

# North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study

Presentation to City Council  
November 7, 2024



City of  
**Woodstock**

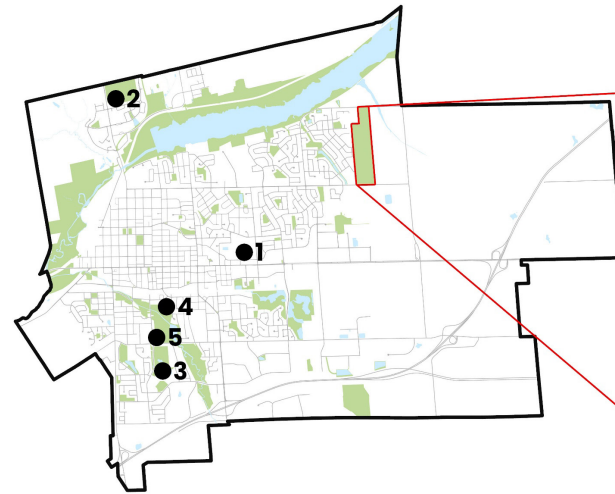


**MJMA**  
ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

# Purpose

An outcome of the City's 2021 Recreation Facility Needs Study was to build **a new arena and community centre at Cowan Fields.**

This North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study reconfirms past findings, conceptualizes how a community centre could be integrated at Cowan Fields, and the costs of doing so.



#### City Owned & Operated Indoor Recreation Facilities

- 1 Civic Centre Arena
- 2 Cowan Sportsplex
- 3 Reeves Community Complex
- 4 South Gate Centre
- 5 Southside Aquatic Centre





# Notable Changes Since 2021 RFNS

## Ice Pads:

The local ice sport market has experienced strong growth and has **exceeded** past projections, placing pressures on the City's arenas.

Woodstock needs **two ice pads** rather than one as originally projected in 2021

**+1,000**

more ice hours  
rented in  
2023/24 than in  
2018/19 season

## Aquatics:

There is merit in planning for an **indoor aquatics centre** at Cowan Fields based on program growth and engineering analysis that suggests site complexities exist at Southside Aquatic Centre.

## Other:

Woodstock Curling Club has identified concerns with their aging facility and City Council recently passed a resolution regarding childcare spaces.



# Community Centre Components

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## **Core Components:**

- Twin Pad Arena
- Gymnasium
- Multipurpose Rooms for camps, fitness and recreation programs
- Youth and Intergenerational Space
- Administrative Space
- Indoor Aquatics Centre (timing TBD based on project budget)

## **Optional Components:**

- Indoor Walking Track if design and budget permits
- Curling Facility if funded and operated by a curling club
- Childcare space



# Concept: Arena & Gym

Curling Club (Optional)

Twin Arenas & Team Rooms

Multi Purpose Rooms

Child Care Centre (Optional)

Administration & Service

Gymnasium & Change Rooms

SPRINGBANK



# Concept: Arena, Gym & Indoor Aquatics

Curling Club (Optional)

Twin Arenas & Team Rooms

Multi Purpose Rooms

Child Care Centre (Optional)

Administration & Service

Aquatic Check-In

SPRINGBANK



# Cost Estimates

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## **Community Centre, excluding aquatics:**

\$67 million

## **Indoor Aquatic Centre:**

\$18.25 million

## **Optional Components:**

\$15.6 million

Note: Prices quoted in 2024 \$CAD, excluding escalation. Gross floor areas and costing assumptions reflect smaller than typical allocations and a more economical level of finishes.





# North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study

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City of Woodstock | October 2024



**Monteith Brown**  
planning consultants

**MJMA**  
ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN



**City of Woodstock**

# **North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study**

**October 18, 2024**

**Prepared by:**





# Table of Contents

- 1 Introduction ..... 1
- 2 Planning Context .....5
- 3 Needs Assessments ..... 15
- 4 Conceptual Plan ..... 32

Appendix A: Gross Floor Area Calculations

Appendix B: Capital Cost Assumptions

## Limitations

This North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study was prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Limited (Monteith Brown) and MJMA Architecture & Design (MJMA) for the City of Woodstock (the client). This Facility Study is based on information provided to Monteith Brown and MJMA, which has not been independently verified.

The disclosure of any information contained in this Facility Study is the sole responsibility of the client. The material in this report and all information relating to this Study reflects Monteith Brown and MJMA's judgment in light of the information available to us at the time of preparation. Any use which a third party makes of this Facility Study, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Monteith Brown and MJMA accept no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by a third party as a result of decisions made or actions based on this report.

# Acknowledgements

## **City of Woodstock Council**

Jerry Acchione, Mayor  
Deb Tait, City County Councillor  
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Connie Lauder, City Councillor  
Kate Leatherbarrow, City Councillor  
Mark Schadenberg, City Councillor  
Liz Wismer-Van Meer, City Councillor

## **City of Woodstock Project Team**

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## **Project Consultants**

Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Ltd.  
MJMA Architecture & Design

# Executive Summary

The North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study has been prepared to implement recommendations contained in the City's 2021 Recreation Facility Needs Study (RFNS) regarding the need for a new multi-use community centre. This Facility Study seeks to confirm or deviate from RFNS recommendations for facility components to be included in a community centre while conceptualizing how such a community centre would be integrated at the Cowan Fields site, located at 1495 Devonshire Avenue in the City's northeast.

The Facility Study validates the RFNS recommendation to provide a multi-use community centre anchored by a twin-pad arena, gymnasium, and multi-purpose program spaces. The timing of an indoor aquatic centre, namely whether to include it as part of an initial or future phase of construction, should be determined based on the City's available budget noting that aquatic program registrations could exceed capacity in the short to medium-term if current trends persist. In addition, the Facility Study and its conceptual plans illustrate how an optional curling facility could be integrated subject to discussions regarding funding and operational details with the local curling club.

## Recommended Community Centre Phasing & Options

- Twin Pad Arena
- Indoor Aquatic Centre (timing/phasing TBD)
- Gymnasium
- One room (minimum) for camps, fitness and recreation programs
- Youth and Intergenerational Space  
Administrative and Office Space

### Optional Components:

- Indoor Walking Track (if design and budget permits)
- Curling Facility operated by the Woodstock Curling Club
- Childcare space

The capital cost of community centre components excluding aquatics is estimated at \$67.15 million; the cost of indoor aquatics centre is estimated at \$18.25 million (2024 dollars excluding escalation). This order of magnitude estimate is higher than past estimates for a community centre in north Woodstock due to inflationary pressures and cost escalations resulting from recent global economic uncertainty and the COVID-19 pandemic.



### North Woodstock Community Centre Concept with Arena & Gym



### North Woodstock Community Centre Concept with Arena, Gym & Indoor Aquatic Centre





# 1 Introduction





# Section 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose of the Facility Study

The City of Woodstock provides a variety of recreation facilities that are used by thousands of residents including the Cowan Sportsplex, Reeves Community Complex, Southside Aquatic Centre South Gate Centre, Civic Centre Arena along with dozens of parks. These facilities are community hubs that bring new and established residents together while enabling social connections and healthy lifestyles.

Woodstock is continually investing in its recreation facilities to keep pace with the growing population and evolving preferences for recreation and sports. In 2021, the City updated its Recreation Facility Needs Study (RFNS) to determine recreation facility needs based on local, regional and provincial trends. One outcome of the RFNS was a recommendation for a new arena and community centre at Cowan Fields.

This North Woodstock Recreation Facility Study (the “Facility Study”) has been prepared to assist the City of Woodstock in making fiscally responsible decisions as it strives to maintain a high standard in the provision of community-based indoor recreation services. This Facility Study builds upon the RFNS Recommendations for a new community centre.

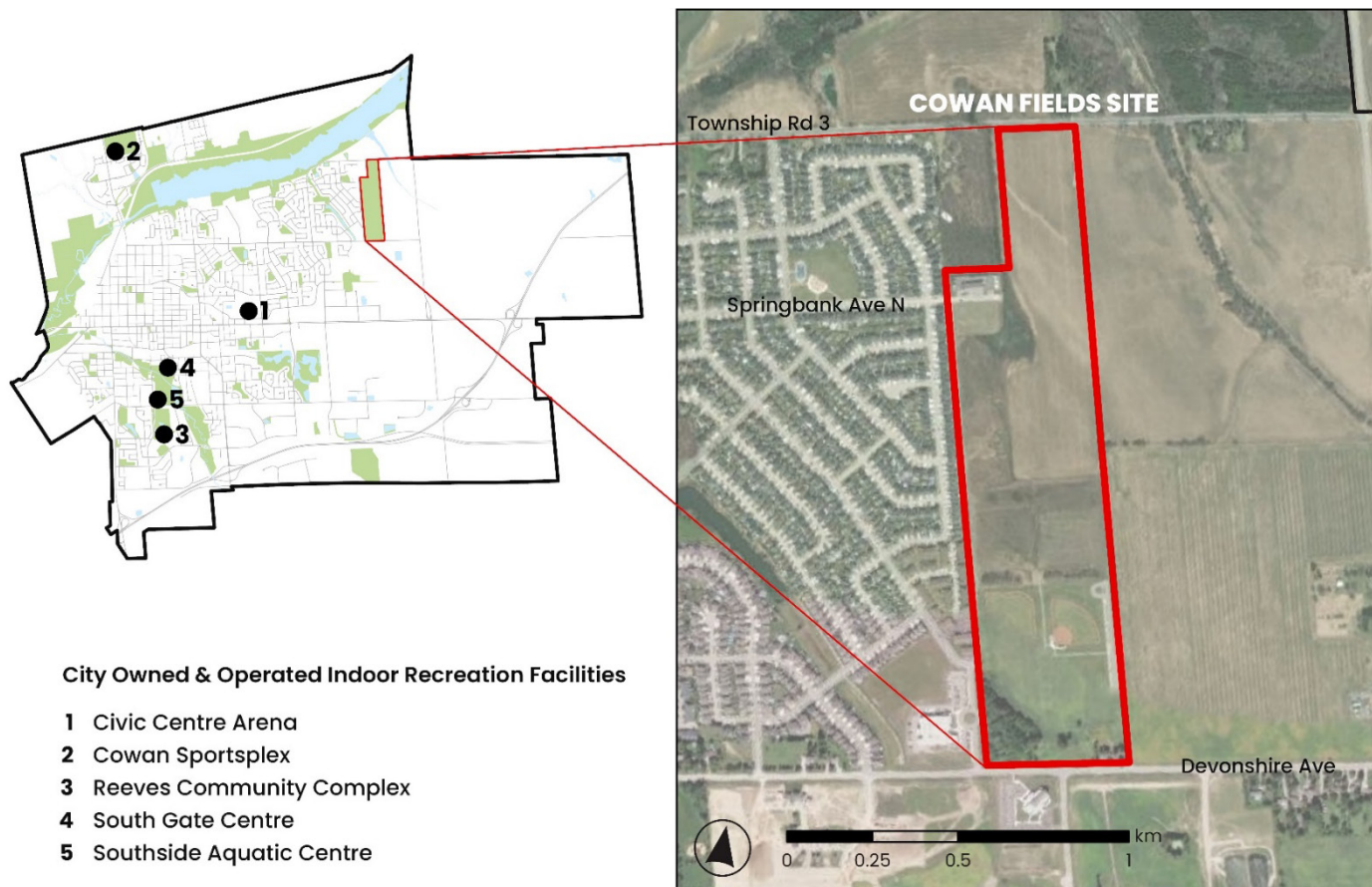
**Table 1: Scope of Facilities Outlined in this Study**

Facility types under consideration	Items beyond the scope of this study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Arenas / ice pads</li><li>• Indoor aquatics</li><li>• Gymnasium</li><li>• Fitness space</li><li>• Multi-purpose rooms</li><li>• Youth &amp; older adult spaces</li><li>• Curling</li><li>• Indoor turf</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Outdoor aquatics</li><li>• Outdoor sports fields</li><li>• Park features</li><li>• Trails</li></ul>

## 1.2 Site Context

Cowan Fields is located at 1495 Devonshire Avenue in the city's east end. The park is bordered by Devonshire Avenue to the south, Township Road 3 to the north, Oxford Road 4 to the east, and Albemni Road to the west. The site is approximately 10 hectares and zoned open space (OS2) as per the County of Oxford Zoning By-Law. The park currently has three ball diamonds, a splash pad, playground, washroom facility and two parking lots.

