

Background Research and Community Engagement Summary Presentation  
**Parks, Recreation, & Culture Master Plan and  
Organizational Structure and Staffing Review**

March 18, 2024



# Municipality Project Team

Councillor Rang, Head of Steering Committee

## **Steering Committee/Working Group Staff:**

- Carlos Salazar / Sarah Allin, Andrei Micu – Planning and Infrastructure Services
- George Acorn / Stephen Myers – Community Services
- Monika Machacek / Alison Dee – Clarington Library, Museums, and Archives
- Trevor Pinn / Paul Davidson, Finance and Technology
- Brett Novak / Ken Mercer – Public Works
- Justin MacLean / Melissa Westover – Administration/Communications

## **Support from:**

- Lee-Ann Reck – Public Services
- Lisa Backus, Tony Ricciardi, Sylvia Jennings – Planning and Infrastructure Services

*Clarington*



# Consulting Project Team

## Monteith Brown Planning Consultants

- Todd Brown, President & Principal Planner
- Dennis Kwan, Senior Planner

## Watson & Associates Economists Ltd.

- Nancy Neale, Manager

## Tucker-Reid & Associates

- Claire Tucker-Reid, President



# Purpose

Clarington is developing a Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan to guide future decisions over the next 10 to 15 years.

The Plan explores:

- Indoor recreation facilities;
- Outdoor parks and recreation facilities;
- Culture and library facilities; and
- Program and service delivery.

This process will also undertake a structural and staffing review of departments responsible for delivering parks, recreation, and culture services.





# The Process



We are here

Recommendations have **not yet** been developed.



# Key Building Blocks

## Research and Trends

Reviewing past studies and trends, examining utilization and participation data, etc.

## Demographic Analysis

How and where Clarington is growing, changes in age structure, ethnicity, income, etc.

## Community Input

Residents have been engaged through open houses and surveys, while stakeholders have participated in workshops.



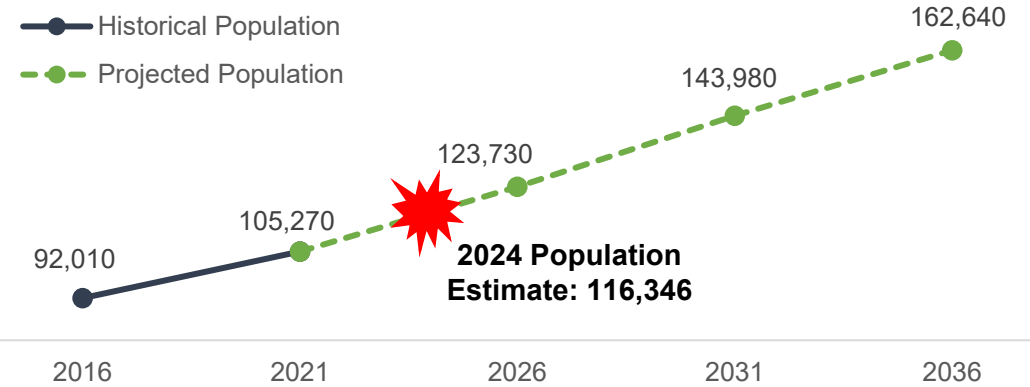


# Community Profile

Parks, recreation, and culture facilities, programs, and services are used by residents of all ages and backgrounds.

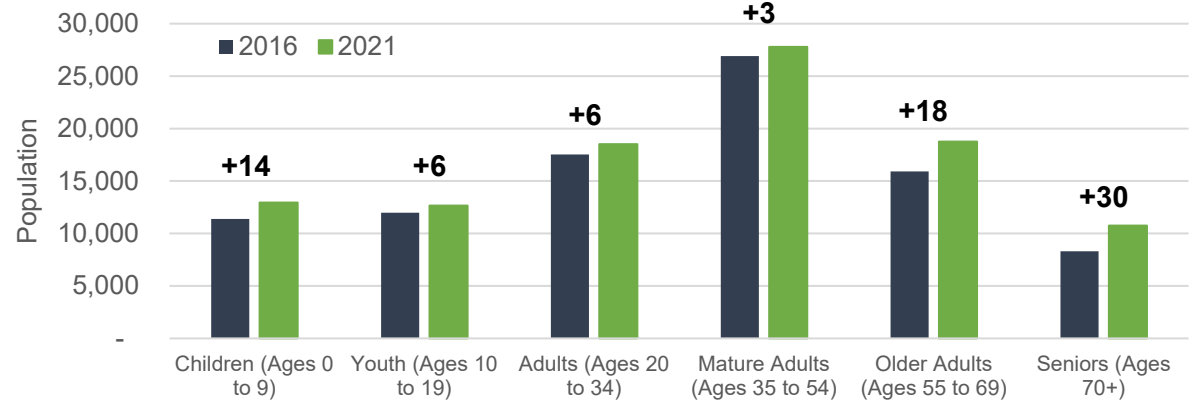
- Clarington is projected to grow by 40%, reaching 162,640 residents by 2036.
- The majority of population growth is expected to take place in Bowmanville, Courtice, and Newcastle.
- The community will continue to age and diversify in terms of cultural background, income, physical ability, etc.

