



# The Corporation of the Town of Milton

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Report To: Council

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From: Joy Anderson, Director, Recreation & Culture

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Date: June 7, 2021

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Report No: COMS-004-21

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Subject: Fitness Services 3-Year Strategic Plan Follow-Up

**Recommendation: THAT COMS-004-21 be received for information.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Fitness Services 3-Year Strategic Plan (Fitness Plan) was discussed at Council on September, 2016 (COMS-018-16) and subsequently approved in November, 2016 (COMS-022-16).
- The Fitness Plan was implemented over a 3-year time span (2017-2019 inclusive), and identified quantifiable targets and high-level action plans to be achieved for the core fitness areas.
- Three targets were identified for fitness services with a completion date of December, 2019 including: (a) 100,000 annual visits – excluding walking tracks; (b) 15% increase in fitness revenue compared to 2016; and (c) 10% increase in unique clients.
- Fitness services achieved 99,213 annual visits = 99% of anticipated target
- Fitness revenue increased 34% compared to 2016 = 226% of established target
- In 2019, Fitness services financial performance included expenses of \$265,178, revenues of (\$552,719) with a net total of (\$287,541).
- 4,473 unique clients participated in fitness in 2019 resulting in a 25% increase = 250% of target achieved.
- The purpose of this report is to update Council on the outcomes of the Fitness Plan and report on the identified targets and action plans. The original intent was to bring this report forward in May, 2020; however, due to the pandemic, operational priorities and related challenges, including facility closures and minimal operation of fitness services, the report was deferred.

## REPORT

### Background

Staff developed the Fitness Services 3-Year Strategic Plan, which was presented to Council in September, 2016. At that meeting, Council requested more information with respect to additional

**Background**

services and competitiveness with the private sector, which led to a revised plan (Schedule A) being tabled and subsequently approved in November, 2016.

The Fitness Plan was implemented over a 3-year time span (2017-2019 inclusive), and identified quantifiable targets and high-level action plans to be achieved for the core fitness areas. The Fitness Plan also included a number of new initiatives including membership structure and fee changes expected to drive an increase in participation and lead to improved financial performance.

During the same timeframe that the Fitness Plan was being implemented, fitness services was identified as a high-level opportunity for review as part of the Service Delivery Review – Phase 1 Final Report (ES-015-19). The report recommended a ‘Status Quo’ approach to the Town’s delivery of fitness services.

There are five types of fitness services offered by the Town shown on Table 1 by location.

Table 1 – Fitness Service by Location

<b>Fitness Service Area</b>	<b>Mattamy National Cycling Centre</b>	<b>Milton Leisure Centre</b>	<b>Milton Sports Centre</b>	<b>Sherwood Community Centre</b>
Drop-In Classes	x	x	x	x
Registered Programs	x	x	x	x
Fitness Centres (free weights, cardio equipment, etc.)	x	x		
Personal Training	x	x		
<b>Fitness Service Area</b>	<b>Mattamy National Cycling Centre</b>	<b>Milton Leisure Centre</b>	<b>Milton Sports Centre</b>	<b>Sherwood Community Centre</b>
Walking/Running Tracks	x		x	

Note - Fitness services are a complimentary but separate set of fitness activities offered at the Milton Seniors’ Activity Centre (MSAC). Therefore, the data provided within this report does not include the programs offered at the MSAC.

**Discussion**

**Fitness Targets**

The quantifiable targets laid out in the 3-Year Plan were to be achieved by December, 2019. Table 2, below, outlines the targets, the actuals as of December, 2019, the percentage of the target achieved and additional information related to each.

Table 2 – Fitness Plan 3-Year Targets

<b>Target</b>	<b>December 2019 Actuals</b>	<b>% of Target Achieved</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
100,000 annual visits to fitness services (excluding walking tracks)	99,213	99%	64% increase from 2016 fitness visits.
15% increase compared to 2016 fitness-related revenues	34% increase	226%	Fitness related revenue in 2019 was \$552,719.
10% increase to the number of unique clients utilizing Town fitness services	25% increase	250%	4,473 unique clients in 2019.

