescription Project (2017)
- Ontario Parks – Wasaga Beach Park Planning: Background Information, Management Topics and Options (2018)
- RTO7 Wayfinding Signage Standards and Specifications (2017)

Other Town Policies, Reports and Initiatives

- Development Charges Background Study (2015)
- Growth Management Discussion Paper (2017)
- Multi-Year Accessibility Plan (2018 – 2022)
- Tourism Destination Management Plan (2018)
- Wasaga Beach Community Hub Economic Analysis (2018)
- Wasaga Beach Downtown Development Master Plan (2017)
- Wasaga Beach Guide (2019 & 2020)
- Various other staff reports, service level standards, and operating procedures, etc.

Appendix B – Tabulated Survey Responses

Q1: In the past 12 months, which of the following activities have you or anyone in your household participated in, in Wasaga Beach or elsewhere? (select all that apply)

	#	%
Walking	188	97%
Cycling	130	67%
Hiking	114	59%
Use of Playground Equipment	96	49%
River Paddling (canoe, kayak, etc.)	81	42%
Running	45	23%
Nordic Skiing	44	23%
Wheeled Sports	25	13%
Use of Mobility Aids	10	5%
Total	733	
Answered Question	194	100%

Q2: In the past 12 months, which of the following trail types have you or anyone in your household used in Wasaga Beach? (select all that apply)

	#	%
Beach Boardwalk	160	82%
Sidewalk	154	79%
Any Natural or Stone Trail (e.g. limestone, dirt, woodchip, grass, etc.)	153	78%
Any Hard Surface Trail (e.g. asphalt, concrete)	142	73%
On-road Trail or Bike Lane	121	62%
Any Nordic Trail	87	45%
Nottawasaga River Water Trail (paddling)	66	34%
Total	883	
Answered Question	195	100%

Q3: On average, how often did your household use trails in Wasaga Beach in the past 12 months? (select one response only)

	#	%
Every day	30	15%
Almost daily	64	33%
Once a week	41	21%
A few times a month	45	23%
Once a month	3	2%
Less than once a month	7	4%
Don't know	0	0%
Not applicable - don't participate in trail activities	5	3%
Total	195	100%

Q4: Where does your household primarily use trails? (select one response only)

	#	%
Mostly on Town Lands	38	19%
Mostly at Wasaga Beach Provincial Park	50	26%
Both Equally	82	42%
Don't know - not aware of who owns the land	16	8%
Other	3	2%
Not applicable - don't participate in trail activities	6	3%
Total	195	100%

**Q5: What are the main reasons your household uses trails in Wasaga Beach?
(select all that apply)**

	#	%
For fitness or recreation	173	89%
For nature appreciation	148	76%
To access the beach	98	50%
To access parks	72	37%
To go to the store	31	16%
To go to school	11	6%
To go to work	6	3%
Other	17	9%
Not applicable - don't participate in trail activities	6	3%
Total	562	
Answered Question	195	100%

**Q6: Are you and members of your household able to participate in trail activities
as often as you like?**

	#	%
Yes	140	72%
No	50	26%
Don't know	4	2%
Total	194	100%

Q7: If "No" to the previous question: Why are you and members of your household not able to participate in trail activities as often as you would like? (select one response only)

	#	%
Lack of personal time/Too busy	28	29%
Trails do not have necessary support amenities (seating, washrooms, parking, etc.)	15	15%
Trails do not connect to desired destinations	11	11%
Unaware of where trails are located	10	10%
Health problems or disability	9	9%
Trail is too far away	8	8%
Trails are not physically accessible	5	5%
Trails are not well maintained	4	4%
Don't feel safe using trails	4	4%
Trails are too busy	1	1%
Other	1	1%
Don't know	1	1%
Not interested in participating in trail activities	0	0%
Total	97	100%

Q8: In the past 12 months, which of the following amenities have you or anyone in your household used in Wasaga Beach? (select all that apply)

	#	%
Passive Park with Open Space	91	69%
Neighbourhood Park with Playground	71	54%
Community park with sport amenities (e.g., soccer fields, ball diamonds, etc.)	64	48%
Active Park with recreation amenities (e.g. outdoor fitness equipment, skate/BMX park, splash pad, etc.)	51	39%
Total	277	
Answered Question	132	100%

