

**BNEC.01**

**Shell Type = use for OPA Amendment**

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**File No: O-8002**  
**Planner: B. PAGE**

<b>TO:</b>	<b>CHAIR AND MEMBERS PLANNING &amp; ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE</b>
<b>FROM:</b>	<b>JOHN M. FLEMING DIRECTOR, LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>APPLICATION BY: CITY OF LONDON RECLASSIFICATION OF URBAN PARKS  PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MEETING ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2012</b>

<b>RECOMMENDATION</b>
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That, on the recommendation of the Director, Land Use Planning and City Planner and concurred by the Director of Parks and Recreation, based on the application of the City of London relating to policies for municipal parks, the proposed by-law attached hereto as a Appendix "B", **BE INTRODUCED** at the February 21<sup>st</sup>, 2012, Municipal Council meeting to amend the Official Plan by changing Section 16 to add a separate category for Urban Parks within the park hierarchy system.

<b>PREVIOUS REPORTS PERTINENT TO THIS MATTER</b>
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None

<b>PURPOSE AND EFFECT OF RECOMMENDED ACTION</b>
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The proposed policy amendments will confirm the definition and role of urban parks within the City of London parks hierarchy system, as recommended in the 2009 Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan.

<b>RATIONALE</b>
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1. Urban parks are unique sites, located generally in more dense areas of the city, containing a variety of characteristics that are not found in one specific tier of the parks hierarchy system.
2. The Official Plan, in its original development, did not contemplate the form of the current urban park and the role it forms within the new approach to the City design.
3. The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan, adopted in 2009, recommended the expansion of the parks hierarchy system to include urban parks.

<b>SIGNIFICANT DEPARTMENT/AGENCY COMMENTS</b>
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London Hydro, Upper Thames River Conservation Authority and EEPAC have no concerns with the application.

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<b>PUBLIC LIAISON:</b>	Living in the City Notice September 13, 2011	1 reply
<p><b>Nature of Liaison:</b> Possible amendment to the City's Official Plan to review the City's park hierarchy classification system to include urban parks as another tier within the system. Consideration of the review will be given to Chapter 16 of the Official Plan.</p>		
<p><b>Responses:</b> The one inquiry sought general information and was in support of the proposed amendments.</p>		

<b>ANALYSIS</b>
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The City's goals and strategies for the development of parks within the City are outlined in the Official Plan in Chapter 16 (Parks and Recreation Policies). The policies in this chapter provide direction for the provision of parkland and recreation services. The Plan sets out a parks classification system or hierarchy where each level serves a different function to accommodate a variety of recreational and leisure activities.

The Parks and Recreation Strategic Master Plan, approved by Municipal Council in 2009, provides direction for staff to undertake the review of urban parks with the intension to include them within the Official Plan. Recommendation 105 reads, *"Add an "Urban Park" category to the existing parkland classification and hierarchy established in the Official Plan, along with appropriate definitions, standards, and policies. An alternative funding program may be required for the full development of "Urban Parks"*.

An urban park may develop in many forms such as a plaza, civic square or civic green and is a reflection of emerging residential growth patterns and a movement toward improved walkability and place-making. These parks are typically located in more dense area of the city where land supply is limited. They satisfy the recreational and leisure needs of a larger population base and provide a higher level of service to the surrounding community than a neighbourhood or district park.

One of the key components or successes of urban parks is the design. The park must accommodate a large volume of users with a variety of interests and needs. The design, layout and functionality of the park are key. As a result, the cost of designing, construction and maintaining these civic spaces is higher than that budgeted for typical neighbourhood parks.

Generally these parks contain a variety of seating areas, enhanced pathways, higher end amenities and greater interface with the neighbourhood and the surrounding streets while maintaining a unique and consistent theme. The success or failure of the park is its incorporation into it surrounding space, reflecting the design of the neighbourhood; built or proposed; and the desired function/needs of the surrounding neighbourhood. The park, in these more dense areas of the city, both emerging and established, becomes the focal point of the community and as such needs to reflect a unique character/amenity that the currently park classification system cannot accommodate.

The City of London uses a four-tiered classification system to match parkland resources with user needs consisting of neighbourhood, district, city-wide and regional parks. The purpose, function, size, location, and activities that are intended to be provided are identified for each tier.

Currently, urban parks would be considered as a type of "neighbourhood park" and as such are subject to the provisions in section 16.2.5 that characterize the purpose, service radius, size, topography, location and use of neighbourhood parks. However, the range of amenities and the style of design is sufficiently different, that there should be a separate category listed in the Official Plan for urban parks to support London's current planning direction.

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To reflect this change in the park classification system the following modification to the Official Plan should be undertake:

Chapter 16 should be amended to:

- a) Insert a new clause 16.2.\_. with a new policy number that establishes Urban Parks as a separate classification to the existing four-tier park hierarchy.

