Arena and Sports Fields Needs Assessment

October 2025







Saugeen Shores

MONTEITH BROWN
PLANNING CONSULTANTS

Town of Saugeen Shores

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Table of Contents

Section 1.0 Introduction 1

1.1 The Arena and Sports Field Needs Assessment 1
1.2 Saugeen Shores Strategic Plan 2
1.3 Recent Accomplishments and Planned Projects 3

Section 2.0 Market Conditions 4

2.1 Arenas 4
2.2 Ball Diamonds 9
2.3 Soccer Fields 12
2.4 Cricket Fields 15
2.5 Community Profile 18
2.6 Facility Provision Considerations 20

Section 3.0 Stakeholder Consultation 21

3.1 Arena Users Focus Group 21
3.2 Sports Field Users Focus Group 23

Section 4.0 Arena Analysis 24

4.1 Identifying Ice Pad Needs 24
4.2 Ice Allocation Policy 24
4.3 Twin The Plex 25
4.4 Continue to Reinvest in the Southampton Coliseum 25

Section 5.0 Ball Diamond Analysis 27

5.1 Identifying Ball Diamond Needs 27
5.2 Monitoring Ball Diamond Needs 28

Section 6 Soccer Field Analysis 30

6.1 Identifying Soccer Field Needs 30
6.2 Strategies to Address Soccer Field Needs 31

Section 7 Cricket Field Analysis 34

7.1 Identifying Cricket Field Needs 34
7.2 Constructing a Permanent Cricket Field 34

Section 8: Implementation Strategy 36

Appendix A: Facility Benchmarking 39

Standard Limitations

This Arena and Sports Field Needs Assessment was prepared by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants Limited (Monteith Brown) for the Town of Saugeen Shores (the client). This Study is based on information provided to Monteith Brown, which has not been independently verified. The disclosure of any information contained in this Study is the sole responsibility of the client. The material in this report and all information relating to this Study reflects Monteith Brown's judgment in light of the information available to us at the time of preparation. Any use which a third party makes of this Study, or any reliance on or decisions to be made based on it, are the responsibility of such third parties. Monteith Brown accepts no responsibility for damages, if any, suffered by a third party as a result of decisions made or actions based on this report.

Section 1.0

Introduction

1.1 The Arena and Sports Field Needs Assessment

The Arena and Sports Field Needs Assessment ("Needs Assessment") examines needs for ice pads, ball diamonds, soccer fields, and cricket fields in the Town of Saugeen Shores over the next 10 years. The Needs Assessment identifies strategies to optimize the use of space and Town resources based on evidence that considered past achievements, demographics, trends, inventories, participation and usage data, and stakeholder input.

The Town's 2016 Recreation Master Plan continues to guide long-range decision-making for Saugeen Shores' recreation system, and the overall types of facilities and services delivered by the municipality. A fulsome update to the Master Plan is not deemed to be required at this time largely due to advancement of the Pryde Aquatic & Wellness Centre as a capital priority.

The scope of this Needs Assessment excludes recommendations for other indoor and outdoor recreation facilities, service delivery, scheduling and allocation, policies, rates and fees, and consultation with the general public. Also excluded from the scope are architectural and engineering works such as arena and field design, condition assessments, accessibility audits, and similar site investigations.









1.2 Saugeen Shores Strategic Plan

The Saugeen Shores Strategic Plan (2023-2027) articulates the Town's commitment to "Fostering a Vibrant Place to Live and Visit", with this Needs Assessment advancing the Strategic Direction to "Grow Local Arts, Culture, and Recreation".

The Strategic Plan envisions recreation infrastructure (such as ice facilities diamonds, and fields) as core elements in building a vibrant community, attracting visitors and enhancing quality of life. Investments in these facilities serve multiple goals such as supporting resident recreation, hosting tournaments and events, and strengthening the Town's appeal as a destination for sport tourism.

The Strategic Plan also emphasizes aligning infrastructure with growth (under the pillar "Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community"), arenas and sports fields are seen not just as amenities, but as essential capital assets the Town must maintain, expand, and program to match population increases and visitor demand.

Moreover, part of the Strategic Plan's direction is to update the Town's Recreation, Parks, and Trails Master Plan to reflect strategic priorities for recreation investment. That process allows the municipality to plan for facility upgrades, expansions, and optimally locate ball diamonds, soccer and cricket fields, and ice surfaces so that these assets can support both community recreation and event-driven visitation.

The Strategic Plan positions arenas and sports fields as foundational to both resident services and economic development through tourism and event attraction.

Vision:

Saugeen Shores is a naturally beautiful, active, healthy, and culturally vibrant place to live and grow.

Mission:

The Town provides high-quality municipal services that allow the community to thrive today and in the future.

Strategic Pillars:

1. Meeting the Needs of a Growing Community
2. Building the Best Municipal Team
3. Building Valued Relationships
4. Fostering a Vibrant Place to Live and Visit

1.3 Recent Accomplishments and Planned Projects

The Town of Saugeen Shores has achieved some recent accomplishments related to arenas and sports fields since the 2016 Master Plan. Major accomplishments included the following:

- The Town is currently in its first year of a three-year pilot program to offer year-round ice at the Plex in Port Elgin (2025-2027). This pilot project could potentially assist with lowering the operating deficit of the facility, with anticipated cumulative new revenue of nearly $250,000 over the three years. It is anticipated that the pilot will increase ice utilization from resident's and visitors which will have a positive impact on the local economy.[1]
- Between 2015 and 2025, various interior and exterior improvements were completed to the Southampton Coliseum that included a new score clock, sound system, slab floor, piping, header, and dasher system, LED lighting, compressors, dehumidifiers, spectator heating, interior painting, roof coating, and accessibility enhancements.
- Open space at Biener Park was repurposed in 2023 to create a cricket field.
- Lamont Sports Park was constructed, which included a total of six ball diamonds (including one hardball), playground, and supporting amenities including two covered pavilions, parking, batting cages, and storage.

The Town's 2025 Business Plan identifies a number of future projects that are included in the 10-year capital program for Council consideration. The following have relevance to this study.

- Continue with the development of Lamont Sports Park including washrooms (ongoing). Additional lands are available for a Phase 3 expansion with the components to be determined through this study.
- Undertake redevelopment of Helliwell Park to replace one full and one intermediate field with two lit full-size fields (ongoing).
- Establish an ice allocation policy and athletic field allocation policy (2026).
- Undertake a year-round park use analysis (2028).
- Install an elevator at the Coliseum to improve accessibility (2030 to 2033).
- HVAC upgrades to the main floor will be undertaken at the Southampton Coliseum to support offseason events (2033).
- Install a portable cover over the ice at the Plex to support event hosting (2033).

[1] Three-year 12-Month Ice Pilot Program, Staff Report, Town of Saugeen Shores, June 24, 2024

Section 2.0

Market Conditions

2.1 Arenas

Local Arena Inventory

Saugeen Shores owns and operates two single pad arenas in ice pads in Southampton and Port Elgin that are available for rentals and recreational public skating.

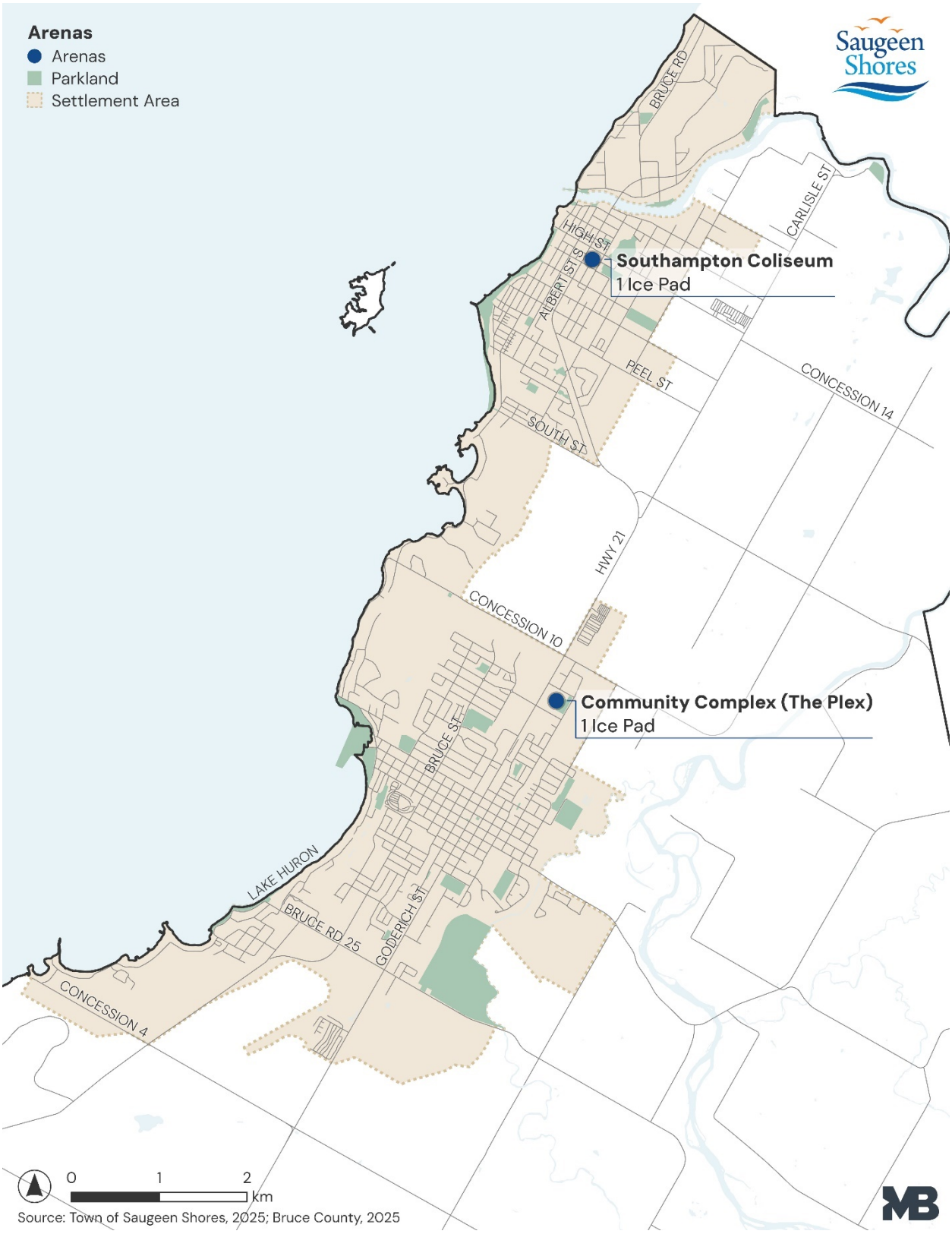
- The **Southampton Coliseum** was constructed in 1977 and is supported by spectator seating, changerooms, and concession. A program room and curling rink is also located at this site. Over the past few years, major lifecycle investments were made to replace various components including mechanical equipment, slab, boards, and glass. Capital investment is also planned to replace additional mechanical equipment over the short-term, as well as accessibility retrofits.

