

Harvie Passage Task Force – Final Report

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council:

1. Direct that the Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan form part of the future Bend in the Bow Update project and development plan and associated public engagement processes; and
2. Formally thank the Harvie Passage Task Force for their work on this project and direct that the Task Force be disbanded.

HIGHLIGHTS

- The Harvie Passage low and high-water river channels, along with the adjacent Pearce Estate Park, form part of a contiguous regional park system along the Bow River in Inglewood that is referred to as the Bend in the Bow area. The Harvie Passage low water channel has seen increased levels of use on both the rapids and the adjacent beach areas since re-opening in 2018 post-flood damage. Use of the amenity and area is expected to remain high due to the growing popularity of river recreation activities.
- The Harvie Passage Task Force (the Task Force) was established in 2021 to oversee the development of a Facility Enhancement Plan that considers safety, access, environmental and operational impacts, and community needs, and identifies short, medium and long-term actions to improve the experience for all visitors of Harvie Passage. The Task Force was directed to bring a final report and Facility Enhancement Plan back to Committee in Q2 2023.
- The Facility Enhancement Plan was created through site assessments, meetings and workshops with key interested parties on the Task Force, analysis of existing policy, flood and site information, and considers new work undertaken including traffic and parking studies and field observations of site use patterns. The Plan also contains learnings gleaned from the public engagement undertaken during the first phase of the Bend in the Bow Plan (2015-2017).
- The purpose of the Facility Enhancement Plan is to provide a framework for short, medium and long-term improvements to Harvie Passage and adjacent area. Facility Enhancement Plan recommendations fall into the categories of: vehicular access and parking improvements, pedestrian and cyclist circulation improvements, park amenities and proposed long-term features and site upgrades. The core values of the plan are: nature, culture, education, safety and recreation.
- **What does this mean to Calgarians?** Calgarians will benefit from enhancements to Harvie Passage and surrounding area (including Pearce Estate Park) that are integrated with broader Calgary Parks initiatives and which may bring additional amenities and recreational opportunities to the city.
- **Why does this matter?** Parks and recreation amenities are directly tied to the quality of life and mental health of citizens, and Harvie Passage, Pearce Estate Park and the adjacent Bow River Pathway provide a unique opportunity to offer a world-class experience to Calgarians and visitors to our city.
- A total of ten formal Task Force meetings were held including a site visit, in-person workshops and a close out meeting.

Harvie Passage Task Force - Final Report

- Budget of up to \$1,000,000 will be used to implement quick wins and short-term improvements from the Facility Enhancement Plan. These funds are aligned with the currently approved capital budget.
- Background and Previous Council Direction is included as Attachment 1.

DISCUSSION

On 2021 September 13, Council passed a notice of motion (PFC2021-1344) for the formation of the Harvie Passage Task Force (the Task Force). The Task force, that includes internal and external members and all appropriate levels of government, was directed to prepare a Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan. The Terms of Reference for the Task Force (Attachment 2) were approved by Council in December 2021 (CD2021-1523).

Unique in its diverse programming, Pearce Estate Park contains the Sam Livingston Fish Hatchery, Bow Habitat Station, a 15-hectare reconstructed wetland and outdoor spaces for leisure and nature education. The park is complemented by Harvie Passage which provides safe Bow River passage for fish, local habitat, wildlife and recreational river users. Since its reconstruction post-flood, Harvie Passage has become a preeminent Canadian whitewater paddling course, while the park in-turn has seen little in terms of upgrades.

The Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan (Attachment 3) identifies ways to support the increase in demand for park and river uses, while considering environmental impacts and public safety concerns. The project's decision-making process was guided by policy and programming information, input from the Harvie Passage Task Force, public engagement from the Bend in the Bow project, as well as new technical assessments such as parking and traffic studies. This process aimed to achieve outcomes that align with best practices, are fiscally responsible, and consider existing natural assets, infrastructure, legislation and recreational activities in the area.

The Facility Enhancement Plan is a strategic document that provides a framework for short, medium and long-term capital improvements and operational land management recommendations for Harvie Passage and Pearce Estate Park. Quick wins outlined in the Facility Enhancement Plan include a Personal Flotation Device lending station, temporary universal change stalls, wayfinding and safety signage and website improvements. Short to medium-term improvements include enhanced parking lot layout, improved access for shuttle buses, food trucks and trailers, and pathway upgrades and other amenities such as seating to improve accessibility.