**Figure 1: Cowan Fields Site Context and City Owned & Operated Indoor Recreation Facilities**





### 1.3 Indoor Recreation Facilities in Woodstock

Recreation facilities that are owned and operated by the City of Woodstock are outlined in Table 2, with the major facilities consisting of the Civic Centre Arena, Cowan Sportsplex, Reeves Community Complex, and Southside Aquatic Centre.

**Table 2: Recreation Facility Inventory & Level of Service, City of Woodstock**

Facility	Municipal Supply	Service Level	Location(s)
Arenas / Ice Pads	3	1: 16,169	Reeves Community Complex (2); Civic Centre Arena
Indoor Aquatics Centre	1	1: 48,508	Southside Aquatic Centre
Gymnasium	2	1: 24,254	Cowan Sportsplex, Goff Gymnasium
Indoor Track	1	1: 48,508	Cowan Sportsplex
Multi-Purpose Rooms	11	1: 4410	Reeves Community Complex; Southside Aquatic Centre; Market Centre; Woodstock Public Library; Art Gallery (2); Museum (2); Cowan Sportsplex; South Gate Centre (2)
Indoor Turf Field	1	1: 48,508	Cowan Sportsplex

\*Service levels are based on a 2024 population of 48,508 as per the 2022 Development Charges Background Study

### 1.4 Community Engagement

A comprehensive community engagement process was carried out for the 2021 RFNS including a community survey, workshops with user groups and City staff, and consultations with the Woodstock Recreation Advisory Committee and City Council. These broad consultations supported the RFNS recommendation for a new community centre and it is not the intent of this Facility Study to duplicate these consultation efforts. However, user groups and the Advisory Committee have been re-engaged as part of this Study to re-affirm the need for a community centre and to inform the initial concepts contained herein.

Notable themes from Advisory Committee and user group representative feedback received in summer 2024 during the initial stages of this Study's preparation are as follows.

- Participation in sport and recreation user groups is growing.
- Ice users are looking outside of the city for ice time.
- User groups are turning away prospective participants as they have no more room to grow.
- Support for a multi-use community centre that is functional and accessible.



## 2 Planning Context





## Section 2: Planning Context

### 2.1 Woodstock Recreation Facility Needs Study

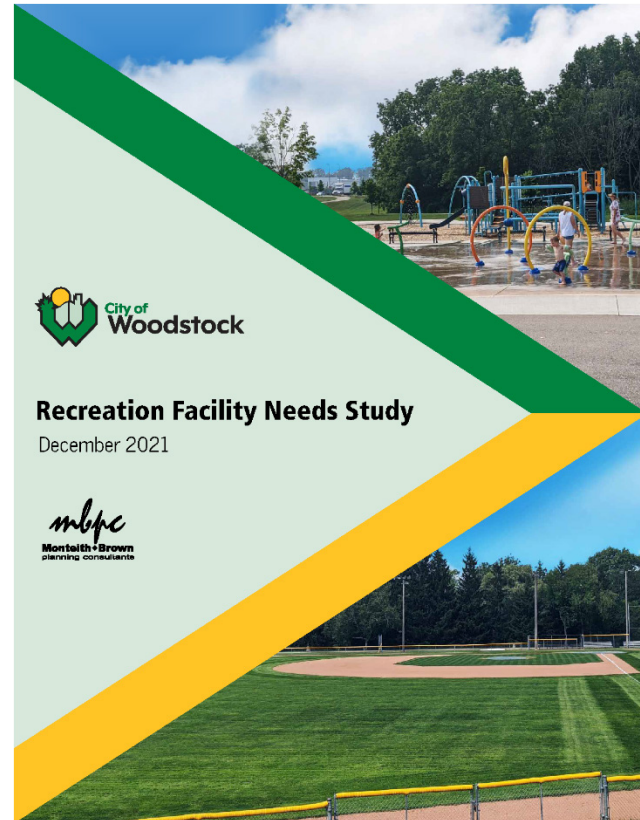
The City's Recreation Facility Needs Study, 2021 provides a fiscally-sound strategy to address recreational needs of Woodstock residents while following best practices and insights into proactive planning and sustainable capital budgeting. The RFNS investigated indoor and outdoor recreation facility needs with recommendations pertaining to this Facility Study highlighted below.

The RFNS recommended that the City construct a multi-use community centre at Cowan Fields containing the following at a minimum:

- single pad arena (designed to allow future expansion if required);
- gymnasium;
- group fitness studio; and
- multi-purpose rooms for meetings, gatherings, and municipal programs.

While outdoor recreational facilities are not part of the scope of this Facility Study, the RFNS recommended the following at Cowan Fields:

- a regulation-size cricket grounds;
- one full basketball court;
- three tennis courts and three pickleball courts;
- four sand volleyball courts; and
- development of internal pathways and/or walking loops.



## **2.2 Development Charges Background Study**

The City of Woodstock 2022 Development Charges Background Study contains growth-related capital requirements, including for parks and recreation. Appendix B.4 speaks to recreation facilities and Table B.4-2 identifies the development-related capital program for Parks and Recreation including a new twin pad arena. The DC Study identifies the gross cost of this facility at \$24 million with approximately 56% being DC eligible costs (\$13.5 million) which is discounted primarily due to the benefit to existing populations.<sup>1</sup>

## **2.3 Oxford County Official Plan**

Oxford County's Official Plan is a long-term plan that is used to manage growth and development in accordance with provincial policies. The Plan was approved by the County on December 13, 1995, with the latest consolidation of amendments approved as of March 31, 2023.

The Oxford Official Plan contains policies regarding community facilities in Woodstock, in Section 7.4.2. Section 7.4.2 outlines community facilities, including major recreational facilities. This section also outlines the designation of the site and site planning. This section speaks on the location, compatibility of surrounding context, traffic, municipal services, public transit, environment, building orientation, landscaping, parking, mechanical equipment, garbage, lighting, access to site, pedestrian movement, barrier-free design, and stormwater management.

When designing the Cowan Fields site, applicable policies from the County Official Plan will need to be taken into account.

## **2.4 Oxford County Phase One Comprehensive Review**

The Oxford County Phase One Comprehensive Review was prepared in 2020 and provides an overview of County-wide and Area Municipal population, household and employment forecasts, and a land need assessment.

This Study provides a basis for assessing land needs in the County for a 20-year period (2019 – 2039) and beyond. This Study will inform a range of land use planning and growth-related studies.

The City of Woodstock is forecasted to accommodate the majority share of population growth in Oxford County over the next 20 years. With this in mind, the City's recreational services and infrastructure will be subjected to new demands from a growing and more diverse population.

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<sup>1</sup> City of Woodstock Development Charges Background Study, 2022, p.113



## 2.5 Demographic Snapshot

### Residential Growth

The City is forecasted to see an increase of 3,444 occupied dwellings from 2021 to 2031, resulting in a total of 22,330 occupied dwellings and 8,605 residents in the new dwellings. The City's Development Charges Study identifies a year 2024 population of 48,508 persons<sup>2</sup> while the County of Oxford projects that Woodstock's population will exceed 58,000 persons by the year 2036.<sup>3</sup>

### Age Composition

The City is becoming "younger" as a whole, contrary to aging trends in the majority of rural and urban municipalities across Canada. This change is attributed to the growth of younger age groups in Woodstock where the number of children (ages 0 to 9) has increased by 20% between 2016 and 2021 and the youth/teen cohort (10 to 19) grew by 12%. It is also noteworthy that the number of persons with all age groups have increased as shown in Figure 3.

### Income

Woodstock's median household income is \$82,000 in 2021, which was lower than the County's median of \$87,000.<sup>4</sup> Ample research exists which points to the positive relationship between higher income levels and active recreation participation rates.<sup>5,6</sup> This is due to the correlation of higher incomes and disposable income that can be allocated towards recreation activities. It is also to be noted that the City is home to many lower income levels with 8.7% of the residents being in the low-income measure after tax (LIM-AT) category.

### Culture

A key factor in recreational activity choices is ethnicity. People from diverse cultural backgrounds tend to favour non-traditional leisure pursuits. In 2021, there were approximately 6,800 immigrants living within the city, equating to 15% of the population. The top three places of birth for the immigrant population of Woodstock residents are Europe (2,865 residents), Asia (2,760 residents), and India (1,530 residents).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> City of Woodstock Development Charges Background Study, 2022, p.49

<sup>3</sup> County of Oxford. 2020. Phase One Comprehensive Review. Table 23 p.41

<sup>4</sup> 2021 Statistics Canada Census

<sup>5</sup> For more information, see Canadian Parks and Recreation Association's Position Paper titled "Everybody gets to play – Recreation without barriers", downloadable at: <http://iin.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/EverybodyGetstoPlayPositionPaper.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> More information on the relationship between income and recreation and physical activity can be found in Information Sheet 4 of "Everybody Active", a joint initiative of BC Recreation and Parks Association and the heart and Stroke Foundation of BC & Yukon, downloadable at: [http://www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca/pdfs/Why\\_Dont\\_People\\_Participate.pdf](http://www.physicalactivitystrategy.ca/pdfs/Why_Dont_People_Participate.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> 2021 Statistics Canada Census

# Community Profile

Understanding the Woodstock community and how it is anticipated to change provides insights into the need for a future community centre.