Q9: On average, how often did your household use parks in Wasaga Beach in the past 12 months? (select one response only)

	#	%
Every day	10	5%
Almost daily	46	24%
Once a week	54	28%
A few times a month	52	27%
Once a month	8	4%
Less than once a month	10	5%
Don't know	4	2%
Not applicable - don't participate in parks activities	10	5%
Total	194	100%

Q10: What are the main reasons your household uses parks in Wasaga Beach? (select all that apply)

	#	%
For fitness or recreation	141	73%
For nature appreciation	119	62%
To watch your children play	67	35%
To socialize, picnic, etc.	60	31%
To attend events	55	29%
To participate in sports	48	25%
Other	14	7%
Not applicable - don't participate in parks activities	7	4%
Total	511	
Answered Question	192	100%

Q11: Are you and members of your household able to participate in parks activities as often as you like?

	#	%
Yes	141	73%
No	42	22%
Don't know	11	6%
Total	194	100%

Q12: If "No" to the previous question: Why are you and members of your household not able to participate in parks activities as often as you would like? (Select up to three responses)

	#	%
Lack of personal time/Too busy	23	55%
Park is too far away	16	38%
Parks do not have necessary support amenities (seating, washrooms, parking, etc.)	12	29%
Health problems or disability	8	19%
Parks do not have necessary recreation amenities (fields, courts, playgrounds, etc.)	6	14%
Unaware of where parks are located	4	10%
Parks are not well maintained	3	7%
Parks are too busy	2	5%
Parks are not physically accessible	1	2%
Don't feel safe using parks	0	0%
Other	3	7%
Don't know	1	2%
Not interested in participating in parks activities	0	0%
Total	79	
Answered Question	42	100%

Q13: In general, how important are the following items to your household?

	Not at all important	Not important	Neither important or Not important	Important	Very Important	Don't know	Total
Active Parks	1	1	12	28	27	1	70
Beach Access Points	2	0	2	21	44	2	71
Community (sport) Parks	1	2	9	25	32	0	69
Hard Surface Trails	2	3	13	32	20	0	70
Natural Trails	0	0	2	16	53	0	71
Neighbourhood Parks	0	2	6	28	32	0	68
On-road Bike Routes	8	4	11	16	30	1	70
Passive Parks	1	1	11	27	20	5	65
Playgrounds	4	5	8	25	28	0	70
Signage and Wayfinding for Parks and Trails	1	2	3	23	40	2	71

Q14: Thinking about those facilities that currently exist in the Town of Wasaga Beach, what is your level of satisfaction with the following?

	Not at all satisfied	Not Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Not Satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't know	Total
Active Parks	1	6	30	39	3	14	93
Beach Access Points	6	18	15	42	10	2	93
Community (sports) Parks	1	7	24	43	8	10	93
Hard Surface Trails	6	17	28	35	3	6	95
Natural Trails	3	12	17	42	18	3	95
Neighbourhood Parks	2	16	22	43	4	7	94
On-road Bike Routes	7	22	27	22	2	12	92
Passive Parks	1	8	27	37	4	14	91
Playgrounds	1	13	23	38	4	14	93
Signage and Wayfinding for Parks and Trails	9	22	24	31	2	6	94

Q15: To what degree do you oppose or support the Town spending additional public funds on improving the following parks and outdoor recreation facility types?

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Oppose nor Support	Support	Strongly Support	Don't know	Total
Park Washrooms	0	0	6	29	62	1	98
Beach Access Points	0	1	7	35	52	2	97
Seating/Benches in Parks	1	0	9	40	47	1	98
Playgrounds	0	0	14	48	33	2	97
Outdoor Ice Rinks	0	0	18	37	36	2	93
Park Pavillions/Gazebos	2	2	16	47	26	1	94
Community Gardens	2	2	14	43	30	4	95
Splash Pads	0	1	22	40	32	2	97
Canoe Launches	1	1	20	41	27	4	94
Basketball Courts (outdoor)	1	0	29	46	15	2	93
Soccer and Multi-use Fields	2	1	29	43	17	3	95
Baseball or Softball Diamonds	1	2	32	34	21	3	93
Tennis Courts	1	2	38	30	21	2	94
Off-Leash Dog Parks	5	10	34	32	14	2	97
BMX Pump Tracks	2	6	36	37	7	7	95
Pickleball Courts	2	3	42	31	12	4	94

Q16: To what degree do you oppose or support the town spending additional public funds on improving the following trails?

