

# 2025— 2029

## SPORT PLAN UPDATE



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# 1 Executive Summary

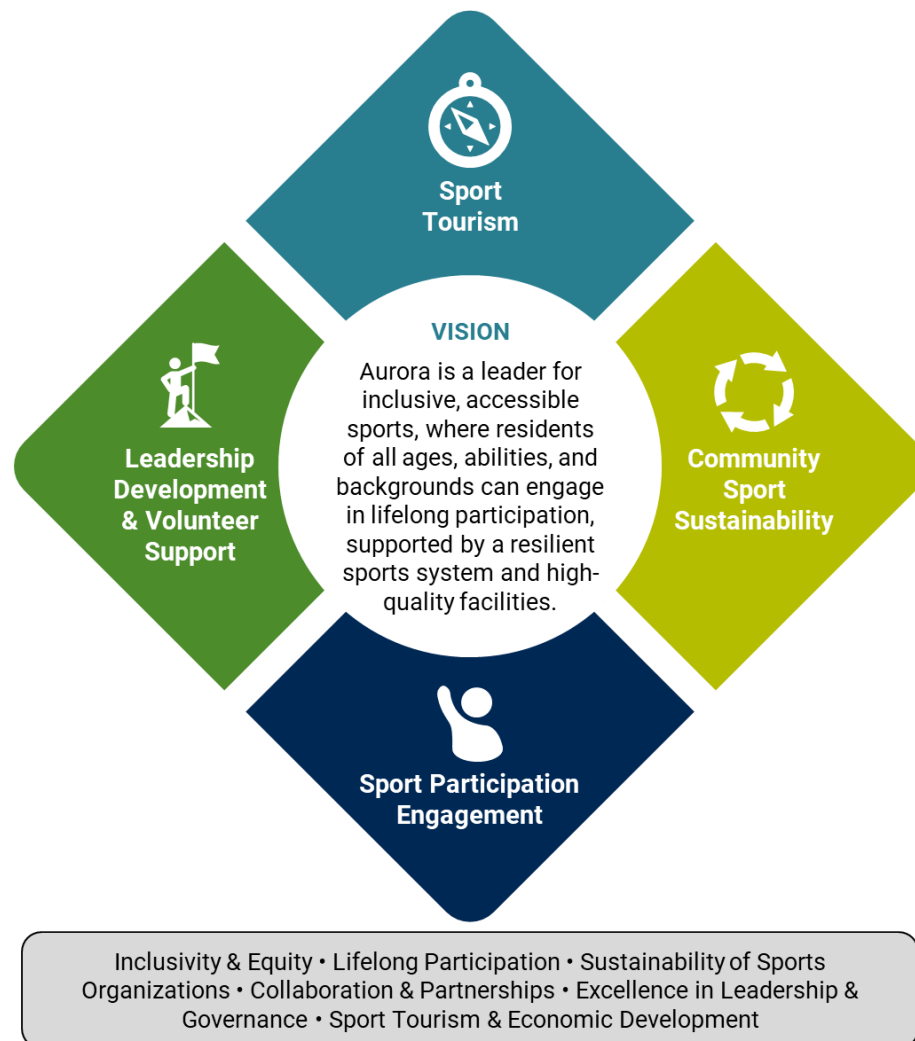
## 1.1 Introduction

Welcome to the Town of Aurora’s 2025 – 2029 Sport Plan. This Sport Plan is designed to focus the Town’s efforts in enhancing the creation of a more inclusive, accessible, and resilient sport community. Sport provides benefits for individuals and the broader community, and we are excited to work with our local and community sport providers to ensure they are able to offer high-quality sport programming that welcomes everyone in our community to participate, volunteer, lead, and spectate. This Sport Plan is built on a foundation of equity, diversity, and inclusion, which can be seen from our overarching Vision statement through to each Pillar and individual Initiative. We hope you will be as excited about this Plan as we are, and we look forward to beginning the implementation of this Plan with one simple phrase: Game on!



## 1.2 The Sport Plan

As noted in the section above, the heart of the Sport Plan is equity, diversity, and inclusion. We know that we see the best of our community and individuals when all of Aurora is welcomed and involved in sport. To this end, the Town of Aurora and our partners want to ensure this Plan is as much for someone who has just moved to Aurora as it is someone whose family has lived here for generations; this Plan is for you regardless of your age, religion, sexual preferences, gender identity, ethnic or racial identity; the languages you speak, economic status, or any other aspect of your being. We are excited to present this Sport Plan to our community, and hope you can see how you fit into the Sport Plan's Framework, outlined in the graphic below.

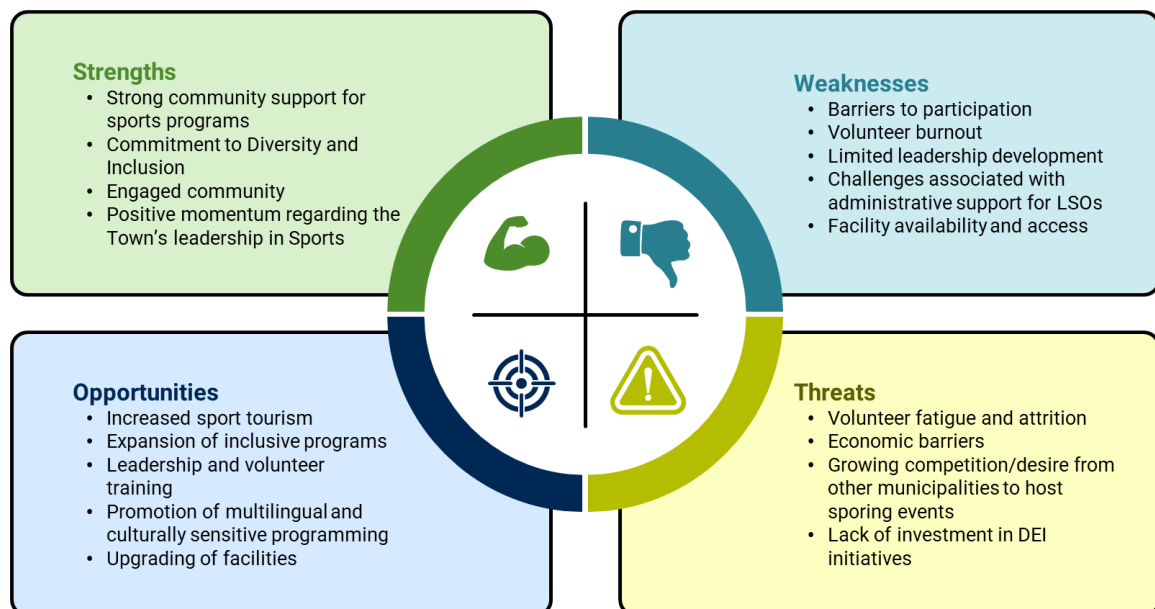




This Sport Plan will help to organize our Town’s efforts when we work with Local Sport Organizations (LSOs), Community Sport Organizations (CSOs), and other community, regional, provincial, and national partners. It is designed to ensure that the Town of Aurora’s work to improve the sport landscape is focused, efficient, and drives meaningful change for our community. In short, the Sport Plan ensures that we have a clear direction and goal for how we want sport to look, feel and engage each other in Aurora, and this Plan ensures we focus on the right activities to help us achieve these goals.

The Sport Plan was developed based on the input received from a community survey, interviews and focus groups with LSO/CSO partners, Council, and engagement of Community Partners more broadly. Feedback from multiple consultation activities ensured that we heard a wide range of the Aurora sport and community landscape, and these findings were then aggregated to identify overarching themes and trends that could be used to develop the core of the Sport Plan.

While some additional detail is provided in the body of the Sport Plan, the graphic below outlines some of the headline findings from our consultation activities, organized into a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) assessment. A SWOT assessment allows organizations, such as the Town of Aurora, to understand the strengths they have today that should be maintained and protected, the opportunities to be developed into the future, the weaknesses that require further attention to remedy, and the threats that can negatively impact our goals.



### 1.3 Next Steps

This Sport Plan will be actioned over the coming five years, led by representatives from the Community Services—who will actively work with our local community to build tactical plans that will move our Initiatives forward year over year. On an annual basis we will report back to Council on our progress against the Plan, so that we can actively celebrate the progress we know we will make with our partners.

## 2 Acknowledgements

We wish to thank all members of the community that have contributed their time and input to the Sport Plan. Special thanks is extended to Community Services staff, who led the work, Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Sport Equity and Inclusion Committee and members of our Local Sports Organizations and Community Sport Organizations, and Community Partners who helped shape the focus and content of the Sport Plan.

