



Keystone Complex Committee &
Parks Committee Meeting

Thursday, March 26, 2026, 7 PM
Southwold Keystone Complex
35921 Talbot Line
Agenda

Call to Order

New Business

A) Parks and Trails Master Plan

Adjournment



Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan



Final Report

Last Revised: February 2026

Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan

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1.0 Overview & Summary

1.1 Understanding the Master Plan

1.1.1 A Set of Strategies

It is a common belief that a township anticipating a magnitude of change to its parks and recreational trail system over the next few decades requires a master plan, to shape that change so that constituent projects work together to form a cohesive whole. While popular, it is a common misunderstanding that it is desirable and somehow possible to firmly fix the shape of years, likely decades, of future upgrades and development through a single plan. Plans that try to predefine the future in this way tend to present more rigidity of the constituent projects (and its community members) and often, many of these projects are abandoned. This leads to an opposite feeling about master plans — that they should be as vague as possible to allow for future flexibility, minimize constraints on township and community advisory committees and councils, and allow park and recreational trail planning creativity to flourish.

The Township of Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan take neither of the above approaches. Its central theme is that the Township parks and recreational trail network is greater than its parts, and that the whole can be beneficially designed, or at least directed, but not in the same way that other elements (e.g., community facilities, buildings, etc.) are designed. It must be sufficiently flexible to respond to its own evolution. The Master Plan, is therefore in essence, a set of strategies, that will last well into time, and that are clearly definitive as to intent but not to final form.

1.1.2 Implementation through Communal and Constituent Projects

The Township parks and recreational trail network is made up of two types of projects: the communal and the constituent. Communal projects are what might be referred to as ‘public works’. They deal with linkages, frameworks, management, and supporting services. Constituent projects are those undertaken by various Township departments, focus groups, and support groups — recreation and sport, environmental consideration, economic development. They meet their

own private needs, but they should also address public needs — through design and implementation in alignment with strategies outlined in 4.0 Planning Strategies on page 33 of this report.

1.1.3 Reinforcing the Best, Repairing the Rest

The Master Plan is founded on existing conditions and an evolving context — a result of development history, physical relationships with neighbouring properties, natural features, changing climate, and the spirit of the place.

A significant portion of the Master Plan is a reaffirmation of strengths, an attempt to enhance existing infrastructure, policy and procedure, or to repair unsatisfactory aspects of the Township parks and recreational trail system. With unique natural heritage, diverse user groups, strong community connection to the land, parks, and trails themselves, there is ample potential awaiting action.

A smaller percentage of the Master Plan deals with new ideas, understanding that making a whole and resilient Township parks and recreational trail system is a bigger idea than trying to be new.

1.1.4 A Commitment

Pursuit of this initiative — creation, adoption, and action upon the Master Plan — exemplifies a commitment by the Township of Southwold to establishing and maintaining sustainable parks and recreational trail planning, development and management practices moving forward. Furthermore, it acknowledges that the Township parks and trails network is, and will continue to be, an important part of the fabric of the community — supporting healthy active lifestyles, community connections, access to nature, and strengthening community identity.

1.2 Summary of Planning Strategies

More detail on each strategy is provided in 4.0 Planning Strategies on page 33 of this report.

1.2.1 Environmental Quality

Quality, Permanence & Economy

The Township will be committed to quality, permanence, and life-cycle economy in all its park and trail development, maintenance, and renewal projects. All design and product decisions will be based on life-cycle as well as first capital costs.

Environmental Responsibility & Stewardship

Parks and trails are sought after by residents and visitors alike, as a means to access, explore, and connect with nature. The Township should provide community leadership in responsible and effective environmental action through mindful park and trail development (i.e., design, alignment, construction, renewal, etc.) and community outreach.

The Spirit of the Place

The design of new projects should embrace the character of the area, which is fundamental to the established image of the community. Moving forward, consistency will be paramount — contributing to a strong, authentic sense of place, that welcomes residents and visitors alike.

A Network Approach

A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of properties, segments, and/or the sum of those parts — it is a system. The Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.

Trail Safety & Risk Management

The Township must strive to establish and maintain safe park and recreational trail environments, to welcome residents and visitors alike. To ensure a safe trail network, the Township must identify an accepted level of risk, produce documents, policies, and procedures, and act upon them.

Respecting Neighbours

The Township will seek to maintain positive relationships with park and trail neighbours by identifying and addressing common issues, seeking appropriate permissions, and mitigating the impact of park and recreational trail use, activity and development on adjacent land uses.

1.2.2 Project Design

Preserve the Best, Repair the Rest

Projects will be identified to preserve park and trail assets, favour the repair of problem sites, and avoid compromising good quality structures, buildings, and landscapes.

Designing Safe Spaces

Landscapes, built forms, furnishings, fixtures, and lighting throughout township parks and trail environments must be designed and managed to promote personal safety.

Accessibility, Barrier Free Environments

The Township recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality.

Trail Ownership & Alignment

The Township will ensure that existing township trails and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s).

Trail Classification & Standards

The Township will establish, adopt, and comply with a defined trail standard, demonstrating proper due diligence, ensuring thorough inspection and maintenance, and informing future trail construction.

Trail Design, Managed & Designed Use

With such diversity in terms of trail use, the Township should adopt the concept of managed and designed use, an industry best practice, to inform trail management and design parameters.

Trail Management

The Township will employ a hybrid approach to trail management, relying on qualified township staff and professional trail contractors, to conduct regular trail inspection, assessment, monitoring and maintenance.

Constituent and Communal Needs

Generally, projects should focus on the communal needs of the community as a whole; even projects established to meet the needs of a particular user group will contribute to the communal needs of the community, accordingly.

1.2.3 Identity and Movement

Entry, Orientation and Wayfinding

The Township will seek ways to give the township parks and recreational trail network a stronger sense of identity, well-defined entrances, and an easy sense of orientation.

Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian zones — paths, walkways, trails, open spaces that facilitate movement — are defining features of parks. They should be strategically positioned and expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement.

Pedestrian Trail Crossings

The Township will ensure that pedestrian crossings are situated and outfitted appropriately, to enhance safety for trail users and motorists alike.

Bicycles

The increased use of bicycles, both for access to and for moving around township parks, will be encouraged and accommodated in future development.

Parking

The Township will adopt a two-pronged approach to parking: reduce demand for parking through establishing community connections, and advocate for parking within comfortable walking distance to trailheads, supporting facilities, and amenities.

Underground Utilities

The Township will plan ahead to ensure necessary upgrades to underground utilities are made before, or during, park development projects to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruptions.

Lighting

Exterior lighting will increase user safety and comfort, and subtly reveal the character of parks at night.

Site Furnishings

The Township intends to develop an economical and comprehensive system of visually coordinated and comfortable outdoor furnishings. Durability in function and attractive appearance under low maintenance conditions are essential.

1.2.4 Implementation

Plan Continuity

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan will be promoted and be approved as Township policy and maintained as an effective development directive through continuity of responsibility, consistent application, and regular updating and review.

Project Design Checklist

Designers (i.e., landscape architects, planners, engineers, etc.) of projects throughout the township parks and recreational trails network must respond to specific criteria — encompassing themes such as site use and organization, local context, local climate, circulation and barrier free access, public safety, and more — and present evidence as to how they have been addressed at each major step of the design process.

Campaign Establishment

Campaigns should be established to raise awareness and funds for major park and recreational trail planning, construction, and redevelopment projects.

2.0 Foundations

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Origin

In 2024, The Township of Southwold identified a need for a Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan. In a dynamic period of growth, marked by an increasing population and evolving community needs, the Master Plan will help the Township work towards their vision to create a connected, inclusive, and healthy community through quality investments in municipal parks and recreational trails. Without a formal plan to direct actions and projects related to parks and recreational trail infrastructure, the Township saw a need for a long-range vision.

If you don't know where you want to go, you will never get there.

In working with Township Council and Staff, regulatory agencies, and community interest-holders, the Master Plan would need to establish a long-range vision and offer recommendations for how the Township should respond to development pressures. Ultimately, a tool used by the Township's Infrastructure and Development Department, Building and Community Services Department, Public Works, and Administration and Finance, among others, the Master Plan would support staff in determining how to allocate resources while preparing their annual budget.

2.1.2 Role & Scope

The Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan is aimed at ensuring that the physical environment, both built and natural, meets the needs and aspirations of its inhabitants and the community around it, and enables Township goals and decisions to be realized.

The Master Plan will be the vehicle for implementing new development and renovation projects, and for maintaining and preserving existing facilities and infrastructure. It will also provide a means for articulating a common purpose, and for communicating it to the Township and the community at large.

The form of a township-wide parks and recreational trail network cannot be determined by a single designer, or even by a single team, as is the

case when designing a building, civic space, or other identifiable project. A comprehensive parks and recreational trail network is a family of projects and therefore a fixed blueprint representing a construction scenario at a single point in time is inappropriate. The Master Plan must be firm about the essentials, but flexible about the details, particularly those which can only be defined by future project programs developed to meet the needs which cannot at present be foreseen except in broad outline.

Communal Action

The Master Plan directs action so that the physical environment suits the community's needs, meets Township goals, and is a joy to be a part of. Its existence and content demonstrates commitment to establishing and maintaining parks and multi-use recreational trails while protecting and preserving the surrounding natural environment for years to come.

Community Plan

Southwold is host to a community of permanent homeowners, second-homeowners, seasonal residents, repeat long-term visitors, and more. An important component in the development of the Master Plan is public engagement that permits the community to shape the Master Plan, ensuring a realistic vision and appropriate recommendations are realized.

Plan Interaction

The Master Plan is one piece of a planning process. In response to evolving needs and growth, the Township has updated and added to its roster of planning documents in recent years. Adopted planning documentation includes, but is not limited to:

- Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021).
- Township of Southwold Asset Management Plan (Township of Southwold, 2022)
- Township of Southwold Strategic Plan, Implementation Plan (Township of Southwold, 2023)

While each document focuses on a different topic, they are highly interdependent. The decisions of one exercise influence, and/or respond to the conclusions of another, as they are developed and implemented.

Fiscal Reality

In order to be successfully implemented, the Master Plan needs to consider current fiscal realities. The Master Plan is a vision, but not a fantasy. It sets realistic policies that can be achieved over time through creative implementation practices and sound long-term planning.

Principal Audiences

The Master Plan is targeted towards two principal audiences, the first being the Township of Southwold, represented by Township Council, Township Staff, and residents alike. The Township is meant to use the Plan as a manual for the physical development and management of Township parks, recreational trails and supporting infrastructure.

Included in this target audience is the Township's Infrastructure and Development Department, Building and Community Services Department, Public Works, and Administration and Finance, among others in the Township who participate in initiating, guiding and executing projects.

The second principal audience is comprised of the various partners that help to fund and support, or cooperate with the Township. This may include, but is not limited to, the Provincial and Federal Governments, First Nations, corporations, and friends. The Master Plan illustrates the Township's intentions and provides guidance for regulation and funding actions.

Strategies

The Master Plan does not describe future built or landscape projects in great detail. Instead, it contains a set of planning strategies that define intent, but not final form. The planning strategies guide physical change to ensure that general objectives are met but are flexible enough to accommodate specific needs as they arise in the future.

Demonstrations included in this plan only illustrate one of several possible ways the planning strategies might be implemented.

Reinforce & Repair

The Master Plan identifies strengths — existing infrastructure and landscapes which make Southwold a special place. Likewise, the Master Plan identifies areas that detract, and could benefit from improvement. It is understood that much of the existing park and recreational trail

infrastructure has been incrementally developed over time — though well intentioned, often in an ad hoc manner. The Master Plan seeks to preserve and enhance the positive aspects, while repairing the challenging aspects of the Township parks and recreational trail network.

Planning Horizons

The Master Plan is projected into two planning horizons, to respond to the diminishing clarity of more distant futures.

The Short Range Horizon represents a vision of a desirable and reasonable foreseeable future. It is based on current goals and aspirations, and on existing constraints and opportunities. The short range framework is firmly based on present realities, but extended far enough into the future to provide a comprehensive context for upcoming planning decisions (up to 10 years).

The Long Range Horizon suggests a future based on goals and growth expectations, which can be articulated only in general terms. The thrust of this horizon is to identify options for future development and suggest measures for their protection beyond the 10 year period.

Primacy of Parks & Recreational Trails

The role of parks and recreational trails in the community is not expected to diminish in the foreseeable future. They will need to accommodate residents, their guests, and visitors alike, facilitate an abundance of recreation opportunities, and host an array of events.

2.2 Context

The Township of Southwold is a municipality within Elgin County, located on the north shore of Lake Erie. The municipality was incorporated in 1852 and is made up of the following communities: Fingal, Iona, Iona Station, Paynes Mills, Shedden, and Talbotville.

The Township of Southwold is a vibrant, safe, and growing rural community recognized for its high quality of life and economic opportunity, with a rich history of pioneering development, growth, and the preservation of heritage buildings in its villages and hamlets.



Figure 1: Southwold Context Map, Adapted from Google Earth

2.3 Framework

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan is subject to regulations as outlined by the Township of Southwold, Elgin County, and the Province of Ontario. Documents outlining this framework include:

- Township of Southwold Official Plan, 2021
- Elgin County Official Plan, 2015
- Elgin County Joint Multi-Year Accessibility Plan, 2021-2026
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Other Guidance & Advocacy

There are several other documents pertinent to the parks and recreational trails master planning process in Southwold, including, but not limited to:

- Township of Southwold Strategic Plan. Implementation Plan, 2023
- Township of Southwold Asset Management Plan, 2022
- Corporation of the Township of Southwold Parks Strategic Plan, 2014

National Frameworks

Guiding documents for public recreation in Canada have also been referenced throughout, including:

- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Reflecting the Current Context, 2025
- A Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing, 2015

2.4 Demographic Profile

2.4.1 Population

According to Statistics Canada (2023), the permanent population of Southwold in 2021 was 4,851 — 9.7 percent higher than the population recorded in 2016. This population growth was significant, exceeding provincial population growth (i.e., 5.8 percent) during this period.

According to Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019), the Township population is anticipated to see continued growth, estimating 1,840 new residents and 1,050 new housing units over the next two decades — reaching an estimated 6,640 total residents and 2,780 housing units by 2041.

Population and Housing Forecast Summary, Town of Southwold

Year	Population	Total Housing
2016	4,570	1,630
2019	4,800	1,730
2031	5,940	2,280
2041	6,640	2,780

Figure 2: Population and Housing Forecast Summary, Township of Southwold

Note: Population includes net Census undercount. Figures may not add precisely due to rounding.

Source: 2016 from Statistics Canada Census data; Forecast by Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019).

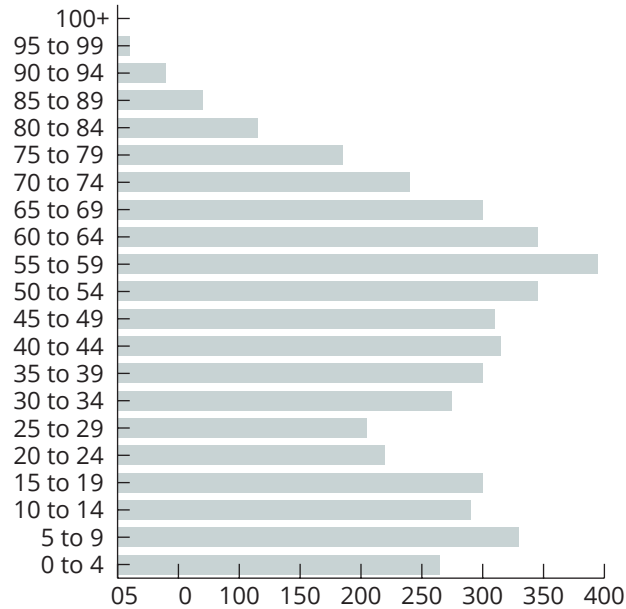
Worth noting, internal development plans suggest more rapid growth is set to occur in the near future; with an estimated 1734 new residential units slated for development in the next 5 years, probable growth could lend to a total population of nearly 9,500 residents¹. In addition, 735 new residential units are currently under discussion; potential growth (5-years and beyond) could see the population reach 11,500 residents¹.

1 Estimated based on Township of Southwold 2021 average household size of 2.8 (Statistics Canada, 2023).

2.4.2 Age Profile

In the Township of Southwold, the median age of the population is 44 years, slightly higher than that of the Ontario population (41.6 years).

Township of Southwold



Province of Ontario

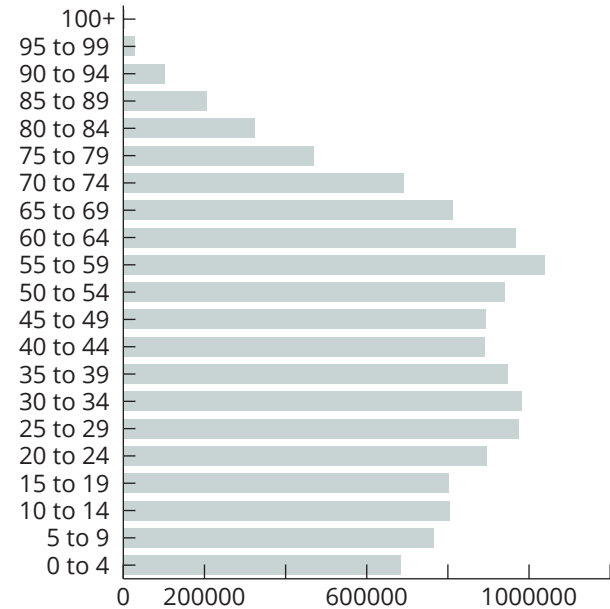


Figure 3: Permanent Population by Age Group Comparison, 2021

Source: Statistics Canada Census Data

2.4.3 Language

In the Township of Southwold, 99.1 percent of the population reports English to be their first official language spoken.

2.4.4 Income, Employment & Commuting

According to Statistics Canada (2023), the median after tax income of households in the Township of Southwold in 2020 was \$41,600. This was significantly lower than the provincial median after tax income of household, which was \$91,000 in 2020. However, only 4 percent of residents were considered to be below the poverty line in 2021, compared to the provincial average of 10 percent.

Approximately 11.6 percent of the employed labour force aged 15 years and over with a usual place of work commute within the Township of

Southwold (Statistics Canada, 2023). Another 48.7 percent commute outside of the Township, but within Elgin County, and the remaining 39.7 percent commute outside of Elgin County.



Recommendations

- Continue to monitor population growth, to ensure appropriate park and recreational trail planning provisions are maintained.
- Consider how park and recreational trail design can accommodate an aging population (i.e., anticipated influx of seniors), as well as young children.
- Continue to monitor the evolving demographic profile, including age, language, and income, employment and commuting, to ensure parks and recreational trails (and related infrastructure) is tailored to the local community needs.

3.0 Community Engagement

3.1 Overview

Community engagement is an important part of parks and trails master planning, as a means to understanding current and anticipated use, and learn about community needs and desires. Working with the Township of Southwold, a three (3) part engagement process was devised, to gather input from interest holders and the general public; including a series of interest holder interviews, a community engagement survey, and a community open house. Public-facing initiatives were advertised online through Township social media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) as well as through print materials (e.g., print posters, handouts).

This section offers an overview of these engagement initiatives and subsequent findings. It is important to note that the information and suggestions presented in this section should not be interpreted as recommendations. Community input has not been altered, even in instances where comments may incorrectly reflect actual policies, practices, or level of provision.

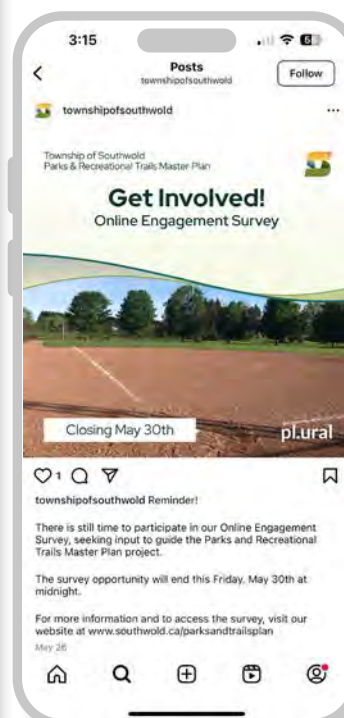


Figure 4: Engagement Initiative Advertisement Mock Ups, Digital and Print Media

3.2 Community Engagement Survey

From May 13, 2025 through to May 30, 2025, an online engagement survey was available to the public. In total, **65 unique responses** were received.

3.2.1 Who We Heard From

The majority of responses (61) were submitted by individuals who identify as permanent residents of Southwold. Those who identify as neighbouring community visitors (e.g., second homeowners, trailer campers, cottage renters, etc.) accounted for the remaining responses (4) aside from a single response submitted by an individual identifying as a seasonal visitor.

Most of the permanent residents who participated (41) reported living in Shedden. Other notable participation was observed amongst residents of Talbotville (14), Fingal (10), and north of Port Stanley (1).

Majority of participants (24) were adults aged 30 to 39. Nineteen (19) participants aged, 40 to 49, and eleven (11) 50 to 59. Very few young adults and/or seniors participated and no individual's 18 and under participated in the Community Engagement Survey.

Most participants (41) reported having children living in their household. Among them, about half (22) have children under the age of 5. Others (13, 15 and 15) have children ages 6 to 9, 10 to 14, and 15 to 18, respectively.



Figure 5: Engagement Initiative Advertisement Mock Ups, Digital and Print Media

Residents vs. Visitors

● Permanent resident	61
● Seasonal resident (i.e., second homeowner, trailer camper, cottage renter)	0
● Neighbouring community visitor	4
● Seasonal visitor	1



Figure 6: Survey Results, are you a resident or visitor of Southwold?

Permanent Residents' Place of Residence

● Talbotville	14
● Shedden	25
● Fingal	10
● North Port Stanley	1
● Other	11

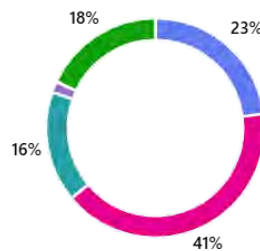


Figure 7: Survey Results, where in Southwold do you reside?

