

Service Delivery Review for the Parks & Recreation Department

Submitted to Township of Selwyn Council
on November 16, 2020



Monteith + Brown
planning consultants



Township of Selwyn

Parks & Recreation Department Service Delivery Review

November 16, 2020

Prepared by:



The disclosure of any information contained in this Service Delivery Review for the Parks & Recreation Department is the sole responsibility of the Township of Selwyn. The Service Delivery Review is attributable to work conducted to inform the Township of Selwyn's Terms of Reference and any findings contained herein should not constitute final recommendations since subsequent works specific to the Parks & Recreation Department will be undertaken by the Township. This Service Delivery Review has been prepared in consideration of information and documentation provided to Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd., and has not been audited or independently verified unless noted otherwise. The material in this Service Delivery Review, and all information relating to this activity, reflect the Consultant's judgment in light of the information available to us at the time of preparation of this report.

Any use which a third party makes of this Service Delivery Review, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. accepts no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by a third party as a result of decisions made or actions based on this report.

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Purpose & Context of the Review	1
1.2	Scope of the Review	2
1.3	Methodology	3
1.4	Parks & Recreation Services Provided by the Township	4
1.5	Demographic Snapshot.....	5
1.6	Legislative & Strategic Frameworks	6
 2.0	 Parks & Recreation Service Review	 9
2.1	The Target Operating Model.....	10
2.2	Departmental Governance & Organizational Structure.....	12
2.3	Departmental Staffing	15
2.4	New Technologies & Approaches	18
2.5	Park Maintenance Practices.....	21
2.6	Expanding Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities.....	24
2.7	Examining User Pay / Pricing Structures in Relation to Cost of Service	26
2.8	Recreation Capital Reserve	28
2.9	Undertaking, Updating & Implementing Long-Range Plans.....	31
2.10	Other Initiatives with Departmental Impact	32
2.11	Arena Operations	33
2.12	Community Hall Operations	38
2.13	Sports Field Operations	44
2.14	Lakefield Campground Operations.....	47
2.15	Lakefield Marina Operations	53
 3.0	 Implementation	 57
3.1	Implementation Schedule	57
3.2	Cost-Benefit Summary of Recommendations	59

Appendix: Peer Group Benchmarking Tables from Financial Information Returns



1.0

Introduction

1.1 Purpose & Context of the Review

The Township of Selwyn's vision is to be a "Progressive, sustainable community." Its corporate mission is to be a "Leader in providing innovative and effective municipal services" and the Township pursues a number of goals through its Strategic Plan including a goal to achieve excellence in governance and service delivery.

In 2020, the Township received funding from the Provincial Municipal Modernization Program to prepare a Service Delivery Review. Undertaking this work advances the Township's pursuit of its corporate vision, mission, values and goals. The Service Delivery Review considers service delivery and modernization opportunities, and reviews administrative processes in order to identify opportunities to reduce costs specifically for services under the purview of the Township of Selwyn Parks & Recreation Department. The Township is also undertaking separate service delivery reviews for other departments across the corporation.

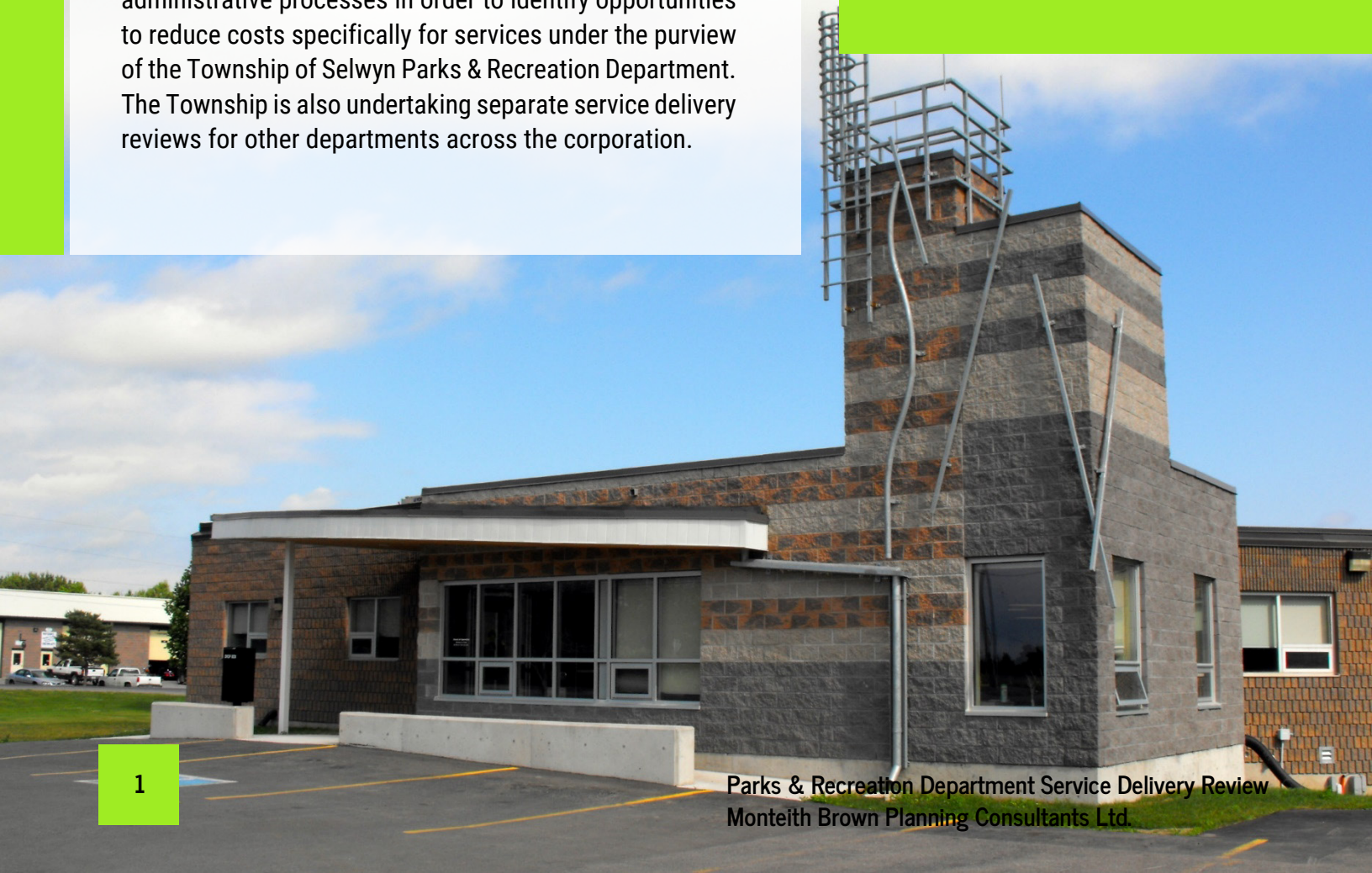
Township Vision:

"A Progressive, sustainable community"

Township Mission Statement:

"Leader in providing innovative and effective municipal services"

Township of Selwyn Strategic Plan 2018



1.2 Scope of the Review

The Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for two arenas, five reception/hall facilities, and one marina while providing trails, parkland, beaches, a number of outdoor recreation facilities and amenities (e.g. sport fields, sport courts, playgrounds.), and supporting special events.

The Township also owns a campground that is managed under contract by a private operator.

The Township of Selwyn has established the following objectives for the Parks & Recreation Department Service Delivery Review:

1. Review service delivery methods and practices within the user-pay areas (arenas, halls, sports fields, and marina) of the Parks & Recreation Services Department to identify improvements in business processes, use of technology, point of sale processes, etc., with a view to identifying opportunities to implement measurable efficiencies and realize cost savings.
2. Consider long standing relationships that the Township has with community groups, sports organizations and service clubs, and propose improvements to establish responsibility agreements, steps to implement cost recovery and documentation to increase transparency.
3. Review the Township's current practices related to the campground and marina operations. Identify opportunities for alternative service delivery methods. Consider how these facilities fit within the adjacent public spaces they are part of and what opportunities this may present.
4. Evaluate each option from the perspectives of financial impact, customer service capability, community impact and maximizing service delivery efficiency and effectiveness. This review would position the Township to undertake the required community consultation component of establishing the future service delivery models for these facilities.
5. In reviewing all of the areas of service, consider external issues and trends in the sector, identify potential impact on the Department and the best practices or alternative service delivery methods implemented in comparable jurisdictions.

1.3 Methodology

Process

The Service Delivery Review is guided by a Terms of Reference developed by the Township of Selwyn and overseen by a Project Team comprised of the Chief Administrative Officer, Manager of Recreation Services, Manager of Community and Corporate Services, and Manager of Financial Services. Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd. was retained to lead the review of parks and recreation services.

The project was initiated in mid-July 2020 and has involved the following core tasks:

- Reviews of corporate background documents, notably those pertaining to recreation services.
- Trends and best practice research, along with benchmarking exercise of comparable municipalities.
- Development of service profiles and comprehensive reviews for the Department's user-pay areas.
- Interviews with members of the Township's senior management team.
- A workshop with Parks & Recreation Department staff.
- A SWOT Analysis for recreation services delivered by the Township.
- Preparation of the Service Delivery Review report incorporating the above-noted tasks.

Consultation with the general public and community stakeholders was not included as part of the Township's Terms of Reference for the Service Delivery Review. However, community outreach is expected to be undertaken by the Township as part of implementation-oriented activities in the future.

Note About COVID-19

This Service Delivery Review is being prepared in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has had a significant impact on national, provincial and local economies. Public health measures in place since the onset of the pandemic have affected the way in which municipalities are delivering services, including for parks and recreation. The disruptive nature of COVID-19 along with shutdowns mandated by senior levels of government significantly skew data for 2020 in comparison to past years.

As a result, analysis of many Study components relies upon data compiled for 2019 and earlier. Any year-to-date data presented for 2020 may not be directly comparable to past years nor may it be a strong indicator of expected future performance due to facility closures, changes in rental activities, or shifts in recreation preferences such as changes in demand/usage of parks and trails resulting from COVID-19.

Township Council and Staff are monitoring protocols pertaining to COVID-19 and are continually developing plans to deliver services as guidelines are updated by senior levels of government and public health agencies. While the future impacts of COVID-19 on the parks and recreation system are unknown, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants are confident that the Township of Selwyn will implement the necessary measures that strive to attain operational sustainability moving forward.

1.4 Parks & Recreation Services Provided by the Township

Notable assets under management of the Recreation Department include:

- 87 hectares of parkland along with 6 municipally maintained trailways and beach areas.
- 2 single pad arenas located at the Robert E. Young Recreation Complex (Ennismore) and Lakefield-Smith Community Centre.
- 4 community halls at the Lakefield-Smith Community Centre, Robert E. Young Recreation Complex, the Marshland Centre, and Bridgenorth Community Hall. In addition to these, Selwyn Public Library operates a hall in Lakefield. Recently, the Township re-assumed operations of the former Lakefield Sea Scout building.
- 3 sports field complexes at Paul J. English Sports Park, Douglas Sports Centre and the Robert E. Young Recreation Complex, along with fields distributed across other municipal parks for soccer, ball, ultimate frisbee, disc golf and other field sports.
- The Lakefield Marina along with land leased for third party operation of the Lakefield Campground.
- Outdoor recreation facilities including hard surface sport courts, fitness trails, a skateboard park and playgrounds.



1.5 Demographic Snapshot

The Service Delivery Review considers the demographic characteristics of Selwyn's population in order to shed insights into the Parks & Recreation Department's clientele. Pertinent demographic and socio-economic trends are summarized below.

Population Trends

- The Township of Selwyn experienced modest population growth between the 2011 and 2016 Census periods with an average annual growth rate of 0.25% during that time. By comparison, Peterborough County averaged annual growth of 0.50% during that same 5-year period.
- The 2016 Census recorded approximately 17,000 permanent residents living in Selwyn. The population increases substantially during the summer months due to an influx of seasonal residents.
- Selwyn's Census median age was recorded at 51.4 years in 2016, an increase of over 7.5 years compared to 2001. The number of residents 55 years of age and over has grown by nearly 50% over this time, amounting to an average annual growth rate of 3%.
- Conversely, the number of permanent residents below the age of 55 decreased by 1,800 persons between 2001 and 2016. The populations of children and teens along with residents between the ages of 20 and 54 have respectively contracted by an average of 1% per year.
- The County of Peterborough forecasts a population of 23,000 persons for Selwyn by the year 2036.¹ It is worth noting that this forecast was prepared over 10 years ago and the County is in the midst of a population assessment that will provide a revised growth target for the Township of Selwyn. As the County's work is ongoing at time of writing and will not be available until after this Service Delivery Review has been completed, population forecasts utilized in the Recreation Services Plan (and 2018 Update) are considered. Although the County's growth forecast from 2008 has fallen short of the 2011 and 2016 Census figures, it remains the most viable forecast for consideration.

50%

Percentage increase in the number of Selwyn residents ages 55+ between 2001 and 2016 (an average growth rate of 3% per year).

¹ Peterborough County. 2008. *Population Projections: The County of Peterborough, 206-2036*. Prepared by Lapointe Consulting. p.41, Table 47 (Reference Scenario).

Socio-Economic Trends

- The Township's Census median household income of \$79,350 in 2015 is 23% higher than the Peterborough County median and 7% above the provincial median.
- There was a slightly lower percentage of Selwyn residents living below the Low Income Cut-Off, after-tax (LICO-AT) in 2015 compared to 2005. The 2016 Census recorded 3.3% of Selwyn residents living below the LICO-AT (560 persons) compared to 3.6% recorded through the 2006 Census. Proportionally speaking, fewer Selwyn residents lived below the LICO-AT in 2015 compared to Peterborough County (7.9%) and the province (9.8%) in 2015.
- The 1,525 Selwyn residents born outside of Canada represents a slight decrease between the 2001 and 2016 Census periods. Whereas immigrants to Canada accounted for 9.7% of the population in 2001, foreign-born residents now comprise 9.0% of Selwyn's population.

1.6 Legislative & Strategic Frameworks

There are several provincial and municipal regulations, policies and guidelines that govern the acquisition, development, location and funding of parks and recreation services.

Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P13

The Ontario *Planning Act* establishes a framework for the dedication of parkland and possible alternatives for the dedication of land for park and recreation purposes. Recent amendments to the Planning Act (and Development Charges Act) also allow municipalities to impose "Community Benefits Charges" that can be used to fund parks and recreation services (in-lieu of collecting Development Charges for those same purposes) although this new tool is most likely to be used in the parks and recreation context among municipalities with demands for higher density residential developments.

Peterborough County Official Plan

The Peterborough County Official Plan, 1994 establishes the overall land use strategy for the County and its lower-tier municipalities, including the Township of Selwyn. Consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement*, the policies and schedules contained within the County Official Plan establish requirements for various land uses (including parks) and help guide municipal decisions with respect to infrastructure, public services and other investments.

Relating specifically to parkland and recreation facilities, the County Official Plan provides definitions of parkland classifications, development standards, acquisition rates and development-specific policies. These policies and schedules apply differently throughout the lower-tier municipalities. The County Official Plan is presently being updated and will continue to serve as the local Official Plan for Selwyn and a number of other area municipalities.

Of note, there are no legislated requirements pertaining to the provision of public recreation facilities though growth-related funding is governed by the *Development Charges Act*. Facility and park design must be in accordance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and in compliance with accompanying regulations such as the Design of Public Spaces Standards.

Parks By-laws

Certain municipalities pass Parks By-laws to regulate the use and operation of parks, open spaces and recreation areas. Issued under the authority of the *Municipal Act*, such by-laws commonly set out regulations for the use of municipal parks, such as hours of operation and permitted and prohibited activities, and provisions to guide parkland acquisition/dedication.

There are also a number of non-legislated supporting documents that municipalities reference and/or align with in the delivery of parks and recreation services.

Framework for Recreation in Canada

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 FRC 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 Township of Selwyn in the establishment of strategic actions and decision making related to parks and recreation services. Several municipalities are formalizing the goals of the FRC through development of, or updates to their Parks and Recreation Master Plans.

The goals of the Framework for Recreation in Canada consist of: Active Living; Inclusion and Access; Connecting People and Nature; Supportive Environments; and Recreation Capacity.

Parks for All

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 Canadians 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 through specific actions, priorities and strategic directions. The plan is guided by four strategic directions: collaborate, connect, conserve and lead.

Township of Selwyn Strategic Plan

The Township of Selwyn Strategic Plan was updated in 2018 to reconfirm the municipal vision, mission and values established in an earlier iteration of the document. The Strategic Plan is considered in corporate decisions and actions, and thus the Service Delivery Review is aligned with the Strategic Plan in striving to attain the vision and values that it sets out for the municipality.

Figure 1: Township of Selwyn Strategic Plan Vision, Mission, Values & Goals



Township of Selwyn Recreation Services Plan

The Recreation Services Plan guides the municipal parks and recreation system by identifying needs and associated recommendations for the ten year period between 2011 and 2021. The Plan was reviewed and updated in 2018 to ensure that recommendations remained relevant in the context of future population characteristics, preferences and needs. Notable in the context of service delivery, the Recreation Services Plan recommends that the Township continue to utilize an “indirect” model of service delivery whereby municipal resources are predominantly directed to the provision of space (e.g. arenas, halls, parks, trails, sports fields, etc.). In doing so, community-based providers of recreation services can access physical spaces that may otherwise be cost-prohibitive to build, operate and maintain on their own.

