

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF GEORGINA

REPORT NO. CSD-2026-0003

**FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF
COUNCIL**

April 22, 2026

SUBJECT: TOWN OF GEORGINA'S PARKS MASTER PLAN

1. RECOMMENDATION:

1. That Council receive Report No. CSD-2026-0003 prepared by the Community Services Department and Operations and Infrastructure Department, dated April 22, 2026 regarding the Town of Georgina's new Parks Master Plan (Attachment 1);
2. That Council receive and endorse the Parks Master Plan in principle; and
3. That the implementation of capital project and recommendations contained therein be subject to the annual business planning and budgetary approvals process.

2. PURPOSE:

The Parks Master Plan serves as a comprehensive, long-term strategic framework to guide the development of parks and open spaces across the Town of Georgina. The plan evaluates the Town's existing parkland and outdoor recreation amenities, and assesses current and future recreation needs across the municipality through to 2040.

This council report highlights key findings and recommendations from the Parks Master Plan and presents the final report for Council's endorsement in principle. Staff will bring forward capital improvements and initiatives identified in the master plan through the annual business planning and budgetary approvals process for Council's consideration and approval.

3. BACKGROUND:

The Parks Master Plan supports several objectives outlined in the Town's Official Plan, including:

- Development of complete and accessible communities where people of all ages and abilities have opportunities to live, work and play; and

- Ensuring the provision of places, facilities and other opportunities for passive and active recreation that will satisfy the needs of Georgina's current and future population and support tourism.

A separate Waterfront Parks Master Plan, completed in 2023, established the vision and strategic direction for the Town's nineteen (19) waterfront parks. This Parks Master Plan was developed to complement and align with that initiative by building upon, but not duplicating, those efforts. The Parks Master Plan is focused on the Town's other thirty-six (36) non-waterfront parks. To ensure a complete understanding of Georgina's overall parkland system, waterfront parks were still considered in the analysis of parkland supply, distribution, and service levels.

Assets considered in this study include municipally owned parks, open spaces, natural areas, outdoor recreation facilities, sports fields, playgrounds, outdoor exercise equipment, park furnishings, sunshades, gazebos, picnic shelters, and all other Town-owned outdoor recreation infrastructure. Indoor facilities including arenas, recreation centres, halls, and banquet facilities were excluded from the scope of work of this master plan.

4. ANALYSIS:

Recommendations contained in the Parks Master Plan are informed by demographic forecasts, projected population growth, emerging trends in outdoor recreation, local priorities, and engagement with residents, community groups, and stakeholders. Together, these findings provide a strategic roadmap to guide the continued delivery of high-quality parks and outdoor recreation opportunities across Georgina until 2040.

Key analyses completed as part of this work include an inventory of in-scope outdoor recreation amenities; an assessment of the Town's parkland supply relative to the target service levels established in Georgina's Official Plan; and an evaluation of the current supply and distribution of recreation facilities across communities and hamlets in Georgina. The plan forecasts future recreation needs by facility type until 2040 based on projected population growth and recommended service levels.

A unique element of the plan includes a benchmarking analysis comparing Georgina's provision of parkland and outdoor recreation amenities relative to four (4) comparator municipalities in Ontario. This analysis provides context for understanding the Town's current service levels relative to similar communities. It will assist staff in evaluating future service requests from community associations and sporting organizations.

While this Master Plan establishes a long-term framework for parks, facilities, and recreation services focused on community needs, it also recognizes that opportunities may arise to support sport tourism initiatives beyond local recreation needs.

Other key highlights from the Parks Master Plan:

- The number of residents aged 65 and older in Georgina increased by 20% between 2016 and 2021. This trend is expected to continue, with the 85+ age group projected to more than double by 2041. Georgina's median age is slightly above the provincial average, reflecting a maturing population. This trend is expected to drive demand for parks and recreation facilities tailored to older adults.
- To meet this demand, Town should expand opportunities for unstructured, low- or no-cost recreation within walking distance of residential areas. Amenities such as outdoor exercise equipment, active walking loops and circuits, community gardens, and disc golf courses offer accessible and inclusive options for residents of all ages and abilities.
- The census data does not negate the fact that young families are expected to be a part of residential growth within development areas in Georgina. The plan is very supportive of recreation for young growing families.
- Approximately two-thirds of Georgina's residents commute to other municipalities for work. To meet this demand, the Town should ensure recreation facilities and programs are available close to home and accessible at times that align with residents' schedules. The plan recommends embracing that trends are shifting towards more drop-in, flexible, and informal spaces.
- The Town should continue to co-locate parks, outdoor recreation amenities, and other multi-use facilities to attract a wide range of users to improve operational efficiencies.
- Flexible, accessible, and multi-purpose spaces should be prioritized to accommodate a variety of activities and changes in demand as recreational trends wax and wane.
- Sports lighting for existing field and sport courts can extend the usability of these existing assets into the evening hours and during shorter daylight seasons, increasing flexibility and access for working families and seniors alike.
- Synthetic turf fields are gaining popularity due to their durability, lower maintenance, and ability to support longer seasons. These surfaces offer more predictable play conditions and extended hours of use, especially in high-demand areas.