Age Profile

● 18 and under	0
● 19 to 29	6
● 30 to 39	24
● 40 to 49	19
● 50 to 59	11
● 60 and over	6

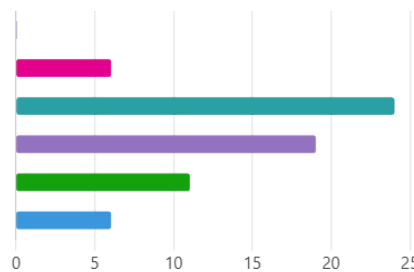


Figure 8: Survey Results, what age group do you belong to?

Age Profile: Children in Household

● 5 and under	22
● 6 to 9	13
● 10 to 14	15
● 15 to 18	15
● I do not have children in my household	20

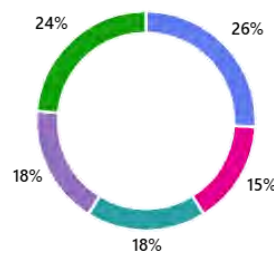


Figure 9: Survey Results, if you have children in your household, what age group(s) do they belong to?

3.2.2 Understanding Use: Municipal Parks

According to engagement survey results, when it comes to municipal parks:

- Municipal parks are being commonly visited, with majority of participants visiting parks 1-2 times a week.
- Survey results show The Keystone Complex is the most visited municipal park, followed by Corsely Park and Fingal Ball Park.
- The majority of individuals are driving to parks (43 out of 66). Respectfully many residents are also walking to the local parks (34 out of 66) and cycling (22 out of 66).
- Residents are enjoying municipal parks with family members, young children, community groups, friends, and more. There appears to be a variety of users.
- Walking, playgrounds, and organized sports appear to be the leading reasons for residents' use of municipal parks.
- Based on park ratings', The Keystone Complex appears to be the most in need of improvement. Following, Fingal Ball Park and Corsely Park are in need of some improvement. Many are unsure on how to rate their local municipal parks.
- Half of survey participants responded that municipal park needed moderate support and improvements.

Importance of Municipal Park Improvements

- | | |
|--|----|
| ● Low: prefer no change to municipal service delivery; limit budget to community-based funding, grants,... | 4 |
| ● Moderate: support reallocating municipal budget to tend to improvements. | 33 |
| ● Considerable: support slight increase in taxes and/or user fees, to tend to improvements while maintaini... | 13 |
| ● High: support more significant increase in taxes and/or user fees to tend to facility improvements a... | 16 |

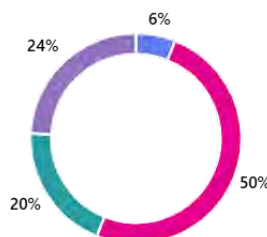


Figure 10: Survey Results, How important are municipal park improvements to you within the Township of Southwold?

Frequency of Use

Daily (i.e., 1-2 times a day)	8
Weekly (i.e., 1-2 times a week)	34
Monthly (i.e., 1-2 times a month)	11
Seasonally (i.e., only during certain seasons)	7
Inconsistently or During Events	4
Rarely or Never	2

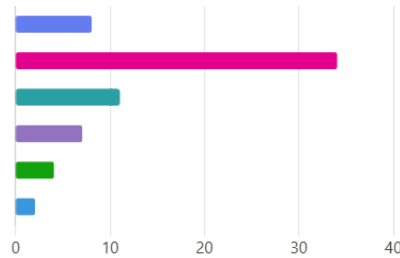


Figure 11: Survey Results, How often do you visit municipal parks?

Park Use

Keystone Complex	47
Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park	10
Talbotville Optimist Sports Park	14
Fingal Ball Park	19
Fingal Heritage Park	14
Ferndale Park	4
Corsely Park	24
Other	4

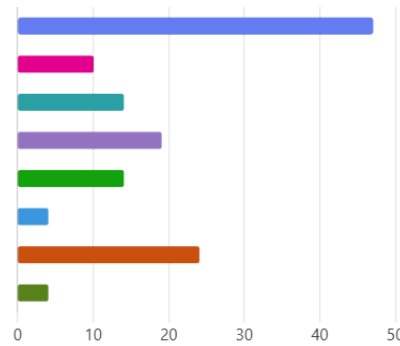


Figure 12: Survey Results, What municipal parks do you visit?

Transportation to Parks

Bike	22
Walk	34
Drive	43
Other	0

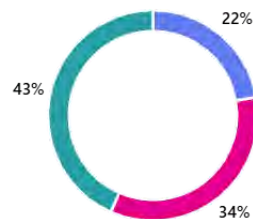


Figure 13: Survey Results, How do you get to municipal parks?

Who visits Municipal Parks

A friend	17
A group of friends	13
Family	45
Young children	33
Seniors	1
Community group or team	15
By myself	17
Other	3

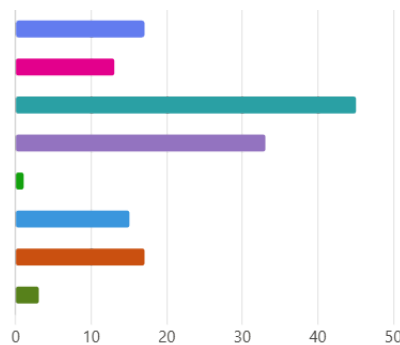


Figure 14: Survey Results, Who do you visit municipal parks with?

Why Visit Municipal Parks

● Walking	41
● Dog Walking	20
● Hiking	9
● Exercise or Jogging	20
● Cycling	13
● Relaxing	18
● Spend time in nature	27
● Picnicking	8
● Family gathering, time with friends	18
● Playground	37
● Racquet sports (e.g., tennis, pickleball)	4
● Basketball	6
● Skateboarding	0
● Attending events	15
● Organized sports (e.g., local leagues, lessons, etc.)	27
● Informal or pick-up sports	5
● Other	4

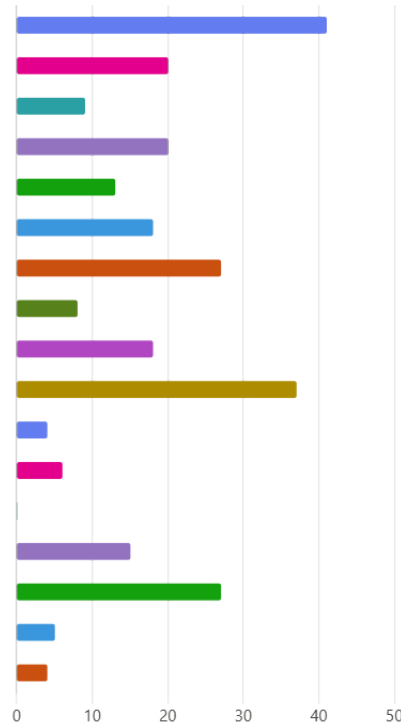


Figure 15: Survey Results, Why do you visit municipal parks?

Park Preference

- Needs work asap
- Good, could be improved
- Love it
- Unsure

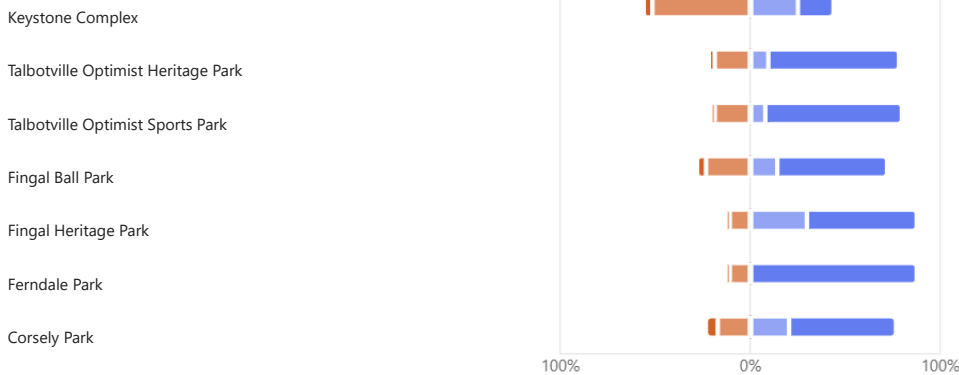


Figure 16: Survey Results, How do you rate each of the following municipal parks?

3.2.3 Understanding Use: Municipal Trails

According to engagement survey results, when it comes to Municipal Trails:

- Respondents report that recreational trails are used most during the summer months, with a near balance of use in the fall and spring. However, consistently throughout the year a significant amount of residents are not using recreational trails in Southwold.
- The majority of respondents identified their form of transportation to recreational trails within Southwold to be by vehicle (41 out of 66) 22 respondents walk to local recreational trails, while others use other means of transportation.
- Majority (42) of respondents are enjoying recreational trails with family members, followed by a fairly even split of respondents (21, 19, 19) are visiting trails with friends, young children, and by themselves, respectively.
- Walking is the most common purpose for recreation trail use in Southwold; exercise and experiencing nature are also prioritized by local residents.
- With a majority of respondents seeing the potential in Southwold recreational trails, 27 believe they are good, but in need of improvement and 16 respondents believe the trails are in need of immediate work,
- Majority of Respondents are not using resources to access recreational trail information.

Recreational Trail Community Priorities

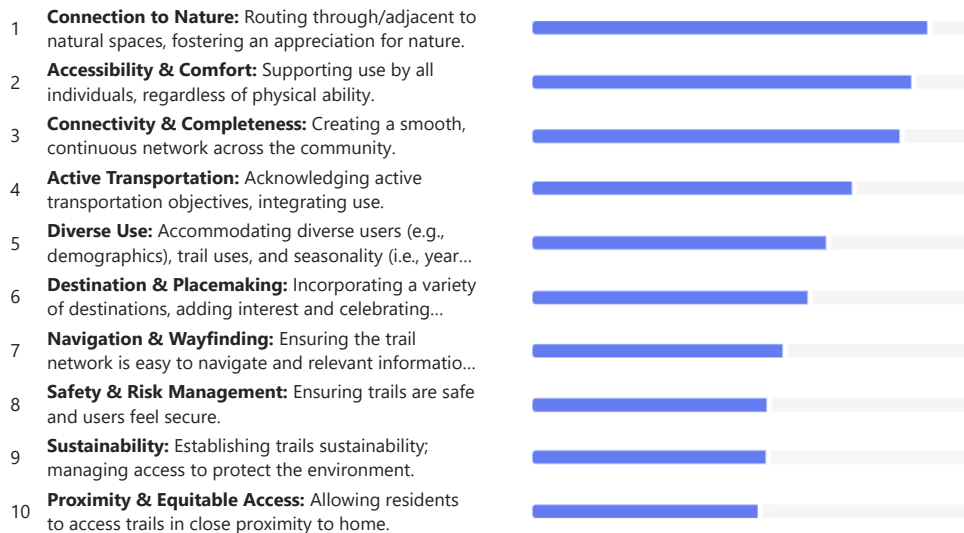


Figure 19: Survey Results, When planning for recreational trails in Southwold, what matters most to you?

Frequency of Use

- Daily (i.e., 1-2 times a day)
- Weekly (i.e., 1-2 times a week)
- Monthly (i.e., 1-2 times a month)
- Inconsistently or During Events
- Rarely or Never



Figure 17: Survey Results, How often do you visit recreation trails in Southwold?

Permanent Residents' Place of Residence

- Bike 15
- Walk 22
- Drive 41
- Other 4

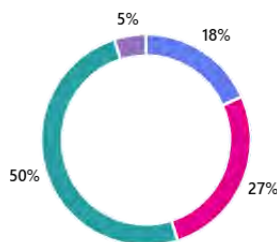


Figure 18: Survey Results, How do you get to recreation trails in Southwold?

Who visits Recreational Trails

A friend	21
A group of friends	13
Family	42
Young children	19
Seniors	1
Community group or team	4
By myself	19
Other	4

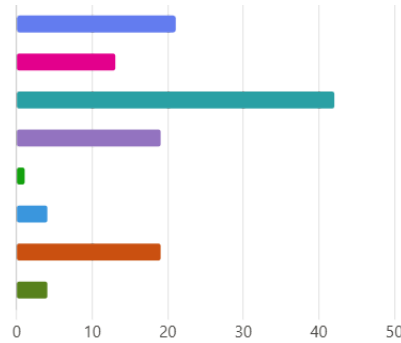


Figure 20: Survey Results, Who do you visit recreation trails with?

Why visit Recreational Trails

Walking	44
Dog-walking	19
Hiking	18
Exercise or Jogging	28
Cycling	14
Transportation	1
Experiencing nature	27
Social interaction	12
Birdwatching	7
Photography	3
Other	1

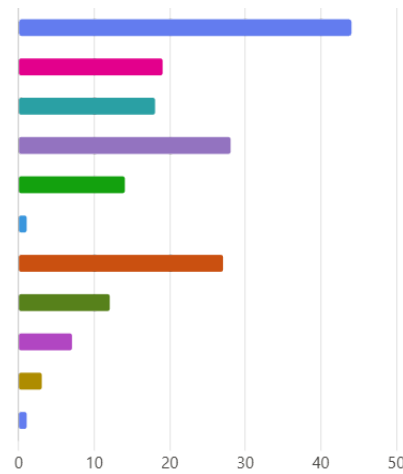


Figure 21: Survey Results, Why do you visit recreational trails in Southwold?

Rating Recreational Trails

Need work asap	15
Good, could be improved	27
Love them	8
Unsure	16

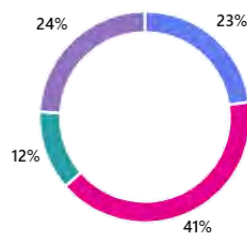


Figure 22: Survey Results, How would you rate recreation trails in Southwold?

Utilized Trail Resources

Elgin County GIS	5
Print materials	12
Township website	11
Other websites	3
External apps (e.g., AllTrails)	9
Google Maps	16
None	28
Other	0

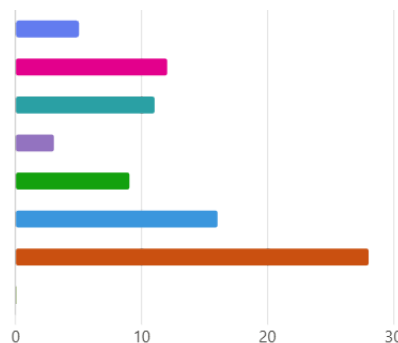


Figure 23: Survey Results, what resources do you use to access recreational trail information/ maps?

3.3 Interest Holder Interviews

Over several months, between the months of May and September 2025, a total of **9 interviews** were conducted, seeking insight from project interest holders.

Who We Heard From

Municipal staff established the list of interest holders — capturing an array of perspectives, without compromising project budgetary constraints. Collectively, participants had experience working with, or on behalf of the following:

- Township Council
- Southwold Parks Committee
- Rosy Rhubarb Committee
- Keystone Complex Committee
- Shedden Truck and Tractor Pull Committee
- Shedden Soccer Representative

Worth noting, many interview participants brought valuable insights beyond the scope of the organizations and/groups above — speaking as long-term local residents, residents newer to the area, parents, young professionals, retirees, local business owners, recreationalists, volunteers, and more.

Emerging Themes

There were several key themes emerging from interviews, including, but not limited to:

- **Community relations;** the community cares about parks and recreational trails in Southwold — as demonstrated by passionate volunteers, and community groups, who continue to raise funds to support local infrastructure. At times there appears to be apprehension amongst user groups to participate in conversations regarding the future of these community spaces. Establishing and maintaining strong, collaborative relationships with constituent groups will be important to long term success.

- **Trail infrastructure;** Trail connectivity and maintenance was a common theme. There is a desire for trail links between communities (i.e. Fingal and Shedden, Talbotville and Ferndale). In addition to the linking of trails, trail surfacing and multi-purpose trails were a topic of conversation. As the community continues to grow (and vehicular traffic intensifies), there is desire to have safe, well-connected, and enjoyable spaces to walk — suitable for a wide array of users (e.g., young families, dog-walkers, etc.).
- **Township Parks;** Township parks are well used and enjoyed by the community. The Keystone Complex being a major staple for Southwold is well spoken of by interest holders. A desire for some additional amenities to the parks such as: pickle ball courts, community splash pad, and a stage and or event space. Overall parks are well received.
- **Flexible infrastructure;** As the population grows and community needs evolve, it is recognized that there is value in designing park infrastructure (e.g., sport fields, venues, etc.) to be flexible, permitting diverse and varies use. There is desire to see some existing facilities, particularly sports fields, retrofitted to permit a wider array of use — offering more outdoor recreation opportunities to residents, while also promoting use of these facilities outside of current peak programming.
- **Community greening;** Tree planting and/or preservation of existing tree canopy is of great importance. The community highly values their many naturalized areas. Ongoing and anticipated stormwater management infrastructure projects (e.g., ponds, bioswales, etc.) are recognized as excellent opportunities to create naturalistic spaces throughout the community, to enhance the look and feel of Township parks and open spaces.
- **Community development;** With a growing community, the development of local neighbourhoods brings some concern of green space being lost and or relocated due to residential and commercial developments. Community fears development may out pace park and green space planning.
- **Maintenance;** With a rapidly growing community, excitement for the future is accompanied with some concern for lack of

maintenance. Community interest-holders want to ensure that with the growth of spaces there is sufficient staff and resources to maintain community parks and trails — and that appropriate plans are in place to guide these efforts, now and into the future.

- **Accessibility;** Accessibility is a priority. Parks and recreational trails should offer equitable opportunities for community members of all ability levels. Additionally, there is a desire for more accessible washroom facilities within major outdoor parks.
- **User conflict;** As park use increases, there are growing concerns surrounding permitted uses and reports of user conflict in these spaces (e.g., off-leash dogs, motorized vehicular use, etc.). There is desire to see the Township work with the appropriate user groups to understand needs, opportunities and challenges, and to make informed decisions regarding park programming, and facility provision and siting to mitigate conflict, where possible.

3.4 Community Open House

On Thursday May 8th, 2025, we hosted a Community Open House, welcoming the community to the Keystone Complex in Southwold.

Existing Conditions, Understanding Use

With an illustrative park and facility inventory on display, attendees were encouraged to confirm findings, and offer feedback on existing conditions — strengths and weaknesses. Related findings have been verified and captured in the respective inventories contained within this document.

Alongside a great turnout of Township staff, we received feedback from community members and members of local committees. Based on this feedback we were able to identify the following emerging themes:

- Interest in trail connectivity across the municipality
- Community Interest in improved sport facilities
- An appreciation for local parks



Figure 24: Photo, attendees participating at the community open house event.

4.0 Planning Strategies

4.1 Environmental Quality

The first series of strategies deal with the quality of renovations and new developments throughout the Township parks, open space and trail environments, as well as the preservation of existing character and quality.

4.1.1 Quality, Permanence & Economy

Strategy 1

The Township will be committed to quality, permanence, and life-cycle economy in all its park and trail development, maintenance, and renewal projects. All design and product decisions will be based on life-cycle as well as first capital costs.

Comprehensive life-cycle costing is one of the essential tools used for the planning and design of new park facilities, trail tread, surrounding landscapes, supporting structures, fixtures and furnishings — a tool that helps ensure long-lasting, superior parks, recreational trails, and public spaces are constructed and maintenance costs are reduced.

The Township should adopt the philosophy that, within the constraints of fiscal reality, quantity should not compromise quality, and that design cost decisions should be measured against the full life of the product, space or landscape rather than its construction alone. This implies a three-part commitment: first to high quality design/finish, construction/installation and maintenance; second to the eventual replacement of temporary and facilities; and third to the renewal of aging and inadequate facilities.



Typical Costs over a 35 Year Life Cycle: the smaller, earlier costs greatly influence larger, later costs.

4.1.2 Environmental Responsibility & Stewardship

Parks and trails are sought after by residents and visitors alike, as a means to access, explore, and connect with nature. The Township should provide community leadership in responsible and effective environmental action through mindful park and trail development (i.e., design, alignment, construction, renewal, etc.) and community outreach.

For many communities, connection to the environment is considered a fundamental component to community identity. Subsequently, parks, open spaces and recreational trails, which offer means to access, explore, and connect with nature, tend to be focal points — sought after by residents and visitors alike. The importance of these spaces and the natural heritage found within, should be more strongly reflected in ongoing and future landscape efforts and projects.

Means to achieving greater connection to natural heritage for the community across the Township's parks and open spaces could include encouraging biodiversity through planting native trees, shrubs and perennials, establishing 'no maintenance' areas (e.g., allowing meadows to grow freely, etc.), and integrating stormwater management infrastructure (e.g., ponds, bioswales, rain gardens, etc.), where appropriate.

Further, means to developing sustainable trails for the community could include informed alignment, consideration of sensitive ecosystems, use of native biodiversity in revitalization efforts, invasive species education and control initiatives, and the use of low impact construction practices and environmentally friendly construction materials. Building in-house capacity and seeking assistance from qualified professional trail contractors, where necessary, will also be an important step in developing sustainable Township trails.

Maintaining positive working relationships with regulatory agencies, environmental groups, and interest-holders (e.g., Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority, Kettle Creek Conservation Authority, etc.) will be a critical component to all future development and appropriate naturalization in these areas. Collaborating with these groups, and seeking approvals where necessary, will encourage responsible environmental action and continued compliance with legislation.

4.1.3 The Spirit of the Place

The design of new projects should embrace the character of the area, which is fundamental to the established image of the community. Moving forward, consistency will be paramount — contributing to a strong, authentic sense of place, that welcomes residents and visitors alike.

The community and its visitors value and want to preserve the qualities that make the Township of Southwold unique. Beyond natural beauty emanating from the shores of Lake Erie and rolling farm fields, punctuated by woodlots, Southwold embodies a desirable sense of simplicity — welcoming, quiet, and laid back.

When it comes to local parks and trail environments much of the character is the result of previous siting and design decisions, or lack thereof. Incremental development over many decades has led to spaces (i.e., parks, trails, staging environments, infrastructure) lacking cohesion, intention, and sense of purpose, among other challenges and limitations.

The key character-defining elements of parks and trail environments can be reinforced by preserving, adapting, and integrating places of value, protecting and improving natural (or naturalistic) landscapes, and by designing spaces and structures, routing trails, and selecting fixtures and furnishings to compliment, not compete, with the spirit of the place. Furthermore, seeking to clean up, coordinate, and consolidate built forms, site furnishings, and signage, should be a priority.

4.1.4 A Network Approach

A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of properties, segments, and/or the sum of those parts — it is a system. The Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.

