

2.12 RECREATION

Preamble

A City's natural and developed open space and recreational facilities are not merely desirable, but are essential to the overall well being of a community. A well-managed system that provides active and passive recreational opportunities is considered an indispensable community feature, one that should be available to all ages on a year-round basis. The City of Fredericton's parks, open spaces, natural areas, recreation facilities and leisure programs are an integral part of the public infrastructure system that creates a livable, dynamic and economically vibrant City.

Residents of Fredericton are provided with a variety of leisure and recreation opportunities. The City's open space and park system includes approximately 457 hectares of parkland. This includes the urban forest of Odell Park and the tranquil lake and forests of Killarney Lake Park. The majority of residents view Fredericton's parks as part of the fabric of the City. The City is committed to continually identifying, protecting and preserving quality natural open spaces for recreational activities, inherent aesthetic value and protection of valuable ecosystems. It is recognized that trees, colorful flowers, specialty gardens, natural areas and trails beautify the City and add to the quality of life for both residents and visitors.

Over the past decade, roughly 70 kilometres of trails have been constructed throughout the City resulting in almost all of the railway rights-of-way being converted into recreational trails. The linear nature of the trails offers excellent opportunities for people of almost any age to pursue physical activity in a natural setting. As the population continues to age, active leisure activities that will continue to be popular are those that are unstructured, affordable and easily accessible.

The trail network has, to some extent, functioned as both a transportation and recreation network. Over the next decade, the focus will be to improve and enhance the existing trail system as well as developing a more integrated north/south network of both off and on-street routes. An enhanced trail network and improved linkages will encourage alternative transportation modes reducing the reliance on the automobile.

The City is committed to providing a wide array of recreation and leisure opportunities to enhance overall health and community well being. To achieve this goal, Fredericton's Community Services Department has developed an active living program – *Move This Way*. Delivered in partnership with River Valley Health, this program promotes good health, extends and improves the quality of life.

2.12.1 OBJECTIVES

- (1) To ensure that sufficient space, facilities and programs are provided to meet the year round recreational and leisure needs of City residents.
- (2) To optimize the use of the St. John River, tributaries and their shores for public recreation and other compatible uses.
- (3) To develop an integrated system of parks, linear parkways, open spaces, and natural areas, throughout the City.
- (4) To develop and maintain a City wide interconnecting network of trails to provide valuable recreation and transportation opportunities.

- (5) To provide high quality programs, services and facilities that are responsive, accessible and affordable to all.

2.12.2 POLICIES

Council Commitment

- (1) Council shall continue to develop, enhance, and deliver high quality recreation and leisure services, programs, facilities, and opportunities for the benefit and enjoyment of all City residents.

Recreation Opportunities

- (2) Council shall strive to provide ample and sufficiently varied and dispersed year round recreation opportunities for all City residents.

Park Classification

- (3) Council shall establish the following classification of parks and recreation facilities to guide and rationalize the continued development of the City's recreation and open space system. A variety of types and sizes of parks, recreational facilities and activities is desirable to meet the diverse interests of the population.

(a) Municipal Facilities

Municipal level recreation facilities are those that serve the City as a whole. These facilities should be accessible by transit, automobile via arterial streets and trail linkages. Examples include:

- (i) City Parkland: Large areas of natural open space for low intensity activities such as walking, cycling and nature study. Odell Park serves this function and is complemented by Killarney Lake Park.
- (ii) Urban Trail System: Major pedestrian and bicycle trails along watercourses, railway land or other rights-of-way and forming part of an integrated linear open space system. The riverfront trail system falls under this category. Associated trail amenities such as playgrounds and washroom facilities may also be provided.
- (iii) Lighted Outdoor Rinks & Tennis Courts: Generally located within larger community parks, these facilities are intended to draw participation from multiple neighborhoods.
- (iv) Indoor Pools, Arenas, Exhibition Halls & Athletic Complexes: (e.g. Nashwaaksis Junior High, YMCA). Intended for use by the whole community, these facilities generally draw participation from a large geographic area.

- (v) Senior Playing Fields, Beaches & Exhibition Grounds: These are the most intense recreation uses and are intended to serve a wide geographic area.

