



REPORT REC-2016-005

TO: Chair and Members of Recreation Committee

FROM: Don Creed, Director of Public Works/Parks
Donna Tremblay, Deputy Clerk

MEETING DATE: May 17, 2016

SUBJECT: Service Levels and Recreation and Parks Master Plan
Recommendations
Our File: CO3-AGE

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Report REC-2016-005- Service Levels and Recreation and Parks Master Plan Recommendations be received; and

That the Recreation Committee provide recommendations to Council with respect to service levels and Recreation and Parks Master Plan Recommendations contained in Report REC-2016-005.

DISCUSSION

Background

In 2014-2015, the Township of Puslinch undertook, with the assistance of its consultant, Monteith Brown Planning Consultants a project to research, develop and produce a fiscally responsible Master Plan document for recreation, parks, open space and trails including their respective services and facilities.

The Master Plan engaged the community, municipal representatives, and other stakeholders throughout the process to gain and understanding of the broad range of leisure interest and to raise awareness for the Master Plan and the recreation and park opportunities that are available within the Township.

Throughout the body of the Recreation and Parks Master Plan, recommendations have been identified at the end of each subsection or topic area. The Master Plan contains 49 recommendations which have been divided into 3 categories including: Service Delivery Recommendations, Facility Needs Recommendations and Parks, Open Space Recommendations. The Master Plan also includes an Implementation Strategy which indicates priority, timing and any considerations including potential operating and capital costs.

On May 20, 2015, by Council Resolution No. 2015-213:

...adopt in principle the 2015 Township of Puslinch Recreation and Parks Master Plan prepared by Monteith Brown dated May 20, 2015 attached as Schedule "A" to report REC-2015-004; and

That Council consider any recommendations made in the 2015 Township of Puslinch Recreation and Parks Master Plan which contain budget implications during the 2016 Budget process.

In October 2015, Phase 1 of the Park Master Plan was launched (*recommendation No. 32 in Recreation and Parks Master Plan*). The purpose of Phase 1 of this Puslinch Community Centre Park Master Plan was to more closely examine options for the site, informed by public input. The design of the park has changed as new features have been added over time. Designing the expansion provides an ideal opportunity to examine the functionality of the entire park, such as the potential relocation of the playground and/or the re-purposing of the ball diamond to other uses.

The draft concept plans were presented by municipal staff to the Township's Recreation Committee on November 17, 2015 for initial review and were fine-tuned prior to presentation to the public. On November 26, 2015, a public open house was held at the Optimist Recreation Centre to present the draft concept plans to interested residents and stakeholders. The concept plans and display panels were also posted on the Township's website from late November 2015 to January 31, 2016, during which comments were welcomed by the Township.

Decisions on the next phase of work – which may include further refinement of the preferred concept plan, capital cost estimation, additional consultation, and approvals – will require Council authorization.

Council during the 2016 Budget deliberations requested special meetings to review the recommendations contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Service Levels with respect to grass cutting, garbage removal, ball diamond/Tennis/soccer maintenance and garden maintenance, along with Parks Master Plan recommendations regarding Badenoch Community Centre, Fox Run Park, Trails, Fees Waivers and Grant Program, and Branding and Signage will be discussed by Council at the June 1, 2016 Service Level Special Meeting.

Service levels with respect to Soccer Fields, Ball Diamond, Tennis Court – Parks Master Plan Recommendations 24 to 29 and 32 and Playground equipment/replacement – Recommendation 30 will be discussed by Council at the June 15, 2016 Service Level Special Meeting.

Purpose

The purpose of this report is provide the Recreation Committee with information on current service levels and anticipated additions to the current service levels with respect to the following:

- Grass Cutting
- Garbage Removal
- Ball Diamond/Tennis/Soccer Maintenance
- Garden Maintenance

Recreation Committee consideration of following service level recommendations contained in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan including:

Badenoch Community Centre - Recommendations 10 and 22

Fox Run Park - Recommendation 34

Trails - Recommendation 42

Fee Waivers and Grant Program - Recommendations 16 and 17

Branding and Signage - Recommendations 11 and 41

Soccer Fields/Ball Diamonds/Tennis Courts Master Plan PCC – Recommendations 24 to 29 and 32

Playground Equipment/Replacement – Recommendation 30

Current Service Levels for Parks

Staff prepared a chart indicating the current parks service levels with respect to the following facilities and/or locations, Puslinch Community Centre Grounds, Morriston Meadows, Old Morriston, Badenoch, Boreham, Calvary Church, Fox Run and Historic Block. Attached as *Schedule "A"* to report REC-2016-005 is a copy of the chart.

