



Subject: Lockview Park – Concepts Plans

To: Council

From: Chief Administrative Office

Report Number: 2021-223

Meeting Date: August 23, 2021

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office Report 2021-223 be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to update Council on the August 11 virtual open house regarding Lockview Park redevelopment and inform of an intention to seek approval for a concept plan, budget and funding source at a fall Council meeting.

Background:

At the February 22, 2021 meeting, Council approved a staff report and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the City and Port Cares for a proposed affordable housing development at Chestnut Park. This report also indicated that the public would be engaged on the future design and redevelopment of nearby Lockview Park.

At the March 22, 2021 meeting, Council approved a staff report outlining a public engagement plan for Lockview Park. This park is a blank canvas and presents an opportunity for resident involvement at the ground level to help decide the best uses for it. The City's 2020-2030 Parks and Recreation Master Plan is being used as a strategic framework to guide discussions and assist with decision-making.

On May 5, 2021, letters were mailed to residents living within 100 metres of Chestnut Park and Lockview Park informing them of the public engagement plan. This was followed by a news release issued on May 10. From May 10 to May 24, an online survey was posted, and 184 responses were received. In addition, a dedicated page regarding the Lockview Park Redevelopment Plan was created on the City's website,

and a project specific email address and phone extension were created for the public to provide comments and ask questions.

Virtual open houses were held on June 2, and August 11, 2021. After receiving community feedback from the online survey and at the first virtual open house, which combined to generate ideas and preferences for redeveloping Lockview Park, City staff retained MHBC Planning, Urban Design and Landscape Architecture to help create two concept plans. MHBC completed the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan, so they already have knowledge of the City's parks as well as a deep understanding of current and emerging trends in park design and amenities.

Discussion:

The second virtual open house on August 11 was attended by five residents, four staff, two Councillors, and a senior landscape architect from MHBC who presented two concept plans. Both plans include a new multi-purpose court that can be used for basketball, tennis, and pickleball. They also comprise several picnic tables, benches, a shaded sitting area, a natural playground structure, perennials, pathways, and signage.

The redeveloped park will be situated in the southwest corner to maintain access to and from John Street, allow for future development on the vacant lands further north, and orient the park in the direction of the canal. The two concept plans propose landscape features that would create a viewing area of the canal to align with the "Lockview" name.

Comments from the second virtual open house included the following:

- Examine the need for property grading to address drainage issues;
- Provide electricity at the park by installing property lighting for safety and security;
- Explore opportunities to have park features and amenities powered by solar energy;
- Create pathways and walkaways to and from the park so that it can remain connected to the rest of the city;
- Have more shaded structures and park equipment; and,
- Ensure accessibility for all user groups and provide some on-site parking.

Staff have posted the two concept plans on a dedicated page on the City's website, and the project specific email address and phone extension will stay active so that residents can keep providing feedback. Furthermore, staff have issued a media release that asks residents to complete a small online survey and provide input on the two concepts plans. Once this survey closes, staff will resume work with the landscape architect from MHBC to review resident comments and look at ways to incorporate these comments into the current concept plans.

A new update report with revised concept plans will be provided to Council in late September or early October for approval along with a proposed budget and funding source.

Internal Consultations:

The Lockview Park Redevelopment Plan has been reviewed by Corporate Services, Corporate Communications, Office of the CAO, Economic Development and Tourism, Parks, and Public Works.

Financial Implications:

In proposing a redeveloped Lockview Park, staff are mindful of budget constraints and the ongoing operational costs to maintain City parks. Staff are currently planning a request of \$350,000 in the 2022 Capital Budget for this project. This amount includes trail and pathway improvements to connect the park to other public spaces and community facilities. Grant and/or donation sources of funding are being investigated.

Public Engagement:

Council approved a public engagement plan at their meeting on March 22, 2021. An online survey was issued in early May and virtual open houses were held on June 2 and August 11, 2021. A dedicated page was added to the City's website, along with a project specific email address and phone extension for communication between residents and staff. Concept plans were shared with the community at the August 11 virtual open house.

Strategic Plan Alignment:

The initiative contained within this report supports the following pillars of the strategic plan:

- Attracting Business Investment and Tourists to Port Colborne
 - City-Wide Investments in Infrastructure and Recreational/Cultural Spaces
 - Value: Financial Management to Achieve Financial Sustainability
 - Governance: Communications, Engagement, and Decision-Making
-

Conclusion:

Two concept plans have been created for redevelopment at Lockview Park. These concept plans were developed from ideas and feedback received at two virtual open houses and through an online community survey. The concept plans are also guided by recommendations from the City's 2020-2030 Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Staff will provide a new update report with revised concept plans in late September or early October, when Council will be asked to approve a concept, budget, and funding source.

Appendices:

- a. MHBC – Lockview Park Concept Plans (08-11-2021)

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Long
Manager of Strategic Initiatives
905-835-2900 x.502
gary.long@portcolborne.ca

Greg Higginbotham
Tourism Coordinator/Special Projects
905-835-2900 x.505
greg.higginbotham@portcolborne.ca

Report Approval:

All reports reviewed and approved by the Department Director and also the City Treasurer when relevant. Final review and approval by the Chief Administrative Officer.