- The **Plex** in Port Elgin was built in 2000 offers amenities including spectator seating, changerooms and a concession. The multi-use community complex also includes the municipal office, Rotary Hall, Port Elgin Rec Centre (PARC 55+), and the new Pryde Aquatic & Wellness Centre.





Figure 1: Distribution of the Town of Saugeen Shores Arenas



Arena Registration

The Town's arenas are primarily used by three minor sports organizations including the Saugeen Shores Skating Club, Saugeen Shores Minor Hockey Association, and Bruce Grey Bulls (minor rep hockey). The minor organizations have a combined membership of 1,200 members (rounded) for the current 2025/26 season, which is a 17% growth compared to the 2022/23 season. Assuming that the participation rates for minor ice sports continue on trend with population growth, there could be 1,400 participants by 2036. In addition to minor users, the arena is also used by adult groups including the Saugeen Shores Winterhawks and other pick-up leagues.

Table 1: Registration in Organized Minor Ice Sports, 2022/23 to 2025/26

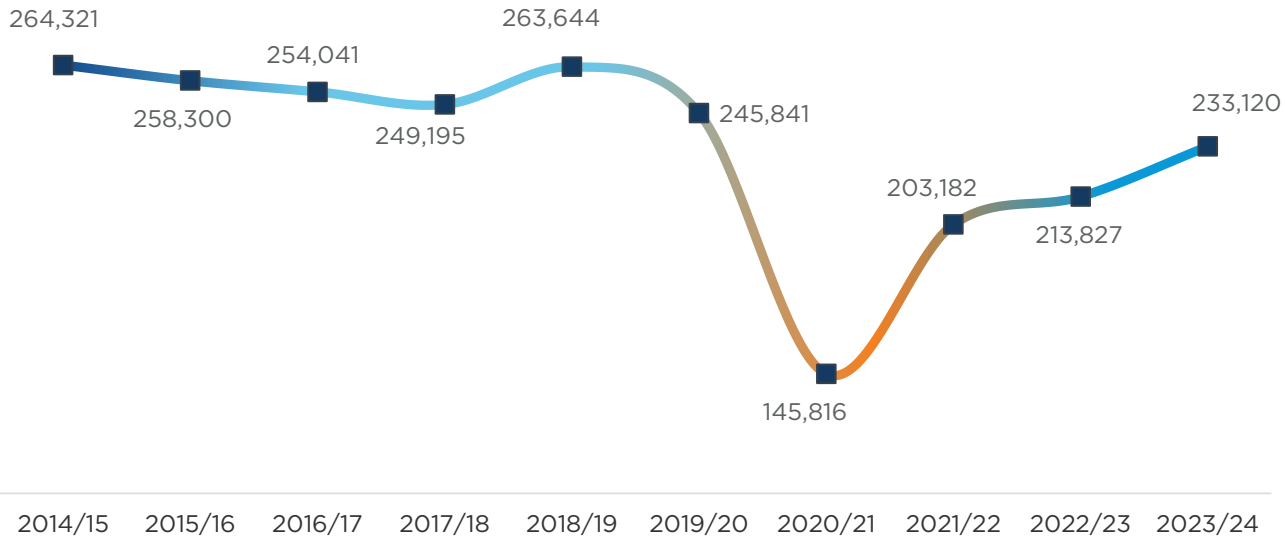
	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Change
Saugeen Shores Skating Club	385	390	398	400	**+4%**
Saugeen Shores Minor Hockey	608	677	750	630	**+4%**
Bruce Grey Bulls	-	-	-	192	n/a
Total Registrants	**1,000**	**1,100**	**1,100**	**1,200**	**+17%**

Note: Excludes adult users including Saugeen Shores Winterhawks and other adult groups. Total registrants are rounded to the nearest 100 players.

Nationally and Provincially, participation in ice sports has been declining nationwide. According to Hockey Canada, registrations declined by 8% nationally and 12% in Ontario between 2014/15 and 2023/24. The decline in ice sport participation can be attributed to:

- Escalating household expenses (equipment, travel, ice rental, etc.);
- Limited time families can dedicate to organized sports;
- Challenges recruiting and retaining qualified coaches and volunteers;
- Demographic shifts (aging population, immigration, widening income disparities, etc.); and
- Increased competition from other sports (e.g., soccer, basketball) as well as unstructured, self-scheduled activities.

Table 2: Registration in Canada, Hockey Canada, 2014/15 to 2023/24



Source: Hockey Canada Annual Reports.
Note: Player registration was negatively affected in 2020/21 due to COVID-19.

Although minor hockey is a male-dominated activity, participation in girls' hockey has been rising due to growth in minor and international sport opportunities, changing lifestyle and personal commitments, and gender equity efforts that remove participation barriers for females. In Ontario, girls' hockey represented one-fifth (22%) of all participants affiliated with Hockey Canada for the 2023/24 season, which is an increase from 20% five seasons prior, which has helped bolster total participation.[2]

Participation in minor hockey is uncertain due to Ontario Hockey Federation's "open borders" policy that is being implemented for the 2025/26 season, allowing players aged U10 and older to try out for and play on any minor hockey team across the province, eliminating residency restrictions.

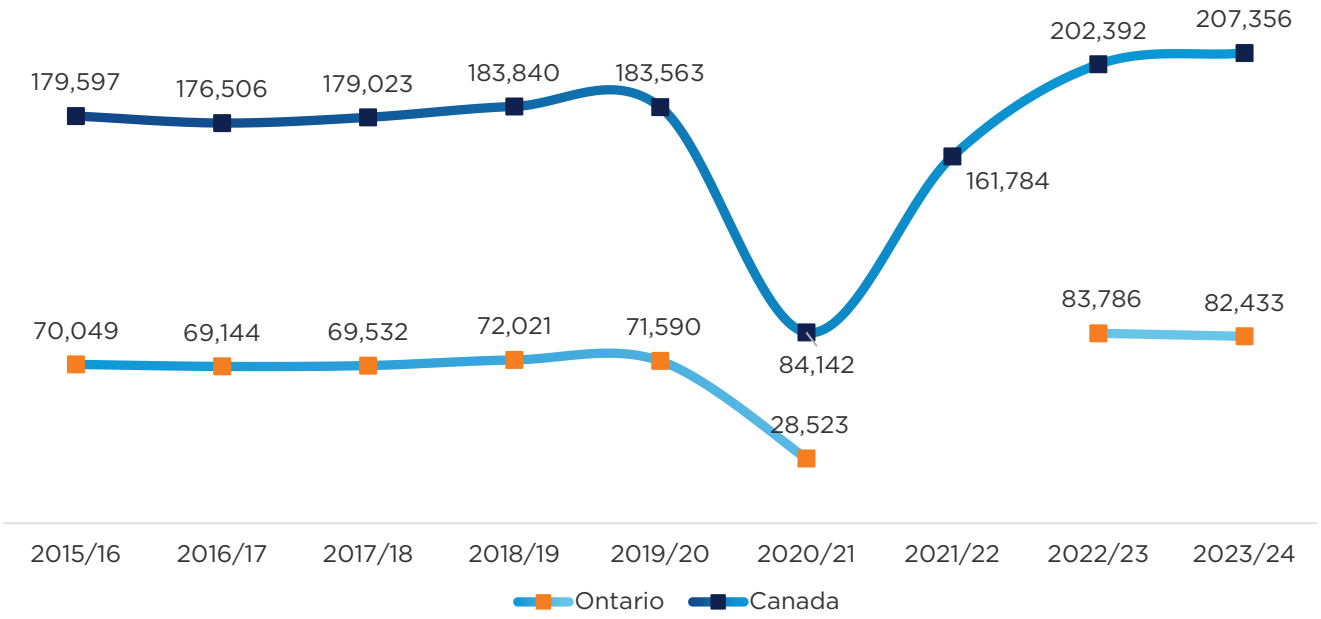
This change is expected to reshape participation trends significantly. This change will offer families and players greater mobility and opportunity to join more competitive programs or groups with better resources, while smaller hometown clubs fear losing local players and community identity. As a result, we could see longer travel times, less consistent team affiliations, and a decline in local-level involvement. However, for players pursuing higher competition and exposure, the change could expand opportunities, though barriers such as travel, time, and cost may still limit participation.

By contrast, participation in figure skating is growing. Since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic, Skate Canada has found success in rebuilding its membership, surpassing historical levels. For the 2023/24 season, Skate Canada reported 207,356 participants, which was a growth of 15% over its 2015/16 participation, while Skate Ontario grew by 18% during the same period to 82,433 members.

[2] Hockey Canada. Annual General Meeting Reports.

Skate Canada attributed its recent success to a variety of factors, particularly in the diversity of its program offering from beginners to elite competition. One area of focus that has been important for the organization is to promote skating as an activity for everyone including equity deserving groups such as newcomers, persons disabilities, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, culturally diverse peoples, low-income households, and people who would not normally have an interest in figure skating.

Figure 2: Figure Skating Registration, 2015/16 to 2023/24



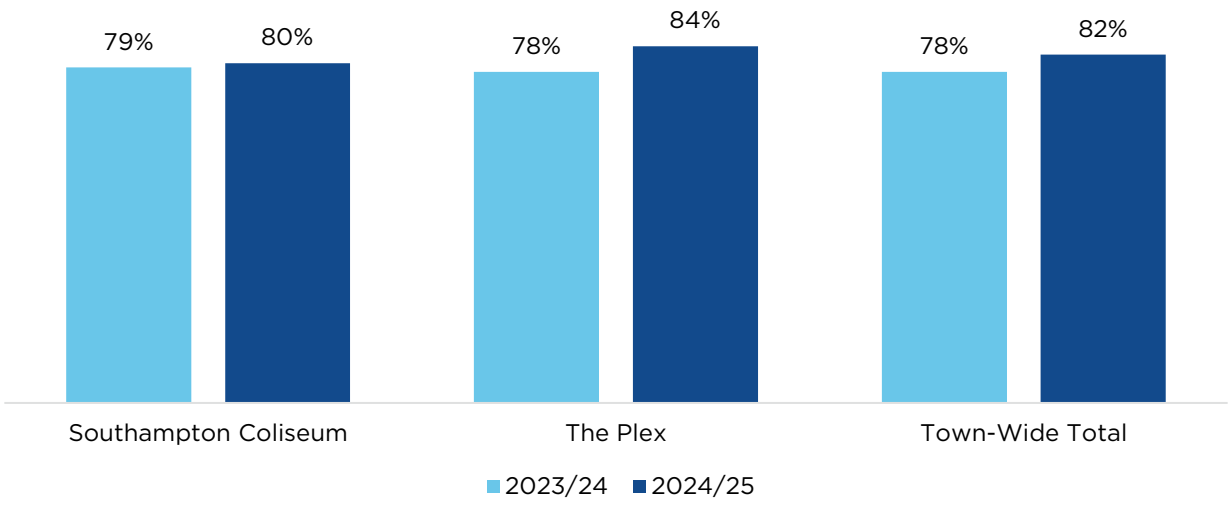
Source: Skate Canada Annual reports
Note: Player registration was negatively affected in 2020/21 due to COVID-19.