### 2.1 Town of Aurora Council

Mayor Tom Mrakas

Councillor Harold Kim

Councillor John Gallo

Councillor Michael Thompson

Councillor Rachel Gilliland

Councillor Ron Weese

Councillor Wendy Gaertner

### 2.2 Local Sports Organizations, Community Sports Organizations, and Community Partners

The following groups had representatives offer their time to provide input into the future of the Sport Plan:

Aurora Sports Hall of Fame

Aurora Men's Slo-Pitch League

Aurora Skating Club

Aurora Lawn Bowling Club

Aurora Barbarians RFC

Ducks Swimming

Aurora Black Community Association

Central York Girls Hockey Association

York Artistic Swimming Club

Redbirds Lacrosse Club

York Curling Club

Team Ontario Baseball

See What She Can Do

Special Olympics Aurora

Aurora Soccer Club

Pickleball Seniors Association

Aurora Diggers

Jump Start Canadian Tire

Storm Volleyball Club

Centre for Immigrant & Community Services

You Can Play

Aurora Chamber of Commerce

Aurora King Baseball Association

Sport Aurora

### 3 Land Acknowledgement

A Land Acknowledgement is a formal statement that recognizes our relationship between Indigenous peoples and their traditional territories.

Acknowledging the land is an Indigenous practice that has been happening for thousands of years. It recognizes and respects the legal and spiritual relationship Indigenous peoples have with their territories. Today, a land acknowledgement remains a way of recognizing and expressing gratitude to the Indigenous peoples whose land we reside on.

At the Town of Aurora, we open our public meetings and events with the following Land Acknowledgement. This statement is available to all members of our community to be used as appropriate.

*The Town of Aurora acknowledges that the Anishinaabe lands on which we live and work are the traditional and Treaty #20 territories of the Chippewas of Georgina Island, as well as many other Nations whose presence here continues to this day. As the closest First Nation community to Aurora, we recognize the special relationship the Chippewas have with the lands and waters of this territory. They are the water protectors and environmental stewards of these lands, and as a municipality we join them in these responsibilities.*

*We further acknowledge that Aurora is part of the treaty lands of the Mississaugas and Chippewas, recognized through Treaty #13 as well as the Williams Treaties of 1923.*

*A shared understanding of the rich cultural heritage that has existed for centuries, and how our collective past brought us to where we are today, will help us walk together into a better future.*





## 4 Introduction

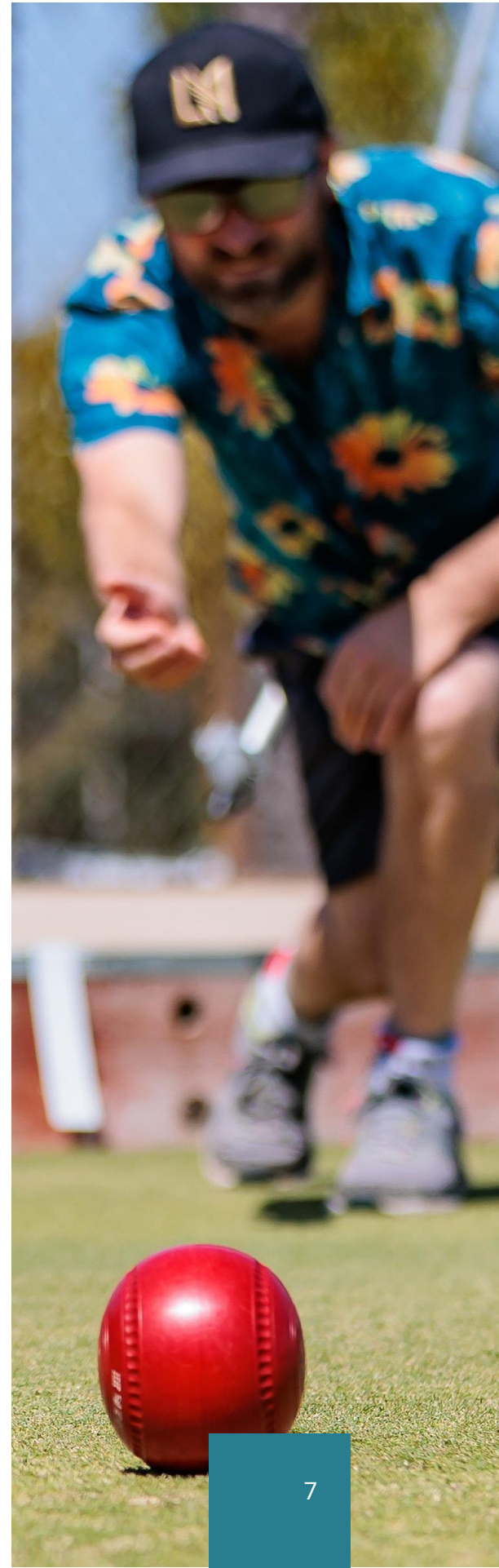
Welcome to the Town of Aurora’s 2025 – 2029 Sport Plan Update.

The Sport Plan Update will guide decision making with respect to community sport and recreation over the next five years. The plan is an update to the original Sport Plan which was a five year plan completed in 2016.

This plan provides a basis for future planning, while still considering the original Sport Plan. This plan captures updated input pertaining to local needs and priorities and recognizes that community characteristics, and trends have changed in Sport. This Sport Plan is designed to focus the Town’s efforts in enhancing the creation of a more inclusive, accessible, and resilient sport community. Sport can bring out the best in individuals and communities, and we are excited to continue to grow our sport community through focused efforts and strong community partnerships.

Sport has benefits that are applicable to everyone – it builds bridges, connects us with others, develops a sense of community, and promotes individual growth and resilience. That is why this Sport Plan emphasizes the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion with core linkages across every pillar. We want everyone in Aurora to feel welcomed in our sport community, and to be able to see themselves in this Sport Plan.

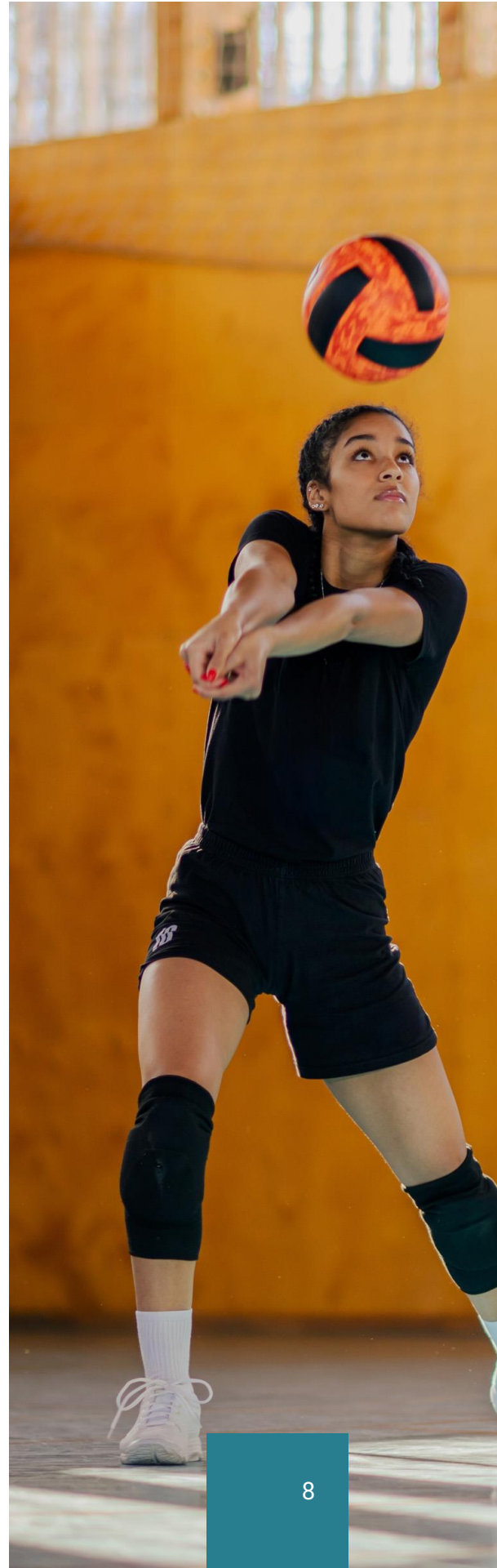
Aurora is thrilled to move this Sport Plan from theory to action, and we look forward to working with our partners across the sport landscape and beyond to realize all of the benefits that sport can bring to the Town. In this Sport Plan you will find an overview of the contextual factors that informed the Plan, as well



as a deeper dive into each facet of the Plan’s components.

The development of the Sport Plan would not be possible without the significant contributions of our community, including many Local Sport Organizations (LSOs), Community Partners, and residents who shared their thoughts and perspectives through participation in interviews, focus groups, and surveys.