- Fitness centres and registered fitness participation have seen significant growth since 2016, 131% increase and 38% increase, respectively, with consistent participation in drop-in fitness classes.
- Increased revenues are attributed to an increase in unique clients and the new membership and fee structure being much easier for potential and existing clients to understand.
- The new structure steered existing short-term pass holders (single visit, 10 visit and 90 days) to convert to an annual Active Living Pass purchase.
- Population growth, especially near the Mattamy National Cycling Centre and Milton Sports Centre is likely a key driver of the increase experienced in unique clients.

## Action Plans

An action plan for each fitness service area was included in the Fitness Plan. The highlights of what was completed are listed in Table 3. Additional details related to each area can be found on Schedule B.

Table 3 – Action Plan Highlights

Service Area	Completed Items	Incomplete Items
Drop-In Fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends</li> <li>• Introduced non-traditional and creative program service delivery options</li> <li>• Specialized in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adults)</li> </ul>	N/A
Registered Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends</li> <li>• Specialized in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adults)</li> <li>• Expanded fitness centre and equipment based programs</li> </ul>	N/A
Fitness Centres (weight rooms – cardio equipment, free weights, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded registered program offerings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revitalize equipment/facilities to stay relevant with current industry trends</li> <li>• Integration with wearable technologies and the internet of things</li> </ul>
Personal Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conducted a review of personal training packages and fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integrate more holistic approaches to the service offering, such as workshops on lifestyle coaching, nutrition consultation, etc.</li> </ul>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer service training program for personal trainers</li> </ul>
Walking/Running Tracks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased registered programs offered on walking/running tracks</li> <li>• Supported walking club development</li> <li>• Reviewed walking/running track rates, fees and options</li> </ul>	N/A
General – All Areas of Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Upgraded recreation software</li> <li>• Updated membership structure and fees</li> <li>• Initiated member retention program</li> <li>• Developed and implemented communications and marketing plans</li> <li>• Implemented customer feedback mechanisms</li> </ul>	N/A

Fitness Centres and Personal Training show incomplete items. An investment in both operating and capital budgets is required in order to revitalize equipment and remain current with industry trends and to also introduce opportunities that will integrate fitness with new technologies. Personal training for the Town continues to be a value-added offering and a compliment to other areas within fitness services. As such, staff prioritized the completion of other action items first. Further review of the Town’s role in offering personal training is being considered, including ways to partner with and support private personal trainers working in the community.

**Participation Rates**

Through analysis of the participation data, the following trends emerged during the execution of the Fitness Plan:

- Fitness centre (weight room) visits account for approximately 60% of the total annual visits.
- The Milton Leisure Centre accounts for the majority of fitness visits when considering all areas of fitness services.

- The Active Living Pass provides approximately 68% of the revenue for fitness services, followed by registered classes (23%) and single drop-in visits (6%). The Active Living Pass includes access to fitness centres, walking/running tracks, drop-in fitness classes and recreational swimming and skating programs.
- Weekly average drop-in class and fitness centre participation shows that the Milton Leisure Centre services a middle to older adult fitness clientele, while the Mattamy National Cycling Centre serves all age groups in a more balanced fashion.

A visual representation of these trends can be viewed in Schedule C.

Additional information related to fitness participation levels by service area from 2017 to 2019 is shown on Table 4.