Arena Utilization

The focus of this analysis is when the ice is in highest demand, typically from the end of September to late March. Consistent with the 2016 Recreation Master Plan, prime time hours are defined as Monday to Friday from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm.

The Town allocates approximately 94% of its prime-time hours to organizations; however, actual usage levels are lower. During the 2024/25 season, Saugeen Shores had an actual usage level of 82% (80% at the Southampton Coliseum and 84% at the Plex. This suggests that groups are using less time than what is actually being allocated and that there is capacity available to accommodate additional use. The number of hours that are unused vary year to year depending on the needs of user groups such as participation levels and tournament scheduling. Over the past two ice seasons, approximately 258 hours of ice time was turned back to the Town.

Table 3: Actual Prime Time Ice Utilization, 2023/24 to 2024/25



Note: prime time hours are defined as Monday to Friday from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm and Saturday and Sunday from 7:00 am to 11:00 pm.

2.2 Ball Diamonds

Local Ball Diamond Inventory

The Town provides 12 ball diamonds at five parks, including 10 lit diamonds and two unlit diamonds. This supply includes the six new ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park, which were built through two phases in 2023 and 2025. An equivalency factor is applied to the Town's lit ball diamonds as the lighting systems allow for use into the later evening thereby increasing capacity and more opportunities for use compared to an unlit field. As a best practice, lit ball diamonds are equivalent to 1.5 unlit diamonds. Based on the number of lit diamonds in Saugeen Shores, the Town has an adjusted supply of **17 unlit equivalent ball diamonds**.

Ball Diamond Registration

There are three organizations that rent the majority of time at the Town's ball diamonds including the Saugeen Shores Minor Baseball Association, and men's slo-pitch and ladies' slo-pitch leagues. There are also four local fastball teams that rent time in Saugeen Shores and a co-ed league that operates during the fall season.

Based on participation data provided by the Town, along with self-reported data from groups and assumptions made on fastball team sizes, there were a total of 1,800 minor and adult participants (rounded) for the 2025 season, the majority of which are residents. This is 36% higher compared to what was reported in the 2016 Master Plan. All user groups experienced varying levels of growth since the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly minor ball that grew by 63%.

Based on the current capture rate of participants who play during a regular season (excluding the fall ball organization) and the total projected population, it is estimated that there could be approximately 2,000 minor and adult players by 2036.

Table 4: Registration in Ball Diamond Sports, 2022 to 2025

	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change
Saugeen Shores Minor Ball	394	472	602	641	**+63%**
Ladies' Slo-Pitch	400	400	400	460	**+15%**
Men's Slo-Pitch	408	442	476	476	**+17%**
Fall Ball	135	150	165	180	**+33%**
Ladies Fastball*	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	**n/a**
Girls' Fastball*	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	**n/a**
Men's Fastball*	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	**n/a**
Men's Industrial Fastball*	n/a	n/a	n/a	15	**n/a**
Total Registrants	**1,300**	**1,500**	**1,600**	**1,800**	**36%**

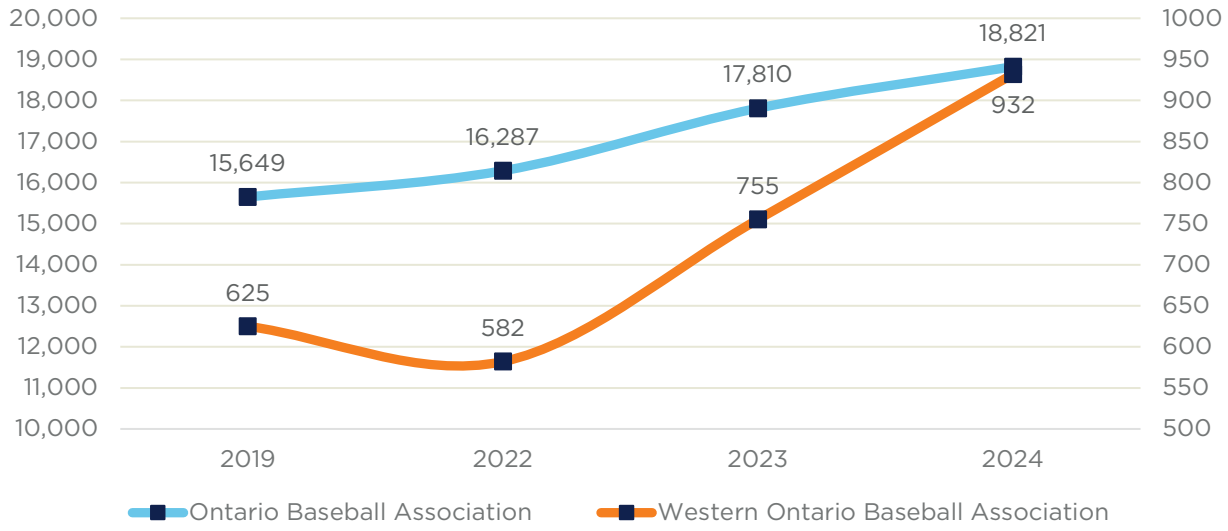
*Assumes 15 players based on one team. Total registrants are rounded to the nearest 100 players.

Baseball and softball are relatively affordable sports that provide children and youth with summer opportunities to be active, develop skills, and experience teamwork. The popularity of baseball in particular is often tied to the success of the Toronto Blue Jays, which helps fuel interest and participation across the province.

The regional baseball affiliate that covers Saugeen Shores is Western Ontario Baseball Association (WOBA). Both Western Ontario Baseball Association (WOBA) and Ontario Baseball Association (OBA) have seen registrations surpass pre-pandemic levels. In 2024, the WOBA recorded 932 registrants while OBA had 18,821. Figure 3 illustrates registration trends for both organizations since pre-pandemic (2019).

Baseball Canada has implemented the Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model, which is designed to support skill progression and long-term engagement in the sport. The model emphasizes physical literacy in the early years and guides athletes through stages that move from fundamental skills, such as throwing and hitting, to more advanced techniques. The Council of Federal, Provincial, and Territorial Ministers responsible for Sport has endorsed LTAD as the national framework for athlete development across Canada's sport community.

Figure 3: OBA and WOBA Participation in Baseball



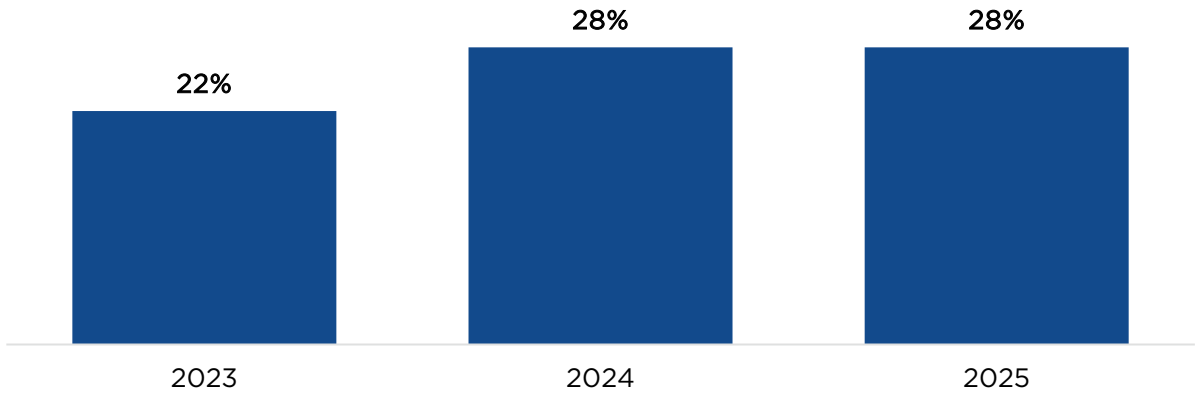
Source: Ontario Baseball Association Annual General Meeting Reports

Ball Diamond Utilization

Saugeen Shores' ball diamonds are booked between Monday and Friday from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm for lit diamonds and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm for unlit diamonds. The diamonds are also available all day during the weekends. Based on the Town's actual usage data, Saugeen Shores' ball diamonds had an overall weekly usage rate of 28% during the 2025 season, which was an increase from 22% from 2023.

These usage levels are lower compared to time that is being allocated to user groups as the Town's schedules revealed that approximately 80% of ball diamond time is being allocated to groups. This indicates that more time is being allocated to organizations than what is actually being used, although it is noted that the usage statistics only reflect time used for games. The Town does not regularly track practices and as a result, actual usage levels may be higher.

Figure 4: Overall Prime Time Ball Diamond Utilization, 2023 to 2025



Note: Prime time is from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm for lit diamonds and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm for unlit diamonds, and all day on the weekends.

On a location basis, the ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park are the most used diamonds in the Town's inventory, particularly at Diamonds 1 to 4, which have a collective usage rate of 45%. Diamond 5 and 6 at Lamont Sports Park were only recently completed and do not have a full year of usage, although it is recognized that it is the Town's intention to maximize utilization at Jubilee and the six diamonds at Lamont Sports Park.

All other ball diamonds in the Town's inventory have documented levels of use. For example, during the 2025 season, Diamond 1 at Biener Park had a usage rate of 3% and the Lakeview Park diamond had a utilization level of 20%. Both ball diamonds at Cameron Park were also not used; this location is only scheduled based on requests from organizations.

Table 5: Prime Time Ball Diamond Utilization by Location, 2023 to 2025

	2023	2024	2025
Biener 1	6%	9%	3%
Biener 2	8%	6%	13%
Jubilee	6%	6%	7%
Lakeview	10%	10%	20%
Cameron B	2%	4%	0%
Cameron D	2%	3%	0%
D1	41%	47%	49%
D2	39%	50%	49%
D3	32%	45%	44%
D4	33%	40%	40%
D5*	-	-	7%
D6*	-	-	26%
Totals	**22%**	**28%**	**28%**
LSP D1-4 Totals	**36%**	**46%**	**45%**

Note: Prime time is from 5:00 pm to 11:00 pm for lit diamonds and 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm for unlit diamonds, and all day on the weekends. Diamond 5 and 6 at Lamont Sports Park does not represent a fully year of usage.

2.3 Soccer Fields

Local Soccer Field Inventory

Saugeen Shores provides nine soccer fields, including two lit full fields that are currently under construction at Helliwell Park. Six soccer fields of varying sizes are all located at J.H. Robertson Park, which are owned by the Bluewater District School Board (the Town accesses these fields through a user agreement). A soccer field is also located at Biener Park.

Ontario Soccer's Long Term Player Development model uses varying field sizes for different age groups that range between 3v3 (for U6 to U8) and 11v11 for ages 13 and over. Generally speaking, multiple small field sizes (3v3 to 7v7) that are used by younger age groups can be accommodated on larger 11v11 fields. This allows groups to program fields more efficiently by subdividing full fields with smaller fields using portable nets to run simultaneous games and practices. As a result, an equivalency factor can be applied to the Town's full fields. Full fields can generally accommodate between two and eight small fields depending on the configuration and level of play. As a conservative estimate for the purposes of this Needs Assessment, each of the Town's three full fields are assumed to be equivalent to two smaller fields. Also recognizing that lit fields offer extended playing capacities, **the Town provides an effective supply of 13 unlit equivalent soccer fields**.

