Joint Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA)

Final Report

July 2025

P1702-1449145603-106 (1.0)

Executive Summary

The Blue Mountains and Collingwood are highly desirable places to live. Both communities have experienced record growth over the past few years, outpacing most of the rest of Ontario and Canada. By 2033, the combined population of these communities will exceed 54,000 residents.[1] Even at the current population levels, existing recreational facilities are not meeting community needs. This is already well documented. The Town of Collingwood's 2019 *Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan* identified the need for additional recreational capacity and recommended a multi-use facility, potentially shared with The Blue Mountains (Recommendation #30).[2] The Blue Mountains' 2020 *Leisure Activities Plan* (updated 2021) identifies a multi-use facility as a long-term solution to meet mounting facility capacity issues.[3] Importantly, both reports reference opportunities to potentially partner with neighbouring communities in a shared facility; and, possibilities to integrate public library services, based on residents' feedback.

This alignment of needs and interests between two neighbouring communities created an opportunity for a shared exploration. In June 2024, the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood, alongside the Collingwood Public Library and Blue Mountains Public Library, initiated a Joint Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA). The mandate for this exploration was clear: listen to the public, learn from the experiences of other communities, and analyze options on a path forward. Colliers Project Leaders was engaged to support this work.

Through this process, residents in both communities expressed a clear, united and strong desire for a shared multi-use facility:

- Potential high users of the space including organized sports and community groups need the capacity that a new multi-use facility could offer, as they are already experiencing significant capacity issues with

[1] Based on the 2033 population estimates from the most recent Development Charges studies in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains (both completed by Hemson) which include population growth projections. It should be noted that this may be a conservative estimate, as both communities have well outpaced the projected population growth over the past few years.
[2] The Town of Collingwood, *A Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*, March 2019. Available online: https://www.collingwood.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/town_of_collingwood_final_prc_master_plan_march_2019_final.pdf
[3] The Town of the Blue Mountains, *2020 Leisure Activities Plan* (updated April 2021). Available online: https://www.thebluemountains.ca/sites/default/files/2021-12/Town%20of%20Blue%20Mountians%20-%20Leisure%20Activities%20Plan%202021%20-%20DEC%20-%20WEB.pdf

current facilities that will only intensify as the communities continue to grow;
- There is pent up demand for additional capacity (both expressed by residents and as documented in existing documents in both communities) in multiple amenity categories including aquatics, ice, indoor and outdoor courts and turf;
- A high level of awareness of and experience using multi-use facilities in other communities has established strong resident expectations for a multi-use facility in their community, which is consistent with resident perceptions of the recreation and wellness oriented lifestyle offered in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains; and
- Residents are excited about the opportunity to enjoy many different offerings in one facility (from accessing the library to going for a swim or taking a call), particularly for families where family members are engaged in different kinds of activities.

In sum, residents expressed a clear desire for a multi-use facility. Valued services like the library coupled with new recreational opportunities both meets community needs but also creates an exciting gathering space for the community. Residents communicated an openness a shared facility particularly if it enables the project to materialize faster, to a larger scale and more cost-efficiently than either municipality may be able to deliver on their own.

In addition to the views of residents, several other factors make a joint multi-use facility between Collingwood and The Blue Mountains an exciting possibility:

- A collaborative spirit and close geographic proximity, enabling a more efficient approach where the communities could create something of a more significant scale by working together;
- Well defined and similar capacity needs with a complimentary desire for a multi-use facility in their existing master plans, development charge studies and more, reflecting an existing strategic alignment between these communities at this moment in time;
- Population growth being concentrated along the municipal boundary and shared coastline of Georgian Bay, anticipating that increased population will also increase need and demand for recreational capacity; and
- The catchment area served by existing recreation facilities already spills beyond municipal borders, establishing norms where current facilities already serve residents in other municipalities.

The benchmarking data from other facilities includes a precedent of shared multi-use recreation facilities between municipal partners. Multi-use facilities involve significant capital and operating costs, and sharing these costs across partners can be a strategy to distribute the financial resources required. This process involved some outreach to neighbouring municipalities, many of which are also quickly growing communities. This report recommends ongoing outreach to neighbouring municipalities should there be interest in adding an additional municipal partner to the project.

Choosing to build a new multi-use recreation facility, and the choice to do so with a partner, is a major decision. This report presents data to help inform this decision: existing data from master plans and studies; public input through the consultation process; data on multi-use facilities in other communities; and recommendations about amenities, governance models, sources of financing and location selection.

This report recommends *proceeding to the next step* by committing to working as partners towards a new joint multi-use recreation and library facility, empowering an inter-organizational team to lead the work ahead, and proceeding to a detailed business case.

The key recommendations emerging from this MURFA study are:

1. **That the Councils of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood commit to working together towards a new joint multi-use recreation facility;**

2. **That the Councils of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood, together with the Library Boards of the Collingwood Public Library and Blue Mountains Public Library, direct their respective Administrations to develop a shared Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this project, which would include the following matters:**

    a. **Membership and terms of reference to empower a joint staff-level MURFA Committee for the project, which would be responsible for jointly making recommendations to both Councils;**
    b. **How decisions will be made by the MURFA Committee;**
    c. **How costs will be shared between organizations for project planning activities; and**
    d. **Information sharing protocols related to real estate holdings, long-term financial plans, facility condition assessments and procurement processes.**

3. **That the joint multi-use recreation facility project progress to the next stage of developing a detailed business case, including:**
    a. **The definition of a target capital budget for the project;**
    b. **Further exploration of operating and governance models;**
    c. **Determination of capital requirements;**
    d. **Development of an operating proforma based on anticipated revenue and expenses;**
    e. **Preliminary outreach to potential facility partners (owners, operators, and/or tenants);**
    f. **Development of a facility functional program, preliminary concept design and Class "D" costing;**
    g. **Analysis and decision on facility location;**
    h. **Review and analysis of possible construction methods (design build, design bid build, construction management, integrated project delivery, P3, others); and**
    i. **Preliminary grant funding scan for additional support.**

4. **That the MURFA Committee responsibilities include the following:**

    a. **Formal outreach to neighbouring municipalities with an invitation to partner in the process and project;**
    b. **Scoping the business case, including a ranked order of preferred facility amenities and recommending an upset limit budget for project, for approval of both Councils;**
    c. **Joint review and analysis of municipal lands and properties as potential facility sites, creating a short list of preferred site options;**
    d. **Serving as the principal point of contact for all business case development activities, including guiding an outreach process to potential facility partners of the business case;**
    e. **Jointly leading any future public consultation or engagement efforts at key decision points in the process;**
    f. **At the conclusion of the business case process, making a joint recommendation to both Councils on a preferred option and operating model emerging from the business case; and**
    g. **Serving as the principle point of contact to coordinate future procurement processes, should the Councils decide to ultimately proceed with a new joint multi-use recreation facility.**

Table of Contents

Background 7
Scope of Work 7
Community Context 9
Existing Landscape: Strategic Direction & Facilities 14
Established Capacity Gaps 18
What We Heard 24
Approach to Community Consultation 24
What We Heard: Theme #1 29
What We Heard: Theme #2 37
What We Heard: Theme #3 46
What We Heard: Theme #4 50
What We Heard: Theme #5 53
Lessons from Other Communities 56
Comparator Facilities for Benchmarking 57
Comparative Analysis 83
Comparator Case: Operating Pro Forma 85
Options for the Future 87
Prioritizing Amenities 88
Location Criteria 90
Sources of Funding and Anticipated Cost 93
Consideration of Governance Models 97
Recommendations 98
Appendices 106

Background

Scope of Work

In June 2024, the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood, together with the Collingwood Public Library and Blue Mountains Public Library, initiated a Joint Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA). This process focused on exploring community interest in and need for a potential multi-use recreation facility. The scope of work includes:

- Understand market and existing conditions
- Understand user needs
- Facility benchmarking
- Location analysis
- Explore financing options
- Explore governance models

The mandate was clear: start with listening to the public and learn from the experiences of other communities. Hearing from the public was identified as an important step at this phase, aiming to build a clear sense of what the public would like to see in a potential multi-use space. A team from Colliers Project Leaders was engaged to support this work.

Importantly, this was not a project where the end state was already known. The joint nature of this exploration, co-led by two municipalities in partnership with two separate library boards, was an innovative approach rooted in a shared desire to explore a multi-use facility.

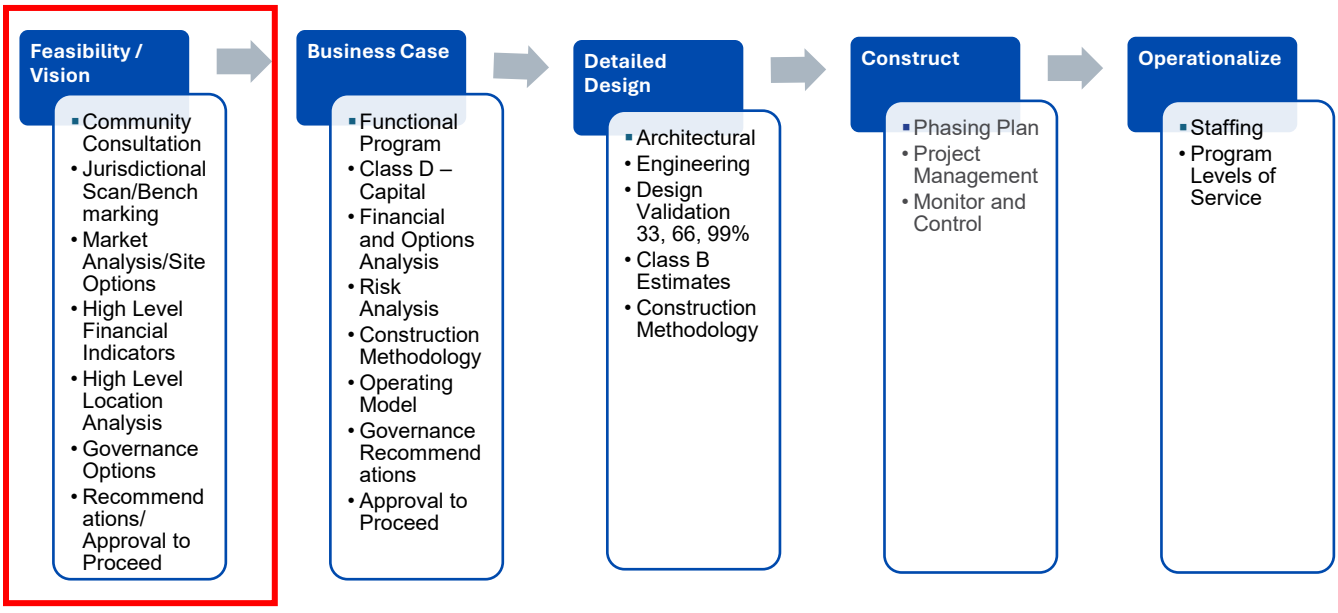
However, it was made clear that the efficiency of a joint MURFA study did not imply that a joint facility would need to emerge from the process. The consulting team was instructed to explore all possible options including joint or separate facilities, including initial outreach to determine if other area municipalities in the South Georgian Bay Region shared an interest in the project. It was also important to listen to residents in each community independently from one another: ensuring survey results could be sorted by municipality; building a presence at events in both communities. This approach enables learning from each community on their own as well as an ability to compare perspectives from residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains to see where they align, where they differ, and whether their general interests were similar.

This report captures what was learned through this process. The report is organized into four substantive sections:

- **What We Heard** – a summary of what residents shared through the community engagement process;
- **Learning From Other Communities** - an examination of what can be learned from multi-use facilities in comparable communities;
- **Options for the Future** – a high-level consideration of key options including amenities, location\, governance models, and financing possibilities; and,
- **Recommendations** – actionable next steps for the consideration of both municipalities and library boards emerging from this process.

It is important to note that this is the start of a process, not the end. Should either or both municipalities decide to proceed with a multi-use recreation facility, the process generally moves from a high-level feasibility and vision (this current stage, as noted by the red box in the image below) into a business case; then, with approval, into detailed design work where architects and engineers are engaged in facility design; then, into construction and operationalization.

Figure 1: Typical Lifecycle of a project



Community Context

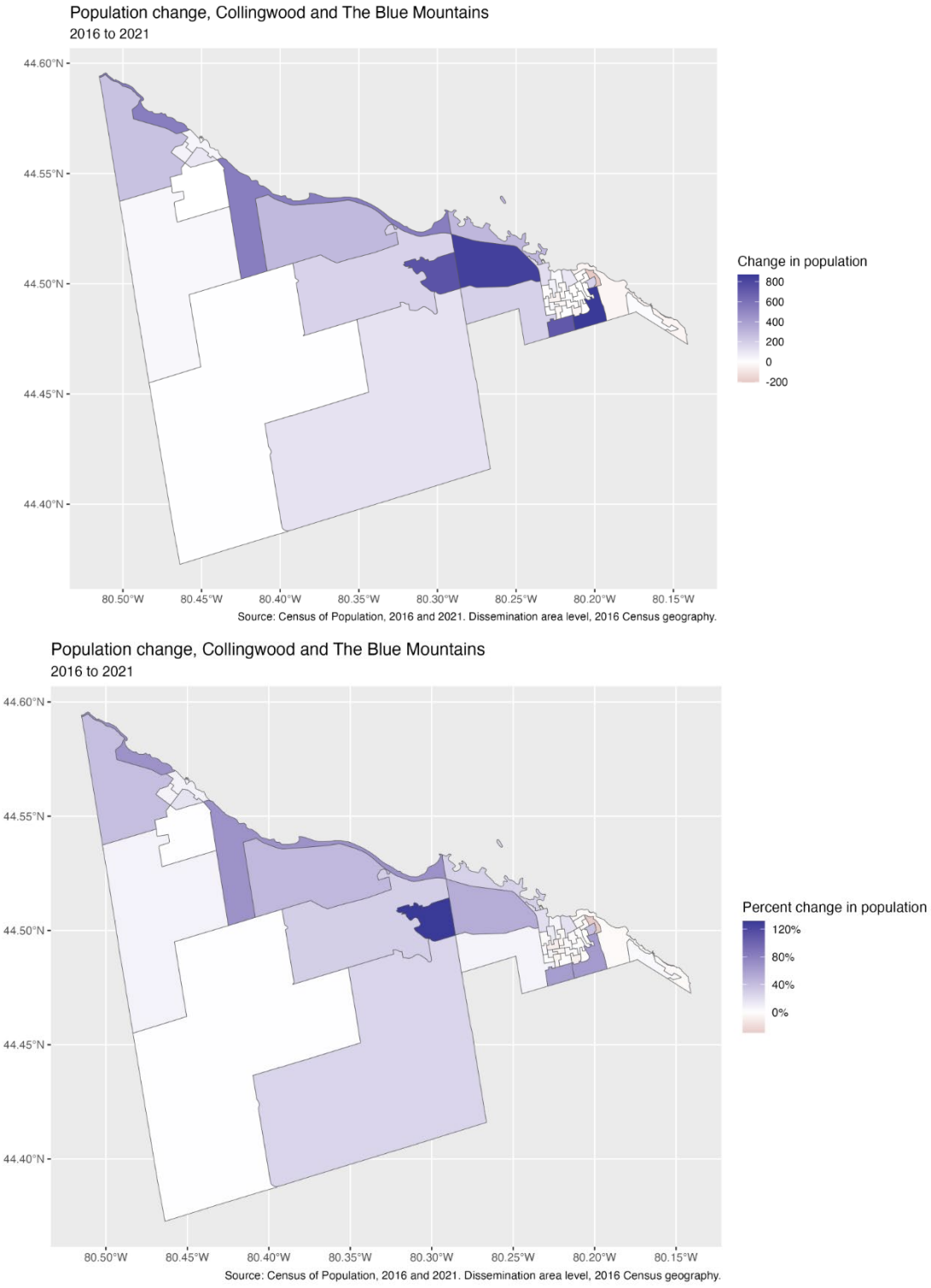
Collingwood and The Blue Mountains are special parts of Ontario. For millennia, these lands have been stewarded by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples as the traditional lands of the Anishinabek, Haudenosaunee, and Wendat-Wyandot-Wyandotte peoples. This land is part of the Lake Simcoe-Nottawasaga Treaty, or Treaty 18, which was made between the Chippewa near Lake Simcoe (the current Chippewa of Rama First Nation, Chippewas of Beausoleil First Nation, and the Chippewas of Georgina Island) and the colonial government of Upper Canada in 1818.

Today, Collingwood and The Blue Mountains are highly desirable places to live, visit and enjoy. The two municipalities neighbour along the coastline of the beautiful southern shores of Georgian Bay within the broader Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve. Both communities are widely known as four-season recreational communities offering a wide range of landscapes and natural amenities loved by residents and visitors alike. As communities within a three-hour drive from the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area, they are popular tourist destinations for those seeking an active lifestyle. From award-winning spas to popular ski villages to historic downtown streets and a growing mix of cultural and business offerings, it is no wonder that Collingwood and The Blue Mountains have become such popular communities. For residents, the range of recreational and cultural offerings as well as well-loved amenities such as public library, gallery, archive and museum services, as well as key municipal facilities are distinguishing features of life in the communities within The Blue Mountains and Collingwood.

The 2021 census reported Collingwood's enumerated population at 24,811 residents, representing 13.8% growth since the 2016 census (an increase of 3,018 residents). The average growth for the same period was 5.8% across Ontario, and 5.2% across Canada. As of 2021, Collingwood is the 71st largest municipality in Ontario and 181st in Canada. By 2033, Collingwood's population is expected to reach 32,226 residents.[4]

[4] There are varying estimates of Collingwood's future population. The 2024 Development Charges Background Study, completed by Hemson in 2023, estimates Collingwood's 2033 population to be 31,716 residents. This number has been updated in Collingwood's community profile, presumably reflecting a change based on outpacing growth even in the first year, with the forecasted 2033 population listed as 32,226 residents. Either way, the Collingwood population is expected to continue to grow at a significant pace over the ne

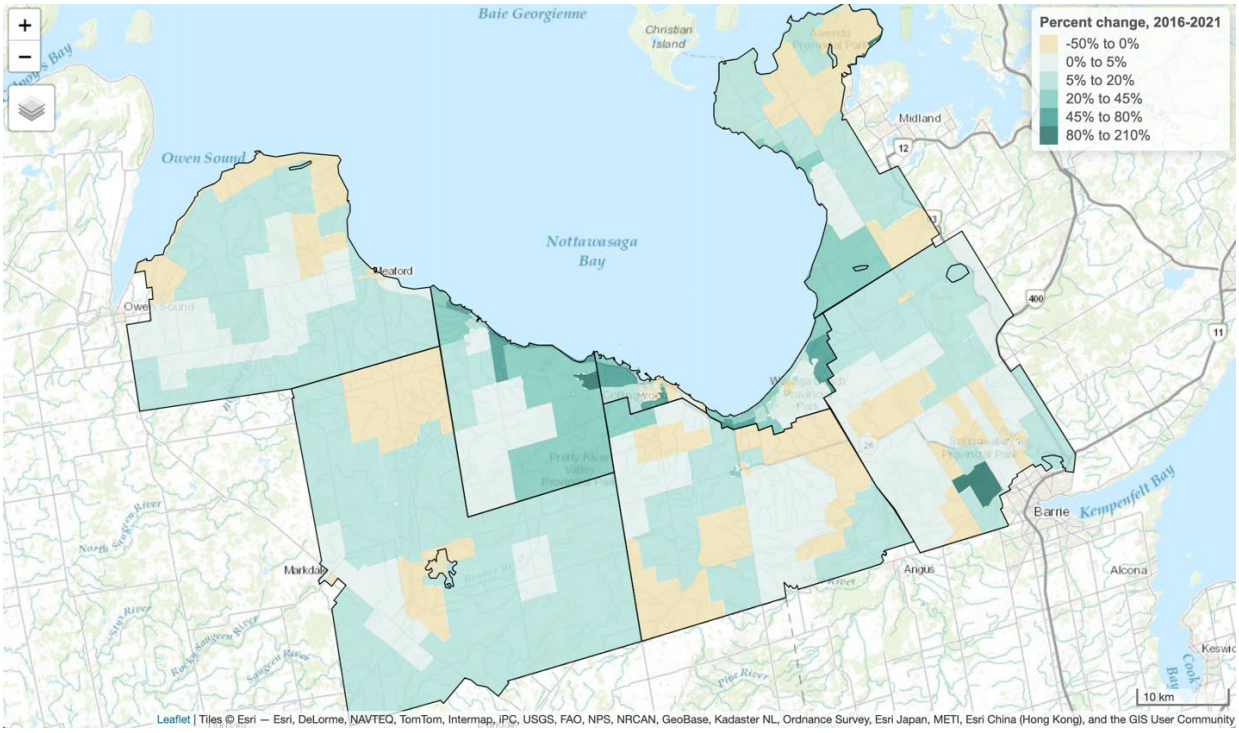
Figure 2: Population change, Collingwood and The Blue Mountains (2016-2021) – expressed in both total numbers (top map) and percentage change (bottom map)



The 2021 census reported the enumerated population of The Blue Mountains at 9,390 residents, representing a remarkable 33.7% growth since the 2016 census – making this community among the fastest growing in Ontario. As of 2021, The Blue Mountains is the 161st largest municipality in Ontario and 453rd in Canada. By 2033, the population of The Town of the Blue Mountains is expected to reach 21,909 residents.[5]

As captured in **Figure 2**, this population growth has been concentrated in specific parts of both communities. In a larger geographic context, as captured in **Figure 3**, the region is overall experiencing high growth with some parts of Collingwood and The Blue Mountains in the highest categories of growth even relative to the region.

Figure 3: Population change, communities south of Georgian Bay



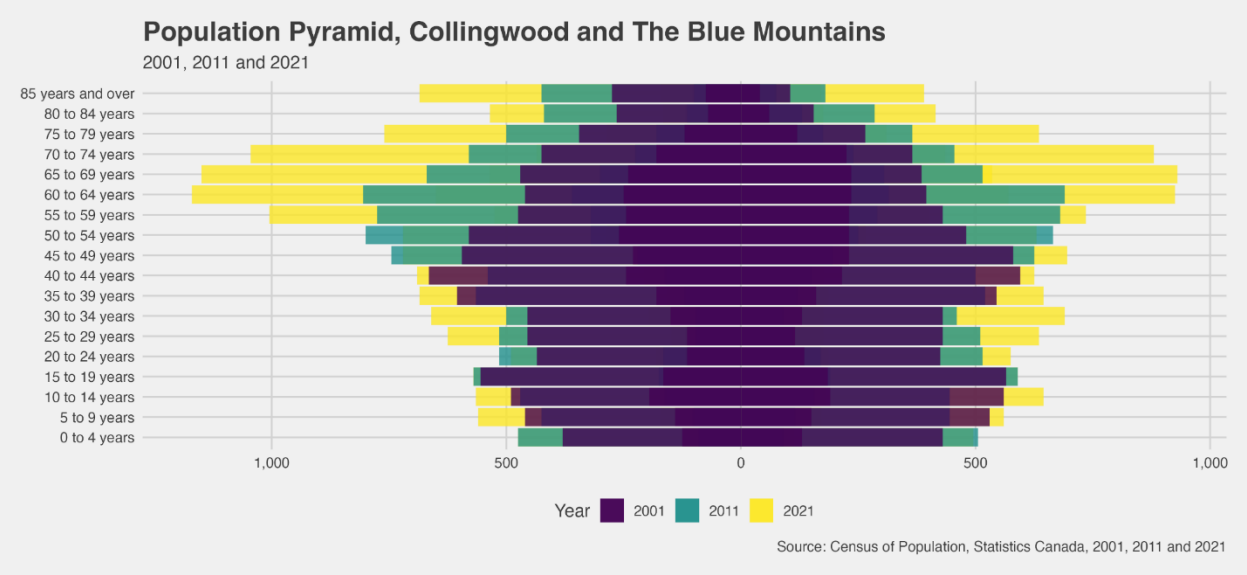
In comparison to the overall population of Ontario and Canada, the communities of Collingwood and The Blue Mountains share some important characteristics: the population tends to be older and with a higher-than-average percentage of Canadian-born residents. Median income levels in The Blue Mountains are higher than the Ontario and Canadian average.