**Table 4 – Fitness Participation Rates by Service Area 2017-2019 (all locations)**

Service Area	2017 Visits	2018 Visits	2019 Visits	Total Visits
Drop-In Classes	27,864	24,838	25,690	78,392
Registered Programs	11,928	12,320	14,387	38,635
Fitness Centres (free weights, cardio equipment, etc.)	46,172	49,717	58,883	154,772
Personal Training	217	311	253	781
Annual Totals	86,181	87,186	99,213	272,580

- Drop-in class participation dropped slightly in 2018 as staff adjusted the schedule to fit in additional registered programs. As Sherwood Community Centre came on board, drop-in class capacity and participation began to show an increase again in 2019.
- Registered program increases can be attributed to the adjusted overall schedule (drop-in schedule adjustments allowed staff to move registered programs into preferred times for customers) and also to the focus on increased registered programs in the fitness centres (weight rooms) and registered programs for children and youth.
- As new membership and fee structures came into effect for fitness services, current personal training clients were offered the opportunity to bulk purchase personal training packages before the price increases took effect in 2017. Many of the visits from the bulk purchased packages took place into 2018.
- Fitness centres continued to see large growth in participation due to inclusion of the Mattamy National Cycling Centre fitness centre in the Active Living Pass. Population



growth and an increased awareness of the fitness services at the Mattamy National Cycling Centre continued to drive traffic.

Walking track participation was not included in the Fitness Plan targets and are therefore not reflected in Table 4. As information, there has been a steady increase in the purchase of walking track passes increased over the 3-year period (2017-2019) from 4,935 in 2017 to 5,147 in 2019. The Mattamy National Cycling Centre continues to see growth in all areas of participation as population growth in close proximity to the facility continues.

Unique clients are calculated as the number of unique participants who have held an annual or 10-visit pass or participated in a registered fitness class or a single-visit drop-in program in a given calendar year.

**Table 5 – Unique Clients 2017-2019**

	2017	2018	2019
Unique Clients of Fitness Services	3,653	4,007	4,473

**Municipal Comparison**

The Town’s fitness services are similar to most Greater Toronto and Hamilton (GTHA) municipalities. Table 6 illustrates services offered by the Town compared to other GTHA municipalities.

**Table 6 – GTHA Municipal Comparison of Fitness Services**

Municipality	Fitness Centre(s)	Drop-in Studio Classes	Registered Studio Classes
Milton	x	x	x
Oakville	x	x	x
Burlington	*YMCA	x	x
Halton Hills		x	x
Brampton	x	x	x
Guelph	x		x



Hamilton	*YMCA		X
Markham	X	X	X
Mississauga	X	X	X
Stouffville	X	X	X
Vaughan	X	X	X

\*Note - While Hamilton and Burlington do not operate fitness centres, the YMCA does within both of these municipalities. The YMCA provides a similar level of community-focused, accessible fitness when compared to municipal offerings.

**Conclusion**

The Town’s fitness services endeavor to provide everyone in the community the opportunity to live a healthy and active lifestyle. Staff strive to celebrate diversity and promote inclusion and equity for the community through program and service offerings. A variety of programs are offered for children, youth, families and older adults for all fitness levels and interests.

The Town has been operating fitness programs and services for over 25 years. Staff maintain high quality standards through regular assessments of programs, facilities and staff, conducting surveys and always remaining open and available for feedback. The Town is a reliable choice and a safe investment for residents.

As Milton continues to grow, it can be reasoned that a variety of services need to be available to serve the community. Private fitness facilities within Milton offer residents choice and are an important part of the fitness landscape. Equally true is that the Town’s fitness services offer a distinct choice from many private fitness offerings. Staff will continue to seek out and remain open to partnership opportunities that will serve the residents of Milton, as well as use fitness to build a sense of community.

**Financial Impact**

The table below illustrates the net financial performance of fitness from direct operations between 2017 and 2019, in alignment with the reporting period covered in this report.

