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The Corporation of **THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER**
ENGINEERING, PARKS & ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT

REPORT

To: Mayor Linda Buchanan and Members of Council

From: Chandra Lesmeister, Park Planner

Subject: KINGS MILL WALK PARK MASTER PLAN

Date: February 23, 2022 File No: 12-6240-20-0045/1

The following is a suggested recommendation only. Refer to Council Minutes for adopted resolution.

RECOMMENDATION

PURSUANT to the report of the Park Planner, dated February 23, 2022, entitled “Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan”:

THAT the Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan be endorsed;

THAT staff be directed to invite the Squamish Nation to work with the City, in recognition of the park location next to Eslhá7an;

THAT staff be directed to bring forward names for Council’s consideration regarding Kings Mill Park to better reflect the area;

AND THAT the members of the Kings Mill Walk Master Plan Task Force be thanked for their significant contribution to the new park plan.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan ([CD#2151193](#))
2. Information Report of the Parks and Greenways Planner, dated September 28, 2021, entitled “Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan Update” ([CD#2100490](#))

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council’s endorsement of the Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan (Attachment 1). The plan will guide the redevelopment of the park with adaptive measures and new amenities for a changing neighbourhood. The conceptual design

reflects a vision for a vibrant, welcoming place for the community where nature is nurtured and protected. Significant shoreline improvements will enhance foreshore habitat and mitigate future impacts of sea level rise. Park facilities will support active, healthy lifestyles by providing a variety of play and recreational opportunities for existing park users and future Harbourside residents. Upon Council's endorsement, the master plan will enter into the detailed design phase with construction anticipated to commence in spring 2023.

BACKGROUND

Kings Mill Walk Park was created in 2000 as part of the initial commercial development at Harbourside. With construction of the Spirit Trail and an off-leash area for dogs in 2013, the park has become an increasingly popular waterfront destination on the north shore of Burrard Inlet.

In 2013, the City approved an application from Concert Properties to rezone their lands at 801, 889 and 925 Harbourside Drive and 18 Fell Avenue to create a new, mixed-use waterfront neighbourhood. Upon completion, the development is expected to create 300,000 square feet of new residential and office space, housing approximately 1,500 people.

As a condition of rezoning, Concert Properties is responsible for fulfilling a number of commitments, including meeting the City's new Flood Construction Level (FCL) for the development and implementing adaptive shoreline improvements to mitigate the projected impacts of sea level rise on both public and private lands in the area. Concert Properties is also committed to the development and implementation of a new master plan for Kings Mill Walk Park that will enhance habitat and provide new park amenities for the community.

Concert Properties, on behalf of the City, received approval from the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority in 2019 for a plan to construct adaptive measures for sea level rise and storm surges that will come with climate change. The foreshore adaptations will transform the existing rip-rap shoreline into a series of habitat zones defined by rocky headlands. These enhancements will diversify and improve the marine environments with the creation of rocky reefs, cobble beaches and upland habitat with woody debris and native plantings.

Along with the shoreline enhancements, the park elevation will be raised 1.5 metres to meet the new FCL and protect park assets on the adjacent private development. These changes provide an opportunity to create a new park with improved park amenities, an enhanced Spirit Trail and facilities to support the new neighbourhood and the broader community.

DISCUSSION

The park master plan process began in 2015 and was reinitiated in December 2020 with Council's appointment of the Kings Mill Walk Park Master Plan Task Force. A new vision for the park and emerging design directions evolved through online Task Force workshops which were facilitated by the design consultants. In May 2021, the initial

concepts were presented to the public for feedback through the CNV engagement platform, Let's Talk. There was strong support for the guiding principles, the proposed separated Spirit Trail and new park facilities. Engaged residents expressed concerns about the size and location of the proposed off-leash area.

In response to the feedback, the concept plan was revised to incorporate the following elements:

- Off-leash area increased from 750 square meters to 1,600 square meters;
- Play area opportunities expanded to include a wider range of ages;
- Washrooms relocated to a central location;
- Increased buffer between the off-leash area and play area;
- Additional amenities proposed for the off-leash area; and,
- Beach volleyball added to the western side of the park.

The concept plan was presented back to the public in July 2021 through a Let's Talk community forum. City staff also held a series of in-person pop-up informational events in Kings Mill Walk Park and at the Civic Plaza. The results indicated overall support for the revised plan. A summary of the public consultation process was shared with City Council in a report dated September 28, 2021 (Attachment 2).

The final plan has evolved into a series of park zones with distinct programming and character. The zones have a 'gradient' design intent, with a more urban character at the east entrance at Fell Avenue. The park gradually transitions to a natural character where the park meets Mackay Creek. The main park zones include Fell Avenue Plaza, All Ages Play, Off-Leash Area, Open Park, and Shoreline Habitat. Active and accessible circulation is prioritized through a hierarchy of pathway types and connections for pedestrians and cyclists.

Fell Avenue Plaza

The plaza and viewing deck will be a destination and rest stop with a range of seating opportunities. It will serve as the primary entrance to the park and it will have an urban character with significant public art features to reflect site history and context. The flexible design will include amenities that allow for potential events or activities. To connect with the water and highlight the views across the inlet, a deck and gathering space extends out from the plaza.