[5] Based on the Development Charges Background Study for the Town of the Blue Mountains, completed by Hemson in 2023.

2021 Census	Collingwood	The Blue Mountains	Ontario	Canada
% Population Age 0-14 (2021)	13.3%	9.9%	15.8%	16.3%
% Population Age 65+ (2021)	30.0%	34.2%	18.5%	19.0%
% Immigrant Population (2021)	13.2%	13.1%	30.0%	23.0%
Median After-Tax Income (2020)	$72,500	$86,000	$79,500	$69,000

In terms of population age, **Figure 4** captures how Collingwood and The Blue Mountains communities have changed over time in terms of age distribution. The bottom (x-axis) is the number of enumerated residents in each age group as of 2001 (purple), 2011 (green) and 2021 (yellow), with women on the left and men on the right. The chart captures a particular trend where living in the Collingwood and Blue Mountains communities has greatly appealed to retirees (with a boom from age 60 upwards) and particularly for women.

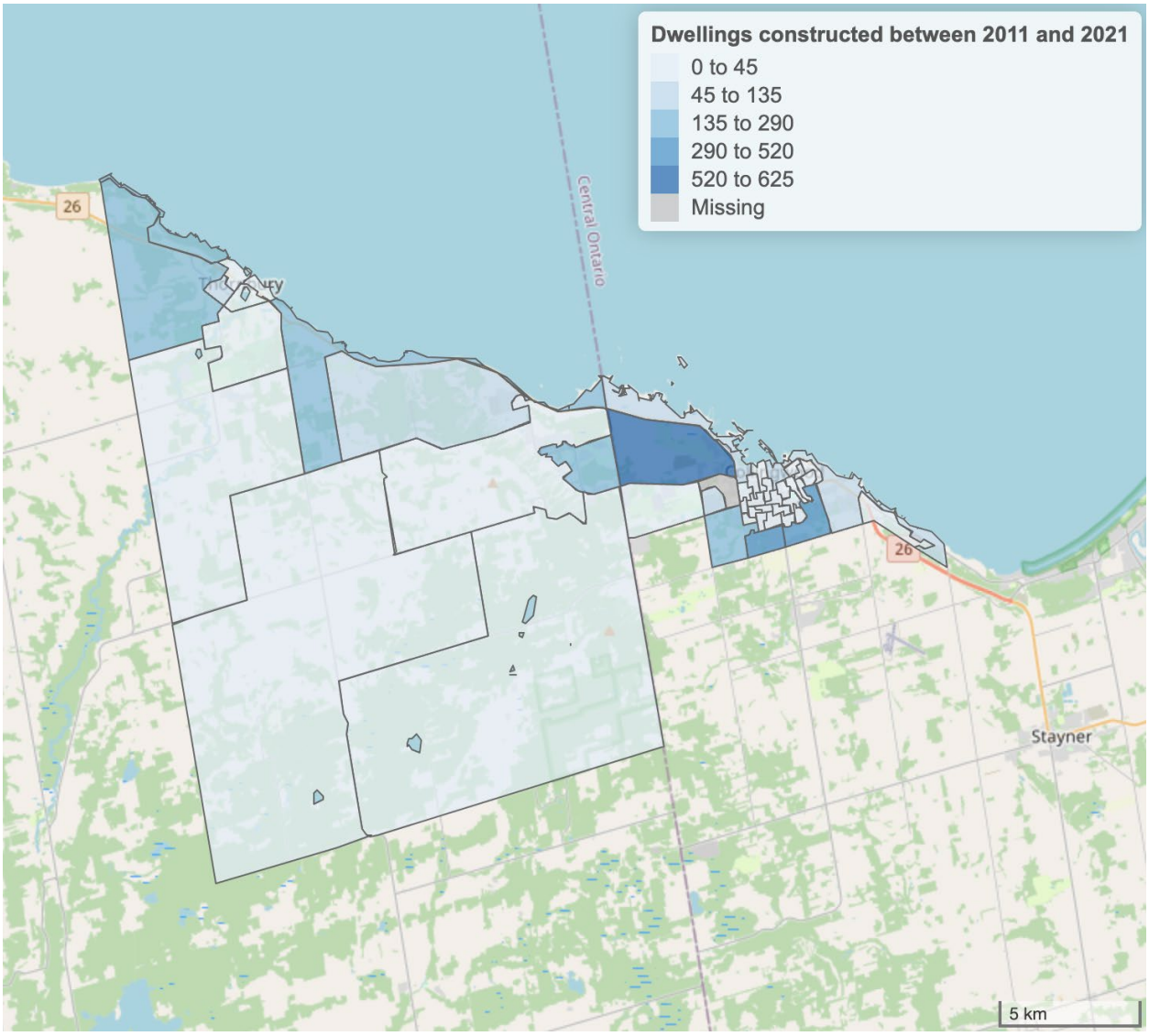
Figure 4: Population pyramid, Collingwood and The Blue Mountains (2001-2021)



Where has this population growth occurred? This population growth has not been evenly distributed. **Figure 5** presents the location of new dwellings constructed between 2011 to 2021, once again demonstrating the concentration of growth in particular parts of both communities.

A number of notable changes have occurred since the 2021 census – particularly in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. First, housing prices across Ontario and Canada have risen by significant levels, particularly in larger urban centres. Second, the increase of work from home (WFH) arrangements – including hybrid work and more flexible hours of work – have changed the life realities for working aged adults, particularly in specific sectors. Third, immigration levels have risen in Canada bringing many new people to communities across the country. The current (2024) immigration levels of 500,000 per year coming to Canada is among the highest rates in the world. This is expected to decrease moving forward (planned to drop to 365,000 by 2027) but still represents an important source of population growth in Canadian communities. Finally, the aging population is ushering in a retirement wave where seniors and older adults are shifting their lives and work, sometimes with new opportunities to enjoy recreational and lifestyle amenities.

Figure 5: Dwellings constructed between 2011 and 2021



All of this presents an interesting context for the Joint Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA). How can these neighboring communities best serve their residents in terms of recreational and library facilities? How are the interests and needs of residents changing, and what new needs or expectations might new residents be bringing to the community with them?

Existing Landscape: Strategic Direction & Facilities

Residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains are served by a mix of municipal and private or community facilities. Because of the close geographic proximity of the communities, it is well known that residents often travel between the communities (and well beyond, where needed) to access the facilities or programs they wish to enjoy. Understanding the existing landscape across the four partner organizations of the

MURFA process – including their existing strategic directions and the current mix of facilities – is an important foundation for this process.

There is already a strong strategic framework in place across all four partner organizations in the MURFA process to guide decision making – including about current and future facilities. As outlined below, these frameworks include several important areas of alignment related to facilities

Organization	Existing Strategic Framework
The Town of the Blue Mountains	• *2020-2024 Strategic Plan* which commits to consideration of a future multi-use recreational facility (Recommendation 4.7) • *2020 Leisure Activities Plan* (updated in April 2021), which identifies a need for a multi-use facility in both the staff and consultant recommendations. • Several other important policy developments including the *2024 Development Charges Background Study* which included an examination of current recreational and library amenities
The Town of Collingwood	• *Collingwood Community Based Strategic Plan (2024-2028)*, which includes a commitment to add recreational programming and facilities including exploring a multi-use recreational facility (Pillar 2, Goal 2) • 2019 *Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan* which identified a need for additional recreational capacity and recommended a multi-use facility. • Multiple other key strategic and policy documents including the new *2023 Official Plan* and the *2024 Development Charges Town-wide Background Study*

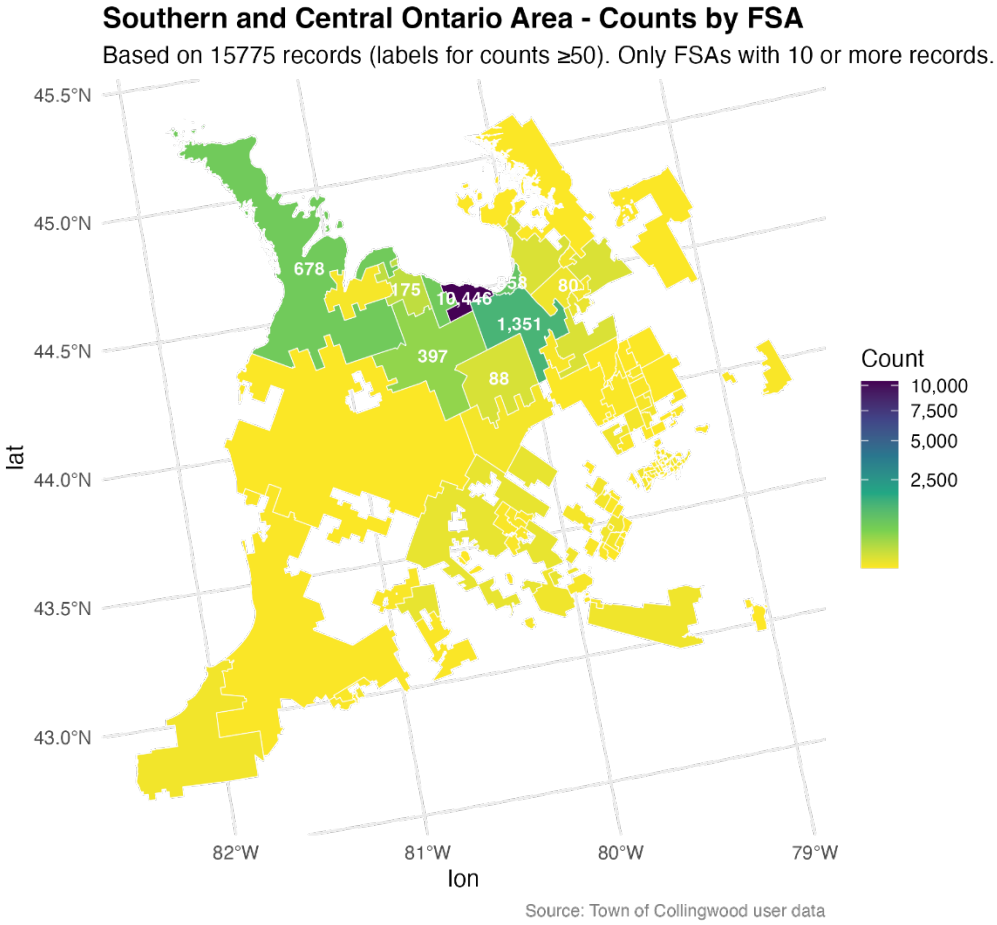
Blue Mountains Public Library	• *Blue Mountains Public Library 2022-2026 Strategic Plan*, which includes a commitment to multi-use spaces and building community hubs • *Gap Analysis and Building Program (2022)* which further identifies space needs to fill gaps in programs and services, with mention of a third branch to serve the growing needs of the East End of the municipality • *Blue Mountains Public Library Master Facilities Plan* (2019), which identifies that library space does not meet space standards for the Town's population forecast (short approximately 11k square feet) and several specific space-related recommendations
Collingwood Public Library	• *Collingwood Public Library 2025-2029 Strategic Plan*, which includes a strategic direction to explore opportunities for physical expansion • Other key strategic documents including the 2024 Development Charges Town-wide Background Study

Three of these four organizations include a direct reference and/or commitment to additional facility capacity through a multi-use facility. Although these commitments are future-framed and exploratory, they reflect an existing shared interest between the partners. The fourth organization, the Collingwood Public Library, does not specifically name a multi-use facility in strategic documents to date – but, has a strategic plan with an orientation towards opportunities for physical expansion. Most importantly, all four organizations express through their strategic plans and directions an obvious focus on serving residents. The shared commitment to public service and finding innovative ways to serve their shared residents is an obvious area of alignments between these organizations.

In terms of current facilities, there is some (albeit uneven) data that already exists about the mix of facilities, facility condition and estimated value, and capacity issues within the current facilities. This data is captured in key documents such as official plans, development charges studies, recreation master plans, and sometimes other facility-specific studies.

As an example, Collingwood maintains a list of postal codes for users of Collingwood recreational facilities (based on 15,775 records from January 2020 to September 2024). Figure 6 illustrates this data, demonstrating that users of Collingwood facilities already span well beyond municipal boundaries across Southwestern Ontario.

Figure 6: Collingwood Recreational Facilities – Postal Codes of Users from January 2020 to September 2024



Existing studies on the current mix of facility offerings also has a common thread: the rapid pace of population growth and the pressure it places on current facility needs. In some cases, these studies point to specific facility gaps:

- Limitations of the current offerings – including current facilities being at or past capacity, as well as the more limited options for year-round recreational activities, and mentioned in both the Town of Collingwood's 2019 *Framework for Wellbeing:*

Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan[6] and The Blue Mountains' 2020 *Leisure Activities Plan*[7] with important data about the gap between specific facility and use types and existing recreational space standards; and

- The Blue Mountains Public Library Master Facilities Plan points to an additional 11,201 square feet of usable floor space needed to fulfill its concurrent mandates as a GLAM (gallery, library, archive, museum), based on current population projections (Recommendation A).[8] The 2022 update to the *Gap Analysis* report sets a goal of 1 square foot per resident, identifying a need for 25,000 square feet by 2028.
- Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) sets guidelines for libraries to provide an appropriate level of service for their community. The best practice for facilities is at least one square foot of assignable space per population served (this is the standard referenced in the Blue Mountains Public Library *Gap Analysis* update in 2022 as well). Based on current population projections, the Collingwood Public Library will also need to expand to maintain current service levels.

It will be important that any future investment – in a facility or facilities; multi- or single-use – include careful consideration of this existing base of knowledge when sizing the footprint of potential recreational and library uses in a potential future facility.

Established Capacity Gaps

This section outlines: (1) the current inventory of facilities; (2) the known recreational gaps, based on existing master planning work in both communities; and, (3) gaps based on industry standards relative to population size.

Current Inventory

Both The Town of the Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood are served by a mix of public and private recreation facilities. The list below includes public facilities only (including partnerships such as the YMCA).

---

[6] The Town of Collingwood, *A Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*, March 2019. Available online: https://www.collingwood.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/town_of_collingwood_final_prc_master_plan_march_2019_final.pdf

[7] The Town of the Blue Mountains, *2020 Leisure Activities Plan* (updated April 2021). Available online: https://www.thebluemountains.ca/sites/default/files/2021-12/Town%20of%20Blue%20Mountians%20-%20Leisure%20Activities%20Plan%202021%20-%20DEC%20-%20WEB.pdf

[8] Blue Mountains Public Library, Master Facilities Plan, Available online: https://www.thebluemountainslibrary.ca/sites/default/files/2022-12/BMPL%20Feasibility%20Study%20%26%20Space%20Plan%20%20Final%20Report.pdf

In addition to these facilities, there are also several private offerings such as Swing (pickleball) Courts, Climbers Corner climbing wall, The Lemonade Collective (gym, pool, squash), Plunge! Aquatics Centre, Pretty River Academy gymnasiums, and many private spas, gyms (fitness centres), and tennis courts.

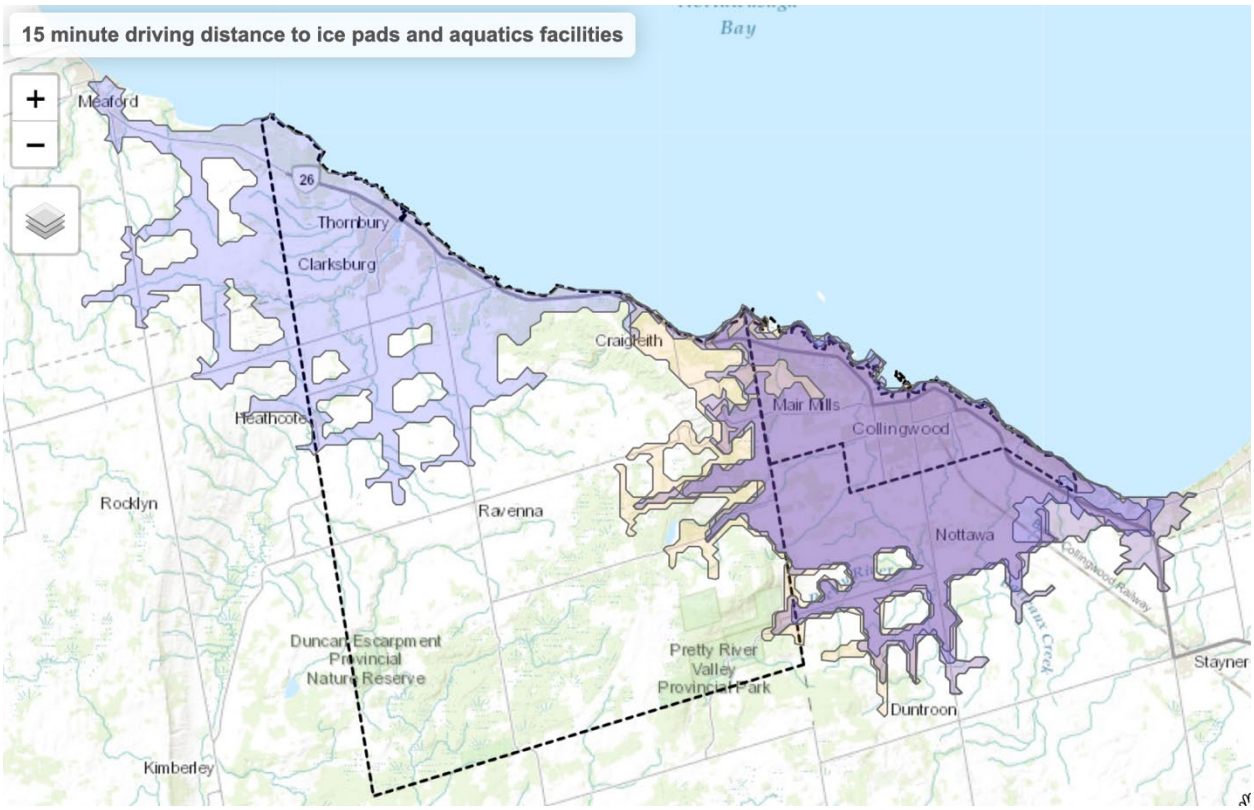
This table also does not include amenities in schools (for example Our Lady of the Bay, CCI, and Bever Valley Community School have amenities like gymnasiums, fitness centres, outdoor tracks and soccer fields). It is also not exhaustive (e.g. it does not include outdoor washroom facilities, maintenance buildings, offices where there may also be periodic community-facing uses).

Amenity	Town of Blue Mountain	Town of Collingwood
Library	• L.E. Shore Memorial Library • Craigleith Heritage Depot	• Collingwood Public Library
Aquatics	• None	• Centennial Aquatic Centre (25m) • Collingwood YMCA (20m)
Ice	• Bever Valley Community Centre Arena (1 pad, 195x90')	• Collingwood Eddie Bush Memorial Arena (1 pad, 200x85') • Central Park Arena (outdoor) • Central Park Arena (indoor, 1 pad) • Curling Club
Indoor	• Bever Valley Community Centre Gymnasium	• YMCA fitness centre • YMCA gymnasium
Outdoor	• Thornbury Tomahawk Fields soccer fields (3) • Tomahawk Municipal Golf Course • Tomahawk Recreation Complex pickleball courts (4) • Tomahawk Recreation Complex groomed winter trail • Moreau Park baseball diamond (1)	• Fisher Fields soccer fields (3 full-size, four non-full size) • Baseball diamonds (5 total, Central Park 1, Central Park 3, Legion Park, Large Heritage, Small Heritage) • Central Park pickleball courts (7) • Princton Shores Tennis Courts (2)

- Bayview Tennis Courts (2)
- Boyer Tennis Courts (2)
- Nipissing Ridge Tennis Court (2)

Figure 7 presents this data in a more visual way. The dotted lines mark the municipal boundaries of the Town of Collingwood and The Town of the Blue Mountains. The shaded areas are isochrones, which represent the catchment area within a 15-minute drive of key recreational facilities. The blue isochrones are ice pads; the orange isochrones are aquatic facilities.

Figure 7: Ice Pads and Aquatic Facilities, with 15-minute drive catchment areas



As this map demonstrates, the catchment areas of existing recreation facilities extend well beyond municipal boundaries (and in practice, the catchment area of some types of facilities may be larger than a 15-minute drive). Existing facilities already serve a cross-boundary population. For example, the 15-minute catchment area around Centennial

Pool includes 100% of Collingwood's population, but also 39.7% of The Blue Mountains' population, 18.3% of Clearview's population, and 5.5% of Wasaga Beach's population. The Eddie Bush Arena's 15-minute catchment includes 100% of Collingwood as well as 23.3% of The Blue Mountain's population. The Beaver Valley Arena's 15-minute catchment serves only 62.8% of The Blue Mountain's population as well as 22.4% of Grey Highlands population and 29.5% of Meaford's population.

Thinking about amenities this way makes one point very clear: existing amenities already serve multiple municipal communities. It also demonstrates that access to recreation facilities is uneven. There are areas that do not currently have access to an aquatic facility within a 15-minute drive, for example.

Known Recreational Gaps

The Town of Collingwood's 2019 *Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*[9] and the Town of the Blue Mountains' 2020 *Leisure Activities Plan* (updated 2021) [10] outline the existing recreational gaps in each respective community as summarized here.

Amenity	**Recommended Service Levels**[11] - Amenity: Population	**Town of Collingwood** - Future Service Level Recommendations, 2031[12]	**Town of Blue Mountains** – Future Service Level Recommendations, 2031[13]
Soccer fields	1 field: 5,000	21 soccer fields (7 additional)	2 new soccer fields
Ball Diamonds	1 senior diamond: 20,000 (lit) 1 junior/softball diamond: 5,000	6 ball diamonds (1 new)	2 new ball diamonds

[9] The Town of Collingwood, *A Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*, March 2019.
[10] The Town of the Blue Mountains, *2020 Leisure Activities Plan* (updated April 2021).
[11] The Town of Collingwood, *A Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*, March 2019.
[12] The Town of Collingwood, *A Framework for Wellbeing: Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan*, March 2019.
[13] Based on recommend overall service levels for the Town of Collingwood, per the *Framework for Wellbeing*). These recommendations were made based on *Guidelines for Developing Public Recreation Facility Standards.*

Tennis Courts	1 tennis court: 5,000	10 tennis courts (3 new)	2 new tennis courts
Basketball Courts	1 per school	5 basketball courts (2 new)	2 new basketball courts
Volleyball Courts	1 court: 5,000	12 volleyball courts (4 new)	2 new volleyball courts
Waterplay Facilities	1 facility:5,000 – 1:7,500	2 new splash pads	1 new splash pad
Skate Parks	1 skateboard park: 20,000	Maintain the current park and consider the development of small skateboard parks to encourage activity closer to neighbourhoods	1 new skate park
Playgrounds	1 playground apparatus: 5,000	22 play structures (8 new)	4 new play structures
Outdoor Ice Rink	1:5,000	1 new outdoor rink	1 new outdoor rink
Ice Pads	1 pad:12,000	3 new ice pads	1 new ice pad
Indoor Aquatic Centre	1 centre:30,000	1.5 new aquatic centers, recommend considering additional aquatic facilities as part of exploring multi-use recreational facilities	Not enough added population for an aquatic centre
Curling Rink	12 sheets: 25,000	9 sheets (3 new)	4 sheets
Community Centre/ Multi-use Recreational Facility	1 centre:25,000	There is currently no community centre that provides users with several recreational uses (aquatic, fitness classes, walking track, etc.)	Not enough added population for a rec centre

Some of these gaps are already being addressed (e.g. Collingwood has opened a new splash pad, basketball courts and playgrounds have opened). Building condition assessments are not available for all current facilities, but it is noted that some such as Collingwood's Eddie Bush Arena are classified as "very poor" condition.