Soccer Registration

The Saugeen Shores United Football Club is the primary user of the Town's sports fields and for 2025, the group reported a total registration of 909 players, with a large majority being minor players. Since the 2016 Master Plan, the Club has more than doubled its membership with much of this growth attributed to the Town's growing population children and youth, as well as growing interest in the sport.

Assuming that the capture rate of minor and adult players remains the same and participation levels grow in proportion to population growth, there will be a projected estimate of 1,100 soccer players in Saugeen Shores by 2036.

Table 6: Saugeen Shores United Football Club Registration, 2017 to 2025

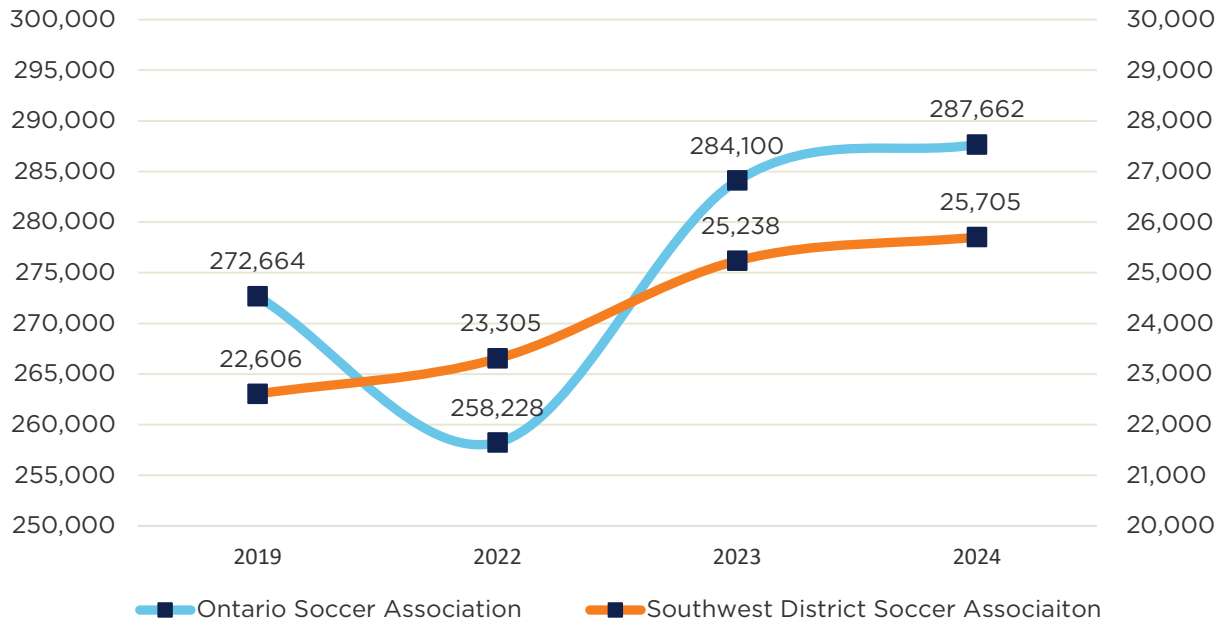
	2022	2023	2024	2025	Change
Saugeen Shores United Football Club	787	830	806	909	**+16%**

The regional soccer affiliate that covers Saugeen Shores is Southwest District Soccer League (SDSL), with 25,705 players in 2024. The SDSL experienced a 14% increase in registrants since 2019, compared to the provincial average of an increase of 5%. Ontario Soccer has been increasing since 2019, making a resurgence since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ontario Soccer adopted a Long-Term Player Development (LTPD) model in 2012, which has reshaped how soccer programming is delivered across the province. The LTPD emphasizes a holistic development approach, focusing on positive experiences, learning, and participation rather than solely on competitiveness or registration numbers. It promotes grassroots initiatives to make the sport accessible to all players. The model also introduced changes to coaching approaches, team sizes, field dimensions, and playing time, which in turn influences the demand for field availability and the physical requirements of soccer fields.

Although participation in some regions have declined, soccer remains widely popular due to its relatively low cost compared with other sports, its global appeal, and its high fitness benefit. As a result, soccer continues to be a primary driver of demand for rectangular fields in many municipalities.

Figure 5: OSA and SDSL Participation in Soccer

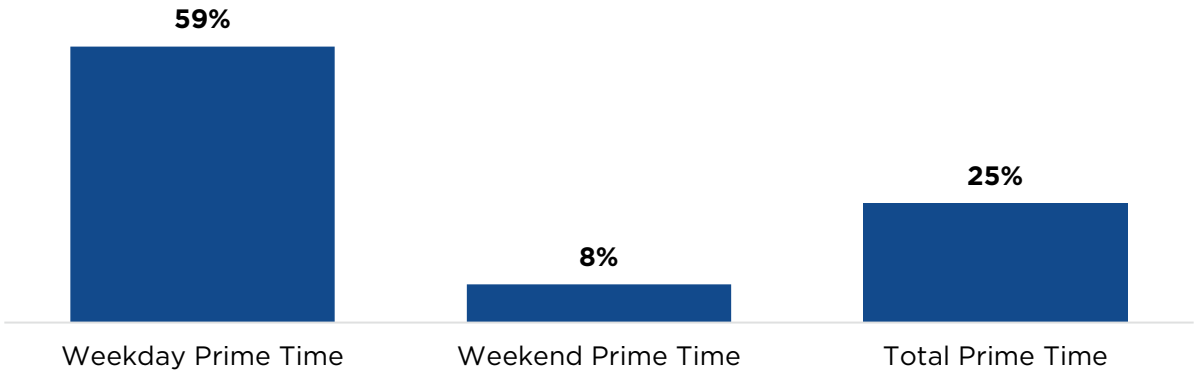


Source: Ontario Soccer Association Annual General Meeting

Soccer Utilization

A review of the Club's soccer schedule revealed that the group uses the Town's soccer fields four days a week (Monday to Thursday) with no use on Fridays. During this period, each field is typically used between 1.5 and 3.5 hours a day. This results in a total of 58.5 hours per week, which translates into a usage rate of 59%. However, this does not factor in times for practices. The fields have limited use during the weekend as the group books five fields for a total of 15.5 hours, equating to a usage rate of 8%. However, this does not factor in times for practices. Tournaments are also not factored into the usage data, which generally occur on Saturdays.

Figure 6: Overall Prime Time Soccer Field Utilization, 2025



Note: Prime time availability assumes between 1.5 to 3.5 hours per field depending upon location during the weekday (excluding Friday) and all day during the weekend. Usage excludes time for tournaments, which occur on the weekend. As a result, actual usage is greater.

These usage findings may suggest that there is capacity within the existing supply to accommodate additional use at times when the fields are not booked, although there are two reasons for this. Firstly, the Club can make efficient use of the Town's field supply by running multiple games and practices on a single field provided there are enough participants within the same age group to utilize the field configuration effectively.

Secondly, the organization's field scheduling follows the guidelines established by Ontario Soccer that recommends the number of practices and games per week for each age group. As a result, the organization does not utilize certain days to provide programs for the same teams in order to adhere to Ontario Soccer's guidelines.

With the lack of fields on days when games and practices are scheduled, the Club is booking additional time at non-municipal fields such as at Saugeen District Senior School, Southport Church, Kincardine, and Saugeen First Nation. These locations have helped alleviate field pressures, although consultation with the Club found that these solutions are not ideal due to challenges including the lack of consistent scheduling. The Club's competitive adult team is also required to book time in Listowel as there is no lit field in Saugeen Shores to accommodate games scheduled later in the evenings.

2.4 Cricket Fields

Local Cricket Field Inventory

A temporary cricket field is located at Biener Park.

Cricket Registration

Saugeen Shores Cricket has approximately 150 to 200 players. Historical data is not available, although the group reported that the organization has grown considerably in recent years, which is partly driven by the Town's increasingly diverse ethno-cultural population base. Should participation levels continue to grow as population increases, it is estimated that there could be approximately 250 players by 2036.

Cricket's rising popularity in Canada is largely driven by newcomers from the Caribbean, Europe and South Asia regions where the sport has deep cultural roots. Communities with high cultural diversity have seen the strongest demand for cricket. Interestingly, cricket has been played in Canada since 1745 and was officially declared the country's first national sport by Prime Minister Sir John A. MacDonald. [3]

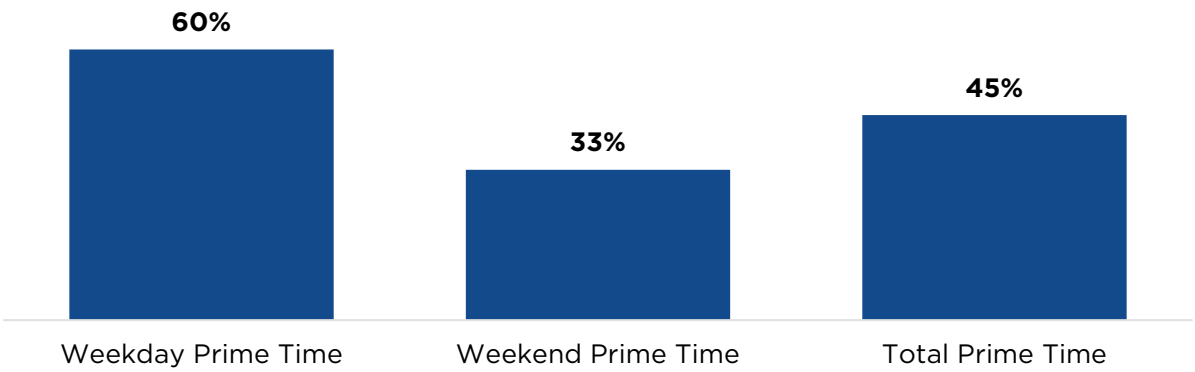
[3] Cricket Canada. (2022). Strategic Plan 2022-2026. Retrieved from https://www.cricketcanada.org/

Cricket Utilization

Saugeen Shores has not defined prime-time hours for its cricket field. For the purposes of this study, prime-time hours are between 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm during the weekday and 9:00 am to 9:00 pm during the weekend, which aligns with the window of when the field is in use and equates to 44 hours of available time per week.

Saugeen Shores Cricket typically uses the field 20 hours per week, which translates into a weekly usage rate of 45%. The field is used most frequently on weekdays, with three bookings per week, resulting in a usage rate of 60%. The field also has limited use during the weekend, amounting to 33% of available time. These findings suggest that there is capacity at the existing field to accommodate greater use, if there is demand.