A township's parks and recreational trails network is more than a collection of segments, or the sum of those parts — it is a system that connects, provides access to, and frames the natural and built environments between them. Servicing many community needs, from nature access, recreation, connectivity, and more, the Township must consider how decisions may impact the network, and the communities it services, as a whole.

Due to incremental development, there are functional, safety, and aesthetic aspects that could be improved upon through changes to the existing spatial structure of the township parks and recreational trails network. Understanding existing and desired uses, verifying (trail) ownership, adopting trail classifications, building to appropriate design parameters, and appreciating parks and trails as parts of a larger network, will be crucial steps in improving the spatial composition, connectivity, level of service and user group satisfaction throughout the Township.

4.1.5 Trail Safety & Risk Management

The Township must strive to establish and maintain safe park and recreational trail environments, to welcome residents and visitors alike. To ensure a safe trail network, the Township must identify an accepted level of risk, produce documents, policies, and procedures, and act upon them.

Maintaining environments which are safe for all users must be a high priority throughout the township parks and recreational trail system. Highly desirable natural qualities and unique environmental character are responsible for drawing residents and visitors to township parks and recreational trails. Conversely, some of the associated natural (or naturalistic) conditions can pose hazard to personal safety. Due to the complex nature of park and recreational trail environments, certain areas present greater risk to users than others.

With diverse trail users, and uses, throughout the Township, identifying managed and designed uses, appropriate trail classifications, and acting upon them will be an important step towards conflict mitigation, and enhancing user experience and safety.

The Township must identify their accepted level of risk, and produce documents, policies, and procedures to ensure a safe trail network; accepting said level of risk, controlling associated risks, and eliminating risks that exceed the resources available.

Further, the Township must seek ways to promote personal safety of all users, through continued monitoring, preventative infrastructure, and strategic design interventions to influence user behaviour.

4.1.6 Respecting Neighbours

The Township will seek to maintain positive relationships with park and trail neighbours by identifying and addressing common issues, seeking appropriate permissions, and mitigating the impact of park and recreational trail use, activity and development on adjacent land uses.

Spanning across the Township, and amongst several settlement areas, township parks and trails affect and are affected by neighbouring communities, landowners, and land uses. Identifying common issues surrounding park and recreational trail development and use including, but not limited to, impacts of heightened use — noise, reduced feeling of privacy, increased traffic, congested parking areas and/or illegal parking, trespassing, perceived ownership, etc. — And planning pro-actively will be an important step in maintaining positive relationships.

4.2 Project Design

This series of strategies provide guidance for the design of new park and trail construction and/or redevelopment projects as they arise.

4.2.1 Preserve the Best, Repair the Rest

Strategy 7

Projects will be identified to preserve park and trail assets, favour the repair of problem sites, and avoid compromising good quality structures, buildings, and landscapes.

In defining new projects, the Township should place priority on the repair or enhancement of problem sites and facilities rather than to the modification of high quality ones: physical park and trail assets should be enhanced, rather than diminished, through redevelopment.

Potential projects include enhancing existing open programmable spaces, facilities, parking environments, pedestrian networks, planted areas, perimeter trees, etc. as outlined in 5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment on page 87. A growing trend for municipalities and rural communities is the development of ‘image’ committees, which are mandated to identify and prioritize image problems as a means to developing a ‘game plan’ for engaging participation and funding for community physical improvements.

4.2.2 Designing Safe Spaces

Landscapes, built forms, furnishings, fixtures, and lighting throughout township parks and trail environments must be designed and managed to promote personal safety.

The development of township park and trail environments which are safe for all users must be a high priority. Township parks and trails which are perceived to be safe, will be used by more people and for longer, enhancing the vitality of these spaces and extending the effective utilization of facilities.

Personal safety is not a single dimensional issue. It requires an environment(s) that has clarity, legibility, vitality, and fosters community life. As more people use township parks and trails, especially at night, the safer they will be.

The design of the public domain, in its structure and details, is critical to ensuring personal safety. A clear spatial structure with a legible hierarchy of clearly identified routes and spaces provides users with orientation and clarity necessary to move through township parks and trails with comfort. Appropriate lighting and well-designed planting are essential for maintaining visibility during both the day and night. There should be no provision of high berming, dense shrubs, dead-end paths, or hiding places.

The circulation networks that support vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and other modes of active transportation are essential components of township parks, that are not currently optimized to promote personal safety. Unsafe intersections, poor sight lines, and disconnected land use lend to conflict between these user groups and increased liability for the Township. These networks should support safe movement of vehicles and pedestrians and limit crossings and intersections, where possible. Further, some aspects of these existing circulation networks inhibit emergency access, which should be addressed immediately.

Buildings and facilities, such as washrooms, are also essential components of the safety networks of township parks. As destinations, structures and their entrances should be clearly identified and illuminated. Structures should define important public spaces, and have windows or openings to demonstrate to people in the surrounding area that they are occupied, providing casual surveillance of otherwise 'open' spaces and adjacent facilities. The Township has a role in identifying and rectifying 'unsafe' situations in their jurisdiction and endorsing principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED).

4.2.3 Accessibility, Barrier Free Environments

The Township recognizes that persons with disabilities should be provided with an equal opportunity to access goods, services and information in a manner consistent with the principles of independence, dignity, integration and equality.

The impact of the physical environment on persons with mobility, visual, hearing, and other impairments is so great, that the Township is encouraged to make the accommodation of those with special needs a first priority. Effective accommodation is a basic responsibility of the Township, upheld by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005, (AODA) in Ontario, and can be of immense benefit to the community. Those who might otherwise be restricted from township parks, recreational trails (and naturalistic environments) will be able to more fully participate in and contribute to community life, and accommodation measures tend to create an environment which is better for all people — more legible, accessible, comfortable, and efficient.

The development of an accessible environment in a new project need not involve exorbitant costs. What is required is an attitude toward development founded on awareness and sensitivity from the start of the design process. Future consideration of a Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) for Southwold would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects. Besides legal ramifications, a solution which ignores accessibility requirements may reduce mobility and comfort for many, and incur very high costs for retrofitting at a later date.



Value Added Opportunity

Future consideration of a Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) for Southwold would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects.

Trails, Under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005

Based on our experience and informed by legislation, this section is intended to highlight key components of the AODA relevant to recreational trail planning, redevelopment, and construction, applicable at the time of report publication — it may be used as a guide, but does not eliminate the need to review applicable legislation, policies, standards and guidelines on a regular basis.

The Design of Public Spaces Standards — also referred to as Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment, referenced in the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation, under the AODA — speak to accessible trail standards.

Application

Generally, these standards apply to newly constructed and redeveloped recreational trails that the Township intends to maintain, but does not apply to the following types of recreational trails:

1. Trails solely intended for cross-country skiing, mountain biking or the use of motorized snow vehicles or off-road vehicles.
2. Wilderness trails, backcountry trails and portage routes.

Consultation

Often, accessible trail standards are determined through comparison of similar trails or trail networks, and identifying what is reasonable and predictable for trail users. Before constructing new or redeveloping existing recreational trails, the Township is obligated to consult with the public and persons with disabilities, as well as their township



Worth Noting

Adopting an awareness and sensitivity to accessibility is seen as an asset to entire communities. Although there are exceptions under the AODA, the Township is encouraged to consider accessibility in all trail related projects.

advisory committees, where one has been established under the Act. Consultation must address:

1. The slope (i.e., longitudinal and cross slope) of the trail.
2. The need for, and location of, ramps/handrails on the trail.
3. The need for, location and design of,
 - i. Rest areas,
 - ii. Passing areas,
 - iii. Viewing areas,
 - iv. Amenities on the trail, and
 - v. Any other pertinent feature.



Worth Noting

Although not explicitly identified under this section of the AODA, consultation should also address trail staging areas (i.e., trailheads).

Technical Requirements

Newly constructed and redeveloped recreational trails, that the Township intends to maintain, must meet the following technical requirements:

1. A recreational trail must have a minimum clear width of 1,000 mm.
2. A recreational trail must have a clear height that provides a minimum head room clearance of 2,100 mm above the trail.
3. The surface of a recreational trail must be firm and stable. . As a general strategy, limestone screenings/chips & dust is the Township standard. Pavement to be used only when funds, traffic/usage patterns, and rectification of challenging drainage and maintenance warrant.

4. Where a recreational trail has openings in its surface,
 - i. The openings must not allow passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm, and
 - ii. Any elongated openings must be orientated approximately perpendicular to the direction of travel.
5. Where a recreational trail is constructed adjacent to water or a drop-off, the trail must have edge protection that meets the following requirements:
 - i. The edge protection must constitute an elevated barrier that runs along the edge of the recreational trail in order to prevent users of the trail from slipping over the edge.
 - ii. The top of the edge protection must be at least 50 mm above the trail surface.
 - iii. The edge protection must be designed so as not to impede the drainage of the trail surface.
6. Despite paragraph 5, where there is a protective barrier that runs along the edge of a recreational trail that is adjacent to water or a drop-off, edge protection does not have to be provided.
7. The entrance to a recreational trail must provide a clear opening of between 850 mm and 1,000 mm, whether the entrance includes a gate, bollard or other entrance design, and in certain locations, accessible parking.

Signage & Media

Technical requirements also speak to signage. A recreational trail must have signage at each trail head, that provides the following information:

1. The length of the trail.
2. The type of surface of which the trail is constructed.
3. The average and the minimum trail width.
4. The average and maximum running slope and cross slope.
5. The location of amenities, where provided.

Additionally, signage text must have a high tonal contrast with its background (i.e., assist with visual recognition) and include characters that use a sans serif font.



Value Added Opportunity

Future consideration of a Township Wayfinding Plan would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects.

Where other media, such as park websites or brochures, are used by the Township to provide information about the recreational trail, beyond advertising, notice or promotion, the media must provide the same information (i.e., listed above).

Future consideration of a Township Wayfinding Plan (i.e., Identification, orientation, direction, information) would be an investment towards providing compliance to accessibility goals with future projects.

Boardwalks

Where a recreational trail is equipped with a boardwalk, the boardwalk must meet the following requirements:

1. The boardwalk must have a minimum clear width of 1,000 mm.
2. The boardwalk must have a clear height that provides a minimum headroom clearance of 2,100 mm above the boardwalk.
3. The surface of the boardwalk must be firm and stable.
4. The boardwalk must not have any openings in the surface that allow the passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm.
5. The boardwalk must have edge protection that is at least 50 mm in height.
6. If a boardwalk has running slopes that are steeper than 1:20, the running slopes must meet the requirements for ramps (see below).

7. Location for the needs and type of guardrails/handrails to be determined as boardwalk segments are implemented.

Ramps

Where a recreational trail is equipped with a ramp, the ramp must meet the following requirements:

1. The ramp must have a minimum clear width of 900 mm.
2. The ramp must have a clear height that provides a minimum headroom clearance of 2,100 mm above the ramp.
3. The surface of the ramp must be firm and stable.
4. The ramp must have a maximum running slope of no more than 1:10.
5. The ramp must be provided with landings that meet the following requirements:
 - i. Landings must be provided, at the top and bottom of the ramp, where there is an abrupt change in the direction of the ramp, and at horizontal intervals not greater than nine metres apart.
 - ii. Landings must be a minimum of 1,670 mm by 1,670 mm at the top and bottom of the ramp and where there is an abrupt change in direction of the ramp.
 - iii. Landings must be a minimum of 1,670 mm in length and at least the same width of the ramp for an in-line ramp.
 - iv. Landings must have a cross slope that is not steeper than 1:50.
6. The ramp must not have any openings in the surface that allow the passage of an object that has a diameter of more than 20 mm.
7. The ramp must be equipped with handrails on both sides of the ramp and the handrails must,
 - i. Be continuously graspable along their entire length and have circular cross-section with an outside diameter not less than 30 mm and not more than 40 mm, or any non-circular shape with a graspable portion that has a perimeter not less than

- 100 mm and not more than 155 mm and whose largest cross-sectional dimension is not more than 57 mm,
- ii. Be not less than 865 mm and not more than 965 mm high, measured vertically from the surface of the ramp, except that handrails not meeting these requirements are permitted if they are installed in addition to the required handrail,
 - iii. Terminate in a manner that will not obstruct pedestrian travel or create a hazard,
 - iv. Extend horizontally not less than 300 mm beyond the top and bottom of the ramp, and
 - v. Be provided with a clearance of not less than 50 mm between the handrail and any wall to which it is attached.
8. Where a ramp is more than 2,200 mm in width,
- i. One or more intermediate handrails which are continuous between landings must be provided and located so that there is no more than 1,650 mm between handrails, and
 - ii. The handrails must meet the requirements set out in paragraph 7.
9. The ramp must have a wall or guard on both sides and where a guard is provided, it must,
- i. Be not less than 1,070 mm measured vertically to the top of the guard from the ramp surface, and
 - ii. Be designed so that no member, attachment or opening located between 140 mm and 900 mm above the ramp surface being protected by the guard will facilitate climbing.
10. The ramp must have edge protection that is provided,
- i. With a curb at least 50 mm high on any side of the ramp where no solid enclosure or solid guard is provided, or
 - ii. With railings or other barriers that extend to within 50 mm of the finished ramp surface.

Exceptions

Exceptions to these requirements are permitted under certain circumstances. Generally, exceptions are made when a Township can demonstrate their affect on a property with cultural heritage value, hinder preservation of a national historic site, threaten natural heritage, or pose significant risk to the natural environment and species within it.

Where an exception is permitted to a requirement that applies to a recreational trail, the exception applies solely to the particular requirement for which the exception is allowed and not to any other requirement that applies to the recreational trail, and to the portion of the recreational trail for which it is claimed and not to the recreational trail or beach access route in its entirety.

The full list of exceptions, complete with conditions (i.e., required designations, parameters, etc.) provided under the AODA should be referenced, to verify exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

4.2.4 Trail Ownership & Alignment

The Township will ensure that existing township trails and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s).

It is imperative that the Township identify property limits, and verify that existing township trails, and new trail development occurs within the limits of township-owned parcels or right-of-ways, or upon a registered easement(s) (as permitted under the Ontario Trails Act, 2016). Besides showing respect for trail neighbours, this will ensure that township trails — as community connections, recreation opportunities, and access to nature — can exist in perpetuity.

Over time, the Township may absorb transitional areas or adjacent properties through the amiable practice of self-directed disposition, in order to facilitate strategic trail expansion. Mindful of operational and fiscal realities, associated costs, maintenance, management, level of use, and potential redundancies, should be carefully considered, before accepting or acquiring lands.

Where disputes on land ownership arise, the Township should work with concerned landowners, to establish common understanding of property boundaries, registered easements, trail use impacts, and opportunities to address them moving forward. Vandalism, or impeding public access to township trails should not be tolerated.

Ontario Trails Act, 2016

This section is intended to highlight key components of the Ontario Trails Act, 2016, relevant to trail easements, applicable at the time of report publication — it may be used as a guide, but does not eliminate the need to review applicable legislation, policies, standards and guidelines on a regular basis.

Easements Overview

Under the Ontario Trails Act, 2016, an owner of land may grant an easement, with covenants, to one or more eligible bodies (e.g., Township), for the preservation, enhancement or management of the use of, or access to, all or a portion of the land for purposes relating to trails or to activities relating to trails or for the creation, maintenance or management of trails for public use.

Voluntary or Reserved

An owner of land may grant an easement, though this decision is voluntary. When an eligible body (e.g., Township) conveys land, it may also reserve an easement.

Defining Use

An easement shall contain one or more covenants, as may be agreed upon by the owner of the land and the eligible body (e.g., Township), stating the uses and activities permitted, restricted or prohibited on the land to which the easement relates and a description of those uses and activities.

Easement Registration

An eligible body (e.g., Township) shall register the easement against the land affected in the proper land registry office and, once registered, the easement and the covenants contained in the easement run with the land against which it is registered. An easement is not valid under the Act, unless it is registered.

Easement Lifespan

An easement is valid for the term specified in it. The term must be specified as a period of months, years or in perpetuity.

Enforcing Easements

An eligible body may enforce an easement that is registered on title to the land, including the covenants contained in the easement, against the owner of the land and against any subsequent owner of the land against which it is registered.

The owner of land may enforce against the eligible body the covenants contained in an easement that is registered on title to the land.

4.2.5 Trail Classification & Standards

The Township will establish, adopt, and comply with a defined trail standard, demonstrating proper due diligence, ensuring thorough inspection and maintenance, and informing future trail construction.

Trails should be built and maintained to a standard — establishing a trail standard and trail classification is the first step in proper risk management. It is important the standard be reviewed, to ensure it reflects what is manageable and sustainable with respect to operational and fiscal realities. Next, it must be adopted, to ensure continued compliance.

Consistency is important for trail users. In the wake of trail development and expansion efforts in the areas, township-led and by others, it is recommended that the Township establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

Trail Classification

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) has produced a trail classification, aimed at trail managers, land managers, trail designers/builders, user groups that manage trails (i.e., ATV, XC ski, MTB), and insurance providers. According to the OTC, the intention of the document is to:

- Organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development,
- Articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level,
- Introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class, and
- Support and complement trail risk management training and best practice document.

The OTC Trail Classification has been attached as an appendix item, to be used at the discretion of the Township.

4.2.6 Trail Design, Managed & Designed Use

With such diversity in terms of trail use, the Township should adopt the concept of managed and designed use, an industry best practice, to inform trail management and design parameters.

Trail uses, and users, throughout the Township are diverse. Some see opportunities to participate in sport or leisure, while others view trails as a means of transportation throughout, and between, communities. While some uses/users are season-specific, others take advantage of the trails year round. It is understood that existing trail use includes walking and dog-walking, hiking, cycling (i.e., road, gravel, and mountain biking), equestrian use (i.e., horseback riders), motorized vehicular use (i.e., ATVs, dirt bikes, snow mobiles), snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and first nations traditional use.

With such diversity in terms of trail use, it is recommended that the Township adopt the concept of managed and designed use — and the understanding that trails are not designed to be ‘one-size-fits-all’. Considered an industry best practice, the concept has been employed in plans and strategies close to home, though the Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives, published by the USDA Forest Service, defines these terms and their application particularly well. As such, the following definitions and explanations have been borrowed from this resource, with some modification to fit local application.

Managed Use

Managed Use is a mode of travel that is actively managed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management.

1. Managed Use indicates management intent to accommodate a specific use.
2. There can be more than one Managed Use per trail or trail segment.
3. The Managed Uses for a trail are usually a small subset of all the allowed uses on the trail, that is, uses that are allowed unless specifically prohibited. For example, on a trail that is closed to all motorized use but open to all non-motorized use, the Managed Uses could be hiking and equestrian. The allowed uses, however, would also include bicycles and all other non-motorized uses.

4. Identify the Managed Uses for each trail based on applicable land management plan, direction, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction.
5. There is a direct relationship between Managed Use and Trail Classification: generally, one cannot be determined without consideration of the other. Not all Trail classes are appropriate for all Managed Uses.

Designed Use

Designed Use is the single Managed Use of a trail that requires the most demanding design, construction, and maintenance parameters and that, in conjunction with the applicable Trail Classification, determines which Design Parameters will apply to a trail.

1. There is only one Designed Use per trail or trail segment. Although a trail or trail segment may have more than one Managed Use and numerous uses may be allowed, only one Managed Use is identified as the design driver or Designed Use.
2. Determine the Designed Use for a trail or trail segment from the Managed Uses identified for that trail. When making this determination, consider all Managed Uses that occur during all seasons of use of the trail or trail segment. Assess any essential or limiting geometry for the Managed Uses of the trail or trail segment to determine whether any trail-specific adjustments are necessary to the applicable Design Parameters.
 - i. In some situations, when there is more than one Managed Use identified for a trail, the Designed Use may be readily apparent. For example, on a trail with Managed Uses of all-terrain vehicle and motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle use would be the Designed Use because this use requires wider tread widths and has lower tolerances for surface obstacles and maximum trail grades.
 - ii. In other situations involving more than one Managed Use, the Designed Use may not be readily apparent, as is often the case when there are fewer differences between the applicable sets of Design Parameters. For example, on a trail that is actively managed for hiker, pedestrian, equestrian, and bicycle

use, equestrian use would likely be the Designed Use because of the three “managed uses” -- equestrian use generally has the most demanding design requirements. While the bicycle use design parameters resemble equestrian design parameters in some ways, design parameters for this trail may need to be adjusted to accommodate bicycles.

4.2.7 Trail Management

The Township will employ a hybrid approach to trail management, relying on qualified township staff and professional trail contractors, to conduct regular trail inspection, assessment, monitoring and maintenance.

It is recommended that township staff and professional trail contractors work together to fulfill trail management roles and responsibilities.

Roles

Township staff, in essence the land managers, must provide management and oversight of township properties and trails. In terms of visitor experience, township staff may be required to educate visitors, and respond to negative visitor experiences, when necessary. In terms of maintenance, township staff may tend to maintenance works according to their level of expertise, recruiting professional trail contractors to tend to maintenance works beyond their scope.

Professional trail contractors can provide consulting, design, construction, and maintenance services — generally, relied upon when township staff are unable to perform duties in house or additional expertise is necessary.

Trail Inspection & Assessment

Trail inspection is an important component of risk management, referring to the process of reviewing a trail (i.e., trail tread, drainage, corridor, surroundings, and associated infrastructure), and identifying hazards, defects or problem areas. The process of evaluating identified hazards, defects or problem areas is referred to as trail assessment. Both trail inspection and assessment should be conducted on a regular basis (e.g., monthly, seasonally, annually, etc.) in accordance with the



Worth Noting

Formalized trail environments require management, oversight, inspection, assessment, measurement and maintenance. As recreational trail development and renewal occurs, township staffing levels should be continually monitored and adjusted, to meet evolving needs.

adopted trail classification. Both should be conducted by qualified individuals; generally, township staff or a professional trail contractor.

Record Keeping

All trail inspections, assessments, and maintenance should be documented on standardized forms/templates. Often referred to as a 'risk mitigation log', these records should be kept on file for a minimum of 7 years, as per industry standard.

Measuring Performance

It is important to monitor trail use (i.e., number of users, time of visit, etc.), to help guide decisions related to maintenance, trail classification, management and funding. Infrared trail counters are a common means of collecting this data. Installing cameras at ground level — capturing only feet, to maintain user privacy — is another approach which may be used, to collect relevant data. Regardless of the technologies used, it is important to erect signage in staging environments, indicating that trail counters are being used on the premises.

