

SECTION 6: GUIDING PRINCIPLES & METHODOLOGY

6.1 GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FACILITY PROVISION

When designing, funding, constructing, and operating parks, recreation, and library facilities, the City of Vaughan and Vaughan Public Libraries should ensure that – to the greatest degree possible – that recreation and library facilities, parks, and trails are:

1. **Integrated and coordinated** – Co-location of parks, recreation, library, and other civic facilities should continue to be a priority for the City. Section 7.2.1.4 of the City’s new Official Plan states that it is a policy of Council: *“To encourage and support the development of joint and/or shared community facilities, such as schools, community centres, libraries, day care or other appropriate facilities, on shared sites and, where appropriate, adjacent to public parks.”*
2. **Multi-use and multi-generational** – Multi-use facilities are generally preferred over stand-alone single-purpose facilities, the development of which is discouraged due to operational inefficiencies and the narrow range of uses that can be accommodated.
3. **Accessible and connected** – New community centres, libraries, and district parks should, at a minimum, be located in highly accessible locations and on transit routes, have high visual identification, and be designed in consultation with community representatives to ensure that spaces are responsive to their users. This is in support of Section 7.2.1 of the City’s new Official Plan, which states: *“Conveniently located and accessible community services and facilities are critical to the success of municipal programs and services, and contribute directly to the health and social wellbeing of communities. Community services and facilities should be integrated into existing and New Community Areas, and located within Intensification Areas and other central locations in order to facilitate access and use.”*
4. **Flexible** – The inclusion of flexible multi-purpose spaces should be considered in the design of all community centres, public libraries, and appropriate civic facilities.
5. **Delivered in partnership with others** – Where appropriate and in the public’s best interest, the City should pursue partnerships in the provision and delivery of parks and facilities. Guidance may be sought from the Council-approved program framework to determine the potential involvement of various parties.
6. **Provided in response to target market needs** – This Active Together Master Plan provides a basis for identifying and prioritizing City-wide and community-specific needs and should be referenced as opportunities arise. Facilities and parks should be designed for their intended function, be it City-wide, community, or neighbourhood.
7. **Provided in a timely fashion** – Where required, land for major facilities should be secured well in advance of construction to leverage lower land values and promote integrated planning.
8. **Affordable and financially sustainable** – Fiscal responsibility will be a key principle in the provision of parks and facilities (e.g., achieving cost recovery targets), as will affordable access for Vaughan residents.

9. **Environmentally responsible** – New and substantially renovated community recreation and library facilities should be designed to incorporate “green” technologies to a level supported by LEED or equivalent standards, thereby reinforcing the City’s role as a leader in environmental efficiency and stewardship.
10. **Inclusive of persons with disabilities** – The City should continue to ensure that regulations established in the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* are met at all community facilities and parks.
11. **Identifiable** – The City should ensure that adequate and consistent signage exists at all parks, trails, and recreation and library facilities. Public art should also be encouraged in parks and community facilities.

6.2 HOW FACILITY AND PARKS NEEDS ARE IDENTIFIED

This Active Together Master Plan was developed to ensure that investments in parks, recreation, and library infrastructure occur in a manner that is timely, fiscally responsible, and meets the highest priority needs of present and future populations.

To assist in meeting this objective, the Plan has established provision targets that will help Vaughan identify and plan for new parks, recreation, and library facilities. These targets are based upon a combination of market-driven factors (such as demand, trends, and demographics), public input expressing local desires and expectations, benchmarks seen in other municipalities, and the City’s past and present circumstances. They are intended to be applied flexibly and may be modified over time to remain responsive to local needs. Most provision targets are population-based, such as one indoor pool tank per 30,000 residents. Often, community planning areas are used as the basis of analysis, particularly for community-level infrastructure.

For more localized facilities that residents expect to be able to walk or bike to (e.g., playgrounds, waterplay facilities, meeting space, etc.), geographic distribution also becomes an important consideration. Assessing spatial distribution is not an exact science, as each community exhibits direct socio-economic characteristics, built form, traffic patterns, and expectations. For example, for years, Vaughan’s development patterns were largely low-density and automobile-dependent. Parks, recreation, and library infrastructure were distributed based on this model through the development of larger, community-level facilities. However, several intensification areas within or adjacent to established communities have been identified by the City’s new Official Plan, which is already creating changes to Vaughan’s urban form. Most of these intensification areas will be characterized by dense populations, high-rise buildings, mixed land uses, and access to transit and alternative transportation choices. In these areas, the reliance on the public realm to provide respite, accommodate gatherings, and protect community identity is heightened. In some cases, existing community infrastructure within these areas will not be sufficient to accommodate the thousands of new residents. Parks, recreation, and library facilities and services are vital to community health and social development and appropriate access is a necessity.

It bears noting that this Plan is a guideline and is flexible in its implementation. While it provides targets and principles that will allow for long-term consistency in planning, this Plan represents a snapshot in time. Further analysis will be required in some cases to more specifically define facility components,

timing, operating models, locations, and costs. For example, the City of Vaughan Planning Department requires Community Facilities and Services Impact Studies for all development applications pertaining to high-rise developments; this Plan is not intended to replace these impact studies, but rather to provide guidance.

Furthermore, new information, changing trends, adjusted population forecasts, public input, partnership alignment, and land and funding availability all have the potential to influence the implementation priorities identified in this Plan. Implementation should be monitored regularly and the entire Plan should be updated in five years' time.

6.3 MUNICIPAL INVENTORY – WHAT IS AND IS NOT INCLUDED

The City of Vaughan owns and maintains over two hundred active park sites and several community recreation and library facilities, some in partnership with other providers. Mapping of community centres, other indoor recreation facilities, outdoor recreation facilities, and Vaughan Public Libraries is contained in [Appendix G](#).

The inventory data referenced herein considers only municipal assets located on land owned or under agreement by the City of Vaughan, and is considered to be accurate as of February 2013. Where known, parks and facilities to be constructed in 2013 have also been included in the inventory. Facilities located on school board properties, with the exception of sports fields permitted by the City (as of 2012), are not included unless otherwise noted. While non-profit and private facilities may augment the supply, they have not been included in the inventory as they may impose restrictions to public access.

In addition to municipal parks, recreation, and library facilities, it is recognized that Vaughan is home to a number of additional municipal assets (e.g., cultural facilities, heritage buildings, etc.) and non-municipal assets provided by schools, places of worship, non-profit organizations, private businesses, conservation areas, etc. Some of these key facilities, which have been considered in the Active Together Master Plan analysis where appropriate, include:

- City Playhouse Theatre (386-seat theatre)
- City-owned designated heritage buildings: Armstrong House, Beaverbrook Activity Centre (Sarah Noble House), J.E.H. MacDonald House, John Charlton House, John R. Arnold House, Kleinburg Railway Station, Kline House, Maple Cemetery Vault, Michael Cranny House, Nathaniel Wallace House, Vellore School & Township Hall, Woodbridge Mackenzie Site (Archaeological Site), Memorial Hill
- McMichael Collection
- Uplands Golf and Ski Club
- MacMillan Farm
- Gallanough Resource Centre
- Boyd Conservation Area (TRCA)
- Kortright Centre
- The Sports Village
- Private arena facilities (The Pavilion, Vaughan IcePlex)
- The Soccer Centre (Ontario Soccer Association)
- Schwartz-Reisman Centre (Jewish Community Centre)