2.0

Parks & Recreation Service Review

This section articulates the current state of the Parks & Recreation Department's operating practices with a focus on the user-pay areas of arenas, halls, and sports fields. Examinations of the Lakefield Marina and Lakefield Campground have been undertaken as well.

The Service Delivery Review finds the Parks & Recreation Department to be a lean and efficient provider of services. Corporate leadership has established a culture of interdepartmental cooperation where resident-focused service, efficiency and implementation of best practices are highly valued.

A number of areas for further investigation have been revealed as a result of reviews of the Township's current service delivery practices, scans of trends and best practices in other municipalities, and consultations carried out with Township staff. Due to the diverse nature of operational and service delivery practices employed by the Parks & Recreation Department, opportunities for further investigation are grouped by areas of similar focus and summarized in the pages that follow.

2.1 The Target Operating Model

A Target Operating Model (TOM) represents how an entity – in this case the Township of Selwyn’s Parks & Recreation Department – can organize itself to operate efficiently, deliver effective services, and execute the corporation’s overall vision. The TOM is a blueprint that allows decision-makers and the public to understand the Parks & Recreation Department’s mandate, goals and values, and in turn provides a basis to measure how the Department’s operating capabilities are aligned with its strategic targets. Any adjustments to the Department’s Current Operating Model – which is the collection of operating practices in place today – will be a result of striving towards the Target Operating Model.

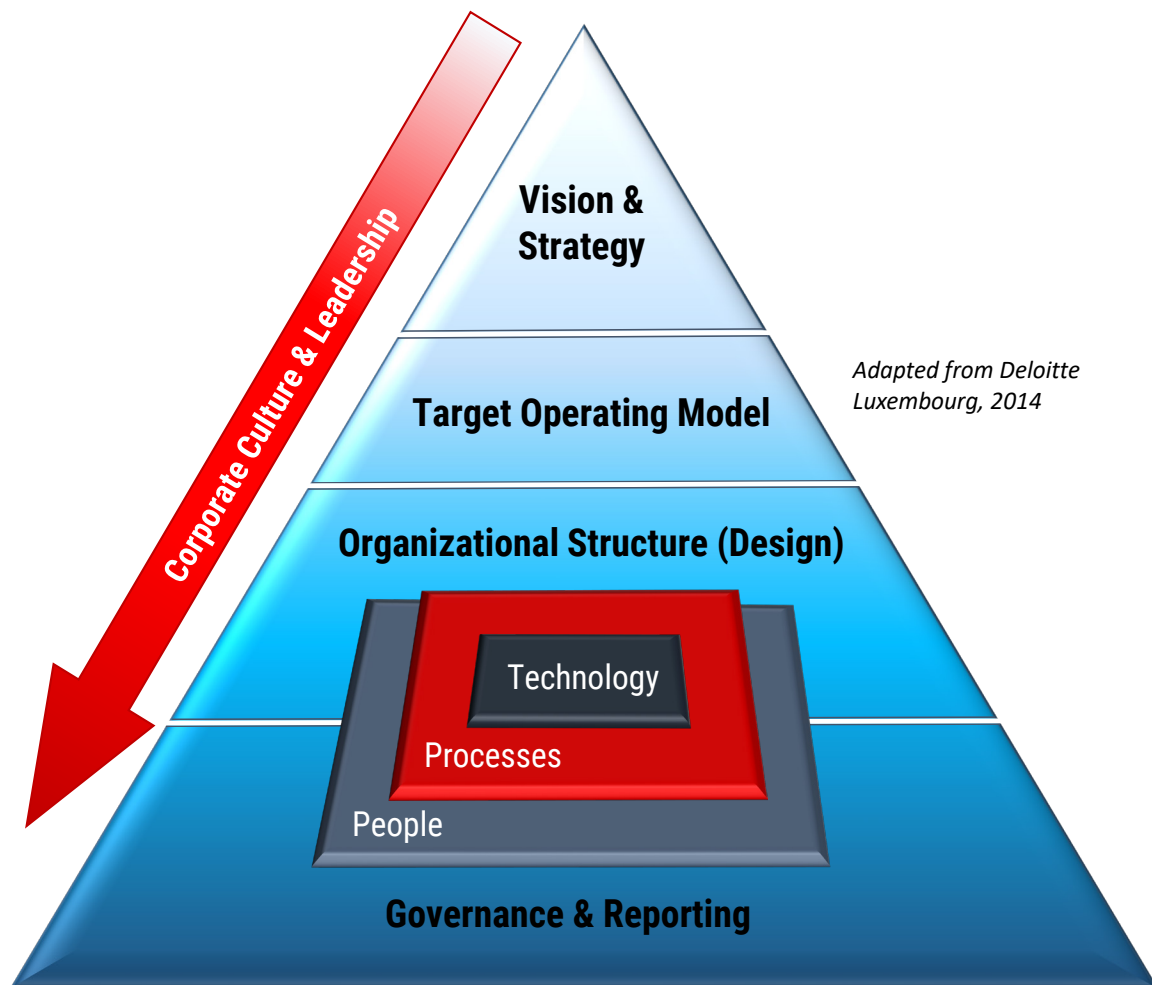
A TOM is typically made up of the following foundational components:

- **A Governance / Strategic Framework** – The Township’s Strategic Plan and Recreation Services Plan are strong examples as they identify visions, goals, values and priorities over a 5 to 10 year planning horizon. These documents and other long-range studies are used by Township staff to measure progress while connecting their strategies/objectives to future decision-making and day-to-day activities.
- **People** – Having the necessary human capital and leadership supports that instill the desired corporate culture along with the staff complement to execute the vision and desired operating state. Since the Departmental mandate is complex and dynamic, it is imperative that the requisite skillsets, opportunities for professional growth, and effective communication between all levels of staff (including others in the corporation) are in place. Parks & Recreation Department Staff indicate that they are clear on their responsibilities, have the skills and tools that they require to perform their tasks, are provided with opportunities to progress, and have strong channels of communication.
- **Processes** – A clearly defined service mandate must be in place and understood so that processes can be implemented to deliver on the mandate. Departmental processes are geared to providing the correct mix of services, maintaining capital assets in a good state of repair, and striving towards operational sustainability to ensure the mandate is executed efficiently over time. Processes generally consist of activities involving planning and decision-making, implementation and execution, monitoring and reporting, measuring performance, and adjusting where required.
- **Technologies** – Identification of the types of technology that are required to allow Department Staff to operate intentionally, effectively, and efficiently in executing the mandate (and ultimately striving to attain the vision).

In undertaking the Service Delivery Review for the Parks & Department, the following principles underpin the assessments of the current state and proposed modernization and improvement goals, in light of the Target Operating Model:

1. Understanding & Acceptance of the Service Delivery Model / Departmental Mandate;
2. Identifying Desired Outcomes to Meet Corporate Goals & Public Expectations;
3. Striving to Deliver Services More Efficiently and Cost-Effectively;
4. Evaluating Alternative Approaches to Deliver New & Existing Services; and
5. Balancing the Needs of the Present while Preparing for the Future.

Figure 2: Components of a Target Operating Model



2.2 Departmental Governance & Organizational Structure

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To re-affirm the Parks & Recreation Department's Target Operating Model by reinforcing its indirect approach to service delivery and ability to execute its community development objectives.

The Parks & Recreation Department employs an "indirect" model of service delivery whereby its mandate is to provide and maintain physical space, by way of parks and built recreation facilities. In doing so, the Department leverages the considerable strength of community-based service providers and volunteers who deliver programs through use of municipal facilities.

Accordingly, the Department embodies an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to building and sustaining relationships with others operating in Selwyn, as identified through Recommendation #1 of the 2012 Recreation Services Plan. This is a highly efficient approach that does not require the Parks & Recreation Department to deliver programs but rather lends its support to local organizations and individuals wishing to run programs and special events/festivals in the community.

The Parks & Recreation Department operates within a centralized organizational structure (Figure 3), led by the Manager of Recreation Services who works closely with other Department Heads and reports directly to the CAO. The Department is lean in comparison to the Peer Group² (Figure 4) given its focus is on operating standard facilities (arenas, halls, sports fields) and the absence of direct programming in the municipal portfolio. It bears noting that the Peer Group average is influenced by certain municipalities that are involved in the direct delivery of recreation programs - some to a greater extent than others - and thus carry greater staffing associated with program development, instruction, performance tracking, etc. One Peer Group municipality also operates an indoor aquatics centre which substantially increases its staffing, particularly among part-time workers such as aquatic programmers, lifeguards, and instructors.

Departmental planning, decision-making and operational activities are carried out in alignment with the Township of Selwyn Strategic Plan, the Recreation Services Plan, annual and long-range budgets, and a set of policies and procedures.

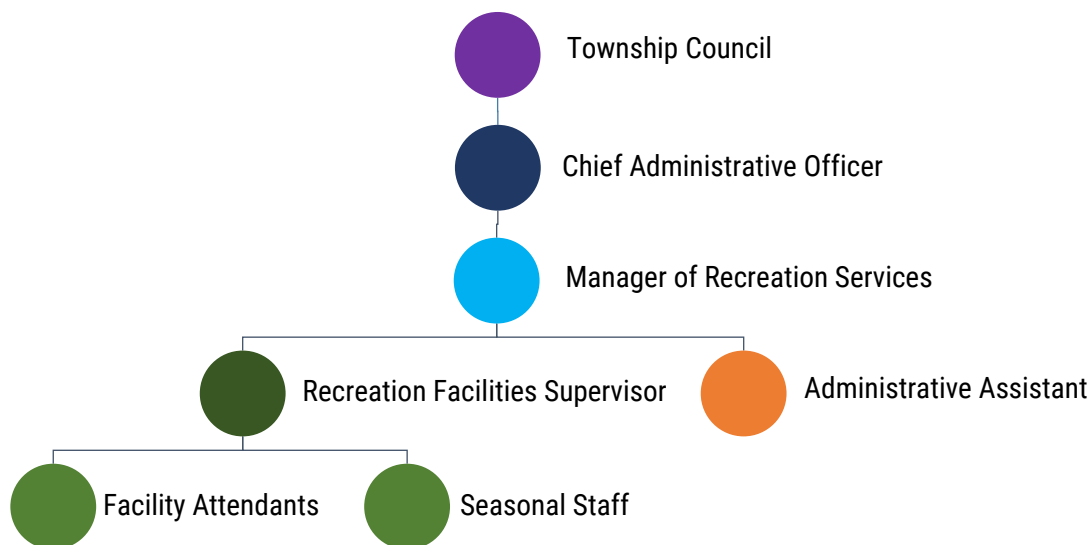
Asset Based Community Development

An approach that focuses on capacities of organizations, rather than their deficiencies, to address their needs, with the intended result of empowering the community to create positive outcomes for themselves.

~ Township of Selwyn
Recreation Services Plan

² The Township of Selwyn typically compares itself to a "peer group" consisting of the following municipalities: Clearview, Greater Napanee, Pelham, Springwater, and Wilmot

Figure 3: Parks & Recreation Department Organizational Structure



Potential Risk Factors: The Departmental governance and organizational structure is consistent with many other municipalities, having been tested for decades and offering a number of efficiencies. Therefore, few risks are foreseen for the future. The 'Integrated Service Delivery Model' currently in place encourages strong communication and coordinated administrative efforts between Departments including planning, funding and operating responsibilities for parks and recreation services. While fairly nominal redundancies have been identified (e.g. payments and invoicing as discussed later in this section), the integrated model of service delivery has the potential to reduce inefficiencies by breaking down 'silos.'

The indirect service delivery model can carry risks that are largely tied to customer expectations and keeping pace with growth-related needs. Parks and recreation preferences are frequently changing as popularity of sports and activities tends to be cyclical while new activities are constantly emerging. Reliance upon community providers to keep apprised and meet demands for new services can be a risk as the inability to do so among local providers can result in a gap. Community providers must also provide strong customer service if their programs are to be successful over the long-term, however, the Township has little control over how external organizations interact with residents on a day-to-day basis.

Population growth can lead to community service providers being unable to accommodate market demands due to functional or organizational deficiencies (e.g. ability to provide staff or volunteers, not having in-house expertise to grow or evolve programs); based on historical and forecasted growth patterns, population growth is expected to be less of a concern in Selwyn though there will be new residential development opportunities that arise such as in Lakefield South.

However, marginal increases or stagnation in population levels can also be a fiscal challenge for the Township as it limits development charges available to fund growth-related capital projects, while escalating asset management costs and operating budgets place greater strain on the existing tax base over time.

Operating Analysis: The Township and the Parks & Recreation Department have strong relationships in place with many local service providers and volunteers. The Recreation Services Plan's ABCD model is an important part of the Departmental mandate moving forward including through continued support for local volunteers and pursuit of partnerships. The Department works with a number of partners ranging from sports groups, service clubs, regional agencies, youth and seniors-serving organizations, and more. It already facilitates secure access to space through lease agreements with local seniors, the curling club, service clubs and health sector partners.

The Township should consider expanding upon the types of financial or other incentives for service providers that are willing to organize recreational programs in Selwyn's parks, community halls and arenas. The minor hockey subsidy is an example in place and other organizations could be encouraged to book time in return for grants, reduced rents, or other incentives offered by the Township. For example, the City of London has built a strong relationship with a large seniors' fitness association (Huff 'n' Puff) that has resulted in the group expanding from its origins as group of seniors' hockey players to an organization that offers tennis, pickleball, billiards, darts, volleyball, Tai Chi, golf, and more. All of these activities are organized by volunteer conveners and most occur within municipal facilities, booking significant amounts of time often during traditionally low-use periods (e.g. daytime hours), thus creating a new revenue stream.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #1.** Continue with the Parks & Recreation Department's indirect service delivery model that is focused on provision of parks and facilities along with an Integrated Service Delivery model and Asset-Based Community Development approach of facilitating community-based delivery of recreation programs and services.
- Rec. #2.** To help bolster facility utilization levels and support community development objectives, continue to provide the use of financial or other incentives to local service providers that can demonstrate they are positively meeting the needs of a broad range of local residents through the organization and delivery of recreational programming in the Township's parks and recreation facilities. Temporary incentives may include (but are not limited to) continuing to formalize lease agreements for organizations to access municipally-owned space, providing discounted rental pricing based upon time of day and/or market segment being served, volunteer training and other organizational tools, and other supports deemed to be appropriate.

2.3 Departmental Staffing

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To position the Parks & Recreation Department's staffing levels in a manner that allows it to effectively and efficiently deliver its core service mandate over time.

The Parks & Recreation Department is comprised of 7 Full-Time Staff including the Manager, Administrative Assistant, Recreation Facilities Supervisor and Facility Attendants. There are also 4 Part-Time Staff along with a Seasonal complement of Facility Attendants, Arena Attendants and Marina Attendants.

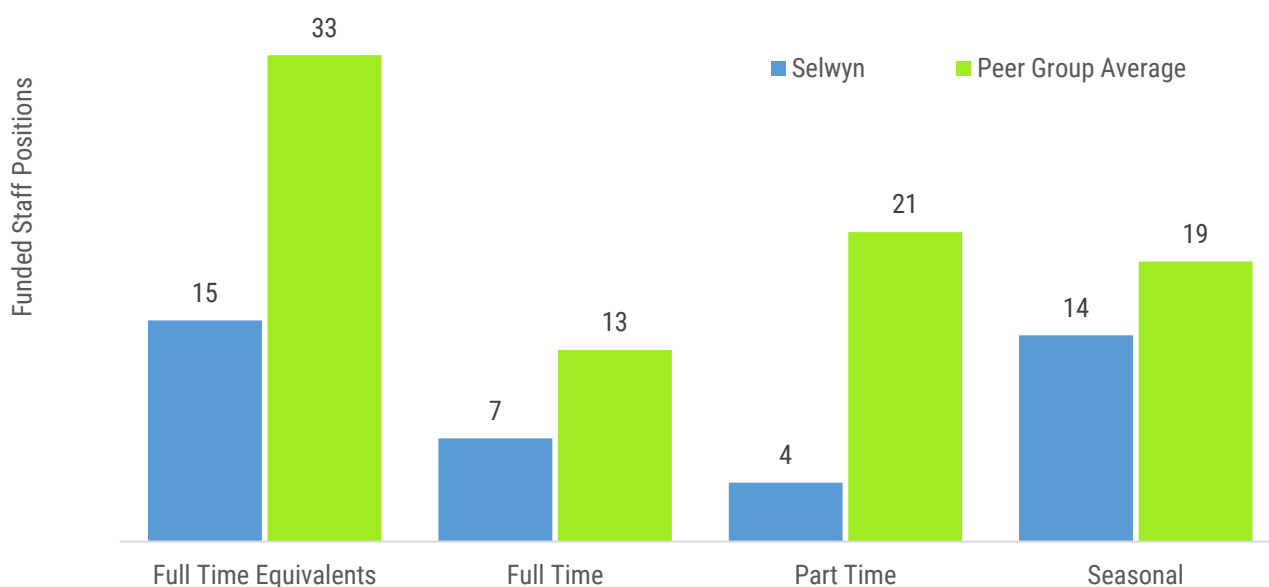
The Township of Selwyn's service delivery model streamlines operations and allows the Department to be highly efficient with its staffing, particularly when compared to the Peer Group. It bears noting that two of the benchmark municipalities employ a direct service model (i.e. they provide programs) which results in higher staffing than the three other municipalities – as well as Selwyn – that employ an indirect model; the SDR Appendix isolates staffing for each benchmark.³

While it is not possible to isolate staff directly associated with direct programming in the two outliers of the benchmarking, the Township of Wilmot's aquatic-specific staff have been removed (indoor pools significantly increase as municipality's staffing complement). Based on data contained in Figure 4 that illustrates staffing levels by Full Time Equivalents (FTEs), Selwyn's Parks & Recreation Department provides 0.9 FTE Staff per 1,000 residents compared to the Peer Group average of 2.0 FTE per 1,000 residents.