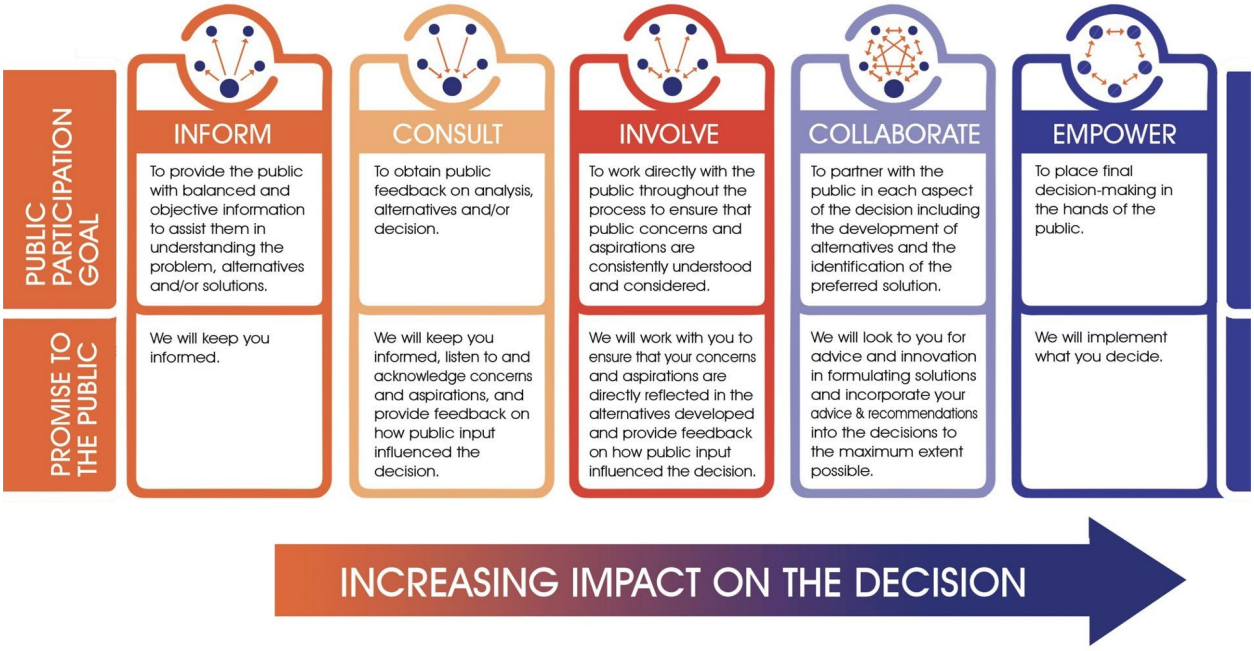
In sum, the existing strategic and recreation-specific documents point to an opportunity for alignment: a shared desire to add recreation capacity, and an overlapping interest in a multi-use recreational facility which can provide a mix of amenities to residents.

What We Heard

Approach to Community Consultation

Not all community engagement efforts are the same. The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) has established well recognized typology – the "spectrum of participation" – for categorizing the type and purpose of engagement. The IAP2 model, as presented in **Figure 8**, is used by the partner organizations engaged in the MURFA, as well as by Colliers Project Leaders.

Figure 8: IAP2 Canada's Spectrum of Public Participation

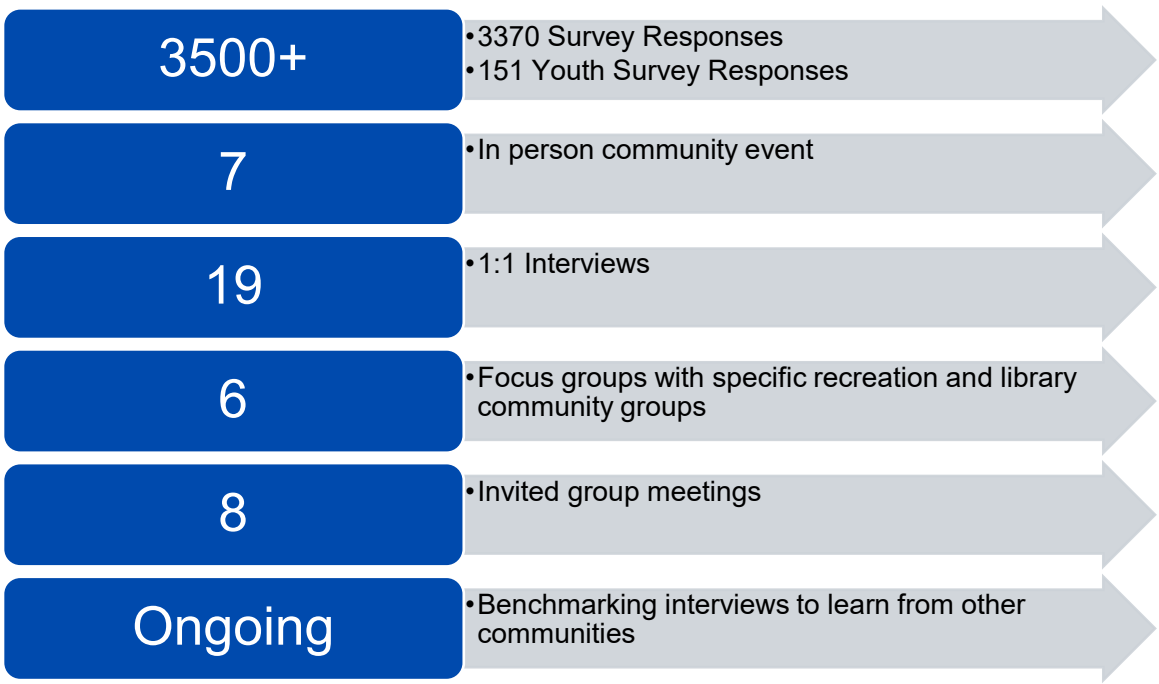


The MURFA is exploratory in nature, seeking to understand residents' needs as options are explored. As a result, the engagement approach driving the MURFA is best categorized as **Consult** – to obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions. Later in the process, there may be future stages which seek to Involve, Collaborate and/or Empower residents once foundational exploratory work is complete.

Figure 9: Public Consultation Process (June to September 2024)

As outlined in **Figure 9**, The community consultation began with conversations with key community leaders to understand their interests in the MURFA process, and what they wanted to learn through the listening exercise. These interviews included Members of Council in The Blue Mountains and Collingwood, both Library CEOs and senior administrators in both municipalities.. From here, a plan was developed which detailed the consultation process: who would be engaged, in what means, when and by whom. This plan was then implemented during August and September 2024 – with a remarkable investment of time, insight and energy from residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains. **Figure 10** captures a high-level summary of this level of engagement.

Figure 10: Consultation Summary by the Numbers



The centerpiece of the consultation was an online survey. Two surveys were made available: a general survey, and a shorter version targeted to youth. The surveys were advertised through earned media, billboards throughout both communities, and postcards distributed at community events. Print copies were made available, and iPad stations were provided at the libraries. A total of 3370 responses were received through the general survey, with an additional 151 youth surveys completed. Almost all survey respondents live (full or part time) or own property in Collingwood or The Blue Mountains (save 7.89% of respondents from other nearby communities); about two-thirds of respondents live in Collingwood with one-third from The Blue Mountains. The full results from both surveys are attached in the Appendices of this report (see Question 1 and 2 for more data on responses from each community).

To generate interest in the survey, and to engage in direct conversations with residents, the Colliers Project Leaders team together with senior officials from both libraries and municipalities, participated in existing community events where large groups of residents were already gathering. A MURFA booth was set up at the following events:

- Collingwood's Sidelaunch Days
- Collingwood Farmers Market
- The Blue Mountains Farmers Market
- Beaver Valley Fall Fair
- Booth at the Blue Mountains Public Library
- Booth at the Collingwood Public Library
- Collingwood Art Crawl
- Seniors Fair at Beaver Valley Community Centre

In addition to these general outreach opportunities open to all residents, more targeted efforts were also made to hear from community members and leaders with a particular expertise or interest in the MURFA study. A total of 19 individual interviews were held with community leaders, as well as eight group meetings where Colliers Project Leaders were invited to hear the perspectives of a particular group or club. These conversations provided an opportunity for in-depth discussions on specific issues, challenges, and opportunities, offering a detailed and nuanced understanding of stakeholder perspectives. In short, the objective was to be as open and transparent as possible: any group with interest in participating in the process were encouraged to be part of the process with various avenues available to do so.

Finally, to hear from organized sport, library and other community groups a series of focus groups were held in September 2024. Each of the six focus groups were held online and open to groups in both Collingwood and The Blue Mountains. The focus groups were scoped as follows: Community Organizations & Service Clubs; Outdoor Sports & Recreation; Ice Users; Indoor Sports & Recreation (Non-Ice); Library User Groups, Health & Social Services; and a general focus group open to those unable to attend any of the other gatherings.

Across these opportunities, what did we hear from residents? The five main themes emerging from these discussions are captured on Page 21.

Key Themes

1. There is **widespread, deep support for adding recreation amenities** in all categories in both Collingwood and The Blue Mountains — and a **high expectation to deliver**.

2. Rapid population growth has produced **practical constraints for facilities and programs**, with concern that continued growth without a long-range plan to invest will add to the capacity issues.

3. Residents **prefer a multi-use space** over single-use solutions — but the location will really matter.

4. Generally, residents **support collaborative efforts** - including between municipalities and other partners - if it means that community needs can be met faster and more efficiently.

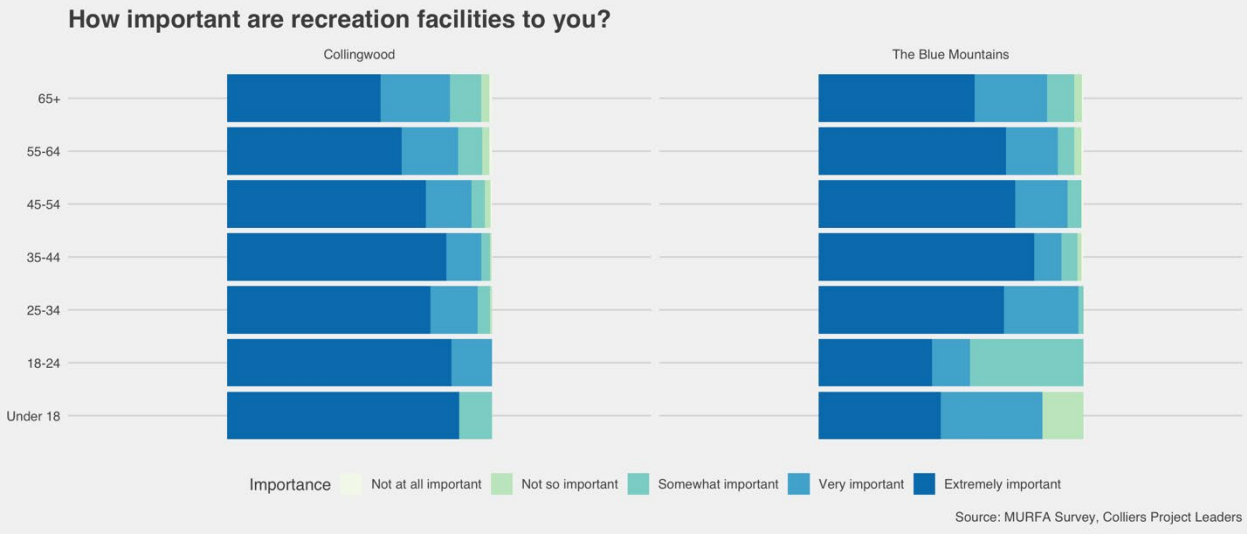
5. Importantly, strategic consideration for what a future facility (or facilities) are trying to accomplish will **maximize community benefits**.

What We Heard: Theme #1

1. There is **widespread, deep support for adding recreation amenities** in all categories in both Collingwood and The Blue Mountains — and a **high expectation to deliver.**

Simply put, recreation is a way of life in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains. In the words of one resident at a community event, "*this is the reason my family and I moved to this area. We cycle, we swim, we play sports. We wanted to be closer to the outdoors with more opportunities to do the activities we love than we felt like we had in the city*." Among survey respondents,[14] a whopping 90% of residents report that recreation facilities are 'very' or 'extremely' important to them (with 'extremely important' being the most common response at almost 70%). The youth agreed: 84% of youth survey respondents identify recreation facilities as being 'very' or 'extremely' important to them.[15] This sense of importance was generally shared across age groups.

Figure 11: Importance of recreation facilities, by community and by age



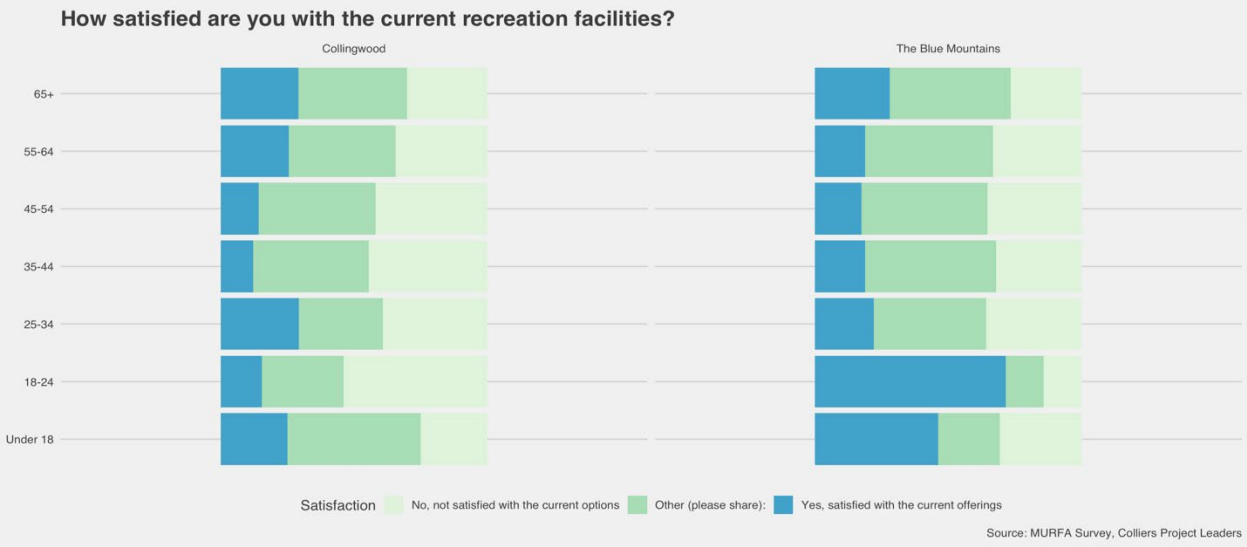
[14] Based on the 3370 responses to the general population MURFA survey conducted in August and September 2024. Full survey results are included in the Appendix.
[15] Based on the 151 responses to the youth-specific MURFA survey conducted in August and September 2024. Full survey results are included in the Appendix.

Figure 11 below separates the responses by age and by community. Generally, Collingwood residents (on the left) ranked recreation facilities as being a bit more important overall than did residents of The Blue Mountains (on the right); and, generally, younger and middle-aged adults ranked recreation facilities with a higher level of importance.

Unfortunately, this high identification of importance is paired with a general dissatisfaction in the current suite of recreational offerings in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains. A total of 35% of survey respondents indicated that they are not satisfied with the current facilities, compared to 23% who are satisfied; the youth survey indicated more satisfaction (37%) but with the balance (40%) indicating dissatisfaction.[16]

Figure 12 breaks out the general survey responses by age and community. Generally, The Blue Mountains residents report a higher satisfaction level with current recreation facilities than do residents in Collingwood, with some difference by age group.

Figure 12: Satisfaction with recreation facilities, by community and by age



When asked about whether current recreation facilities were meeting the community's needs, the resounding response in all six focus groups and most of the smaller interviews and conversations was a resounding 'no.'

[16] It should be noted that the youth survey was condensed to make it more user friendly, and this question about satisfaction (Q4) included both library and recreation amenities in the youth survey only. Satisfaction with library and recreation amenities were separated into distinct questions in the general survey. Full survey results are included in the Appendix.

What is driving this dissatisfaction? For many, the lack of satisfaction is tied to a specific capacity issue that they or their family have experienced (these responses are captured under Theme #2 about specific use capacity issues). However, three broader common sources of dissatisfaction emerged through the process: (1) a feeling of mismatch between the recreation-oriented nature of the community and the calibre or range of current offerings; (2) a feeling that the idea of a multi-use space has been in the works for a long time without materializing; and (3) a high level of awareness of the facilities offered in other communities.

The first source of dissatisfaction stems from the brand of Collingwood and The Blue Mountains as recreation communities and feeling that this is not embodied in the scale, scope and/or calibre of current recreational facilities. In residents' own words, this sentiment was expressed this way:

- *"Collingwood and the Blue Mountains is considered a top tier area for homes and sports. But our facilities currently are sub-standard. We should have the best hockey/pool/sports facility in the entire region!"*
- *"I believe we are living in the best part of Ontario however missing some essential things like a smart cohesive recreational building.*
- *"Not satisfied. Collingwood and The Blue Mountains are a high-sporting area. We have many athletes from all Canada come here and we do not have a Sports Rec Plex. We have hockey arenas, indoor tennis courts, etc., but we don't have indoor basketball courts. Basketball is becoming such a popular sport with the kids in Elementary school and high school. There aren't any outdoor full basketball courts for the kids to play a game. They are having to play half court which is very limiting. […]. It's also very important for our maturing members of our community. We have no mall to walk in or get exercise during the winter months and walking outdoors with ice is dangerous for these older folks".*
- *"Our current facilities are a joke. The pop-up tent serving as an ice rink is embarrassing. Collingwood could be hosting numerous profitable hockey tournaments every year, but our facilities are inadequate. We need an all-in-one sport rec facility including at minimum 2 ice pads, 2 swimming pools, library, gym with indoor walking track, concession stand, green space with a park for kids. There are many communities smaller or equal size to Collingwood that have fantastic community-oriented facilities."*
- *"A recreation centre is essential especially as the community continues to grow and attract a younger demographic. Such a facility provides residents with a year-round space to stay active, particularly during the long winter months when outdoor activities are limited. […] . Investing in such infrastructure will not only*

improve public health but also support Collingwood's continued growth as a thriving, active town."

Second, many residents expressed that a major rec centre or multi use space has been in the works for a long time without materializing. This sentiment was more commonly expressed by Collingwood residents.

- "*We have been talking about a multi- use facility for close to 40 yrs now in Collingwood. It is only getting more expensive to build and more and more people moving to this area want access to a facility that can offer multiple activities/ sports. It will benefit all."*
- *"The people of Collingwood have been saying for many years (50plus) that we needed a new double ice rink. I was 10 years old when the centennial pool opened and they said that it a few years they would enclose it, many years passed and then it got tented along with a second ice surface. In my opinion as a taxpayer for close to 40 years and renter before that the tented covers for the pool and arena were a waste of taxpayers money. Do it right like Wasaga Beach and stop wasting our tax dollars."*
- *"We really are long overdue for a major rec centre."*
- *"We need a sport centre in Collingwood near fisher fields, which we were supposed to have years ago."*
- *"A proposal over 10 years ago to use the Fisher Fields area to create a multi-use facility was nixed. This was short-sighted and a missed opportunity. We participated in the TBM Leisure and Activities committee a couple of years ago. The information from that committee should be considered as a comprehensive guide to what is needed here in the region. Unfortunately, we seem to have countless consultations with a variety of stakeholders and consultants, yet nothing seems to progress. It has been deferred or ignored. This is frustrating! Please do something!"*

Third, residents seem to have a high level of awareness and exposure to facilities in other locations and would like to see a similar offering closer to home. Specific facilities were mentioned in every focus group call, at every community event by residents passing by, and many mentioned specific facilities in the survey submission (for example, in the 1272 additional comments written in the question about satisfaction with recreational facilities, the new facility in Wasaga was mentioned more than 400 times – including from residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains).

- *"Have a look at Wasaga Beach's new facility if you don't want to drive to Vaughan and see how it's done. Wasaga beach hit it out of the park. Copy that*

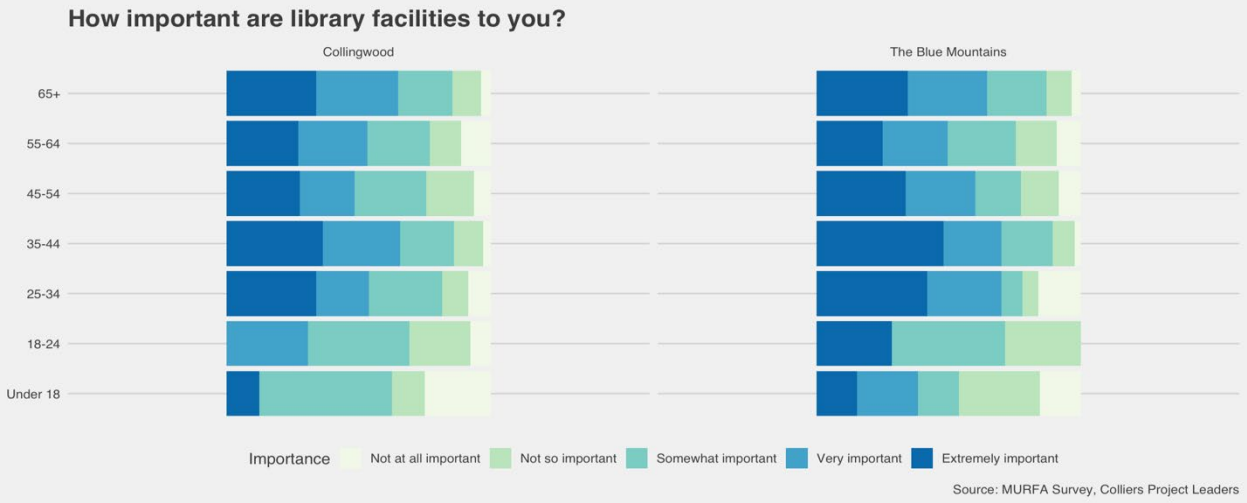
facility but make it even better. Add a gym and a general sports court. Library that can house activities the entire day for children of all ages!"