	Strongly Oppose	Oppose	Neither Oppose nor Support	Support	Strongly Support	Don't know	Total
Natural Trails	0	1	4	38	51	1	95
On-road Bike Routes	3	3	11	44	30	2	93
Hard Surface Trails	1	2	14	47	27	3	94
Off-Road Signed Cycling Trails	2	1	14	39	35	3	94

Q17: Please indicate your level of support with the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Don't Know	Total
Continue to partner with Ontario Parks to improve park and trail connectivity.	0	0	6	42	45	2	95
Investment in parks and trails should be a high priority for Town Council.	0	3	8	39	40	3	93
Town-owned trails are well maintained.	3	6	21	48	5	10	93
You are confident that you know where most local parks and trails are located.	3	19	15	42	10	5	94
Your household has reasonable access to a quality public playground.	8	11	16	37	13	9	94
The Town should invest in additional land for waterfront and beach access.	3	17	22	25	24	3	94
The Town should acquire new parkland to expand the park system.	1	16	26	25	20	5	93
Parks and trails are accessible for persons with disabilities.	6	13	29	19	8	17	92
The Town's parks are effective in meeting the needs of all ages, including older adults.	6	29	27	23	4	4	93
The Town should consider selling small parks that are under-utilized and surplus to needs.	23	29	14	13	6	9	94

Q18: Please provide any additional comments or suggestions you may have regarding parks and trails in the Town of Wasaga Beach. (open-ended)

<i>Top 10 Response Categories</i>	#
<i>Address Trail Gaps / Construct More Trails</i>	15
<i>Improve Trail / Park Signage, Wayfinding and Brochures</i>	11
<i>Provide More Parks / Address Gap in West End</i>	10
<i>Improve Playgrounds</i>	9
<i>Improve Trail / Park Maintenance</i>	8
<i>More Winter Maintenance / Activities</i>	7
<i>Install Another Splash Pad</i>	6
<i>Outdoor Fitness Equipment on Trails</i>	5
<i>Better / Safer Cycling Routes</i>	5
<i>More / Improved Washrooms</i>	5
Total	81

Q19: How many people including yourself, live in your household?

	#	AVG.
Number of people	557	2.86
Answered Question	195	

Q20: What are the ages of the people living in your household?

	#	%	2016 Census
0 to 9 years	60	11%	8%
10 to 19 years	75	14%	9%
20 to 39 years	88	16%	16%
40 to 59 years	156	29%	26%
60 to 79 years	150	28%	36%
80 years or more	6	1%	7%
Total	535	100%	100%

Q21: Are you a resident of the Town of Wasaga Beach?

	#	%
Permanent/Seasonal	189	97%
No	6	3%
Total	195	100%

Q22: In which part of Wasaga Beach do you live?

	#	%	Stas Can #	DAs %
West	74	40%	6116	30%
East	66	35%	3490	17%
Central - South (South of Mosley Street / River Road West)	36	19%	7789	38%
Central - North (North of Mosley Street)	14	8%	3231	16%
Total	190		20626	100%
Answered Question	186	100%		

Q23: If not a resident of the Town of Wasaga Beach, in which community do you reside?

	#
<i>Adjacent township</i>	1
<i>Clearview</i>	1
<i>Collingwood</i>	1
<i>Tiny</i>	1
<i>Toronto</i>	1
<i>Vaughan</i>	1
Total	6

What is your connection to Wasaga Beach? (check all that apply)

	#	%
Resident	180	93%
Landowner in Wasaga Beach, but live elsewhere	16	8%
Business Owner	14	7%
Visitor/Tourist	4	2%
Other (please specify)	6	3%
Total	220	
Answered Question	193	100%

How do you identify? (will remain confidential)

		Male	Female	Other	Total
Gender	#	34	62	1	97
	%	35%	64%	1%	100%

What is your age? (will remain confidential)

		Under 18 years	18-24 years	25-44 years	45-64	65 years or older	Total
Age	#	0	0	22	45	30	97
	%	0%	0%	23%	46%	31%	100%

Appendix C – Park Profiles

All of the Town’s current park properties have been summarized through park profiles below. Each profile includes a photo of the property, description of park uses and unique site features.

