

Town of Oakville response

Cultural Displays

More diverse recreation and leisure classes

Recreation and Leisure centres need to expand the classes they offer the community to include different forms of dance such as bollywood, sarang folk, calypso, hopak, traditional indigenous dances and music classes such as African drumming or Hindi singing lessons. Even yoga, which is not a traditional western practice, has been whitewashed away from its traditional roots. We need to offer Eastern/Asian/African/Indigenous practices and cultural practices by Eastern/Asian/African/Indigenous practitioners.

The Town of Oakville recognizes that there is room to improve and expand on recreation and culture programs and events. We invite the community to participate in our great offerings, and to let us know what else we can do to broaden our offerings based on our community's needs.

Examples of current and recent offerings include:

- Latin dance, Zumba, hip hop, Bollywood
- Tae Kwon Do, cricket, basketball
- Mindfulness and meditation
- Cooking workshops
- Art exhibitions (many BIPOC artists featured)
- Oakville's Black History display at three community centres (Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre, Glen Abbey Community Centre and Trafalgar Park Community Centre)
- A range of inclusion programs to support individuals with a disability including a new partnership program with Community Living Oakville for a summer camp program
- Performances at the Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts live and streaming options, free and paid, with diverse artists and performers including traditional folk dance and music of North India, Muslim Canadian Comedian, Spirit and Legacy of Black Music.
- The town also supports community organizations in delivering culturally specific programs and events.

More shared greenspace and publicly accessible parks

Participants asked for shared green space that would allow for culturally and ethnically diverse individuals to come together in more organic ways. They also suggested publicly accessible parks should include soccer, cricket, and football fields, as well as basketball and bocce ball courts. It should also include a live entertainment space so cultural events could take place throughout the year and the Region should work hard to ensure diversity of representation. Frequent and inclusive festivals and events where people's food, arts and music can be shared with the entire community.

- We have two dedicated Moccasin Trails located along the Bronte Creek Heritage Trail and the Inner Valley Trail portion of the Sixteen Mile Creek

Trail. There is a kiosk located near Rebecca Street and Mississauga Street on the Bronte Creek Heritage Trail and the Moccasin Trails feature a series of 13 plaques containing Indigenous stories, verses and information relating to the land, water and sky, giving visitors a deeper understanding of Indigenous heritage. The content for the information booth and plaques was developed in partnership with the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation and Indigenous community members. The trail projects honouring Oakville's Indigenous heritage received funding from the Oakville Community Foundation's Community Fund for Canada's 150. (2017)

- At Oakville's Tannery Park, an Indigenous history wall and outdoor classroom gathering circle were installed to promote awareness of the significant cultural historic sites and the ancestral presence of First Nations, Métis and Indigenous communities. (2019)
- Installed Treaty 22 and 14 signs in 18 town parks to further the community's shared understanding of Oakville's Indigenous past and support local truth and reconciliation as part of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and Oakville Community Foundation Debwewin "the Oakville truth" project. (2022)
- Installed a word mural on the washroom in Trafalgar Memorial Park featuring many local Indigenous names (2021-2022)
- Installed a Mural by Indigenous artists called Mother Bear Medicine at Central Library branch
- With the Canadian Caribbean Association of Halton, installed accessible planter tables within Harmony Garden at Queen Elizabeth Park Community and Cultural Centre. The creation of the Harmony Garden was funded by the Oakville Community Foundation (2021-2022)
- Hosted Indigenous film series in parks (2021-2022)
- The town is taking steps to develop a plan for a Downtown Cultural Hub where cultural facilities would be distributed throughout the downtown area. The key components would include a new library, gallery and performing arts centre as well as major open space areas including a Navy Street Plaza and a new Riverfront Park.
- The town has many sports fields at parks across Oakville that offer residents the opportunity to play soccer, football and other sports. In particular, there is a bocce ball court and a cricket field at Glenashton Park, with a basketball court on its way; and 19 outdoor basketball courts across Oakville for residents to enjoy. The town recognizes the opportunity to offer more and as such, an all-season multi-use court will soon be installed at George Savage Park to play basketball

and hockey and can be flooded in the winter to create an ice rink. We also have plans to expand Sixteen Mile Sports Complex next year to include two additional lit sports fields, cricket field, skateboard park, bike pump track and basketball courts.

Renaming spaces to recognize First Nations land, racialized figures

Participants suggested incorporating multiple language signs into public spaces and renaming spaces, places, and streets to properly recognize First Nations land and treaty rights and racialized historical figures and women versus only white settlers. And removing the names of known racist figures such as Dundas.

