



Report

Rockmosa Park Master Plan

Prepared for Township of Guelph/Eramosa
by IBI Group in association with New Line Skate Park Inc.
Rockwood, Ontario
December 7, 2015



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**“To be an engaged community that works together to
provide active and healthy opportunities.”**

- Goal of Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2013

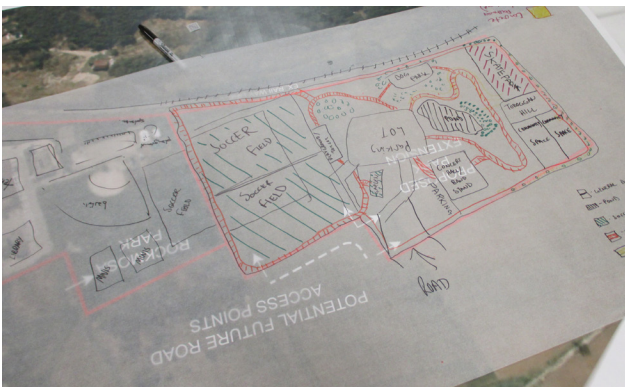
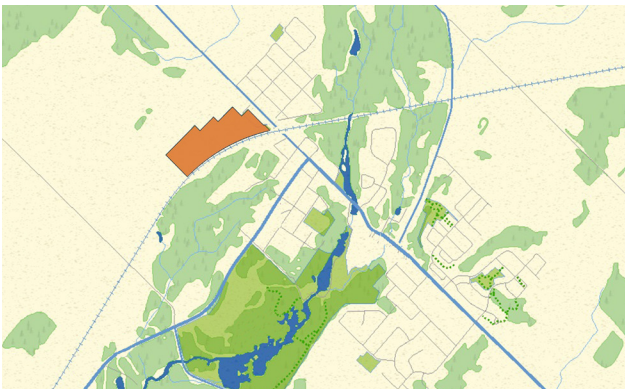


Introduction

A well-used park can greatly add to the quality of life in a community. For the Community of Rockwood, Rockmosa Park has been providing community parks services since the 1970's. Through the outstanding work of local service clubs, volunteers, community fundraising and municipal support, a diverse, well used and highly valued community centre and park complex has evolved. Rockmosa Park currently provides sport fields for soccer and baseball, a summer splash pad and covered pavilion, tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, an enabling garden and the Rockmosa Community Centre and Rockwood Library/Older Adult Centre with associated parking also located within the park. The outdoor spaces support a range of activities including minor and adult sports, community special events, dog walking, non-programmed recreation and outdoor fitness activities and a host of other typical community park activities.

Over the past several years the Township of Guelph/Eramosa has been investing in recreation infrastructure to meet the changing needs of its residents. The first step the Township took to improve their recreation assets and ensure those assets reflected the needs of the community, was the completion of a Parks and Recreation Master Plan ("PRMP") in 2013. The main

goal of the PRMP was to provide the Township with a community-based, creative, realistic and clear action plan to lead and sustain the future development of recreational infrastructure and services for ten years. The vision that emerged from this Master Plan was "...an engaged community that works together to provide active and healthy opportunities." Within the PRMP were sixty-five (65) individual recommendations for consideration when developing park and recreation assets. Based on these recommendations, the Township of Guelph/Eramosa recently purchased 21.4 acres of land adjacent to Rockmosa Park (85 Christie Street, Rockwood) to expand park amenities. In order to consider the long-term service delivery for the park, the Township decided that a Park Master Plan ("Master Plan") was needed to develop an overall park design for Rockmosa Park and the park expansion lands. Of the sixty-five recommendations there were a number of recommendations that spoke to the need for additional soccer fields, a covered community space for skating in the winter and court sports or events in the summer, a skatepark for local youth, an off leash dog park and winter sports including a toboggan hill. Notably, the design would have to be long term – factoring in a fulsome facility recognizing the financial reach of the



municipality and the reality that the design vision would be developed incrementally, over time.

The overall intent of the Master Plan was to develop a holistic approach to park design in order to guide future park capital works as funding becomes available. The Master Plan was intended to be a community-based plan for Rockwood primarily addressing “community-scale” facility needs as well as with some limited neighborhood type amenities as classified in the PRMP. The Master Plan process included four (4) phases:

1. Review of background documents and site analysis;
2. Consultation with focus groups and the public,
3. Preparation of three design options; and
4. Refinement of a preferred concept.

This process involved technical and document reviews, trends analysis, a community survey and MindMixer on-line engagement tool, interviews with Council and municipal staff, public meetings, financial assessments and related perspectives. Through the process, several design options were put forward to the community and one preferred concept was selected for refinement.

The formulation of a Master Plan represents an overall conceptual plan that will be refined through a detailed design process as capital funds or grants are available to construct various park components and amenities. The implementation of the Master Plan is meant to be phased over a number of years and may require updating should the development window for the park exceed 10 years. The Master Plan includes a supporting implementation plan to allow for long-term planning and create individual projects over an extended period of time that collectively work toward achieving the long term vision identified for Rockmosa Park.

Following the background review and early in the process a preliminary program for the park was confirmed through site analysis and public consultation. The following amenities were determined the most important to include in future Rockmosa Park:

- Walking trails;
- Multi-purpose/soccer fields (5 soccer fields are needed to provide an adequate service level to the

community, including 2 lit and irrigated full sized fields, 1 intermediate field and 2 mini fields);

- Skateboard park;
- Covered community space with ice pad;
- Additional parking to accommodate more users;
- Dog park;
- Toboggan hill for winter activity;
- Destination playground;
- Outdoor fitness equipment;
- Tennis hitting wall;
- Seating areas;
- Tot lot; and
- Lots of shade trees.

Three park design concepts were developed to incorporate as many of these items as practical given physical space constraints and one concept was selected by the community, Council and interest groups for further refinement. The final Master Plan includes these elements and has arranged them functionally in consideration of site conditions, geographic orientations and pedestrian circulation throughout the site.

Through consultation, there were a few instances that community members requested a large-scale recreation facility with a pool and/or arena. As part of the Master Plan process, the feasibility of this request was reviewed. Firstly, the request was reviewed in the context of the PRMP recommendations which is the guiding document for park and recreation service delivery in the Township. The PRMP reviewed the feasibility of an arena and pool separately and recommended that given the combination of regionally available facilities and the high cost of construction and operation of such municipal facilities, the development of a pool and/or arena was not recommended at the current time. The PRMP however suggested that should a mutually beneficial partnership opportunity arise for such facilities, the Township may want to consider low-risk participation. Similar to the approach taken in the PRMP, it is the recommendation of this Master Plan that should a partnership opportunity arise in the future for either of these two facilities, the Master Plan should be revisited to consider options to accommodate such uses. To this end, the Master Plan contains opportunity and flexibility

within it to place these uses in the park in the future.

As an alternative solution to a large-scale recreation facility and at the recommendation of the PRMP, the feasibility of a covered community space was reviewed through this Master Plan process. The intention of the space would be similar to the Puslich Optimist Recreation Centre as a flexible multi-use covered hard surface space, whereby in the summer the space could house community activities such as a farmer's market, concerts, ball hockey, etc., and in the winter it could accommodate recreational skating and hockey. In principle, it was determined that a covered community space could conceivably be accommodated in the Township's Recreation Budget and it suited the overall vision for Rockmosa Park.

The following sections summarize the process that led to the development of the preferred Master Plan concept and associated implementation strategy and has been divided into the following primary sections:

Planning Process – describes the Master Plan process, the public engagement methods employed, a summary of the feedback received from the community and Township Council and how this was considered in establishing the preferred Master Plan concept.

