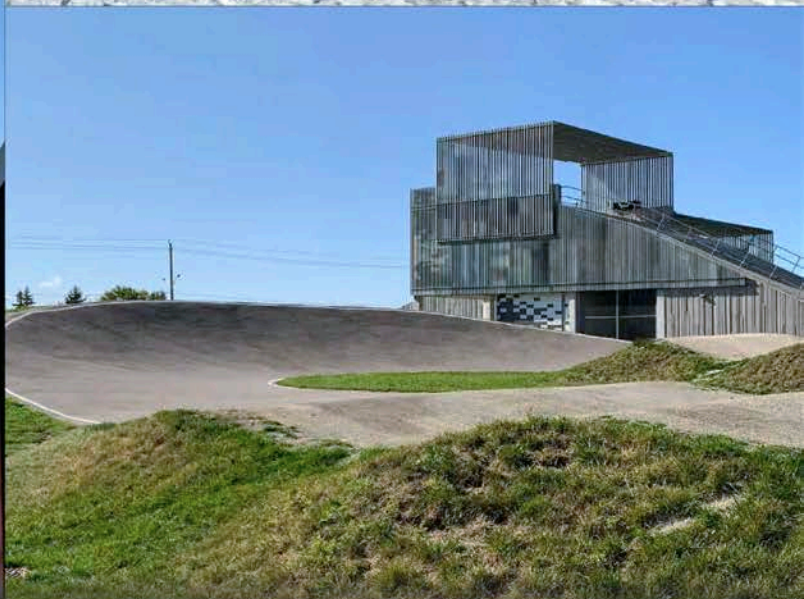




Centennial Park Master Plan

Facilities and Service Planning Assessment



February 2020



Centennial Park Master Plan Facilities and Service Planning Assessment

February 2020

Prepared for:
City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation

Prepared by:
Monteith Brown Planning Consultants



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Purpose

This “Facilities and Service Planning Assessment” identifies recommendations intended to inform the development of a Park Master Plan Update for Centennial Park. Specifically, this assessment examines and prioritizes recreation facility needs for Centennial Park, guided by the City’s Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan, including the current thinking around emerging recreation needs. This report relies on readily available information, secondary research and supporting data supplied by the City of Toronto. It does not make recommendations regarding specific design elements, costs/ affordability, management practices or partnerships, many of which will be a focus of the Park Master Plan Update.

Centennial Park (Etobicoke) is the City’s second largest park and was created in 1967 to mark Canada’s Centennial. Most of the park’s foundational assets – the arena, sports fields, ski hill and more – are original to the park’s construction and many are in need of reinvestment or re-imagination. A key strength of Centennial Park are its spaces for active and structured recreation that serve the diverse interests of those living locally and across the city. The size of the park also lends itself well to large-scale events, while its passive areas create opportunities for social gatherings and respite. Year-round use of the park is promoted; however, this is an area that has been performing below expectations and requires special consideration.

Summary of Recommendations and Priorities

This report provides guidance on facility and service planning priorities and sets a general course for meeting the needs as they are presently defined. The recommendations are not intended to be a definitive list, as additional capital projects and service initiatives may be identified and prioritized through the Centennial Park Master Plan Update.

Within the scope of this report, priority has been determined based on an assessment of need, with consideration of approved master plans, public input, trends and demographic analysis, capacity and demand, facility condition, etc. Specifically, the FMP Implementation Strategy identifies the following questions to help guide the prioritization of different facility types – high priority projects should be able to respond positively to most questions.

- 1) Most important, does the project align with FMP guiding principles and provision targets?
- 2) Is the project necessary to offer continued support to key stakeholders or the neighbourhood?
- 3) Does the facility serve a substantial market/population?
- 4) Is usage of the facility type trending upward?
- 5) Would the project result in a substantial improvement to accessibility, efficiency or functionality?
- 6) Can the project be bundled as part of a larger project, resulting in cost savings or efficiencies?





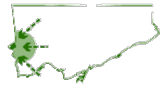



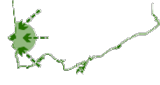



As noted in the FMP, frequently reviewing and assessing emerging trends and opportunities concerning facility investment is critical. Other factors that might alter priorities throughout the implementation phase include:

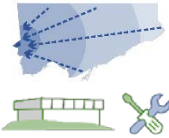





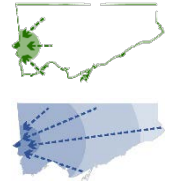

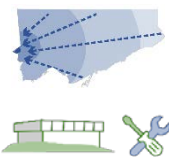







- capital lifecycle and considerations of safety
- emerging trends and changes in participation
- legislation and mandated requirements
- availability of alternate public providers
- changes to service standards
- socio-demographic changes and growth forecasts
- public input and community interests

Legend

Strategic Objectives			
			
Local Gaps for Unstructured Recreation	City-Wide Park Opportunities	Existing Amenities & Park Design	
Priorities			
			
Top Priority	High Priority	Medium Priority	Low Priority

Table 1: Summary of Recommendations and Level of Priority

Facility Type	Recommendation	Strategic Objectives	Priority
Ski Hill and Chalet	1. Major capital reinvestment in the snow-making equipment and/or ski lifts at the Centennial Park snow centre is not recommended. Consistent with past studies, programming and services at the Centennial Park Snow Centre should cease when the hill operations become unviable, with programming being consolidated at Earl Bales Snow Centre. A cost-benefit analysis may assist in supporting this direction.		
	2. An exercise should be initiated in the short-term to re-envision future uses for the Centennial Park ski hill / snow centre once operations cease.		
	3. Opportunities should be sought to enhance year-round usage of the ski chalet through programming, permits and event support. A space expansion may be required to achieve the full impact of this opportunity.	  	
Wading Pool	4. Convert the Centennial Park wading pool to a destination splash pad (up to 6,000 square feet). To align with the FMP, this project should be undertaken between 2029 and 2033, but could be completed earlier if associated with a broader park renewal project.	  	

Facility Type	Recommendation	Strategic Objectives	Priority
BMX Park	5. Consult with users, potential users and partners to identify opportunities to improve utilization of the Pan Am BMX Centre. Seek partnerships that generate regular use for training and competition, while retaining public access.		
Other Existing Unstructured Use Amenities	6. As required, undertake capital renewal and/or to enhancements to existing unstructured and year-round use amenities, such as the disc golf course, playgrounds, trails, open space, ponds, picnic areas and shelters, and model aircraft flying circle.		
	7. Consider the installation of an adventure playground with unique natural and/or challenging features.		
	8. Consider opportunities to enhance the accommodation of large-scale events , such as the addition of a stage, covered space and open lawn areas.		
Stadium and Track	9. As part of a city-wide Sports Bubble Strategy, evaluate the potential for installing a seasonal winter dome enclosure over the field at Centennial Park Stadium.		
Soccer and Multi-Purpose Fields	10. Opportunities should be sought to cluster and improve the quality of rectangular fields within the park. The total number of fields may be increased (with a focus on full-size, high class fields), but should not be reduced.		
Ball Diamonds	11. Opportunities should be sought to cluster and improve the quality of ball diamonds within the park, including the addition of field lights . The total number of diamonds may be reduced slightly if potential losses in capacity are offset by quality improvements.		
Cricket Pitches	12. Opportunities should be sought to improve the quality of existing cricket fields within the park. The total number of pitches may be increased (such as adding a third pitch across two soccer fields), but should not be reduced.		







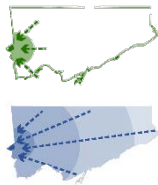

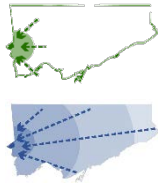

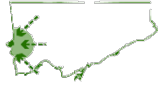

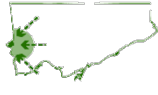

Facility Type	Recommendation	Strategic Objectives	Priority
Centennial Park Arena	13. Seek additional opportunities to maximize use of Centennial Park Arena (dry floor) during the summer months .		
	14. To retain the long-term potential for facility expansion – as limited as it may be – do not place significant permanent infrastructure southwest of the Centennial Park Arena. This area is currently occupied by an unlit multi-purpose field.		
Etobicoke Olympium	See Recommendation 3 (ski chalet)	n/a	n/a
Contracted Facilities	15. Monitor the lease terms of contracted facilities and services and work with park partners to achieve the highest and best use of these spaces. At the appropriate time, consider opportunities to re-integrate the space occupied by the mini-indy, batting cages and volleyball courts into the park; additional planning will be required to determine potential uses and management models.		
Skateparks	16. Identify an area for the potential installation of community-level skatepark in Centennial Park, to be confirmed through a comparative analysis of potential sites within Ward 2. A skatepark in Ward 2 has been identified as a priority in the FMP between 2024 and 2028.		
Basketball Courts	17. Identify an area for the potential installation of lighted full-size multi-use court in Centennial Park, to be confirmed through a comparative analysis of potential sites within Ward 2. This project has been identified as a priority in the FMP between 2024 and 2028.		
Dog Off-Leash Areas	18. The development of a dog off-leash area in Centennial Park should only be considered if a formal request is made by the community and the request meets the criteria established in the City's Off-Leash Policy. The Park Master Plan Update may designate space for a future dog off-leash area.		
Other Small-scale Park Amenities	19. Consider the provision of other park-based amenities not discussed herein through the Centennial Park Master Plan Update (e.g., toboggan hill, pavilions, fitness equipment, community garden, etc.).		

Figure 1: Map Illustrating Proposed Place-based Recommendations



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Study Purpose

This Facilities and Service Planning Assessment identifies parks and recreation planning recommendations intended to inform the development of a Park Master Plan Update for Centennial Park (Etobicoke). The analysis is guided by and built on the City of Toronto Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (approved by City Council in November 2017) and the accompanying Implementation Strategy (approved by City Council in October 2019).

The ten-year update to the 2008 Centennial Park Master Plan will serve as a check-in and opportunity to recalibrate the 30-year vision with emerging needs and priorities, such as those identified in the City's Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. To this end, this review will assist in prioritizing facility planning and investments for Centennial Park with the goal of aligning this unique city-wide park with the current thinking around future recreation needs.

This report relies on readily available information, secondary research and supporting documents such as the Facilities Master Plan, Recreation Services Plan, etc. Any observations are based on data supplied by the City of Toronto or the experience of the consultant. This report does not make any recommendations regarding specific design elements, costs/affordability, management practices or partnerships. Monteith Brown Planning Consultants – the principal author of the Facilities Master Plan – were retained through a competitive bid process to assist the City of Toronto with this assessment.

Note: The golf course and lands located west of Centennial Park Road are excluded from this assessment.

1.2 About Centennial Park

Centennial Park is located at 256 Centennial Park Road. The park occupies approximately 213 hectares (526 acres) in the west end of the City of Toronto, making it the second largest City-owned park after the Toronto Islands. The park was created in 1967 to mark Canada's Centennial and most of the foundational assets within the park – the arena, sports fields, ski hill and more – are original to the park's construction.

The park is bounded by Etobicoke Creek (and the City of Mississauga) to the west, Eglinton Avenue West (and the City of Mississauga) to the north, Rathburn Road to the south and Renforth Road to the east. Adjacent land uses include industrial (north), residential, and institutional (including Seneca School and Hollycrest Middle School). In addition, a hydro corridor runs through the park.

The sheer size of Centennial Park, easy access to highways, and its surrounding environs (there are no Neighbourhood Improvement Areas within the immediate catchment area) suggest that most users would access the park by automobile. While there are bus lines along both Rathburn Road and Eglinton Avenue), the park is not highly accessible for those using transit. The park is also connected to the city-wide trails system through trails along Etobicoke Creek and the hydro corridor.

Figure 2: Aerial image of Centennial Park



Source: Google Earth, 2019

Centennial Park is a “Centre of Excellence” and is an integral part of the City’s park network, providing a rare park experience with a unique range of active and passive amenities. In addition, this park satisfies the diverse needs and interests of those living locally and across the city by offering access to traditional park programming and activities, permits and leases. Due to its size and unique attributes, many assets within the park (e.g., Olympium, premier sports fields, bike park, ski hill, etc.) draw users from across the City and the Greater Toronto Area (an estimated 1.5 million people annually); however, some amenities serve a more localized user group (e.g., wading pool, playgrounds, etc.). This is evident in the public consultation conducted for the City’s Parkland Strategy, which found that survey respondents living in Etobicoke use city-wide parks (such as Centennial Park) more often than respondents from other districts.

Research completed to date suggests that – with nearly twenty sports fields, a sanctioned indoor aquatic centre and a twin pad arena – active and structured recreation is one of Centennial Park’s key strengths. The size of the park also lends itself well to large-scale events, while its passive areas create opportunities for social gatherings and respite. Centennial Park’s size can also serve as a challenge, as it is difficult and costly to maintain and enhance the sheer amount of infrastructure throughout the park. Previous studies have also found that wayfinding and connections between the park’s various zones area also lacking. Given the park’s role as a Centre of Excellence, year-round use is promoted; however, this is an area that has been performing below expectations and requires special attention in future planning.

Existing amenities include:

Unstructured Use Amenities

- ski hill and ski chalet
- event space
- wading pool
- BMX park
- disc golf course
- playgrounds (4)
- trails, open space and ponds
- picnic areas (8) and shelters (5)
- model aircraft flying circle

Sports Fields

- premier stadium (turf, lit) and outdoor track
- multipurpose field (1 – Class A, unlit)
- soccer fields (11 – 4 Class A, 2 Class B, 5 Class C; 1 with lights)
- ball diamonds (6 – 3 Class A, 3 Class C; all with lights)
- cricket pitches (2 – Class C; plus a practice wicket)

Indoor Sport Facilities

- Etobicoke Olympium (indoor aquatic centre with 2 tanks, 2 gymnasiums, fitness centre and several multi-purpose and activity rooms)
- Centennial Park Arena (twin pad)

Contracted Facilities *(note: excluded from scope)*

- mini-indy go kart (operated by third-party)
- batting cages and beach volleyball courts (operated by third-party)
- 27-hole golf course, mini golf and restaurant (operated by third-party)

Supporting Facilities *(note: excluded from scope)*

- conservatory and greenhouse
- parking lots
- shelters/washrooms
- maintenance buildings/yard
- former Soccer City (being converted to a works building)



Soccer Fields



Passive Area / Pond



Ski Chalet



BMX Park

A Master Plan was developed for the park in 2008 and is currently being updated. Since 2008, PFR Capital Projects has carried out over \$36 million in capital project works, Parks Operations and Pan Am Games have also completed extensive work in the park. Specifically, Parks Development and Capital Projects completed major upgrades (e.g., stadium, greenhouse, arena, Etobicoke Olympium Pool, water play and ski hill and chalet) and Parks Operations completed many Master Plan projects (e.g., updating the disc golf course, eliminating the toboggan hill, naturalization, tree planting, improving sports fields and implementing an emergency wayfinding strategy). In addition, projects that were not included in the Master Plan, such as a BMX park and a new social gathering space, were added.

As an important west end park, Centennial Park receives approximately 1.5 million visitors per year. Visitor statistics alone provide clear evidence that Centennial Park is not only a well-used and highly valued park, but that it anchors the City of Toronto acting as:

- a) a Centre of Excellence providing a unique experience, destination and recreational amenity in the city's west end;
- b) an important landscape for City of Toronto residents and visitors alike;
- c) a unique and natural environment with many ESA's to be valued, protected and enhanced to ensure sustainability of environmentally sensitive and significant flora and fauna; and
- d) a unique park that is integral to the City's Parkland system, with unrealized potential for enhancing the Park user experience.

As Toronto's population grows, and pressure for park space increases, the significance and importance of Centennial Park also increases. This increasing popularity results in greater demand for services and amenities, which in turn increases expectations for varied programs and events. Increased use results in greater environmental impacts and operational demands. New programs, management approaches and systems need to be put in place to better mitigate these impacts and to protect the unique and highly valued character of Centennial Park.

1.3 About the Centennial Park Master Plan Update

This study is being undertaken to inform the Centennial Master Plan Update, upon which work is continuing in 2019/20. The Master Plan Update will develop a new vision for the ski hill area and guide future programming, service and facility investments within the entire park property.

The Master Plan Update will consider the complexity of Centennial Park's landscape and uses as an integrated and significant part of the City's Park system, as a residential community and neighbourhood, and as a cherished city-wide park and tourist destination, with a rich natural landscape worth protection and celebration.

Specifically, the Master Plan Update will address:

- community expectations for future use, programming and management of Centennial Park;
- resilience, restoration, enhancement and sustainability of the park;
- consideration for the form, function and program of the ski hill area in Centennial Park including naturalization and other park programs to replace the ski hill activities;
- rationalization and rehabilitation of park access including walkways, paths and roads;
- potential new programs and features in the park; and
- comprehensive park communication strategy and wayfinding.

2. PLANNING CONTEXT

This section contains a summary of key supporting documents and research (e.g., community profile and public input) that will inform the development of facility and service recommendations.

2.1 Foundational Studies

Below is a summary of the policy documents and guidelines that inform the development and management of municipal parks and recreation assets in the City of Toronto. The findings and directions of these studies provide a basis for evaluating needs and identifying facility and service recommendations for Centennial Park.

Parkland Strategy (2019)

The Parkland Strategy is a 20-year plan that will guide long-term planning for new parks and expansion and improved access to existing parks. It will aid in the decision-making and prioritization of investment in parkland across the city.

