
TO: B POSAC, EW/PV POSAC, E POSAC, F POSAC, G POSAC, H POSAC, EA A Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission, Electoral Area Services Committee, Regional Parks and Trails Select Committee **MEETING:** October 8, 2019

FROM: Yann Gagnon
Manager of Parks Services

SUBJECT: Parks Summer 2019 Update Report

RECOMMENDATION

That the Parks Summer 2019 Update Report be received as information.

SUMMARY

Parks staff continue to work on projects identified in the 2019 Parks Work Plan and the RDN Operational Plan.

Mount Benson Parking Facilities RP-S4-1.20

Substantial completion of the new parking lot was reached on June 17th and it was opened to the public on June 19th. A temporary connector trail was provided to take visitors from the new parking lot to the existing trail system while the official new trail was constructed taking visitors up to the park. The new trailhead was completed on June 28th. Final touches on the new trail are being completed along with mapping updates and signage.

Benson Creek Falls Facilities RP-S2-3.7

A Stage 2 grant application for the Economic Infrastructure and Innovation Program for the parking lot, bridge and descent to the falls will be submitted for a September 30th application deadline. This application will include more detailed design and costing information as well as a high-level marketing plan for the Park. If successful, the grant will be in the amount of up to \$103,125.

Trail from Horne Lake and Heritage Designation RP-S4-1.12

A meeting with Mosaic Forest Management will be organized in order to proceed with the creation of a MoTI supported dedication plan for the 1911 gazetted Horne Lake and Alberni Road, the proposed trail route between Horne Lake Regional Park and the ACRD border. In June 2019 a land consultant agent hired by RDN Parks was assigned the file. The project surveyor remains available to undertake the road dedication work, and the 2019 budget for the services is in place. In May 2019, The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development Heritage Branch advised that there are no formal programs in place at this time to officially designate a heritage trail. Following the survey work, meetings will take place with the applicable First Nation communities and the ACRD to determine an appropriate name for the future trail to be used by the RDN and ACRD.

Parks and Trails Strategic Plan

A request for Proposals for the Parks and Trails Strategic Plan was issued on June 6th with a submission deadline of July 18th. The project was awarded to the consulting firm Lees and Associates Consulting and the project has now commenced.

Community Parks and Trails

EA B - Huxley Community Park Projects RP-S4-1.2

Phase 2 and 3 Construction Drawings

An Islands Trust Development Variance Permit was approved for the variances requested to construct the skate park and parking lot with the following conditions: a reduction in the number of trees to be removed in Phase 2 by reducing the footprint of the parking lot, and a tree-planting plan to replace the trees that need to be removed for Phase 2 (either at Huxley park or in an alternate RDN park on Gabriola). Construction drawing revisions are underway to accommodate the DVP conditions.

EA B - Village Way Pathway

A first draft of a project management plan has been received from MoTI's active transportation consultant, with associated signage and operations plans to be developed by Parks Services. Revised design drawings reflecting drainage infrastructure now allowed by MoTI have been received and are anticipated to be reviewed by MoTI before end of September.

EA EW/PV - Anders & Dorrit's Community Park Design RP-S4-1.5

The Non-Farm Use Permit for the proposed parking lot was denied by the Agricultural Land Commission. An alternate approval was granted to allow 0.1 ha the development of park amenities and trail network. Alternative design options will be explored.

EA E - Jack Bagley Community Park – Court Placement PR-S4-1.16

A public open house was held in June and community feedback was integrated into the design of the site. The consultant is finalizing the concept design, phasing plan and costing. Review is pending the consultant's submission and the Get Involved project page will be updated once the final concept plan is complete.

EA F - Errington Community Park – Master Planning Process RP-S4-1.6

The consultant is completing the detailed design and costing for the playground (first phase of the project). Illustrations of the final design have been completed in August 2019.

EA G - Little Qualicum Hall Renovation RP-S2-3.6

Work on the hall commenced in June with demolition completed to the rear part of the building. Construction of the replacement section is underway with foundation and sub-grade work complete and framing underway. When finished this new work will provide barrier free building access, improved occupant safety, three new washrooms, and a future kitchen space. Exterior finishing is expected to complete by early fall along with electrical and mechanical installations. Interior finishing will follow into the fall with efforts made to have the hall ready to re-open by mid-December of 2019.

