

**KANATA LAKES NORTH NEIGHBOURHOOD**  
PARK FACILITIES PROGRAM UPDATE

November 2002

Prepared by:

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The 1989 Open space Master Plan was based on the existing Community Master Plan prepared by Genstar. This Master Plan for the subdivision set the conceptual direction for the 40% open space which included an 18 hole golf course, a natural environment area (NEA) and municipal parkland. The golf course, and NEA land areas and configurations were based on program and natural features, while the parks were somewhat more flexible and related to community design principles and the recreation needs. The findings of the recreation needs assessment at that time endorsed the provision of natural and linear, open space, as well as identified program elements which should be accommodated in the parks.

Thirteen years later, in 2002, the golf course has been expanded, development has reached the NEA area and the definition of those lands have been refined as an "on the ground" survey line. The subdivision layout requires refinement by the present owner KNL Developments Inc. to reflect this more precise NEA boundary with it's associated buffer zone and current market conditions as they relate to lot size, School Board options and the like in terms of subdivision layout. This juncture presents an opportunity to revisit the recreation need and trends as we find them in 2002, and revisit the municipal park configuration and program as part of the subdivision redesign. In this context the needs assessment is focused on the program needs which might best be accommodated within the remaining parklands.

A current review of recreation patterns, as reflected in current national surveys continues to endorse the concept of linear open space. Activities such as walking, bike riding and cross country skiing continue to be among the highest frequency of recreation activities. While no direct survey was conducted in the now existing neighbourhood, a comparison was made to determine recreation patterns of people of similar demographic profile. A review of the demand for sports field bookings and interviews with various sports groups confirmed that while linear open space is in high demand there is also need for community level sports fields within the available parkland.

While it would have been possible to configure the parkland component of the open space to connect and augment the NEA lands, this type of approach would be at the expense of providing active sports fields within the community. Luckily this need not be an "all or none" decision as the NEA lands provide an extraordinary resource in terms of path network community connectivity and distinctive neighbourhood character, such that sports fields in the remaining parks will provide that recreation component in addition, rather than at the expense of unstructured activities. More specifically, soccer pitches are in high demand as this sport has virtually exploded in participation numbers over the last decade, while softball and baseball participation has declined. Moreover it is clear that grouping of soccer pitches best accommodates, user needs, be it for families with children of different ages practicing at the same time, or to host tournaments. This being said it may be possible to configure these sports parks so that they also provide through community linkages.

Based on the review of recreation needs the following principles were developed to guide the configuration of parkland in the revised subdivision layout. These principles were presented for discussion at a public meeting in July and received general community support.

- The parks will be designed to accommodate Kanata's two main user groups: individuals and small groups participating in unstructured outdoor activities and Kanata Soccer;
- Park location and configuration will contribute to open space connections, i.e. Nodes of activity or destination points that are linked by trail systems;

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- The size of the parks will optimize the number of sports fields;
- Sports fields will be clustered together to allow for the development of ancillary facilities such as washrooms, play areas and parking;
- Trail management is necessary to reconcile conflicts among user groups and reduce trail deterioration;
- Sports fields will be provided for both introductory/ developmental play and competitive / tournament level activity.

These principles guided the redesign of the subdivision layout as it related to parks. This plan uses some of the allotted parkland to enhance community connections which can contain other elements such as seating areas, shade structures and play equipment, and does provide two small neighbourhood level parks within the core of the planned neighbourhood. One community level park adjacent to the Goulbourn Forced Road is large enough to provide four soccer pitches. This location on the edge of the community is deliberate, both to reduce traffic conflicts and to present a green gateway at that edge of the community. This park is large enough to provide up to four intermediate sized soccer pitches and 160 parking spaces (40/ pitch) as well as a field house/shade structure plus play area, which would serve as the orientation point for soccer activities as well as a community amenity. Another location, adjacent to Shirley's Creek is large enough to provide two small soccer practice fields.

The KNL Developments Inc. plan provides approximately twice the area, compared the 10.6 ha. provided for in the 1989 Open Space Master Plan for Marchwood - Lakeside. In closing, this reworking of the subdivision from a parks perspective both supports the recreation needs for both natural and linear open space concept surrounding the NEA lands without trading off that land for sports fields as is usually the condition with the conventional 5 % to 6% parkland dedication.