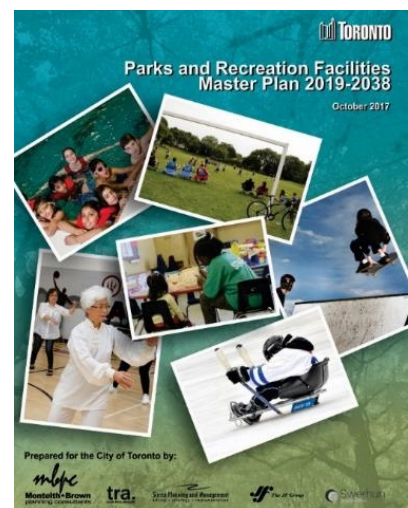
Four principles guide the policies and recommendations in the Parkland Strategy:

- Expand the park system by creating new parks to support growth and address gaps to ensure a flexible, adaptable park system that will support the needs of a livable, diverse city.
- Improve the function of existing parks to promote community cohesion, ecological sustainability, and health and wellbeing through active living, access to nature, and the provision of spaces for rest, relaxation and leisure.
- Connect parks and other open spaces, physically and visually, and leverage opportunities so that people, communities and wildlife have abundant access to parks and can seamlessly navigate to and through the parks and open space system.
- Include everyone by removing barriers so that parks and other open spaces are inclusive places and equitably accessible for people of all ages, cultures, genders, abilities and incomes.

Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (2017)

To manage investment and facility provision over the next twenty years, the City of Toronto prepared a 20-year Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (FMP), which was unanimously adopted by City Council on November 9, 2017. This Plan is the most ambitious recreation facility development program in the history of the City.

The FMP reflects the City's ongoing commitment to providing high quality parks and recreation facilities, taking a proactive, city-wide approach to provide for all current and future residents. It will ensure everyone has an opportunity to create the sense of vitality and community that make Toronto such a vibrant city, now and well into the future.



Depth of public consultation and evidence-based research were central to the success of the FMP, including the Recreation and Parks Service Plans and the most recent thinking about recreation in Canada¹.

The FMP contains recommendations that direct:

- a) reinvestment in existing facilities through replacement, repurposing and state of good repair renewal;
- b) addressing facility gaps caused by geographic distribution or large waitlists; and
- c) responding to future facility needs that will arise due to population growth.

Parks for All (2017)

Parks for All is An Action Plan for Canada's Parks Community. This document aligns with and supports Connecting Canadians with Nature as well as the Framework for Recreation in Canada, particularly the Framework's third goal "Connecting People and Nature". The Action Plan focuses on how all Canadians benefit from healthy parks and natural areas and shares the community's vision and goals for our parks. Parks for All includes a variety of perspectives that helped form a distinct set of responsibilities and practices moving forward.

Parks for All is intended to unite the parks community through specific actions, priorities and strategic directions. The plan is guided by four strategic directions: collaborate, connect, conserve and lead.

The Recreation Gap: A Case for Resource Investment in Etobicoke Centre (2016)

This report, commissioned by the Martin Prosperity Institute, highlighted that Central Etobicoke has one of the lowest connectivity scores in the City. According to Walk Score, an online walkability assessment tool, the four least walkable neighbourhoods in the City of Toronto are located in Wards 3 and 4.

The report also found gaps in park provision and recreation program. Aside from Centennial Park, parks in Central and North Etobicoke are nearly vacant of specialized, staffed programming and have fewer park amenities to support quality outdoor recreation. This suggests that Centennial Park – a location that provides many city-wide services – is also being asked to deliver on the park and recreation needs of the surrounding area. As noted above, the FMP support the provision of several recreation and park facilities in this area to address gaps and future growth.

Framework for Recreation in Canada (2015)

The Framework for Recreation in Canada is a watershed guideline designed to support coordinated policies and practices in recreation and related sectors in Canada. Its aim is to improve the wellbeing of individuals, communities and the built and natural environments. Specifically, it:

- Presents a renewed definition of recreation and explores the challenges and benefits of recreation today
- Provides the rationale for investing in an evolved recreation strategy and describes the need for collaboration with other initiatives in a variety of sectors

¹ 2015 Framework for Recreation in Canada <http://www.cpra.ca/main.php?action=cms.framework>

- Describes a new vision for recreation in Canada and suggests common ways of thinking about the renewal of recreation based on clear goals (active living, inclusion and access, connecting people, supportive environments and recreation capacity) and underlying values and principles

Its fourth goal – Supportive Environments – is to ensure the provision of supportive physical and social environments that encourage participation in recreation and help to build strong, caring communities. Selected priorities with relevance to this assignment include:

- 1.1 Enable participation in physically active recreational experiences throughout the lifecourse, continuing to focus on children and youth but expanding to meet the needs and foster the participation of the growing number of older people in Canada.
- 2.1 Work in partnership with community and provincial/territorial planners and Aboriginal communities to provide natural spaces and places in neighborhoods, communities and regions through the retention and addition of natural areas, forests, parks, trails and recreational waters.
- 4.1 Provide recreation facilities and outdoor spaces in under-resourced communities, based on community and/or regional needs and resources.
- 4.2 Work with partners to increase the use of existing structures and spaces for multiple purposes, including recreation.
- 4.3 Enable communities to renew recreational infrastructure as required and to meet the need for green spaces by: securing dedicated government funding at all levels, as well as partnerships with the private and not-for-profit sectors for the necessary development, renewal and rehabilitation of facilities and outdoor spaces; developing assessment tools and evidence-based guidelines for investing and reinvesting in aging recreation infrastructure; and developing and adopting innovative renewal strategies that will endure over time, use less energy and provide affordable access for all.

[Parks Services Plan \(2013\)](#)

The Parks Plan sets priorities for the development, management and operation of parkland for the next five years. It acts as a framework for budget and resource allocation. The Plan identifies four areas of priority and sets out recommendations for each: communicate and connect with users; preserve and promote nature; maintain quality parks; and improve system planning. The plan also lends support to an update of the City's Parkland Acquisition Strategy, which is currently underway.

[Recreation Services Plan \(2012\)](#)

The Recreation Service Plan has guided the funding and management of Toronto's recreation services since 2013. The plan contains a summary of socio-demographic and leisure trends, program registration data, public input and a description of Toronto's recreation system (including other sectors), leading to 27 actions designed to achieve the Council-approved principles of equity, inclusion, capacity building and quality.

The Plan aims to increase overall participation in recreation, decrease financial barriers, and improve local and geographic access. It outlines the current role of PFR in the provision of recreation within the broader context of the Toronto recreation service sector, with its many and diverse providers. The aim is

to improve access to recreation with specific attention to children, youth and seniors, and to reduce barriers faced by low-income families, newcomers and persons with disabilities.

With respect to parks and recreation facilities, the plan recommends that high priority state of good repair facilities projects be identified and advanced. The Recreation Service Plan recognizes that facilities are core community assets used not only to deliver recreation services, but to meet a wide variety of needs related to employment, child care, housing and health. The plan supports facility investment – particularly to fill gaps in underserved areas – as a means of maintaining and increasing access to recreation.

Service Efficiency Study (2012)

In 2011 the City completed a Service Efficiency Study for the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. The purpose of the study was to identify and supply actionable recommendations to maximize service efficiency savings (e.g., through effective service delivery, organizational and operational arrangements) in the shortest period of time. The result was a series of recommendations to be considered by the City Manager and Senior Management to determine their feasibility for implementation. Some recommendations have since been implemented, while others remain under review for viability and implementation in future years where feasible.

The study focused on golf courses, ski hills, City-run farms/zoos (excluding Toronto Zoo), community centres, parks maintenance and recreation service planning. Recommendations include options to improve existing business processes, efficiencies through technology investment, consolidation of resources, functions to be considered for outsourcing and opportunities for shared service approaches.

Relative to ski hills, the report recognized the high cost of providing this service and the impact of volatile weather. At the time, it was recommended that the City continue to support the provision of skiing as a municipal public service, while taking steps to reduce the risk and cost associated with service provision. Through the development of a business plan, it was recommended that operations be consolidated and services restructured and repositioned with a greater emphasis on marketing, sponsorships and special events.

Centennial Park Master Plan (2008)

In 2008, the City developed a Master Plan for Centennial Park. At that time the prime challenges facing the park included volume of park programming, user pressures, competing user interests, budget constraints, and environmental protection and enhancement. The Master Plan contained 45 projects that laid out a 30-year vision for the park. Although some park improvements have undertaken to date, much of this vision has yet to be achieved.

The Master Plan indicated that recreation trends in the City has changed significantly since the park was first planned. There was greater demand for unstructured recreation activities from user groups such as women, single parents, older adults and equity seeking youth. The Master Plan addressed this trend by recommending additional opportunities for individual unstructured recreation such as an enhanced path system for walking, jogging, cycling and general fitness.

Through the Master Plan consultation and design process, the following guiding principles were identified:

- Centre of Excellence
- Environmental protection and enhancement
- Cohesion and integrated park design
- Creation of rooms
- Separation of active and passive recreation
- Creation of gateways

In terms of recreational uses, the following is a high-level summary of the Plan's primary recommendations:

- the east side of Centennial Park should continue to be the focus of active recreation, with athletic fields being clustered and lights added to support tournament play
 - improvements should be made to the disc golf course (completed)
 - the ball diamonds should be oriented in a cloverleaf design and a fourth diamond added in this cluster
 - the cricket pitches should be relocated and a third pitch added
 - several soccer fields should be rationalized and relocated (some to the site of the current BMX facility), as well as the multi-use fields
 - upgrades should be made to the stadium (some have been completed, others are in progress)
 - the ski hill should be upgraded (snowmaking, lifts, etc.) and expanded (larger chalet)
- the west side of Centennial park will focus on opportunities for quiet enjoyment of the park and its associated natural features
 - family picnicking areas, a children's water play feature, updated playgrounds, and new trailheads and trail connections will be introduced
- the mini indy (go kart) facility, batting cages and beach volleyball courts should be phased out
- space should be set aside for future additions to the Centennial Park Arena (west-side) and Etobicoke Olympium (west-side)

2.2 Community Profile

Demographic data from the 2016 Census was compiled for a 2.5-kilometre radius surrounding Centennial Park (City of Toronto only²). In 2016, there were approximately 42,000 persons living within this area, representing 1.5% of Toronto's total population. Anticipated population growth within the area is below City averages – the development pipeline data estimates 8.6% growth, compared to 22.6% across Toronto.

Generally, the demographic composition of those living in the area is very similar to city-wide averages. Looking more closely, the study area contains a slightly higher proportion of children and seniors (and a lower proportion of young adults), has a slightly higher persons per unit count, and has a lesser proportion of low-income households.

² Adjacent lands in the City of Mississauga are largely comprised of business parks and stable residential (5,778 persons as of 2016).

Due to Centennial Park's location at the edge of the city, it is geographically distant from many area residents, particularly those living in the higher needs areas within the northern and eastern portions of the Ward.

Study Area – Key Demographic Characteristics (2016 Census)

Socio-Demographic Characteristics	Study Area*	City of Toronto
Population		
Total Population	41,954	2,731,571
- ages 0 to 14 years	15%	12%
- ages 15 to 24 years	12%	12%
- ages 25 to 44 years	24%	31%
- ages 45 to 64 years	29%	27%
- ages 65+ years	19%	16%
Population Growth (2011-2016)	4.7%	4.5%
Population Density (persons per hectare)	35	43
Future Population Growth (Pipeline 2018 Q4)	3,927 (8.6%)	617,766 (22.6%)
Households & Housing		
Households	22,500	1,112,929
Persons per Household	2.62	2.42
Household Tenure – Rental	32%	47%
Dwelling Structure – single or semi-detached house	43%	30%
Dwelling Structure – apartment, rowhouse or duplex	57%	70%
Immigration & Diversity		
Foreign-born Population	46%	47%
Income		
Average Household Income	\$100,278	\$102,721
Low income Rates	13%	19%

* Study area is 2.5-kilometres around Centennial Park within the boundaries of the City of Toronto only (census tracts: 221.01, 221.02, 222.02, 234.00, 235.01, 235.02, 236.01, 236.02)

Source: City of Toronto; Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

Looking slightly beyond the 2.5-kilometre radius and considering the entirety of Ward 2, we find that – while the area has a large proportion of middle-income residents – there are numerous pockets of poverty which are rapidly growing. A 2016 report (“The Recreation Gap: A Case for Resource Investment in Etobicoke Centre”) found that the area straddles the “in-between” – while not necessarily a high-income neighbourhood, many of the residential areas are well-established, yet social housing neighbourhoods are poorer and require additional services. This is notable as low-income individuals usually face severe social and environmental barriers to recreation activities, and thus require affordable and convenient options to assist them in overcoming these barriers. This can be a challenge in Centennial Park as many of the fields and facilities in Centennial Park are booked well in advance by groups who obtain permits to use the space.

2.3 Public Input

In early 2019, a public consultation process was initiated to inform the Centennial Park Master Plan Update. This consultation program engaged stakeholders, permit holders and the public in conversations to understand what is working well at Centennial Park, what is not currently working well, and what has changed since the public was last consulted in 2008. A “What We Heard Report” was prepared that summarizes the key findings that emerged during the consultations.

Strengths (recreation-focussed)

- Sports fields are in high demand. The park offers users access to unique assets such as cricket fields, track and field, golf, and frisbee golf.
- Sports facilities are in high demand. The Olympium is a unique and accessible facility that offers users access to warm water pools.
- Due to Centennial Park's scale and location, it is an ideal place for special events such as Ribfest and Jerkfest.
- Ski hill is also in demand. Skiing opportunities at affordable prices. Often used by first-time skiers. In the offseason it is used for running and walking.
- Accessible playground along Rathburn is an important asset.
- Picnic areas are in demand.

Challenges (recreation-focussed)

- Sports fields can be difficult to locate, and in poor condition/end of lifespan. The design of some sports fields interferes with adjacent games. Sports fields lack shade during the day and proper lighting for nighttime play. Participants identified that there are insufficient amenities such as washrooms, water stations and seating to meet demand.
- Sports facilities need enhancement to meet demand. Public perceives that some facilities are underutilized (i.e. Pan Am BMX). Some noted that Etobicoke Centre lacks a centrally located curling facility.
- Pathways throughout the park are not accessible. Pathways and circulation need improvement to accommodate a variety of users and uses (i.e. pave pathways).
- There are a variety of accessibility challenges throughout the park: pathways, wayfinding, washrooms, transportation, etc.
- Ski Hill is costly, underutilized feature due to loss of south lift. Ski hill infrastructure is failing due to age.
- Playgrounds are too dispersed, /non-clustered, difficult to maintain and at the end of lifespans.
- Lack of designated off-leash dog area.
- Large events' space/sports fields require a lot of repair after events.
- Picnic Areas in need of enhancement with a focus on accessibility.

Opportunities (recreation-focussed)

- Variety of opportunities to enhance sports fields identified such as improvements to soccer and cricket fields, design of softball diamonds, amenities (i.e., seating, washrooms, shade, etc.).
- Variety of opportunities to enhance sports facility ideas were identified such as accessibility improvements to Olympium, community BMX programs and new/repurposed spaces – consider incorporating ropes courses, skateboarding and curling facilities.
- Variety of opportunities to enhance public awareness and services with Centennial Park were identified such as incorporating an off-leash dog area, a flexible space (i.e., one space that could accommodate tai chi, outdoor theatre/music and yoga), independent coffee/tea house.
- Ski Hill could be reimaged to incorporate active uses, water. The Ski Chalet could be high active year-round nature/garden destination offering programming, guided walks, etc.
- Playgrounds should be clustered and designed with accessibility in mind. Consider an adult playground space.
- Consider winter animations to animate park all-seasons and establish relationships with unexpected park spaces.
- Enhance accessible pathways throughout Centennial Park.
- Consider enhancing picnic areas to include shade, improved seating, lighting, amenities.

3. REVIEW OF CENTENNIAL PARK FACILITIES & SERVICES

This section contains a review of the current range of parks and recreation facilities at Centennial Park. Service profiles are established for each facility grouping, including commentary on condition, usage, trends, and alignment with FMP priorities and recommendations.

3.1 Unstructured Use Amenities



Ski Hill



Ski Chalet



Wading Pool



Playground



Disc Golf Course



BMX Park



Pond / Bridge / Naturalized Feature



Trail / Picnic Area

3.1.1 Ski Hill and Chalet

Inventory & Capital Profile

The Centennial Park and Earl Bales Snow Centres are the only downhill ski and snowboard facilities in the City of Toronto and both are municipally-operated. The Centennial Park Snow Centre currently contains two vertical runs (north and centre) plus a small learn to ski area, which have been built on a former landfill. The hill is equipped with snow making equipment, night lighting, and a conveyor lift at one end of the hill. The primary T-bar lift is no longer operational (but remains in place), which has led to closure of a third ski run along the south slope of the hill.

A ski chalet is located near the base of the hill, which offers indoor seating space, washrooms, concessions, office/support space, and two program rooms that are permitted outside of the ski season. **The chalet was recently refurbished (roofing, ceiling, lighting, etc.) and is listed in good condition with \$0.7M in identified SOGR over the next ten years.** Additional renovations will be required over time to address lifecycle items and internal upgrades.

Although seasonal use is weather dependent, the hill is generally used for skiing and snowboarding between early January and mid-March. Both the Centennial Park and Earl Bales Snow Centres are oriented to participants of beginner and intermediate skill levels. The City directly provides instructional programs for a variety of age groups (the majority of which are children and youth, including persons with disabilities) and interests (e.g., learn to ski, learn to snowboard, private lessons, etc.). A Track 3 program operates at both snow centres, enabling children and youth with disabilities to participate in snow sports. Users may also access the facility for non-programmed use through the purchase of a lift ticket. To facilitate use, the City also provides equipment rentals at this location.