Council Consideration Additions/Deletions to Service Levels

Baseball Diamond Maintenance – Currently the Township provides this service on a “as required basis”. Should parks staff continue to provide lining and base set-up or should the various user groups assume responsibility?

Subdivision Maintenance Levels –Currently the Township has acquired a contractor (40hrs/month) to perform the maintenance of gardens at the Millennium Garden, Township Administration and Fire Department Complex. The Township will be assuming the maintenance of gardens on Township lands at the Aberfoyle Creek Estate Subdivision in 2016. What level of service will the township provide to this area?

Trail Maintenance – Currently the Township has ownership of one trail Telfer Glen. Funds have been set aside in the

2016 Capital Budget for the inclusion of a trail at the Puslinch Community Centre Grounds. The Township does not have a current maintenance standard for trails. What level of service will the Township provide for trails within the Township?

Morrison Streetscaping-

The permit for Phase 1 of this project has been issued and works commenced in the Spring of 2016. The Township has received an estimate from its consultant that annual maintenance costs of the project will be approximately \$2,000 per year.

Master Plan Recommendations

Badenoch Community Centre

The Badenoch Community Centre Board is responsible for the following:

- advising Council on issues that affect the Badenoch Community Centre (including policy and fee schedules)
- providing input to Council on the operating and capital budget
- reviewing existing practices and policies and make recommendations to improve the delivery of services to the public
- bringing forward and discussing concerns raised by taxpayers, users or staff that may affect the operation of the department

As currently constituted, the Badenoch Community Centre Board operates with much autonomy from the Township and has taken over responsibilities for the management and operation of the Badenoch Community Centre, having hired a booking coordinator that is not a municipal employee. Procedurally, the Board (which has a sitting member of Township Council) does not report directly to Council like the Township's other committees, but rather operates as a board of management. However, the Board is not incorporated and, therefore, is not subject to the same policies, procedures, and guidelines as not-for-profit corporations (requirements that are in place to protect all parties involved, including insurance coverage). While this arrangement has been cost effective for the Township, the current arrangement lacks the same accountability and transparency that other municipal operations enjoy and there are also concerns about the long-term viability of this model given the high level of commitment from a small number of members. It is recommended that the Township work with the Board to seek its incorporation as a not-for-profit entity responsible for the operation of the Badenoch Community Centre.

Recommendation 10

Work with the Badenoch Community Centre Board to seek its incorporation as a not-for-profit entity responsible for the operation of the Badenoch Community Centre. Should this direction not be supported by the Board/Council, the Township may consider assuming the operational duties for this facility and absorb the Board's mandate into that of the Recreation Committee.

Staff are in support of this recommendation.

The Badenoch Community Centre was a former school erected in 1889, although the building has no heritage designation. This facility is owned by the Township and operated by a group of volunteers (the Badenoch Community Centre Board, which is not a formal board of Council or board of management) as a community hall suitable for weddings, banquets, meetings, and other small events. The Board is generally responsible for minor changes and day-to-day operations, while the Township is responsible for other major works. A practice ball diamond and swing set is located outside, in addition to parking for approximately 20 cars.

The facility is generally in good condition and is equipped with a full kitchen and bathrooms, although the building is not accessible. The roof was also recently replaced in 2010. A wheelchair ramp flanks the east side of the building; however it is not built to code. The building also has a basement, although it is not currently utilized. The building condition assessment prepared in early 2014 identified several areas requiring attention including fire safety supplies, water infiltration repairs, water treatment equipment, light fixtures, and replacement of the furnace, heating oil tank, windows, doors, and hot water tank, as well as exterior wall rehabilitation. These projects are estimated to cost approximately \$135,850. In addition to the improvements identified in the building condition report, a number of enhancement opportunities may exist including upgrading the building to ensure that it is accessible, improving outdoor amenities, and developing a trail connection to the Badenoch Tract to the west.

