

DATE OF MEETING June 27, 2018

AUTHORED BY KIRSTY MACDONALD, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PLANNER

**SUBJECT FERN NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK IMPROVEMENT REQUEST  
UNDER THE PARTNERS IN PARKS PROGRAM**

## **OVERVIEW**

### **Purpose of Report**

To provide background information on this Partners in Parks (PIP) Program request for the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee consideration and recommended approval to City Council.

### **Recommendation**

That the Parks Recreation and Wellness Committee recommend that Council allocate \$25,000 from the 2018 Partners In Parks Program, and \$20,000 from deferred revenue for Fern Neighbourhood Park improvements.

## **BACKGROUND**

Fern Park is a 0.24 hectare park located off Meredith Road in the Beban/Northfield neighbourhood of Nanaimo. This park was acquired in 1988 through subdivision. The park is **zoned PRC-2**, and was designated as such in anticipation of active recreation amenities. The park is situated in a transitioning area with residential, institutional, industrial and agricultural land uses nearby.

The neighbourhood has explored development of this greenspace through the City's Partners in Parks (PIP) program a few times over the years with no implementation. Expecting this to be a neighbourhood park through development application, money has been committed from rezoning community-contribution funds for development of Fern Park over the years, and is held in deferred revenue.

Many new residents and families have recently moved into the neighbourhood and requested a local playground, therefore, a PIP start-up meeting was held in March 2018 where strong support for improvements was indicated. Requested improvements in Phase 1 include; a playground, shade trees, and picnic tables. In the future, additional improvements may be explored. Since the initial meeting, the neighbourhood has worked under the process of the PIP Program and developed a proposal and site plan for the Committee's consideration.

The PIP program was initiated by Council in 1982 to develop neighbourhood parks. Each year, there are 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 at Coal Tyee School and Forest Drive School. Both require families crossing major roads to access. There are no City playgrounds within a 15-minute walk of this neighbourhood.

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

## **OPTIONS**

1. That the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee recommend that Council allocate \$25,000 from the 2018 Partners in Parks (PIP) Program, and \$20,000 from deferred revenue for Fern Neighbourhood Park improvements.
  - **Budget Implication:** If the money is awarded, all \$50,000 from the 2018 PIP account will be allocated. \$50,000 should be available again in 2019 on a first come, first serve basis. The \$20,000 budget addition from deferred revenue will be included in a future 2018-2022 Financial Plan budget bylaw amendment.
  - **Policy Implication:** The PIP program is consistent with the City of Nanaimo's Corporate Strategic Plan which identifies community partnerships as a key method of making Nanaimo a great place to work and play.
  - **Engagement Implication:** Community engagement has been carried out under the PIP process.
2. That the Parks, Recreation and Wellness Committee recommend that Council deny the application
  - **Budget Implication:** \$25,000 dollars will remain unallocated in the PIP for future groups to request in 2018. Funds of \$20,000 will remain in deferred revenue allocated for Fern Park.
  - **Engagement Implication:** Community engagement has been carried out under the PIP process. |

## **SUMMARY POINTS**

- Fern Park is an undeveloped neighborhood park in the Beban/Northfield neighbourhood.
- Residents are requesting improvements to Fern Park through the Partners in Parks Program, as well as, \$25,000 of program funding.
- Funds of \$20,000 are committed for the park in deferred revenue from a nearby rezoning community contribution.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Fern Neighbourhood PIP Proposal

### **Submitted by:**

Kirsty MacDonald  
Parks and Open Space Planner

### **Concurrence by:**

Richard Harding  
Director, Parks and Recreation