EA G – Maple Lane Community Park Upgrades

A public open house was held in June and community feedback was integrated into the design of the site. The layout plan and play equipment have been approved and reviewed by the neighbourhood. Construction of the playground will commence this fall

EA H - Dunsmuir Community Park Development RP-S4-1.7

Over 20 community members participated in a planting event on May 25th to install 260 plants to create a hedgerow buffer between the new sports court and neighbouring properties. Final site grading will be completed this fall to address site drainage issues.

General Updates

Registry and Mapping

Work is on-going towards improving Parks asset registries and raising the confidence level of the data. The completion of an updated and comprehensive property and acquisition inventory has been a foundational component; using an excel format staff continue to add data and refine the work. Data gaps are indicating where further condition assessment is required, most commonly the more complex assets obtained with land acquisitions

Operational – Key Highlights

General Service Calls

There were 177 work-orders assigned to operations staff during this reporting period. Tree related issues continue to be the most common type of resident request.

Park Inspection and Service Software RP-R2-4.6

Parks staff completed 89 documented park and playground inspections during this reporting period, identifying 51 faults for correction during the process.

Parks Programming

Nine hiking related programs were offered this spring and summer. All three Hiking Information Sessions were cancelled: the first due to low registration and the other two due to instructor not being available. Of the six Guided Hikes and Guided Alpine Hikes scheduled, one Guided Hike (Wesley Ridge) ran successfully, one was cancelled due to low registration, and four were cancelled due to instructor not being available.

Service options to secure new guides for these hikes are being explored. Transportation alternatives are also being considered as it is difficult to secure a suitable guide or guide assistant who also possesses a Class 4 driver's license, as required to drive a 15 passenger van to the hike locations.

Summer Camp programs held at Moorecroft Regional Park were full with waitlists. GO Wild (6-9yrs) July 8-12 had 20 registered and GO Wilder (9-12 yrs) has 14 registered and 8 waitlisted (lower max class size due to activities such as paddle boarding and ratios).

Park Use Permits

All parks use permits are now being processed through the RDN Activenet system.

Area A – No permits issued this quarter.

Area B – Permit given for Concession at Rollo McClay Community Park for duration of softball season (April-September); Gabriola and area Land and Trails Trust, GaLTT, were given permits for broom cutting at Rollo McClay Community Park and for free walks/tours in Blue Heron

Community Park and 707 Community Park; permit given for a pancake breakfast at Rollo McClay Community Park June 23.

Area C – Permit request from Alpine Club of Canada for Mt. Benson Regional Park for “Respect the Mountains Day – June 15” was unable to be given due to ongoing construction of the new parking lot. Alpine Club will be coming back next year for same event.

Area E – Permits given to Quality Foods Teddy Bear Picnic (July 5-6) at Jack Bagley Community Park, a Wedding at Moorecroft Regional Park (Aug 17) and another at Brickyard Community Park (Aug 3); Broombusters at Nanoose Place parking area (May 13).

Area F – Errington Therapeutic Riding Association given permit for their 2nd Annual Pledge Ride on the Coombs to Parksville Regional Trail June 23.

Area G – Permits granted for research at Englishman River Regional Park: Beaver pond Monitoring by Mid-Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society (MVIHES) 2019-2023 and Bethnic Invertebrates monitoring by MVIHES two ½ days in July and August.

Arrowsmith and Comox Valley Search and Rescue, along with Justice Institute of BC, permitted to use cliffs at Top Bridge Regional Trail and Top Bridge Community Park (City of Parksville) for SAR training in April and May..

Area H - Research permit given for Bat Monitoring by BC Parks, West Coast Regional, for June 2019-2023; permit for Kayak Debry given to West Coast Kayak Anglers at Horne Lake Regional Park April 19.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The projects outlined in this report have funds identified in the 2019 Budget. Electoral Area projects are funded through the associated 2019 Community Parks Budget and in some cases are supplemented by Community Works Funds or grant funding. Regional Parks projects are funded through the 2019 Regional Parks Operational Budget or the Regional Parks Capital Budget.



Yann Gagnon
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October 1, 2019

Reviewed by:

- T. Osborne, General Manager of Recreation and Parks
- P. Carlyle, Chief Administrative Officer

Attachments

1. Parks Work Plan