**16.2.\_.      *Urban Park***

*Urban Parks are intended to be provided and developed in accordance with the following provisions:*

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Purpose and Functions | i) Urban parks should be the focal point of the community and developed for the enjoyment of a diverse population including individuals, family groups and community organizations. Opportunities for many types of recreational, social and leisure development will be provided. The park is to satisfy the needs of the local community in more dense areas of the city and will maintain a higher level of design and service. |
| Service Radius        | ii) Urban parks should be accessible to the community by means of public access generally in the form of pedestrian walkways and bicycle paths. Typical service area radius should be less than 800 metres (10 minute walk).   |
| Size                  | iii) Urban parks may vary in size depending upon the availability of land, the nature and extent of the facilities to be provided, but the minimum size will be 0.25 hectares.   |
| General Topography    | iv) Urban Parks should be flat and well drained in order to accommodate a variety of recreational and leisure activities. These parks are more urban in character and could contain a significant amount of hard surfaces. Depending on the site characteristics and available park space, contour variations and vegetation will be retained and enhanced to create an attractive setting.  |
| Location              | v) Urban Parks should be centrally located, in order to be within safe and convenient walking distance of the majority of neighbourhood. The park will be designed with extensive street frontage (50% minimum) and should integrate the street frontage into the design of the park. Where possible the park will be coordinated with other public space.   |
| Activities            | vi) Urban parks can be designed for multi-purpose or specialized functions; they are intended to be the focal point of the community. Multi-purpose parks should offer a wide range of recreational and leisure opportunities, ideally for all four seasons.   |

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<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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The addition of an “Urban Park” category such as plazas, civic squares, civic greens, is recommended by the Parks and Recreation Master Plan to reflect emerging residential growth patterns and a movement toward improved walkability and place-making. To ensure the success and maintenance of these parks, alternate funding streams will be required to cover the additional costs associated with this park type.

Urban Parks are unique and desirable areas to be located within the city. These publically owned spaces will provide an opportunity for social gathering, recreation and/or leisure. They are intended to be the focal point of the community and are found in more dense areas of the city.

The proposed changes to the Official Plan will recognize these forms of parks and provide opportunity for appropriate funding.

<b>PREPARED BY:</b>	<b>SUBMITTED BY:</b>
<b>BRUCE PAGE – SR. PLANNER, PARKS PLANNING &amp; DESIGN</b>	<b>A. W. MACPHERSON MANAGER- PARKS PLANNING &amp; DESIGN</b>
<b>RECOMMENDED BY:</b>	<b>CONCURRED BY:</b>
<b>JOHN M. FLEMING, MCIP, RPP DIRECTOR, LAND USE PLANNING AND CITY PLANNER</b>	<b>WILLIAM C. COXHEAD, O.A.L.A. DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT</b>

January 26, 2012  
 bp  
 Attach

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**Responses to Public Liaison Letter and Publication in “Living in the City”**

**Email**

**Written**

Peter Sergautis, Extra Realty Limited

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## **Appendix A**

The following lists the parks that would be included within the Urban Parks category:

- Campbell Memorial Park – 380 Dundas Street
- Doidge Park – 300 Cromwell Street
- Golden Jubilee Square – 99 Dundas Street
- Covent Market Plaza – 128 King Street
- McMahan – 640 Adelaide Street North
- Piccadilly Park – 695 Waterloo Street
- Queens Park – 900 King Street
- R.H. Cooper Square – 300 Dufferin Avenue

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**APPENDIX B**

Bill No. (number to be inserted by Clerk's Office)  
2012

By-law No. C.P.-1284-\_\_\_\_\_

A by-law to amend the Official Plan for the City of London, 1989 relating to the Urban Parks within the park hierarchy system.

The Municipal Council of The Corporation of the City of London enacts as follows:

1. Amendment No. (to be inserted by Clerk's Office) to the Official Plan for the City of London Planning Area – 1989, as contained in the text attached hereto and forming part of this by-law, is adopted.
2. This by-law shall come into effect in accordance with subsection 17(38) of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13*.

PASSED in Open Council on February 21, 2012.

Joe Fontana  
Mayor

Catharine Saunders  
City Clerk

First Reading – February 21, 2012  
Second Reading – February 21, 2012  
Third Reading – February 21, 2012



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**AMENDMENT NO.**  
**to the**  
**OFFICIAL PLAN FOR THE CITY OF LONDON**

**A. PURPOSE OF THIS AMENDMENT**

The purpose of this Amendment is:

To add a new policy to Section 16.2 of the Official Plan to add Urban Parks as a new tier within the Park’s Hierarchy System.

**B. LOCATION OF THIS AMENDMENT**

- 1. This Amendment applies to all lands located in the City of London.

**C. BASIS OF THE AMENDMENT**

The addition of an “Urban Park” category such as plazas, civic squares, civic greens, is recommended by the City of London’s Parks and Recreation Master Plan to reflect emerging residential growth patterns and a movement toward improved walkability and place-making.

Urban Parks are unique and desirable areas to be located within the city. These publically owned spaces will provide an opportunity for social gathering, recreation and/or leisure and will function as a focal point of the community. They are generally located in more dense areas of the city where land area is limited.

**D. THE AMENDMENT**

The Official Plan for the City of London is hereby amended as follows:

- 1. By adding the following new section to Section 16.2 of the Official Plan:

“16.2.\_            Urban Park

Urban Parks are intended to be provided and developed in accordance with the following provisions:

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Purpose and Functions | i) Urban parks should be the focal point of the community and developed for the enjoyment of a diverse population including individuals, family groups and community organizations. Opportunities for many types of recreational, social and leisure development will be provided. The park is to satisfy the needs of the local community in more dense areas of the city and will maintain a higher level of design and service. |
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| General Topography    | iv) Urban Parks should be flat and well drained in order to accommodate a variety of recreational and leisure activities.  |

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- |            |  |
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| Location   | v) Urban Parks should be centrally located, in order to be within safe and convenient walking distance of the majority of neighbourhood. The park will be designed with extensive street frontage (50% minimum) and should integrate the street frontage into the design of the park. Where possible the park will be coordinated with other public space. |
| Activities | vi) Urban parks can be designed for multi-purpose or specialized functions; they are intended to be the focal point of the community. Multi-purpose parks should offer a wide range of recreational and leisure opportunities, ideally for all four seasons.”  |

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