- *"I have travelled extensively with AAA hockey with our son and been able to visit many multi use complexes in a variety of other cities and towns and would love to see a public use facility that has a large swimming pool, indoor running/walking track (often around ice rinks in an upper level), fully equipped work out room, indoor squash/racquetball courts, rooms for pilates, yoga and dance. TOBM municipality as well as Grey Highlands is seriously lacking in these areas. Since the pandemic, it feels like the town has doubled or tripled in size and most new residents have incomes that expect these services and have moved from Toronto where these services have existed for years."*
- *"We need recreation complex for ice rinks, gymnasiums, walking track, meeting rooms, refreshment outlets, diversity of pools, childcare, excellent change areas, etc. all integrated. See City of Edmonton's several complexes! A good example is Terwillegar Recreation Complex (recently renamed "Booster Juice Recreation Centre) which has 4 ice rinks, a water area with lane swimming, diving pool, general swimming, water slide, lazy river, toddlers pool, hot tub, steam room and a variety of changing areas, several gymnasiums, two refreshment areas, several meeting areas & room, workout area, kids play area, etc. Or go next door 20 minutes away to St Albert's Servus Credit Union Place - look it up!!! We are sadly lacking and very limited!!!!!"*
- *"No real gym, no place to play indoor basketball. There is no facility like in Barrie or even the new facility in Wasaga Beach with multiple ice rinks and a place to gather for events."*
- *"Every other community has a centre that is easily accessible to seniors and families. The senior population is not being served for sports and other activities except for high priced private facilities (from the YMCA to private clubs)."*
- *"With having children involved in recreational sport teams that travel, we get the pleasure of seeing what multi-recreational facilities other towns have for their residents (e.g. Orillia) and are always in awe of the caliber of the facility there and wonder why Collingwood doesn't have such a facility, but rather a small pool (that hosts one of the largest most sought-after swim meets), and have to rely on school gymnasiums to be able to host practices and games for rep basketball teams."*
- *"Need one space where we can visit and accomplish all of our sports, recreational, educational activities like the new centre in Wasaga Beach."*
- *"We are constantly travelling to other communities for sporting activities and compared to other communities such as Orillia, Huntsville, Orangeville, Owen Sound and Barrie our facilities locally are extremely disappointing and do not meet the needs of our community."*

During the focus groups, specific design features of other facilities were a common topic of discussion. Features that were enjoyed by residents while visiting other facilities were often shared during the focus groups and met with interest from others in the discussion: underfloor lighting that allows for a court to be used for multiple sports; walking tracks which provide visibility into kids lessons and sports below; gathering places and interesting experiences for family members travelling with an athlete for a game or event.

So far this discussion has focused on recreation facilities. What did residents share about the importance and satisfaction with library facilities? Generally, residents value their libraries, with just under 60% of respondents indicating that library facilities are ‘very’ or ‘extremely’ important to them. **Figure 13** breaks this down by age and community. The data reflects a slight trend towards libraries being more valued by older residents.

Figure 13: Importance of library facilities, by community and by age



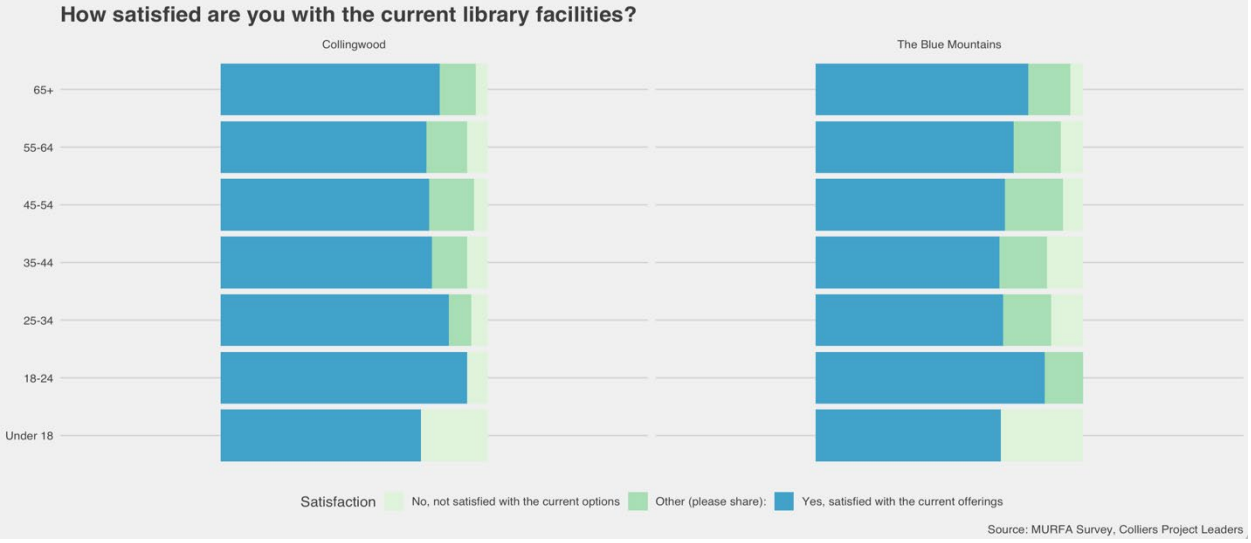
For most residents, libraries are important – and ‘extremely important’ to about a third of survey respondents. Happily, residents also report a very high level of satisfaction with their library facilities. This is captured in **Figure 14.** More than three in four (78%) of respondents indicated that the current library facilities are meeting their needs. Additionally, the youth survey suggests that most young respondents can access a library easily and conveniently (66%).

The qualitative feedback about the libraries was also overwhelmingly positive – and sometimes pointed to in contrast to the lower level of satisfaction with recreation facilities (as one youth respondent put it, “*We have a great library in Thornbury but no*

indoor recreational space for swimming, racquet sports, gym etc.”). Generally, the feedback about library facilities was positive. Those who also indicated a high use of the library were also much more likely to point to a need for additional capacity and program space.

- *“Current Library needs support to hire more staff and / or financial support to continue the great programming, events, and services provided to the expanding community.”*
- *“Our library is terrific. Staff and programming are really proactive and forward-thinking.”*
- *“I think the libraries are amazing and I love the programming. I really love the library outreach initiatives like their visits to camps through the summer. Both libraries are fabulous. We use the Collingwood one more as we live here but also use Thornbury periodically too. I think weekend programs and special event and holiday programming would be nice, and programs that maybe support youth literacy like a book club for kids and tweens would be really neat too.”*

Figure 14: Satisfaction with library facilities, by community and by age



- *“I am satisfied with what I see in the Blue Mountains in general terms with those programs offered but not in the size of facilities or the total scope of program offerings. Larger public space is required - the current space is frequently under sized for many events and there are many more things a library can do such as having a makers space with equipment from 3 D printers to wood working etc.”*
- *“The LE Shore Library is an extremely well used facility. The combination of physical and virtual resources is excellent. It is also located centrally and is accessible. The building also has space for seniors exercise, community*

information sessions, children's program, art exhibitions, and meeting space. It is a general space well used by the community. Close proximity to the public school allows classes to visit the library as part of their regular curriculum. With more space for a variety of programs, more members of the community could participate. For example, the seniors exercise program is spilling into the entrance hall and the noise from visiting school classes makes it difficult to hear the instructor."

Of course, these views were not unanimous. Some felt the library is less relevant in a digital age or to younger demographics:

- *"I believe the idea of a library has become generationally less appealing to the larger community. Generally, it seems to appeal to an older and specific profile of interest and has become a somewhat irrelevant institution to the majority of particularly younger demographics. Perhaps it's time to rethink the idea of a library in lieu of new ways to access information and experience culture in a community context."*

The conversations with both library boards reflected a high level of openness, innovation and creativity in terms of future opportunities for both libraries to serve the community. Libraries play increasingly diverse roles in the community – from community hub to educational programming to access to resources to social services – and both boards had interesting ideas about how potential new offerings could be built into possible future recreational spaces. How residents perceive the relationship between recreation and library services and spaces (including gallery, archive and museum space) was raised by board members as an important curiosity, opening a door to imaging various roles the library might play in a future faculty.

In sum, the high importance and lower satisfaction levels with recreation facilities reflect a general public appetite for a new recreation facility (or facilities). In Collingwood particularly, a feeling that this opportunity has been missed in the past adds a layer of public expectation. Libraries enjoy a high level of satisfaction from residents but the urgency for new facilities was heard more for recreation; that said, the libraries may present exciting possibilities for new programming, space and services as partners in a potential future recreation facility.

What We Heard: Theme #2

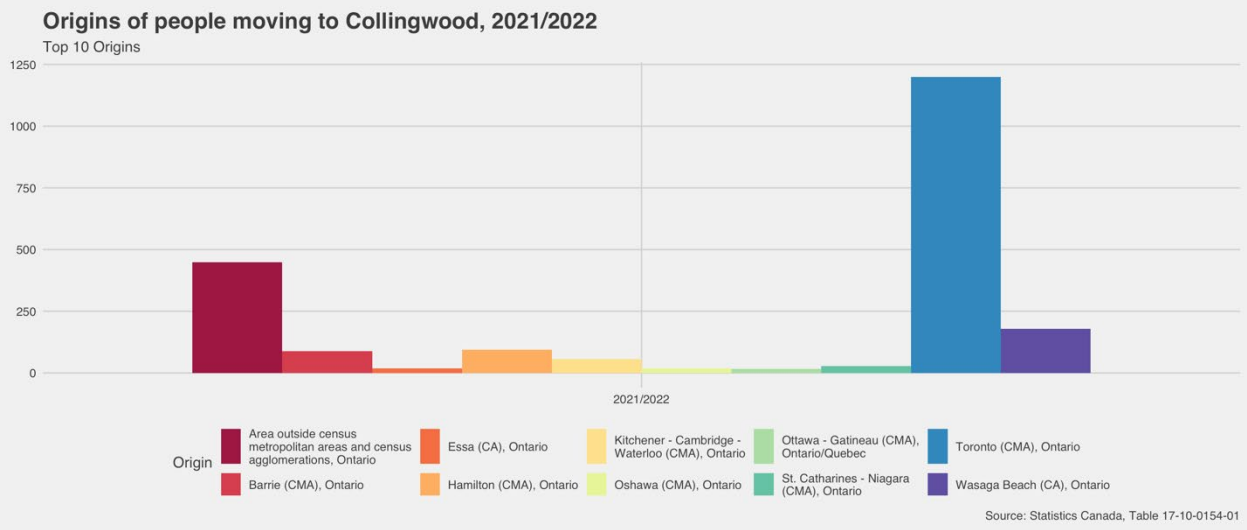
2. Rapid population growth has produced **practical constraints for facilities and programs**, with concern that continued growth without a long-range plan to invest will add to the capacity issues.

"A new recreation facility should be the top priority right now. We're a recreation community. We're growing so fast, and we need something that will meet the needs of this community for the next 50 years. It's not going to get any cheaper; we're just going to fall further behind if we don't do this. Many families in our community have kids in multiple sports, or people do different activities. They don't have time to lobby council, but they want this – and I think council knows that it's important, I'm just not sure they know how desperate the situation already is."

The post-pandemic era in Ontario has included significant in-migration with flows of residents moving to new communities, driven by many concurrent factors: higher housing prices in larger urban centres; more workers with the flexibility to work remotely from home, and some needing larger square footage residences to do so; an aging population who may wish to live their retirement years in a different setting. For the communities along the southern shore of Georgian Bay, it has been a high growth period with a particularly strong flow of residents from the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area. **Figure 15** demonstrates the flow of new residents into Collingwood over just two of the post-pandemic years (2021-2022) with more than a thousand people moving to the community from Toronto alone (unfortunately this Statistics Canada data is not available for The Blue Mountains).

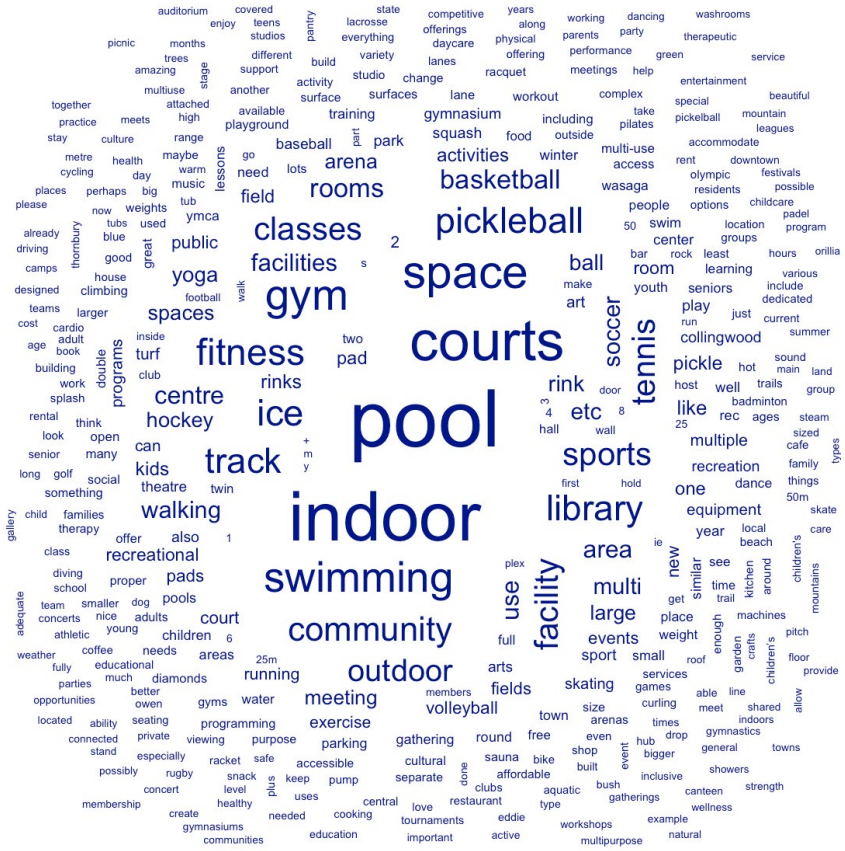
High levels of growth produce new opportunities, but this consultation also revealed two very practical challenges related to facilities and programs: first, that capacity issues have become more acute and, in some cases, urgent to continue to meet community needs; and second, that new residents often bring with them new expectations for facilities and amenities. Residents from the Greater Toronto-Hamilton Area are familiar with a much different array of recreational and library offerings. Even in choosing to relocate – in part or fully – to a smaller community, they may still have urban-scaled expectations for what they want to see in their community.

Figure 15: Origins of new residents to Collingwood, 2021-2022



Both increased demand and heightened expectations are creating practical challenges for groups and associations in the community who use recreation facilities.

Figure 16: Word cloud of open text responses


pool
indoor
courts
space
gym
pickleball
fitness
swimming
community
outdoor
library
facility
tennis
soccer
track
ice
rink
pads
fields
arena
rooms
classes
basketball
baseball
field
yoga
public
facilities
centre
hockey
kids
walking
recreational
programs
turf
spaces
sports
area
multi
large
events
use
new
one
dance
recreation
multiple
collingwood
pickle
like
etc
ball
room
learning
seniors
youth
play
art
make
people
wasaga
activities
winter
squash
gymnasium
training
park
surfaces
lane
workout
complex
racquet
studio
change
activity
surface
another
support
build
variety
lanes
offering
meetings
help
entertainment
special
beautiful
pilates
pickelball
mountain
leagues
accommodate
rent
downtown
olympic
festivals
residents
possible
childcare
options
padel
program
location
groups
center
swim
bar
rock
least
hours
orillia
access
multi-use
outside
food
including
take
offerings
daycare
physical
parents
party
performance
green
service
therapeutic
washrooms
dancing
working
years
along
competitive
lacrosse
everything
state
pantry
studios
teens
enjoy
covered
auditorium
picnic
months
trees
amazing
different
stage
multiuse
attached
high
together
practice
meets
range
culture
stay
metre
health
maybe
warm
day
cycling
music
big
tub
ymca
weights
used
tubs
now
please
places
perhaps
already
driving
thornbury
blue
good
great
camps
house
climbing
designed
teams
larger
cost
cardio
age
adult
book
building
work
splash
rental
think
look
open
senior
many
long
golf
social
something
gallery
child
families
therapy
offer
also
class
diving
school
proper
team
smaller
concerts
nice
adults
young
athletic
dog
pools
court
children
areas
needs
coffee
weather
fully
educational
much
parties
diamonds
opportunities
better
owen
gyms
water
located
ability
seating
programming
connected
private
viewing
purpose
stand
especially
possibly
rugby
snack
concert
level
membership
create
gymnasiums
communities
healthy
needed
cooking
education
uses
keep
pump
plus
accessible
safe
racket
parking
exercise
meeting
running
25m
6
1
2
s
go
need
lots
lessons
walk
part
two
pad
inside
club
double
rinks
ice
hockey
can
kids
theatre
twin
walking
recreational
pads
pools
court
children
areas
needs
diamonds
gyms
water
programming
purpose
viewing
private
seating
stand
rugby
snack
concert
level
membership
create
gymnasiums
communities
healthy
needed
cooking
education
uses
keep
pump
plus
accessible
safe
racket
parking
exercise
meeting
running
outdoor
community
swimming
pads
proper
recreational

The survey echoed these pressures. When asked about what amenity or offering residents would like to see added, the list was extensive – and often paired with an anecdote or experience about why this amenity or space is needed. For some, they have a sport or activity of choice and completed the survey to advocate for more amenities related to that activity (in one resident's words, "I only filled out this survey to say we need a disc golf course"). Other experiences and perspectives were much more common, as captured in this table.

Type of Facility	Sample of Comments
Aquatics	• *"Not enough indoor public swimming pool options. Very difficult and competitive to get into swimming lessons. A fun and affordable indoor swimming pool option between Collingwood and Thornbury would be great."* • *"We are big swimmers, and the town could really use an upgraded facility. A competition grade pool , improved access for kids (like a kids play zone) with a shallow pool and some slides and things. Gatineau and Kamloops are great examples of these types of facilities. Consider diving as a possible additional area to think about. There are no diving facilities close to us and many of the youth in this area would likely be interested (very high interest in gymnastics and aerial sports such as snowboarding and skiing)."* • *"Swimming pool 8 lanes for competition (incl para) with decent viewing area and good changing areas."* • *"There are limited indoor aquatics facilities. Building a second community pool will provide kids in the community with better access to swimming lessons (it's an important life skill for everyone, especially living on a body of water). The athletes on the local swim teams and triathletes would benefit from access to an 8-lane pool (standard pool size in similar communities) to host sizable swim and tri meets. It will also increase the number of training and recreational lanes available at lane swim times allowing more people to enjoy the sport and ease current overcrowding in lanes."* • *"As an active member of Collingwood & Blue Mountains, I am disappointed with the community aquatic offerings. Although far from ideal, the Centennial Pool surface covering has marginally*

	addressed demand for public, competitive, training and lessons. Consideration needs to be given towards a 50m competitive pool. The increased size would address additional use (concurrent groups) and address a shortage in the province (increased rental revenues + local swimmers remaining in area). The benefit of a twin ice pad is apparent given the number of recent provincial projects allowing for coliseum seating (large groups - 1500-2000) and stand alone with minimal seating. The WB Star facility will serve as an ideal sample to consider ROI."
Ice	• *"We have major issues with the growth of girls' hockey and not enough ice available to have practices to game ratios so an urgent need to get ice or kids will be missing out as a limit will have to be put on. That time is coming quicker than we think!" "More ice. The arenas are so busy it's not even funny."* • *"Multiple ice pads for year round skating."* • *"I am a senior and live in Christie Beach at the west end of the TBM. We badly need a swimming pool and a walking track so we seniors can stay active during bad weather in the winter. Also, curling is becoming more and more popular with us seniors, and there is only one day a week curling ice available at the arena. The Collingwood curling club is full, and Meaford's facility is on its last legs. We need a dedicated curling facility."*
Courts	• *"Our Collingwood Trailblazers are all in desperate need of another facility to train at. The U13 boys last year had to practice late on a Sunday night because there were no facilities available for training. Pretty River Academy is currently hosting all the OBL games. We need another facility to support the growing demand and need for our large basketball community."* • *"Pickleball is one of the fastest growing sports. We need indoor and outdoor pickleball courts so everyone can enjoy the sport."* • *"I am not able to play indoor pickleball because all the courts are always fully booked."* • *"Not enough tennis/pickleball facilities. They should also be in areas that do not affect neighboring residents with noise issues (pickleball can be loud for those not playing)."* • *"Collingwood needs more proper outdoor pickleball courts, not makeshift courts such as the slippery cement surface of the*

	outdoor rink. Plus, the town needs a public indoor facility for pickleball. We are way behind other communities in respect to pickleball courts." • *"My girls play rep basketball and there is a constant battle for gym time around the area. Having a dedicated multi court venue for basketball is needed."* • *"Collingwood is in dire needs of more tennis courts that are in good (and safe) condition. We've had pickleball lines painted on 2 of the courts in town, which places further constraints on their usage by opening them up to a whole new group of player base - one equally as large (and getting larger every day) as tennis. We need more tennis courts, as well as the resurfacing of a lot of them around town. (Side note: new pickleball courts being created for that sport would be good too, it'll mean we're not losing more of ours dedicated solely to tennis)."*
Indoor Turf / Fields	• *"The need is for indoor sports facilities […] to cater for sports that require indoor facilities when the snow flies! We have great youth soccer, rugby, baseball teams that end up playing in small halls (a Safety issue) or not at all during the winter months."* • *"There is a huge need for indoor turf for year round activities. We really need this for our town!"* • *"It's a very active community and another recreation ctr is necessary due to our winter season to play indoor activities at this time."* • *"Need an indoor soccer type complex. Soccer is a much more economically accessible sport for most families in comparison to hockey. A complex would benefit most all families throughout the severe weather months."*
Fitness Space	• *"We are dependent on private businesses for exercise which are expensive."* • *"We do not have a location that offers exercise classes without being a member. Many of these locations who do are suitable only for adults, so the children don't have anywhere to go."*
Tracks	• *"We are missing bike related options for youth including a paved pump track, mountain bike skills area and beginner mountain bike*

	trails accessible from town without having to drive. These are options in other similar communities in Canada." • *"I would also like to see an indoor track so that we can support a track club. A track can be added to the outer perimeter of any indoor field or court."*
Community Space	• *"We desperately need more opportunities for students and adults to take classes. For example, having a space for adults to learn woodworking skills here in Collingwood is not available, and affordable cooking classes or craft classes, even language classes like taking Spanish or ASL is completely out of reach. We need a maker's space in our area instead of having to drive to Barrie. There are far too many barriers in place for adults to change professions or improve themselves in Collingwood."* • *"I would love a maker space - condo living makes maker lifestyle challenging. Would be great place to connect with people."* • *"It would be great to have a soup kitchen that the community could help with as well."* • *"Would love to see a 55 plus centre with fitness classes, art classes, etc. A drop-In place for seniors to socialize."*

The general survey asked about future uses residents would like to see. Responses are broken down by age and response and sorted by community with The Blue Mountains residents' responses in **Figure 17** and Collingwood residents' responses in **Figure 18.** On whole, the most common responses were quite similar: sports and fitness facilities (including ice), courts and fields, and aquatics facilities.