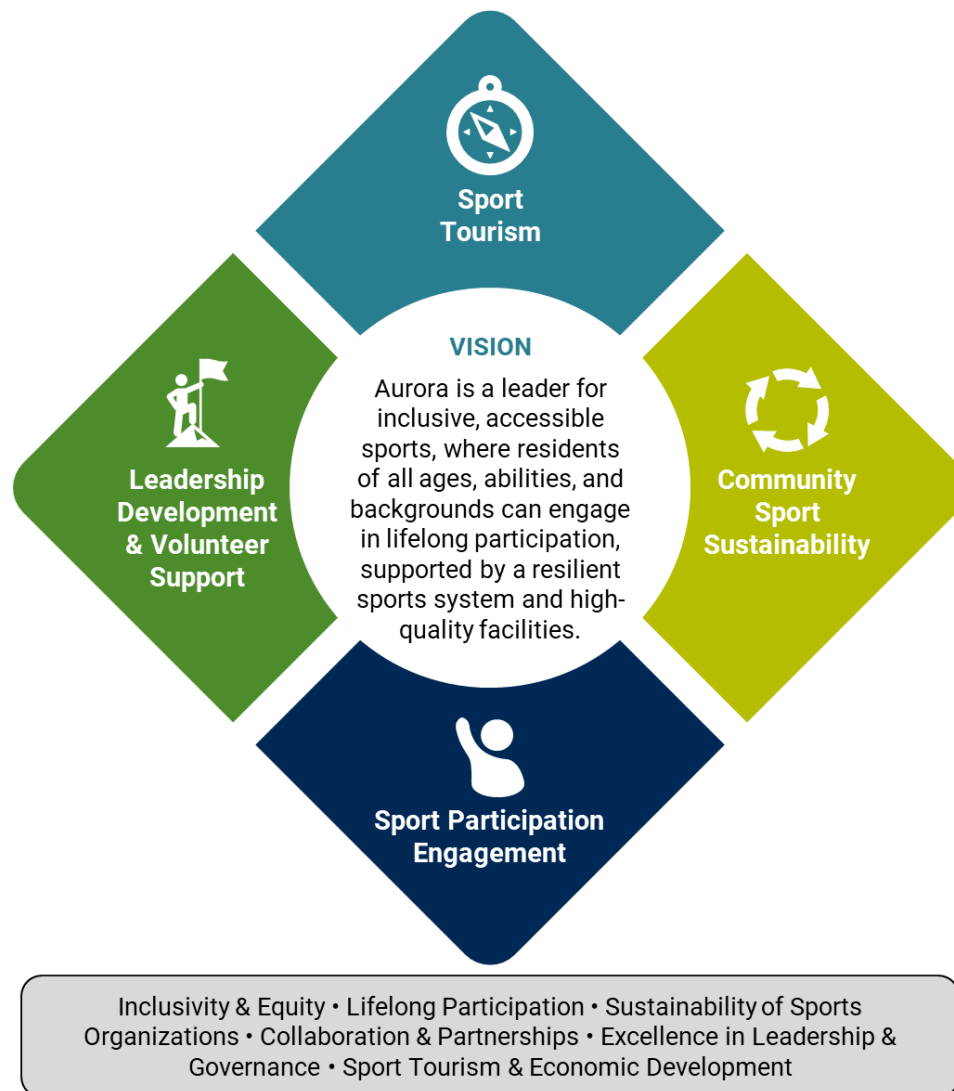
We look forward to beginning the implementation of this Plan with one simple phrase: Game on!



## 4.1 Sport Plan at a Glance

With an almost unlimited number of avenues that could be focused on when creating this iteration of the Sport Plan, it was imperative that we narrowed our focus and prioritized a limited number of key areas. For us to have the biggest and best impact that we can on our sport landscape and the broader Aurora community, we have identified a Vision, Guiding Principles, and four Pillars. The visual below depicts the framework of our Sport Plan.

Figure 1: The Sport Plan Framework



In the center of the Framework is our Vision for the future. This defines what we are hoping to achieve through the Sport Plan, ensuring that we are always looking forward and weighing our actions against our targets for the future.

Located around the circle are our four Pillars, which define the areas that we intend to focus on. Success across these areas will give the Town the best chance of achieving our Vision for the future.

At the bottom of the graphic is a bed of Guiding Principles that are fundamental principles needed to continue to build a sport community that welcomes everyone and best serves the Aurora community. Across every aspect of the Sport Plan is a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion because we know that sport is applicable to everyone, and it is only when we all come together that we get the best out of ourselves and our community.

## 4.2 Purpose of the Sport Plan

A common question that can be asked is, “Why does the Town of Aurora have a Sport Plan? What is the purpose of this Plan, and what is included?” To help understand the boundaries of the Sport Plan, it is important to understand where it lives within the Town of Aurora.

The Sport Plan is an initiative of the Community Services Department – the group responsible for providing recreation, sport, and facilities services to Town residents and for working with our LSOs and Community Partners to help create a sport community that we can all benefit from. The Sport Plan is specific to sports within the Town of Aurora and exists as a secondary plan under our [Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#) (2023-2027), which is designed to guide decision-making with respect to municipal parks and recreation facilities and services in the Town of Aurora. Table 1 below outlines the core differences between the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Sport Plan.

*Table 1: Differences between the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the Sport Plan*

Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Sport Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a broad scope, including programming, infrastructure (buildings, parks, fields, and trails), and service delivery models.</li> <li>Sets an implementation plan for activities related to any and all of the above, guiding capital projects (i.e., facility creation or redevelopment), or service changes (e.g., new</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a narrow scope, specifically focused on sport in Aurora. This does not include infrastructure, facilities, or recreation broadly.</li> <li>Identifies key areas of focus for the Town to help achieve advancement in the sport community and landscape of Aurora.</li> <li>Can have linkages to other, broader requirements/initiatives (e.g.,</li> </ul>

Parks and Recreation Master Plan	Sport Plan
<p>programs to be provided or services to be scaled back over time).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a five-year outlook with a focus on the longer-term objectives of the Town.</li> <li>Identifies core activities/services the Town will take on and must own to improve the sport and recreation landscape of Aurora.</li> </ul>	<p>facilities, systems) of the Town, but does not focus on these aspects as part of the direct scope of the Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a five-year outlook to achieve enhanced sport participation and benefits from all residents in the Town of Aurora.</li> <li>Has a concerted focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion within the sport landscape – from participation through to sport volunteerism and leadership.</li> <li>Understands and respects that the sport landscape is a combination of the efforts of all our Local Sport Organizations, and that the Town is a supporting partner, not the sole owner or driver.</li> </ul>

As indicated in the final points of Table 1 above, the Town of Aurora understands that while we are the stewards of the Sport Plan, we are not the owners of the sport landscape in Aurora. Rather, we are a supporting player in this game, with the MVPs being our LSOs, and CSO's who work to provide programming, engage residents and visitors, and drive engagement in sport from the participant, volunteer, and leadership levels.

As such, the Town recognizes that, like a team sport, the ideas and initiatives introduced in this Plan will require collective effort to be successful, along with consensus that we are working towards a singular objective – advancing sport in our community and creating a more open, accessible, and inviting sport environment for all Aurorans.

For the purposes of this Sport Plan, the following definitions are given to help separate the two terms 'sport' and 'recreation', given their close linkages:

- Sport** refers to organized, competitive, and skillful physical activities that follow specific rules and regulations. These can be either team-based (e.g., cricket, rugby, hockey), or individual (shotput, boxing, long-jump). The goal is typically to compete against and best an opponent (or opponents) to improve an overarching "record".
- Recreation** refers to a wide range of activities that people can engage in for enjoyment, relaxation, exercise, and leisure. These can be physical in nature (e.g., going for hikes, exercising at the gym, or playing a game of shinny at a local rink), or can be mental (e.g., sudoku) or social (e.g., group activities such as mall walks). Recreational activities are ones that people choose to participate in during their free time and can include both competitive and non-competitive activities. Some sports can be part of recreation activities, such as pick-up games of basketball.



While the two terms are similar, and recreation can encompass some elements of sport, the core difference between the two is that sport is organized, competitive, and objectives-based, while recreation does not have to abide by these requirements

### 4.3 Benefits of Sport and a Sport Plan

While sport will mean different things to different people, there are universal benefits for individuals and communities that underpin the reason for caring about sport and the necessity to develop a plan to grow sport within our community.

At an individual level, sport can help people maintain a physically healthy lifestyle, reducing the risk of chronic disease and injury during tasks of everyday life. Similarly, sport can promote improved mental health by providing individuals with an outlet for stress and anxiety – enhancing mental health outcomes, including improving mood and overall wellbeing. Sport can also help build resilience as individuals face and overcome obstacles, challenges, and achieve goals. Critical life skills grow when we engage in sport, including leadership capabilities, personal discipline, resilience, and time management. Lastly, sport improves physical literacy for individuals of any age and never stops providing the opportunity to build character and channel growth.

