



City of  
**Peterborough**

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**To:** Members of the General Committee

**From:** Sheldon Laidman, Commissioner of Community Services

**Meeting Date:** February 3, 2020

**Subject:** Report CSRS20-003  
Municipal Parks and Open Space Study Final Report

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## **Purpose**

A report to present the findings and recommendations of the comprehensive Municipal Parks and Open Space Study.

## **Recommendations**

That Council approve the recommendations outlined in Report CSRS20-003 dated February 3, 2020, of the Commissioner of Community Services as follows:

- a) That a presentation by Mr. Brian Basterfield from Basterfield and Associates Inc., and Mr. Robert Lockhart from RETHINK Group be received as a final update on the Municipal Parks and Open Space Study;
- b) That the Assessment of Parks and Open Spaces document (Appendix C), and the Park Development Standards document (Appendix D), as attached to this report be adopted in principle, and be used to develop policies and guide priorities related to the development of municipal parks and open space.

## **Budget and Financial Implications**

There is no immediate budgetary or financial implication resulting from the approval of the recommendations of this report. Adopting in principle the Parks and Open Spaces document and the Park Development Standards document does not commit Council to any of the recommendations or strategies contained within them.

Financial resources that will be required to support specific future projects that align with the recommendations of the Parks and Open Space Study will be considered annually as part of the municipal budgeting process.

## **Background**

Through Vision 2025, a Ten-Year Strategy for Recreation, Parks, Arenas and Culture, a need was identified to conduct a comprehensive review of the City's parks and open space system, and to establish a park planning process.

In the 2018 Capital Budget, Council approved the Parks Review and Planning Project (Budget Reference 6-1.07). A Request for Proposal (RFP# P-17-18) was issued to secure a consultant to conduct the work, with a closing date of May 31, 2018. The Administrative Staff Committee awarded the RFP to Basterfield & Associates, in association with The Rethink Group, as per the recommendation of Report CSRS18-10, dated June 27, 2018.

The project was initiated in July 2018 and concluded in October 2019. The study resulted in the development of two documents, referred to as the Assessment of Parks and Open Space document and the Park Development Standards document. To highlight the main features of the reports, the project consultants have provided an executive summary for each of the documents, which are attached to this report as Appendix "A" and Appendix "B".

### **Assessment of Parks and Open Spaces Document**

The Assessment of Parks and Open Spaces document attached to this report as Appendix "C", assesses and inform on the current state of the existing Parks and Open Spaces in Peterborough. The results of the assessment were used to formulate recommended solutions that will improve access to and quality of the City's existing and future parkland.

### **Parks Development Standards Document**

The Parks Development Standards document attached to this report as Appendix "D", is prepared to assist City staff, Landscape Architects, the development industry, City Council, and the general public with understanding and moving forward with the planning and design of new or redeveloped parks and open spaces that contribute to the City's overall park and open space system. The Park Development Standards represent current best practices for parkland. The Parks Standards document is a living document that should be updated on a regular basis to keep pace with changes to Peterborough's demographics, new recreation and park trends or to address changes to standards of practice within the broader realm of Park Planning and Design. The Parks Development Standards are presented in three sections that include Planning for Parks, Design for Parks and Construction Details for Parks.

## **Consultation Process**

The Parks and Open Space Study was an action item stemming from Vision 2025. The Consultants reviewed the results of the extensive consultation process conducted for Vision 2025 and drew out considerable input that related to parks and open space. Input from Vision 2025 is represented in the Parks and Open Space Assessment report and its recommendations, as well as in the Parks Development Standards report.

The nature of the consultation that effectively provides input into the Parks and Open Space Study is quite different to what is required for a needs assessment study to support a plan like Vision 2025. The scope of work for the Parks and Open Space Study project is more technical in nature, involving the assessment of several components, including the following:

- Access to neighbourhood parkland and distribution;
- The quantity of neighbourhood parkland;
- Evaluation of the quality and functionality of neighbourhood parkland;
- City-owned (non-parkland) open space;
- Park equity by planning area; and
- The amount of Regional and Community parkland required to accommodate future facilities.

