

SECTION 7. PARKS & OPEN SPACE

7.1 OVERVIEW

Public open space and parks play an important part in the quality of life that is enjoyed by Brantford residents. They provide opportunities for popular recreation activities such as walking and hiking, as well as space for outdoor facilities such as playing fields. Parks and open space also play a key ecological role by preserving and enhancing natural areas and features such as the Grand River and the City's woodlots and ravine areas. Furthermore, they contribute to the aesthetic quality of life in Brantford. The City is proud of its achievements in Communities in Bloom competitions, having won first place in its class in 2002.

The following parks and open space analysis includes an inventory of the City's parks and open space system, assesses the open space standards, establishes a hierarchy for parks and open space, provides policy direction for future parkland acquisitions and provides recommendations regarding future parkland requirements.

7.2 PARKS & OPEN SPACE INVENTORY

The analysis of Brantford's supply and distribution of municipal parks and open space indicates that the City has an excellent supply of parkland and open space, which allows for both active and passive recreation and leisure activities for all ages. Household survey respondents feel that there are sufficient parks and open space areas in their neighbourhoods.

As indicated in Table 7-1, the City's inventory of parks and open space includes approximately 111 properties, amounting to 572.9 hectares (1,413.29 acres) of parks and open space. This supply is comprised of natural areas such as woodlots, municipal golf courses, tourist attractions (e.g., Bell Homestead National Historic Site), arboretums, cemeteries and parks.

Table 7-1 classifies the municipal inventory of parks and open space according to their function as either "active" or "passive". These terms are defined as follows:

"Active" parks are those designed to serve the municipality's needs for organized recreation activities for both daytime and evening use. An active park may include a combination of playing fields or a single purpose playing field within a landscaped setting. Activities could include baseball, soccer, tennis, picnic areas, playgrounds and trails. Facilities could include an arena or a community centre.

"Passive" parks include creatively landscaped areas designed for aesthetic appeal (and possibly a specific municipal purpose such as a War Memorial) or are natural areas with limited active uses. They may include playgrounds, picnic areas as well as trails for biking. They are primarily used for walking, viewing, sitting, bird watching, hiking, wildlife habitat or any combination of the above. Passive parks are designed primarily for daytime use.

**Table 7-1
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Park Name	Classification	Active/Passive	Area	
			acres	hectares
Alexandra Park	Specialized	Passive	1.89	0.77
Andrew W. Pate Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.68	1.49
Anne Good Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.17	1.28
Arctic Park	Parkette	Active	1	0.4
Armouries Gore	Specialized	Passive	0.3	0.1
Arrowdale Golf Course	Specialized	Active	47.07	19.05
Bell Homestead	Specialized	Passive	14.06	5.69
Bell Memorial	Specialized	Passive	1.45	0.6
Bellview Community Hall	Neighbourhood	Active	0.54	0.2
Bellview Park	Parkette	Active	n.a.	n.a.
Bill Little Park	Community	Active	6.9	2.8
Branlyn Park	Community	Active	12.68	5.13
Brant's Crossing Park	Specialized	Passive	0.5	0.2
Brantford Senior's Centre	Specialized	Combination	n.a.*	n.a.*
Brenda Court Park	Parkette	Active	0.2	0.1
Bridle Path Park	Neighbourhood	Active	8.87	3.59
Brier Park	Community	Active	20.45	8.28
Brooklyn Park	Neighbourhood	Active	8.83	3.57
Burnley Park	Community	Active	11.9	4.8
Cameron Heights Park	Neighbourhood	Active	5.87	2.38
Carolina Park	Parkette	Passive	1.24	0.5
Cedarland Park	Community	Active	11.84	4.79
Centennial Park	Neighbourhood	Active	6.1	2.47
Central Park	Neighbourhood	Active	1.63	0.66
Charles Ward Park	Neighbourhood	Active	1.41	0.57
City View Park	Neighbourhood	Combination	3.75	1.52
Civic Centre	Specialized	Combination	13	5.26
CNR Gore	Specialized	Passive	0.19	0.07
Cockshutt Park	Community	Active	30.33	12.27
Conklin Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.02	0.82
Connaught Park	Neighbourhood	Active	5.13	2.08
D'Aubigny Creek	Specialized	Combination	191.68	77.57
Deer Park	Neighbourhood	Active	4.13	1.67
Devereux Park	Neighbourhood	Combination	3.7	1.5

