



Village of New Maryland Athletic Park Redevelopment Study

Background Review

September 2022

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This report was prepared by
UPLAND Planning + Design Inc.,
in association with REConsulting.

UPLAND **RE**Consulting Group

For the Village of New Maryland



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Background



1 Community Context

This Redevelopment Study will provide a framework to manage recreation facilities and services in New Maryland Athletic Park over the next five years. In order to establish needed services in this park, a wider perspective to outdoor recreation planning in the Village also needs to be applied.

In working towards this goal, it is important to understand the demographic profile of the population in New Maryland, both now and as the population changes over time. This will help to ensure that the preferences, needs, and desires of the population are captured during the planning process. The following chapter describes current and future demographic trends which will inform this Redevelopment Study.

1.1 Current Population Trends

The Village of New Maryland has experienced a small decline in population over the past two and a half decades. Since 1996, the population has declined from 4,285 people to 4,160 people in 2021, which is equivalent to nearly 3% of the population over that time period.

Although the population has been declining steadily over the past 25 years, the rate at which the population is declining is slower than the province as a whole. The population of the Province of New Brunswick declined by 5% between 1996-2021.

Overall, New Maryland's population trends quite closely with the province.

The Village experienced its highest rate of population decline during the 2006–2011 time period (-1.1%). The Province of New Brunswick also experienced its highest rate of population decline during the same time period, a total of nearly 3%.

Migration

Migration rates were obtained from the 2016 Statistics Canada census, as 2021 Census information on migration was not available at the time this report was written. The Census provides information about residents mobility status by comparing the number of people that live in the census area compared to the number of people that lived there one year prior.

4.7% of New Maryland residents migrated to the Village between 2015-2016, which includes both internal migrants (people who have moved from elsewhere in Canada), as well as external migrants (people who moved from outside of Canada). 4.5% of residents were internal migrants, and 0.2% of residents were external migrants. Comparatively, 5.1% of New Brunswick residents were migrants during the same time period, with internal migrants accounting for 4.5% of residents, and external migrants accounting for 0.6%.

Shifting Age Structure

As demonstrated in Table 1 on page 6, New Maryland has experienced a shift in age structure. While segments of the population

below an age of 65 are declining in numbers, the population over 65 has grown by 358% since 1996. This shift is important to consider when planning for recreation services, as it will help to ensure that facilities and services provided in the Athletic Park meet the needs of the community over the long-term.

Between 2011-2021 the median population age increased from 40.7 to 43.6 years old. The rate of increase is slower compared to the remainder of the

province, which experienced an increase in the median age from 40.6 to 46.8 years of age during the same period.

The average household size shrank slightly between 2011–2021 in New Maryland from 2.9 persons to 2.7. The average number of children in families is slightly higher in New Maryland (1.8) compared to New Brunswick (1.7).

Aerial view of Athletic Park with adjacent Centennial Gardens and Highland Acres neighbourhoods.



1.2 Population Projections

The population projection model used for this analysis relies on census data from Statistics Canada for both the Village of New Maryland as well as the Province of New Brunswick.

To project the future population, the model assumes that the proportion of the population of New Maryland compared to the Province of New Brunswick will remain constant over time. Using this assumption, the Statistics Canada provincial population projections can help to project the future population of New Maryland.

Statistics Canada produced a series of growth scenarios to account for uncertainty

related to future fertility rates, life expectancy, and migration rates. For the purposes of this analysis, a low, medium, and high growth scenario were chosen to project future scenarios of growth in the Province.

Table 2 shows the projected population under each growth scenario. The population is expected to increase in the low, medium, and high growth scenarios. This could be attributed to a number of factors, such as provincial policies and programs related to migration, or improvements to health services. New Maryland's historical and projected population is depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 2 depicts the projected population by age cohort under the low, medium, and

Table 1. Population Village of New Maryland 1996-2021

Age	1996	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021	Percent Change 1996-2021
0-19	1,455	1,335	1,245	1,190	1,110	1,035	-29%
20-64	2,650	2,710	2,715	2,575	2,400	2,300	-13%
65+	180	240	300	450	675	825	358%
Total	4,285	4,285	4,260	4,215	4,185	4,160	-3%

Table 2. Projected Population Village of New Maryland 2026-2036

Annual Rate of Change	2026	2031	2036
Low Growth Scenario	4,506	4,482	4,418
Medium Growth Scenario	4,558	4,588	4,586
High Growth Scenario	4,653	4,770	4,870

high growth scenarios. A noticeable trend is the increase in the share of the population over the age of 65. In the medium growth scenario, this could result in a 66% increase in the percentage of the population over 65 between 2021 and 2036. Conversely, the proportion of the population under the age of 19 is likely to decrease. This could be due to factors such as shifting preferences for family sizes. In a medium growth scenario, a 22% decrease in the population under the age of 19 is projected between 2021–2036. The population between the ages of 20–64 is projected to remain relatively stable over time.

Dependency Ratio

The dependency ratio is the proportion of the population that is composed of dependents (those that are not typically in the labour force), compared to portion of the population that are typically in the labour force.

The dependency ratio in New Maryland has been steadily increasing, predominantly due to the increasing proportion of the population over the age of 65. This development could have social and economic implications, such as changing needs and demands for health, wellness or recreation services.

Figure 1. Historical Population (1991-2016), and Projected Population (2016-2036)

— Recorded Population
 - - - Projected population (high, medium, low scenarios)

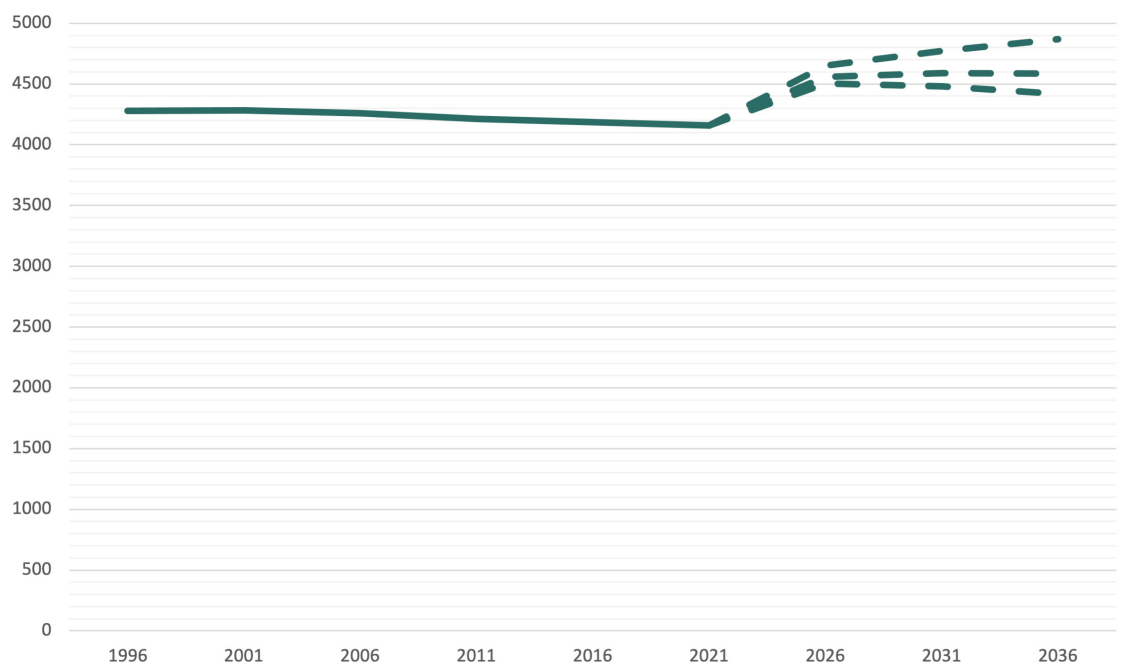
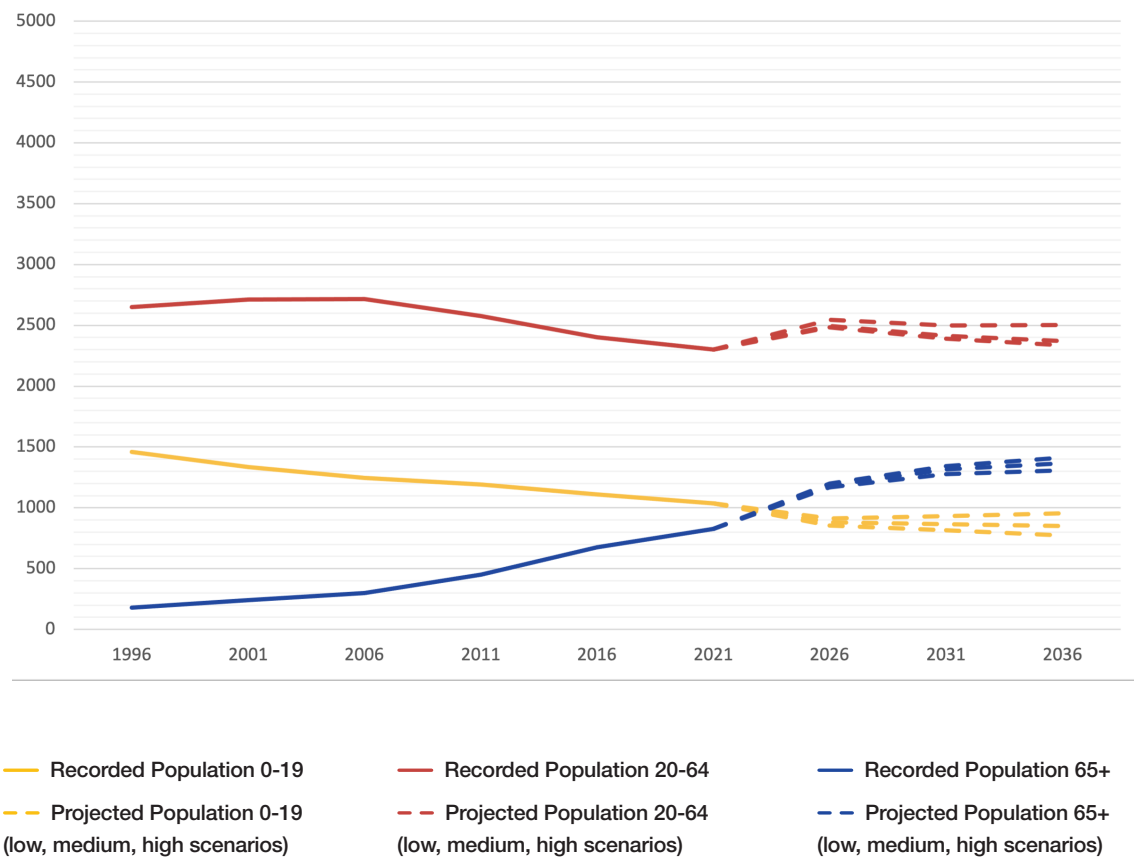


