

THRIVE's SUBMISSION TO COUNCIL
Re: Proposals for Jack Purdie & Centennial Parks

Issue: PARKING

THRIVE applauds Amherstburg Council on the consultation process to date regarding the future of Jack Purdie and Centennial Parks. In the spirit of requesting feedback we would like to offer our thoughts on PARKING.

While we recognize that the designs that were presented are preliminary and it is difficult to understand specifics, we have concerns that the parking spaces as outlined are excessive. We are concerned that the town will follow its current parking minimums regulations to make unnecessary and expensive investment in parking capacity.

Recent research out of the United States indicates that the residents of Affordable Housing have far less need for parking and that historically communities have over built parking.

Specifically:

- The residents of affordable housing are much less likely to own cars. Around 60% of low-income households do not have a vehicle.
- Historically, market-rate properties offer 40% more parking than residents use. And residents of income-restricted properties have 50% more parking than residents use.
- In addition to residential parking, only 5-15% additional parking for visitors is considered optimal.
- Empty parking spots represent wasted money. Many affordable housing projects do not happen because the project's financials are materially impacted by parking minimum requirements.
- The average parking space costs upwards of \$20,000 to construct and maintain.
- The projected parking lot costs for Centennial Park (\$150,000), for example, are as much as the cost of building a multiuse sports field, and three times the cost of all of the trees to be planted.
- Asphalt isn't beautiful and it contributes to and magnifies climate change. Amherstburg has not addressed its Climate Emergency declared in November 2019. It is difficult to justify maintaining current parking minimums at the expense of climate change mitigation.
- It is also suggested that the Administration carefully review the amount of public parking. Instead of residents driving to the park, they should be encouraged to use active transportation like cycling. Again, there are major health and environmental benefits from reducing travel by automobiles.

Conclusion

Residents want to protect and enhance their parks. Every parking space built reduces the amount of green space in the park.

It would be more reasonable to spend the monies that go to more parking to build more housing for people.

THRIVE believes that Amherstburg's current parking minimums are antiquated, unscientific and are a barrier to business and residential investment. A White Paper will be presented to Council during 2021.

Note: the research data quoted in this submission are taken out of a study by the Denver City Council, and bolstered by a second study by Shopworks Architecture and Fox Turtle Transportation Group. Administration is encouraged to validate this data using Canadian studies.

Richard Peddie
On behalf of THRIVE's Board of Directors

July 26, 2021