



To: Mayor and Council

From: Stephanie Clark, Director of Community Services

Date: September 18th, 2024

Committee of the Whole Date: September 23rd, 2024

Title: Strategic Initiative 6.3- Operationalize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

☐ For Direction

☐ For Information

☒ For Adoption

☒ Attachment (8 pages)

Recommendation: That Council of the Corporation of the Town of Smiths Falls approve the implementation strategy for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Purpose: The Department of Community Services has been tasked with undertaking Strategic Initiative 6.3 - *Operationalize the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to identify investments*. This priority item aims to help the Town plan for, and implement the activities and milestones identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, enhancing the overall quality of life for residents of our community.

Background: The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed as a key strategic document in 2022 to guide the growth, development, and enhancement of parks, recreation facilities, and recreational services within the Town of Smiths Falls. The Master Plan identifies the investments and initiatives needed to improve and expand recreational opportunities, ensuring that residents have access to quality spaces and programs that promote active living and community well-being.

In alignment with Strategic Initiative 6.3, the Town has prioritized the operationalization of this Master Plan. The Department of Community Services has been tasked with developing and implementing a strategic framework that will help identify and guide the actions needed to realize the goals outlined in the Plan. This includes improving infrastructure, enhancing accessibility, and ensuring that recreational services evolve to meet the changing needs of our growing community.

Analysis and Options: The implementation strategy for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan serves as a necessary planning tool to help the Town achieve the goals set forth therein. While the implementation strategy identifies key actions, projects, and milestones, it is important to note that no financial resources are being allocated at this stage. Each of the initiatives highlighted in the strategy will require annual budget approvals by Council, allowing for flexibility and the incorporation of fiscal realities into decision-making processes.

The strategy will be executed over several years, prioritizing initiatives based on community needs, funding opportunities, and resource availability. Council's role in the process will be integral, as each year's budget will need to reflect the required investments to advance the implementation of the Plan. This approach ensures that the Town can maintain a balanced and responsible financial framework while progressing

toward enhancing our recreational opportunities and infrastructure. Approval of this strategy at this time is an important step to ensure proper planning and to signal the Town's commitment to advancing its recreational priorities.

The options ahead of Council are as follows:

- 1) Adopt the implementation plan. **(Recommended)**
- 2) Do not adopt the implementation plan. *(Not recommended)*

Budget/Financial Implications:

The approval of the implementation strategy for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan does not, at this time, allocate any financial resources. The strategy outlines the priorities and actions necessary to achieve the objectives of the Plan, but each project and initiative will be subject to the Town's annual budget process. As a result, all identified projects will require individual budget approvals by Council during the corresponding fiscal year.

This approach allows the Town to manage its financial commitments in a phased and responsible manner, ensuring that investments in parks and recreation services are balanced with other budgetary priorities. Additionally, external funding opportunities, such as grants or partnerships, will be pursued where possible to offset costs and minimize the financial impact on the Town's overall budget.

Link to Strategic Plan (2023-2026): Strategic initiative 6.3- Operationalizing the parks and Recreation Plan to identify investments

Existing Policy: Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Consultations: NA

Attachments: Implementation Strategy – Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Respectfully Submitted by:

Approved for agenda by CAO (Acting):

Stephanie Clark, Director of Community Services

Original Copy signed:
Paul McMunn, Director of Public Works Utilities

***Parks and Recreation Master Plan Implementation:
A Vision for the Future of Smiths Falls***

Introduction

The Town of Smiths Falls has embarked on a mission to renew and enhance its parks and recreational facilities as part of a long-term strategy to support the health, well-being, and enjoyment of all its residents. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan is more than just an investment in infrastructure—it is an investment in community vitality, environmental stewardship, and the future of Smiths Falls as a vibrant place to live, visit, and explore. By focusing on accessible, modern, and engaging recreational spaces, we are building a foundation that will serve residents and attract visitors for years to come.

This implementation plan outlines the detailed projects that will bring this vision to life, ensuring that we deliver on the priorities identified by our community. These projects will improve the overall quality of life, boost economic development through enhanced tourism, and solidify Smiths Falls as a leader in recreational excellence.

Goals and Objectives

The key goals of this implementation plan include:

1. **Enhancing Existing Parks and Playgrounds:** Upgrading outdated infrastructure to meet current safety, accessibility, and design standards, while positioning the Town's recreational infrastructure to better meet existing and future needs.
2. **Expanding Recreational Opportunities:** Developing new parks, playgrounds, and trails in areas of growth to provide equitable access to recreational amenities across all neighborhoods; ensuring that existing recreational facilities are meeting current and future needs, and considering facility expansion or development as required.
3. **Fostering Community Pride and Engagement:** Beautifying parks and public spaces to create welcoming, enjoyable environments that foster community pride and strengthen social ties.
4. **Promoting Connectivity and Accessibility:** Ensuring that all residents, regardless of ability, can easily access and enjoy Smiths Falls' parks and recreational facilities through improved pathways and sidewalks.