Figure 2. Population Change by Age Cohort (1996-2021) and Projected Population by Age Cohort (2021-2036)



1.3 Local Demographics

Income

Individuals and families with lower incomes are more likely to experience socio-economic barriers to recreation. Recreation program fees may be too high for families to access services, the location of recreation facilities may present financial barriers associated with the cost of travel, and recreation equipment and facility rental costs can be prohibitive.

In 2021, the median income in New Maryland (\$116,000) was higher than both New Brunswick (\$70,000) and Canada (\$84,000). Other income and housing statistics in this report reference the 2016 Statistics Canada Census (see Table 3), as the majority of 2021 data was not available at the time this report was written. In 2016, median household

income in New Maryland was \$102,713, which was considerably higher than the remainder of New Brunswick (\$59,347).

A higher proportion of residents in New Maryland are employed compared to the rest of New Brunswick. The most prevalent employment sectors in 2016 were public administration, educational services, and health care and social assistance. Fewer residents in New Maryland receive government transfers (59%) compared to New Brunswick and Canada, which includes transfers such as employment insurance, disability benefits, and social assistance.

There are fewer residents in New Maryland (7%) spending more than 30% of their income on shelter — which is the national

Table 3. Income and Housing Statistics (2015/16)

	New Maryland	New Brunswick	Canada
Median Total Household Income	\$102,713	\$59,347	\$70,336
Labour Participation Rate	65.2%	61.5%	65.2%
Employment Rate	61.2%	54.7%	60.2%
Received Government Transfers	59%	70.9%	68.9%
Median Home Value	\$230,074	\$150,010	\$341,556
Median Shelter Cost (Owned Dwellings)	\$939	\$741	\$1,130
Median Shelter Cost (Rented Dwellings)	\$994	\$704	\$910
Households Spending Over 30% of Income on Rent	7.3%	16.8%	31.8%
Tenant Households in Subsidized Housing	0%	14.4%	13%

The dependency ratio in New Maryland has been steadily increasing, predominantly due to the increasing proportion of the population over the age of 65.

measure of unaffordable housing in Canada —compared to all of New Brunswick (17%), .

Most residents (95%) own their own homes, and 88% of residents live in single detached dwellings. The median shelter cost for rented dwellings in New Maryland is higher compared to New Brunswick and Canada. No residents in New Maryland live in subsidized housing compared to New Brunswick (14%).

Health

The New Brunswick Health Council compiled background reports about the health of 33 New Brunswick communities in 2017.

These “Community at a Glance” documents provide detailed information about several determinants of health, including information about demographics, physical environments, social and economic factors, and health behaviours, services, and outcomes. The information available regarding New Maryland is combined with the communities of Kingsclear and Lincoln Area.

In 2012-2014, the top five physical activities that residents in the community engaged in were walking, garden and yard work, home exercise, swimming, and jogging and running.

Painted Sidewalk encouraging physical activity on New Maryland Highway.



The average life expectancy in this community is 79.6 years, which is only slightly lower than the average life expectancy in New Brunswick (80.2 years). When examining health services, the top five reasons for admission to hospitals in this community between (2013/14 – 2015/16) included newborn care, other medical care, heart attacks, complications during delivery, and chronic breathing diseases.

Cannabis and alcohol use by teens (grade 9-12) is higher in this community than the remainder of New Brunswick. Teens also reported a higher likelihood of operating

a motor vehicle, both on and off road, after consuming alcohol or other drugs.

Community members were asked to self-report about their perceived health, outlined in Table 4. The responses largely align with Provincial trends in New Brunswick. Adults over 65 years report somewhat higher-than-average health and physical activity levels. Children in grades 4-5 seem to acquire more screen time than the Provincial average.

Table 4. Perceived Health (NBHC, 2017). The New Maryland community includes the communities of Kingsclear and Lincoln Area.

	New Maryland	New Brunswick
See Their Health as Being Good or Excellent: Grades 6 - 12	69%	66%
See Their Health as Being Good or Excellent: Ages 18-64	59%	66%
See Their Health as Being Good or Excellent: Ages 65+	45%	36%
Reported Being Active at Least 60 Minutes Per Day: Grade 4-5	37%	35%
Reported Being Active at Least 60 Minutes Per Day: Grade 6-12	22%	22%
Sedentary: More than 2 Hours of Screen Time Per Day: Grades 4-5	63%	55%
Sedentary: More than 2 Hours of Screen Time Per Day: Grades 6-12	62%	63%
Physically Active During Their Free Time, Moderately Active, or Active Daily: Adults Ages 18-64	54%	50%
Physically Active During Their Free Time, Moderately Active, or Active Daily: Adults Ages 65+	53%	46%

Source: My Community at a Glance 2017, New Brunswick Community Profile Report (NBHC, 2017).

