

Halton Hills Pickleball Association – Strategic Plan 2022-2026
February 2022
FINAL

What is a Strategic Plan?

A strategic plan clearly lays out what an organizations goals and objectives are over a given period. Strategic plans should link the organizations vision and mission with short-, medium- and longer-term operational plans. A Strategic Plan can allow organizations to work collectively with all stakeholders to ensure that common goals exist, that stakeholders know what the group is trying to accomplish and that efforts to maximize needed resources to achieve the goals are aligned.

Why a Strategic Plan?

The development of a plan at this time reflects the need to ensure that the Halton Hills Pickleball Association is well positioned to support the interest and growth in the sport, to ensure that the recommendations in the Town of Halton Hills Court Sports Strategy are realized, and to assist in aligning the efforts of volunteers collectively. The time is now for the organization to move to a proactive planning approach and away from a reactive problem-solving approach. While efforts will continue to be needed at the operational and day-to-day work of providing programs, schedules and other administrative needs, overarching strategic directions can ensure each Board member has a “guiding target” to support their work.

Town of Halton Hills Demographics (2021 National Census, Statistics Canada)

Town of Halton Hills population, 2021		62,951	
Age 40-64	38.8%	Ontario Average	35.1%
Age 65+	13.4%	Ontario Average	16.7%

With the percentage of people in the 40-64 age range already exceeding the Ontario average, it can be assumed that this age cohort will continue to need programs and activities to stay active and healthy as they age. Pickleball will continue to be a popular choice and interest will likely grow. With the over 65 age group slightly below the Provincial average (in 2021), demand for safe, affordable activities that can continue as one ages will also be in demand. Halton Hills Pickleball Association growth in membership within both age cohorts supports these assumptions.

Growth of Pickleball in Canada:

*Today, pickleball has been dubbed the fastest-growing sport in Canada. Membership in Pickleball Canada has grown **from 5,000 to 22,000 players in just five years**, and a pre-pandemic Ipsos poll put the number of Canadians playing pickleball at 350,000. (Pickleball Canada)*

History of Pickleball in Halton Hills:

In October 2015, without a known available place to play in Halton Hills, a group of Pickleball converts looked around for options of where to play this infectious game. Initial play started by going to the Velodrome in Milton (Mattamy National Cycling Centre).

By January 2016, PPG (Pickleball Players Group, now a non-profit group), had very productive discussions with The Town of Halton Hills and agreed to promote Pickleball in Halton Hills. Thanks to their assistance, and the support from the Georgetown Active Living Centre, indoor playing time was secured at the Alliance Church (8th Line) gymnasium in Georgetown where play continued until COVID-19 postponed indoor activities.

In May 2016, working with the Acton Active Living Centre, PPG started playing at the Acton Arena on Arena floor ‘A’ and marked out two Pickleball Courts with red tape. Before the season ended in late August, it became necessary to add 2 more courts due to the demand of playing time.

After a very successful inaugural season in Acton, play expanded to 6 full-size courts on the Arena surface for the 2017 Summer season. Indoor play also continued on the Arena surface at Mold-Masters Sports Plex in Georgetown.

Play continued in Georgetown and Acton during 2018 and 2019, with facilities being used at a variety of locations. In 2020, play was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Some locations were cancelled and most had some level of suspended play. The Board of Directors was diligent in finding available space, securing needed permits and assigned play at all facilities.

Summary of Facility Use 2016 through 2022 (planned)

Years	Indoor	Outdoor**
2016 – 2022*	Velodrome, Milton Alliance Church, Georgetown Acton Arena Mold-Masters Sportsplex, Georgetown Centennial School, Georgetown (limited use)	Emmerson Courts, Georgetown (used by HHPA and the Thursday evening PB group) Prospect Park Courts, Acton Joseph Gibbons Courts, Georgetown (limited use) Georgetown Racquet Club Joseph Gibbons Park, Georgetown

	Georgetown Christian School St. Brigid's School, Georgetown Acton High School Milton Leisure Centre Milton Sports Centre	Fallbrook Farm (limited use by EasyRiders during summer months)
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*play impacted by suspension of indoor facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, 2021 and 2022

**play outdoors also commenced at a private rural location organized by a group known as "Easy Riders" (Fallbrook) and continues into 2022

Halton Hills Pickleball Association

Current Status:

- At the 2020 AGM, the last of the original PPG board of directors stepped away from their duties after several years of hard work in growing Pickleball in Halton Hills. The COVID-19 pandemic was in full swing again after a great summer of Pickleball play at Prospect Park.
- In November 2020 after several discussions with the Town of Halton Hills, it was suggested that we rebrand our group and become an incorporated organization make us eligible for the various government grants and funding available to Not-For Profit Corporations.
- The new board decided to change our name from PPG (Pickleball Players Group) to Halton Hills Pickleball Association. The name change was to reflect the whole town, and the new logo was created to be more recognizable by the public.
- On Feb 12, 2021, the organization officially became the Halton Hills Pickleball Association, dedicating themselves to continue the hard work of growing Pickleball in our community
- Meetings held between the Town of Halton Hills and HHPA continued between March and December 2021 on the future opportunity for additional facilities to support Pickleball play year-round
- The Town launched a "Court Sports Strategy" over this same time including significant consultation engagement with stakeholders and the public
- The "Court Sports Strategy" was adopted by Town Council in December 2021
- The HHPA Strategic Plan was prepared in January 2022, reviewed by the Board, and finalized in February 2022.

Summary:

Town of Halton Hills Court Sports Strategy – Recommendations (as summarized on Pages 28-29)

Court Sports Recommendation
1. Endorse dedicated courts that are lined for one sport with permanent nets for both sports.
2. Endorse definition of Neighbourhood Courts and Community Club Courts.
3. Endorse the Service Provision Standard of 1:5000 per population, with review and adjustment made annually based on analysis of participation, membership, comparators and trends.
4. Endorse the three models of play for tennis & pickleball.
5. Track and monitor indoor participation to ensure incorporation in future studies and development of facilities (e.g. Gellert Phase 2, Community Use of Schools)
6. Incorporate recommendations into capital and operating forecasts.
7. Endorse the interim use of Emmerson Park Courts as a Pickleball Community Club.
8. Endorse the removal of one tennis court and installation of 2 permanent pickleball nets at Emmerson Park Courts.
9. Add additional Neighbourhood Courts (2 pickleball and 1 tennis) at Gellert Community Park as part of the Gellert Park Expansion Project.
10. Endorse proposed location at Trafalgar Sports Park for a future Community Club for pickleball.
11. Consider proposed courts within Vision Georgetown.
12. Convert Joseph Gibbons and Prospect Park Courts to neighbourhood facilities.

Town of Halton Hills Court Sports Strategy – Short, Medium-, and Long-Term Actions (as summarized on Pages 29-31)

Court Sports Actions
Short Term Actions (2021-2023)
General Repairs & Ongoing Maintenance
1.1 Continue to plan for the ongoing repair and replacement of outdoor courts based on participation, membership and trends.
1.2 Resurface Prospect Park Neighbourhood Courts, 2022, \$70,000
1.3 Replace Emmerson Park Court fencing and resurface, 2023, \$90,000
Outreach and Capacity Building
1.4 Renew the partnership agreement with the Halton Hills Tennis Club that encompasses community recreational tennis, club activities and utilities. 2021
1.5 Create an agreement for Halton Hills Pickleball Association to use Emmerson Park Courts until such time as “new” Community Club Courts are available. 2022, ongoing

Court Sports Actions
1.6 Create a sport equipment and net lending program for pickleball and tennis equipment. 2022, \$3500 from sponsorship
New Capital projects
1.7 Install two pickleball dedicated nets at Emmerson Park. Emmerson Park will be used as a temporary Pickleball Community Club. 2022, \$10,000
1.8 Expand the Gellert Community Park courts by adding a neighbourhood level court (1 tennis 2 pickleball) to accommodate level of use. 2023, \$300,000
1.9 Determine location and design with stakeholders and community input on an 8 court Pickleball Community Club at Trafalgar Sports Park. 2023-2024 for construction in 2026.
Medium Term Actions (2024-2026)
General Repairs & Ongoing Maintenance
2.1 Continue to plan for the ongoing repair and replacement of outdoor courts based on participation, membership and trends. Ongoing.
Outreach and Capacity Building
2.2 Work with Community User Groups on a potential fundraising campaign for the new Pickleball Community Club Courts. 2024
2.3 Explore Public/Private Partnerships for additional opportunities to provide Community Club facilities. 2024
New Capital Projects
2.4 Build and construct an 8 court pickleball Community Club at Trafalgar Sports Park (Phase 6b). 2026, \$800,000
2.5 Convert Emmerson Park to Neighbourhood Court (1 tennis, 2 pickleball). 2026
2.6 Convert Joseph Gibbons Park Courts to a Neighbourhood Court facility (1 tennis, 2 pickleball). 2026, \$10,000
Long Term Actions (2027-2031)
General Repairs & Ongoing Maintenance
3.1 Continue to plan for the ongoing repair and replacement of outdoor courts as required based on participation, membership, and trends. Ongoing
New Capital Projects
3.2 Convert Prospect Park shared court to dedicated tennis (2) and pickleball courts (2). 2027
3.3 Add Neighbourhood Courts (tennis/pickleball) within the Vision Georgetown catchment area. 2027, \$300,000-\$600,000 each.
3.4 Consider complementing existing park facilities with associated servicing and infrastructure such as washrooms, water fountains, benches, and lights to existing courts. 2027.
3.5 Construct a new Community Club Tennis Court as Vision Georgetown Community Park (4 courts). 2031, \$800,000