The range of services and programs is generally consistent with industry standards. The pricing structure reflects the level of service and fees are generally less expensive than those charged at other ski areas in Ontario, many of which are operated by private or non-profit sector providers that offer an enhanced experience through the provision of longer/more runs and/or additional services. The snow centre employs approximately 75 to 100 persons, most on a part-time seasonal basis.

i) Usage Trends – Centennial Park Snow Centre

Aging infrastructure has had a dramatic impact on the hill’s capacity and performance. Most notably, the hill was closed for the 2017 snow season due to failure of the snow-making equipment. In 2018, a decision was made to operate the snow centre without lessons and only two operational slopes (centre and north), accessed by the carpet lift.

Although the snow centre re-opened for full winter use (including lessons) on January 1, 2019, **the number of registrations and the amount of revenue were far below those from 2016** – only 795 program registrations in 2019 compared to 2,000 in 2016 and 2015. This is in large part due to the reduced capacity of the hill (only two of three runs are operational), along with reduced hours. **The revenues generated from program registrations decreased by 60% compared to 2016.** In recent years, changes have been made to the City’s Welcome Policy (program subsidy) which may have also affected program participation at the ski hills. In 2019, courses accounted for 41% of the total number of visits to the Centennial Park Snow Centre (passes accounted for the remaining 59%). **However, public demand for ski and snowboard programs remains high – currently over 900 people are registered for the 2020 season with over 1,100 on waitlists.**

From spring to fall, the hill is used for unstructured activities, such as hiking, kite flying and a scenic lookout. **No registered programming occurs on the hill during the warmer months, although the ski chalet is used for rentals and courses.** Many private and resort-style ski hills have developed non-snow season attractions and activities such as mountain biking, ziplining, ropes course, lift-accessed sightseeing and mountain-top activities to increase use and revenue outside of the winter season; however, many of these structured and regulated uses are not likely viable in a municipal park setting.

ii) Comparative Analysis – Centennial Park and Earl Bales Snow Centres

Due to its operational restrictions, the Centennial Park Snow Centre is now being significantly outperformed by the Earl Bales Snow Centre on an annual basis. In 2019, the Centennial Park Snow Centre attracted nearly one-quarter as many program registrations, nearly one-third as much program revenue and one-fifth as much rental revenue as the Earl Bales Snow Centre. On average, the number of daily passes is twice as great at Earl Bales Snow Centre. Earl Bales is open an average of 70 days per year, while Centennial Park is open an average of 66 days per year (2013-2019, excluding the season that the Centennial Park Snow Centre was closed).

Several factors contribute to the **relative performance of the snow centres**, most notably:

- the lifts and terrain at Centennial Snow Centre are not operating at capacity (carpet lift only; third run is closed); this shifted the focus to lower-level programs where ratios are lower;
- as a result, hours have also been reduced at Centennial Snow Centre (Monday to Friday evenings only);
- the Earl Bales Snow Centre is used by school boards and special groups, which adds revenue and usage; and
- snow-making ability differs between the two sites.

An examination of program registrations at the two snow centres illustrates that **users predominantly use the location nearest their place of residence.** On average, registrants are travelling farther to access

Centennial Park Snow Centre (8.5-kilometres) than Earl Bales Snow Centre (6-kilometres). There may be many reasons for this difference, including residential density and ease of access. Maps illustrating place of residence for 2019 snow centre program registrants are shown below.

Figure 3: Centennial Park Snow Centre – 2019 Registrations by Postal FSA

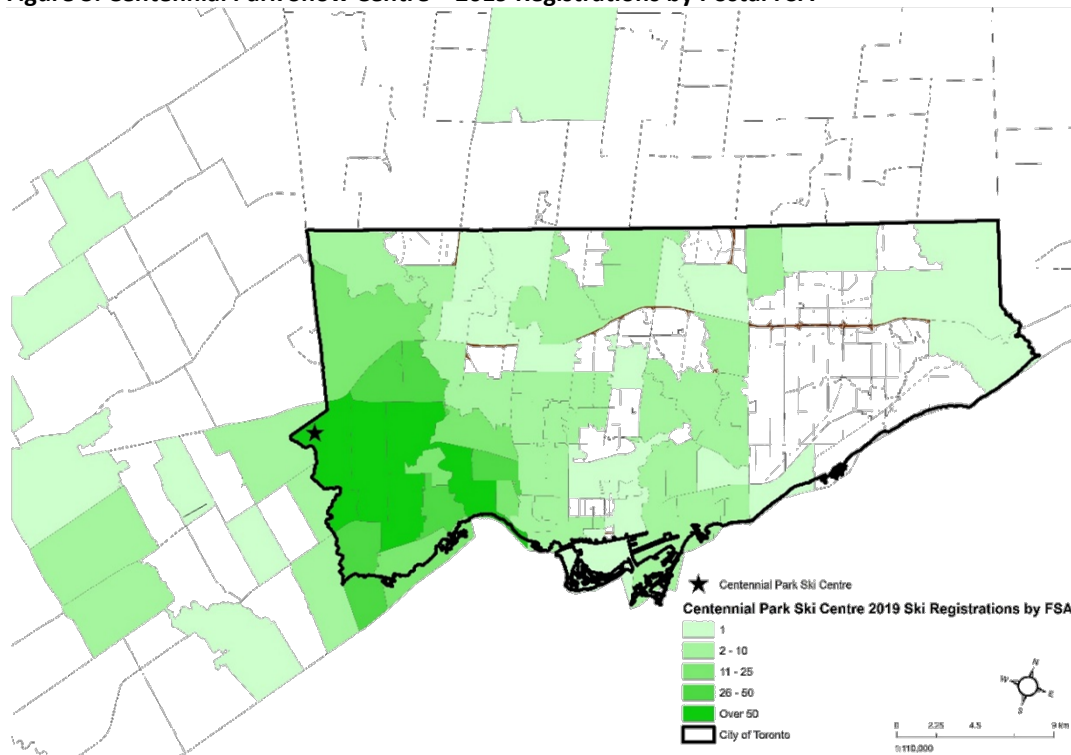


Figure 4: Earl Bales Snow Centre – 2019 Registrations by Postal FSA

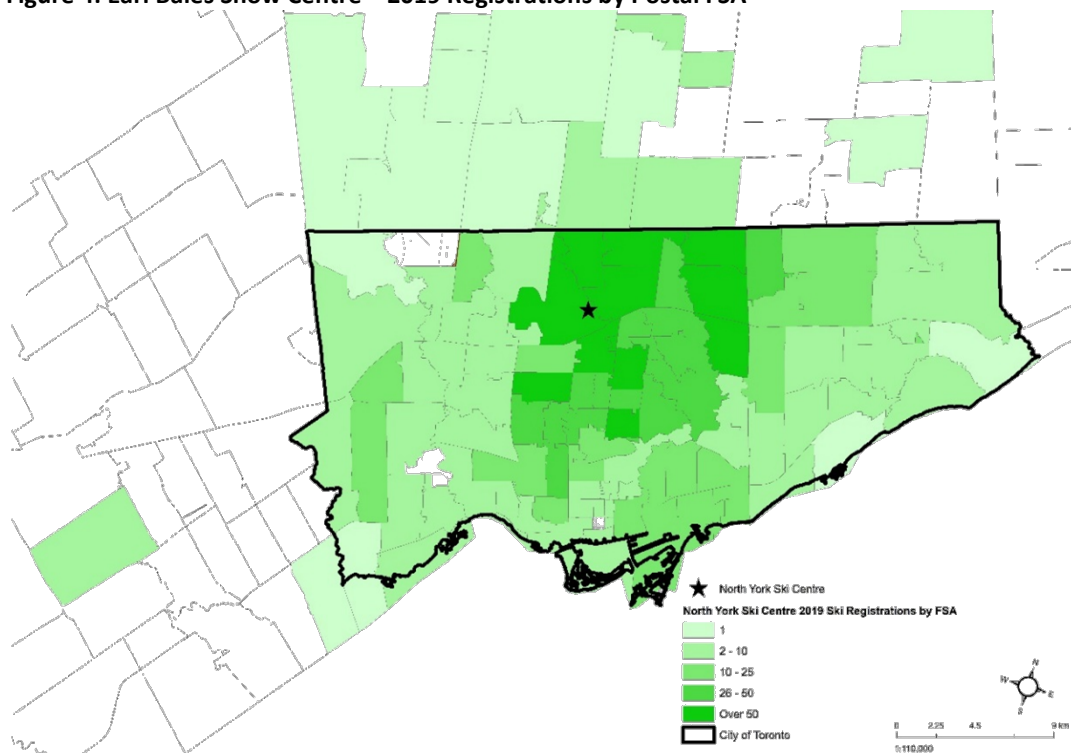


Figure 5: Snow Centres - Daily Passes Sold, 2013 to 2019

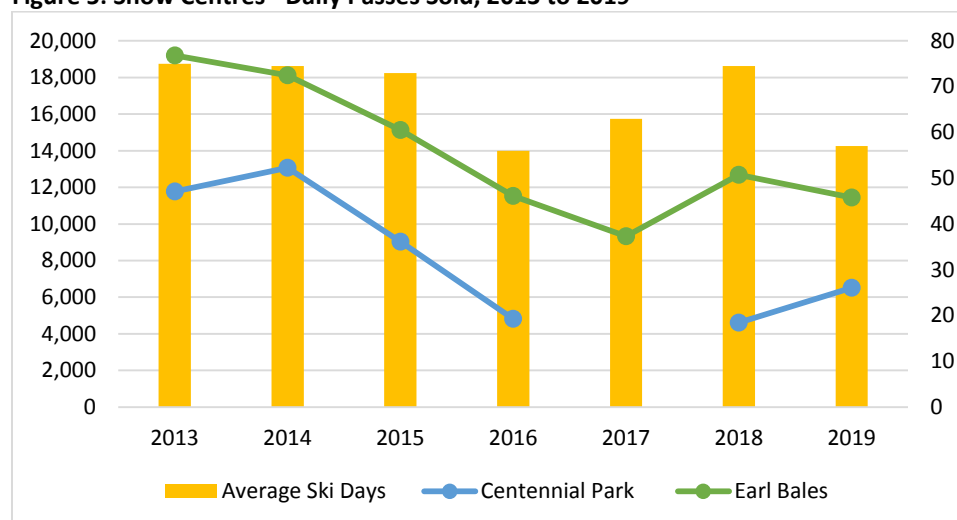


Table 2: Ski Hill Usage Comparisons

Categories	Centennial Park Snow Centre	Comparator (Earl Bales Snow Centre)	Overall Trend at Centennial Park Snow Centre (2015-2018)
Program Registrations (2019)	795	2,969	Decreasing (-63%)
Program Revenue (2019)	\$185,520	\$516,977	Decreasing (-68%)
Seasonal Memberships, POS (2019)	6	83	n/a
Daily Snow Passes (2019)	6,585	12,822	Decreasing (-49%)
Daily Snow Pass Revenue (2019)	\$105,833	\$265,621	Decreasing (-42%)
Ski Chalet Booking Hours (2018)	261	738	Decreasing (-54%)
Ski Chalet Revenue (2018)	\$7,753	\$41,920	Stable (-1%)

Source: City of Toronto, Policy & Strategic Planning (2019)

iii) Financial Analysis – Centennial Park and Earl Bales Snow Centres

While a detailed review of **financial performance** is beyond the scope of this report, high level data has been examined to illustrate trends (see figures on the following page). Key observations include:

- Traditionally, the snow centres are **profitable as a unit** (excluding capital reinvestment). The average cost recovery of this business unit is 115%; however, this has been declining in recent years (likely impacted by closures and reduced capacity at Centennial Park).
- Since 2013/14, **revenues and expenditures have been declining at both locations** (down by one-third to two-fifths between 2013 and 2018) indicating a shift in participation and/or programming.
- Revenues have traditionally been highest at Earl Bales Snow Centre** (78% higher than Centennial Park between 2013 and 2016, when both sites were fully operational).

The future capital investment requirements associated with the Centennial Park snow centre are significant and its performance in recent years suggests that the financial risks associated with annual operations are high. The usage data indicates that the facility is substantially underutilized, particularly given the lack of access to the third downhill run. **Ongoing monitoring of financial performance at both the Centennial Park and Earl Bales Snow Centres would be helpful to inform the long-term viability of the operations.**

Figure 6: Centennial Park Snow Centre - Financial Performance 2013-2019

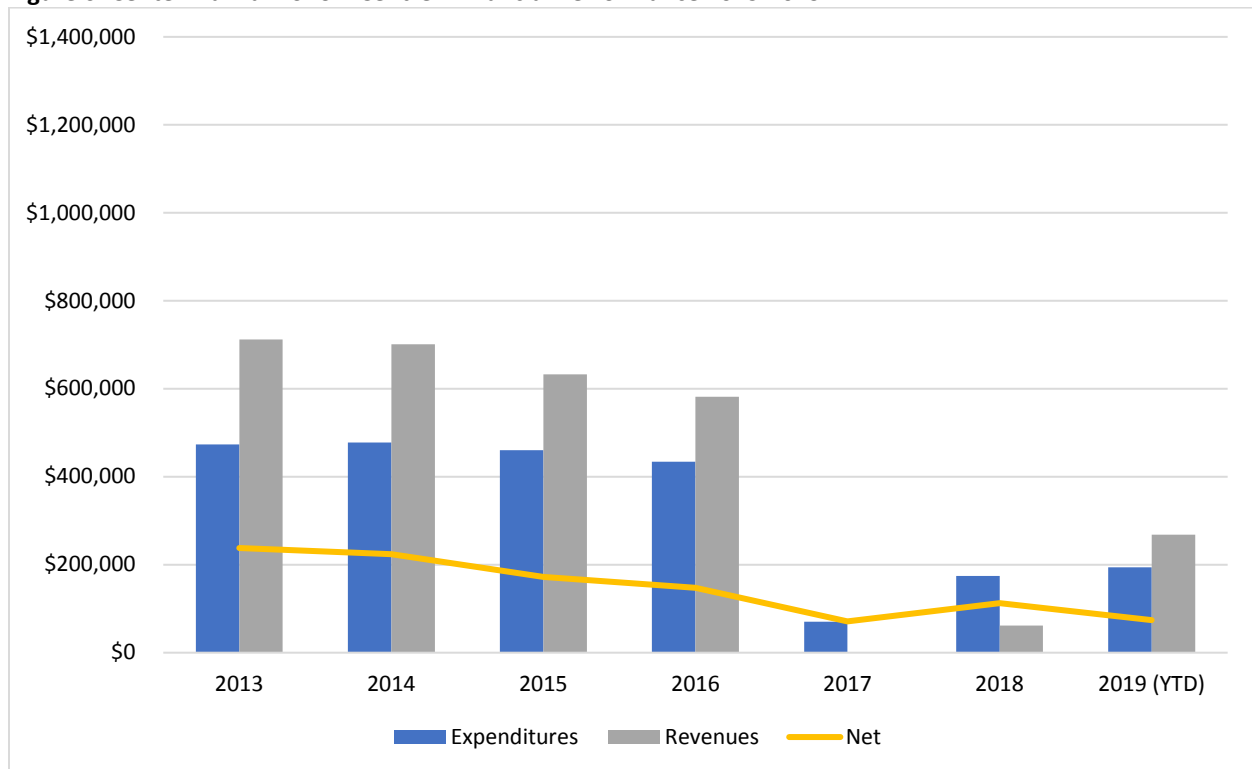
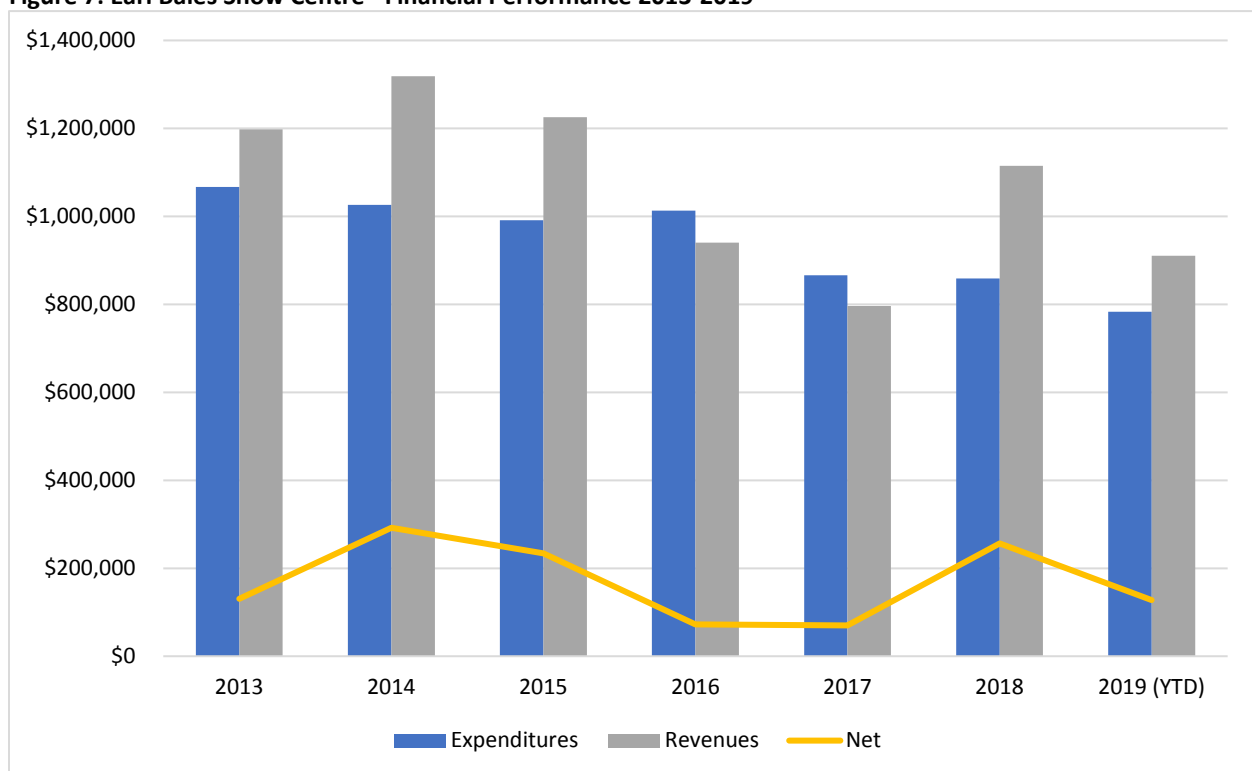