Vision and Guiding Principles – outlines the community's vision for Rockmosa Park as being a community destination including the principles of site development.

Design Brief – describes the design context of each amenity associated with the preferred Master Plan.

Implementation Strategy – defines a list of project initiatives to be implemented over a development horizon.

Planning Process



Splash Pad - Rockmosa Park
Rockwood, ON



The fundamental approach to the Master Plan consisted of a highly consultative, community-based effort that involved the public in a brainstorming, creative design and decision-making process.

Firstly, the consulting team reviewed background documents to ensure any future park development was aligned with the goals, objectives and principles already established by Township Council through previous planning documents.

Secondly, a trends analysis was completed to ensure the future needs of the community would be addressed through any facility component recommended through the Master Plan. Fundamentally, the trends identified in the PRMP were reviewed and considered throughout the design process.

Thirdly, with a conceptual list of facilities and amenities in hand the project team undertook an extensive process of public consultation to confirm desired facility and amenity components and associated priorities. This process consisted of an on-line “MindMixer” survey, a participant-driven design-based public information meeting, and a working session with all members of Council.

Fourthly, derivative of the above, three schematic designs were prepared including all of the amenities identified as a priority for the park. As noted previously, it is important to understand the given the spatial requirements of each facility and amenity not every facility and amenity was included within each schematic design.

Fifthly, the schematic designs were returned for public input consisting of on-line “MindMixer” survey input, direct outreach from the Township to user groups and interested individuals, a second public open house and a second working meeting with all members of Council. Residents, user groups and Council were asked to rank each schematic design based on preference and offer comments for revisions and improvements.

Finally, one preferred design concept was created.

1.1. Document Review

1.1.1. Township of Guelph/Eramosa Parks and Recreation Master Plan 2013

In 2013, the Township adopted the PRMP, which provides the Township with a creative, realistic and clear action plan to lead development of future parks and recreational infrastructure and services through 2022.

The objectives for the Master Plan, include the following:

- Creating a 'vision' for the delivery of parks and recreation that is aligned with the diversity of the Township's community;
- Establishing 10 year capital priorities for the construction of indoor/outdoor recreation facilities and the development of associated programs and services;
- Infusing the principles of sustainability, accessibility, and integration into the development and delivery of services and programs;
- Assessing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges facing the municipality's parks and recreation system;
- Enhancing community cooperation and partnerships in the planning and delivery of services and programs;
- Reviewing recreational services available to seniors in the Township;
- Promoting healthy living and increased physical activity among all age groups and segments of the community; and
- Enhancing the overall community quality of life and place of the Township.

The Plan also sets out several recommendations applicable to the expansion of Rockmosa Park, as set out below:

Recommendation 32: To meet recreational skating and ball hockey demand, the Township may evaluate the need for an outdoor covered rink (refrigerated; similar to the one at the Puslinch Optimist Recreation Centre) at Rockmosa Park in the long-term.



Recommendation 36: Pursue the development of a perimeter walking trail around the expanded Rockmosa Park.

Recommendation 41: Provide a total of 2 full-size soccer fields (including one lit artificial turf field) and 4 mini intermediate soccer fields at Rockmosa Park (made possible through park expansion) to meet current demand. There may also be a need for a shelter/storage/washroom building to serve the new fields.

Recommendation 42: Discourage the use of Valentino Park for soccer due to neighbourhood impacts. Usage should be moved to the additional mini fields proposed for Rockmosa Park.

Recommendation 49: Work with local organizations to pursue the development of a 'skate park' at Rockmosa Park for Guelph/Eramosa youth. The facility should be designed with input from local youth skateboarders and should consider accommodating trick cycling as well as skateboarding.

Recommendation 52: Seek a suitable partner organization and site for the development of an off-leash dog park.

Recommendation 53: Work with community groups to pursue the creation of a pilot community garden project.

Recommendation 54: Develop a business plan to define the capital cost, operating cost, and revenue/potential market for winter downhill toboggan/tube facility at an expanded Rockmosa Park.

Recommendation 59: Maintain a commitment to

accessibility, safety, and security within the Township's parks and trails system.

For the Rockmosa Park Master Plan the recommendations above formed a solid foundation to guide the future park development. These recommendations were reviewed consistently through the design and consultation process as the emerging plan was developed.

1.1.2. Official Plan Amendment No. 88 – Application OP-2012-04

In 2012, the Township of Guelph/Eramosa submitted an application (OP-2012-04) to the County of Wellington to amend the Official Plan to support the expansion of Rockmosa Park through changes to land use designations within Rockwood and modifications to the northern boundary of the community. In general the purpose of the Official Plan Amendment was to expand the existing recreational areas of Rockwood. In order to provide land for community infrastructure, designated residential lands that were considered marginal in terms of development potential were redesignated to institutional and a corresponding amount of new, more viable residential development land was designated.

Included in the background report for the application, was conceptual information for the proposed residential lands. For the purposes of the Master Plan, the residential subdivision plan was used as a guide for the location and configuration of future roads and other potential municipal infrastructure connections. Notably no formal Plan of Subdivision application has yet been submitted. Once submitted, this will need to be reviewed to confirm infrastructure availability.

1.1.3. County of Wellington Official Plan

The County Official Plan ("County OP") sets out broad policy direction for growth and development in the Township and sets out a policy framework to promote healthy and active communities within the County. The County OP also promotes the provision of trails and the facilitation of pedestrian and non-motorized movement to meet the needs of the community.

The Rockwood Urban Centre, where Rockmosa Park is situated, is identified as an 'Urban Centre' in the County OP. Urban Centres are expected to provide a full range of land use opportunities (e.g. residential, commercial, industrial, and recreational), and are required to provide adequate parks and open space areas to serve their population and may provide recreational opportunities for a larger regional population.

The County OP also sets out specific land use designations for the Rockmosa Park property. Both the current and expanded park properties are designated 'Recreational' pursuant to Schedule A3-1 of the County OP. These lands are intended to be used for passive and active recreational purposes, and may be used for: private and public parks, playing fields, playgrounds, arenas, community centres, fairgrounds, picnic areas, curling clubs, lawn bowling greens, hiking/trails, golf courses and other recreational uses and facilities.

The Official Plan also directs that Recreational areas should be used to meet the following objectives:

- To provide a wide variety of recreational opportunities for the residents of the community;
- To recognize and maintain the natural areas and rivers as unique natural features and important community resources;
- To co-operate with the appropriate Conservation Authority, local service clubs and other public and private agencies in providing and/or enhancing recreational and cultural facilities for the community;
- To obtain land suitable for parkland development; and
- To improve access to public open spaces wherever appropriate.

1.1.4. County of Wellington Active Transportation Master Plan

In 2012 the County of Wellington, in association with the seven local municipalities, developed and adopted an Active Transportation Master Plan (“ATMP”) for the County. The ATMP sets out a long-term strategy to create a pedestrian and cycling supportive environment in Wellington County.

The ATMP encourages both utilitarian and recreational travel by walking and cycling and promotes the importance of active lifestyles for residents and tourists. It is intended to assist the County and lower tier municipalities with meeting their planning and transportation objectives in the future. The ATMP also provides guidance to County and lower tier Councils with respect to active transportation measures as future transportation infrastructure improvements are considered.

Of note, the ATMP includes an implementation strategy to guide the County in improving active transportation infrastructure over the short (1-10 years), medium (11-20) and long-term (beyond 20 years). Similar to the project team’s consideration of features and facilities for Rockmosa Park, the ATMP sets out a number of goals for the expansion of the County’s Multi-Use Trail network

from its existing 93 km network length by a further 13.3 km in the short-term, 43.4 km in the medium-term, and 10.2 km in the long-term. While there were no specific recommendations or plans associated with Rockmosa Park, other expansion lands or other Township parks, the Master Plan process for Rockmosa Park nonetheless provides timely opportunities to further the stated intention of the ATMP to extend multi-use trail facilities and opportunities.



