

REPORT

Parks & Recreation

To: Mayor Johnstone and Members of Council
Date: December 11, 2023

From: Dean Gibson,
Director of Parks and Recreation
File: 2410284

Item #: 2023-834

Subject: Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan Update- Contract Award

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive this report for information.

PURPOSE

This purpose of this report is to inform City Council and the broader community that a preferred proponent has been selected and the process to update the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan (“PRCP”) will launch in early 2024.

SUMMARY

An interdepartmental staff team has selected a consultant team and plans to launch the process in early 2024 to update to the 2008 Parks and Recreation (PRCP) that provides both an aspirational outlook (to 2050) and implementation strategy (to 2035).

BACKGROUND

At the [City Council Workshop on May 8, 2023](#), Council provided feedback on the Terms of Reference (TOR) which informed a Request for Proposal (RFP) used to retain a consultant team to develop an update that builds on the 2008 PRCP. Through discussion with Council, it was confirmed that the study will build upon four foundational questions and incorporate study nine high-level themes:

Four Questions:

1) Who should have access to Parks and Recreation services?

2) What types of Parks and Recreation services are needed, and most valued, by the community?

3) In what ways does the City excel in providing Parks and Recreation Services, and where do service gaps exist?

4) How can the City’s Parks and Recreation Services best respond to a changing and growing community over the medium and long term?

Nine Study Themes:

1) Diversity, Equity and Inclusion	6) Service Adequacy
2) Anti-Racism	7) Service Standards
3) Truth towards Reconciliation	8) Community Belonging and Connecting
4) Local Economy	9) Adaptation to a Changing Climate
5) Connectivity of Networks	

ANALYSIS

Through an interdepartmental staff team evaluation process, a preferred proponent has been selected. The PRCP update will be led by a consultant team that includes a number of data specialists, planning and facilitation experts:

Urban Systems (US)- An interdisciplinary consulting practice with planners, landscape architects, community engagement specialists, local government consultants, land economists and engineers. US has completed over 70 comprehensive plans for parks, trails, recreation, and culture (or portions thereof) for municipalities of various sizes with a strong understanding of trends and best practices, as well as adapting their work to meeting changing priorities including equity, reconciliation, and climate resilience.

Happy Cities (HC)- An urban planning, design, and engagement consultancy that draws on research in psychology, neuroscience, public health, and behavioural economics to illuminate the intersection between the built environment and wellbeing. They employ thoughtful and creative approaches to reach community members who may feel excluded, ignored, or unserved by traditional engagement processes.

Through the RFP process, US and HC have proven their expertise in data collection, analysis, planning, facilitating and balancing the nine key themes (listed above) in the development of long-term visions and plans. The team will be led by a Landscape Architect and Planner and will be supported by Engagement Specialists, Inclusive Design Specialist, Senior Advisor for Indigenous Truth and Reconciliation, GIS specialist, Recreation and Social Planning Consultant, and Graphic Designer.

The scope of work includes a robust public engagement plan, background/analysis of interdepartmental policy documents, review of parks and recreation baseline data, development of optimum service level recommendations, gaps analysis and implementation strategy. The work will take place over a 12-18 month period in three phases as outlined below:

- 1. Background Review, Data Collection & Trends Analysis/ Phase 1 Engagement
- 2. Growth Analysis/ Phase 2 Engagement
- 3. Final Reporting with Recommendations and Implementation Plan

NEXT STEPS

Once a contract is finalized, an interdepartmental team will confirm the roles in project governance and confirm schedule for Phase 1 and overall project timeline. The project schedule and work plan will be shared with Council as soon as possible in the new year.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The 2023-2027 Proposed Capital Plan includes \$250K to complete the PRCP update. Staff anticipate the project to commence in January 2024 with completion in 12-18 months.

INTERDEPARTMENTAL LIAISON

Interdepartmental liaison has occurred between staff from Parks & Recreation, Office of the CAO, Finance, and Climate Action, Planning and Development.

OPTIONS

The following are options for Council’s consideration:

- 1. That Council receive this report for information; or
- 2. Provide alternate direction to staff.

Options #1 is recommended.

CONCLUSION

Through the PRCP update, the Parks & Recreation Department will be better equipped to respond meaningfully to the needs of a growing community with evolving needs while continuing to advance equity, connectivity and access to parks and recreation services for all.

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