Figure 7: Earl Bales Snow Centre - Financial Performance 2013-2019



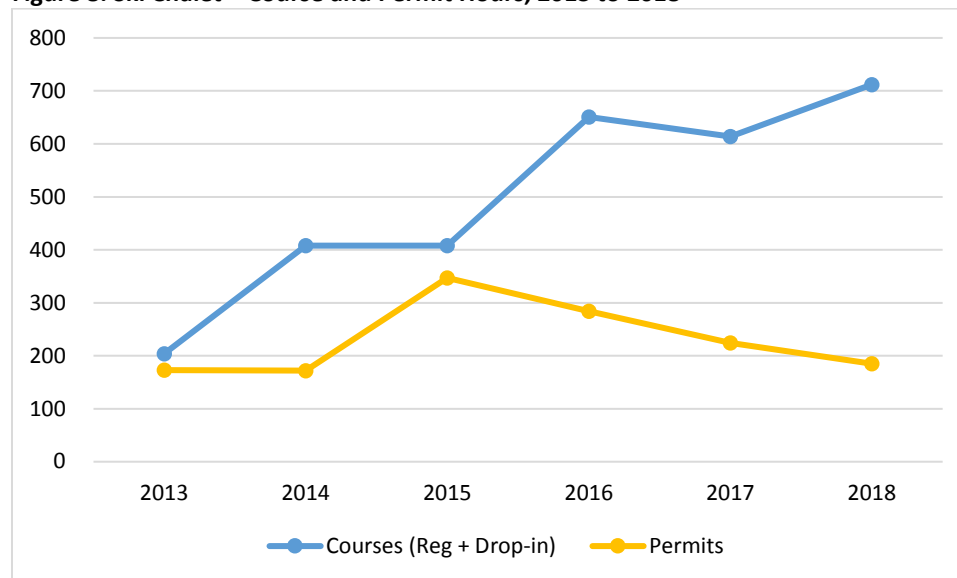
Note: YTD (up to November 22, 2019)

Source: City of Toronto

Trends & Usage Data – Ski Chalet

Usage of the two program rooms at the ski chalet for courses increased by nearly 250% between 2013 and 2018, while permitted usage during this period increased by 7%. **This illustrates the City's efforts to increase utilization of the chalet for registered courses.** The rooms are unavailable for permits during the ski season and are well used by camps in the summer.

Figure 8: Ski Chalet – Course and Permit Hours, 2013 to 2018



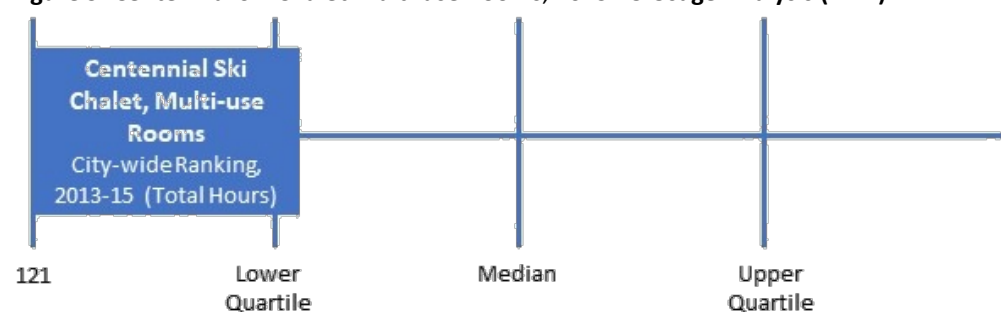
Data collected for the 2017 FMP indicates that the two multi-use rooms at the Centennial Ski Chalet are used at below average levels, although usage has been increasing more recently as noted above.

Table 3: Centennial Ski Chalet Multi-use Rooms, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Categories	Centennial Ski Chalet Rank (among 193 Rooms)*
Total Hours	138 of 193
Total Visits	159 of 193
Visits per Hour	182 of 193

* per room

Figure 9: Centennial Ski Chalet Multi-use Rooms, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)



Other Considerations

As noted in the City of Toronto 2012 Service Efficiency Study, **smaller scale ski and snowboard operations are increasingly experiencing financial distress given the considerable changes experienced by the industry in recent times, including: shifts in demographics of users; increased popularity of snowboarding and to a lesser extent tubing; increased number of larger scale residential resort developments; increased awareness of safety concerns; and significant changes in equipment.**

Further, skiing is still perceived by many to be an elite and expensive type of outdoor recreational experience and these perceptions continue to be a barrier to participation and interest in the activity of skiing among a portion of the population.

According to the Canadian Ski Council³:

- Approximately 275 Canadian ski areas see more than 19 million visits per season; 17.8% of these visits are in Ontario, which has an estimated 63 ski areas (as of 2015);
- 14.2% of Canadians over the age of 12 participate in skiing and snowboarding; these percentages are slightly lower in Ontario (in 2014/15, 6.3% of Ontarians skied and 3.6% snowboarded);
- Between 2004/05 and 2014/15 visits to Ontario ski hills declined by 3%;
- It is estimated that there are 2.5 million skiers and snowboarders in Canada and each averages 7.5 visits per year;
- The median age for Canadian skiers is 35 to 44 years; 58% are male and 42% are female; 90.4% speak English or French at home;
- The median age for Canadian snowboarders is 25 to 34 years; 61% are male and 39% are female; 89.7% speak English or French at home;
- Canadian ski and snowboard participants generally come from upper-income families (101,175 average household income); and
- Majority of skiers and snowboarders advise that their motivation for skiing and snowboarding is to do “something together as a family”.

The ski and snowboard industry are also being threatened by changing winter weather and climatic conditions. With a shorter (and less reliable) ski season, user visitation and revenues are declining and the cost of maintenance and operations is rising. Warmer winter temperatures also affect the characteristics of accumulated snow on the ground, including snow depth, which can heighten safety concerns.⁴ Climate change projections suggest substantial changes in winter recreation season lengths across the United States – and most notably in the Northeast United States (the same general region as Toronto) – exceeding 50% by 2050 and 80% in 2090 for some downhill skiing locations.⁵ Since 2013, Toronto’s two snow centres operated for an average of 68 days per year (excluding the 2017 season when Centennial Park Snow Centre was closed) – a 50% reduction by 2050 as predicted above would equate to an average of 34 operating days per year.

³ Canadian Ski Council. 2014-2015 Facts and Stats. www.skicanada.org/about-us/quick-facts

⁴ Burakowski, Elizabeth and Rebecca Hill. [Economic Contributions of Winter Sports in a Changing Climate](#). Hagenstad Consulting, Inc. 2018.

⁵ Cameron Wobus et al. [Projected climate change impacts on skiing and snowmobiling: A case study of the United States](#). Global Environmental Change. 45 (2017) 1-14.

The operation of ski hills is not traditionally a municipal recreation service in Ontario or most Canadian municipalities. The only other municipal ski hills in Southern Ontario are in the City of Brampton and Town of Georgina and both are smaller hills than those operated by the City of Toronto. Notable non-profit and private ski hills in Southern Ontario include Boler Mountain (London), Chicopee (Kitchener), Kelso / Glen Eden (Milton), Hockey Valley (Mono) and Brimacombe (Clarington); all of these non-municipal hills have substantially more vertical drop, runs, lifts and amenities than the Centennial Park Snow Centre. For a point of reference, the Glen Eden ski hill (owned and operated by Conservation Halton) has a vertical drop of 240 feet, contains 16 runs and 5 lifts, stays open for ±90 days per year, attracts approximately 340,000 visitors per winter (71,800 daily lift tickets, plus memberships and programs), and achieves an average revenue of nearly \$24 per ski/snowboard visit; the majority of their users live within a 40km catchment area ⁶.

The planning and delivery of the municipal ski and snowboard services has been subject to a number of different strategies in recent years. None led to a specific outcome. For example, the City has considered the potential for public/private partnerships for the snow centres in the past (including through the 2012 Service Efficiency Study), but has been unable to identify viable opportunities for contracting out this service. This uncertainty has led negatively impacted service planning and provision as decisions concerning capital investment and improvements – such as replacement of the lift – have been delayed. **Operational and capital decisions should focus on service viability and be grounded in rationalized market and trend assessments.**

The 2012 Service Efficiency Study concluded that potential operation of the snow centres by a third-party is not a viable or realistic strategy. Further, it asserted that further development of additional attractions and revenue streams oriented for use during the “green” season would not be appropriate. The report concluded that the City should consider withdrawing from the provision of ski/snowboard service and operation of the associated facilities, but – recognizing Council’s consistent support for this service area – offered two operational alternatives for further consideration: service rationalization and consolidation. Neither of these options have been fully implemented, although operational improvements have been sought since this time.

⁶ Sources:

Mountain News Corporation. Mountain Stats. <https://www.onthesnow.com/ontario/glen-eden/ski-resort.html>; accessed November 2019.

Conservation Halton. About Kelso Conservation Area / Glen Eden. <https://gleneden.on.ca/blog/get-tuned>; accessed November 2019.

Conservation Halton. 2019 Budget and Business Plan.

Watson & Associates. Conservation Halton Parks Program Rates and Fees Review. February 2019.

3.1.2 Wading Pool

Inventory & Capital Profile

Centennial Park contains one wading pool that is original to the park's construction. Despite its age, it is listed in good condition. The wading pool is located near the playground (on a lower tier), south of the Conservatory. It is one of nearly 100 wading pools operated by the City across Toronto.

Trends & Usage Data

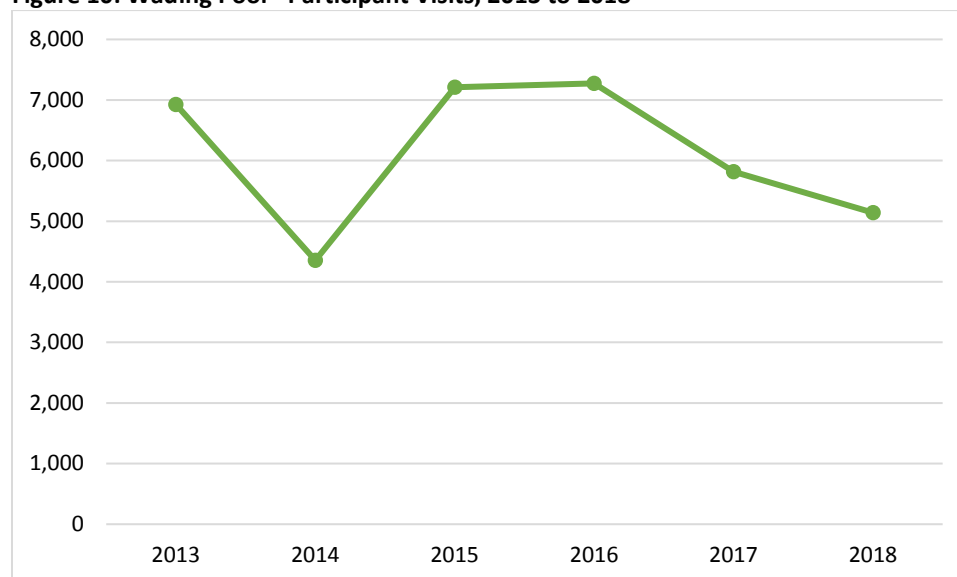
Wading pools are free to use and provide affordable water play opportunities for young children, with a focus on pre-school ages. They contain shallow water that is drained daily and are staffed by attendants.

Wading pool construction was common in the 1960s and 1970s, but has fallen off considerably in recent years (the last one built in Toronto was in 2003), with many being replaced by splash pads.

Waterplay facilities – including wading pools and splash pads – respond very well to growing demands for unstructured, spontaneous forms of recreation. Given their target market – young children and families looking to cool off during summer months – they are typically complemented by washrooms, seating, shade and playgrounds.

Participant visits to the Centennial Park wading pool declined by 26% between 2013 and 2018, although usage is often directly proportional to the quality of weather during the summer. In general, the City has experienced declining visits to its entire network of wading pools in recent years as many are losing interest in favour of splash pads and other activities.

Figure 10: Wading Pool - Participant Visits, 2013 to 2018

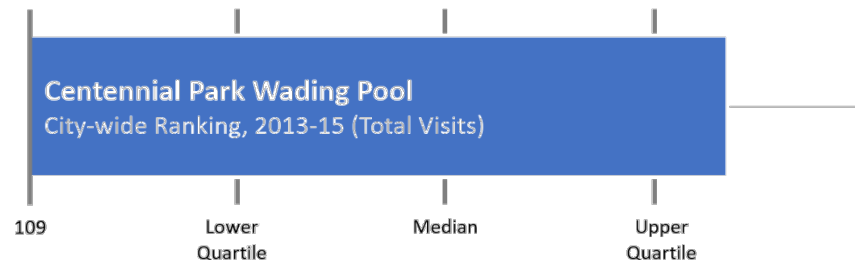


Data collected for the 2017 Facilities Master Plan was also analyzed to understand how overall usage of the Centennial Park wading pool compares to others in Toronto. **Given its location within a city-wide park, the hours and visitation levels of the Centennial Park wading pool were in the upper quartile, making this one of the better used locations in the city.**

Table 4: Centennial Park Wading Pool, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Categories	Rank (among 109 Wading Pools)
Total Hours	22 of 109
Total Visits	17 of 109
Visits per Hour	16 of 109

Figure 11: Centennial Park Wading Pool, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)



Other Considerations

The FMP recommends that the City gradually phase out wading pools in favour of splash pads or other in-demand facilities. Splash pads are unstaffed park amenities that spray water from a variety of features activated by the user. Because they contain user-activated features and do not require lifeguards, they are generally more cost effective to operate than wading pools and are available during daylight hours beginning earlier in the season and ending later.

Specific Wards have been identified for the remaining splash pad projects, recognizing that site-specific analysis will be required to confirm the suitability of park sites. In fact, **three splash pads are recommended to address gaps in Ward 2 (which is where Centennial Park is located)**, including two through new development (one between 2024-28 and one between 2029-33) and one through a repurposed wading pool (between 2029-33).

The FMP contains criteria to be considered when evaluating opportunities for converting wading pools to splash pads. Due to the lack of a nearby splash pad (there are approximately four splash pads within four to five kilometres of Centennial Park, including one in Mississauga⁷), declining wading pool visitation, and the park's abundance of shade, parking and supporting amenities such as playgrounds, washrooms and picnic areas, **Centennial Park would be a strong candidate for installation of a destination splash pad (up to 6,000 square feet) in place of its aging wading pool.**

⁷ Nearest splash pads to Centennial Park: East Mall Park (3.0-kilometres), Six Points Park (4.7-kilometres), Martingrove Gardens Park (4.8-kilometres) and Michael Power Park (5.0-kilometres); Forest Glen Park in Mississauga (~4-kilometres).

Nearest wading pools to Centennial Park: Glen Park (3.2-kilometres) and Fairhaven Park (6.7-kilometres).

Nearest outdoor pools to Centennial Park: Eringate Park (1.5-kilometres), West Mall (2.3-kilometres) and West Deane Park (2.6-kilometres).

3.1.3 BMX Park

Inventory & Capital Profile

The Centennial Park Pan Am BMX Centre was built in 2015 as a host facility for the 2015 Pan Am/Parapan Am Games. It consists of a 350-metre closed-looped course with two start ramps. The Pan Am BMX Centre is a competitive course designed for more advanced riders and competitions and is **one of the premier tracks in Canada**. It is one of four municipally-maintaining bike parks in the city.

Given its recent construction, condition assessments have not been completed and the facility is assumed to be in good condition.

Trends & Usage Data

Off-road cycling, including mountain biking and BMX, experienced rapid growth in the 1980s and 90s (though participation appears to be levelling off⁸) and remains popular among people who prefer individual recreational activities. Off-road bike riding is a diverse and creative sport with highly specialized sub-categories (e.g., dirt, park/vert, street, racing, etc.) differentiated by the terrain/surface, types of equipment and technical skills required. In keeping with this trend, there are an increasing number of bike parks in Canada, several of which can be found in the GTA.

Bike parks offer opportunities for BMX riders of varying skill and experience to enjoy off-road cycling and build skills. As identified in the City's Go Forward BMX Strategy, different designs appeal to different rider groups. The Centennial Park Pan Am BMX Centre is available for casual use during certain hours, as well as training and sanctioned events.

The BMX Centre has one regular user and events are infrequent; approximately 64 permits are issued every year. In 2017 and 2018, the BMX Centre was permitted for an average of 250 hours per year, generating nearly \$1,000/year in revenue. **This corroborates input from City staff suggesting that the BMX Centre is lightly used.** It would appear that the advanced nature of the course also limits its appeal for the casual user.

Other Considerations

Consultation with users, potential users and partners is essential to understanding opportunities to improve utilization of this venue. Improved marketing, support amenities (e.g., shade, lighting, washrooms, etc.), and enhanced program partnerships may also assist in increasing use of this unique recreational asset.