Figure 17: Desired future uses, responses from The Blue Mountains residents

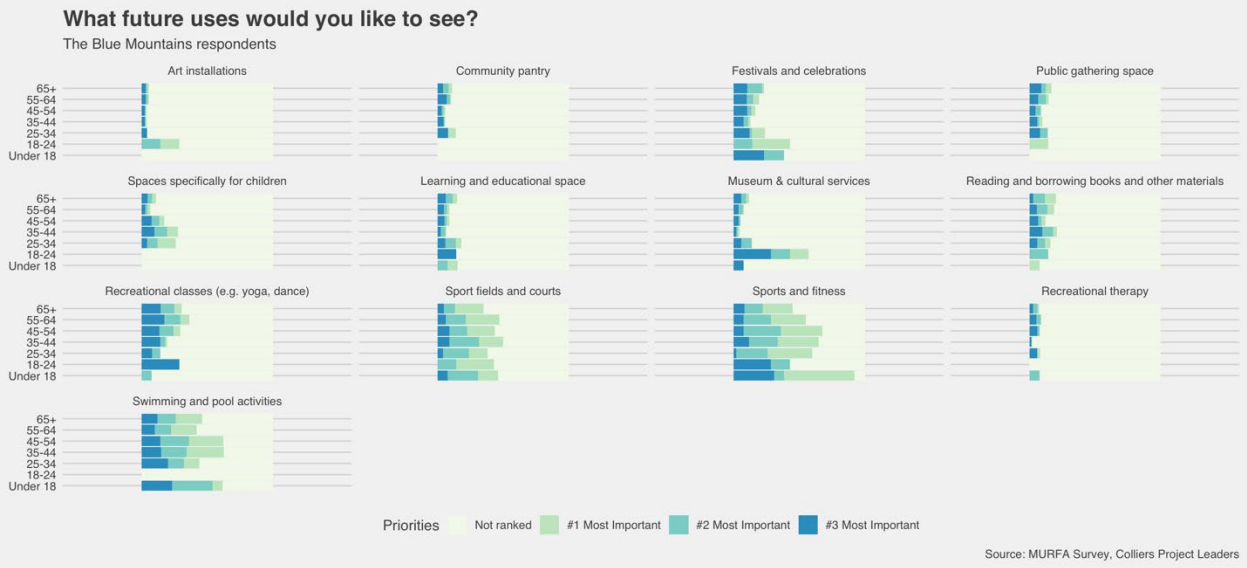
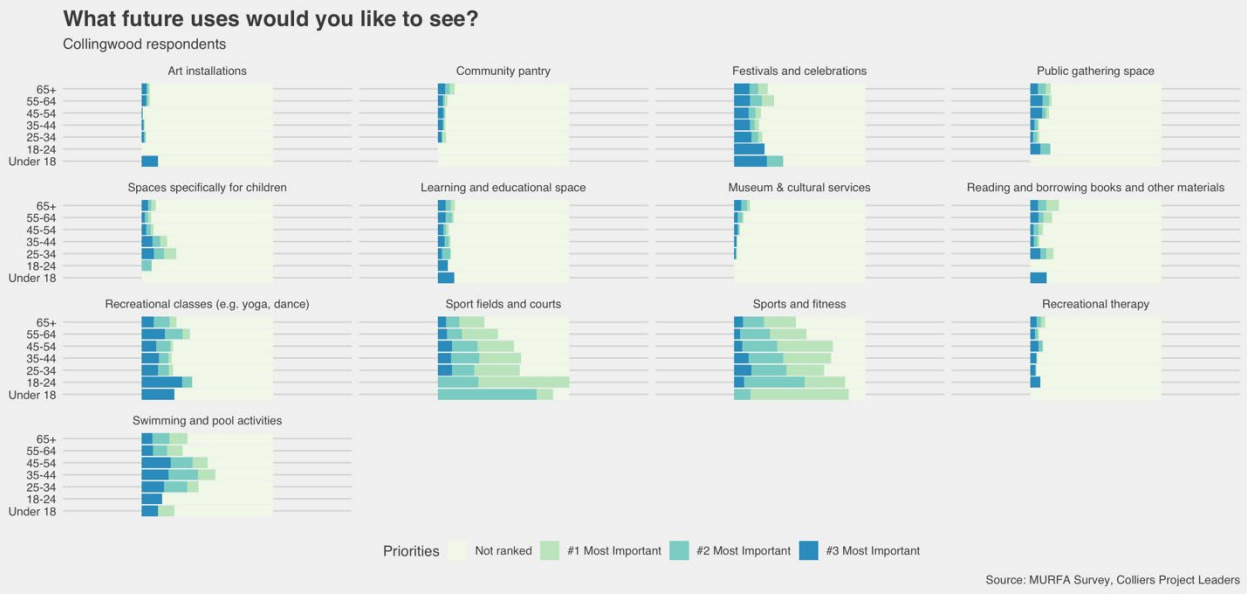


Figure 18: Desired future uses, responses from Collingwood residents



One question in the survey was particularly insightful. It asked respondents to use a “magic wand” and imagine whatever they might like to see in a new facility. This avoids the challenge of defined categories to hear in a more fulsome, qualitative sense what residents are interested in seeing. The most common word used in response to this question was “pool” (and even more so if related words such as “swimming” or “pools” are included). This list shares the frequence of mentioned words, excluding words that can be associated with multiple uses (e.g. “indoor” was sometimes connected to the

word pool but sometimes connected to courts or other words). The number of respondents from youth was much smaller, which is why the number of mentions is also smaller.

Mention frequency on general survey	Mention frequency on youth survey
• Pool (915 mentions) • Courts (580) • Gym (449) • Swimming (443) • Fitness (336) • Ice (361) • Pickleball (360) • Library (345) • Track (335) • Tennis (293) • Basketball (233) • Walking (193) • Soccer (185) • Yoga (159) • Volleyball (106) • Skating (77) • Squash (74) • Pools (60) • Dance (49) • Childcare (15)	• Soccer (30 mentions) • Pool (28) • Swimming (21) • Hockey (16) • Basketball (16) • Gym (16) • Ice (15) • Courts (12) • Tennis (8) • Pickleball (5) • Trampoline (5) • Library (4)

During the focus groups, organized recreation and community groups were invited in to share their perspectives. These were insightful conversations with high-use and high-knowledge community members. Most of the participants provided advocacy-oriented perspectives, speaking to why their group or sport needs more facilities. These were often accompanied by illustrative qualitative examples of how the current mix of facilities is not meeting their needs.

Several groups shared specific capacity issues. This data should be viewed as anecdotal only, for a few reasons. First, this is not an exhaustive sample (meaning, some groups participated, and others did not). Second, each sport has a different geography and scale (so, one group saying they have X members might sound higher,

but it more accurately reflects that their geography is larger). Third, there was no standardized measure used by these groups to speak about their size and rate of growth; instead, they shared data in whatever format is meaningful for their own association, club or group (eg. “we’ve experienced X% growth over the past four years” which may reflect heightened demand or some dynamic of the group itself, such as the rapid increase that often accompanies a newly formed group or association). Collecting more standardized growth, demand and utilization data may be a worthwhile exercise later in this process. On whole, the focus group feedback was unanimous: a worry about current capacity issues getting worse due to rapid growth; and a strong desire for added amenities across all categories.

In sum, the public consultation process highlighted how important sports and recreation are to residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains. There is general data in Canada on participation in sports and recreational activities.[17] More than half (55%) of Canadians participate in some form of sport, although this data is not reported below a provincial level, this percentage may well be higher in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains given the centrality of sport and recreational to the lifestyle offerings in these communities. Across Canada, men (62%) are more likely to participate in sport than women (49%). The popularity of specific kinds of sports varies widely by age, gender and cultural or ethnic group. Overall, swimming is the most common (35% of all Canadians engage in this sport) followed by cycling (33%) and running (27%). Soccer, ice hockey, skating, skiing, tennis and basketball are also common among specific demographics. There are also periodic reports citing the ‘fastest growing sports’ in Canada, often referencing emerging and fast-growing sports such as cricket or pickleball (which although fast growing, generally show up as a lower percentage of the overall population in terms of participation compared to more dominant activities such as swimming or cycling). There is a competitiveness between sporting communities and groups about which sports overall are gaining the most traction. In practical terms, most sports vary in popularity depending on the demographic (by age, gender, ethnic or cultural group, income levels and more) so understanding demographic change and growth in a community is perhaps just as important as the overall data about sport activity.

In sum, the rapid pace of population growth in both The Blue Mountains and Collingwood have created capacity issues with current facilities and very real current pressures on various sports and community groups. This is consistent with the capacity issues already identified in the strategic documents of both municipalities with respect to recreation facilities, as outlined in the first section of this report. These pressures are

[17] Statistics Canada’s *Survey Series on People and their Communities* includes questions about participation in sports. This series consistently finds that participation in sport is the most common form of community or civic engagement in Canada, for both men and women and across most cultural and ethic groups. For more information on this data, see: https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/231010/dq231010b-eng.htm

expected to continue as the population grows. Adding additional facility capacity will help address current and future capacity needs.

What We Heard: Theme #3

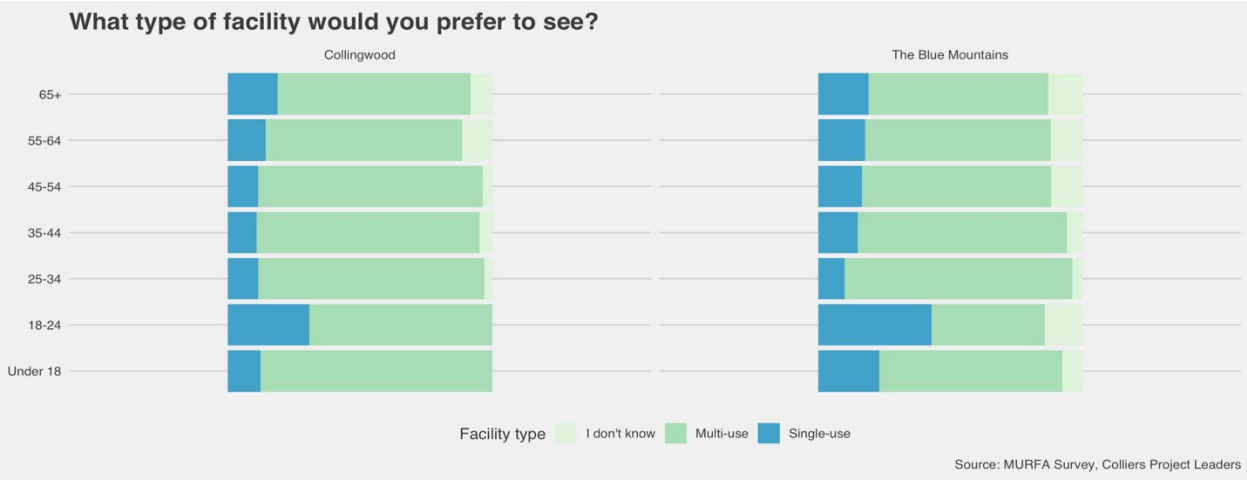
3. Residents **prefer a multi-use space** over single-use solutions — but the location will really matter.

When asked about whether a multi-use facility or a single-use facility are preferred, most respondents shared the same view: a strong preference for multi-use facilities. **Figure 19** shares this data, sorted by community. On whole, residents have a 5:1 ratio preference for multi-use facilities. Additionally, when asked "if you had a magic wand and could create a new recreational space or facility in your community, what would it offer?" the majority of responses included more than one type of use:

- *"My vision of a new space would include a pool, large indoor gym for indoor soccer/ball hockey/gymnastics, kitchen space for cooking classes, music studio, lounge-inspired multi-use area for music/events/games nights/creative programs."*
- *"We need a facility with at least 2 hockey rinks a large gym and aquatics centre, we do not need another library at this facility, it should also have soccer grass field and artificial turf field along with tennis and pickle ball courts!"*
- *"Would be great to see a bigger competitive pool as well as a recreational pool with kid friendly options like a waterslide. The need for a couple of ice pads would also help hockey teams having to drive into other communities to use their facilities. The option of developing indoor soccer with turfed fields would be amazing in Collingwood as well as a space for indoor baseball training."*
- *"Our family travels regularly to many other towns and cities that have unbelievable public rec centres combined with pools, theatre, courts, and libraries. Combining makes sense for economies-of-scale. Our tarp-covered facilities are both an embarrassment and uncomfortable. (But PLEASE preserve Eddie Bush for historic value- other teams love visiting, it's a draw for Blues' players, and its Main Street location is distinctly special)."*
- *"All the facilities are extremely busy and getting dated. We need more modern facilities. We need a bigger Y (i.e., like in Owen Sound) and better swimming facilities with better viewing areas and changing facilities."*

- *"With the growing population and popularity to our area. It is time to start thinking about the future of this community. Young and aging folks need a multi-functional facility. Possibly a pool, gymnasium, weight room, pickleball courts. Pickleball is not a fad. It is here to stay."*

Figure 19: Single or multi use preference, by age and community



The ability to have multiple activities or multiple family members engaged under the same roof was often cited as the reason for the multi-use preference over single use facilities. This option was generally viewed to be more convenient, family-friendly, and offered more opportunities to provide a 'community hub' gathering place.

- *"Current facilities are too spread out. My son is at one place and my daughter is at another and I am just driving them to and from. I wish we had something like the Owen Sound YMCA."*
- *"If you are going to build something, make the facility all in one with everything. Do it once and do it right."*
- *"Need more arenas and indoor activity, exercise and/or court space as well as public swims where both kids and parents can be active at the same time!"*
- *"I have grandchildren living here who often drop in at my house with their friends because they have no place to go, especially on a weekend night. We have a void in offering places for youth to "hang out", play games, watch TV, dance to music, or just listen to music. It would be great to offer a youth centre. I would also like to see a public pool in Thornbury. Collingwood's YWCA is too far to go. Thanks for giving us this opportunity to have some input."*
- *"Need to have a community centre, 1 big place that kids can see all the sports together, that has everything, swimming, library, rinks, curling rink, basketball, dog park, fitness centre, a real nice indoor track....etc."*

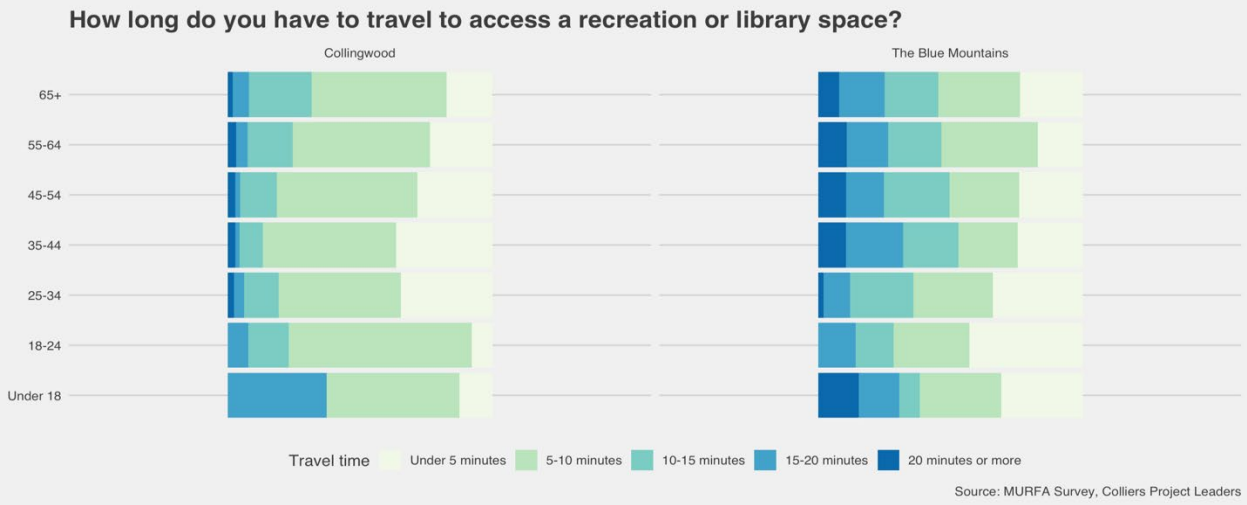
- *"We have a swimming pool, but public swimming is only at certain times, which may or may not be convenient. Many activities that have been set up by the town are outdoor (skate park, volleyball at Sunset, parks etc.). In inclement weather, these are not good options. Keeping children active and allowing them a variety of activities is important for their physical and mental health."*
- *"We should have a multi-use facility. The fact that we have a YMCA right beside Central Park and they are not part of one facility is frustrating. This has allowed for private facilities to be opened up separately to take the place of a basic gym setup. (beside Giant Gym). Look at all the little businesses around Kidding Around/GiantGym/Climbers Corner. These should all be part of a mutli-use facility that can include rock climbing, gymnastics, court sports, gym sports. This would greatly benefit the entire community both from a monetary perspective and a use perspective by merging them together in one facility so they can benefit from sharing all the overhead required to run facilities like these. Plus, we would have larger gym, bigger climbing wall, etc. Not to mention merging the swimming pools. There are many examples of beautiful multi-use facilities in these small towns all around Ontario."*
- *"There are 2 bubble buildings in Collingwood- an ice rink and a pool. This is an embarrassing state of affairs for a town that prides itself on being a recreational community. I've travelled through numerous towns across the province and most of them have facilities that far surpass anything in this town. The YMCA and private business provide most of the recreational opportunities in Collingwood. A MURF is key to having a healthy community and should be a top priority for the town of Collingwood."*

All of these sentiments share an underlying interest: to see various uses co-located in a single facility. This is a convenient option for couples and families where different people may wish to do different activities at the same time; and, for individuals seeking to do multiple kinds of activities. The broader social, economic, environmental and health benefits of creating an appealing community hub or gathering place are well documented.

The clear preference for a multi-use facility has one important caveat: the location will matter. Being able to access the facility within a "reasonable" amount of time was frequently flagged as an important consideration (noting that individual perceptions about what is "reasonable" may vary). As described in **Figure 20**, Blue Mountains residents generally report travelling further to access recreation and library spaces today, although in both communities most respondents indicate they can access a facility within 15 minutes. Importantly, although a general location analysis is in scope for this project, site selection is not (this requires a clearer and agreed-upon definition of

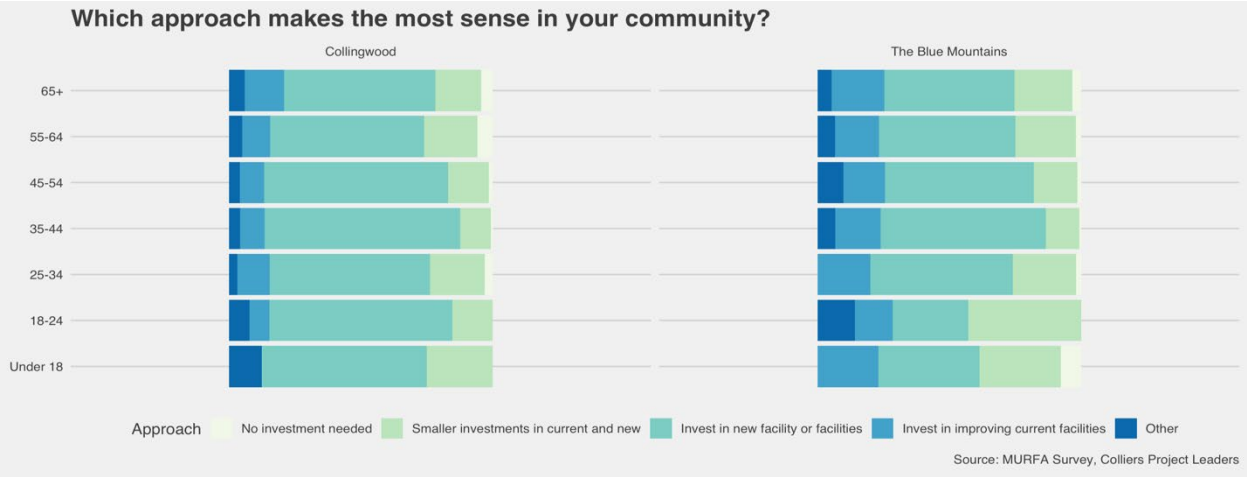
facility needs including total square footage and types of amenities – a step which is usually part of the business case process). As the process progresses, location and distance – and the sense of whether the proposed location is a “reasonable” distance away – will be important considerations.

Figure 20: Travel distance to access a recreation or library space, by age and community



Finally, residents in both The Blue Mountains and Collingwood would generally prefer to new investment (59% overall, with the breakdown by community and age provided in **Figure 21**) over investing in current facilities. The second highest overall response was investments in both new and current facilities (18%) with a remarkably small (2.7%) indicating that no new investment is needed in recreation and library facilities.

Figure 21: Preference for investment in new or existing facilities, by age and community



Interestingly, the preference for investment in new facilities was stronger among respondents from Collingwood than from The Blue Mountains. Blue Mountains residents were more likely to say they would prefer investments in current facilities (see light blue bar in diagram below) or a mix of investments in new and current (green bar), but in both groups the strong preference overall (teal bar) was for investments in new facilities. In the qualitative responses, there were references to the need for continued investment in existing facilities, even in the event of a new multi-use facility. Of course, these perspectives can change once the project is more well scoped – and costed – but the initial perspectives suggest that both multi-use and a new facility are the general and overwhelming interest of residents in both communities.

What We Heard: Theme #4

4. Generally, residents **support collaborative efforts** - including between municipalities and other partners - if it means that community needs can be met faster and more efficiently.

The joint nature of this exploration does not necessarily imply municipal or community support for a joint facility. This question was put to the test particularly in the focus groups and interviews with potential high users of a new facility. On balance, sentiments shared were positive or at least open to the idea of a joint facility – although with some important considerations raised by those who did not support a joint facility.

Focus group respondents shared the following reasons for supporting a joint facility:

- *"Having one in the middle - yeah that would just make sense."*
- *"I mean, of course we want our facilities to be nearby but that depends on your own location and the affordability financially. Could we get a $20 million facility instead of a $10 million facility if we did this together? Obviously, that would be better. I just don't think we have the population on our own to warrant something like this. If you based it on population alone, it would have to be in Collingwood. People in Thornbury would have to drive to Collingwood. But maybe Craigleith would make sense because people could come from the west and the east and share the distance, and you get the opportunity to be part of something bigger. I think people would like that."*
- *"For sure I support a joint facility. I don't foresee in any shape or form why we would need two facilities between Collingwood and Blue – and you know, it would*

be wonderful if we could pull in Clearview too. Our club already kind of does this, with about 50% of the kids coming from Collingwood and the rest coming from somewhere else – Blue or Clearview or even Wasaga or Meaford. This is already kind of normal for these families, going to different places for dance or hockey or even getting bused in for high school – so it's already kind of normal to share our facilities between people who live in different places."

- *"I'm all for the joint facility thing. Why not? If it gets us something bigger and better and faster, let's do it."*

Generally, the rational for supporting a joint facility were rooted in a sense that a shared facility could yield a larger venue and more value in terms of uses, and that the burden of investment would be lessened through working together. Interests in seeing this facility materialize quickly (as referenced in an earlier theme about the mounting sense of urgency) were also often cited as reasons for a preference towards a joint facility.

