Parks Background Information

• “If the 20th century was dedicated to buildings, the 21st will be about the spaces between them.” - Christopher Hume

• Around the world the interest in community public spaces such as parks, squares, plazas, and piazzas has never been greater.

• Municipal politicians are realizing that parks are not civic frills, but urban necessities.

• The future will unfold in cities, and in Canada, more than 80 per cent of the population now inhabits urban centres.
• For the first time in history, more than half the planet's population lives in cities and with these growing urban populations comes a growing need for communal spaces.

• More new urbanites live in high-rise condos.

• As a result, they look to the city to provide many of the features house-owners take for granted.

• City life in Canada has become more European; we no longer just live in the city, we inhabit it. The city is where we eat, drink, sit outside, meet friends, or simply watch the passing parade.
• The grandfather of landscape architecture, Frederick Law Olmstead, saw his work as part of a larger effort to civilize humanity and improve the lives of people who existed in crowded, cramped and dirty conditions.

• His belief in the restorative powers of nature was widely shared.

• People are passionate about parks and open space.

• Parks are special places that evoke feelings of happiness, and memories of childhood, special events, nature, adventure, health, sports and summer camps.
A City of Ottawa park is defined as a parcel of land that has come to the City through the parkland dedication process, or through other means of acquisition (i.e. purchase, disposal), to be used by the public for active and passive recreation.
Parks

Ottawa’s City Parks bring many benefits to its communities, including:

• Meeting places
• Play
• Fitness and health
• Relaxation
• Large spaces to roam
• Nature
• Special events
Ottawa’s City Parks come in a variety of shapes and sizes, and may be home to:

- Tennis Courts
- Trees
- Water
- Tennis Courts
- Sports
- Pathways
- Public Art
- Green
- Community Centres
- Dog Park
- Senior
- Children
- Slides
- Benches
- Skating
- Swings
- Respite

And much, more.
1. The Evolution of Public Parks
The Evolution of Public Parks

- Parks haven’t always existed as public spaces in communities. This section of the primer will provide a brief overview of the evolution of public parks.

- We begin with Persian gardens or “Paradise Gardens” that may have originated as early as 4000 BC, and were the root of the western garden ideal.

- Paradise - old Farsi (Iranian) word for exceptional gardens - paridiz.

- Typical cross plan of the Persian paradise garden - the four rivers of paradise.

- Christians adopted the word to describe the Garden of Eden or paradise on earth.

- The gardens provided protection from human hostilities and environmental conditions, and provided a place of repose, reflection and gathering, creating a paradise on earth.
Persian Paradise gardens and influences

GROUND-PLAN OF THE PALACE OF BALKUWARA, SAMARIA

Tomb of Nebamun- Fresco from Thebes 18th 1400-1350.B.C.
• Gardens were designed as extensions of dwellings in Greece, Persia and Asia.

• The great estate gardens of Rome took idea of paradise to heights.

• They transformed private villa gardens into the first city parks, extending along the Tiber river.

• European park model based on Roman Empire’s formal gardens and parks.

• Park concept did not expand further into the Roman empire (Europe) because of the political situations of war and invasion.
The Middle Ages

• European towns were in a constant state of destruction and rebuilding in tumultuous war-torn centuries of the middle ages.

• Did not allow for much development of towns and villages outside of the fortified walls and patchwork of small kingdoms.
What flourished were the private royal courtyard gardens. While not elaborate or extensive, they introduced the concept of beautiful outdoor spaces to emerging European cultures. They were rich with raised beds, fountains and pergolas that offered protection.

The protected courtyards of isolated monasteries offered solitude among the medicinal, herbal and produce gardens.

Forbidding external environment versus facilitating internal environment.
Within fortified, protective, castle and town walls, market squares provided the first meeting and gathering places. **Brugge, Flanders**
The Renaissance

• Reduction in hostile invasions and war, allowed for the evolution place.

