



Staff Report

Council Meeting Date: June 9, 2025

Subject: Leash Free Park Request - Chesley

Report from: Carly Steinhoff, Park, Facilities and Recreation Manager

Attachments: Appendices A - E

Recommendation

Be It Resolved that Council hereby,

1. Receive Report REC-2025-09 Leash Free Park Request – Chesley;
2. Approve the potential two (2) locations for the Leash Free Park, including Northwest of the Pool and Near Chesley Landfill, for community input; and
3. Direct staff to engage with the Kinette Club of Chesley and develop a community consultation process for the Leash Free Park.

Background

Earlier in 2025, the Kinette Club of Chesley brought a request to Council for the possible procurement of a leash free dog park in Chesley. The Club has begun preliminary planning and have requested from the Municipality the following:

- Permission for an off-leash park in an appropriate location
- Municipal staff to lead this project
- Ongoing maintenance

The Kinette Club of Chesley has indicated that they would raise the funds for this park and amenities.

Analysis

Staff have been researching best practices regarding leash free parks:

- Location – it is suggested that parks be at a minimum of 2 acres or 2 hectares (4.94 acres). If possible, it should be set back 50 to 100 metres from playgrounds, splash pads, sport fields, schools, daycares and places of worship. They should not be located in environmentally sensitive areas. It is also recommended that they are not located in highly populated residential areas.
- Site Selection – it is recommended that prior to site selection, that appropriate Municipal staff and Councillors participate in a public meeting with neighbourhood residents and affected stakeholders.
- Fencing – it is recommended that fencing be a minimum of 1.2m in height (4 feet). Leash free parks should have a double gated entry system and it is highly recommended that there are separate areas and entrances for large dogs and small dogs.
- Amenities – leash free parks should include waste receptacles, benches, picnic tables, shade structures, potable water, dog play equipment, adequate parking and signage.

Staff have reviewed possible locations in Chesley that could potentially be utilized for a leash free park. The attached appendices show photos of each identified area. Sizes noted on the maps are for reference purposes only, and do not reflect the potential park size.

Northwest of Pool – Appendix A

Because this location is part of the park, an exact size is not known. It is estimated that there is approximately 1 hectare (2.47 acres). This area is treed with an open space in the middle. There are minimal residents in the area, but there is a resident to the south of this proposed location. There is no potable water at this site, but there is water at the pool. Park users can utilize park and pool parking options.

Near Chesley Landfill – Appendix B

The Municipality acquired property to the east, when entering the landfill. The entire area of this space is 2.82 hectares (6.97 acres) and was purchased for future expansion of the wastewater treatment facility. This area has limited residential impact, but no potable water. Staff do not currently maintain this area, so if selected, would be an additional space for staff maintenance and time.

East of All Wheel Park – Appendix C

There is a long, narrow stretch east of the wheel park, toward the soccer field. This area is approximately 0.27 hectares (0.66 acres). Staff feel that this is not an appropriate location, due to proximity to park amenities and size.

Hutchison Park – Appendix D

This is the park area behind Chesley Fire Hall. The parkland size in its entirety is 0.8 hectares (1.97 acres) and includes a playground equipment on the west side of the property. There are residents around the north, east and south side of this area.

Krug Memorial Park – Appendix E

Located on 2nd Street SW, Krug Park property, in its entirety, is 1.36 hectares (3.36 acres) and has historic artifacts and information from the former Krug Furniture factory. Although this area is sizable, its landscape is limiting for use of this purpose. There are bridges and trails, but not a lot of open spaces to convert to a leash free park.

Staff have listed these locations in the order that they feel are most appropriate to change their use to a leash free park. Staff are recommending that, should Council approve this project, Municipal staff in consultation with the Kinette Club of Chesley, begin the community consultation phase of this project and identify Northwest of Pool and Near Chesley Landfill as the two (2) proposed locations for the community to consider. Once the consultation process concludes, staff will bring a report back to Council with the community input and next steps.

Link to Strategic/Master Plan

6.5 Engaging People and Partnerships

Financial Impacts/Source of Funding/Link to Procurement Policy

The Kinette Club of Chesley has indicated that they would pay for this project. Should this be approved, there will be staff time associated with leading the leash free park as well as on-going maintenance.

Approved by: Emily Dance, Chief Administrative Officer