## I. PURPOSE OF THIS UPDATE

The lands which will become Kanata Lakes North neighbourhood were purchased from Genstar by KNL Developments. This new owner wished to revise the subdivision concept to reflect their corporate view in response to not only current market conditions, but also the final refinement of the actual Natural Environment Area (NEA) boundary.

The 1989 Open Space Master plan was based on the Community Master Plan prepared by the original landowner and land developer, Genstar. While the concept and agreement to provide 40% open space (this includes the golf course, NEA lands as well as parks) continues to be the core planning principle, with the passage of time several parameters have been fixed and with the presence of a the existing neighbourhoods there is a community with which to consult, which was not present thirteen years ago. Additionally a plan has been developed for the Trillium Woods Park which is on the north side of the Goulbourn Forced Road, the Terry Fox Road extension alignment has been fixed and some 600 acres or hectares of the March Highlands, which are high quality natural lands, have been purchased by the City of Ottawa adjacent to the Marchwood ' Lakeside community. The City of Ottawa planning and park planning staff were aware of shifts in recreation demands as well as changes in the approach to location and provision of sports fields in parkland since the 1989 study.

In short the revisiting of the subdivision concept and the impending development of Kanata Lakes North provided not only an opportunity to revisit the park configurations and facilities program, but

has also instilled some urgency to update the plans before the subdivision plans are refiled.

## **2. SYNOPSIS OF 1989 OPEN SPACE MASTER PLAN FOR MARCHWOOD. LAKESIDE**

### **Torrance and Wright July, 1989**

#### **Open Space Master Plan Marchwood-Lakeside. City of Kanata**

The main objectives of the Study were to record and assess the recreational potential of proposed park sites, identify the recreational needs of the Marchwood-Lakeside Community and prepare conceptual park plans and cost estimates for the development of proposed park sites. The study includes an inventory of parkland, demographic analysis, community survey results, standards for recreation amenities and costing. The Open Space System included 40% of the total development area (567 hectares (1,400 acres) of land, eventually housing 23,000 people. The parkland included:

- a. 18 hole golf course (72 ha or 177 acres)
- b. municipal parkland (41 ha (102 acres)
- c. natural environment area (128 ha 316 acres)
- d. storm water management areas (within parkland or NEA's)

The survey results rated playgrounds, swimming, cycling and skating as highly important activities as well as 'enjoyment of nature'. From the survey results the report recommended preserving natural features as much as possible, providing an extensive bike path system, providing loose surface trails through natural settings, provide interpretive information at points of interest; provide recreational skating at local neighbourhood level ponds; locate sports fields on or near school sites and possibly out of the area in the business park or close by. The proposed program included 8 soccer fields, 3 ball diamonds, 1 multipurpose field, 3 tennis court areas, 1 athletic track, 7 play structures, 8 tot lots, 2 pond areas for outdoor skating. The Report notes the need to use Beaverbrook's facilities and also that these need improvement. A review of the parks and facilities within the Kanata Lakes North neighbourhood in the 1898 is summarized in the table below.

#### Summary of Park Facilities within the Kanata Lakes North Neighbourhood

##### **Park # 7      8.4 ha.**

- twinned with 2 school sites
- 2, 60 x 100 m soccer pitches
- paths
- 2, play areas

##### **Park #8      2.2 ha.**

- twinned with school site
- play area
- paths
- "potential field" - would require extensive clearing. and grubbing

#### **Total Park Area 10.6 ha.**

## **3. RECREATION NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

In order to understand the needs of both existing and projected Kanata Lakes residents and

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recommend preferred options for the development of the remaining parkland in this area, the Needs Assessment, detailed in Appendix A, included the following steps:

- A review of relevant background documents;
- An analysis of trends, specifically popular physical activities, recreation expenditures and the health status of children and youth in Canada;
- A demographic comparison of Ottawa, former Kanata and Kanata Lakes, profiling age, income and education variables;
- A Situational Analysis - determining the current registration numbers of Kanata organizations, discussions with some community groups;
- A review of the community's comments and feedback from the public and stakeholder meetings.

Given the time frame, the desire to find practical solutions and the fact, to some extent, that the community has been quite satisfied with its outdoor amenities, no comprehensive random sample household survey was conducted.