• By 15th century, gardens and meeting places were being constructed in towns and cities throughout Europe,

• The Netherlands was the richest country in Europe in terms of gardens and open space for public use.
In France, the premiere public park was the Tuileries in Paris, designed and constructed for Catherine de Medici. It soon after became one of the first parks opened to the public in the late 1600’s.
• Factories, mills and economic boom degraded cities by creating smog filled places, polluted rivers and streams. Environmental conditions were very poor and only escape was to the countryside.

• Public parks were created as idealized pockets of countryside in the middle of towns and cities.
Charles I opened Hyde Park to the public in 1637.
• Formal conveyance of land as public parks in England began with Hyde Park in London which opened in 1637.

• It was remodeled as a naturalistic landscape in 1728 and set a design standard for redesign of other parks such as Green Park (1826), St. James Park (1827) and Regent Park in 1835.
Central Park, New York City - Opened 1865
• Central Park was the first landscaped public park in the United States and 19th century New York's most massive public works project.

• Advocates of creating the park, urged that New York needed a comparable facility to London and Paris to establish international reputation a 19th Century belief that recognized beautiful parks and open spaces as essential to a City “arriving “ as an international and cosmopolitan centre.

• In 1857, the Central Park Commission competition committee selected Fredrick Law Olmstead and Calvert Vaux “Greenwald Plan”.
Public Parks In Canada

• In the 1700’s, England and France continued to expand their reach across Canada.

• Small communities began to develop around the forts, trading posts and ports.

• Cemeteries and parade squares were the forerunners of public parks and open spaces in Canada.

• As Canada’s towns and cities prospered, they began to develop a sense of place.

• The idea and necessity for Canadian public parks, as seen in Europe, was initiated in the late 18th and 19th century.
• The Halifax Commons 235 acres of land were granted for the use of the inhabitants of the Town of Halifax by King George III in 1763.

• Less than 1/3 of the original land granted as commons remains.

• Halifax Public -1867- a Victorian garden, is developed within the original Commons parcel.
• Mont Royal Park in Montreal was also designed by Frederick Law Olmstead and one of the grandest constructed in Canada.

• Mount Royal Park was officially opened on Queen Victoria’s birthday, Wednesday, May 24, 1876.
• Stanley Park is a 404.9 hectares (1001 acres) urban park bordering downtown Vancouver, BC.
• It was opened in 1888 by David Oppenheimer in the name of Lord Stanley of Preston, The Governor General of Canada. More than 10% larger than Central Park in New York.
The Garden City Movement

• Response to the need for improvement in the quality of urban life - marred by overcrowding, congestion and uncontrolled growth since Industrial Revolution.

• Development of public parks pockets of countryside in the middle of towns and cities gave rise to the Garden City Movement.

• Combine the amenities of urban life with the ready access to nature typical of rural environments.

• In North America the best known of these sub-urban communities is Riverside in Chicago, also designed by Olmstead.
20th Century Urban Design and City Parks

• Town Planners and Landscape Architects were recognized as one profession.

• In 1950’s Landscape Architecture programs were instituted in universities throughout the United States and Canada.

• In the 1960’s Landscape Architects established their own professional designation - moved away from partnership with town planners.

• Focus became one of overall urban design and green space master planning, design of communities including natural areas and public places.
Parks in the City of Ottawa

- The 20th Century many Canadian cities developed urban design master plans such as the Mawson Plan for Calgary.

- In the 1950’s, the National Capital Commission provided City of Ottawa with Greber Plan by French Planner Jacques Greber.

- Plan to create a beautiful and distinctive setting for the national capital.

- Unique characteristic of Ottawa includes urban, suburban and rural communities as well as the federal lands.

- Greenbelt established to protect the rural area bordering the Capital from the haphazard urban sprawl typical of so many other cities.
• Most of the 14,950 hectares, is owned and managed by the National Capital Commission

• Balance by other federal departments and private interests.

• On the nation's Capital doorstep Greenbelt is a rural environment rich in natural and historic resources.