Education

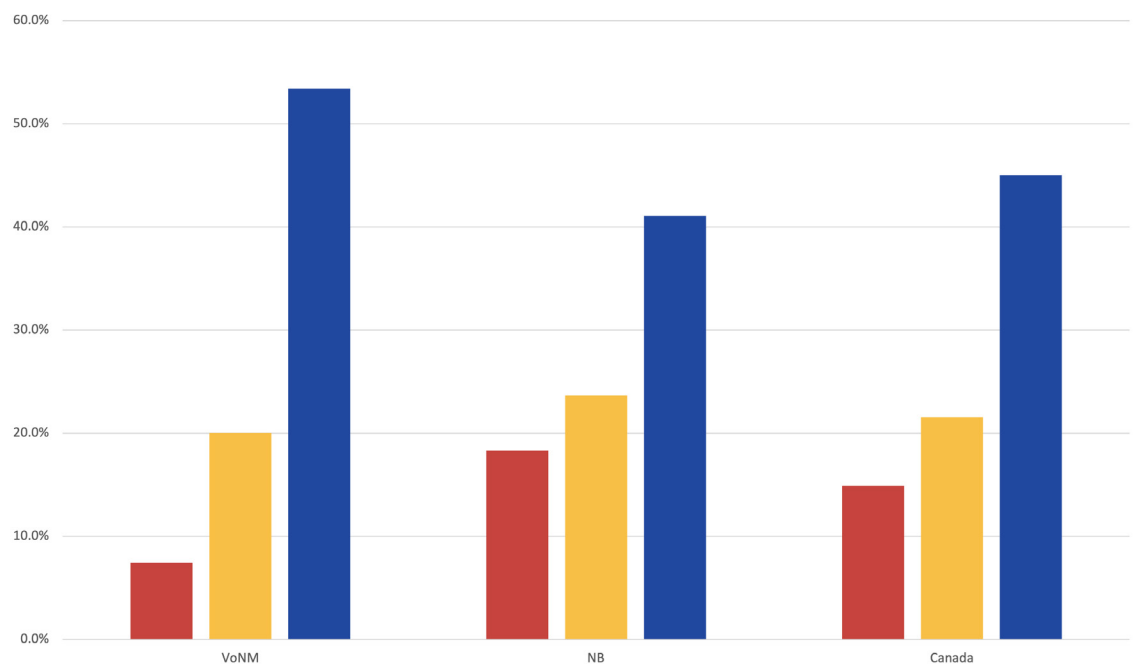
Physical activity is associated with many educational benefits such as enhanced problem-solving skills, improvements in concentration, memory, learning, attention, and overall educational achievement. Education is also commonly linked to higher paying jobs, which can provide people with the financial means to better access recreation services.

As shown in Figure 3, a greater proportion of New Maryland residents have a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree

relative to New Brunswick and Canada. 73% of New Maryland residents hold at least a high school diploma, with 53% holding a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree. Comparatively, 65% of New Brunswickers hold at least a high school diploma, and 41% have received a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

A smaller proportion of New Maryland residents have no certificate, diploma, or degree (7.4%) compared to the remainder of New Brunswick (18.3%).

Figure 3. Highest Education Level, 2016 (Statistics Canada)





Facilities Inventory



2 New Maryland Athletic Park

Aerial View showing all facilities of New Maryland Athletic Park. New Maryland Elementary School (NMES) can be seen in the top right corner.



2.1 New Maryland Athletic Park

The subject of this report and project is New Maryland Athletic Park, and is therefore listed first in this inventory. Athletic Park is located next to the New Maryland Elementary School and is the central facility for outdoor organized sports and leisure activities in New Maryland, with regular programming and events from spring to fall.

Currently there are two main access points to the park. On the southeastern side, there is a gravel parking lot with a small equipment storage area on municipal land. On its north-western end, the park can be accessed from the paved and landscaped school parking

lot, which often doubles as an alternative parking space in the evenings. Next to this lot, a narrow strip of woods roughly demarcates the boundary between municipal park property and provincial school property.

Between the two parking lots, there is a wide gravel walkway which serves as pedestrian access to sports fields and vehicle access for municipal maintenance trucks. A water main runs beneath the entire gravel path, and a service lateral to the basketball court allows for an outflow in that location.

Map 1. Athletic Park
(municipally
owned land
shown in black-
dashed outline).



There are numerous trails within the boundaries of the Village of New Maryland, and Athletic Park contains a trail head to a trail leading over private land into the woods and connecting to the wider system. A municipal walking connection through the Centennial Gardens Neighbourhood is currently under construction and additionally will provide a more formalized pedestrian access to the park.

Facilities within New Maryland Athletic Park include the following.:

- + **‘Peewee’ baseball field.** This is the only ball field with lighting in the park. It is fully fenced, has been renovated in 2008 and is in good condition. It measures approximately 75 by 75m and features two roofed team stands and one small, open bleacher for spectators.
- + **‘Bantam’ baseball field.** This field is similar to the ‘peewee’ field in terms of equipment and condition, except that it has no lighting but is much larger. The footprint measures approximately 115 by 115m, i.e. it covers more than double of the ‘peewee’ field surface area.
- + **Soccer field.** In the eastern corner of the park, a soccer field has been installed between the two baseball fields in 2013. It therefore is the newest addition to the park. The field was designed and built to the size of 100 by 75 yards, i.e. 91.44 by 68.58m. This is sufficient to satisfy the ‘grassroots’ standard of the Canadian Soccer Association, but fails to meet Provincial Championship Hosting Standards of Soccer New Brunswick, which requires 100m of length as a

minimum. Next to the soccer field, there are four small bleachers for spectators.

- + **Basketball courts.** This fully fenced area fits two standard basketball courts. Two baskets are permanently installed on the court which contains linework. The second court is used flexibly using movable baskets.

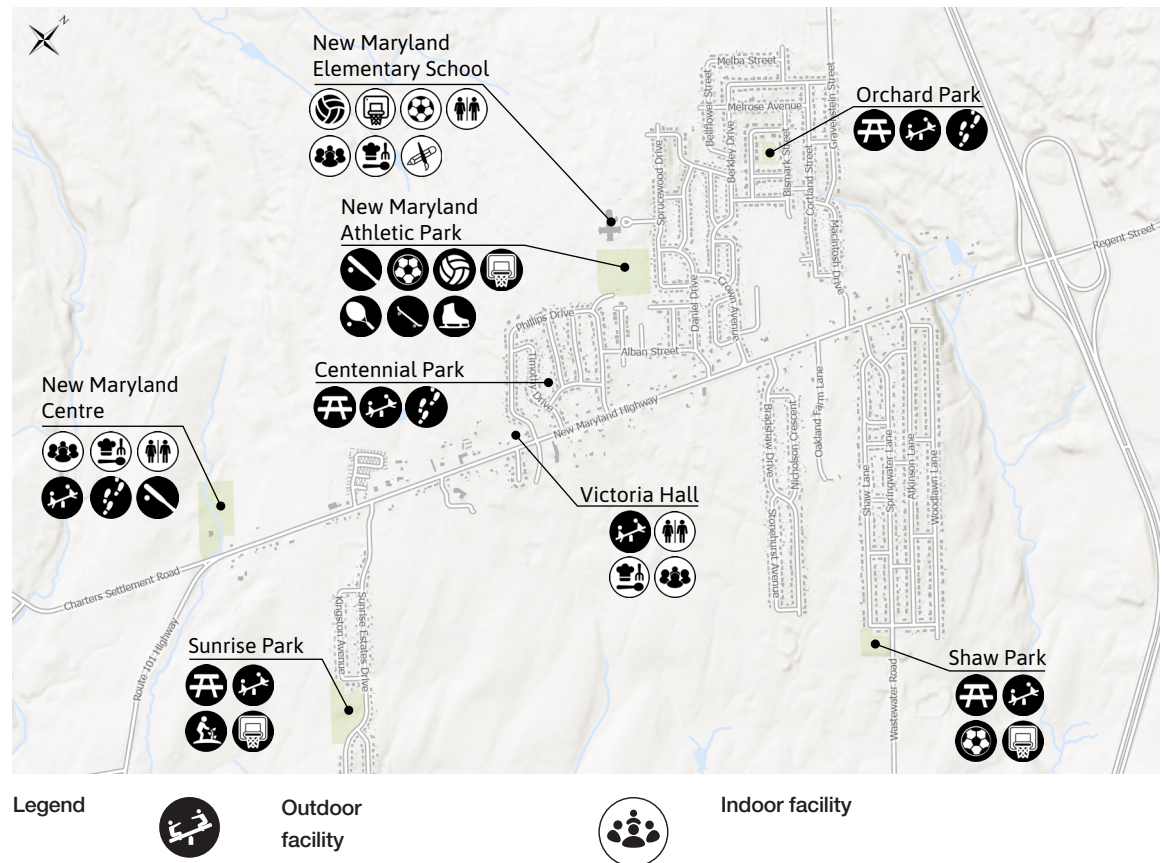
The entire area is enclosed by a raised asphalt edge, which allows for flooding and freezing of the courts in the winter. This allows winter usage for skating and shinny but has lead to considerable wear of the court surface.

- + **Tennis courts.** This fully fenced area fits two standard tennis courts. This area also contains the paved edge and is flooded and frozen in some winters. The court surface is in need of substantial repairs.
- + **Beach volleyball court.** The court measures 18m by 10m of excavation filled with sand, which is enough to fit a standard beach volleyball court of 16m by 8m. However, there is insufficient room for a buffer around the field which would allow for play at competitive level. A permanently installed net is provided. During some winters, the volleyball field serves as snow storage and sliding hill.

It should be noted that Athletic Park does currently not contain any washrooms or public buildings.

