



Corporate Report

NO: C001

COUNCIL DATE: February 7,

2005

COUNCIL-IN-COMMITTEE

TO: **Mayor and Council** DATE: **February 2, 2005**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning and Development** FILE: **6140-20 (Port Mann)**

SUBJECT: **Master Plan for the Port Mann Park and Concept Plan for Phase 1 of the Park**

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Approve, in principle, the Port Mann Park Master Plan, as summarized in this report and as illustrated in Appendix I attached to this report; and
3. Authorize staff to proceed with detailed design and construction of the works included in the Phase 1 Concept Plan for the Port Mann Park, as illustrated in Appendix II.

BACKGROUND

The Port Mann landfill operated from 1969 until 1997. In the latter years of its operation, a portion of the tipping fees related to waste hauled to the site were set aside for decommissioning of the landfill, restoration of the land and redevelopment of the site as a park, the Port Mann Park. The site is located at a highly visible location and provides panoramic views of the Fraser River. The park, to be developed on this site, is being designed with the expectation that it will draw visitors from the entire City and beyond.

The site has an area of 65 hectares, including a combination of City-owned land and designated parkland. Only part of the land was formally used as part of the landfill operation. Other land within the site is in its natural state. Located in the Fraser Heights neighbourhood of the Guildford community, the lands are accessible from 115A Avenue, near Roxborough Road in Guildford, from the Dogwood Campground (land leased from the City) at 15151-112 Avenue and by way of several pedestrian access points from local streets north of 112 Avenue between 152 Street and 153A Street. Currently, the area of the park within which the landfill operated is covered with grass and is subject to surface undulations as the waste buried in the landfill consolidates. Other parts of the park site include wooded slopes, steep ravines, creeks and riparian areas and the privately operated Dogwood Campground. The property contains some noteworthy geological formations and some important ecological features, including large Douglas fir trees, rich wetlands and streams and a variety of wildlife species.

During 2004, in collaboration with the public through a comprehensive consultation process, City staff developed a recommended Park Master Plan and Concept Plan for Phase 1 of the Port Mann Park.

DISCUSSION

Port Mann Park Public Consultation Process

The Port Mann Park Master Plan was prepared under the direction of a City staff Steering Committee (including Parks Division staff and Engineering Department staff) and a consultant team lead by Catherine Berris Associates Inc. The public consultation process included a civic leaders visioning session and three public open houses.

The visioning session, held on March 30, 2004, was attended by City Councillors, a Parks and Community Services Committee member, representatives from Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP), Greater Vancouver Regional District Parks staff and senior Parks Division and Engineering Department staff. This visioning session was focussed on capturing the full breadth of opportunities for this future City park.

The first public open house meeting was held on April 1, 2004 to obtain input from interested members of the public, with respect to the vision for this park, as drafted at the visioning session and to assist in establishing direction for future facilities and activities at the park. This

information was used to draft guiding statements for the Park Master Plan and to develop two options for the Master Plan for the park.

The guiding statements and the two Master Plan options were presented for consideration by the public at a second public open house meeting on May 11, 2004.

Each of the open house events was attended by residents from both the Guildford and the Fraser Heights neighbourhoods. A summary of the input received through the visioning session and each of the open houses is attached in Appendix III. The two Master Plan options presented at the second open house are described and illustrated in Appendix IV.

The members of the public, attending and providing comments at the Open House, were generally very supportive of the vision, goals and objectives identified for the Master Plan. There was also strong support for keeping the park as natural as possible, providing a linked trail system within the park and developing portions of the park in the short term. Those who did not support the objectives of the Plan were primarily concerned about the parking and traffic (both vehicular and pedestrian) impacts related to linking trails from the park to their neighbourhoods or losing their current home (in the case of residents of the Dogwood Campground).