• City of Ottawa has a unique variety of parks from old municipal parks to new parks dedicated though development process.
Map of City of Ottawa Parks

City Owned Parkland
(Active and Passive)
City of Ottawa Parks

- E-Map link to park information found here.
- [http://apps104.ottawa.ca/emap/](http://apps104.ottawa.ca/emap/)
2. Legislation, Policies and By-laws that Influence Park Planning.
The Legislative Background of Park Planning

Planning Hierarchy

- Planning Act
- Provincial Policy Statement
  - Transportation MP
  - Infrastructure MP
  - Greenspace MP
- Official Plan
  - Community Design Plan
  - Zoning By-law
- Development Review/Approval
- Design Guidelines
Planning Act

The province establishes the ground rules for land use planning to be followed by municipalities in Ontario.

The *Planning Act* is the means by which municipalities derive their powers and some of their processes.

s. 42  Conveyance of land for park purposes
- Amount of land required:
  - Commercial or industrial 2%
  - All other purposes 5%
  - Residential alternative of 1 hectare/300 dwelling units
- Land is to be used for **park or other recreational purposes**, but can be sold at any time
s. 42 - Municipality may require the **payment of money** to the value of the land otherwise required to be conveyed under this section in lieu of the conveyance
- Establishment of Cash-in-lieu fund

s. 55.1 Parkland
- Requirement for land or payment of cash-in-lieu may be established as a **condition** of approval of an application for subdivision approval
Provincial Policy Statement

Sets the policy foundation for regulating the development and use of land in Ontario.

All decisions affecting land-use planning must "be consistent with" the Provincial Policy Statement.

1.0 Building Strong Communities
   1.5 Public Spaces, Parks and Open Space
   1.6 Infrastructure and Public Service Facilities
2.0 Wise Use and Management of Resources

3.0 Protecting Public Health and Safety

**Recreation:** means leisure time activity undertaken in built or natural settings for purposes of physical activity, health benefits, sport participation and skill development, personal enjoyment, positive social interaction and the achievement of human potential.
Official Plan

An Official Plan (OP) describes a city’s policies on how the city will manage growth and how land in the city should be used.

An Official Plan contains policies for those matters identified in the Provincial Policy Statement and those matters addressed by applications under the Ontario Planning Act.
2.4 Maintaining Environmental Integrity

2.4.5 Greenspaces – speaks to the implementation of the Greenspace Master Plan

2.5.4 A Strategy for Parks and Leisure Areas

1. Parks and leisure areas will be linked to the Greenspace Network, identified in the Greenspace Master Plan

2. Council will pursue targets for parks and leisure areas in the urban area in keeping with the objectives of the Greenspace Master Plan
Greenspace Master Plan – Strategies for Ottawa’s Urban Greenspaces

Council has adopted this plan to express its objectives for urban greenspace:

• An adequate supply of greenspace;
• Readily accessible to residents;
• A connected network of high-quality spaces;
• Planned and maintained on a sustainable basis.
Greenspace Master Plan, cont.

The backbone of this Master Plan is the...

**Urban Greenspace Network**

This is a continuum of natural lands and open space and leisure lands that in time could connect every neighbourhood in Ottawa to a larger network that connects to the Greenbelt and spans the City.
Greenspace Master Plan, cont.

This Master Plan includes strategies to achieve Council’s greenspace objectives:

• A commitment to extend the multi-use, city-wide pathway system;
• The preparation of plans needed to fill gaps in the network; and
• The development of Design Guidelines for green streets and parks.
Community Design Plans (CDPs)

• Council-approved guide to the long-term growth and development of a particular area.

• They are often implemented through zoning amendments or through the adoption of Secondary Plans.

• The **Fernbank CDP** includes a section of policies entitled “4.2.7 Greenspace Network.”
Community Design Plans, cont.

This section includes direction concerning:

• Urban Natural Features
• Natural Environment Areas
• Open Space
• Village Green
• Stormwater Management
• Pathway System; and...
• Parks, including:

An extensive system of public parks has been planned for within the Fernbank Community, ranging from passive parks to active parks and amenities such as recreation facilities and sportsfields to passive recreational activities such as multi-use pathways and cycling facilities.
Fernbank CDP
Land Use Plan
Fernbank CDP
Greenspace Plan
Secondary Plans

Secondary Plans form a part of the Official Plan, and provide more detailed, site-specific policies and land use guidance.