	2017	2018	2019
Expenses	\$249,111	\$258,437	\$265,178
Revenues	\$(410,428)	\$(496,705)	\$(552,719)
Net	\$(161,137)	\$(238,268)	\$(287,541)





**Financial Impact**

Fitness services continue to be provided for in the 2021 approved budget.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristene Scott  
Commissioner, Community Services

For questions, please contact:          Steve Palmer                                  Phone: Ext. 2581

**Attachments**

Schedule A – COMS-022-16 Fitness Service Levels and Action Plan Follow Up Report to COMS-018-16

Schedule B – Fitness Action Plan Details

Schedule C – Emerging Fitness Trends in Town of Milton Programming 2017-2019

CAO Approval  
Andrew M. Siltala  
Chief Administrative Officer



## Town of Milton

### Fitness Services 3- Year Strategic Plan

The Community Services Department has purposely chosen to focus resources and leadership in the area of Fitness and Well Being to support the development of Milton as a vibrant and healthy community. Programs and services are expected to provide -

- An introduction to an activity
- Development of skill
- The opportunity to play
- A social connection with others who share a similar interest

Programs and services focused on fitness and well-being refers to mental, emotional and physical fitness. The current inactivity and obesity issue facing Canadians requires intervention through program provision. Recreation opportunities offered by the department are provided at an established minimum level with some opportunities available for progress to encourage overall health and a long term commitment to an active lifestyle.

This program area also provides an opportunity for integration. Community growth is fostered through increased contact between people of various ages, abilities, and ethnic backgrounds. The Community Services Department fitness programs serve as a vehicle to make Milton a more cohesive community by increasing contact and interchange between these groups leading to appreciation of the differences and strengths of individuals living in our community.

Current Areas of Service include:

- a) Drop-in Classes
- b) Registered Programs
- c) Fitness Centres
- d) Personal Training
- e) Walking/Running Tracks

## Targets

The following are the quantifiable targets that are expected to be achieved by the end of 2019 in addition to the action plans outlining the high level work to be undertaken over a three year period.

- 1 – To achieve 100,000 total visits to fitness services (excluding Walking/Running visits)
- 2 – To achieve a 15% increase compared to the 2016 fitness related revenues
- 3 – To achieve a 10% increase to the number of unique clients utilizing town fitness services

## ACTION PLAN

(a) Drop-in Fitness – A wide variety of group fitness classes providing customers the ability to commit to fitness on their own timeline

- Conduct a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends
  - Provide programming that caters to all ages, demographics and interests.
- Non-traditional and creative program delivery
  - Explore different and appealing ways to offer programming i.e.: outdoor fitness.
  - Offer more event based activities.
- Specialize in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adult)

(b) Registered Programs – Specialty group fitness classes that offer customers a regular fitness routine

- Conduct a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends
  - Provide programming that caters to all ages, demographics and interests.
- Specialize in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adult)
- Expand fitness centre and equipment based programs
  - Offer additional opportunities for small classes focused on weight based training.

(c) Fitness Centres – Equipment based (free weights, cardio equipment etc.) fitness locations

- Revitalize equipment/facilities to stay relevant with current industry trends
- Integration with wearable technologies and the internet of things
  - Explore options for programs and equipment to integrate with wearable technologies to meet customer demands for performance tracking.
  - As fitness equipment is replaced through regular life cycle periods, ensure that the infrastructure is present to capitalize on the technology that base models now regularly include.
- Expand registered program offerings
  - Offer additional small group training and programs specific to weight training in our fitness centres thus building on current industry trends.

(d) Personal Training - Private or semi-private sessions with trained staff (members only)

- Integrate more holistic approaches such as workshops on lifestyle coaching, nutrition consultation, etc.,
  - Fitness and nutrition can be overwhelming and offering these services will help educate the customer and also support member retention.
  - Workshop focus that is introductory themed and not intended to provide a level of service that a nutritionist or formal weight-loss program would.
- Conduct a review of personal training packages and fees

- Review fees for appropriate pricing levels and provide more flexible options for packages.
- Continue to maintain a commission free model delivered by internal personal trainers that ensures there is no sales pressure on members.
- Customer Service Training Program for Personal Trainers
  - Develop a training program for personal trainers that encourages a customer service friendly and non-intimidating approach that will assist in developing a long-term customer base.