Community Parks

Park Image	Park Name & Description
 A photograph of an outdoor tennis court with blue and green surfaces, surrounded by trees and a clear sky.	<p>McIntyre Creek Tennis Courts</p> <p>McIntyre Creek provides two tennis courts and one multi-use tennis (1) or pickleball (4) court with outdoor sport court tiles; all are in good to excellent condition. All courts are unlit and there is a gravel parking lot. The site also connects to an adjacent wooded trail network (Sunnidale Trails – McIntyre Creek Trail).</p>
 A photograph of a wooded area with a dirt path, trees, and a small structure, likely part of the Oakview Woods Sports Complex.	<p>Oakview Woods Sports Complex</p> <p>Oakview Woods Sports Complex is a popular community destination located on Mosley Street. The park contains a BMX pump track, off-leash dog park, skateboard park, 4 tennis courts (2 of which are lined for pickleball), gazebo, playground (installed in 2006), swings (sand base), the Town’s only refrigerated outdoor ice rink (shared with two tennis courts and operated by the Public Works Department), and a former visitors’ centre / washroom building. The Sports Complex is adjacent to the Wasaga Beach YMCA and RecPlex, and connects to the Oakview Woods trails network (Ontario Parks) and Beach Areas 5 and 6. The Oakview Woods property is owned by Ontario Parks and the Town has a land-lease agreement. A continued focus on asset management is a priority for this location.</p>

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Wasaga Sports Park

As the Town's primary venue for outdoor recreation, Wasaga Sports Park (also referred to as Klondike Park) provides all of the town's permitted sports fields, including 14 soccer fields (configuration varies seasonally; 1 with lights) and 5 ball diamonds (1 with lights; no mounded diamonds). In addition, the Park contains: a banquet hall and canteen (Fernbrook Recreation Centre), pavilion, sand volleyball courts (2), outdoor fitness equipment, playground structure (installed in 2012), off leash dog park, horseshoe pits, a driving range (leased), canoe launch along the Nottawasaga River (Ontario Parks property), butterfly garden, orchard, and maintenance building/yard. The park is also home to several clubs (ATV, snowmobiling, skydiving), some of which have their own buildings/spaces. The park is situated at the south end of town and, due to its location, is typically accessed by vehicle. Municipal water services will be extended to the site shortly, creating an opportunity for field irrigation if required. The Town owns the woodlot to the west of the site, providing possible land for future park expansion.



Wasaga Stars Arena

The Wasaga Stars Arena property includes a landscaped garden feature, multi-use court (ball hockey and basketball), 4 pickleball courts (recently refurbished, including new seating area), outdoor fitness equipment (older and in poor condition) and connects to a looped network of trails (Fitness Trail). The Town has recently committed to replacing the arena with a new twin pad arena and library on a nearby site; the future of the existing arena has not been determined.

Neighbourhood Parks

Park Image	Park Name & Description
	<p>Batteaux Park</p> <p>Batteaux Park is located in the centre of a looped road (Oxbow Park Drive) and is found in a back-lotted wooded area which includes a playground structure (installed in 2011). The site lacks visibility from the street and identifiable entry-points.</p>
	<p>Blueberry Trail Park Central</p> <p>Blueberry Trail Park Central includes a paved pathway throughout, large open space at the rear, swings (sand base) and playground near the road (installed in 2009) and offers off-street parking. The park serves as a connector between the Blueberry Trails Network (Ontario Parks) and neighbouring Wasaga Beach residences.</p>

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Deer Trail Park

Deer Trail Park is located on Fernbrook Drive and includes a small garden feature, off-street parking, swings and a playground (installed in 2003; sand base), as well as open space (has been used as a mini soccer field in the past).