At the community level, sport fosters a sense of community by bringing groups of people together for a shared purpose. As sport reaches higher levels, this sense of community spirit can drive civic pride, allowing us to celebrate our team's wins in unity. The same goes for when local individuals succeed on national and international stages, as we saw with the success of the Canadian Women's Rugby 7's team during the Paris 2024 Olympics, which included Aurora Barbarian rugby player Chloe Daniels. Municipalities can also experience economic impacts from sport – hosting tournaments brings more individuals to our community, providing additional revenues to hotels and other local industries. Sport's infrastructure can also drive development in our communities, as we build to support our sport goals and build community for all. Sport can increase the overall health of our residents and create a healthier, safer, and more connected community that drives vibrancy at all levels. Finally, sport can break down barriers that separate us from one another, promoting inclusion and community building in a manner that emphasizes equity in our community.



One of the best parts of sport is that it can be accessible for everyone in Aurora – there are almost no restrictions on sport engagement except those we create for ourselves and allow to exist. This Sport Plan recognizes that sport is for everyone – regardless of how long you have lived in Aurora, your religion, creed, sexual orientation, age, or mother tongue.

This Sport Plan should be seen as a commitment to everyone in our community – we recognize the importance of sport, and we want to ensure that you are able to participate at the level that makes the most sense for you. We are committed to reducing barriers to participation, to increasing inclusivity with our LSO and Community Partners, and to ensuring all sports can see the Town of Aurora as an advocate for sport success in Aurora.

#### 4.4 Approach to the Development of the Sport Plan

The development of the Sport Plan was guided by a structured and inclusive approach, designed to ensure that all relevant perspectives and insights were considered. The process was built upon engagement with key stakeholders, a comprehensive review of foundational data and documents, and an analysis of comparator municipalities.

Figure 3 illustrates the structured approach introduced above.

*Figure 2: Structured Approach to Create the Sport Plan*



**Who we engaged:**

We engaged extensively with stakeholders across the community to inform the Sport Plan:

- **Council Engagement:** Conducted interviews with 3 Council members, focusing on goals for the Plan and providing background context.
- **Local Sports Organizations (LSOs) and Community Sport Organizations (CSOs):** Conducted interviews with 19 individuals across 16 LSO and CSO bodies, exploring key topics such as facility access, volunteer support, and participant engagement.
- **Community Partners:** Held 12 meetings with community organizations to gather insights on partnerships and opportunities for collaboration.
- **Public Survey:** Received 268 responses from residents, identifying barriers to participation and demand for drop-in programs.
- **Staff Engagement Session:** Held one session to discuss internal challenges, opportunities for collaboration, and alignment with community goals.
- **Validation Meetings:** To test results with stakeholders prior to finalizing the Plan.

**Comparator Analysis**

We reviewed best practices from five comparator municipalities—Markham, Brantford, Windsor, London, and Mississauga. These comparator municipalities were chosen as they have similar internal resources dedicated to Sport (i.e., sport plan, staff resources). This analysis enabled us to:

- Benchmark Aurora's performance and identify innovative practices.
- Understand strategies used by similar communities to address shared challenges.
- Incorporate lessons learned to ensure Aurora's Sport Plan reflects both ambition and feasibility.

### Data and Documents Reviewed

To supplement stakeholder engagement, we reviewed key documents and data, including:

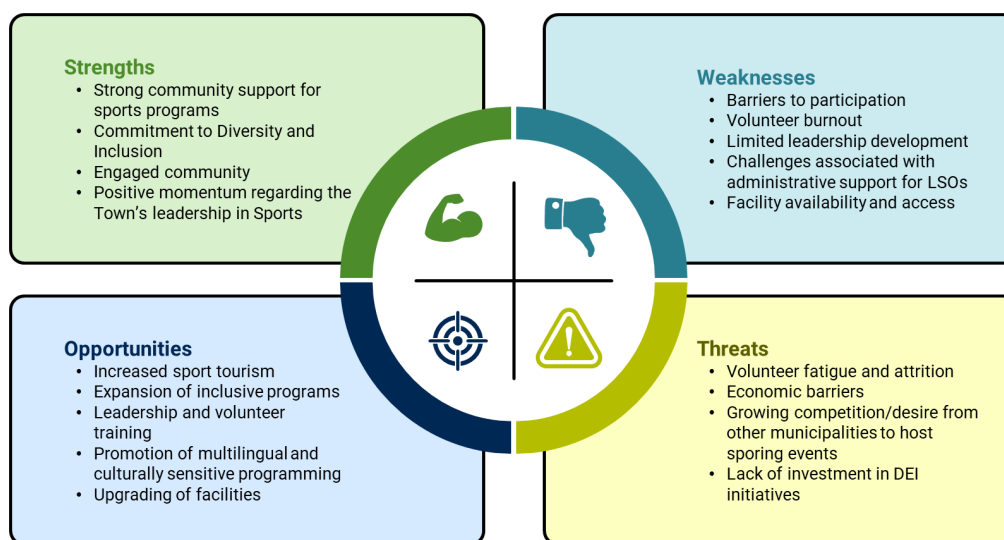
- The Town's updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Previous iterations of the Sport Plan.
- The Town's Sport Tourism Plan
- Content from previous discussions with stakeholders and partners about ideal updates to Sport Plan topics.
- Reviews of non-sport specific national values-based sport bodies, understanding the key commonalities and differences between them to ensure that the Aurora sport landscape promotes an ethical and inclusive sport environment.



## 4.5 The Environment Today

The Town of Aurora, along with our partners, has made significant strides since the inception of our first Sport Plan in enhancing the local sport landscape. Through strong leadership and a commitment to diversity and inclusion, the Town has built a solid foundation for sport in our community. The creation of our sport landscape is a marathon with no defined finish line, requiring continuous improvement to enhance the sport landscape in our Town. To ensure that the updated Sport Plan is grounded in reality, a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis was conducted. The inputs for the SWOT assessment included engagement with LSOs/CSOs and Community Partners, research into other municipalities to identify leading practices, and a public survey. All this content was then aggregated and themed to present the summary in the image below:

*Figure 3: SWOT Analysis of the Town's Sports Programs: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats*



To help give greater context to the points raised above, a summary of the key findings which informed the structure of the Sport Plan are included below.



### Strengths

- The Town benefits from strong community support for sports programs, which provides a solid foundation for further development.
- Across Aurora, there is a demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion whereby our LSO partners do their best to ensure that sports and recreation are accessible to all residents.
- Aurorans are an engaged community that actively participate in programs, contributing to the Town's positive momentum.
- The Town's leadership in sports has been widely recognized and provides a stable platform to build upon.

### Weaknesses

- Barriers to participation persist, such as financial constraints, timing of programming, and accessibility challenges.
- Volunteer burnout remains a significant issue, with many organizations commenting that competing demands and time constraints leads to volunteer attrition, which can make maintaining programs a challenge.
- LSO leadership is often stretched from coaching and administrative work, as well as ensuring alignment with broader provincial/national body requirements for themselves and all others volunteering. This can create challenges to take on additional leadership development opportunities and can hinder long-term growth.
- Those engaged noted that facility availability and access continues to be a concern, particularly for emerging sports and during peak times. These challenges can negatively impact growth of the LSOs.



**Opportunities**

- While not a viable option for every sport, there is potential for increased sport tourism that could drive additional economic growth and community engagement.
- Expansion of inclusive programs and the promotion of multilingual and culturally sensitive programming can help engage underrepresented groups.
- Investing in leadership and volunteer training that is unique and focused on areas that are non-duplicative of provincial/national bodies can strengthen the capacity of LSOs.
- Aligned to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the careful review and upgrading of facilities can meet the needs of a growing and diverse population.

**Threats**

- LSO participation is a volunteer activity, and as has been demonstrated nationwide, there are waning levels of volunteerism due to fatigue and attrition, which can limit the sustainability of sports programs.
- Despite best efforts of LSOs and the Town, economic barriers persist that can negatively impact the participation of individuals in sport.
- Municipalities across Ontario are increasingly focusing on sport tourism as an economic driver, which is creating competition for Aurora, potentially reducing Aurora's share of sports tourism opportunities.
- While the Town has taken strides to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in sport and recreation, there continues to be a demand/need for these initiatives which requires a continued focus to ensure opportunities are not missed to engage diverse communities.

## 5 The Sport Plan

This section of the Sport Plan provides a deeper dive into the Plan’s various components, ensuring that our commitments and activities are understood, so that in the future we can look back at our progress and celebrate our successes, together.