4.2.8 Constituent and Communal Needs

Generally, projects should focus on the communal needs of the community as a whole; even projects established to meet the needs of a particular user group will contribute to the communal needs of the community, accordingly.

Township park and trail development projects meet two kinds of needs: the communal (i.e., of benefit to all) and the constituent (i.e., of benefit to specific groups). Currently, large portions of township parks are consumed by facilities and services to meet the need of constituent user groups. Yet, many of the best things about township parks are a result of providing for the community's communal needs.

From the very outset, all projects must seek to appease communal needs, above those of the constituent. The program and design of new projects should meet the needs of the user group, but with limited land and under township ownership, have an obligation to make a positive contribution to the park environment, to serve the whole community.

4.3 Identity and Movement

This series of strategies deal with access and movement through the township parks and recreational trail network.

4.3.1 Entry, Orientation and Wayfinding

Strategy 15

The Township will seek ways to give the township parks and recreational trail network a stronger sense of identity, well-defined entrances, and an easy sense of orientation.

Generally, Township parks and recreational trail environments lack a satisfactory sense of entry and orientation.

A Primary Entrance

As parks are improved, the means of accessing them, or the entry sequence, will need improvement too. A primary entrance should be identified for each park site; outfit with necessary place identification signage and other treatments, to support navigation and confirm arrival.

Secondary entrances with quality treatments should be developed in support of the primary entrances — facilitating arrival via alternative vehicular routes, or adjacent trail environments, where possible.

Staging Environments

Staging environments offer access to trails, and encompass the spaces and facilities we generally associate with trailheads — parking, washrooms, signage, picnic areas, space to meet, organize and prepare, and/or programmable space to accommodate trail related activities and events (e.g., lessons, group activities, races, etc.).

These spaces should be designed to welcome visitors to the trails, and to support managed and designed trail uses. Staging environments, their finishes and furnishings (e.g., signage), can also distinguish township trails from others in the community.

Staging environments come in many shapes and sizes, responding to surrounding geography, intentions, trail access, and means of arrival. For example, a trail situated in an isolated context requiring vehicular access may require more space for parking (i.e., vehicles, trailers, etc.),

washroom facilities, and other amenities to support trail users — perhaps concentrated at a single entrance. Alternatively, a trail with several opportunities for community connections (e.g., pedestrian paths from adjacent residential areas) may warrant smaller staging areas, designed to welcome, inform, and orient pedestrians and cyclists, without accommodation for vehicles.

Signage & Wayfinding

A coordinated signage system should be developed, to welcome, orient, inform, educate, and direct park and trail users. Property entrances (i.e., staging environments) should be identified, and staging environments should be outfitted with appropriate information to equip visitors, and satisfy risk management policies. This may include, but is not limited to, code of conduct, guidelines for use, waiver sign, trail mapping, emergency information, and design parameters as prescribed under the AODA.

On trails themselves, wayfinding signage, such as trail markers and mapping may also be used, to ensure visitors remain on township trails and are able to make informed decisions and navigate the network appropriately. Additionally, where situations permit, the use of gates, barriers (constructed and/or planted) can assist in preventing unauthorized access/traffic to “off trail” environments. In areas of unique natural or cultural heritage, interpretive signage can be used as an interactive educational component.

Temporary signage, often used to convey trail closures, is another important component of a coordinated signage system.

The names of facilities and amenities, services, and buildings should be clearly presented and associated with building approaches and entrances.

Design Considerations

The Township is advised to work with a qualified consultant, to develop a coordinated signage system specific to township parks and trails, responding to risk management policies, township goals, and the needs of park and trail users. Design considerations should include, graphics and legibility (e.g., contrast, text size, use of universal symbols, visibility, etc.), content (e.g., code of conduct, mapping, etc.), locations (e.g., sign situation, distance from trail tread, responding to varied topography, snow build up, etc.), dimensioning (e.g., overall size, height, etc.), and maintenance.

Consistent Naming & Identifiers

Throughout the process, we have come to appreciate various names for the same spaces and/or trails, found throughout the Township. The Township should prioritize the selection of a single naming convention for each trail/space, that can be rationalized and used indefinitely. A process should be developed to outline this decision-making process, that also considers stakeholder consultation to ensure naming is agreeable and adopted by the community.

Named Trails & Places

Very few communities have a set policy for naming a trail, space or entity. However, when named, trails and spaces tend to be identifiable and act as a destinations. The Township should strive to create destinations that are well signed and have a story to tell — trails and destinations tend to be harder to let fall into disrepair when they are named.

4.3.2 Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian zones — paths, walkways, trails, open spaces that facilitate movement — are defining features of parks. They should be strategically positioned and expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement.

Pedestrian paths are defining features of township parks. These, and associated pedestrian zones, should be expanded upon through the realignment and retrofitting of vehicular thoroughfares that can be made secondary to pedestrian movement. Consolidation and connectivity between open spaces, free from vehicular traffic, should be encouraged.

The only routes that require automobile access are those leading to parking lots. At all times, pedestrian movement should be given priority. Where vehicular crossings are required, sidewalks should be constructed to address the crossing — sidewalks should not be paved over, giving vehicles priority.

Pedestrian access to facilities and amenities should, where feasible, reflect a balance between environmental preservation and the desired line of movement.

A pedestrian circulation system should be developed that facilitates convenient and comfortable movement around township parks, and the larger community beyond.

4.3.3 Pedestrian Trail Crossings

The Township will ensure that pedestrian crossings are situated and outfitted appropriately, to enhance safety for trail users and motorists alike.

Rural, high-speed roadways, especially those with poor sight lines can pose risk to pedestrians. Although many township trails are isolated from vehicular traffic, others intersect with roadways — sometimes more than once.

When planning for new trail construction, or trail redevelopment which would require users to cross a roadway, every effort should be made to locate trail crossings where sight lines meet or exceed best practices, as well as provincial engineering standards.

Where possible, or required due to substandard sight lines, a trail crossing warning system should be considered. Often composed of signage to demonstrate the purpose of the trail, as well as flashing beacons to warn oncoming traffic of the trail crossing, trail crossing warning systems can improve safety for trail users and motorists alike.

It is understood that roads throughout Southwold span township, county, and provincial jurisdiction. The Township is encouraged to work collaboratively with regulatory agencies, to understand where opportunities to align safe trail crossings exist and to determine the feasibility of trail crossing warning systems, where necessary.

Across the province, we are seeing public works and engineering policies be developed, speaking to the logistics of erecting hiking trail crossings on county roads. As an example, in Renfrew County the Public Works and Engineering Policy PW-14: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads (included as an appendix item, for reference) outlines a collaborative process, where costs and responsibilities are shared between the County and member municipalities — there may be opportunity to establish a similar model within the context of Southwold and Elgin County.

4.3.4 Bicycles

The increased use of bicycles, both for access to and for moving around township parks, will be encouraged and accommodated in future development.

Bicycle use offers many opportunities to the community — lessening environmental impact, decreasing demand for vehicular access and parking, encouraging healthy, active living, and providing another enriching means to enjoy the existing network of township parks and trails.

Bicycles are an extremely efficient means of local transport, but they present problems for planners precisely because they are fast and mobile. Not powered vehicles but not pedestrians either, bicycles are found on all reasonably level surfaces — roads, lanes, sidewalks, walkways, plazas, and trails — and frequently come into conflict with vehicles and pedestrians alike. To create a separate, designated system for bicycles is ambitious; to completely restrict bicycles from all pedestrian areas would (if even possible) defeat their value.

Major approach roads to most Township parks are broad and busy. The continued provision of bicycle lanes (and separated multi-use paths) should be encouraged by the Township within Township parks, paths and thoroughfares, and should be identified and marked to aid in the clear and safe movement of bicycles. In some areas of the pedestrian precinct (i.e., gathering areas, plazas) it may be necessary to heighten pedestrian awareness of cycling activity within in these areas.

The Township should provide bicycle parking on the periphery of the pedestrian precinct, located conveniently and visible from facilities and amenities. If possible, sheltered bicycle parking and related amenities (i.e., repair stands) should be provided — few communities offer them, yet they has been proven to be a significant amenity in attracting cycling clubs and tours.



Worth Noting

Parks host a wide array of cyclists — families with young children, leisurely folks, athletes, etc. It is important to recognize that not all cyclists have the same needs and additional infrastructure may be required to ensure safety and enjoyment for all.

4.3.5 Parking

The Township will adopt a two-pronged approach to parking: reduce demand for parking through establishing community connections, and advocate for parking within comfortable walking distance to trailheads, supporting facilities, and amenities.

Where possible, demand for parking should be reduced through establishing community connections (i.e., trail access from residential areas, existing parks, community facilities, etc.). Often overlooked, community connections can be of immense benefit — encouraging active transportation, reducing barriers to recreation opportunities, and reducing parking demand (i.e., less resources allocated to expansion and maintenance of parking environments).

Given the rural context and expansive geography of the area, it is understood that not all parks and recreational trails will be serviceable through community connections, and will require parking environments. In these instances, park and recreational trail use will be correlated with parking capacity, and vice versa. It's a balance, where insufficient parking will limit park and recreational trail use, yet an abundance of parking could lend to congestion, or remain unused (i.e., wasted resources). When planning to construct or redevelop parking facilities, the Township must consider use, demand (i.e., typical, not peak), and current capacities, to right size these facilities. Well maintained gravel parking is to be considered the Township's level of service.

Maximize Efficiency of Existing Lots

Despite park and recreational trail users' reliance on motor vehicles to access township trail infrastructure, existing parking environments servicing township parks and trailheads can be improved upon. Each lot should be considered individually to determine the best operating, personal safety, and aesthetic design.

4.3.6 Underground Utilities

The Township will plan ahead to ensure necessary upgrades to underground utilities are made before, or during, park development projects to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruptions.

Township utilities — including but not limited to water, gas, electricity, storm, sewage, and communications — have been developed piece by piece over many decades. In the wake of new development in the area, particularly residential subdivisions, many systems are approaching their maximums or are limited in reach, and may be insufficient to support future expansion set to occur. Municipal utilities — including but not limited to water, gas, electricity, storm, sewage, and communications — tend to be developed incrementally over time. In the wake of new development in areas having utilities, particularly residential subdivisions, the Township may have utilities that are approaching their end of useful life, maximum capacity, and may be limited in supporting future expansion.

The program for rationalization and rehabilitation should be coordinated with other park development, including the construction of new buildings, road redevelopment, and landscape projects, in order to avoid costly duplications and extended site disruption.

Conversely, each park project should give adequate consideration to its impact on the existing systems and potential contribution it might make to future utilities rationalization. The cost of updating and/or engineering systems should in part be borne by the project budgets of new buildings and facilities which draw upon those systems, and in part by a utility infrastructure budget.

4.3.7 Lighting

Exterior lighting will increase user safety and comfort, and subtly reveal the character of parks at night.

A cohesive lighting system should be developed that increases user safety and comfort at night, and reinforces the spatial structure and organization of Township parks. Effective and well-designed artificial lighting is critical to comfort, personal safety, and orientation, and in some instances, extended play. The Township should consider lighting for all of its soccer facilities, primary trail segments, and of amenity/ congregation areas (washrooms, entrances, etc). determined to be accessible after hours.

Township parks change at night. Activity diminishes. What were colourful gardens can become shadowed recesses. A sense of orientation, difficult as it is to maintain during the day, can be further reduced. But it does not need to be; nighttime outdoor can and should be as pleasant as daytime.

Good lighting must be adequate; though, this does not necessarily mean in greater quantities. Glare and extreme contrast are just as great a problem as too little light. It is a great mistake to try to provide daytime-like intensities; those areas that are not as brightly lit become seemingly more dark, purely by contrast and the inability for the eye to adapt. The lighting strategy therefore is to limit light levels to no more than what is required to see at night (i.e., not much more than full moonlight) and to distribute light more evenly with smooth transitions between illuminated buildings, roads, walkways, and open spaces. This allows the eye to comfortably adapt and thus be able to see into shadows.

Lighting can also add immeasurably to the night aesthetic of parks, by subtly illuminating key features. This will assist orientation and engender a sense of comfort and satisfaction. All building entrances, alcoves and/ or dark corners should be softly lit.



Worth Noting

Excessive lighting can also pose challenges for some, notably neighbouring residents and wildlife; light intensity, distribution, necessity, placement and orientation should be considered.

Overly bright lighting which may disturb adjacent residential areas and sensitive wildlife must be avoided. All lighting should be 'dark sky' compliant allowing the visibility of the night sky to be preserved as a community asset.

Lighting fixtures are an important part of the furniture that embellishes parks; they are as important during the day as they are at night. All lighting should coordinate with other park site furnishings.

4.3.8 Site Furnishings

The Township intends to develop an economical and comprehensive system of visually coordinated and comfortable outdoor furnishings. Durability in function and attractive appearance under low maintenance conditions are essential.

To be conducive to use and social interaction, an environment must be well endowed with a range of furnishings, including seating, waste receptacles, bicycle racks, and other elements of convenience. These components should be designed as a visually coordinated system that works well with other elements, like signage, to enhance the identity of parks as places with special purposes and roles.

Furnishings play a key role in the ‘branding’ of the community through consistent visual reminders that the viewer is in Southwold, whether in a township park or travelling upon a township trail. Care should be taken to ensure consistency throughout the community, through establishing ‘standards’ (i.e., parks and recreation furnishing standard), or seeking furnishings that complement other township efforts.

Furnishings should also be comfortable, durable, vandal-resistant and attractive under low maintenance conditions, and should be located where they will be used. Materials should be comfortable and dry, and components should be designed to accommodate a range of needs with respect to posture and individual preference. Components should be located to take maximum benefit of seasonal climactic changes and characteristics.

4.4 Implementation

This series of strategies deal with plan management and project delivery.

4.4.1 Plan Continuity

Strategy 23

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan will be promoted and be approved as Township policy and maintained as an effective development directive through continuity of responsibility, consistent application, and regular updating and review.

To ensure that the Southwold Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan remains an effective basis for development, the Township should establish administrative structures for its approval, application, and updating.

An Approved Master Plan

The Parks and Recreational Trails Master Plan, particularly the strategies and its implementation and review mechanisms, should be received by Township Council.

Applying the Master Plan

The strategies contained within should be applied to all parks and recreational trail development or renewal projects, regardless of scale or type. The prime responsibility for this should be assigned to a township department (i.e., infrastructure and development services, building and community services, public works, etc.) whose job it will be to ensure that the Master Plan is brought forward at all stages of the parks and recreational trail development process.

This Master Plan represents the institutional “intention and memory” of the Township, and will be a source of reference for many people, staff and departments. The Master Plan will require consistency in interpretation, for which the continued leadership of a township planner is necessary as well as the continuity of those associates with the task, both at the planning and project levels.

Updating the Master Plan

The Parks and Recreational Master Plan should be capable of responding to changing needs over time. Implemented in projects, each defined by the conditions of the current time, once completed, each project will influence subsequent projects (i.e., the completion of a short-term project will serve to inform the design planning of subsequent projects). It therefore requires periodic updating. Master Plan amendments should be made explicitly not implicitly, following formal amending procedures.

Plan Amendment

An amendment is made when a proposed project would contradict the Master Plan in some way, but seems otherwise to be desirable. The first method of updating is a “Plan Amendment” which is triggered if it is found that a project is desirable but does not comply with the Master Plan. The second method is a Formal Review, conducted at five year intervals, by which the Master Plan’s policy status is confirmed. This review will include a re-examination of the strategies, and the incorporation of Master Plan Amendments made in the preceding period. A ‘working group’ including township planning and community services staff, should review and advise as to whether a proposed project is consistent with the Master Plan, and be responsible for requesting that Council decide whether amendment should be made.

4.4.2 Project Design Checklist

Designers (i.e., landscape architects, planners, engineers, etc.) of projects throughout the township parks and recreational trails network must respond to the following criteria and present evidence as to how they have been addressed at each major step of the design process.

During the design of new and renovated spaces, structures and amenities, the project team — users, administrators, managers, and designers — will have three areas of responsibility: the first towards particular project needs, the second towards communal needs, and the third towards outdoor space and circulation.

Site Use and Organization

- Land use efficiency should be maximized.
- Sites should be selected to assist the rationalization of movement and of utility infrastructure.
- Built forms should be located on those parts of the site which are in worst condition, rather than the best.

Responding to Local Context

- Open spaces and associated structures should be designed to enhance the larger compositions created by groups of facilities, amenities, and landscapes; these should also preserve and increase physical and visual connections to Southwold's hamlets and residential areas.
- Spaces and associated infrastructure should be organized in a way that makes new function and circulation routes compatible with those of adjacent uses and open spaces.
- Existing high quality open spaces should be protected and enhanced.
- New open spaces should form part of a continuous network.
- New structures adjacent to open spaces, trails and thoroughfares, should be treated as fronts and should activate these environments.

- All uses should relate directly to grade for ease of access and continued/increased accessibility.

Response to Local Climate

- Park spaces, both outdoor and indoor (e.g., washrooms, facilities, etc.), should benefit from the sun, yet also consider protection for excessive solar radiation.
- Sun, rain and snow shelters should be provided in high use areas, and adjacent to frequently travelled pedestrian routes.
- Park paths, walkways, and plaza gradients should be minimized and/or skid resistant to reduce slipping when wet, icy, and/or snow-covered.

Circulation & Barrier Free Access

- Park, open spaces, trail environments, and associated structures/amenities should be universally accessible.
- New open spaces, associated structures, and amenities should be barrier free, including clear, unobstructed direct paths for the persons with visual impairments and/or disabilities. Create logical, intuitive guides to major destinations.

Public Safety

- New projects and renovations should be designed to provide actual personal safety as well as impart a sense of comfort and well-being in park and recreational trail users.
- Personal safety is a broad-spectrum requirement that is basic to all aspects of the environment, including spatial clarity and legibility, signage and orientation, lighting and visibility, planting, paving materials, and winter walkability-mobility, as well as ramp gradients, traffic controls, and safety alert devices.

Long Life/Loose Fit

- New spaces, structures, and amenities should be capable of being adapted to new uses and expansion as the needs and the priorities of the community change.

Expression

- Southwold's landscapes should express a sense of connectedness to nature, to permanence, resiliency and respect while ensuring a sense of connection to the community's traditional roots and its historical legacies.
- Southwold's parks, open spaces and trail environments, and associated amenities, should express the township's commitment to serving the community, their guests, and its visitors — and its responsibility to treat leisure and recreational activity as a public resource. To express this, landscapes and amenities should be open, safe, accessible, welcoming and fair.
- Southwold's parks, open spaces, and trail environments should express a connection to nature, providing the opportunity to tie nature and recreation

Scale

- The scale of spaces and amenities throughout township parks should relate to the scale and size of the human body, to make approaching and using of the space/amenity a comfortable experience.
- The scale of elements and massing should correspond to the various distances from which it is viewed.

Materials, Finishes and Products

- Materials, finishes and products should reinforce the cohesion of related groups of uses (i.e., recreation zones, access and parking, etc.).
- Materials, finishes and products should reflect the role of township parks, open spaces and trail environments as focal points of the community.

Landscape Quality

- Landscape design should receive the same level of attention and budget stability afforded to buildings and infrastructure, elsewhere in the township.
- Landscapes should be designed to ensure personal safety.

Servicing

- Service areas and associated utility infrastructure should be located and designed to efficiently support parks and trails functions and operator requirements.
- Services areas should in general be located away from public open spaces and thoroughfares.
- Where service areas are integrated with pedestrian use, design treatments should reflect the pedestrian use.

Technical Performance

- Projects should be subjected to life-cycle costing to determine the best fit between capital costs, operating costs and ongoing maintenance costs; projects should be designed to reduce maintenance costs.
- All design efforts should reduce energy and resource consumption and environmental impact.

Environmental Quality

- Improvements and new use development should demonstrate high respect for the environment and should not compromise the existing natural features necessary in supporting resilience.
- Amenities and structures should not be permitted to emit unacceptable noxious or otherwise unpleasant run-off, fumes/gases, etc. into township parks, open spaces, or trail environments.
- Noise generating activities should be located within facilities designed or strategically situated to protect other park and trail users from noise intrusion, where possible.

4.4.3 Campaign Establishment

Campaigns should be established to raise awareness and funds for major park and recreational trail planning, construction, and redevelopment projects.

Campaigns should identify independent projects with specific budgets to be financed by the Township and its funding partners. Creating means for the community to invest in, to help shape, and to care for their local parks, open spaces, and trail environments, can also lend to a heightened sense of appreciation, stewardship, and civic pride.

5.0 Parks & Outdoor Recreation Facilities

5.1 Classification & Service Level Summaries

The Township of Southwold is home to several parks and open spaces, offering active and passive outdoor recreation opportunities to residents and their guests.

5.1.1 Parkland Classification

The Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), identifies two types, or classifications, of parks — Community Parks and Neighbourhood Parks — which will provide a range of recreational and open space opportunities, within settlement areas.

Community Parks

As per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), Community Parks are intended to serve the recreational needs of the residents at the community level. Community Parks will:

- a. Provide indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, and are a focal point for community activities;
- b. Provide predominantly for active recreational uses;
- c. Be accessible to the community; and
- d. Incorporate elements of the natural environment wherever feasible.

Neighbourhood Parks

As per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), Neighbourhood Parks are permitted uses in all land use designations. Neighbourhood Parks will generally consist of small children's play facilities at the neighbourhood level and greenbelt area that serve neighbourhoods within a community. More specifically, Neighbourhood Parks will:

- a. Be accessibly located within a neighbourhood;
- b. Provide opportunities for minor recreational activities; and
- c. Provide opportunities for passive enjoyment of the environment.

Recommended Classification

Beyond those identified in the Official Plan, it is recommended that the Township adopt additional parkland classification (and associated parameters) when describing current parks, and planning for new ones. It is also recommended that the Township Official Plan be amended to support these additional parkland classifications. In alignment with industry best practices and comparator municipalities, the following parkland classification is recommended for use.