For the few who expressed reservations about a joint facility, the reason was generally one of three considerations. First, the concerns about municipal dollars subsidizing residents' activities from other communities was raised by a few focus group respondents as an ongoing concern (followed by a discussion about more general considerations like parking charges and library lending policies as examples of how challenging this can become in practice). In one person's words,

- *"While I appreciate the efforts to date, it would be great to see more done to support local residents while balancing the needs and benefits of tourism. With the increase of visitors to the area, there has been a marked reduction in the ability for residents to access facilities and to have their needs met (e.g., parking, competing uses for space). Educating visitors on small town etiquette would be awesome."*

The worry that those who ultimately have to pay for this facility may not be the same geography of people who benefit from the facility was raised as an issue, perhaps more related to the operation of the facility (e.g. user fees, access rights) than the construction of a shared facility itself. The second concern and consideration that was raised by a few focus group respondents was about the area becoming overrun with tourists generally ("*if we build something that is so large that it becomes a place for all of these tournaments and things, what will that mean for residents who want to use it?*"). The third consideration was about the size and scale of the facility if it was pursued as a joint venture between municipalities – specifically what the environmental and health impact would be of what was imagined by the focus group participants as a larger greenfield site rather than adding density to existing areas.

Discussions about joint facilities often also led to questions about how a joint facility would operate ("*who would actually run it, though?*") or questions about the location, as

also raised in the previous theme ("*I love our connection with Blue Mountains, and I think this makes sense, but it depends on where it actually goes. I'd be okay with Craigleith but no further!"*). The operating model and site selection are beyond scope of this initial study but suggest that this stage of work would need to understand the relationship between these key decision points in the project.

On whole, residents generally seem open to and even supportive of collaborative efforts if it means that community needs can be met faster, more efficiently and yield a scale that would not be possible through working alone. Reference to other partners, particularly the YMCA (given the seemingly high awareness of the partnership between the YMCA and municipalities in building multi-use facilities in other communities), were also often made in a positive way. In some cases, a key private or community group were mentioned specifically as being a potential high value partner in the project given the expertise they could contribute about the administration or organization of a specific population group and/or sporting community.

During the MURFA process, there were several outreach efforts from potential facility partners – both private and nonprofit – which on whole reflected a high level of interest in a potential future facility. In some cases, these conversations were with partners who may have significant expertise, resources or capacity to contribute to the project. Engaging an outside organization(s) to play a key role in the administration and operation of the facility is an option that has been used in other communities, for example. As captured in the Executive Summary and the final section of this report, these partnership possibilities should be explored more fully should the municipalities opt to proceed with a multi-use facility, either joint or independently.

Finally, initial conversations were held with key administrative leaders in neighbouring municipalities. These were positive conversations generally met with appreciation for opening lines of communication between neighbours about a major project being explored at an early stage. As neighbouring municipalities plan for their futures in terms of meeting recreational and library facility needs, these preliminary conversations should continue. Should Collingwood and/or The Blue Mountains proceed with a multi-use recreation facility and a location is selected, ongoing discussion with the closest geographic neighbours will be particularly important.

What We Heard: Theme #5

5. Importantly, strategic consideration for what a future facility (or facilities) are trying to accomplish will **maximize community benefits**.

This section has documented a number of important findings from the MURFA listening exercise, including rather remarkable consistency in the desire for adding facility capacity and a preference towards a new multi-use space. The seemingly high level of awareness and exposure to facilities in other locations adds specific expectations of what a potential facility could look like in Blue Mountains or Collingwood and creates excitement about the possibilities from this process.

However, this is still early in the process. This section of the report has flagged questions raised through the process – on the location, or size and scale of the facility, or the operating model for a possible joint facility – but at a deeper level it seems there are three strategic considerations that will be important to resolve before making more specific decisions like square footage, location or specific amenities. Coming to an agreement early on these strategic matters would be particularly important in the scenario where a joint facility is being built with two municipal partners.

First, ***who is this facility really for?*** The range of perspectives on this varied quite a bit. For some, this future potential facility should address current gaps for current residents. Specific examples cited included people with disabilities or the underserved recreation needs of the seniors population. These perspectives were often expressed in similar terms to this individual's contribution focused on the barriers that current residents experience:

- *"I would like to see more classes geared towards or including adults with disabilities such as swimming lessons. Money and having to pay for staff to get anywhere is a huge barrier for the people I support. Not having the ability to go to local park without paying is a huge barrier, paying a staff to get there (who does not live in town then having to pay for parking) is a huge barrier, and when they live below the poverty line, parks are now not accessible. A simple picnic and walk at Sunset Park is no longer an option. They also don't have cell phones/know how to use them to sign up for many things. With everything now online they are missing opportunities."*

For others, the big opportunity presented by the MURFA exploration is to build something of a scale and calibre that will appeal to visitors and attract new people to the region. This was expressed in terms like this:

- *"We see the real value this can bring in so many communities. Let me give you an example. We host a swim meet every June. It brings in almost 500 athletes and their families. We're talking to thousands and thousands of parents staying overnight, eating, and doing all the things that the area has to offer. The impact of this is huge. We can only host this meeting when we put everybody outside. The capacity of the deck is minimal. So, we can't really go bigger, and we can't host at any time of the year. We could do so much more because we're so centrally located. […] A 50-meter pool is the Olympic sized pool. You have to have one to host regional qualifiers and to prepare for national championships. There is no 50-meter pool in this area. If we built one, think of the opportunity."*
- *"There are so many sports where to get to compete or be really elite you have to go somewhere else. Why can't that be here? It seems like such a fit for us to build something that brings our best athletes here. It's on brand."*

The aspiration of who a potential facility is intended to serve is a key decision. Focusing on current gaps for current residents would yield a facility that looks and is sized quite differently from a facility that aims to draw in a larger tourism and economic draw for the region or augment the area's brand as a sports and lifestyle community by drawing in more elite athletes to the area.

Second, **what is this facility trying to accomplish?** Beyond the uses contained within a facility – more sport and recreation capacity, providing specific programming and other offerings, etc. – a public investment of this magnitude can also drive other benefits in a community. The example that was most often cited of this effect was the Eddie Bush arena. Across the survey, interviews and focus groups this example was cited as an example of a recreation facility which benefits the larger community by drawing residents downtown, adding vibrancy and economic activity to the entire area around it. Others raised concerns about the potential consequences of a major investment and facility that brought negative consequences to the community in other areas:

- *"It all depends on the consequences - will old historical buildings be destroyed to build new infrastructure? Will mature trees be cut down for pipes to be put in underground? For every action there is a reaction. I am currently satisfied and would be interested in adding improvements using existing structures, with the environment being top priority."*

Considering site options in particular against a rubric of broader social, economic, environmental, cultural and even wider health considerations will be important. Agreement on strategic consideration of larger objectives will be a particularly essential part of any partnership should a joint facility be pursued.

Finally, although the MURFA consultation reflected generally high support among residents for a multi-use facility, continued community engagement at every step of the process will be important – particularly as the project moves to more detailed phases where location, cost and specific use profiles are known. Answering the strategic questions identified here (who is the facility for, and what is it trying to accomplish?) are important considerations where the public will continue to have useful feedback to inform decisions being made. Although cost did not emerge as a main topic of discussion (and the survey suggested a general preference for investment over making no investment) some did raise concerns about the trade-offs that might be involved for other community priorities:

- "*Of course, we would always like more, but you live with what you can afford. It's just like a home where you fix your roof before you put in a pool. Our roads are a mess and should be a priority."*

Ongoing community consultation and engagement as the project unfolds will be important, consistent with the ethos of this initial phase of work. Residents offered enormous wisdom and insight to the process and can continue to provide guidance as the work progresses.

In this spirit, the final word in this What We Heard summary goes to a resident who wanted to offer a word of advice:

- *"You can't do it all so focus on what the majority would use and what is missing. This seems to be an aging, retirement town, and staying active/fit outside of the ski hills is a big priority for these people. Simple sports that are easy to learn and safe like indoor cycling, walking, yoga, swimming, pickle ball/tennis, etc. should be the focus. It is a proven concept that community (i.e., Blue Zones) prevents aging so consider adding space to enjoy a bite/lunch/BBQs (even if BYOB). So many of our local facilities ignore this […]. Look at what this area doesn't have and build from there. Good luck!"*

Lessons from Other Communities

With residents having a high awareness of other facilities, it begs the question: what can be learned by examining multi-use facilities in other communities?

This benchmarking exercise focused on evaluating municipal recreation facilities across various regions to identify best practices and key amenities that could be incorporated into the proposed new facility. The selected facilities were chosen based on their ability to serve similar community sizes, offer a wide range of services, and demonstrate a strong community impact. The goal was to gather insights on design, operational efficiency, and community engagement to inform the development of a modern, multi-use recreational center.

Twelve facilities were examined as comparators: most from Ontario, as well as a few facilities in other provinces. These facilities serve communities ranging in size from smaller than Collingwood and The Blue Mountains combined; and a few facilities from larger urban centres with an emphasis on the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). These GTA facilities were chosen because of the higher level of awareness expressed by residents in Collingwood and The Blue Mountains (with many residents moving from or having ongoing connections to the GTA). Although these facilities may be at a scale that is larger than what a smaller community would need, they can play an important role in establishing expectations – as documented in the What We Heard section of this report.

This section presents data on three facilities which are currently in operation, as listed in this table, all from the past five years (the oldest facility examined here opened in 2000). The remaining nine facilities are in various states of construction. Contemporary comparators were chosen given the dramatic change in constructing pricing in the wake of the pandemic due to supply chain and inflationary pressures. The latest facility compared here (Pickering) is planned for construction beginning in 2026 with an opening in 2029. For each facility, the following dimensions were examined:

- **Size and Capacity:** The overall square footage and the number of amenities.
- **Project Cost:** Total capital costs of the project, noting the date of construction.
- **Services Offered:** The range and diversity of programs and services, including fitness, aquatics, community events, and specialized sports.
- **Community Impact:** The facility's ability to meet the needs of the population, including accessibility, programming for diverse age groups, and the integration of cultural or educational services.
- **Operational Efficiency:** The effectiveness of governance structures, financial sustainability, and the ability to adapt to changing community needs.

Comparator Facilities for Benchmarking

Facility	Population (2021)	Opening Year	Facility Size	Budget	Land Acreage (acres)	Aquatic Centre (Lanes x Metres)
1. Wasaga Beach, ON Twin Pad Arena & Library	24,862	2024	117,700 sf	$59M	50.0	Lane Pool, Leisure Pool
2. Cranbrook, BC Western Financial Place	20,499	2000	95,000 sf	$22.6M	9.6	8-Lane, 25-meters
3. Spruce Grove, AB TransAlta Tri-Leasure Centre	37,645	2022	226,000 sf	$28M		10-lane, 25-meters
4. Oakville, ON Sixteen Mile Sports Complex	221,484	2025 (expansion)	88,000 sf	$75.5M	49.6	6-lane, 25-meters
5. Cambridge, ON Recreation Complex	143,245	2026	110,000 sf	$112M	32.5	10-lane, 25-meters
6. Vaughan, ON Carrville Community Centre	333,692	2025	92,000 sf	$70M	18.6	25-meters
7. King City, ON Zancor Centre	27,333	2025	124,000 sf	$86M	25	6-lane, 25-meters
8. Guelph, ON South End Community Centre	146,600	2026	160,000 sf	$115M	25	Lap pool
9. Georgina, ON Georginia Multi-Use Recreation Complex	47,642	2024	85,000 sf	$50.2M		6-lane, 25-meters
10. Pickering, ON Seaton Recreation Complex	99,186	2029	TBD	TBD	25	6-8 lane, 25-meters

11. Bracebridge, ON Muskoka Lumber Community Centre & Library	17,305	2024	114,000 sf	$78M		None
12. Toronto, ON Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Community Centre	2.9M	2023	209,000 sf	$93M	9.1	6-lane, 25-meters

Wasaga Beach was unsuccessful in obtaining grant funding from senior levels of government and moved forward using municipal reserves, long-term financing, and community fundraising from the **Wasaga Beach Twin Pad Arena & Library** project. Cambridge sought $25 million from the federal Green and Inclusive Community Buildings (GICB) program to support the **Cambridge Recreation Complex** project. The Oakville **Sixteen Mile Sports Complex** obtained $656,250 through the Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev Ontario), under the Canada Community Revitalization Fund (CCRF) to construct a full-size cricket field at the Complex. Spruce Grove's **TransAlta Tri-Leisure Centre** in partnership with the City of Spruce Grove, received a significant grant to offset the cost of retrofitting facility lights with new energy-saving LED lighting. Guelph's **South End Community Centre** demonstrates the use of their Parks and Recreation Development Charge Reserve Fund for 95% of its $115.5 million budget, while King City's **Zancor Centre** received over $21.1 million from the federal government and $17.6 million from Ontario through the Investing in Canada Plan. Vaughan's **Carrville Community Centre** also utilized city-wide development charges, supplemented by a budget amendment from its public library board.

There is no publicly available information confirming provincial or federal grants for several other facilities, including the **Western Financial Place** in Cranbrook, the **Georgina Multi-Use Recreation Complex**, Pickering's **Seaton Recreation Complex**, Bracebridge's **Muskoka Lumber Community Centre & Library**, and Toronto's **Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Community Centre**.

1. Twin Pad Arena & Library (Wasaga Beach, Ontario)

This facility serves a population of about 20,000 permanent residents, with significant seasonal fluctuations due to tourism. This facility is a key comparator for Collingwood and The Blue Mountains given its close geographic proximity, high level of resident awareness of the facility, and similar population change dynamics during peak tourism seasons. The facility's design and operations, which effectively address the needs of both year-round residents and seasonal visitors, offer useful insights into managing similar demands in the proposed recreation centers.

Twin-Pad Arena & Library	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Wasaga Beach, ON
Area (square feet)	117,669
Library	Yes

Aquatics	Lane pool Leisure pool
Arena - Ice Surface	Twin-pad arena (Two NHL-sized ice pads, 900-seat event arena, 200-seat community arena) Fitness walking track Elevated warm viewing gallery
Outdoor Courts	Outdoor basketball courts
Community Space	Multi-purpose rooms with kitchen and storage facilities
Other Amenities	Electric vehicle charging station Outdoor reading garden Stormwater pond Concession stands Recplex Community Centre (YMCA Day Care, Wasaga Beach YMCA)
Construction Start	2021
Opening	2024
Land Acreage	50 acres
Budget	$59 Million
Governance	The facility is town-run with a partnership between the Recreation and Fitness department and the Wasaga Beach Public Library.

2. Western Financial Place (Cranbrook, BC)

This facility serves approximately 33,000 people within a 20-minute drive, including the City of Cranbrook and nearby regional districts. This facility is an apt comparison due to its role as a central hub for a regional population, much like the anticipated role of the Collingwood and The Blue Mountains potential joint facility. The way Western Financial Place accommodates both a smaller city and its surrounding rural areas provides a model for addressing the needs of a dispersed population.

Western Financial Place	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Cranbrook, BC
Area (square feet)	95,500
Library	No

Aquatics	8-lane, 25-meter lap pool Leisure pool Water slide Hot tub Steam Room Sauna
Arena - Ice Surface	NHL-sized rink with a seating capacity of 4,268 plus 352 standing room
Indoor Gymnasium	None
Outdoor Courts	Seniors' Fitness Park with outdoor training circuit
Community Space	Meeting rooms available for rent or lease
Other Amenities	Catered restaurant (145 capacity) Indoor walking concourse around the perimeter of the arena Squash court with a moveable wall converting into a racquetball or wallyball court
Construction Start	1998
Opening	2000
Budget	$22.6 Million
Governance	Initially started as a P3 project but taken over by the municipality in 2007. The facility is fully managed by the City of Cranbrook.

3. TransAlta Tri-Leisure Centre (Spruce Grove, AB)

This facility serves approximately 100,000 residents across three municipalities—Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Parkland County. Although this facility serves a larger population, its model of regional cooperation and shared services between multiple municipalities is highly relevant. This approach aligns with the collaborative efforts between Collingwood and The Blue Mountains, offering valuable lessons in governance and operational efficiency that could be adapted to the proposed facilities.

TransAlta Tri-Leisure Centre	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Spruce Grove, Alberta
Area (square feet)	226,000
Library	No

Aquatics	25-meter pool with 10 lanes Leisure pool with a play structure and water features Indoor waterslide Hot tub Steam Room
Arena - Ice Surface	Two NHL-sized arenas
Indoor Gymnasium	Gymnasium with sprung flooring for basketball, pickleball, volleyball Indoor walking/running track Group fitness centre Two indoor fields
Outdoor Courts	Outdoor Community Rink for inline skating, ball games (summer), skating rink (winter)
Community Space	Multiple meeting and party rooms
Other Amenities	Leased spaces including a physiotherapy clinic and food concessions, Child minding, personal training
Construction Start	2000
Opening	2022
Budget	$28 Million
Governance	Operated by a Part 9 corporation, which is a not-for-profit entity representing the three municipalities. The governance structure includes a board of directors with representatives from each municipality. It employs about 35 full-time staff and up to 185 part-time and casual staff, depending on the season. The operating cost per square foot has varied over the years, with $31.05 in 2022, $35.74 in 2023 and $36.95 projected for 2024.

4. Sixteen Mile Sports Complex (Oakville, Ontario)

This project is built on a 79-hectare community park with three areas: a natural heritage areas, a parcel under development for the active sports field, and a sports complex with a community centre, library branch and many outdoor amenities.

Sixteen Mile Sports Complex	
Completed?	Expansion ongoing
Location	Oakville, ON
Area (square feet)	88,000
Library	Yes
Aquatics	25-meter,6-lane lap pool Leisure pool

Arena - Ice Surface	Olympic-sized ice pad with seating for 1,500 spectators Three NHL-sized ice pads
Indoor Gymnasium	Fitness/active living centre, flexible multi-use space to accommodate seniors, youth and cultural programming and gymnasium
Outdoor Courts	Basketball, pickleball, tennis, and volleyball courts
Community Space	Multi-use spaces
Other Amenities	Two shooter pads Two community rooms Pro shop Restaurant LEED Gold certification
Construction Start	Expansion - 2022
Opening	2025
Land Acreage	49.6 acres
Budget	Community centre and library addition ~ $75.5 million

5. Cambridge Recreation Complex (Cambridge, Ontario)

The facility will be located on city-owned lands, adjacent to a new public/catholic elementary school with a childcare facility and residential development called South Point. The City of Cambridge, the Waterloo Region District School Board, Waterloo Catholic District School Board and the Cambridge Public Library undertook a Joint Use Campus Feasibility Study to explore and identify synergies between all partners and evaluate various campus and facility space programs. The campus will consist of two separate buildings that will operate independently but will share the use of key facilities including a new community park. This model benefits from maximizing amenities while reducing overall expenditure.

This facility is of particular interest as a comparator given the joint feasibility work and driver for a collaborative facility and campus. The location of the facility adjacent to schools and residential development also underscores the inclusivity of the facility within the community to capitalize on accessibility and ease of use.

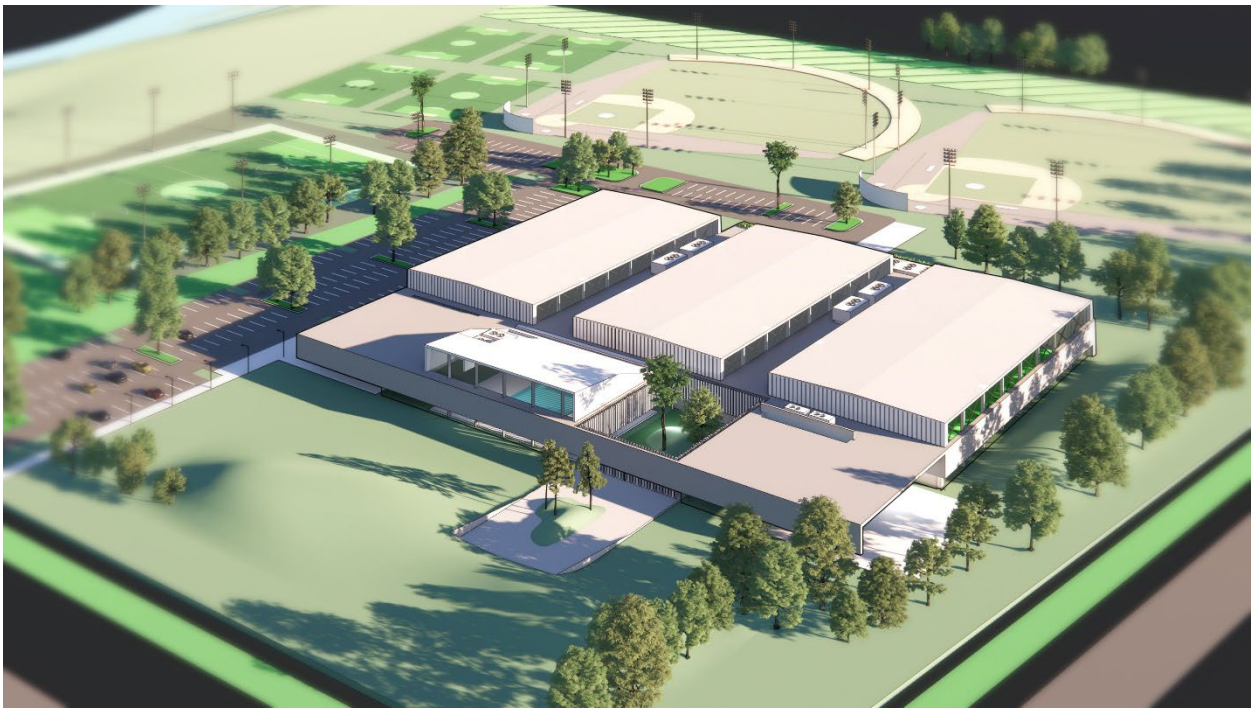
Cambridge Recreation Complex	
Completed?	No
Location	Cambridge, ON
Area (square feet)	110,000
Library	Yes
Aquatics	10 lane, 25m swimming pool Warm water leisure pool
Indoor Gymnasium	3 FFIBA-standard gymnasiums suitable for various sports and activities
Outdoor Courts	None
Community Space	Multi-purpose rooms Fitness area Running/walking track
Other Amenities	Concession stands
Construction Start	2023
Opening	2026
Land Acreage	32.5 acres (City Owned)
Budget	$112 Million

6. Carrville Community Centre (Vaughan, Ontario)

The City of Vaughan is developing a new community centre, library and district park on a parcel of land located between Dufferin and Bathurst streets near Major Mackenzie Drive on a 7.53-hectare parcel of land. The Carrville Community Centre, Library and District Park site is defined by Major Mackenzie Drive (to the north), Valley Vista Drive (to the south), Thomas Cook Avenue (to the west) and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority-regulated valley lands and associated watercourse (to the east).

Carrville Community Centre	
Completed?	No
Location	Vaughan, ON
Area (square feet)	92,000
Library	Yes
Aquatics	25-meter pool Leisure pool

Arena - Ice Surface	
Indoor Gymnasium	Double gymnasium with retractable seating
Outdoor Courts	
Community Space	Multi-purpose room Fitness center Teaching kitchen Childcare area
Other Amenities	LEED Gold and CaGBC Zero Carbon Building Standard certifications.
Construction Start	2022
Opening	2025
Land Acreage	7.53 hectare
Budget	$70 Million



7. Zancor Centre (King City, Ontario)

The $86 million facility sits on 25 acres at the southeast corner of the King Campus of Seneca College and will be accessible from 15th Sideroad. The Zancor Centre will include an aquatics centre with a six-lane lap pool and leisure pool, two NHL-sized ice rinks, spectator seating, an artificial turf fieldhouse with running track, and a multi-use community space. Outdoor amenities include a large courtyard with direct access to social and community rooms, with future plans for the site including connections to the Oak Ridges Moraine trail system and outdoor sports fields.