Figure 7: Cricket Field Utilization During Prime Time, 2025

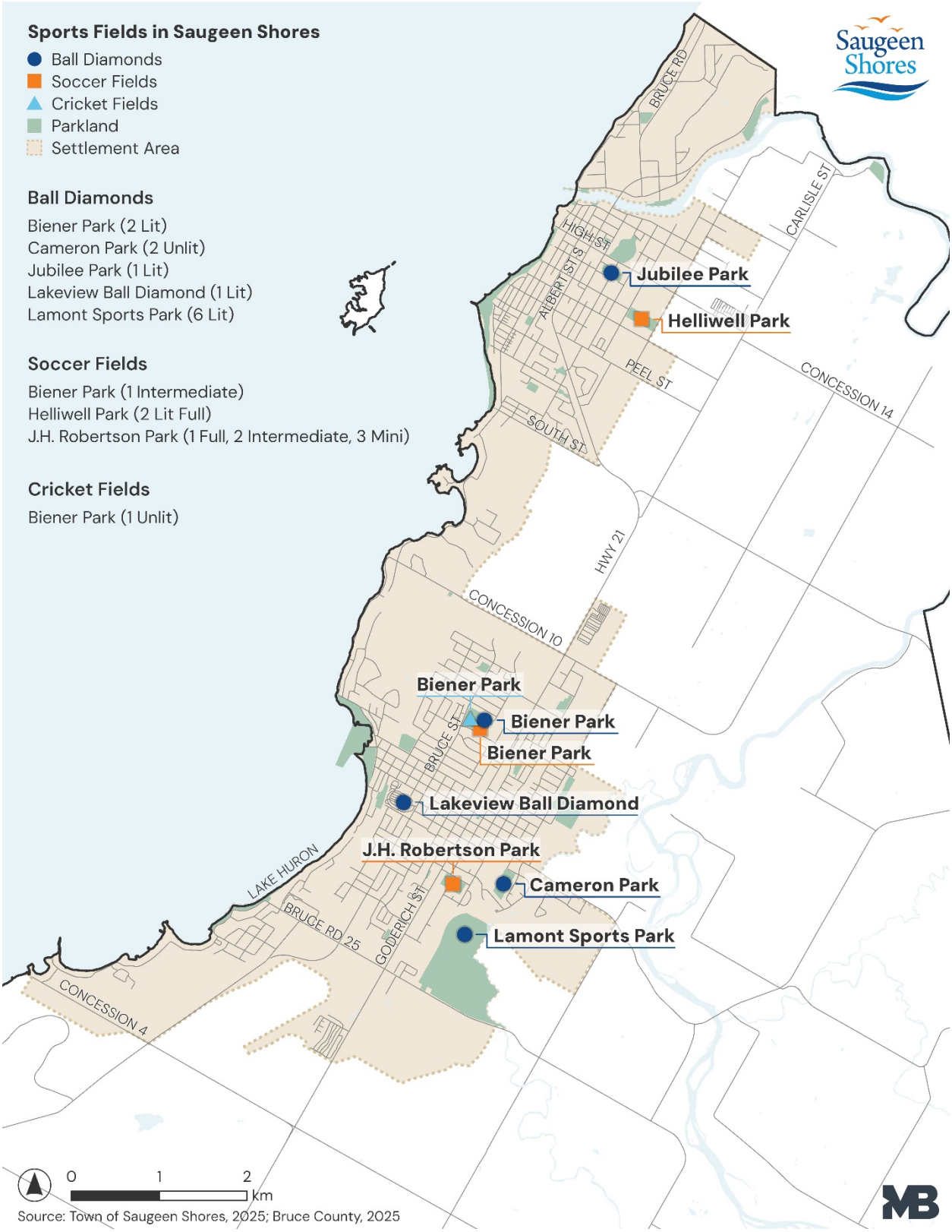


Note: Prime time hours are 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm during the weekday and 9:00 am to 9:00 pm during the weekend.
Source: Town of Saugeen Shores, 2025

Cricket activity is expanding in Saugeen Shores, supported by a strong local club and increasing regional interest. The Saugeen Shores Challenger Cup tournament has become a signature event, drawing four teams, hundreds or players and spectators, including participants from Cambridge, Toronto, Markham, Brampton, Hanover, Walkerton, Wingham, Owen Sound, and Kincardine. The tournament generated economic benefits for local businesses and demonstrated cricket's ability to foster community connection, youth engagement, and cultural diversity.

The Town recognizes cricket as an emerging sport, and the local club has identified Lamont Park as a potential site for a dedicated or permanent facility to support training, tournaments, and long-term growth. The club has also suggested that future development opportunities include hosting annual cricket festivals with cultural and community activities, establishing youth and school-based programs to build grassroots participation, collaborating with local businesses to strengthen partnerships and sponsorship opportunities, and expanding marketing and outreach efforts to attract broader regional participation.

Figure 8: Distribution of the Town of Saugeen Shores Sports Fields Supply

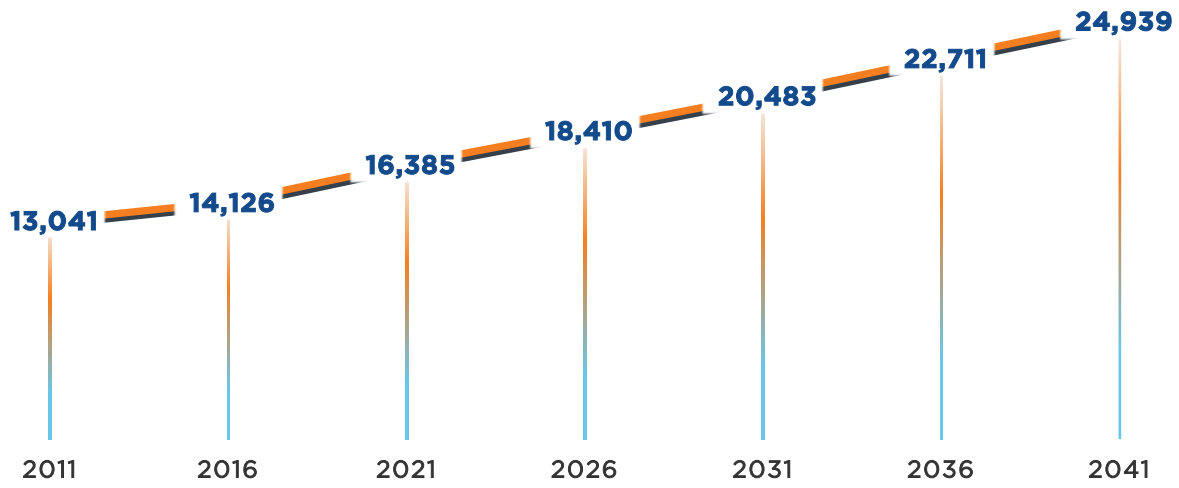


2.5 Community Profile

Historical and Projected Population Growth

Between 2011 and 2021, the Town grew by 26% (or 3,300 residents) to 16,835 residents. By 2036, the Town is expected to grow by 35% to 24,939 residents.[4] The Town's 2026 population estimate is 18,410, which will be used as the population baseline for this Needs Assessment. Over the planning period, all three wards are expected to continue to see growth and development, with the majority over the past 10 years being in the areas of Port Elgin and Saugeen Township.

Figure 9: Historical & Projected Population, 2011 to 2040



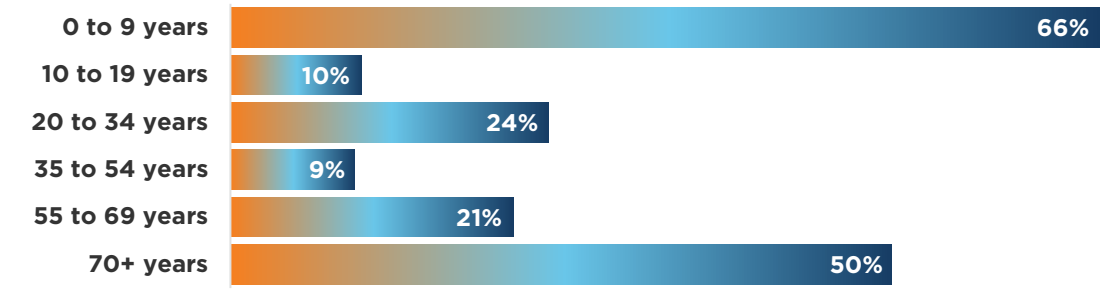
Source: Town of Saugeen Shores Development Charges Background Study, 2023
Note: Population figures include undercount and excludes seasonal residents.

Contrary to aging trends in many small and rural municipalities across Ontario, Saugeen Shores is becoming younger. The 2011 Census reported a median age of 46.8 years, which is a decline from 49.1 years recorded in 2011. This is also lower compared to Bruce County (48.0 years) but higher compared to Ontario (41.6 years).

The change in the Town's median age is attributed to the increasing number of families with younger children. Between the 2011 and 2021 Census, the number of children (ages 0 to 9) increased by 66% and the number of young adults (ages 20 to 34) grew by 24%, as illustrated in the following figure. This will have notable impact on arena and field sports as these age groups represent the primary market for these activities.

[4] Town of Saugeen Shores Development Charges Background Study, 2023

Figure 10: Population Change by Age Group, 2011 to 2021



Source: Statistics Canada, 2021 & 2011 Census of Population.

Income

Research consistently shows a positive link between higher income levels and participation in active recreation. This is largely because households with higher incomes may have more disposable income that can be used towards organized sports registration fees, equipment, and associated costs of recreation activities.

Participation in sports can be expensive, particularly ice sports. For example, hockey is considered one of the costliest recreational activities in Canada, with families spending between $1,200 and $1,700 per year on registration and equipment alone. Depending on the level of play, travel, and tournament costs, this amount can be significantly higher. Consequently, higher income households are more likely to participate in arena and field sports, while lower income households may face financial barriers that limit participation.

In Saugeen Shores, the median household income in 2020 was $103,000, higher than both Bruce County ($87,000) and Ontario ($91,000). At the same time, 7.6% of residents fall into the Low-Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT) category. The portion of residents falling into this category suggests that a smaller share of household's face income constraints that might limit recreation participation. By comparison, Bruce County (10.7%) and Ontario (10.1%) have a higher percentage of households in the LIM-AT category. Therefore, Saugeen Shores residents are more likely to have the financial capacity to participate in arena and field sports.

Cultural Diversity

Saugeen Shores is becoming a more culturally diverse community. This is being driven by economic development trends as local industries are attracting international talent and a culturally diverse workforce. Newcomers and immigrants are also attracted to affordable communities with established cultural communities. In 2021, there were approximately 1,785 foreign born residents living within Saugeen Shores, equating to 13% of the population. The top three places of birth for the immigrant population of Saugeen Shores residents are United Kingdom (505 residents), India (245 residents), and Pakistan (145 residents).[5]

[5] Statistics Canada, 2021 Census of Population.

2.6 Facility Provision Considerations

Demand for multi-pad arenas are high

Single pad arenas are beneficial in ensuring that there is a strong geographic distribution that residents can access. However, multi-pad arenas offer many benefits over single pad sites. From a municipal perspective, multi-pad arenas are more efficient to construct and operate, particularly when they are co-located with other recreation facilities. For community organizations, multi-pad arenas are desirable for hosting simultaneous games and tournaments so activities can be centralized at a single (or fewer) location(s).

