

CHAPTER 10

OPEN SPACE POLICIES

The Township recognizes the importance of parks, open space and recreational facilities in supporting a liveable community with a high quality of life. These areas also provide opportunities for both passive and active recreation that support the overall health and wellbeing of the community. The Township will therefore provide and maintain sufficient space for both active and passive recreational pursuits by combining the provision of parkland, sports fields, community facilities, and natural areas to satisfy the recreational needs of all ages and lifestyles, in a manner that reflects the Township's growth and financial priorities.

The policies of this Plan seek to protect and expand the Township's parkland and open space areas to improve quality of life in the community.

10.1 GENERAL POLICIES

- 10.1.1 The Township will actively seek to provide a balanced system of recreational and leisure opportunities through the *development* of parks, open space and recreational facilities that provide opportunities for physical recreation, socialization, cultural pursuits, community identification, nature appreciation and education.
- 10.1.2 Where feasible, the Township will facilitate partnership arrangements, joint ventures and facility sharing with the school boards, other institutions and community groups to expand the supply of parks, open space, and recreational facilities.
- 10.1.3 The Township may undertake a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to establish a hierarchy of the Township's existing parkland, open space, and recreational facilities, and to identify deficiencies, and recommendations for the potential future acquisition/*development* of parkland, open space and facilities This range of parkland and associated facilities may include:
- a) Parkettes and Tot Lots;
 - b) Neighbourhood Parks & Open Space;
 - c) Community Parks & Open Spaces; Specialized Parks,
 - d) Open Space, and
 - e) Linkages; Cemeteries; and other active or passive recreation areas.

- 10.1.4 As part of the completion of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan noted in Section 10.1.3, the Township will evaluate the linkages between its existing parkland, open space areas, and recreational facilities and identify opportunities for new or improved linkages to increase public access to these areas.
- 10.1.5 The Township will encourage the development of a system of linked green space, open space and trails throughout the Township relying on existing parklands, watercourses, utilities corridors, conservation areas, schools and the co-operation of private landowners.
- 10.1.6 The Township will support the maintenance and continued viability of its trail system, to ensure continued access and enjoyment by Township residents.
- 10.1.7 The Township will encourage the development of a system of bicycle routes, sidewalks, and pedestrian paths to link residential areas, employment areas, major public open spaces, schools and activity centres, and to provide for recreational needs of Township residents, as well as those visitors of the community.
- 10.1.8 The Township will encourage and work with the Grand River Conservation Authority, the Region, other agencies and the public to make lands available for recreational purposes such as cross-country skiing, cycling and hiking trails.
- 10.1.9 The Township will support the implementation of the Regional cycling routes shown on Map 5C of the Regional Official Plan through strategies that facilitate cycling for both recreational and everyday activities.
- 10.1.9 Wherever feasible, sidewalks will be provided on both sides of streets where transit service currently exists or is planned, and a minimum of side of all other through- streets or streets that interconnect with the walking network.
- 10.1.10 The Township recognizes the following key principles with respect to municipally owned parkland and open spaces:
- a) That municipally owned parkland and open space are important quality of life assets that should be protected and preserved in our communities;
 - b) To plan for the expansion of municipal parks and open spaces, because of the recreational and quality of life opportunities they provide to the residents of, and visitors to, our communities;
 - c) To strive to a "no net loss of parkland" approach which applies to all current and future designated parkland;
 - d) To ensure that the development parkland, trails and recreational uses does not have a significant adverse impact on the natural heritage features; and
 - e) To only consider parkland as surplus based on the appropriate review, consultation, and appraisal as per the approved surplus land policies.

10 .2 PARKLAND AND OPEN SPACE ACQUISITION

10.2.1 The Township may acquire and/or protect parkland and open space areas as follows:

- a) By leasing or purchasing;
- b) By entering into any agreements, or enact a Zoning By-law to preserve open space;
- c) By requiring in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, the dedication of land for parkland or other public recreational purposes:
 - i) An amount equivalent to two percent (2%) of the net land area proposed to be developed or redeveloped; or
 - ii) At the discretion of the Township, payment of money in an amount equivalent to the value of lands required under subsection i) for commercial or employment-related *development* as a condition of draft approval of plan of subdivision or the granting of a consent to sever.
- d) By requiring in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act, the dedication of land for parkland or other public recreational purposes based on:
 - i) An amount equivalent to five percent (5%) of the net land area proposed to be developed or redeveloped; or
 - ii) If the net land area to be developed is at a density of 20 to 75 dwelling units per hectare, an amount of land equivalent to a rate of 1.0 hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed; or
 - iii) If the net land area to be developed is at a density greater than 75 dwelling units per hectare, an amount of land equivalent to a rate of 0.6 hectare for each 300 dwelling units proposed; or
 - iv) At the discretion of the Township, payment of money in an amount equivalent to the value of lands required under subsequent i), ii), or iii) for residential *development* as a condition of draft approval of plan of subdivision or the granting of a consent to sever.
- e) By calculating any lands dedicated to the Township in accordance with sections c) and d) on the basis of the pro-rata proportion of commercial land and residential land for mixed-use *development* proposals.
- f) Further to Section 10.2.1, the Township may require cash-in-lieu of all or part of the required parkland dedication where:
 - i) The required land dedication fails to provide an area of suitable shape, size or location for *development* of public parkland;
 - ii) The required dedication of land would render the remainder of the site unsuitable or impractical for development;
 - iii) It is determined that existing park and recreational facilities in the immediate area of the proposed *development* are adequate to serve the projected increase in population; or
 - iv) Funds are required to acquire, upgrade or expand land, parks or recreational facilities elsewhere in the Township to meet the needs of the projected population.

- 10.2.2 The amount paid for cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication will be in accordance with provisions of the Planning Act and be placed in a fund to be expended solely for the purchase of additional parkland, open space or recreational lands and/or facilities.
- 10.2.3 Hazard Lands, *environmental features*, or opens space areas for stormwater detention purposes will not be accepted as part of a dedication for parkland and/or cash-in-lieu of parkland pursuant to the Planning Act and Section 10.2.1, unless deemed acceptable to the Township.
- 10.2.4 The Township may accept ownership of woodlots and other environmentally significant areas for protecting the natural area for passive recreation and education uses over and above the parkland dedication requirements in Section 10.2.1.
- 10.2.5 Lands to be dedicated to the Township for active parkland and other recreational facilities pursuant to Section 10.2.1 shall be required to meet minimum standards to the satisfaction of the Township in terms of topsoil depth, material compaction, landscaping, demarcation (fencing, landscaping and/or monuments) drainage, grading and site condition.
- 10.2.6 The foregoing policies relative to open space area as a descriptive term should not be confused with the specific policies and designations relating to Section 7.4.