With respect to pertinent background documents, the 1989 *Open Space Master Plan Marchwood-Lakeside Report*, has been described earlier. Some of the germane highlights from other reports are summarized below and elaborated in Appendix A:

- The 1992 *Brunton Report* recommended an amendment to Kanata's Official Plan to consolidate, clarify and expedite sound ecological planning and management direction for the NEA's of the Kanata Lakes Study Area (Lots 6,7,8 and 9 of Concessions 2 and 3), that non-conforming activity be removed from the NEA area such as biking activity that erodes the environment;
- The *South March Community Parks Master Plan* which included Morgan's Grant and Riddell Village had an anticipated population of 9,600 and the Plan noted the need for larger scale outdoor facilities and a shortage of ball diamonds and sports fields within the community; the Plan also recommended that the City start acquiring school property options in order to meet the needs of the Morgan's Grant area;
- The 1997 *Rural Parks and Open Space Plan* recommended developing criteria for property acquisition, enhancing facilities at Pinhey's Point, and acquiring land to provide a centrally located community scale active park facility;
- The 1995 *City of Kanata Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan* recommended the initiation of a major outdoor sports complex with 1 major baseball field, 1 intermediate softball field, 1 major soccer, 1 intermediate soccer, 1 minor soccer field and 6 tennis courts built in the short term (1996,99) to service the entire city. In the medium term (2000,2005) the Report identified the need to continue the outdoor sports complex with 3 additional intermediate softball diamonds, 2 intermediate soccer fields and 2 tennis courts;
- A 1999 *Staff Report to Kanata Council* indicated the immediate need, as a result of rapid growth in soccer, for 3 sports fields, and upgrades to existing fields to service the entire city. The Report indicated that soccer registration in Kanata had grown from 2500 in 1995 to 3500 in 1998. Today, it's reported to be about 4,200.

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Based on the demographic and trends information we know that:

- Kanata Lakes is a young, highly educated, family oriented community with above average household incomes, so we can anticipate above average participation rates in recreation and cultural activities;
- Based on both the demographic data and soccer registration information, it's anticipated that soccer participation will continue to grow in the short and medium terms;
- The current number of soccer fields in Kanata does not meet the need as identified in several earlier reports and supported by the anecdotal evidence that the Kanata Soccer Club is turning away 250,350 potential participants annually; this shortage is not a Kanata Lakes issue, as much as it is both a ward-wide and most definitely a city-wide issue;
- With the aging baby boomers, *walking*, which has consistently been the most popular physical activity over the past two decades, will continue to be popular and therefore trail use will certainly continue to escalate;
- Of the twenty-eight Kanata residents who attended the Kanata 'Lakes July Open House, 22 supported a ratio allocation of Open Space of 88% NEA complete with an integral trail network and 12% active park space ratio; the majority also supported clustered sports fields and on-street parking;
- With greater concern about the 'environment' and degradation flagged as early as 1992, a review of whether trail bike riding is appropriate, and should be allowed is necessary before refining the width, material alignment of the actual trails.

Based on the above overview of findings, the following is recommended:

- With increased numbers of users trail conflict can be anticipated and will need to be resolved; a well marked trail system and trail management plan should be developed;
- Based on existing trail use patterns, the City's Study on Natural Environment Areas being undertaken currently, and the earlier Brunton Report, the City needs to work with the local community and trail users to clearly define the Kanata Lakes Trail Network including its purpose, destination points, linkage, surface type, usage, prime users, liability, maintenance and conflict resolution;
- There is a need for 'community-level' soccer fields, preferably clustered, possibly with a school location, to maximize parking/ washroom and complementary play amenities.
- Some smaller park locations may serve neighbourhood needs and if possible, should connect to the Trail Network.

#### **4. PARK FACILITIES RECOMMENDATIONS**

In addition to the recreation needs a shift in the approach to planning parks over the thirteen years since the Open Space Master Plan for Marchwood – Lakeside influenced the location and configuration of the parks as set out in the KNL developments Inc. Sub-division plan. This park planning approach is, based in response to observations gained from dealing with programming and user's comments from other similar suburban neighbourhoods in Ottawa, as experienced by the authors of this report and as reported by City of Ottawa Park Planning professionals. The 1989 plan assumed that parks should be centrally located within the neighbourhood and twinned with school properties. While the concept of locating parks centrally still applies for the small neighbourhood parks, thinking has changed in regards to parks with sports fields.