3 Other Existing Village Facilities

Map 2. Facilities Map



3.1 New Maryland Centre

The New Maryland Centre is a community hall set on the edge of the Village which contains a kitchen, board rooms, events hall, and washrooms. The grounds include the "wildwood park" playground, a baseball diamond, and wooded walking trails. The trails total a distance of under 2km but are fully developed with a number of bridges, including a suspension bridge, signs, benches and parking.

Facilities:

- + community space
- + kitchen
- + washrooms
- + picnic area
- + parking
- + baseball field
- + nature trails (& suspension bridge)
- + "wildwood park" playground

3.2 Victoria Hall

Victoria Hall was constructed in 1917 as the New Maryland Women's Institute. The village of New Maryland took over the care and maintenance of the hall in 1993, and purchased it in 2003. It is available to the public to rent for events.

Next to Victoria Hall is Victoria Park, a small park with short paved trails, benches and a cenotaph. This park is where the Village of New Maryland hosts their Remembrance Day ceremony and other outdoor gatherings.

Facilities:

- + community space
- + kitchen
- + washrooms
- + parking
- + outdoor gathering space

Community picnic at
Wildwood Park next to
New Maryland Centre



3.3 New Maryland Elementary School

Although not a municipal facility, the provincially operated New Maryland Elementary School (NMES) allows for organized after-hour usage of its facilities. NMES has a 'Community Use of Schools Agreement' with the Village, which allows to provide programming for the public at the school during evenings and weekends. The school facilities include a gym and cafeteria where the Village hosts organized activities as well drop-in gym open hours for a small fee. The school grounds also include a soccer field and several playgrounds with play structures and swings.

Facilities:

- + indoor gym
- + community space
- + soccer field.

3.4 Neighbourhood Parks

Subdivisions within the Village of New Maryland contain several local neighbourhood parks. They serve various recreational functions, and some of these parks also contain limited sports equipment.

Shaw Park

This park is located in the Springwater Place neighbourhood and features a baseball field with lighting (and a storage shed), a recently upgraded playground, basketball courts, a picnic shelter and benches.

Facilities:

- + baseball field
- + basketball courts
- + picnic area

Sunrise Park

Sunrise park is a neighbourhood greenspace in the Sunrise neighbourhood of New Maryland, on Sunrise Estates Dr. It was built in 2005 and originally included a playground, basketball court and picnic area. Since 2019, the New Maryland Community Garden has been located in this park.

Facilities:

- + community garden
- + sliding hill
- + playground and swings
- + parking
- + basketball court
- + covered picnic area

Sunrise Park
Community Garden



Orchard Park

Orchard park is a neighbourhood park in the Applewood Acres neighbourhood, built in 1999. It includes a walking path that connects residential roads, two playground structures, swings, a picnic shelter, picnic table and benches, and a multi-use lawn area.

Facilities:

- + Walking path
- + playground
- + picnic area

Centennial Park

Centennial park is a neighbourhood park in the Centennial Heights neighbourhood, built in 1992. It features walking paths connecting between residential roads, a playground, picnic tables and benches.

Facilities:

- + walking path
- + playground
- + picnic area
- + large playing field (previously used for soccer)

4 Utilization Patterns

4.1 Ball Fields

Grassy playing fields are very well utilized in New Maryland, as can be seen from field booking data between 2019-2022. Between the two baseball fields in Athletic Park and the two additional fields at the New Maryland Centre and Shaw Park, the majority of venues is booked for evening games on 3-4 days a week.

The two soccer venues are similarly well utilized. The soccer field at the New Maryland Elementary School hosts daily evening games and the Athletic Park soccer field is booked twice a week. The organizers' preference for the school field can likely be attributed to the availability of storage space in shipping containers.

It should be noted that these usage statistics only reflect organized games which require painted lines. Both the baseball and soccer communities use the fields for semi-formal training sessions when the fields are unoccupied.

Usage of the sandy beach volleyball field is not exactly known to Village staff and has varied considerably over the years. Since the court volleyball games at the school usually draw large groups of participants, it can be assumed that some of these players also like to play outdoors in the summer. Fresh footprints seen during the site visit confirm that assumption. The winter sliding hill in this location—built of snow cleared from the walkways—is very popular.

Athletic Park basketball courts serving as skating rink in the winter.



4.2 Hard Courts

The multifunctional hard courts are enjoyed by the community year-round. The highest utilization and popularity can be observed in the winter, when the courts are flooded and frozen to serve as skating surfaces. The basketball courts are frozen every winter. Depending on weather conditions and demand, the tennis courts are also flooded in some winters to allow for separation of skating and shinny.

During the summer, uptake of basketball and tennis courts has varied over the years. However, in recent years a very active basketball community has emerged and frequently uses the fields for both play and practice.

4.3 Paths and Trails

During the summer, the gravel path of the park and its adjacent trail are used for occasional walks, especially by residents walking their dogs. This number of pedestrians increases in the winter, when the park central path is one of the few trails in New Maryland to be cleared of snow.

4.4 Pandemic Impact

The recent Covid-19 pandemic appears to have somewhat increased residents' interest in physical activity. Organized field bookings have slightly increased since after 2019. Village staff has further observed a rapid increase in unorganized, 'pick-up' sports activities in the park.

Sliding hill built in the vicinity of the Athletic Park beach volleyball court.





Current Trends in Recreation



tire jump

5 National and Provincial Recreation Trends

5.1 Overview

There is value in taking the time to analyze evolving trends in the parks and recreation field, given the swiftly changing climate in which municipalities operate and the challenges of the global pandemic.

The Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) is a national organization dedicated to realizing the full potential of parks and recreation. Their work includes providing information and resources, influencing policy direction, and addressing social issues and challenges related to recreation, physical activity and sport, facilities, parks and trails and other social service areas.

While the trends in the following CPRA excerpt are national, they will heavily influence the direction of the plan especially relative to post-pandemic considerations; equity, access and inclusion; programming rural recreation; volunteers and staffing. The following is an excerpt from ReImagine RREC: A Canadian Parks and Recreation Project.

“There is heightened awareness of the value of parks, recreation and community sport. Past efforts by the sector, including the Benefits of Recreation initiative, the Framework for Recreation in Canada: Pathways to Wellbeing (2015), and policy initiatives such as Affordable Access, have advocated and touted the important societal role of parks, recreation and community sport. The pandemic has brought

into focus the public’s acceptance that access to parks and other open spaces, recreation services and community sport are a right and centrepiece of individual and community health and wellbeing.

Many sub-population groups continue to be disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. COVID has exacerbated a litany of health, social and economic inequalities. The pandemic continues to have a tremendous negative impact on disadvantaged and underrepresented population groups and communities, including Indigenous and Black communities, people of colour, women and girls, persons with a disability, children and youth, essential front-line workers, low-income families, LGBTQ2+ communities and others. Ensuring equitable access to parks, recreation and community sport facilities and programs must be a critical element as the sector renews, retools and contributes to broader community recovery.

Public expectations, preferences and behaviours are changing. Some findings confirm that some users are hesitant to return to organized sport and recreation programming. COVID-19 lockdowns have resulted in the widespread decrease of physical activity and increased sedentary behaviour, underscoring the importance of promoting the integration of health-enhancing physical activity into everyday living and capitalizing on heightened interest in parks and outdoor green spaces. The demand for outdoor, holistic and self-directed programming—including winter

programming—is on the increase. “Animating” outdoor programming to attract existing and new users— including vulnerable and hard-to-reach populations—has been identified as a best or “next” practice by leaders.

Staffing and other human resource challenges will need to be addressed. Data shows that parks, recreation and community sport administrators face mounting HR challenges as the pandemic continues. They will linger if not increase post-pandemic. There is an exodus of staff and volunteers who may not return post-pandemic. Changing roles and responsibilities, including abiding by public health measures, as well as new and oft-changing policies and guidelines, will require new and different skills.”

5.2 Ensuring Equitable Access

The Framework for Recreation in Canada acknowledges that “historically, recreation was considered a public good, which focused outreach to vulnerable people, families and communities. In recent times this has often shifted toward an individual-based, facility-focused, user-pay model. At the same time, Canadians are witnessing rapid technological, economic, environmental, demographic and social changes. This creates an urgent need for recreation to reaffirm historic values, while simultaneously adopting new ways of working that meet emerging needs.”