1.2. Site Inventory and Analysis

1.2.1. Community Overview

The Township of Guelph/Eramosa is a lower-tier municipality located in the County of Wellington. Rockmosa Park is located in the Rockwood Urban Centre, which is the largest settlement area in the Township.

The Township is made up of several vibrant settlement areas, including Rockwood, Everton, Ariss, and Eden Mills, as well as extensive rural, natural heritage and agricultural areas. The Township is also home to over 81 kilometres of trails, 11 municipal parks, 2 conservation areas, and many annual festivals and events.

The 2011 Census indicated that the population of the Township was approximately 12,380 persons, with approximately 3,870 people living in the Rockwood Urban Centre alone. The County OP projects that the Township will grow to a population of 15,290 by the year 2013, with the Rockwood Urban Centre accommodating the majority of this growth where the population is expected to grow to 6,150 or approximately 60%.

The 2011 Census data also indicates the Township's median age is 43.2 years, with 62% of the population being 35 and older. Older adults (55+) comprise over 30% of the population. It is also noted that the Township is aging as a whole, as the median age of Township residents was reported in the 2001 Census as 38.6 years.

1.2.2. Description of Subject Lands and Adjacent Features

Rockmosa Park is located in the Rockwood Urban Centre in the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, north of the Metrolinx Corridor and accessible via Christie St., which has two entrances off of Main St. North.

The existing park contains a baseball diamond, a full size soccer field, two half-sized soccer fields, three tennis courts, a basketball court, a splash-pad, a community centre building, and associated parking spaces. There is also a local library branch located north of the tennis courts, which shares parking with the park facilities.

There is a proposed subdivision north of the Rockmosa Park property and west of Main Street. The proposed development may include approximately 214 homes, both single-detached and townhomes. The main access to these homes will be via Christie St. and a proposed road to the north with connection to Main. St. N.

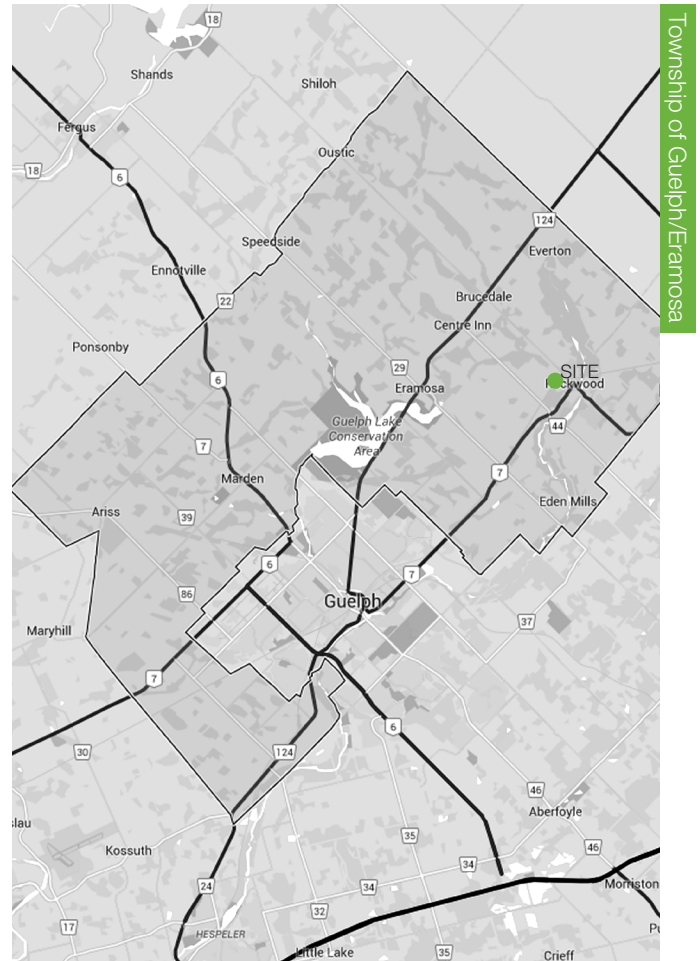
Surrounding land uses are primarily residential to the east and south with some limited commercial, institutional and industrial uses in close proximity.

1.2.3. Site Analysis

Rockmosa Park has been operational since 1977 and since then a number of features and amenities have been added to increase service delivery for the park. When visiting Rockmosa Park for the first time, it is difficult to discern you are entering a park. Currently Christie Street travels through the park and connects back to Main Street North. Parking, vehicular circulation and pedestrian circulation occurs in a relatively undefined manner and it appears this condition could result in potential conflicts between people and cars. Currently there are three general active areas in the park, which include: (1) Rockwood Library and the tennis courts, (2) Rockmosa Community Centre and (3) the splash pad, playground, pavilion baseball diamond and soccer fields. A key consideration for the Master Plan was to organize these areas more efficiently and formalize pedestrian and vehicular circulation in accordance with current principles of good urban design.

The Township recently purchased 21.4 acres of land to the west of the existing Rockmosa Park. This land is currently dedicated to active agricultural practices. Given this use, the land is characteristically flat in nature and currently tile drained. The flat nature of the park lends itself well to creating sport fields and accessible trails.

In terms of municipal servicing, water, sanitary and stormwater services are provided along Christie Street and are available throughout the park. There are two hydro-electric corridors that exist in the park, one is located along the rail line the other travels along the existing west edge of Rockmosa Park. Through design, it will be important to ensure these lines are protected and accommodated.





1.3. Community Consultation

As the Guelph/Eramosa PRMP states, the vision is “to be an engaged community that works together to provide active and healthy living opportunities.” The Township has put an emphasis on ensuring the Master Plan for Rockmosa Park is rooted in the needs and aspirations of the community. The public consultation program for the Master Plan ensured that user groups and residents in general were well informed and able to participate in meaningful decision-making, resulting in community buy-in for the final design.

The Rockmosa Park Master Plan comprehensive community consultation program was designed to:

- Understand the community’s perceptions of their current facilities;
- Assess resident’s future needs and aspirations;
- Identify and prioritize opportunities and constraints;
- Identity and confirm design options and programming needs;
- Foster community engagement in and ownership of the emerging master plan.

For the Rockmosa Park Master Plan, one of the keys to the successful public consultation was to ensure that consultation was meaningful for those who decided to participate and diverse enough for the range of skills and experiences in the community. Various methods of communication with members of the public were used throughout the process as follows:

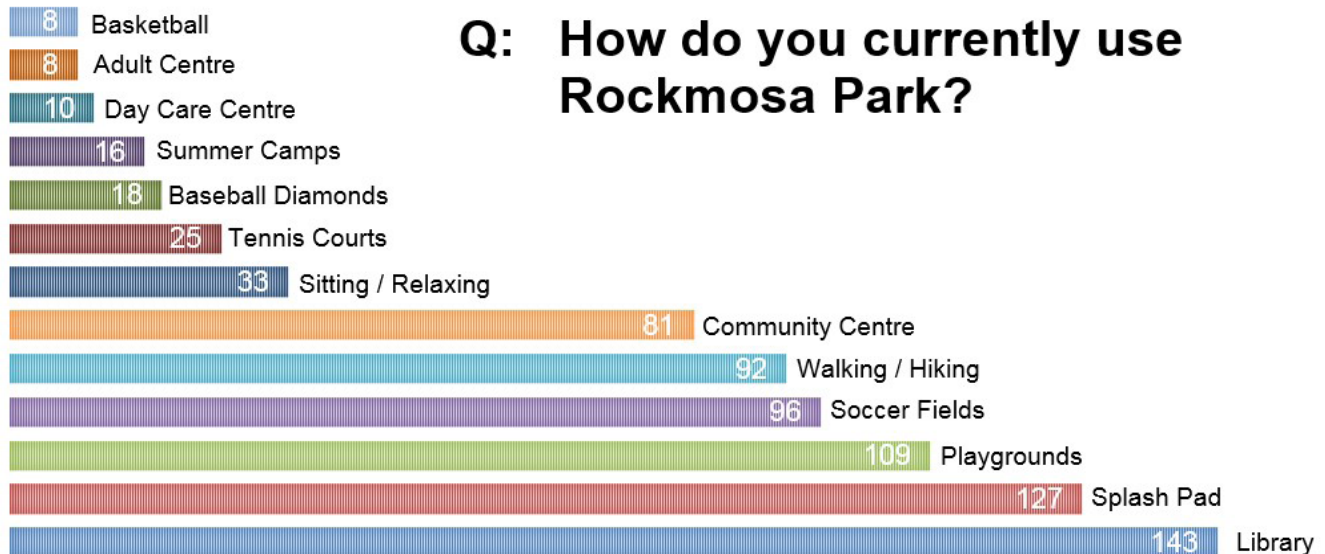
Advertisement

- Five (5) large 4’x5’ signs erected in the existing Rockmosa Park;
- Advertisement cards mailed to all homes in Rockwood;
- One (1) full page spread printed in the community recreation guide;
- Advertisement on the Township’s website;
- Social media advertisement through Twitter and Facebook.
- Media releases printed in the two local newspapers

Opportunities for Community Input

- MindMixer public engagement software (survey and comment pages);
- Community workshop open to general public and community groups;
- Option to provide written comments directly to Park and Recreation Department;
- Public open house;
- MindMixer public engagement software (review of design options and ranking).

The following subsections summarize the methodology and results of the community consultation program.



1.3.1. MindMixer Public Engagement (Project Initiation)

An online “MindMixer” survey was posted on the Township website seeking public input on a long-range expansion plan for Rockmosa Park. The MindMixer engagement tool was used to solicit information in the form of a survey, as well as an open forum for the community to express their visions, programming needs and overall objectives for the project. The online tool was used from August 15th, 2015 to October 9th, 2015. Throughout this time, several different discussion topics were posted on a regular basis for the community to provide input.

The first topic posted on MindMixer was a community survey which was composed of several multiple choice questions, as well as a few free response questions soliciting feedback on the current state of Rockmosa Park, future vision for the park and goals and objectives for the park. In total 215 surveys were completed, 180 of which were completed by residents of Rockwood. Bearing in mind the size of the community this is considered to be a high response rate.

The survey indicated that the majority of respondents who use the park travel there using a personal vehicle, while a lesser number walk or bike to the park. The library, splash pad, playground and soccer fields were the most widely used facilities by respondents, while

the basketball courts, adult centre, day care centre and summer camps were the least frequently used.

Common concerns raised about the existing park focused primarily on the poor condition and availability of parking on the property, limited access to the tennis facilities, condition of and access to concessions and washrooms, and the availability and frequency of winter activities in the park.

The survey also raised questions about the design of the park, prodding respondents to consider the most important values or guiding principles for the redesign of the park and what amenities/facilities should be included in the park. Respondents commonly identified the following guiding values: family-friendly, fun, active, safe, and flexible.

In response to questions asking about the types of amenities and facilities should be included in the Rockmosa Park expansion, the most commonly reported answers were additional walking/bike trails, seating areas, an outdoor ice surface, a dog park, a skatepark, a toboggan hill and an outdoor fitness area. As a result of these responses, it was determined that these are the priority facilities for Rockmosa Park .

Following the survey discussion, questions were posted for the community to discuss. These topics included:

- What active and passive activities should the park

1.3.3. Public Design Charette

On September 23, 2015 a Public Design Charette was hosted by the Township of Guelph/Eramosa and IBI Group staff. An estimated 48 members of the public were in attendance, along with Councillor Mark Bouwmeester (Ward 4) and Mayor Chris White. From a public meeting standpoint, the number of residents in attendance was reflective of a strong turnout.

Attendees of the Design Charette participated in two table activities to facilitate discussion and gather ideas on the possible development of Rockmosa Park. The first activity divided the attendees into table groupings of approximately six to ten people, and provided them with the opportunity to discuss what facilities they would like to see in the future park. Through this activity, a number of commonly desired facilities were identified by different groups, including: a skateboard park, a dog-park, walking trails, natural play areas, covered outdoor rinks, toboggan hills, and new or improved soccer fields.

Building off of the first activity, the second activity introduced financial considerations and limitations and questioned whether the groups would still proceed with the same plan, and how they might phase their plan (if necessary) given the financial constraints associated with the cost of the various facilities vis a vis available budget. Soccer fields, dog parks and walking trails remained as primarily desired amenities, while many

groups removed more expensive facilities (such as the covered outdoor rinks) from their list of desired facilities, or directed that these facilities should be pursued in later phases of the park development.

Following the table exercises, each attendee was invited to identify their preferred five amenities to potentially be included in the redesigned Rockmosa Park. Participants could identify different amenities or vote for the same amenity several times. A summary of this activity is provided as follows .

Item	Total Votes
Soccer Fields	49
Skateboard Park	45
Walking Trails	24
Off Leash Dog Park	20
Covered Community Space	19
Naturalized Areas and Wildlife Habitat	9
Seating Areas	9
Community Garden	8
Destination Playground	6
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	6
Picnic Area	5
Event Space/Performance Space	5
Toboggan Hill	5
Tot Lot	2
Beach Volleyball	0



1.3.4. Public Open House

Following the public design charrette and the completion of the initial MindMixer survey and discussion topics, three (3) design concepts were presented for public input. A Public Open House was held in the Older Adult Centre located in Rockwood Library on November 17th, 2015 from 5:30 to 8:30pm. An estimated twenty-three (23) participants attended this open house. The format of the open house was the presentation of the three concepts on boards for community input. Members of Council, Township staff and the project team were there to answer any questions related to the concepts.

A number of comments were received verbally as well as through written comment forms. Some discussion surrounding the size of the dog park, the toboggan hill, accessibility and a running track were recorded.

Overall Option 3 was supported more than the other two concepts. Seven participants liked Option 1, no participants like Option 2 and thirteen participants liked Option 3.

1.3.5. Presentation to Council

On November 18th, 2015 the project team met a second time with Council to review the three (3) design concepts. A presentation describing the project to date, the findings of the community consultation as well as a walk-through of all three concepts was provided to Council. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit input on the direction for a preferred Master Plan.

All three concepts were generally well received by Council with Option 3 being tentatively selected for refinement. Its selection was contingent on continued support from the community for Option 3. At this meeting, there were a number of items noted for improvement or further consideration, including:

- Parking configuration and availability of parking adjacent to the community centre;
- Access from the proposed subdivision;
- Covered community space and pool and/or arena;
- Incorporating natural features into the park;
- Potential for incorporating an oval running track;
- Size of dog park;

- Orientation of 7v7 soccer fields and the enlargement of the 11v11 fields;
- Phasing and funding.

Subsequently, modifications to the plan were made to address the specific comments and related issues. A refined concept was presented to council at the December 7th, 2015 Council meeting for adoption.

1.3.6. MindMixer Public Engagement (Selecting a Preferred Concept)

On November 9th, 2015 the three conceptual plans were uploaded to the MindMixer project website for voting and comment. Ninety-nine participants voted on the three options and provided comment. Sixty-seven (67) participants voted for Option 3; twenty-three (23) participants voted for Option 1; and nine (9) participants voted for Option 2.

