



Staff Report for Decision

File Number: A4-1-2 / D1-2-77

DATE OF MEETING | MAY 15, 2019 |

AUTHORED BY | KIRSTY MACDONALD, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLANNER |

**SUBJECT ARBOT 2 NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK IMPROVEMENT REQUEST
UNDER THE PARTNERS IN PARKS (PIP) PROGRAM**

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To provide information on Arbot 2 Park and the request for funding for improvements under the Partners in Parks (PIP) Program.

Recommendation

That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council:

1. allocate \$25,000 from the 2019 Partners In Parks Program project for Arbot 2 Neighbourhood Park improvements; and,
2. approve the renaming of Arbot 2 Park to Royal Oak Park.

BACKGROUND

Arbot 2 Park is a 0.1-hectare park located off Arbot Road in the Westwood/College Heights neighbourhood of Nanaimo. This park was acquired in 2014 through subdivision and has a primarily treed character. The park is zoned PRC-2, and was designated as such in anticipation of active recreation amenities. The park is situated in a primarily residential area that does not have a lot of active park potential. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan has identified the Westwood area as a location to acquire future neighbourhood park space.

Many new families have recently moved into the new neighbourhood and requested a local playground, therefore, a Partners in Parks (PIP) start-up meeting was held in December 2018 where support for improvements from park neighbours was indicated. Requested improvements in Phase 1 include a small natural playground, seating, and retention of the natural site characteristics. Since the initial meeting, the neighbourhood has worked under the process of the Partners in Parks (PIP) Program and developed a proposal and site plan for consideration.

The PIP program was initiated by Council in 1982 to develop neighbourhood parks. Each year, the City has funds allocated for the program, and the program has continued to expand in many ways. Funds from the PIP program are approved and allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Currently, sufficient funds remain to support this request for PIP program park development.

The closest playgrounds to this park are located at the Nanaimo Christian School and Cariboo Park. Both require families crossing major roads to access and a five-minute drive.

If approved, a project account will be set aside for Arbot 2 Park improvements, and all disbursements from the account will be City-controlled. Fundraising proceeds can be added to the City account and the project will not proceed until the fundraising as outlined in the delegation's proposed budget is successful.

The neighbourhood group is also requesting officially changing the name of the park from Arbot 2 Park to Royal Oak Park. The name is consistent with the surrounding neighbourhood and reduces confusion with Arbot 1 Park off of Westwood Road.

Traffic safety concerns have been raised by surrounding residents regarding the sharp downhill curve on Harwell Road that borders the park. Staff are working on addressing these concerns internally with traffic control devices.

OPTIONS

1. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council:
 - 1) allocate \$25,000 from the 2019 Partners in Parks (PIP) Program fund for Arbot 2 Neighbourhood Park improvements; and,
 - 2) approve the renaming of Arbot 2 Park to Royal Oak Park.
 - **Budget Implication:** If the grant is awarded, the \$25,000 would be funded from the unallocated amount in the 2019 PIP Program project. This would leave \$25,000 in unallocated funds available for the remainder of 2019 for future groups to request.
 - **Policy Implication:** Supporting this community group's proposal is in line with the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan.
 - **Engagement Implication:** Community engagement has been carried out under the PIP process with the neighbourhood.
 - **Strategic Priorities Implication:** The PIP program is consistent with the 2016-2019 Strategic Plan Update which identifies community partnerships as a key method of making Nanaimo a great place to work and play and ensuring access to recreational amenities for community wellness.
2. That the Finance and Audit Committee recommend that Council not allocate \$25,000 from the 2019 PIP Program fund for Arbot 2 Neighbourhood Park improvements.
 - **Budget Implication:** If the grant is not approved, \$50,000 dollars will remain available in the PIP Program project for future groups to request in 2019.
 - **Policy Implication:** Not supporting this community group's proposal goes against priorities identified in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan.
 - **Engagement Implication:** Community engagement has been carried out under the PIP process with the neighbourhood.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Arbot 2 Park is an undeveloped neighbourhood park in the Westwood/College Heights neighbourhood.
- Ensuring adequate neighbourhood park space in the Westwood neighbourhood was identified as a priority in the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan.
- Residents are requesting improvements to Arbot 2 Park through the Partners in Parks Program and \$25,000 of program funding.
- The neighbourhood is also requesting the park be renamed from Arbot 2 Park to Royal Oak Park to align with the subdivision name and the surrounding neighbourhood and reduce confusion with Arbot 1 Park.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Arbot 2 Neighbourhood PIP Proposal

Attachment B: Arbot 2 Park Site Plan

Submitted by:

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Parks and Open Space Planner

Concurrence by:

Richard Harding
Director of Parks and Recreation