Additional public engagement and consideration of relevant legislation and project funding are required for long-term site improvements which include a boathouse, engineered wave, playground upgrades, and permanent public washrooms.

Due to existing lease agreements and the multi-jurisdictional nature of the area (Province, City, Federal), any project work undertaken is contingent on complying with lease agreement terms and conditions as well as relevant legislation and bylaws and further discussions with key interested and affected parties.

EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- Public engagement was undertaken Public/interested parties were informed

Harvie Passage Task Force - Final Report

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |
|---|---|

Per Council direction and the Harvie Passage Task Force Terms of Reference (CD2021-1533), engagement was undertaken with Task Force members that represented a broad range of perspectives and interests including community representatives, river user groups, internal City business units and provincial representatives. Connections developed between City representatives and interested parties and user groups over the course of this project will allow for continued communication and collaboration into the future. A Task Force Meeting and Workshop Summary is included in Attachment 4.

The City's website will be updated with information on how the Facility Enhancement Plan was developed along with the plan itself. Future project work will come forward for public engagement as part of the Bend in the Bow Update project later in 2023.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

Access to a variety of parks for socializing along with active and passive recreational activities contributes to the overall physical and mental health and well-being of Calgarians. Any improvements will prioritize citizen safety.

Environmental

A focus on the environment and nature was a core value of the project. Improvements to Harvie Passage will contribute to a healthy waterway, protection of the riverbed and riverbank and adjacent natural areas, and environmental resiliency.

Economic

Implementation of the Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan will provide opportunities for future investment, commercial activities, events, and improved experience for all visitors over the short- and long-term.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing capital funding - one-time

Up to \$1,000,000 from the approved 2023-2026 capital budget.

Administration recommends that up to \$1,000,000 from the approved capital budget (Program 500-006, Park Upgrades) be used for the implementation of the Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan. A summary of proposed projects is below:

Core Plan Value	Project Title/Quick Wins	Class 5 Budget Estimate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Education 	Sea Can Storage & Personal Flotation Device Lending Station, public education and access pilot	\$10,000 (to supplement \$30,000 in grant funding secured by river user group)

Harvie Passage Task Force - Final Report

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Recreation 	Small-Scale Universal Change Stalls (2) - parking lot and riverside	\$20,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Recreation • Culture 	Pathways – upgrades, safe crossings, signage and emergency location markers	\$200,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety • Culture 	Parking Lot – improvements, capacity signage and expansion	\$250,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recreation • Culture 	Boathouse – finalize scenarios and concept design	\$60,000 (to progress work done to date by river user groups)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety 	Existing washroom upgrades	\$375,000

TOTAL: \$915,000

RISK

The Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan was created with input from interested and affected groups who represented a range of interests however broader public and community engagement has not occurred. Future public engagement on longer term, higher impact elements of the Facility Enhancement Plan will occur as part of the Bend in the Bow Update Project.

Due to existing lease agreements and the multi-jurisdictional nature of the area (Province, City, Federal), any project work undertaken is contingent on complying with lease agreement terms and conditions, as well as relevant regulations and bylaws and further discussions with key interested and effected parties.

In accordance with the City's Land Use Bylaw, Part 3, Division 3, new buildings, or other new structures, are not permitted within a floodway. Additional information and data on flooded areas and flood inundation maps are provided by the Alberta Government's floods portal map. Future developments will require regulatory applications and will be subject to the development permit and building permit processes.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Previous Council Direction, Background
2. Harvie Passage Task Force Terms of Reference
3. Harvie Passage Facility Enhancement Plan
4. Harvie Passage Task Force Meeting & Workshop Summary
5. Letters of Support
6. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
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**Operational Services Report to
Community Development Committee
2023 June 28**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CD2023-0522
Page 5 of 5**

Harvie Passage Task Force - Final Report

Kyle Ripley	Parks and Open Spaces	Approve
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Approve
Michael Thompson	Infrastructure Services	Inform
Kerensa Fromherz	Public Spaces Delivery	Inform
Heather Johnson	Recreation & Social Programs	Inform