



PARKS AND RECREATION Master Plan

Town of Aurora Parks & Recreation Master Plan (Draft)

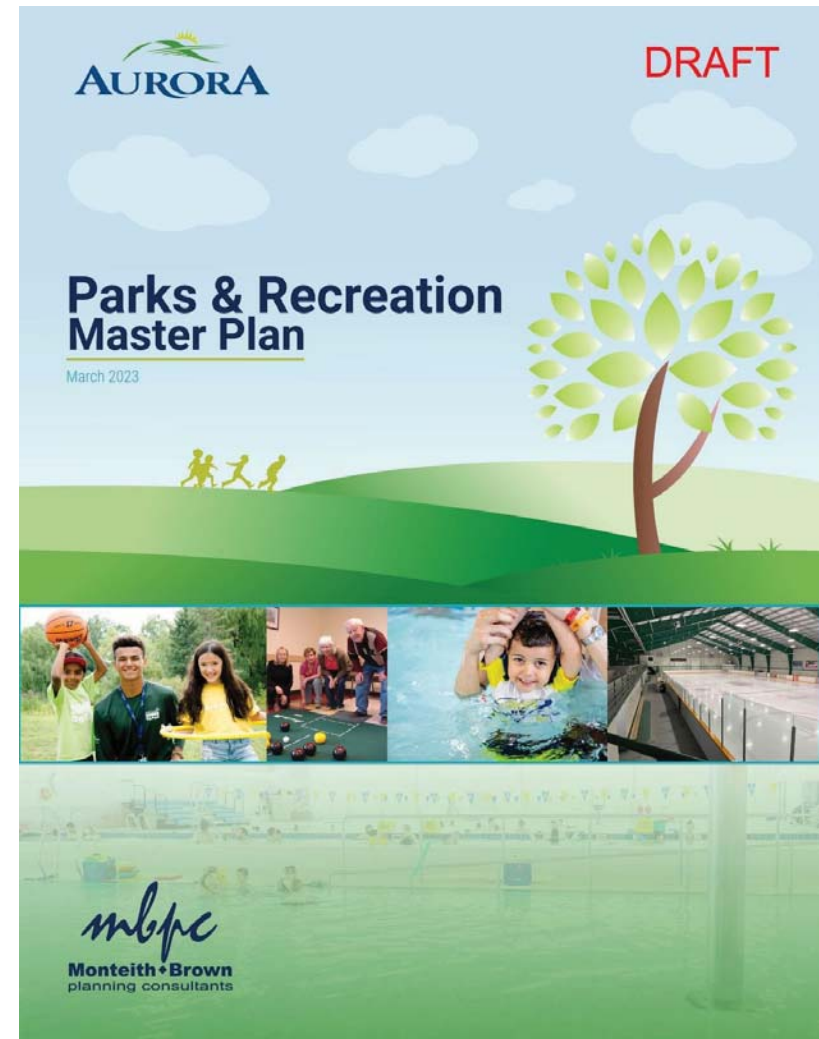
April 2023



About the Plan

The **Parks and Recreation Master Plan** guides decision-making over the next five years (2023 to 2027).

It is an update of the 2016 Master Plan and takes into account new growth factors, emerging participation interests, and public input.



About the Project

The **scope** of the plan includes:

- Indoor Recreation Facilities, such as aquatic centres, arenas, gymnasiums
- Outdoor Recreation Facilities, such as sports fields, playgrounds, sport courts
- Parks and Open Spaces

The plan considers many **factors**:

- Public and Stakeholder Input
- Demographic and Growth Data
- Participation Trends
- Municipal Benchmarking
- Supporting Policies and Studies

