

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE – FEBRUARY 13, 2012

SKATEBOARD PARK LOCATIONS FOR WORTH PARK, THORNHILL – WARD 5 AND NAPA VALLEY PARK, WOODBRIDGE – WARD 2

Recommendation

The Commissioner of Community Services, in consultation with the Commissioner of Finance recommends:

1. That this report be received for information.

Contribution to Sustainability

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council in the Green Directions Vaughan, Community Sustainability Environmental Master Park Plan:

Goal 2, Objective 2.2: To develop Vaughan as a City with maximum green space and an urban form that supports our expected population growth.

Economic Impact

The Napa Valley skate park requested by the deputant Mr. Korben Lirette was originally submitted for 2011, to be funded through taxation. Through the project prioritization process, and due to constrained taxation funding and competing priorities, the project has been deferred to the 2014 and beyond Capital Project listing. A taxation funded capital project for a skateboard park in the Concord Thornhill Regional Park (in combination with Basketball Courts) is deferred to the 2014 and beyond Capital Project listing. A capital project for a skate park in Worth Park has not been submitted to date.

The demand for taxation funding is significant every year, as this funding source is constrained by its impact on the tax rate. The significant projects expected to be approved for 2012 taxation funding are the Civic Centre Resource Library (\$1.3M), Concord Regional Park Artificial Turf Soccer Field (\$1M), Fire Station 7-3 relocate (\$1.1M), various Information Technology replacements (\$1M) etc. Additional taxation to fund skateboard parks in 2012 would impact 2.95% tax increase proposed in the 2012 Operating Budget.

Communications Plan

N/A

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to respond to resolutions of the Finance and Administration Committee regarding the provision of skateboard parks.

Background - Analysis and Options

The Finance and Administration Committee of January 16, 2012 passed the following resolution:

1. That the deputation of Mr. Korben Lirette with respect to a proposed skateboard park be received; and,
2. That staff review the feasibility of funding the proposed skateboard park in 2012 and report back at the next opportunity.

In addition, the Finance and Administration Committee of January 28, 2011 passed the following recommendation as a result of a deputation:

1. That staff report on funding options, including public/private partnership options, to try and get a skateboard park in Thornhill.

The “Active Together” Master Plan notes that skateboarding, while once considered a short term trend, has demonstrated sustained longevity and appears to have become a mainstream pursuit among children, youth, and to a lesser extent, young adults. Additionally, the master plan states that skateboard parks have become a popular facility in communities and have largely generated positive responses if designed and located appropriately. Most large communities are moving toward a skate park provision strategy that involves a small number of larger City-serving facilities (eg. 20,000 sq. ft. or greater) combined with a series of smaller community / neighbourhood level parks (eg. 12,000 – 15,000 sq. ft.). The “Active Together” Master Plan contains the following action plans:

- a) *The City identify funding opportunities to expand its supply of larger skateboard park facilities from 1 at present to 5 or more by build-out, with a focus on developing most new facilities within the next five to ten years. Existing demand justifies the provision of smaller skateboard parks in Thornhill, Maple, Woodbridge, Woodbridge East, and Carville, while the Long Term Residential Growth Area would be a good future location for a larger skate park;*
- b) *The introduction of smaller-scale skate zones into neighbourhood-level parks is encouraged to facilitate the casual use of the park by those who are seeking basic skateboarding elements;*
- c) *Local youth and skateboarding/biking representatives should be consulted in the design of any new skateboard/bike parks developed by the City;*
- d) *It would be preferable for new skateboard parks to be constructed in the more urbanized areas of Vaughan, assuming appropriate space can be secured within park sites. As recommended in the “Active Together” Master Plan, the City may also consider decommissioning surplus park facilities (ball diamonds, tennis courts, basketball courts, etc...) in favour of replacing them with skateboard parks.*

Since approval of the “Active Together” Master Plan, Parks Development has implemented five (5) neighbourhood level skateboard zones in the City of Vaughan in the following locations:

- Ward 4:
 - Freedom Trail Park
 - Jack Pine Park
 - Twelve Oaks Park
 - Carrville Mill Park
- Ward 3:
 - Hillside Park

In addition to these built neighbourhood level skateboard zones, in the Parks Development work plan, there is another skateboard zone to be constructed in Village Green Park (Ward 3 – approved 2010), which is anticipated to be completed in 2013. Also, the development of two skateboard zones in existing neighbourhood parks have been previously proposed for Ward 2 at Napa Valley Park and Sonoma Heights Community Park and both are currently listed on the “2014 and beyond Capital Project Listing” due to funding constraints.