Recommended Parkland Classification, Town of Southwold

Classification	Description	Size (ha)
Parkette	Small open spaces with limited recreational facilities, if any. Supports passive recreational use (i.e., rest, play, gathering). May include areas of natural heritage, historic or architectural significance.	Under 0.6
Neighbourhood Park	Provide opportunities for minor recreational activities and passive enjoyment of the environment. Generally consist of small children's play facilities and green space.	0.6 to 4.0
Community Park	Intended to serve the recreational needs of residents at the community level. Provides indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, predominantly for active recreational uses.	4.0+
Regional Park	Intended to serve the recreational needs of residents, the broader community and region. Provides a variety of amenities and/or unique environmental areas. May provide additional income opportunities (e.g., sport tournaments, tourism, etc.).	Varies

Figure 26: Recommended Parkland Classification

Using the recommended parkland classification above, the following table provides an overview of existing parks in the Township.

Overview: Southwold Parks

Name	Recommended Classification	Settlement Area	Size (ha)
Corsley Park	Community Park	Shedden	6.3
Ferndale Community Park	Neighbourhood Park	Ferndale	2.8
Fingal Ball Park	Community Park	Fingal	6.5
Fingal Heritage Park	Parkette	Fingal	0.5
Keystone Complex	Regional Park	Shedden	11.4
Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park	Neighbourhood Park	Talbotville	1.9
Talbotville Optimist Sports Park	Community Park	Talbotville	5.8

Figure 27: Overview of Parks in Southwold

5.1.2 Parkland Service Level

The Township owns and manages approximately **35.2 ha** of parkland. Based on the current population of Southwold, this yields a service level of approximately **7.3 ha per 1,000 residents**.

As demonstrated in the figure below, on average the parkland service level of comparator municipalities is **4.0 ha per 1,000 residents** — in alignment with their average target service level. In comparison, the parkland service level in Southwold is considerably higher than that comparator municipalities. However, considering the probable 5-year growth (i.e., totalling 9,500 resident population) and potential growth 5-years and beyond (i.e., totalling 11,500 resident population), this service level is under threat. If the Township’s parkland inventory remains as-is, the service level could fall to 3.7 ha per 1,000 residents, then 3.1 ha per 1,000 residents, respectfully.

Worth noting, beyond quantity, it is up to the Township to take appropriate steps to assess and ensure an acceptable quality of parkland — considering site suitability, programming compatibility, ease of access, proximity, public safety, environmental and/or historical significance, and connectivity, among other characteristics.



Improvements & Recommendations

- The Township should target a parkland service level of 4.0 ha per 1,000 residents, in alignment with the average amongst comparator municipalities.
- Although there is currently an abundance of parkland in the community (i.e., service level exceeds target), it is recommended that the Township retain parklands through anticipated period of unprecedented growth, to avoid falling below target.

Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

Municipality	2021 Population	Supply of Parks	Service Level (ha /1000 pop.)	Target Service Level (ha /1,000 pop.)
Town of Alymer	7699	14	3.57	3.88
Township of Malahide	9308	7	0.79	2.2
Town of St. Marys	7386	19	4.55	4.2
Town of Ingersoll	13693	18	3.39	2.5
Town of Tillsonburg	18615	19	4.29	4.5
Town of Petrolia	6013	14	4.27	4.3
Town of Shelburne	8994	17	6.41	6.41
Town of Goderich	7881	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of St. Thomas	42840	43	4.83	4
Average	13603	18.88	4.01	4.00

Figure 28: Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

Surplus Lands

As explained above, based on probable and potential growth it is recommended to retain current parkland, to ensure the desired service level target is met. In the future, should the Township determine there to be a surplus of parkland, properties should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, with the support of a qualified consultant, as needed. Considerations may include, but are not limited to:

- Ease of access, proximity;
- Site suitability, programming compatibility;
- Public safety;
- Environmental and/or historical significance; and
- Connectivity.

5.1.3 Outdoor Recreation Facilities

Existing parks throughout the Township feature many outdoor recreation facilities, supporting both active and passive park use.

As demonstrated in the figure below, when compared to the respective service levels of comparator municipalities, the Township generally meets or exceeds an acceptable service level for most facility types. However, considering probable 5-year growth (i.e., totalling 9,500 resident population) and potential growth 5-years and beyond (i.e., totalling 11,500 resident population), many of these service levels will fall below those of comparator municipalities.

Other Considerations

There are many other recreation facilities that may warrant discussion, as the Township seeks opportunities to diversify their outdoor recreation offerings. These may include, but are not limited to BMX/skatepark/pump track facilities, disc golf courses, fitness parks, beach volleyball courts, and outdoor skating rinks. With a lack of comparator data to determine adequate service levels for these facilities, provision should be based on community desire and feasibility (i.e., fiscal and operational realities, environmental conditions, etc.).



Improvements & Recommendations

- The Township should consider probable and potential growth, when planning for the provision of new outdoor recreation facilities.
- Where possible, multi-use facilities should be considered to maximize use potential without incurring excess installation and maintenance costs (e.g., explore multi-sport courts, which may support tennis, pickleball, basketball, and more).
- The Township should monitor community interest in unique outdoor recreation facilities (e.g., BMX/skatepark/pump track facilities, etc.) to determine need.

Outdoor Recreation Facility Service Level Summary, Town of Southwold

Facility Information			Calculated Provision (per Population)				Considerations	
Facility	Current Supply	Comparator Provision (1:x)	Current (4800 pp.)	Probable (9500 pp.)	Potential (11500 pp.)	Community Desire	Supply Status	
Baseball Diamond	4	1471	3.3	6.5	7.8	Satisfied	Ok	
Basketball Court	2.5	7705	0.6	1.2	1.5	Improvements needed	High	
Off-Leash Dog Park	0	8665	0.6	1.1	1.3	Moderate	Low	
Outdoor Pool	0	15301	0.3	0.6	0.8	Low	Ok	
Pickleball Court	0	3060	1.6	3.1	3.8	High	Low	
Playground	6	1703	2.8	5.6	6.8	Improvements needed	High	
Soccer Pitch	5	1920	2.5	4.9	6.0	Moderate	High	
Splash Pad	0	9892	0.5	1.0	1.2	High	Ok	
Tennis Court	1	3861	1.2	2.5	3.0	High	Ok	

Comparator provision based on comparator municipalities, including Town of Alymer, Township of Malahide, Town of St. Marys, Town of Ingersoll, Town of Tillsonburg, Town of Petrolia, Town of Shelburne, Town of Goderich, and City of St. Thomas.

Figure 29: Parkland Service Level, Comparator Municipalities

5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment

Based on site observations collected in April 2025, and supplemented by desktop research and community engagement findings, site specific inventories have been prepared for existing park sites in Southwold¹. Each site has also been assigned a ‘necessary improvements’ rating, based on overall conditions, equipment, and finishing — considering safety, repair, desirability, among other criteria.

Site specific recommendations have been made for each site, complete with illustrative demonstration plans, to help guide physical change through the short-, mid- and long-term.



Fingal Ball Park (Township of Southwold, n.d.)

1 Excluding Fingal Heritage Park, as per project scope.

5.2.1 Corsley Park

Corsley Park (previously Shedden Open Space Park) is delineated on one side by Union Road. Although currently adjacent to large swaths of vacant land (i.e., lands cleared for development, farm fields), the park will soon be surrounded by residential development.



Inventory

- Linear pedestrian path along northeast property line extends beyond park boundary through adjacent development lands to the Keystone Complex.
- Soccer fields (approx. 34 goalposts)
- Pavilion
- Accessible playground
- Seasonal washroom
- Gravel parking lot



Site Observations, Conditions

- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Soccer fields appear saturated and uneven, difficult to walk on.
- Pathway to Keystone Complex materiality varies and is not accessible (i.e., no footpath) from parking lot or pavilion.
- Accessible playground equipment but no accessible route to the playground.
- Seating is concentrated in one area.

Address

9210 Union Rd, Shedden, ON N0L 2E0

Facility Condition – Improvement Need



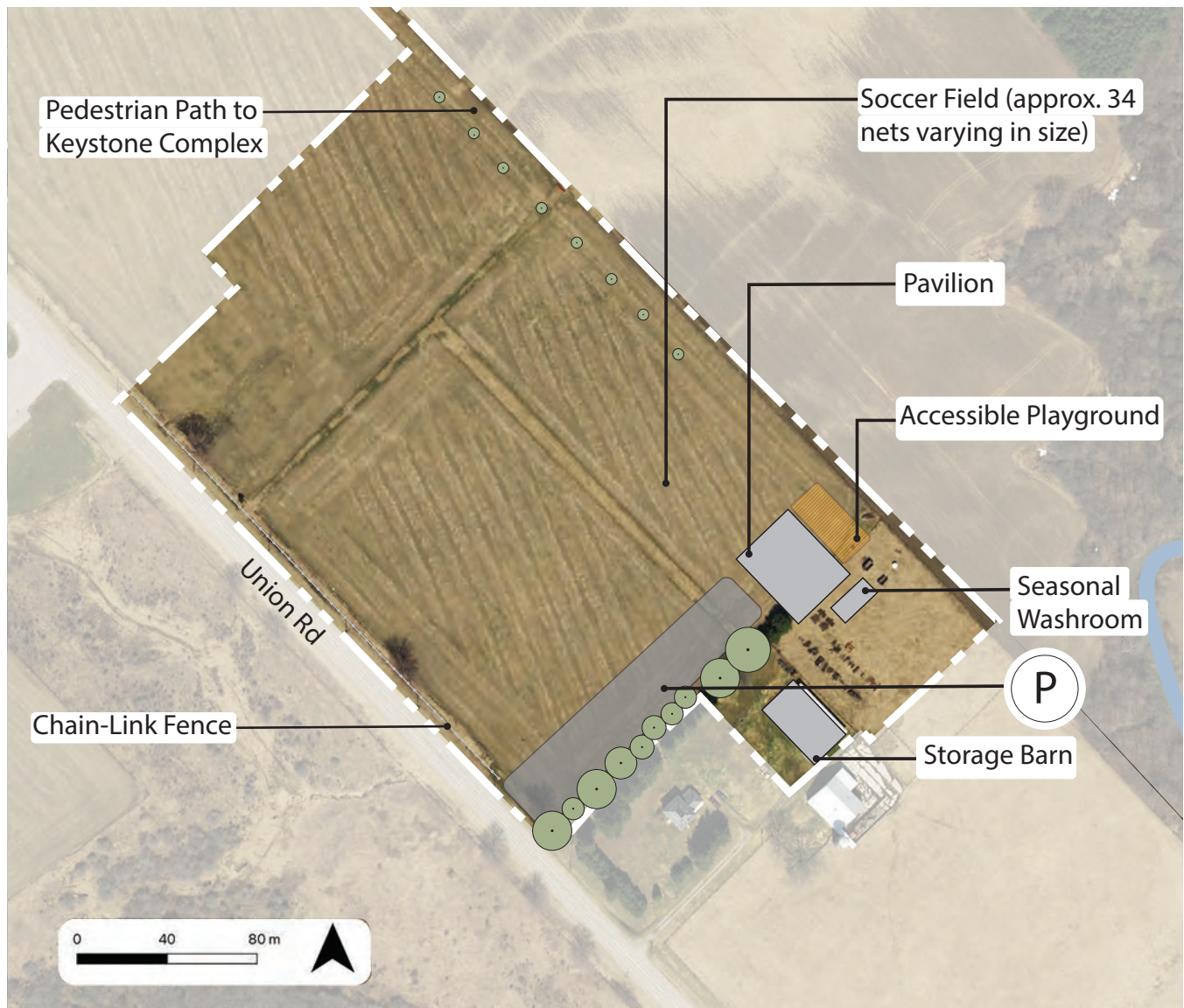
Existing path to Keystone Complex (above), pavilion and park facility (centre), washroom facility (below).



Other Considerations

- Ground has been broken on residential development to the northwest; consider increased pedestrian use, dog-walking.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the north.
- Conservation lands may be established to the south, across Union Rd.
- Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail opportunity.

Figure 30: Corsley Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





Improvements & Recommendations

- Consider adjusting soccer pitch alignment, to improve playability (i.e., reduce sun interference) and mitigate rogue soccer balls in proximity to Union Rd.
- Monitor demand for other field-based programming (e.g., rugby, lacrosse, etc.) and consider investment in additional equipment/line painting to promote more diverse use of these facilities.
- Improve multi-use path; refer to 6.0 Recreational Trails on page 112 for more information.
- Add perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate noise complaints and exposure to elements (i.e., supplement existing perimeter tree planting efforts).
- Ensure accessible playground facility can be accessed via an accessible pathway.
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity. Well maintained gravel parking is to be considered the Township's level of service.
- Consider reinstating turf in overflow parking area, to support passive use outside of peak parking times.

Figure 31: Corsley Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Existing Soccer Fields — realign to improve playability and safety.
- (B) Parking Lot Improvements — refine footprint and delineate parking stalls; add drop off to improve circulation.
- (C) Existing Accessible Playground Improvements — ensuring accessible pathway access; shade tree planting.
- (D) Multi-Use Perimeter Path
- (E) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment
- (F) Pedestrian Crosswalk, as permitted — to connect to future Conservation Area.



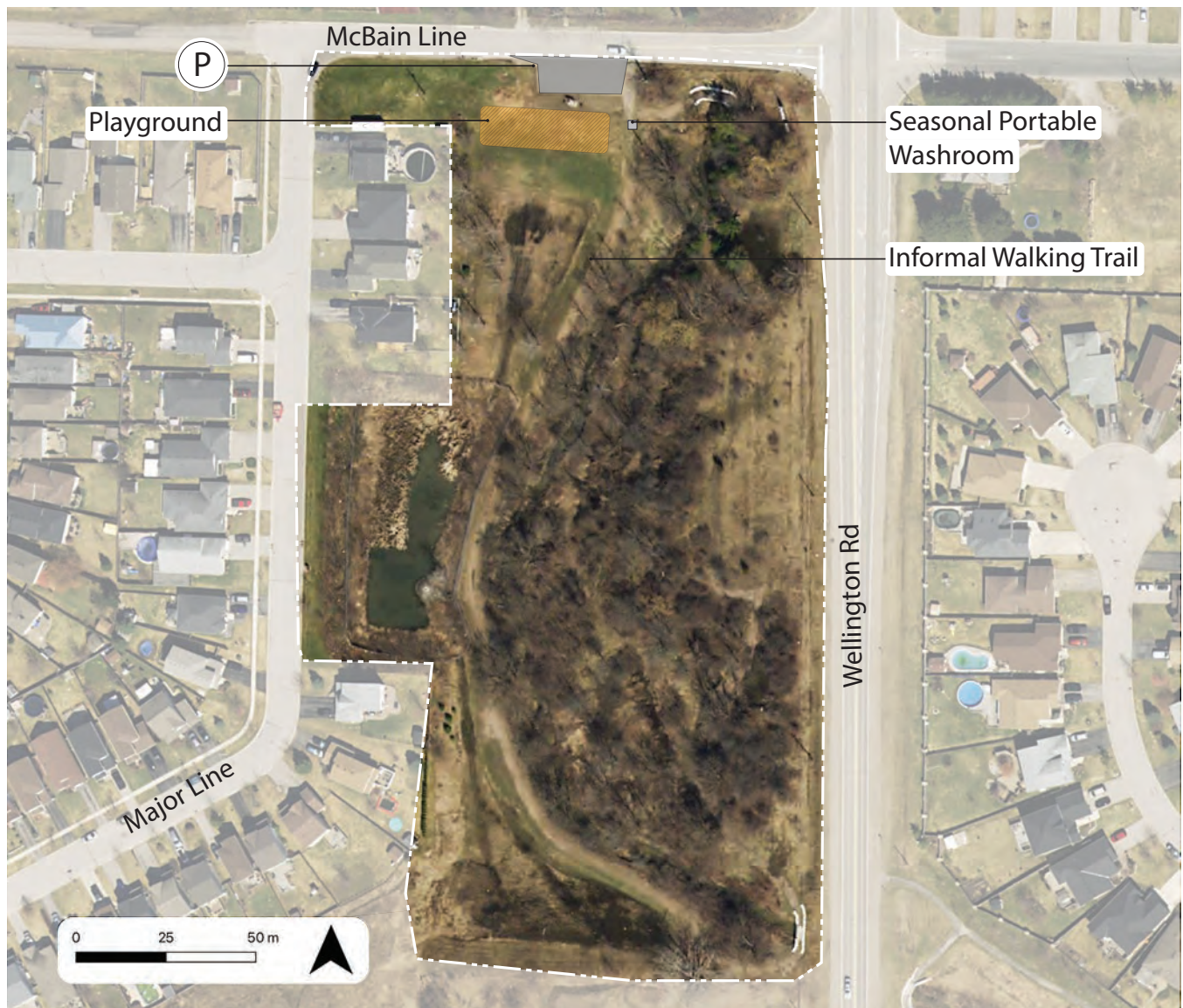
- (G) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (H) Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.



Other Considerations

- There is an entrance to a Municipality of Central Elgin multi-use trail directly across Wellington Rd to the east; desire lines suggest informal crossing and park access occurs frequently and behaviour is likely to continue. Opportunity to support cross-boundary pedestrian circulation and enhance access to neighbouring park facilities (e.g., Lynhurst Park and Turvey Park Skate Pad).

Figure 32: Ferndale Community Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





Improvements & Recommendations

- Install more seating opportunities, to support parents (i.e., surrounding playground) and pedestrians (i.e., along walking path).
- Ensure 'accessible' sidewalk is purposeful and permits use of park facilities (e.g., provide adequate connection to playground, seasonal portable washrooms, etc.).
- Consider working with Elgin County and the Municipality of Central Elgin to establish a formal pedestrian crosswalk across Wellington Rd, in alignment with existing trail access/ egress (i.e., maintain comfortable walking distance, create safer environment to support existing movement/behaviour patterns).

Figure 33: Ferndale Community Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Existing Playground — with safety and access improvements.
- (B) Pedestrian Walking Trail
- (C) Pedestrian Crosswalk, as permitted.
- (D) Formalized Parking Area — complete with accessible parking space, delineated by new tree planting.
- (E) Naturalistic Area — allow area to naturalize, providing ecosystem diversity and point of interest for users.



5.2.3 Fingal Ball Park

One of Southwold's largest parks, Fingal Ball Park boasts several sports facilities — including ball diamonds and sport courts — and an expansive lawn. A new stormwater management pond is under development on site, towards the northwest. New residential development slated for the immediate vicinity will alter context, access and use.

Address

8086 Millpark Street, Fingal, ON N0L 1K0

Facility Condition — Improvement Need



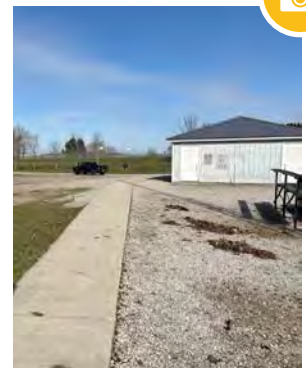
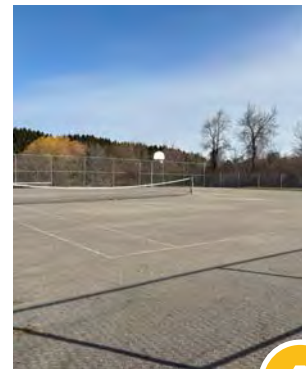
Inventory

- Sport courts (i.e., tennis and basketball)
- Baseball diamonds, lit (x2)
- Seasonal washrooms
- Pavilion
- Gravel parking lot



Site Observations, Conditions

- Expansive parking lot is difficult to navigate, lacks order and is showing signs of wear (i.e., poor drainage, potholes).
- Lack of formal pathways to sport facilities (i.e., pedestrians crossing long, uneven sections of lawn to access facilities).
- Lack of seating, specifically around sport courts.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Large maintained lawns appear resource intensive, yet underutilized.



Tennis and basketball court (above), baseball diamond and supporting infrastructure (centre), pavilion and parking area (below).





Other Considerations

- New residential development to the west will alter context, access and use; consider increased pedestrian use, dog-walking.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the north, across Union Rd; may be opportunity to establish pedestrian crossing and access path, to further enhance connectivity.

Figure 34: Fingal Ball Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





Improvements & Recommendations

- Establish paths to improve access and navigation to park facilities and amenities.
- Establish trails to promote passive recreational around the site.
- Ensure stormwater management pond plans integrate multi-use perimeter path, in a safe and desirable manner.
- Sport court improvements, to address aging and/or missing infrastructure (e.g., nets, baskets, etc.). Resurfacing should include new lines, to accommodate multi-sport use (e.g., pickleball).
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off), maximize parking opportunity, enhance pedestrian safety and promote accessibility.

Figure 35: Fingal Ball Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Multi-Use Paths — improving facility access; supporting pedestrian use.
- (B) Stormwater Pond — opportunity to encourage biodiversity; a picturesque setting to complement perimeter trail.
- (C) Parking Lot Improvements — refine footprint and delineate parking stalls.
- (D) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (E) Meadow Planting — ‘no mow’ areas, to promote biodiversity while reducing maintenance costs.
- (F) Lookout — point of interest, complete with rest area.
- (G) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment

5.2.4 Keystone Complex

Host to many longstanding events — the Shedden Fair, Rosy Rhubarb Festival, and Shedden Truck and Tractor Pull, among others — the Keystone Complex is a focal point of the community. The space appears expansive, with vacant farm fields and residential estates in the vicinity however, ongoing development will see the grounds surrounded by mid- to high-density residential use in the near future.



Inventory

- Keystone Complex (Community Hall & Library)
- Basketball court
- Baseball diamond, lit
- Seasonal washroom
- Storage shed
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Tractor pull lane
- Horse riding ring
- Asphalt parking lot



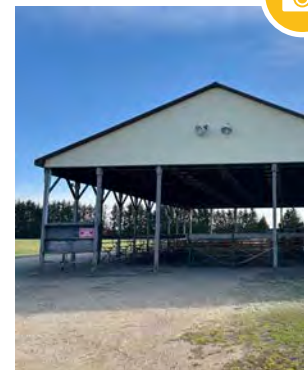
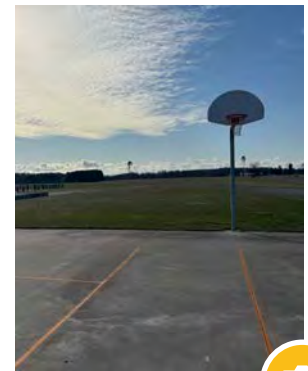
Site Observations, Conditions

- Generally, facilities in good condition.
- Facility alignment could be improved, to promote use, safety and sight lines.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Baseball diamond falling into disrepair.