(b) Community Facilities

Community level facilities are those that serve more than one neighborhood but are not intended to serve the City as a whole. Examples include:

- (i) Community Park: (e.g. Reading Street, Royal Road). Passive landscaped or natural areas. Community parks are intended to provide residents with ample opportunity for both passive and active recreational activities.
- (ii) Playgrounds & Wading Pools: (e.g. Queen Square and Henry Park). Suitable for younger children. Ease of access from surrounding neighborhoods, central location, and pedestrian/ bicycle linkages are key considerations when developing these types of facilities.
- (iii) Community Centres & Public Gyms: Offer a range of activities and programs and flexible design to meet changing resident needs. This category would also include facilities for youth and senior citizens.
- (iv) Playing Fields, Outdoor Pools, Outdoor Rinks & Outdoor Unlighted Tennis, Skateboarding Parks: High intensity outdoor facilities and specialty type parks which attract residents from multiple neighborhoods.

(c) Neighborhood Facilities

Neighbourhood level facilities are those that are less structured and primarily serve the immediate neighbourhood. They should be accessible by pedestrians without the need to cross arterials or collectors. Examples include:

- (i) Pocket Parks: Small landscaped areas with benches; no special land use restrictions.
- (ii) Tot Lots: Small areas intended primarily for use of children up to age eight containing playground equipment, swings, slides, and benches.

Designate Major Recreation Open Space

- (4) Council shall designate on Schedule "A" (Generalized Future Land Use Map) the major municipal and community level recreation and open spaces in the City.

Trail Master Plan

- (5) Council shall consider preparing a trail master plan to determine new trail locations, specific linear open space alignments and improvements. Council shall provide for public consultation during the planning phases of linear open space systems.

Connections

- (6) Council shall pursue the connection of the linear open space system with other recreation facilities, the downtown and other commercial areas, educational institutions and residential neighborhoods.

Other Open Spaces

- (7) Council shall pursue the provision and retention of open spaces and recreation facilities within the other primary land uses designated on Schedule "A". Specifically, Council shall pursue the provision of open space, recreation and leisure opportunities as a component of individual developments, where appropriate.

Environmentally Significant Areas

- (8) Council shall ensure that recreation uses located in environmentally significant areas designated as Open Space on Schedule "A" are passive and maintain the general integrity of the natural environment.
- (9) Council may pursue the acquisition of environmentally significant land for recreational purposes provided that the land lends itself to passive recreational use and will enhance the City's open space system.

Land Acquisition

- (10) Council shall actively seek to acquire land through dedications, easements, purchase or other methods for:
 - (a) Developing trails and reserving rights-of-way between major parks;
 - (b) Preserving and developing riverbanks and stream valleys for trails and other public use;
 - (c) Reserving abandoned rail beds and developing them for public use.

Public Dedication Criteria

- (11) Council shall consider the following when evaluating subdivision proposals for public land dedication or cash-in-lieu:
 - (a) Likely impact on maintenance and property tax costs;
 - (b) Existence of other nearby facilities;
 - (c) Quantity and nature of local recreation demand;
 - (d) Physical suitability for intended purpose;
 - (e) Accessibility from all areas of the subdivision;
 - (f) Site frontage along roadways;
 - (g) Potential for integration with existing parkland and trail

- system;
- (h) Compatibility with existing and proposed adjacent land uses;
- (i) Potential traffic generation and distribution;
- (j) Need for parking.

Complementary Uses

- (12) Council may permit the development of commercial recreation and other complementary land uses within the designated parks, linear parks and open space areas where:
 - (a) Such uses enhance the recreation value of the area;
 - (b) The use complements the intended use and aesthetic character of the subject area and is compatible with surrounding land uses;
 - (c) Parking, pedestrian access and other requirements can adequately be accommodated.

Design Guidelines for Park, Open Space and Facility Development

- (13) Council shall provide for the development of parks, open space and recreation facilities in accordance with the following design guidelines:
 - (a) The proposed use should be compatible with the natural environment and designed as an integral part of the surrounding land uses;
 - (b) The site should be adequately landscaped and designed in accordance with an approved site plan;
 - (c) Impacts on adjacent land uses, including light spill-over, noise and loss of privacy should be minimized;
 - (d) User safety and security should be addressed through the appropriate use of lighting, signage, guardrails, surveillance and supervision;
 - (e) Site frontage along roadways should be maximized, where appropriate, to ensure greater visibility and encourage use.
 - (f) Adequate on-site parking should be provided;
 - (g) Traffic on local streets should be minimized. Sites generating significant levels of traffic should have direct access to arterial or collector streets;
 - (h) Provision for the needs of persons with disabilities and other special needs groups.