Barriers to participation in sport and recreation are often intersectional. User

and identity groups face many challenges and barriers to active living that prevent them from participating in recreation. Generally, barriers to sport and recreation participation can be categorized by:

- + Gender barriers: There is a bias in favour of boys, especially in sports.
- + Cultural barriers: Racialized groups may feel uncomfortable and unwelcome.
- + Socio-economic barriers: The cost of recreation can be prohibitive.
- + Organizational barriers: A lack of supportive policies, facilities and financial resources.
- + Communication barriers: Information about recreation resources and services have limited reach.
- + Facility barriers: Facilities are not equipped or designed to accommodate people of all ages and abilities.
- + Logistical barriers: Time commitments and lack of transportation prevent individuals from participating in recreation.

These barriers require immediate and progressive action, and some recreation practitioners across Canada have begun to design their activities to address such barriers. As people’s lives have become more complex (work schedules, family commitments and multiple responsibilities), recreation practitioners have shifted traditional formal and structured activities to more informal activities and flexible formats.

Generally, municipalities are striving towards an increased focus on diversity,

“Inclusion is an organizational practice and goal in which all groups and individuals are welcomed and valued. Equity speaks to fairness in access to resources, opportunities and experiences.”

— The Framework for Recreation in Canada

inclusion, equity and access. Some of the strategies and practices being adopted include but are not limited to:

- + free and low-cost programming;
- + free or low-cost equipment rental/ rental loan sign-outs, (could include winter and water equipment - skis, kayaks, canoes, paddle boards, bikes);
- + availability of community play boxes;
- + free or low-cost drop-in programs, including free and low cost after school programs;
- + free leisure sampling opportunities;
- + free programs to introduce recreation programs to new Canadians;
- + greater emphasis on gender equity including girls-only spaces and girls-only programs;
- + the creation of more welcoming environments (e.g., non binary washrooms, change rooms, and showers in facilities; more emphasis on staff training);
- + greater emphasis on safety features (e.g., lighting, sight lines, and signage);
- + more inclusive recognition on signage and PR materials, additional languages in PR material;
- + greater efforts to learn about first voice experiences and integrating Truth and Reconciliation findings into decision making regarding programming, events, facility access;
- + developing access and inclusion policies and strategies; and
- + recognizing financial barriers in the development of pricing strategies.

In keeping with the above, many municipalities are also developing or revamping fee structures and revenue generation formulas.

Physical Accessibility

All across Canada, communities are increasingly aware of the challenges faced by persons living with a disability. Challenges can be present in every aspect of society, including sport and recreation. In 2020 the New Brunswick Premier’s Council on Disability published a report: New Brunswick Disability Action Plan For Persons With A Disability. This report captured the current state of disability and accessibility in the province and provided a series of recommendations for consideration by the government.

The Plan describes how over one quarter of the population in New Brunswick reported having a mental or physical disability in 2017, which was the second highest percentage amongst the provinces and territories. The most common types of disabilities were related to pain, flexibility, mobility, and mental health, and were more prevalent in women than men. These recommendations included the importance of incorporating the principles of Universal Design in new construction and renovations. As the Village of New Maryland considers renovations to its facilities, it will be critical to incorporate Universal Design principles to ensure that all residents and visitors have equitable access to activities and opportunities in the community.

5.3 Rural Trends

With smaller and more remote populations, rural recreation faces different challenges than typical urban areas. Smaller populations spread over larger geographies simply don't have the tax base nor the volunteer base to support an extensive delivery of programs and services. However, there are opportunities for recreation that can play out differently, utilizing trends in outdoor recreation, environmental education, trails, equipment loan programs, toy boxes and other forms of unstructured recreation to ensure citizens can partake in recreation and physical activity.

A desire to connect to the natural world is more paramount now given the pandemic. Citizens want activities they can do year-round that are accessible and convenient. Self-pursuits such as running,

hiking, mountain biking, fishing, skiing, and snowshoeing are popular and municipalities are playing an increasing role through their physical activity strategies in highlighting fitness and motivational tips, safety tips, maps, and other "how-to" tips. Of particular interest is improved trail connectivity, expansion of trails for longer loops, improved conditions for cycling, and the addition of amenities such as restrooms, benches, shaded areas, and interpretative signage.

Municipalities are also taking the leadership role in increasing citizen connection to the outdoors through partnerships, policy and program development in nature based programming and environmental education. Public awareness and education programs increase awareness of nature's importance for healthy human

Freely accessible playground (front) and community trail entrance (rear) at the New Maryland Centre.



development and vibrant communities.

Other best practices include:

- + Municipalities supporting informal opportunities for small group gatherings: For example, “Meet up” events are in-person gatherings organized online (meetup.com), where members and organizers get together to connect, discuss, and practice activities related to their shared interests. It could be geo-caching, hikes, orienteering activities, cross country skiing, fat biking, or even indoor activities such as chess and other board games at the local community hall.
- + Creating an Equipment Loan Program and or a Toy Box program: Built over time, an inventory of recreational equipment is made available, free of charge, for citizens to borrow year-round. For example, hiking equipment, cross-country ski equipment, and hiking poles would enhance trail usage. Free play boxes at playground sites is a popular trend and the program could be built up over time to include locations across the region. These community assets can help make play and healthy living accessible to everyone.
- + Supporting the development of facilities that are available year- round and free of charge to use: Many municipalities are offering opportunities (facilities and programs) that support unstructured, self-directed and spontaneous participation. Parks, trail networks, (greenways and pathways), bikeways, skateboard parks, splash pads and outdoor multipurpose courts are examples of this trend.
- + A general focus overall on free and low-cost programming especially in parks, open spaces, trails and beaches: Free drop-in programs for learn-to-ski, skate, skateboard or swim, as well as free or low-cost after school programming or after school leisure sampling programs are some examples. Intro to outdoor survival skills and outdoor wilderness camping are not only fun but promote valuable life skills.
- + Nature based play activities where children and youth can learn about the great outdoors through play experiences; These are hugely popular now given the focus on climate change. Programs focusing on learning about forest growth, herbs and flowers, photosynthesis, bird watching, making crafts with forest-found items and environmental stewardship activities are a few examples.
- + Nature inspired play structures that blend the beauty and wonder of nature with the safety, age appropriateness, and durability found in manufactured equipment such as tree houses, log steppers, giant toadstools, and simple fort structures are growing in popularity.
- + Outdoor pizza ovens and permanent barbecue structures located in strategic spots encourage family and small community gatherings. The City of Toronto has a resource entitled “Using an Outdoor Oven in a City Park” through their Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division that can apply anywhere.
- + Community gardens and public landscaping are increasing in popularity, particularly given the renewed interest in outdoor spaces during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- + Making a diversity of outdoor winter activities available is essential for promoting

activity and maintaining community during Canada's cold winter months. Winter festivals, both active and art based, winter carnivals, pond hockey tournaments, ice sculpture exhibitions and contests, community sledding parties, winter hiking adventures and snow shoeing, ice fishing, and skating are a few examples.

- + Compressed program times to accommodate busy schedules are becoming a common option, especially if travel is a concern or constraint.