All Ages Play Zone

Adventure and nature based play is integrated into the landscape in this zone using malleable and natural materials to facilitate children's engagement with the environment. Fitness and parkour elements expand the diversity of park users and provide opportunities for a range of group activities or individual exercise. An accessible park washroom will be located close to this area.

Off-leash Area

To integrate the off-leash facility into the newly enhanced parkland habitat, the fully enclosed area will be situated away from foreshore and riparian areas. All stormwater run-off will be managed on-site through infiltration (bioswales or other techniques) to prevent the direct discharge of any contaminants into the surrounding environmentally sensitive areas.

The pet friendly area will provide a variety of design elements for dogs and their owners. There will be looping and accessible pathways, a small /shy dog area, access to a water source, and a run and fetch space. To increase the seasonal and intensive use of this zone, lighting and seating are integrated into the plan. In addition to the off-leash area, dog's on-leash will be welcome on all other park pathways.

Open Park Zone

The open park zone encompasses a lawn area with picnic shelters, shade trees and a beach volleyball court. Park users will enjoy this flexible green space to gather, picnic, and feel surrounded by nature. Trees will be retained in this zone and a densely planted edge at the top of bank creates a generous habitat buffer to protect Mackay Creek.

Shoreline Zone

Along Burrard Inlet, the sculpted shoreline is designed to create an ecologically rich water's edge and mitigate future impacts of climate change. The Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's approved plan for the enhanced shoreline is comprised of two sub-zones: the upper foreshore and intertidal zone.

The upper foreshore is a people place with a pedestrian pathway, lookouts, and seating to allow park users to enjoy a closeness to the water. The intertidal zone is a protected habitat area with perched wetlands and rocky headlands. As per the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's industrial water lot lease requirements, public access to the water is not permitted in this area.

Active and Accessible Circulation

Kings Mill Walk Park will be connected to the North Shore region through the North Shore Spirit Trail. Cyclists will be separated from pedestrians from the east side of the park, near Gostick Place, through to Mackay Creek. Pedestrians will have dedicated pathways that follow along the enhanced foreshore. The plan will include infrastructure to support pedestrians and cyclists, such as bike racks, water fountains, and shelter spaces that may act as rest stops along the way.

NEXT STEPS

With the master plan now complete, staff are seeking Council's endorsement to advance the project onto the detailed design phase. During this next project phase, the plans will continue to be refined to ensure that they are aligned with the park vision statement and consistent with Concert Properties' financial commitments for the park improvements that

was determined at rezoning. Concert Properties anticipates construction of the park and the shoreline work to start in spring 2023.

Throughout the consultation process, the public, stakeholders and the task force members identified that recognition of the Squamish Nation and indigenous people should be a critical component of the park. The master plan considers many options to celebrate and raise awareness of indigenous culture such as the use of edible native plants and accompanying educational signage, public art and place naming. For example, participants provided the suggestions of highlighting the traditional Squamish names for Mackay Creek and Mosquito Creek in the on-site signage. With Council's direction, City staff would further consult with the Squamish Nation to determine how best to achieve those goals.

Further, the consultation process for the park plan identified a disconnection between the current name of the park and its precolonial history as an ecologically significant intertidal mudflat situated between the mouths of Mackay and Mosquito Creeks, and next to the Squamish Nation community of Eslhá7an. The park is currently named after the M.B. King Lumber Company; the site's original industrial user that opened a sawmill at the foot of Fell Avenue in 1933. The mill was then sold to the Fullerton Lumber Company in 1961 for use as a log sort and storage area. Fullerton Lumber closed in 1972, and then filled the large water lot to the west of Fell Avenue as a potential development site. The new land remained vacant until the early 2000's when the Automall and the current park was developed. Many park users refer to the site by other names, such as "Automall Park" or "Harbourside Park", and staff recommend that Council consider renaming the site to better reflect its environmental and cultural significance.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

As a condition of rezoning, Concert Properties is financially obligated to deliver the following park components:

- Park master planning process and detailed design.
- Tender and construction of the park and Spirit Trail improvements with a budget not to exceed \$5.299 million.
- Construction of the Fell Plaza and Spirit Trail to the east of Fell Avenue. This scope is included in the Phase 1 servicing agreement and all associated work is excluded from the park budget.
- Final public art plan, selection process and implementation. Up to \$600,000 for the park, plazas and public spaces within the development.
- Tender and construction of the shoreline works and flood prevention measures in accordance with the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority approved plan.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There has been coordination between Engineering, Parks and Environment and Planning and Development staff regarding the applications for the proposed private developments by Concert Properties and the integration of the park and other public realm including the Spirit Trail and additions to Kings Mil Walk Park.

STRATEGIC PLAN, OCP OR POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The redevelopment and enhancement of park spaces contributes to Council's Strategic Plan goal of creating a "City for People" and supports the health and well-being of all. The Kings Mill Walk Park master plan also supports the Council priority to create a "Vibrant City", where dynamic public spaces provide opportunities for connection and enable residents to engage with their community.

The project also supports the City's Official Community Plan goal to enhance well-being and quality of life for all community members (Goal 3.1). Additionally, this plan supports the enhanced infrastructure, habitat and programming goals in the City's Parks Master Plan.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:



Chandra Lesmeister
Park Planner