Final Public Open House Meeting of June 22, 2004

The final public open house was held at Harold Bishop Elementary School on June 22, 2004. The preferred Master Plan and Phase 1 Concept Plan for development of the park were presented. Approximately 25 residents attended this final open house. Parks, Recreation and Culture staff, Engineering staff and consultants were on hand to provide information to those in attendance and to answer questions. The preferred Master Plan was well received and supported by a majority of residents, with two exceptions. Some concerns were raised about pedestrian access to the park through the existing neighbourhoods, north of 112 Avenue in Fraser Heights. The Final Master Plan has been amended to eliminate several pedestrian access points that were the subject of the concerns. There was also a concern raised by the operator of the Dogwood Campground about lease termination.

The City owns the land on which the Dogwood Campground is located, but has leased the land to the operators of the Dogwood Campground. The lease expires in 2017. The Port Mann Park Concept Plan proposes a public pedestrian trail through the campground, leaving the leased area intact. Initial communication with the campground operator indicates he is willing to work with the City to find a workable solution for a public pathway through the leased lands.

Residents of 153A Street submitted a petition on June 22, 2004, signed by 80 local residents, against trail access from local neighbourhood streets in Fraser Heights to the proposed park. The petition cites increased traffic, trespassing onto private property, garbage, noise and vandalism in the community as concerns of the neighbourhood, along with environmental concerns such as soil erosion, loss of animal habitat and reduction of naturally occurring noise and privacy barriers. The residents indicated that access to the park should be from a staging area away from their community and that the walkways within the park should not connect to the local streets. As a result of these concerns, the Concept Plan for the park was adjusted to eliminate trail connections to 153 Street, 153A Street or to 112 Avenue at 153 Street, which appear to be the streets of prime concern. The Plan provides for a staging area on Ministry of Transportation and Highways land at the easterly end of the park and also provides linkages to existing walkways in new residential developments in the Fraser Heights area. The 153A Street residents have expressed an interest in partnering with the City of Surrey through its Partners in Parks Program to refine the proposed trail system and to restore and maintain the park in the vicinity of their homes. Parks Division staff will continue to communicate with this residents group with a view to mitigating their concerns and potentially developing a partnering agreement.

Final Draft Master Plan – Plan Summary

An illustration of the preferred Port Mann Park Master Plan is attached as Appendix I. A full copy of the Port Mann Master Park Plan is available for viewing in the Councillors' Library. The preferred plan was based on Option 1, as described in Appendix IV, with some of the elements of Option 2 included in the Plan. This preferred plan generally responds to public comments and concerns that were raised through the consultation process.

It is noted that the landfill area within the Port Mann Park site will continue to consolidate over the next 10+ years and, as such, permanent improvements should not be constructed on this landfill area until the majority of that consolidation has taken place. Therefore, it is proposed that the Phase 1 improvements to the Park be outside of the landfill limits. Attached, as Appendix II, is the Concept Plan for the Phase 1 component of the Port Mann Park development. These improvements can be undertaken at the present time. The Phase 1 Concept Plan also illustrates, among other things, properties that are considered strategic to acquire for potential future park expansion on 112 Avenue. These properties are riparian headwaters to creeks within the Port Mann Park. These properties will probably be dedicated in conjunction with development, although limited purchases by the City may be necessary.

The Master Plan includes a parking lot, washroom building, terraced display gardens and possible sculptural landforms and looping pathways through new tree plantings. The site provides opportunities for unique recreation, such as formalized mountain bike tracks and areas within which enthusiasts may operate remote control miniature cars. The South Fraser Perimeter Road runs along the toe of the slope at the north limit of the Port Mann Park site. There is a screen of tall shrubs near the base of the slope, adjacent to the future South Fraser Perimeter Road that will act to screen the South Fraser Perimeter Road from the park. The remainder of the slope above

the screen of shrubs is a grass meadow, providing habitat for small mammals and raptors. A hierarchy of looped trails is provided throughout the park. These trails connect to adjacent areas and lookouts. The Phase 1 Concept Plan calls for the development of some of these trails and look outs, along with tree management and staging areas.