The current approach to providing sports fields is to consolidate fields together in larger parks rather than distributed sites, locate the parks at the edges of neighbourhoods and provide parking, accessed from collector roadways. This approach is in response observations about how the fields are used and complaints about traffic circulation and parking in existing neighbourhoods. Parks with several fields optimize the number of fields per hectare of parkland, as well as facilitate the efficiency of maintenance. Not only do multiple field facilities work better for tournaments, but often different age groups are able to practice in the same park, which simplifies practice logistics for families with siblings on different teams practicing at the same time. While the model of sports fields being within walking distance of the participant's homes, the actual usage usually involves arrival by car. This association of cars to fields is for many reasons, including athletes arriving from other neighbourhoods, parents running late and bringing younger siblings, matches with other districts and the like. On street parking adjacent to homes near parks is a constant source of resident complaints, with safety in areas without sidewalks being sited as the main concern. The associated traffic on local streets abutting homes is also an irritant, and can be mitigated by locating sports parks on collector roads so that access to parking, and even on street parking minimizes circulation on the local street network.

In support of the use patterns of sports parks, a centralized gathering area with shade, play structure, seating and even water or washroom facilities sets up a natural location for registration and the like for tournaments and community events but also recognizes the need for parents with young children to allow them to play while their older sibling is practicing or participating in a match.

The trail system within the NEA, and linkages to that trail is intended to be a continuous system. Care must be taken not to interrupt this trail with storm water fore bays. A preliminary alignment was flagged in the field by Jerry Corush, Bernie Muncaster and Alan Cameron in the Summer of 2002. While the width and surface material of this trail was not resolved, the assumption was that this trail would be for pedestrian use. Should a bike riding trail, be required the alignment, particularly as it relates to slopes would be quite different from a walking trail so that it is challenging as well as separate from the pedestrian trail to minimize conflicts. Surface materials, slope retention and the like for a bike trail would also be considerably different from a walking trail to withstand the erosion, and limit the tendency for cyclists to create new trails.

The following key plan and table set out recommendations for the facilities within the parks in the KNL developments Inc. subdivision Plan. Schematic plans of parks "C" and "F" have been developed to test the potential field layouts. Actual design of these parks will require judgements as to removal of existing trees and more detailed review of the size of fields required.

