

## NEWS RELEASE

*June 22, 2026*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Council to Review Public Engagement Process for Future Sportsfield Complex and Annandale Ball Diamonds Site Planning**

**TILLSONBURG, ON** — On Monday, June 22, 2026, Town Council will review a report (EDM 26-014) outlining the next steps in a long-term community planning initiative involving the potential development of a new sportsfield complex at 67 Mall Road and future planning considerations for the Annandale Diamonds site at 160 Concession Street East.

The report recommends launching a Level 3 Public Engagement Strategy that would involve consultation, collaboration, and community input on conceptual plans and future options for both sites.

**This report is solely about deciding whether to direct staff to gather public feedback.** No decisions will be made regarding land use changes, surplus declarations, redevelopment, housing development, or facility construction.

If approved by Council, staff will release conceptual plans and begin a multi-month engagement process that includes Public Information Centres, stakeholder meetings, advisory committee consultations, and an online survey.

“These discussions are about planning for Tillsonburg’s future,” said Mayor Deb Gilvesy. “We need to consider how recreation, housing, greenspace, and municipal services can best support residents over the long term. This engagement process will



help Council understand community priorities before any future decisions are considered.”

The Town's Recreation Master Plan identified a need for additional sportsfield capacity to support future recreational needs, including the equivalent of one additional hardball diamond and four additional softball diamonds. While operational improvements may enhance the use of existing facilities in the short term, the Annandale Diamonds site is physically constrained and offers limited opportunities for long-term expansion.

As part of the planning process, the Town is exploring the potential development of a modern, scalable sportsfield complex at 67 Mall Road that could support future recreation needs and allow for phased expansion over time.

Conceptual planning work also includes exploring future options for the Annandale Diamonds site. Potential concepts may include housing opportunities, greenspace enhancements, trail connections, landscape buffering, and other compatible community uses, subject to public consultation, future planning approvals, and Council direction.

“The Recreation Master Plan highlights the importance of planning for future recreation lands and sports field infrastructure, while the Strategic Plan promotes active living for residents of all ages,” said Kyle Pratt, Chief Administrative Officer. “This engagement process, if approved by Council, would give the community an opportunity to help shape options that enhance the Tillsonburg experience while balancing neighbourhood character, housing possibilities, and long-term financial sustainability.”

In 2023, Council updated its Community Strategic Plan to reflect feedback received during the 2022 municipal election, including priorities related to recreation amenities, greenspace, and community growth. Shortly thereafter, the opportunity arose to acquire the lands at 67 Mall Road. Following planning reviews, consultation with Norfolk County, servicing reviews, and other due diligence, the Town completed the land purchase in April 2024.



Since then, staff have undertaken planning studies and developed conceptual designs to help illustrate potential options for both sites. The Town has also retained The MBTW Group to assist with park planning and best practices in urban design.

“The exciting part of this initiative is that it allows us to look at several important community priorities together,” said Cephias Panschow, Development Commissioner. “We are exploring opportunities to enhance recreation capacity, support future housing needs, preserve and improve greenspace connections, and make efficient use of municipal assets. Community feedback will play an important role in shaping any future recommendations.”

The Town has budgeted \$6.3 million in land acquisition, investigations and development costs related to 67 Mall Road. As part of this planning process, the Town is examining how municipal land and infrastructure can be used efficiently to support future recreation, housing, and community needs while maintaining long-term financial sustainability.

If Council directs staff to proceed with public consultation, the Town will:

- Release conceptual drawings and background information to the public
- Launch a dedicated project webpage with supporting materials, FAQs, and engagement opportunities
- Consult Town Advisory Committees, including focused discussions with Recreation, Housing, Accessibility, Economic Development, Parks, Traffic, and Youth advisory groups
- Host two or more Public Information Centres
- Conduct stakeholder meetings with sports users and neighbourhood residents
- Launch an online survey to gather community feedback



Residents will be encouraged to provide feedback on a range of topics, including recreation needs, housing considerations, greenspace, neighbourhood compatibility, traffic, community development, and long-term planning priorities.

The full report and conceptual plans will be made available following the June 22 Council meeting, subject to Council approval of the recommendation to proceed with public consultation. Following the completion of the public consultation process, a report will be brought back to Town Council for consideration.

For more information:

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**Quick Facts:**

- \$6.3 million allocated in 2025 Capital Budget for land acquisition, studies, and approvals



- The Annandale site will only be redeveloped after public engagement and necessary zoning changes
- Final decisions will be made by Council following the engagement process

### **Consultants Involved:**

The MBTW Group was retained through a competitive process to prepare the conceptual designs. Their expertise in master planning, park design, and community development has helped shape a balanced vision for both recreation and housing.

### **Stay Connected:**

Visit [www.tillsonburg.ca/sportsfieldproject](http://www.tillsonburg.ca/sportsfieldproject) (coming soon) for updates and engagement opportunities.

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### **About Tillsonburg**

Located 90 minutes west of the Toronto area, Tillsonburg offers companies a strategic location in Ontario's agriculture and manufacturing heartland. With low business and development costs, progressive policies and a high-speed fibre optic network, Tillsonburg is home to more than 600 regional, national and international companies. To find out more about Tillsonburg, visit [www.tillsonburg.ca](http://www.tillsonburg.ca).

The essence of Tillsonburg is captured in three words:

**Connected** – A strong sense of community, a history of engagement and collaboration, and strong connections to surrounding markets based on a strategic location within Southwestern Ontario

**Enriched** – A high quality of life evidenced by community centres/programs, opportunities to be meaningfully involved, abundance of parks and green spaces, and a rural/urban influence that combines for a sustainable, comfortable pace

**Inspired** – An entrepreneurial spirit and strong rural work ethic with leadership in agri-business and related ventures and a track record of “Made in Tillsonburg” solutions