



Staff Report

Request for Decision

TO: Electoral Area Services Committee – April 17, 2025

AUTHOR: Sam Adams, Parks Planning and Community Development Coordinator

SUBJECT: **Coopers Green Park Enhancement Project Options**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of this report is to provide options for consideration regarding the Coopers Green Park Enhancements project. This report requests a Board decision to accept, reject or provide alternate direction with respect to staff's recommendations as presented below.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) **THAT staff be directed to proceed with the necessary planning and designing for the construction of a washroom building with flushable toilet(s) (Option 1) with any remaining project budget to be used to construct a natural play area/social space.**
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BACKGROUND

Coopers Green Park is a nine acre regionally significant waterfront destination in Halfmoon Bay which connects locals and visitors with nature, community, and space for outdoor recreational activities. The park and hall have been owned and managed by the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) since 1985. In addition to a community hall there is a boat launch, beach access, open lawn space, and volleyball area all anchored by the park's extraordinary natural beauty. This waterfront park is located within the traditional territories of the shíshálh Nation.

At the July 13, 2023, Regular Board Meeting of the Sunshine Coast Regional District (SCRD) the following resolution in part was adopted:

213/23 **Recommendation No. 3** *Halfmoon Bay Community Hall and Coopers Green Park*
(in part) *Enhancements*

...AND THAT ... Up to \$633,238 for Park Enhancements at Coopers Green Park:
ii. Funded from the following sources:
a. Amenity Funding up to \$233,113;
b. Canada Community-Building Fund - Community Works Fund up to \$400,125;

AND FURTHER THAT the 2023-2027 Financial Plan be amended accordingly.

There are many factors within Coopers Green Park which the planning process needs to consider **that may have a significant impact on the project costs** including archaeological,

environmental, spatial, and development permit areas. The project budget has assigned contingencies for archeological, technical and emerging issues.

Staff procured the services of landscape architects to support the initial design and public engagement process.

The public engagement process involved two phases of public engagement. Both were advertised widely in the Coast Reporter, SCRD Website, social media, the online engagement Let's Talk Page, and through email to local community groups.

The first phase of engagement was an online survey which was open from November 11, 2024 to December 14, 2024. Over 450 responses were received. The intended outcome of this first phase was to gather input to determine what the community would like to see in the park.

Based on feedback from the first phase, three conceptual plans identifying park enhancement options were developed. As part of the second phase of engagement, three concept strategies were presented to the community in January at an open house. The open house was attended by 60 people who provided feedback directly to SCRD staff and the landscape architect regarding the concepts. The concept strategies were also available for review and comment on the project's Lets Talk Page in the weeks following the open house. The intended outcome of this phase is to integrate the feedback on the three concept strategies to inform the enhancement priorities and ultimately design and construction.

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

Result of the Public Engagement

The emerging priorities for park enhancements after the first phase of engagement were washrooms, a covered social gathering space and parking. The consultants used the feedback received to develop three themed conceptual strategies for park enhancement to present and receive feedback on in the second phase of engagement.

Washrooms again emerged as the primary desired feature and a natural play area that would double as a social space was the secondary priority in the second phase of engagement.

Attachments A and B provide summaries of the two public engagement phases.

Service Levels for Park Washrooms

Most of the SCRD's regional "Destination"¹ parks include washroom facilities. The current service level includes external park access to washrooms within a hall that exists within the park, separate cinderblock or wood framed washroom buildings, porta potties or pit toilets.

Currently Coopers Green Park is served by external park access to washrooms within Coopers Green Hall as well as an additional two porta potties. The hall washrooms are connected to a septic field located to the southeast of the hall.

The SCRD is currently negotiating with an external party to operate and maintain the hall. The party has requested that the agreement specify the hall washrooms be for hall users only and

¹ Sunshine Coast Regional District Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2014, Parkland Classification

closed to general park access. This consideration further supports the need for the Park Enhancement Project to include public washrooms.

Priorities for the Coopers Green Park Enhancements Project:

The public engagement sessions as well as the potential change to hall operations both support the provision of washroom facilities within the park as the priority for the Coopers Green Park Enhancement project. Washroom access is a consistent service provision through SCRD regional “Destination” parks.