## Historical and Projected Population Growth, 2016 to 2036



Source: Statistics Canada 2016 and 2021 Census, Region of Durham Envision Durham Adopted Official Plan

## Population Growth by Age, 2016 to 2021



Source: Statistics Canada 2016 and 2021 Census



# Trends to Consider

There are several trends impacting parks, recreation, and culture opportunities in Clarington that are being considered in the development of the Master Plan. Some examples include:



Growing and Evolving Population



Residential Intensification



Park and Facility Renewal



Environmental Sustainability and Green Infrastructure



Multi-use and Multi-generational Community Hubs



Multi-use Park Facilities



Emerging Activities and Facilities



Creative/Cultural Spaces and Libraries



# Parks and Trails

Clarington currently provides:

- 243 hectares of parkland
- 287 kilometres of trails
- 34 kilometres of waterfront

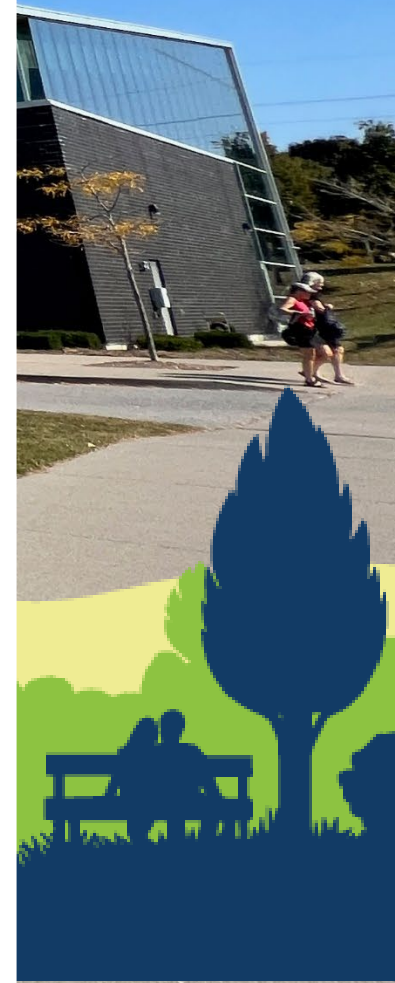




# Recreation and Cultural Facilities

The Municipality's inventory of recreation and cultural facilities includes:

- 7 ice pads
- 3 indoor swimming pools
- 2 gymnasiums
- 17 multi-purpose spaces
- 2 fitness spaces
- 2 dedicated youth spaces
- 2 dedicated older adult spaces
- 2 indoor racquet sports
- 1 indoor artificial turf field
- 4 library branches
- 1 heritage centre and museum
- 1 school house
- 1 visual arts centre
- 43 rectangular sports fields
- 1 shared cricket field
- 31 ball diamonds
- 23 tennis and pickleball courts
- 21 basketball courts
- 16 splash pads
- 1 outdoor pool
- 5 skate parks
- 3 leash free dog parks
- 1 outdoor lacrosse box
- 1 outdoor fitness equipment
- 62 playgrounds
- 4 outdoor skating rinks



# Community Engagement

Public awareness and promotion

Clarington Connected project webpage ([www.claringtonconnected.ca/PRCMP](http://www.claringtonconnected.ca/PRCMP))

Public open houses

Community survey

Stakeholder focus groups

Advisory committee meetings

Staff and Council engagement

Additional consultation will be undertaken once the draft Master Plan is developed



# Public Open Houses

Four in-person public open houses were held in Bowmanville, Courtice, Newcastle, and Orono to provide an opportunity for residents to learn about the Master Plan and to provide their input. A virtual session was also held. The community survey was also promoted at these events with bookmarks providing links to the project and survey.

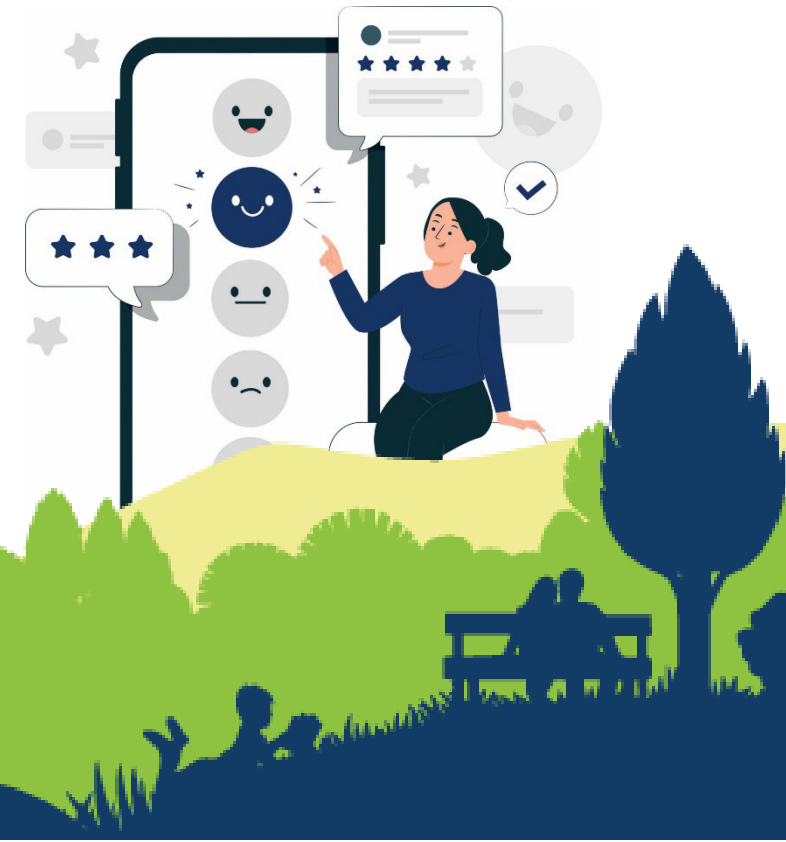


# Community Survey

A community survey was undertaken to collect input on participation preferences and priorities.