The Department works effectively within the Township's overarching integrated service delivery model by sharing certain responsibilities with Public Works staff. The two Departments work particularly well for park and trail maintenance activities while there is strong coordination between the Manager of Recreation Services and the Facilities Coordinator (Finance) with respect to facility planning and renewal. Departmental responsibilities are clearly delineated for day-to-day tasks though there may be some lack of clarity resulting in overlap for the maintenance of downtown public spaces and public boulevards.

³ Staffing levels between the municipal benchmarks should be interpreted with caution. In particular, the Township of Wilmot and the Towns of Pelham carry higher staffing levels because they directly deliver programming (whereas the other benchmarks do not).

Figure 4: Departmental Staffing Numbers in Comparison to the Peer Group Average



Notes: Peer Group consists of the municipalities of Clearview, Greater Napanee, Pelham, Springwater, and Wilmot which Selwyn typically compares itself with. Peer Group Average has been adjusted to remove the Township of Wilmot's indoor aquatic staff (4 FT and 60PT staff). FTE calculated by assuming Full-Time = 1.0 FTE, Part-Time = 0.6 FTE and Seasonal = 0.4 FTE

Source: 2018 Financial Information Returns

Potential Risk Factors: The Manager of Recreation Services and the Administrative Assistant (along with the Finance Department's Facilities Coordinator, to a lesser extent) are presently the individuals that are most responsible for building community relationships. Based on a review of their core responsibilities, these three staff have limited time to devote towards effectively undertaking the community outreach tasks that are so critical to the Department's delivery model. For example, the time required for the Manager and Administrative Assistant to complete their core duties could challenge these two staff in keeping apprised of all existing, emerging and potential parks and recreation service providers in the community let alone dedicate the appropriate time needed to nurture/maintain ongoing relationships with these providers.

In addition, a number of senior level staff positions are expected to be vacated in the next 5 to 10 years due to retirements. The Township will need to recruit qualified individuals, whether internal or external to the organization, that not only have the skills to carry out the work but also the commitment to build relationships with community members that are so critical to the Department's indirect service delivery model.

Operating Analysis: Many municipalities have a dedicated staff person(s) responsible for liaising with groups through their asset-based community development model for recreation, as well as to track industry trends and monitor local facility performance so that their Departments are well positioned to have their facilities be well used.

In the absence of a staff person that is dedicated to community outreach and trend tracking (or whose responsibilities can accommodate substantial time to these activities), the Township should review existing workloads to determine whether an existing staff person can take on a greater role in community development or if a new staff position is needed. While there are financial costs associated with adding staff, a portion of this cost could be offset if a new staff person is able to find groups that rent Township parks and recreation facilities, or at the very least, there is an indirect cost saving by directing residents to the appropriate group rather than having those residents demand that the Township address a potential or perceived program gap. This is especially true for the Township's community halls which are considered underutilized due to a number of factors including a lack of awareness as is discussed later in Section 2.12.

Impending retirements are a common issue in many municipalities. As noted in the 2012 Recreation Services Plan, a strategy needs to be in place to determine the Township's course of action to replace retiring workers, considering factors such as internal promotion, hiring from outside the organization, re-evaluating job descriptions of existing positions, and / or placing greater reliance on outsourcing and consulting services. The Township's Organizational Policy provides direction regarding a number of such topics. The Township may also look at cross-training staff to work in different Departments in order to cover core responsibilities. Implementing the succession plan would also assist the Department in retaining invaluable historical knowledge, relationships, and/or local expertise.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #3.** Create a Community Recreation Liaison (or similarly titled) position reporting to the Manager of Recreation Services. The staff Liaison would be responsible for: a) identifying community-based recreation providers and the services that they offer; b) connecting with these providers to determine how they can be encouraged to use the Township's parks and recreation facilities; c) seeking new rental opportunities to maximize facility utilization; and d) finding new marketing revenue streams as identified in Recommendation #10 of the Service Delivery Review.
- Rec. #4.** Continue to use hiring, training and performance review practices as set out in the Township of Selwyn Organizational Policy to advance staffing succession goals and to sustain the organizational capacity of the Parks & Recreation Department.

2.4 New Technologies & Approaches

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To explore the use of technology and modern approaches to improve efficiencies in the Parks & Recreation Department's customer service and operations.

From ongoing customer satisfaction surveys, day-to-day feedback and observations of local parks and recreation facilities, it is evident that Parks & Recreation Department staff take great pride in delivering high quality services to the community. Discussions with Department staff reveal that they are generally satisfied with the time, tools and support that they are provided to deliver services efficiently. That being said, the rate of technological change is ever-advancing in terms of how customers learn about and access recreation services, as are the technologies in how parks and recreation facilities are operated and maintained.

Potential Risk Factors: Undoubtedly there is a cost associated with adopting new technology as well as staff time to learn, manage and work with new systems. However, the business case for doing so is supported by efficiency gains in terms of revenue generation potential (e.g. reaching new audiences or enticing people to participate more), cost containment, and reduction of redundant processes.

Operating Analysis: Recent and emerging technologies should be considered to enhance staff's ability to perform its functions. In addition, staff should continue to participate in the development of specifications for new equipment.

The Parks & Recreation page on the Township's website (www.selwyntownship.ca) is the public's primary online portal to the Department. It is clearly laid out with contact details that are easily identifiable along with facility rental information – which is the Department's primary customer-centred service – displayed along with a link to online schedules. An interactive copy of the "Selwyn Guide" is listed while a number of tabs direct users to other specific services available in Selwyn. The Township is in the process of refreshing its website and any updates to the corporate website will likely include changes to the Department's page as well.

A significant opportunity for the Department is to expand the range of payment opportunities available to residents for facility rentals. Presently, payments are only accepted in-person during the Township's business hours or by mail. This system is cumbersome to the customers that are unable to come into the Township Offices (and those that do not carry cash or use cheques) as well as for Township Staff who must process invoices separate from the booking (the Finance Department is also involved in invoicing). By accepting credit cards, the Township adds a convenient option to the customer while creating an opportunity for online payments which can be processed at the same time as a booking.

Ideally online payments would form part of a new online scheduling/booking program and also reduce redundancies currently experienced on the “back-end” between the Parks & Recreation Administrative Assistant (booking and collections) and the Finance Department (invoicing and tracking). Substantial staff time associated with administering outstanding accounts could also be reduced as the transfer of funds would be immediate. It is possible that such savings in time might outweigh credit card service fees that are charged to the Township, or adjusting pricing / levying a “convenience fee” to online payments could recoup some of these charges.

There are a number of third-party vendors of recreation management software that serve the parks and recreation sector (e.g. Active Network, Perfect Mind, and others); their packages offer a plethora of choice for functional options, cloud-based services and pricing to assist municipalities with rentals, scheduling, registration and payment. The Township should issue a Request For Proposal seeking third party bids to be submitted based on the Department’s specific needs regarding its role in the facility rental business; this will allow the Township to conduct a cost-benefit analysis among submitted bids while having vendors identify the features and pricing that pertain to Selwyn’s specific requirements. A new system for the Parks & Recreation Department should also be compatible with the system used by Finance Department.

While the Service Delivery Review does not delve into the extent to which the municipality employs specific technologies across the corporation, some operational ideas for the Parks & Recreation Department to consider include:

- GPS tracking of equipment and fleet vehicles. GPS data can provide useful information to schedule tasks and develop efficient routes. GPS data also provides a record that can be useful for due diligence purposes.
- Energy efficient and sustainable technologies for parks, buildings and mechanical systems. Examples include energy efficient lighting, building cladding and insulating materials, water conservation measures, etc. noting that a number of these technologies have a higher capital cost than standard systems and thus operational savings would be paid back over time. The Township’s recent adoption of the REALice water treatment system for arenas is an example of energy efficiency as it eliminates the need for hot water when building and resurfacing ice.

- Similar to the above noted point, exploration of tools and technologies geared to climate change resiliency and/or carbon neutral operations should be a priority for the Township. A shift from fossil fuels to more sustainable energy sources is one example for fleet and equipment (e.g. electric ice resurfacers, battery-powered grass trimmers, etc.).
- Other ideas could include use of QR codes for operations and customer-focused experiences, providing phones in trucks to improve communications, and/or other technologies as they emerge.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #5.** Issue a Request For Proposal for recreation management software focusing specifically upon an online booking and payment system that has full integration between customer-facing and back-end processes such as invoicing and reporting, and is compatible with systems used by other corporate departments.
- Rec. #6.** Pursue technologies that enhance corporate and Departmental operating efficiencies for buildings, fleet and equipment including (but not limited to) the use of GPS, sustainable, carbon neutral, and mobile/smartphone-based systems.

2.5 Park Maintenance Practices

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To modernize parks maintenance practices carried out by the Parks & Recreation Department.

Competing demands for parks and recreation services within the community can place burdens on Departmental resources, in terms of number of staff, hours that staff have available throughout a typical week, and finances. While the Department operates with a lean staffing that maximizes certain efficiencies, this can also pose challenges in light of new demands that may arise or changing service levels.

As a broad example, one elected official may have a number of constituents calling concerned about the height of the grass and weeds on a sports field in May, while at the same time, another elected official is expressing concern about the upkeep on the beautification features in a business district. The Parks & Recreation Department is tasked with addressing both concerns, however, the Department may be challenged if resources are already dedicated to other responsibilities.

Potential Risk Factors: Modernizing parks maintenance involves a well thought-out approach involving research, staff engagement, and building a financial case. Risks are thus managed and mitigated by undertaking the necessary due diligence prior to enacting major or minor changes. While there is a degree of logic to the old adage about fixing unbroken things, such a philosophy should not impede innovation in operations.

Operating Analysis: Having an updated set of maintenance practices/guidelines that dictate when and how properties and facilities are maintained would allow the Township to clearly delineate the responsibilities of various Departments (e.g. Parks & Recreation and Public Works), while defining service levels that establish required staff and financial resources needed to fulfill maintenance activities. Maintenance practices are generally developed by staff with input from other Departments (e.g. Finance, Public Works) and stakeholders. An example related to parkland grass cutting would be to state that the municipality cuts parkland grass areas once every ten days to a height of three inches or when grass height exceeds three inches, whichever comes later (note that sports fields would have a more frequent schedule). When grass slows in its growth rate in July and August, staff resources could be deployed to needs beyond grass cutting. Approved maintenance practices could include horticultural features, beautification features, grass cutting, irrigation, sports field maintenance, playground maintenance, arena maintenance, trail and beach maintenance, etc.

Certain municipalities have found staff and cost-efficiencies by contracting out services to a third party. This is particularly useful for:

- “non-core” or lower priority tasks for the Department (e.g. garden maintenance, watering, etc.);
- where staff time is constrained to adequately devote to the task;
- where staff expertise/skillsets do not match the task (e.g. overqualified staff undertaking the work in lieu of other priorities, or conversely where staff may not have the expertise to complete a task effectively); or
- seeking cost-savings, provided that the third party can do so at a lower cost and at a prescribed level of quality.

In Selwyn, maintenance of horticultural beds, planters and hanging baskets are two such examples where both Public Works and Parks & Recreation take on responsibilities. There may be an opportunity to better leverage community resources (e.g. garden clubs, horticultural associations) through the Township’s community development model or to explore private sector contracts so that the Departments have clarity in their responsibilities and/or are freed up to address other core service needs. Due to the sheer geographic size of the Township, grass-cutting could also be contracted out for individual or multiple properties under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Department to minimize staff time and fuel costs associated with travel.

Selwyn has a number of naturalized areas within its active parks and open spaces. The benefits of “re-naturalizing” areas are two-fold; these areas require less maintenance compared to manicured lands, thereby resulting in less staff time and financial cost being expended on a per-hectare basis while also attaining environmental benefits. Often parkland grass is maintained due to traditional practices even in areas where parkland use is exclusively passive. Naturalization and re-naturalization are complementary to the Township’s sustainability objectives, builds resiliency to climate change within the parks system, and provides habitat for indigenous flora and fauna. It is important to note that naturalization does not necessarily mean that an entire park is to be naturalized as certain areas within a park might be suitable for naturalization (e.g. buffer areas, land where cutting can be difficult due to topography, etc.).

Naturalized areas are often appreciated by many in the community and are usually well-received when they are defined by a contoured edge and identified with signs. Tree planting and pollinator gardens can also replace traditional passive grass areas in parks. It bears noting that naturalization does not mean that areas in parks should be overgrown or unkempt, but rather that the area is managed in a way that is appropriate for the setting and the end objective of promoting certain habitats.

There is an opportunity to work with environment-focused agencies and organizations that operate in the region including (but not limited to) the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority, the Kawartha Land Trust, GreenUP and local garden clubs; these external groups can provide expertise and assistance that can help the Township identify priority sites, suitable plant species, and even deliver natural education programs or develop interpretive signage that promotes public understanding of naturalization efforts.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #7.** Update the existing set of parks maintenance standards, working in conjunction with other municipal Departments and in consultation with parks/sports field stakeholder groups.
- Rec. #8.** Explore options to contract out beautification and hanging basket maintenance, along with selected grass cutting responsibilities in order to better deploy Parks & Recreation Department staff expertise.
- Rec. #9.** Pilot a naturalization program at Douglas Sports Park, Chemong Park and Robert E. Young Sports Complex in pursuit of financial efficiencies and environmental benefits. If deemed a success, the naturalization programs should be expanded to other municipal parks and open spaces, as appropriate.

2.6 Expanding Advertising & Sponsorship Opportunities

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To diversify the Parks & Recreation Department's advertising and sponsorship revenue potential in order to improve cost-recovery levels and minimizing reliance on tax-funding.

The Township currently receives advertising revenues in areas such as arena rink boards which in turn help to offset a portion of facility operating costs. Sponsorships are a similar approach though are usually more common for the community groups making use of the Township's facilities. With the Township increasingly looking at digital forms of communication corporately and within the Parks & Recreation Department through its website and social media, there is an opportunity to broaden advertising opportunities as well.

Potential Risk Factors: The ability to generate alternative streams of revenue can sometimes dilute the parks and recreation customer experience, particularly if it is imposed as a direct user charge or is perceived to be a tax. That being said, pursuit of sponsorships and advertising is a way of helping a business increase its exposure to the community and highlight corporate goodwill as the proceeds are typically perceived by residents as helping to improve local facilities and services. The ability to generate alternative revenue streams can be constrained by a lack of population and economic growth if customers or partners cannot afford to spend money on goods, services or activities deemed to be non-core.

Operating Analysis: At a fairly simplistic level, advertising could be expanded from arena rink boards to also include digital signage or screens inside the arenas/community centres. A more comprehensive approach would be to assess how advertising could be integrated into other Departmental platforms, whether:

- physical space such as advertising across other Township facilities (e.g. such as the Marina) or in other high traffic areas such as local businesses and restaurants;
- expanding upon the Township's tree and bench naming program;
- an expanded online presence such as advertising in the interactive Selwyn Guide, exploring search engine optimization and advertising;
- partnering with local sports and recreation organizations (e.g. the Lakefield Chiefs) to expand the scope and scale of promotion/advertising; and/or
- building upon existing practices by exploring new or refined advertising packages as an up-sell opportunity to increase marginal rate of returns.

Many municipalities have benefitted from additional revenue through naming right agreements for facilities and rooms/spaces within facilities. Such a practice requires a defined policy to stipulate what can be named, the associated fees and the term of the agreement (naming agreements are often long-term but should have a renewal date or termination date). While park areas are usually viewed as areas to escape the commercialized world, most people have no objection to attending a hockey game at a rink named for a local business or “Adopt A Park/Adopt A Trail” type sponsorship programs. However, smaller and rural municipalities may find that the number of naming rights opportunities and/or revenue potential are more limited than their urban counterparts (e.g. there is a greater number of businesses located in Lakefield and Bridgenorth to potentially draw from compared to Ennismore and the small settlements). The Community Recreation Liaison staff person recommended in Section 2.3 of the Service Delivery Review would be an optimal person to lead the Parks & Recreation Department’s efforts aimed at engaging the local business community.

Recommendations:

Rec. #10. Build upon engagement efforts with local businesses to expand marketing and sponsorship opportunities through Parks & Recreation Department facilities and services.

2.7 Examining User Pay / Pricing Structures in Relation to Cost of Service

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To consider the cost of providing parks and recreation services in the pricing of services delivered by the Parks & Recreation Department.

User fees and taxation are the two primary sources of revenue for most Parks & Recreation Department services, and are used to offset capital and operating expenditures. While there are ancillary sources of revenue such as grants from agencies and senior levels of government, advertising, concessions, etc., these supplementary contributions can be uncertain or non-guaranteed particularly over the entire life of an asset.

Accordingly, municipalities levy user charges as is their right under the Ontario Municipal Act. The fee charged to users of parks and recreation services is often discretionary depending upon a municipality's desired level of cost recovery, whether the facility is being operated on a subsidized/break-even/profit-generating basis, and/or alignment with market rates.