Depending upon available budget, the secondary priority for park enhancements includes the development of a natural play area/social space.

Staff are seeking Board support for the preferred park enhancement option before moving forward to the final design and procurement phases of this project.

There are several options that could be considered to provide a washroom facility.

OPTION 1: Construction of a washroom building with flushable toilet(s) (staff recommended option)

This option supports the development of a modest building (potentially prefabricated) with accessible washroom(s) and potentially a small change area (subject to budget availability). The exact location of the building would still need to be determined based on further investigation and technical considerations.

Staff recommend this option because it aligns with the current service level of washroom access in a regional “destination” park, and it was supported as the primary priority identified by the community during the engagement sessions. The challenge with this option is that it contains the highest risk for project escalation costs and may require the entire construction budget, potentially leaving no funding for another park enhancement like the natural play area.

The estimated capital cost of this option is between \$525,000-\$550,000 including a 20% contingency.

Should the Committee choose to go with this option, a recommendation could be considered, as follows:

- 1) THAT staff be directed to proceed with the necessary planning and designing for the construction of a washroom building with flushable toilet(s) with any remaining project budget to be used to construct a natural play area/social space.

OPTION 2 – Installation of a Pit Toilet

This option supports the installation of a prefabricated, or similar, pit toilet. The public will still have access to a washroom facility, albeit a different experience than a flushable toilet.

The estimated capital cost of this option is \$375,000.

Staff are not recommending this option because it does not align with the quality of washroom amenity supported through public engagement, nor does it provide the opportunity for possible changeroom space.

Should the Committee choose to go with this option, a recommendation could be considered, as follows:

- 1) THAT staff be directed to proceed with the necessary planning and designing for the installation of a pit toilet with any remaining project budget to be used to construct a natural play area/social space.

OPTION 3 –Porta Potties

This option would see the continued use of the porta potties as washroom facilities in the park. This option would have no impact on the construction budget and would enable the park enhancement planning to not only include the natural play area (second priority) but would also enable the project to pursue the development of a covered gazebo-style public space, which was the third priority identified through the public engagement process.

Staff do not recommend this option because it does not align with the quality of washroom amenity supported through public engagement, nor does it provide the opportunity for possible changeroom space.

Should the Committee choose to go with this option, a recommendation could be considered, as follows:

- 1) THAT staff be directed to continue to provide washroom access through the provision of porta potties, with the project budget being to be used to construct a natural play area/social space and a covered gazebo-style public space.

Natural Play Area/Social Space

Depending on the available budget remaining after the washroom facility has been completed, the remaining budget will be put towards the development of a natural play area/social space. Depending on the features of the natural play area, budget estimates range from \$50,000 to \$150,000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All options proposed are within the current approved project budget of \$633,238. The cost of the washroom building design and location selected will influence the budget available for the natural play area/social gathering space.

It should be noted that depending upon what is developed as part of this project, the operating costs may exceed the current operating budget for Coopers Green Park. If this is anticipated, staff would surface this during the annual financial planning process for the Boards consideration at that time.

New assets built as part of this project will also need to be included in the Parks Capital Renewal Plan for long-term replacement planning.

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLICATIONS

N/A

TIMELINE

Staff anticipate the final design to proceed once a decision is reached, with construction to begin in late 2025.

COMMUNICATIONS

Project decisions and implications will be communicated through the Let's Talk "Coopers Green Park Enhancements Project" page, and through News Releases and social media posts.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Through the public consultation process, the community indicated that a washroom facility was the primary preferred option for the Coopers Green Park Enhancements Project. In alignment with the service level expectations expressed by the public, staff recommend the construction of a modest washroom facility with flushable toilets. Further, pending the remaining available budget, staff recommend the development of a natural play area/social space.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A – Round 1 Public Engagement Summary

Attachment B – Round 2 Public Engagement Summary

Reviewed by:			
Manager	X - J. Huntington	Finance	X - A. Taylor
GM	X - S. Gagnon	Legislative	
CAO	X - T. Perreault	Communications	X - A. Buckley