

STANLEY PARK REDEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan (Attachment 1) was created through a public engagement process and is intended to guide future redevelopment of the park. The focus of the redevelopment plan is to optimize the visitor experience and recreational opportunities in the park, while minimizing negative impacts to the park's sensitive ecosystems along the Elbow River. The Preferred Concept Plan (Attachment 2) outlines lifecycle and maintenance requirements along with the proposed upgrades to ensure the park thrives and remains viable for park users today and into the future. Funding is not yet approved for the detailed design and construction phases of the project. These phases of the project are listed on the Culture, Parks and Recreation Infrastructure Investment Plan (CPRIP) and can be initiated once funding is secured.

ADMINISTRATION RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the SPC on Community Services and Protective Services recommends that Council:

1. Receive for information the Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan (Attachment 1); and
2. Approve the Stanley Park Preferred Concept Plan (Attachment 2).

RECOMMENDATION OF THE SPC ON COMMUNITY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES, DATED 2016 JANUARY 15:

That the Administration Recommendations contained in Report CPS2016-0041 be approved.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION / POLICY

No previous Council direction.

BACKGROUND

Stanley Park is one of Calgary's older regional parks located in the established southwest neighbourhood of Parkhill. Stanley Park is recognized locally and citywide as a popular outdoor recreation destination. Its 21 hectares (52 acres) includes diverse recreation opportunities and a sensitive riverbank and grassland ecosystem. Stanley Park was originally designated as a park in 1924, but the majority of park development did not occur until the 1960s. The park is aging, yet its visitation is increasing.

Features in the park include beach access to the river, picnic and barbeque areas, a regional pathway link, an outdoor pool and spray park playgrounds, tennis courts, two baseball diamonds, a lawn bowling facility and large open fields. The fields are often used by the Calgary Canuck's Rugby Club and the lawn bowling facility is operated by the Stanley Park Lawn Bowling Club. The Southern Alberta Pioneer's Memorial Building is located in the park and the winter community rink area and community hall are managed by the Elboya Heights Community Association.

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Stanley Park did not sustain major infrastructure damage in the 2013 flood. The flood event did, however, raise awareness of the park's vulnerability due to its location in the flood fringe. To ensure the parks resiliency, the redevelopment plan contains flood mitigation measures.

INVESTIGATION: ALTERNATIVES AND ANALYSIS

In 2013 January, Administration retained a consultant through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process. Scope for this initial phase of work was to establish a redevelopment plan for the park to guide future redevelopment. An extensive engagement process drove the creation of the Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan. The Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan will ensure continued enjoyment of the park, balancing demands and desires of citizens while protecting the integrity of its sensitive ecosystems, and it will act as a touchstone on which future decisions on the park will be based. The plan reflects the long-term vision for the park which is to remain:

"A memorable City destination that protects and maintains the Elbow River's riverbank, habitats and processes and is a hub for imaginative, innovative and stimulating structured and unstructured recreation and learning experiences for all. Stanley Park will be a safe place that connects visitors with the Elbow River, adjacent neighbourhoods and the rest of The City of Calgary. It is a place where community members, clubs and other groups continue to work collaboratively with The City to manage the park, park facilities and deliver community programs."

The Redevelopment Plan contains a Preferred Concept Plan that is supported with implementation strategies. The Preferred Concept Plan outlines changes such as:

- Realigning the regional pathway away from the river to address conflicts between cyclists and park users accessing the Elbow River;
- Redesigning beach access to provide a formal route to the river and enhanced riverbank protection;
- Creating a new park centre hub with expanded picnic area, a multi-purpose facility for concession, public washrooms and outdoor seating and educational space;
- Reconfiguring the Parks' maintenance yard and both parking lots for improved circulation;
- Adding angled parking along 42 Avenue SW; and
- Other improvements including renewed playground, park entry experience, pathway connections as well as trail repairs and closures within the hillside escarpment area.

The Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan along with the Preferred Concept Plan will serve as a guide for the redevelopment of the park and will also guide future funding requests for the design and capital construction phases. While the detailed design and construction phases are not currently funded, the work done to date provides a comprehensive vision and the ability to proceed with the entire project or allow components of the design to be constructed based on need and priority when funding is available.