The Township has entered in January 2007, the Township entered into a 20 year lease Agreement with the Badenoch Community for use and maintenance of the facility.

Recommendation 22

Prioritize improvements to the Puslinch Community Centre and Badenoch Community Centre and link projects to the Township's long term capital forecast.

Staff are in support of this recommendation.

Fox Run Park

Fox Run Park is located north of Aberfoyle. This flag-shaped park is bordered by residential dwellings on all sides with extremely limited frontage along Fox Run Drive and Deer View Ridge. No amenities or facilities are available at this park and no signage exists identifying its location. As this park is land locked and largely serves as

an extended backyard for neighbouring estate residential dwellings, this park may be suitable to naturalize or divest from the Township's responsibilities.

Recommendation #34

Consult with local residents and seek opportunities to naturalize or divest Fox Run Park in order to reduce maintenance and carrying costs.

Staff is in support this recommendation.

Trails

Telfer Glen Park/Trail

Telfer Glen Park is a small naturalized park in Morriston with generally thick vegetation. Located along Calfass Road south of Queen Street and north of Settlers Court, Telfer Glen Park is approximately 1.5 hectares (3.8 acres) in size and offers a naturalized trail loop. Limited opportunities are available given the naturalized state of the park.

The only trail owned and maintained by the Township of Puslinch is located at Telfer Glen Park in Morriston. This short trail loop measures approximately 270 metres in length and is located within a naturalized wooded area. Accessible from Calfass Road, this trail has a natural hiking surface with an easy to moderate difficulty. A park sign is located at the main trail access point; however, there is no wayfinding signage that identifies the trail route and other key information. Improvements can also be made to improve entrance visibility and vegetation clearing to widen the trail. Limited road-side parking is available along Calfass Road, although it is anticipated that this trail is used by local residents only.

Proposed Puslinch Community Centre Parkland Trail

The capital carry forward amount of \$37,800 has been set aside in the 2016 Parks Capital Budget for the development of the Parkland Trail. This project was included as a recommendation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and was to be evaluated after the Development of the Master Plan for the Puslinch Community Centre Park.

At the Public Meeting held on November 6, 2015, public input regarding the trail included:

"I like the proposed trail loop around the new land. This will be great for young and old to promote physical activity. "

The proposed trail received good support, with suggestions that it should encircle the entirety of the park. Single comments were received for asphaltting the trail, a shorter oval, and for routing of the trail closer to Mill Creek.

The proposed trail will have additional maintenance and inspection costs. Staff will be preparing maintenance standards for the proposed trail in order to determine costs.

Recommendation No. 42

Seek opportunities to include trails and pathways (unpaved) within the Puslinch Community Centre Park (existing portion and/or expansion lands) through the recommended Park Master Plan process.

Staff are in support of this recommendation.

Fee Waivers and Grant Program

Report FIN-2015-021- 2015 Grant Application Policy and Fee Reduction/Waiver Policy appeared on the May 6, 2015 Council Agenda. Council by way of Council Resolution 2015-171 requested that the matter be deferred to the May 20, 2015, Council meeting for consideration.

At the May 20, 2015, Council meeting Council considered Report FIN 2015-021- 2015 Grant Application Policy and Fee Reduction/Waiver Policy and provided staff with direction on revisions to the policies contained in report.