5.4 Other Trends

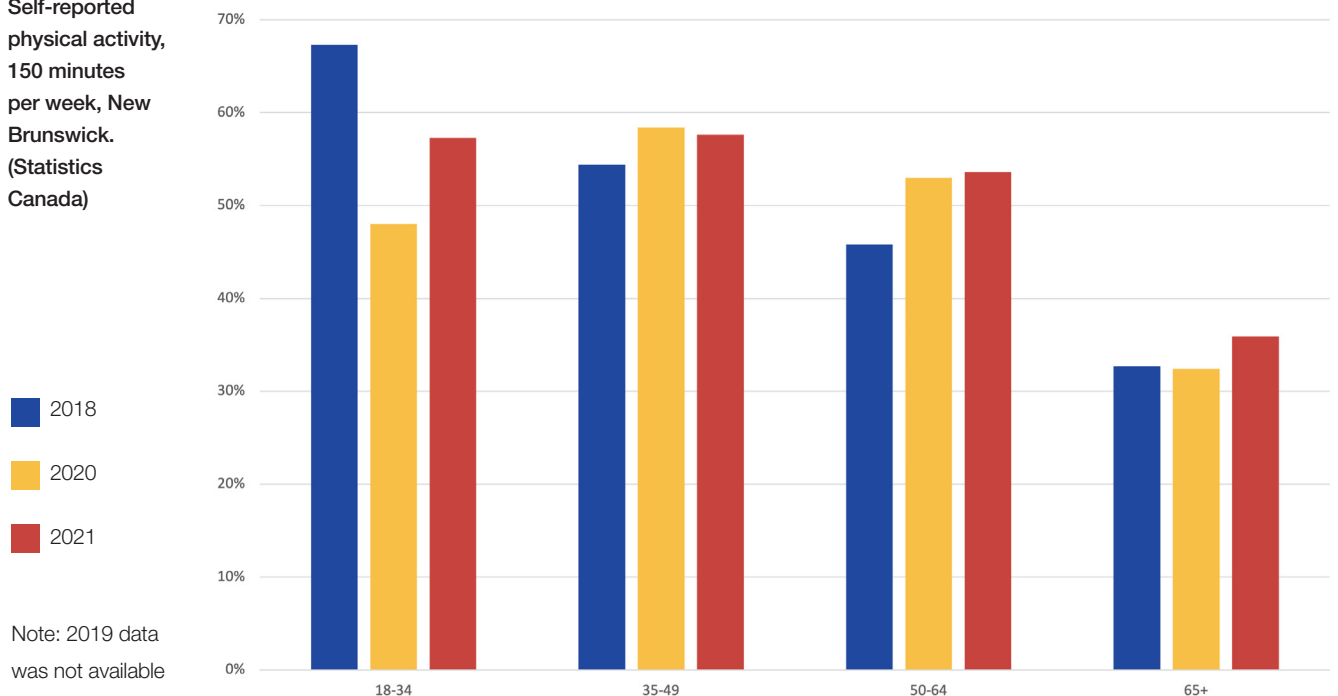
Physical Activity

There is a growing emphasis in Canada on increased health and wellbeing, and municipalities are seen as key providers of

opportunities for physical activity and fitness for their citizens. Wellbeing is the overarching goal of the recreation system in New Brunswick, as well as the overarching goal for many other policy fields in the province.

In order to be an effective resource for health and wellbeing, municipal recreation departments must provide opportunities for all age groups, ranging from active play for pre-school children, to teen and adult fitness programs, to movement classes for older adults. The statistics on display in Figure 4 show that physical activity of New Brunswickers generally declines with rising age. Healthy Aging in Canada: A New Vision, A Vital Investment specifically identifies recreation as critical to addressing priority areas in healthy

Figure 4. Self-reported physical activity, 150 minutes per week, New Brunswick. (Statistics Canada)



aging such as social connectedness, physical activity and age-friendly communities.

A growing body of research examining exercise among different age, gender and ethnic groups has revealed some user groups are less likely to have adequate access to exercise facilities and programming. Only 49% of women over the age of 18 receive the recommended amount of exercise compared to 57% of men over the age of 18. Further analysis reveals that young women of colour and people who are trans and non-binary have some of the lowest participation rates in exercise due to many factors including discriminatory policies.

According to the Canadian Physical Activity Guidelines, adults 18–64 should get 150 minutes per week (two and a half hours) of aerobic physical activity, such as walking, jogging, swimming, or cycling. This physical activity doesn't need to be done all at once; it can happen in sessions of 10 minutes or more. Adults should also do activities that strengthen their muscles and bones twice a week. Children and youth need even more. However, 82% of Canadian adults do not currently meet these guidelines.

Youth Sport

The comprehensive report compiled by the Canadian Solutions Research Group Consultants (SRG) indicated 84% of Canadian youth aged 13-17 participate in sports of some kind with 60% doing so on an organized basis. The Canadian Youth Sport Report analyzed 44 sports

for participation data. Swimming and soccer were the two highest ranking sports listed. Girls are more likely to be in individual sports such as organized dance, ballet and gymnastics, with soccer being the highest rated team sport for girls.

Overall, there is a slight decline in sport in Canada. A 2008 True Sport study found several factors contributed to this decline including harassment in sport and lack of fair play policies, injuries, high costs, over-involvement by parents, under involvement by parents and too much emphasis on winning and competition. Canadian Fitness and Lifestyle Research Institute (CFLRI) 2009 data showed more men than women participating in sport, with a decline in each age group after teenage years. In 2019 Sport Canada initiated several strategies to engage children and youth and underrepresented groups (including women and girls, persons with a disability and Aboriginal peoples) in sport through managed projects and policies including the development of a Working Group on Gender Equity in Sport.

Ice Sports

Ice sports including hockey, skating and ringette have historically been key recreation activities for Canadian children and adults. However, the cost to participate and risk of injury in ice hockey has resulted in a decrease in participation in recent years, despite a growth in the number of female players registered. Nevertheless, ice skating as a mode of active transportation and recreation outside of organized sport

continues to be popular. Skating trails and pathways, outdoor rinks and lake skating are examples of free or low-cost outdoor facilities encouraging this activity.

Tennis and Pickleball

In 2018, Tennis Canada reported 6.6 million Canadians hit the courts at least once and there was a 36% increase in frequent play (people playing four or more times within 12 months) between 2016 and 2018. Tennis Canada reported tennis is a gender-balanced sport with 44% of its participants female, and 56% male. It also ranks in the top three sports for new Canadians, with 23% of the total user group being born outside of Canada. Pickleball, brought to Canada in the early 1970s, continues to be a sport primarily played by older adults. The National Sport Organization, Pickleball Canada

promotes and supports the growth of the sport through its member organizations such as Pickleball NB. The sport has seen significant growth in the past several years. Between 2012 and 2018, the estimated number of people playing pickleball in Canada grew from 6,000 to 60,000.

Padel

Padel, not to be confused with paddle or platform tennis, can be played indoors and out on an enclosed court roughly 25% smaller than the size of a tennis court. Fun and social, it has rapidly taken hold in Canada and features the same scoring method as traditional tennis.

An ongoing game of pickleball (photo credit: Picklerpeej, Wikipedia)



Swimming

In 2005, Statistics Canada found that swimming came in third place behind golf and hockey for most practiced sport by Canadians 15 and up. However, by 2014, the Canadian Youth Sports Report indicated that swimming was the most popular organized sport for children. According to this study, more than 1.1 million children were involved in a swimming program in 2014 and swimming was listed as the most popular sport in Canada (the next most popular sport was soccer at 767,000 participants according to the same study).

Splash Pads

Spray parks and splash pads are increasingly becoming the preferred facility to help communities cool off on hot summer days. Generally, spray parks cost less to install and operate than traditional outdoor pools. Spray parks can be made fully accessible for all ages and abilities and do not require fencing to ensure public safety.

Skateboarding

Skateboarding made its debut as an Olympic sport at the Summer Olympics in 2021 in Tokyo, Japan. It has also been provisionally approved by the IOC for inclusion at the 2024 Olympic Games

Playground design
at New Maryland
Elementary School.



in Paris. Canadian Skateboarders see this Olympic debut as an opportunity to grow their sport across Canada.

Playground Design

Emerging research points to the importance of play—especially unstructured play — for fostering the curiosity and wellbeing of children of all ages and abilities. This has resulted in an increase in the number of ‘adventure playgrounds’ being developed. These playgrounds break the mould of traditional rigid playgrounds by using a combination of natural features such as rocks, logs, tunnels and workshop areas for children to participate in unstructured play. Nevertheless, ‘traditional’ playground structures still represent a valuable investment for a community.

Other trends that are emerging concerning play structures is the incorporation of play for adults and seniors. Most playgrounds are oriented towards children’s play; however, greater emphasis is being placed on creating and designing public places for people of all ages and abilities.

5.5 Other Information

The following information includes best practices, experiences garnered from practitioners in the field, and general societal trends.

Community art and placemaking:

- + Street art, place-making and arts and cultural programming enhance community pride as well as promoting

individual self-expression. Impromptu pop-up arts and cultural programming includes flash mobs (music and dancing), art-installations, beautification projects, day long workshops, and creative block parties. Other examples include building wall murals and the establishment of creative outdoor gathering places such as impromptu settings for chalk boards, outdoor musical instruments, amphitheatres, and reading circles and book boxes, as well as initiatives that combine beautification projects with art making (e.g., sculptures).

Community gatherings:

- + There appears to be a general desire to have more opportunities for free or low cost, and no-commitment ways to simply hang out, chat and have a bit of fun with family and friends. The degree to which a municipality can be involved in the organization of these events can vary.

Special events:

- + The creation of a Special Events Policy can assist in guiding a municipality through the many aspects of organizing and staging of events, including booking policies, priorities for use of space, capacities of parks and facilities, commercial restrictions, fees and charges, applicable bylaws to be considered, alcohol restrictions, and funding. The creation of Community Events Councils is becoming more popular for the coordination, scheduling and fund raising of special events.

Sport tourism and ecotourism:

- + People are seeking unique travel experiences and the opportunity to combine learning and new interests while

traveling. This could include learning about the region's art, language, culture, cooking and heritage. In addition, the hosting of sport tournaments combined with festivals and other community events will spark participation, economic development and community pride.