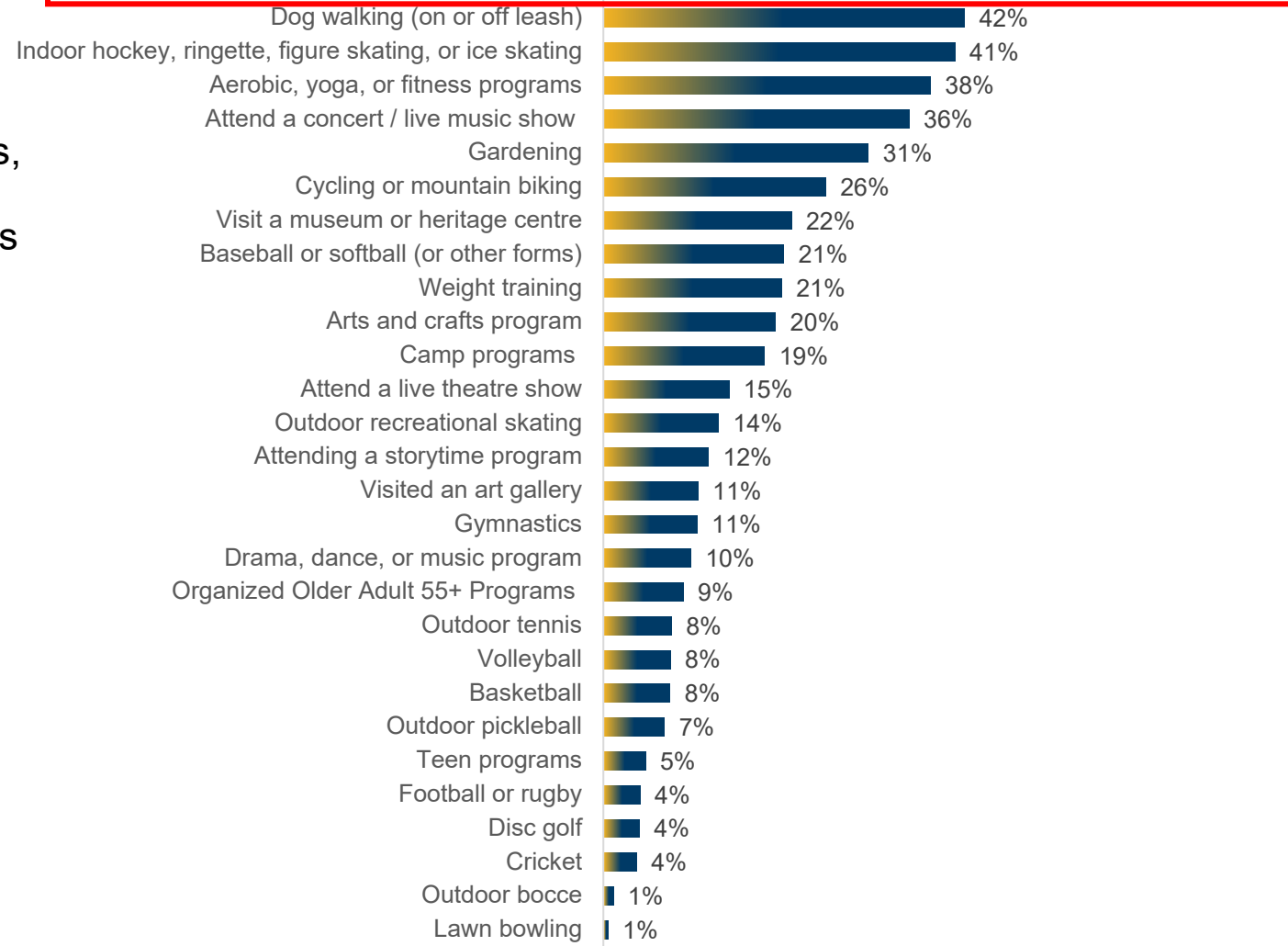
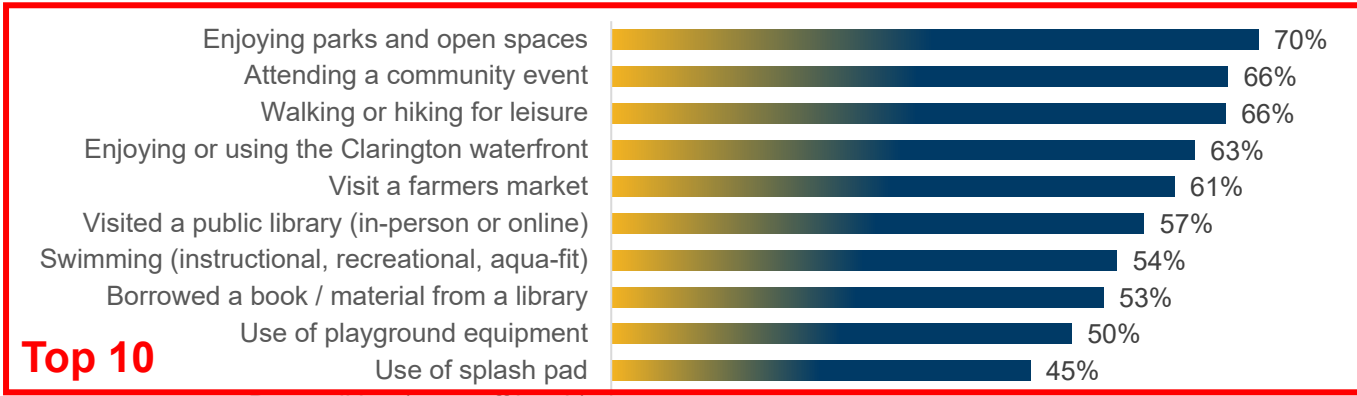
3,203 surveys were received, representing over 8,000 people across all age groups.

The survey was available online and in hardcopy.



# Participation in Parks, Recreation and Culture Activities

In the past five years, the top ten most popular parks, recreation and culture activities were casual and unstructured pursuits (except for swimming), which is consistent with broader participation trends.