As a result of this consultation, the public open house and Council direction, Option 3 was selected for final refinement. Comments from the community consultation were addressed in a number of modifications, resulting in the preferred concept.





1.4. Trend Analysis

1.4.1. Age and Population

Ontario is experiencing an aging population, with 32% of its residents being of the 'boomer' era and now moving into their 60s and 70s. Age influences the types of activities that people partake in, and expectations about the use of parks and other engagements.

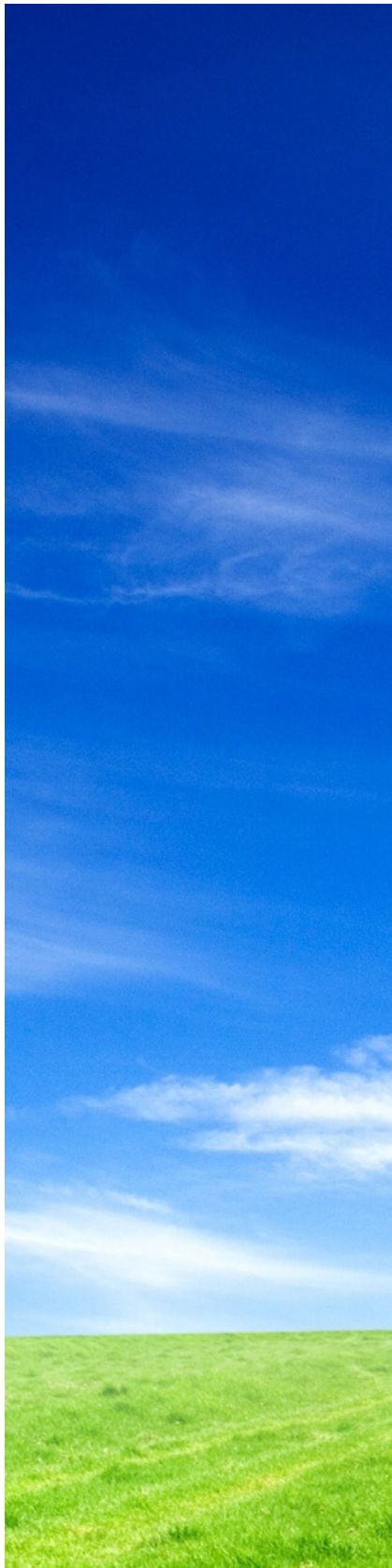
Coupled with the aging population, is a general trend towards a decrease in the quantum of school-aged children in communities outside of the GTA, as evidenced by the significant number of school closures. For Rockwood however, it is expected that where there will be an increase in the average age of the population, the nature of recent and proposed new residential development, the proximity to Guelph and the desire for an enhanced family experience in a rural setting, will likely result in growth of the school-aged population in terms of absolute numbers. Accordingly we expect that there will be a continued need for both seniors and youth oriented programs.



1.4.2. Accessibility

Participation in recreation for persons with disabilities can be inhibited by barriers such as physical, attitudinal, communicational and policy. The AODA Customer Service Standards provides policies, practices and procedures to ensure persons with disabilities are respected and allows participation. The Township has developed its own Accessible Customer Service Policy while also training its staff, volunteers, and election workers. An accessible communications policy and overall accessibility policy have also been created by the Township.

The Master Plan was created to ensure that through the conceptual and detailed design process accessibility will need to be at the forefront of decisions.



1.4.3. Changing Face of Canadian Culture

Canada attracts 280,000 to 300,000 new immigrants a year, mostly from the Middle East, Far East, Africa and South America. Many choose to settle in major urban centers such as Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. Within Guelph/Eramosa Township only 14% of the population is made up of immigrants. Therefore, it can be anticipated that most residents will for the most part, seek traditional recreation programs and services. Through the Master Plan process, it was important to review program facilities from a cultural perspective, but as noted above a traditional approach was predominantly considered.

1.4.4. Environment

There is a shifting priority towards environmental considerations in today's society, especially amongst youth and younger generations. Global warming, water quality, preservation of woodlots/forest cover, recycling, green building and similar themes are increasingly being invested in and practiced by Canadians. Environmentally-friendly design and operation of parks is strongly encourage. Integrating energy efficiency and water conservation measures into proposed facilities and park design can positively contribute to the larger greening of the community.

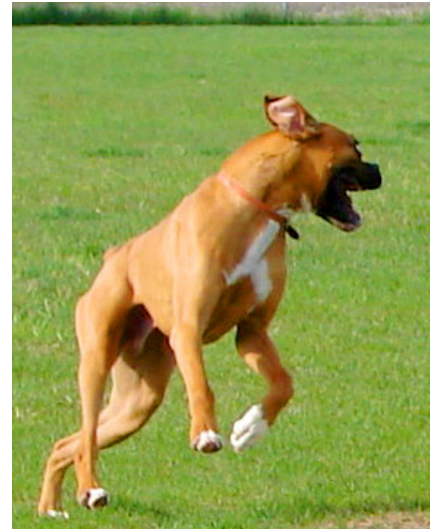
Natural environments provide benefits to both quality of life and improved activities. The Rockwood Conservation Area, located approximately one kilometer away from Rockmose Park, offers a naturalized space for local residents and visitors with numerous related activities, such as canoeing/kayaking, camping, fishing and swimming. It will be important to consider the natural environment in the Master Plan process, and this can be completed through the detailed design process in the design of stormwater management, the use of sustainable technologies and creation and preservation of habitat. Native planting species should be considered where appropriate.

1.4.5. Recreation Facilities

Recreation and leisure activities can improve quality of life through both physical activity and social relations. Developing opportunities and incentives for exercise has the potential to reduce physical inactivity and obesity rates, especially in children and youth. The following trends related to recreation facilities and activities were identified:

- Centralizing facilities and amenities creates stronger destination locations and increases efficiency in terms of their operating costs;
- Emphasizing multi-use and multi-partner facilities extends services and share costs, while appealing to everyone in the community. These parks are often designed to be flexible with the possibility of expansion in event of changing trends and demands;
- There is increasing emphasis on non-traditional and non-structured activities. Self-scheduled, unorganized activities show the strongest potential. Related activities include: hiking, bird watching, casual cycling, ultimate frisbee, rugby, dog walking, outdoor ice skating, etc.;
- Studies have found that proximity to trails have a positive impact on the value of homes. Furthermore, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention found that 26.5% more people exercise more than three times per week when access to parks is increased. Walking for leisure was identified as the most popular activity in most communities, including Guelph/Eramosa;
- Participation in soccer is growing rapidly at both youth and adult levels primarily due to its high exposure, low costs, and high fitness value. Over one million people in Canada have registered to play soccer making it the most registered national sport;
- Fitness and health are becoming more prevalent themes in people's lives. In recent years there's been an increase in people attending fitness centres or partaking in self-directed fitness activities;
- Skateboarding has become a popular activity, especially for youth. These parks allow skateboarders to use a specialized area to develop skills away from streets and public places;
- Tennis popularity has declined in the last decade, with no anticipated growth in Canada;
- Large recreation facilities such as pools and arenas have become increasingly expensive due to new standards and consumer expectations;

Through the Master Plan process, these trends will be considered in the creation of a comprehensive plan.



2 Vision Guiding and Principles





In developing any plan, it is important to have a strong foundation. A foundation is often developed around a number of key elements that are determined through inventory, analysis and public engagement. For this project, these elements include an overall vision and guiding principles. With these in place, the development of a plan, priorities, and implementation details can occur.