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PARKS KEY PLAN



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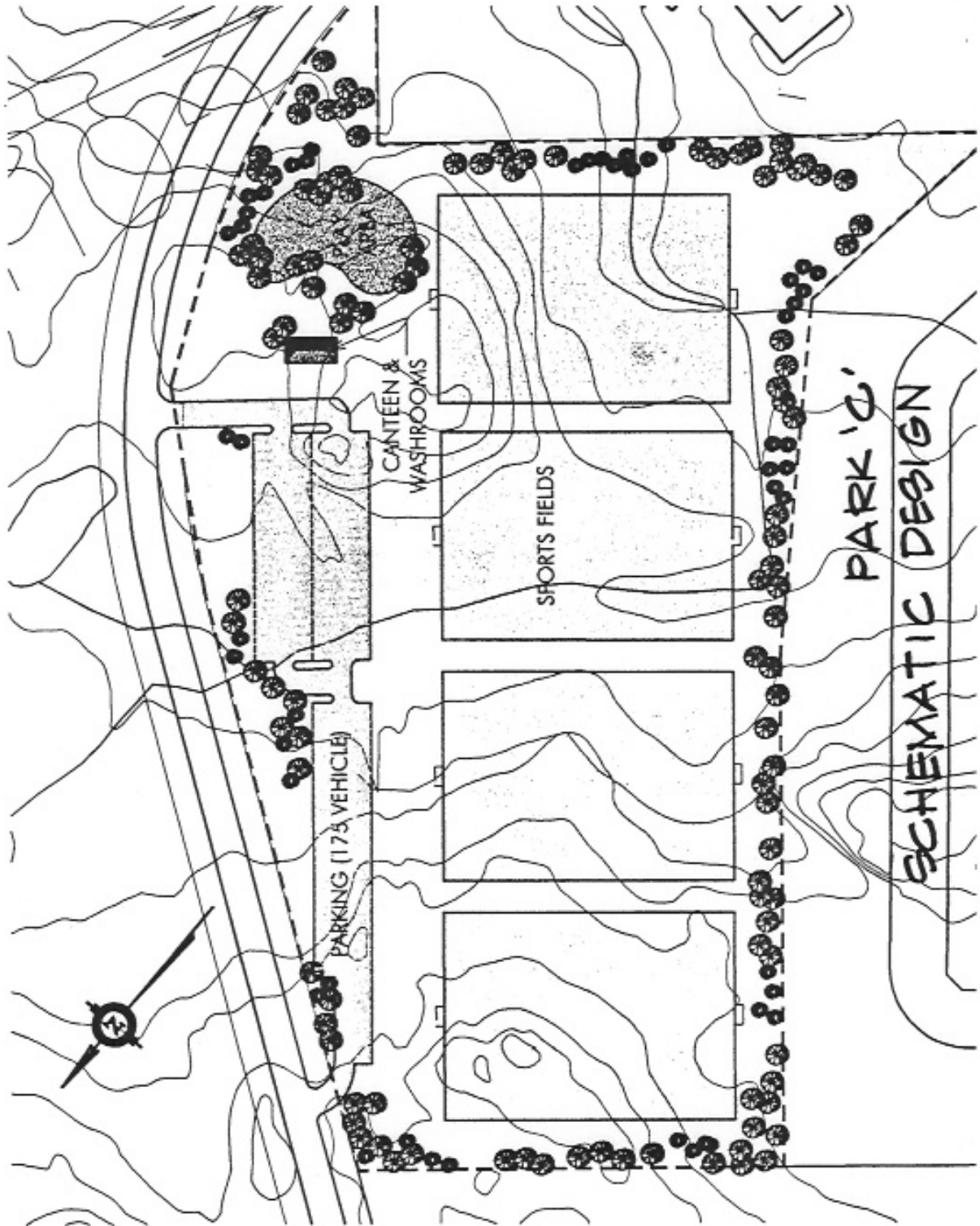
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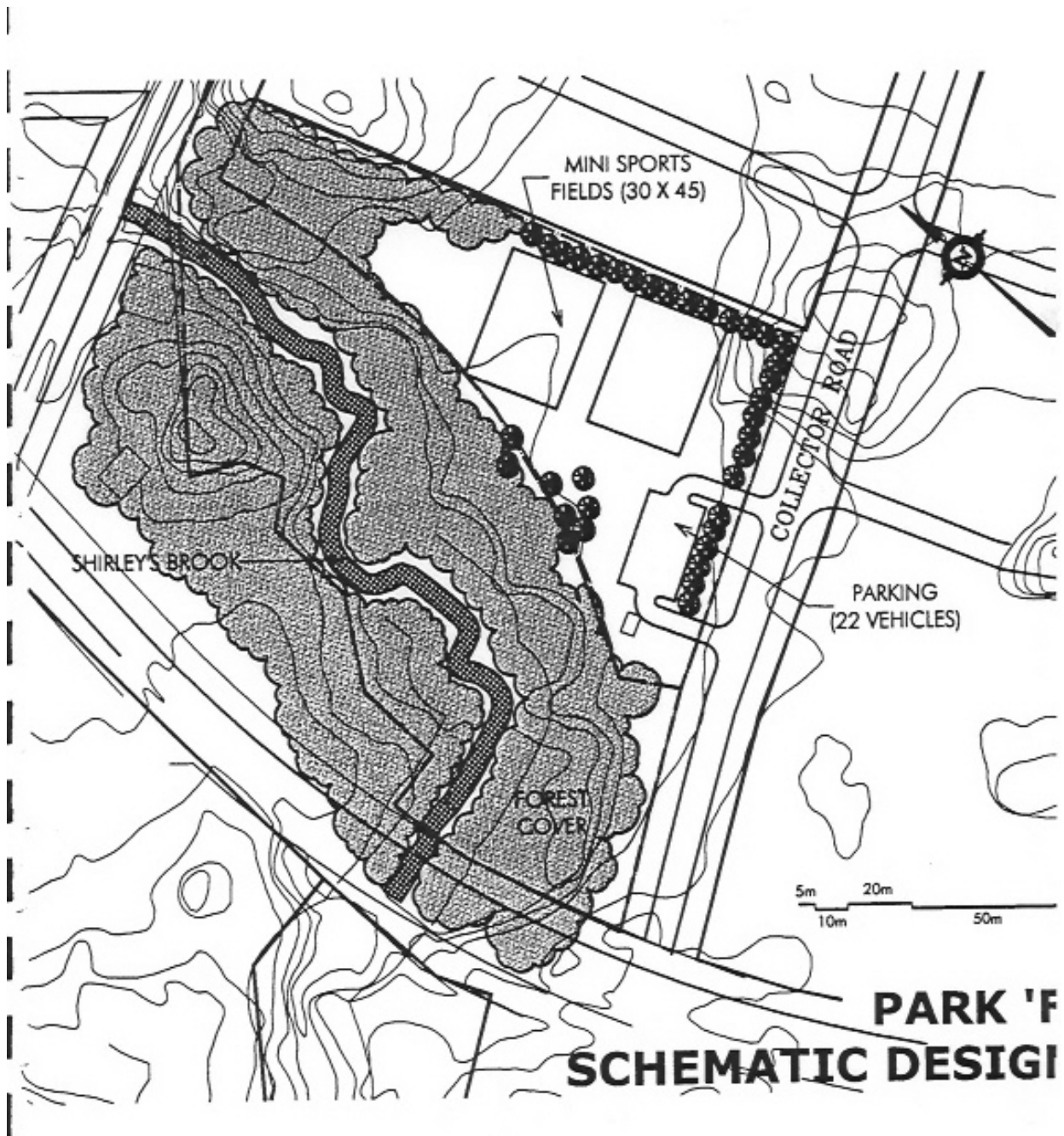
Park	Area	Role	Facilities
A	3.86 ha	Natural Amenity	. rock knoll, natural feature
B	0.46 ha	Neighbourhood Amenity and Punctuation	. along collector roadway . shade structure, sitting area . play area
C	3.9ha	Community Level Sports Park	. open level grass area for informal play . up to four 60 x 100 m soccer pitches . parking for 160 cars (forty/pitch) . central shade structure, gathering area, play equipment . preserve groups of existing trees, where practical
D	3.14 ha	Linear Connector and Relocated Stream	. 30 m width additional to railway corridor in which a recreation path or trail can be located as part of the community wide trail and patch network . retain exiting trees as practical
E	0.57 ha	Neighbourhood Amenity and Punctuation along Collector Roadway	. shade structure, sitting area . play area . open level grass area for informal play . preserve existing trees as practical
F	8.64 ha	Natural Amenity Area, Containing Stream	. path and trail connection along railway corridor, preservation of Shirley's Brook as fish habitat . sufficient space for two mini soccer practice pitches, sand twenty-two parking spaces subject to evaluation of existing trees
O	2.37 ha	Natural Open Space Corridor and	. trail connection from rail corridor to NEA as part of the community wide trail and path network
H	2.0ha	10 m Wide Buffer Strip along NEA (natural environment area) Lands	. buffer for NEA
I	0.42 ha	Natural Open Space Corridor and Landscape Boulevards as Community Entry Feature	NEA lands
Total Park Area	25.36 ha		. four possible 60 x 100 soccer pitches and two mini soccer practice pitches

