



MUNICIPALITY OF THAMES CENTRE

REPORT NO. PDS-021-24

TO: Mayor and Members of Council
FROM: Director of Planning & Development Services
MEETING DATE: April 15, 2024
SUBJECT: Proposed Parkland Dedication By-law

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Report No. PDS-021-24 be received for information.

AND THAT the attached draft parkland dedication by-law be **APPROVED** in principle and that staff be directed to finalize the by-law for Council's consideration at a future meeting subject to the following:

THAT the Director of Planning and Development Services be **APPOINTED** as administrator of the by-law; and

AND THAT Fees and Charges By-law No. 119-2023 be **AMENDED** at a future meeting of Council to require 2% payment-in-lieu of parkland dedication by consent for commercial or industrial purposes based on an appraisal and that Council **APPROVE** Option 2 as outlined in this report with respect to payment-in-lieu (PIL) of parkland dedication by consent (severance) for residential purposes.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this report is to consider a parkland dedication by-law for the Municipality to reflect changes to the Planning Act including allowing the dedication of parkland and payment-in-lieu through the development and redevelopment of land from the approval of a site plan or zoning by-law amendment application.

BACKGROUND:

The Municipality retained Watson & Associates ("Watson") to undertake a review and analysis of Thames Centre's current policies regarding parkland dedication and payment-in-lieu of parkland. A memorandum was prepared by Watson and is appended to this report, outlining applicable legislation, our current policies, analysis of alternative policies and next steps for consideration. Although a draft by-law is attached to the memorandum, a more recent version of the draft by-law is attached to this report as a separate item based on recommended revisions following the virtual consultation session held on February 29/24.



COMMENT:

Comments raised during the consultation process were limited to the written submissions attached to this report. Those comments have been considered and upon further review have resulted in the following adjustments to the proposed by-law:

- Section 4 – fixed typo
- Section 9a – updated index to be StatsCan New Housing Price Index
- Section 15 – new section for redevelopment regarding incremental floor space

Although the Thames Valley District School Board (TVDSB) and the London District Catholic School Board (LDCSB) have requested eliminating the requirement for a shared use agreement with the Municipality as outlined in their attached joint letter, the proposed by-law has not been revised accordingly considering the requirement in staff's opinion is appropriate and in the public interest.

Under Section 16 of the draft by-law, it should be revised to appoint the Director of Planning and Development Services in consultation with the Director of Financial Services / Treasurer to assist with the administration of the by-law.

The Municipality currently utilizes a per lot rate for residential and commercial/industrial payments-in-lieu of parkland dedication for consents (severances). The rates imposed are \$4,000 per lot for residential development and \$1,600 per lot for commercial and industrial development. Watson has reviewed these rates and estimated the equivalent value that would be received on a typical lot in the Municipality. Simply put, what is the assumed value of the land at the 5% dedication rate using the per lot fees of \$4,000 for residential and the 2% dedication rate per lot fees of \$1,600 for commercial/industrial.

Based on the valuation calculations outlined on Table 3-1 on page 11 of the attached Watson memorandum, the current residential charge of \$4,000 reflects an assumed value per lot of \$80,000 whereas a more appropriate charge of \$10,000 is more indicative of the assumed value per lot of \$209,000 based on current market rates. Considering the current rate of \$4,000 is significantly lower than the amount that would be collected using the 5% rate, the following options are provided for Council's consideration:

OPTION	RATE
1	\$10,000 per lot consistent with the Watson analysis
2	phased in approach - \$6,000 (2024); \$8,000 (2025) and \$10,000 (2026)
3	No change - \$4,000 rate would continue to apply

With respect to the commercial and industrial rates per lot, Watson advises that it is unclear as to a typical lot size as properties vary depending on the nature of the business. As a result, it would be recommended that the Municipality require an appraisal be undertaken and the 2% dedication rate be applied.

CONSULTATION:

School Boards having jurisdiction in Thames Centre including:

Thames Valley District School Board
London District Catholic School Board
Conseil Scolaire Viamonde
Conseil Scolaire Catholique Providence

Development Community
Website and social media posting
Senior Management Team

A virtual consultation session was held on February 29/24

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposed by-law will allow the Municipality to receive parkland dedication and payment-in-lieu based on recent changes to the Planning Act via Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, where development results from the approval of a site plan or zoning by-law amendment application based on an appraisal. Prior to Bill 23, the Municipality could only receive parkland dedication and payment-in-lieu through the subdivision of land including consents (severances).

STRATEGIC PLAN LINK

Pillar: *Smart Planning*

Goal: *Make smart planning decisions to grow the community, while maintaining a "hometown feel"*

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Watson Memorandum
2. Draft Parkland By-law
3. Joint Letter from the Thames Valley District School Board and the London District Catholic School Board
4. Letter from Sifton Properties Limited

Prepared by: M. Bancroft, Director of Planning and Developments Services

Reviewed by: D. Barrick, Chief Administrative Officer