**Table 7-1
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Park Name	Classification	Active/Passive	Area acres/hectares	
Devon Down Park	Neighbourhood	Active	5.96	2.41
Donegal Park	Neighbourhood	Active	7.1	2.9
Dufferin Park	Community	Active	7.18	2.91
Dunsdon Park	Specialized	Passive	0.26	0.1
Earl Haig Park	Specialized	Active	14.61	5.91
Echo Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.12	0.86
Elgin Park	Neighbourhood	Active	1.26	0.51
Florence Buchanan Park	Neighbourhood	Combination	1.88	0.76
Fordview Park	Specialized	Passive	10.32	4.18
Forestwood Park	Neighbourhood	Passive	7.32	2.96
Friendship Park	Neighbourhood	Passive	3.9	1.58
George Campbell Park	Community	Active	10.71	4.33
Gilkison Flats	Specialized	Passive	91.15	36.89
Glenhyrst Gardens	Specialized	Passive	15.15	6.13
Golfdale Park	Specialized	Passive	0.74	0.3
Grandwoodlands	Neighbourhood	Active	8.09	3.28
Greenbrier Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.89	1.17
Greenwood Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.01	0.81
Greenwood Cemetery	Cemetery	Passive	14.02	6.67
Hillcrest Park	Neighbourhood	Active	1.56	0.63
Holmedale Park	Neighbourhood	Active	4.08	1.65
Iroquois Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.82	1.14
Jaycee Sports Park	Community	Active	32.14	13.01
John Wright Soccer Complex	Community	Active	15.75	6.37
Jubilee Terrace	Specialized	Passive	0.95	0.39
Kerr Shaver Park	Specialized	Passive	0.25	0.1
Lansdowne Park	Parkette	Active	0.82	0.33
Lincoln Circle	Parkette	Passive	0.32	0.13
Lincoln Square	Parkette	Passive	0.24	0.1
Lions Park/Steve Brown Sports Complex	Community	Active	36.96	14.96
Lorne Park	Specialized	Passive	5.43	2.2
Lynden Hills	Neighbourhood	Active	7.77	3.14
Mayfair Park	Neighbourhood	Active	8.59	3.48
Mayor's Common	Neighbourhood	Combination	2.21	0.9

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**Table 7-1
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Park Name	Classification	Active/Passive	Area acres/hectares	
Mohawk Canal	Neighbourhood	Passive	2	0.8
Mohawk Park	Community	Combination	47.83	19.36
Mohawk Trail	Neighbourhood	Passive	5.53	2.24
Moose Park	Parkette	Active	0.7	0.28
Mount Hope	Cemetery	Passive	45	18.2
New Park - south -west	Neighbourhood	Active	7.65	3.1
Northridge Golf Course	Specialized	Active	141.07	57.09
Oakhill Cemetery	Cemetery	Passive	71.74	29.03
Orchard Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.41	1.38
Parsons Park	Neighbourhood	Active	6.62	2.68
Pleasant Ridge Park	Neighbourhood	Active	2.34	0.95
Preston Park	Specialized	Passive	3.62	1.46
Prince Charles Park	Neighbourhood	Active	4.01	1.62
Princess Anne Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.39	1.37
Recreation Park	Neighbourhood	Active	1.89	0.76
Regent Park	Specialized	Passive	1.71	0.69
Resurrection Community Centre	Specialized	Combination	3.12	1.26
Rivergreen Park	Neighbourhood	Passive	2	0.8
Robert Moore Park	Parkette	Active	0.82	0.33
Roswell Park	Neighbourhood	Active	6.37	2.58
Royal Oak Park	Neighbourhood	Passive	2.33	0.94
Seneca Park	Specialized	Passive	0.52	0.21
Shallow Creek	Neighbourhood	Active	7.41	3
Sheri-Mar Park	Parkette	Active	0.73	0.29
Silverbridge Park	Neighbourhood	Active	8.83	3.57
Spring Gardens Park	Neighbourhood	Active	8.27	3.35
Spring St. - Buck	Neighbourhood	Active	3.92	1.59
St. Andrew Park	Specialized	Passive	0.3	0.12
Tom Thumb Park	Specialized	Passive	0.68	0.27
Tranquillity Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3	1.2
Tranquillity Cemetery	Cemetery (Inactive)	Passive	1	0.4
Tutela Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.77	1.53
Victoria Park	Specialized	Passive	1.43	0.58
War Memorial	Specialized	Passive	1.03	0.42