3.1.4 Other Existing Unstructured Use Amenities

Centennial Park contains several additional unstructured use amenities and spaces that support park use by a broad audience, such as (but not limited to) **event space, disc golf course, playgrounds, trails, open space, ponds, picnic areas and shelters, and a model aircraft flying circle**. Enhancements to these

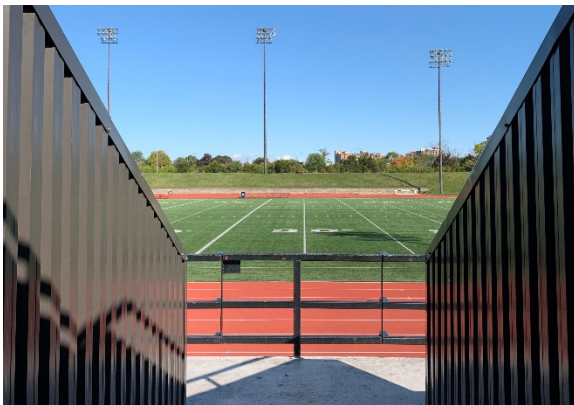
⁸ Outdoor Foundation. [Outdoor Participation Report 2015](http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchParticipation2015.pdf).
<http://www.outdoorfoundation.org/pdf/ResearchParticipation2015.pdf>

features may be required to address state of good repair requirements and/or to enhance the experience for park users.

For example, many of the playgrounds within the park are at the end of their life and requirement replacement, with consideration of accessible components to encourage use by children of all abilities. **The installation of an adventure playground with unique natural and/or challenging features may be considered for this premier park site.** The disc golf course is a unique attribute that fits well with the current park layout and receives a reasonable level of unstructured use; the City recently invested in improvements to this asset.

Centennial Park's network of open spaces and picnic areas are well used for gatherings and events. Rental permits at the Park's eight designated picnic areas increased by 39% between 2013 and 2018. **Opportunities to enhance the accommodation of large-scale events (e.g., Ribfest, etc.) – such as the addition of a stage, covered space and open lawn areas – may be considered as part of the Park Master Plan.**

3.2 Sports Fields



Stadium



Soccer Fields



Ball Diamonds



Cricket Pitches

3.2.1 Stadium and Track

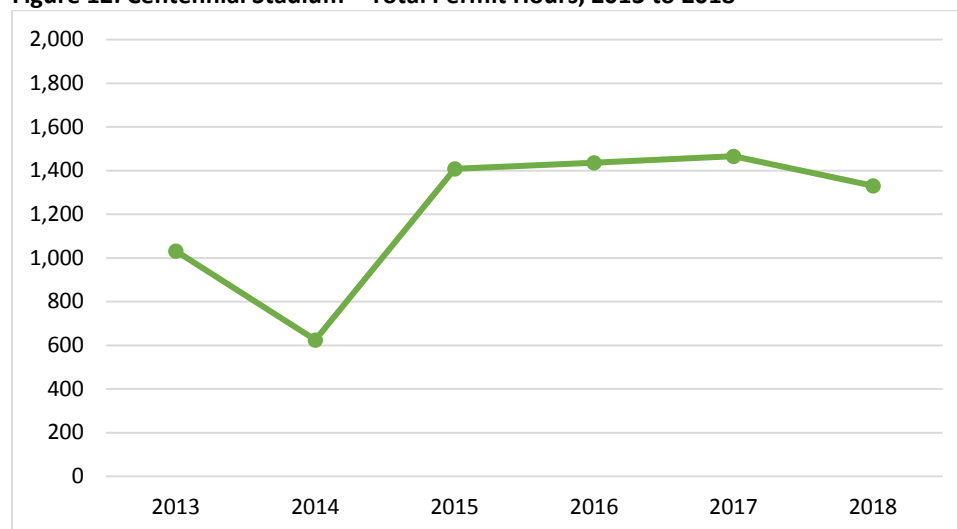
Inventory & Capital Profile

Centennial Park Stadium is one of four municipal stadiums in Toronto. It contains a regulation-size multi-use turf field with lights, and eight-lane all-weather track, track and field features (jump pits, discuss throw, etc.), and a seasonal fieldhouse consisting of change rooms, washrooms, concessions, and 2,200 bleacher seats. The stadium was built in 1967 and is listed in fair condition, with \$3.1M in state of good repair projects over the next ten years. **A renovation of the fieldhouse and bleachers is anticipated to begin shortly, while turf rehabilitation is scheduled in long-term capital plan.**

Trends & Usage Data

Access to the stadium field and track are through permit only. The facility is primarily used for soccer, track and field, and football. **Permits at the Centennial Park Stadium increased by 29% between 2013 and 2018.**

Figure 12: Centennial Stadium – Total Permit Hours, 2013 to 2018



Note: The stadium underwent renovations in 2014 (installation of artificial turf), which impacted availability and revenues.

Usage profiles across the four City of Toronto stadiums vary considerably and are highly dependent on the degree of school versus community usage. Usage at Centennial Park Stadium was compared against a blended usage at Lamport and Birchmount Stadiums (Lamport Stadium is a revenue-generating stadium, but is not nearly as well used, while Birchmount Stadium is similar in size and overall usage, though it is heavily used by school boards and generates much lower revenues). Compared to these two stadiums, **Centennial Park Stadium generates twice as much usage and more than ten times as much revenue**, although revenue did decline in 2018.

Table 5: Stadium Usage Comparisons

Categories	Centennial Park Stadium	Comparator (Lamport & Birchmount Stadiums)	Overall Trend at Centennial Park Stadium (2015-2018)
Booking Hours (2018)	1,380	690	Stable (-1%)
Revenue from Permits (2018)	\$184,052	\$16,626	Decreasing (-11%)

Source: City of Toronto, Policy & Strategic Planning (2019)

Note: Additional stadium usage analysis is contained under the Soccer and Multi-Purpose Fields section.

Other Considerations

Centennial Park Stadium is a core feature of the park and is well used by the community.

Recommendation #48 of the FMP supports the evaluation of stadium locations (including Centennial Park) to be used for year-round field sports through seasonal bubbles. The City will soon be initiating a sport bubble strategy that will further assess these options.

Sports bubbles (or domes) allow for summer activities (such as soccer and other field sports) to move indoors during the winter by covering existing all-weather playing surfaces. Across Ontario, the number of indoor sports fields has increased substantially within the last decade, driven largely by soccer's continued appeal and growing demand for winter competition and training opportunities for other field sports. In Toronto, these facilities are principally provided by the private sector, high schools and post-secondary institutions, although the City has an agreement for the winter enclosure of the Lamport Stadium turf field.

Looking to the future, it is recognized that domes create a more intense use that necessitates the need for site-specific review. **The City's stadium locations – including Centennial Park – offer a great opportunity for sports bubbles, but require site-specific assessments, as well as consideration of partnership options.** This assessment is a short-term priority for the City.

The Centennial Park fieldhouse is an integral supporting structure for the premier field and track facility. A renovation project has recently been initiated. The FMP recommends a strategic approach to their renewal, coordinated with sports field upgrades and park master planning projects.

3.2.2 Soccer and Multi-Purpose Fields

Inventory & Capital Profile

Excluding the stadium field, there are a total of 12 rectangular (soccer and/or multi-use) fields of varying sizes throughout the park. This consists of:

- 4 Class A soccer fields (1 with lights)
- 2 Class B soccer fields
- 5 Class C soccer fields
- 1 Class A multi-purpose field

The City does not presently conduct condition assessment of its sports fields.

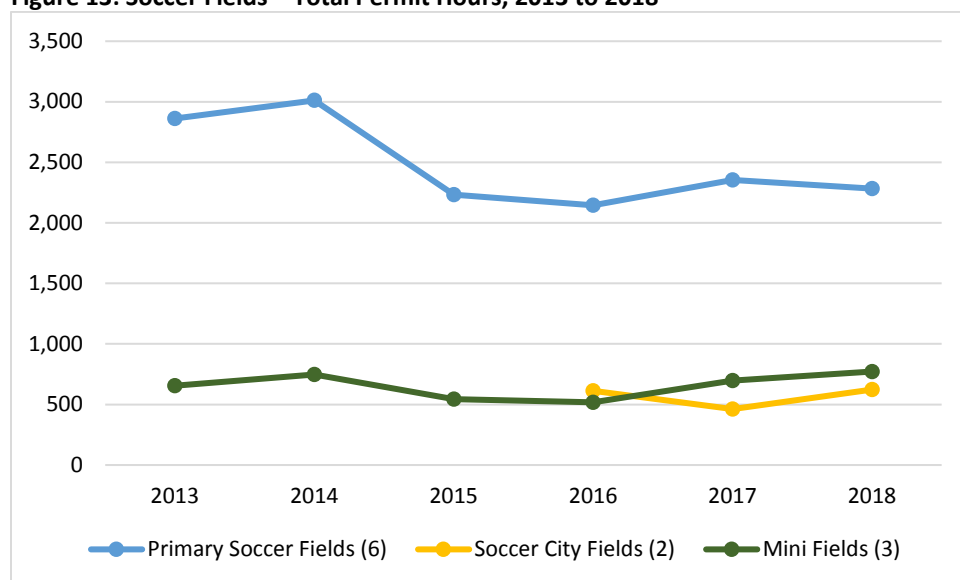
Trends & Usage Data

Soccer continues to be the most popular organized sport among Canadian youth. However, at the national level, **the number of participants registered with the Ontario Soccer Association (OSA) peaked in 2007 with 385,000 participants and has slowly declined each year since.** For 2018, the organization reported a total of 287,700 participants, which is a decline of 25% from the 2007 peak. The overall decline in soccer participation may be due to several factors such as demographic trends, introduction of the OSA's Long Term Player Development model, emergence of non-affiliated soccer clubs and academies, concussion awareness and growing interest in competing activities.

Multi-use fields shared by sports such as soccer, football, rugby, field lacrosse and Ultimate Frisbee provide the greatest flexibility. Many of these sports are growing in popularity – in particular rugby and lacrosse – although participation levels remain much lower compared to soccer. Many of these sports prefer artificial turf as it provides a more predictable playing surface that has a greater capacity and can be used for an extended season.

The soccer fields at Centennial Park are well used; on average, the eleven soccer fields were permitted for 335 hours each in 2018. Although permitting of the Park's six primary soccer fields (excluding the "Soccer City" pitches, mini fields and multi-purpose field) decreased by 20% between 2013 and 2018, permitting of the three mini fields increased by 18% during this period. In 2016, the City took over permitting of the two Soccer City fields. **Permitting across all soccer fields increased by 5% during this timeframe (2016 to 2018).**

Figure 13: Soccer Fields – Total Permit Hours, 2013 to 2018



Data collected for the 2017 Facilities Master Plan indicates that the primary Centennial Park soccer fields (Fields A to D, as well as the stadium field) rank in the upper quartile of field permitting across the city; it is anticipated that the former Soccer City fields would have a similar usage profile. The mini fields exhibit an average to above average level of use. **This suggests that demand is greatest for large, high quality (e.g., Premier, Class A) sports fields.**

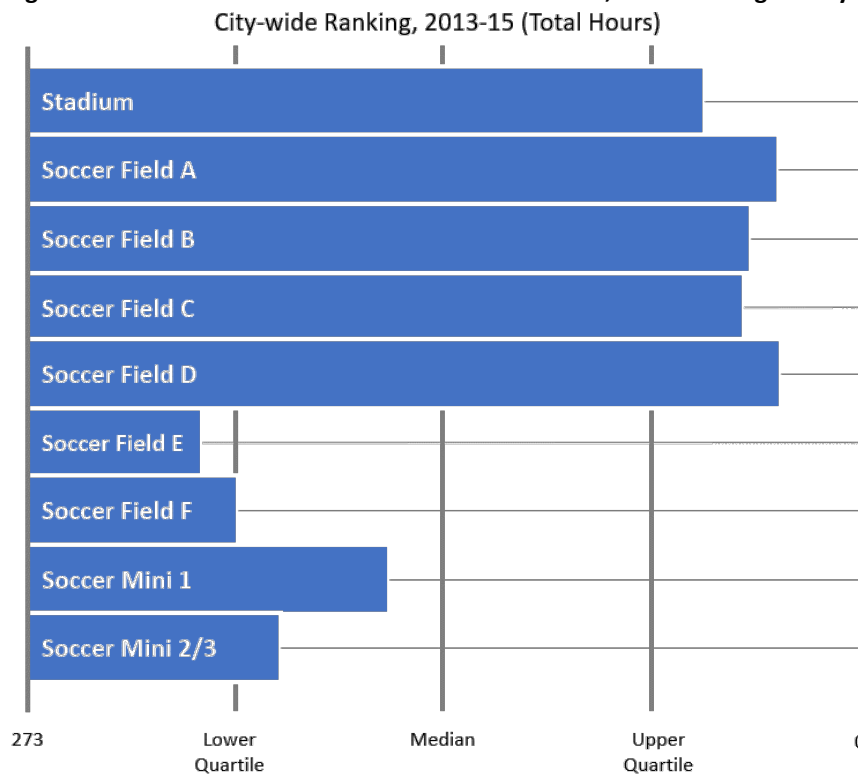
Table 6: Centennial Park Soccer and Multi-use Fields, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Rank (among 273 Permitted Soccer Fields)*

Categories	Stadium	Field A	Field B	Field C	Field D	Field E**	Field F	Mini 1	Mini 2/3
Total Hours	52	23	35	34	26	224	206	158	88
Total Visits	9	25	27	35	16	228	214	152	88

* per field

** overlaps with ball diamond

Figure 14: Centennial Park Soccer and Multi-use Fields, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Other Considerations

Across Toronto, the City maintains over 300 soccer and multi-use fields, ten of which have artificial turf that offers extended use potential (including Centennial Park Stadium). These fields are used for sports such as soccer, football, rugby, lacrosse, field hockey and ultimate frisbee. Sports fields are a core element of the City's parks system. They serve thousands of residents ranging from children's recreational programs to adult leagues to internationally sanctioned competitions. Interest is growing in many field sports and adult soccer players are among the fastest growing segment.

The FMP indicates that new soccer and rectangular fields should be added to address population growth. **Sustained efforts are also required to improve the quality of fields.** The FMP sets a target of upgrading 10% of all soccer and multi-use fields by 2038, with a focus on lower quality fields such as Class B or C fields. Upgrades to turf quality (including the additional of artificial turf) and support amenities will improve playability and the quality of experience for field users, in addition to adding capacity.

Many of the soccer and multi-use fields at Centennial Park are rated as Class A fields and are highly utilized. The Park's seven Class B and C fields are of lower quality and/or smaller dimensions and are used less frequently; many are spread throughout the park, limiting tournament potential. Further, the Class C fields lack irrigation and most Class A/B fields lack lighting. **Strategic improvements may be considered to facilitate enhanced maintenance and/or usage, in keeping with the City's field usage guidelines.**

Given the stated need to expand the supply of soccer and multi-use fields, any upgrades to Centennial Park should promote the retention, improvement and/or expansion of rectangular fields. Demand is greatest for high quality full-size lit fields that can accommodate competitive play. Providing multiple fields at one location helps to facilitate league and tournament play, and makes the best use of supporting infrastructure.

3.2.3 Ball Diamonds

Inventory & Capital Profile

Centennial Park contains six (6) ball diamonds, including:

- 3 Class A diamonds (with lights), including one hardball diamond; each diamond has dimensions of approximately 310 feet and would be appropriate for youth and/or adult play
- 3 Class C diamonds (with lights); each diamond has dimensions of approximately 230 feet and would be appropriate mainly for youth play – all diamonds have open outfields that may overlap with other fields

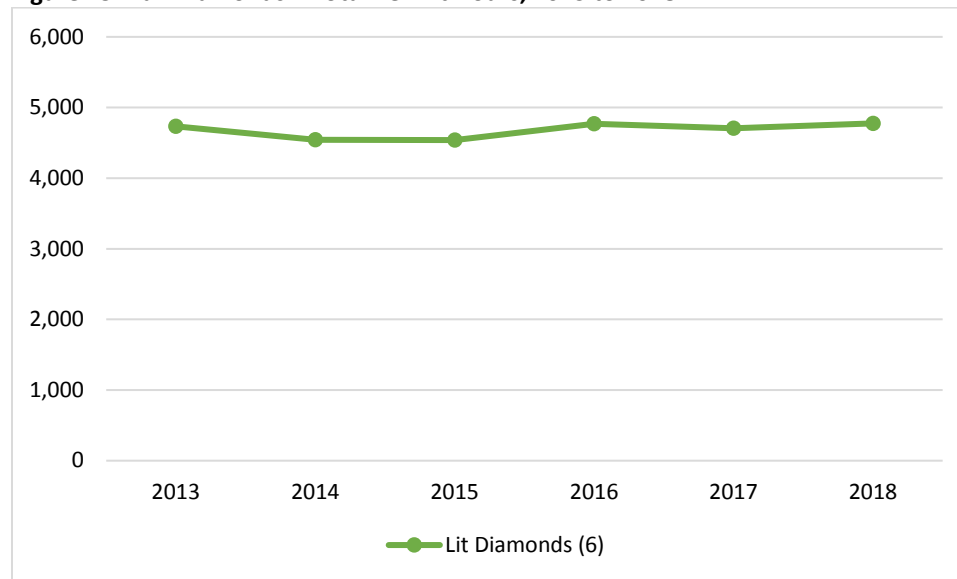
The City does not presently conduct condition assessment of its sports fields.

Trends & Usage Data

Participation in baseball (and related forms such as softball, slo-pitch and hardball) has been on the rise over the past ten years. Participation data collected by Baseball Canada revealed that there were 14,300 registered participants in 2017, which is an increase of 28% from 2007 (11,200 participants). These figures do not include recreational/house leagues and participants registered in non-affiliated ball groups and as a result, actual participation figures are greater. The renewed interest in baseball is driven by several factors such as a greater focus in skill development, grassroots programs to engage children and youth at a young age to participate in the sport, and renewed interest in the Toronto Blue Jays.