**48,508 persons**

**+19%**

population increase from 2016<sup>1</sup>

**40.8**

median age

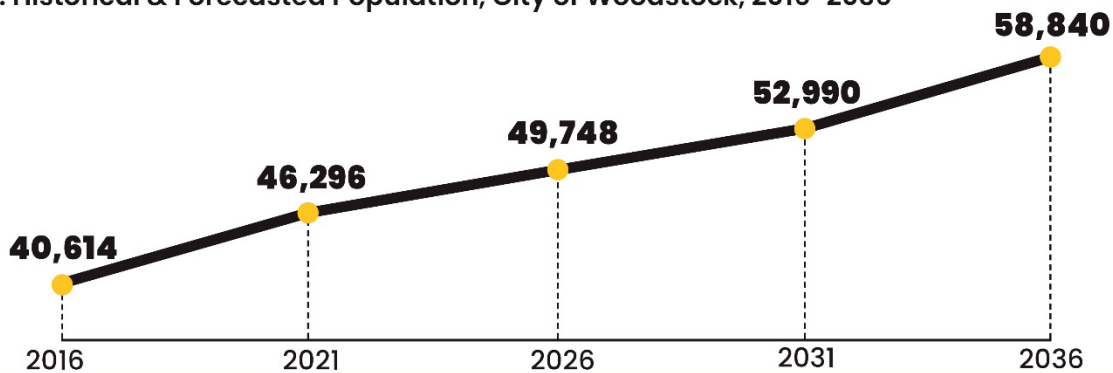
The City's median age from 2016 to 2021 decreased from 41.9 years to 40.8 years, slightly lower than Oxford County (41.6 years).<sup>1</sup>

**58,840 persons by 2036**

**+21%**

projected population increase over the next 10 years<sup>2</sup>

Figure 2: Historical & Forecasted Population, City of Woodstock, 2016–2036<sup>3</sup>



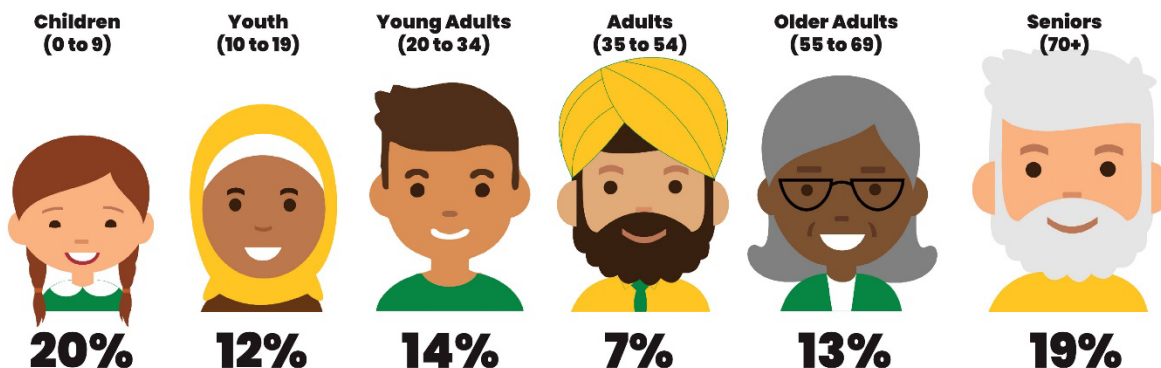
**\$82,000**

Median income, 2020

**13.7%**

of the population is racialized

Figure 3: Population Change by Age, City of Woodstock, 2016 to 2021<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>City of Woodstock Development Charges Background Study, 2022; Statistics Canada Census 2016

<sup>2</sup>Oxford County Phase One Comprehensive Review, 2020

<sup>3</sup>Statistics Canada Census 2016; City of Woodstock Development Charges Background Study, 2022; Oxford County Phase One Comprehensive Review, 2020

## 2.6 Trends

The identification and monitoring of existing and emerging trends in recreation participation and facility provision is essential to understanding and responding to local recreation needs. This section explores the major trends that could affect the provision of indoor recreation facilities in Woodstock based on research at the provincial and national levels.

Existing and evolving trends in sport participation and facility provision that could affect the provision of arena and recreation facilities in Woodstock will be explored in this section.

### Aging Population

Municipalities across North America are experiencing an aging of the population as the baby boomer generation move through the age cohorts.

Between the 2016 and 2021 Census, Woodstock's older adult and senior population (age 55+) experienced a growth of 1,465 residents, representing a growth of 16%. During this period, all other age groups increased by a combined total of 5,400 residents. The number of children and youth (age 0-19) in Woodstock, who are the primary users of arenas, increased by 15% (2,030 persons) between the 2016 and 2021 Census periods.

There is a growing need for accessible and barrier-free facilities to respond to provincial legislation as well as the need to respond to increasing program demands for older adults and seniors who wish to remain active (e.g., pickleball, walking, fitness, seniors' skating, etc.).

### High Levels of Physical Inactivity

The 2021 and 2024 ParticipACTION report cards on physical activity graded overall physical activity levels a "D+"<sup>8</sup> for children and youth. The 2021 ParticipACTION report card for adults classified activity into light (LPA) and moderate-to-vigorous activity (MVPA). Adults scored "C+" for LPA and a "C" for (MVPA), which is a marginal improvement over previous years.

Nearly one-third of Canadian children and youth (age 5-17) are obese or overweight, which was an increase from 23% reported in 1979.<sup>9</sup> Almost two-thirds (64%) of adults over the age of 18 are obese or overweight, which was an increase from 49% in 1979.<sup>10</sup>

Reliance on automobiles (as opposed to walking or biking) has contributed to a culture of physical inactivity, while sedentary activities such as watching television, playing video games, or using a computer further exacerbate sedentary behaviours.

Ice sports such as hockey and figure skating continue to be popular recreation activities in Canada, particularly for children and youth, as they foster a variety

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<sup>8</sup> The ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Adults (2021) and Children and Youth (2024). Retrieved from <https://www.participaction.com>

<sup>9</sup> Public Health Agency of Canada. Tackling obesity in Canada: Childhood obesity and excess weight rates in Canada. 2017. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca>

<sup>10</sup> Ibid



of benefits including encouraging healthy and active lifestyles. Broader trends have revealed that there are increasing rates of physical activity due to the rise of sedentary activities and increasingly busy lifestyles.

### **Focus on Active Living and Wellness**

The Healthy Communities movement recognizes that recreation and leisure are vital contributors to social and personal health. Active living is a primary goal of the 2024 Framework for Recreation in Canada.<sup>11</sup>

Municipalities are focusing on strategies to improve the activity levels, health and wellbeing of their residents. The Town's Strategic Plan identifies active living as part of its vision for the community, and also places a priority on recreation activities for all ages.

Older adults are remaining active later in life their interests are shifting away from traditional seniors' activities and towards leisure opportunities focused on wellness and active living.

### **Growth in Unstructured Activities**

The primary barrier to recreational participation for both youth and adults is a lack of free time. Organized sports, particularly at the competitive levels, often require a considerable time commitment for training, practices, travel and other league activities.

Due to increasingly busy lifestyles, competing interests, and the inability for many people to commit to structured activities, there has been a growing desire for drop-in and unstructured activities that can be self-scheduled. To address this trend, municipalities are seeking strategies such as extending hours of operation, providing more drop-in activities, offering programs at different times of the day, and more.

Woodstock provides flexible opportunities to engage in recreation, largely through its parks, trails and outdoor spaces.

### **Affordability Concerns**

Income can be a significant barrier to participation in organized sports where equipment, travel and rental fees result in greater costs to the participant. Financial assistance programs and low-to-no-cost programming options can help alleviate the financial burden of participation.

Woodstock's median household income is lower than the County and the Province, suggesting that residents may be less likely to participate in costly leisure activities. Affordability is a key concern for many households as recreation is one of several spending choices for discretionary income.

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<sup>11</sup> Framework for Recreation in Canada, Update: March 2024. Retrieved from [https://assets.nationbuilder.com/cpra/pages/1532/attachments/original/1719875949/Framework\\_for\\_Recreation\\_Update\\_-\\_EN.pdf?1719875949](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/cpra/pages/1532/attachments/original/1719875949/Framework_for_Recreation_Update_-_EN.pdf?1719875949)

## **Participation in Ice Sports**

Registration in Hockey Canada (both in Ontario and Canada) has declined since peaking in the 2018/19 season. The 2023/24 season had approximately 214,000 affiliated players reported in Ontario and 550,000 in Canada. This represents a 19% decline from the peak in 2018/19 (over 50,000 players) and can be linked to several factors such as the high cost of hockey, concerns over safety, competing interests, aging populations, and competition from leagues/organizations that are not sanctioned by Hockey Canada.

In contrast to Provincial and National trends, local participation in ice sports has been increasing. The number of registered major ice players using the City of Woodstock's arenas has increased 14% between 2021/22 and 2023/24 fall/winter season.

Historically, municipal arenas experienced strong or steady ice usage during the early mornings or late-night hours. Most recently, experience in the sector revealed that the window of core prime time ice is shrinking as most groups desire the use of early prime time hours, particularly during the weekday. Groups are increasingly reluctant to utilize ice time during the morning, shoulders, and late prime time hours. Some communities are also challenged with filling weekend hours. These usage trends are placing pressures on groups' ability to secure desired ice times and expand memberships. An analysis of Woodstock's arena schedules finds that the ice pad is generally booked to capacity during peak season, with an average utilization rate of 96% during weekday prime time hours.

## **Multi-Use Recreation Facilities as Community Hubs**

In this era of user convenience and cost recovery, many municipalities are centralizing multiple recreational facilities. Experience in communities across Canada supports the finding that multi-use recreation facilities can provide a great number of benefits. While the specific nature and degree of these benefits will depend on local circumstances, facility design and operation, and other factors, there is no denying that multi-use recreation facilities have the potential to generate substantial economic, social, and environmental gains for local municipalities.

The majority of recent arena construction across Ontario has been in the form of multi-pad and multi-use venues. There are a range of benefits of multi-use facilities including the creation of a destination where all household members can gather and engage in recreation activities, thereby contributing to sport development, tourism, and operational efficiency.

The creation of "community hubs" has also been a recent focus in many communities as it offers tremendous social benefits, strengthens community cohesion, and fosters enhanced quality of life by providing a central location to deliver a range of services. A community hub is a central access point for a range of needed health and social services, along with cultural, recreational, and green spaces to nourish community life. There may be potential for developing a community hub model in Woodstock by developing a community centre at Cowan Fields.



## **Persons with Disabilities and Barrier-Free Facilities**

The *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)* directs municipalities to consider the needs of persons with disabilities through facility design and service delivery. By 2025, municipalities are required to remove all barriers within new and redeveloped municipal facilities, including those related to physical space as well as customer service through training. Given the age of the City's arenas, some public areas are not fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

## **Embracing Green Design**

Environmental concerns are often a top of mind issue among Canadians as there is an increasing need to maximize the efficient use of resources. Many municipalities have demonstrated environmentally conscious awareness in the design of new facilities that utilize state-of-the-art technologies (e.g., photo voltaic systems, geo-thermal, etc.) to enhance energy efficiency and environmental objectives such as reducing or fully eliminating green house gas emissions.

## **Partnerships**

Throughout Ontario municipal recreation departments are increasingly challenged to provide and maintain top quality facilities, services and programs within defined budget envelopes. As financial pressures mount and the need for cost containment rises, many communities are examining new and creative service provision methodologies including developing relationships with outside entities.

There are many potential advantages of a collaborative service delivery approach including the sharing of risk, possible cost or service efficiencies, gaining a competitive advantage in having programs and services delivered by specialized community groups, and the sharing of vital data to identify emerging trends and opportunities.

# Trends Influencing Recreation

## Growth and Rising User Expectations

Greater ethnic diversity will introduce new activities into the community, creating higher expectations.



## Focus on Active Living and Wellness

Growing emphasis placed on active living and wellness as it is closely linked to living longer and healthier.



