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## Taxpayers pay developer for construction of new parkette?

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**Halton Hills:** Recently we read in a local newsprint publication; the Town of Halton Hills wrote a cheque for \$45,726 to a political campaign contributing developer. The cheque was to cover the cost for the preliminary development of the Dr. Charles Best Parkette in Mattamy's Arbor Glen subdivision. The article reported; rather than wait for the Town to build the park, Mattamy started building the parkette themselves.

The Town of Halton Hills Parks and Recreation Director Terry Alyman vaguely noted, "Mattamy's cost was at or below the market rate". According to the report; Mattamy was paid \$45,726 for the parkette's preparation work, the lighting and planting. The Town installed the wood fiber play surface, the parkette's play equipment and a bench.

The total cost reported to Halton Hills taxpayers for building this parkette in the Mattamy Homes - Arbor Glen development, was \$63,000.00, none of which the developer of the development was obligated to pay. The report failed to address the issue of the developer entering into a non-tendered, non-obligatory agreement (although no agreement was reported) of some-sort to employ Mattamy workers on a taxpayer funded project, which would of course -- contravened the Municipal Act.

The report also noted; the Town is also proposing a trail be built along Black Creek in Arbor Glen leading to the parkette, through the open space of Stewart's Mill and then to McNally Park via some sort of connecting walkways.

The "McNally Park", named after Councillor Jane Fogal's brother, some may recall -- was the subject of controversy which lead to a police investigation by The Halton Region Police Services and the Anti-rackets Bureau of the OPP. Concerned citizens logged complaints, first with council, then with the police over the manner and terminology used by Councillor Fogal's brother during the political campaign contributor's unscheduled delegation, where Mr. McNally expressed an insistent desire to acquire a nine acre parcel of land -- slated to be park property, using terms such as; "one hand washing the other" and "blackmail".

Adding to the controversy, Mattamy Homes recently received a \$150,000 cheque from the Town's coffers after council members who had benefited in campaign contributions from the developer, voted to give the developer back 90% of the maintenance fees from the \$170,000 collected, rendered to maintain the developments enormous gated entrance.

Per lot, the Arbor Glen subdivision has more open space than any other subdivision in Halton Hills. Taxpayers are now obligated to maintain the gated entrance in perpetuity for a mere \$16,640. Taxpayers are also on the hook to maintain the parkette and all the open space trails that surround Mattamy's Arbor Glen subdivision, which some say; will exceed \$16,000 annually.

Councillor Inglis once purported in a local newspaper article; "developments don't pay for themselves", and 'that' certainly seems to be the case here in Halton Hills. But can we really expect our politicians to keep the community's best interest their priority when dealing with issues that concern developers' who, not only burden our community with their developments, but also help finance the election campaigns of our politicians?