Glendale Community Park

Glendale Community Park has frontage on three streets and is uniquely divided by a line of trees. On the west side (Riverdale Drive) are a passive area with bench, open space (has been used as a mini soccer field in the past) and memorial plaque. On the east side (Glen Eaton Road) are swings, a playground structure (installation date unknown, but in poor condition and likely older; sand base) and overgrown garden. The size of this park, age of infrastructure, and sightline issues make it a good candidate for renewal and possible renaming as it does not function as a “community” park.



Mills Park (Town Hall)

Located adjacent to Wasaga Beach Town Hall, this park includes a tennis court (unlit; lined for pickleball), outdoor fitness equipment, swings and a playground (installed in 2005). A continued focus on asset management is a priority for this location.

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Red Berry Park

Red Berry Park is situated between a stormwater management pond and residential street (Meadowood Drive). The park includes swings and a playground (installed in 2013) near the street entrance and a paved pathway connecting the park to a neighbouring trail network and looped path around the pond.



Red Oak Park & Trail

Red Oak Park is located in the centre of a residential subdivision (back-lotted wooded area) with a playground (installed in 2013), swings (sand base) and looped trail in the centre. The park is well-connected to neighbouring residences through multiple access points (Knox Road West, Frederick Drive, Red Oak Drive, Matthew Court) but lacks visibility from area streets.



Chase Family Park

Chase Family Park is the only municipal park on the east end of Wasaga Beach. It fronts on Sunward Drive and includes swings and a playground (installed in 2007), as well as a paved pathway throughout the site.

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Wasaga Estates Park

Wasaga Estates Park is located at the edge of a three-way intersection (Leo Boulevard and Langevin Drive) in a residential subdivision. The park includes a picnic table, swings and playground (installed in 2001; sand base) along a wooded area.



Wasaga Village Park

Wasaga Village Park includes a picnic table, playground structure (installed in 2009) and paved pathway to connect between local streets (White Sands Way, Grand Poplar Lane and Culham Trail).



William Arnill Memorial Park

William Arnill Memorial Park (also known as Wasaga Sands Park) includes a large sloped open space (dry stormwater pond with screened track around the base; formerly used for sports fields and occasionally used as an informal toboggan hill), off-street parking, swings and playground (installed in 2006). The sloped area is used as a toboggan hill in the winter months. This is the Town's largest neighbourhood park and a candidate for future improvement and/or redevelopment.

Parkettes

Park Image	Park Name & Description
 A photograph of Brillinger Parkette, showing a narrow strip of green space with a gravel path leading into a dense line of trees.	<p>Brillinger Parkette</p> <p>Brillinger Parkette is a linear strip of green space along the edge of Brillinger Drive. This passive park provides area residents with shaded picnic tables and is located on the same site as the community mail boxes for the neighbourhood.</p>
 A photograph of Fairway Parkette, featuring a grassy area with a wooden bench, a large purple-leaved tree, and a tall evergreen tree in the background.	<p>Fairway Parkette</p> <p>Fairway Parkette is located along the bend of Fairway Crescent and contains open green space and bench seating for passive use.</p>

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Golfview Park

Golfview Park (also referred to as Marlwood Park) provides residents of Marlwood Avenue and surrounding area with open space, gazebo, interpretive signage, a pollinator garden and other landscaped features. Although the parkette is centrally located in the subdivision, there is no sidewalk access to the site.



Goose Garden

Located at the corner of River Road West and Oxbow Park Drive, Goose Garden is a landscape feature that includes a footpath throughout, interpretive signage and namesake ornamental geese.



Peacekeepers Park

Peacekeepers Park was developed by the Town of Wasaga Beach and dedicated as a veteran's memorial in 2015 (when Power Line Road was renamed to Veteran's Way). The beautifully landscaped garden is located at the northeast corner of Veteran's Way and River Road West and includes a pollinator garden, memorial plaques, flags and other commemorative features honouring Canadian veterans and peacekeepers.

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Red Pine Park

Red Pine Park is an open space located at the corner of Red Pine Crescent and Meadowlark Boulevard. The park includes a small garden feature and connects to Mosley Street (and commercial area) via a multi-use pathway around the adjacent stormwater management pond. This location may have potential to accommodate a playground should one be required in the area.