### 5.1 Our Guiding Ethos

#### 5.1.1 The Heart of Our Plan – Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

At the heart of our Sport Plan is a commitment towards diversity, equity, and inclusion. We know that we see the best of our community and individuals when all of Aurora is welcomed and involved in sport. To this end, throughout the Sport Plan, its Vision, Pillars, and Guiding Principles you will see multiple references to ensuring that everyone can see themselves in sport and in this Plan.

We want to ensure this Plan is as much for someone who has just moved to Aurora as it is someone whose family has lived here for generations; this Plan is for you regardless of your age, religion, sexual preferences, gender identity, ethnic or racial identity; the languages you speak, or any other aspect of your being. You are welcome, invited, and we are excited to have you be part of our sport community in Aurora.

#### 5.1.2 Our Guiding Principles

In creating the Sport Plan, we had six Guiding Principles that we followed, including:

- **Inclusivity and Equity** – We want to ensure we are reducing barriers to sport and facilities so that opportunities are accessible to everyone.
- **Lifelong Participation** – Sport is for everyone, regardless of age and your stage of life. We want to foster physical literacy from childhood through to older adulthood.
- **Sustainability of Sports Organizations** – In Aurora, sport is facilitated by our LSO partners, and we want to ensure that these organizations continue to be sustainable by providing resources that can support volunteers, leadership, and more.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships** – Building relationships and partnerships between Aurora, local businesses, community organizations, schools, LSOs, and regional/national sports bodies that will help make the best use of our resources and enhance the sport experience for our residents.
- **Excellence in Leadership and Governance** – Working with our LSOs, we want to promote strong, ethical, and inclusive leadership within sports organizations, ensuring responsible decision-making, transparency, and accountability.
- **Sport Tourism and Economic Development** – Leverage sport tourism to act as a driver for economic growth in Aurora by hosting events that showcase our vibrant and inclusive sport community.

These Guiding Principles have been developed based on three key facets:

- **We Know It's Right** – These Principles ensure that we are giving fair opportunities to everyone, and that we are actively creating the landscape and community we want to see in Aurora.
- **The Wants of Our Partners** – These six items were common refrains we heard as we undertook engagement activities with LSOs and Community Partners
- **Alignment with National Sports Bodies** – These Principles align with the principles and values of national sports bodies that promote sport, inclusivity, and physical literacy for all. To this end, we know that if we want to see the fullest benefits, partnering with national bodies will help to provide Aurora with another level and recognition on broader stages.





## 5.2 The Vision

Our Vision for this Strategic Plan is:

*Aurora is a leader for inclusive, accessible sports, where residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds can engage in lifelong participation, supported by a resilient sports system and strong community partnerships.*

This Vision is one that prioritizes our guiding ethos of diversity, equity, and inclusion, ensuring that we are explicitly stating how we want everyone to be able to see themselves in and participate in sport in our community. Furthermore, the Vision statement recognizes that sport is not just for one age group but rather is a community for people of all ages, as we know this broad approach to sport will create the most resilient system for our community. Lastly, we recognize that while we as the Town are a facilitator of the sport landscape we want to see, we are not the key players. The key players in our sport landscape are our LSO and Community Partners, and as such, we know we need to work jointly to drive the improvements we want to see.

## 5.3 The Pillars

This section provides a deeper dive into each of the Pillars of the Sport Plan. Each section provides an overview of the Pillar and explicitly defines our commitments as the Town of Aurora to the Pillar. Lastly, each section outlines the type of initiatives, or multi-faceted projects, that we will work on across the coming five-year period.





### 5.3.1 Pillar 1: Leadership Development and Volunteer Support



#### 5.3.1.1 Overview of the Pillar

Sport in Aurora relies on volunteers to act as coaches, referees, and leaders. This time that is offered is a labour of love and creates opportunities to engage in sport that our participants enjoy. We recognize that strong leadership and development are core goals that will create a sustainable, inclusive, and fulfilling sport experience for participants and audiences alike. To this end, we know that we have to do more to support our LSOs and their volunteers.

The Leadership Development and Volunteer Support Pillar is designed to focus on supporting our LSO partners to ensure that they are able to continue to shape the success, ethics, and inclusivity of community sports in Aurora. To this end, we, as the Town of Aurora, commit to the following:

- We will support the development of strong, inclusive leadership across the Aurora sport landscape.
- We will provide training that helps grow the skills and capacity of LSO leaders, supporting the adoption of sport across all segments of the Town’s residents.
- We will provide administrative support and mentorship to LSOs to support long-term growth and appropriate decision-making.

#	Initiative Title	Description
1.	Support sport leadership training	<p>To help create a sport landscape that ensures all leaders have the necessary skills and supports to help grow their sports, the Town will help to identify the trainings that will have the most impact for leaders. We recognize we cannot do it all, and we will identify and source partners that have the specialties required to equip LSOs for success. We will ensure these are not duplicative of what LSOs already receive and will be offered in various formats to be accessible to all.</p> <p>A key focus for this work will be ensuring that we are supporting under-resourced and under-represented groups in the process. This may mean that there are additional training supports identified to support an equitable landscape for all and may involve finding training partners who better align with the needs of everyone in our community.</p>

#	Initiative Title	Description
2.	Support the creation of leadership empowerment programming	Welcoming everyone into sport becomes easier when they can see themselves in the sport – from participation through to leadership. When we engaged with our LSO and CSO partners, we heard a clear desire to engage new leaders in sport, and this initiative will help achieve that goal. Specifically, this initiative will engage those groups who have not been traditionally represented in sport leadership to provide programming that empowers them to take on leadership roles in LSOs and CSOs across Aurora.
3.	Provide tools and templates to support the administrative and governance work of LSOs	<p>LSO/CSO leadership is a labour of love but it is one that has multiple draws for attention and time: the sport itself, the volunteers, administrative activities, governance activities, and more. Oftentimes these leaders are doing their best with what they have available and are using templates they have been provided from others and/or that they've found online. All of this takes time away from their core goal – providing a great sport experience.</p> <p>We are going to work with LSOs and CSOs to identify the templates that are currently working well and where there are items that are lacking and will help to develop tools and templates to drive greater standardization across groups and will remove the unnecessary guesswork.</p>

## 5.3.2 Pillar 2: Sport Participant Engagement



### 5.3.2.1 Overview of the Pillar

Sport is for everyone and ensuring that those sport experiences are enjoyable and accessible is a priority for our LSOs and the Town as a whole. We want everyone in Aurora to have the ability to engage in sport, because we want everyone to benefit from the healthier lifestyles, increased social cohesion, and stronger community connections that sport provides. When everyone can engage in sport in a manner that is fun, competitive, aligned to their abilities, and inclusive, the Town of Aurora will see improvements in social quality, wellness of our neighbours, and an overall improvement in the quality of life for residents.

Knowing the benefits that sport provides our communities means we know we need to reduce barriers to participation and do our best to work with our LSO partners to ensure there are flexible, inclusive programs that encourage lifelong participation. To this end, we as the Town of Aurora commit to the following:

- We will reduce barriers to sport participation across all ages, abilities, and backgrounds.
- We will support the development of flexible and inclusive programming to increase engagement across all the Town’s residents.
- We will collaborate with our LSO partners to foster an environment attracts lifelong engagement in sport.

#	Initiative Title	Description
4.	Identify barriers to sport participation	<p>If we want to create a landscape where everyone in Aurora is able to participate in sport, we need to understand what is currently standing in the way of participation for people. This means we need to better understand the unique experiences of various resident and participant groups to identify common, cross-cutting barriers as well as those that are unique.</p> <p>This Initiative will involve the Town working with various groups across Aurora to understand their experiences and to work with others to test potential solutions. Through a continuous improvement process we hope to dismantle barriers to empower everyone to enjoy the sport of their choosing.</p>

#	Initiative Title	Description
5.	Trial new flexible programming options	<p>Building on the Initiative above, a finding that was clear from our public engagement activities was that one barrier groups experience is a lack of flexibility in programming options. This could be sport programs being offered during times that are inconvenient, costs, or accessibility. While sports may take place at Aurora-owned facilities, the reality is that the Town does not control the provision of sport. Rather, sport is offered by our network of fantastic LSOs and CSOs.</p> <p>This Initiative will see the Town working with our LSO and CSO partners to trial new flexible programming options that would increase the accessibility of sport to the public. What this will look like in practice still has to be developed, but we will trial new ways to offer programs and will evaluate their impact.</p>
6.	Develop a Comprehensive Sport Communications Strategy	<p>Aurora does a lot of great work to support those interested in sport participation, leadership, and volunteering, but we recognize that we may not be the best at communicating what we do. Furthermore, there are many events, weeks, weekends, or days that are recognized in the sport community, such as Rowan’s Law Day – a day that raises awareness about concussion safety in sports. We will develop a Comprehensive Sport Communications Strategy to ensure that we are structuring and sharing key communications that will impact the sport community in Aurora.</p>



### 5.3.3 Pillar 3: Community Sport Sustainability

#### 5.3.3.1 Overview of the Pillar

This Pillar takes a different approach to supporting sport in Aurora, because we recognize that for sport to flourish and provide benefits to everyone, it also requires that the LSOs who offer sport are able to sustain themselves. LSOs are the foundation of our sports system, and as such it is critical that we provide them with the supports that they need to offer programming, recruit volunteers, and maintain the facilities that they steward. Without receiving this support, there is a risk that LSOs will falter as they battle with volunteer burnout, administrative challenges, and financial viability long-term.