Address

35921 Talbot Line, Shedden, ON N0L 2E0

Facility Condition — Improvement Need



Keystone Complex and basketball court (above), fairground infrastructure and pavilion (centre), playground (below).

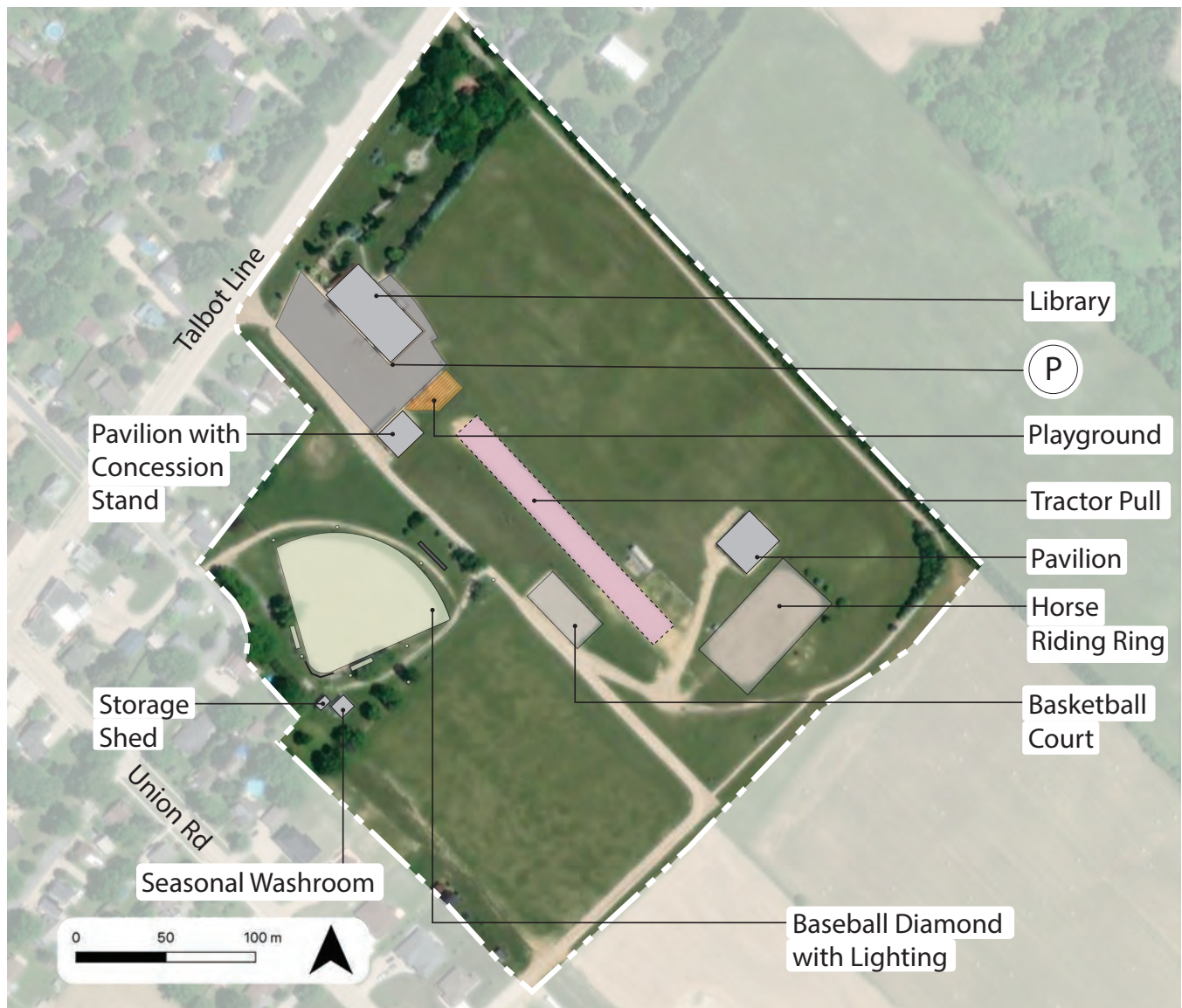




Other Considerations

- New residential development to the southeast will alter context, access and use; site will appear smaller, more defined.
- Additional residential development anticipated to the east.
- Shedden to Fingal trail connection opportunity.
- With increased development pressures in Shedden, some proponents would prefer to see the south most corner re envisioned as residential development.

Figure 36: Keystone Complex Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





Improvements & Recommendations

- Engage with primary event organizers to investigate options to realign fairground infrastructure, to improve space use, access and safety.
- Add perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, a mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate noise complaints and exposure to elements.
- Formalize pedestrian access from John St/Waugh St.
- As playground and court facilities near end of lifespan, relocate out of direct path of travel (i.e., create buffer between play and parking environments).
- Maintain park extents — development on existing greenspace is not recommended at this time.

Figure 37: Keystone Complex Improvement Demonstration Plan



- (A) Open Lawn & Events Field — to support community-wide events.
- (B) Multi-Sport Court
- (C) Multi-Use Perimeter Path — accepts controlled vehicular access to support maintenance and event setup.
- (D) Plaza — paved plaza area, to support gatherings and events.
- (E) Formalized Pedestrian Access — complete with park identification signage, to improve pedestrian connectivity.
- (F) Playground
- (G) Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce elemental exposure and improve aesthetics

- (H) Splash Pad
- (I) Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Segment
- (J) Temporary Trailer Parking — to support event setup, circulation.
- (K) Alternative Tractor Pull Area
- (L) Primary Tractor Pull Area
- (M) Existing Plaza - to remain until end of useful life

5.2.5 Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park

Though not a new park, the Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park has undergone changes over recent years, in the wake of residential development. As adjacent parcels (some of which were once parkland) have been developed, and incremental development has occurred on site, site circulation and facility siting has suffered.



Inventory

- Basketball (half) court
- Baseball diamond, lit
- Seasonal washroom
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Swing sets (x2)
- Soccer field
- Gravel parking lot



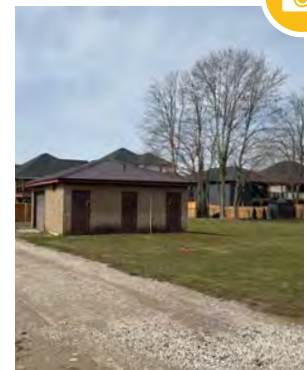
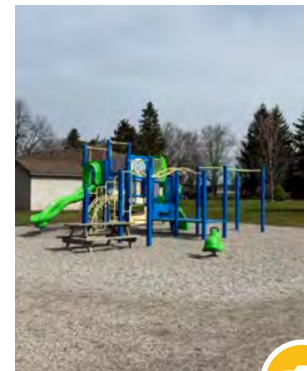
Site Observations, Conditions

- Washroom facilities could be improved, updated.
- Swing set placement (i.e., behind soccer goalpost) poses safety concerns.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Pavilion abutts parking environment, without physical or visual buffer.

Address

116 Optimist Dr, Talbotville, ON N5P 3T2

Facility Condition – Improvement Need



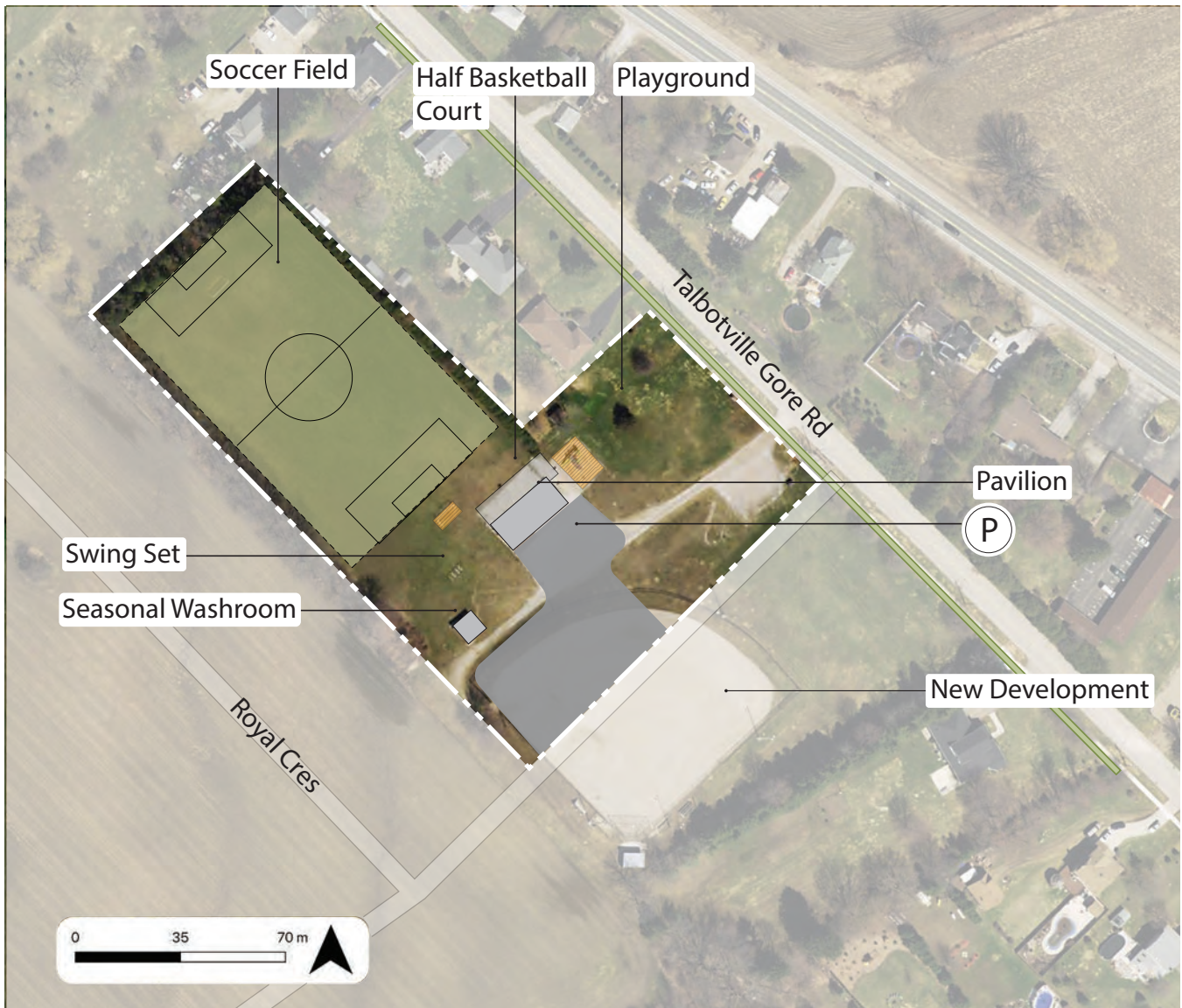
Park identification signage (above), fairground infrastructure and pavilion (centre), playground (below).



Other Considerations

- Recent residential development around the park has prompted the park to get smaller in size and access has changed (i.e., some facilities are no longer sited appropriately, based on new bounds).

Figure 38: Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park Inventory Mapping — Existing Condition





Improvements & Recommendations

- Add new pathway, to improve connectivity and passive use of the space.
- Create visual separation between parking environment and pavilion area.
- Remove swing set; relocate to playground facility area.
- Add buffer (e.g., planting, mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) between soccer field and pavilion/lawn space.
- Reconfigure and formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity.

Figure 39: Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- Ⓐ Soccer Field — to accommodate one 11x11, or two 9x9 pitches.
- Ⓑ Parking Lot Improvements — reduce footprint, reconfigure stalls.
- Ⓒ Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.
- Ⓓ Playground



5.2.6 Talbotville Optimist Sports Park

Recently developed, the Talbotville Optimist Sports Park is well equipped for both soccer and baseball programming.



Inventory

- Baseball diamond, lit
- Seasonal washroom
- Storage shed
- Soccer fields (x2)
- Pavilion
- Playground
- Gravel parking lot
- Pedestrian walking path



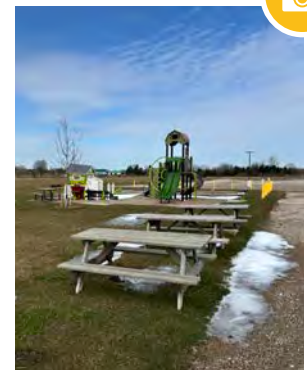
Site Observations, Conditions

- Generally, facilities in good condition.
- Open, exposed landscape with minimal protection from elements (e.g., lack of vegetation, built forms).
- Perimeter pathway lacks formality; not inherently inviting for pedestrian use.
- Lack of seating around sports facilities.
- Large open lawn areas appear underutilized.
- Gravel parking lot lacks organization and circulation control.
- Playground is very close to parking environment, posing safety concerns.

Address

51 Optimist Dr, Talbotville, ON N5P 3T2

Facility Condition – Improvement Need



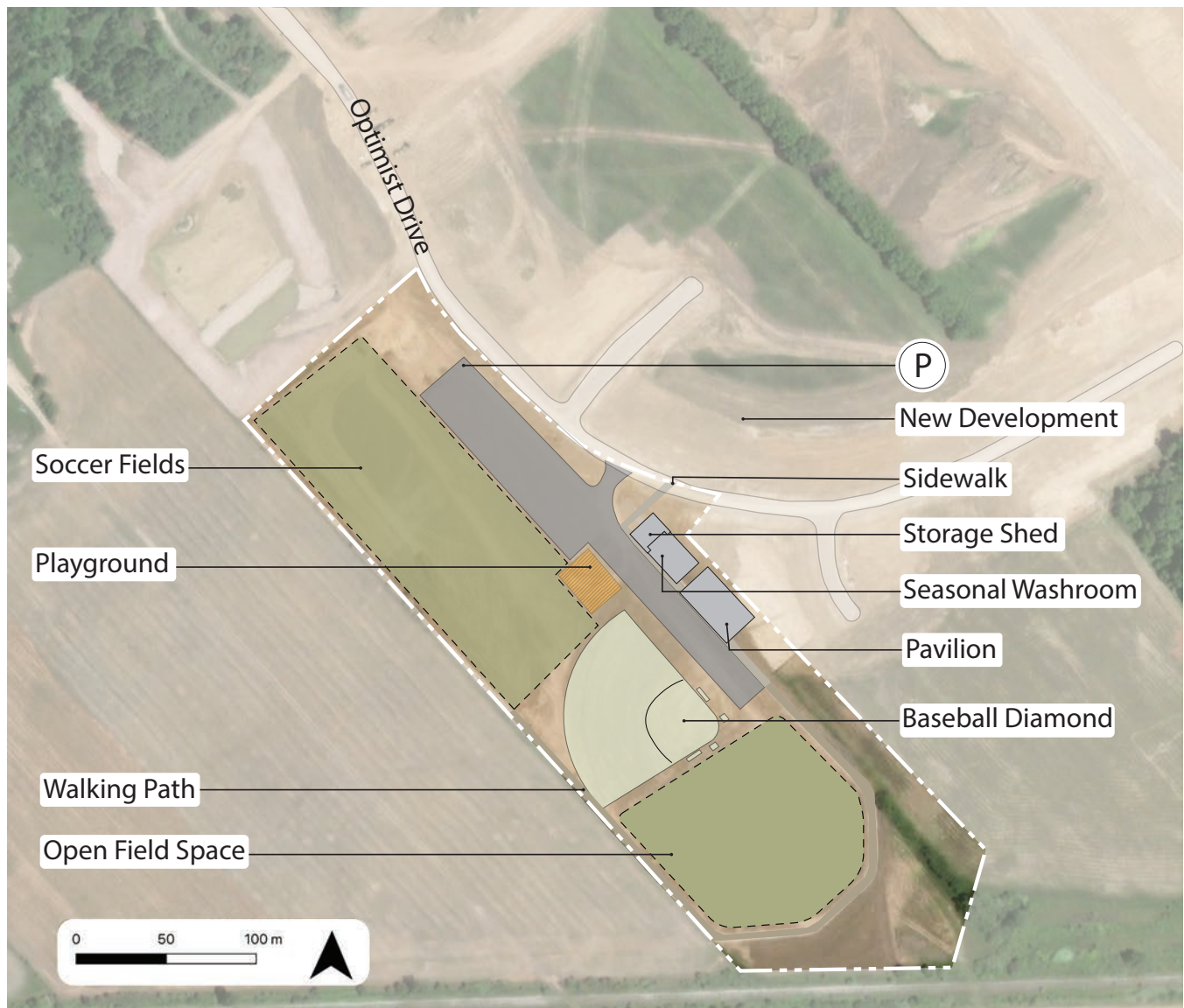
Parking environment , seasonal washrooms (above), playground and picnic area (centre), pavilion (below).



Other Considerations

- Original park development plans suggest provision of additional soccer field(s) and baseball diamond on site; opportunity to reorient these facilities to adhere to best practice (e.g., baseball diamond configuration to reduce afternoon glare).
- Significant residential development in the area; opportunity to support passive, family-oriented recreation.

Figure 40: Talbotville Optimist Sports Park Inventory Mapping — **Existing Condition**





Improvements & Recommendations

- Improve perimeter pathway, to improve access and support passive use.
- Ensure safe, direct pedestrian access to new residential development.
- Add vegetation (i.e., planting, a mix of native trees, shrubs, and perennials) throughout to mitigate exposure to elements.
- Ensure accessible playground facility can be accessed via an accessible pathway.
- Add buffer (e.g., planting) between playground and parking facility, to improve safety.
- Formalize parking area to improve circulation (i.e., drop off) and maximize parking opportunity.
- Continue to monitor demand for additional soccer field, baseball diamond.

Figure 41: Talbotville Optimist Sports Park Improvement Demonstration Plan



- Ⓐ Soccer Field — to accommodate one 11x11, or two 9x9 pitches.
- Ⓑ Buffer Planting — to add shade, reduce exposure to elements (i.e., wind), and improve aesthetic.
- Ⓒ Baseball Diamond — add new diamond, facing NE to improve playability (i.e., reduce sun interference).
- Ⓓ Parking Lot Improvements — reduce footprint, reconfigure stalls; add vegetated medians.



- Ⓔ Existing Multi-Use Perimeter Path — extend where necessary, to ensure access to park facilities.

6.0 Recreational Trails

6.1 Overview & Classification

Trails are valuable outdoor amenities, supporting many community user groups — pedestrians and dog-walkers, hikers, runners, and cyclists, to name a few — and providing means to access, explore and connect with nature. Furthermore, trails can also act as key components in the Township’s active transportation network, enhancing community connectivity and encouraging healthy, active lifestyles amongst residents.

6.1.1 Existing Trails

Currently, the Township’s trail infrastructure is limited to pedestrian-oriented paths (e.g., unpaved, limestone screenings and/or concrete sidewalks) found in existing Township parks and open spaces (refer to 5.2 Existing Park Inventories & Needs Assessment on page 87 for more information). While these existing trail segments service park users (i.e., providing access between outdoor recreation facilities), there is opportunity to enhance the Township’s trail system, to improve safety and access, enhance the visitor experience, and address gaps in connectivity which have formed through years of incremental development.

6.1.2 Trail Classification

Trails should be built and maintained to a standard — establishing a trail standard and trail classification is the first step in proper risk management. It is important the standard be reviewed, to ensure it reflects what is manageable and sustainable with respect to operational and fiscal realities. Next, it must be adopted, to ensure continued compliance.

Consistency is important for trail users. With an abundance of trails, municipal and others, in the area, it is recommended that the Township establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

OTC Trail Classification

The Ontario Trails Council (OTC) has produced a trail classification, aimed at trail managers, land managers, trail designers/builders, user groups that manage trails (i.e., ATV, XC ski, MTB), and insurance providers. According to the OTC, the intention of the document is to:

- Organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development,
- Articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level,
- Introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class, and
- Support and complement trail risk management training and best practice documents.

The OTC Trail Classification has been attached as an appendix item, to be used at the discretion of the Township.



Recommendation

- Establish and adopt a trail standard that is in line with other jurisdictions, with regard to trail classifications, trail specifications, risk management, and maintenance.

6.1.3 Recommended Trail Development Standards

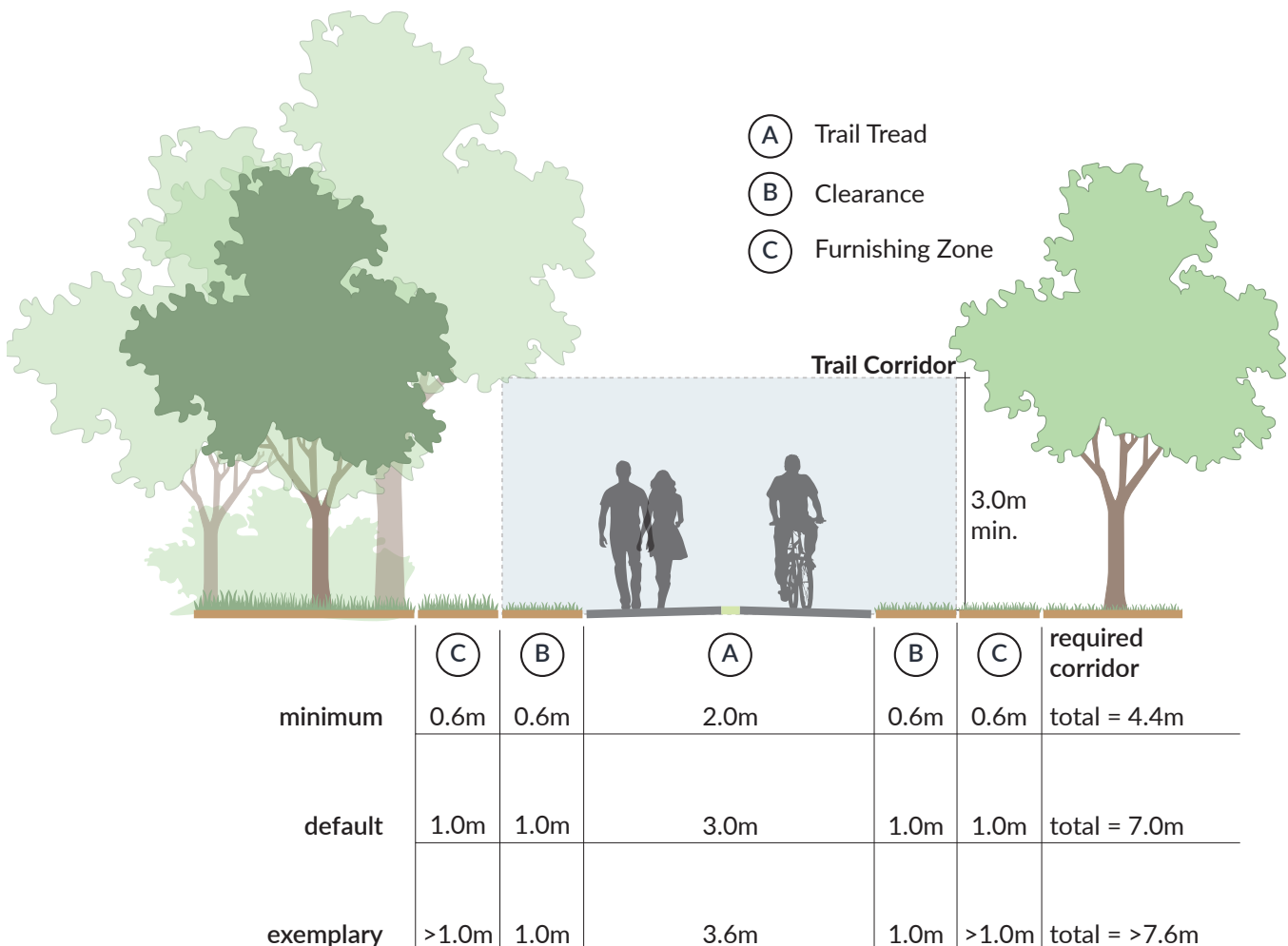
Trail development standards should reflect the adopted trail classification and vice versa. In alignment with the OTC Trail Classification and industry best practices, the following illustrations depict trail development standards recommended for use in the Township.