In consultation, partnership or engagement with our Indigenous community:

- At Town Hall, the flag of the MCFN is permanently flown alongside the national, provincial and municipal flag. (2019)
- Installed a demonstration called canoe garden in front of Town Hall, incorporating Indigenous and reconciliation themes with biodiversity.
- The town renamed five meeting rooms available to staff and the public at Town Hall. The meeting rooms were renamed to honour the Indigenous land and territory where Oakville resides, and was done to embrace a meaningful connection to Indigenous languages and teach and preserve them. This project responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #14.1. (2021)
- The town also installed permanent plaques featuring a land acknowledgement in prominent areas at Town Hall, our six community centres, Oakville Museum and Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts to acknowledge the appreciation and gratitude we carry for the enduring presence and deep traditional knowledge, laws and philosophies of the Indigenous people with whom Oakville shares this land today. This is in addition to the plaque that was introduced at the Oakville Museum. The establishment of land acknowledgement plaques in facilities responds to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #57. (2021)
- A beautiful garden called One Dish was planted at Iroquois Ridge Community Centre, honouring the One Dish covenant that teaches that all people need to collectively care for and respect the land, water, animals and each other in the interests of peace and friendship, for the benefit of not only ourselves but for our future descendants. The Indigenous names of each plant are highlighted on the garden signage to increase awareness, and teach and preserve the languages. (2021)
- The Town of Oakville worked with our Indigenous community to select a location and design the town's first orange crosswalk in honour of children of the residential school system. There is also a utility cabinet

covered in a Moccasin Identifier Project design of four moccasins representative of the four linguistic groups in Ontario and a permanent interpretive sign which provides the public with not only the opportunity to reflect on generational impact, trauma and oppression endured by Indigenous peoples in Canada as a result of the residential school system, but learn more about the treaty lands that Oakville exists on and Indigenous culture. (2022)

- Every year red dresses are hung at Town Hall, all recreation and culture facilities, and all library branches as our communities' response to the 231 Calls for Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls 2S+. The red dresses are displayed from October 4 Sisters in Spirit Day to November 25 the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.
- Placed decals on town vehicles and/or epaulets on staff uniforms to show support for Truth and Reconciliation and Black History Month.

Inclusivity in the Workplace

More diverse mentorship opportunities and business grants

Indigenous and racialized mentorship and business grants would help individuals who have been historically excluded from receiving business startup funding to open businesses. For example, the data indicated there is a lack of hairdressers throughout the Region who know how to work with black hair, or bars and restaurants that provide entertainment that is culturally diverse. More non-chain restaurants, coffee shops and furniture stores that represent other cultures would be a welcome addition to the community.

- The town's Digital Service Squad has connected diverse businesses with opportunities such as the [R.A.I.S.E grant](#), which supports Indigenous, Black and other Racialized entrepreneurs to start and scale a business, providing access to business development training, culturally responsive support services and grant funding. The program is now closed and will reopen if further funding is available.

Improved public transportation system

Respondents feel the Halton transportation system in Milton and Halton Hills keeps people separated and is underdeveloped. An overhaul of the transportation system may allow for more inclusivity and for greater feelings of connectedness and ultimately belonging.

- The Town of Oakville's transit system strives to provide services for all who use the system. We operate across municipal boundaries and have both a conventional and specialized fleet to support riders of all abilities. Our fleet is 100% low floor buses and we have an intelligent transit system which means there are preboarding announcements, digital sign and audio announcements for next stop information, high color contrast grab bars and stanchions on our

conventional buses. We are also proud to support MagnusCards, a free app for people living with autism. MagnusCards combines structured, step-by-step guidance with game design to help teach a variety of life skills through free downloadable Cards Decks. Oakville Transit funded unique Card Decks that will help those with autism or other cognitive disabilities feel supported and empowered to use our transit, navigating tasks like riding the bus, paying a fare or using a PRESTO card, planning a trip, transferring buses and how to stay safe on the bus. One of the innovative ways we bring services to all residents is through our Home to Hub program which picks up/drops off a rider at the end of their driveway to get you to and from the closest transit hub where they can connect with regular fixed route transit service, at no additional charge than a regular transit fare.

- Oakville Transit is always open to meeting with groups/individuals to understand transportation issues and looks for ways to help resolve them. In addition to working with our neighbouring Halton municipalities, Oakville Transit works with agencies across the GTHA to find solutions to Fare and Service Integration, we seek service delivery improvements through Annual and Five Year Business Plans, annual accessibility reviews and outreach to seniors and youth. We also have translation services to improve communication to those with English as a second language.