The Ministry of Transportation and Highways own a 1.0 acre site at the southwest corner of the intersection of 152 Street and 112 Avenue. Preliminary discussions with officials of that Ministry suggest that the City will be able to enter into a lease with the Ministry to allow part of that site to be used as a trailhead and parking/staging area, complete with public washrooms for the trails in the Port Mann Park, as part of the Phase 1 development of the park. This lease will be dependant on Highway 1 widening plans. Such a staging area will help to alleviate some of the concerns of the residents of the Fraser Heights area.

Subject to Council approval- in-principle, of the Port Mann Park Master Plan and the Phase 1 Concept Plan, staff will proceed with detailed design of the Phase 1 work with a view to commencing construction of the Phase 1 works (i.e., trails and staging area) in the late summer or early fall of 2005. Funding for the Phase 1 works is available as carry forward funding from the 2004 budget.

It is expected that additional work may be undertaken in those areas of the Park, outside of the landfill area, in the next few years as funding becomes available. This work will include mountain bike tracks and areas designed for the operation of remote control cars. Improvements in the area of the park, which overlay the former landfill, will be deferred for at least 10 years. As such, this area will remain a grassed area for the foreseeable future.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above, it is recommended that Council approve-in-principle, the Port Mann Park Master Plan as summarized in this report and as illustrated in Appendix I, attached to this report. It is further recommended that Council authorize staff to proceed with detailed design and construction of the works included in the Phase 1 Concept Plan for the Port Mann Park as illustrated in Appendix II.

Murray Dinwoodie
General Manager
Planning and Development

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Attachments

- Appendix I Map showing Port Mann Park Master Plan
- Appendix II Map showing Phase I Concept Plan
- Appendix III Summary of Input Received through Visioning Session and Open Houses
- Appendix IV Options Presented at Second Open House

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Appendix I

Appendix II

Port Mann Park Public Consultation Process Summary of Findings

The public consultation process included a civic leader visioning session and three public open Houses. The following are summarized each of these key events:

Visioning Session - March 30 2004

The Visioning Session, held at the Parks, Recreation and Culture Administration Offices Boardroom, on March 30, 2004, was attended by City Councillors, a Parks Committee member, representatives from Surrey Environmental Partners (SEP), GVRD Parks staff and senior City Parks and Engineering staff. The vision and guiding principles emanating from this session focussed on tourism, the high visibility of the site and the potential for a City wide destination.

First Public Open House Meeting - April 1, 2004

The first Public Open House was held at Guildford Recreation Centre. Letters of invitation were mailed to over 600 property owners in the neighbourhood areas surrounding the park and an advertisement notifying the public of the open house was placed on the City Page in the local newspaper and on the City's web page in the Park Events Section.

The purpose of the first open house was to give the residents an opportunity to put forward suggestions regarding the park, prior to development of the design options for the park. A site inventory and analysis and a digital fly-through overview of the park were provided as presentation materials at the open house. A comment form was available for those in attendance to document their concerns/comments and to provide suggestions.

Forty individuals attended this open house, with 25 comment sheets being submitted as input. The following are the topics raised by more than one person on the comment forms, with the number of people raising the topic indicated in brackets. The comments relate directly to the comment form questions.

The issues most frequently noted by the public in relation to the park development were:

- park access (8);
- adequate parking (7);
- protection of the environment (6);
- trails (6);
- traffic and parking in Fraser Heights (5);
- safety of the landfill (3);
- the 152 Street Connector – opposed to or relocate out of forest (2);
- want a park on the landfill (2); and
- public safety related to wildlife (2).

The most frequently noted suggestions for the vision, goals and objectives for the park were:

- protect and enhance ecological resources (10);
- provide trails and linkages (10);
- no parking in residential areas and parking at the perimeter of site only (5);
- provide a variety of recreational activities (5);
- limit active sports and facilities (4);
- provide sports fields (3); and
- retain views to the north (2).

The most frequently noted suggestions for future facilities or activities at the park included:

- trails (8);
- picnic areas (7);
- interpretive centre and features (6);
- parking at Dogwood Campground (4);
- pitch and putt par 3 golf (3);
- viewpoints (3);
- washrooms (3);
- sports fields (3);
- tennis courts (2);
- dog off leash area (2); and
- river access and fishing (2).

