

Strategic Facility Plan Township of Oro-Medonte, 2008

The Township of Oro-Medonte is embarking upon an important project that will result in a long term township-wide strategy to identify needs and priorities, and to provide direction for the provision of recreation, arts, culture and heritage facilities (including libraries) for the residents of the community. The strategy will build upon the 1997 Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the 2001 Parkland Secondary Plan.

The project is being divided into two parts. Part One will examine the nature of the community as it is today and how it could change over the next twenty years. Also included will be an assessment of how most recreation, arts, culture and heritage facilities are provided and the adequacy of those facilities to meet the needs of today and beyond. There will be specific recommendations about how best to provide and locate facilities over the next twenty years. An engineering review or condition audit of the eight community centres and the Oro-Medonte Community Arena will also be included.

In addition, Part One will assess the need for and potential nature of a multi-use recreation complex. If the research indicates that this type of facility is needed and is the most desirable approach to provide some of the community's key facilities, then an in-depth assessment will be undertaken to explore the feasibility of the initiative, and provide more detail about the make-up of the facility, how it will be used, cost to build and operate, possible phasing, sources of funding and the potential for partnerships. This feasibility assessment will comprise Part Two, and the exact nature of this follow-up task will be determined at the conclusion of Part One.

Crucial to the success of the project will be the involvement of individual residents from throughout the community, as well as groups, organizations and other entities that have an interest in the outcome. To assist with communication throughout the project and input into the needs and priorities research, a number of input and communication opportunities are planned, including:

- A media conference at the outset of Part One;
- Information and updates on the Township web site;
- A call for submissions and briefs;
- A survey of community, recreation, arts, culture and heritage groups;
- A community-wide Search Conference; and
- A number of Focus Group Workshops with specific groups where more information is required.

A Technical Committee will be involved in all aspects of the process and will be particularly helpful in identifying groups and individuals to invite to input sessions, interpreting findings, and providing input into strategies and decisions about options.

As the facility strategy and the multi-use recreation facility are beginning to take shape, a community-wide Forum will be held to report on findings and conclusions, and to solicit input into the emerging facility recommendations. If it is decided not to undertake the feasibility study (Part Two), the Community Forum will focus on the township-wide facility strategy.

*The project is being completed with the assistance of a team of planning, engineering and architectural specialists led by **The RETHINK GROUP**, a consulting firm from Peterborough, Ontario that specializes in parks, recreation and arts planning and management. **Robert Lockhart**, the Project Director, can be reached by: telephone (705) 292-5331, e-mail (robert@rethinkgroup.ca), or regular mail (1205 Connaught Drive, Ennismore, Ontario K0L 1T0).*