Some municipalities have been favouring the development of multi-pad arenas, or staggering construction by designing arenas in a manner where a second ice pad is built as part of a future phase contingent upon confirming ice needs. Some municipalities also approach multi-pad arena development with the intention of consolidating single pad arenas, which may be aging, exceeding their lifespan, inefficient to operate, or have constraints prohibiting expansion.

Barrier-free and inclusive spaces in ice facilities

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requires that municipal spaces and facilities are accessible to the public. Saugeen Shores' 2024 to 2028 Accessibility Plan identifies that the Town will work to remove barriers from all Town buildings, including recreation facilities such as the Plex and Coliseum. It is recognized that the Town has been undertaking barrier-free enhancements to both facilities, and future capital work is being planned to make spaces more accessible for the users and spectators.

Multi-Functional Complexes

Historical park design practices were to include a sports field in neighbourhood-level parks whereas the trend today is to direct fields to complexes or parks serving multiple neighbourhoods. Part of the shift away from neighbourhood park sports fields is due to the changing provincial legislation reducing how much parkland can be acquired through the land development process, as well as user groups desires for multi-field complexes. Similar to multi-pad arenas, sports field complexes offer benefits in simultaneous games, practices and tournaments, and it a range of supporting amenities can be rationalized such as parking, washrooms, shade shelters, seating, and other complementary amenities.

Saugeen Shores has multiple sports fields concentrated into complexes (e.g., Lamont Sports Park and J.H. Robertson), allowing for operational efficiencies in scheduling and maintenance, while supporting league programs and tournaments.

Section 3.0

Stakeholder Consultation

Consultation was undertaken to collect input from stakeholders that was considered as part of developing this Needs Assessment.

Two virtual stakeholders focus group sessions were held on August 19, 2025, to solicit input from regular facility users, understand challenges, and collectively brainstorm potential solutions. The stakeholder focus groups were organized by facility type, arena users and outdoor field users. Organizations that attended the sessions and provided input included the following:

Arena Users

- Bruce Grey Bulls
- Saugeen Shores Skating Club
- Saugeen Shores Winterhawks
- Saugeen Shores Minor Hockey

Sports Field Users

- Fall Baseball
- Grey Bruce Ladies Fastball
- Saugeen Shores Cricket
- Saugeen Shores Ladies Slo Pitch
- Saugeen Shores Minor Ball
- Saugeen Shores United Football Club
- UTM Grey Bruce Impact

3.1 Arena Users Focus Group

The following is a summary of key themes from the discussions with arena users.

Arenas are a Strength

Arena users agreed that Saugeen Shores' arenas are a strength of the community, noting that they are safe, clean and well-run. The Plex in particular is valued for its amenities, such as skate sharpening, and high-quality changerooms. Staff are recognized for their professionalism and support, and recent improvements to the Town arenas have been well received by the community.

Growing Registration and Demand

A key theme across all organizations is growing registration, resulting in an increased demand for their programs. It was mentioned that this growth was driven by new families moving to Saugeen Shores and strong local interest in ice sports. The increased demand has also been influenced by interest in players from non-residents looking to play in Saugeen Shores. As a result, organizations expressed that there is pressure on ice time and facility availability, with multiple groups noting that limited access to ice may restrict their ability to expand and meet rising demand.

Ice Time Shortages

A consistent challenge identified by all organizations is the lack of available ice time. As a result of this constraint, organizations reported that they are using ice in neighbouring communities, which can be a challenge to travel to particularly during poor weather conditions. Organizations reported having waitlists due to the limited ice times that are available.

Shifting Community Needs and Diversity

The community's changing demographics are creating new recreational demands. Cultural diversity is increasing, with newcomers and adults expressing interest in learning to skate in Saugeen Shores. Families are looking for ice times that are more family and work friendly.

Ice Time Allocation

Concerns were raised about the fairness and transparency of current ice allocation times with the bookings being "grandfathered". Ice users suggested that the Town's ice allocation approach should be revisited to ensure that ice time is prioritized for youth and that new organizations have access to sufficient time. It was also suggested that the Town should develop an online booking system to make it easier for people to rent ice.

Facility Requests and Suggested Improvements

To alleviate facility demand, requests were made for a third ice pad. Organizations felt that this should be a priority rather than making any further investments at the Town's existing arenas as it was felt that upgrades would not address the need for additional ice time. Dedicated dryland training space was also identified as a priority, as access to gymnasium space is often limited and difficult to secure. It is noted that the Pryde Aquatic & Wellness Centre, which is currently under construction, may address some of these suggestions for supporting facility space.

3.2 Sports Field Users Focus Group

The following is a summary of key themes from the discussions with sports field users.

Lamont Sports Park is Highly Valued

Lamont Sports Park is highly valued in the community and groups are proud to have it located in Saugeen Shores. Organizations felt that it is high quality and well run and maintained. Notable features include the ability for groups to hold concurrent games and practices and to host tournaments, trail pathways, and amenities (existing and planned). Lamont Sports Park has also been an economic development generator for the Town with local businesses benefiting from out-of-town spending.

Growth in Participation

All organizations reported that participation has increased dramatically compared to pre-pandemic levels. This was due to various factors such as overall growth of the community and the increasing interest in sports.

Pressure on Field and Diamond Availability

While organizations have been experiencing strong demand for programming, groups are not able to accommodate new participants or teams due to limited field access. As a result, some groups reported that they have to create waitlists for new players. Organizations expressed that losing existing sports fields would negatively impact their programs.

Facility Gaps and Upgrades Needed

Ball diamond and soccer organizations expressed the desire for more sports fields to accommodate interest in their sports. The need for an indoor soccer fieldhouse was mentioned to allow for year-round play. Indoor soccer programs are currently being delivered outside of Saugeen Shores, which can be a challenge for travel during inclement winter weather. It was identified that the indoor field house could be multi-use to support programs for various sports, as well as general community uses.

The cricket organization also expressed the desire to improve the existing pitch as it is well located in the centre of Port Elgin. Suggested enhancements included improving the playing surface and adding spectator seating and shade structures. The group also mentioned that an alternative location could be at Lamont Sports Park.

A pressing concern for groups was the lack of washrooms and drinking water access at Lamont Sports Park, although it is recognized that these amenities are planned for the short-term.

Section 4.0

Arena Analysis

4.1 Identifying Ice Pad Needs

The 2016 Recreation Master Plan established a service level target of providing one ice pad per 700 minor and adult registrants. A review of ice schedules revealed that the Town's arenas are predominantly used by minor hockey and figure skating groups. It is recommended that Saugeen Shores adopt a new target that is specific to minor participants. This ensures that youth continue to be prioritized for access to ice time, recognizing that adult users are more mobile who can travel to play in other arena centres and have the ability to play later in the evenings.

Communities generally provide arenas at a range between one ice pad per 400 to 500 minor participants. A target of **one ice pad per 500 minor participants** is recommended for Saugeen Shores as it is similar to the Town's current level of service of one per 581 minor participants. This conservative target also recognizes that there is a level of uncertainty with respect to future participation levels as a result of new OHF open borders policy. With 1,400 minor skating registrants forecasted over the next 10 years, the recommended target would suggest that there would be a need for a third ice pad shortly after 2036.

Table 7: Projected Ice Pad Needs

	2026	2031	2036
Population Estimate	18,410	20,483	22,711
Estimated Number of Minor Registrants	1,200	1,300	1,400
Existing Number of Ice Pads	2.0	2.0	2.0
Required Ice Pads @ 1 ice pad per 500 minor participants	2.3	2.6	2.9
Ice Pad Needs	**0.3**	**0.6**	**0.9**

Note: minor participation forecasts assume similar age structure proportions and percentage of children and youth playing ice sports.

4.2 Ice Allocation Policy

The Town is planning to establish an Ice Allocation Policy in 2026. While an analysis of ice allocation and scheduling is beyond the scope of this study, this direction is supported as it is recognized that user groups are using less time than what is currently being allocated; the desire for more ice time was also heard through the consultation process. Having an ice allocation process that is fair, transparent, and equitable will be important to ensure that time is being distributed appropriately to existing and new organizations. This will help ensure that ice time is being used efficiently and that minor groups continue to be prioritized.

4.3 Twin The Plex

The most logical location is at the Plex in Port Elgin. While the Town is currently in the process of completing the Pryde Aquatic & Wellness Centre (co-located with the Plex), this expansion was designed with the intent to expand the facility to accommodate a second ice pad. This strategy will create a twin pad facility, which is the ideal template for an arena as it would allow the Town to achieve efficiencies with operations and programming; it is also more desirable among user groups compared to single pad locations. Increasing ice availability would not only accommodate growing demand but also allow for additional tournaments. The Town currently hosts two tournaments annually and has not received a request from groups to host additional ones to avoid disruptions to regular programming. The Town has also hosted two professional curling bonspiels at the Plex, and one planned for 2026. If a second pad was provided at the Plex, it is anticipated that there would be additional requests to host additional tournaments and potentially additional bonspiels.

While a second ice pad is not needed until shortly after 2036, the Town should engage an architect during this planning period to prepare a design that would include the second ice pad with supporting amenities. Ensuring that the appropriate funding is in place will also be important. The need for the second ice pad should be reconfirmed as part of a future update to this Needs Assessment and/or the Town's Recreation Master Plan, which should consider participation levels, arena usage levels, and community input.

4.4 Continue to Reinvest in the Southampton Coliseum

The Town has made intentional efforts to reinvest in the Southampton Coliseum with the replacement of various mechanical components, slab, rink boards, glass, accessibility retrofits, and more to extend the life of this facility for ice. Additional work is planned to include continued replacement of lifecycle components and other accessibility retrofits. There are other opportunities to consider in order to make the facility more functional. While the Town has completed, or has planned, capital reinvestment in the ice pad, which is expected to continue serving the Southampton area, attention should be given to complementary areas such as Green Room, which is located on the second floor of the building. This space would benefit from modernizing the interior with new flooring and updating interior finishes, and kitchen enhancements. Accessibility retrofits to the Southampton Coliseum should also continue to be undertaken to increase use, such as adding an elevator and ensuring that areas are barrier-free.

The Southampton Curling Club is also located at the Coliseum. While an analysis of curling needs was beyond the scope of this study, it is recognized that this space, as well as the lounge, is generally original to the building. Over time, there will be a need to address aging lifecycle components that influence the functionality of the space for curling such as the slab and refrigeration piping, which falls under the responsibility of the Town. Given that there two separate curling clubs in Saugeen Shores, the other one being located in Port Elgin, a coordinated approach between the Town and both

curling organizations is recommended to determine the long-term vision for curling. This may be explored further as part of an update to the Recreation Master Plan.

Arena Recommendations	
Rec 1.	**Develop an ice allocation policy** to ensure that time is being distributed in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner for existing and new organizations.
Rec 2.	Prepare a **design and funding plan** for a second ice pad at the Plex, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.
Rec 3.	Create a plan to **update and modernize the Green Room** at the Southampton Coliseum to bolster usage levels. This may include replacing the existing carpet, updating interior finishes, and modernizing the kitchen.
Rec 4.	Complete **accessibility retrofits** to the Southampton Coliseum including adding an elevator and removing barriers from public areas.
Rec 5.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan** to reconfirm arena and curling needs with consideration given to updated participation data, usage statistics, and stakeholder input.
Rec 6.	Subject to confirmation of arena needs, **construct a second ice pad at the Plex**.