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**Table 7-1
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Inventory**

Park Name	Classification	Active/Passive	Area	
			acres	hectares
Waterworks Park	Specialized	Combination	210.83	85.32
Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre	Community	Active	26.65	10.79
West Street Gore	Specialized	Passive	0.25	0.1
Westdale Park	Parkette	Active	0.88	0.36
Wilkes Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.01	1.22
Wood Street Park	Neighbourhood	Active	3.69	1.49
Riva Ridge Woodlot	Neighbourhood	Passive	7.77	3.14
Woodman Park	Community	Active	4.1	1.66
TOTAL			1413.3	572.9

* City staff advised that the size of park/location is not available as per the current inventory.
Source: City of Brantford and Monteith Planning Consultants, 2003

7.2.1 Parkland Inventory/Database

City Staff advised that the parks inventory is not readily available as an independent database. Furthermore, there are a number of gaps in the inventory with respect to land area and the amenities/facilities available at each location.

It is also noted that a City-owned site located on Powerline Road in the County of Brant has not been included in the municipal inventory. The site is approximately 40 hectares (100 acres) in size. Although there have been some discussions regarding the future development of these lands for recreation purposes, nothing has been finalized to date.

The existing City's Parks and Recreation Facility Map should be updated as it currently contains inaccuracies and inconsistencies. The map should also identify the facilities of the City's key recreation partners including the YMCA-YWCA and the Boys and Girls Club. A separate parks database should be prepared that contains a map or park layout plan for each location. This database/inventory should be updated on a regular basis. Furthermore, some confusion exists with the naming and renaming of parks; lists need to be updated to show one name only.

Recommendation: *That the City's parks and open space database/inventory be updated on a regular basis.*

Recommendation: *That the City's parks and open space inventory be updated to only include those lands that are owned by the City. A separate database that includes City maintained (but not owned) lands should be developed.*

Recommendation: *That the City update its Parks and Recreation Facility Map and include the facilities/locations of the City's key recreation partners.*

Recommendation: *That the City develop a parks and open space database that includes a map or layout plan for each location as well as an accurate listing of the amenities and facilities available at each park.*

Recommendation: *That the City undertake a review of all park names in an effort to endorse one official name for each park.*

7.2.2 Current Parkland Supply

Based on the City's supply of 572.9 hectares (1413.29 acres) of parks and open space, there is a ratio of 6.6 hectares of parks and open space per 1,000 Brantford residents. As residents have expressed a strong degree of satisfaction with the existing supply of parks and open space, the City should continue to try and achieve a minimum standard in the range of 6 hectares per 1,000 population.

The City has a very good supply and distribution of parks and open space. Furthermore, this supply is actually much higher if the inventory of other public lands, such as schools and Conservation Areas, are taken into account.

While the majority of household survey respondents indicated that the City has enough parkland, the development of parks and open space was the "facility" most frequently requested by household survey respondents (12%).

The City should continue to provide sufficient parkland and open space in the developing areas. A significant amount of new residential development is planned for southwest Brantford.

Recommendation: *That the City seek to maintain a minimum standard of 6 hectares of municipal parks and open space per 1,000 population.*

Agreements with other providers (e.g., School Boards, Conservation Authority, etc.) provide another means of improving the functional supply of parkland in Brantford. In cases where land acquisition is not an option, the City should work with its partners to secure appropriate access to green spaces.