Public Engagement

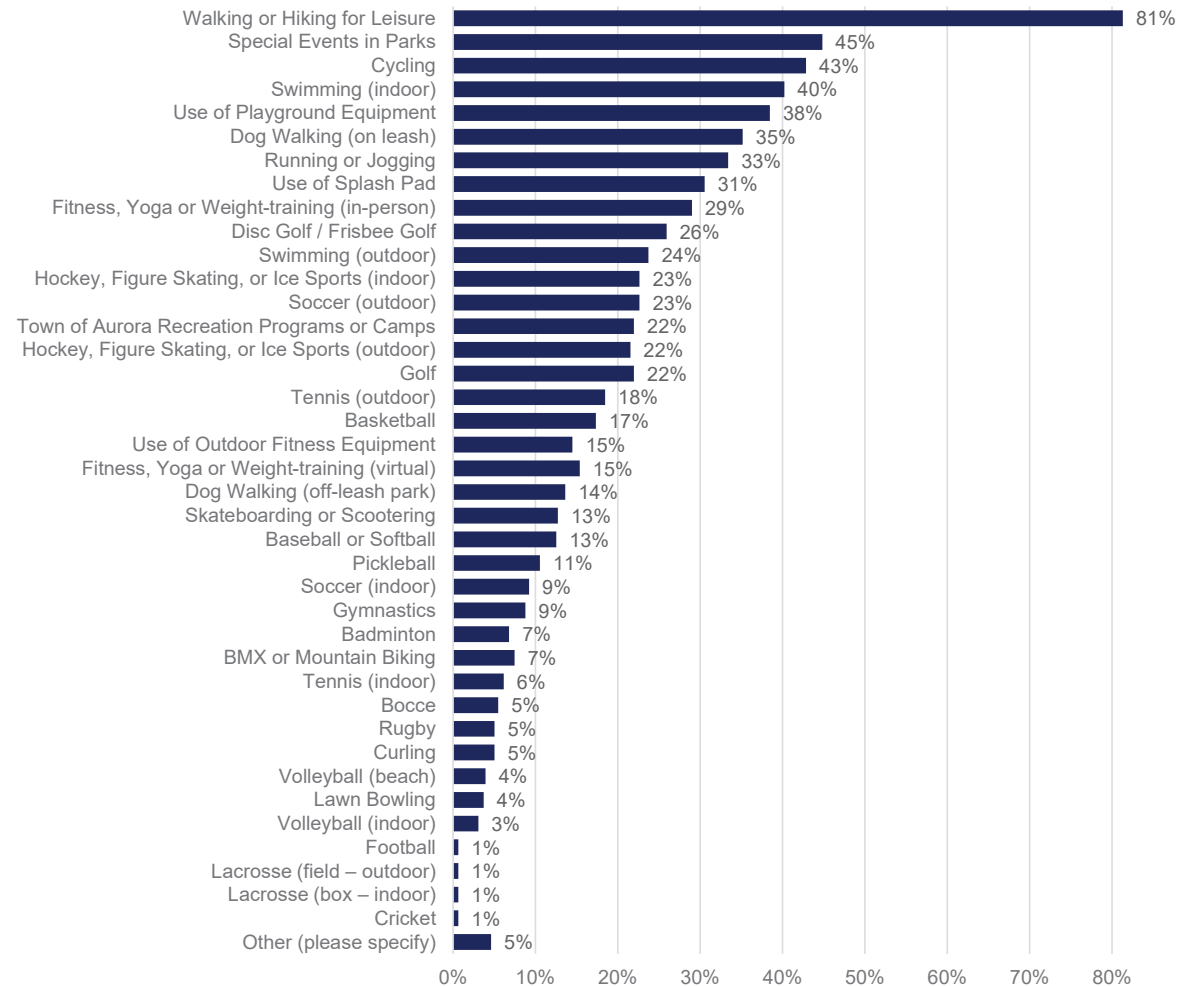
- **Community Survey**
 - 544 total responses (455 from residents)
- **Pop-up booth**
 - over 75 engaged participants at Farmers' Market
- **Stakeholder Workshops**
 - 15 groups, representing 1000's of residents
- **Youth consultation**
- **Staff consultation**
- **Council consultation**
- **Input on Draft Master Plan (ongoing)**