Category 1 (Developed) Trail

Often described as urban multi-use paths or rail trails, these non-motorized paths are important active transportation thoroughfares, connecting parks, destinations, and neighbourhoods throughout a community.

Trail tread should be constructed of a hardened or compacted surface, such as asphalt, concrete or stone dust; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 42: Category 1 (Developed) Trail Development Standard Illustration

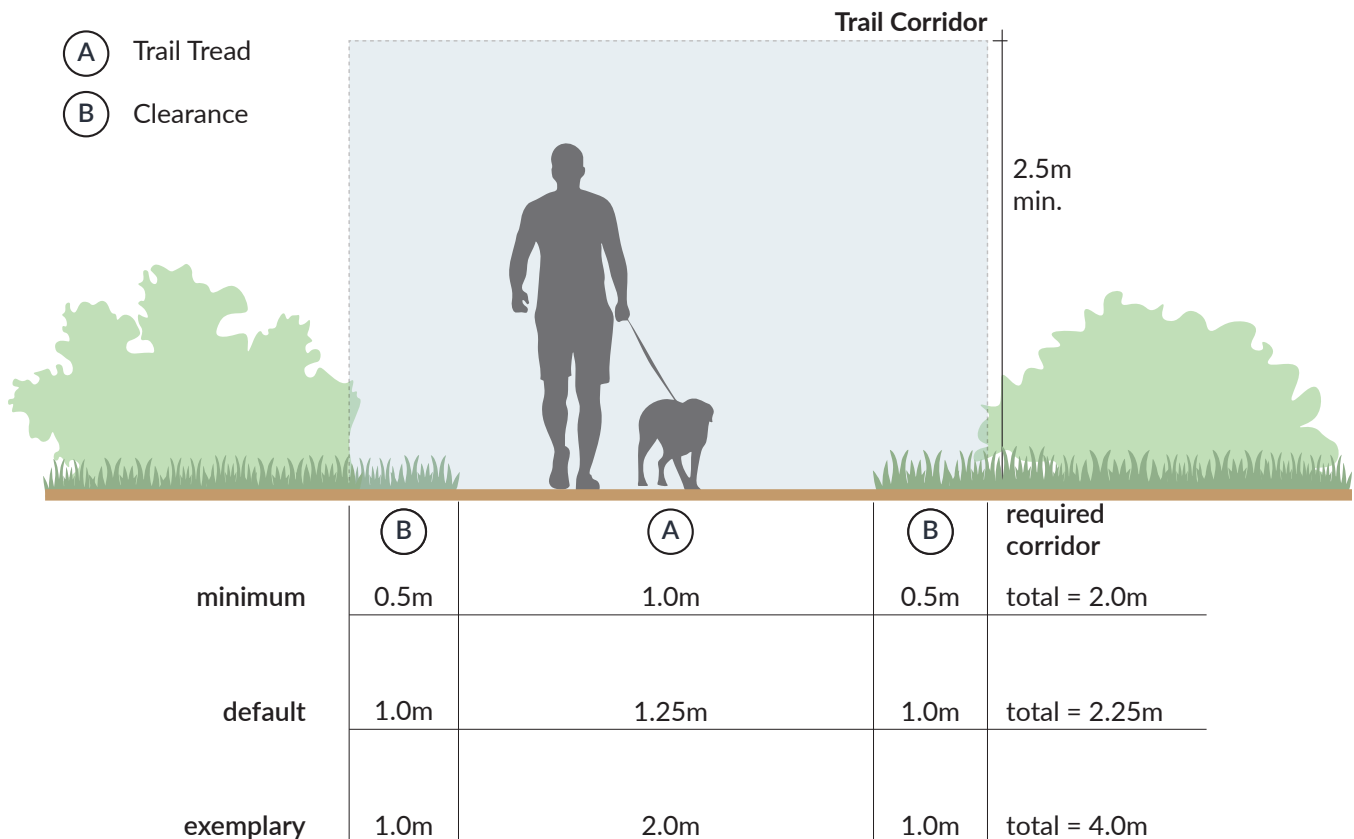


Category 2 (Semi-Developed) Trail

Often described as urban, natural environment or wilderness-based multi-use paths or rail trails, these non-motorized paths often service park amenities, facilitate local connections, and feed into Category 1 (Developed) Trails, where possible.

Trail tread should be constructed of a compacted surface, such as stone dust or compacted earth; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 43: Category 2 (Semi-Developed) Trail Development Standard Illustration

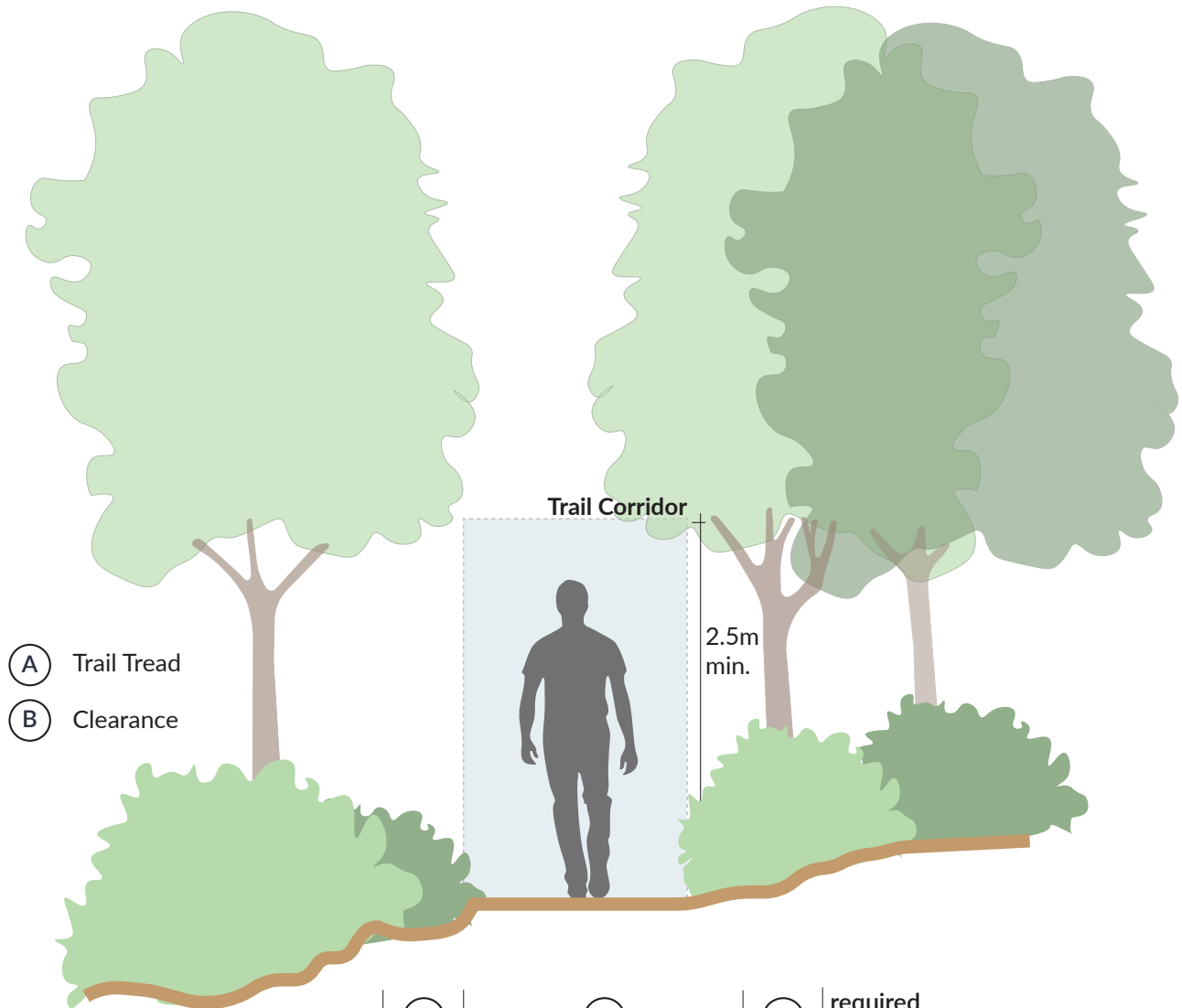


Category 3 (Single Track) Trail

Often described as single track or hiking trails, these non-motorized paths situated in natural settings offer opportunities to access, explore and connect with nature.

Trail tread should consist of a natural surface, such as compacted earth; typical dimensioning is demonstrated in the illustration below.

Figure 44: Category 3 (Single Track) Trail Development Standard Illustration



	(B)	(A)	(B)	required corridor
minimum	0m	0.25m	0m	total = 0.25m
default	0.5m	1m	0.5m	total = 2.0m

6.2 Opportunities Assessment

As Southwold continues to grow and develop, it is critical that the Township continue to seek and assess opportunities to develop new trails, and improve and connect existing trail segments — to enhance community connectivity and encourage healthy, active lifestyles amongst residents. Further, as per the Township of Southwold Official Plan (Township of Southwold, 2021), connectivity of neighbourhoods is required through recreational spaces, parks, **trails**, sidewalk and other active transportation linkages where feasible.

6.2.1 Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail

The Township, in collaboration with the Lower Thames Valley Conservation Authority (LTVCA), has identified an exciting opportunity to connect the settlement areas of Shedden and Fingal via **Category 1 (Developed) Trail**. As illustrated in the figure below, the proposed trail would begin at the Keystone Complex and traverse a new residential development before entering Corsely Park. From here, the proposed trail would cross Union Road (i.e., via formalized pedestrian crossing), providing access to the site of a future conservation area, to be owned and operated by the LTVCA. Although trail alignment and staging area siting is yet to be determined for the property, ongoing conversations suggest that future infrastructure would offer trail users unencumbered access through the site to the next Township-managed segment situated on the southeast side of the property. The proposed trail would then span two right-of-ways (i.e., to be acquired, owned and operated by the Township), one on either side of McDiarmid Line, before reaching Fingal Ball Park.

The Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail, approximately 3.1km in length (i.e., excluding LTVCA owned/operated segments, supplementary access from adjacent residential development, etc.), has potential to provide an estimated 1000+ residents with safe and desirable access to all three of Southwold's park sites located in Shedden and Fingal (i.e., Keystone Complex, Corsley Park, and Fingall Ball Park) as well as the facilities and amenities located within (e.g., community centre and library, sporting venues, etc.).



Recommendations

- The Township should take appropriate steps, to see the Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail come to fruition.
- Continue working with key interest groups (i.e., LTVCA, adjacent landowners, etc.) to foster strong working relationships and identify common goals, opportunities and challenges.
- Establish formal agreements with appropriate landowners, to ensure the trail can continue to exist and be used in perpetuity.

Figure 45: Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Demonstration Plan



- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment
- Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity*
- Proposed Sidewalk Connection
- Proposed Access to Conservation Area*
- Existing Staging Environment
- Proposed Staging Environment
- Proposed Pedestrian Crossing
- Area to Accept Future Stormwater Management Pond



- (A) Keystone Complex
- (B) Corsley Park
- (C) New Residential Development
- (D) Future LTVCA Conservation Area
- (E) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (F) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (G) Fingal Ball Park

*LTVCA to confirm alignment.

Figure 46: Shedden to Fingal Multi-Use Trail Demonstration Plan, Enlargement A



- Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment
- Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity*
- Proposed Sidewalk Connection
- Proposed Access to Conservation Area*
- Existing Staging Environment
- Proposed Staging Environment
- Proposed Pedestrian Crossing
- Area to Accept Future Stormwater Management Pond



- (A) Keystone Complex
- (B) Corsley Park
- (C) New Residential Development
- (D) Five Maples Conservation Area
- (E) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (F) Future Township-owned Right of Way
- (G) Fingal Ball Park

*Alignment to be confirmed by LTVCA.

6.2.2 Talbotville to Ferndale Connection

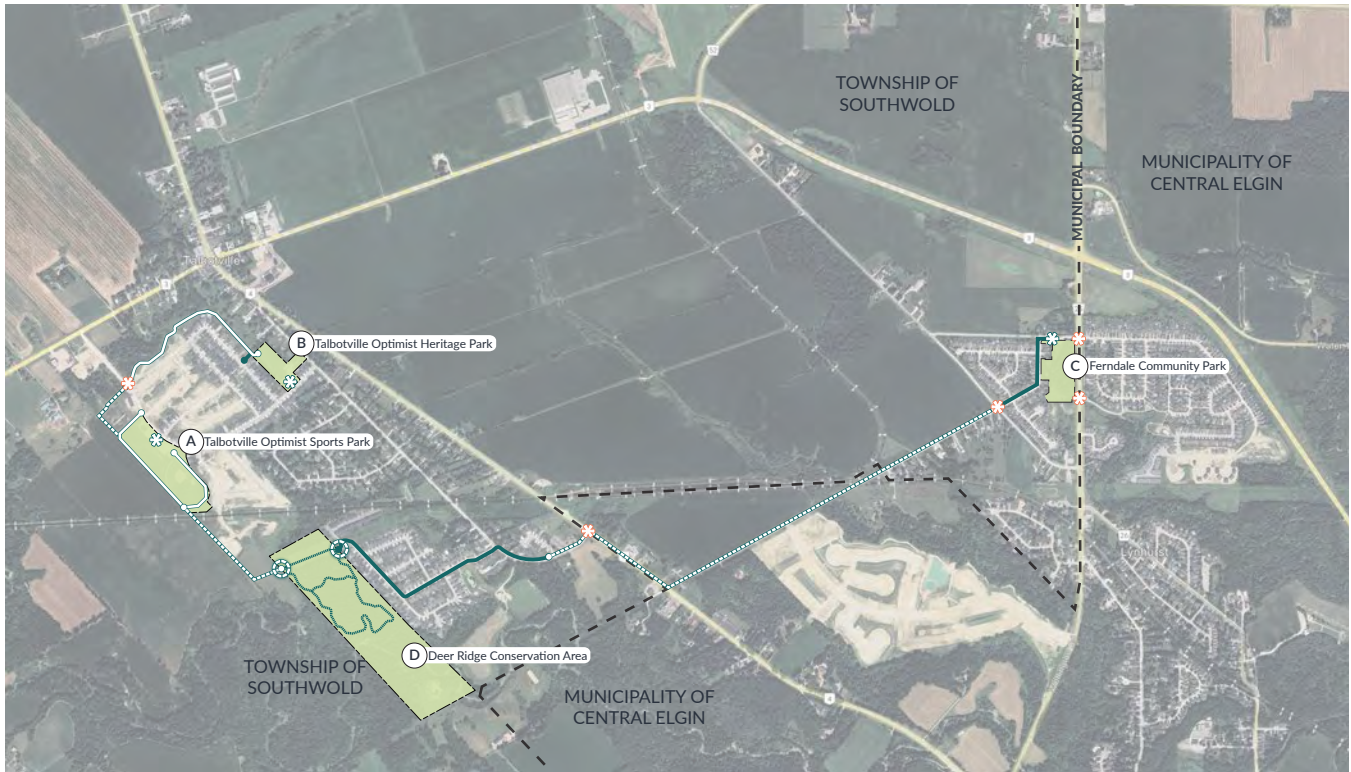
Across the Township, another connection opportunity has been identified between the settlement areas of Talbotville and Ferndale. As illustrated in the figure below, the proposed route would be comprised of **Category 1 (Developed) Trail** and sidewalk segments. Beginning at Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park, the proposed route would travel along the existing Talbotville Meadows (i.e., developer-built) trail, then along a new trail segment before reaching Talbotville Optimist Sports Park. From here, the proposed route would cross a former rail line (i.e., alignment, permissions, etc. to be confirmed), eventually meeting the existing trail network at Deer Ridge Conservation Area, courtesy of Kettle Creek Conservation Authority. Once through the adjacent residential neighbourhood, a collaborative effort between the Township and the City of St. Thomas would be necessary, to establish a trail parallel to Major Road — sections of which would span municipal boundaries. Existing sidewalks in Ferndale would support users in reaching Ferndale Community Park. The Talbotville to Ferndale Connection, approximately 6.0km in length (i.e., excluding KCCA owned/operated segments), has potential to provide residents of the area with safe and desirable access to several park sites located in Talbotville and Ferndale (i.e., Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park, Talbotville Optimist Sports Park, Deer Ridge Conservation Area, Ferndale Community Park), as well as amenities found nearby in the adjacent residential development(s) of neighbouring Municipality of Central Elgin.



Recommendations

- The Township should take appropriate steps, to see the Talbotville to Ferndale Connection come to fruition.
- Continue working with key interest groups (i.e., KCCA, City of St. Thomas, private developers, adjacent landowners, etc.) to foster strong working relationships and identify common goals, opportunities and challenges.
- Establish formal agreements with appropriate landowners, to ensure the connection can continue to exist and be used in perpetuity.

Figure 47: Talbotville to Ferndale Connection Demonstration Plan



-  Proposed Multi-Use Trail Segment*
-  Multi-Use Trail Connection Opportunity*
-  Proposed Sidewalk Connection
-  Proposed Access to Conservation Area*
-  Existing Staging Environment
-  Proposed Staging Environment
-  Proposed Pedestrian Crossing

0 0.5 1 1.5km



- (A) Talbotville Optimist Sports Park
- (B) Talbotville Optimist Heritage Park
- (C) Ferndale Community Park

*Alignment to be confirmed by appropriate agencies (i.e., KCCA, Municipality of Central Elgin, etc.).

7.0 References

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Watson & Associates Economists Ltd. (2019). Township of Southwold Official Plan Review: Council Presentation #2. <https://www.southwold.ca/en/business-and-development/resources/Documents/Planning-and-Development-Documents/New-Official-Plan-Documents/Township-of-Southwold-OPR-Presentation-2.pdf>

Appendix A

Trail Classification

Ontario Trail Council, 2020





Ontario Trails Council Trail Policy Outline re: Risk Management

Intention of document:

1. To organize and categorize existing recreation trails and future trail development
2. to articulate the trail parameters for each trail class level;
3. introduce base level standard of service expected for each trail class;
4. support and complement trail risk management training and best practice document.