Recommendation: *That the City continue to work with its partners in recreation to develop creative, non-acquisition based strategies to improve the functional supply of open space available to residents.*

7.3 PARKS & OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION, ACQUISITION & DEDICATION

The City of Brantford's Official Plan includes a well-defined hierarchy or classification system for its parks and open space (see Table 7-2). In the case of community parks/open space and specialized parks, consideration should be given to adding a policy requiring the provision of adequate off-street parking. Furthermore, the City's parks inventory appears to be using different classifications than those included in the Official Plan. There should only be one parks classification or hierarchy.

Recommendation: *That the City review its parkland classification hierarchy to ensure that it is consistent with the policies in its Official Plan.*

**Table 7-2
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Classification**

Park Category & Current Provision Level	Description of Parkland	Facilities/Amenities	Location Criteria
<p>Parkettes & Tot Lots</p> <p>Current Level of Provision: 0.03 hectares per 1,000 population</p>	<p>Intended to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • visual & natural amenities within the urban area; • playspace for young children within residential areas; • landscaped & garden areas; • meeting or resting areas; or • special areas of historic or architectural significance • optimum size of less than 0.6 hectares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • playground equipment • landscaped areas • floral displays • seating areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permitted City-wide, in all designations
<p>Neighbourhood Parks & Open Space</p> <p>Current Level of Provision: 1.0 hectares per 1,000 population</p>	<p>Intended to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • active sports & recreation facilities; • areas for passive leisure activities; • natural areas such as woodlots and ravines; and • landscaped & garden areas. • direct pedestrian access from all parts of the Neighbourhood • optimum size of 0.8 to 4.0 hectares 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports & recreation facilities to meet the needs of all residents including playgrounds, sports fields, rinks, ball diamonds, wading pools & multi-purpose pads; • accessible meeting rooms & halls; • accessible landscaped areas or floral displays; • accessible seating areas; • natural areas; • pedestrian mobility aid or bicycle paths; and • accessory buildings & structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permitted City-wide in all designations • frontage on a Local or Minor or Major Collector Road so that the park is visible & accessible • may be co-ordinated with the location of elementary schools

**Table 7-2
City of Brantford - Parks & Open Space Classification**

Park Category & Current Provision Level	Description of Parkland	Facilities/Amenities	Location Criteria
<p>Community Parks & Open Space</p> <p>Current Level of Provision: 1.28 hectares per 1,000 population</p>	<p>Intended to provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • large active sports & recreation facilities; • areas for passive leisure; • natural areas such as woodlots, valleys & ravines; or • landscape & garden areas. • optimum size of greater than 4.0 hectares but generally determined by the amount of land required to accommodate the desired facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sports & recreation facilities to meet the needs of all residents including sports fields, playgrounds ball diamonds, swimming & wading pools, fitness trails, arenas or gymnasiums; • landscaped areas or floral displays; • seating & picnic areas; • auditoriums, community centres & meeting rooms; • natural areas; • pedestrian & bicycle paths; and • accessory buildings & structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permitted in the Major Open Space designation • frontage on a Minor Collector, Major Collector, Minor Arterial or Major Arterial Road to facilitate access from various parts of the municipality • may be co-ordinated with the location of elementary or secondary schools • direct barrier free access
<p>Specialized Parks & Open Space</p> <p>Current Level of Provision: 3.6 hectares per 1,000 population</p>	<p>Will vary in size depending on the physical characteristics of the site & the type and number of facilities provided.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • botanical gardens, arboreta & greenhouses; • art galleries; • public golf courses; • environmentally unique or sensitive natural areas; • Grand River waterfront area; • large open spaces within the urban area; • special sports facilities such as ski & toboggan hills; and • accessory buildings & structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permitted in the Major Open Space designation • frontage on a Minor Collector, Major Collector, Minor Arterial or Major Arterial Road to facilitate access from various parts of the municipality
<p>Cemeteries</p>	<p>Provide large landscaped & garden areas within the urban area opportunities for passive leisure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ trails, pathways ▶ landscaped areas ▶ seating ▶ natural areas 	<p>within the Major Open Space designation</p>

Source: City of Brantford Official Plan

In analyzing the City's parks and open space inventory, it was noted that Brantford has in the order of 27 parkettes, which account for approximately 8.35 hectares of parkland (20.6 acres). Table 7-3 provides a breakdown of current park classifications and sizes. It is evident that these small spaces play an important role in the community. When asked whether the City should eliminate some of its community gardens, many of which are located in parkettes, the majority of the household survey respondents indicated that they did not agree with this at all. However, these small park facilities are both costly and time consuming to maintain. As a result, many municipalities are opting not to develop park space at this scale.