The Rockmosa Park Master Plan is intended to be a conceptual blueprint to guide future, more detailed work and addresses the following:

- Responding to the emerging residential neighborhood around the Park;
- Creating a park-like experience and quality destination;
- Addressing the PRMP recommendations and evolving park trends; and
- Integrating new needs and interests of the community into the park.

Through public consultation a number of themes emerged as important to the community, these included:

Healthy Living	Family Friendly
Active & Fun	Financially Feasible
Sustainable	Accessible

It is understood that the newly expanded park must:

- Encourage healthy and active lifestyles;
- Strengthen the community through community partnerships;
- Embrace and create a unique place;
- Be family friendly, accessible, safe, secure, active and sustainable;
- Manage expectations of the community and make a plan that is financially feasible.

Rockmosa Park should incorporate elements of a destination park while also fulfilling some of the needs of a neighborhood park. Creating a park-like experience with a variety of places to walk, sit, relax and gather should be incorporated amongst the programmed active features of the park.







From the preceding research, analysis and community input process a preferred Master Plan concept emerged to guide future projects in Rockmosa Park. The intent of the Master Plan is to create a functional plan that the community supports and that will guide capital investment over the next several years. As projects are completed, as the community evolves and as recreation trends and interests change, the Master Plan may need to be revisited and updated. In this regard we encourage Council, Township staff and the community to view this Master Plan as a living document, reflective of a particular moment in time, with the flexibility to adapt for the future.

The following Design Brief describes the context of the preferred concept. The main focus of the Design Brief is to outline the uses being proposed and the criteria to be considered in detailed design.

The existing park consists of a baseball diamond, a full size soccer field, two half-sized soccer fields, three tennis courts, a basketball court, a splash-pad, a community centre building, and associated parking spaces. There is also a local library branch located north of the tennis courts, which shares parking with the park. For the Rockmosa Master Plan it was determined that all of these facilities would remain, with the exception of the basketball court.

Prior to developing three different concepts for

community review, a program for the park was determined through site analysis, background review and public consultation. The following amenities were determined the most important to include in future Rockmosa Park:

- Walking trails;
- Soccer fields (5 soccer fields are needed to provide an adequate service level to the community, including 2 lit and irrigated full sized fields, 1 intermediate field and 2 mini fields);
- Skateboard park;
- Covered community space;
- Additional parking to accommodate more users;
- Dog park;
- Toboggan hill for winter activity;
- Destination playground;
- Outdoor fitness equipment;
- Beach volley ball courts;
- Tennis hitting wall;
- Seating areas;
- Tot lot; and
- Lots of shade trees.

Three concepts were developed to incorporate most of these items as space permitted. In a few instances it was difficult to fit all of the facilities and some items were substituted in different options.

Option 1



Option 2



Option 3



*Refer to Appendix B for Detail

Insert
Master Plan
(11x17)

3.1. Program Elements

3.1.1. Existing Facilities

There are a number of great recreation features existing in Rockmosa Park that remain in the Master Plan including: the Rockwood Library, an enabling garden, the tennis courts, the Rockmosa Community Centre, the early years centre, a splash pad, playground, baseball diamond, batting cage, washroom facility and covered pavilion. As identified through public consultation, pedestrian circulation around these elements and the park experience can be improved in the existing Rockmosa Park. As part of the Master Plan, the entrance to the park will be improved through the addition of a bicycle/pedestrian trail that leads from Main Street North into the park, supplemented with many trees, green space and benches. An entrance feature into the park can also be considered in the future to better advertise the park's location. It is proposed that Christie Street be resurfaced and parking be reconfigured to make pedestrian circulation safer. The parking spaces in front of Rockmosa Community Centre will be redesigned with accessible parallel parking. This change will green the park and provide for some seating along the edge of the tennis courts. In addition, curbs and gutters will be used to update the park and formalize parking. Originally there were 140 parking spaces in the Community Centre vicinity whereas the proposed plan increases parking to 157 spaces utilizing the same space. These changes will make a tremendous improvement to the aesthetics in the existing park and improve the park-like experience as you enter the park.





3.1.2. Multi-Purpose Fields

As per the PRMP, a need for additional mini and full-sized soccer fields was identified for the Township. Soccer remains a popular sport among youth and adults due to its international appeal and low cost fitness benefits. Other needs identified with the soccer fields in Guelph/Eramosa include lighting and maintenance, such as irrigation. Lighting extends the playing time available on a field and correspondingly increases maintenance costs as a result of that additional usage. After reviewing the PRMP and consulting with local soccer groups, five fields were determined as sufficient for Rockmosa Park current and future needs and would allow for potential tournament play. The proposed Master Plan includes two full sized (11 v 11) soccer fields to be lit and irrigated. These full size soccer fields can also accommodate two mini fields or an intermediate field inside each. In addition, the fields could be programmed for other field sports including; football, lacrosse, field hockey and others. Adjacent to these full size fields are two mini fields (7 v 7) and an intermediate field (9 v 9). Each field will be complete with nets, player and spectator benches. A central washroom facility is also proposed that will also meet the long-term needs of park visitors in addition to those associated with soccer.



3.1.3. Dog Park

Guelph/Eramosa Township does not currently have an off-leash dog park. Benefits of these parks include the opportunity for both dogs and their owners to socialize and exercise. Through the community consultation process there was consistent strong interest and desire expressed for such a facility. The proposed off-leash dog park should be located in the north-west corner of the park with access and parking from the future road. It is suggested that the park introduce shade trees, which should be protected from the dogs with fencing. The park will be approximately 2.4 acres in size and be surrounded by 1.5m high chain link fence to separate the space from the remainder of the park. The future dog park may include user signs, dog wash station, concrete entrance way, waste receptacle and double gate enclosure.





3.1.4. Toboggan Hill

One notable concern raised in the PRMP was the lack of available winter activities. A solution for this has been to propose a toboggan hill as a component of the future park development. Design considerations should include a smooth transition slope at the top and bottom of hill for riders to safely mount and dismount. The tobogganing slope should also face north to reduce sun exposure which causes snow melt and the creation of ice and prevent prevailing winds from blowing directly at sledders. The remaining sides of the hill should be naturalized to deter access and promote safe, visible sledding. The Master Plan suggests the space to the south of the dog park would be best suited for a toboggan hill. In order to promote safety, the toboggan hill should be signed with rules for safe sledding and the potential risks associated with the activity. In the future, it will be important to light the hill for use after school or work as it is very dark by 5pm in the winter.

The toboggan hill can also provide opportunity for programming in the summer months. Along the front slope of the hill there are opportunities to program the space for performance with theatre-like seating. It will be important to have an electrical hook-up to accommodate this use.

3.1.5. Trail and Outdoor Fitness Equipment

Through the community engagement process, trails were another amenity that were consistently recognized as an important resource to the community. The proposed Master Plan proposes a 3m wide pathway totalling 1.8km in length, substantially located at the perimeter of the park. A perimeter paved surface would allow for walking, running, biking and rollerblading throughout the park. The inclusion of strategically placed benches is necessary to allow for people to rest, relax and enjoy the park. Fitness equipment stations are also proposed along the trail which would also promote fitness among residents of all ages to be utilized as someone moves through the space. It is envisioned the 3m wide trail will have painted lane markings to accommodate pedestrian and cycling uses. The long term intention is that the trail will be lit for increased safety at night.

One section of the trail accommodates the community request for a track like measured surface. This part of the trail will be signed with metre markers at regular intervals for users to determine distances as they train.





3.1.6. Covered Community Space

In response to the community input with respect to an ice surface, a covered community space was determined an acceptable alternative. The proposed covered community space would be designed to function similarly to the Puslich Optimist Club Rink, but would be designed to look like a large decorative pavilion.

