

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Members of Council

FROM: Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services

PREPARED BY: Tom Villella, Senior Projects Coordinator

DATE: January 22, 2013

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF PARKLAND
DEDICATION BY-LAW, POLICIES AND PRACTICES

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the information memo entitled "UPDATE ON THE REVIEW OF PARKLAND DEDICATION BY-LAW, POLICIES AND PRACTICES", including the consultant's Final Draft Study Report, Draft Official Plan policies, Draft By-law, Draft Staff Procedure Manual, and Presentation dated January 22, 2013, be received and made available for public comment, and;

THAT the Draft Official Plan policies be considered at the statutory public meeting respecting the New Official Plan, and;

THAT Staff report back to Development Services Committee on the recommendations and public comments received prior to adoption of the New Official Plan.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this Memorandum is to provide Development Services Committee with information respecting the progress of the Review of Parkland Dedication By-law, Policies and Practices.

BACKGROUND:**A review of Parkland Dedication has been undertaken in the Context of the Official Plan Review**

Markham is quickly transitioning from a suburban community to an urban centre, and the current parkland dedication policies are being reviewed relative to the evolving higher density built form.

In November 2011, Markham retained The Planning Partnership to review the existing Parkland Dedication By-law, as well as the City's policies and practices related to parkland dedication, and to prepare new policies and a supporting by-law to ensure that the growing population of Markham continues to be well served by municipal parkland. A review of the existing parks hierarchy, as espoused in the Markham Official Plan, was also undertaken, with a view to developing a new hierarchy more reflective of

Markham's changing urban character. It is intended that the results of the review will be incorporated into the New Official Plan and Parkland Dedication By-law.

Consultation has taken place throughout 2012

Throughout 2012, Staff and the City's consultant met with various stakeholder groups, including individual interviews with Members of Council, meetings with Markham's Advisory Committees, BILD, and key staff members involved in the parkland dedication process. Presentations were previously provided to DSC in November 2011, March 2012 and June 2012 to keep Members of Council informed of the progress of the project. A Draft Interim Report was released in May 2012, and at that time a webpage was created on the City Website in order to allow the general public to review and comment on the project.

Consultant has conducted in-depth research and comparative analysis

In addition to the consultation exercise, the consultant has conducted in-depth research into the matter of parkland dedication in general, and in particular the importance of investment in an attractive public realm, innovative policy approaches, additions to the existing Parks Hierarchy in the Official Plan, strata parks, current legislative framework, and Markham's current and past practices.

Also, as part of the research component of the project, the consultant performed a detailed comparative analysis respecting parkland dedication in other jurisdictions, including other provinces, and other municipalities within the GTA. They then performed testing of various approaches in order to determine the impact (financial and otherwise) on both the development industry and the municipality.

Summary and Recommendations

The consultant has provided a series of recommendations based on the research conducted and the stakeholder consultation undertaken. These are outlined in greater detail in the Final Draft Report and in the related presentation dated January 22, 2013 (Final Draft Report and Presentation attached). Also attached are a draft Parkland Dedication By-law and Official Plan policies, originating with the consultant but refined by Staff based on internal discussions with key Staff involved in the process as well as the consultant. Staff will report to DSC at a future date with respect to our analysis of the consultant's suggested recommendations for improvement/alteration to current Markham practices. Staff will not report back until further consultation has taken place with BILD and other interested community stakeholders. The Final Draft Report will also be made available on the Parkland Dedication webpage for viewing by the general public. The draft Official Plan policies are available for public review and comment and will form part of the discussion on the New Official Plan at a statutory public meeting in the first quarter of 2013.

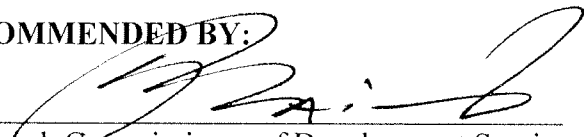
BILD Comments on Draft Interim Report No. 1

The Building Industry and Land Development Association submitted a letter to Development Services Committee on June 25, 2012 outlining its issues and concerns with respect to current Parkland Dedication practices in the City of Markham, and its concerns with the Draft Interim Report No. 1 which was released in May 2012. The consultant has discussed many of BILDs concerns in the Final Draft Report, and staff is committed to meeting further with BILD representatives to continue discussions prior to a final recommendation report being brought forward to DSC in the next few months.

Documents to be provided for DSC and public review at this time

The following documents are being provided to DSC members as an attachment to this memorandum. These documents are also being provided to key external stakeholders (i.e. BILD) and the general public, and will be available on the City Website for review.

- 1) Final Draft Study Report – City of Markham Review of Parkland Dedication By-law, Policies and Practices
- 2) Draft Official Plan policies
- 3) Draft Parkland Dedication By-law
- 4) Draft Staff Procedure Manual
- 5) Copy of Presentation to DSC for January 22, 2012

RECOMMENDED BY:

Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) Final Draft Study Report – City of Markham Review of Parkland Dedication By-law, Policies and Practices
- 2) Draft Official Plan policies
- 3) Draft Parkland Dedication By-law
- 4) Draft Staff Procedure Manual
- 5) Copy of Presentation to DSC for January 22, 2012