(e) Walking/Running Tracks

- Increase registered programs offered on Walking/Running Tracks
  - Building upon our current programming, expand registered program offerings to maximize use of the track and meet customer demand.
- Club development
  - Create walking and running clubs, particularly for older adults that help encourage physical activity and socialization.
- Walking/running track rates, fees and options
  - Review the walking/running track memberships and fees during the 2017 comprehensive user fee review

(f) General - All Areas of Service

- Recreation software upgrade
  - A new recreation software system will be implemented in late 2017 that will provide an intuitive interface for customers and greatly enhance the ability to communicate with customers, track performance metrics related to usage and retain existing members.
- Membership structure and fees
  - The existing membership model and subsequent pricing options will be simplified to respond to industry best practices in order to provide better customer service and improved efficiency.
- Member retention program
  - A new program will be initiated that recognizes and rewards existing members for their continued patronage.
- Communications and marketing plan
  - A new promotional plan for local residents is being created in cooperation with the Communications and Marketing division to drive enhanced communications that are easily accessible and encourage participation.
- Customer feedback program
  - An improved feedback system will be implemented to gather participant feedback, opinion and satisfaction to better respond to community need.



COMS-004-21 Schedule B Fitness Action Plan Details

Service Area: Drop-In Fitness

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion
Conduct a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends	Completed	Streamlined class descriptions and titles to be user-friendly while simultaneously introducing new classes including Bollywood, TRX®, Run & Sculpt and Fit for Life.
Non-traditional and creative program service delivery	Completed	New event-based activities were offered (i.e. Zumba® Party) to build community togetherness while encouraging movement and healthy, active lifestyles.
Specialize in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adults)	Completed	Older adult programming focused on functional fitness through a rebrand of Going Strong 55+ to Fit for Life and a near doubling of the day time offerings of Mind, Body, Flow.

Service Area: Registered Programs

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion
Conduct a thorough analysis of current fitness industry trends	Completed	Review of industry trends indicated an opportunity to introduce new classes to the community including, Bollywood, Barre and Pound®.
Specialize in specific target markets (children/youth, family, older adults)	Completed	Focused on and achieved growth in children, youth and family classes, including Fit Family Mashup, Zumba® Kids, Yoga for Youth, Yoga Kids, Active Kids, Toddler & Me, Generation Pound® and Weight Training for Youth.

COMS-004-21 Schedule B Fitness Action Plan Details

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion
Expand fitness centre (weight room) and equipment based programs	Completed	Expanded fitness centre (weight room) registered programs, with a focus on programming for women and youth.

Service Area: Fitness Centres (Free Weights, Cardio Equipment, etc.)

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion or Further Actions Required
Revitalize equipment/facilities to stay relevant with current industry trends	Incomplete	Financial investments required to support growing participation, industry trends and lifecycle replacements for well-utilized equipment.
Integration with wearable technologies and the internet of things	Incomplete	Financial investments required and investigation of partnerships to determine the feasibility of integrating wearable technologies.
Expand registered program offerings	Completed	Introduced and expanded registered programs including, small group training, weight training for women and weight training for youth.

Service Area: Personal Training

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion or Further Actions Required
Integrate more holistic approaches to the service offering such as workshops on lifestyle coaching, nutrition consultation, etc.	Incomplete	Investigate partnerships with private personal trainers to enhance holistic approaches to service offerings and provide space and support for small-business owners to succeed.
Conduct a review of personal training packages and fees	Completed	Personal training packages and fees were reviewed and updated in 2017.



COMS-004-21 Schedule B Fitness Action Plan Details

Customer service training program for personal trainers	Incomplete	Develop and deliver specific customer service training for all fitness centre (weight room) staff.
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Service Area: Walking/Running Tracks

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion
Increase registered programs offered on walking/running tracks	Completed	Introduced and added several programs that utilize walking/running tracks, including Run & Sculpt and Strollerfit.
Club Development	Completed	My Heart Fitness (a tenant at Mattamy National Cycling Centre) patients regularly used the walking/running tracks with other patients and have created a sense of camaraderie as they work towards a common goal.
Walking/running track rates, fees and options	Completed	Walking/running track rates and fees were reviewed and updated; continued work can be done to simplify the fee structure.