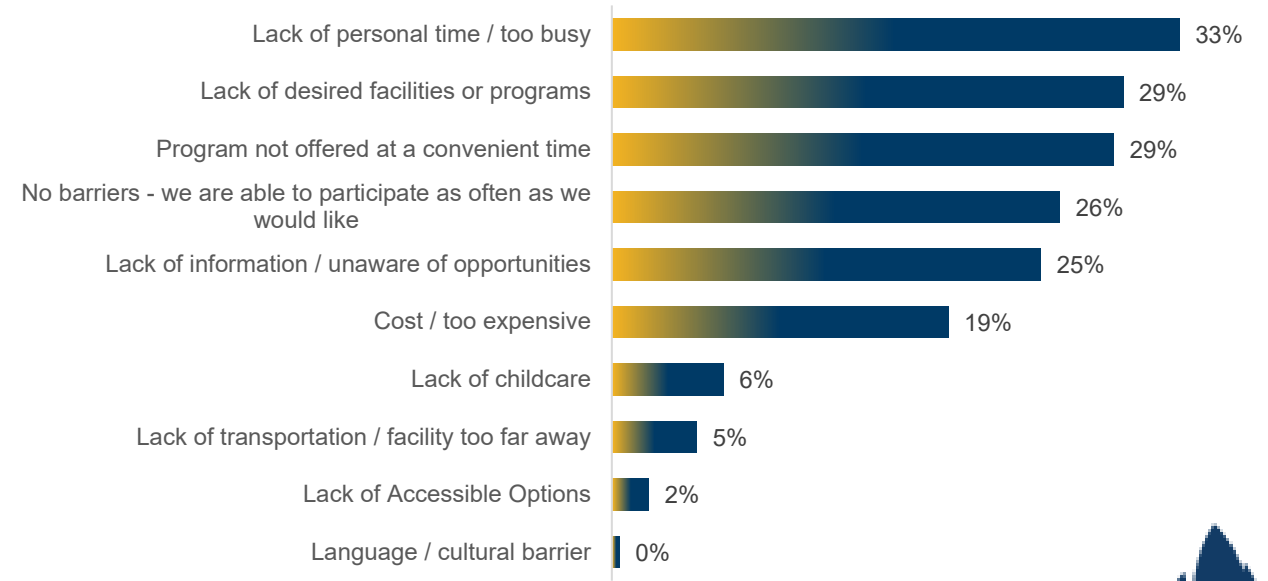




# Participation Barriers

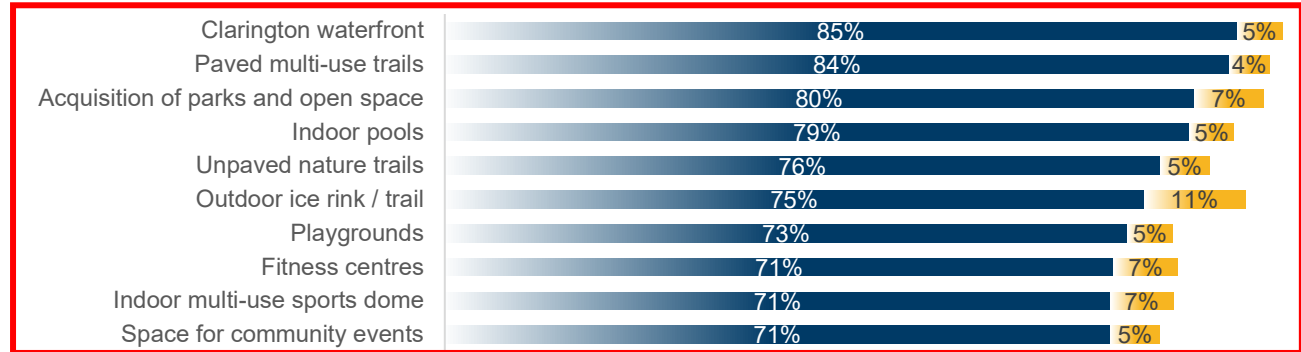
The most common barrier to participating in parks, recreation and culture activities was the lack of personal time/too busy.

This is common in many communities as people are leading busier lifestyles and it is a barrier that municipalities have little control over.