Section 5.0
Ball Diamond Analysis

5.1 Identifying Ball Diamond Needs

Based on current registration rates during the summer season (excluding fall user groups) and the recent completion of six new lit ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park, the Town is providing a service level of one ball diamond per 96 participants, which matches the target established in the 2016 Master Plan (one per 100 participants). This target aligns with provision model used in other municipalities and continues to be recommended for Saugeen Shores.

With a forecasted participation of 2,000 players by 2036, the recommended target suggests that there will be a need for 20 ball diamonds by the end of the planning period; however, additional data is required to have a better understanding of total ball diamond usage levels (including games, practices, and tournaments). Until there is a full understanding of actual ball diamond usage, no new ball diamonds should be constructed.

Table 8: Projected Ball Diamond Needs

	2026	2031	2036
Population Estimate	18,410	20,483	22,711
Total Estimated Number of Players*	1,6,00	1,800	2,000
Existing Field Supply (ULE)	17	17	17
Required Field Supply (ULE) @ 1 diamond per 100 participants	16	18	20
Ball Diamond Needs (ULE)	**0**	**+1**	**+3**

*Total estimated number of players includes groups that play during the summer.
ULE=Unlit equivalent. Lit fields are assumed to have an equivalent capacity of 1.5 unlit diamonds.





5.2 Monitoring Ball Diamond Needs

In the short term, the Town should monitor total ball diamond usage and improve how it tracks time being used to capture games, practices, and tournaments. This will give the Town a better understanding of diamond use and projected needs. With this data, a reassessment of ball diamond needs should be undertaken.

The Town is planning to prepare an Athletic Field Policy to ensure that time is being allocated in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner. This is supported by this study that will help optimize the use of the Town's ball diamond supply. This is particularly important given the major capital investments made at Lamont Sports Park. While a detailed allocation analysis is beyond the scope of this study, usage be directed to this site to optimize the benefit of the Town's investment. Encouraging the use of Jubilee Park should also be considered given its recent investments and continuing to undertake enhancements at this location is supported including (but not limited to), replacing fencing and seating areas.

While no new ball diamonds are required in the short term, there may be a benefit to prepare a future facility fit design for ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park (subject to reconfirming needs), where there is space available. These ball diamonds should be designed for softball as there is currently no indication that there is a need for an additional hardball diamond.

Given current ball diamond usage levels, the above noted strategy may result in surplus diamonds at Cameron Park, Biener Park, and Lakeview Park, where usage levels were less than 20% in 2025. Should it be determined that use from all or some of these locations can be accommodated at Lamont Sports Park and Jubilee Park, these diamonds should be decommissioned through a phased approach, and alternative uses of lands should be explored. While this study identifies the need for soccer fields and cricket, it was determined that these facilities are better suited elsewhere in Saugeen Shores. An analysis of repurposing opportunities was not undertaken as part of this study and may be considered as part of an update to this Needs Assessment and/or the Recreation Master Plan.

Should there be no viable repurposing opportunities, consideration should be given to divesting all or a portion of these properties. This is supported by the 2020 Lamont Sports Park Business Plan, which recommended that sites be divested to provide financial support for the new site development. If the Town repurposes or divests one or more of these properties, other recreation facilities that exist at these sites will need to be relocated and accommodated elsewhere. For example, Biener Park has a soccer field and temporary cricket field. These assets are discussed in the following sections of this study.

Ball Diamond Recommendations	
Rec 7.	**Develop Athletic Field Allocation Policy** to ensure that time is being allocated in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner for existing and new organizations.
Rec 8.	**Monitor and track total utilization** of the Town's ball diamonds, including games, practices, and tournaments.
Rec 9.	Through the Town's new Athletic Field Allocation Policy, **direct usage to ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park and Jubilee Park.**
Rec 10.	Based on an understanding of ball diamond usage and accommodations at Lamont Sports Park and Jubilee Park, **remove between two to three ball diamonds** from Biener Park, Cameron Park, and/or Lakeview Park.
Rec 11.	Prepare a **facility fit design at Lamont Sports Park** for a Phase 3 expansion to accommodate two lit softball diamonds with a cricket field (see Recommendation #27).
Rec 12.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment** to reconfirm ball diamond needs based on updated participation levels, usage statistics, and stakeholder input.
Rec 13.	Subject to confirming ball diamond needs, **prepare a design and funding plan for a Phase 3 expansion at Lamont Sports Park**, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.
Rec 14.	Undertake **improvements to the Jubilee Park ball diamond** including, but not limited to, fencing and seating.
Rec 15.	If required, **undertake a refresh and update of the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan**.
Rec 16.	Proceed with **constructing two lit ball diamonds** at Lamont Sports Park.
Rec 17.	Following the development of new diamonds at Lamont Sports Park and based on a review of usage levels, **decommission between two to three ball diamonds** from Cameron Park, Biener Park, and/or Lakeview Park.

Section 6
Soccer Field Analysis

6.1 Identifying Soccer Field Needs

The Town's 2016 Master Plan established a target of one soccer field per 70 participants, which is towards the higher end of the range compared to other municipalities that target between one per 60 to 90 participants. With a current registration of 900 participants and an adjusted field supply of 13 unlit equivalent soccer fields, the Town is providing a service level of one unlit field equivalent per 70 participants, which matches the recommended target.

Since the pandemic, the soccer group has experienced a strong increase in field registration due in part by population growth and a renewed interest in the sport. This level of growth may not be sustainable long-term particularly as sport participation is cyclical, although low barriers to entry and international appeal may continue to bolster registration levels. Nevertheless, there is ample capacity within the Town's field supply base that suggests that there is time available. It is a best practice to ensure that the Town's existing assets are optimized prior to building new facilities, particularly given the land requirements associated with soccer fields, and the fact that opportunities for future parkland are reduced as a result of changes to the Planning Act. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Town adjust its provision target to one field per 80 participants to recognize that there is capacity within the existing supply to accommodate additional use.

Based on the recommended target and a projected estimate of 1,100 participants, it is anticipated that the Town may require 14 unlit field equivalents in 2036, one more than what is currently required.

Table 9: Projected Soccer Field Needs

	2026	2031	2036
Population Estimate	18,410	20,483	22,711
Total Estimated Number of Players	900	1,000	1,100
Existing Field Supply (ULE)	13	13	13
Required Field Supply (ULE) @ 1 field per 80 participants	12	13	14
Soccer Field Needs (ULE)	**-1**	**0**	**1**

ULE=Unlit equivalent. Lit fields are assumed to have an equivalent capacity of 1.5 unlit fields. Existing supply includes the redevelopment of Helliwell Park that will include two lit soccer fields. The existing supply is also adjusted to recognized that the Town's full fields can be subdivided into two fields to support simultaneous games for younger age groups.

6.2 Strategies to Address Soccer Field Needs

With the redevelopment of Helliwell Park, the Town will need to monitor its use once completed to understand how these new fields respond to local demand, which can be achieved by establishing a process to track user group participation and field usage levels. There are currently limited options to construct new soccer fields in Saugeen Shores, should there continue to be field demand. While there is currently land available at Lamont Sports Park, this site is better suited to address other land intensive sports field needs such as cricket and ball diamonds. Opportunities to add new programmable soccer fields to the Town's supply to meet forecasted needs are highlighted below. Soccer field needs should be reassessed as part of updating the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan.

a. **Promote the use of available time within the Town's existing soccer field supply.** The Town's usage schedule suggests that there is time available to accommodate additional use, particularly on Friday when no fields are in use. There are also times available on Mondays and Wednesdays, as well as during the weekends. While it is recognized that current field scheduling is done in a manner to align with Ontario Soccer standards, it is also important to ensure that the Town's existing field supply is fully optimized to make efficient use of land, prior to constructing new fields.

b. **Encourage the use of third-party soccer fields.** It is recognized that there are soccer fields in Saugeen Shores that are owned by others including at Saugeen District Senior School and Unifor Family Centre. While it is recognized that there are challenges with gaining consistent access to these amenities, these amenities exist and there may be an opportunity to use these fields to meet community needs. The Town may play a role in facilitating discussions between the soccer field landowners and the soccer club to negotiate regular access.

c. **Maintain the Biener Field on a temporary basis.** During the redevelopment of Helliwell Park, Biener Field should be used as a temporary field until construction is completed. At this point, the Town should evaluate how redeveloped Helliwell Park can accommodate soccer field needs and redirect use back to this location.

d. **Explore expanding Helliwell Park.** There may be an opportunity to expand the park to construct a third field (potentially lit). This could potentially further strengthen this park as a soccer hub for the Town given the current redevelopment to include two lit soccer fields. Further discussions may be required with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority to ensure that future expansion would have no negative environmental impacts, and consideration should be given to the Helliwell Park Master Plan. Additional public consultation should be undertaken as part this process. As part of discussions, there may be value in discussing the potential to accommodate a fourth future field as part of an additional development phase, which would further bolster the site as a soccer hub. Prior to development, the Town should reconfirm needs through an update to this Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan.

e. **Construct soccer fields at future parks.** As new parks are planned, acquired and developed, opportunities to meet future soccer field needs should be explored. This may include expanding existing parks through land purchase or acquiring parkland through future subdivision development, although there are currently no known new parks in the development pipeline that would be suitable to accommodate soccer fields.

As part of any new field development, consideration could be given to the feasibility of accommodating artificial turf with the potential to be covered during the winter season to offer year-round programming, although this should be supported by appropriate business planning. This type of facility does not currently exist, and the local soccer organization is currently booking time in another municipality to meet their indoor programming needs.

In addition to new soccer fields, the desire to enhance the existing soccer field supply was expressed through the consultation process, particularly at J.H. Robertson Park, such as improving field quality conditions, ensuring that seating is available, and providing a pavilion. However, this property is owned by the Bluewater District School Board. The Town accesses these fields through a user agreement. It is recommended that a long-term lease agreement is negotiated to ensure its continued use for the soccer organization. Any investment at this location, such as installing appropriately sized goal posts that meet Ontario Soccer standards, improving the playing surface and providing player seating, should be done strategically and potentially in partnership with the school board and the soccer organization. Major capital investment in existing or new structures (such as a pavilion) on non-Town owned lands are not recommended.



Soccer Field Recommendations	
Rec 18.	**Monitor and track total utilization** of the Town's soccer fields diamonds, including games, practices, and tournaments.
Rec 19.	Promote the use of available time at the Town's soccer fields to **maximize the use of the existing supply**.
Rec 20.	Encourage and support the Saugeen Shores United Football Club in discussions with third parties to **negotiate regular access to existing non-Town-owned soccer fields**.
Rec 21.	**Maintain the soccer field Biener Park** on a temporary basis until the completion of Helliwell Park. Subject to usage levels following its redevelopment, redirect use back to Helliwell Park.
Rec 22.	Engage the Bluewater District School Board to **negotiate a long-term agreement to use J.H. Robertson Park** for soccer and work collaboratively with the school board and the Saugeen Shores United Football Club to identify and prioritize future improvements, including capital funding sources and opportunities.
Rec 23.	Consult with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority to **explore the feasibility of expanding Helliwell Park** to add a third soccer field (possibly lit). The feasibility of accommodating a fourth future field could also be explored to meet long-term needs. Consideration should also be given to the Helliwell Park Master Plan. Additional public consultation should be undertaken as part of this process.
Rec 24.	**Prepare a design and funding plan** for expanding Helliwell Park for soccer, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.
Rec 25.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan** to reconfirm soccer field needs.
Rec 26.	**Construct a third soccer field (potentially lit) at Helliwell Park**, and if required, a fourth future field as part of a future development phase.