Potential Risk Factors: Imposition of new user fees and taxes are typically not politically popular as there are segments of the population that believe they are over-taxed. With socio-economic disparity across all municipalities, there can be a segment of the population that cannot afford user fees and thus creates a barrier to participation, impeding their ability to attain the benefits that parks and recreation services have to offer.

Operating Analysis: Parks & Recreation Department user fees are identified in its Fees and Charges By-law and are generally based on a comparison to the regional market along with previous year pricing, sometimes with an adjustment for the annual rate of inflation. While this approach provides certainty for facility users, it does not always consider the true cost that the Township incurs in delivering the service.

A number of municipalities across Ontario are undertaking exercises to quantify their costs of operation for specific facilities or operating units (e.g. arenas, halls, sports fields, etc.). This can be a complex endeavour due to the need to isolate direct operating costs, develop assumptions if/where costs are shared between operating units (e.g. general parks maintenance and sports fields, costs within community centres containing multiple operating units such as arenas and halls, etc.), and sometimes allocating indirect costs such as corporate overhead. As such, true costing exercises are not usually conducted annually given the amount of effort but rather every three to five years with annual adjustments for inflation applied in between.

As will be shown through the user-pay facility assessments in the sections that follow, quantification of true costs represents an opportunity to improve efficiencies by providing information that the Township can use to make informed decisions regarding pricing. By developing a formula for compiling and tracking true costs, the Township can assess operating performance attributable to the user pay facilities more accurately over time while setting its pricing in a manner that ensures operational sustainability.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #11.** Quantify the true cost of operating the Township's user-pay services and set pricing to recover a percentage of these costs, while continuing to have regard for market rates. This exercise should be accompanied by a Pricing Policy that formalizes cost recovery objectives depending upon the type of service and the type of user (e.g. children/youth, adults, seniors, populations experiencing low-income).

2.8 Recreation Capital Reserve

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To promote sustainable funding practices related to the Parks & Recreation Department's recreation capital replacement and renewal obligations.

The Township has a number of capital assets in place that allow parks and recreation activities to take place. Facilities and the equipment required to operate them have finite life spans; as these assets age and approach the end of their useful lives, replacement and renewal is required to keep the facilities in a good state of repair.

Parks & Recreation Department staff work with the Finance Department and others to anticipate work required to keep parks and facilities operating at a level that is safe, functional and reflective of the quality that residents have come to expect. The costs of infrastructure renewal can be significant over time and thus the proactive efforts of staff to remain apprised of future obligations is critical. Long range capital budgeting is in place to identify an estimated schedule that prioritizes activities and considers available funding. Dedicated in special accounts or reserves, these monies can offset large, unexpected capital expenses while distributing the tax impact over a number of years rather than all at once. Proactive municipalities also set aside monies accrued from tax dollars or other revenue sources for planned or special projects, such as the development or expansion of a specific facility or park.

Operating Risks:

The use of reserve funds requires a regular contribution from revenue sources such as user charges and taxation over an asset's lifecycle. Accordingly, these revenues cannot be used for other corporate priorities such as other capital or operating budget requirements, and cannot be used to offset any increases to the tax rate; in fact, reserve funds can result in the tax rate being increased, albeit to a much lesser extent in any given year as opposed to having to finance a major capital expenditure at the time an issue is incurred (e.g. contributions of 1% annually over 10 years compared to a 10% or greater increase in year 10).

For reserve funds to be effective, they require a sustainable funding source or commitment for regular contributions otherwise they risk being underfunded and thus increasing the likelihood of a larger tax increase in the year that an asset fails. They also benefit from having specific rules in place to define their ultimate intent and avoid use of "general reserves" that direct funds towards unintended uses.

Operating Analysis:

Lifecycle or maintenance reserves are contributions from the municipality, proactively enabling it to fund the maintenance and state-of-good-repair of existing facilities, and have a contingency should unexpected maintenance be required for a facility. For the latter, an added benefit is that a major repair does not significantly impact any one annual budget since a municipality is putting away small contributions for many years prior. Through capital forecasting, the Township can plan and submit funding plans for lifecycle and maintenance needs and is thus in a position to estimate renewal costs over time.

Four common categories of reserves / reserve funds employed by municipalities include: 1) asset maintenance reserves for lifecycle funding; 2) growth reserves such as Development Charges and Cash-in-Lieu of Parkland collected as part of the land development process; 3) program reserves for specific uses/operating units and one-time projects; and 4) sustainability reserves that are typically committed through policy to be held until needed for extraordinary and unforeseen costs.

Asset maintenance reserves are most applicable to Selwyn's context. They can draw from the annual tax-based maintenance envelope, a percentage of revenues generated by the asset, the Federal Gas Tax transfer, or other sources. These transfers are typically committed to finance lifecycle maintenance of existing assets for a defined period (e.g. five years) and may be under-funded beyond the specified term. Under such a model, Township Staff would annually prioritize projects (and defer others) to match the annual funding available. Any additional parks and recreation assets constructed in the future would require the annual envelope to be adjusted.

Utilization of, and continued contributions to, reserve funds represents sound and sustainable fiscal planning, while allowing the Township to efficiently allocate capital costs over asset lifecycles. Many progressive municipalities have reserve funds and Reserve Fund Policies in place to guide regular contributions in a transparent and consistent manner. Best practice examples include Oakville, London, and Mississauga although smaller municipalities (e.g. Woodstock and Middlesex Centre) also employ this practice.

Reserves are typically comprised of a compilation of tax and user fee revenue whereby the funding is collected and subsequently put in a reserve fund before capital projects are undertaken. The Township presently has replacement reserves in place for equipment (e.g. fleet), arena ice resurfacers, and arena ice plant components, but not for all building components. Ideally, the Township of Selwyn would create a Capital Reserve Fund for Recreation Capital Repairs and

Replacements (a form of an asset maintenance reserve) that is funded through an annual allocation of:

- **A Percentage of Recreation Revenues.** Under this mechanism, municipalities devote a percentage of revenues (budgeted or earned amount), typically about 2%. This approach is useful since it draws from user funded sources and is usually a manageable amount, particularly for municipalities that do not have the ability to set aside large amounts of money every year. However, the approach has limitations where earned revenues are not substantial as in the case of Selwyn where the majority of facility rentals are assigned to subsidized user groups (youth) and does not offer any programs that would otherwise constitute a revenue stream. In Selwyn, allocating 2% of annual Recreation revenues would amount to \$4,000 to \$4,500 per year based upon 2019 revenues. This represents a very small percentage of the lifecycle cost of an asset.
- **A Percentage of Recreation Asset Replacement Value.** Municipalities calculate the total replacement value of their existing assets and then allocate a budgeted amount, typically between 1% and 2% of the total replacement value. These contributions are substantially greater than allocating a percentage of recreation revenues since asset replacement costs are much to the high cost of facility development (particularly for built structures). For example, allocating 2% of an asset's replacement value amounts to an annual contribution of \$20,000 for every one million dollars of calculated replacement value; this amount of money can be difficult to find room for in annual and long-range budgets (particularly if facing pressures to keep budgets from escalating).

In recognition of Selwyn's fiscal capacities but also to allocate meaningful amount towards an asset management reserve, the Department may wish to consider a hybrid approach that combines the two approaches noted above. The Township should allocate a minimum of 2% of recreation revenues along with any top ups that reflects budgeted and/or forecasted infrastructure renewal costs.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #12.** Establish a Capital Reserve Fund for Recreation Capital Repairs and Replacements with preliminary funds generated through an allocated percentage of revenues, percentage of asset replacement values, a lump sum or combination thereof. These reserves should focus on assets and equipment that the Township does not already regularly allocate funds towards.

2.9 Undertaking, Updating & Implementing Long-Range Plans

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To ensure that the Parks & Recreation Department is proactively anticipating future service delivery needs and having the resources in place that are required to address them.

The Township is highly proactive in planning how to address service needs of its resident base. This is commendable by allowing the Township to anticipate what is in store for the future rather than having to react to unforeseen challenges. Long-range planning allows the Township to implement financial, strategic and operational objectives in a well thought out manner that improves operational efficiencies as a whole. The studies prepared by the Township are likely contributing to its success in securing external grant funding by informing grant-writers and funders of documented community needs and the due diligence undertaken.

Potential Risk Factors: There are very few risks to being proactive in planning. Staff may not have the time to complete long-range plans that fall outside of their core responsibilities and there may be financial costs associated with hiring consultants or contract staff. Unanticipated changes that affect a plan's foundation can also require a new course of action or a new plan altogether (e.g. market shifts, changes to municipal council or leadership that bring about a different vision, legislative changes, etc.) but can be mitigated through ongoing monitoring and updating of the plans.

Operating Analysis: The Parks & Recreation Department is guided by its Recreation Services Plan which was last updated in 2018. The review examined the status of implementation for each recommendation in the original Recreation Services Plan in light of changes to inventory, demographics, and insights provided by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee. Concurrently, the Township updated its corporate Strategic Plan to reflect current priorities and provide guidance over a new term of Council.

The proactive approach to planning allows corporate and departmental resources to be matched to community need, thereby placing the Township in a strong position to deliver its services efficiently and intentionally. As Selwyn experiences population growth - such as in the Lakefield South Secondary Plan area - along with evolution in its socio-demographic composition and changes in leisure preferences, a comprehensive update of the Recreation Services Plan is recommended. The Recreation Services Plan is approaching the end of its original planning horizon so there will be a need to re-evaluate needs once again with a supporting community consultation process and consideration of future growth.

Recommendations:

Rec. #13. Prepare an update to the Recreation Services Plan by the year 2023, along with a plan for parks and recreation facilities required to service the Lakefield South Secondary Plan.

2.10 Other Initiatives with Departmental Impact

The following topic areas arose during discussions with Township staff and were further explored in relation to experiences and best practices in other municipalities.

Purchasing Co-operatives

There is a growing trend in public sector organizations (see *Harnessing the power of cooperative purchasing in Municipal World*, February 2020) to achieve economic benefits from purchasing cooperatives. At the corporate level, Selwyn is part of purchasing collectives for items such as propane, fuel and road salt. Rural and smaller municipalities do not enjoy the high-volume purchasing clout that larger urban centres are able to achieve. Specialty services particular to recreation like booking and program registration software, refrigeration service contracts and operational equipment (mowers, string trimmers, ice resurfacers, etc.) may benefit from pooling purchasing needs with neighbouring municipalities or other public organizations to achieve improved pricing and service from vendors.

Snow Clearing

Facility staff have been approached with concerns from arena and hall patrons with respect to parking lot snow clearing, particularly during high snowfall events. The Public Works Department is responsible for plowing recreation facility parking lots, and has the staffing and equipment in place to do so. During periods of intensive snowfall, however, Public Works staff correctly prioritize roadways and other areas that are critical to public safety. Recreation facilities are a lower priority for snow clearing relative to certain other municipal infrastructure and it is during these times that recreation facility staff generally hear complaints.

Recreation staff are equipped with hand shovels and snow blowers to clear walkways and other circulation areas leading to the facility; however, facility staff do not have the tools to clear large areas such as parking lots. To address customer concerns and potentially mitigate liability issues should a patron slip and fall, the Township should either explore contracting out snow clearing services for the arena and hall parking lots, or equip Parks & Recreation Department vehicles with snow plows so that recreation staff can clear parking lots when Public Works is committed to higher priorities.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #14.** Investigate additional purchasing cooperatives for equipment and services under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Department to benefit from economies of scale, cost savings and/or sharing of knowledge.
- Rec. #15.** Improve snow clearing operations at arenas and community halls (and potentially other municipal properties) through contracting third-party services or equipping Parks & Recreation Department vehicles with snow plows.

2.11 Arena Operations

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To seek operating efficiencies for the Township of Selwyn's Arenas.

The Township of Selwyn operates 2 single pad arenas, located at the Lakefield-Smith Community Centre, Robert E. Young Recreation Complex.

Peer Group Analysis: Selwyn provides ice pads at a rate of 1 per 8,530 residents, a level of service that is in line with the majority of the peer group; all peer group municipalities operate 2 ice pads with the exception of Springwater's one ice pad (which brings down the average service level per population).

Municipality	# of Ice Pads	Service Level**
Clearview	2	1 : 7,000
Greater Napanee	2	1 : 8,000
Pelham	2	1 : 8,500
Springwater	1	1 : 19,000
Wilmot*	2	1 : 9,000
Peer Group Average	2	1 : 10,500
Selwyn	2	1 : 8,500

* Wilmot is presently assessing the need for a third ice pad

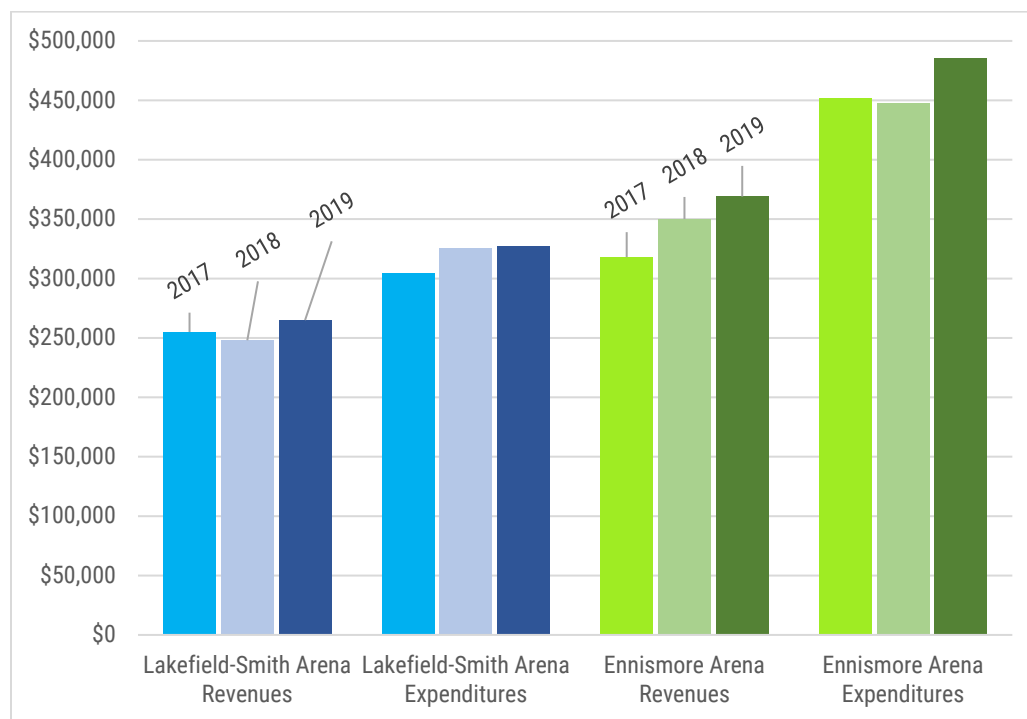
** derived from municipal population sourced in 2018 Financial Information Returns and rounded to nearest 500 residents

Operating Information: The Township's arenas are well used during weekday evenings and weekends between the months of September and January. Utilization falls off in the late winter/early spring as minor hockey bookings diminish with their playoffs.

The Township has considerably reduced arena operating deficits, a commendable feat given many municipalities are grappling with escalating costs. In 2014, net expenditures for arena operations were in the range of \$200,000 which have been nearly halved to under \$110,000 in 2018. The vast majority of arenas in Ontario incur a net operating deficit, particularly single pad arenas such as those found in Selwyn; a regional scan of arenas in the Peterborough area finds that their operating deficits are greater than those in Selwyn. Based on 2019 financial data, the community centres in Lakefield and Ennismore recovered 84% and 70% of their direct facility costs through revenues (noting this includes hall operations which are included as part of these cost centres, although arena operations account for the majority of revenues and expenses).

Arena operating performance is heavily reliant upon rental revenues to offset operating expenditures. The Township prices its ice pads by applying a nominal annual escalation (generally the rate of inflation) to historical pricing and occasional price comparison of prevailing market rates.

Figure 5: Arena Operating Revenues & Expenditures, 2017-2019



Note: graph illustrates total operating revenues and expenditures for the Lakefield-Smith Community Centre and Robert E. Young Recreation Complex, including hall facilities. However, revenues and expenditures in these two facilities are primarily attributable to arena operations. Transfer amounts are excluded.

Potential Risk Factors: Single pad arenas across Ontario are deemed to be less operationally efficient compared to multi-pad arenas, the latter of which benefit from economies of scale in staffing, equipment and certain other shared overheads. While this is identified as a potential inefficiency, many municipalities whose small populations are dispersed over a large geographic territory – as is the case in Selwyn – accept the operational costs associated with a decentralized arena provision model in order to ensure their residents have reasonable proximity to an arena.

Provincial and regional participation trends show declining numbers of minor hockey players and figure skaters who have traditionally constituted the majority of rentals in Ontario arenas. Operating revenues have been negatively affected in communities where minor and adult programs have reduced their bookings (typically 'shoulder' hours in the early morning, afternoon and late evening). Any attrition in local ice sport registrations has the potential to decrease revenues

which would negate progress that the Township has made in reducing its operating deficits, particularly if operating expenditures increase (e.g. hydro, capital renewal, staffing, etc.). The effect of COVID-19 on arena participation will be better understood after this coming year as governing ice sport bodies and their local leagues/programs implement new rules.

