



**Township of Puslinch**

# **Community Engagement Strategy (Ver.1.0)**

Recreation and Parks Master Plan – September 2014

**Contents**

- Introduction ..... 1
- Communications Support ..... 1
- Communication Engagement Strategy Components..... 1
  - A. Awareness and Fact Finding ..... 3
    - A1. Public Awareness Campaign ..... 3
    - A2. Community Launch Event ..... 3
    - A3. Online Web Survey ..... 4
    - A4. Stakeholder Group Survey ..... 5
    - A5.Focus Groups and Interviews ..... 5
    - A6. Workshops with staff, Recreation Committee, and Council ..... 6
  - B. Testing and Refining ..... 7
    - B1. Public Meeting / Open House ..... 7
    - B2. Presentation to Council ..... 7
  - C. Ongoing Dialogue with Staff ..... 8
    - C1. Meetings with the Project Team..... 8

## Introduction

The Township of Puslinch is preparing a Recreation and Parks Master Plan (herein referred to as the 'Master Plan'). This study will assess the current and future needs of recreation and parks facilities and programs for the next ten years, aligning with other key County/Township documents.

The development of the Master Plan requires extensive consultation with Township staff and Council, Recreation Committee, the public, service providers, user groups, and other stakeholders in order to identify and prioritize issues and recommendations, and create a level of cooperation.

This Community Engagement Strategy (also known as a 'Communications Plan') is intended to guide the Master Plan's consultation efforts. The Community Engagement Strategy contains a detailed proposal of when major engagement activities should take place in relation to the planning process, as well as the preferred form that communications will take.

## Communications Support

In support of the Master Plan's communication program, the Township is encouraged to:

- Create a webpage dedicated to the Master Plan hosted on the municipal website (e.g., [www.puslinch.ca/recreationandparksMP](http://www.puslinch.ca/recreationandparksMP)) to provide opportunities to raise awareness, receive feedback, and share information with the public.
- Provide the consultant with digital images (if available) to be used in creating consultation materials and within the Master Plan itself for graphical purposes.

## Communication Engagement Strategy Components

Involvement of the public and stakeholders is essential to create an interest in the topic areas, build momentum for the Master Plan, and increase awareness of the community's recreation and parks facilities and programs. It should be noted that the timing of engagement activities is subject to change as the project progresses. The key component of this Community Engagement Strategy will be conducted in three key stages:

- a) Awareness and Fact finding
  - Public awareness campaign
  - Community Launch Event
  - Online Web Survey
  - Stakeholder Group Survey
  - Focus Groups and Interviews
  - Workshops with staff, Recreation Committee, and Council

b) Testing and Refining

- Public Meeting / Open House
- Council Presentation

c) Ongoing Dialogue with Staff

- Meetings with the Project Team / Recreation Committee

## A. Awareness and Fact Finding

The Awareness and Fact Finding phase of this Strategy takes place early in the Master Plan process to identify key issues and opportunities, as well as to establish core values and priorities that will assist in developing the foundational framework in which the Master Plan is rooted.

### A1. Public Awareness Campaign

#### **Strategic Purpose**

To notify the general public and stakeholders that the Master Plan is being undertaken, explain the process, and announce (and invite participation in) upcoming consultation events.

#### **Target Audience**

Township-wide residents and stakeholders.

#### **Timing & Logistics**

To be initiated in September 2014, and will be ongoing over the duration of the planning process.

- MBPC will prepare an awareness poster to advertise the project. The Township will distribute and display posters at prominent locations such as community facilities and other local destinations.
- MBPC will prepare a web narrative identifying opportunities for members of the public and community organizations to get involved and to participate through the consultation initiatives.
- The Township will post the web narrative on a webpage dedicated to the Master Plan, update the webpage as new information becomes available to share, and post the Draft Master Plan for review and comment.

### A2. Community Launch Event

#### **Strategic Purpose**

To introduce the Master Plan to the community while also engaging a wide variety of residents in identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) related to recreation and parks facilities and programs. The Community Launch Event will bring a diverse group together in order to shape a vision of a desired future, assisting us in creating a strategic foundation for the Master Plan.

## **Target Audience**

Township-wide residents and stakeholders. Stakeholder groups and key individuals representing a wide variety of interests will be sent invitations (possibly under the Mayor's signature) and requested to RSVP. The event will be promoted through the awareness posters, as well as through the Puslinch Pioneer, school handouts, the Farmers' Market, the Aberfoyle Fall Fair, and/or information on the Township's website.

## **Timing & Logistics**

The Community Launch Event is targeted for early October 2014. The event would run from approximately 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm in a large hall (minimum capacity of 75 persons), preferably located at a Township facility. MBPC will prepare the presentation material, sign-in sheets and comment sheets.

- The Township will advertise the event, co-ordinate attendance, arrange the space, provide note-takers (as needed), and provide refreshments.
- The Township will welcome those in attendance before turning it over to MBPC who will present project background, lead the SWOT discussions, and summarize notes from the Community Launch Event.
- The room shall be set up for small group discussions with about 8 chairs around each table depending upon the number of attendees expected (e.g. 10 tables would suffice for about 75 participants).
- The Township will provide a screen, laptop, projector and/or microphone to be located at the front of the room.
- All members of Council, Recreation Committee, and the Project Team are invited to attend the event as observers (but not as active participants).
- Options for organizing this as a drop-in session linked to another community event (e.g., BBQ) may be explored.

## **A3. Online Web Survey**

### **Strategic Purpose**

The purpose of the online public survey is to understand the community's perception of local recreation and parks facilities and programs.

