



Report to Council

Department: Community Services
Division: Parks and Facilities
Date: September 2, 2025
Prepared by: Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services
Report Number: Parks and Facilities-2025-07
Subject: Essex Town Centre Park Design – Feedback Results
Number of Pages: 9

Recommendation(s)

That Parks and Facilities-2025-07 entitled Essex Town Centre Park Design – Feedback Results, prepared by Jake Morassut, Director, Community Services dated September 2, 2025, be received, and

That Council approve the design plan to prepare cost estimates for presentment at the 2026 budget deliberations.

Purpose

To provide Council with an update on the results of the public feedback survey for the design of Essex Town Centre Park.

Background and Discussion

In 2024, the Town of Essex assumed land in Essex Town Centre, in accordance with the Parkland Dedication requirement for new housing developments. Since assumption of the land, Administration has been working with Ron Koudys Landscape Architects to develop a design

plan for the park. A webpage dedicated to this project was available May 1, 2025, until May 31, 2025, for residents to provide feedback on the park design.

Administration reached out to advocacy agencies for parks and recreation, such as the Ontario Parks Association, Parks and Recreation Ontario, as well as other municipalities to determine features that are recommended for neighbourhood parks. The feedback from these agencies/municipalities was in line with the design plan, which includes playgrounds, shade structures, and some green space. Most of the time, because neighbourhood parks are small in land size and intended to be walkable to those within 500 meters of the park space, they do not contain parking areas or washrooms.

During the Council meeting, it was mentioned that there should be more activities for teenagers. This park does have features that would accommodate older ages as the level of challenge for the rope climber is considered higher difficulty than other standard playground features. As well, the shelter space is a great area for teens and adults to socialize.

Based on the feedback from the survey, Administration recommends proceeding with the design plan, as presented at the May 5, 2025, Council meeting.

Below are the comments received from the public survey, for Councils information.

Neighbourhood Park Related Comments:

- I would like to see this becoming a reality.
- Your design of the new park in Essex on Jones & Lane Street looks wonderful for the kids. Glad to see some shade area.
- The plan for this park project looks amazing.
- Park concept looks good.

- Park idea is great I'm just wondering if the sidewalk along south Talbot will be made to go that far?
- It would be amazing to have more than one infant swing (2x).
- The plan looks very nice. It's not my neighbourhood, but I'm always in support of more updated park spaces for the kids.
- Please go forward with the proposed park!! Essex needs more parks for our kids!
- Plans and pictures of the new park look great.
- I kindly urge you to prioritize and expedite the completion of this park. Our community has waited patiently, but it is becoming increasingly difficult without this essential facility.
Thank you.
- Although the development of this park will not affect me personally, I think it looks like a lovely little park.
- With so many kids in the area this is a great idea! Keep kids safe and happy!
- This would be great to have something for the kids.
- The park's layout looks fantastic! We're all looking forward to seeing it built soon, as the neighbors have eagerly anticipated a place for our children to play.
- Would be very nice for the kids in the town.
- This neighborhood needs a park for there children they are to far from others.
- This is an essential investment in the well-being and future of our community.
- It is a beautiful design. All I ask is more baby swings.

Community Park Related Comments:

- There are no parking spots designated like big hill park. It shouldn't be assumed there is room on the street to park. Perfect example is the Morris Ave Park. When it's busy there is no where to park. Most people drive to that park.
- There are several families in this neighbourhood and that is why I would suggest building a few pavilions in place of some of the lawn/trees, so that more families and friends can enjoy the shaded areas.
- Also, must be a dog park separate area.
- Please leave some space where just beautiful green space can be enjoyed. Add paths and gardens, sure. But leave out the ugly, unnatural, obnoxiously colourful play equipment.
- A washroom would be so nice. (2x)
- Solar lights to keep the area lit at nighttime to avoid disruption or vandalism.
- Adequate parking spaces.
- It would be neat to have another nature area like Sadlers pond, with water and the wildlife that comes with it.
- Consider putting in some type of calisthenics park for teens to grow their skills.

Miscellaneous Comments:

- Another neat thought would be to arrange for food and beverage vendors to be there on occasion, like an ice cream truck, lemonade truck, food truck, etc.
- We have enough parks 300 thousand do something better.
- The current playgrounds in Essex and near the splash pad are too small. And please make it little fast, we are waiting for 3 years now and it's still nothing done. (2x)

- As someone who is a mother, I would like this park to have a more accessible pathway route that is safe for everyone to access this park.
- Paving a sidewalk along the main road or creating a path through the industrial walk field would allow for all of Essex to safely enjoy this park.
- We have enough parks and splash pads how about a pool for the town instead?
- There are already parks in town with plastic, ugly playground equipment and there are never kids there.
- I would like to see grass cut and properties maintained.
- Any reason why a more central or more well-established neighborhood wasn't chosen for this project?
- I would say add a walking path on that road. So, people can walk from there to the park?

Financial Impact

The future park was included as part of the Development Charge Study/By-Law that was passed by Council, which included \$300,000, fully funded through Development Charges, allocated toward this project.

This park construction project is anticipated to be presented to Council during the 2026 budget deliberation.

Consultations

Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer

Rodney Klie, Manager, Parks and Facilities

Link to Strategic Priorities

- Embrace asset management best practices to build, maintain, and continuously improve our municipally owned infrastructure.
- Leverage our Town's competitive advantages to promote jobs and economic investment.
- Take care of our natural environment and strengthen the sense of belonging to everyone who makes Essex "home".
- Deliver friendly customer service in an efficient, effective, and transparent manner while providing an exceptional working environment for our employees.
- Build corporate-level and community-level climate resilience through community engagement and partnership and corporate objectives.

Report Approval Details

Document Title:	Essex Town Centre Park Design - Feedback Results - Parks and Facilities-2025-07.docx
Attachments:	- 24-171w-Lf-L-1 LANDSCAPE PLAN (D)_Edit.pdf - Essex Town Centre Park Design.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Aug 22, 2025

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Giurissevich". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Kate Giurissevich, Chief Administrative Officer - Aug 22, 2025 - 10:04 AM