Stakeholder Engagement, Research and Communication

The process to develop the Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan included extensive public and stakeholder engagement. Numerous external stakeholders groups as well as City of Calgary

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business units and the general public were consulted through a three-phased engagement strategy.

Phase 1: Awareness Building, Visioning, Issues & Opportunities (March – April 2013)

Community and user input, suggestions and comments were gathered. This information helped to inform and establish a baseline for how the park is utilized as well as identify opportunities for improvement in the park.

Phase 2: Strategic Framework & Alternative Futures (June – July 2013)

Input from Phase 1 was used to develop a strategic framework for design (vision, goals and guiding principles) along with two concepts. This information was then presented back to stakeholders and the public for their input.

Phase 3: Preferred Plan (November 2013)

Input gathered on the concepts was translated into the Preferred Concept Plan for the redevelopment of the park. The Preferred Concept Plan was presented back to the public at a final open house.

Overall 733 connections were made with internal and external stakeholders and community groups and 1,100 comments were received. Multiple tactics were used throughout the engagement phases including: project kick-off BBQ, project webpage, online survey, in-park sounding board, workshops and public open houses.

External stakeholders were involved in engagement including: Stanley Park Lawn Bowling Club, Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants, Canucks Rugby Club, Calgary Area Outdoor Council, Bike Calgary, and the Calgary Outdoor Swimming Pool Association. Several community associations participated including: Elboya, Rideau Roxboro, Parkhill Stanley Park, Elbow Park, Windsor Park, Mount Royal, Britannia, Eriton, and Marda Loop.

Strategic Alignment

The Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan aligns with:

- Council Priorities of a city of inspiring neighbourhoods and a healthy and green city by proposing enhancements that support the optimization of the existing parks system, protect sensitive habitats, and encourage healthy living
- The Open Space Plan (2003) policies for regional recreation parks by creating a design for Stanley Park that responds to the current and future needs of the regional market and by proposing amenities that are appropriate at the regional scale
- Direction in the Municipal Development Plan (2009) by proposing improvements that support enhanced accessibility to the Elbow River, and by considering the biodiversity and unique environmental features of the area

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Social, Environmental, Economic, (External)

Social

With its many amenities and natural setting along the Elbow River, the regional park attracts residents of the adjacent communities as well as residents from across Calgary. The park plays a vital role in the quality of life and recreation for a wide variety of citizens.

Environmental

The Preferred Concept Plan includes improvements to ensure sustainment of the park's sensitive riverbank habitats and promotes responsible use of these spaces including rehabilitation efforts for damaged natural areas and high-level flood mitigation and park resiliency considerations.

Economic (External)

High quality park space favourably impacts both the park's image and property values within Calgary and provides an attraction for visitors and migrants to The City. An improved park environment may increase use of the outdoor pool facility and rental opportunities for Parks, Elboya Community Association, Stanley Park Lawn Bowling Club and the Southern Alberta Pioneers.

Financial Capacity

Current and Future Operating Budget

As the proposed capital improvements are implemented, impacts to operations may result due to new park assets and increased usage. A preliminary analysis of current and anticipated operation impacts has been completed by Administration. Initial estimates indicate a net operational cost uplift of up to \$30,000 per annum. These costs are early estimates that will be refined by Administration when the project is constructed. If necessary, Administration will bring forward a funding request through the budget process.

Current and Future Capital Budget

Capital improvements noted in the redevelopment plan have been estimated at \$9.2 million (November 2013 Class 5 estimate). The project is currently unfunded and is listed on the Culture, Parks and Recreation Infrastructure Investment Plan (CPRIP). Parks is exploring potential funding sources and is positioned to move into the detailed design and construction phase when funding is secured.

Risk Assessment

There are no significant risks associated and operational and project risks that have been identified are being managed.

REASON(S) FOR RECOMMENDATION(S):

Stanley Park is a prominent regional destination along the Elbow River. A redevelopment plan for the park is important to ensure its long term sustainability and value as open space for the varied park users it serves, as many park assets are nearing the end of their life-cycle and

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require replacement or upgrades. The Preferred Concept Plan is supported by extensive public engagement and provides the design elements for the future redevelopment of this important regional site.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Stanley Park Redevelopment Plan (Attachment 1)
2. Stanley Park Preferred Concept Plan (Attachment 2)