Key Projects and Timelines

The following key projects represent the core initiatives of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, each contributing to the long-term goals of enhancing recreational spaces, improving accessibility, and fostering community pride. These projects have been carefully planned with clear budgets, resources, and timelines to ensure successful delivery.

1. Playground and Park Enhancements

All Playgrounds

In partnership with Duncan J. School, the Town will install communication boards at each of its playgrounds. The communication boards have been designed by students from DJS and will be site specific.

- 2025 Installation: Communication Boards adjacent to all Town playground facilities.
 - Budget: \$15,000
- 2025-2026: Upgraded park and playground signage including replacement of missing signage in relevant parks.
 - Budget: \$40,000

Hyland-Corbett Park

The Hyland-Corbett Park playground was successfully upgraded in 2023 at an actual cost of \$129,000. The renovation included modern, accessible play equipment that caters to children of all abilities. This park now serves as a model for future playground developments in Smiths Falls.

- 2024: An inclusive spinner will be added to the playground area, complete with base preparation and rubberized matting to ensure accessibility and safety.
 - Budget: \$40,000
- 2027: The park will see further improvements with the installation of additional sensory play items, such as a sensory sway swing and/or ground-level musical instruments adjacent to the spinner, enhancing the sensory experience for children.
 - Budget: \$60,000



Victoria Park

Victoria Park's play structure was enhanced in 2023 with an investment of \$113,000. This upgrade has increased the park's appeal, creating a safe, inclusive, and vibrant space for families. The new equipment supports active play and encourages children of all ages and abilities to participate.

2024 Enhancements: Several upgrades will be made to improve accessibility and safety:

- Add a sidewalk and accessible approach to the existing swing set.
- Fully decommission the wading pool to make way for further enhancements.
- Budget: \$55,000 (\$45,000 for sidewalk and accessible approach, \$10,000 for decommissioning the wading pool)
- 2026 Enhancements
- Install rubberized matting under the entirety of the existing play structure.
 - Budget: \$250,000

Lee Avenue Parkette

This parkette will be host to features that cater to children aged 2-12, including sensory and mobility play elements. The design will include fully accessible features, and rubberized matting where possible, and will complete the park space associated with this previous subdivision development.

- 2024 Design and installation:
 - Budget: \$90,000
- Install a sidewalk and accessible approach to create active transportation connection to the park space.
 - Budget: \$45,000

Alexander Park

- 2024 – Removal of the play features that are beyond end-of-life; host community consultation to develop vision of park space for 2025.
- 2025 Design and installation:



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

- Comprehensive enhancement that includes the installation of new playground equipment, the creation of a walking trail, the planting of additional trees, and the construction of a picnic shelter.

- Budget: \$150,000

Memorial Community Centre Complex

2026-2028 Phased Implementation: A multi-phase project to enhance the recreation zone in the Memorial Community Centre Arena Complex:

- Phase 1-2026: Install a Pump Track with accessible options where possible.
 - Budget: \$85,000
- Phase 2-2026-2027: Expand the play area to include an enclosed, inclusive playground with rubberized matting, wheelchair-accessible entrances, ground-level play features, sensory play panels, visual boards, and calming stations.
 - Budget: \$300,000
 - Phase 3-2028: Install a splash pad with accessible and sensory features.
 - Budget: \$950,000

Lower Reach Park

2024-2027 Phased Implementation: A comprehensive redesign of Lower Reach Park will take place over several phases:

- Phase 1- 2024: Remove the wooden play structure and replace it with an accessible swing set, including both tot and adult swings.
 - Budget: \$25,000
- Phase 2- 2024: Commission contractor (Q3) to undertake redesign of Lower Reach park space.
 - Budget: \$100,000
- Phase 3- 2025: Revitalize the splash pad area, incorporating more ground-level spray features and repair leaks/concerns.
 - Budget: \$150,000



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

- Phase 4-2026-2027: Revitalize the entire playground area, adding rubberized matting, sensory play elements, visual boards, calming stations, slides, accessible swings, and climbers.

- Budget: \$300,000

Bellamy Farms Subdivision Playground and Trail

In conjunction with the development of the new subdivision, the department will aim to finalize the

- 2024- Finalize Design of a full-size playground with a rubberized base, accessible swing set, and spinner. Additionally, multi-use picnicking and seating areas will be developed, featuring accessible tables and adjacent trail.
- 2025- Installation of Play Structure
 - Budget: \$250,000
- 2026- Development of Trail
 - Budget: \$350,000

Parkview Homes Subdivision

A new park space will be developed in the latest Parkview Homes subdivision, providing recreational space for this growing area.

