

**To:** PLANNING COMMITTEE (STATUTORY PUBLIC MEETING)

**Meeting Date:** 7/15/2025

**Subject:** Official Plan Amendment for Parkland Dedication Policies

**Submitted By:** Lesley Head, Director of Recreation and Culture

**Prepared By:** Melissa Aldunate, Manager of Policy Planning

**Report No.:** 25-082-CD

**File No.:** OP03/25

**Wards Affected:** All Wards

### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

THAT Report 25-082-CD Official Plan Amendment for Parkland Dedication Policies be received.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

#### **Purpose**

The proposed City-initiated Official Plan amendment for parkland dedication policies is required to implement the changes to the Ontario Planning Act that were brought into effect with the approval of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022. Parkland dedication policies relate to the municipality's authority to require developers to provide land – or money instead of land – for parks when developments are approved.

#### **Key Findings**

The Planning Act Sections 42, 51.1 and 53 were revised through Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, to amend the parkland dedication and cash-in-lieu of parkland provisions.

The City of Cambridge Official Plan contains policies that provide for the dedication of land for parkland through the development process including an enabling policy to allow for the use of the alternative rate for payment in lieu of land conveyance. These provisions require modification for consistency with Bill 23.

#### **Financial Implications**

The proposed Official Plan amendment does not have direct financial impacts. However, the revisions to the Planning Act that were introduced by Bill 23 have an

impact on the amount of parkland that the City can require to be dedicated or provided through cash-in-lieu.

### **STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:**

☒ Strategic Action

**Objective(s):** PLANNING FOR GROWTH - Provide for a mix of development, uses and amenities in order to meet the needs of a changing and diverse population

**Strategic Action:** Lay the foundation for future community-building

**OR**

☐ Core Service

**Program:** Not Applicable

**Core Service:** Not Applicable

### **BACKGROUND:**

#### **The Planning Act and Parkland Dedication**

Under the Planning Act, municipalities have the authority to require developers to provide land—or money instead of land—for parks when new developments are approved. This ensures that as our city grows, we can continue to provide accessible green spaces and recreational opportunities for residents. The land or funds collected through this process help us meet the needs of a growing population and maintain a high quality of life in our communities. This process of providing land to municipalities is called parkland dedication.

#### **Summary of Bill 23 Parkland Dedication Changes**

Through the approval of Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022, the Planning Act provisions for parkland dedication and payment of cash in lieu of parkland dedication were amended. Specifically, Bill 23 amended the alternative rates that a municipality may apply when requiring the conveyance of land for parks or other recreational purposes or payment in lieu of land. This provision is in effect. Bill 23 also introduced revisions to parkland dedication rates and exclusions for inclusionary zoning units, affordable and attainable housing along with changes to the provisions for the acceptance of lands. These changes have not been proclaimed and will be considered through the future Official Plan Review. This report and the proposed amendment address the sections of Bill 23 affecting parkland policies that are in effect.

Bill 23 amended section 42 (Conveyance of Land for Parkland), 51 (Plan of Subdivision Approvals), and 53 (Consents) of the Planning Act with respect to parkland requirements. Amendments were made to the alternative requirement for parkland conveyances and payments of cash in lieu, to change the maximum rates and provide a maximum amount of land or value that may be required to be provided.

### **Purpose and Effect of Official Plan Amendment**

This is a technical amendment to the Official Plan to update the parkland dedication policies for consistency with the Bill 23 changes to the Planning Act that reduced the alternative parkland dedication rate and the cash in lieu of parkland rates. This amendment will ensure that the City's Official Plan is in conformity with the Planning Act and contains the appropriate policies to allow for the use of the alternative rate.

### **Location**

This amendment applies to all lands within the City of Cambridge.

### **ANALYSIS:**

The City of Cambridge Official Plan Section 7.8 contains policies for the dedication of land and for the acceptance of cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication. These policies reflect the requirements of the Planning Act in effect at the time the Official Plan was approved. However, these policies no longer align with the requirements of the current Planning Act specifically with the rates that may be applied to the acquisition of land and for cash in lieu.

Section 42 (4) of the Planning Act sets out that "The alternative requirement authorized by subsection (3) may not be provided for in a by-law passed under this section unless there is an official plan in effect in the local municipality that contains specific policies dealing with the provision of lands for park or other public recreational purposes and the use of the alternative requirement." This section of the Planning Act requires that the Official Plan must contain an enabling policy in order to allow for the alternative requirement to be included in the City's parkland dedication by-law that is being brought forward for Council's consideration. To satisfy the requirements of the Planning Act, policy 7.8.1 of the Official Plan is proposed to be amended.

### **EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):**

The City's current Official Plan parkland dedication policy (Section 7.8, policy 7.8.1) and proposed revisions to policy 7.8.1 are set out in Appendix A.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

The proposed Official Plan amendment does not have direct financial impacts. However, the revisions to the Planning Act that were introduced by Bill 23 have an

impact on the amount of parkland that the City can require to be dedicated or provided through cash-in-lieu.

## **PUBLIC VALUE:**

### **Engagement:**

Notice of the proposed Official Plan Amendment and the Statutory Public Meeting was provided June 20, 2025 in the Record and posted on the City's website.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:**

Not Applicable

## **PUBLIC INPUT:**

Public comments received through the Public Meeting and release of the draft OPA will be shared through a recommendation report to Council.

## **INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:**

Internal consultation was undertaken with Legal Services.

## **CONCLUSION:**

The proposed City-initiated amendment to the Official Plan policies for parkland dedication are technical in nature to ensure that the City's policies are consistent with the in-effect Planning Act. The amendment ensures that the Official Plan policy for parkland or cash-in-lieu of parkland is aligned with the rates set out in the Planning Act and that the enabling policy for the use of alternative rates is in place when Council considers a parkland dedication by-law.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **No**

Budget Amendment: **No**

Policy: **Yes**

## **APPROVALS:**

**This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:**

**Director**

**Deputy City Manager**

**Chief Financial Officer**

**City Solicitor**

**City Manager**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 25-082-CD Appendix A – Proposed Official Plan Amendment