Supporting our LSOs will mean that we must focus on core aspects of their operations, including helping LSOs with their governance models, including financial management. We will work with all LSOs to foster a community of resource sharing, so that groups across Aurora have a viable means to collaborate. To this end, we as the Town of Aurora commit to the following:

- We will commit to long-term sustainability of LSOs by partnering to refine and enhance governance structures and support for volunteers.
- We will continuously identify new and innovative partnerships that will provide LSOs with the support that they need to grow the sport landscape of the Town.
- We will provide resources that support the leadership of LSOs as it relates to financial and administrative requirements to reduce burden and burnout for volunteers.

#	Initiative Title	Description
7.	Develop a governance training program with LSOs	<p>Governance is a deceptively complex topic – it can seem simple at a base level, but when it is fully explored the various nuances, offshoots, and potential tripping points emerge. LSOs are often working through governance structures they’ve created for themselves, attempting to align with leading practices, required activities from provincial or national bodies, or just trying to manage their respective teams. Engagement with LSO and CSO partners highlighted the need for greater support to leadership on this topic.</p> <p>This Initiative will focus on how the Town can work with LSOs to offer tailored recommendations and guidance on governance to support leadership and offer a more consistent experience across each group in Aurora. It will be a collaborative effort that will ensure recommendations are tailored, realistic, and impactful.</p>



#	Initiative Title	Description
8.	Create an online, self-serve resource hub for LSOs and the community	<p>Templates, tools, resources, and supports currently span multiple topic areas, such as financial supports, governance, grant funding, etc. These same supports exist in multiple locations – on our website, with Town staff, with our LSO/CSO partners, etc. The Town will work with our partners and the community to help source and provide information so that those offering their time and efforts to the broader sport community can continue to effectively do so. This is a role and responsibility we are happy to play, however, having to always reach out to the Town for this information can be cumbersome, can feel inefficient, and can take time that proponents may not always have the luxury of.</p> <p>This Initiative will develop a self-serve resource hub on the Town’s website so that the public and our partners can look up known/existing supports in a single location. This will make lives easier for our partners and the community, and will help to create a more efficient and effective experience for everyone.</p>



## 5.3.4 Pillar 4: Sport Tourism

### 5.3.4.1 Overview of the Pillar

Beyond the physical, mental, and community benefits of sport are the economic benefits sport can bring to Aurora. When we attract tournaments – be it from the regional, provincial, national, or international levels – we bring visitors to our town that stay in our hotels, eat at our local restaurants, shop in our stores, and ultimately add to our local economy. When visitors to Aurora come for sporting events, we have the opportunity to drive our profile by showing the vibrancy and inclusivity we can offer. In short, bringing sport tourism events to Aurora can create a lot of benefits for our town, and it is something we are keenly interested in pursuing into the future. To this end, we as the Town of Aurora commit to the following:

- We will work with our partners to establish Aurora as a vibrant sports tourism destination that will provide economic benefits and community engagement for all of Aurora.
- We will identify opportunities to attract sporting events together with our LSOs.
- We will do our best to use our facilities to their highest and best purpose in service of residents and visitors.
- We will continue to work with our partners across the Town, including ensuring continued alignment with the Sport Tourism Plan.

#	Initiative Title	Description
9.	Build relationships and partnerships with values and ethics-based bodies that can enhance the sport experience in Aurora	<p>Beyond single-sport focused national, provincial, and local bodies exists values-based and ethics-based organizations who are either directly linked to sport or whose work can directly benefit those engaging in sport. These bodies will often aim to instill ethical and moral structures and decision-making into everyday activities and into sport which often acts as an amplifier in the sport landscape, enhancing messaging and allowing for greater visibility in the sport landscape.</p> <p>The Town of Aurora intends to consistently identify and build relationships with these organizations from the local through to the national levels. These activities will help to raise our status, perception, and reach in the sport landscape in a manner that aligns with the goals and attitude we have for sport.</p>

#	Initiative Title	Description
10.	Engage Community Partners to support sport tourism opportunities	Beyond the direct LSO and CSO partners we have in Aurora, there are other bodies outside of the immediate sport landscape that want to see Aurora sport thrive. We know partnerships and activities already exist between the broader Aurora community and the sport landscape, and the Town will continue to work with Community Partners to identify new and interesting opportunities to enhance the reach of sport and the experience that we have for sport activities, particularly in realm of sport tourism. When we all work together, we know we can clearly highlight and display the vibrant, welcoming, and incredible Town that Aurora is to our visitors.
11.	Develop a structured process to review and pursue sport tourism opportunities.	<p>Sport tourism can have great impacts on our community, including economic benefits, cultural benefits, and potentially enticing new residents and businesses to join Aurora. While we recognize the clear benefits that sport tourism brings, we are also acutely aware of the impact it has on those who live in our Town. Those who use certain facilities may be directed to other locations if a tournament takes over their regular space, roads may be more congested, and there may be environmental impacts in increased waste production.</p> <p>For this reason, this Initiative will serve to create a structured process in which all of the possible benefits and downsides of a sport tourism event are systematically weighed and evaluated to ensure that we are pursuing those opportunities that will bring real and positive benefits for Aurora. Not every event is equally beneficial, and we will ensure that we select and highlight those that are most impactful and meaningful to our community.</p>

## 6 Next Steps

This Sport Plan will be actioned over the coming five years, led by representatives from the Community Services Department who will actively work with our local community to build tactical plans that will move our Initiatives forward year over year. On an annual basis we will report back to Council on our progress against the Plan, so that we can actively celebrate the progress we make with our partners. The game is about to start for our Sport Plan, and we're ready to win big over the next few years – we are excited to play with you all and to continue to make Aurora the great sport community we know it to be!

## 7 Appendix

### 7.1 Definitions

#### **LOCAL SPORT ORGANIZATION (LSO)**

A community-based group or association that organizes and delivers competitive sports programs for residents of the Town of Aurora. LSOs foster participation, skill development, and community engagement in sports and often collaborate with municipal facilities and resources to support their activities. LSOs have a formal relationship with either a provincial or national sport body above them that instills requirements on the LSO (e.g., coach training requirements).

#### **COMMUNITY SPORT ORGANIZATION (CSO)**

A community-based group or association that organizes and delivers competitive sports programs for residents of the Town of Aurora. A core difference between a CSO and an LSO is that CSOs do not have a formal relationship with an overarching body (i.e., a provincial or national parent body).

#### **PROVINCIAL SPORT ORGANIZATION (PSO)**

A governing body that oversees the development, regulation, and promotion of a specific sport within a province or territory. PSOs provide support and resources to local and regional sport organizations, ensure alignment with national standards, and deliver programs that promote participation, athlete development, and competition at the provincial level. They serve as a critical link between National Sport Organizations and municipal-level sport initiatives.

#### **NATIONAL SPORT ORGANIZATION (NSO)**

A governing body responsible for the administration, regulation, and promotion of a specific sport across Canada. NSOs establish national standards, oversee athlete development, and support participation at all levels, from grassroots to high-performance. They work in collaboration with provincial and local sport organizations to ensure alignment and consistency in the delivery of programs and competitions.

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Organizations, groups, or stakeholders within Aurora that collaborate with the Town on initiatives that can and often are broader than just sport or recreation. These may include schools, non-profit organizations, health and wellness groups, service clubs, or private businesses that contribute to promoting equity, active living, community engagement, and resident well-being.



## **SPORT**

Sport refers to organized, competitive, and skillful physical activities that follow specific rules and regulations. These can be either team-based (e.g., cricket, rugby, hockey), or individual (shotput, boxing, long-jump). The goal is typically to compete against and best an opponent (or opponents) to improve an overarching “record”.

## **RECREATION**

Recreation refers to a wide range of activities that people can engage in for enjoyment, relaxation, exercise, and leisure. These can be physical in nature (e.g., going for hikes, exercising at the gym, or playing a game of shinny at a local rink), or can be mental (e.g., sudoku) or social (e.g., group activities such as mall walks). Recreational activities are ones that people choose to participate in during their free time and can include both competitive and non-competitive activities. Some sports can be part of recreation activities, such as pick-up games of basketball.

