



Recreation, Arts & Culture Master Plan

Council Presentation

April 2018

PURPOSE

To guide decision making on matters related to recreation, arts and culture over the next ten years.

OBJECTIVES

Assess the need for parks, recreation, arts and culture facilities, programs and services.

Identify strategies and recommendations to meet the needs of residents.

Engage the public, stakeholders, staff and Council.

MASTER PLAN PROCESS

Phase One

- Background Review
- Community Engagement
- Demographic Review
- Trends Review
- Park and Facility Inventory
- Service Inventory
- Presentation to Council

Phase Two

- Strategic Directions
- Service Delivery Audit
- Fees and Charges Review

Phase Three

- Parks and Open Spaces Strategies
- Trails Design Standards and Strategies
- Recreation Facilities Strategies
- Cultural Facilities Strategies
- Implementation Plan
- Draft Master Plan
- Public Meeting
- Finalize Master Plan
- Council Presentation – We are here

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Public Open Houses
- Online Community Survey
- Stakeholder Focus Groups

- Township Staff Workshop
- Interviews with Councillors
- Student Survey
- Final Public Open Houses to Present the Draft Master Plan

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Five strategic directions were developed to serve as the framework for advancing recreation, arts and culture in the Township:

- Focus on Healthy Communities
- Work Together
- Promote Awareness of Opportunities
- Keep Facilities Relevant
- Enhance Parks, Open Spaces, and Trails

PARKS AND TRAIL RECOMMENDATIONS

Update the conceptual park plan for the Thamesford District Recreation Centre to include a soccer field, ball diamond, basketball court, beach volleyball courts, trail routes, and outdoor fitness equipment.

- Alternative locations should be considered if all or some outdoor recreation facilities cannot be accommodated.
- Relocation of existing outdoor recreation facilities may be required.

Continue to implement Zorra-specific elements of the County of Oxford Trails Master Plan, with a priority on connecting existing parks and recreation facilities.

Explore the feasibility of implementing the park-based trail routes recommended in this Master Plan.

INDOOR RECREATION FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Arenas

Bolster ice usage by offering new drop-in skating programs, working with user groups to optimize available ice, engaging local schools, utilizing black-out periods, and continuing to promote usage to non-local users.

Improve the Township's tracking/collection of accurate arena usage and participation data. Should demand for ice decline below 70% utilization, explore alternative uses for one of the Township's ice pads, including recreational use(s), other Township indoor space needs, or the development of a community hub.

Monitor plans and timing for Ingersoll's new arena.

Multi-Purpose and Meeting Space

Maximize the use of existing spaces by identifying opportunities to modernize space, ensuring that the public is aware of available space, working with community providers to develop programs to better utilize available space.

Gymnasiums

Continue to engage the Thames Valley District School Board to formalize a reciprocal agreement in order to secure future access to gymnasium space.

Fitness Space

Integrate outdoor fitness equipment as part of an internal trail loop at the Thamesford District Recreation Centre or at the Embro Zorra Community Centre.

Youth and Older Adult Space

Engage the Ingersoll Fusion Youth Centre and Ingersoll Services for Seniors to discuss strategies to meet the needs of Zorra youth, older adults, and seniors, including outreach programs and services.

Create a Youth Council to ensure that youth are heard and considered as a part of future decisions in Zorra.

OUTDOOR RECREATION FACILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Aquatics

Establish a committee similar to the Zorra Water and Wheels committee to lead fundraising efforts for a small scale spray pad in Embro.

Ball Diamonds

Direct demand for additional ball diamond access in Thamesford to existing diamonds in Embro to relieve facility pressures. Should there be demonstrated and sufficient demand for an additional diamond, provide a new adult ball diamond at the Thamesford District Recreation Centre.

Soccer Fields

Develop a full size soccer field at Thamesford District Recreation Centre.

Playgrounds

Construct a playground at a future park in the proposed residential subdivision in the southwest corner of Thamesford.

Develop a playground replacement program to renew aging playgrounds.

Beach Volleyball Courts

Work with the Thamesford Beach Volleyball League to add lights to the existing volleyball courts or construct new courts.

Skateboard Parks

Monitor usage of the proposed Terry Fox skateboard park in Thamesford and evaluate the need for a small scale skateboard park in Embro. Should demand exist, a committee similar to the Zorra Water and Wheels Committee should be formed to lead fundraising efforts.

Outdoor Basketball Courts

Construct a new outdoor basketball court at the Thamesford District Recreation Centre.

ARTS AND CULTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

Arts and Cultural Policy

Create a Public Art Policy to recognize the importance of local arts and cultural groups and outline a process for selecting public art.

Examine strategies to strengthen appropriate areas of the Strategic Plan and Official Plan, during the next review period, to recognize the importance of arts and culture.

Arts and Cultural Mapping

Inventory all arts and cultural providers, programs, and services available in the Township with a view of promoting opportunities and addressing gaps. This process will help the Township identify potential partners, policies, and strategies to bolster the local arts and cultural sector.

Arts and Cultural Space

Engage local arts and cultural groups to explore opportunities to improve the use of existing municipal spaces.

In consultation with the arts and cultural community, the planning and design of parks and recreation facilities should consider the integration of appropriate arts and cultural infrastructure and amenities.

Greater Communication

Convene regular meetings with the arts and culture sector to identify and discuss issues, gaps, strategies, and solutions with a view of strengthening relationships and coordination.

Marketing and Promoting Arts and Culture

Explore strategies to enhance marketing and promotion of local arts and cultural opportunities in Zorra, such as improving online presence and cross-promotion among groups.

Undertake a Special Events and Festivals Strategy to establish the goals and objectives required to facilitate the longevity, quality, and vitality of special events and festivals in Zorra.

SERVICE DELIVERY RECOMMENDATIONS

Role of the Township

Adopt a mandate to guide the Recreation Department in providing high quality facilities, while supporting community partners.

Organizational Structure

Create a Recreation Facilities & Services Manager position to oversee all aspects of the Recreation Department.

Continuous Professional Development

Prepare a staff development and training plan, with consideration given to succession planning to preserve knowledge and expertise.

Programs and Activities

Either alone or in a partnership, explore opportunities to offer the parks, recreation, arts, and culture programs suggested by residents through this Master Plan on a trial basis to evaluate demand.

Pursuing Partnerships

Pursue potential partnership opportunities that align with the Department's mandate in order to reduce the reliance on municipal resources.

Volunteerism

Explore strategies to promote volunteer opportunities such as establishing a dedicated section on the Township's website, volunteer recruitment fair, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Funding Considerations

The following funding sources should be considered to assist with implementing the Master Plan's recommendations:

- Municipal Reserves
- Development Charges
- User Fees
- Fundraising / Partnerships
- Grants (as they become available)

Monitoring and Updating the Master Plan

Establish a system for regular implementation, monitoring, and review of the Master Plan, including the creation of an annual work plan.

Thank You