General – All Areas of Service

Action Item	Status	Evidence of Completion or Further Actions Required
Recreation software upgrade	Completed	A new recreation software management system implemented in August 2020. Fitness services has been one of the lead program areas that has utilized the new software capabilities and staff continue to explore new ways to utilize the software to provide enhanced customer experience and service.
Membership structure and fees	Completed	A simplified pass structure was adopted in 2017 and has

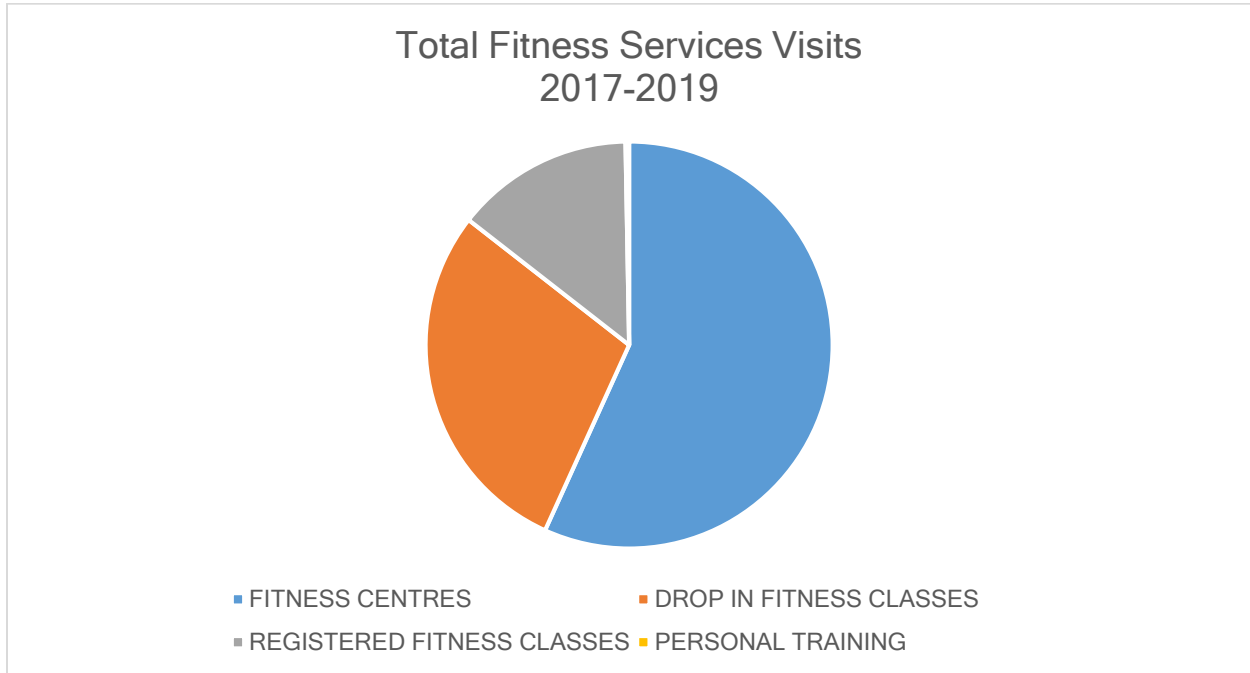
COMS-004-21 Schedule B Fitness Action Plan Details