Changing demographics can also influence demand for ice time. Most ice sport participation is attributable to children and teens; while where adults are involved, participation rates tend to decline with age. Selwyn has an older median age and a greater proportion of older adults/seniors than the provincial average and thus a continued aging of the population – combined with a continued decrease in the under 20 population as noted in Section 1.4 – could decrease the local arena market. That said, declining minor bookings may be offset in the event adults pick-up vacated ice time and their higher rental rate per hour could in fact increase revenues so long as adults do not vacate their historical time slots.

The Township is operating without a formalized Ice Allocation Policy or standardized ice usage contracts that commit high volume users to the entire September to March arena operating season. The Township has found it difficult to secure ice rentals to replace ice time vacated by minor sports after playoffs in the late winter/early spring. Therefore, there is a lost revenue opportunity that could potentially be recouped by revisiting the distribution of, or contractual obligations for prime time ice. As described below, the Township provides a generous subsidy to minor ice users yet is vulnerable to financial shortfalls when the minor ice associations withdraw their ice time bookings early in the calendar year.

The Lakefield-Smith Community Centre is home to the Lakefield Chiefs Junior C team who provide quality entertainment to residents while generating some economic spin-off to the local businesses. Most municipalities have an agreement in place with their Junior C teams that define rental rates associated with ice time (including differentiated rates for practices and games to reflect different staffing needs) and/or occupancy of space within the building (e.g. dedicated dressing rooms, storage, administration, etc.). This allows municipalities to reinvest in their arenas to provide a level of quality that may not otherwise be afforded without partnerships with their Junior teams. There is no such agreement in place in Selwyn which poses a funding risk due to the Township's capital obligations for the arena.

Service Area Analysis: Municipal arena operations are commonly subsidized to provide affordable access to children and allowing all residents to attain the benefits of sport and physical activity. The Township has significantly reduced its arena operating deficit in recent years and its rental rates are competitive to the surrounding market, particularly after applying the hourly subsidy to minor hockey.

Given the Township's recent cost savings efforts, it will be difficult to significantly decrease operating expenditures any further without diminishing the quality of service or facility upkeep. There may be opportunities to leverage more energy efficient technologies through building and mechanical system upgrades, though these have a capital cost that would be paid back over time. The Township already staggers the opening and closure across the two arenas to contain costs though there may be opportunities to increase the amount of time directed to one of the ice pads (though this would require more travel for users).

Arena operating performance would be more realistically improved through bolstering the revenue side of the equation. This could be achieved in a number of ways, including (but not limited to):

- Increasing rental rates/user charges bearing in mind that price elasticity of demand is such that any fee increases has the potential to reduce the number of bookings; while rates will need to remain competitive with the local market, fee increases are more defensible if the Township can define its "true cost" of delivering arena services (Section 2.7). Progressive municipalities quantify how much their arenas cost to operate on an hourly basis, and then set their pricing to recover a pre-established percentage of direct costs and sometimes include an allocation to cover a portion of indirect costs and/or equipment replacement.
- Formalizing an Ice Allocation Policy that matches registrations to the number of hours allocated to a given user group (including the type of organization such as minor or adult leagues), thereby ensuring ice times reflect demand and promote efficiency of use. Ice Allocation Policies, particularly when developed with stakeholder input and approved by Council, provide municipal staff with a valuable tool that considers principles of equity and fairness in relation to priorities (e.g. minor compared to adult users). To address major changes, these policies could be phased in over time although the City of Peterborough is an example of a municipality taking a different tact where it provided groups with advance notice and implementing allocation changes all at once.

- Revisit the Township's arena contract practices, beginning with having large volume users commit to a longer playing season so that utilization in the back end of the winter season remains at an appropriate level. Using the example of minor users that have historically turned back substantial time after playoffs, one way to address this local issue would be to establish an Ice Usage Policy that stipulates the subsidized ice time is only available to organizations if they subscribe to a full season (22 to 26 weeks); like an allocation policy, this policy could be phased in. An ice usage policy such as this - which is in place in some larger municipalities like London - enables children to access greater amounts of ice time and encourages organizations to be creative by scheduling exhibition games, creating development programs or holding tryouts for next year's teams.
- Building ancillary revenue streams such as expanding advertising opportunities from rink boards to other media (e.g. digital signs), enhanced efforts to seek sponsorships, naming rights, etc.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #16.** Formalize an Ice Allocation Policy and an Ice Usage Policy to optimize arena scheduling processes in prime time periods throughout the entire fall/winter season and establishing a set number of weeks for high volume user groups to commit to (for try-outs, exhibition games, etc.). The analysis of the true costs of operation identified in Recommendation #11 of the Service Delivery Review will also inform the Township's ice usage policies and practices.
- Rec. #17.** Continuing to stagger opening and closing dates of the two arenas, but also doing so in a manner that may result in one arena being closed earlier (preferably the one that is less operationally efficient).
- Rec. #18.** Enter into a formal agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the Lakefield Chiefs to help offset costs associated specifically with their team's operations, as previously articulated in a Staff Report⁴ to Council in December 2019. Exclusive use of municipal space by an independent organization typically warrants a written agreement that outlines roles, responsibilities and liability mitigation measures (e.g. insurance requirements).

⁴ Township of Selwyn Staff Report to Township Council entitled Arena Operational Deficits and dated December 19, 2020

2.12 Community Hall Operations

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To improve operating performance of the Township of Selwyn's community halls in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

The Parks & Recreation Department is responsible for operating 4 halls located at the Lakefield-Smith Community Centre, the Robert E. Young Recreation Complex (Ennismore), the Bridgenorth Community Centre and the Marshland Centre. Memorial Hall in Lakefield is also available for public use but is managed under the purview of Selwyn Public Library.

The Lakefield Scout Ship Building is not included in the supply as up until this year, was leased to Scouts Canada. The Scouts ended their lease in January 2020 and the Township is contemplating future use for the building, potentially to support functions at the adjacent Isabel Morris Park.

Peer Group Analysis: Selwyn's total number of halls is in line with the Peer Group average and slightly above-average when measured by as a rate per population. This finding should be cautiously interpreted because halls are highly differentiated in terms of their occupancy capacities, interior aesthetics, types of amenities (e.g. kitchens, bars, etc.), and other factors that influence cost and rental/programming opportunities. Certain municipalities also supplement their halls with multi-use program and meeting rooms, including some within large multi-use community centres, which reduces pressure to provide dedicated hall facilities.

Municipality	# of Halls	Service Level*
Clearview	8	1 : 1,800
Greater Napanee	4	1 : 4,000
Pelham	2	1 : 8,500
Springwater	5	1 : 3,800
Wilmot	6	1 : 2,900
Peer Group Average	5	1 : 4,200
Selwyn	5**	1 : 3,400

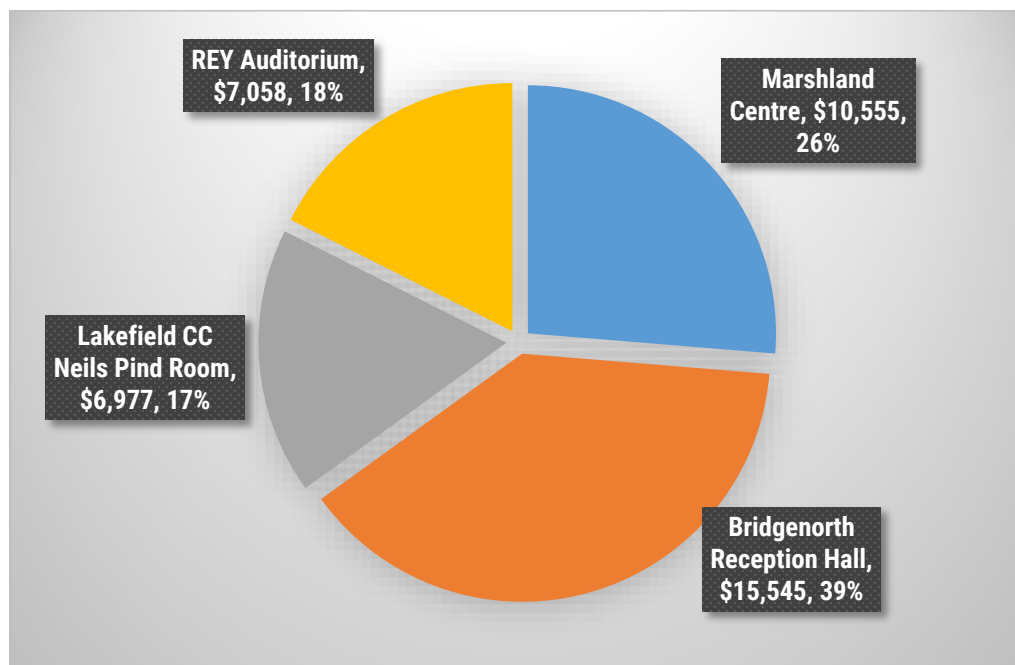
* derived from municipal population sourced in 2018 Financial Information Returns and rounded to nearest 100 residents

** includes Memorial Hall for the purposes of benchmarking

Note; excludes meeting/program rooms with capacity less than 50 persons

Operating Information: Rental revenues attributable to four of the community halls totaled \$40,000 in 2019 exclusive of the Lakefield Memorial Hall which is not identified in budget documents; revenues were approximately \$10,000 (27%) above the two previous years and erased a decline in revenues across all halls that was experienced in 2018. Nearly two of every three rental revenues earned are attributable to the Bridgenorth Reception Hall and the Marshland Centre.

Figure 6: Share of Earned Rental Revenue by Community Hall, 2019



Bar rentals have declined by 6% over the past three years though could have fared much worse on a percentage basis if not for bar receipts at the Lakefield-Smith Community Centre nearly tripling in 2019; the latter case is likely a result of one or two licensed events over what is currently booked. Bar revenues are a relatively nominal source of revenue, representing 12% of overall hall revenues though account for between 15% and 30% of total revenues at the two arena halls.

Aggregated operating expenditures for the halls are more difficult to calculate given some are combined with other operating units (e.g. buildings containing arenas and halls). Municipal budget sheets isolate operating expenditures for the Marshland Centre and the Bridgenorth Community Hall, however, the other two halls are combined with the arena cost centres in their respective buildings. As stated earlier, the Lakefield Memorial Hall is not included in the budget sheets thus its operating expenditures are unknown. Therefore, it is difficult to aggregate hall operating expenditures across the entire corporation.

Looking at the two stand-alone halls, the Marshland Centre incurred \$20,300 in operating expenses in 2019 (excluding a \$11,600 contribution to capital equipment), representing a 17% increase in costs compared to 2017 and driven in part by maintenance activities. The rate of increase in the Marshland Centre's operating expenditures have generally kept pace with revenue growth (+18%). By comparison, the Bridgenorth Community Centre's nearly \$19,000 operating expenditure is actually 3% less than incurred in 2019 matching the same decrease in revenues.

The resulting net operating subsidy amounts to \$9,300 for the Marshland Centre and \$2,000 for the Bridgenorth Community Hall. The Bridgenorth Community Hall has recovered between 82% and 91% of its direct facility costs through rental and bar revenue over the past three years. By comparison, the Marshland Centre has recovered slightly more than half of its operating costs through its operating revenues (54% on average). Although costs directly attributable to the Neils Pind Room (Lakefield) and the Auditorium in Ennismore cannot be quantified, it is highly likely that they also incur a net operating subsidy since their rental revenues are lower than the stand-alone halls and it can be assumed that their respective operating subsidies are in a similar range as the Marshland Centre and Bridgenorth Community Hall.

Potential Risk Factors: The Township's community halls are susceptible to a number of capital and operating factors including costs attributable to lifecycle renewal and ongoing maintenance, and uncertainty in revenue streams. With the exception of the Bridgenorth Community Hall and the REY Auditorium which was substantially renovated in 2012, the remaining halls in Lakefield have been in service for decades and thus face capital replacement and renewal costs as they continue to age. Structural and mechanical systems can be costly endeavours.

Rental revenues are the primary source of cost recovery for the halls and any changes to the number of bookings and the rental receipts will affect operating performance. The halls are operating in a competitive industry that continues to grow with the number of events being held in area golf courses, banquet venues, and more recently a trend towards agricultural properties such as barns and tented events. The Township's price point is highly competitive though the design quality of its facilities is a differentiating factor as it tends to be more basic than a number of private sector venues. The halls also face competition from community-based facilities such as places of worship, cultural/ethnic clubs, etc.

The declines in rental and bar revenues is generally consistent with the experiences in a number of Ontario municipalities. It represents a likely shift in the number of social gatherings and receptions taking place in municipal facilities, due in part to competitive forces noted above but also a result of stronger laws and enforcement regarding impaired driving compared to 20 years ago.

The Township and other hall/event venue operators in the sector have been impacted by COVID-19 in 2020 and ongoing physical distancing measures may delay plans for those in the community that are looking to rent space for gatherings, at least for the near-term. Depending upon how long pandemic-related restrictions are in place at the provincial and regional levels, rental bookings and their respective revenues may be below historical averages.

Service Area Analysis: The Bridgenorth Community Hall's relatively strong operating performance and the fact that it is a relatively new facility bode well for the future. It benefits from a centralized location within Selwyn and proximity to the City of Peterborough which strengthens its market catchment area relative to the other halls. By comparison, the Marshland Centre likely serves a market niche as it is located in a unique, natural setting; its design and configuration appeal to a specific target market when compared to the Bridgenorth Community Hall. The same can be said for the two arena halls which largely service their respective urban areas of Ennismore and Lakefield and provide a more basic level of amenity relative to certain other competitors in the social venue sector.

Arguably, the most pressing priority for the Township's halls moving forward will be to grow rental and booking levels, or sustain them at a minimum. Since rental revenues are the primary source of revenue and cost recovery, focus must be placed on revenue-generating bookings. There may be certain opportunities to generate revenue from naming rights, sponsorships and advertising as noted in Section 2.6; however, private sector contributions, particularly among the business community, are usually intended to be associated with an impression of their brand and thus the current design quality could be a deterrent. As such, revenues from naming rights and sponsorships in particular could be tied to capital improvements (e.g. renovations or other substantial improvements) rather than offsetting ongoing operating costs, although improved design and desirability to renters has the potential of increasing hall utilization and thus rental/bar revenues in turn.

Greater attention should be placed on running rental facilities as business entities whereby they operate near or at a break-even basis and have money set aside for capital obligations if possible. It also bears noting that the Township provides free and heavily discounted rentals to certain user groups (e.g. occasional use for local sports organizations and service clubs); from a municipal accounting perspective, such rental supports to the community would ideally be captured and charged back as grants or items requiring increased tax support.

Rentals can be strengthened through continued diversification of the types of hall bookings; this will be extremely important if the decreasing market for traditional gatherings and receptions continues to be saturated with new private or community-based providers. As an example, the Township is already working with local fitness providers (organizations and individuals) to facilitate programming in the halls. Diversifying the types of uses in the halls requires the Township to identify community providers and encourage them to use municipal facilities which requires an understanding of their needs; the community development model and staffing dedicated to it, as discussed in Section 2.2, is critical in this respect.

Understanding the needs 'non-traditional' renters may require the Township to reconsider aspects of a hall's pricing, scheduling, and/or design. The Township may also provide assistance or incentives for community providers for undertaking pilot or trial programs, particularly for those that are identified by the Township as a gap in Selwyn. If a pilot program can get off the ground and become established, incentives could be reduced and allow the Township to benefit from increased paid rentals of its facilities. The Community Recreation Liaison, as identified in Recommendation #3, would be responsible for identifying potential gaps in programs and services and could bring prospective opportunities forward to local community providers to pilot.

The Marshland Centre presents an opportunity to potentially diversify its revenue streams by capitalizing upon visitor traffic associated with the adjacent Lakefield Campground and Lakefield Beach. For example, the campground operator may see a value in renting the space for events or gatherings, or there may be a third party partnership opportunity to provide refreshments or other service.

Other aspects to consider are a continued emphasis on delivering strong customer service through client interaction, convenient booking/payment systems (see Section 2.4), and supports, services or assistance provided in advance of and on the day of booking (e.g. event planning, setup and take-down, etc.). Anecdotally speaking, Township staff have found many clients become repeat renters at certain halls such as that in Bridgenorth, particularly after customers become aware of the facility and have a chance to try them out. Generating awareness through enhanced marketing/advertising efforts could drive greater use of the facility in conjunction with community development and customer service initiatives.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #19.** Operate community halls as distinct business entities whereby the Township seeks to optimize operating performance and accounting/reporting capabilities by: a) continuing to diversify the types of rental and booking opportunities taking place in the community halls in response to market trends and demands; b) continued implementation of the Township's community development and outreach efforts; and c) operating the halls at or near a break-even financial position pending the results of the true costing exercise identified in Recommendation #11 of the Service Delivery Review.
- Rec. #20.** Enhance marketing efforts specific to the features and potential types of uses that can take place in the Township's community halls to build awareness, possibly by expanding advertising beyond municipal boundaries and seeking greater use of technology in awareness efforts.
- Rec. #21.** Encourage community organizations to "pilot" programs and services, potentially with incentives such as subsidized space or staff support during the initial testing period. Pilot projects should be accompanied by an agreement articulating terms, expectations and supports at a minimum.

2.13 Sports Field Operations

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To explore the role of pricing in efficiently maintaining the Township of Selwyn's sports field system.

The Township of Selwyn owns 6 rectangular fields and facilitates access to 1 more at Lakefield District Public School. There are 5 ball diamonds of which 3 are lighted, while groups are able to also access an unlit diamond in Ennismore located on private property.