Rental trends at the Park's six ball diamonds have been steady between 2013 and 2018 (1% increase).

Figure 15: Ball Diamonds – Total Permit Hours, 2013 to 2018



Data collected for the 2017 Facilities Master Plan indicates that **all Centennial Park diamonds rank in the upper quartile of field permitting across the city**. The Optimist diamond has the second highest usage level amongst the City’s permitted diamonds, suggesting that youth hardball diamonds are in high demand. The two “diamond beach” (Class A) diamonds are used slightly more than the Class C diamonds, though demand is strong for all fields.

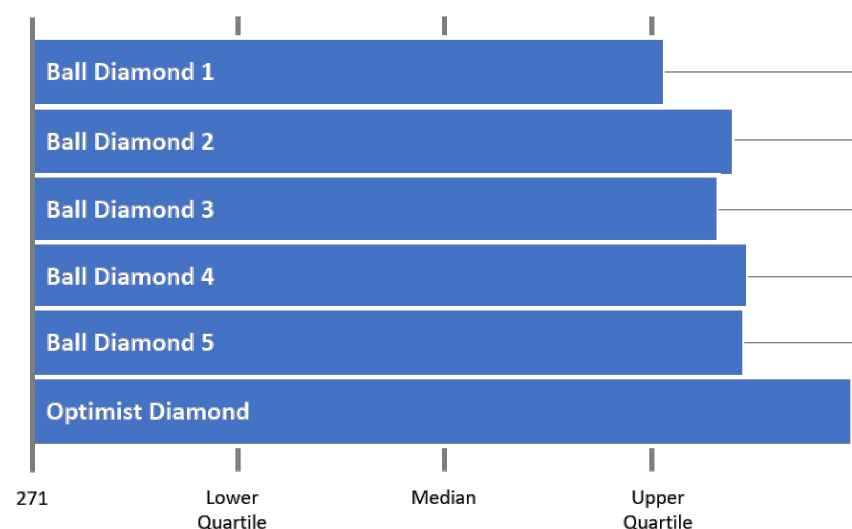
Table 7: Centennial Park Ball Diamonds, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Rank (among 271 Permitted Diamonds)*

Categories	Diamond 1	Diamond 2	Diamond 3	Diamond 4	Diamond 5	Optimist Diamond
Total Hours	64	53	59	37	38	2
Total Visits	52	51	61	34	36	4

* per field

Figure 16: Centennial Park Ball Diamonds, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)
City-wide Ranking, 2013-15 (Total Hours)



Other Considerations

Although there is growing demand for high quality ball diamonds, the FMP found that the City of Toronto has an overall surplus of diamonds. Many under-utilized diamonds are lower quality and not appropriate for all levels of play; some will be candidates for conversion to other uses, where supported by additional research. **The diamonds at Centennial Park are not good candidates for conversion to other uses as they are highly utilized and located within a multi-field complex that enhances their appeal.**

The FMP anticipates that long-term baseball needs can be addressed through improvements to the city's current inventory of ball diamonds (of which there are nearly 350 diamonds, plus school fields); new diamonds are not recommended in the FMP. The FMP sets a target of upgrading 10% of all ball diamonds by 2038 (approximately 34 diamonds), such as elevating Class B and C diamonds to Class A and Premier diamonds through improvements to field quality and support amenities.

3.2.4 Cricket Pitches

Inventory & Capital Profile

Located at the north end of Centennial Park are 2 Class C cricket pitches, as well as a practice wicket. The City does not presently conduct condition assessment of its sports fields.

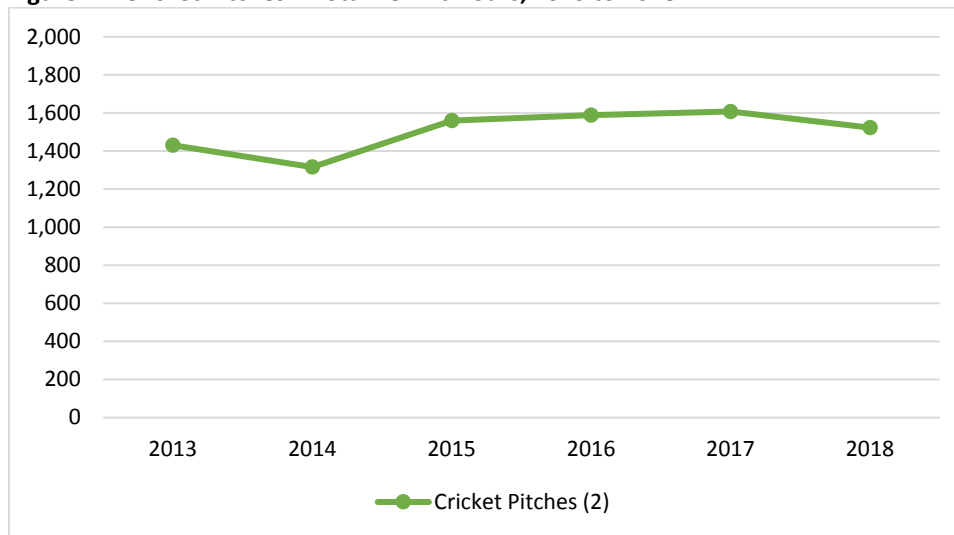
Trends & Usage Data

Cricket is a sport on the rise in Canada, driven in large part by our diverse cultural demographics. Nearby Mississauga and Brampton – which have large South Asian and West Indian populations – have higher levels of cricket pitch provision than Toronto.

Cricket pitches accommodate youth and adult programming that ranges from instructional play to recreational and competitive levels to international events. Cricket games are played predominantly on weekends, with some spanning multiple days (although short-format cricket is becoming more common). Games are popular social events for non-participating family members and should be supported by picnic areas and other recreational amenities.

Permitting of the Park's two cricket pitches increased by 6% between 2013 and 2018.

Figure 17: Cricket Pitches – Total Permit Hours, 2013 to 2018



Data collected for the 2017 FMP indicates that the Centennial Park cricket pitches are two of the three highest use pitches in the city, supporting the finding that they are in very high demand.

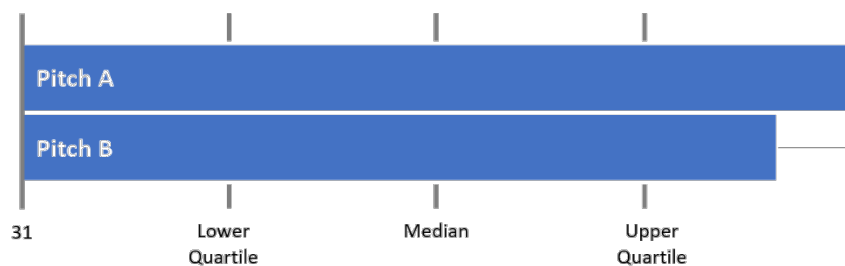
Table 8: Centennial Park Cricket Pitches, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Rank (among 38 Permitted Cricket Pitches)*

Categories	Pitch A	Pitch B
Total Hours	3	1
Total Visits	3	1

* per field

Figure 18: Centennial Park Cricket Pitches, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)
City-wide Ranking, 2013-15 (Total Hours)



Other Considerations

The FMP identified a need for five additional cricket pitches in the city by 2038 to address growth-related needs. To improve geographic equity, new pitches are required most in Toronto East York and Etobicoke York. Additional capacity may also be addressed through improvements to existing cricket pitches and the City has set a target of upgrading 10% of all cricket pitches over the next twenty years (approximately 3 pitches). **Currently, 57% of the City's supply consists of Class C pitches, including those in Centennial Park.**

3.3 Indoor Facilities



Etobicoke Olympium - Exterior



Centennial Park Arena – Exterior



Etobicoke Olympium – Interior



Centennial Park Arena – Interior

3.3.1 Centennial Park Arena

Inventory & Capital Profile

As of 2019, the City owns 50 Indoor Arenas (17 of which are operated by Boards of Management) providing a total of 65 indoor ice pads. **Centennial Park Arena is one of 12 multi-pad arenas owned by the City.**

Centennial Park Arena was built in 1972 and contains two indoor ice pads (each measuring 185 by 85 feet; ice is removed in the summer), 8 to 10 change rooms (below grade), and two multi-use rooms. **The facility is designed to be expanded to the southwest, an area currently occupied by an outdoor multi-purpose field.**

The arena is listed in fair condition. **The facility has a total of \$5.5M in identified SOGR projects over the next ten years**, but recently underwent renovations as part of the Canada 150 Community Infrastructure Program; a portion of the listed SOGR may have been addressed through this renovation.

Trends & Usage Data

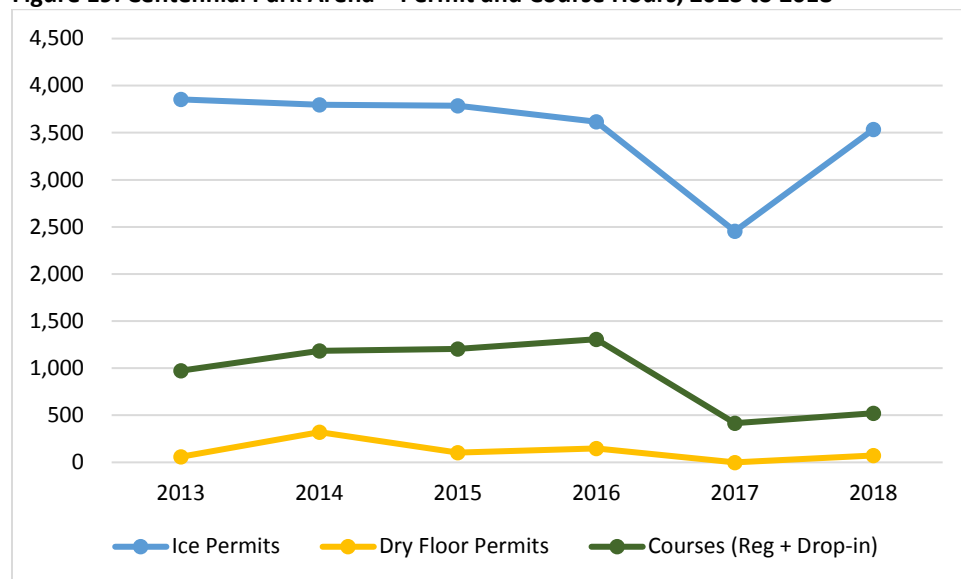
Across Canada, participation in organized ice sports is stable to declining – registration in the Ontario Hockey Federation declined by 21% between the 2008/09 and 2017/18 seasons. Currently, 8% of Canadian children and youth play hockey, less than half the percentage that played twenty years ago.

Growth in female hockey participation has helped to slow this trend, but also peaked in 2008/09.⁹ This trend applies to Toronto as well – data collected for the FMP indicates **that there has been no appreciable change in the overall number of youth participants permitting City of Toronto rinks in the past five seasons.**

This trend is a result of several factors, such as the high costs of play, increasing cultural diversity, aging population (79% of Toronto’s arena users are youth), and greater competition from alternative winter activities. In addition, there is a growing unwillingness to play during less convenient time slots, such as early mornings and late evenings, a trend that has been noted in Toronto despite policy changes to encourage greater usage.

Consistent with this observation, **ice rentals at Centennial Park Arena declined by 8% between 2013 and 2018, while the number of course hours decreased by 46%.** Dry floor usage increased by 24% during this timeframe, but has fluctuated and represents a much smaller percentage of overall use.

Figure 19: Centennial Park Arena – Permit and Course Hours, 2013 to 2018



Note: The arena underwent renovations in 2017, which impacted availability and revenues.

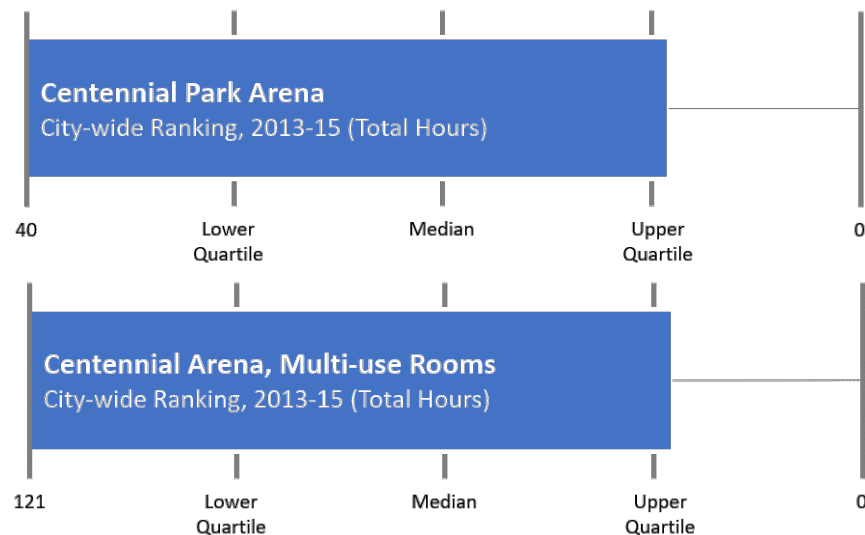
Data collected for the 2017 FMP indicates that the **Centennial Park Arena ranks in the upper quartile of arena usage (hours) across the city, driven by its strong rental profile.** Arenas with multiple pads and convenient access tend to attract more rentals as these factors help to support league and tournament play. Conversely, the arena is not as well used for courses or drop-in programs, although its two multi-use rooms rank within the upper quartile of use.

⁹ Hockey Canada. Annual General Meeting Reports.

Table 9: Centennial Park Arena, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Categories	Arena Rank (among 40 City Arenas)*	Multi-use Room Rank (among 193 Rooms)*
Course Hours	25 of 40	--
Drop-in Hours	33 of 40	--
Permit Hours	5 of 40	--
Total Hours	9 of 40	45 of 193
Total Visits	19 of 40	36 of 193
Visits per Hour	36 of 40	42 of 193

* per pad/room

Figure 20: Centennial Park Arena, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Centennial Park Area was compared to Commander Arena to provide a closer look at how the arena is currently used. Centennial Park Arena offers a larger variety of instructional programs and more specialized ‘hockey skills’ programs, although the total number of registrations was lower at Centennial Park Arena. Permitting (and revenue) is also greater at Centennial Park Arena.

Table 10: Arena Usage Comparisons

Categories	Centennial Park Arena	Comparator (Commander Park Arena)	Overall Trend at Centennial Park Arena (2015-2018)
Programs Offered (2018)	63	42	Stable (-2%)
Arena Programming Hours (2018)	523	262	Decreasing (-12%)
Program Registrations (2018)	534	653	Increasing (+11%)
Booking Hours (2018)	6,600	3,901	Decreasing (-22%)
Revenue from Permits (2018)	\$738,572	\$555,738	Stable (-3%)

Source: City of Toronto, Policy & Strategic Planning (2019)

Other Considerations

Recognizing the slow decline in ice sports, the FMP does not recommend any additional municipal arenas. Instead, strategic renewal and the creation of multi-pad arenas co-located with other recreation spaces will be emphasized, ensuring that users have safe and high quality venues in which to participate.

An arena replacement and repurposing strategy will be developed to ensure that the City's arenas can continue to meet long-term community needs.

While some arenas may be repurposed to other uses, such as indoor skateboarding or curling facilities, Centennial Park Arena is not a candidate for conversion due to its strong usage levels, service to local and city-wide users¹⁰, and multi-pad design (which enhances efficiencies in operations and use). However, it is understood that the arena has expansion potential and the FMP supports co-locating arenas with other community recreation spaces to broaden their appeal and provide the City with more programmable community spaces that can be accessed year-round for a variety of ice and non-ice activities.

On a related note, the FMP suggests that the City accommodate curling within its existing inventory of facilities, where feasible and guided by a future strategy. **Recently, the curling community has expressed a need for additional curling facilities in Toronto.** This has been brought on by several factors, most notably the recent closure of three facilities (totalling 18 sheets and serving 1,800 members). Curling rinks are traditionally provided by the private sector, although there are three legacy facilities within the City's recreation inventory. The distribution of municipal and private curling facilities is weakest in the Etobicoke York district. Advocates for the sport suggest that its popularity is on the rise and interest is growing among all ages and cultures, from casual players to competitive athletes (the Ontario Curling Association indicates that over 2 million Canadians curled last year and this number has been growing since 2015).

3.3.2 Etobicoke Olympium (community recreation centres)

Inventory & Capital Profile

The Etobicoke Olympium is one of 85 Large Multi-use or Mid-size Community Recreation Centres (CRCs) operated by the City of Toronto. CRCs provide publicly accessible space that promotes and supports community engagement, social connections and personal health, wellness and physical activity.

The facility is well known for its role as a competitive aquatics venue as it contains two tanks, including a 50-metre course. **It is one of six Premier indoor pools in the City, including one of two that support competitive long-course meets** (the other being the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre). The gymnasium, fitness centre and various multi-use and specialty rooms also help make the Olympium a popular destination of local residents and other visiting users. Its fitness centre is one of only two Type A fitness centres in the City (the other being Cummer CRC).

The Olympium was built in 1975 and is nearly 70,000 square feet. **It is listed in good condition and recently underwent a significant renovation to support its use as a training venue for the 2015 Pan Am / Parapan Games.**

¹⁰ The nearest arenas to Centennial Park include Central Arena (5.3-kilometres) and Lambton Arena (6.5-kilometres).

Community Recreation Centre Programming

Community recreation centres serve people of all ages and abilities. With an aging population, there will be greater demand for multi-purpose rooms, indoor pools (warm water), fitness studios, age-friendly designs and barrier-free spaces, informal gathering spaces and daytime and targeted programming. There is also an increasing focus on the creation of community hubs, youth spaces and places for unstructured/self-regulated recreation.