Life-long engagement:

- + There is a greater shift towards wellness, including a cultural emphasis on positive aging. Older adults are living longer and staying more active, therefore more options for wellness and fitness are required. Sport for Life produces a document with best practices and data to encourage life-long engagement in sport.

Youth engagement:

- + Youth action teams, special youth spaces and places, youth Councils, and youth committees of Town Council serve to increase opportunities for youth leadership and involvement in local decision making related to their town or district.

Technology in recreation:

- + Municipal recreation departments are placing an emphasis on the greater use of technology. Examples include spin bikes with gaming features, computers in youth centres, adult learning, and other virtual reality and augmented reality options including for e-games and e-sports.

Commercial recreation:

- + There are increasing commercial or private options for recreation. Businesses popping up include trampoline parks, climbing walls, axe throwing studios, and escape rooms.

More creative and non-traditional partnerships:

- + Libraries, various cultural associations, immigration associations, as well as tourism agencies, businesses and mental health organizations are helping people to connect with one another and with the community resources they may need.

Fitness for the mind and body:

- + Yoga has many variants ranging from fast-paced fitness classes to sitting meditation sessions. Yoga, Barre and other conscious movement-oriented fitness classes are increasing in popularity. These types of classes are frequently run by private businesses, although lower-cost options run through municipal recreation facilities are continuing to appear.

- + **Dog parks and off leash parks** are increasing in popularity.

- + **Additional creative fitness programming trends** include floorball, triathlons, stand up paddle boarding, HITT (high intensity interval training), all types of cross-fit classes, hybrid spin classes, boutique fitness, pop-ups, kettlebells and kickboxing.

- + **Retirement type communities** are placing an emphasis on bocce, billiards, cards, golf, parties and events, woodworking, book clubs, arts and crafts, walking groups.





6 Planning Context

6.1 Municipal Plans

Several current provincial and municipal plans and strategies relevant to recreation and physical activity planning were reviewed to understand what factors have shaped and influenced the provision of recreation and physical activity New Maryland in recent years.

MUNICIPAL PLAN

This is the main document guiding the Village's future land use and development through long-term policies and proposals.

General Goals

The document begins with a community vision statement, which emphasizes several desirable characteristics related to recreation. The plan outlines a vision of community that is:

- + healthy;
- + vibrant;
- + offering a pleasant living environment and high quality of life;
- + containing recreation facilities and programs which are provided to serve all areas and age groups within the community.

Recreational Goals

References to the need for a full range of recreational amenities for all ages and abilities are found in various sections across the document. One Policy of the Plan mentions that with the aging of the fitness-conscious generation, more physical activity related equipment will be required for senior citizens. In the section specifically dedicated to Recreation, the document highlights that “the Village will continue to support and promote healthy living through access to recreational facilities throughout the community.” The following are declared as municipal recreation objectives:

- + To provide neighbourhood recreation facilities throughout the Village to serve as many residents as possible;
- + To provide recreation services and facilities for all age groups in the community;
- + To provide and protect open spaces for the enjoyment of all residents and promote health and wellness by providing opportunities for active lifestyles as well as providing shaded areas as a means of heat refuge.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan creates an overall strategic direction for all aspects of municipal government. Its main components are mission and vision statements, a list of 'Values & Principles' and 'Key Result Areas'.

The vision and mission statements emphasize once more the aspects of a healthy living environment, quality of life, becoming a 'community of choice' and providing services in a 'responsible and innovative' manner.

By adopting this document, Council declared to be guided by the following principles in all decision making:

- + Innovation: seek progressive solutions to meet Village needs
- + Environmental friendliness: integrate and promote the principles of environmental stewardship practices
- + Safety: promote and advocate safety
- + Neighbourliness: encourage shared responsibility and a strong sense of community
- + Healthy living: promote active living and healthy lifestyles
- + Responsibility: sound fiscal planning and Management

The document is further divided into eight Key Result Areas (KRA) that contain measurable aspects of Council's progress towards achieving compliance with these principles.

KRA V is dedicated to 'Active Living'. The guiding objective for this area are "Healthier/happier residents with a high quality of life." Several metric of recreational service variety in the Village are contained within this KRA.

“Recreation (...) is an important aspect of one’s life. It is also important to a community because it develops community wellness, social interaction, business stability, and community pride.”

— VONM Recreation Master Plan

RECREATION MASTER PLAN

This document builds on policies from the Municipal Plan and adds further detail to the recreation objectives of the Village.

As designated objectives, the Recreation Plan lists the following:

- + To provide neighbourhood recreation facilities throughout the Village to serve as many residents as possible.
- + To provide recreation services and facilities for all age groups in the community.
- + To provide and protect open spaces for the enjoyment of all residents and promote health and wellness by providing opportunities for active lifestyles.

The Master Plan begins with a thorough analysis of a demographic data and community activity snapshot from 2010. It also contains an inventory of recreational facilities at the time of preparation.

The core of the document consists of 52 numbered recommendations related to organizational aspects, cooperation, programming and facilities. The consultations on this project have also documented a list of facilities which residents desired or wanted to prevent at that time.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT MASTER PLAN (2017)

The goal of the Stormwater Management Master Plan is to improve the quality of life for residents, improve safety, reduce risk to public and private property, and enhance the natural environment in New Maryland. The plan provides a detailed hydrological assessment, and provides a series of prioritized project recommendations based on the assessment work.

As it pertains to the Athletic Park, the Master Plan details how the Park is located on a major watershed. The analysis suggests that the area is at minor risk for flooding due to the nearby presence of dedicated storm and sanitary sewers and a dry pond.

TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS MASTER PLAN (2012)

The Trails and Bikeways Master Plan is intended to provide a long term vision for active transportation planning in New Maryland. The objective of this Plan is to establish an active transportation network that is accessible to a wide range of residents and abilities, and that allows residents and visitors to safely travel throughout the Village and to adjacent communities.

This network would connect existing trails and bikeways to various activities, residential areas, and other amenities and services. Some suggested elements of the Master Plan include expanding the multi-use trail network, incorporating bike lanes throughout the Village, and providing community education about active transportation.

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN (2018)

The main goal of the Age-Friendly Community Action Plan is to implement actions that will improve the services and offerings available to seniors in the Village, and that will contribute towards making their lives more safe, independent, healthy, and participatory. The creation of this Action Plan was in response to observed changing demographics within the Village, as well as to meet the World Health Organization's (WHO) definition of an age-friendly community.

Some actions outlined in the Plan related to parks and recreation suggest expanding the number of accessible benches in parks, introducing senior friendly park equipment, and to expand the existing sidewalk network throughout the community.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION STRATEGY (2019)

The Strategy provides data and information about climate change, both within the Village and on the global scale. It provides guidance on how climate change may impact the Village in the short and long term, and outlines priorities and climate change risks that ought to be considered in future planning and decision making. The climate change risks identified as high priority due to their likelihood of occurrence and potential severity are heat waves, intense rains, ice storms, and winter storms. The Strategy also identifies some particularly vulnerable groups, including senior citizens', youth, and extra needs residents.

When planning for recreation, the Strategy recommends considering opportunities to incorporate additional shade, water stations, and heat and drought resistant plants to mitigate the risks associated with heat waves.

URBAN DESIGN STANDARDS AND PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES (2022)

Urban design standards and guidelines are development regulations that aim to improve the look, feel and cohesiveness of the community. They help to establish a sense of place and improve safety and comfort for pedestrians and other active transportation users, making for a more vibrant and inviting streetscape. A draft version has been prepared, however, these standards and guidelines have yet to be adopted by Council.

The urban design standards will become a part of the Zoning By-law and regulate things such as building and parcel design, massing, shapes of walls, heights, types of windows, construction materials, signage, and public realm integration. They will focus on rules for private lands.

The public realm guidelines will focus on the Village's development and renewal of public spaces, including streetscapes, parks and trails. The design elements will be implemented through future capital projects (i.e. financed from public funds).

The guidelines focus on public lands along New Maryland Highway, and give the Village a blueprint on how to implement such projects. Although Athletic Park is outside of that area, the document can provide guidance on how to thoughtfully design public spaces that can enrich the quality of life in the community.