The **North Gower** Secondary Plan includes Parks and Open Space policies, including the following:

1. *Schedule B - Parks and Open Space Plan*, shows the conceptual location of new parks, and will serve as a guide during the development approvals and park planning process. Other park locations may be considered, but will conform to the intent of the Parks and Open Space Plan.
NORTH GOWER
SECONDARY PLAN / PLAN SECONDAIRE

Parks and Open Space
Parcs et espaces ouverts

- Existing Park / Park existant
- Possible Future Park / Parc futur eventuel
- Existing Uses With Greenspace
- Existing Vegetation / Vegetation existante
- Stevens Creek Floodplain / Plaine inondable
- Stevens Creek / Ruisseau Stevens
- Municipal Drain / Drain municipal
- Village Boundary / Limite du village

Scale 1 : 20,000
Design Guidelines

Design and Planning Guidelines translate the broad framework of the OP into detailed principles for development. These guidelines play an integral role in achieving high quality design throughout the City, including parks.

Completed Guidelines:

[Images of urban design guidelines]

- Urban Design Guidelines for Greenfield Neighbourhoods
- Road Corridor Planning & Design Guidelines: Urban and Village Collectors, Rural Arterials and collectors
Zoning By-law

A Zoning By-law is a set of regulations that controls development in a specific geographic area. Enabled by the Planning Act (s.34), zoning by-laws assist in carrying out the planning objectives of Council, expressed through the Official Plan.

Part 8 of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-law regulates Open Space and Leisure Zones, and includes provisions as follows:
Zoning By-law, cont.

O1 – Parks and Open Space Zone
(Sections 179-180)

Purpose of the Zone

(1) permit parks, open space and related and compatible uses to locate in areas designated as General Urban Area, General Rural Area, Major Open Space, Mixed Use Centre, Village, Greenbelt Rural and Central Area as well as in Major Recreational Pathway areas and along River Corridors as identified in the Official Plan, and

(2) ensure that the range of permitted uses and applicable regulations is in keeping with the low scale, low intensity open space nature of these lands.
Zoning By-law, cont.

O1 – Parks and Open Space Zone (Sections 179-180)

Permitted Uses:
community garden;
environmental preserve and education area; and
park.

Parks are also permitted in a variety of other zones, including all residential, institutional, mainstreet, and industrial zones.
Development Applications

The policies, regulations and rules that we discussed so far are implemented through the review and approval of development applications.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Application</th>
<th>Approval Authority</th>
<th>Parkland Dedication</th>
<th>Park Planning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Official Plan Amendment</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zoning By-law Amendment</td>
<td>City Council</td>
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<td>Minor Variance</td>
<td>Committee of Adjustment</td>
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<td>Consent to Sever</td>
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<td>Plan of Subdivision</td>
<td>Staff / Planning Committee</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Site Plan Approval</td>
<td>Staff / Planning Committee</td>
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<td>Maybe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building Permit</td>
<td>Chief Building Official</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Development Applications, cont.

Cash-in-lieu of Parkland is routinely collected on Severances and Site Plans, as they often involve small sites where parkland dedication would be impractical.

Bruce will discuss the Parkland Dedication By-law and Cash-in-lieu of Parkland By-law.

For Subdivisions, the planners consider the overall needs of the area, existing nearby parks, relevant CDP policies, the natural topography, etc when determining where parks go.
Where does Parkland Come From?