Intended Audience: Trail manager, land manager, trail designer/builder, user groups that manage trails (i.e. ATV, XC ski, MTB), insurance providers

TRAIL CATEGORIZATION BY TYPE

Parameter Sub-class	Category 1 Developed	Category 2 Semi-developed	Category 3 Single Track	Category 4 Undeveloped
Sample image				
Type described as	Urban multi use path; non motorized; rail trail	Urban, natural env or wilderness multi use path with constructed tread; rail trail; reclaimed roadway; motor or non; (inc groomed xc ski trail and sno-mo trail in winter)	Single track width, developed or semi-developed trail in natural env or wilderness; hike, bike, horse, atv/moto; motor or non; (inc xc ski trail in winter, groomed or non)	Undeveloped natural environment pathway; or wilderness or backcountry trail, path or portage; unmaintained or low level maintenance; includes unauthorized pathways in populated areas
Corridor	Typically +1m either side tread, 3m tall	Typically 0.5m either side tread, 2.5m tall	Typically 0m either side tread, 2.5m tall	Variable
Tread	2+m wide or wider, hardened (asphalt,	1+m wide or wider, aggregate soft surface,	0.25-1m wide singletrack, natural surface	Unsurfaced natural environment

	concrete or stone dust) or compacted surface	natural or compacted surface		
Surface obstruction	Hardened surface cracks and bumps; minimal effect on user	Variable natural or compacted loose surface; minimal obstruction	Roots, rocks, variable surface	Rough surface
Maintenance effort	Commensurate with volume of use: High for high traffic trails, lower for low traffic trails	Seasonal as needed; commensurate with volume of use; maintenance of tread surface and corridor	Seasonal as needed; commensurate with volume of use to low maintenance; minimal to no maintenance of tread surface and corridor	No maintenance of tread; low to no maintenance of corridor
Risk mitigation effort	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard	Commensurate with volume and type of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard	Commensurate with volume and type of use and proximity to population; commensurate with severity of emergent hazard; low effort for wilderness environment	Low to no effort
Inspection interval (regular visual inspection)	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; approximately monthly (when open) for high volume/close proximity trails; approx. seasonal for low volume/distant trails	Commensurate with volume of use and proximity to population; approximately monthly (when open) for high volume/close proximity trails; approx. annual for low volume/distant trails	Annual	No
Hazard marking	Yes i.e. road crossing signs, warning signs	Yes in close proximity to population; little to no otherwise	No	No
Difficulty rating	Suitable for all permitted users	Close proximity to population suitable for all permitted users; natural env or wilderness may	May have difficulty rating for intended activity or no rating	May have difficulty rating for intended activity or no rating

Installed features (where they exist i.e. bridge, trailhead, parking)	Engineered	have difficulty rating for intended activity	Rustic, minimalist construction	Minimalist construction to no
AODA compliance considerations	Yes, consideration required	Engineered when or where warranted; otherwise overbuilt for intended use Yes in close proximity to population, otherwise no in wilderness or designated use (i.e. ATV trail, xc ski trail)	No	No

MINIMUM SIGNAGE STANDARD

Uniform/standardized expectations for signage/markings of recreation trails in Ontario

Trailhead/map/online information required of Type 1,2,3:

1. Recreation trail label/designation and trail classification (as per this document)
2. Targeted user group with expected average grade, maximum grade, and cross slope grade (or difficulty rating, if applicable to activity)
3. Designate authorized/unauthorized users
4. Users assume all risks as per Occupiers' Liability Act RSO 1990
5. 911 address or emergency contact info

Hazard marking and waymarks: standardized ISO compliant warning icon for road crossing, cliff edge, steep up/down, merging traffic (to be determined)

DEFINITION OF TERMS

1. Trail: a general term applied to a track, route or pathway
 - a. Recreation trail: a category of trails with recognition under the Occupiers' Liability Act RSO 1990 and AODA, where the intended purpose of use is for recreation and/or travel that is not upon an automobile roadway
 - b. Wilderness or backcountry trail: a trail removed from population centres, often with minimal infrastructure and time-delayed access to emergency response

- c. Natural environment trail: a trail traveling through forested or agricultural zones, either within urban areas or in close proximity to population centres; improved access to emergency response relative to a wilderness/backcountry trail
 - d. Specific use trail: an AODA designation indicating a trail authorized for a single use type/activity
 - e. Multi use trail: a trail with multiple authorized use types/activities
 - f. Unauthorized trail or pathway: a recreation trail that is user generated and not endorsed or maintained by the occupier/land manager
 - g. Water trail: a recognized waterway route designated for recreational use or travel
2. Corridor: the average or typical width and height of the opening or area through which the recreation trail travels; assumed variation given natural environment and activity type; clear of highly unusual encumbrances for permitted users.
 3. Tread: the ground surface upon which users travel;
 - a. hardened tread (AODA defines hardened as asphalt, concrete or stone dust),
 - b. compacted tread (soil stabilizers, aggregate and mineral)
 - c. natural tread (insitu mineral or no treatment)
 4. Visual inspection: a regular process of visually identifying emergent safety hazards (to all potential users) on a defined section of trail
 5. Technical inspection: process of assessing the integrity of trail subsurface, tread, drainage, corridor, and infrastructure (i.e. gate, fence, bridge); often requires specific technical training or credentials
 6. Volume of use: relative to other trails in the management jurisdiction; a spectrum or grouping of trails from highest use/volume to lowest use/volume

REFERENCES:

Ontario Trails Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/16o08>
 Occupiers' Liability Act: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o02>
 AODA trail requirements and exceptions: <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/110191#BK92>
 Book 18 Cycling Facilities; Ontario Traffic Manual
[http://www.rqgsb.mto.gov.on.ca/techpubs/eps.nsf/0/825810eb3ddd203385257d4a0063d934/\\$FILE/Ontario%20Traffic%20Manual%20-%20Book%2018.pdf](http://www.rqgsb.mto.gov.on.ca/techpubs/eps.nsf/0/825810eb3ddd203385257d4a0063d934/$FILE/Ontario%20Traffic%20Manual%20-%20Book%2018.pdf)

Disclaimer: While the Ontario Trail Council does its best to provide useful information and guidance on matters of interest to its members. The Ontario Trails Council recognizes that statutes, regulations and common law continually change and evolve, vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and are subject to differing interpretations and opinions. The Ontario Trails Council recommends that this document be used in conjunction with a Trail Management Plan for the construction and maintenance of trails. The information provided by the Ontario Trails Council is not intended to replace legal or other professional advice or services. The information provided by the Ontario Trails Council herein is provided "as is" and without any warranty, either expressed or implied, as to its fitness, quality, accuracy, applicability or timeliness. Before taking any action, consult an appropriate professional and satisfy yourself about the fitness, accuracy, applicability or timeliness of any information or opinions contained herein. The Ontario Trails Council

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Appendix B

Example Policy, Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads

County of Renfrew, 2021

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
POLICY: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			APPROVED:
DATE: May 2010	REV. DATE: February 2021	COVERAGE: Public Works and Engineering Department	PAGE #: Page 1 of 6

POLICY STATEMENT

The County of Renfrew as a road authority, has a need to ensure that any Pedestrian Crossing or Hiking Trail Crossing on a County Road is consistent with the Department’s primary objective of providing and maintaining a safe road system.

BACKGROUND

The County of Renfrew, as the road authority having jurisdiction over County Roads, may make and enforce by-laws and policies pertaining to those items that may be placed within the road allowance.

1. The Municipal Act, 2001 in Section 11 permits a municipality to pass by-laws pertaining to the public assets of the Municipality for the purpose of exercising its authority under the Act, and to pass by-laws pertaining to highways.
2. The Municipal Act, 2001 in Section 55 indicates that where a sidewalk is located on a highway that falls under the jurisdiction of an upper-tier municipality, the responsibility for the construction and maintenance of the sidewalk shall be the responsibility of the local municipality.
3. The Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15 (Pedestrian Crossing Treatments) provides guidance for the installation of various roadway crossing treatments consistent with the Highway Traffic Act and Provincial standards.

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
POLICY: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			APPROVED:
DATE: May 2010	REV. DATE: February 2021	COVERAGE: Public Works and Engineering Department	PAGE #: Page 2 of 6

4. Local municipalities, as well as the County of Renfrew, have an extensive network of Pedestrian and Off-Road Trails which cross high-speed, high-volume County Roadways and must be able to do so safely.

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions shall apply:

“Highway” has the same meaning as provided in the Municipal Act, 2001, Section 1 and pertains only to those highways that fall under the control and jurisdiction of the County of Renfrew.

“Pedestrian Crossing” means that portion of a County Road, designated by by-law of the County of Renfrew, at an intersection or elsewhere, distinctly indicated for pedestrian crossing by signs and signals on the highway and lines or other markings on the surface of the roadway.

“Road Allowance” means the land occupied by the highway.

“Hiking Trail Crossing” means any crossing of a County Road for which the purpose is a connecting trail on both sides of the County Road for which the use is limited to the purpose of hiking or sightseeing by foot. The trail must be for public use and owned and maintained by either the County of Renfrew, a local municipality situated within the County of Renfrew, or a recognized and approved entity within the County of Renfrew.

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
POLICY: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			APPROVED:
DATE: May 2010	REV. DATE: February 2021	COVERAGE: Public Works and Engineering Department	PAGE #: Page 3 of 6

PROCEDURES

Pedestrian Crossings

The County of Renfrew may permit the installation of Pedestrian Crossings on County Roads, subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. Requests for the installation of the Pedestrian Crossings shall be submitted by the local municipality in which the pedestrian crossing is requested. The request shall be accompanied by a resolution passed by the local municipal Council supporting the request.
2. Upon receipt of a request from a local municipality for the installation of a Pedestrian Crossing, the County of Renfrew will review the location to determine its suitability for a Pedestrian Crossing.
3. The County of Renfrew will conduct a 12-hour vehicle and pedestrian volume traffic count to determine the volume and nature of the traffic at the location of the proposed Pedestrian Crossing. The County of Renfrew will analyse the data collected from the traffic count to determine whether or not the vehicle and pedestrian volumes satisfy the minimum warrants established for the installation of a Pedestrian Crossing.
4. All Pedestrian Crossings shall meet the requirements of the Ontario Traffic Manual Book 15, Pedestrian Crossing Treatments, as may be applicable at the time of request and installation. The Level and Type of facility installed shall be in accordance with the warrant requirements contained within the Manual, however, Level 2 Type D Pedestrian Crossovers shall not be permitted on County Roads. Durable pavement markings shall be used for

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
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DATE: May 2010	REV. DATE: February 2021	COVERAGE: Public Works and Engineering Department	PAGE #: Page 4 of 6

all mid-block Pedestrian Crossovers and at Pedestrian Crossovers at non-signalized intersections.

5. The local municipality requesting the Pedestrian Crossing shall be responsible for all costs associated with the initial installation of the Pedestrian Crossing, including signage and pavement markings associated with the crossing, as well as the replacement of the Pedestrian Crossing. The local municipality will be required to submit a resolution of the local municipal Council agreeing to pay the costs of the installation and replacement.
6. The County of Renfrew shall include the installation of Pedestrian Crossings at all intersections where new Traffic Signals are to be installed. The cost of the Pedestrian Crossing features at these locations shall be borne by the County of Renfrew.
7. The County of Renfrew shall be responsible for the costs associated with the annual operation and maintenance of the Pedestrian Crossing and signage. The local Municipality shall be responsible for the annual pavement markings associated with the crossing.

Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems

1. Requests for the installation of Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems shall be submitted by the local Municipality in which the trail crossing is requested. The request shall be accompanied by a resolution passed by the local Municipal Council supporting the request and accepting fifty percent (50%) of the total costs of installation. These systems exclude trails used by off-road vehicles and snowmobiles.

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
POLICY: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			APPROVED:
DATE: May 2010	REV. DATE: February 2021	COVERAGE: Public Works and Engineering Department	PAGE #: Page 5 of 6

2. Upon receipt of a request from a local municipality for the installation of Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems, the County of Renfrew will review the location to determine if a Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System is warranted. In general, these systems will only be recommended for locations along rural, high speed roadways where sight lines are substandard. Every effort should be made to locate trail crossings where sight lines meet or exceed best practices and engineering standards for the Province of Ontario.
3. A Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System shall be comprised of appropriate signage to demonstrate the purpose of the trail, as well as a combination of flashing beacons as may be determined to be necessary in order to effectively warn oncoming traffic of the trail crossing.
4. The installation of a Trail Crossing Warning System as well as any future replacement of the system shall be cost shared by the County of Renfrew and local Municipality or Entity at a fifty percent (50%) split. Costs to be shared include all equipment, signage, and third-party costs associated with the installation or replacement. Internal staff time will not be cost shared.
5. If at anytime during the service life of the system, the Hiking Trail Crossing is closed, the County shall remove and retain the system for use at a future location.
6. The County of Renfrew shall be responsible for the costs associated with the annual operation and maintenance of the Hiking Trail Crossing Warning System including troubleshooting equipment issues and repair or replacement of damaged signage.

Corporate Policies & Procedures			
SECTION: Operations	AUTHOR: Director of Public Works and Engineering		POLICY #: PW-14
POLICY: Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossings on County Roads			APPROVED:
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APPROVALS

The installation of new Pedestrian Crossings and Hiking Trail Crossing Warning Systems on County Roads shall be approved by the appropriate Committee of County Council and authorized by the passing of a By-law by County Council.

Appendix C

Suggested Capital Project Listing

pl.ural, 2025

Corsley Park Estimated Costs

1	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
1.1	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site (50 ± m³)	m³	50	\$ 25.00	\$ 1,250.00
		Granulars	Supply and Place 100mm Granular A	tonne	858	\$ 35.00	\$ 30,030.00
						Subtotal	\$ 31,280.00
1.2	Accessible Playground	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	31.5	\$ 25.00	\$ 787.50
		Sidewalks	Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (12.5mm concrete, 150mm Gran. A)	sq.m	105	\$ 75.00	\$ 7,875.00
		Restoration	150mm Topsoil and Sod	sq.m	189	\$ 25.00	\$ 4,725.00
						Subtotal	\$ 13,387.50
1.3	Multi-Use Path	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	387	\$ 25.00	\$ 9,675.00
		Path	Supply and Place 300mm Gran A	tonne	967.5	\$ 35.00	\$ 33,862.50
		Asphalt Surfacing	Supply and Place 50mm HL3F (Optional)	tonne	177.375	\$ 120.00	\$ 21,285.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	2322	\$ 10.00	\$ 23,220.00
						Subtotal	\$ 66,757.50
1.4	Fingal-Shedden Multi-Use Path	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	396	\$ 25.00	\$ 9,900.00
		Path	Supply and Place 300mm Gran A	tonne	851.4	\$ 35.00	\$ 29,799.00
		Asphalt Surfacing	Supply and Place 50mm HL3F	tonne	177.375	\$ 120.00	\$ 21,285.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	2322	\$ 10.00	\$ 23,220.00
						Subtotal	\$ 84,204.00
1.5	Pedestrian Crosswalk	PXO	PXO Level 2 Type B (D/C Funded)	l/s	1	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ -
1.6	Subdivision Connection	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	m³	9	\$ 50.00	\$ 450.00
		Culvert Crossing	Supply and Install 1.2m - 52.5mm HDPE Culvert	l/s	1	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 10,000.00
		Sidewalks	Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (12.5mm concrete, 150mm Topsoil and Sod)	sq.m	15	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,125.00
		Restoration		sq.m	30	\$ 10.00	\$ 300.00
						Subtotal	\$ 11,875.00
1.7	Buffer Plantings	Plantings	Tree and Shrub Plantings	ea	50	\$ 500.00	\$ 25,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 25,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 232,504.00
						Contingency, Design Fees (25%)	\$ 58,100.00
						Total	\$ 290,604.00

Keystone Complex

4	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
4.1	Open Lawn and Events Field		Realignment of Tractor Pull Track	L.S.	1	\$ 149,600.00	\$ 149,600.00
						Subtotal	\$ 149,600.00
4.2	Ball Diamond Restoration		Removing and resusing existing topsoil	sq.m	3483	\$ 6.15	\$ 21,420.45
			Supply and place (180mm thick)	sq.m	2500	\$ 33.50	\$ 83,750.00
			Drainage System	m	755	\$ 30.00	\$ 22,650.00
			150mm perforated tile	m	155	\$ 29.40	\$ 4,557.00
			Fencing, dugout and backstop				
			Dugout (2.4mx9.0m) 200mm granular base, 125mm concrete, players bench and complete enclosure including fencing and metal roof deck	each	2	\$ 28,330.00	\$ 56,660.00
			Backstop fence (14.64m)	/fs	1	\$ 34,560.00	\$ 34,560.00
			Sideline, infield and outfield fence, 2.4m, with gates	m	300	\$ 231.75	\$ 69,525.00
			Aluminum Spectator Grandstand (3mx4m)	each	2	\$ 6,390.00	\$ 12,780.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 108.00	\$ 108.00
			Spike plate pitcher mound (SKU:PP)	each	1	\$ 141.00	\$ 141.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 150.00	\$ 150.00
			Removable home plate (SKU:RHPA)	each	3	\$ 150.00	\$ 450.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
			Base in ground fixture package (SKU:SYS-K)	each	3	\$ 150.00	\$ 450.00
			Riley Sports equipment	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
			Complete double bag system (SKU:SYS-D)	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
						Subtotal	\$ 307,278.45
4.3	Multi Sport Court			L.S.	1	\$ 120,000.00	\$ 120,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 120,000.00
4.4	Pedestrian Circulation Improvements						
			Excavation and Grading	sq.m	600	\$ 22.50	\$ 13,500.00
			Asphalt Path (Base)	sq.m	3600	\$ 75.00	\$ 270,000.00
			300 mm Granular "A" & 75mm HL3F	sq.m	2100	\$ 9.00	\$ 18,900.00
			Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	30	\$ 75	\$ 2,250.00
			Site Prep for Benches	ea	12	\$ 1,700.00	\$ 20,400.00
			Benches for Trail			Subtotal	\$ 325,050.00
4.5	Paved Plaza		Concrete Plaza for Community Gathering Events				
						Subtotal	\$ 60,000.00
4.6	Pedestrian Access						
			Sidewalks	m ²	15	\$ 75.00	\$ 1,125.00
			Restoration	m ²	30	\$ 10.00	\$ 300.00
			Supply and Place 1.5m Sidewalk (125mm concrete, 150mm Topsoil and Sod)			Subtotal	\$ 1,425.00
4.7	Playground		Playground and Pavillion relocation	/fs	1	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 50,000.00
4.8	Buffer Planting						
			Tree Planting (50mm cal)	ea	50	\$ 500.00	\$ 25,000.00
			Plantings	sq.m	2310	\$ 15.00	\$ 34,650.00
			Wildflower Seed Mix (prepare seed bed)			Subtotal	\$ 59,650.00
4.9	Splash Pad						
						Subtotal	\$ 200,000.00
4.10	Fingal-Shedden Multi-Use Path						
			Excavation and Grading	cu.m	585	\$ 25.00	\$ 14,625.00
			Asphalt Path	sq.m	1950	\$ 75.00	\$ 146,250.00
			Multi-use Path (300 mm Granular "A", 75 mm HL3F	sq.m	3510	\$ 10.00	\$ 35,100.00
			Topsoil and Hydro Seeding			Subtotal	\$ 195,975.00
						Subtotal	\$ 1,688,978.45
			Contingency, Design Fees (25%)			\$ 422,244.61	\$ 422,244.61
			Total			\$ 2,111,223.06	\$ 2,111,223.06

Talbotville Heritage Park Estimated Costs

5	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
5.1	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Excavate topsoil and stockpile onsite (Hauling unacceptable material away)	sq.m	700	2.50 \$	1,750.00
		Grading	Regrade parking lot	sq.m	1850	4.50 \$	8,325.00
		Granular Top coat	Granular "A" Top coat	tonne	460	33.00 \$	15,180.00
						Subtotal	\$ 25,255.00
5.2	Pathways	Excavation and Grading	Regular material incl. disposal off-site	sq.m	450	22.50 \$	10,125.00
		Asphalt Path (Base)	300 mm Granular "A" & 75mm HL3F	sq.m	450	75.00 \$	33,750.00
		Topsoil and Seeding	Topsoil and Hydro Seeding	sq.m	900	9.00 \$	8,100.00
						Subtotal	\$ 51,975.00
5.3	Buffer Plantings	Plantings	Tree Planting (50mm cal)	ea	50	250.00 \$	12,500.00
		Plantings	Wildflower Seed Mix (prepare seed bed)	sq.m	1200	15.00 \$	18,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 30,500.00
					Subtotal	\$	107,730.00
					Contingency, Design Fees (25%)	\$	26,932.50
					Total	\$	134,662.50

Talbotville Optimist Sports Park Estimated Costs

6	Section	Item	Description	Unit	Quantity	Unit Price	Total
6.1	Parking Lot Improvements	Excavation and Grading	Excavate topsoil and stockpile onsite (Hauling unacceptable material away)	cu.m	1742.4	\$ 25.00	\$ 43,560.00
		Grading	Regrade parking lot	sq.m	6930	\$ 4.50	\$ 31,185.00
		Granular Top coat	Granular "A"	tonne	1524.6	\$ 33.00	\$ 50,311.80
						Subtotal	\$ 125,056.80
6.2	Baseball park Estimate (V-AAR 2021)				Quantities from Sprit Design		
		Topsoil	Removing and resusing existing topsoil	sq.m	3483	\$ 6.15	\$ 21,420.45
			Contingency for Supply of screen topsoil	cu.m	1 (Was for 3500cu.m)	\$ 7.55	\$ 7.55
			Contingency for Hydroseed	sq.m	1 (Was for 7700sq.m)	\$ 1.15	\$ 1.15
		Washington Ball mix	Supply and place (180mm thick)	sq.m	2500	\$ 33.50	\$ 83,750.00
		Drainage System	100mm perforated tile	m	755	\$ 30.00	\$ 22,650.00
			150mm perforated tile	m	155	\$ 29.40	\$ 4,557.00
		Fencing, dugout and backstop	Dugout (2.4mx9.0m) 200mm graular base, 125mm concrete, players bench and complete enclosure including fencing and metal roof deck	each	2	\$ 28,330.00	\$ 56,660.00
			Backstop fence (14.64m)	l/s	1	\$ 34,560.00	\$ 34,560.00
			Sideline, infield and outfield fence, 2.4m, with gates	m	300	\$ 231.75	\$ 69,525.00
			Aluminum Spectator Grandstand (3mx4m)	each	2	\$ 6,390.00	\$ 12,780.00
		Riley Sports equipment	Spike plate pitcher mound (SKU:PP)	each	1	\$ 108.00	\$ 108.00
		Riley Sports equipment	Removable home plate (SKU:RHPA)	each	1	\$ 141.00	\$ 141.00
		Riley Sports equipment	Base in ground Fixture package (SKU:SY5-K)	each	3	\$ 150.00	\$ 450.00
		Riley Sports equipment	Complete double bag system (SKU:SY5-D)	each	1	\$ 677.00	\$ 677.00
		Electrical	All Site Electrical with field house	L.S.	1	\$ 220,000.00	\$ 220,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 527,278.45
6.3	Soccer Field						
		Ground Work	Removing and resusing existing topsoil (11x11)	sq.m	7000	\$ 6.15	\$ 43,050.00
			Removing and resusing existing topsoil (9x9)	sq.m	3500	\$ 6.15	\$ 21,525.00
			Contingency for Supply of screen topsoil	cu.m	1 (Was for 3500cu.m)	\$ 7.55	\$ 7.55
			Contingency for Hydroseed	sq.m	1 (Was for 7700sq.m)	\$ 1.15	\$ 1.15
		Drainage System (9x9)	100mm perforated tile	m	520	\$ 30.00	\$ 15,600.00
			150mm perforated tile	m	79	\$ 29.40	\$ 2,322.60
		Drainage System (11x11)	100mm perforated tile	m	910	\$ 30.00	\$ 27,300.00
			150mm perforated tile	m	100	\$ 29.40	\$ 2,940.00
		Regrading	To finish ground	sq.m	10500	\$ 5.00	\$ 52,500.00
		Back Board Nets	Supply & Install New Back nets	ea	4	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 60,000.00
		11x11 Nets	Nets	ea	2	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 6,000.00
		9x9 Nets	Nets	ea	2	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 4,000.00
						Subtotal	\$ 235,237.60
					Subtotal		\$ 887,572.85
					Contingency, Design Fees (3.5%)		\$ 310,650.50
					Total		\$ 1,198,223.35