Halton Hills Pickleball Association – Strategic Plan

To ensure that HHPA has clear direction moving forward, the Strategic Plan outlines Goals and recommended Actions to achieve desired results. The Actions are assigned to a Board Member, other volunteer, or a committee

HHPA should review the plan annually to ensure that progress is being made and that the Association is working collectively with others (Government and membership) to achieve desired success.

SWOT Analysis – HHPA

What Is SWOT Analysis?

SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis is a framework used to evaluate organizations position and to develop strategic planning. SWOT analysis assesses internal and external factors, as well as current and future potential.

A SWOT analysis is designed to facilitate a realistic, fact-based, data-driven look at the strengths and weaknesses of an organization and initiatives. The organization needs to keep the analysis accurate by avoiding pre-conceived beliefs or gray areas and instead focusing on real-life contexts. Organizations should use it as a guide.

HHPA

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ continued growth in pickleball for all ages ➤ dedicated Board of Directors ➤ opportunity for indoor and outdoor play (albeit indoor limited) ➤ involved membership, willingness to volunteer ➤ good adaptability and problem solving to ensure play continues ➤ excellent organizational work to schedule play, assist convenors, ensure nets available and communicate with members ➤ Board of Directors able to pivot as needed during COVID-19 to change locations, communicate to members and access alternative play locations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Need for written job descriptions to define roles for members of the Board of Directors ➤ Need for guidance on what should be a Board member task, vs what should be undertaken by a committee ➤ Need for more proactive member communication (on longer terms plans combined with general information sharing) ➤ membership could be more involved in establishing and supporting direction ➤ lack of understanding of the challenging municipal government/bureaucracy and how to deal with their needs. ➤ Not currently in a position to launch a coordinated fund-raising campaign

Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Align HHPA Annual plans with Town of Halton Hills Court Sports Strategy to ensure proactive actions ➤ Increased access to dedicated courts (outdoor) to promote and develop various models of play ➤ Potential to increase membership fee based upon “value to member” to develop improved financial capacity ➤ Potential to apply for grant funding (Ontario Trillium Foundation) to support incremental facility improvements ➤ Good potential for fund-raising / sponsorship ➤ Begin documenting decision making and tracking annual activity to maintain accurate historic records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Potential split in member engagement based upon membership fees, rental permit requirements, differentiation in play (as is being experienced in some other jurisdictions i.e Hamilton) ➤ Growth trajectory outstrips ability to meet the needs of players resulting in loss of interest & support ➤ Splinter groups forming which can threaten cohesiveness of HHPA (i.e. GRC, East Riders, Acton/Georgetown) and ability to speak as a unified voice ➤ Unable to meet fundraising targets to realize Trafalgar Sports Park Community Club facility ➤ Potential loss of “institutional knowledge” if Board members leave unexpectedly and therefore loss of historic knowledge or information on previous decision making

HHPA Vision:

The embodiment of Pickleball as an activity of choice for all age groups and skill levels within Halton Hills.

HHPA Mission:

Facilitate the growth of Pickleball in Halton Hills for the enjoyment, health, and social engagement of all players by offering organized recreational and competitive play, ensuring there are opportunities for new and existing player development in an inclusive, welcoming environment.