- Planning Act
- Provincial Policy Statement
- Official Plan
- Design Guidelines
- Community Design Plan
- Zoning By-law
- Development Review/Approval
- Acquisition
- Dedication
Parkland Dedication
By-law
PLANNING ACT

• Requires a By-law

• Requires policies in OP

• Establishes maximum & alternate dedication rates

• Provides for cash instead of land

• Dictates how funds are managed
BY-LAW PROVISIONS

- 2% for Ind’/Com’ uses
- 5% for Res and other uses
- Alternative for higher density
- 10% cap for apartments
- Flat rate for rural severances
- Calculation for Mixed-use
- Defines acceptable land
CASH-IN-LIEU OF LAND

• Cash where land is not required

• Equivalent to the value of land to be dedicated

• Cash not to exceed 10% cap

• Value @ day before approval

• Cash for land, facilities or upgrades
CASH ACCOUNTING

- 23 Ward and 1 Citywide
- 60% to Ward use
- 40% to Citywide use
- Regular reporting
- Appealed sums not reported
- Accessed through budget and departmental work plans
EXEMPTIONS

- Uses identified in the By-law
- Some changes of use
- Where prior agreements exist
- Replacement of existing uses that are not expanding
- Where development approval is not required
3. PARKS IN THE CITY OF OTTAWA
Defining City of Ottawa Parks

• A City of Ottawa park is defined as a parcel of land that has come to the City through the park land dedication process, or through other means of acquisition, to be used by the public for active and passive recreation.

• Majority of parks come to the City through the development process.

• Dedication is traditionally honoured in perpetuity.

• The City of Ottawa is responsible for planning, managing and operating over 1,000 parks.
• Parks evolve over time through the redesign of programmed spaces or life-cycle needs.

• City parks contribute to the overall green infrastructure and network of open spaces throughout the City.
What is not a City of Ottawa Park

Ottawa includes many other types of open space, that are beyond the scope of a City Park such as:

- Federal Lands i.e. NCC, Parks Canada, Agriculture Canada, DND
- Open space - i.e.. R.O.W., easements,
- Urban Natural Features
- Natural areas/ wetlands
- Pathways
Park Types

Parks are defined as **Active** or **Passive**.

- This categorization determines the type of activity in the park and the funding allocated to the park for design and construction.

- **Active Parks** are defined as parks with any type of amenity that provides active play or recreation. Play structures, Boule/Bocce, play fields, puddle rinks, etc. are some examples.

- **Passive Parks** are defined as parks that provide opportunity for passive activity such as reading, bird watching, or relaxing in the park. Benches and stone-dust pathways are elements found in passive parks.
As stewards of park planning and development we oversee the design and construction of City parks including:

• Urban parks within the greenbelt.
• Urban style parks in suburban areas.
• Suburban parks.
• “Rural Village” parks.
• Rural estate parks.
Hierarchy of Parks
Hierarchy of Parks

**District Parks:**
- Purchased by City with CIL and capital funds.
- Minimum of 8 hectares- 20 acres.
- Home to recreation facilities such as sports facilities arenas, swimming pools, community centres and libraries.
- Found in urban, suburban, and rural areas.
- Often identified through a Community Design Plan process.
- Designed to serve region.
Community Parks:

- Acquired through parkland dedication process.
- Central to the community and within 800m walking distance.
- Found in urban, suburban, and rural developments.
- Designed to accommodate needs of several neighbourhoods.
- Community-scale recreational facilities, such as water play features, playgrounds, sports fields, community halls, field houses and natural features.
Neighbourhood Parks:
- Acquired through parkland dedication process
- Minimum of 0.8 hectares – 2 acres.
- Central to the neighbourhood and within 400m walking distance.
- May include play structures, sportsfields, water play features and natural features.
Parkettes:

- Acquired through parkland dedication process
- Minimum of 0.4 hectares – 1 acre.
- Urban Areas and suburban areas.
- Found in urban areas, and urban-style suburban developments
- Facilities may include play structures, benches, puddle rinks.
- Often the primary green space for urban residents in denser neighbourhoods.
RECREATION PLANNING AND FACILITY DEVELOPMENT
The Mission:

• Ensuring that communities, residents and visitors have the places, programs, events and services that allow them to experience all the benefits that Parks, Recreation and Culture has to offer.
The Operating Principles related to the built environment:

- Consultation
- Accountability
- Collaboration
- Accessibility
Parks Recreation & Cultural Services delivery overview

Four Branches
- Community Programs Branch
- Complexes, Fitness and Aquatic Venues Branch
- Cultural and Heritage Services Branch