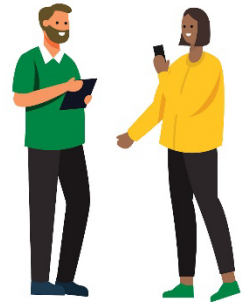
## Accessible Facility Design

Equitable access to facilities is a key component to communities that support all ages and stages.



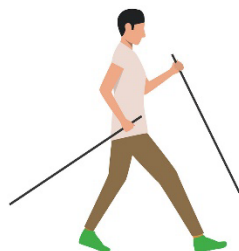
## High Levels of Inactivity

Lack of free time is limiting people from easily accessing physical activity opportunities.



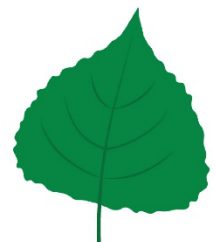
## Demand for Self-Directed & Drop-in Activities

Residents are opting for more informal, individual recreational activities that are both convenient and affordable.



## Green Design

There is a growing demand for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing efficiency.





### 3 Needs Assessments





## Section 3: Needs Assessments

This section contains needs assessments that are intended to confirm recommendations in the 2021 RFNS and validate recreation facility components for a future community centre at Cowan Fields. With expected population growth and recreation sport participation rates evolving, it is recommended that demand indicators be closely monitored over the coming years.

The following analysis builds on the information contained in the 2021 RFNS, with additional information presented on local usage and registration. A focus is placed on understanding current and past demand by examining facility schedules, participation levels, consultation input and to develop solutions to address these needs.

### 3.1 Arenas

The City has two arenas that contain a total of three ice pads. The Reeves Community Complex has two ice pads: The 'Red Pad' is an event-oriented venue containing an Olympic Size rink (200' x 100'), spectator seating for 1,848 and standing room for 500 around the rink; the 'Green Pad' is slightly undersized (185' x 85') relative to NHL standards with seating for 100 persons. The two rinks are serviced by 11 changerooms and a concession booth.

The Civic Centre Arena contains an undersized ice pad (180' x 80') with seating for 300 persons, a concession booth, and 4 changerooms. It is an aging facility with a number of major lifecycle needs, and the building is not fully accessible to persons with disabilities.

The City also operates a volunteer ice rink program where the community actively participates in the upkeep of outdoor rinks, providing an opportunity for drop-in skating and shinny. However, locations vary by year depending on the volunteer interest and weather conditions.

#### 2021 RFNS Recommendation

The 2021 RFNS recommended construction of a single pad arena at Cowan Fields, designed to allow it to be twinned if needed in the future. The recommended new arena was contingent on replacing the Civic Centre Arena.

#### Market Conditions

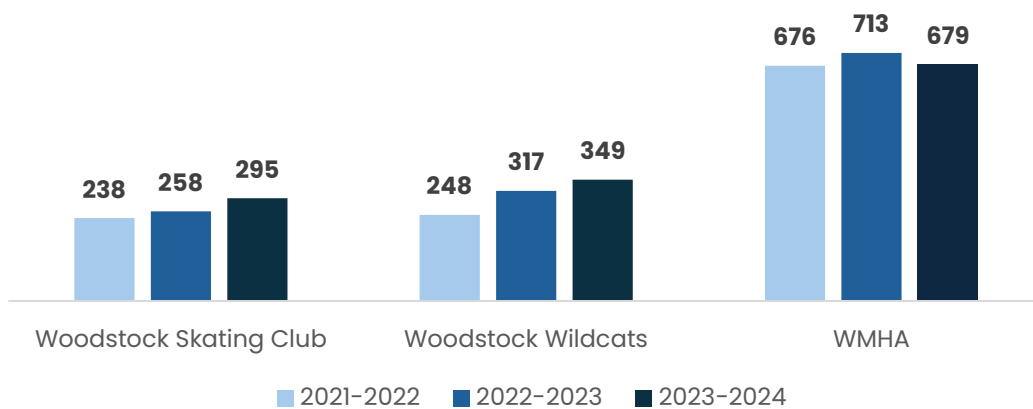
Ice sports participation is slowing in many parts of Canada and Ontario due to factors such as cost, lack of time, concerns over safety, and immigration from countries where ice sports are not commonly played. Participation since the COVID-19 pandemic are mixed; certain communities, particularly in rural Ontario, have seen registrations rebound whereas participation rates remain below pre-pandemic levels in certain other municipalities.



In Woodstock, registrations have grown since the pandemic. The 2021 RFNS recorded 1,750 ice sport participants using local arenas whereas the most recent 2023/24 season had nearly 2,100 players and skaters registered with local organizations. This represents an increase of 19% (333 participants) since 2021 and shows that registrations in ice sports is growing a faster rate than that of Woodstock’s overall population which grew by 5% over the same time. Registrations have increased at the Woodstock Skating Club and Woodstock Wildcats while registrations have been fluctuating but similar over the past three years.

**+1,000**  
**more hours rented**  
**in 2023/24 than in**  
**2018/19 season**

**Figure 2: Registration Usage of Major Ice Users in Woodstock**



Presently, the only City programming offered during prime time is public skating. The City has received requests for adult skating lessons and parent and tot skating during prime time (evening and weekend), but there is no ice time available to accommodate additional programs.

### Replacement of Civic Centre Arena

The Civic Centre Arena is near the end of its useful life, does not meet barrier-free accessibility standards, has required numerous repairs and will continue to require greater attention to keep it operational. Consistent with the 2021 RFNS, this Study continues to support decommissioning the Civic Centre Arena and relocating its ice pad to a new arena.

### Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis

Utilization rates for past winter season indicate that Woodstock’s three ice pads are near capacity, standing above 95% during prime time. Usage during weekday shoulder periods (4pm - 5pm & 10pm - 11pm) and weekends (open - close) has increased substantially since 2021. Consultation with City staff and arena users confirms that demand for ice time has remained strong compared to provincial trends, especially for weekday peak time slots (5pm - 10pm). Arena users have indicated the need for prime time ice, stating that limited availability is impacting their ability to grow programs and accommodate new players.

Figure 3 illustrates the system-wide arena utilization for the past winter season between October 2023 and March 2024 while Table 3 illustrates the utilization rate of each ice pad. Over the last 5 years, the usage of all three arenas has been increasing and is now near capacity; prime time utilization rates have exceeded pre-pandemic (COVID-19) levels and arena users report making use of arenas outside of Woodstock when they cannot obtain the ice time they need within the City.

It is worth noting that 95% capacity across an arena system essentially means that there is very little ability to accommodate for use. It is rare to achieve 100% utilization as there is often sporadic timeslots available usually in the form of a few 30 minute blocks that are not attractive to leagues or most renters looking for 60 minute minimum slots. One minor hockey group has indicated that an inability to secure more ice time in Woodstock has resulted in them turn away players equivalent of two to three teams, even after securing time at arenas outside of the city. Adult leagues are also seeking additional times although some of these requests are for times that are assigned to children/youth under the City's ice allocation and scheduling policies.

City staff also indicate that public skating is the only municipal program offered during prime time and that there is no time available to run any other City programs (e.g. learn to skate) let alone be able to accommodate new leagues or expansion/growth of existing leagues for hockey, ringette, figure skating or other ice sports.

There were a total of 2,083 of ice players and skaters reported in 2024, which translates into a service level of one ice pad per 694 ice users. With high demand for ice time, the market size has surpassed the RFNS projections for the 2031 market (1,950 participants). There is expected to be a shortage equivalent to 0.6 ice pads in 2036 based on a projected 2,530 players (Table 4).

If there were to be a future supply of 4 ice pads this would result in a service level of 1:14,600 which is within population-based thresholds in Ontario. Based on the utilization data and consultation with Staff and ice users, it is apparent that the City of Woodstock needs an additional two ice pads rather than just one as originally forecasted in the RFNS.

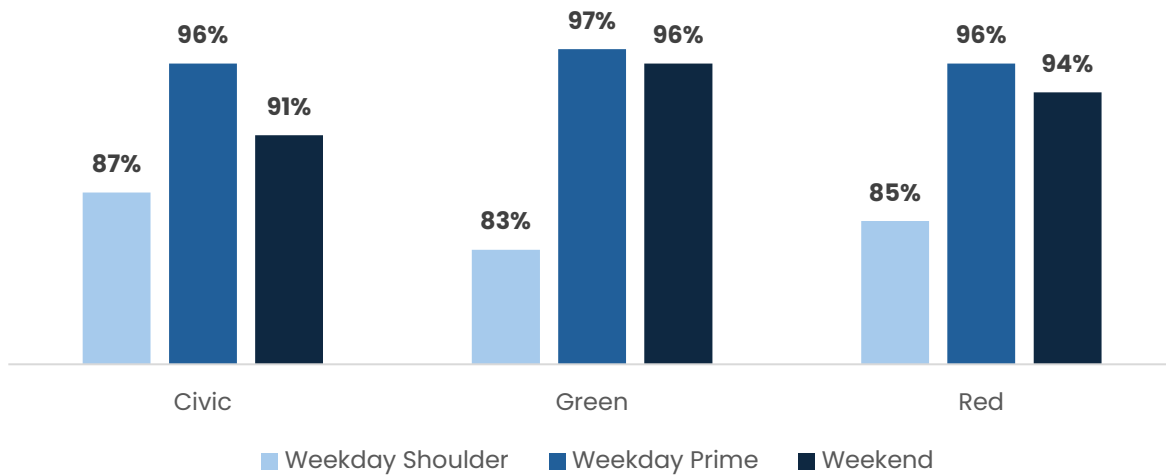
This Study supports the development of a twin-pad arena at Cowan Fields in order to add a net new ice pad to alleviate capacity constraints as well as to replace the aging single-pad Civic Centre Arena. Developing two new ice pads concurrently at the community centre in accordance with modern best practices and amenities will allow for an enhanced player experience while increasing economies of scale in the construction budget.

## **Community Centre Recommendation**

- Rec. 1:** Construct a twin-pad arena at the Cowan Fields community centre, containing two NHL-regulation ice pads and spectator seating oriented to local-level programs offered by minor sports.



**Figure 3: System-Wide Arena Utilization, Oct. 2023 – Mar. 31, 2024**



Note: Weekday Shoulder (4pm-5pm, 10pm-11pm), Weekday Prime (5pm-10pm), Weekend (open-close)

**Table 3: Arena Utilization, 2021-2024**

Arena / Time	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
<b>Civic Arena</b>					
Weekday Shoulder	74%	-	76%	84%	87%
Weekday Prime	94%	-	93%	96%	96%
Weekend	79%	-	78%	89%	91%
<b>Reeves Complex - Green</b>					
Weekday Shoulder	71%	36%	56%	67%	83%
Weekday Prime	91%	90%	92%	97%	97%
Weekend	91%	90%	93%	97%	96%
<b>Reeves Complex - Red</b>					
Weekday Shoulder	51%	68%	45%	57%	85%
Weekday Prime	88%	80%	88%	88%	96%
Weekend	84%	91%	87%	91%	94%

Note: Civic Arena was closed during the 2021 Fall/Winter Season due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

**Table 4: Historic, Current and Forecasted Ice Participants**

	2024	2026	2031	2036
Estimated Market Size	2,083	2,140	2,280	2,530
Existing Supply	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0
Required Ice Pads @ 1 ice pad per 700 participants	3.0	3.1	3.3	3.6
<b>Deficit</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.3</b>	<b>0.6</b>

## 3.2 Curling

The Woodstock Curling Club has been operating for decades at their independently owned facility. The City of Woodstock, like many municipalities in Ontario, is not involved in the delivery of curling facilities or programs.

