



Community Services *Staff Report*

REPORT NO: CS-2024-28

TO: Council

SUBMITTED BY: Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

PREPARED BY: Chris Catania, Director of Community Services

REVIEWED BY: Greg Clark, Acting Chief Administrative Officer

DATE: October 21, 2024

SUBJECT: 2024 Community Services Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report CS-2024-28, 2024 Community Services Master Plan be received for information; and

THAT Council approve the 2024 Community Services Master Plan for implementation as presented in this report

SUMMARY:

To provide Council with information and seek approval of the Township of Wilmot's 2024 Community Services Master Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Situational Analysis Report & Key Findings

On August 26, 2024, Staff presented Council with the Situational Analysis Report (SAR) that provided key findings comprising of the culmination Research and Data Analysis, and Extensive Community Engagement and outreach. The purpose of the Situational Analysis Report was to create a benchmark with respect to how the Township is currently meeting the

community services needs of its residents. This benchmarking exercise is evidence-based. It includes quantitative results of the current inventory of assets, utilization rates, financial performance, demographics, and growth projections. It is further informed by qualitative information through stakeholder engagement, policy alignment, trends, best practices, and sound planning principles.

The Situational Analysis Report did not contain any specific recommendations. Rather, the Situational Analysis Report helps determine, through a series of findings, what (if any) gaps currently exist and how, when, where, and why those gaps could be addressed. The report also clearly identifies which community needs the Township is already positioned to meet over the ensuing years. Some key findings from the Situational Analysis Report include; Asset Management planning, Under-utilized halls, Ice Pad needs, Capital and Operational resourcing, Volunteer sustainability and Programming expansion. These observations have informed the themes for the draft recommendations being presented in the Community Services Master Plan.

Master Plan Draft Recommendations

On September 23, 2024, Staff circulated and presented Council with the Service Delivery Review and draft recommendations for the Community Services Master Plan (Phase 4).

The Township's Community Services Master Plan was developed based on the needs and requirements of its residents. The Master Plan has seven (7) strategic themes with a total of 139 recommendations over 10 years. The recommendations are grouped by subject area intentionally includes a preamble that sets the context for the recommendations. The context is directly related to the findings within the qualitative and quantitative analysis as outlined in detail from the Situational Analysis Report.

The sections have been structured to address:

- Aquatics
- Asset Management
- Community Centres and Halls
- Ice Pads
- Parks and Outdoor Facilities
- Programming and Events
- Policy, Administration and Communication

Each recommendation and expected outcome(s) include a timing mechanism. Timing is defined as Short-Term (1-3 years), Mid-Term (4-6 years) and Long-Term (7-10 years). This timing may be adjusted through proactive monitoring of trends, funding programs, staff availability, alignment with corporate priorities, volunteer support and other external influences that may affect implementation plans.

Finally, the recommendations all provide an expected (or predicted) outcome. This

is intended to support the rationale for implementing the recommendation and can be used as a reporting mechanism in regular reports to Council regarding results and “key performance indicators”. Periodic surveys of users, customers and residents should be undertaken to understand community perception of results as noted in the expected outcome column.

Extensive Community Outreach, Stakeholder Consultation and Engagement

A multi-faceted community engagement process was employed to provide options for Council, staff, user groups, community leaders, participants, and residents to share their insights and interest in the future of parks and recreation services.

The community engagement process used in the development of the Community Services Master Plan included a variety of different forums for stakeholders to share their input, ideas, and suggestions. Options included interviews (1:1 or in small groups), facilitated focus group with representatives of ‘like’ organizations, opportunity to provide a written submission based upon questions provided by the consultants. Interviews (1:1 and small group) were also conducted with staff and Members of Council.

Several themes arose from the engagement process. A Public Workshop was held to discuss themes, hear new and different perspectives, and validate some of the initial findings and feedback, using a “SOAR” exercise led by facilitators (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results).

An online community survey was also available receiving 349 responses. The survey was promoted through many communication channels:

- Direct email to all community groups, service clubs, special event organizers, sporting user groups.
- Information on website, social media and all Township electronic signs.
- Master Plan postcards printed that contained information regarding the process and invitation to complete survey as well as link and QR code. Available:
 - To program participants across the municipality, Firebirds games, concession booth patrons.
 - Hard copies of postcards displayed on counters at WRC, Active Living Centre, Administration Complex, Castle Kilbride and Satellite Facilities.
 - Postcards given out at Heritage Day
 - Postcards provided to all that participated in the “Wilmot Roots” tree giveaway.
- User group meetings asked to share the information with their memberships.
- High school workshop - Surveys at Waterloo-Oxford District Secondary School.

Extensive stakeholder and community engagement constructed the Situational Analysis Report and formed recommendations arising out of the Master Plan. Staff continued to engage the community through the project by soliciting feedback on the draft recommendations in advance of seeking adoption of the Community Services Master Plan by Council.

REPORT:

The Community Services Master Plan serves as a guiding document for regular reference and reporting purposes. Staff endeavor that relevant recommendations are included in annual business and operational planning with regular reports to Council and the public in a regular and transparent manner. Operating and capital budgets, as well as capital budget forecasts, will require updating as projects are completed and the operating impacts planned. Staff resources in conjunction with the Service Delivery Review will require monitoring to ensure capacity and to monitor expectations in the community to meet customer satisfaction.

Growth communities should expect that new residents will place incremental demands on parks and recreation services. There will be increased wear and tear on existing assets, increases in new neighbourhood parks and associated amenities, and increased demands on new and expanded programs and services. As such, successful Master Plans are based on the corresponding incremental increases of human and equipment resources to serve new residents, and the capital funding to maintain existing and new assets. This will include a proactive approach to changing, adding or reducing service levels to ensure community expectations and Township resources are aligned. To keep the Community Services Master Plan current and supportive for decision making, adequate resources will be required and/or service delivery adjusted to align with overall human and financial capacity within the Township.

ALIGNMENT WITH THE TOWNSHIP OF WILMOT STRATEGIC PLAN:

- Quality of Life through Recreation and Leisure Opportunities
- Community Engagement through support for Belonging
- Responsible Governance through Service Reviews and Master Planning

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

Recommendations that have financial implications will be addressed through the operating and 10 year capital budgets in the annual municipal budget process.

ATTACHMENTS:

Appendix A – Community Services Master Plan
Appendix B – Situational Analysis Report