Peer Group Analysis: Selwyn provides 1 rectangular field per 2,400 residents and 1 ball diamond per 2,300 residents. Rectangular field supplies are generally in line with the Peer Group average while ball diamond supplies are roughly half of what is provided by others.

Municipality	# of Rectangular Fields*	Service Level (pop.)**
Clearview	5.0	1 : 2,800
Greater Napanee	12.5	1 : 1,300
Pelham	3.0	1 : 5,700
Springwater	8.0	1 : 2,400
Wilmot	14.0	1 : 1,300
Peer Group Average	8.5	1 : 2,600
Selwyn	7.0	1 : 2,400

Municipality	# of Ball Diamonds*	Service Level (pop.)**
Clearview	10.5	1 : 1,300
Greater Napanee	13.0	1 : 1,200
Pelham	10.5	1 : 1,600
Springwater [^]	16.0	1 : 1,200
Wilmot	15.0	1 : 1,200
Peer Group Average	13.0	1 : 1,300
Selwyn	7.5	1 : 2,300

*supply stated in "unlit equivalents" where 1 lit field equals 1.5 unlit fields due to additional booking capacity later in the evening; includes regularly permitted non-municipal fields.

** derived from population sourced in 2018 Financial Information Returns and rounded to nearest 100 residents

[^] Springwater also has a major sports field complex that contains 10 diamonds which are excluded as the park was funded by an organization in an adjacent municipality who book the vast majority of time through their partnership agreement.

Operating Information: Sports field expenditures of \$17,000 attributable to maintenance and hydro increased by 55% (\$6,000) between 2017 and 2019; the majority of the increase is a result of property maintenance. Capital equipment is excluded from the noted expenditure figure as are staffing costs, the latter of which are shared with other

park operations and thus cannot be isolated to the sports fields. Expenditures are aggregated for rectangular fields and ball diamonds.

User fees are not charged to minor sports field users who account for the majority of field bookings and thus cost recovery rates are low; the exception is for minor ball organizations making use of lit diamonds who are charged a fee to offset a portion of the utility costs. User fees from adult ball groups constitute the majority of ball diamond revenues which totalled \$29,000 in 2019, representing a modest decrease compared to 2017 (\$30,500) but a more significant shortfall (-12%) compared to 2018 when user fee revenues exceeded \$33,000. No revenues were attributable to adult users of rectangular fields (resulting from no adult bookings) although the Township's recent investments in Ultimate Frisbee fields may contribute revenues given adult users are levied a charge for use.

Based upon information contained in previous recreation planning assessments, it would appear that existing sports fields have the capacity for additional usage throughout the week.

Potential Risk Factors: Underutilization of sports fields will continue to be an operating risk, particularly since minor sports tend to be the primary users; with a slight decrease in the number of residents under the age of 20, minor sports registration will be challenged unless groups can increase their market share. In the event that minor registrations stagnate or contract, further underutilization may occur though impacts on revenues would be negligible given the Township's fee structure. However, the absence of revenue from minor users (aside from lit diamond rentals) may challenge the Township to mitigate any escalation in operating expenditures or capital renewal.

Service Area Analysis: The 2018 Update to the Recreation Services Plan does not recommend new construction of soccer fields or ball diamonds based on population forecasts and local registration trends. Instead, the focus is placed on working with sports field users to make greater use of the facilities and engaging local school boards to encourage greater community use of their fields as a means to address any unmet demands in prime time periods. The recommendations contained in the Recreation services Plan continue to be supported as a means to mitigate risks associated with underutilization and overbuilding of the sports field supply.

To address operating risks of escalating expenditures, the Township should revisit its sports field fee structure and pricing practices. Similar to the discussion to potentially employ a "true cost" pricing regime as discussed in Section 2.7, the Township is advised to determine its true costs associated with rectangular fields

and ball diamonds as separate cost centres (ball diamonds tend to be more costly to operate due to specialized maintenance and equipment requirements).

By defining true cost of sports field operations, the Township can determine an acceptable level of cost recovery. It is acknowledged that sports field operations are a nominal cost in the grand scheme of municipal service provision and that minor groups have become accustomed to free access. Sports field users across Ontario have historically accessed sports fields for free or at very low rental rates (this is especially true for natural grass rectangular fields) though there is strong merit in revisiting this practice. A number of municipalities have, or are in the process of revisiting their sports field pricing practices out of principle to ensure fairness and sustainability through their pricing regimes (Middlesex Centre, Whitchurch-Stouffville and London are examples). Municipalities are also increasingly being pressed for higher quality playing fields involving enhanced designs and more diligent maintenance practices (e.g. top dressing, fertilization, goal mouth seeding, etc.) which is increasing their costs compared to past years.

Rental rates do not need to attain full cost recovery and the low operating cost of certain fields (particularly those that are unlit or are not maintained to a 'premier' level) can make user fees affordable. Municipalities applying user fees to minor sports fields do so through nominal per hour rental charges, a per player charge which is usually in the range of a few dollars, and/or imposing field lighting fees to recover the cost of hydro (as the Township of Selwyn already does).

The Township may also be able to contain costs, or at the very least better define them, by formalizing a set of park maintenance standards as discussed in Section 2.5. By assigning maintenance activities such as mowing according to grass length rather than a day of the week, there may be cost savings generated during dry-weather periods in the season (e.g. staff time, fuel, wear on equipment). Implementation of a sports field rental fee for minor users can also help contribute to enhanced levels of design / maintenance (e.g. design quality, irrigation systems, field amenities, etc.) or directed to a sports field reserve fund so that users can see how fees are being used to improve their playing experience.

Recommendations:

- Rec. #22.** Based upon the true cost analysis to be carried out in Recommendation #11, determine whether to implement sports field rental fee for all minor sports field users noting that this fee could be phased in to allow groups time to adjust and/or be applied to selected fields in order to mitigate short-term financial impacts on the users.

2.14 Lakefield Campground Operations

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To confirm the Township of Selwyn's role at the Lakefield Campground.

The Township of Selwyn owns the lands at Hague Point upon which the Lakefield Campground is situated. The Township has a longstanding lease agreement with a third party that manages campground operations.

Staff report that there are 138 sites, 108 of which are seasonal and 35 of which include water and sewer services.⁵ Washroom facilities are open to day-use beach and park users while showers are used exclusively by campground users.

Peer Group Analysis: None of the Peer Group municipalities own or manage campgrounds. Instead, a sampling of selected municipalities that do so is provided for reference, along with some notable information regarding the campgrounds and their respective operating models.

Municipality	Management Model	Number of Campsites	Seasonal vs. Transient Split	Serviced Sites Available	Notes
City of Peterborough (Beavermeade Campground)	Owned by City, operated by Conservation Authority, shared revenue arrangement	109	Seasonal: 9% Transient: 91%	Yes	
South Bruce Peninsula (Bluewater Campground)	Owned and operated by municipality	94	Seasonal: 43% Transient: 57%	Yes	Waiting list for seasonal rentals. Fees for winter storage.
North Bruce Peninsula (Lion's Head Beach)	Owned and operated by municipality	42	Seasonal: 52% Transient: 48%	Yes (35)	Waiting list for seasonal sites.
Saugeen Shores (Southampton)	Owned and operated by municipality	149	Seasonal: 97% Transient: 3%	Yes	Seasonal trailer park focus.
Selwyn (Lakefield)	Own and Lease operations to private sector	138	Seasonal: 78% Transient: 22%	Yes	

⁵ Township of Selwyn internal document entitled "Campground Discussion 2019"

Operating Information: Prior to the year 1996, the former Village of Lakefield operated the Lakefield Campground. Since 1996, the Lakefield Campground has been operated by a third-party operator through a formalized agreement; the agreement has an automatic renewal for two-year extensions. The Township’s responsibilities primarily pertain to capital maintenance activities of existing infrastructure and spends approximately \$9,500 to \$11,000 annually for these obligations. While the Township provides staff support for start-up and winterization activities at the beginning and end of the camping season, day-to-day maintenance of the campground is the responsibility of the operator under the terms of the agreement.

The Township’s revenues received from campground operations come from an annual compensation amount provided by the operator in exchange for the right to operate, escalated by 3% annually from the base figure identified in the agreement. In 2019, the Township received \$56,000 from the campground operator net of budgeted expenditures. This revenue is used towards municipal parks operations along with contribution towards capital replacement reserve.

Potential Risk Factors: Risks associated with the Lakefield Campground under the current operating agreement are largely financial. Capital infrastructure obligations represent the most significant financial risk as much of the existing infrastructure in place dates back to the 1970s and is deteriorating as the years go by. Recent estimates obtained by the Township estimate servicing infrastructure costs (hydro, water, waste, etc.) in the range of \$650,000 to \$800,000 plus debt servicing/amortization costs. Based upon the annual revenue currently being earned by the Township, a major capital investment would be recovered only after a significant period of time at which time, capital renewal may again be necessary.

\$650K to \$800K

Estimated cost to improve aging infrastructure at the Lakefield Campground.

Should the Township reinvest in the campground, a business case must exist and a cost-sharing or amended agreement with the operator should be put in place to fund capital projects.

There is always a risk that the operator chooses to not renew its agreement with the Township (though must provide notice in advance if it intends to do so). In this scenario, there is a possibility that the Township would need to assume day-to-day management of the Lakefield Campground and thereby incurring the staffing and operational costs of doing so until a new operator is found.

There may be cost savings should the Township move to permanently close the campground, however, associated revenue generation potential could be eliminated or diminished in turn. There could also be a loss of spinoffs to certain segments of the local economy that campers contribute towards through spending.

Another risk with the current operating model is that the Township relies upon the third party operator to meet customer expectations in terms of service quality; indications are that campers are generally satisfied with the operator though any dissatisfaction or deviation from expected levels of service could result in the public pressing the Township for greater accountability notwithstanding the formal agreement in place.

The impact that COVID-19 has had on campground operations is not yet known though campgrounds across Ontario were closed for the early summer of 2020. A number of campgrounds were busy upon their re-opening due to the ability of people to keep distance and a desire to connect with the outdoors during the pandemic. Certain operators also adapted to health regulations through increased cleaning or closure of their washroom/shower facilities. The length of the pandemic and directives from provincial and regional health authorities will likely determine the impact, if any, on the Lakefield Campground.

Service Area Analysis: The campground is well-established within the Lakefield community. Although a strong majority of the camp sites are leased to seasonal renters, the transient sites introduce a regular stream of short-term visitors to the Township.

Based on interviews with staff, the relationship with the current third-party operator has improved over previous years and a spirit of cooperation has been established. The campground washrooms also serve day-use beach-goers and are maintained to the general satisfaction of municipal staff.

The online profile for the campground is limited and internet searches regarding the site lead to a website that would appear dated (for example, 2018 rates were posted at the time of the online review). However, marketing efforts are primarily the responsibility of the operator and thus the Township's role is limited here. Encouraging the operator to update and regularly maintain its website could further mutual objectives, particularly if serving to increase campsite bookings and thereby shared revenues.

Campground infrastructure is in need of significant capital investment to ensure future operations, however, the current agreement requires the Township to undertake capital projects. As noted, the costs of doing so could be significant and may not represent a sound business case for the Township. The operator would benefit from a much higher marginal return on investment for any infrastructure spending committed by the Township as the operator could conceivably charge higher rates for modern services. Should the Township reinvest in campground infrastructure, the business case must exist to do so and should include a cost-sharing agreement with the operator to fund capital projects or

amend the agreement after its two-year expiry so that the revenue contributions back to the Township result in a more justifiable 'pay-back' period.

Before reinvesting in the Lakefield Campground, however, the Township needs to assess and confirm its desired future role. An investment in administration, operations and marketing staff would be required (at a minimum) should the Township revert to the pre-1995 model and operate a campground in today's competitive market place. The Township could continue with its current model, either continuing its agreement with the current operator or seeking a new agreement (with either the current operator or a new operator), or ceasing campground operations altogether and returning the land to enlarge the public park component at Hague Point.

The most viable options related to the future of the campground are summarized in the table that follows. A study determining the future role of the Township at the Lakefield Campground should be undertaken to evaluate each of these 5 options (and any other options that emerge through research or analysis).

Table 1: Potential Operating Roles for the Lakefield Campground

Option	Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
1. Status Quo The Township renegotiates the agreement with the current operator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proven service delivery model with consistent revenue source – Minimal ongoing staff effort – Potential to negotiate infrastructure cost-sharing and greater revenue sharing – No disruption to level of service for existing customers – Can re-define service delivery model through specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Infrastructure renewal requirements – Competing public interests – Requires some management oversight of contract
2. Competitive Market The Township terminates the current agreement and issues an RFP (Request for Proposals) or EOI (Expressions of Interest) in order to enter into a new third party operating agreement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for greater revenue sharing – Potential for infrastructure cost sharing – Can re-define service delivery model through specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Infrastructure renewal requirements – Competing public interests – Requires some management oversight of contract – Could result in no qualified proponents

Option	Strengths and Opportunities	Weaknesses and Threats
<p>3. Conservation Authority</p> <p>The Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and pursues an operating agreement with the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority.</p> <p><i>Note: ORCA was not engaged through this study so this option is subject to verification</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Experience in campground operations – Operates with a commitment to the public good – Environmental Stewardship Mandate – Established standards for operations – Can re-define service delivery model through specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Existing customers may not be receptive if operations are significantly altered – ORCA may not have capacity to manage additional campgrounds
<p>4. Self-Operate</p> <p>The Township terminates the lease and assumes operational control of the campground.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for synergy with Marina operations (supervisory, staffing, marketing, etc.) – Enhanced revenue opportunities – Potential to share operating unit and certain functions (such as administration, customer service, maintenance, etc.) with Lakefield Marina to leverage efficiencies – Can re-define service delivery model through specifications 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Competing public interests – Service is atypical of most core municipal service mandates – Additional human resources required
<p>5. Cease Campground Operations</p> <p>The Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and converts the property to passive parkland.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Allows for greater opportunity for land stewardship – Negates the need for significant infrastructure spending – Could be well-received by park proponents in the community – A park would be complementary to the ecological function of Hague Point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Eliminates a regular stream of annual revenue – Negative economic impact on businesses relying on campers – Adds to parkland maintenance – Cost associated with decommissioning existing campground – Will incur costs for restoration to passive parkland – Impact to existing campers

Recommendations:

- Rec. #23.** Undertake a study that determines the Township's future role and/or responsibilities associated with the utilization of the Lakefield Campground. The study should consider the following service delivery options, at a minimum (listed in no particular order of priority or preference):
- i. *Status Quo*: the Township renegotiates the agreement with the current operator, with modest amendments or more comprehensive revisions.
 - ii. *Competitive Market*: the Township terminates the current agreement and issues an RFP (Request for Proposals) or EOI (Expressions of Interest) in order to enter into a new third party operating agreement.
 - iii. *Conservation Authority*: the Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and pursues an operating agreement with the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority.
 - iv. *Self-Operate*: the Township terminates the lease and assumes operational control of the campground.
 - v. *Cease Campground Operations*: the Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and converts the property to passive parkland.

2.15 Lakefield Marina Operations

Modernization & Improvement Goal:

To capitalize on the strong demand for the Lakefield Marina.

The Township of Selwyn owns and operates the Lakefield Marina. The Marina is well-positioned within the Trent-Severn Waterway, a significant national navigable water route. It is a modestly sized Marina offering 34 slips, of which 25 are seasonal slips (i.e. they are booked for the season). Demand for these scarce seasonal slips is strong and a waiting list has existed for them for a number of years. Some additional wall space is also available for transient vessels.

The Marina offers serviced slips, washrooms and showers as well as pump out services and a snack bar. Some nautical items are also available for sale. There is no fuel available at the marina.

Peer Group Analysis: None of the Peer Group municipalities own or manage marinas. Instead, a sampling of selected municipalities that do so is provided for reference, along with some notable information regarding the marina and their respective operating models. All of these selected municipalities are direct operators of their marinas consistent with the Township of Selwyn, however, the Lakefield Marina provides the fewest number of slips.