### 2021 RFNS Recommendation

The RFNS indicated that there is no need for the City to provide curling facilities within the next 10 year period.

### Market Conditions

Curling participation has been declining over the past two decades, nationally. The declining rates are due to aging population, immigration patterns, and shifting interests. Curling Canada stated that many clubs are offering youth leagues and programs, although the participants are mostly older adults and seniors.

The RFNS community survey revealed that 12% of respondents curled in pre-pandemic times. 23% of respondents recorded that curling was important to their household, and less than 1% indicated that curling facilities should be a priority for municipal investment.

The Woodstock Curling Club has maintained a stable participation level over the past number of years, with approximately 250 members as of 2024. The Curling Club also hosts an 8-week program (Learn to Curlers) where they have anywhere from 25 – 50 participants.

### Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis

The Woodstock Curling Club had approximately 250 participants during the 2023-2024 season. As a general standard, each curling sheet can support between 100 – 125 members. The Woodstock Curling Club facility has four sheets, which equates to a service level of 1:63 members.

The club has stated their Wednesday and Friday (fun) nights are at full capacity and that they are seeing the most interest from players but do not have any more capacity. The Club has indicated that in the upcoming year (2024-2025) they are going to push for more youth curlers and reach out to more diversified communities.

The Club's is concerned about reinvesting in their existing building as it is near the end of its lifecycle. The Club has suggested they could contribute capital and be partners in a new community centre. By developing the future community centre to house two ice pads and curling sheets, there could be shared infrastructure (mechanical, kitchen, program rooms, etc.).

This Study acknowledges that the City does not need to provide curling facilities and keeps with the RFNS suggestion. The concept in Section 4 articulates how curling sheets could fit into the future community centre, provided that a partnership can be successfully negotiated with the Woodstock Curling Club.



## Community Centre Recommendation

**Rec. 2:** Consult with the Woodstock Curling Club on the potential option of co-locating the Woodstock Curling Centre facility within the future Cowan Fields community centre.



### 3.3 Indoor Aquatics Centres

The Southside Aquatic Centre is the City's sole indoor pool, designed in a 25-metre, six-lane L-shaped configuration. The City has recently reinvested in a number of mechanical components to replace aging equipment and tank renewals.

#### 2021 RFNS Recommendation

The 2021 RFNS recommended to construct an outdoor pool at Southside Aquatic Centre. Subsequent analysis by City Staff have determined that an outdoor pool at Southside Aquatic Centre is not feasible due to geotechnical conditions previously not documented at the time of the RFNS. The RFNS also recommended enlarging the changerooms at Southside Aquatic Centre to increase functional capacity for the next 10 years.

#### Market Conditions

Indoor pools offer a variety of aquatic programs and activities for people of all ages, abilities, and interests. They provide year-round opportunities ranging from lessons, leadership, fitness, drop-in recreation and socialization. Participation in Woodstock's aquatic programs demonstrate the City's popularity of indoor swimming with registrations for learn to swim registrations increased by 45% and drop-in swim and aquatic fitness increased by 17% between 2017 and 2019 (data for the 2023 season was not available at time of writing).<sup>12</sup>

Consultations with City Staff identified the need a second public indoor pool within the City. Pressures on Southside Aquatic Centre have been increasing as the Woodstock YMCA's indoor pool has not been re-opened after the COVID-19 pandemic and it is known that YMCAs across Ontario have been facing significant financial headwinds in recent years. City staff indicate that learn to swim programs are nearly at capacity (fill rates are currently between 90% and 98%), and it is possible that Southside Aquatics Centre may soon be unable to accommodate additional registrations even if aforementioned changeroom expansions are completed. The growth in learn-to-swim programming is likely a direct result of 20% growth in Woodstock's population of children under the age of 10 as well as growth in the youth/teen population.

#### Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis

A number of mid-sized municipalities in Ontario target indoor aquatic centre provision at a rate of one per 35,000 to 45,000 population. With an estimated population of 48,508, Woodstock now falls just below of this range. When the City's population approaches 60,000 persons around the year 2036, the City would have a deficit equivalent to 1.5 indoor pools based on a service level target of one indoor pool per 40,000 Woodstock residents.

With limited capacity currently available at Southside Aquatic Centre to accommodate more indoor aquatics program participants, short-term efforts should continue to be directed to enlarging its changerooms which are presently limiting how many users can be in the facility. If learn-to-swim program registrations continue to grow at current rates, particularly with

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<sup>12</sup> 2021 Recreation Facility Needs Study, City of Woodstock

continued influx of children and teenage residents, the existing pool could be at capacity in the short to medium-term.

This Facility Study offers two options for the City to consider. The first option is to develop an indoor aquatics centre as part of a new community centre at Cowan Fields by the year 2036 in order to allow the City to build a greater critical mass of population and defer a portion of the community centre's capital cost to the future. The second option would be to construct the indoor aquatic centre at the same time as the arena and gymnasium (i.e. everything at once) to take advantage of potential economies of scale in construction, alleviate programming pressures at Southside Aquatics Centre, and reduce potential waiting lists which are now beginning to form.

### Community Centre Recommendation

**Rec. 3:** Integrate an indoor aquatics centre as part of a community centre at Cowan Fields. Timing of this facility should be dictated by available project budget, more specifically whether an indoor aquatics centre is included as part of the initial phase of construction or deferred to a future phase.





## 3.4 Gymnasium

### Existing Gymnasium Supply

Both of the City's gymnasiums at Cowan Sportsplex and Reeves Community Complex have been converted from community halls and thus are not purpose-built facilities. The Cowan Sportsplex gymnasium is sized similar to high school dimensions, has a partition to allow it to be separated and contains storage room. The former Goff Hall at the Reeves Community Space was converted to a small gymnasium in 2023 in response to growing demand for community recreation programs, camps and rentals; this 3,600 square foot gym provides space for three pickleball courts, two volleyball courts, one junior basketball court and is able to accommodate selected other activities.

### 2021 RFNS Recommendation

The 2021 RFNS recommended construction of a gymnasium as part of a future community centre. The gym should be sized similar to college regulations, have multi-sport lining, and considers an electronic scoreboard, changerooms, spectator seating, storage, and a partition curtain/wall.

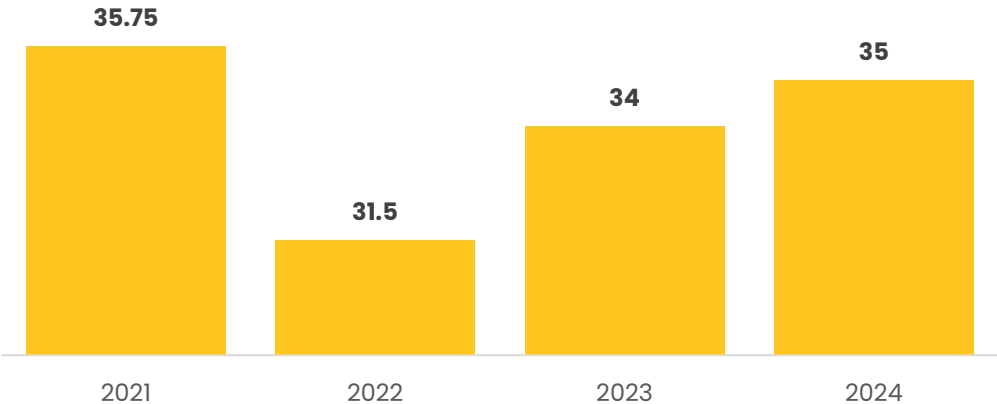
### Market Conditions

Gymnasiums are used as flexible spaces that can accommodate year-round programming including sports, active living and floor-based fitness, dance, camps and classes. Certain gymnasiums are also designed to allow social gatherings, tradeshow, performances, etc. The City currently offers a variety of recreation programs, including pickleball and open gym drop-ins at the Cowan Park Sportsplex gymnasium. The balance of times are allocated to community rentals, including those by sports leagues.

Gymnasium prime times are considered Monday to Friday from 5:30pm – 10pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 9am – 5pm. The service level of one municipal gymnasium per 35,000 to 45,000 persons is commonly provided in Ontario, varying depending on the level of public access to school gymnasiums.

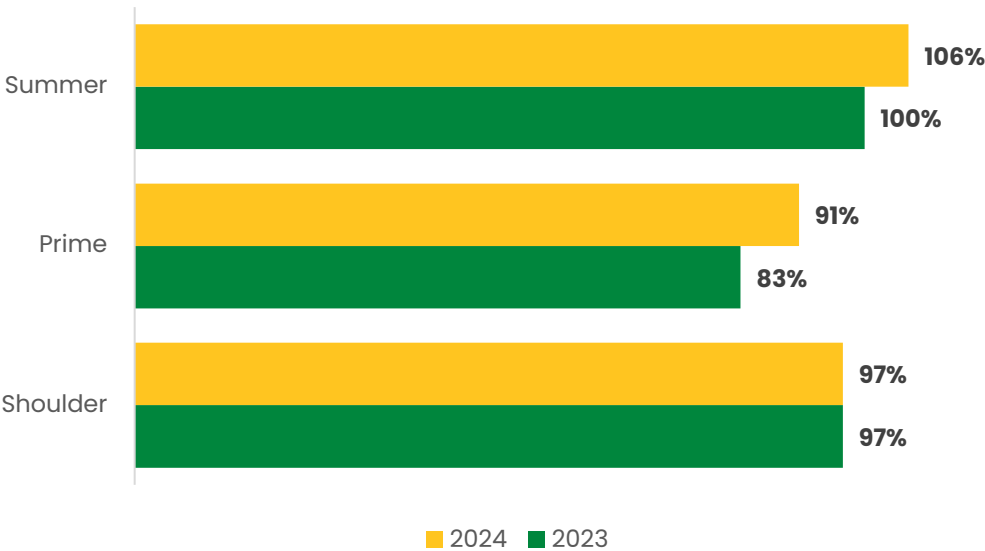
In summer 2024, the City expanded gymnasium operating hours to accommodate rental groups requiring more evening space; this results in the gym being overcapacity (106%) due to the City exceeding its traditional operating hours. City staff have received requests from gymnasium users (basketball, volleyball and pickleball) for more space and time to accommodate their programs. Groups have communicated that some of their programs have waitlists and have indicated the need for more space to host tournaments, summer camps, and evening programming. Staff indicate that no more City-run programs can be offered as all available prime times in the two gyms are accounted for.

**Figure 4: Average Prime Hours Booked per Week at Cowan Park Sportsplex Gymnasium**



Note: 37.5 prime hours available per week (2021), 38.5 prime hours available per week (2022-2024)

**Figure 5: Cowan Sportsplex Gym Usage, 2023 & 2024 (October to May)**



Note: Prime and Shoulder include weekday and weekend. In Summer 2024, gym operating hours were increased to accommodate rental group needs for evening space, therefore utilization exceeded planned operating hours.

## Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis

Population growth have escalated pressures placed on municipal gymnasiums for both municipal programming and community rentals. These pressures can be expected to continue to increase in the coming years, particularly as population growth leads to greater program registrations and user group membership growth. Pickleball is a notable example of a sport that can grown substantially in Woodstock in recent years and there is very little ability of the two gyms to add more time for this and other activities. Further, the City of Woodstock does not currently have a reciprocal agreement to access school gymnasiums on behalf of the residents, which can compound community program and rental pressures.

It is recommended that a gymnasium be included as part of the Cowan Fields Community Centre in order to alleviate pressures currently placed on the Cowan Park Sportsplex and Reeves Community Complex gymnasiums; doing so will also allow the Parks and Recreation Department and community user groups to grow their variety of municipal programming for fitness, sports, and general interests.

The City's measures to convert former halls into gyms has provided opportunity for certain floor sport organizations with local availability outside of schools, the latter of whose usage and pricing policies can be restrictive to certain groups. Hall conversions have also allowed City programming to grow to respond to greater needs as the population has increased. However, the former halls have certain design limitations compared to a purpose-built gymnasium.

The City has had to balance user group bookings, rental requests, and recreation program times to ensure that everyone receives gymnasium time. However, user groups, rentals and municipal programs need more space to increase offerings.

The degree of need expressed during the RFNS consultations along with demonstrated demand in the converted gymnasiums leads this Facility Study to continue supporting inclusion of a municipal gymnasium at a future community centre. Supporting amenities that may be considered include a spectator seating area, scoreboard, equipment storage room, partition curtain/wall, and changerooms. Depending on design and the available project budget, an indoor walking track could be included within the gymnasium or alternatively encircle one of the recommended ice pads.

### Community Centre Recommendation

**Rec. 4:** Construct a gymnasium at the Cowan Fields community centre.



### **3.5 Camps, Fitness & Recreation Program Space**

Multi-Purpose Rooms (MPRs) are flexible spaces that can be used for meetings, camps, fitness classes, municipal recreation programs and selected other uses depending on their design. The City of Woodstock's 11 MPRs are primarily oriented to meetings and certain recreation programs.

Some municipalities also provide MPRs in the form of youth lounges, senior space, or even a multi-generational space for both of these age groups. In Woodstock, the South Gate Centre is a dedicated facility for residents 50+ and is operated by a third party under a service agreement with the City.

It is also increasingly common to see municipal community centres with dedicated studios for group fitness classes (e.g. yoga, aerobics) and/or equipment-based fitness centres (e.g. for weight-training, cardio-training). However, the private sector retains a strong presence in the fitness market and Woodstock's growing population has resulted in this market becoming more competitive. The City of Woodstock historically has not competed with private fitness operator and does not have any dedicated group fitness studios nor equipment-based fitness centres; however, an indoor walking track at Cowan Sportsplex encircles the indoor field that the public can access by purchasing a membership or paying a drop-in fee while the City also offers selected fitness programs on the indoor field.

#### **2021 RFNS Recommendation**

The 2021 RFNS recommended inclusion of at least two MPRs, a group fitness studio, and to explore the feasibility of including an indoor walking track as part of a community centre at Cowan Fields.

Part of the 2021 RFNS included consultation with youth and older adults which resulted in a recommendation to consider an intergenerational lounge, reading area, kitchen, and more at Cowan Fields.

#### **Market Conditions**

Multi-purpose rooms can be used in many ways ranging from City-run programs and camps to general community rentals. Ideally, these rooms are integrated into larger community / recreation centers to facilitate cross-programming opportunities.

Canadians consider their personal health and wellbeing a top priority, with further priority since the COVID-19 pandemic. People desire to live active and healthy lives which drives the demand for fitness services across the province, both public and private. Relating back to the 2021 RFNS survey, 61% of respondents identified equipment-based fitness centres are important to their household, with 36% of respondents participating in fitness activities (either group or weight training).

Youth (10 to 19 years) and older adults (55 to 69 years) in Woodstock collectively represent 25% of the population. Meeting the needs of youth and older adults is a high priority for municipalities in Ontario. The City offers many activities for youth that complement youth-serving providers such as the Oxford-Elgin Child and Youth Centre, and the Woodstock Area Community Health Centre.

Many youth are gravitating towards unstructured activities over organized sports, creating a demand for drop-in youth centres that offer casual activities (e.g., gaming console, arts and crafts activities, etc.). Co-locating these spaces within multi-use facilities allows for cross-programming opportunities and allows for multi-generational use of the multi-use facility (e.g., child using the dedicated youth space while their guardian participates in a fitness program).

Providing spaces for all generations is important for many communities as these there are many specific desires and needs. Research has shown that spaces for all groups function as a safe space where individuals can gather, participate in activities, share interests, and socialize. Recreational interests among all age groups are broadening in variety and intensity.

### **Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis**

Ensuring even distribution of MPRs throughout Woodstock is a recommended best practice. Currently, the northeast side of Woodstock lacks MPRs and remains underserved. This Facility Study supports the City in moving forward with incorporating a minimum of two multi-purpose rooms at the future community centre to serve the east side of Woodstock.

### **Meeting, Program & Fitness Space**

With a greater supply of multi-purpose rooms, the City and community will have more opportunities for programming, rentals and other activities. To allow for the best use of the space, these rooms should be designed to accommodate a broad range of activities and should include amenities such as counter space, sinks, partition walls, and storage. Including a sink in the space will allow for more activities, camps and programs.

The Facility Study recommends that an MPR is designed to accommodate fitness programs. This would allow the City to deliver basic and introductory fitness programs that would not necessarily compete with private fitness offerings. A dedicated group fitness studio (which could have sprung wood floors, mirrors, etc.) has not been advanced through this Facility Study but may be considered depending on available project budget and further analysis of the City's role in delivering fitness services. Similarly, an indoor walking track has not been advanced though there is merit in exploring one as indicated by design and funding given that indoor tracks provide year-round opportunities for physical activity.

## Youth & Intergenerational Lounge

Woodstock is experiencing an aging population, similar to other communities within Ontario. Trends have found that this generation of older adults is more active compared to the previous generations. This allows for more active programming centres that focus on continuous learning and socialization. The Facility Study finds that the South Gate Centre adequately serves in the capacity of a dedicated seniors' centre. South Gate Centre engages residents in an open, active, and social environment with registered or drop-in classes. Some of the activities available are woodshop classes, education classes, fitness classes & leagues, social & craft activities, wellness classes, and general interest activities. Older adults also have an opportunity to participate in recreation and leisure activities at VON - Oxford.

Combined with the need to provide safe and meaningful spaces for a growing population of youth and teens in Woodstock, the Facility Study continues to support an intergenerational approach to sharing multi-purpose space in the new community centre.

### Community Centre Recommendation

- Rec. 5:** Construct at least one multi-purpose room at the proposed community centre at Cowan Fields that can be used for meetings, group fitness, camps and other municipal recreation programs.
- Rec. 6:** Construct a shared youth and intergenerational space that potentially includes a lounge, computer workspace, and reading area.



### 3.6 Indoor Turf

The City of Woodstock has one indoor artificial turf field at Cowan Sportsplex that can be partitioned into three smaller fields. The field is primarily rented by soccer clubs but also receives bookings for other field sports (e.g. football, baseball) that are looking for time outside of their playing season.

#### 2021 RFNS Recommendation

The 2021 RFNS recommended to replace the indoor turf surface at the Cowan Sportsplex and that additional indoor turf field houses are not needed in Woodstock.

#### Market Conditions

Indoor artificial turf fields provide a space year-round for soccer, football, rugby, baseball training, fitness, and more. Dimensions for indoor turf fields vary, but a FIFA regulation field is the leading practice for the standard as it can be booked as a full, half, or quarter field.

#### Cowan Fields Community Centre Analysis

The standard service level of an indoor turf field is one per 100,000 residents. Using this metric, the City of Woodstock is currently providing a high level of service at one indoor turf field per 48,508 residents. Due to the City providing a high level of service, no additional indoor turf fields are required within the next ten years.



### 3.7 Child Care

In 2024, Council directed City Staff to prepare a report outlining ways the City could facilitate more childcare spaces and resolved that “that City staff consider opportunities for new childcare space when expanding existing municipal buildings or designing new municipal buildings, where appropriate.”<sup>13</sup>

In line with the City Council resolution, childcare space should be considered as part of a new community centre. However, it is not within the recreational scope of this Facility Study to make a determinative recommendation thus separate analysis will need to be undertaken to rationalize whether childcare space is included.

For the purposes of informing the capital forecast for the community centre, the City has obtained a preliminary analysis supplied by the County of Oxford with respect to childcare. The County indicates that a space with capacity for 88 childcare spaces would be appropriate and that 30 square feet per child is appropriate to guide planning; this would necessitate 2,640 square feet of gross floor area. Again, the cursory nature of the County’s analysis should be treated as being preliminary and would require further exploration should the City decide to proceed with childcare space at a new community centre at Cowan Fields.

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<sup>13</sup> City of Woodstock. Regular Council Minutes, September 19, 2024. Item 14.e.1.



# 4 Conceptual Plan





## Section 4: Conceptual Plan

This section provides a conceptual plan and capital costs estimates relating to the Cowan Fields site and future community centre.

### 4.1 Summary of Recommendations

This Study recommends inclusion of the following components in a community centre at Cowan Fields.

Core:

- Twin Pad Arena
- Gymnasium
- Indoor Aquatic Centre (timing TBD)
- One room (minimum) for camps, fitness and recreation programs
- Youth and Intergenerational Space
- Administrative and Office Space

Optional:

- Indoor Walking Track
- Curling Facility operated by the Woodstock Curling Club
- Childcare Space

Phasing the project into two stages will allow the City to direct resources in a manner that will provide greater financial flexibility and construct facilities when populations attain suitable thresholds. While this phasing is based on Recommendations of this Study, the City reserves the right to determine final components included in the community centre, and has flexibility to accelerate or defer the phasing of any components noted above.

#### Facility Study Recommendations

**Rec. 1** Construct a twin-pad arena at the Cowan Fields community centre, containing two NHL-regulation ice pads and spectator seating oriented to local-level programs offered by minor sports.

**Rec. 2** Consult with the Woodstock Curling Club on the potential option of co-locating the Woodstock Curling Centre facility within the future Cowan Fields community centre.

**Rec. 3** Integrate an indoor aquatics centre as part of a community centre at Cowan Fields. Timing of this facility should be dictated by available project budget, more specifically whether an indoor aquatics centre is included as part of the initial phase of construction or deferred to a future phase.

**Rec. 4** Construct a gymnasium at the Cowan Fields community centre.

**Rec. 5** Construct at least one multi-purpose room at the proposed community centre at Cowan Fields that can be used for meetings, group fitness, camps and other municipal recreation programs.

**Rec. 6** Construct a shared youth and intergenerational space that potentially includes a lounge, computer workspace and reading area.

## 4.2 Conceptual Plan

MJMA Architecture & Design has prepared a conceptual site plan and building program to illustrate how the Cowan Fields Community Centre could potentially be laid out. Concepts have been structured to reflect the proposed phasing and optional curling component described in this Facility Study.

The community centre has been situated in the northern part of the site to allow primary access from Springbank Avenue North. An internal laneway would connect to existing and future parking lots throughout the Cowan Fields site.