Strategic Actions

With Council adoption of the Town of Halton Hills Courts Sports Strategy in December 2021, the HHPA has identified the actions for it to undertake as an organization. Following an action plan that aligns with the Recommendations and short-, medium- and long-term actions that the Town intends to take over the coming years (as identified in the Court Sports Strategy) will ensure that Pickleball can continue to grow and flourish. Aligning HHPA Actions with the Town recommendations and actions:

- Provides guidance on priority actions by year
- Allows the Board of Directors to assign tasks and monitor results
- Assists with developing volunteer roles, committees, and targets to ensure that everyone is going in the same direction
- Provides for planning related to organizational growth, membership engagement and fundraising to ensure that the needed facilities are developed in a timely manner
- Supports the need to collect data, track usage and gather member feedback to assist with annual planning and budget forecasts
- Can identify changes in trends, use or new opportunities that may accelerate facility provision or support changes to use of existing facilities
- Assists with growing the sport through promotion of youth development, coaching clinics and a differentiated membership base that meets pickleball players needs over time
- Allows HHPA to speak as “one voice” on behalf of pickleball play in Halton Hills

Strategic Directions

This section aligns Actions for the HHPA with Association goals as well as actions needed to align with the Town’s Court Sport Strategy. An annual review is recommended.

The HHPA Lead corresponds to the Board of Director positions and Position Duties. **The Actions noted here are in addition to the ongoing duties for each Director as outlined in their position description.**

- President
- Director of Coaching
- Director of Fundraising and Sponsorship
- Director of Facilities
- Director of Play and Scheduling
- Director of Communications
- Director of Membership
- Social Director
- Secretary
- Treasurer

HHPA Goals	HHPA Actions to meet Court Sport Strategy Actions	HHPA Lead
1. Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with the membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Approval of Court Sports Strategy - Plans for facilities for summer 2022 - Three models of play (public, permitted and community club) 	Director of Communications

HHPA Goals	HHPA Actions to meet Court Sport Strategy Actions	HHPA Lead
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explain new membership fees and rationale 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance communication through use of social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, use of regular newsletters) 	Director of Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively share information about the municipal structure, roles, and how to move forward; use examples from 2021 and approval of Court Sports Strategy to demonstrate positive results 	President and Director of Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share details on how members can access courts with lock boxes, sport lending program etc. 	Director of Facilities (input to Director of Communications)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure court signage is up to date (contact information, key access etc.) 	Director of Facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a marketing strategy to highlight new programs, publicize results of any tournament play, recognize volunteers, link to potential sponsors 	Director of Communications and Social Director
2. Data Collection and Operational Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact the Town to determine the level of data needed each year (membership numbers, sessions offered, players per session, drop-in play) 	Social Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If needed and possible, create a plan to collect data for drop-in (to ensure that random drive-by data is not used for future facility planning) 	Secretary and Social Director
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure data is kept on play that occurs indoor including Town facilities, schools and Milton facilities (Leisure Centre, Sports Centre, Velodrome); may have to work with Milton to get accurate Halton Hills data 	Social Director and Secretary (Ken - Milton)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share usage data and membership growth to Town staff by August each year (to ensure any changes to the subsequent budget year can be incorporated based on data) 	Social Director and Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and revise Membership Fee for full season, winter and summer • Communicate to membership with rationale 	Treasurer and Director of Membership
3. Fundraising & Sponsorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a committee to develop a fund-raising and sponsorship approach Starting with membership - Develop goals for each year with a target of 2026 to support TSP facility (campaign to launch in 2024) - Will need to enter into an Agreement with the Town for the fund-raising commitment 	Director of Fundraising & Sponsorship (with Committee)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider fund-raising if needed to ensure the Prospect Park project proceeds in 2022 	Director of Fundraising and Sponsorship
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain contact with Ontario Trillium Foundation to determine grant funding possibilities • Connect with Town liaison to ensure HHPA is made aware of all grant funding programs 	President