The current strategy for the implementation of skateboard facilities in parks is to include these facilities in park designs when building new parks and using Development Funds. In areas such as Woodbridge and Thornhill that have limited opportunities for new park construction projects since these areas are close to build out. The strategy in place for dealing with these areas within the City is retrofitting of the park when the current facility has reached its life cycle, and is no longer required because of less demands or trends have changed in the community. An existing facility can be replaced where there are appropriate spatial and servicing requirements that can accommodate a skateboard facility. This retrofit and repurposing of existing park facilities with a skateboard facility is funded from tax dollars.

Staff have reviewed the feasibility of a skateboard facility at Napa Valley Park. Currently, there are no skateboard parks located south of Rutherford Road and west of Weston Road in the City of Vaughan and the areas have been identified as being deficient of skateboard park facilities.

Parks Development staff have reviewed Napa Valley Park and have found that there is spatial capacity to allow for the addition of a neighbourhood level skateboard zone (3,230.sq. ft to 6,460 sq. ft.) within the park. The proposed location for this skateboard zone is a relatively flat grassed area; it is highly visible, and separated from other park facilities. This proposed location complies with CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles. The cost associated with the design and construction of a neighbourhood level skateboard zone in Napa Valley Park is estimated to be \$135,000.

However, as mentioned above, Sonoma Heights Community Park has been identified as another potential location. Staff is recommending that this is the preferred location for a skateboard facility. It is located within the deficient area, and as it is a district park has multiple potential locations for a skate zone that are highly visible, with easy access including parking and walkway connections in accordance with the "Active Together" Master Plan. In addition this location is centrally located for both Ward 2 and residents of Kleinburg in Ward 1. The cost associated with the design and construction of a skateboard zone in Sonoma Heights Community Park is estimated to be \$148,500.

In addition, staff has reviewed the feasibility of constructing a skateboard facility at Worth Park (Ward 5) and have found that this location is not suitable to accommodate a neighbourhood level skateboard zone. The only area that is spatially large enough to accommodate a skateboard zone (2,690 - 3,230 sq. ft.) it is not highly visible. This area has no existing site servicing and had been noted to have potentially poor local drainage.

Since there are no skateboard facility or zones located in Thornhill, Ward 5 and no new parks planned for the immediate future, staff would recommended the development of a skateboard facilities in the Concord Thornhill Regional Park in Ward 5, which is located immediately north of the Worth Park site. The City has been working on securing funding through fundraising and public private sponsorship for several years for this location with little success. This project is currently under the capital funding line for 2012 and was originally requested in 2006 for funding approval. The Concord Thornhill Regional Park site is deemed to be a suitable location for a skateboard park area that would satisfy the conditions noted above and address the deficiency identified in this area for a skateboard facility. This Regional Park is connected to the neighbourhood with pedestrian access and also has parking. Once the final footprint is finalized for the proposed artificial turf facility at Concord Thornhill Regional Park, the skateboard project and budget for this location will be revisited and brought forward for discussions during the 2013 budget deliberations.

In addition, staff have reviewed the feasibility of introducing a neighbourhood level skateboard zone in the Glen Shields Park site in Ward 5, which is located within the southern portion of Thornhill. As per the recommendation noted in the "Active Together" Master Plan, the existing outdoor ice rink at Glen Shields Activity Centre and wading pool were recommended for decommissioning and it was suggested that a possible replacement would be a skate zone. The cost associated with the design and construction of a neighbourhood level skate zone in the Glen Shields Park site is estimated to be \$130,000.00. The construction of the skate zone facility consolidated with the proposed demolition and re-development of the Glen Shields Park – Playground Replacement and Safety Surfacing works would allow for additional costs saving.

The demolition was approved in 2011, the playground replacement was originally requested in the 2011 budget and is currently listed on the "2014 and beyond Capital Project Listing".

Currently the funding source for new Skateboard facilities projects within existing park sites is taxation. Unfortunately, a number of skateboard facility projects were deferred to future budget deliberations due to the prioritization of many projects competing for this very limited taxation funding source. In an effort to find alternative funding sources, the City had previously worked on a fundraising campaign. This campaign included a sponsorship match, where for every dollar raised through sponsorships, the City would match these contributions with a maximum limit. This process was unsuccessful and yielded no sponsorship contributions.

Relationship to Vaughan Vision 2020 / Strategic Plan

In consideration of the strategic priorities related to Vaughan Vision 2020, the project will provide:

- **STRATEGIC GOAL:**
Service Excellence - Providing service excellence to citizens.
- **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:**
Pursue Excellence in Service Delivery;
Enhance and Ensure Community Safety, Health and Wellness; and,
To deliver high quality services and to promote health and wellness through design and program.

This report is consistent with the priorities previously set by Council.

Regional Implications

N/A

Conclusion

The purpose of this report is to respond to resolutions of the Finance and Administration Committee regarding the provision of skateboard parks within Thornhill – Ward 5 and Woodbridge – Ward 2.

Attachments

N/A

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Respectfully submitted,

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