Programming in Toronto's community recreation centres is highly varied as is facility quality. Area residents are served by programs delivered at Centennial Park (through the Etobicoke Olympium, Centennial Park Arena and Ski Chalet) and at nearby CRCs such as Hollycrest Community School, Bloordale Community School. Due to its proximity, some residents may also choose to travel into Mississauga (the closest facility is the Burnhamthorpe Community Centre, which contains a pool, fitness centre, gym, and arena); access to these facilities by Torontonians is managed through the City of Mississauga fee policy (registration rates and non-resident fees may apply).

Indoor Pools

The demand for aquatic services is expanding. Indoor pools are some of the most highly sought-after recreation facilities and swimming represents nearly 30% of PFR's service hours, representing nearly 4 million visits and one-third of PFR's waitlist in 2018. Today's users require higher levels of design (e.g., multi-tanks, different configurations, etc.) and functionality (e.g., different water temperatures). Accessible, inclusive and high quality indoor pools are responsive to needs and emphasized in the City's capital program. These attributes were a key focus of the recent Olympium renovation and are a key part of what makes the facility a popular aquatic venue.

Compared to similar facilities (Cummer Park Community Centre was chosen as the comparator pool based on similarities in pool programming), Etobicoke Olympium's program registrations have declined since 2016, while they have increased year-over-year at Cummer Park Community Centre; revenues are in line with this trend as well. **Conversely, pool rentals have been increasing at the Etobicoke Olympium, which is a City-wide site for competitions and training; this has led to a positive trend in overall facility revenue, but creates challenges in providing a balanced range of community programs.**

Table 11: Indoor Pool Usage Comparisons

Categories	Etobicoke Olympium	Comparator (Cummer Park CC)	Overall Trend at Etobicoke Olympium (2016-2018)*
Programs Offered (2018)	1,411	1,226	Decreasing (-14%)
Pool Programming Hours (2018)	8,713	9,026	Decreasing (-11%)
Program Registrations (2018)	4,449	6,888	Decreasing (-7%)
Revenue from Programs (2018)	\$414,311	\$473,185	Decreasing (-9%)
Booking Hours (2018)	6,292	n/a (low)	Stable (0%)
Total Revenue (2018)	\$692,667	\$478,000	Increasing (+11%)

* In 2015, usage of the Etobicoke Olympium was impacted by the Pan Am Games; 2016 is used as the year of comparison.

Source: City of Toronto, Policy & Strategic Planning (2019)

Data collected for the 2017 FMP indicates that the Etobicoke Olympium ranks in the upper quartile of total hours and visits across all City-operated pools. In fact, it is the most heavily permitted pool in the inventory, including amongst the City's Premier-class pools (prior to the development of TPASC). **Its profile indicates that it is a well used venue for permitting (such as training and competitions), but offers fewer drop-in hours than most other pool locations.** As of 2015, this location received an average number of program registrations (but fewer than other Premier pools).

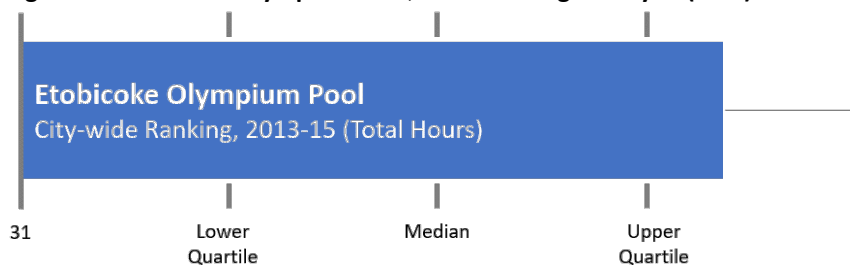
Table 12: Etobicoke Olympium Pool, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Categories	Rank (among 31 City Pools)*	Rank (among 5 Premier Pools)**
Registered Participants	18 of 31	5 of 5
Waitlist	25 of 31	5 of 5
Course Hours	11 of 31	4 of 5
Drop-in Hours	24 of 31	5 of 5
Permit Hours	1 of 31	1 of 5
Total Hours	5 of 31	3 of 5
Total Visits	6 of 31	5 of 5
Visits per Hour	8 of 31	5 of 5

* excludes pools in schools

** excludes TPASC

Figure 21: Etobicoke Olympium Pool, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)



Gymnasiums and Multi-use Rooms

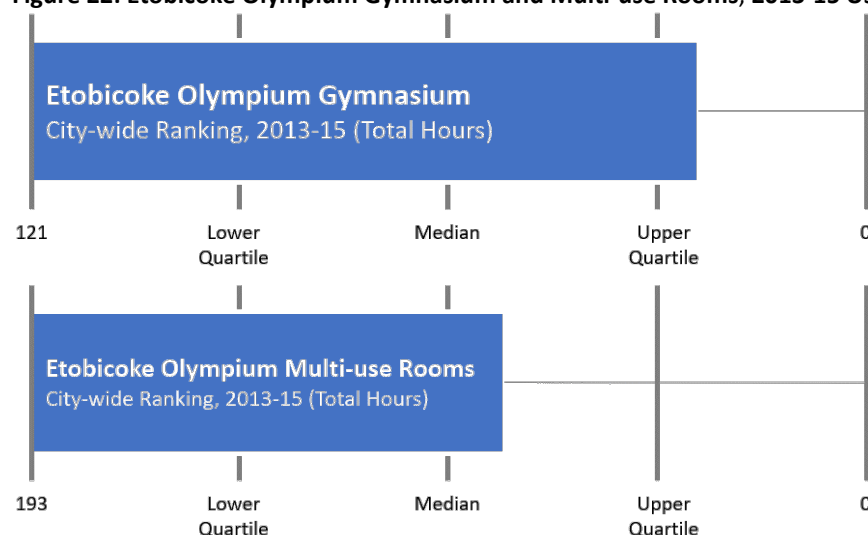
Gymnasiums are well-used spaces that offer extensive flexibility in use, including activities such as sports (e.g., basketball, volleyball, badminton, netball, etc.), a wide variety of registered and drop-in programs, special events, community meetings and more. A significant amount of programming, activities and community meetings take place in community and multi-purpose rooms, which are a necessary amenity within any CRC.

Data collected for the 2017 FMP indicates that **the gymnasium at the Etobicoke Olympium ranks in the upper quartile of total hours, courses and registered participants across all City-operated gymnasiums.** While the gym is well used for courses and permits, it receives an average level of drop-in use. The fifteen multi-use and activity rooms at the Olympium generally accommodate an average level of use compared to other rooms across the city.

Table 13: Etobicoke Olympium Gymnasium and Multi-use Rooms, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Categories	Rank (among 121 Gyms)*	Rank (among 193 Rooms)*
Registered Participants	25 of 121	--
Waitlist	47 of 121	--
Course Hours	8 of 121	--
Drop-in Hours	67 of 121	--
Permit Hours	34 of 121	--
Total Hours	24 of 121	82 of 193
Total Visits	51 of 121	122 of 193
Visits per Hour	104 of 121	168 of 193

* per gym/room

Figure 22: Etobicoke Olympium Gymnasium and Multi-use Rooms, 2013-15 Usage Analysis (FMP)

Fitness Centres

The Olympium's fitness centre is a key feature of the facility. It is well used and generates slightly more revenue than a comparable fitness facility at the Cummer Community Centre, but substantially less than the fitness centre at the Toronto Pan Am Sports Centre (which offers a similar suite of services). A city-wide fitness review is ongoing.

Other Considerations

The FMP supports reinvesting in existing CRCs, with a focus on those centres that are in the greatest capital need and offer opportunities to enhance and expand services to residents in areas of high need. **Although the Etobicoke Olympium is now more than 40 years old (the median age of CRCs in the city), a major renovation project was completed recently and the facility is not a candidate for redevelopment.** The FMP also supports the provision of new CRCs in pace with growth – **three new CRCs are recommended to address gap and growth areas within the Etobicoke York District:** Etobicoke City Centre; Central Etobicoke; and North Rexdale.

The Central Etobicoke Hub Feasibility Study (2017) prepared by Social Planning Toronto also supports the need for additional community centre space in Ward 2. The FMP has proposed the development of a community recreation centre as a high priority in the eastern half of this ward, closest to the

Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. While the proposed CRC will address many of the needs identified in the Feasibility Study, the Study also highlighted needs that could be enhanced at other locations in the ward – such as facilities within Centennial Park – including:

- space to provide a range of programs and services (including seniors and youth);
- common space for residents to meet, socialize and connect;
- track and gymnasium facilities; and
- surrounding green space for community gardening and active recreation.

The FMP recommends several new indoor pools, gymnasiums and multi-use rooms in proposed CRCs and geographic gap areas. The area around Centennial Park is adequately served in this respect.

Although there are no major indoor facility gaps in the immediate vicinity, a desire for improved access to the Etobicoke Olympium for local residents was expressed as part of the FMP consultation process. The City is currently implementing a strategy to reduce waitlists and grow recreation services, and balancing competing demands will be part of this strategy.

3.4 Contracted & Supporting Facilities

Centennial Park contains several facilities that are operated by third-parties. These – along with the Conservatory and Greenhouse – are beyond the scope of this initial analysis, but may offer opportunities for additional programming in the future.



Beach Volleyball Courts / Batting Cages



Conservatory (maintained by City)



Mini-Indy



Golf Course

4. NEEDS ASSESSMENT & PRIORITIES FOR INVESTMENT

This section contains an assessment of current and future facility needs based on the review of Centennial Park facilities and services (Section 3) and guiding documents such as the City's Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (FMP). Where applicable, recommendations – which consider new, revitalized and/or repurposed facilities – have been aligned with FMP priorities and timelines.

4.1 Assessment Methodology

The identification of facility requirements considers a range of factors. Broadly, the analysis has been informed by the FMP guiding principles, goals and objectives. More specifically, the process:

- a) considers the public and stakeholder input received through the recent Centennial Park consultation program;
- b) examines areas of alignment with the growth-related needs and geographic gaps identified in the FMP¹¹;
- c) assesses opportunities to improve and optimize existing facilities based on the current state of facilities, their target market and their usage (identified in Section 3);
- d) identifies new facilities that could possibly be introduced to the park based on gaps in provision and supporting trends; and
- e) responds to demographic influences, participation trends and relevant municipal strategies.

4.2 Strategic Objectives

A number of themes have emerged from the review of the FMP and Centennial Park facilities and services. These themes have been synthesized into five broadly-defined strategic objectives that will guide the needs assessment.

1. ADDRESSING LOCAL GAPS FOR UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION

Centennial Park serves a very broad range of users, from area residents that view it as their local park¹² to other Torontonians and visitors that are using city-wide and higher-order facilities. Although population growth in the surrounding area will be limited, the FMP provides a framework through which to identify and evaluate gaps in facility provision, with a focus on equity.



Several local- and district-level facilities promote unstructured recreation and trends indicate growing interest in opportunities that respond to changing demographics, lifestyle trends, and emerging needs. Many activities that are now popular were not contemplated when Centennial Park was initially conceived, such as skateboarding, interactive waterplay (splash pads), pickleball, community gardening and off-leash dog activities.

¹¹ To assist in the analysis of gaps, public recreation facilities and park amenities within a 2.5-kilometre radius of Centennial Park were identified for most facility types. This represents the outer limit of the conceptual service area for most community-level facilities, such as indoor and outdoor aquatic facilities.

¹² The 2018 Toronto Social Capital Study found that park development in the area has been under-resourced due to the existence of Centennial Park, which has led to a gap in recreation.

2. IDENTIFYING CITY-WIDE PARK OPPORTUNITIES

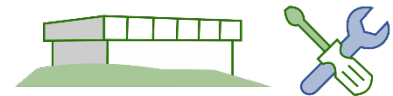
Centennial Park contains several spaces and facilities that are highly permitted by outside groups. As a prominent City-wide destination, the Park is able to accommodate a broad range of activities, including unique facilities that serve people from across the city and region such as the Pan Am BMX Centre. The Park also contains a wide variety of active and passive spaces, including sensitive environmental landscapes. Finding an appropriate balance between these uses is one of the key challenges at Centennial Park. Partnerships with organizations at various levels may be sought to enhance usage and stewardship and strike the right balance.



Increasingly, PFR is expanding and offering diverse outdoor and indoor programming within its parks. Additional registered and drop-in programming may be an opportunity to be considered at Centennial Park, including year-round opportunities, which are supported by the City's Parkland Strategy.

3. ENHANCING EXISTING AMENITIES & PARK DESIGN

Centennial Park initially opened in 1967, although some facilities were phased in over time. Most of the park's core components are at or approaching their end of life, requiring considerable investment. The City has recently undertaken large-scale improvements to the Olympium, Arena and Stadium. Renewal and/or repurposing of other aging amenities – such as the ski hill, sports fields, wading pool, playgrounds and picnic facilities – needs to be rationalized.



Furthermore, thoughtful park design that responds to the landscape and community needs is essential to creating great public spaces – this will be a focus of the Master Plan Update. Wayfinding and signage, accessibility, user experience and connections are areas requiring special attention in Centennial Park – these are also among the primary types of improvements recommended within the Parkland Strategy.

4.3 Unstructured Use Facilities

4.3.1 Ski Hill and Chalet

Building upon the analysis in Section 3, the following findings may be useful in guiding the decision surrounding the ski hill:

- a) Traditionally, the snow centres are profitable as a unit (excluding capital reinvestment). The average cost recovery of this business unit is 115%; however, this has been declining in recent years (likely impacted by closures and reduced capacity at Centennial Park).
- b) Closure of the lift and south run, coupled with temporary unplanned closures to accommodate repairs to the snow-making equipment, have severely limited the capacity and operational performances of the Centennial Park Snow Centre. While demand for programs remains strong, the range of programs and market has been diminished.
- c) The lifts and snow-making equipment are at or beyond end of life. An operational lift will be necessary to bring this facility up to consumer and technical standards. Maintaining and improving the facility will require a large capital investment.
- d) As a result of its reduced capacity, revenues and usage have declined considerably. The Centennial Park snow centre is being significantly outperformed by the Earl Bales snow centre, although future skiing and snowboarding participation trends can be unpredictable.

- e) The operation of ski hills is not traditionally a municipal service in Ontario. The Centennial Park ski hill offers programs that are largely categorized as “secondary” according to the City’s Recreation Services Plan (secondary programs are: not offered everywhere; respond to individual need; and provide individual benefit). Primary “learn to” programs are offered at Earl Bales Snow Centre in North York and there is capacity to accommodate registrants at this location, which is more central to most parts of Toronto.
- f) Winter usage is weather dependent and climate change is contributing to greater volatility and uncertainty across the ski and snowboard industry. Revenue is uneven and highly dependent on weather and snow conditions.
- g) The ski industry has changed dramatically since Centennial Park ski hill was initially developed; although the number of Canadians that ski has not changed dramatically, many are increasingly seeking out destination resorts (e.g., Blue Mountains) that began proliferating in the 1990s and 2000s. The focus is also shifting from recreational skiing and snowboarding to authentic ski and winter activities that provide broader lifestyle benefits to participants and are driven by savvy marketing campaigns.¹³
- h) With increasing immigration and an aging population, it is unlikely that demand for downhill sports will increase in the future; rather a projection of slow decline is the more likely scenario.
- i) There is interest in enhancing year-round, multi-season use of the site; however, the ability to offer enhanced winter downhill opportunities is hindered by size and height of hill. The ability to offer summer opportunities is also limited by concerns over liability, cost-benefit, competing opportunities (e.g., BMX Park), and low interest.

Unstructured uses hold the most promise for a re-envisioned hill. For example, one opportunity may be creating a designated tobogganing area (relocating this from its current placement near the BMX Centre to a larger and more accessible location). During the summer, hiking and fitness trails would appeal both to the casual user and those seeking cross-training experiences.

- j) There is growing demand for local access to indoor community spaces. The ski chalet may offer opportunities as the Etobicoke Olympium and Centennial Park Arena are at capacity.

Recommendations

1. Major capital reinvestment in the snow-making equipment and/or ski lifts at the Centennial Park snow centre is not recommended. Consistent with past studies, programming and services at the Centennial Park Snow Centre should cease when the hill operations become unviable, with programming being consolidated at Earl Bales Snow Centre. A cost-benefit analysis may assist in supporting this direction.
2. An exercise should be initiated in the short-term to re-envision future uses for the Centennial Park ski hill / snow centre once operations cease.
3. Opportunities should be sought to enhance year-round usage of the ski chalet through programming, permits and event support. A space expansion may be required to achieve the full impact of this opportunity.

¹³ The Lake Louise Ski Area Ltd. Ski Industry Economic Analysis and Long-Range Business Plan. Draft Long-Range Plan. April 2019.

4.3.2. Wading Pool

The FMP recommends that the City gradually phase out wading pools in favour of splash pads or other in-demand facilities. Three splash pads are recommended to address gaps in Ward 2, including two through new development and one through a repurposed wading pool.

There are presently two wading pools in Ward 2 that may be candidates for conversion to splash pads: Centennial Park and Glen Park (east of Highway 427). An analysis of the FMP wading pool conversion criteria finds that Centennial Park is the preferred candidate for conversion due to its antiquated design/condition, availability of splash pad support amenities (e.g., parking, washrooms, picnic areas, etc.), service to residents living west of Highway 427 (there are no other splash pads in the area) and its location in a prominent park that will attract high usage.

Recommendations

4. Convert the Centennial Park wading pool to a destination splash pad (up to 6,000 square feet). To align with the FMP, this project should be undertaken between 2029 and 2033, but could be completed earlier if associated with a broader park renewal project.