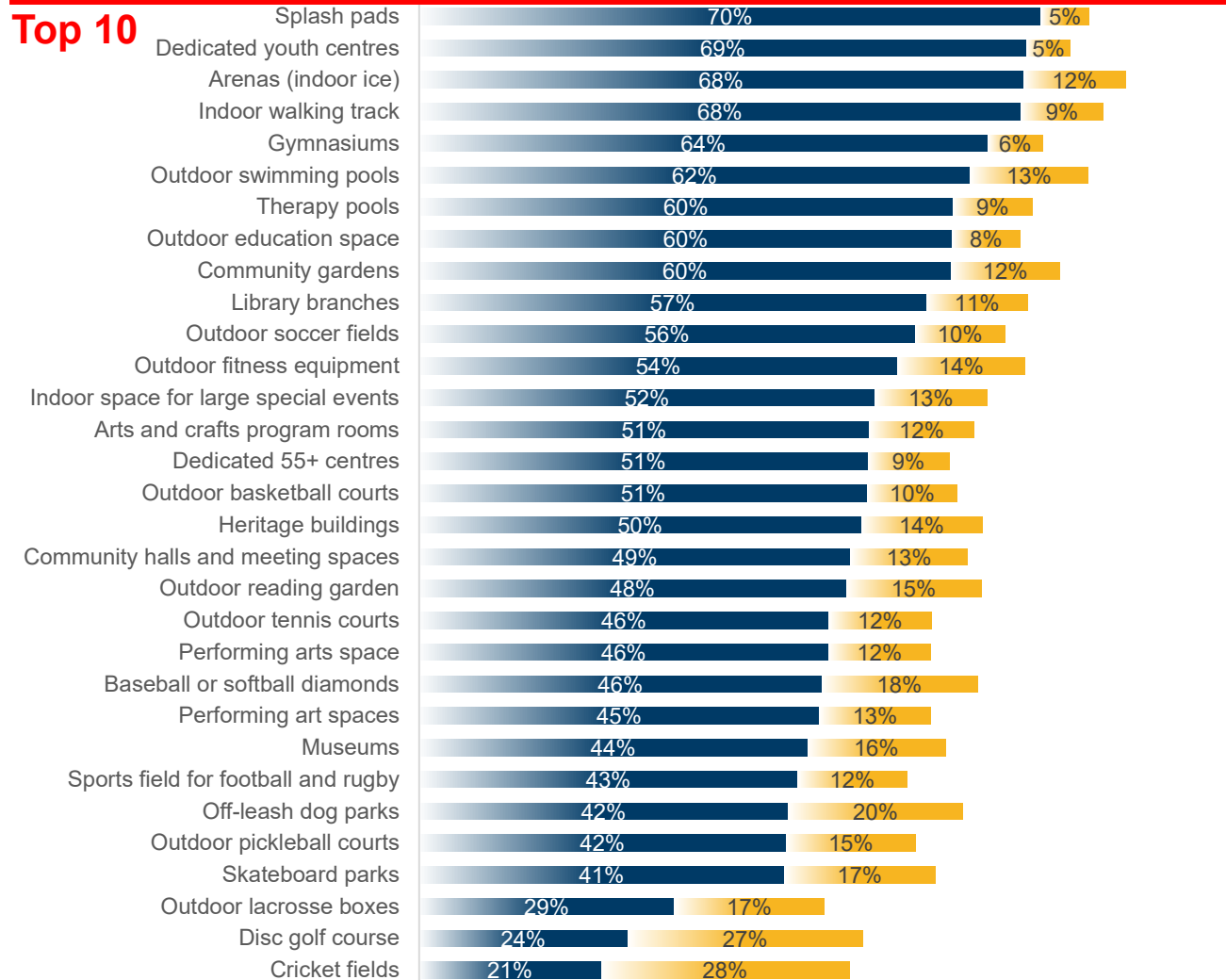


# Public Support for Investment

The facilities with the most support for additional public spending were those that are for casual and unstructured activities (except for indoor pools and indoor multi-use dome), which aligns with the participation trends observed across Ontario.



## Top 10



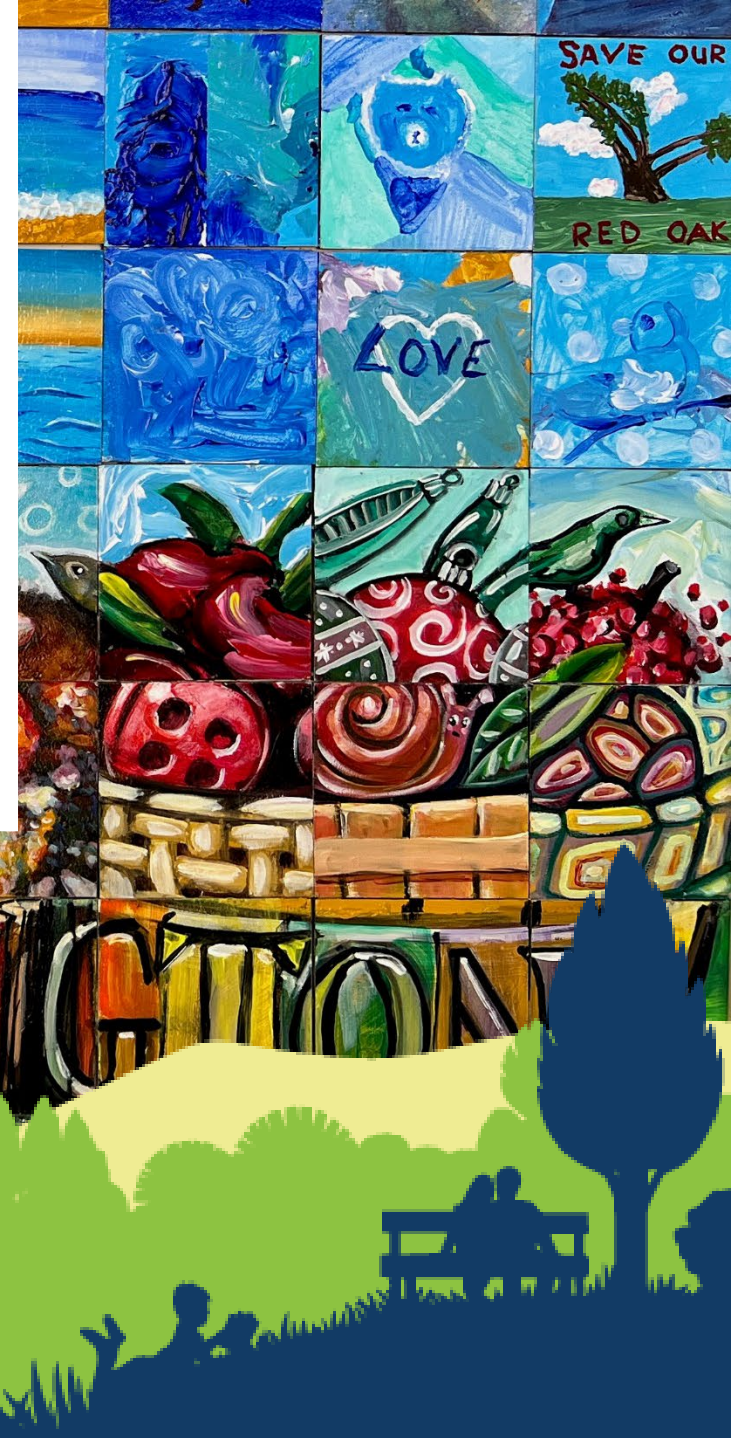
■ Strongly Support or Somewhat Support      ■ Strongly Opposed or Somewhat Opposed

# Consultation with Stakeholders, Advisory Committees and Boards

18 focus groups or interviews were held with community stakeholders and representatives to provide input, share experiences, and identify potential improvements.