The City's future efforts in park development should be focussed on developing Neighbourhood and Community Parks and Open Space that are multi-functional and can accommodate the active and passive recreation activities, as well as natural heritage features such as woodlots.

**Table 7-3
Composition of the Existing Parks & Open Space System**

Park Classifications	Size	# of Parks	Land Area (ha.)
Parkettes and Tot Lots	less than 0.6 hectares	11	2.82 (6.97 ac.)
Neighbourhood Parks & Open Space	0.8 to 4.0 hectares	49	87.22 (215.5 ac.)
Community Parks & Open Space	greater than 4.0 hectares	14	111.46 (275.4 ac.)
Specialized Parks	vary in size	30	313.03 (773.48 ac.)
Cemeteries	vary in size	4	54.3 (134.2 ac.)

Note: The City's inventory does not include the size and classification of all of its parks and open space.

Source: City of Brantford Official Plan and Monteith Planning Consultants, 2003.

Recommendation: *That the City limit the future development of tot lots/parkettes as residents are better served with larger parcels that permit a range of passive and active recreational opportunities.*

Recommendation: *That the City encourage the development of Neighbourhood and Community Parks and Open Space.*

Brantford's Official Plan includes policies to guide the acquisition and development of future parkland. There are, however, some areas for improvement, particularly in the newly developing areas of the City.

Parkland that is located in "backyards" presents a number of development problems. Often, large buffers (which functionally are unusable lands) are required in order to reduce the impacts such as noise resulting from park usage on adjacent residential properties. Also, as evidenced in

Brantford, these sites can be subject to encroachment (e.g., composting, gazebos, patios) and become extensions of abutting residential backyards. This may result in problems in the future if the park needs to be modified to meet the changing needs of the larger neighbourhood. Those benefiting from an “extended back yard” may be reluctant to give up that space.

A related issue involves the dumping of yard clippings into ravine areas. People have no idea that this in fact is smothering the land and plant life in the ravines. The public needs to be educated that this practice is detrimental to natural areas.

City staff noted that the City of Waterloo has developed an effective demarcation program to reduce the level of encroachment onto municipally owned lands. This involves the installation of posts to identify the limits of City property. If implemented in Brantford, an education program to inform residents of the purpose of these posts would be required.

Recommendation: *That the City, where possible, avoid the development of parks and open space in “backyard” locations.*

Recommendation: *That the City develop an awareness and education program regarding the negative impacts associated with the dumping of yard clippings into ravines and natural areas.*

Recommendation: *That the City consider developing and implementing a demarcation program that would serve to reduce encroachment onto City lands. This program should also include an education component to inform the public of the significance of the posts.*

In accordance with the Official Plan policies for parks and open space, all parkland should have the greatest flexibility to allow for future expansion or development of park features (e.g., soccer fields, splash pads, play equipment, etc.). For this reason and for reasons related to maintenance, the City should focus its efforts on acquiring parcels having a minimum area of 1.5 to 2 hectares. This would support the recommendation that the City focus its efforts on developing more Neighbourhood Park space.

Recommendation: *That the City acquire parkland that is flexible, able to accommodate a range of uses, and not limited by slope or drainage restrictions.*

Recommendation: *That the City focus on developing parks having a minimum area of 1.5 to 2 hectares.*

Where land is set aside for stormwater management purposes, it should not be considered to be parkland, but rather a hard or engineered service, and should not form part of the required parkland dedication. If properly designed, stormwater management areas may form an interesting feature or aesthetic to the area, but they do not meet the true recreation needs of the community.

Recommendation: *That the City maintain its current practice whereby lands set aside for stormwater management purposes are not be considered to be part of the required parkland dedication.*

Frontage on streets is required to improve access to parks and safety within them. Street frontage is known to reduce incidences of vandalism. Several sources noted that Brantford has had to address the issue of vandalism in conjunction with both recreation facilities and park space. Also, frontage on a street generally makes a park more inviting to all who live in the local neighbourhood and not just the abutting properties.

