



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF AMHERSTBURG

OFFICE OF PARKS, FACILITIES, RECREATION & CULTURE

MISSION STATEMENT: *Committed to delivering cost-effective and efficient services for the residents of the Town of Amherstburg with a view to improve and enhance their quality of life.*

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Author's Phone: 519 736-5712 ext. 2128	Date to Council: September 12, 2022
Author's E-mail: hbaillargeon@amherstburg.ca	Resolution #:

To: Mayor and Members of Town Council

Subject: Co-An Park Redevelopment

1. **RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that:

1. Administration **BE DIRECTED** to proceed with Phase 1 public engagement and consultation in collaboration with the Town of Essex to identify re-development opportunities for Co-An Park;
2. An unbudgeted expenditure, not to exceed \$10,000 plus applicable HST, **BE APPROVED** for Phase 1 Public Engagement and Consultation to identify redevelopment opportunities for Co-An Park; and,
3. A transfer from the Parkland Reserve Fund **BE AUTHORIZED** for the Phase 1 Public Engagement and Consultation to identify redevelopment opportunities for Co-An Park.

2. **BACKGROUND:**

Co-An Park is a 15.9 ha Athletic park located in The Town of Essex and was founded in 1977 by the Townships of Anderdon and Colchester North to provide municipal parkland and recreational services to the community.

The park consists of the following amenities:

- Six Baseball diamonds
- Three Soccer fields
- Two Tennis courts
- Playground equipment
- Washrooms
- Pavilion and canteen with site furnishings

- Maintenance, storage building
- Walking Paths
- Parking lot with lighting
- Essex County Steam and Gas Engine Museum Inc.

Although Co-An Park is located in McGregor (Essex) it is jointly owned 50/50 by the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of Essex. There are several by-laws and agreements dating back to the early 1970's that govern the use, maintenance and operation of the park which is run by a Board.

The Board, consists of members of Council and residents from each municipality that is responsible for the operation, maintenance and recreational programming and activities for the park. Decisions regarding capital investments in the park are currently made by the Board and costs are jointly shared on a 50% basis between the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of Essex.

The Board holds regular monthly meetings and submits to Council an annual report of its activities and operational costs as well as other reports that are required from time to time. In September of each calendar year the Board submits to Council a detailed estimate of its operating and capital budget requests for consideration for the following years budget.

The Essex County Steam and Gas Engine Museum Inc. is also located in the park and is owned and operated by a third party since 1997. This building has a twenty (20) year lease with the Town of Essex in the amount of \$1.00 per year. The lease term began July 2008 and expires June 30, 2028 with the right to renew the operating agreement for a second term. The Museum is responsible for:

- all utility and insurance costs
- repair and maintenance of the property including buildings, driveways, sidewalks, parking areas and grass areas.

3. **DISCUSSION**

The agreements and by-laws that govern the use, maintenance and recreational operation of Co-An Park need to be updated and or amended to meet the changing needs of the community. The Parks Master plan speaks to this under Recommendation number 74:

“Examine all options relative to the Town’s ongoing management and financial commitments to Co-An Park. Re-negotiation of the terms and municipal commitment is anticipated.”

The Town of Essex has reached out to the Town of Amherstburg Administration and members of Council requesting that the process begin to investigate potential re-development opportunities for the park that would benefit both communities.

This request is timely in that it coincides with planning initiatives currently underway within the Town of Amherstburg as it relates to both the Woodland Trails Subdivision and the Canard Valley Estates Phase two. These two subdivisions are within close proximity to Co-An Park and the Park could offer residents a number of recreational

opportunities. The 2021 population in this area was 712 people with approx. 277 dwellings which equates to 2.57 persons per dwelling. A total of 143 new dwellings are proposed as part of Woodland Trails Ph 1 and Canard Valley Estates Phase 2. With this information we can assume that the catchment area for Co-An Park will be:

Population: $712 + 2.57 \text{ persons per dwelling} * 143 \text{ new dwellings} = 1,080$
Dwellings: 420

The subdivisions are located approx. 1km away from Co-An Park heading east on Middle Side Road (**See Appendix A**). In addition, there is a proposed trail connection that would link both subdivisions to Co-An Park that was recently updated in the 2020 CWATS Master Plan. Should these subdivisions move forward, Administration would recommend that Council make a request to the County to fund and expedite the construction of this portion of trail as a priority. This connection is extremely important in providing healthy active living and access to recreational amenities for the residents of the area.

The Town of Essex has made a formal request to Administration to begin the process to investigate potential opportunities for Co-An Park including how both municipalities could benefit and continue to support the park. In order to move forward on a redevelopment plan for Co-An Park, a coordinated public engagement meeting is required by both municipalities.

The recommended method for public engagement is through a joint public information session with the Town of Essex. The public engagement process will include:

- In-person public information session (location to be identified) to:
 - Inform residents about the park current amenities and how it is managed
 - Collect feedback from both municipalities and residents on the needs and requests regarding recreational amenities
 - Answer questions and provide information

Once this process is undertaken the information collected will be used to develop a master plan for the park that will guide all future development and capital expenditures. The end goal in the re-development process is to create a Master Plan for Co-An Park that is agreed to by both the Town of Amherstburg and the Town of Essex with identified phases, timelines and projected costs that support the recreational needs of residents of both communities.

4. RISK ANALYSIS:

The agreements and by-laws that govern the operation, maintenance, capital expenditures and recreational use of Co-An Park need to be updated to coincide with current policies and procedures as well as new planning initiatives for both municipalities. Updating these documents will ensure compliance with current Town standards, policies, procedures and regulations thereby helping to reduce and mitigate risk, liability and exposure to the Town associated with long term capital and operational investments of the park.

5. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

The Town of Amherstburg annually commits \$20,000 (2022) towards operations and entertains requests for capital expenditures related to the park, as requested.

Administration requests funding in the amount of \$10,000 from the Parkland Reserve Fund to undertake phase one of the public engagement/consultation process for the park.

6. CONSULTATIONS:

Town of Essex
Director of Development Services, Deputy CAO
Manager Planning Services
Manager of Parks
Manager of Facilities

7. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the Town of Essex has reached out to the Town of Amherstburg Administration and members of Council requesting the process begin to investigate re-development opportunities for Co-An Park that would benefit both communities. In light of the fact that the agreements and by-laws that govern this park need to be updated and there are two potential proposed subdivision developments on the horizon, this presents a great opportunity for both communities to come together and establish strategic goals and objectives for the park. It presents an opportunity for further cost sharing between the communities while helping to continue to deliver high quality recreational services to the residents.



Heidi Baillargeon
Director of Parks, Facilities, Recreation and Culture

RC

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Co-An Park Redevelopment.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix A McGregor Development and trail connection to Co-An.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Sep 1, 2022

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

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Tracy Prince'.

Tracy Prince

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Valerie Critchley'.

Valerie Critchley