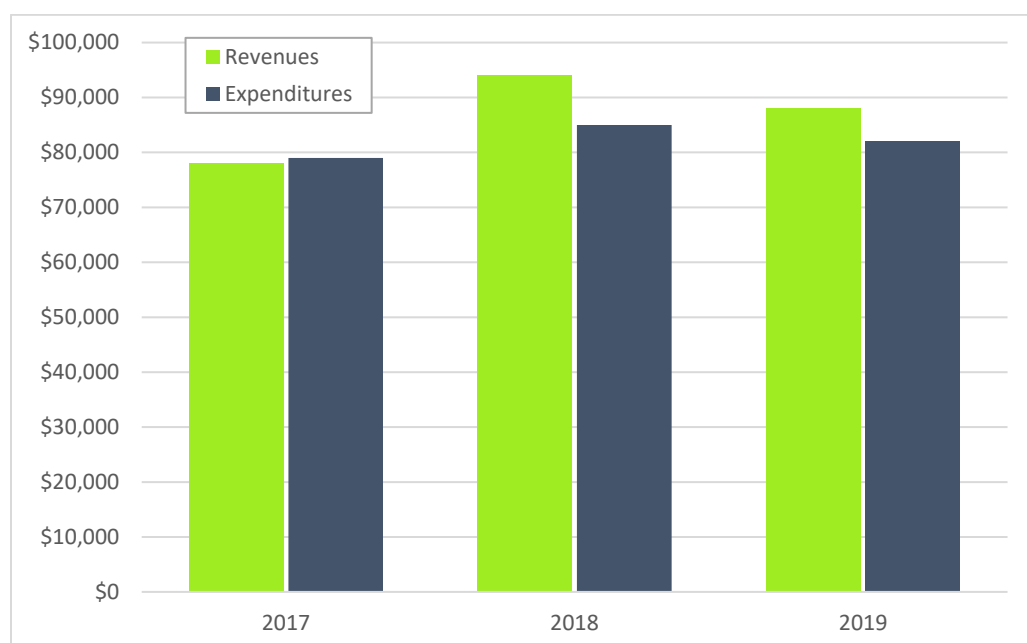
Municipality	Management Model	Number of Slips	Approx. Seasonal vs. Transient Split	Transient Fee per foot per day
Peterborough	Own and directly Operate	100	Seasonal: 63% Transient: 37%	\$2.09 (15-30 amp)
North Bruce Peninsula (Lions Head)	Own and directly operate	203	Seasonal:57% Transient:43%	\$1.85 plus hydro fee of \$10/day (30 amp)
Quinte West (Trent Port marina)	Owned and directly operate	378	Seasonal:85% Transient:15%	\$1.90 (30 amp)
Selwyn	Own and Directly Operate	34	Seasonal:74% Transient:26%	\$1.90 (30 amp)

Operating Information: Revenues attributable to the Lakefield Marina fluctuated between \$78,000 and \$94,000 from 2017 to 2019. The majority of revenue is earned in the rental of boat slips where seasonal rentals contributed \$42,000 and transient slips earned \$30,000 in 2019. Interestingly, transient slips generate \$2,500 per slip per year in revenue on average (assuming wall space counts for 3 slips); this is nearly 50% more revenue per slip than the \$1,680 per seasonal transient slip. Concessions typically contribute \$9,000 to \$10,000 per year primarily through sales of ice, snacks, drinks and ice cream.

Direct operating costs ranged between \$79,000 and \$85,000 between 2017 and 2019. The Marina is operated primarily with seasonal Township employees whose wages account for one out of every three dollars attributed to direct costs. Utility costs, dock installation and removal, insurance and capital equipment are other notable costs of operation.

The Lakefield Marina generated an operating surplus between \$6,000 and \$9,000 in 2018 and 2019, and operated near break-even in 2017. The Marina also generates direct and indirect spending at local businesses which has not been quantified.

Figure 7: Lakefield Marina Operating Revenues & Expenditures, 2017-2019



Potential Risk Factors: The Lakefield Marina is strategically located within the heart of Lakefield and the shopping district; while this is a core strength of the marina, it also constrains its potential for expansion because of the municipal water supply intake and geographical limitations. This could result in ongoing unmet demand, opportunity cost of lost revenue, and continued waiting lists.

COVID-19 has had an impact on the tourism sector, though more so at an international level. Domestic travel and tourism has also been impacted although there are signs that people are once again more open to travel as restrictions are lifted. It is not known to what extent regional tourism has been impacted in the Peterborough and Kawartha regions, though it is understood that seasonal slips continue to be fully subscribed in 2020 and thus bringing certainty in revenue to the Township.

Service Area Analysis: An obvious way to increase operating performance would be to address the latent demand for both seasonal and transient slips, thereby increasing revenue through rental volume. Unfortunately, geographic and servicing constraints make this a challenge. Assessing the feasibility or potential to expand the Lakefield Marina is beyond the scope of this exercise, however, it would be beneficial for the Township to undertake a Marina Utilization Study.

Operating performance could be optimized through the revenue streams. Transient slips produce a proportionately higher level of revenue (50%) than the seasonal slips, likely indicative of strong turnover rates and high demand to dock in Lakefield. Consideration should be given to shifting the balance of transient and seasonal slips in favour of additional transient slips. Given the nature of the location of the Lakefield Marina within the Trent-Severn waterway and the number of vessels that pass through, the additional earning potential of transient slips should be further assessed. Transient users also tend to have a greater positive impact on the local economy, particularly in the food and retail sectors as they restock during their journey through the Trent-Severn as compared to their seasonal counterparts (who often arrive with many of their consumable goods already in hand). Transitioning to a new level of transient versus seasonal slips should be done gradually in order to maintain positive relationships with existing seasonal renters.

The Township should also review its pricing of seasonal and transient slips. While the review against selected municipal marinas yield comparable pricing, a more robust review of marina rates and fees should be undertaken. Based upon the significant demand for slips in Lakefield, there is likely room to increase pricing simply beyond the level of inflation.

Consideration may also be given to alternative revenue streams at the Lakefield Marina. One such option would be to explore kayak, canoe, paddleboard or paddleboat rentals with interest in water-based activities growing across the province. Certain municipalities have taken on management of equipment rentals while others lease operations or have dockage agreements in place to collect income and/or share revenues. Such activities could also be considered for the Lakefield Beach, and potentially housing operations in another municipal facility/open space.

Operating performance of the Marina's store/concession stand should also be examined as it accounts for approximately 10% of total marina revenues. The Township is cognisant of the balance between providing goods and services that the Marina users are looking for onsite versus directly competing with what local businesses are supplying. There may be opportunity to diversify the types of goods and services offered at the Marina, or adopting a more entrepreneurial approach to improve the bottom line.

Recommendations:

Rec. #24. Undertake a Marina Utilization Study that investigates and provides guidance for the following aspects of the Lakefield Marina:

- i. Reviewing alternative service delivery options for the Lakefield Marina's retail operations to improve its financial performance and value provided to boater. At a minimum, this may include expanding the range of products and services offered or contracting out the concession (if space is available to accommodate this option).
- ii. Reviewing the mix and pricing of seasonal versus transient boat slips. With its location along a prime water route, Lakefield is an ideal location for a Marina that caters to transient boaters. Consideration could be given to adjusting the balance between seasonal and transient boaters and to pricing for both. Based on demand, it would appear that there is room for prices to be adjusted upward without an adverse effect on the volume of seasonal or transient slip rentals.
- iii. Pursuing partnerships or working agreements with senior levels of government and other agencies (e.g. Parks Canada, Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry) operating along the waterways to determine whether additional docking opportunities can be secured through their lands to alleviate demands being placed upon the Lakefield Marina.

3.0

Implementation

3.1 Implementation Schedule

The Township of Selwyn's Parks & Recreation Department is a high functioning operating unit within the corporation, striving to deliver its services in line with corporate vision, mission and values. The Department is highly cost-efficient due to its organizational structure and focused service mandate. Importantly, the Department builds strong relationships with the community it serves and has excellent communication with others in the corporation which lead to efficient and effective operations.

This Service Delivery Review has evaluated the current state of Departmental operations in relation to an understanding of its Target Operating Model. A total of 24 recommendations are identified with the goal of modernizing service delivery and improving operating performance of the Parks & Recreation Department.

Implementation of these recommendations is proposed to occur over a five year period, beginning in the Township's 2021 fiscal year. Figure 8 provides a critical path for initiating recommendations of the Service Delivery Review; recommendations are categorized into: 1) Strategic & Financial; and 2) Facilities & Operations.

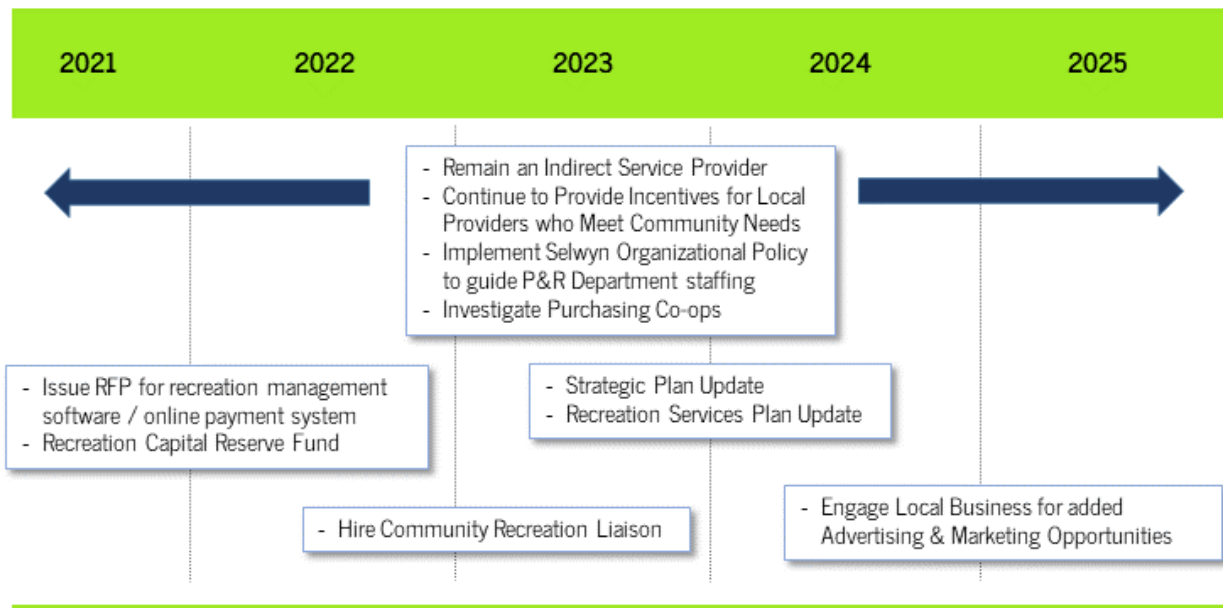
Prior to initiating recommendations, the Township should validate assumptions and develop a refined implementation plan that confirms - among other things - the financial costs, staffing capacities, other resourcing opportunities and constraints, and relevant market/organizational factors.

24 Recommendations
have been identified to
help modernize and
improve the performance
of the Parks & Recreation
Department.

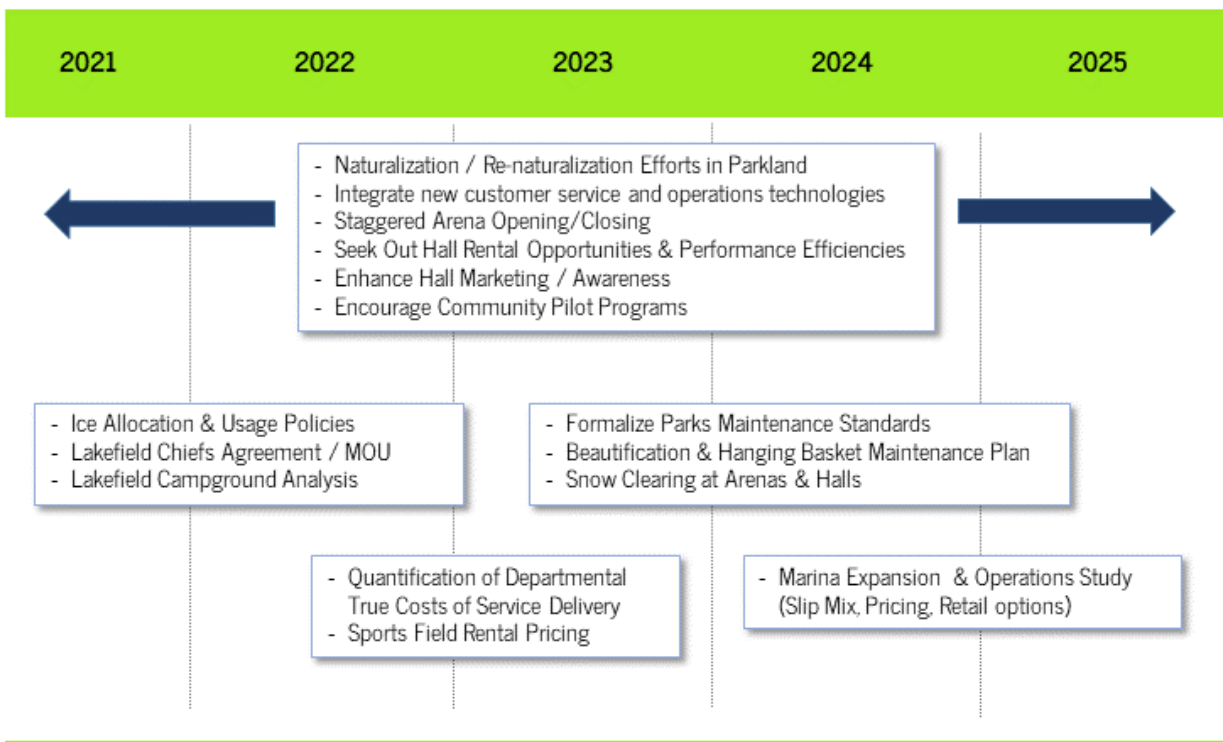


Figure 8: Proposed Implementation Schedule

Strategic & Financial



Facilities & Operations



3.2 Cost-Benefit Summary of Recommendations

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #1</p> <p>Continue with the Parks & Recreation Department's indirect service delivery model that is focused on provision of parks and facilities along with an Integrated Service Delivery model and Asset-Based Community Development approach of facilitating community-based delivery of recreation programs and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost-effective method of service delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality assurance relies on a third party but is often perceived as a Township service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No change to Parks & Recreation Department financial position
<p>Rec. #2:</p> <p>To help bolster facility utilization levels and support community development objectives, continue to provide the use of financial or other incentives to local service providers that can demonstrate they are positively meeting the needs of a broad range of local residents through the organization and delivery of recreational programming in the Township's parks and recreation facilities. Temporary incentives may include (but are not limited to) continuing to formalize lease agreements for organizations to access municipally-owned space, providing discounted rental pricing based upon time of day and/or market segment being served, volunteer training and other organizational tools, and other supports deemed to be appropriate.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved utilization of community facilities – Enhanced menu of recreational opportunities available for the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial incentives can create a dependency, thus providers must be able to demonstrate long-term sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Financial impacts are variable depending upon the type and number of incentives offered

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #3</p> <p>Create a Community Recreation Liaison (or similarly titled) position reporting to the Manager of Recreation Services. The staff Liaison would be responsible for: a) identifying community-based recreation providers and the services that they offer; b) connecting with these providers to determine how they can be encouraged to use the Township's parks and recreation facilities; c) seeking new rental opportunities to maximize facility utilization; and d) finding new marketing revenue streams as identified in Recommendation #10 of the Service Delivery Review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ability to execute Departmental community outreach and relationship building objectives effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for certain duplication in responsibilities with existing staff unless job descriptions are revised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be determined based upon Full Time or Part-Time status, responsibilities to be undertaken, and candidates qualifications
<p>Rec. #4</p> <p>Continue to use hiring, training and performance review practices as set out in the Township of Selwyn Organizational Policy to advance staffing succession goals and to sustain the organizational capacity of the Parks & Recreation Department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensures that current experiential knowledge base is available for future reference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Must be flexible to adapt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time to review and implement Policy in relation to Department needs
<p>Rec. #5</p> <p>Issue a Request For Proposal for recreation management software focusing specifically upon an online booking and payment system that has full integration between customer-facing and back-end processes such as invoicing and reporting, and is compatible with systems used by other corporate departments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – RFP Bidders provide information necessary for Township to complete a cost-benefit analysis – Convenience to facility renters – Less staff time spent on following up outstanding accounts / collections – Greater efficiencies between Departments involved in scheduling, payment and financial reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Time to learn new operating platforms – Cybersecurity needs to be in place for online transactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost of purchase or subscription depending upon product chosen – Staff time or third party costs to administer and troubleshoot system

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #6</p> <p>Pursue technologies that enhance corporate and Departmental operating efficiencies for buildings, fleet and equipment including (but not limited to) the use of GPS, sustainable, carbon neutral, and mobile/smartphone-based systems.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential to lower financial costs and improve operating efficiencies over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Technologies may be unproven or untested in the local operating environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Certain technologies carry a higher upfront cost than 'standard' items (e.g. energy efficient systems)
<p>Rec. #7</p> <p>Update the existing set of parks maintenance standards, working in conjunction with other municipal Departments and in consultation with parks/sports field stakeholder groups.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Creates realistic expectations for community and elected officials – Allows for efficient work planning – May free up additional productive time at certain times of the year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Approved "practices" should be considered as "targets" rather than standards to avoid creation of unrealistic expectations (e.g. if areas are too wet to mow) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time to prepare Standards – Operating cost changes dependent upon ultimate maintenance levels
<p>Rec. #8</p> <p>Explore options to contract out beautification and hanging basket maintenance, along with selected grass cutting responsibilities in order to better deploy Parks & Recreation Department staff expertise.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff can be redeployed to other priority areas – Third party may be able to provide the service at a lower cost 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Quality assurance relies on a third party – Long-term costs of a contract may be greater than if using existing staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost of procuring and contracting a third party
<p>Rec. #9</p> <p>Pilot a naturalization program at Douglas Sports Park, Chemong Park and Robert E. Young Sports Complex in pursuit of financial efficiencies and environmental benefits.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reduced staff and machinery time required for maintenance – Enhanced environmental stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Community resistance to historical practices – Short-term unsightly areas as naturalization is implemented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Operating cost savings through staff time, fleet, equipment, supplies, etc.
<p>Rec. #10</p> <p>Build upon engagement efforts with local businesses to expand marketing and sponsorship opportunities through Parks & Recreation Department facilities and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Additional revenue opportunities to offset departmental expenditure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Need to distinguish between naming rights and fundraising initiatives for capital projects – Need to preserve parks and open spaces from excessive commercialization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time to reach out to local business (could be assigned to the proposed Community Recreation Liaison)

