

Subject: Parkland First Policy

File Number: ACS2022-RCF-GEN-0003

Report to Planning Committee on 23 June 2022

and Council 6 July 2022

**Submitted on June 9, 2022 by Kevin Wherry, Manager, Parks and Facilities
Planning, Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department**

**Contact Person: Katie O’Sullivan, Coordinator, Strategic Support, Recreation,
Cultural and Facility Services Department**

613-580-2424, ext. 43113, Katie.O’Sullivan@ottawa.ca

Ward: Citywide

Objet : Politique priorisant les terrains à vocation de parc

Dossier : ACS2022-RCF-GEN-0003

Rapport au Comité de l’urbanisme

le 23 juin 2022

et au Conseil le 6 juillet 2022

**Soumis le 09 juin 2022 par Kevin Wherry, Gestionnaire, Direction général des
loisirs, de la culture et des installations**

**Personne ressource : Katie O’Sullivan, Coordonnatrice du soutien stratégique,
Direction général des loisirs, de la culture et des installations**

613-580-2424, poste 43113, Katie.O’Sullivan@ottawa.ca

Quartier : À l’échelle de la ville

REPORT RECOMMENDATION(S)

**That Planning Committee recommend Council approve the Parkland First Policy
detailed in Document 1.**

RECOMMANDATION(S) DU RAPPORT

Que le Comité de l'urbanisme recommande au Conseil municipal approuver la Politique priorisant les terrains à vocation de parc présentée dans le document 1.

BACKGROUND

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (the Plan) was approved at a joint meeting of Planning Committee and Community and Protective Services Committee in September 2021 ([ACS2021-RCF-GEN-0018](#)), and subsequently by Council in October 2021. The Plan is a supporting document to the Official Plan (OP). While the OP provides high level direction on parks and green spaces, the Plan provides more specific recommendations and policy directions on municipal parks and recreation facilities and examines what parks and facilities will be required to serve the needs of the city's residents to 2031.

The Plan outlined a series of strategies which, if adopted and applied together, would facilitate the City in achieving the Plan's recommended per capita parkland and facility provision levels. Included within the strategies were a series of recommended new policies. These new policies would aid in the acquisition and funding of new municipal parkland and recreational facilities, while also ensuring the retention and maximum use of existing municipal parkland to serve the recreational needs and interests of residents.

The Plan recommended the creation of a Parkland First Policy for parkland dedication.

DISCUSSION

In 2015 Recreation, Cultural and Facilities Services (RCFS) investigated parkland provision in the urban context and observed that there was a growing need for more parkland to serve the increasing number of residents resulting from infill and intensification. As part of this work, RCFS established a minimum size of parkland that was needed to create a viable public park. This minimum size standard was adopted as a Departmental directive and was provided to Development Review staff instructing that parkland, instead of cash-in-lieu of parkland, be taken on development sites of 4,000m² or greater. This practice has resulted in the creation of a number of new urban parks.

In 2021 both the new Official Plan and the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan (the Master Plan) were completed. The Official Plan indicates that there will be significant increases in the urban population. From the direction of the Official Plan, the Master Plan makes projections to 2031 and demonstrates a need to acquire new parks in the urban area to meet the needs of a growing population. The Master Plan validates

the concerns that were noted in 2015. As a result, the Parkland First Policy (Document 1) formalizes the well-established current practice into formal policy.

The Parkland First Policy (Document 1) directs staff to prioritize and request the dedication of land rather than Cash-in-lieu of parkland during the development review process. The purpose of this policy direction is to increase per capita parkland provision rates, especially in areas that do not meet the targets set by the Plan. The policy provides formal guidance, while offering flexibility in determining land requirements.

The City has always been able to request land or cash-in-lieu of parkland on development applications, regardless of the size of the development area. This policy does not remove the City's opportunity to take cash-in-lieu of parkland when it is determined to be the more beneficial of the two choices for the City.

Where the scale of development warrants a request for parkland, the resulting new parks will support new and existing residents by increasing access to parkland in the urban area and providing more parks closer to where residents live. The new parks will help meet the provision level targets in the Plan for both parkland and recreational facilities. As the city grows, this policy will help improve access to public parks.

Please note, Document 1 will be updated with hyperlinks to the new Official Plan, the published version of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan and the new Parkland Dedication By-law once they are available.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no municipal financial implications for this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to the adoption of the recommendations in this report. The determination of policy in respect of taking land or cash-in-lieu of parkland is at a municipality's discretion.

COMMENTS BY THE WARD COUNCILLOR(S)

This is a City-wide report.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE(S) COMMENTS

Advisory Committees were consulted through the Parks and Recreation Facilities

Master Plan process. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Master Plan.

CONSULTATION

The policy direction detailed in Document 1 is identified in the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan and was outlined in the report to Committee and Council entitled Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan – Final Draft (ACS2021-RCF-GEN-0018). The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan process included consultation with a Technical Advisory Committee, as well as extensive consultation with external stakeholders. There was widespread public support for initiatives that resulted in more parks and recreational facilities.

Document 1 was drafted in consultation with staff from Planning, Real Estate and Economic Development Department, Financial Services, Public Works and Environmental Services, Community and Social Services; and in consultation with CREO and Legal Services. Following the internal consultations, the draft policy was provided to all departments for comment. Staff also met virtually with the Greater Ottawa Home Builders Association (GOHBA) to discuss the policy.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

The recommendations make no changes to current accessibility policies and provisions. When built, all new parkland, indoor and outdoor recreation facilities meet current accessibility design standards. The City of Ottawa continues to retrofit buildings to improve accessibility.

ASSET MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The recommendations are anticipated to result in the retention of existing parkland and the acquisition of new parkland. When considering new and upgraded facilities, the City should consider cost of ownership. The lifecycle implications of these changes include pressures for increased resources to inspect, operate, maintain, and renew, as well as end-of-life replacement costs.

CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

Climate Implication were addressed through the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan process. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Environmental implications were addressed through the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan process. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Plan.

INDIGENOUS GENDER AND EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

An indigenous, gender and equity lens was applied through the development of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Plan.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications.

RURAL IMPLICATIONS

Rural implications were taken into consideration in the development of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Plan.

TERM OF COUNCIL PRIORITIES

The Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan is a supporting document to the Official Plan (2021). The Official Plan is an action under Economic Growth and Diversification Priority and investing in recreation infrastructure is an action under the Thriving Communities priority. This plan supports the future vision of growth for the city that positively affects community livability and investment in parks and facilities across all wards. The items in this report implement the Council approved direction of the Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 – Parkland First Policy

DISPOSITION

Following approval at Committee and Council, staff will implement the Parkland First Policy.