## **VISION**

A long-term statement that articulates the desired future goal/outcome for Aurora’s sport and recreation system, prioritizing inclusivity, accessibility, and lifelong participation. Vision statements provide a target that the rest of a strategy focuses upon and builds towards achieving.

## **PILLAR**

A focus area that, if focused upon in a systematic manner, will support the achievement of the Vision. Pillars group key activities and help define what will and will not be a focus area for the strategy’s lifetime. In this regard, key areas are prioritized for future effort.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

A core value or belief that shapes the priorities and actions of the Sport Plan, ensuring alignment with the Town’s goals and objectives. Guiding Principles identify and define the types of behaviours that we as a municipality want to identify, prioritize, and reward.

## **INITIATIVE**

A multi-faceted project/piece of work aligned to one of the Pillars. Initiatives are a collection of tangible activities that will drive success within a Pillar and ultimately contribute to the successful achievement of the Sport Plan’s Vision.

**VALUE BASED SPORT BODY**

A governing or organizing entity that prioritizes ethical principles, inclusivity, fairness, and community well-being in its operations and programming. These organizations aim to foster environments where sport contributes to personal growth, social connection, and collective values, ensuring that decisions and activities reflect respect, equity, and integrity. These are not organizations focused on a single sport (e.g., Hockey Canada), but rather are focused on all sports and the principles and values that sport espouses.

**SPORT LITERACY**

The knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable individuals to understand, participate in, and appreciate sport. Sport literacy encompasses physical competence, tactical understanding, and an awareness of the rules, values, and culture of sport, promoting lifelong engagement and enjoyment in both competitive and recreational activities.

## 7.2 Comparator Scan Leading Practices

The following table outlines a series of leading practices identified during the comparator scan, and then provides insights to what this may mean for Aurora as it moves into the future. This table is meant to provide an overview and understanding of the broader landscape, to help provide direction and insight for Aurora as it continues to evolve and grow its sport landscape.

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Athlete Development and Physical Literacy:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Markham in Motion:</b> A program that integrates physical literacy into all recreation and sport offerings, focusing on fundamental movement skills like throwing, swimming, and climbing to encourage lifelong activity.</li> <li>• <b>Act-i-Pass (London):</b> Provides free recreation access to Grade 5 students, promoting early engagement in physical activity and fostering healthy habits.</li> <li>• <b>Physical Literacy Action Plan (Mississauga):</b> Aligns with the Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L) model to ensure consistent and quality programming for all ages, supporting pathways from grassroots participation to elite performance.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markham: Implements "Markham in Motion" to embed physical literacy into all programs.</li> <li>• London: Offers free recreation through the "Act-i-Pass" program for Grade 5 students.</li> <li>• Mississauga: Aligns programming with the CS4L model to ensure consistent pathways.</li> <li>• Brantford: Focuses on long-term athlete development through introductory and skill-building programs.</li> </ul>	<p>The Town can continue to work with its LSO and CSO partners to identify opportunities to embed physical literacy as a core staple for public education. Identifying unique opportunities – either in partnership with a national values-based sport body, school boards, Town programming, or programming of LSOs/CSOs – is critical to developing a populace with strong athletic and sport fundamentals.</p> <p>Furthermore, with fundamental skillsets in place, the Town will likely benefit from an increase in sport participation at all levels and age groups. This becomes a self-sustaining cycle in which the Town will have residents excited and able to participate, foster greater community mindedness, and can support broader health benefits for residents throughout their lives.</p>

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Coach and Officials Development:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Multi-Sport Workshops:</b> Delivering National Coaching Certification Program (NCCP) workshops in partnership with the Coaches Association of Ontario. This approach simplifies access to certification for community coaches.</li> <li>• <b>Retention Strategies for Officials:</b> Addressing issues like burnout and abuse by offering training in conflict resolution, stress management, and communication.</li> <li>• <b>Annual Recognition Events:</b> Celebrating contributions during events like Coaches Week to promote pride and retention among coaches.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markham: Partners with CAO to deliver NCCP workshops, celebrates Coaches Week, and integrates feedback into retention strategies.</li> <li>• Mississauga: Identifies coaching gaps and offers tailored workshops and recruitment incentives.</li> <li>• Windsor: Organizes retention-focused workshops and ongoing support for coaches.</li> </ul>	<p>Partner with LSOs to understand if/where there is currently a need for more training to support coaches and officials, and work with provincial or national values-based sports bodies to provide these more regularly and/or in alternative formats. Continue to work with LSO and CSO partners to define and enforce the type of environment the Town wants its coaches and officials operating within to reduce negative or harmful interactions to drive long-term retention.</p> <p>Continue to work with Sport Aurora and the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame to recognize the contributions and outcomes of athletes, coaches, and other volunteers in the Town. Determine if there are broader opportunities (e.g., with others in York Region) to further recognize local sport/athlete/volunteer impacts.</p>

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Sport System Sustainability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Governance and Capacity-Building Workshops:</b> Assisting sport organizations with strategic planning, financial management, risk management, and human resources through tailored workshops.</li> <li>• <b>Networking Events:</b> Hosting regular networking events to unite sport leaders and create a collective voice for local sports.</li> <li>• <b>Assistance for Compliance with Provincial Standards:</b> Helping organizations meet Ministry expectations (e.g., Ontario Sport Recognition Policy) through governance support and training.</li> </ul> <p><b>In practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markham: Hosts governance workshops and SportsLink events.</li> <li>• London: Builds capacity through the London Sport Council and governance support.</li> <li>• Mississauga: Helps organizations meet provincial compliance standards.</li> <li>• Brantford: Changing the structure of its meetings to ensure meetings have representatives from the same type of sport (e.g., all aquatics based leaders together) to openly discuss challenges and attempt to find joint resolutions to issues.</li> </ul>	<p>Aurora can collaborate with LSOs and CSOs to deliver targeted governance workshops focusing on strategic planning, financial management, and compliance with provincial standards, such as the Ontario Sport Recognition Policy. These workshops can be developed in partnership with provincial sport organizations or local leaders to ensure alignment with leading practices.</p> <p>Additionally, the Town could host annual networking events to unite sport leaders, providing opportunities for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving. By prioritizing governance support and fostering a connected sport system, Aurora can enhance the long-term sustainability and effectiveness of its local sport organizations.</p>



### Sport Tourism

- **Hosting Strategies:** Leveraging existing infrastructure for national and international events while promoting all available community facilities to maximize economic and social impact.
- **Grant Funding:** Proactively aligning local hosting strategies with available federal and provincial grants.
- **Event Planning and Impact Assessment:** Using models like the STEAM (Sport Tourism Economic Assessment Model) to evaluate the economic impacts of hosted events and justify further investment.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Collaborating with local economic development departments, tourism boards, and education partners to broaden sport tourism offerings.
- **Tournament Hosting Focus:** Brantford maximizes sport tourism by aligning facilities with tournament requirements, such as adequate seating, parking, and ancillary amenities.

### In Practice:

- Markham: Developed a Sport Tourism Strategy, uses STEAM model for impact evaluation.
- Brantford: Heavy focus on sport tourism as a key driver for the City's brand and image. Examples including hosting events like the Walter Gretzky Street Hockey Tournament, aligns facilities with tournament needs.
- Mississauga: Collaborates with over 100 Community and Local Sport Organizations (CSOs/LSOs) through the Community Group Support Program. The City supports these organizations by providing facility access, governance guidance, and financial assistance (e.g., Active Assist). The Mississauga Sports Council acts as a key partner, fostering collaboration and alignment between the City and sport organizations.
- London: Attracts competitions through Tourism London, balancing community and elite needs.

Aurora can develop a sport tourism strategy that leverages its existing facilities to attract regional, national, and international tournaments. By aligning hosting strategies with federal and provincial grants, the Town can secure funding to offset costs and maximize the economic and social benefits of events.

Aurora could also adopt tools like the STEAM model to assess the economic impact of tournaments and justify further investments in sport tourism infrastructure. Partnering with economic development, tourism boards, and local education institutions can enhance offerings and attract diverse events. Ensuring facilities meet tournament needs—such as seating, parking, and amenities—will position Aurora as a premier host for sport tourism.