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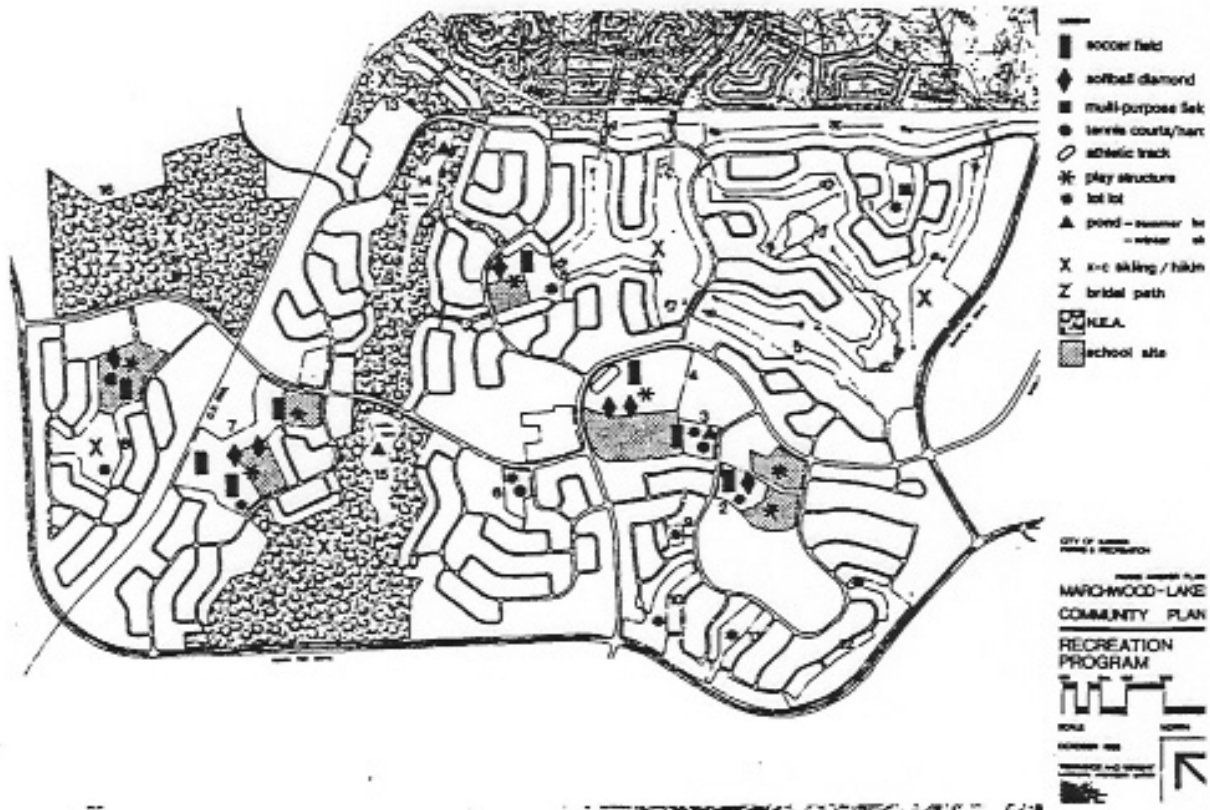