Second Public Open House Meeting - May 11, 2004

The second public open house was held at the Harold Bishop Elementary School, located at 15670 - 104 Avenue. The primary purpose of this Open House was to introduce the guiding principles and two options for the Park Master Plan. The options were designed, based on suggestions received through the Visioning Session and the first public Open House and recognized long term recreation facility needs of the community. The two park

development options are documented in Appendix IV of this report. As with the first Open House, more than 600 local residents were invited by mail to attend, including participants from earlier meetings. The Open House was also advertised on the City Page in the local newspaper and in the Parks Events Section of the City web page. Staff of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Engineering Department were on hand at the Open House to provide information and answer questions.

Approximately 25 people attended the Open House, with 14 comment sheets being submitted as input. The following is a summary of the responses received through the Open House comment sheets and subsequent letters.

Opinions on the draft "Vision", as presented were:

- Good planning, develop the park soon (3);
- Keep park as natural as possible – forest and wildlife (2);
- Provide park walking trails (2);
- Concerned about access off 153A Street (2);
- Concerned about being displaced from the campground (2);
- Need washroom in Dogwood campground area (2);
- Make the most of views (2);
- Need more policing (2);
- I love the gardens, this site could be a world class park;
- Use Dogwood Campground as much as possible ;
- Bike trails only along the highway to Big Bend Area;
- Concern about trails on banks;
- Acquire land to protect the watersheds; and
- Slow down planning for path construction.

Responses to the draft "Goals and Objectives", as presented were:

- Removing Dogwood Campground is a good step (2);
- Need to know when Dogwood will be closed (2);
- Link trails together first (3);
- No nature trails connected to 153A Street (3);
- Acquire more land;
- Have access and parking on east side;
- Try to find a way to connect to the river;
- Protect wildlife;
- Clear signage to show park access;
- No parking on streets; and
- Excellent;

Responses to the draft "Option 1 Plan (including 1a)", as presented were:

- Protect wildlife and trees (3);
- Prefer this option (3);
- No trail through residential neighbourhoods (3);
- Natural trails are great (2);
- Dog off leash areas should be fenced to separate from rest of users (2);
- Support bike trails separate from walking trails;
- Support parking on west side and near 152 Street – should keep cars out of neighbourhoods;
- Concern about temporary parking beside bridge re: debris from bridge – move farther away or right under bridge;
- Wouldn't like traffic from the perimeter highway to the park;
- Control access as soon as possible;
- Don't cut any trees at the promontories – the trees provide a noise barrier;
- This is making more people homeless;
- A great place for junkies and homeless;
- Need multi use trails;
- Don't want dog "off-leash" area;
- Support some commercial development to fund purchasing more parkland;
- Add a viewpoint in southwest corner of park; and
- Concerned about impacts on wildlife and erosion from trails on steep slopes.

Responses to the draft "Option 2 Plan (including 2a)", as presented were::

- No trails through residential neighbourhoods (6);
- Support the botanical theme (3);
- Don't support gardens (3);
- Smaller botanical garden (2);
- Have less development on bridge side;
- We need lots of notice to find somewhere else to live;
- No Visitors Centre or Commercial Space;
- Don't support remote control cars;
- Remote control cars are a great idea in this noisy location – paved and off-road tracks;
- Larger picnic and play area; and
- Provide for bird habitat and bird viewing.

Other comments to both options included:

- Previous comments regarding 153A Street were ignored (3);
- Vandalism, garbage and noise concerns from trails into neighbourhoods (3);
- Inadequate consultation with organizations other than residents – particularly difficult with fast-tracking;
- Air photo does not show new development – new residents may not be here yet;
- Plan does not address the intense noise of CN train car coupling;
- Provide parking at 156 Street and 112A Avenue; and
- Build only one lookout to minimize environmental impacts.