VILLAGE OF NEW MARYLAND ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN (2018)

The Asset Management Plan provides information on the infrastructure assets owned by the Village, the services they provide, the work that will need to be done to them now and in the future, the cost of the work, and the proposed sources of funding. It also addresses the impact of the Village's Strategic Plan on infrastructure assets, and prioritizes investment needs. Key recreation assets outlined in the Plan include the New Maryland Centre, sports courts and fields, playgrounds, linear trails. Athletic Park Drive accounts for 29% of the Parks and Recreation assets owned by the Village. 63% of the Athletic Park Drive assets are in good or very good condition, and 32% are considered to be in poor or very poor condition.

Park renewal is listed as a medium priority for risk, climate change, strategic alignment, and service delivery. The Village created a level of service statement related to recreational services and assets. It suggests that these services and assets must be available, accessible and safe to use for users, and align the types of recreational activities the community wishes to support, at a cost that is affordable. Some ways in which this is measured is through the percentage of parks with accessible features, and that park investment prioritization considers economic, social, environmental factors.

6.2 Provincial Plans

Apart from the municipal Policy level, there are several influential plans and policy document in New Brunswick which provide guidance and a framework for physical activity and wellbeing.

NEW BRUNSWICK'S RECREATION AND SPORT POLICY FRAMEWORK (2017)

The New Brunswick Recreation and Sport Policy Framework conveys a set of concepts, principles, and roles to guide the province's recreation and sport delivery system until into the next decade. One of the main goals of this framework is to promote relationship-building, particularly through fostering partnerships, to ensure that citizens and communities benefit from the recreation and sport system and to enhance their wellbeing and quality of life. Proposed actions that are identified in the Framework include providing communities with access to recreation and sport infrastructure, and ensuring that adequate resources are provided to support quality programming.

A SPORT PLAN FOR NEW BRUNSWICK (2008)

A Sport Plan outlines how the lack of investment in the NB sport system has impacted the health of the population, as well as New Brunswick's relative standing in Canadian Sport. The Plan calls for an increase in investment in sport operational activities to levels comparable to the investment in the provincial healthcare system. It also calls for better and more efficient use of existing resources, and for improved collaboration between the New Brunswick sport system. The Plan provides a background about sport and recreation in NB, and describes four goals related to improving the standing of sport in the province including enhancing participation, excellence, capacity, and interaction.

NEW BRUNSWICK'S DISABILITY ACTION PLAN (2020)

The Disability Action Plan is a multi-year strategy which provides recommendations aimed to tackle key issues involving disability stakeholders, such as accessibility, housing, transportation, recreation, and wellness. In 2017, 26.7% of the province's population aged 15 and over had one or more disabilities, which is the second highest percentage amongst the provinces and territories (the national level is 22.3%). The most common types of disabilities among the NB population were related to pain, flexibility, mobility, and mental health. One objective of this Strategy is to promote accessibility and barrier-free / universal design as a method reducing barriers to accessing programs and services. The Action Plan suggests that this could be done through introducing minimum universal / barrier free design standards for all public buildings and facilities.

NEW BRUNSWICK WELLNESS STRATEGY (2014)

New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy (2014-2021) intends to collectively guide stakeholders in the province towards improving the wellbeing of New Brunswickers. It aims to enable all New Brunswickers to see how their goals, activities or mandates are supported by improved wellness, and how they can contribute to enhancing wellness within the province. Guiding this strategy are three principles: using a comprehensive approach, focusing on inclusiveness and equity, and building competence, autonomy, and relatedness. The Strategy supports actions that contribute to enhancing wellness and other determinants of health by increasing the number of New Brunswickers with capacity to support healthy development and wellness, and increasing the number of settings to support wellness.

SPORT AND RECREATION BRANCH STRATEGIC PLAN 2016 – 2020

The Sport and Recreation branch of the Province of New Brunswick describes that their mission is to increase sport, recreation and active living opportunities in the province, and to improve residents and community's wellbeing and the quality of life. In keeping with the Framework for Recreation in Canada, their vision is to create a strong sport and recreation delivery system that provides meaningful and accessible recreation opportunities for New Brunswick residents, which contributes positively to their quality of life and wellbeing. The branch's five strategic goals which are aligned with national policies on recreation, which includes promoting physical activity, improving inclusion and access, providing supportive environments, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring operational effectiveness.

GUIDE: HOW TO DEVELOP YOUR AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

The Age-Friendly Community Guide outlines how age-friendly communities pursue general objectives such as combating ageism, adapting policies, services, and structures to support the senior population, and promoting the participation of seniors. The Guide outlines how built environments play an important role in the health, security, safety, and participation of seniors, and how the built environment needs to be accessible to support participation in the community. As it relates to green spaces, it is suggested that urban design can contribute to supporting senior participation by integrating rest areas, pedestrian friendly walkways, and well maintained and safe spaces to ensure residents can enjoy their living environment. This can also be done through universal / accessible design, which improves access and reduces barriers to allowing residents to participate in public life regardless of their age, physical or mental well-being, or their economic situation. For seniors in particular, this can enhance their independence, foster social interactions, and reduce barriers to access.

6.3 National Plans

CANADIAN SPORT POLICY (2012)

The vision of the Canadian Sport Policy is to promote and celebrate participation and excellence in sport. It is intended to provide direction and desired outcomes for governments, institutions and organizations to realize the positive impacts of sport on individuals, communities and society between 2012-2022. The five goals of the policy are to introduce Canadians to sport and provide them with the skills and knowledge they need; to provide opportunities for people to participate in recreational sport; to provide Canadians the opportunity to compete in performance sports safely and ethically, to promote Canadians success in world-class sport competition; and to use sport as a tool for social and economic development.

A FRAMEWORK FOR RECREATION IN CANADA: PATHWAYS TO WELLBEING (2015)

The Framework for Recreation in Canada considers a renewal of recreation based on a new vision where recreation where everyone is engaged in accessible and meaningful activity that promotes wellbeing. The Framework and associated action items are guided by five goals and priorities for action, which include fostering active living, increasing inclusion and access, connecting people and nature, encouraging supportive environments, and building on recreations'

capacity. The Framework also outlines some challenges and opportunities for recreation, such as demographic changes, challenges to health, economic inequities, and threats to the natural environment.

A COMMON VISION FOR INCREASING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY AND REDUCING SEDENTARY LIVING IN CANADA

A Common Vision provides guidance towards ways of increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary living. It includes six areas of focus for collaborative action, which includes cultural norms (establishing movement as a social norm), spaces and places (providing the necessary environments for all forms of movement), public engagement, partnerships, leadership and learning (as a method of building capacity), and progress (to know what is working and what is not). A Common Vision identifies certain demographic groups as having special considerations when planning for recreation, this includes seniors, immigrants, indigenous peoples, those with physical health impairments, those in poverty or low income, and those in less developed built environments.

Conclusion

Conclusion



7 Summary and Outlook

Physical activity is widely encouraged in New Maryland. There seems to be a strong active living culture.



One of a municipal recreation department's core responsibilities is providing recreation facilities. In many cases facilities would not exist without municipal support, or they would be unaffordable and inaccessible to many.

Village Council is committed to ensuring that the residents of New Maryland have access to a wide variety of recreation opportunities in their Athletic Park. The earlier policy analysis demonstrated how both the Village and the Province recognize recreation's critical role in the community and individual health. Participation in recreation directly improves mental, physical, and social health.

New Maryland is a small community with a big heart and a strong desire to be active. The community is fortunate to be close to Fredericton and, therefore, can access large facilities, such as an arena or indoor swimming pool.

However, not everyone has easy access to a vehicle to drive outside of Village boundaries and there is currently no transit service in New Maryland. The utilization patterns of existing facilities show that citizens also want to be active in their community. They want to be able to play and connect with family, friends, and neighbours.

New Maryland recreation facilities and services are also accessed by several surrounding communities, providing recreation opportunities to their citizens.

A critical component of the next phase of this Athletic Park Redevelopment Study is to

consult with the community and learn what they need and want now within their Athletic Park, as well as what needs may arise the future. Municipal staff are regularly talking with the community, and citizens are excited about the possibilities for improved recreation opportunities. Some of these ideas that have already been shared through staff include:

- + Pickleball courts;
- + Some form of water feature, such as a splash pad;
- + Public washrooms and drinking water;
- + Upgraded outdoor rink facilities;
- + Outdoor exercise equipment.

Existing facilities in the Athletic Park, such as the basketball and tennis courts or the soccer field, could be upgraded. Trails are also an important component of the New Maryland recreation infrastructure, and improvements and enhancements could also be considered.

We know that there are many additional ideas to be explored. UPLAND and Rec Consulting are looking forward to learning what the residents of the Village of New Maryland want for their community and designing a plan to help ensure that everyone has opportunities to be active.