Figure 4 defines the community centre's building program containing the twin pad arena, gymnasium, multi-purpose rooms. The optional curling facility has been situated adjacent to the arena in order to potentially tie into proposed mechanical systems. Figure 5 integrates an indoor aquatic centre – whose timing will need to be confirmed by the City based on available project budget – on the north side of the building.

These are high level plans that are subject to change based on technical analysis of site conditions, regulatory requirements and other factors. The City will be required to complete a detailed design exercise to determine final configuration and refine capital costs of construction.

The total gross floor area of the community centre is 115,130 square feet; of this, 19,210 square feet associated with the indoor aquatic centre could be potentially deferred to a future construction phase depending on project budget. The optional curling club and childcare space could add another 28,160 square feet if provided. A full description of the building's gross floor area is outlined in Appendix A.

Figure 6: Cowan Fields Community Centre Concept with Arena & Gymnasium

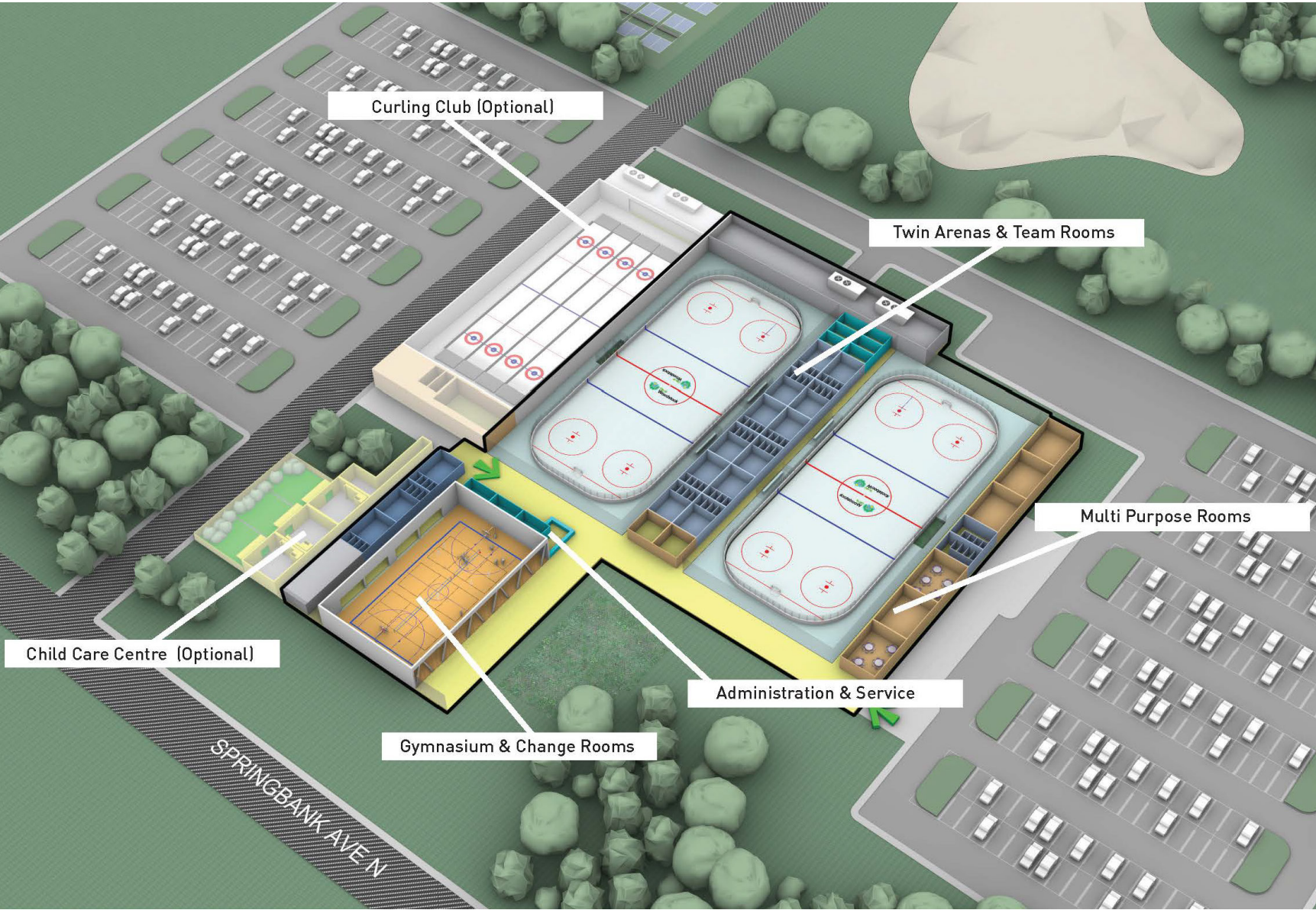
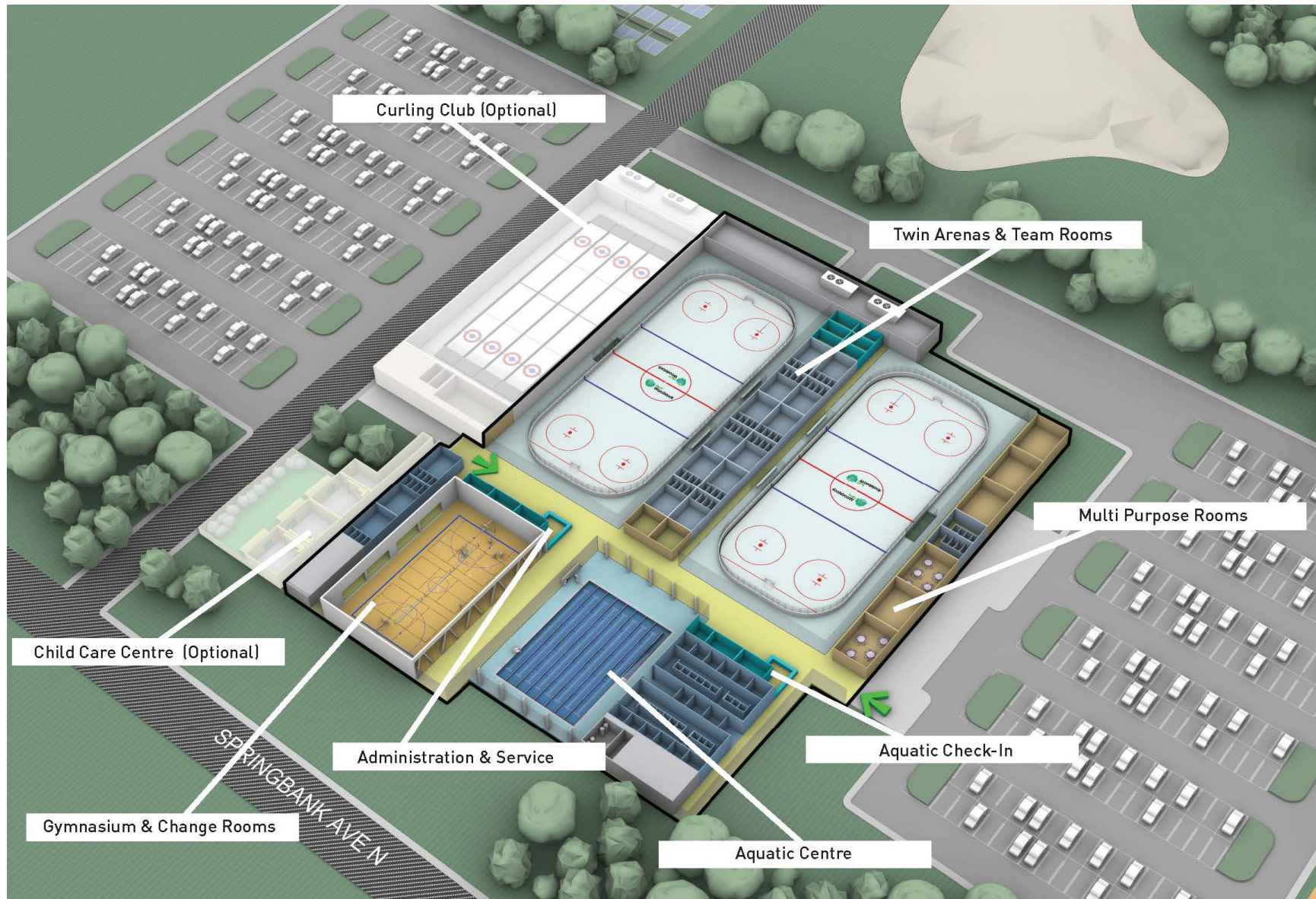




Figure 7: Cowan Fields Community Centre Concept with Arena, Gymnasium & Indoor Aquatics Centre



## 4.3 Cost Implications

### Capital Cost Estimate

Order of magnitude capital cost estimates have been prepared for the community centre based on floor area calculations reflected in Figures 2 and 3. Costs are stated in 2024 dollars and exclude adjustments for future cost escalations.

Please note that the concepts and costing have been prepared with **smaller-than-typical allocations to floor space and reflect a more economical level of finishes** through cost per square foot assumptions. As the City proceeds through more detailed architectural design exercises, the capital costs stated herein are subject to change as they will be refined.

Construction costs can significantly vary depending on material costs, labour costs, and other economic factors. The costs are for the building only and exclude Furnishings, Fixtures & Equipment (FFE), soft costs, and escalation. The included and excluded costing assumptions for this Class D estimate are outlined in Appendix B. The estimated average per-square-foot cost to construct the Cowan Fields community centre is \$705 (for core facilities, the indoor aquatic centre and optional curling and childcare components).

Table 5 outlines the cost estimates for the core components that are anticipated to be developed in Phase 1, collectively totalling \$67.15 million. For the purposes of providing a conservative estimate, floor areas and cost per square foot figures have been presented on the upper range of the spectrum. As a Class D cost estimate, the stated amounts may carry variability of plus or minus 25%.

**Table 5: Cost Estimates for Core Components**

Core Components	Gross Floor Area	Cost per sq. ft.	Cost
Arena	68,420 sq. ft.	\$725 per sq. ft.	\$49,604,500
Gymnasium	9,570 sq. ft.	\$650 per sq. ft.	\$6,220,500
Multi-Purpose Rooms	3,410 sq. ft.	\$600 per sq. ft.	\$2,046,000
Building Services	4,400 sq. ft.	\$500 per sq. ft.	\$2,200,000
Entrance, Lobby & Circulation	10,120 sq. ft.	\$700 per sq. ft.	\$7,084,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>95,920 sq. ft.</b>		<b>\$67,155,000</b>

Note: Priced quoted in 2024 \$CAD, excluding escalation. Refer to Appendix B for costing assumptions.

The cost estimate for the indoor aquatic centre is presented in Table 6.

**Table 6: Cost Estimate for Aquatic Centre**

Core Component	Gross Floor Area	Cost per sq. ft.	Cost
Aquatic Centre	19,210 sq. ft.	\$950 per sq. ft.	\$18,249,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,210 sq. ft.</b>		<b>\$18,249,500</b>

Note: Priced quoted in 2024 \$CAD, excluding escalation. Refer to Appendix B for costing assumptions.

The conceptual plan articulates how the optional curling and childcare components could fit into the future community centre. The involvement of the curling facility is based on a if the City and the Woodstock Curling Club negotiates a partnership while childcare would be explored based on a 2024 City Council resolution to do so as part of new facility construction.