HHPA Goals	HHPA Actions to meet Court Sport Strategy Actions	HHPA Lead
4. Member /Engagement & Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake a survey of members to determine their expected plans for play in 2022 (where, how often, daytime or evening) desire for lessons, desire for differentiated level of play (relaxed to advanced) etc. 	Director of Play and Director of Communications
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host AGM and provide updates on all projects and plans, new member fees, current financial position, new volunteer recruitment opportunities etc. 	President with support of all Directors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report to members annually to status of Strategic Plan and actions; seek input to revise if needed 	President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure any players that have let their membership expire are contacted to understand why they left (injury, loss of interest, lack of play, cost etc.) to develop a member retention program 	Social Director
5. Board Strength and Succession planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Organizational chart Develop position descriptions (Terms of Reference) for each Board position 	President with input from Board members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create guidelines on when a committee is needed and assign a Board liaison lead 	President
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruit new members to become involved on Board or Committee Consider skill sets needed when recruiting (financial, strategic, policy, inter-Governmental relations etc.) 	President All Board members (determine skill sets needed)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a “Duty to remain” clause for Board members when they transition off the Board (i.e., one month pre-AGM till one-month post-AGM) to assist with smooth transfer of information 	By-Laws
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider having Board members length of term on a rotational basis to ensure some overlap between “experienced” and “new” (knowledge retention) 	By-laws
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain accurate Minutes of Board meetings and decisions made for future reference 	Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct annual review of Strategic Plan, Actions and Board tasks to ensure accountability and clarity for volunteers 	President
6. Liaison with Partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create 1:1 drop in visits to all locations for play (including Easy Riders and Thursday night group) to introduce HHPA, create strong relationships and share up-to-date information where all pickleball players benefit 	Could rotate between Board members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host an “Open House” with Halton Hills Tennis Association to engage group to try pickleball (strengthen relations between “court sports”) 	Social Director

HHPA Goals	HHPA Actions to meet Court Sport Strategy Actions	HHPA Lead
7. Long Term Planning & Facilities Leadership (new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Town to develop the Community Club Agreement (pilot) for Emmerson (and Prospect if new court added as part of 2022 project) 	President (with Committee)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stay in contact with Town staff pending outcome of tender for Prospect to ensure that the court realignment is undertaken with additional pickleball courts, prior to resurfacing 	President with Director of Facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to monitor what other municipalities are doing to provide indoor and outdoor courts (monitor “Comparator communities” and others) 	Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitor plans to complete the capital projects at Emmerson and Prospect for an early Spring completion 	President with Director of Facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Town on future court planning (Gellert expansion, TSP) 	President with a Facilities Committee (with Board liaison)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Sub-Committee to outline all HHPA requirements to contribute to future capital projects 	President and Director of Facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm expectations for HHPA to contribute financially to new facilities (% or specific amenities, or both); share with Fund Raising Committee Ensure that the expectations are in line with other community projects that required fund raising from local groups (Tennis, Dog Park, Baseball, other) 	President, Director of Fundraising & Sponsorship and Treasurer
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At annual check-in with Town, monitor status of Vision Georgetown (growth plan) to check timing and progress on development, park plans etc. 	President and Board members that liaise with Town
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to collect data to demonstrate possible need for additional dedicated Community Club level courts in Vision Georgetown area (in addition to Trafalgar Sports Park and <u>particularly</u> if Trafalgar does not have expansion potential) 	Social Director and Secretary
8. Facilities Maintenance (existing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request to meet at each court location with Town staff to inspect courts and identify any needed repairs or future capital budget requirements 	Director of Facilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide data on participation, membership and trends to Town on an annual basis and advocate on priorities for court repairs based on data 	Social Director and Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Town to identify how the sport equipment and net lending program could work (key access etc) 	Director of Facilities

HHPA Goals	HHPA Actions to meet Court Sport Strategy Actions	HHPA Lead
9. Indoor and Outdoor Play Advocacy (grow pickleball)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage the Town of develop an <u>indoor</u> strategy to address Pickleball needs (Schools, Gellert Expansion, other) 	All Directors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure data collection is maintained to support the need for additional indoor courts 	Social Director and Secretary
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot a one day “Open House” for pickleball; organize relaxed play and advanced play to showcase the range of participation options 	Director of Coaching and Social Director
10. Schedules and Levels of Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish schedule of play for each season; use Survey data from membership to assist with schedule 	Director of Play
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider any interruption to court play and plan for alternatives if needed (gym closures due to COVID, resurfacing outdoor courts etc.) 	Director of Play and Director of Facilities
11. Coaching and Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a coaching program including the need to recruit and train additional coaches to provide instruction at various levels 	Director of Coaching with Committee for New Player Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host “introduction to pickleball” sessions and highlight youth groups to participate 	Director of Coaching with Committee for New Player Development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a coordinated introduction to pickleball within secondary schools; liaise with school athletic departments to bring in volunteer coaches and equipment needed 	Director of Coaching, Committee for New Player Development, Director of Communications

Summary

HHPA is committed to fostering pickleball and growing interest and play in Halton Hills. They are working diligently to ensure that facilities are available to meet the demand of this growing sport. The plan and recommended actions should assist the Board with annual planning and assignment of tasks to the volunteer Board of Directors, sub-committees, and other engaged volunteers. Annual reviews of the plan to ensure it remains current and to identify achievements is recommended.