Zancor Centre	
Completed?	Yes
Location	King City, ON
Area (square feet)	124,000
Library	No
Aquatics	Six-lane 25-metre lap pool Leisure pool

Arena - Ice Surface	Two NHL-sized ice surfaces with change rooms, seating, and storage
Indoor Gymnasium	Artificial turf fieldhouse Running track
Outdoor Courts	Future plans for outdoor sports field
Community Space	Multi-purpose community room
Construction Start	2023
Opening	2026
Land Acreage	25 acres
Budget	$86 Million

8. South End Community Centre (Guelph, Ontario)

The South End Community Centre is a 160,000 square foot facility with twin ice pads, aquatic center with a lap and teaching pool, double gymnasium, walking track and multi-purpose rooms, all connected by a central lobby. The community centre will be built on existing City-owned lands. The facility's green initiatives align with the City's community net zero carbon and corporate 100 per cent renewable energy goals, and the Canada Green Building Council's Net Zero Carbon design criteria.

South End Community Centre	
Completed?	No
Location	Guelph, ON
Area (square feet)	160,000
Library	No
Aquatics	Lap pool Teaching pool
Arena - Ice Surface	Twin ice pads
Indoor Gymnasium	Double gymnasium
Community Space	Multi-purpose rooms

Other Amenities	Walking track
Construction Start	2023
Opening	2026
Land Acreage	25 acres
Budget	$115 Million

9. Georgina Multi-Use Recreation Complex (MURC) (Georgina, Ontario)

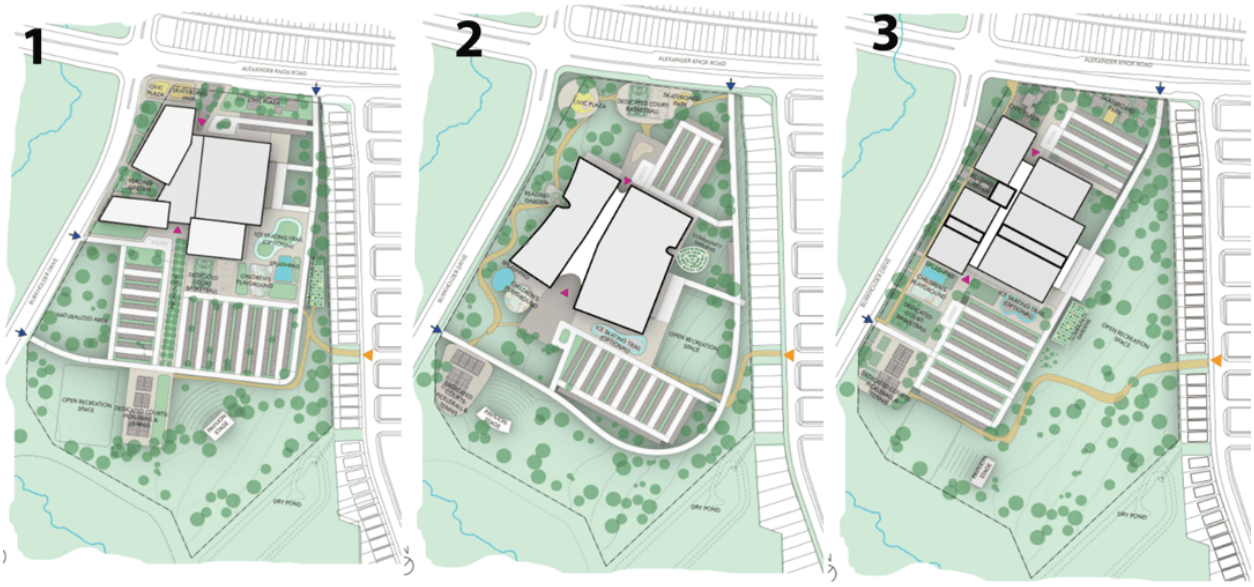
The recreation complex is a community destination and includes:

- Six-lane 25-metre pool
- Therapy pool
- Double gymnasium
- Indoor walking track
- Multi-use meeting/activity rooms
- Active living space
- Discovery Library branch offering expanded programs and new technology options.

The goal of the complex is to create an inclusive environment that offers multi-purpose and multi-generational spaces to serve as a community living room and hub. The anticipated project budget for the MURC is $50.2 million. It will be 100 per cent funded by development charges due to legislative changes at the provincial level. There will be no tax levy increases relating to the MURC capital and operating costs. The anticipated annual net operating costs for the MURC will be approximately $2 million. The entire amount will be funded through assessment growth, which is the new property taxes that will be collected from new development. As a result, there will be no tax levy increases relating to the MURC operating costs. The design for the MURC was developed with

public and stakeholder consultation that included public input sessions, surveys and outreach throughout the Town at various community events. Information was shared on social media, in print and online on the dedicated Building Georgina webpage. A video was also created that highlighted the community involvement in the project.

Georgina Multi Use Recreation Complex	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Keswick, ON
Area (square feet)	85,000
Library	Yes
Aquatics	6-lane, 25-meter pool Two-depth leisure pool
Arena	Ice Surface
Indoor Gymnasium	Double gymnasium
Outdoor Courts	
Community Space	Multi-use meeting and activity rooms
Other Amenities	Indoor walking track
Construction Start	2021
Opening	2024
Land Acreage	
Budget	$50.2 Million



10. Seaton Recreation Complex & Library (Pickering, Ontario)

The Seaton Recreation Complex & Full-Service Library will be Pickering's first multipurpose recreation complex built in Pickering since the Pickering Recreation Complex (now the Chestnut Hill Developments Recreation Complex) opened in 1983. The final amenities and functional programs will be guided by the City's Recreation & Parks - Ten Year Plan, the Pickering Public Library's Strategic Plan, and community consultation.

Seaton Recreation Complex & Library	
Completed?	No
Location	Pickering, ON
Area (square feet)	TBD
Library	Yes
Aquatics	25-metre, 6-8 lane pool Warm-water leisure pool
Arena - Ice Surface	Two-pad arena

Indoor Gymnasium	Divisible gymnasium to accommodate various sports and activities
Outdoor Courts	Destination playground Splash pad Sport courts
Community Space	Multi-purpose program room for community events and activities
Other Amenities	 Fitness center and studios Walking track Support spaces including office space, and storage
Construction Start	Spring 2026
Opening	Spring 2029
Land Acreage	25 acres
Budget	TBD

11. Muskoka Lumber Community Centre & Library (Bracebridge, Ontario)

The Muskoka Lumber Community Centre is a state-of-the-art, multi-generational social hub that consolidates community activities and services under one roof. The facility is home to an arena, library, multi-sport fieldhouse, outdoor courtyard, and play space, and includes the option for future expansion, supporting Bracebridge for generations to come.

Muskoka Lumber Community Centre & Library	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Bracebridge, ON
Area (square feet)	114, 000

Library	Yes
Aquatics	None
Arena - Ice Surface	Single ice pad with seating for 1,020 spectators
Indoor Gymnasium	Multi-sport fieldhouse suitable for various indoor sports and activities
Outdoor Courts	Outdoor courtyard Play space
Community Space	Community hall Café Office spaces Administrative and support areas
Other Amenities	Makerspace Recording studio Auditorium
Construction Start	2021
Opening	2024
Land Acreage	
Budget	$78 Million

12. Ethennonnhawahstihnen’ Community Centre (Toronto, Ontario)

Completed in 2023, Ethennonnhawahstihnen’ (pronounced Etta-nonna wasti-nuh) is a multi-use Community Recreation Centre with an Aquatic Centre, Child Care Centre and a Toronto Public Library branch.

The new 209,000 sq ft Community Centre serves Bayview Village and Concord Park Place, an area that will host over 10,000 residents. The multi-function facility includes recreation space comprised of a double gymnasium with change rooms, indoor running track, fitness studio, weight room, art rooms, pre-school room, games room, community hall with kitchen, multipurpose rooms, six-lane lap pool, 25m length leisure pool with water play areas, Toronto Public Library branch, childcare centre with outdoor play areas, three levels of underground parking.

Ethennonnhawahstihnen' Community Centre	
Completed?	Yes
Location	Toronto, ON
Area (square feet)	209,000
Library	Yes
Aquatics	6-lane, 25-meter lap pool Leisure pool
Arena - Ice Surface	None
Indoor Gymnasium	Double gymnasium is available for various sports and recreational activities
Outdoor Courts	None
Community Space	Multiple multi-purpose rooms Fitness studio Weight room Art rooms Preschool room Games room Divisible community hall with a kitchen
Other Amenities	Indoor running/walking track Childcare center with a capacity for 52 children Rooftop solar farm
Construction Start	2019
Opening	2023
Land Acreage	9.1 acres
Budget	$93 Million

Comparative Analysis

Twelve facilities were examined as comparator projects in this section: mostly from Ontario, and all with some or all construction occurring within a recent (or ongoing/future) time horizon. Some of these facilities serve a smaller or similar population base as Collingwood and The Blue Mountains together, such as the facilities in Wasaga Beach, Bracebridge and Cranbrook. The highly seasonal nature and population changes over the course of the year in communities like Wasaga and Bracebridge make these facilities particularly important comparators. Some facilities presented here are from larger urban centres but included given the high level of influence that these facilities seem to have on residents' expectations in The Blue Mountains and Collingwood, as captured in the What We Heard section.

One of the most obvious observations based on this comparison is that multi-use recreation facilities are not one-size-fits-all. They are not simply a calculation based on population or other factors; instead, each one takes a slightly different form based on the mix of existing amenities, the priorities of the community, availability of resources, mix of partners and uses involved, and other factors. That said, there are some patterns across these comparator projects which are worth noting:

- **Size and Capacity:** as captured in the summary table at the beginning of this section, facility size varies enormously (from under 100,000sf to well over 200,000 sf). Importantly, community size does not emerge as the predictor of facility size; instead, this tends to be more of a reflection of each community's mix of amenities and the capacity desired in each community (which is likely a decision informed at least in part by existing capacity in other facilities or other factors).

- **Project Cost:** the variation in capital cost (from under $30 million to well over $100 million) is also greater than what may have been expected. The per-square-foot construction cost varies (for example, $817/sf in the Georgina facility, $663/sf in the Bracebridge facility, $463 in the Wasaga facility, $778/sf in the Cambridge facility). These costs are sensitive to many factors: the size and scale of the facility; timing of construction; the mix of amenities included, with some amenities such as a pool adding significantly to the per square foot cost; facility- and site-specific details related to the parcel of land, ownership arrangements; and more. Facilities with high environmental standards (e.g. LEED Gold) will have different capital and operating costs. Operating costs also vary widely depending on the governance and operating model, particularly depending on

the employer arrangement for staff working in each facility. The next section provides a deeper look at operating costs in one facility, as a comparator case.

- **Services Offered:** the range and diversity of amenities and services, including fitness, aquatics, community events, and specialized sport uses, vary by facility. Most of the facilities (8 of 12) examined here include a library branch. Almost all of these facility examples include aquatics, but what this means ranges in terms of the length and number of lanes and other types of aquatics amenities (e.g. leisure pool, waterslides, hot tubs). Some but not all facilities include arena space also with variation in ice pads. The mix of courts vary including both indoor and outdoor offerings. Some of the less common amenities such as recording studios, maker spaces, childcare and child minding, dining offerings, off leash dog parks, walking tracks and more add a unique personality and experience in each facility.

- **Community Impact:** multi-use recreation facilities are being carefully examined, evaluated and then constructed in communities across the country. This fact on its own is an important expression of how valued these facilities have become in Canadian communities, including those examined here. Expansions on current facilities and planned future expansions is further evidence of this point. Although collecting residents' feedback on facilities in other communities was outside of the scope of this project, the highly positive reviews of other communities' facilities shared by residents in The Blue Mountains and Collingwood is a reflection of the impact these facilities have on their users.

- **Operational Efficiency:** the effectiveness of governance structures, financial sustainability, and the ability to adapt to changing community needs is a shared objective across all multi-use facilities, particularly those where there are multiple partners engaged in the space. Should the Collingwood and The Blue Mountains Councils opt to pursue a joint multi-use facility, a few governance models should be closely examined – including an option which involves a third-party operator – which would be a part of the detailed business case. Site visits to facilities which have a similar governance model would also be well worth the investment as a way to learn more about the lessons of multi-partner facilities in both construction and operational phases.

Comparator Case: Operating Pro Forma

The comparator facilities examined in this section vary in scope and scale. In effort to add a more nuanced picture of what the financial commitment of a multi-use facility can involve, this section provides a closer look at the revenues, expenses and municipal contribution of a comparator facility.

The TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre (Spruce Grove, Alberta) was selected as a good comparator case (see #3 in the previous section for details about this facility). The facility serves approximately 100,000 residents across three municipalities—Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, and Parkland County. Although this facility serves a larger population (~100k), its model of regional cooperation and shared services between multiple municipalities is highly relevant. The facility also includes a mix of amenities desired by residents and in the existing master plans – ice pads, aquatics, indoor and outdoor courts, and various community spaces including a café, a market and some retail spaces.

The TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre is run by a corporation jointly established by three municipalities to oversee the facility. It is led by a Board of Directors that includes a mix of elected officials and residents from the three municipalities.

The following financial information was modelled from the Centre's 2024 Financial Statements.[18] The data was reviewed and converted to a cash basis and modelled over a 10-year period from 2030-2040. The net present value numbers are expressed in both 2025 and 2030 dollars.

The operating pro forma below captures the revenues for TransAlta: recreation fees, rental revenues, donations, advertising and more. It also captures expenses: chiefly, salaries and benefits; costs related to repairs, maintenance and utilities, and other costs.

The most important part for the purposes of this report is likely the partner contribution. Like most municipal recreation facilities, the facility requires a public contribution to operate. In this case, the partnership contribution is about $2.1 million per year (or $21 million over 10 years, expressed in 2025 dollars). This cost is shared between the partner municipalities.

[18] Available online: https://www.trileisure.com/uploads/source/2024_TLC_Financials_web.pdf

TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre

Cash Inflows

Operating Revenues	Common Size	10 Year (2030-2039)	1 Year (2030)
Pass Fees	46.58%	$ 43,260,947	$ 3,725,278
Partner Contributions	0.00%	$ -	$ -
Rental	21.48%	$ 19,954,858	$ 1,718,349
Program Fees	15.42%	$ 14,324,228	$ 1,233,485
Corporate Sponsors and Donations	5.40%	$ 5,013,016	$ 431,680
Lease	3.38%	$ 3,138,908	$ 270,297
Interest	2.19%	$ 2,031,546	$ 174,940
Management Services	2.22%	$ 2,064,208	$ 177,753
Miscellaneous	2.52%	$ 2,336,685	$ 201,216
Advertising	0.49%	$ 454,416	$ 39,131
Commissions	0.33%	$ 304,187	$ 26,194
Total Revenues	100%	$ 92,882,998	$ 7,998,322

Cash Outflows

Operating Expenses	Common Size	10 Year (2030-2039)	1 Year (2030)
Salaries, Wages, and Benefits	71.10%	66,041,049	5,686,913
Repairs and Maintenance	21.37%	19,846,866	1,709,049
Utilities	15.36%	14,262,542	1,228,173
Contracted Services	12.49%	11,597,701	998,699
Materials, Goods and Services	5.89%	5,474,451	471,415
Administrative Services	4.99%	4,632,113	398,880
Amortization of Tangible Capital Assets	0.00%	-	-
Other	1.28%	1,186,610	102,181
Marketing and Publications	0.77%	710,696	61,199
Total Expenses	133%	123,752,027	10,656,509

Income

Total Revenue	92,882,998	7,998,322
Total Opex	123,752,027	10,656,509
Partnership Contribution	(30,869,029)	(2,658,187)
Present Value	(25,264,395)	(2,565,075)
Net Present Value (2030)	**(25,264,395)**	
Net Present Value (2025)	**(21,138,853)**	

Options for the Future

As captured in the benchmarking summary, there are many important differences in multi-use recreation facilities built in different communities. There is no ‘one size fits all’ that works everywhere; instead, these facilities reflect differences in the communities in terms of what they need and what they want to accomplish through investing in a major multi-use facility. In other words, *form follows function*.

This report recommends proceeding with a joint multi-use recreation facility shared between Collingwood and The Blue Mountains, together with public libraries and potentially other partners. The report outlines a path forward, starting with Council commitments in both municipalities to proceed together, empowering a shared decision-making body to lead the process and make joint decisions about the project, and developing a business case which costs specific options.

Should these recommendations be supported by both Councils to proceed, there will likely be (at least) two significant decisions ahead with anticipated high levels of public interest: first, the specific location where the facility will be located; and second, the mix of amenities chosen to include in the facility, which will also be a central driver of facility capital and operating costs. Although the public has been vocally engaged, there may be a desire to seek additional feedback on some of these key decisions.

The decision to proceed with a joint (vs separate or single individual) facility is a foundational threshold decision which will shape other decisions including location, amenities and costs. In the past, elevated expectations for a project which did not materialize created anger, a heightened sense of urgency and a more challenging public context for future facility considerations. As such, making decisions to move forward is best done in a well-planned manner starting with the big picture question: are we proceeding towards a facility, and are we doing it together?

Addressing this initial question is paramount. This report outlines a collaborative approach, including empowering a joint decision-making committee which includes senior leaders from both municipal administrations. This group would have a key role and make joint recommendations to both municipal councils going forward. Importantly, they would also establish protocols for sharing otherwise confidential information including about the financial projections, plans and priorities of each municipality as well as confidential information about land holdings.

This body should establish key parameters for the project (including upper limit capital costs) and make important decisions. This section captures important considerations for

a potential future joint multi-use facility emerging from this process. It offers guidance in four areas: prioritization of amenities, selection of location, sources of financing and governance model. The data presented here is aimed to support this decision-making process.

Prioritizing Amenities

The most significant driver of costs in a multi-use facility is the mix of amenities included. This will also be a key area of interest for the public, both in terms of the mix of amenities (what's included in the facility?) and the scale (what size is the pool? How many courts of what type?).

Based on the (1) public input about preferred amenities for a new multi-use facility; (2) capacity gaps as identified in master plans; (3) a comparative examination of peer groups; and (4) general industry data, a number of priority amenities emerge – presented here in a ranked order.

Priority	Rational
1: Aquatics	Aquatics emerge as the top priority amenity for the multi-use facility. This could be a 25m pool or aim larger for a 50m 8-lane competitive training facility (a recent paper[19] notes that Ontario overall has a lack of these facilities and there is an industry advocacy campaign for dedicated provincial funding for Olympic sized aquatics training facilities). This was the top amenity desired by residents and is the most common sport of choice in Canada. The proximity of communities along Georgian Bay was also noted often in the community consultation as a brand-defining priority – and important safety investment as well.
2: Ice	Given the "very poor" condition of the Eddie Bush arena, the enthusiasm around hockey in the public consultation, and the suggested service level not being met by the current number of ice pads available, the creation of new ice pads takes second priority. Both municipalities should share condition assessments about their existing arenas, including plans for repairs/renovations and

[19] *Building More Aquatic Centres in Ontario*.

	eventual replacement, in making decisions about how many ice pads to include.
3: Courts	The public consultation showed great enthusiasm for court sports including pickleball, tennis, volleyball and more. Given their actual service level and suggested service level, this category takes third priority. During the focus groups, there were many animated discussions about more innovative ways to meet these needs – including dedicated courts as well as indoor multi-courts with under floor lighting that can change to regulation lines for various sports and uses. Court spaces tend to be more affordable per square foot than uses like aquatics, so adding significant capacity in a new venue to address multiple sport and recreational needs is an exciting opportunity.
4: Library & Community Space	Community gathering places will be a big part of what brings a new multi-use recreational facility to life, offering additional experiences and 'third space' opportunities for families and individuals to enjoy will enhance and animate the venue. Both library partners had innovative ideas on what a potential space (or spaces) could look like, such as maker space or gallery opportunities. Add-on amenities such as indoor walking tracks, open gym space (for everything from kids programming to yoga studio to other communal uses), and purpose-built offerings like community kitchens can provide the unique appeal of this facility.

The question of the scope and scale of each of these amenities (size of pool, number of courts, total square footage for community space, etc.) should be sensitive to the collective capital funds available for the project. Additional consultation with the anticipated high user groups in each amenity category would be a valuable part of the next stage of this process, once a commitment to proceed has been made (as to not build expectation before this commitment is in place).

Location Criteria

Location analysis will be heavily reliant on the building footprint, indoor amenities, outdoor amenities, and parking considerations. Detailed site analysis is recommended during business case development to properly assess land availability and facility requirements.

A driving factor for this multi-use recreation facility exploration and the options in this report is the pace of growth in The Blue Mountains and Collingwood. To repeat the diagrams from the first section of this report, this growth has been concentrated in specific parts of the municipalities. These patterns are presented here in two ways: first the rate of population change, reflecting the highest rate of growth occurring in The Blue Mountains in the area bordering Collingwood (see Figure 2, repeated); and, the number of dwellings being constructed, where the highest number of new units being constructed is in Collingwood in an area bordering The Blue Mountains (see Figure 5, repeated).