An assessment of Brantford's parks was undertaken by City staff, applying the principles of sight lines and visibility that was developed by the International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Association. A significant difference in the level of vandalism was noted between those parks considered to have good sight lines and those which are enclosed on two or more sides by backyards. 74% of vandalism occurred in those parks that have poor visibility whereas 24% of incidents occurred in those parks that have high visibility.

Recommendation: *That the City adopt a parks planning policy which maintains the sight line/visibility principles developed by the International Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Association. Maintaining good sight lines and visibility should be a fundamental objective in the future design of all municipal parks.*

Although not specifically identified during the Study process, the provision of "off leash" areas in parks for dogs is a provincial trend. Excessive human activity in conjunction with roaming pets creates the potential for significant negative impacts on natural heritage features that are located in many of the City's parks and open spaces.

Recommendation: *That the City consider establishing "off leash" areas in park locations where it can be demonstrated that there will be minimum impact on other park users and natural heritage areas.*

7.4 PARK DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES & GUIDELINES

While it is essential that the City be proactive in planning and developing new parks and open space, residents have indicated the importance of maintaining and enhancing the City's existing parks and open space infrastructure. The majority of household survey respondents indicated that the City should focus its efforts on upgrading and maintaining the existing recreation facilities and parks.

It should be noted that the City's Leisure Activities Guide does a very good job of informing the community of what park and trail improvements are planned or have recently occurred.

Recommendation: *That the City continue to upgrade and maintain the existing park infrastructure by devoting capital budget funds for improvements on an annual basis.*

Recommendation: *That the City develop a Capital Renewal Fund for park development and improvement.*

Being the Tournament Capital, Brantford's parks draw a significant number of visitors each year. As a result, these parks need to have proper amenities in place such as washrooms, parking and pathways. For residents as well as visitors, developing and improving the facilities and amenities within existing parks is a priority.

It was noted that the lack of parking is a problem associated with many of the City's parks. Part of this is attributed to the fact that playing fields were developed in Neighbourhood Parks and rather than serving the surrounding (walking) community, these facilities are in fact functioning more like Community Parks to which people drive.

Many municipalities have established parking standards for playing fields. In London, 30 spaces per field are required for senior baseball/soccer while 25 spaces per field are required for junior baseball/soccer. In Barrie, the parking standard for their sports park (consisting of 12 diamonds and 9 soccer fields) is approximately 40 parking spaces per field. Waterloo has a parking standard of 30 spaces per field for minor facilities (e.g., 2 games played in an evening) and 50 spaces per field for major facilities, with additional parking provided at those facilities that are suitable for tournament play.

Recommendation: *That the City's Community and Specialized Parks and Open Space areas include proper amenities to accommodate all users (e.g., residents, tournaments, etc.). Amenities should include washrooms, water fountains, electrical outlets, benches, safe pedestrian-friendly pathways leading to facilities, off-street parking areas, etc.*

Recommendation: *That the City develop a parking standard for playing fields.*

7.5 PARK IMPROVEMENTS

As previously noted, the City of Brantford has an excellent and well distributed supply of parks and open space. No major parks-related issues were identified through the public consultation process. Through the household survey, however, various suggestions were noted by individuals (see Table 7-4). It must be emphasized that these suggestions were identified by either one person or a handful of individuals. They are presented for the information of Parks and Recreation Staff only. Further input from both staff and the public is required as the responses are not statistical valid.

