



STAFF REPORT

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF COBOURG

Community Services, Protection, and Economic Development Standing Committee

Report to: Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Councillors
From: Brian Geerts, Director, Community Services
Standing Committee Date: June 5, 2024
Report Number: COMM-2024-014
Council Meeting Date: June 26, 2024
Subject: **Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw Administrative
Amendment**

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1. Recommendation:

THAT Council receive this report for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT Council amend Schedules A and B of the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw 022-2016 to include the Town-owned lots west of Glen Watford Road and Ravensdale Road.

2. Executive Summary:

During the committee and Council meetings in April of 2024, a policy gap became apparent regarding town-owned parcels of land west of Ravensdale Road and Glen Watford Road. As per the resolution of Council, staff are responding with a policy recommendation to add the subject lands to Schedules A and B of the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw.

3. Background

This report refers to the following documents and records:

Item Council Agenda April 24, 2024 Item 14.2:

<https://pub-cobourg.escribemeetings.com/Meeting.aspx?Id=2d0c0417-291a-4ea1-917b-1c3bc675b8c4&lang=English&Agenda=Agenda&Item=43&Tab=attachments>

Corresponding Resolution of April 24, 2024:

Adam Yahn regarding a request for Town Council to donate the existing Town of Cobourg properties within the Pebble Beach/Glen Watford forested area to the Northumberland Land Trust.

WHEREAS at the Public Works, Planning, and Development Standing Committee meeting on April 3, 2024, the Committee considered a delegation from Adam Yahn regarding a request for Town Council to donate the existing Town of Cobourg properties within the Pebble Beach/Glen Watford forested area to the Northumberland Land Trust.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive the delegation from Adam Yahn regarding a request for Town Council to donate the existing Town of Cobourg properties within the Pebble Beach/Glen Watford forested area to the Northumberland Land Trust for information purposes; and

FURTHER THAT the delegation regarding the land trust be added to the resolution from September 11, 2023; and

FURTHER THAT Council direct staff to research opportunities for the Town to consider the logistical and financial impacts of designating the lots it owns west of Ravensdale into a nature park; and

FURTHER THAT staff bring the report with options back to Council at Regular Council on June 26, 2024.

Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw:

<022-2016-Parks-and-Facilities-Regulations-Bylaw.pdf> (cobourg.ca)

4. Discussion:

During the speaker's presentation and subsequent Council discussion regarding item 14.2 as noted above, it became clear that there is currently a policy gap regarding acceptable uses and activities permitted on the subject parcels of Town-owned lands west of Glen Watford Road and Ravensdale Cres. The lands identified with a star "*" below are owned by the Town of Cobourg but not activated or developed in any way, remaining in a relatively natural state.



Figure 1: Town-owned lots () west of Ravensdale Road and Glen Watford Road*

Based on the parcel layout, access, and other considerations, the Community Services Division has no plans at this time to develop or activate the parcels as active parkland in the short-term. This could change when the Parks Master Plan is updated, a process which will include thorough public consultation. However, in the meantime it would be in the public interest to apply a framework of rules or expectations for appropriate use of the lands until a long-term use is decided upon.

The best-fit preexisting framework for regulating human behaviour for this site is the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw. It contains a series of purpose-built regulations for different land types, considers ecological and human factors, and is well-known and consistently applied across the Town. While the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw is a useful tool for regulating behaviours on public lands, these particular parcels have significant constraints to public access; they will not operate as a typical park would. Most parcels are not accessible to the public at all, except through private properties or via Lake Ontario.

Planning Division Analysis:

The lands are zoned “Rural Holding (R[H]) Zone” on Map 1 to the Town’s Comprehensive Zoning By-law #85-2003. As per Section 22.1.1 of the Zoning By-law, a public park is a permitted use on the subject lands.

The Holding Provision (H) on the lands restricts development on the property until appropriate reports and studies are conducted (and various planning act applications are received with these reports/studies). So long as there is no development on the lands (i.e., there is no servicing needed for the park, no buildings or structures being proposed on the lands), it would comply with zoning.

A public park would also be permitted on the subject lands under the “Public Use” provisions in Section 5.3.2 of the Zoning By-law.

Zoning By-law reference: [13660 \(cobourg.ca\)](https://www.cobourg.ca/13660)

Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw:

The subject lands are appropriate to consider as a park based on the included definition:

"Park" shall mean **land** and Municipal owned **water lots** and all portions thereof owned by or made available by lease, agreement, or otherwise to the municipality, that is or hereafter may be established, dedicated, set apart or made available for use as public open space, and that has been or hereafter may be placed under the jurisdiction of the Director including any and all buildings, structures, facilities, erections and improvements located in or on such land and for further certainty includes the parks and recreation areas listed in Schedule "A" to this by-law and which forms a part of this by-law;

The subject lands would best be described as the “Nature Park” class according to the bylaw:

"Nature Parks" shall mean parks that are predominantly natural in character and exhibit landscape/environmental characteristics common to Cobourg or the surrounding area. The focus of these parks is conservation, nature appreciation, and interpretation. They provide a nature-based experience and environmentally compatible passive recreation activities; (Page 4)

By adding these lands to the Parks and Facilities Regulations bylaw, the Town can apply a consistent set of expectations and rules for the public benefit including conduct, firearms, fireworks, injury & damage, waste & pollution, encroachment, risk management, hours of use, fires, cooking, organized gatherings, camping, structures, shelters, bathing, organized sports, domestic animals, aircraft, commercial enterprises, filming, advertising, protection of wildlife, motorized vehicles, watercraft, vehicle parking, and more (Section 4.X).

As per section 2.0 “General” of the parks bylaw, subject areas regulated by the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw are defined on Schedules “A” (list) and “B” (map). Should this recommendation be approved as per this report’s resolution, staff will append the subject lands to Schedules A and B.

Considering the discussion and analysis thus far, three main options come to mind in response to Council’s resolution of April 24, 2024:

1. Do nothing.
 - a. A “Do Nothing” response would not address the land-use and development-related questions raised by the neighbourhood stakeholders in April of 2024.
2. Designate lands as parkland “Nature Park” via Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw.

- a. This regulatory designation provides a clear framework of purpose, regulation, and enforcement for the public at a very low cost and using a policy tool that the public is already familiar with.
3. More complex solutions, such as consolidating the lands in support of the Open Space Network as noted in the Parks Master Plan (page 21 [Parks-Master-Plan-2013.pdf \(cobourg.ca\)](#)) or other future-forward solutions supported by existing policy. As per the Parkland Acquisition list on page 22 of the Parks Master Plan, this area is not one of the top 6 priority areas. These options are complex and require further input and analysis; moving ahead with option 2 does not restrict the Town from further analysis and decision in the future.

Staff recommend moving forward with Option 2 at this time.

5. Financial Impact and Budget

This amendment to the Parks and Facilities Regulations Bylaw is not expected to trigger any new financial savings or expenses.

6. Relationship to Council's Strategic Plan Priorities 2023 to 2027 and beyond:

☒ Thriving Community

Foster community well-being.

☒ Service Excellence

Provide optimal service.

☒ Sustainability

Take care of what we have in ways that are adaptive, resilient, clean, green, and beautiful.

7. Public Engagement:

This report was posted publicly as part of the Council and Committee procedures. No site-specific consultation was performed. However, this report was drafted in direct response Council's swift action to stakeholder input.

8. Attachments:

N/A

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Parks Bylaw Amendment Pebble Beach.docx
Attachments:	
Final Approval Date:	May 27, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Tracey Vaughan, Chief Administrative Officer - May 27, 2024 - 12:45 PM