4.3.3. BMX Park

The Centennial Park Pan Am BMX Centre is under-utilized and a point of contention for some park users and stakeholders. Nonetheless, it is a premier facility in Canada and has considerable potential that could be achieved through partnership and awareness initiatives. It is recommended that the City continue to invest in program, outreach and marketing efforts to facilitate greater community use.

Recommendations

5. Consult with users, potential users and partners to identify opportunities to improve utilization of the Pan Am BMX Centre. Seek partnerships that generate regular use for training and competition, while retaining public access.

4.3.4. Other Existing Unstructured Use Amenities

Centennial Park contains several additional unstructured use amenities and spaces that support seasonal and year-round park use by a broad audience, such as (but not limited to) event space, disc golf course, playgrounds, trails, open space, ponds, picnic areas and shelters, and a model aircraft flying circle.

Recommendations

6. As required, undertake capital renewal and/or to enhancements to existing unstructured and year-round use amenities, such as the disc golf course, playgrounds, trails, open space, ponds, picnic areas and shelters, and model aircraft flying circle.
7. Consider the installation of an adventure playground with unique natural and/or challenging features.
8. Consider opportunities to enhance the accommodation of large-scale events, such as the addition of a stage, covered space and open lawn areas.

4.4 Sports Fields

4.4.1. Stadium and Track

The Centennial Park Stadium and Track are core components of the park and opportunities should be sought to ensure they are properly maintained and optimized. Acting upon a recommendation within the FMP, the City will be preparing a Sport Bubble Strategy to evaluate the potential for seasonal bubbles at stadium locations, with a focus placed on community access. This will require a site-specific assessment, as well as consideration of partnership options. Should the Centennial Park Stadium not be a candidate for a seasonal bubble, this could be a consideration at another location within the park, should an artificial turf field be installed.

Recommendations

9. As part of a city-wide Sports Bubble Strategy, evaluate the potential for installing a seasonal winter dome enclosure over the field at Centennial Park Stadium.

4.4.2. Soccer and Multi-Purpose Fields

Excluding the stadium field, there are a total of 12 soccer and/or multi-use fields of varying sizes throughout the park. Demand is greatest for large, high quality sports fields. Fields that overlap with baseball outfields should be avoided. Sustained efforts are required to improve the quality of fields, such as moving Class C fields to Class B, Class B fields to Class A or Premier, etc. Any upgrades to Centennial Park should promote the retention, improvement and/or expansion of rectangular fields.

Centennial Park is adjacent to Hollycrest Middle School – one of the City's 123 community recreation centres (community school) with soccer fields (7), ball diamonds (2 – scrub), basketball courts (2) and tennis courts (3 – in disrepair). The FMP recommended working closely with schools on improving community access to quality sports fields. In the longer-term, improvements to school fields could assist in meeting demands for weekend tournaments and other peak needs.

Recommendations

10. Opportunities should be sought to cluster and improve the quality of rectangular fields within the park. The total number of fields may be increased (with a focus on full-size, high class fields), but should not be reduced.

4.4.3. Ball Diamonds

Centennial Park contains six (6) ball diamonds in three different locations within the park. The diamonds are not good candidates for conversion to other uses as they are highly utilized and located within a multi-field complex that enhances their appeal. As with soccer fields, sustained efforts are required to improve the quality of the diamonds. A slight reduction in the number of diamonds – if accompanied by quality enhancements to maintain or increase capacity (e.g., adding lights, expanding dimensions, eliminating overlapping fields, clustering of fields, etc.) – may be considered in order to accommodate higher priority needs within the park.

Recommendations

11. Opportunities should be sought to cluster and improve the quality of ball diamonds within the park, including the addition of field lights. The total number of diamonds may be reduced slightly if potential losses in capacity are offset by quality improvements.

4.4.4. Cricket Pitches

The two cricket pitches in Centennial Park should remain, but like other sports fields, should be considered candidates for improvements (e.g., shade shelter, washrooms, lights, etc.). The potential for adding a third pitch – possibly spanning two soccer fields – should also be considered to allow for maximum use of space.

Recommendations

12. Opportunities should be sought to improve the quality of existing cricket fields within the park. The total number of pitches may be increased (such as adding a third pitch across two soccer fields), but should not be reduced.

4.5 Indoor Sport Facilities

4.5.1 Centennial Park Arena

The Centennial Park Arena consists of a twin-pad rink that is well used during the winter season. While some City of Toronto arenas may be repurposed to other uses, such as indoor skateboarding or curling facilities, Centennial Park Arena is not a candidate for conversion.

The arena is designed to be expanded to the southwest, an area currently occupied by an outdoor multi-purpose field. For the reasons articulated below, expansion of the arena is viewed as a low priority:

- a) Adding two more ice pads (to create a quad pad arena) would not be seen as a high priority within the FMP as there are other areas of the City that are in higher need of arena investment.
- b) The FMP supports enhancing year-round usage of arenas; however, there are other facilities within Centennial Park that would be higher priorities for investment, such as the ski chalet.
- c) The curling community has expressed a need for additional curling facilities in the Etobicoke area and the City has recognized that additional study is required to determine their role in meeting these needs. With a modest surplus of arenas at present, there is the potential to support curling in existing facilities rather than building new. The FMP identified several arenas

that may be repurposed to other uses (including curling) – all of these are single pad arenas and many are in the Etobicoke York district. Should the City choose to further accommodate curling within its arena system, Centennial Park Arena should not be a candidate.

- d) There are considerable functional and logistical concerns with expanding a facility that is 40+ years old. Oftentimes with projects such as this, the anticipated efficiencies are not realized.

Recommendations

13. Seek additional opportunities to maximize use of Centennial Park Arena (dry floor) during the summer months.
14. To retain the long-term potential for facility expansion – as limited as it may be – do not place significant permanent infrastructure southwest of the Centennial Park Arena. This area is currently occupied by an unlit multi-purpose field.

4.5.2 Etobicoke Olympium

The Etobicoke Olympium recently underwent a significant renovation to support its use as a training venue for the 2015 Pan Am / Parapan Games. The facility serves as a City-wide site for competitions and training, which creates challenges in providing a balanced range of community programs and drop-in opportunities for local residents.

The FMP recommends three new CRCs within the Etobicoke York District: Etobicoke City Centre; Central Etobicoke; and North Rexdale. These facilities are anticipated to address widespread needs through the district, particularly within neighbourhood improvement and growth areas. An earlier recommendation to enhance community use of the Centennial Park ski chalet also has the potential to provide for more accessible localized programming.

4.6 Contracted Facilities

Recommendations

15. Monitor the lease terms of contracted facilities and services and work with park partners to achieve the highest and best use of these spaces. At the appropriate time, consider opportunities to re-integrate the space occupied by the mini-indy, batting cages and volleyball courts into the park; additional planning will be required to determine potential uses and management models.

4.7 Other (new) Facilities

Through the scoped public consultation undertaken to support the Centennial Park Master Plan Update and a review of the Facilities Master Plan, possible opportunities for other recreation facilities not currently present within the park were identified. Discussed in more detail below, these include:

- skatepark
- tennis and/or pickleball courts
- basketball court
- dog off-leash area
- other small-scale park amenities (fitness/ trail circuit, community gardens, etc.)

4.7.1. Skateparks

Skateparks provide accessible and engaging activities for all Torontonians, particularly children, youth and young adults. The City’s Skateboard Strategy and FMP identified demand for new and improved skateparks and noted that there are large gaps in provision across the city. The FMP recommends four additional community-level skateparks, one in each district, with gaps currently assessed using a 5-kilometre radius. In Etobicoke York – and more specifically Ward 2 – the provision of a community skatepark was identified as priority between 2024 and 2028. A location has not been chosen for this project.

Skatepark planning should consider the site selection criteria identified in the City’s Skatepark Strategy, public input and park redevelopment opportunities. Priority areas are those that meet all four criteria in the following table – the Centennial Park area meets or partially meets three out of four criteria, although a park redevelopment project such as the one proposed for Centennial Park could elevate it based on opportunity.

Table 14: Area-specific Analysis of Skatepark Planning Criteria (Step 1) – Centennial Park Area Analysis

Skatepark Planning Criteria	Description	Validation
1) High concentration of youth population	The area directly surrounding Centennial Park area does not have a notable youth population, though the broader area (2.5km radius) has a slightly higher than average proportion of youth.	✓ Partially meets criteria
2) Areas with greater need	There are no Neighbourhood Improvement Areas within the vicinity of Centennial Park and the area has relatively average income levels.	✗ Does not meet criteria
3) Community interest	Consultation for various initiatives has found support for the provision of another skatepark in Etobicoke York, though the viability of a specific location has not been demonstrated.	✓ Partially meets criteria
4) Areas lacking skateparks	The nearest skateparks are located at Weston Lions Park (approximately 10-kilometres) and Eighth Street Park (approximately 11-kilometres) – each of these are “Beginner to Intermediate” parks. The nearest skatepark for “all skill levels” is in Leonard Linton Park (Vanderhoof Skatepark) approximately 22-kilometres away from Centennial Park.	✓✓ Meets criteria

If the proposed Ward 2 skatepark is not built in Centennial Park, another potential area would be east of Highway 427, which shares many of the same attributes as the study area. The Skatepark Strategy recommends assessing potential sites within gap areas using the criteria in the following table, which have been used to compare Centennial Park to an undetermined location in the eastern part of Ward 2.

Table 15: Area-specific Analysis of Skatepark Site Criteria (Step 2)

Skatepark Site Selection Criteria	Pass/ Fail	West of Highway 427 (Centennial Park)	Pass/ Fail	East of Highway 427 (site undetermined)
a) Location	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic gap area Sufficient space availability Low impact on residential areas 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Geographic gap area Space availability and impact on residential areas unknown (site-specific)
b) Proximity to youth services and facilities	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearby schools and CRCs 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to schools and CRCs unknown (site-specific)
c) Community interest	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community support undetermined (site-specific) 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community support undetermined (site-specific)
d) Access	✗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of the park are accessible by public transit Area has lower walkability score 	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area is accessible by public transit Area has higher walkability score
e) Safety and security	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park is busy and highly visible, with emergency access 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undetermined (site-specific)
f) Physical site conditions	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site is of sufficient size with expansion potential 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undetermined (site-specific)
g) Supporting amenities	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parts of the park have washrooms, lighting, water fountains, shade, etc. 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undetermined (site-specific)
h) Facility conversion opportunities	✗	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No existing courts/pads available for conversion 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undetermined (site-specific)
i) Integration opportunities	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park renewal provides an opportunity to integrate skateboarding 	?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undetermined (site-specific)

Although comparing Centennial Park to an unknown site is a theoretical exercise at this stage, it is evident that Centennial Park features many of the required criteria for a successful skatepark, especially one that is designed as a community-level all skills skatepark. The greatest challenge may be finding an appropriate location within the park that is visible, safe, complementary to other uses (e.g., BMX Centre, nearby land uses, etc.) and accessible by public transit.

In terms of design, it should be noted that the Skatepark Strategy establishes typologies by style of terrain (skateable art, transition/bowl, street plaza and hybrid) and by hierarchy (city-wide skateparks, community skateparks and skate sports). There is a strong preference for skateparks made of poured concrete (particularly for large community and city-wide facilities), which allows for design flexibility, smoother rides and increased longevity. The design process should include users, such as the Toronto Skateboarding Committee, which can help to foster a spirit of community and mentorship.

Recommendations

- Identify an area for the potential installation of community-level skatepark in Centennial Park, to be confirmed through a comparative analysis of potential sites within Ward 2. A skatepark in Ward 2 has been identified as a priority in the FMP between 2024 and 2028.

4.7.2. Tennis and Pickleball Courts

The FMP recommends investment in existing tennis courts to address SOGR and improve the playing experience. New tennis courts are only recommended in geographic gap areas or where a need has been demonstrated for additional club courts (in keeping with the City's tennis policy). Although there are no public or club tennis courts in Centennial Park, there are several in proximity, including at Mill Valley Park (1-kilometre), Garnetwood Park in Mississauga (2.0-kilometres), West Mall Rink (2.3-kilometres) and Bloordale Park South (2.5-kilometres). There are also three tennis courts at the adjacent Hollycrest Middle School, although they are in disrepair and not likely in active use. For these reasons, the development of tennis courts in Centennial Park is not recommended.

Pickleball is Canada's fastest growing sport and is very popular with older adults. Although there are presently no dedicated pickleball courts within Toronto's parks system, some tennis courts are being relined to accommodate the sport and gymnasiums are also well used. The FMP recommends that additional opportunities for pickleball should be made a priority. As the sport is still relatively new, the City has not set a provision target – the planning of pickleball courts is currently proceeding on a case-by-case basis, most notably through re-lining projects. It is anticipated that future opportunities for pickleball will largely be accommodated through the modification or redevelopment of existing tennis / multi-use courts. As there are no existing sport courts in Centennial Park – and in the absence of a City-wide provision strategy – the development of pickleball courts is not currently recommended.

4.7.3. Basketball Courts

Basketball is one of the most popular team sports in Toronto and demand is on the rise. There are outdoor basketball courts within 105 City of Toronto Parks, but none on Centennial Park. The nearest public courts (excluding schools and residential complexes) are located in Garnetwood Park in Mississauga (2.0-kilometres), Dixon Park (5.7-kilometres) and Magwood Park (7.6-kilometres).

The FMP observed that additional outdoor basketball courts are required to serve existing needs and gaps in distribution, and that new courts should emphasize multi-use designs capable of supporting a variety of sports (e.g., basketball, tennis, pickleball, ball hockey, netball, ice skating, futsal, etc.). The City recently approved a Basketball Development Plan which aims to improve program quality, address gaps in service, and build the capacity and sustainability of community-based basketball across Toronto.

Using a 2-kilometre service radius to identify gaps in distribution, two new outdoor courts were recommended for Ward 2 in the FMP and both have been identified for construction within the 10-year Capital Budget and Plan (one between 2019-2023 and another between 2024-2028). Service to neighbourhood improvement areas should be a factor in prioritizing the Ward 2 gaps (both in the western half – one east and one west of Highway 427); on this basis, the gap west of Highway 427 (the Centennial Park study area) would be the lower priority project (2024-2028).

Centennial Park provides a reasonable location for an outdoor multi-use / basketball court – particularly a full court with lighting that may serve both local and city-wide functions – though there may be other potential sites in the area as well. As with a skatepark, the challenge may be finding an appropriate location within the park that is visible, safe, complementary to other uses and accessible by public transit.

Recommendations

17. Identify an area for the potential installation of lighted full-size multi-use court in Centennial Park, to be confirmed through a comparative analysis of potential sites within Ward 2. This project has been identified as a priority in the FMP between 2024 and 2028.

4.7.4. Dog Off-Leash Areas

Dog off-leash areas (DOLAs) provide a place for owners to exercise and socialize their dogs. Pet ownership is on the rise and DOLAs have become places where people come together to socialize and celebrate their common interests. There are over 73 municipal DOLAs in Toronto, with most in higher density neighbourhoods that have fewer options for dog running and socialization (e.g., vertical living with no backyards).

There are no off-leash dog areas in Ward 2. The closest one is about 2.0-kilometres away in Mississauga (Garnetwood Park), while the nearest City of Toronto DOLA is in King's Mill Park, approximately 9-kilometres from Centennial Park. A DOLA has been proposed for Scarlet Mills Park in Etobicoke York, approximately 7-kilometres from Centennial Park.

The FMP does not establish a provision target for DOLAs and recommends that the establishment of new DOLAs should continue to be guided by the City's "People, Dogs and Parks Off-leash Policy". The evaluation of sites for potential DOLAs is based on community requests and requires neighbourhood and site-specific analysis based on the following criteria set out in the policy:

- Neighbourhood characteristics (adjacent land uses, population density, housing types, licensed dog population, proximity of existing and other potential off-leash areas located within a 15-minute walk or 1-kilometre);
- Compatibility with the park's design, established uses, features and components;
- Potential impacts on the park's functionality, condition and natural environment;
- Proportion of park to be taken up by the proposed off-leash area; and
- Proximity to residences and off-leash area exclusions.

The Off-leash Policy also sets out a variety of exclusions and requirements related to neighbourhood meetings and notices. The Policy requires that communities interested in establishing a dog off-leash area establish a local dog owners' association.

Although a park redevelopment project provides an opportunity to consider the establishment of a new dog off-leash area – and Ward 2 could be considered a geographic gap in DOLA provision – the development of a DOLA in Centennial Park is not considered further within this report as a formal request has not been made by the community. The Park Master Plan Update may set aside space for a DOLA should support be found through the ongoing public consultation program.

It is also noteworthy that the FMP recommends a greater focus on improving existing dog off-leash areas, rather than establishing new ones. This is partly because appropriate sites for DOLAs can be difficult to identify and they often compete with other park facility priorities. The City is currently preparing a study to find out how existing DOLAs can be improved. Three DOLAs are proposed in the City's capital budget and long-term plan; however, all have been allocated to specific sites. The establishment of additional DOLAs (2029 and beyond) will be subject to site-specific analysis and capital funding.

Recommendations

18. The development of a dog off-leash area in Centennial Park may be considered if a formal request is made by the community and the request meets the criteria established in the City's Off-Leash Policy. The Park Master Plan Update may designate space for a future dog off-leash area.

4.7.5. Other Small-scale Park Amenities

Although the FMP did not evaluate the full range of park-based amenities, trends and case studies in Toronto and beyond support the consideration of other amenities such as (but not limited to):

- toboggan hills
- pavilions
- fitness equipment / trail circuits
- community gardens

Recommendations

19. Consider the provision of other park-based amenities not discussed herein through the Centennial Park Master Plan Update (e.g., toboggan hill, pavilions, fitness equipment, community garden, etc.).