Table 7- 4
Summary of Household Survey Responses On Parks Improvements

Park Name	Suggested Improvements
Alexandra Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure
Andrew W. Pate Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure
Anne Good Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure
Bellview Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more parking
Branlyn Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more child oriented
Brier Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance • relocate ball diamond • more parking • drainage
Burnley Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure
Centennial Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Cockshutt Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance • more picnic tables
Conklin Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Connaught Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
D'Aubigny Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Devon Downs Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better lighting • more garbage cans • water fountain
Dufferin Lawn Bowling Club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better lighting • more garbage cans • new play structure • need soccer field
Glenhyrst Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Jaycee Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play equipment • washroom maintenance • lighting
John Wright Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • picnic tables • more shade
Lansdowne Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure
Lions Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure • pool • more seating needed • better maintenance
Lorne Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • more garbage cans • better maintenance

Table 7- 4
Summary of Household Survey Responses On Parks Improvements

Park Name	Suggested Improvements
Lynden Hills Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new basketball court
Mayfair Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ice rink in winter
Mohawk Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • new play structure • clean up lake area • better maintenance • security • lighting • washroom maintenance • more parking • large pool, wading pool • keep dogs on leashes • tennis courts • more shelter • more flowers • drainage • plant more trees
Prince Charles Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance • needs sidewalks • tennis courts
Tutela Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Victoria Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance
Waterworks Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trail markers • bigger pool • new play structure • more picnic areas
Wayne Gretzky Sports Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grass cutting • improve diamonds • lower costs • skate park • more land needed • more parking
Woodman Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • better maintenance

Source: Monteith Planning Consultants, 2003

Brantford's Neighbourhood Associations were included in the Master Plan process and asked to complete a survey. Of the 32 active associations, 25% completed the survey and identified a number of parks improvements as follows:

Branlyn Park

- One large storage area is needed for equipment. The Branlyn Neighbourhood Association indicated that they would be willing to share the cost thereof.

Centennial Park

- Lighting, a new tennis pad and a storage building are needed.

Mayfair Park

- Lighting (all parks should be lit) is needed and the park needs to be cleaned.

Parsons Park

- Benches for the ice rink are needed.

Westdale Park

- More playground equipment (1-2 pieces) is needed.

Other Comments

- More accessible play structures are needed.

City Councillors and Staff were also asked for their input regarding park improvements. For the most part, parks and open space were not a key issue. The following represents a summary of suggested parks improvements:

Glenhyrst Gardens

- In need of upgrades including the infrastructure and plant material. Improvements to Glenhyrst are included in the 2003 Capital Budget.

John Wright Park

- More parking is needed.

Lorne Park

- Lorne Park is considered to be the most high profile park in the City. It was designed to showcase the City's horticultural expertise and annual plantings. As a result of the City's success in the Community in Blooms competition, the usage of the park has changed, resulting in a number of issues that need to be addressed.

- The park is being used as a prime location for the taking of wedding photographs. It is also being marketed and has developed into a tourist attraction. This has resulted in major parking problems involving cars (park along roadway through which is a safety hazard) as well as tour buses. A number of questions have been raised: Is the road necessary? Should the road be closed? Should there be parking? Where should the parking be located?
- The City's Engineering Department has undertaken a traffic analysis through the park. As a result, it has been recommended that speed bumps be installed (this was to have occurred in the Fall, 2002).
- In the past there have been discussions as to whether additional land can and should be acquired. Various scenarios have included purchasing the commercial site at the corner of Colborne Street and Gilkison Street or alternatively, purchasing the houses along Gilkison to accommodate a parking area. Staff indicated that one residential property that fronts onto Gilkison has been acquired.
- There is also an issue regarding the alignment of the City's trail system.
- Other potential uses at this location include a concession or tea house to serve the needs of visitors.
- Another issue that has been raised is that of recognition within the park for volunteer groups who have made substantial contributions to the park.

Mohawk Park

- Mohawk Park is considered to be the most frequently used municipal park as indicated by staff and the public at large. The issues at this location include an aging infrastructure (old water and sanitary lines need to be upgraded). Other improvements include revamping the splash pad as well as the washrooms. It was noted that this park requires ongoing maintenance and that a number of upgrades have been included in the 2003 capital budget.

Victoria Park

- Victoria Park has become the location to hold special events (e.g., chili cook offs). The park was not designed for this type of use and as a result has experienced a significant amount of wear and tear (e.g., breaking of irrigation lines).
- As indicated in Section 2, the development of a new Civic Square is one of the priorities identified in the City's Downtown Plan. In the interim, a policy has been passed which limits the number of special events that can be scheduled at Victoria Park.
- The Parks and Recreation Department have been working with the Planning Department to identify a location and to develop a Civic Square that can better handle these types of special events. A site opposite the Sanderson Centre, which features a city-owned parking lot, has been identified as a good location for the square.