30 community groups participated, including sports clubs, arts and cultural organizations, parks groups, and service providers.

Eight advisory committees were also engaged, including the Clarington Library, Museum, and Archives Board and Community Hall Boards.



# Staff and Council Engagement

Municipal Council and Staff engagements were undertaken to gather knowledge, experiences, and create buy-in for the project. These engagements included two staff workshops and interviews with each member of Council.

The Project Steering Committee and Consultants met several times to review project deliverables and to obtain feedback. Regular meetings were also held with the project leads and other key staff.





# Summary of Consultation Themes

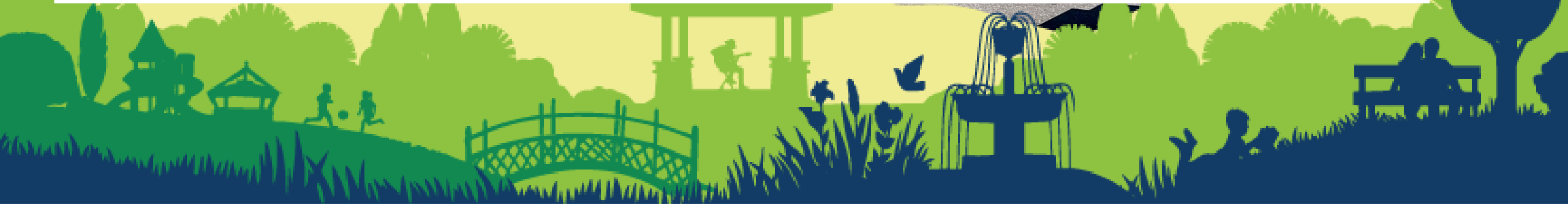
- Clarington's parks, recreation, and culture system is viewed as a **strength of the community** that attracts new residents, visitors and economic development and it should continue to be a high priority.
- There are opportunities to **strengthen parks and trails** through the development of a looped trail around Bowmanville (circle of green), Camp 30 and the Bowmanville Zoo, connecting the rural area, valleylands, and waterfront.
- The **Municipality's waterfront** is highly valued by the community and there is potential for enhancement, including trails and outdoor spaces for special events and performing arts.
- Emphasis should be placed on **maximizing the use of existing** parks, recreation, and cultural facilities, which may require consideration for park or facility renewal or enhancement.
- Clarington's parks, recreation, and culture system should grow to **respond to needs and expectations**. This will impact staffing and financial needs, and municipal support for community organizations, service providers, and community facility operators to ensure they are successful.
- Parks, recreation and culture opportunities should be **accessible** to persons with disabilities and be **inclusive** of all residents, regardless of age, ability, income, background, and orientation.





# Summary of Consultation Themes

- The community is proud of what the **Clarington Library, Museum and Archives** offers such as the food pantry, borrowing library, and social services. There is a desire to update the Bowmanville branch and to offer enhanced library services in the rural area (e.g., bookmobile).
- There is a desire for the Municipality to offer more popular recreation activities at convenient times that work for families to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to **participate in registered programs**.
- There is a strong desire for **casual, unstructured activities** for residents of all ages.
- **Requests** were made for indoor pools, ice pads, pickleball courts, cricket pitches, gymnasiums, youth drop-in space in the rural area, off-leash dog parks, squash courts, outdoor fitness equipment, program and sensory rooms, indoor walking tracks, performing arts space, and more.
- **Natural heritage spaces** and **local history** are an important part of the Municipality's identity and their protection and preservation need to be considered. Promoting their enjoyment is encouraged, although it should be done in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on the environment.



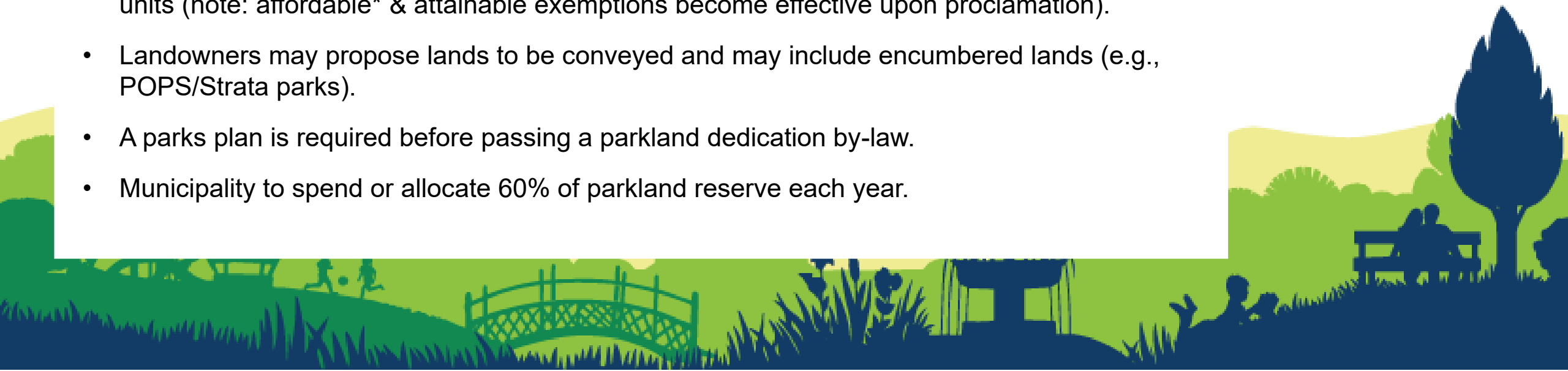
# Impacts of Bill 23

Bill 23 (More Homes Built Faster Act) received royal assent on November 28, 2022, which amended legislation including the Planning Act and Development Charges Act.

