

Policy Objective

The primary objective of the policy is to provide the parameters and guidelines for citizens to participate in a Memorial Bench Program within the Township's green spaces including parks, facilities, and trails. This policy will provide appropriate oversight and understanding of administration and maintenance responsibilities to preserve the Township's parks.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to outline the terms and conditions that allow for the provision of commemorative/memorial park benches for the citizens of Southwold. Such installations are provided at the cost of the individual. Responsibility for maintenance of the items, within specific parameters, is provided by the Township as identified in this policy.

Scope

The policy applies to benches within parks, open spaces, and trails owned and managed by the Township of Southwold. The existing benches constructed and maintained by community groups (i.e. Rosy Rhubarb) do not fall under the parameters of the policies and procedures as identified in this document

General Provisions

To protect park resources, values and the park visitor experience, bench donations shall respect the priorities, purpose and integrity of the Township parks and trails. Park bench donations shall contribute to the visitor experience, increase public enjoyment and preserve the visual character of the park, waterfront and or trail setting.

The Keystone Complex Committee and Parks Committee will be consulted on priority locations for benches. Donors may include a preferred location for a bench; however, those that are not within established priority locations will require further review and justification prior to approval.

Items purchased, installed or planted under this policy will become property of the Township.

Term/Agreement:

Benches in an outdoor setting have a reasonable life span of 10 years. The dedicated bench term will be for a period of 10 years. The fee covers the acquisition and installation of the bench, plaque with inscription, and general maintenance and repair during its useful life.



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Within this time, the Township will replace the park bench if deemed necessary by the department. The Township will not be responsible for damaged or vandalized plaques. In the event of severe bench vandalism, the plaque will be installed on another bench. The Township reserves the right to relocate the bench if unforeseen circumstances arise due to its location or setting.

Renewal: After initial 10-year term is completed, applicant will have the option to renew for an additional 10 years at the current cost of a new bench

Procedures

The following guidelines and procedures apply when purchasing a Commemorative/Memorial Park Bench:

1) Application Process:

- Citizens wishing to participate in the Commemorative Memorial Park Bench may do so by completing an application form available on-line at the Township of Southwold website.
- Benches: Applications will be received annually between September and April and will be installed beginning in June throughout the summer and fall as weather permits. Township staff will determine the total number of benches to be available each year based on staffing resources and budgetary restraints. For the 2022 season, applications for up to 20 benches will be available until September 2022. Installation for the 2022 season will be in the fall, weather depending.

2) Review Process:

- Applications will be reviewed by Township Parks and Recreation Staff. Applications that deviate from the established program parameters or warrant special consideration will be escalated as required to the CAO/Clerk, Keystone Complex Committee, Parks Committee and/or Council.
- Applications that request a Keystone Complex area bench will be reviewed by the Keystone Committee
- The requested inscription will not be permitted if it:
 - Detracts from the image of the Township;
 - May be considered discriminatory, derogatory or offensive;

- exceeds the space available on one plaque per bench

- Design specifications and message request will be approved at the discretion of the Township

3) Fees

The donor shall pay in advance the full cost to purchase, supply, deliver and install the bench and plaque including the necessary concrete surface and/or installation work required for the bench as agreed upon through the application process.

- Park Memorial/Commemorative Bench with a plaque installed at a cost outlined in Schedule 'A'

- Payment is due at the time application is submitted;

Fees as identified in Schedule 'A' will be included in the Fees for Service By-Law approved by Southwold Township Council. Fees may be updated from time to time.

4) Maintenance

Nothing herein shall prevent the immediate removal of any item deemed by staff to constitute an immediate safety concern. Should the parkland containing benches be altered, the Township shall make its best efforts to relocate within the property. Due to concerns for risk management, maintaining quality and safety of product and installation, substitution of other providers, bench options or do-it-yourself work shall not be permitted.

4) Location Consideration: 5

While the donor may suggest the proposed location, certain requirements shall apply as noted below. The appropriate member or committee of the Township shall make the final and precise determination of location, with consideration for the criteria below:

- The location does not interfere with any active park facility;
- The location would be considered appropriate in accordance with design criteria related to Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED);
- The location does not interfere with approved park design including horticultural or arboricultural components or displays;
- The location does not interfere with park maintenance including access for maintenance requirements;

- The location maintains at least a 75 meter separation distance between benches. In smaller parks or areas with more amenities, benches may be installed closer than 75 meters, subject to there being a good distribution throughout the park and in a variety of areas.
- Impacts on surrounding properties be considered including the impact on views from surrounding properties.

6) Installation:

The Township shall be responsible for the installation of the commemorative item.

- Benches: Installations are seasonal and are completed as weather and ground conditions permit under the timelines as identified in this policy;
- Installations will be processed in the order received;
- If required, a site visit to determine precise location will be arranged by Township staff with the donor prior to installation;
- The Township understands that the bench may have sentimental value, however, it is not to be considered a memorial or shrine. For that reason, the Township respectfully advises that the placement of flowers, commemorative stones, wreaths, pictures, etc. at the site is not permitted.

Accessibility Requirements

Benches will meet the standards outlined by the Accessibility for Ontarians Disability Act (AODA) and within reason follow County of Elgin Accessible Playground Consultation Document.

Monetary Donation

Nothing in this policy shall limit the ability of any individual, organization or corporation to make a monetary donation to the Township for the purpose of the provision of benches to be utilized at the discretion of the Township or to be held in a reserve for future replacement of benches and trees.



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Administration of Policy and Program

The Township CAO and or designate shall implement and ensure compliance with this policy;

This Program Policies and Procedures shall be reviewed from time to time;

Fees will be reviewed annually during the budget process.

Schedule 'A' –

Fee (including installation)

Parks Signature Memorial/Commemorative Bench	\$2,500
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