		<p>been well-received by the community. It provides greater access, affordability and flexibility for residents. Additionally, it has provided operational efficiencies for staff. The simplified structure has resulted in increasing revenues and increased participation. There were 1,052 Active Living pass holders in January of 2017 and the number of pass holders grew to 1,437 by December of 2019.</p>
Member retention program	Completed	<p>A member appreciation week was developed in 2018 and has run annually since. Staff used this opportunity to celebrate customer successes, build community and thank customers for committing to themselves and for choosing Town fitness services.</p>
Communications and marketing plan	Completed	<p>Working in conjunction with Strategic Communications, recreation staff developed and implemented annual communications and marketing plans. The plans most often focused on reaching older adults, youth and children within the community to ensure awareness of and benefits from Town fitness programs.</p>
Customer feedback program	Completed	<p>Customer feedback continues to be a priority for staff and is gathered through various methods including, in-person, email, phone calls and through customer surveys. Staff expect to expand customer feedback methods by using new tools available through PerfectMind.</p>

## COMS-004-21 Schedule C Emerging Fitness Trends & Town of Milton Program 2017 to 2019

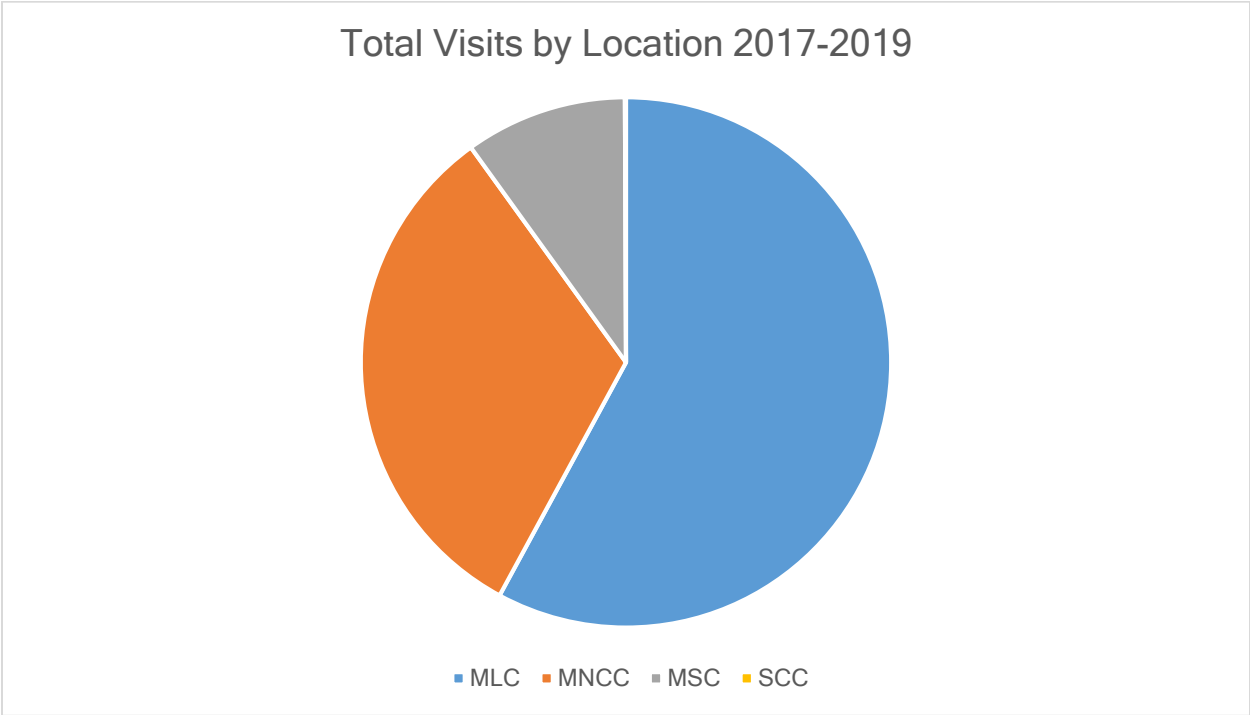
The following trends emerged when analyzing participation data in Town fitness services from 2017 to 2019.

Trend 1: Fitness centre (weight room) visits account for approximately 60% of the total annual visits, followed by drop-in fitness classes, registered fitness classes and personal training, respectively.