- 2027- Creation of a tennis/pickleball court, basketball court and defined open-greenspace. Include lighting, seating and a few interactive play features.
 - Budget: \$75,000

Victoria Park Beautification

A significant beautification project will take place in Victoria Park aimed at removing outdated infrastructure and enhancing the overall aesthetics.

- 2024- Removal of the remains of the Kinsmen Memorial Pool; demolition of a derelict shed in Victoria Park; updates to the benches along Evergreen Avenue.
 - Budget: \$2500
- 2024- enhancing the appearance of the fuel tanks at Victoria Park. This project will include installing a fence around the fuel tank to disguise the industrial nature of the utility.



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

- Budget: \$10,000
- 2025- Update benches and garbage cans along Evergreen Avenue.
 - Budget: \$10,000

Murphy Park Beautification

Ongoing beautification will take place in Murphy Park, aimed at removing outdated infrastructure and enhancing the overall aesthetics.

- 2026: Updating existing seating through the replacement of wooden benches, installation of additional of affixed picnic tables, and installation of permanent garbage cans.
 - Budget: \$10,000

Revitalization of Parkette and Boulevard Spaces

2024-2027 Ongoing Implementation: Develop parkette/rest spots throughout the community in vacant or underutilized spaces, ensuring connectivity to trails and sidewalks; upgrade and revitalize existing parkette and rest spaces. These include upgrading/swapping out existing wooden benches and garbage cans with powder-coated steel benches and matching garbage bins for continuity with downtown look and feel as well as added durability.

- Site works will be conducted as required to meet accessible standards, including curb and approach enhancements.
 - Budget: \$5000 per parkette plus site improvements (TBD)

Abbott and Lombard

The vacant corner lot at Abbott and Lombard will undergo a transformation with the installation of benches, flower beds, shrubs, and trees, and upgrades to the trail into the area adjacent to the Canal.

- 2024- installation of benches and planting of trees; levelling of lot and clearing area.
 - Budget: \$25,000
- 2025: Installation of flower beds and additional shrubs; enhancements to the trail into the area adjacent to the Canal.
 - Budget: \$10,000



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

3. Infrastructure Development

Civitan Ball Diamonds

- 2024-Removal of the derelict shed to make way for future developments and improvements in the area.
 - Budget: \$500
- 2025- Rolling of the baseball fields to improve the quality of the playing surface, and increasing safety.
 - Budget: \$18,000

Cataraqui Trailhead Development

2024- This will provide a clearly defined trailhead and parking lot that enhances access to the Cataraqui Trail. This project will include signage, potential for seating, and a graded, defined parking lot.

- Budget: \$45,000

Turtle Island Development

- 2027- Remove unsightly concrete connection from the island to the pedestrian bridge; enhance lighting and introduce additional shoreline vegetation as a deterrent for Canada Geese.
 - Budget: \$70,000

Murphy Park Beach Restoration

These projects will enhance the park's usability, and encourage more water-based recreation.

- 2027- Restoration of the Junior Beach; additional sand; shoreline vegetation planting to reduce impact of erosion; install a ramp for accessible access to the water.
 - Budget: \$100,000 for beach restoration

Healing Circle on Duck Island

Installation of a Healing Circle on Duck Island, offering a serene and culturally significant space for ceremony, reflection and community gatherings. This project is a key element of the town's commitment to reconciliation.

- 2024- complete Landscape design; build and install Healing Circle



SMITHS FALLS

RISE AT THE FALLS

- Budget: \$20,000

Placemaking/Wayfinding

Council Strategic Initiative 3.1- *Placemaking, activate and link waterfront areas (parks and paths) to entice and attract visitors and residents to the waterfront at all times of the day, and year round.*

- 2025- Engage qualified contractor to assist in mapping/delineating safe, clear paths of travel and linkages for trails, parks and paths.
 - Budget: \$20,000
- 2026- Design and install clear, informative signage; create guide (e.g. app/guidebook/map) for residents and visitors to map their travel through the trail network
 - Budget: \$50,000
- 2027-2029: Undertake pathway improvements to ensure accessibility and unimpeded, safe travel is possible.
 - Budget: TBD

Youth Arena Feasibility Study

A feasibility study will be conducted to determine the best path forward for the youth arena facility. This study will assess current usage, community needs, and potential upgrades or repurposing options to ensure the facility continues to serve the town effectively.

- 2024- Engage qualified contractor to undertake a feasibility study for the Youth Arena complex.
 - Budget: \$80,000

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan represents a significant investment in the future of Smiths Falls. The projects outlined in this implementation plan are designed to enhance the quality of life for all residents, create inclusive and accessible spaces for enjoyment and use by the public, and promote a sense of community pride. By mapping out these strategic investments, the Town of Smiths Falls will not only meet the current needs of its residents but also position itself as a leader in recreational excellence and community development for the future.