Community Survey

Most Popular Parks and Recreation Activities

- Walking / Hiking (81%)
- Special Events in Parks (45%)
- Cycling (43%)
- Indoor Swimming (40%)
- Playgrounds (38%)



Community Survey

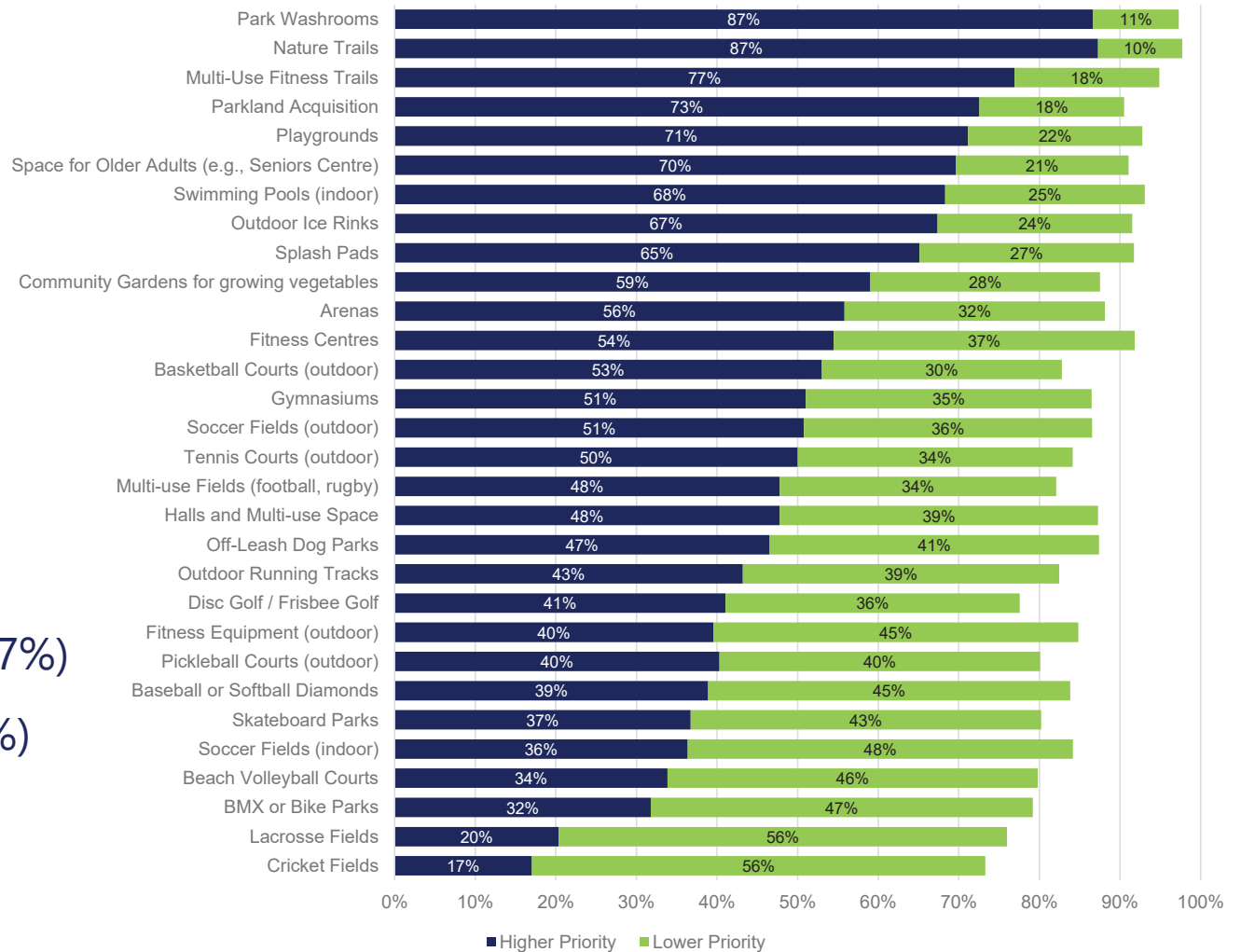
- 44% are unable to participate as often as they would like. **Main barriers** include:
 - lack of desired facilities or programs (60%)
 - program or activity is full (33%)
 - lack of time (28%)
- **Outdoor recreation facilities** have the largest gap in expectations:
 - 86% feel they are important
 - But only 60% are satisfied