Rotary Clock Tower Garden

The Rotary Clock Tower garden is located in the centre of a traffic island at the intersection of Main Street and River Road West. The site serves as a gateway feature and includes a small water feature, clock tower and concrete path.



Stonebridge Park & Silhouette Trail

Stonebridge Park is a passive park including a large gazebo and connections to the Stonebridge/Silhouette Trail (described in the **Trail Infrastructure and Wayfinding Inventory**). The park also includes scenic views of the adjacent stormwater management pond and is within walking distance to one of the town's commercial areas.

Urban Plazas

Park Image	Park Name & Description
	<p>Beck Square</p> <p>Beck Square functions as a hardscaped civic space in the centre of the downtown core. The square includes a mural, seating area, plaque and small garden features.</p>
	<p>Main Street Garden</p> <p>The Main Street garden functions as a gateway to Wasaga Beach's downtown area. The garden is located on the north-west corner of Main Street and River Road East and is maintained by the Ganaraska Hiking Trail Association. The park is being renovated in 2020.</p>

Natural Areas

Park Image	Park Name & Description
	<p>Blueberry Trail Park North & South</p> <p>The North and South Blueberry Trail Parks are passive parks located in close proximity to the Wasaga Nordic and Trail Centre (Ontario Parks) along the western edge of the Wasaga Beach Provincial Park dunes property. These two parks (along with Blueberry Trail Park Central, a neighbourhood park) help to connect the provincial park's Blueberry Trails system with the neighbouring residential community.</p>
	<p>Pridham Park</p> <p>Pridham Park is a large piece of open greenspace located in close proximity to the McIntyre Creek Tennis Courts and Sunnidale Trails on Pridham Court. The park formerly contained a ball diamond, but the site is now available for passive use and includes a small Butternut Tree orchard with limited street access.</p>

Park Image

Park Name & Description



Silver Birch Central and Trail

Silver Birch Central and Trail is a passive green space and trail (described in the **Trail Infrastructure and Wayfinding Inventory**). The trail entry points are located at Silver Birch Avenue (multiple access points), Evergreen Crescent, Acorn Crescent, Brouwer Crescent and Silversands Crescent.



Silver Birch South

Silver Birch South is an extension of the Silver Birch Park Central and Trail and is located at the apex of Bush Crescent, Silver Birch Avenue and Regina Boulevard. The site includes a large woodlot with open space and connects to Wasaga Beach Provincial Park (dunes property).

Open Space Linkages

Park Image	Park Name & Description
	<p>Dyer Drive Parkette</p> <p>Dyer Drive Parkette is a wooded pathway that serves to connect residents living in the Dyer Drive area to the Town's major artery, River Road West (via Goldsmith Place). The site is easily identified through open fencing at both entry points.</p>

Appendix D – Undeveloped Municipal Properties

One option for addressing parkland gaps – aside from the development process or acquisition – is the use of undeveloped municipally-owned lands. The following table and map illustrate the results of a preliminary evaluation of undeveloped municipal properties. While all municipally-owned sites were initially considered, potential candidate sites were short-listed to those that:

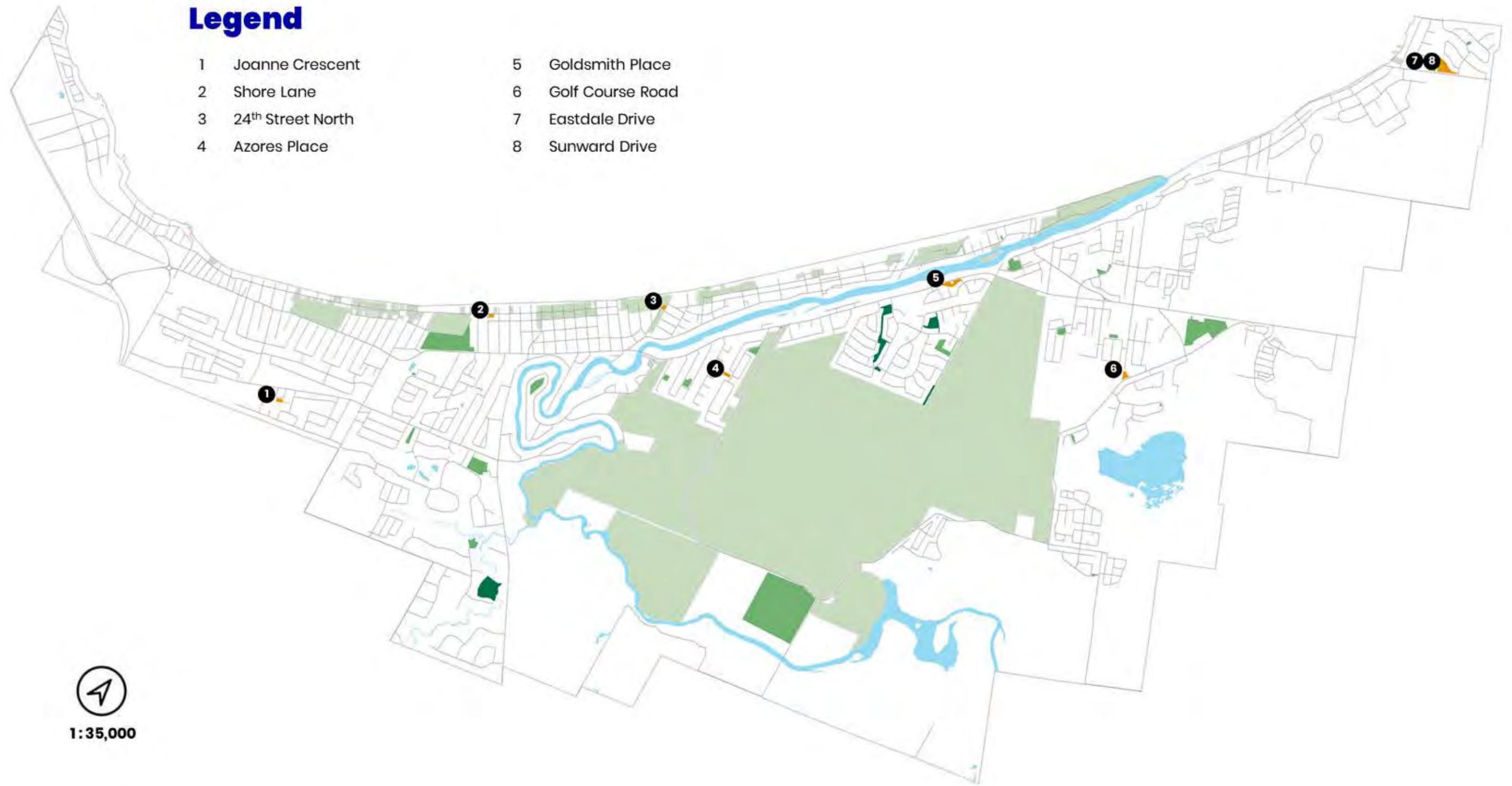
- are owned by the Town of Wasaga Beach, but are not actively occupied with permanent municipal uses;
- are generally 0.5 hectares or larger (the minimum recommended size for a neighbourhood park);
- are not designated for commercial or industrial uses;
- are not designated as Natural Hazard or Natural Heritage Systems; and
- are not largely land-locked, have poor visibility or are of poor configuration.

While the preliminary analysis does not identify any high priority sites for park development, further analysis is suggested to verify these findings.

Table 28 Summary of undeveloped municipally-owned lands (future parkland development opportunities)