Section 7
Cricket Field Analysis

7.1 Identifying Cricket Field Needs

The Town's 2016 Master Plan did not assess cricket field needs as there was no demand for this type of facility at that time. As a result, Saugeen Shores does not have an established target for cricket. Municipalities that have adopted service targets aim to provide a standard of one cricket field per 100,000 residents. This target is typically applied in urban communities, particularly GTA municipalities, that have large concentrations of culturally diverse residents that play cricket.

Smaller municipalities, including Saugeen Shores, have also been introducing cricket fields to respond to growing demand through various ways such as converting underutilized open fields as a stop gap measure that has allow communities to respond quickly to community needs. Saugeen Shores in particular is also in proximity to Bruce Power, which is attracting international talent and a culturally diverse workforce that has been a contributing factor to the growing local interest in cricket. As Bruce Power expands, and other energy-oriented industries are drawn to Saugeen Shores through the development of Innovation Park, it is anticipated that the Town's population will continue to diversify.

One cricket field in Saugeen Shores is expected to be sufficient during the planning period based on current and projected registration levels and existing usage levels.

7.2 Constructing a Permanent Cricket Field

The cricket field at Biener Park was the Town's temporary response to meeting an emerging demand as there were no viable locations at the time to accommodate an appropriately sized field. Generally, cricket fields vary from 137 metres to 150 metres in diameter and approximately two to three hectares in size. By comparison, the Biener cricket field is undersized at less than one hectare in size and is thus provides about a third of the space needed for most organized play. As a result, use of the field is limited to tape ball cricket, which is used for recreational play only; a larger field is required for hard ball cricket. The current cricket pitch is also not ideally designed, and the playing surface is not maintained at a level for organized play.

Given the above noted constraints, and projected growth and interest in the game, the Town has an opportunity to construct a permanent cricket field at Lamont Sports Park. High level observations suggest that there is sufficient space to accommodate a cricket field that would be suitable for varying types of the game including adult hard ball and tournaments. Complementary amenities are already located or planned at this site such as parking and washrooms, which would be particularly beneficial for cricket given the length of games and number of people that come to spectate.

Constructing a permanent cricket pitch in Saugeen Shores will not only satisfy local cricket needs, but it may also have economic development benefits as it would bolster

the Town's desirability for new residents and immigrants, strengthening local industries. Cricket is also a regional sport and may attract visitors and users from surrounding municipalities given that there are no other communities in Bruce County has a cricket field, which may potentially create economic spinoffs that benefit local businesses.

As a starting point, the Town should engage a landscape architect to prepare a facility fit design for a cricket field at Lamont Sports Park, along with supporting amenities such as shade and seating. Once the facility fit is completed to confirm that it can be accommodated, preparing a detailed design and funding plan should be undertaken. The funding plan should consider using a range of funding sources including establishing a user fee (engaging the cricket user group should be undertaken).

Cricket Field Recommendations	
Rec 27.	Prepare a **facility fit design at Lamont Sports Park** for a Phase 3 expansion to accommodate two lit softball diamonds with a cricket field (see Recommendation #11).
Rec 28.	Prepare a **design and funding plan for a Phase 3 expansion at Lamont Sports Park**, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.
Rec 29.	**Construct a cricket field** with supporting amenities at Lamont Sports Park.



Section 8:
Implementation Strategy

This Needs Assessment provides focused recommendations to the year 2036. Recommendations should be considered through long-range capital budgets, and ongoing updates to the Town's Recreation Master Plan.

It bears noting that while the scope of this Needs Assessment focuses on infrastructure and capital projects, the Town must be prepared to also respond to operational resources that are required to sustain and maintain the arena and sports field system. At the time of when recommendations are brought forward for capital requests, the Town should also assess associated operating implications.

Future population growth, along with evolving participation rates, usage, and other recreational needs has the potential to alter arena and sports field needs and demands. For this reason, reviewing and updating this Needs Assessment in the next five years is recommended to reflect changes in supply and trends in facility use and participation. This may also be combined together with the next iteration of the Recreation Master Plan.

The following implementation table summarizes the recommendations contained in this Needs Assessment, in the order that they appeared. Suggested timing for implementation is also identified, although this should be only used as a guide as there may be factors that impact when recommendations are brought forward.

Arena Recommendations		Timing
Rec 1.	**Develop an ice allocation policy** to ensure that time is being distributed in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner for existing and new organizations.	2026
Rec 2.	Prepare a **design and funding plan** for a second ice pad at the Plex, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.	2029 – 2031
Rec 3.	Create a plan to **update and modernize the Green Room** at the Southampton Coliseum to bolster usage levels. This may include replacing the existing carpet, updating interior finishes, and modernizing the kitchen.	2029 – 2031
Rec 4.	Complete **accessibility retrofits** to the Southampton Coliseum including adding an elevator and removing barriers from public areas.	2029 – 2031
Rec 5.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan** to reconfirm arena and curling needs with consideration given to updated participation data, usage statistics, and stakeholder input.	2029 – 2031
Rec 6.	Subject to confirmation of arena needs, **construct a second ice pad at the Plex**.	2036+

Ball Diamond Recommendations		Timing
Rec 7.	**Develop Athletic Field Allocation Policy** to ensure that time is being allocated in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner for existing and new organizations.	2026
Rec 8.	**Monitor and track total utilization** of the Town's ball diamonds, including games, practices, and tournaments.	2026
Rec 9.	Through the Town's new Athletic Field Allocation Policy, **direct usage to ball diamonds at Lamont Sports Park and Jubilee Park.**	2026
Rec 10.	Based on an understanding of ball diamond usage and accommodations at Lamont Sports Park and Jubilee Park, **remove between two to three ball diamonds** from Biener Park, Cameron Park, and/or Lakeview Park.	2026 – 2028
Rec 11.	Prepare a **facility fit design at Lamont Sports Park** for a Phase 3 expansion to accommodate two lit softball diamonds with a cricket field (see Recommendation #27).	2027
Rec 12.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment** to reconfirm ball diamond needs based on updated participation levels, usage statistics, and stakeholder input.	2028
Rec 13.	Subject to confirming ball diamond needs, **prepare a design and funding plan for a Phase 3 expansion at Lamont Sports Park**, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.	2029 – 2031
Rec 14.	Undertake **improvements to the Jubilee Park ball diamond** including, but not limited to, fencing and seating.	2029 - 2031
Rec 15.	If required, **undertake a refresh and update of the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan**.	2029 – 2031
Rec 16.	Proceed with **constructing two lit ball diamonds** at Lamont Sports Park.	2036+
Rec 17.	Following the development of new diamonds at Lamont Sports Park and based on a review of usage levels, **decommission between two to three ball diamonds** from Cameron Park, Biener Park, and/or Lakeview Park.	2036+

Soccer Field Recommendations		Timing
Rec 18.	**Monitor and track total utilization** of the Town's soccer fields diamonds, including games, practices, and tournaments.	2026
Rec 19.	Promote the use of available time at the Town's soccer fields to **maximize the use of the existing supply**.	2026
Rec 20.	Encourage and support the Saugeen Shores United Football Club in discussions with third parties to **negotiate regular access to existing non-Town-owned soccer fields**.	2026
Rec 21.	**Maintain the soccer field Biener Park** on a temporary basis until the completion of Helliwell Park. Subject to usage levels following its redevelopment, redirect use back to Helliwell Park.	2026
Rec 22.	Engage the Bluewater District School Board to **negotiate a long-term agreement to use J.H. Robertson Park** for soccer and work collaboratively with the school board and the Saugeen Shores United Football Club to identify and prioritize future improvements, including capital funding sources and opportunities.	2026
Rec 23.	Consult with the Saugeen Valley Conservation Authority to **explore the feasibility of expanding Helliwell Park** to add a third soccer field (possibly lit). The feasibility of accommodating a fourth future field could also be explored to meet long-term needs. Consideration should also be given to the Helliwell Park Master Plan. Additional public consultation should be undertaken as part of this process.	2026 – 2028
Rec 24.	Prepare a design and funding plan for **expanding Helliwell Park for soccer,** with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.	2029 – 2031
Rec 25.	**Refresh and update the Needs Assessment and/or Recreation Master Plan** to reconfirm soccer field needs.	2029 – 2031
Rec 26.	**Construct a third soccer field (potentially lit) at Helliwell Park**, and if required, a fourth future field as part of a future development phase.	2036+

Cricket Recommendations		Timing
Rec 27.	Prepare a **facility fit design at Lamont Sports Park** for a Phase 3 expansion to accommodate two lit softball diamonds with a cricket field (see Recommendation #11).	2027
Rec 28.	Prepare a **design and funding plan for a Phase 3 expansion at Lamont Sports Park**, with consideration given to using a range of funding sources.	2027
Rec 29.	**Construct a cricket field** with supporting amenities at Lamont Sports Park.	2028 – 2029

Appendix A: Facility Benchmarking

The following table compares the Town's inventory and service levels for ice pads, ball diamonds, rectangular fields and cricket fields compared to other municipalities in Bruce County. Saugeen Shores in providing a lower level of service for ice pads, but a higher level of service for its outdoor sports facilities. The Town is also the only municipality that provides a cricket field.

Table 10: Facility Provision in Other Communities

Facility	Saugeen Shores	Average	Arran-Elderslie	Brockton	Huron-Kinloss	Kincardine	Northern Bruce Peninsula	South Bruce	South Bruce Peninsula
Population	18,410	9,749	7,222	10,608	8,412	13,092	4,921	6,144	9,835
Ice Pads	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	2	1
Service Level (per capita)	1:9,200	1:6,309	1:2,407	1:10,608	1:4,206	1:6,546	1:4,921	1:3,072	1:9,835
Ball Diamonds (ULE)	17	7	9.5	9.5	7	8	3	8.5	5
Service Level (per capita)	1:1,100	1:1,300	1:800	1:1,100	1:1,200	1:1,600	1:1,600	1:700	1:2,000
Rectangular Fields (ULE)	13	6	4	5	9.5	14.5	0	1	5
Service Level (per capita)	1:1,400	1:2,300	1:1,800	1:2,100	1:900	1:900	n/a	1:6,100	1:2,000
Cricket Fields	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Service Level (per capita)	1:18,400	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Rounded to the nearest 100. Population Source: Statistics Canada. Table 17-10-0155-01 Population estimates, July 1, by census subdivision, 2021 boundaries



Saugeen Shores

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