



The Corporation of the Town of Tecumseh

Community & Recreation Services

To: Mayor and Members of Council

From: Beth Gignac, Director Community & Recreation Services

Date to Council: November 14, 2023

Report Number: CRS-2023-21

Subject: Lakewood Park South – Parking Lot Security

Recommendations

It is recommended:

That Report No. CRS-2023-21 entitled “Lakewood Park South – Parking Lot Security” **be received;**

And that operational and capital costing for Option 4 outlined in Report No. CRS-2023-21 for additional security controls for Lakewood Park North and South **be referred to** 2024 budget deliberations.

Background

Records indicate that since 2020, there have been numerous incidents of public nuisance behaviours occurring in the parking lot at Lakewood Park South, primarily on weekends from mid-May to early October.

Over this time period, the Essex County – North Operations of the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) report to Administration that Officers have attended the parking lot at Lakewood Park South in response to 78 reported occurrences involving trouble with youth, noise complaints (music from vehicles or otherwise), open alcohol, people on the roof of the Parks shed, vehicle nuisance, public urination, and other similar types of behaviours.

The Parks By-law 2017-13 states that all parks are closed from 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. daily however, enforcement has always been on the “honour system” since it is very difficult to monitor and enforce improper access at all 41 parks in the community.

Comments

Since 2020, Administration met with both the OPP and residents in the area on multiple occasions and implemented several initiatives in an attempt to mitigate the situation. A summary of the initiatives can be found below:

2020

- Administration installed a fence between the Parks shed and the residential fences on the east side of the shed to prevent youth from gathering in that area
- Installed security cameras
- Ensured that the parking lot was illuminated to assist in improved visibility from Riverside Drive

2021/2022

- Ongoing monitoring by OPP through increased presence

2023

- Planting of “hostile” plant materials on Town property to prevent pedestrian ingress to the resident fences on the east side of the parking lot
- Installation of a divided cycling/pedestrian lane to prevent vehicles being able to park close to the resident fences on the east side of the parking lot
- Security contract with the Commissionaires to provide parking lot monitoring from May 25 – September 23 for a total of 18 weeks with 6.5 hour shifts (7:30pm – 2am) every Thursday to Sunday (72 shifts)

Unfortunately, these efforts have not reduced the number or types of occurrences. The OPP report that they were involved in 28 calls from the Commissionaires from May 22 – September 4, 2023 since the behaviour required the additional support from the OPP. This represents 39% of all security shifts where the volume of individuals and escalated behaviours created conditions which were unsafe to the Commissionaires. Furthermore, when individuals did leave the area, they either relocated to the parking area at Lakewood Park North or simply returned after a period.

In consultation with the OPP, Administration is providing the following options to address these nuisance incidents for Council’s consideration going forward:

1. Continue to monitor the area via complaint calls and/or nuisance calls to the OPP by residents;
2. Continue to request the OPP to patrol the area on an ad hoc/as possible basis during peak hours of concern 10:00 p.m. – 2:00 a.m. on weekends, in particular between June – September;
3. Install security cameras and permanent motion sensor lighting on the lighting stands in the parking lot and on the Parks shed;
4. Install permanent parking barrier arm system at the ingress/egress at both Lakewood Park South and Lakewood Park North with timed closure from 10pm – 7am, per Parks By-Law 2017-56 and, install security cameras on the lighting stands in the parking lots and on the Parks shed.

For Option #4, further consultations will be required with Chartwell St. Clair Beach Retirement Residence due to the agreement for their staff and visitors to use the parking lot at Lakewood Park South to ensure accommodations are incorporated in the plan to support their ongoing use of that area.

Administration recommends that Council consider implementation of Option #4 as the most viable option for both operational effectiveness and financial sustainability.

Consultations

Chief Administrative Officer
Essex County – North Operations of the Ontario Provincial Police

Financial Implications

Mitigation efforts since 2020 have totaled \$26,090 from Parks Lifecycle Reserve or annual Operating Budgets:

\$2,000	Fence at eastern side of the Parks shed
\$2,850	Parking lot bollards/line painting for pedestrian/cycling lane
\$21, 240	Commissionaires security (72 shifts) May 25 – September 22, 2023

Administration recommends that Council consider Option #4 and that current cost estimates are provided for the 2024 Capital Budget deliberations.

Link to Strategic Priorities

Applicable	2023-2026 Strategic Priorities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sustainable Growth: Achieve prosperity and a livable community through sustainable growth.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Health and Inclusion: Integrate community health and inclusion into our places and spaces and everything we do.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Service Experience: Enhance the experience of Team Tecumseh and our citizens through responsive and respectful service.

Communications

Not applicable

Website Social Media News Release Local Newspaper

This report has been reviewed by Senior Administration as indicated below and recommended for submission by the Chief Administrative Officer.

Prepared by:

Beth Gignac, BA Hons
Director Community & Recreation Services

Recommended by:

Margaret Misek-Evans, MCIP, RPP
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment Number	Attachment Name
None	None