## Key Changes to the Planning Act Related to Parkland:

- The maximum alternative dedication rate has been reduced to 1 hectare per 600 units for parkland and 1 hectare per 1,000 units for cash-in-lieu.
- The maximum alternative dedication rates are capped at 10% of land for sites under 5 hectares and 15% for sites larger than 5 hectares.
- Mandatory exemption for affordable\*, attainable, non-profit, and additional residential dwelling units (note: affordable\* & attainable exemptions become effective upon proclamation).
- Landowners may propose lands to be conveyed and may include encumbered lands (e.g., POPS/Strata parks).
- A parks plan is required before passing a parkland dedication by-law.
- Municipality to spend or allocate 60% of parkland reserve each year.

\* Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, 2023: Amended the definition of affordable housing to include an income based measure for both rental and owned affordable units.

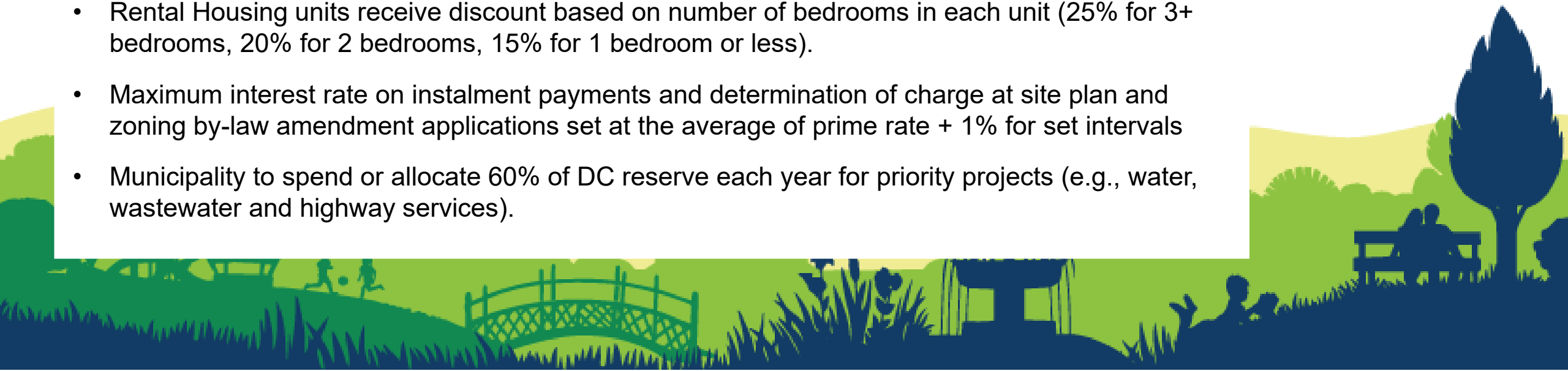


# Impacts of Bill 23

## Key Changes to the Development Charges Act

- Mandatory exemption for affordable\*, attainable, non-profit, and additional residential dwelling units (note: affordable & attainable exemptions become effective upon proclamation).
- Historical service levels for DC eligible costs extended from 10 to 15 years.
- Growth-related Studies removed as an eligible cost in new by-laws.
- Life of by-laws extended from to a maximum of 10 year, from 5 years.
- Mandatory Phase-in over the first 5 years of new by-laws (80% for yr. 1, 85% for yr. 2, 90% for yr. 3, 95% for yr. 4, 100% for yr. 5-10).
- Rental Housing units receive discount based on number of bedrooms in each unit (25% for 3+ bedrooms, 20% for 2 bedrooms, 15% for 1 bedroom or less).
- Maximum interest rate on instalment payments and determination of charge at site plan and zoning by-law amendment applications set at the average of prime rate + 1% for set intervals
- Municipality to spend or allocate 60% of DC reserve each year for priority projects (e.g., water, wastewater and highway services).