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #11</p> <p>Quantify the true cost of operating the Township's user-pay services and set pricing to recover a percentage of these costs, while continuing to have regard for market rates. This exercise should be accompanied by a Pricing Policy that formalizes cost recovery objectives depending upon the type of service and the type of user (e.g. children/youth, adults, seniors, populations experiencing low-income).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Understand the costs incurred by the Township of providing a service and use this data to inform pricing – Provides a transparent and consistent methodology to replicate costing for future pricing and operating analyses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – True cost of operation may rationalize a fee that is substantially higher than current rates – User groups may be resistant to changes to fees and fee structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time to compile true costs – Implementation may result in better financial performance by setting pricing in relation to costs of operation
<p>Rec. #12</p> <p>Establish a Capital Reserve Fund for Recreation Capital Repairs and Replacements with preliminary funds generated through an allocated percentage of revenues, percentage of asset replacement values, a lump sum or combination thereof. These reserves should focus on assets and equipment that the Township does not already regularly allocate funds towards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minimize tax burden incurred in a given year by spreading the cost over a period of years – Sound fiscal planning practice akin to saving for the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – It can be difficult to apply consistent funding contributions, particularly if municipal budgets are seeking cost and/or tax rate reductions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – \$4,000 to \$4,500 per year assuming 2% of 2019 revenues (excl. grants, transfers, and fundraising) plus any top ups accounting for asset management plans
<p>Rec. #13</p> <p>Prepare an update to the Recreation Services Plan by the year 2023, along with a plan for parks and recreation facilities required to service the Lakefield South Secondary Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Proactive approach to understanding and planning for needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential for change in strategy depending upon market factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – \$65,000 for consulting fees – Staff time
<p>Rec. #14</p> <p>Investigate additional purchasing cooperatives for equipment and services under the purview of the Parks & Recreation Department to benefit from economies of scale, cost savings and/or sharing of knowledge.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential cost savings and other efficiencies by being part of a collective buying group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reduces flexibility to shift to other products that may have greater functionality or ability to address specific needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – There may be contract and/or subscription fees
<p>Rec. #15</p> <p>Improve snow clearing operations at arenas and community halls (and potentially other municipal properties) through contracting third-party services or equipping Parks & Recreation Department vehicles with snow plows.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Improved customer service – Reduced risk of liability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff may be redirected from core responsibilities if undertaking snow clearing – Quality assurance relies on a third party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Cost of procuring and contracting a third party – Cost to equip municipal fleet if done in-house

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #16</p> <p>Formalize an Ice Allocation Policy and an Ice Usage Policy to optimize arena scheduling processes in prime time periods throughout the entire fall/winter season and establishing a set number of weeks for high volume user groups to commit to (for try-outs, exhibition games, etc.). The analysis of the true costs of operation identified in Recommendation #11 of the Service Delivery Review will also inform the Township's ice usage policies and practices.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Provides an approved framework for addressing equity and fairness issues when allocating ice – Provides a more predictable operating season and corresponding revenue and expenditure. – Encourages greater utilization of ice and can promote greater skill development among participants through expanded ice time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Historical users may be resistant to change thus implementation may need to be phased in over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time to prepare the Policy – Potential to reduce operating deficit if scheduling and rental efficiencies result in higher revenues or lower costs
<p>Rec. #17</p> <p>Continuing to stagger opening and closing dates of the two arenas, but also doing so in a manner that may result in one arena being closed earlier (preferably the one that is less operationally efficient).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Optimizes usage demand in relation to available capacity across the entire arena system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Certain groups may have to travel to a greater extent to reach the operating arena – Certain groups use arenas as their home facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Potential to improve operating performance but reducing operating costs
<p>Rec. #18</p> <p>Enter into a formal agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the Lakefield Chiefs to help offset costs associated specifically with their team's operations, as previously articulated in a Staff Report to Council in December 2019. Exclusive use of municipal space by an independent organization typically warrants a written agreement that outlines roles, responsibilities and liability mitigation measures (e.g. insurance requirements).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Roles, responsibilities and expectations are clearly identified – Revenues collected can reduce the arena's net operating subsidy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Staff time may be required to administer certain elements of the agreement – Agreement may preclude the ability of other arena users to access the facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ability to recoup a portion of operating costs associated with the Team's use of the arena

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #19</p> <p>Operate community halls as distinct business entities whereby the Township seeks to optimize operating performance and accounting/reporting capabilities by: a) continuing to diversify the types of rental and booking opportunities taking place in the community halls in response to market trends and demands; b) continued implementation of the Township's community development and outreach efforts; and c) operating the halls at or near a break-even financial position pending the results of the true costing exercise identified in Recommendation #11 of the Service Delivery Review.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase the number of locally-available programs and reduce program gaps – Higher facility utilization rates and/or rental revenues collected 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – No guarantee about if or how long a community provider will rent and/or deliver programs – Greater staff time may need to be devoted to marketing and outreach to generate sufficient rentals (could be the responsibility of the proposed Community Recreation Liaison) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Greater rental revenues would be collected though higher use may also result in increased operating costs (hydro, staff time for room setup and takedown, etc.)
<p>Rec. #20</p> <p>Enhance marketing efforts specific to the features and potential types of uses that can take place in the Township's community halls to build awareness, possibly by expanding advertising beyond municipal boundaries and seeking greater use of technology in awareness efforts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Greater awareness of halls and their amenities – Increased revenue generation potential to improve net operating performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Difficult to reach the target market cost-effectively – Competing with providers that have substantial marketing budgets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Costs of advertising and marketing depend upon media chosen
<p>Rec. #21</p> <p>Encourage community organizations to "pilot" programs and services, potentially with incentives such as subsidized space or staff support during the initial testing period. Pilot projects should be accompanied by an agreement articulating terms, expectations and supports at a minimum.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lowers the risk incurred by a prospective service provider – Encourages the community development model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Costs of incentives are borne by the Township (but could be recouped over time if a program is successful) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Higher operating costs resulting from staff time, rental subsidies, or other incentives
<p>Rec. #22</p> <p>Based upon the true cost analysis to be carried out in Recommendation #11, determine whether to implement sports field rental fee for all minor sports field users noting that this fee could be phased in to allow groups time to adjust and/or be applied to selected fields in order to mitigate short-term financial impacts on the users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Efficient operating practice by recovering at least some cost – Revenues collected could be reinvested back into the fields – Equity and consistency with other facility pricing (e.g. arenas) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Minor sports are used to free access thus a fee may be met with resistance and/or affect participation if user groups' registration fees are increased 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Higher rental revenues (depending upon the price set)

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #23</p> <p>Undertake a study that determines the Township's future role and/or responsibilities associated with the utilization of the Lakefield Campground. The study should consider the following service delivery options, at a minimum (listed in no particular order of priority or preference):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i <i>Status Quo</i>: the Township renegotiates the agreement with the current operator, with modest amendments or more comprehensive revisions. ii <i>Competitive Market</i>: the Township terminates the current agreement and issues an RFP (Request for Proposals) or EOI (Expressions of Interest) in order to enter into a new third party operating agreement. iii <i>Conservation Authority</i>: the Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and pursues an operating agreement with the Otonabee Region Conservation Authority. iv <i>Self-Operate</i>: the Township terminates the lease and assumes operational control of the campground. v <i>Cease Campground Operations</i>: the Township terminates the agreement with the current operator and converts the property to passive parkland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – A comprehensive analysis that evaluates the options demonstrates a commitment to ensure that the best interests of the community are considered. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – None foreseen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – To be determined through the Study specific to each option

Recommendation	Potential Benefits	Potential Risks	Financial Impacts
<p>Rec. #24</p> <p>Undertake a Marina Utilization Study that investigates and provides guidance for the following aspects of the Lakefield Marina:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i Reviewing alternative service delivery options for the Lakefield Marina's retail operations to improve its financial performance and value provided to boater. At a minimum, this may include expanding the range of products and services offered or contracting out the concession (if space is available to accommodate this option). ii Reviewing the mix and pricing of seasonal versus transient boat slips. With its location along a prime water route, Lakefield is an ideal location for a Marina that caters to transient boaters. Consideration could be given to adjusting the balance between seasonal and transient boaters and to pricing for both. Based on demand, it would appear that there is room for prices to be adjusted upward without an adverse effect on the volume of seasonal or transient slip rentals. iii Pursuing partnerships or working agreements with senior levels of government and other agencies (e.g. Parks Canada, Ministry of Natural Resources & Forestry) operating along the waterways to determine whether additional docking opportunities can be secured through their lands to alleviate demands being placed upon the Lakefield Marina. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Economies of scale related to servicing more customers with a similar staffing level would yield better financial results – Economic benefit to the local community through increased visitor spending – Third party retail operations or agreements may enhance the user experience – Staff and administrative time presently devoted to retail could be deployed to other priority areas or reduced altogether – Encouraging more transient use of the marina would foster more tourism spending in the community and would (based on current demand) enhance the revenue stream for the marina operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Environmental impacts of encouraging more motorized watercraft – Third party agreements do not guarantee improved financial positions and require oversight to ensure consistency with corporate values – Seasonal slip holders would be resistant to giving up their historic use - waiting list customers could be similarly upset if seasonal slips are reduced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Consulting fees to prepare Study – Potential for revenue gains though operating impacts will ultimately depend on if services are run on a subsidized or enterprise basis – Ultimately, financial impacts to be determined through the Study

Appendix: Peer Group Benchmarking Tables from Financial Information Returns

SCHEDULE 40 - CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS: EXPENSES

Parks & Recreation Combined									
Municipality	Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits	Interest on Long Term Debt	Materials	Contracted Services	Rents and Financial Expenses	External Transfers	Amortization	Total Expenses Before Adjustments	Expenses as a Percentage of Total Municipal Expenditures
Clearview	945,057	19,154	1,001,675	136,056	2,260	0	240,863	2,345,065	11%
Greater Napanee	1,338,808	93,740	1,059,498	15,264	(5,799)	0	428,216	2,929,727	12%
Pelham	1,639,423	686,873	910,744	439,937	189,696	0	1,125,028	4,991,701	20%
Springwater	888,211	0	985,708	159,240	4,094	0	260,298	2,297,551	10%
Wilmot	2,758,198	0	1,714,780	0	0	49,247	1,001,393	5,523,618	25%
Peer Group Average	1,513,939	159,953	1,134,481	150,099	38,050	9,849	611,160	3,617,532	16%
Selwyn	793,424	3,489	634,953	136	0	0	280,766	1,712,768	11%

Parks Only									
Municipality	Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits	Interest on Long Term Debt	Materials	Contracted Services	Rents and Financial Expenses	External Transfers	Amortization	Total Expenses Before Adjustments	Total Expenses per Hectare of Parkland
Clearview	448,649	19,154	193,611	58,553	0	0	220,180	940,147	\$39,173
Greater Napanee	601,923	0	214,282	15,264	-6,475	0	128,986	953,980	data not available
Pelham	481,959	6,821	61,804	159,935	0	0	205,535	916,054	data not available
Springwater	444,247	0	336,310	79,050	0	0	173,736	1,033,343	\$4,851
Wilmot	553,538	0	465,704	0	0	0	0	1,019,242	\$11,200
Peer Group Average	506,063	5,195	254,342	62,560	-1,295	0	145,687	972,553	385,052
Selwyn	389,748	0	188,203	136	0	0	34,609	612,696	\$7,042

Recreation Only - Expenditures									
Municipality	Salaries, Wages and Employee Benefits	Interest on Long Term Debt	Materials	Contracted Services	Rents and Financial Expenses	External Transfers	Amortization	Total Expenses Before Adjustments	Total Expenses per Square Foot of Rec Space
Clearview	496,408	0	808,064	77,503	2,260	0	20,683	1,404,918	\$12.18
Greater Napanee	736,885	93,740	845,216	0	676	0	299,230	1,975,747	\$16.31
Pelham	1,157,464	680,052	848,940	280,002	189,696	0	919,493	4,075,647	\$21.18
Springwater	443,964	0	649,398	80,190	4,094	0	86,562	1,264,208	\$0.25
Wilmot	2,204,660	0	1,249,076	0	0	49,247	1,001,393	4,504,376	\$1.91
Peer Group Average	1,007,876	154,758	880,139	87,539	39,345	9,849	465,472	2,644,979	10
Selwyn	403,676	3,489	446,750	0	0	0	246,157	1,100,072	\$9.07

Source: 2018 FIRs Schedule 40 for Recreation Programs & Facilities (Lines 1620, 1631, 1634)

SCHEDULE 12 - GRANTS, USER FEES AND SERVICE CHARGES (REVENUES)

Parks & Recreation Combined									
Municipality	Ontario Conditional Grants	Canada Conditional Grants	Other Municipalities	User Fees and Service Charges	Ontario Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Canada Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Other Municipalities - Tangible Capital Assets	Total Revenues Per Capita	Percentage of Expense Recovery from User Fees & Service Charges
Clearview	3,658	0	50,689	686,342	0	0	12,500	\$53.23	29%
Greater Napanee	0	5,520	43,792	876,771	0	0	0	\$58.27	30%
Pelham	42,749	15,013	0	240,748	17,817	69,600	0	\$22.56	5%
Springwater	0	24,570	7,500	626,945	0	5,396	0	\$34.86	27%
Wilmot	13,231	63,472	0	1,679,156	45,821	16,030	0	\$103.77	30%
Peer Group Average	11,928	21,715	20,396	821,992	12,728	18,205	2,500	\$54.54	24%
Selwyn	8,918	0	0	712,292	0	0	0	\$42.27	42%

Source: 2018 FIRs Schedule 12 for Parks, Recreation Facilities and Recreation Programs

Parks Only									
Municipality	Ontario Conditional Grants	Canada Conditional Grants	Other Municipalities	User Fees and Service Charges	Ontario Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Canada Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Other Municipalities - Tangible Capital Assets	% of Expense Recovery from User Fees & Service Charges	Total Revenues per Hectare of Parkland
Clearview	0	0	4,604	39,316	0	0	0	4%	\$1,830.00
Greater Napanee	0	0	43,792	13,338	0	0	0	1%	\$57,130.00
Pelham	0	0	0	0	17,817	69,600	0	0%	\$87,417.00
Springwater	0	3,360	0	2,500	0	5,396	0	0.2%	\$52.85
Wilmot	4,991	6,482	0	235,222	45,821	16,030	0	23%	\$3,390.62
Peer Group Average	998	1,968	9,679	58,075	12,728	18,205	0	0	29,964
Selwyn	8,918	0	0	38,857	0	0	0	6%	\$549

Recreation Only - Revenues									
Municipality	Ontario Conditional Grants	Canada Conditional Grants	Other Municipalities	User Fees and Service Charges	Ontario Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Canada Grants - Tangible Capital Assets	Other Municipalities - Tangible Capital Assets	% of Expense Recovery from User Fees & Service Charges	Total Revenues Per Capita
Clearview	3,658	0	46,085	647,026	0	0	12,500	46%	\$50.12
Greater Napanee	0	5,520	0	863,433	0	0	0	44%	\$54.68
Pelham	42,749	15,013	0	240,748	0	0	0	6%	\$17.45
Springwater	0	21,210	7,500	624,445	0	0	0	49%	\$34.27
Wilmot	8,240	56,990	0	1,443,934	0	0	0	32%	\$86.16
Peer Group Average	10,929	19,747	10,717	763,917	0	0	2,500	35%	\$48.54
Selwyn	0	0	0	673,435	0	0	0	61%	\$39.47

SCHEDULE 80A - STATISTICAL INFORMATION (Parks & Recreation Staffing)

Municipality	Full-Time Funded Positions	Part-Time Funded Positions	Seasonal Employees	FTE Equivalents*
Clearview	8.0	1.5	4.0	10.5
Greater Napanee	12.0	20.0	20.0	32.0
Pelham	17.0	12.0	42.0	41.0
Springwater	11.0	5.0	28.0	25.2
Wilmot**	22.0	125.0	0.0	97.0
Peer Group Average	14.0	32.7	18.8	41.1
Selwyn	7.0	4.0	14.0	15.0
* Assumes FT = 1.0 FTE, PT = 0.6 FTE, Seasonal = 0.4 FTE				
** Includes 4 Full-Time Staff and 60 Part-Time Staff (40.0 FTEs) for Wilmot's indoor aquatic centre				
Source: 2018 FIRs, Schedule 80 Line 0245				

SCHEDULE 74 - LONG TERM LIABILITIES AND COMMITMENTS

Municipality	TOTAL Net Long Term Liabilities of the Municipality	Long-Term Debt Attributable to Parks & Rec	Parks & Rec Debt as Percentage of Total Municipal Debt	Long-Term Parks & Rec Debt Per Capita
Clearview	11,867,035	653,830	5.5%	\$46.20
Greater Napanee	6,741,183	2,699,956	40.1%	\$169.89
Pelham	30,088,688	20,832,351	69.2%	\$1,217.55
Springwater	4,389,694	0	0.0%	\$0.00
Wilmot	0	0	0.0%	\$0.00
Peer Group Average	10,617,320	4,837,227	0	\$286.73
Selwyn	931,129	96,154	10.3%	\$5.64
Source: 2018 FIRs, Schedule 74 for Parks, Recreation and Cultural services				



Monteith♦Brown
planning consultants



of Planning Excellence
Established • 1977