Maintenance

- (14) Council shall ensure that all City parks and recreation facilities are adequately maintained.

Monitoring

- (15) Council shall monitor demographic trends and leisure needs both at the municipal and neighborhood levels and shall endeavor to accommodate changing user needs by:

- (a) Redesigning open spaces when and where required;
- (b) Tailoring recreation programs and opportunities to the user requirements of the intended area to be serviced;
- (c) Design and construct new community facilities to have flexible function to ensure adaptability to changing needs of the community.

Fredericton Botanic Gardens

- (16) Council will continue to support the efforts of those developing the Fredericton Botanic Gardens.

2.12.3 PROPOSALS

Linear Open Spaces

- (1) Council shall continue to improve and enhance the linear open space system to provide quality and continuous pedestrian and bicycling linkages throughout the City by:
 - (a) Eliminating identified gaps along the north side of the St. John River;
 - (b) Developing a north/south network of trails on both sides of the St. John River;
 - (c) Investigating the possibility of constructing a second pedestrian/bicycle bridge crossing, either by retrofitting the Westmorland Street Bridge or by constructing a pedestrian bridge on the Carleton Street Bridge piers;
 - (d) Providing trails in selected ravines and stream shorelines, where appropriate;
 - (e) Providing paths or lanes in road rights-of-way where required to connect public parks and open spaces;

Council may use a combination of the foregoing to provide for an interconnected system of pedestrian and bicycle linkages. Unless otherwise specified, the use of trails for motorized vehicles should be prohibited.

Educational Institutions

- (2) Council shall encourage the development of open spaces and facilities in association with educational institutions and shall:
 - (a) Seek agreements for the joint use and maintenance of facilities where appropriate;
 - (b) Endeavour to site City owned parks and recreation facilities adjacent to schools in order to achieve an enhanced level of facilities.

Public Dedication

- (3) Council shall require, as a condition of subdivision approval pursuant to the Subdivision By-Law, the conveyance of either land or an equivalent amount of cash-in-lieu of land to the City for the purposes prescribed by the Community Planning Act.

Parkland Acquisition Strategy

- (4) Council should prepare a parkland acquisition strategy that will assist in determining the need and location of future parks and recreational areas prior to development. The strategy should include the following:
 - (a) Inventory of existing facilities;
 - (b) Identification of under serviced areas;
 - (c) Types of parks required and land requirements;
 - (d) Park priorities.

Adjoining Uses

- (5) Council shall strive to ensure that land uses adjoining parks, and other recreation facilities are compatible. Council may require buffering or other design measures as a condition of development approval.

Cooperation

- (6) Council shall seek to co-operate with other levels of government and other organizations:
 - (a) To co-ordinate the provision of recreation programs and facilities;
 - (b) To develop the tourism potential of the City's major recreation areas;
 - (c) To cost share recreation and tourism oriented programs and facilities.

Carleton Park

- (7) Council should seek a more permanent leasehold arrangement for the Carleton Park property and shall explore the feasibility of purchasing the land.

Killarney Lake Park

- (8) Council shall, as a long term objective, continue to pursue the acquisition of land and the development of the Killarney Lake Park within the area illustrated on Schedule "A" in accordance with the Killarney Lake Master Plan and the Fredericton Northwest Master Plan.
- (9) It is proposed that the development of the Killarney Lake Park include opportunities for more "nature oriented" activity such as hiking trails, wilderness camping and mountain biking.

Recreation Master Plan

- (10) It is proposed that Council prepare a Recreation Master Plan to provide more detailed guidance on the development and enhancement of recreation systems in the City. The plan shall include:
 - (a) An assessment of all existing City owned recreation and

- parklands in order to rationalize the disposition and use of such lands to serve existing and future populations;
- (b) The determination, on a municipal, community and neighborhood basis of what recreation areas and facilities will be required;
 - (c) To identify acceptable standards for municipal, community and neighborhood facilities.

Nashwaak River

- (11) It is proposed that Council acquire lands adjacent to the shores of the Nashwaak River for future recreational purposes as opportunities arise.