The proposed covered community space would offer many programming opportunities for the Township through all seasons. In the winter, the space would host a large ice rink to accommodate hockey, recreational skating and other programmed activities. During the remainder of the year the space could accommodate a farmer's market, ball hockey, pickleball, basketball or other court sports. The covered space would also accommodate change room facilities. The space would be flexible to serve the future needs of the community and can be programmed for large events. The suggested structure size would be approximately 34m by 80m.



3.1.7. Skate Park

Another preferred amenity consistently identified through the community consultation process was the addition of a skateboard park. With input from youth and the community the suggested location for the park is in the south east corner providing 465m² (5000ft²) of space. The location would provide easy access and natural surveillance. Specific elements of the skateboard park will be determined through public consultation in the detail design phase.



3.1.8. Destination Playground & Tot Lot

The proposed playground is situated in close proximity and within walking distance to the future residential subdivision located to the north of the park and adjacent to the multi-purpose fields. The playground would serve the needs of local residents and visitors. Elements of the destination playground will be determined in the detail design process however in general, it is envisioned that the playground would be bigger than the existing playground in Rockmosa Park, offer an experience for a broader age range of children and offer a different level of play. The design of the future playground will be fully accessible and allow for integrated play for all ages and abilities.

In order to accommodate, younger children, a need for a tot lot was identified through community consultation. Since the existing splash pad is used primarily by younger children, it is being proposed adjacent to that space.





3.1.9. Parking & Vehicular Circulation

In order to accommodate the new facilities in the park, additional parking has been proposed in the Master Plan. 275 spaces have been added to the north property line adjacent to the future subdivision. It is currently proposed that this parking would be accessed from the adjacent future road, however it can be redesigned to be accessed from existing park facilities should the future road location change. A separate, 40 space parking lot is also proposed to accommodate the proposed dog park, which will also be accessed from the future road. Parking has been consolidated in one main area to reduce conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians. The design of future parking should consider bioswales for stormwater management, screening parking with vegetation to diminish the visual appearance of hard asphalt and should incorporate vegetative islands to break up asphalt into smaller sections.



3.1.10. Lighting

As a longer term project, it is proposed that the park will include a variety of different lighting types. For the two large multi-purpose fields, sport field lighting is being recommended to extend playtimes and allow for additional programming. In addition, it is also recommended that the central trail loops be lit with pedestrian-scale lighting. Through the detailed design phase it will be important to ensure that lights are sensitively and efficiently integrated at strategic locations to maximize the visual experience of the park in a safe and controlled manner while at the same time minimizing light pollution.

3.1.11. Shade Trees & Naturalized Areas

The Master Plan is proposing a significant number of trees throughout the park to provide shade for park users. When implemented, the selection of tree species in Rockmosa Park will favour native varieties over non-natives and cultivars. In an effort to ensure that sustainable principles are being met, a few areas of naturalization have been incorporated into the Master Plan. These areas will be planted with native shrubs, forbes and grasses and will not be manicured or mown. Within the natural areas, there is opportunity for local groups to include special habitat creation projects, interpretative signage and further greening projects .



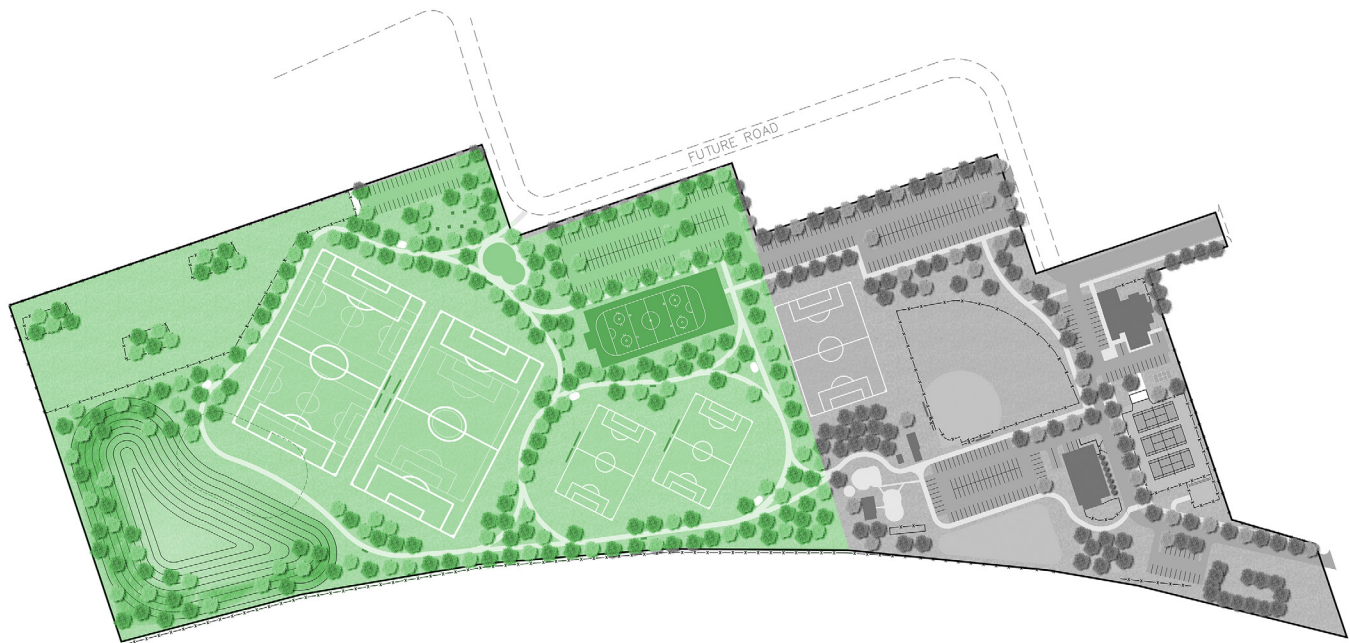
4

Phrasing and Implementation



The implementation plan has been structure to allow Council and staff to plan, fund and execute individual project initiatives over an extended period of time. The intent of the implementation plan is that the strategy is updated on a regular basis to reflect changing financial conditions and evolving community interests. As funding becomes available through capital dollars, fundraising or grants, it is anticipated that projects are completed. It is recommended that the implementation plan be review annually and updated every five years. Finally, understanding the rural nature and tax base for the Township of Guelph/Eramosa, it is important to pursue alternative funding avenues including, partnerships, fundraising, provincial/federal infrastructure funds and development charges.