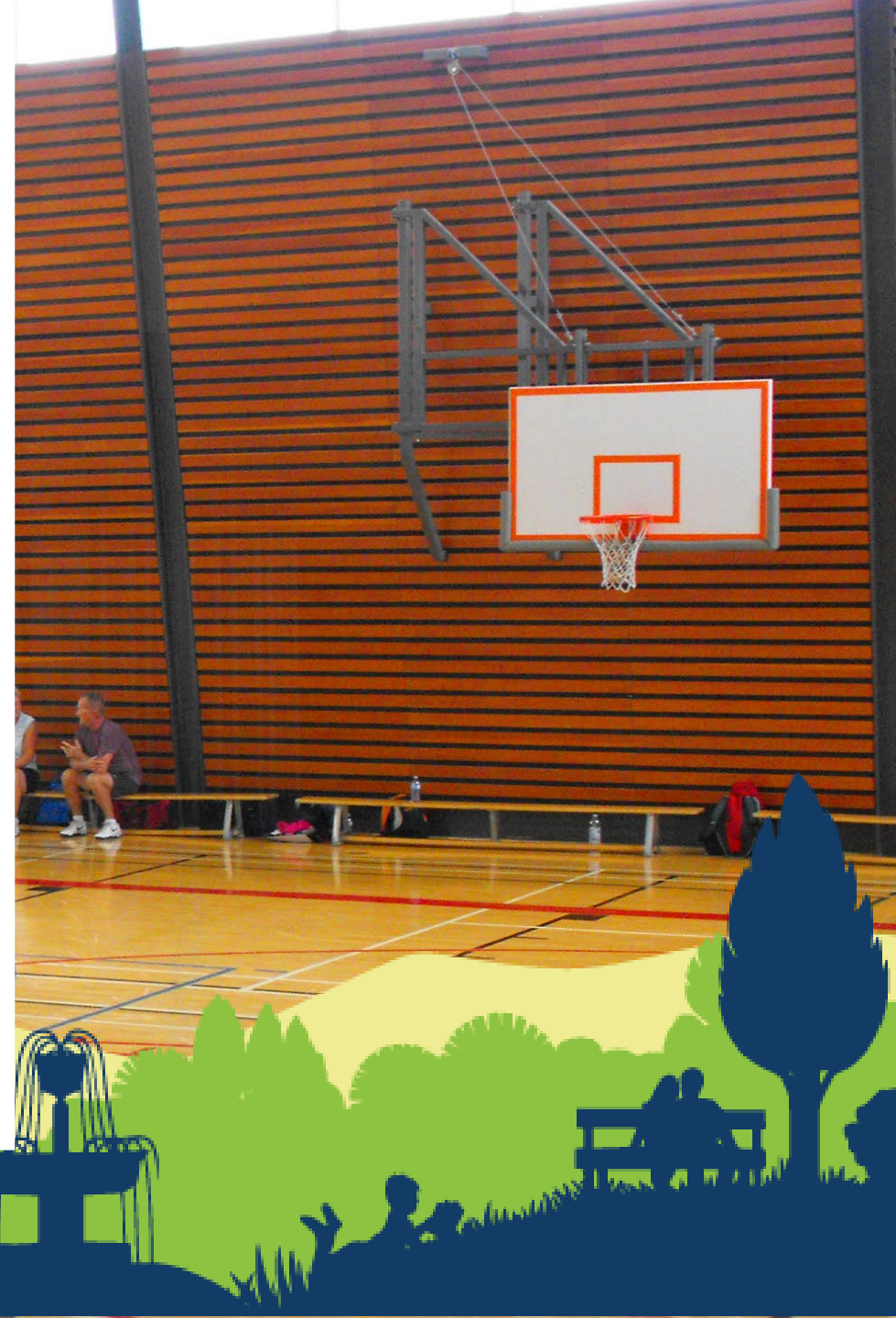
\* Bill 134, Affordable Homes and Good Jobs Act, 2023: Amended the definition of affordable housing to include an income based measure for both rental and owned affordable units.



# Existing Funding Tools

Municipalities have a number of funding tools available to assist in paying for capital and operating costs associated with parks, recreation, and cultural services, including:

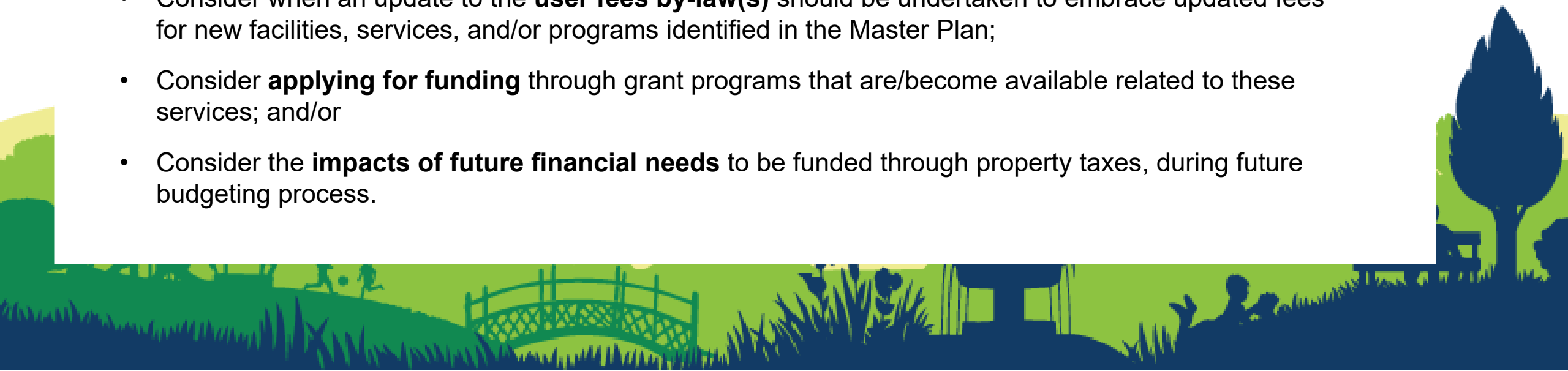
- Development Charges (as per the Development Charges Act);
- Payment-in-lieu of parkland acquisition (as per the Planning Act);
- Community Benefits Charges (as per the Planning Act);
- User Fees (as per the Municipal Act);
- Fundraising;
- Receipt of Donations and/or Benevolent Funds;
- Grants and Subsidies; and/or
- Property Taxes.



# Funding Considerations for the Master Plan

With the completion of the Master Plan, the Municipality will have information required to:

- Undertake a **new Development Charge Background Study** to embrace the identified growth-related capital needs related to parkland development, recreation, and library services;
- Update the **Parkland Dedication By-law** to maximize the amount of parkland conveyance and/or payment-in-lieu funds from future growth that is allowable under the Planning Act;
- Consider **capital needs** in excess of the parkland provisions of the Planning Act, and Development Charges Act provisions, through a Community Benefits Charge Strategy;
- Consider when an update to the **user fees by-law(s)** should be undertaken to embrace updated fees for new facilities, services, and/or programs identified in the Master Plan;
- Consider **applying for funding** through grant programs that are/become available related to these services; and/or
- Consider the **impacts of future financial needs** to be funded through property taxes, during future budgeting process.





# Next Steps

Needs Assessments (*Spring*)

Implementation Strategy (*Spring*)

Draft Master Plan and Organizational Review (*June*)

Public Feedback Period (*June/July*)

Finalize Master Plan and Organizational Review  
(*September 2024*)



# Thank You!

## Questions and Comments

Visit [www.claringtonconnected.ca/PRCMP](http://www.claringtonconnected.ca/PRCMP) for project updates or email comments to [PRCMP@clarington.net](mailto:PRCMP@clarington.net).