### **Target Audience**

Township-wide residents. The event will be promoted through the awareness posters, as well as through emails to groups, the Puslinch Pioneer, school handouts, the Farmers' Market, the Aberfoyle Fall Fair, and/or information on the Township's website.

### **Timing & Logistics**

To be initiated in September 2014.

- MBPC will create survey hosted on a third-party website (e.g., SurveyMonkey).
- The Township will review the draft survey, provide comment and approve final version prior to public release.
- The survey will consist of mostly closed-ended questions, with up to 3 open-ended questions.
- MBPC will collect and analyze the survey results. A full write-up of the results, complete with charts and tables, will be produced and appended to the Draft Master Plan.

## **A4. Stakeholder Group Survey**

### **Strategic Purpose**

To obtain input on participation levels, range of activities and other baseline data – as well as key issues and opportunities – from organizations and groups to be directly affected by the outcome of the Master Plan.

### **Target Audience**

Stakeholder and user groups utilizing local recreation and parks facilities such as various community sports and recreation organizations, service providers, park and facility user groups, etc.

### **Timing & Logistics**

To be initiated in September 2014.

- MBPC will create survey to be hosted on a third-party website (e.g., SurveyMonkey). A hardcopy survey can also be provided for those without email.
- The Township will email survey link to all stakeholder contacts with an interest in recreation and parks facilities and programs. Note: an updated list of contacts will be required.
- MBPC will analyze up to fifty (50) completed surveys and provide a write up that will be appended to the Draft Master Plan.

## **A5. Focus Groups and Interviews**

### **Strategic Purpose**

To engage a variety of organizations and individuals who represent the major users of recreation and parks facilities, or are providers of community programs within Township facilities.

## **Target Audience**

Township-wide representatives from major indoor and outdoor recreation and parks organizations, sports groups, school boards, and community program providers. Up to ten (10) one-on-one interviews and small focus groups will be undertaken.

## **Timing & Logistics**

Targeted for mid to late September 2014 with date, time and location to be confirmed.

- MBPC will prepare a presentation, lead discussions, and summarize notes for up to ten (10) interviews or focus groups.
- The Township will identify representatives of groups and organizations to participate in the interviews and focus groups, with direction from MBPC.
- The Township will send invitations, co-ordinate attendance and room bookings, and/or provide refreshments.
- The Township will schedule the interviews and focus groups on the same day. For those unable to meet in-person, MBPC will make arrangements to contact them via telephone.
- Each interview will be approximately 30 minutes in length.
- Each small group session will be approximately 75 to 90 minutes in length.
- The room should be set up for a roundtable group discussion.

## **A6. Workshops with staff, Recreation Committee, and Council**

### **Strategic Purpose**

To ensure that the opinions and perspectives of Township of Puslinch staff, Recreation Committee, and Council are integrated in the Master Plan. To garner input on topics such as recreation and parks facilities and program needs. Three separate workshops will be held with each of these groups.

### **Target Audience**

Township staff, Recreation Committee (workshop discussion to be accommodated through regularly scheduled meetings), and Council

### **Timing and Logistics**

Targeted to occur in September 2014 with date, times, and location to be confirmed.

- MBPC will prepare a presentation, lead discussions, and summarize notes from each workshop.
- To leverage project efficiencies, the staff and Council workshop will occur on the same day.
- Township will coordinate attendance and room bookings, and/or provide refreshments.
- Each workshop will be approximately 75 to 90 minutes in length.



- Depending on the number of participants for each workshop, the room should be set up for small group discussions for up to 20 participants.

## **B. Testing and Refining**

The Testing and Refining phase of the Community Engagement Strategy presents preliminary findings to key stakeholders and interested residents to seek feedback prior to finalizing the Master Plan. Consultations in this phase are geared to “testing” recommendations to ensure that they are adequately justified and result in buy-in from decision-makers, user groups, and the general public to the greatest extent possible.

### **B1. Public Meeting / Open House**

#### **Strategic Purpose**

To present and receive feedback on the draft Master Plan

#### **Target Audience**

Township-wide residents and stakeholders

#### **Timing and Logistics**

A Public Meeting / Open House with the date, time, and location to be determined (held after the Recreation Committee / Project Team and Council reviews the draft Master Plan).

- MBPC will prepare sign-in sheets, facilitate the event, and document information received.
- Event options include a structured presentation followed by a question and answer period, or an informal drop-in session with the Consultants available to engage individuals as they arrive.
- Township staff will organize the Public Meeting / Open House (including identifying and contacting participants, advertising, room booking, refreshments, etc.) and attend the meetings as greeters and observers.

### **B2. Presentation to Council**

#### **Strategic Purpose**

To seek comments on the Draft Master Plan and to seek adoption of the Final Master Plan by Council.

#### **Target Audience**

Township of Puslinch Council

## **Timing and Logistics**

Two (2) separate meetings, dates to be determined (late 2014/early 2015).

- Township will place MBPC on Council Agenda and circulate the Draft and Final Master Plan to Council.
- Township will promote the meetings in the community in advance of the meeting dates.
- MBPC will prepare a presentation and take notes to facilitate finalization of deliverables.

## **C. Ongoing Dialogue with Staff**

Throughout the process, input will be provided by the Township of Puslinch Project Team (Recreation Committee). This feedback is intended to provide overall guidance for the Master Plan.

### **C1. Meetings with the Project Team**

#### **Strategic Purpose**

To coordinate key tasks and to review, comment on, and approve deliverables.

#### **Target Audience**

Township of Puslinch Project Team

#### **Timing and Logistics**

Meetings to be held at key points in the planning process.

- MBPC will prepare agendas and provide written documentation of key discussion points and action items, attend, and facilitate meetings.
- Township will be responsible for room booking and invitations, as necessary.