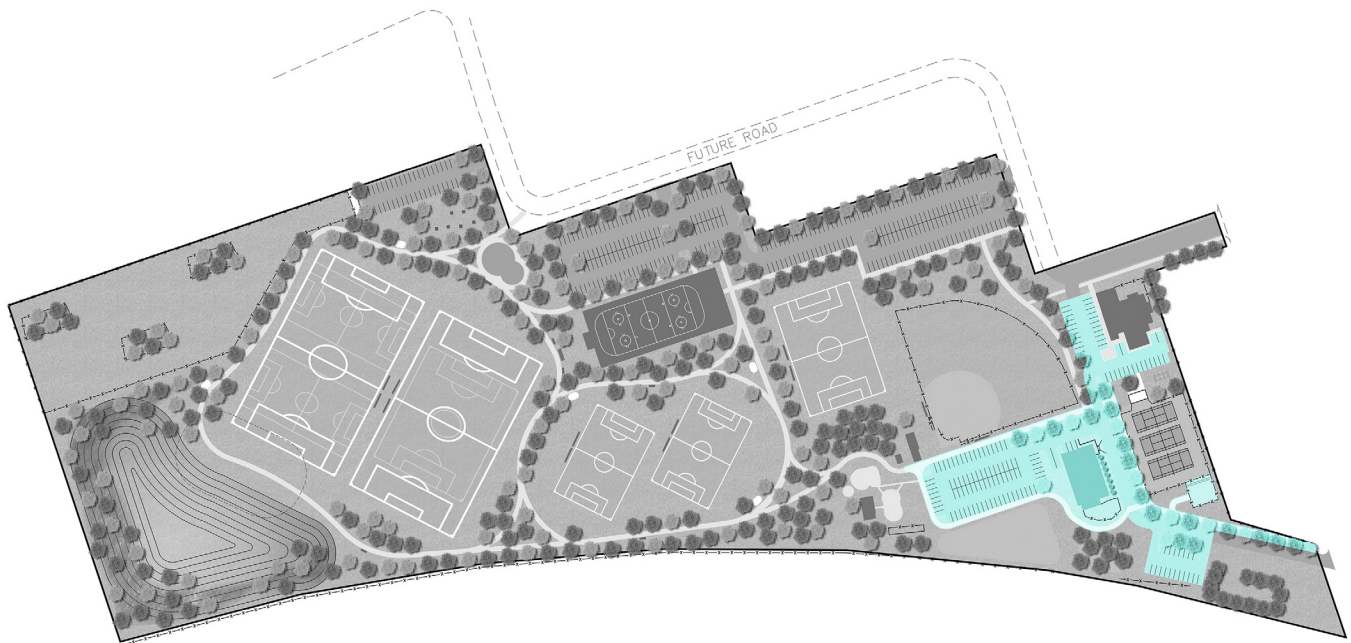
The project initiatives noted in this plan are high level and do not include every possible step required to complete each stage. In addition, the costing provided is draft and are subject to change based on detailed design. These are meant to be a high level estimation.



Project 1 – Grading, Servicing and Stormwater Management of Expansion Lands

- Conduct geotechnical investigation and prepare engineering plans;
- Install necessary services and conduit for future projects;
- Import competent fill as required to build toboggan hill;
- Rough grade park to necessary elevations including construction of multi-purpose fields, bioswales and appropriate drainage patterns in park;
- Install irrigation system for multi-purpose fields;
- Install player benches on multi-purpose fields;
- Topsoil and hydraseed park.

Estimated Cost: \$875,000



Project 2 – Resurfacing of Christie Street and Rockmosa Park Entrance

- Conduct geotechnical investigation and prepare engineering plans;
- Construction of entrance trail;
- Resurfacing of Christie Street complete with curb;
- Reconstruction of parking behind Rockmosa Community Centre, complete with curb and line painting;
- Construction of new parking area beside Rockmosa Community Centre,
- Correction of drainage issues around baseball diamond;
- Tree Planting.

Estimated Cost: \$410,000



Project 3 – Construction of the Skate Park

- Conduct geotechnical investigation and prepare engineering plans;
- Public consultation;
- Construction of Skate Park.

Estimated Cost: \$350,000



Project 4 – Construction of Main Trail

- Install asphalt trail complete with line painting,
- Install benches;
- Tree Planting.

Estimated Cost: \$150,000



Project 5 – Construction of Parking Lots

- Conduct geotechnical investigation and prepare engineering plans;
- Construction of parking lots along the future road, complete with curb and line painting;
- Construction of trails that lead to parking area;
- Improvements to existing soccerfield;
- Tree Planting.

Estimated Cost: \$450,000



Project 6 – Construction of Dog Park

- Installation of Dog Park Fencing;
- Construction of parking lot beside dog park, complete with curb and line painting;
- Tree Planting.

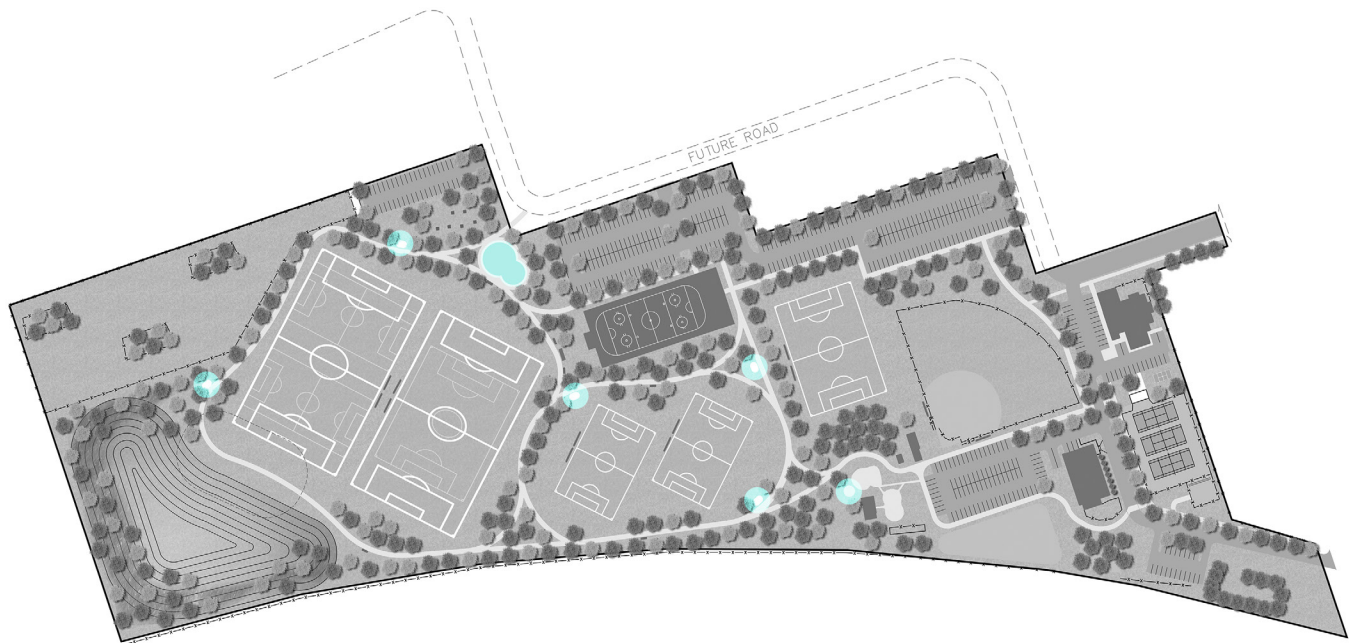
Estimated Cost: \$85,000



Project 7 – Covered Community

- Installation of covered community space, complete with washrooms;
- Installation of outdoor ice surface c/w chiller unit and boards (as separate project).

Estimated Cost: \$1.8 - 2.5 million



Project 8 – Destination Playground

- Installation of Destination Playground;
- Tree Planting.

Estimated Cost: \$125,000

Project 9 – Exercise Stations

- Installation of five exercise stations along the trail;
- Tree planting.

Estimated Cost: \$30,000

Project 10 – Tot Lot

- Installation of tot lot.

Estimated Cost: \$30,000



Project 11 – Sportsfield Lighting

- Installation of sportsfield lighting.

Estimated Cost: \$200,000



Project 12 – Toboggan Hill and Park Lighting

- Installation of park lighting.

Estimated Cost: \$100,000

Appendix A- Existing Conditions



Playground- Rockmosa Park
Rockwood, ON



Appendix B - Master Plan

A photograph of a pink flower with a dark red center in a field of green plants. The flower is in the foreground, slightly to the left of center. It has a dark red, spiky center and pink, pointed petals. The background is a dense field of green plants, some with yellow flowers, which are out of focus. The overall scene is a natural, outdoor setting.

Appendix C - Public Consultation