Community Survey

Priorities for Facility Investment

- Nature trails (87%)
- Park washrooms (87%)
- Multi-use fitness trails (77%)
- Parkland acquisition (73%)
- Playgrounds (71%)



What we have Heard so far

Some broad themes:

- Expanding options for **outdoor recreation** (disc golf, outdoor rinks, off-leash areas, splash pads, etc.)
- Enhancing **existing facilities** (e.g., lighting, repurposing, etc.)
- Supporting local and regional organizations through **sport-friendly facilities** (e.g., indoor pools, turf fields, etc.)
- Addressing **changing demographics** (e.g., growth, diversity, seniors, persons with disabilities)

Other Trends and Emerging Influences

- Communities are increasingly viewing recreation and parks as **essential services** and believe that these will be a critical contributor to our recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Recent **staffing and volunteer shortages** have created challenges with maintaining levels of service
- **Outdoor recreation** is on the rise and many communities are reimagining existing spaces in creative ways
- Municipalities are placing a growing emphasis on **inclusion, barrier-free accessibility, affordability, and climate change**

Indoor Recreation Facilities

Selected Recommendations

- Continue to pursue options for securing land to support a **community centre in the southwest** to include an indoor pool, gymnasium, walking track, and more
- Prepare a study to consider arena needs and options for **repurposing the AFLC rink** into dryland, non-ice activity space



Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Selected Recommendations

- Complete a scoped review and update of the **Sports Field Development Strategy**, with a focus on replacement options for the Stronach fields (e.g., artificial turf fields, partnerships)
- Establish an **outdoor pickleball complex** (6+ courts); consider club partnership options
- Advance reconstruction of the **AFLC skate park**
- Address gaps in **playground and sport court provision** through future park projects
- Prepare a business plan to consider options for a **refrigerated outdoor ice rink**



Parkland

Selected Recommendations

- Update **parkland policies** to reflect changing legislation and Aurora's urban structure
- Strive to achieve a service level of 2.0 ha/1000 residents, providing **17.2 hectares** of additional parkland by 2031
- Take a “**parkland-first**” **approach** to securing land and maximize community access to non-municipal sites
- Develop a strategy for the **renewal of key park sites** (e.g., Confederation Park)



Service Delivery & Program Support

Selected Recommendations

- Fully implement the **Recreation User Fee and Pricing Policy**
- Conduct a comprehensive review of **permitting procedures and allocation policies**
- Undertake a **recreation program review** and **Special Events Policy** to clarify levels of service
- Continue to collaborate with schools to enhance access and creation of **community hubs**



How the Plan Supports Accessibility

Some examples:

- Recognizes growing population with increased mobility challenges, as well as aging infrastructure that may not be fully barrier-free
- Supports regular consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee and ensure compliance with the AODA
- Supports barrier-free playground components and infrastructure to support inclusive participation
- Supports the provision of amenities such as benches/seating areas, bike racks, shade (structures, tree canopy, etc.), and barrier-free washrooms in appropriate park types
- Identifies a need for training and community outreach to engage under-represented populations (e.g., persons with disabilities, etc.) and remove barriers to participation
- Recommends a Recreation Needs Assessment for Persons with Disabilities

Next Steps

1. The draft plan is available for review on the **project website**, with a deadline of May 3 for written feedback
2. An in-person **open house will be held on May 1** to receive public feedback
3. The plan will be presented to Town Council on **June 6** for approval



Thank you!

Comments and Questions?