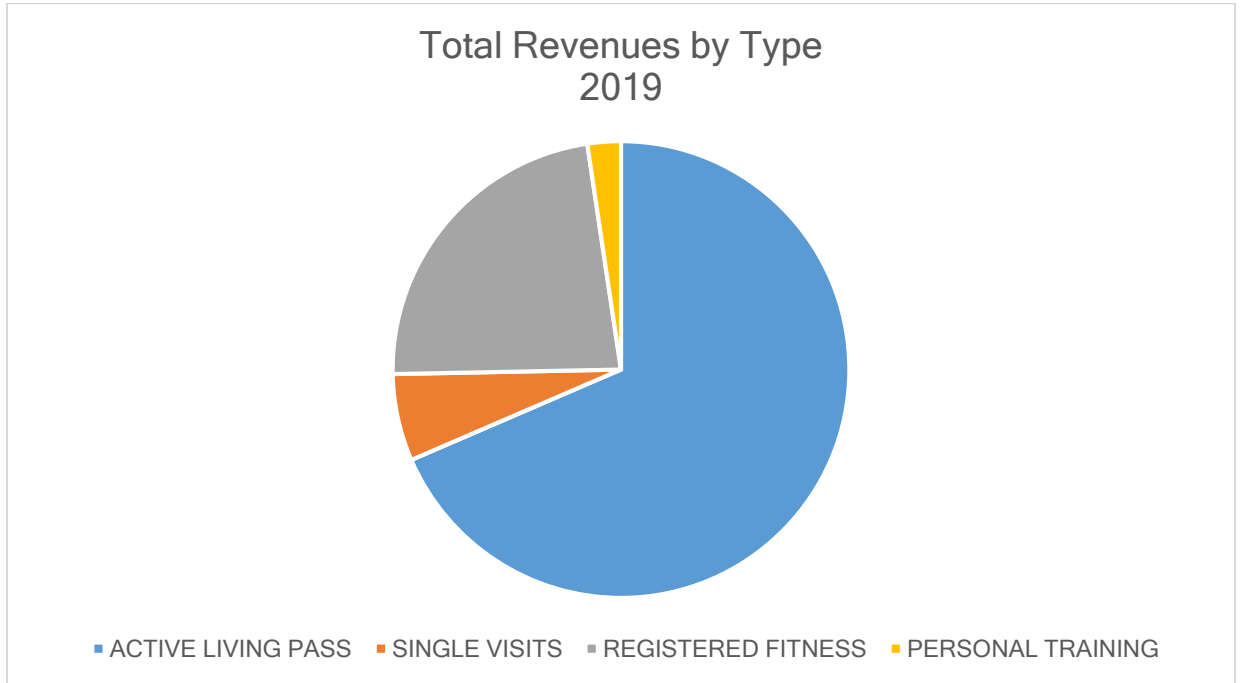
COMS-004-21 Schedule C Emerging Fitness Trends & Town of Milton Program 2017 to 2019

Trend 2: The Milton Leisure Centre (MLC) accounts for the majority of fitness visits, followed by Mattamy National Cycling Centre (MNCC) and Milton Sports Centre (MSC). Sherwood Community Centre (SCC) was only open for a few months in 2019 and therefore registers low in total visits by location.



COMS-004-21 Schedule C Emerging Fitness Trends & Town of Milton Program 2017 to 2019

Trend 3: The Active Living Pass provides approximately 68% of the revenue for fitness services, followed by registered fitness, single visits and personal training, respectively. The Active Living Pass includes access to fitness centres (weight rooms), walking/running tracks, drop-in fitness classes and recreational swimming and skating programs.



COMS-004-21 Schedule C Emerging Fitness Trends & Town of Milton Program 2017 to 2019

Trend 4: Based on Active Living Pass scans for drop-in fitness classes and fitness centres (weight rooms), the Milton Leisure Centre services a middle to older adult fitness clientele on a weekly basis, while the Mattamy National Cycling Centre serves all age groups in a more balanced fashion.