- According to the Town's 2025 Climate Action Plan, the number of days exceeding 30°C is projected to increase by 300% by 2050. To ensure parks remain safe, comfortable, and usable during extreme heat events, future park planning must prioritize cooling infrastructure. This includes the strategic addition of splash pads, shade structures, tree planting, and naturalized landscapes that reduce mowing and enhance ecological resilience. The Climate Action Plan also forecasts that by 2050, 53% of winter precipitation will fall as rain, representing a 77% increase from today. This shift toward wetter, milder winters calls for thoughtful investment in year-round recreation infrastructure, particularly in Georgina. Parks should be designed with efficient drainage systems, covered activity areas, and adaptive programming that supports winter use even in the absence of snow. The Parks Master Plan identifies the potential opportunity for a multi-sport dome to support year-round recreation programming. Such a facility would expand indoor recreation capacity and could also support the hosting of regional sporting events and tourism, if so desired by the Town.
- The municipal parkland provision target in the Official Plan (OP) is 2.25 ha / 1,000 residents. Georgina's current parkland provision level of 3.35 ha / 1,000 (including waterfront and non-waterfront parks) is above the target identified in the OP.
- The Town's OP parkland provision target is lower than the current and target service level of comparator municipalities. It is also lower than the average parkland provision level of comparator municipalities. The Town should consider implementing a higher parkland provision target in the OP to ensure the service level can meet the Town's future needs.
- The Town's current supply of outdoor recreation facilities generally meets or exceeds the service levels of comparator municipalities.
- Mapping analyses were completed to identify gaps in the Town's parks and open space network. A 10-minute walkability analysis from residential areas highlights locations where residents may have limited walking access to nearby parks and open spaces, indicating where improved local access may be needed.
- Concept plans were developed for two priority park sites, West Park and the Multi-Use Recreation Complex (MURC) lands, to guide future planning efforts by the Town. The concepts illustrate how future amenities and park features could be organized to best serve current and emerging community needs, based on the analyses in the Parks Master Plan. Proposed amenities were designed to complement nearby facilities, address identified service gaps, and to respond to existing site conditions. The concepts are illustrative and high-level, intended to inform decision-making and capital planning, and will be refined through future phases of detailed design, technical review, and community consultation.

5. RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Delivering service excellence

The Parks Master Plan emphasizes data-driven decision-making and equitable service delivery across all communities in Georgina. Analysis of the Town's overall parkland supply, distribution, and service levels supports the delivery of high-quality municipal services that meet our community needs.

6. FINANCIAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACT:

Capital improvements identified in the Parks Master Plan may be brought forward for Council consideration through the Town's annual budget process, aligned with the plan's direction and informed by staff input. To guide implementation, each recommendation has been categorized by priority (short, medium, or long term), with corresponding timelines and an overall anticipated budget to assist in the effective delivery of priority projects.

Concept plans for priority projects at West Park and the MURC lands represent significant placemaking initiatives that will require further refinement through detailed design, technical review, and stakeholder consultation. The scope and timing of these projects will be refined to reflect municipal funding availability and budget priorities.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION AND NOTICE REQUIREMENTS:

Engagement activities included an online survey, promotional banners at key municipal facilities (Civic Centre, MURC, and the Keswick Ice Palace), and posters at high-traffic outdoor recreation locations across the Town encouraging residents to visit the Parks Master Plan website and participate. In-person workshops were held in Keswick, Pefferlaw, and Sutton and were strategically coordinated to align with high traffic events such as Canada Day, the Pefferlaw Street Fest, and the Farmer's Market to increase community participation. Additional sessions were held with frontline staff and park user groups.

8. CONCLUSION:

Endorsement of the Parks Master Plan in principle will ensure that future park improvements and capital investments are made in a coordinated manner across all communities in Georgina. The master plan reflects community input, aligns with the Town's strategic priorities, and positions the Town to respond proactively to population growth and evolving recreation trends. Implementation of specific recommendations will continue to be reviewed and brought forward through the annual budgetary process for Council's consideration.

APPROVALS

Prepared By: Courtney Rennie, Senior Project Manager,
Capital Projects – Vertical, Operations & Infrastructure

Reviewed By: Steve Lee-Young, Director of Community Services

Approved By: Rob Wheeler, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer /
Treasurer

Approved By: Ryan Cronsberry, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments:

Attachment No 1 – Town of Georgina Parks Master Plan (March 3, 2026)