The project also involved providing input into the Official Plan policy regarding parks and open space, and preparation of parkland development and design standards. The Consultants from the Parks and Open Space Study met several times with the City's Official Plan Review Project Consultants to ensure consistency between documents.

Thirty-three stakeholder groups were identified and invited to participate in two stakeholder workshops. This group was referred to as the 'Stakeholders' group rather than the general community, and included organizations such as Peterborough Field Naturalists, Friends of Jackson Park, Nogojiwanong Friendship Centre, Age Friendly Peterborough, Green Up, ORCA, New Canadians Centre, Peterborough & Kawartha Home Builders Association, local sport organizations, and the local school boards. It is important to note these groups represent and were able to speak for the interests of a wide spectrum of residents across the City, representing thousands of individuals.

The consultants hosted a meeting to engage First Nations, with approximately a dozen representatives being invited from across the Williams Treaty area, which reaches from Curve Lake to Rice Lake and west to the Scugog area.

Peterborough Public Health was consulted individually, in addition to their attendance at both Stakeholder Forums. The consultants presented to and received input from the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee three times, and the Accessibility Advisory Committee twice. All of which were meetings open to the public.

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## **Parks and Open Space Classification**

In line with the update of the City's Official Plan, the parks and open space classification system was revised to reflect future direction of the City, especially the trend toward increasing density of existing neighbourhoods and new residential areas.

The number of classifications has increased from the current 3 to 5, as detailed within Appendix A. The new park classification system includes Regional Parks, Community Parks, Neighbourhood Parks, Pocket Parks, and Urban Park Spaces

## **Neighbourhood Park Equity**

Park Equity is a critical concept that supported much of the research, analysis and recommendations, and represents a new way of assessing a community's parks and recreation resources. For inclusivity, the Consultants mapped a range of residential density and household income.

Park Equity = Access (to parkland) + Quality (of parks) + Inclusivity (the degree to which all residents can access Parkland).

The Consultants have developed a specific strategy to improve neighbourhood park equity in each of the City's residential planning areas.

## **Priority Neighbourhood Parks - Rejuvenation**

Given municipal financial resources are finite and there were 79 neighbourhood parks identified by the Consultants for rejuvenation, it was important to prioritize the list of parks needing rejuvenation. The Consultants utilized the factors comprising park equity to augment the quality/functionality assessment, in establishing the following as the 10 highest priority parks for rejuvenation:

1. Cameron Tot lot
2. Earlwood
3. Keith Wightman
4. Dominion
5. Hamilton (imbedded neighbourhood park portion)
6. Glenn Pagett
7. Whitefield
8. Dainard
9. Denne
10. Queen Alexandra (Plus Nicholls Place Pocket Park)

## **City-Owned (non-Parkland) Open Space**

Across the City, there are 250 hectares of City-owned (non-parkland) open space plus 69 hectares in current draft-approved plans of subdivision. Much of this land has potential to become parkland. In all, 149 properties were evaluated, utilizing 15 criteria. All but 15 properties are recommended to become parkland.

Twenty properties are recommended to become Neighbourhood parkland, and each has been assigned a development priority. The Consultants recommended that City-owned (non-parkland) open space properties that contain high-value natural heritage features that are recommended to become parkland be further designated as nature reserves or nature preserves.

### **Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee**

On October 22, 2019, the project consultants made a final presentation to the Arenas Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (APRAC), at which time APRAC endorsed recommendation (b) of this report.

## **Summary**

Project consultants Basterfield and Associates and the RETHINK Group have concluded their work on the comprehensive Municipal Parks and Open Space Study. The study resulted in the development of the Assessment of Parks and Open Space document and the Park Development Standards document, to be used by the City as planning tools to shape policies and guide priorities related to municipal parks and open space. On December 2, 2019, the project consultants will attend the General Committee meeting to make a presentation on their findings and recommendations.

Submitted by,

Sheldon Laidman  
Commissioner of Community Services

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### **Attachments:**

Appendix A - Assessment of Parks and Open Space Executive Summary  
Appendix B - Parks Development Standards Executive Summary  
Appendix C - Assessment of Parks and Open Spaces  
Appendix D - Park Development Standards