**Table 7: Cost Estimate for Optional Facilities**

<b>Core Component</b>	<b>Gross Floor Area</b>	<b>Cost per sq. ft.</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Curling	25,520 sq. ft.	\$550 per sq. ft.	\$14,036,000
Childcare	2,640 sq. ft.	\$600 per sq. ft.	\$1,584,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,160 sq. ft.</b>		<b>\$15,620,000</b>

Note: Priced quoted in 2024 \$CAD, excluding escalation. Refer to Appendix B for costing assumptions.

A portion of the community centre’s capital cost is eligible for growth-related funding under the Development Charges Act. The City of Woodstock Development Charges Background Study identified a gross cost of \$24 million for a “twin pad arena/fieldhouse/youth centre.” Since one ice pad is treated as a replacement facility for Civic Arena and provides a benefit to existing population, this portion of cost is not recoverable under development charges legislation and the DC Study identifies \$13.5 million as being eligible for growth-related funding. Notwithstanding this, it bears noting that the capital estimate prepared for this Facility Study – based on the recent experience of the architects in a post-pandemic cost environment – is substantially greater than those presented in the DC Study.

### **Note about Green Building Design**

The City of Woodstock is dedicated to reducing overall energy consumption and lowering Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. The Ontario Building Code’s evolving sustainability standards increasingly require high-performance building envelopes with minimized thermal breaks, optimized ratios of solid exterior walls to glazed areas, and decarbonization through electrified heat pump systems.

The proposed multi-use recreation facility will be a large consumer of energy. By capturing waste heat from the refrigeration system to assist in pool water heating, hydronic underslab heating and domestic hot water pre-heat is a benefit of the combined ice rink and pool programs.

This estimate anticipates a high R-Value building envelope, with upgraded roof insulation and high solar reflectance index (SRI) value to minimize effects on the local surroundings. The focus will be on advanced indoor air quality, better energy performance, reduction in indoor potable water use and annual GHG emissions. Community centre interior finishes have to be robust to withstand extended-hour daily use, to provide a long service life and to be easily maintained.

The above noted Class D construction cost estimate assumes high quality finish materials in the program areas; a fully tiled pool basin and deck, hardwood sports floor system (gymnasium), and acoustic wall/ceiling finishes (multi-purpose rooms).



## Operating Cost Estimates

The City of Woodstock has prepared an estimate of operating costs associated with a community centre based on operation models and budget items in place for its existing community centres and arenas. As with most community services, a community centre is not expected nor intended to achieve full cost recovery. Table 8 illustrates that the net operating impact of the community centre would be approximately \$1 million per year, stated in 2024 dollars.

**Table 8: Annual Operating Cost Estimates by Facility Component**

Facility Component	Revenue	Expenditure	Net
Twin-Pad Arena	\$850,000	\$1,350,000	- \$500,000
Aquatics Centre	\$750,000	\$1,300,000	- \$550,000
Gymnasium	\$25,000	\$20,000	\$5,000
Recreation Programs	\$75,000	\$71,000	\$4,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,700,000</b>	<b>\$2,741,000</b>	<b>- \$1,041,000</b>

Notes: annual costs presented in 2024 dollars based on prevailing rates for facility overhead, salary and wage scales, and FTE required for facility operation. Excludes cost escalations, operating implications of optional components or facility types not identified above, nor do figures reflect costs or savings associated with green building components.

Source: City of Woodstock, 2024

## 4.4 Suggested Implementation Plan

The tasks associated with implementation may include, but are not limited to:

- **Acquisition of consultants and final design.** A Request for Proposal may be issued for a consultant to undertake the final design concept of the community centre. The final detailed design concept is expected to be completed in 2025. This task will also undertake the preliminary site plan approval.
- **Allocation of funds.** The city may want to determine an order of magnitude for its long-term capital forecast. At this stage, the city may want to commence fundraising efforts.
- **Tendering and award.** Tender documents are issued and interested general contractors (or pre-qualified bidders) will develop submission and pricing, while being evaluated by the City.
- **Construction.** The successful bidder will construct the Cowan Fields community centre in accordance with the construction documents, with significant oversight from the City. Phase 1 construction is expected to begin in 2026.
- **Commissioning.** This task ensures that the City's requirements from Phase 1 are incorporated into the design, are built, and are configured to the required result. The community centre should be targeted to open in 2027/2028.

Implementation is anticipated to take a minimum of three years given the need to complete a detailed design concept, final approval, secure funding, establishment of partnerships (if applicable), and to construct the facility.

# Appendix A

## Gross Floor Area Calculations

Arena Component	Area
Ice Pad 1 (NHL 85' x 200')	22,000 sq. ft.
Ice Pad 2	22,000 sq. ft.
Arena Refrigeration	1,200 sq. ft.
Ice Resurfacer & Melt Pit	2,000 sq. ft.
Maintenance & Workshop	800 sq. ft.
Arena Electrical	400 sq. ft.
Shipping & Receiving	500 sq. ft.
Waste & Recycling	500 sq. ft.
12 Team Rooms	8,000 sq. ft.
Referee & Support Room	1,800 sq. ft.
Public Washrooms	1,000 sq. ft.
Arena Corridor	2,000 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	6,220 sq. ft.
<b>Total Arena Component</b>	<b>68,420 sq. ft.</b>

Gymnasium Component	Area
Gymnasium (FIBA court with run-outs)	6,500 sq. ft.
Dry Change Rooms (Gendered change rooms)	1,400 sq. ft.
Gymnasium Storage	800 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	870 sq. ft.
<b>Total Gymnasium Component</b>	<b>9,570 sq. ft.</b>

Multi-Purpose Rooms Component	Area
Multi-Purpose Room 1	1,000 sq. ft.
Multi-Purpose Room 2	1,000 sq. ft.
Shared Chair Storage	400 sq. ft.
Multi-Purpose Corridor	700 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	310 sq. ft.
<b>Total Multi-Purpose Rooms Component</b>	<b>3,410 sq. ft.</b>

Building Entrance, Lobby & Circulation Component	Area
Entrance, Lobby & Circulation	8,000 sq. ft.
Administration & Reception	1,200 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	920 sq. ft.
<b>Total Building Entrance &amp; Lobby Component</b>	<b>10,120 sq. ft.</b>

<b>Building Services Component</b>	<b>Area</b>
Sprinkler Room	400 sq. ft.
Main Electrical Room	400 sq. ft.
Boiler Room	1,200 sq. ft.
Maintenance Storage	350 sq. ft.
Universal Washroom	1,200 sq. ft.
Concession & Vending	250 sq. ft.
Data & Communication	200 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	400 sq. ft.
<b>Total Building Services Component</b>	<b>4,400 sq. ft.</b>

<b>Aquatic Centre Component (Timing TBD)</b>	<b>Area</b>
Natatorium (25m, 8 lane pool with ramp access)	9,200 sq. ft.
On-deck Viewing	500 sq. ft.
Universal Change Rooms (2)	4,300 sq. ft.
Guard & First Aid	700 sq. ft.
Pool Storage	600 sq. ft.
Filtration	140 sq. ft.
Pool Electrical	200 sq. ft.
Aquatic Administration	1,700 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	1,870 sq. ft.
<b>Total Aquatic Centre Component</b>	<b>19,210 sq. ft.</b>

<b>Curling Component (OPTIONAL)</b>	<b>Area</b>
Curling Hall (5 sheets, 3m aisles)	19,000 sq. ft.
Pebble Equipment* (heater & RO water)	150 sq. ft.
Change Rooms (2)	350 sq. ft.
Lounge	2,000 sq. ft.
Club Washrooms	300 sq. ft.
Kitchen & Storage	750 sq. ft.
Exterior Club Access	300 sq. ft.
Club Lobby	350 sq. ft.
0.1 Gross-up (Wall/Structure GFA)	2,320 sq. ft.
<b>Total Curling Component</b>	<b>25,520 sq. ft.</b>

\* Refrigeration system shared with arena system, with separate pumps and temperature control system

<b>Childcare Space (OPTIONAL)</b>	<b>Area</b>
Childcare Space*	2,640 sq. ft.
<b>Total Childcare Space</b>	<b>2,640 sq. ft.</b>

\*estimate provided by the County of Oxford



# Appendix B

## Capital Cost Assumptions

### Included Costing Assumptions

The costing assumptions include:

- Mechanical and service area estimates within the building
- Exterior refrigeration (outdoor cooling coils, towers, primary HVAC that is roof-mounted on the exterior).
- Basic site development including
  - +/- 450 parking spots at \$6,500 per vehicle
  - Drive aisles
  - Access routes
  - Drop-off aisles
  - Hard surface area (south of refrigeration and waste collection area)
  - Basic site servicing connections from properly sized water supply and sufficient sanitary (storm sewer if required) capacity from the Springbank Avenue North road extension
  - Basic hard surface walks to the east and west entrance doors
  - Sodding and landscaping at the north elevation of the building

This cost estimate assumes a Stipulated Sum Tender process to pre-qualified General Contractors experienced in the project type who have expressed interest and capacity to undertake the project. This costs also assumes Storm Water Management capacity and construction for the entire park area.

### Excluded Costing Assumptions

The costs excluded from this estimate are:

- Street construction, curbs & sidewalks outside of the immediate building
- Land costs and legal costs
- Environmental remediation
- Project management fees
- Advanced LEED designations
- Road/parking lot construction (park area to the south)
- On-site energy generation system costs for Photo Voltaic arrays or geothermal systems
- Mechanical system designs that limit or eliminate Green House Gas production (e.g., full system electrification or primary heat pump systems)
- Walking/running track
  - A 3 lane (second level) track around the gymnasium perimeter would add approximately 3,000 sq.ft. of GFA and 500 sq.ft. of elevator and exit stair floor area
  - A 3 lane (second level) track around the arena would add approximately 6,000 sq.ft. of GFA and 500 sq.ft. of elevator and exit stair floor area
  - Track construction would include a resilient rubber floor finish on concrete placed on steel framing with steel hanger support from overhead trusses
  - Track construction is estimated at \$600 per sq.ft.

A full project cost (including soft costs) can be 25–30% more than the base construction cost determined in the tender process. The soft costs can include:

- Recommended 5% construction contingency
- Professional consultant fees (estimated 7% of construction cost) for
  - Prime consultant (architect)
  - Structural engineer
  - Environmental graphics and signage
  - Energy modeling
- Site related investigations
  - Surveying
  - Geo-technical
  - Geo-hydrological
  - Environmental
  - Historical and archeological studies
- FFE (estimated \$250,000)
  - Loose pool equipment
  - Office furniture
  - Computers
  - Multi-purpose rooms furniture & lobby furniture
- Testing and inspection allowance (steel, roofing, waterproofing, air-vapour barrier, etc.) (estimated \$350,000)
- Mechanical system testing, balancing and commissioning allowance (estimated \$150,000)
- Audio-visual systems, security, telecommunications
- Interior wayfinding signage and exterior site pylon signage (pylon road sign with 2-sided digital display board)(estimated \$200,000)
- Primary electrical service (estimated \$150,000)
- Bell/Fibre Optic cable installation to property line (estimated \$25,000)
- Additional operator system training (refrigeration and filtration) past the specified hand-over procedures
- Additional soft cost contingency



City of Woodstock



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