Map ID	Legal Description	Location	Area (ha)	OP Designation	Current Use / Description	Park Potential
1.	REG COMP PLAN 1700 LOT 49 RCP 1700 PT LOTS 47 AND 48; AND RP 51R39118 PART 2	JOANNE CRES JOANNE CRES	0.30 0.29	Residential	Undeveloped residential / road allowance?	Low priority – in gap area but lands in nearby subdivision (Zancor / Marocco) to be developed as park
2.	PLAN 805 LOT 119 TO 122	1067 SHORE LANE	0.46	Residential	Woodlot	Not a priority – near Oakview Woods; would require extensive clearing
3.	PLAN 679 LOT 30 RP 51R7867; PART 9 TO PART 11 PLAN 679 LOT 31	31 24TH ST N 35 24TH ST N	0.32 0.16	Open Space	Town parking south of Beach Area 4	Low priority – in minor gap area, but adjacent to Beach Area 4 and currently used as resident parking lot
4.	PLAN M362 BLKS 18 19 & 26	AZORES PLACE	0.52	Residential	Paved open space linkage / woodlot	Not a priority – near several parks, including Glendale Park; continue to maintain as walkway
5.	PLAN M433 BLK 179	GOLDSMITH PLACE	1.76	Open Space	Woodlot surrounding Dyer Drive Parkette	Not a priority – adjacent to Dyer Drive Parkette; would require extensive clearing
6.	CON 8 S PT LOT 25 PT ROAD; ALLOW BETWEEN LTS 25 & 26	354 GOLF COURSE RD	0.77	Residential	Cleared open space; sight triangle at busy intersection	Not a priority – near several parks, including Wasaga Estates Park; busy intersection is not ideal
7.	PLAN 1493 BLK D	EASTDALE DR	1.47	Open Space	Woodlot	Not a priority – near Chase Family (Sunward) Park; would require extensive clearing
8.	PLAN M192 BLOCK 156	SUNWARD DR	3.58	Open Space	Woodlot with footpath trail	Not a priority – near Chase Family (Sunward) Park; would require extensive clearing

Figure 27 Selected Town-owned Lands Evaluated for Parkland Potential



1:35,000

Appendix E – Examples of River Trail Signage

As a starting point, the site-specific wayfinding system for the river trail components may be focused on the following sign types:

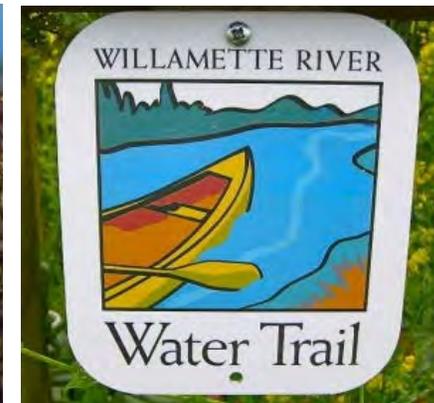
River Trail Gateway Signage

- A kiosk meeting certain design requirements should be available for gateway locations
- The full color panels should include the following information:
 - Map of entire water trail with "you are here" sign
 - General water trail information
 - Paddling safety guidelines
 - River etiquette
 - Local emergency numbers
 - Amenities provided
 - Description of river section to the next downstream access point (distance, hazards)
 - Local community interest points
 - Photos of local attractions
 - Interpretive opportunities
 - Logos or information for supporting partners at that site



River Trail Access Point Signage

- Access sites may be prioritized based on need and availability of resources
- The signage panels may include the following information:
 - Map of entire water trail
 - General water trail information
 - Paddling safety guidelines
 - River etiquette
 - Local emergency numbers
 - Amenities provided
 - Description of river section to the next downstream access point (distance, hazards)
 - Local community interest points
 - Photos of local attractions



Wayfinding Directional Signage from Roadways

- Directional signage from the nearest roadway should also be considered
- Major intersections and road locations where directional signs are needed should be identified



River Trail Wayfinding Signage along the River

- Kilometre (mile) markers should be placed at landing sites and at appropriate intervals along the trail; kilometre marker signs allow trail users to inform emergency personnel of their location and provides emergency workers with more detailed access information in the event of an emergency
- Landing sites should be identified with signs visible from the trail
- Major landmarks visible from the trail may be identified
- Bridges may be used to deliver locational information to paddlers



River Trail Hazard and Regulatory Signage

- General risks should be identified on the kiosk/panel at the upstream access point in that section of the trail
- Other hazards and portages (if any) may be identified with signage visible from the trail as appropriate
- Warning/Regulatory signs should have clear and concise messages indicating type and level of risk and, indicate proper response, and allow plenty of time for user to respond
- Water hazard warning signs may include, but are not limited to, swift current, small rapids, river snags, branches, river eddies, steep bank, submerged logs, and motor boat traffic