At the July 15, 2015 Council meeting, Council considered Report FIN-2015-027 and adopted Council Resolution 2015-276 as follows:

That Report FIN-2015-027 regarding the 2015 Grant Application Policy and Fee Reduction/Waiver Policy - Revised, be received; and

That Council directs staff to proceed with holding a Public Meeting in September at the Puslinch Community Centre in conjunction with the Fees and Charges Public Meeting to obtain public input on the proposed Grant Application Policy as outlined in Schedule C to Report FIN-2015-027 and the recommendations regarding fee reductions and waivers as outlined in Report FIN-2015-027; and

That staff publish notice in the Wellington Advertiser, Township website, and provide notice to previous funding recipients to advise of the Public Meeting; and

That staff report back on the results of the Public Meeting; and

That staff report back in 2016/2017 with regard to the following:

- *Organizations under separate agreement;*
- *The establishment of a facility use agreement with the Upper Grand District School Board; and*
- *Sports facility user fees collected from Minor Soccer, Old Timers Baseball, Senior Ladies Baseball, Junior/Intermediate Men's Fastball, Minor Baseball, Morriston Men's League, and Tennis.*

A Public Information Meeting was held on September 17, 2015. The Public provided comments regarding the draft policies contained in Report FIN-2015-017 and presented by staff at the public meeting. These comments are reflected in the Public Information Meeting Minutes of September 17, 2015.

Staff will be reviewing the public comments and a further staff Report will be presented to Council in June 2016 which will include any revisions to the policies.

Recommendation 16

Establish a policy to address special requests for fee waivers in an equitable and transparent manner. (e.g., each affiliated community organization may receive one two-hour room rental free each year for an annual meeting).

Recommendation 17

Develop a Community Funding Policy and grant program to assist community organizations in implementing initiatives that are aligned with the Township's goals and priorities (funding could go towards offsetting the cost of items such as materials, equipment, promotion, staffing/administration, etc.). There is an expectation that organizations would also be required to fund a portion of the cost themselves.

Staff are in support of recommendations 16 and 17.

Branding and Signage

The Recreation and Parks Master Plan and Township Council during its Term of Council Goals and objective setting session held on December 22, 2014, identified "destination Marketing/Branding as an initiative.

The Township of Puslinch Community Based Strategic Plan identifies destination and marketing/branding as an objective under Strategic Goal I – Create a Puslinch Identity.

The amount of \$15,000 has been budgeted for in the 2016 Corporate Capital Budget and Forecast. This project could be eligible for \$7,500 (50%) Rural Economic Development (RED) funding with the remaining \$7,500 (50%) fund from the tax levy.

Recommendation 11

Undertake a Communications & Branding Strategy to promote local parks and recreation opportunities. This Strategy may include:

- Publishing a bi-annual community leisure guide containing information relating to parks, trails, and recreation opportunities, as well as other services provided by the Township and its community partners;

- Exploring digital signage, social media, and emerging technologies to maximize
- awareness opportunities and outreach to wider audiences; and
- Township-wide signage to easily identify municipal assets and branding (logo, tag line, etc.) and to provide consistent messaging.

Recommendation 41

Establish a consistent signage design template and install at all parks, recreation facilities, and trail heads.

Staff are in support of these recommendations.

The Recreation Committee have reviewed both the Recreation and Parks Master Plan and the Parks Master Plan Concept Plans 1 and 2 and have provided their recommendations. These recommendations will be included in the Staff Report to Council for the special meeting to be held on June 15, 2016, along with recommendations regarding a request for a basketball court at Boreham Park.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As noted in the report.

APPLICABLE LEGISLATION AND REQUIREMENTS

ATTACHMENTS

SCHEDULE "A" - Current Service Level for Parks

CURRENT SERVICE LEVELS FOR PARKS – SCHEDULE “A”

	PCC	MORRISTON MEADOWS	OLD MORRISTON	BADENOCH	BOREHAM	CALVARY	FOX RUN (contractor)	HISTORIC (contractor)
GRASS CUTTING AND TRIMMING	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/10 days	As required
FERTILIZE	Once/year	Once/year	Once/year	Once/year	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ROLLING	Once/year	Once/year	Once/year	Once/year	N/A	Once/year	N/A	N/A
GARBAGE REMOVAL	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	N/A	As required
PLAY GROUND maintenance	Once/7 days	Once/7 days	N/A	N/A	Once/7 days	N/A	N/A	N/A
PLAY GROUND INSPECTIONS	Once/month	Once/month	N/A	N/A	Once/month	N/A	N/A	N/A
BALL DIAMONDS Dragging/lining *	As required*	As required*	As required*	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
MILLENNIUM GARDEN	40hrs/mnth contractor							