The fourth is Home to the Recreation and Parks Planners: Customer Relations, Business Integration and Funding Branch at Constellation Crescent in Ottawa West dealing with business issues for recreation facilities and existing parks.
• The Branch is made up of 2 units & 4 divisions—one is the
Recreation Planning and Facility Development Division.
• Here the Recreation Planners manage the delivery of new and renovated recreation facilities –
• entire buildings or elements of existing buildings are added or renovated
• existing parks are enhanced and renewed with the support of the Infrastructure Services: Design & Construction: Buildings and Landscape Architecture.
RPFD Facility Renovation: Hintonburg Lower-level Community Rooms
RPFD Recreation Facility Expansion at Hunt Club Community Center:
RPFD New Facility:
Huron Daycare Center
Recreation Planning and Facility Development Process

- This process varies with funding types
- Historic Planning documents provide necessary background
- Park enhancement and renewal follow a similar process to new construction.
- During rigorous consultation Communities are advised of project intentions and approve the design.
Recreation Planning and Facility Development Process

- The park project is then fully executed by the **Landscape Architectural Unit (LAU)**
- During tendering & construction by LAU, The recreation planner continues to liaise with the community, ensuring continuity
- To provide direction, the Parks Recreation and Culture Department has been undertaking a practical strategy defining the needs of future residents from a recreational programming perspective- with access to recreation programs by all groups.

This will be followed by an overall **Recreation Master Plan**.

- For current physical planning, an interim document used for new park and park renewal is the Sports field Strategy.
- This is to be complimented by a facility development plan.
- The planning cycle continues optimally on a 5 year frequency.
Sports Field Strategy

• The current inventory of fields is **455 sports fields (soccer & football)** and **298 ball diamonds**

• Multi use is designed into the fields where possible- For example, two ultimate frisbee games can be played on one large soccer field. Frequently fields will have combination goal posts so they can be used by two different sports, particularly if they have different seasons eg. soccer and football
198 Diamonds:
- 32 T-Ball; 37 Baseball; 229 Softball

455 Sports Fields:
- 13 Multiuse (soccer/football/rugby); 11 Ultimate
- 31 Football; 1 Rugby; 1 Field Hockey 366 Soccer
  - 167 Mini (47 identified as overlaying a full field, usually two per field) and 178 Full
- 26 general use
Sports Fields and Ball Diamonds Distribution
• Soccer has the greatest number of participants, making it the prime user of Ottawa sports fields, closely followed by softball and baseball groups.

• The total of number of hours booked annually is as follows:
  • ball diamonds: 55,426 hours
  • sports fields: 120,432 hours.
Parkette level: Stirling Carruthers Park in Hintonburg
Neighbourhood level : Bordeleau in lowertown
Community level: Dovercourt in Westboro
City wide level in Sandy Hill Community – Sandy Hill Park site
This redevelopment won 5 awards from the City of Ottawa and across North America.
RPFD Prime Directive: Access for all residents

Questions?
Key Messages

• The Planning Process is established by the province.

• A hierarchy of Planning exists in Ontario.

• In Park Planning and Development, Development Charges (DCs) fund all new parks - with the exception of District Parks.

• Parks Planning requires dedication of parkland and the maximum amount of parkland will ensure sufficient parks for future generations.
• People are passionate about parks and open space.

• Parks are special places that evoke feelings of happiness, memories of childhood, special events, nature, adventure, health, sports.

• Parks are critical to the environmental health, and aesthetic quality and of cities and physical and emotional health of its residents.
How to get involved

• Volunteer as a member of an advisory committee. i.e. Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Ottawa Forestry and Greenspace Advisory Committee.

• Join a Community Association.

• Adopt a Park.
  • [http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/environment/community/adopt_en.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/environment/community/adopt_en.html)

• Improve parks you love apply for Community Partnership Grants - Major or minor Park grants.
  • [http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/funding/capital_major/index_en.html](http://www.ottawa.ca/residents/funding/capital_major/index_en.html)

• Attend a public consultation where park issues or plans are presented.