Final Public Open House Meeting - June 22, 2004

The final Public Open House was held at the Harold Bishop Elementary School. The purpose of this Open House was to present the preferred Park Master Plan for the Port Mann Park and the Concept Plan for the Phase 1 component, based on the preferred Master Plan. The Plan was developed with due consideration of the input received at the first two Open Houses. As with the previous Open Houses, more than 600 local residents, including participants from earlier meetings, were notified of the Open House by direct mail. The event was also advertised on the City Page in the local newspaper and in the Parks Events Section of the City web page. Staff of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Department and the Engineering Department were on hand at the Open House to provide information and answer questions.

Approximately 25 people attended this final Open House, with 12 comment sheets being submitted.

The following is a summary of the written responses received, including subsequent letters and a petition from residents in the vicinity of 153A Street. The petition contained 80 signatures and expressed opposition to Port Mann Park trails connecting to residential neighbourhoods in Fraser Heights, to the south. Concerns related to such connections include increased traffic, trespassing, garbage, noise, vandalism, soil erosion, loss of animal habitat and reduction of natural noise and privacy barriers between the park and the residential neighbourhood.

Responses to the draft "Master Plan", as presented included:

- Retain Dogwood Campground (3);
- Include dog off-leash area (2);
- Support bike park in the upper area (2);
- Support remote control cars;
- Look forward to Phase 1 trails;
- Lock parking lot at the end of 112th and keep it to no more than 30 cars;
- Concerned about safety and crime in such a large park;
- Requires a water park and/or swimming pool
- Seawall to connect to Patullo Bridge area;
- Detailed suggestions on trails;
- Develop viewpoint at southeast corner;
- Natural beauty and habitat will be lost (3);

- We don't need this park (3);
- Retain Dogwood Campground and its natural beauty (2);
- Concerned about crime and policing (2);
- Please work on sound buffer very soon;
- Close Dogwood Campground as soon as possible, provide parking area there; and
- Concerned about increase in traffic, will need signs restricting parking to residents only at trail heads, visitor permit cards;

Responses to the draft "Phase 1 Plan", as presented included:

- Concerned about safety and crime (2);
- Retain Dogwood Campground;
- Concerned access off 153A Street was not two, but twenty letters of concern as well as a petition of over one hundred twenty and growing;
- Keep it to trails and view;
- Concerned about fire hazard;
- Natural beauty and habitat will be lost; and
- What is the possible/potential impact of the Port Mann Bridge expansion?

The final concept plan was modified, based on the comments and input from the public, including, among other things, provision of a viewpoint at the south east corner of the park and revisions to trail locations and connections. Suggestions related to parking, buffering and traffic will be addressed through the detailed design process, where possible.

The final Phase I Concept Plan is attached as Appendix II.

Appendix IV

Alternate Concept Plans

The following is a description and graphics of the two alternate Concept Plans presented at the second Port Mann Park Open House on May 11, 2004. These concepts are attached to this Appendix.

Concept Plan Option 1 – "Natural Theme"

This Concept Plan is a soft intervention on the site that focuses on the natural aspects of the site. This Plan provides for minimal walking trails throughout the park site and trail connections to existing access points to the park site. Parking is located at the edges of the park. Significant forest is maintained and a large portion of the site is proposed to be restored to forest and old-field habitat. A grass area, a picnic shelter, a play area, an interpretive kiosk, an area for model airplanes, an area for mountain biking and a visitor centre are included as part of the Plan. If the 152 Street connector is constructed, opportunity exists for a small picnic area, visitor centre and commercial development on the Dogwood Campground site.

Concept Plan Option 2 – "Horticultural Theme"

This second Concept Plan is a more involved design with a focus on a horticultural destination park. It includes more points of access to the park and parking and an entry drive aisle central to the site, but outside larger use areas. Some forest restoration is included at the back edge of the park. The emphasis in this option is a botanical sculpture garden with an entry pavilion (including landfill interpretation), ceremonial/meditation site, promenade (with seating and telescopes), a horticultural display on the slope, picnic shelters and play areas. If the 152 Street connector is constructed a small informal grass area (arboretum/picnic area), a visitor centre and a remote control car track are possible on the Dogwood Campground property.



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