Other

- All of the City's parks are aging, in particular the horticultural parks (e.g., Preston Park). This includes both the hard components (e.g., infrastructure, pathways, irrigation, lighting systems, etc.), as well as the soft components (e.g., turf, shrubs, plantings, etc.). The City needs to have a process in place which allows for a regular review of all of its parks facilities including the need for storage areas, parking washrooms, lighting and plant materials.

Recommendation: *That the City proceed with the development of a Master Plan for Lorne Park.*

Recommendation: *That the City continue in their efforts to develop a new Civic Square that will alleviate the wear and tear on Victoria Park.*

Recommendation: *That the City develop a parks monitoring and assessment program which assesses the parks on a regular basis and allows for the scheduling of necessary upgrades and maintenance in a timely and fiscally responsible manner.*

7.6 PARK STEWARDSHIP

Brantford's Natural Heritage plays an important role in the quality of life in the City. It provides environmental benefits, opportunities for heritage appreciation, aesthetics of urban form, and recreation and tourism benefits. Components of the Natural Heritage system (including woodlots and ravines) are located within the City's parks and open space areas. These natural areas need to be protected from the potential negative impacts of either passive or active recreation opportunities. The majority of household survey respondents feel that the City should do more to ensure that natural areas are protected.

The City's Official Plan has identified the significant environmental areas within Brantford and includes very good policies to protect them. The City's 2002 Fall Program Guide included an advertisement called "Nature in the City" that informs readers to "let it grow", "avoid dumping" and "use existing trails".

The following recommendations are intended to reinforce the policies and programs which are already in place.

Recommendation: *That the City continue to broaden its efforts to generate community and civic awareness and understanding about its natural heritage system and the features and areas contained therein.*

Recommendation: *That the City prohibit the development of municipal infrastructure and services within the natural heritage system and associated components unless it is absolutely essential and fully supported by the required studies and analysis and is in keeping with the Environmental Assessment Act.*

Recommendation: *That adequate and appropriate separation distances be applied in situations where parks and open space areas include both natural areas and developed recreation components (e.g., playing fields). Any impact on the natural heritage areas and features and the ecological function thereof should be avoided and/or properly mitigated.*

Recommendation: *That the City establish stewardship priorities for the natural heritage system. Stewardship may include direct ownership and management by the City as well as ownership and land stewardship initiatives by private landowners.*

7.7 TRAILS AND LINKED OPEN SPACE SYSTEM

Trails and linked open space systems have become increasingly important recreation and leisure features province-wide. The household survey asked respondents whether the City should expand its network of paved and multi-use trails and most feel that the trail system should be expanded.

In March of 2000, the City's Multi-Use Trail/Bikeway Implementation and Design Plan was prepared and is to be reviewed every 5 years. Brantford's trail system is designed to include 110 kilometres of Primary Routes, 52 kilometres of Neighbourhood Routes and Connecting Links for a total of 162 kilometres. Approximately 45 kilometres have been developed to date. It is noted that the Plan does not provide timing for the overall implementation of the trail system other than the 5 year review period.

The multi-use trails are to be designed to meet the needs of all users, including walkers, runners, cyclists, people with mobility aids, and in-line skaters at select locations.

Recommendation: *That the Multi-Use Trail/Bikeway Implementation and Design Plan continue to be implemented and reviewed every 5 years.*

The total cost to construct the trail system is estimated at \$6.7 million (1999 dollars). Concern was expressed regarding the amount of money being budgeted for trail development (approximately \$50,000 is budgeted annually) and the adequacy of staffing levels (see staffing recommendations Section 4.5.3).

Recommendation: *That the budget for trail development and maintenance be reviewed and adjusted to reflect the importance of trail development to Brantford residents.*

7.8 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

As previously indicated, the City cannot be expected to “do it all”. The need for assistance in developing and enhancing the City’s parks system has been recognized and addressed through creative arrangements with a variety of community partners.

Recommendation: *That the City continue to work with its partners in recreation to develop “value-added” improvements to the parks system. Such improvements should address City and local priorities and conform to City safety and design standards.*