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Youth and Grassroots Sport Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Affordable Access to Sport:</b> The City addresses financial barriers by offering subsidized programs and equipment for youth and families in need.</li> <li>• <b>Emerging Sports Development:</b> Focused efforts are made to foster new sports, like pickleball and disc golf, in response to growing local demand.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• London: The "Play Your Way" program offers subsidies to families, enabling children and youth to participate in recreation programs. This complements London's "Act-i-Pass" initiative, which provides free recreation access to Grade 5 students.</li> <li>• Mississauga: The "Active Assist" program offers financial assistance to residents, promoting participation in sports and recreation. The city has also partnered with Canadian Tire's Jumpstart program and introduced the "Wal-Mart at Play" initiative, providing free or low-cost sports programs to youth.</li> <li>• Brantford: The "Can We Help" program offers subsidies to families in need for youth recreation programs. Additionally, the city collaborates with regional partners through "Active Grand" to promote affordable recreation access.</li> </ul>	<p>Aurora can enhance affordable access to sports by collaborating with both national bodies (e.g., Jumpstart, True Sport) as well as local organizations (e.g., Chamber of Commerce, local businesses) to provide subsidies, equipment, and fee assistance for youth and families facing financial barriers. This ensures equitable participation opportunities across the community.</p> <p>By investing in grassroots sport development, Aurora can foster a culture of inclusivity and lifelong participation, helping to engage youth while nurturing a pipeline of future athletes.</p>

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Data-Driven Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Geographic Information System (GIS) Analysis:</b> Windsor uses GIS to assess the distribution of recreational facilities, identifying gaps and areas for improvement.</li> <li>• <b>Performance Metrics:</b> Establishing measurable goals helps evaluate the success of sports initiatives and ensures continuous improvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windsor: Uses GIS tools to assess facility distribution and gaps.</li> <li>• London: Analyzes demographic and participation trends to guide investments.</li> <li>• Mississauga: Tracks performance metrics to measure program success and align with community needs.</li> <li>• Brantford: Actively developing a Sport Fields and Courts Strategy that explores the types and distribution of sport and recreation facilities throughout the city.</li> </ul>	<p>Aurora can leverage Geographic Information System (GIS) tools to analyze the distribution of sports facilities and identify gaps in accessibility or areas requiring additional resources. Furthermore, a detailed review and analysis of the types of parks and sport facilities in the Town, paired with any potential utilization data (e.g., based on permits) can help to identify priorities for future infrastructure development. This data-driven approach will help ensure equitable access to recreational spaces across the community.</p> <p>The Town can also establish performance metrics to evaluate the success of sports initiatives, such as participation rates, facility utilization, and community satisfaction. Regularly monitoring and reporting on these metrics will support continuous improvement, align investments with community needs, and provide evidence for future funding or development priorities.</p>
<p><b>Collaboration with Community Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Leased Facility Spaces:</b> Windsor leases facility spaces to community partners like private schools, maximizing utility and generating additional revenue.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Windsor: Leases spaces to community partners like private schools to increase utility and revenue.</li> <li>• Markham: Collaborates with private organizations and groups to share spaces for recreation.</li> <li>• London: Co-locates facilities with schools and non-profits to expand access.</li> </ul>	<p>Aurora can explore leasing facility spaces to community partners, such as private schools or non-profit organizations, to maximize utilization and generate additional revenue. This ensures there is a resident tenant who can use the spaces during non-peak hours. These partnerships can also support shared programming, reduce operating costs, and expand access to recreational opportunities for residents.</p>

Leading Practices	How Aurora can Apply these Leading Practices
<p><b>Emphasis on Multi-Sport Programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Sport Diversification:</b> Windsor supports multi-sport programs to improve athlete development and reduce burnout in youth sports.</li> </ul> <p><b>In Practice:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Markham: Embeds multi-sport practices in "Markham in Motion."</li> <li>• London: Leverages the CS4L framework to provide diverse multi-sport opportunities.</li> </ul>	<p>Aurora can promote multi-sport programming by collaborating with LSOs to design programs that encourage youth to participate in multiple sports throughout the year. This approach helps improve skill development, reduce the risk of burnout, and foster long-term engagement in physical activity. The Town could also host multi-sport clinics or events to introduce youth to diverse activities, ensuring programming aligns with community interests and available facilities. Additionally, partnering with LSOs and CSOs can have them identify sports that are mutually reinforcing in off-seasons, so that there can be cross pollination and growth of local sports.</p>

## 7.3 National Values-Based Sport Bodies

This section provides an overview of the commonalities and differences between some of the leading national values-based sports bodies in Canada. This is designed to provide some background information that will enable the Town of Aurora to then determine if there are any specific aspects they wish to more fully embed within its own sport landscape. In particular, the Optimus SBR team reviewed three bodies: Sport for Life, True Sport, and Participation.

Org.	Mission	Focus Area	Key Programs and initiatives	Similarities	Differences	Benefits to the Town in Adopting a Values-Based Approach to Sport
<b>True Sport</b>	To promote values-based and principle-driven sport to instill character in individuals and build strong communities.	Ethical competition, inclusion, community impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>True Sport Principles:</b> A framework of seven core values (Go For It, Play Fair, Respect Others, Keep It Fun, Stay Healthy, Include Everyone, Give Back)</li> <li>• <b>Jr. True Sport Champions Program:</b> Trains and engages youth to become advocates for True Sport values in their communities.</li> <li>• <b>Educational Resources:</b> Provides coaches, parents, and athletes with tools and resources to foster a positive and values-based sport environment.</li> </ul>	Focus on character development and values in sport	Primarily focused on youth sport and athlete development	<b>Improved Youth Development,</b> Reduced Pressure, Increased Participation, Enhanced Community Spirit, Improved Physical and Mental Health <b>Improved Youth Development:</b> Fosters crucial life skills such as teamwork, leadership, resilience, respect, and sportsmanship in young athletes. <b>Reduced Pressure:</b> Creates a less pressure-cooker environment for young athletes,



Org.	Mission	Focus Area	Key Programs and initiatives	Similarities	Differences	Benefits to the Town in Adopting a Values-Based Approach to Sport
						<p>minimizing anxiety and burnout.</p> <p><b>Increased Participation:</b> Encourages greater participation in sports and physical activity by creating a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all athletes, regardless of skill level, background, or ability.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Community Spirit:</b> Promotes a sense of community and shared values among residents through shared experiences in sports. Fosters stronger bonds and a greater sense of belonging within the community. Cultivates positive role models for younger generations</p>

Org.	Mission	Focus Area	Key Programs and initiatives	Similarities	Differences	Benefits to the Town in Adopting a Values-Based Approach to Sport
						<p>through coaches and athletes who embody True Sport values.</p> <p><b>Improved Physical and Mental Health:</b></p> <p>Fosters a love of physical activity that can translate into healthy habits throughout life, reducing the risk of chronic diseases. Provides a healthy outlet for stress and improves mental well-being.</p>

<b>Sport for Life</b>	To increase sport's contribution to Canadian society by promoting each child's healthy and logical development in a sport or physical activity.	Physical literacy, long-term athlete development, quality sport programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Long-Term Development Framework:</b> A multi-stage pathway guiding individuals' experience in sport and physical activity.</li> <li>• <b>Physical Literacy Resources:</b> Tools and guides to develop physical literacy across various environments.</li> <li>• <b>Community Projects:</b> Initiatives aimed at enhancing sport and physical activity at the community level</li> </ul>	Emphasis on long-term athlete development and physical literacy	Broader scope, encompassing all stages of life and various levels of participation	<p><b>Improved Youth Development:</b> Fosters positive character traits like teamwork, leadership, resilience, and respect in young athletes.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Physical and Mental Health:</b> Promotes healthy lifestyles and well-being by encouraging physical activity and skill development. Increased</p> <p><b>Participation:</b> Creates a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all athletes, regardless of their skill level or background.</p> <p><b>Community Building:</b> Strengthens community bonds by providing opportunities for people of all ages to participate in sport and physical activity.</p>
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Org.	Mission	Focus Area	Key Programs and initiatives	Similarities	Differences	Benefits to the Town in Adopting a Values-Based Approach to Sport
<b>ParticipACTION</b>	To encourage Canadians to lead active lifestyles and make physical activity a vital part of their everyday lives	Physical activity promotion, public awareness, community engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community Challenge:</b> A national competition that encourages communities to get active and improve their overall well-being.</li> <li>• <b>School Programs:</b> Programs that promote physical activity and healthy eating habits in schools.</li> <li>• <b>Social Marketing Campaigns:</b> Creative campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of physical activity and inspire Canadians to be more active.</li> </ul>	Broader focus on general physical activity and public health	Improved Youth Development, Reduced Pressure, Increased Participation, Enhanced Community Spirit, Improved Physical and Mental Health	<p><b>Improved Public Health:</b> Contributes to a healthier population by increasing physical activity levels and reducing chronic disease risks.</p> <p><b>Enhanced Quality of Life:</b> Improves the overall well-being of residents by promoting an active and healthy lifestyle.</p> <p><b>Economic Benefits:</b> Can boost local economies by attracting tourism, supporting local businesses, and creating jobs in the sports and recreation sector.</p> <p><b>Community Development:</b> Fosters a sense of community and social cohesion.</p>



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