#### 4. Situational Analysis - The Study Area

The overall development plan for the Marchwood-Lakeside community had an open space component representing 40% of the total development area (836haj595 acres), including:

- An 18 hole golf course (72 ha/ 177 acres)
- Municipal parkland (41 ha/ 102 acres)
- Natural Environment Area (128 haj316 acres)



The 1989 Marchwood-Lakeside Open Space Master Plan recommended preserving natural features as much as possible, providing an extensive bike path system, providing loose surface trails through natural settings and interpretive information at points of interest; providing recreational skating at local neighbourhood level ponds; locating sports fields on or near school sites and possibly out of the area in the business park or close by. The proposed program for the entire Marchwood-Lakeside area included 8 soccer fields, 3 ball diamonds, 1 multipurpose field, 3 tennis court areas, 1 athletic track, 7 play structures, 8 tot lots, 2 pond areas for outdoor skating.

The Kanata Lakes North Neighbourhoods specifically included 2 park sites twinned

with a potential school site and the following amenities were proposed in 1989:

Park #7 (8.4 ha):                2 (60x100 m) soccer pitches  
   Paths  
   2 play areas

Park # 8 (2.2 ha):              1 play area  
   Paths  
   Potential field (extensive clearing required)

At the public meeting in July, 2002, the City of Ottawa indicated, after researching the various agreements and legal documents, that Kanata Lakes has a total of 560 acres of dedicated open space and within the Urbandale land holdings, approximately 271 acres is to be dedicated to active parks, natural environment area (NEA) and walkway linkages, with about 88% or 238.5 acres of NEA and 12% or 35.5 acres in active park spaces.

The community was asked for their feedback at this meeting and the full results are documented in Appendix C. Some highlights of this feedback are:

- 78% supported the ratio of 88% NEA and 12% Active Park Space
- 78% agreed with the criteria for defining the environmental sensitive area within the NEA being: representation of diverse natural features, protection of sensitive natural features, and topography
- While the majority agreed with the criteria, only half agreed with the
  - proposed boundary
- 57% preferred a cluster of sports fields versus individual sports fields
- 50% preferred on-street parking versus 39% on-site parking
- 50% wanted mountain bikers restricted to their own trail system 42% did
  - not want them restricted
- 71% supported restrictions on trail use