



Subject: Lockview Park Redevelopment Project – Update

To: Council

From: Chief Administrative Office

Report Number: 2021-163

Meeting Date: June 28, 2021

Recommendation:

That Chief Administrative Office Report 2021-163 be received for information.

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to provide a brief update to Council regarding public feedback received at the June 2, 2021 virtual open house regarding Lockview Park Redevelopment.

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 staff report also indicated that the public would be engaged on the future design and renewal 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, so there is an opportunity for residents to be involved at the ground level in helping to decide the best uses for the park and any new amenities. The City's 2020-2030 Parks and Recreation Master Plan will be 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 and Lockview Parks. A copy of this letter is attached to this report. On May 10, 2021, a news release was issued announcing the public engagement plan. From May 10 to 24, 2021, an online survey was posted and 184 responses were received. A copy of the survey questions and results is attached to this report. Moreover, 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.

Discussion:

Given public health directives to prevent the spread of COVID-19, an in-person public open house is not possible. However, there are public engagement initiatives that staff have developed to provide residents with an opportunity to participate in this process. A virtual open house was held on Wednesday, June 2, and a second virtual open house is scheduled for Wednesday, August 11, at 6:30 p.m.

The City has 219 acres of parkland, comprising 13 neighborhood parks, 8 community parks, 7 parkettes, and 4 large city parks. Port Colborne has 4.9 hectares of parkland for every 1000 people. This exceeds best practices from other municipalities that typically provide 1.0 to 1.5 hectares for every 1000 people.

There are several parks located within a close proximity of Lockview Park. Consideration should be given to incorporating innovative design elements and different amenities at Lockview Park rather than duplication of what is offered at nearby parks.

Regarding the results from the online survey, washrooms, safety, lighting, and parking were shown to be important park features. 70% of respondents indicated that they would visit Lockview Park very often if new amenities were added, while 23% said they would visit sometimes. Picnic tables, shaded structures, children's playground, splash pad, seating area, and community gardens were identified as the more popular amenities that survey respondents would like to see.

There were 16 participants at the June 2 virtual open house, including six residents, five members of Council, and five City staff. The key comments and questions were as follows:

- Having a designated park area at Lockview Park with amenities and features is important rather than focusing on nearby parks.
- Lockview Park should be viewed as a "neighbourhood park".
- Budget resources should be invested at Lockview Park and not in other parks.
- Playground equipment at Chestnut Park should be relocated to Lockview Park.
- Shelter, picnic benches, improved drainage, accessibility, washrooms, and larger mature trees should be included in the concept plan.
- What is the budget for this project?
- Could Lockview Park be used for affordable housing?
- When will work start on the redevelopment plan?

With respect to next steps, staff will review all feedback from the June 2 virtual open house, prepare preliminary concept plans for public input at the August 11 virtual open

house, develop a “what we heard” final report for Council, and make a submission to the 2022 Budget deliberations.

Internal Consultations:

City staff from Corporate Communications, Corporate Services, Economic Development and Tourism Services, and Parks/Public Works are involved in this project. The Chief Administrative Officer has also been involved on this file on an oversight basis.

Financial Implications:

There is no financial impact associated with this report. Ideas received from residents will provide the basis for a park renewal plan that will be costed, reviewed by Council and staff, and submitted to the City’s Budget Committee for the 2022 Budget deliberations. The renewal of Lockview Park and the investment in new amenities and equipment will likely be a multi-phased project.

Public Engagement:

Council approved a public engagement plan for Lockview Park at their meeting on March 22, 2021. This is consistent with the December 14, 2020 and February 22, 2021 staff reports referencing the development of a renewal plan for Lockview Park and the request to seek public input. A virtual open house was held on Wednesday, June 2 and a second virtual open house is scheduled for Wednesday, August 11. Residents can obtain more information about this project on the City’s website, and there is a dedicated email and phone extension to leave comments and ask questions.

Conclusion:

A virtual open house was held on June 2 that sought public input regarding the renewal of Lockview Park and in light of the proposed redevelopment of Chestnut Park for affordable housing. A public engagement plan has been implemented to receive ideas from individuals and families in the neighbourhood. A second open house is scheduled for August 11. An online survey was completed that highlights resident ideas and preferences for park amenities. The City is committed to maintaining and investing in parks and green spaces, having amenities, and creating experiences that individuals and families are looking for.

Appendices:

- a. Letter sent to residents living within close proximity of Chestnut/Lockview Park
- b. Community Survey Results

Respectfully submitted,

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Report Approval:

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