Figure 6: Population change, Collingwood and The Blue Mountains (2016-2021)

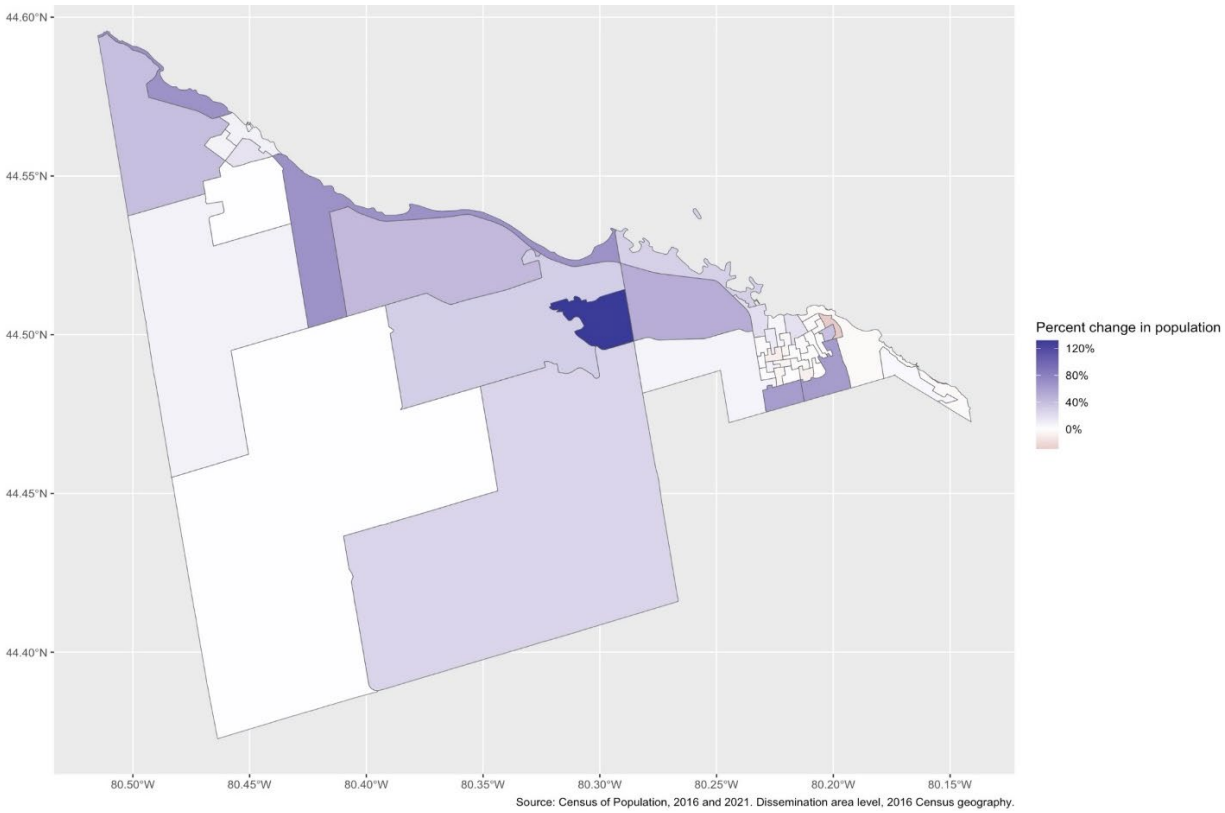
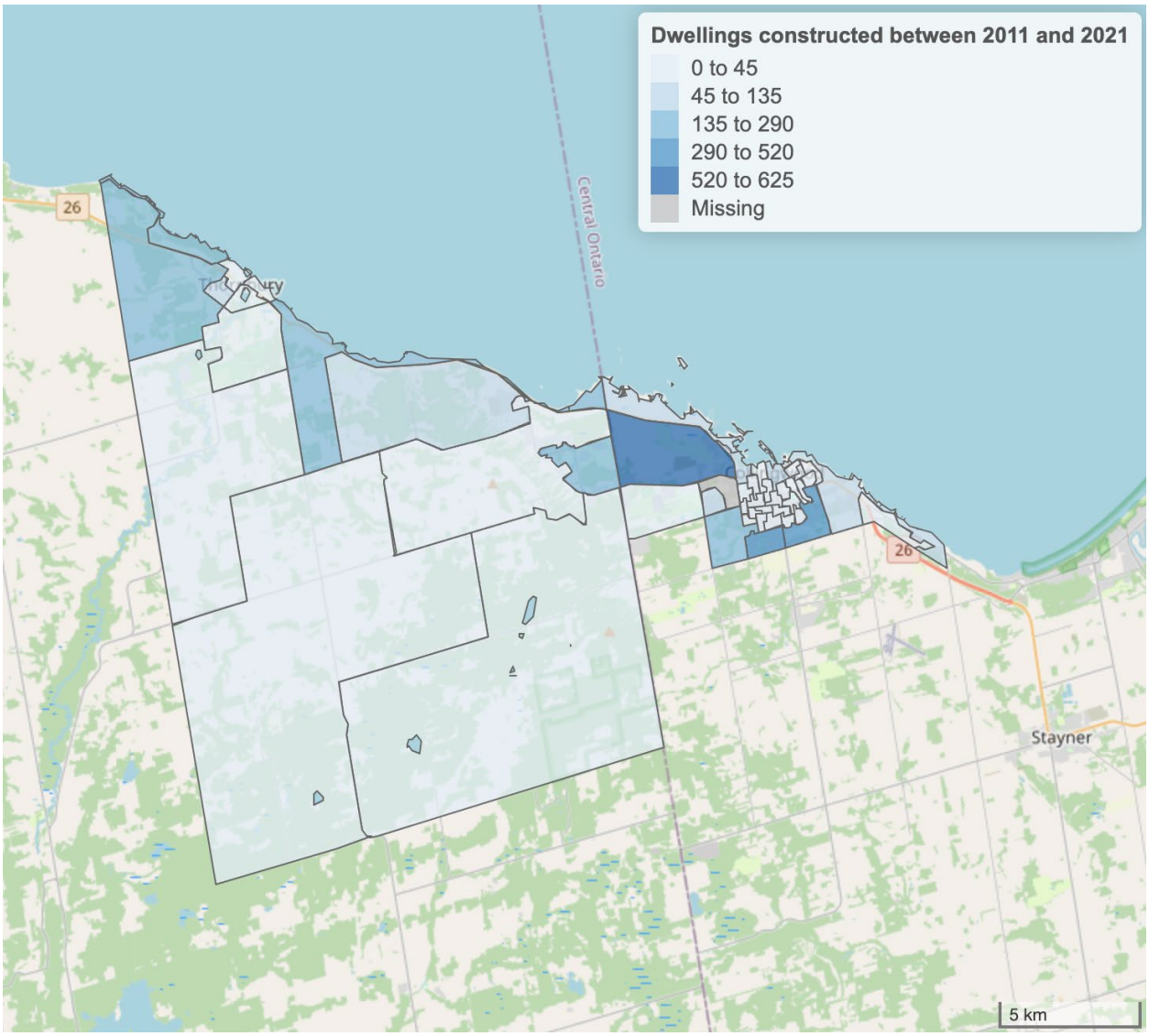


Figure 7: Dwellings constructed between 2011 and 2021



These combined patterns are another indication that a joint facility may make sense, as both communities may have a desire to locate new amenities in places of high growth and the geographic proximity of these capacity needs can be mutually addressed with a joint facility.

It will be important for Collingwood and The Blue Mountains to find a location that is central to both communities and is ideally already municipal owned to reduce overall project costs. Municipal owned land will reduce the capital expenditure for this project.

At this stage of project exploration location considerations are tied to community impact, zoning accessibility and land availability. During the community outreach the desire for a

facility that is located within community as opposed to in industrial areas was expressed. It was also mentioned that a recreation facility should be accessible whether that's by walking, transit, bike or other modes of transportation. Many community members expressed a desire to stay within a 30-minute radius to access a facility. The community outreach did not focus on specific location or land, however, the community of Craigleith was highlighted on numerous engagements as being a community with need for more services and land potential that would be accessible for both Collingwood and The Blue Mountains.

From the benchmarking information in the "Lessons from Other Communities" section above and additional research conducted the range of site acreage to accommodate a Multi Use Recreation facility can range significantly depending on recreational programming, future expansion considerations and particulars of the real estate transaction. At a minimum for 100,000 sq. ft. facility the Towns could anticipate a requirement for 10 acres to accommodate the facility or as much as 22 acres depending on programing, landscaping and outdoor uses desired.

Should both municipalities decide to pursue a joint facility, it is recommended that the site selection process begin with terms established in a memorandum of understanding that allow for sharing confidential information about municipal land assets; and, where the focus is on lands which are as close to the boundary between the municipalities as possible to ensure a central location for residents in both communities. Selecting the ideal site may influence other considerations such as land and/or facility ownership.

Sources of Funding and Anticipated Cost

Most municipal recreation facilities are funded through some combination of property taxes, development charges, and funding from other sources. In some cases, this includes funding from other governments. During business case development the project budget will be developed considering numerous factors such as facility size, location and amenities. The analysis below provides an overview of current funding opportunities that Collingwood and The Blue Mountains can explore to assist in the cost of the project.

No.	Program Name	Funding Type	Eligibility	Funding	Projects	Description	Due Date
1	Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund (CSRIF)	Provincial	Municipalities, Indigenous communities and organizations, local service boards, not-for-profits, and for-profits managing spaces for sport or recreation programs	Funding up to $10 million. Projects must be completed, with all eligible expenses incurred, by March 31, 2027	New builds, transformative investments, or iconic sport/recreation projects	The Ontario government has launched the $200M CSRIF to build and revitalize sport and recreation facilities	ongoing until all funding has been allocated

2	Canada Community-Building Fund	Federal	All Ontario municipalities	$358M allocated to Ontario	Infrastructure across 19 categories, including recreation	This federal program provides long-term funding for various infrastructure projects, including recreational facilities.	ongoing
4	FCM - Study: New construction of municipal and community buildings	Federal/Municipal	Municipalities, not-for-profits, Indigenous communities	Up to $200K (50–80% of costs)	Feasibility studies for energy-efficient municipal/community buildings	A feasibility study that assesses in detail the approaches needed to implement a new construction of an energy efficient community or municipal building.	Ongoing

5	FCM - Capital project: Construction of new sustainable municipal and community buildings	Federal/Municipal	Municipalities, Indigenous communities, non-profits6	Up to $10M (grant + loan)	New builds, retrofits, and low-carbon initiatives	A capital project that constructs a new, low-carbon municipally owned building	ongoing
6	Community Fundraising	Donations	N/A	$2.5-$5.0M	N/A	Reviews of press releases across Canada indicates that similar projects have secured fund raising donations in excess of $5M.	

At this feasibility stage of the project, it is difficult to determine construction costing with out establishing a footprint of a building and specifics of the programming/services to be included in the facility. However, the Altus Canada 2025 Costing Guide indicates that the anticipated hard(construction) per square foot costing for multi-recreation facilities would be in the range of $670 to $1180 per square foot. In addition, project soft costs (architectural/engineering) costs for

infrastructure projects of this nature are generally within a range of 10% to 15% in addition to the hard costs. The numbers are within the range of most recent projects included in the benchmarking section above.

Consideration of Governance Models

Facility governance refers to the accountability and responsibility, and the ways this is organized including across partner organizations. It also includes important practices and norms: who makes decisions, how decisions including the use of resources get made, how others are able to contribute to or shape decision making and activities. In designing the governance model for a facility, there is no 'one size fits all.' Instead, there are many different models which have been used in practice to govern multi-partner recreation and other facilities. Generally, form should follow function. The governance model will be different depending on key decisions about the function of the facility. These decisions include:

- **Ownership: who owns the land and/or the facility?** A common model is where the host municipality owns (purchase or use existing) the land and the facility on it. There are examples where the landowner and the building owner are not the same (e.g. the long-term land lease model of the Sports Centre in London, Ontario). Models where two or more partners may share the ownership, sometimes through the creation of a new joint body (e.g. a municipal services corporation or similar) or through an agreement, could also be explored.
- **Operation: who is responsible for the operation of the facility**? Is this a single entity, or does it function as a partnership – and if the latter, what is the distribution of responsibilities and/or the vehicle for this partnership to make decisions? There are many multi-use facilities where a third party – a private or community entity – plays an important role as the operator of all or part of the facility, even in municipally-owned facilities. The operator model chosen will influence the ongoing operating budget of the facility.
- **Tenants: which organizations have a presence in the facility, and what role do they play in the overall facility governance?** From small cafes to large anchor tenants, considering the mix of tenants and their role within the broader facility governance is important. There will be different norms across organizations involved in the same facility – from hours of operation to parking practices with staff to larger issues like security and branding – which must be navigated at the outset and over time.

Recommendations

The Joint Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA), initiated in partnership by the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood, alongside the Collingwood Public Library and Blue Mountains Public Library, to explore whether a new multi-use recreation facility is desired, needed and warranted

This report has considered various data points to explore this question: a background context review of growth patterns in both communities over the past few years; an extensive public consultation listening process to hear perspectives from residents across various platforms; a review of multi-use facilities in other communities including lessons learned; and a review of the range of financing and governance options.

Ultimately, the decision on whether a multi-use facility is warranted is not something that can be calculated using data alone. There are communities with larger and smaller populations which already have successful, operational multi-use facilities. There are always trade-offs between major public investments where funds for a large facility could have also been used elsewhere. The value placed on certain kinds of amenities and facilities – and the perception of priorities, gaps and future needs – all vary from place to place.

Instead, the decision rests on an examination of various options against one another, asking which of these options will best achieve what this community wants and needs as it is understood today.

For this MURFA report, four scenario options were considered against one another:

- **Option 1: No New Facility** – no apparent need or justification for major investment in a new public facility or facilities; low public interest in a multi-use or joint facility; a better approach may be to consider alternative and more modest ways to address future recreation and library capacity needs.

- **Option 2: Proceed with Separate Single-Use Facility Solutions –** no apparent interest in a shared facility or a critical misalignment between partners where a successful collaboration seems unlikely; more interest in single-use facilities and needs of one community and/or type of amenity far outweigh the others where a single-use solution may be better suited; the option would be for each municipality and partner organization to proceed with building their own facilities (multi- or single-use) over time in alignment with their existing recreation master plans, library facilities plans, etc.

- **Option 3: Proceed Together Towards a Joint Multi-Use Facility** – signs of strategic compatibility between partners, an openness among stakeholders and potential users for a joint facility, and a general preference towards a multi-use solution; formalize the partnership (and potentially explore the role of other partners in a more focused way as potential owners, operators and/or tenants), create a vehicle for shared decision making and action, and move towards a business case for a joint multi-use facility

- **Option 4: Proceed with Separate Multi-Use Facilities** – clear interest in multi-use facility but no apparent interest in a collaboration; no obvious alignment in interests, timelines and needs between partners; option of separate multi-use facilities which retain the branding and control of each municipality to be built a time that is financially feasible in each community on their own.

The first option was discarded quickly. The sheer pace of population growth in both The Blue Mountains and Collingwood (and, in the region more generally) paired with the current capacity issues across several different types of facilities and amenities makes this an unwise option. These issues are already well documented in both municipalities' master plans. Should the current rate of growth continue (even at a more modest level) these current capacity issues – which are already acute in some cases – would quickly become a major problem. This option also seems inconsistent with the existing strategic direction in both municipalities and public libraries, where the pent-up demand for years has led to including an explicit reference to a multi-use space being included in strategic plans and recreation master plans already.

Option 4 was the next option to be discarded. One lesson from other communities in the process of building multi-use facilities is how dramatically the cost of capital works has escalated over recent years. One of the many 'long tails' of the COVID pandemic is rising inflation around the world and rapid increases in the cost of materials and labour related to construction in Canada. The cost of a potential multi-use project will be significant and is unknown until more detailed plans can be developed through a business case and facility design. Taking on a significant public facility project in this environment carries with it financial risk – so recommending that each municipality pursue this on their own would require a demonstrated capacity to take on this risk in both municipalities on their own. For reasons related to population size, facility cost, and risk levels, Option 4 of pursuing separate multi-use facilities is also not recommended.

The consideration between the final two options – Option 2 and Option 3 – was more difficult. There are differences between the municipalities in terms of population, level of growth, existing recreational and library capacity, and in a few minor areas in the

interests expressed by residents. The practicalities of working together should not be underestimated, from timelines to make political decisions to coordinating planning activities to the actual operation of a shared facility. The time costs of a joint project compared to a simpler approach of working alone and scoping smaller projects (potentially including single or multi-use, or a combination – for example, if Collingwood opted to build a multi-use facility and The Blue Mountains focused instead on a single-use aquatics facility, as a fictious scenario). One of the appeals of Option 2 is that a potential partnership between each municipality and their respective library board might be easier to navigate than an arrangement where shared efforts between municipalities could delay progress in both communities – or asking two separate public libraries to work together in a way that extends beyond what is conventional or fits neatly in the *Public Libraries Act.* In other words, both Option 2 and Option 3 have strong pros and cons – as outline in this table.

Option	Pros	Cons
Option 2: Proceed Separately with Single Use Facility Solutions	• Simpler to navigate through the decision-making process and potentially to operate. • Allows each community to add only amenities that are most important to their residents. • May make the library partnerships and involvement easier. • More traditional, easy to understand; clearer lines of accountability between who pays and who benefits. • Easier to integrate into existing built-up areas.	• Would most likely lead to either smaller facilities with less capacity, or more capacity at greater expense by pursuing multiple projects. • Limits the opportunity to do something more significant (e.g., establishing the community as a tourism designation through a more elite offering; providing a wider range of amenities in the facility for residents
Option 3: Proceed Together	• Adds financial capacity by combining resources of more than one municipality (likely through	• More complex; rests on a strong partnership between municipalities which may be difficult to sustain over time.

	development charges and other sources) • May be more appealing to potential funders (e.g., federal, and provincial funding opportunities) • Enables adding higher caliber recreational offerings and at a larger scale than either municipality may be able to do on their own. • Cost of development (including studies, design work, construction contracts)	• Will lead to a predictable (and likely heated) debate about location, which may slow progress and add expense to the process.

This report recommends Option 3: *proceeding to the next step* by committing to working as partners towards a new joint multi-use recreation and library facility, empowering an inter-organizational team to lead the work ahead, and proceeding to a detailed business case.

Residents in both communities expressed a clear, united and strong desire for a multi-use facility, and potential high users of the space including organized sports and community groups need the capacity that a new multi-use facility could offer. If the consultation process had reflected a misalignment in the needs and interests of residents, this option may not have ranked as well; but, in this case, there was a clear and shared desire for added capacity across recreation categories and existing norms of boundary-crossing recreation activities already in place. The collaborative spirit and close geographic proximity make partnership between the two municipalities an exciting possibility, enabling a more efficient approach where the communities could create something of a more significant scale by working together. Residents seem open to a shared space, particularly if it enables a facility to materialize faster and more efficiently than either municipality may be able to deliver on their own.

In some cases, these processes highlight specific amenity or facility needs in a community (for example, if the desire for aquatics facilities far outweighed the need for other kinds of amenities in both capacity pressures and public interest). This was not the case in this MURFA review. Instead, a strong demand across several key recreation

and amenities categories was clearly expressed. Residents want more capacity in all of the ‘big ticket’ categories – aquatics, ice, indoor turf and courts, and outdoor courts – and had an impressive range of ideas about other value-add amenities which could add vibrancy to the community. The shared vision expressed was very much one of a multi-use facility that operates as a community hub, a gathering place, and an expression of what these neighbouring municipalities offer in terms of an active, happy and healthy quality of life. To be more direct, three specific factors led to the strength of Option 3 in this case: a clear and shared ambition among residents; the strong desire for a wide breadth of recreational amenities and facilities to be added; and the collaborative spirit and strategic alignment demonstrated between the partners.

There are several recommendations emerging from this study. The first seeks commitment from the Councils of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood to working together on a joint multi-use facility. This is an important threshold decision: it forges a partnership that enables other decisions, progressing this project towards a business case.

The second creates a governance vehicle for this project to proceed. Specifically, it is suggested that the municipal and library administrations develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this project. Importantly, this MOU would establish and empower a new joint body – a staff-level MURFA Committee – to be responsible for making decisions and reporting to both Councils and Library Boards from this point forward. The MOU must include key practical elements such as decision-making model (including how to handle conflicts when they emerge), how and when key decisions are reported to Municipal Councils and Library Boards, how costs for project planning will be shared between the municipalities, and information sharing protocols. It is strongly recommended that the MOU include provisions which allow for the Committee to openly share confidential information between municipalities – particularly with respect to real estate holdings, long-term financial plans, data on facilities and more. This MOU will empower a key and joint body to act, enabling this process to move forward more efficiently.

The third reflects the next substantive step in this process: building a business case. The typical project lifecycle, as captured on Page 7 of this report, moves from this high-level process into a business case. This step usually involves developing a functional program (specific uses, square footages, etc.), an operating model, an analysis of various financial and other considerations based on the operating model and its assumptions, identifying a construction methodology and more.

It is strongly recommended that an early step of the new Committee is to establish the parameters of this business case. This will involve a few key decisions. First, the

Committee should establish an upper upset limit for the project. This will require information sharing between municipalities about several assumptions built into long-term capital plans and development charges. This upper limit will provide essential direction to those engaged in the business case development about the range of options to present for evaluation. Second, the Committee should rank the amenities desired for inclusion in the multi-use facility. The MURFA process to date has indicated that residents want more capacity in all of the 'big ticket' categories – aquatics, ice, indoor turf and courts, and outdoor courts –with interest in several other value-add amenities. The Committee should examine several data points together: the data already captured in both municipalities' recreation master plans; the public input through the MURFA process; data about existing capacity issues across recreation and sport categories; data about current facility capacity and lifecycle expectations; and industry data about changes in recreational and sporting activities more generally. All of this data already exists. A collaborative effort at the Committee to examine this data and provide a preferential ranking of amenities for the multi-use facility will also give necessary direction to the business case.

It is also strongly recommended that the business case scope of work specifically request that the business case include multiple options – likely ranging from an upper end scenario which includes all or most of the preferred amenities, and down to a more modest offering focused on the most important amenities. The process should also involve more formal invitation to other neighbouring municipalities; and, formal outreach (potentially through an Expressions of Interest process) for other partners who may wish to be involved in the MURFA as tenants, owners or operators. Through this initial study, there was a surprising level of outreach from both community and private partners with interest in this project. These expressions should be considered more carefully and in a comparative context. For this reason, it will be important that any potential partners – tenants, owners, operators or other forms of engagement – are not represented directly on the Committee. If all proceeds, this process will ultimately lead towards a significant public procurement process for a major construction project and potentially exciting opportunities for a few partners. Ensuring this process is objective does not create bias later in the process is essential.

This report began with a bold claim: The Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood are highly desirable places to live because they offer an extraordinary quality of life. Every community wants to be a place with happy, healthy, engaged and well-connected residents. Population wellbeing is increasingly understood as the foundation for many other important objectives. The Blue Mountains and Collingwood *already* share this reputation as places that support healthy, active lives. The MURFA represents an exciting next step in this well-established tradition: an opportunity to

collaborate, to innovate, and to invest in the wellbeing of residents today and in the future.

The key recommendations emerging from this MURFA study are:

1. **That the Councils of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood commit to working together towards a new joint multi-use recreation facility;**

2. **That the Councils of the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Town of Collingwood, together with the Library Boards of the Collingwood Public Library and Blue Mountains Public Library, direct their respective Administrations to develop a shared Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for this project, which would include the following matters:**

    a. **Membership and terms of reference to empower a joint staff-level MURFA Committee for the project, which would be responsible for jointly making recommendations to both Councils;**
    b. **How decisions will be made by the MURFA Committee;**
    c. **How costs will be shared between organizations for project planning activities; and**
    d. **Information sharing protocols related to real estate holdings, long-term financial plans, facility condition assessments and procurement processes.**

3. **That the joint multi-use recreation facility project progress to the next stage of developing a detailed business case, including:**
    a. **The definition of a target capital budget for the project;**
    b. **Further exploration of operating and governance models;**
    c. **Determination of capital requirements;**
    d. **Development of an operating proforma based on anticipated revenue and expenses;**
    e. **Preliminary outreach to potential facility partners (owners, operators, and/or tenants);**
    f. **Development of a facility functional program, preliminary concept design and Class “D” costing;**
    g. **Analysis and decision on facility location;**
    h. **Review and analysis of possible construction methods (design build, design bid build, construction management, integrated project delivery, P3, others); and**
    i. **Preliminary grant funding scan for additional support.**

4. **That the MURFA Committee responsibilities include the following:**

    a. **Formal outreach to neighbouring municipalities with an invitation to partner in the process and project;**
    b. **Scoping the business case, including a ranked order of preferred facility amenities and recommending an upset limit budget for project, for approval of both Councils;**
    c. **Joint review and analysis of municipal lands and properties as potential facility sites, creating a short list of preferred site options;**
    d. **Serving as the principal point of contact for all business case development activities, including guiding an outreach process to potential facility partners of the business case;**
    e. **Jointly leading any future public consultation or engagement efforts at key decision points in the process;**
    f. **At the conclusion of the business case process, making a joint recommendation to both Councils on a preferred option and operating model emerging from the business case; and**
    g. **Serving as the principle point of contact to coordinate future procurement processes, should the Councils decide to ultimately proceed with a new joint multi-use recreation facility.**

Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of MURFA Survey Results (All Questions)

Appendix B: Summary of Youth MURFA Survey Results (All Questions)

Appendix C: Interview Guide

Appendix D: Focus Group Discussion Guide