



Summer Village of Crystal Springs Parks and Recreation – a Q & A.

The Parks and Recreation Committee currently has 3 projects. They are:

1. The Footbridge Rebuilding Project
2. The Day Park Enhancement Project
3. The Beach Enhancement Project.

- **Why are we doing this?**

- i. The foot-bridge at the west end of the community was in an advanced state of deterioration, unsafe and a liability with “use at your own risk” signs in place.
- ii. The Day Park near the west end of Crystal Springs has dangerous rotting trees, over-growth, rough pathways worn, decaying buildings, slivers in the play equipment, and lacking in adult amenities.
- iii. The beach area below the day park is dirty, overgrown and repeatedly algae mat infested.

- **What are we planning to do?** The three projects summarized above are prioritized and planned for 2018/2019.

The first priority was the replacement of the footbridge with a long treated wood level design with elevated entries to accommodate bicycles and wheel chairs. The design and construction ensured water diversion, absorption and filtration. In addition to the bridge replacement, the “Blue Bird Park” beach was groomed, the foot path widened, barriers straightened and a picnic table added.

The second project is a major day park enhancement that includes removing dangerous trees, a substantial day park shelter renovation (enlargement, new roof/concrete, improved lighting, electrical connections, inclement weather screening, rain barrels, minor playground changes, a fire pit and storage facilities for wood and equipment, plus volleyball and horseshoe areas across the street. Walking paths will improve lake access for people with mobility challenges, a lake viewing platform.

The third project is an improved beach front and swim area with cleaning, dead and noxious vegetation removal and a water-based raft / platform. Future consideration for the beach may include an in-lake fountain to clarify and move stagnant water (this may help with localized algae mitigation) and to serve as a water play area for children.

- **What are the capital costs?** (1) The foot bridge replacement is budgeted at \$6000 - with \$3000 from the municipality and a \$3000 donation from the Canadian Trails Association. (2) The day park enhancement project is budgeted at \$86,000 with a grant application to the Provincial Government’s Community Facility Enhancement Program fund in the amount of \$40,000. The rest of the required funding, per grant requirements, must

come from various categories of community donations. If the requested grant funding is received, based on current committed donations, "in-kind" labour, equipment and materials, a minimal fund-raising effort of \$3500 will satisfy project requirements. (3) The budgeted cost of the beach enhancement (aeration / fountain) will be from future fund raising once cost estimates are determined.

- **How about operating costs?** Costs for electricity, improved maintenance by Public Works, spring planting and any other necessary operating costs are projected at less than \$400 a month over a six-month period, costing each ratepayer about \$1.00 a month. Firewood (for the day park fire pit) is readily available from felled trees throughout village reserve land.
- **Who was involved in the preparation of the day park plan?** After discussions with community residents, the conceptual design requirements were developed by the SVCS Parks and Recreational Committee. There has been policy guidance from Council and advice from community members, environmental and recreational groups, politicians and various experts including arborists, electricians and construction specialists. The plan has been detailed in newsletters on the Internet and included in the SVCS Strategic Plan. More than 2700 hours have been committed by community residents in order to complete the project. **When funding is confirmed, a work plan will be developed, Council consulted and a community information session held before work proceeds.**
- **Are the projects environmentally sound?** All three projects have been given considerable attention in an attempt to balance human recreational needs with environmental principles including controlling run-off, minimizing disturbance of existing natural terrain, maintaining natural shorelines and preserving trees. The day park project was reviewed by Alberta Environment and Parks, the Pigeon Lake Watershed Association (PLWA), the Pigeon Lake Watershed Management Plan and the Alberta Parks Association. Many aspects of the plan (i.e.: run-off control, refurbishment of existing shelter versus demolishing and starting over) can be used to demonstrate sound environmental practices.
- **What, specifically, is being done within the day park project to make it environmentally sound?** Many things were considered in the development of the day park projects. While not yet finalized, environmental attributes considered include:
 - i. The Day Park shelter will be re-built and refurbished rather than replaced
 - ii. Rain barrels will be utilized to catch run-off from the roof.
 - iii. Low wattage LED lighting will be used throughout.
 - iv. Only problematic trees will be removed with work by an ISA certified arborist with membership in the IVMAA (Industrial Vegetation Management Association of Alberta).
 - v. Wood for the fire pit will be from unsafe trees taken down within the day park area. Excess wood can be released to residents for their lake lot fire-pits. We expect there will be an ongoing source of firewood from regular tree maintenance requirements on village property.
 - vi. Branches from the above will be chipped and used to line walking paths and high traffic areas (other than the paved walkway). Excess chips can be released to resident for use in their lake residences.

- vii. The lake viewing platform will be installed on one of two potential sites that will require no removal of healthy trees.
- viii. The lake viewing platform will be slightly elevated so that rainwater will flow between the wooden floor planks and onto the earthen surface below for quick absorption / filtration.
- ix. The lake viewing platform will be built with the wooden floor planks parallel to the shore. This minimizes flow of water before it will be returned to the earth for absorption / filtration.
NOTE: Per the three items listed above our goal for the viewing platform is to create “zero” environmental impact along the shoreline. The viewing platform will be approximately 12’ x 16’ size and located to create minimal restrictions in the area currently used to store boat lifts / pier platforms by some residents over the winter months.
- x. Discussions with the PLWA will be held to determine if the culvert southwest of the day park can be redesigned to incorporate a rain garden or some other feature which collects and/or filters / absorbs rainwater. Currently, water entering the culvert is routed directly into the lake.
- xi. Further discussions with the PLWA will ensue to determine potential plants, trees and grasses that are environmentally sensitive and cohesive to protection of the lake.
- xii. Use of a used volleyball net (we may be able to get one from a local school)
- xiii. Use of a different colored grass (instead of painted lines) for the volleyball court

- **What is the timeframe for the work?** The foot-bridge was completed in June and the day park enhancement is planned to begin in late July, 2018. No work will commence until funding is confirmed and Council has approved final plans. Depending on volunteer availability and scheduling, weather, equipment and contractor (arborist, electrician, concrete, other) availability and other factors, work will continue into the fall. Unfinished items will resume in summer / fall of 2019. Per grant funding requirements, project completion must be within 18 months of receipt of funds. Some beach cleanup will be done this summer, with remainder of items addressed in 2019.
- **Have any issues been raised?** To date, community members have requested specific information on three areas: Placing a volleyball court near two roadways, having a public “firepit” in the day park shelter and security issues caused by increasing the use of the day park area by the public. Vehicular traffic is generally modest in the area and new “Children at Play” signage is contemplated. Seen as the potential centre of activity throughout the community that will draw people together, a fire-pit within the renovated cookhouse will provide warmth and ambience. Plans include rule signage age restrictions, two firewood sheds and a secure fire-pit cover that can be managed with a signed agreement, permit and keys for use. Violations can be addressed through by-law, police and consequences for violations such as future use access denial. As for public use, this Park is a public facility, however the improvements are expected to increase resident use, with only modest use by the travelling public.

- **Will the modifications increase community liability?** Liability should be decreased. Significant liability did rest with the footbridge and continues with the current state of the park, dead trees, (one large decaying tree leaning over the “cookhouse,”) an aging play-ground and an irregular footpath. Insurance coverage was recently reviewed and a risk assessment model applied to the plans.
- **Will the initiative burden our already busy administration?** Volunteers have conceptualized and developed the plans and intend to implement them. The administration’s role during these projects will largely be relegated to the financial management of resources and operationally to over-seeing maintenance and the issuance of fire-pit permits and calling the By-law Officer as may be required.
- **What are the next steps for the Day Park improvements?** It is hoped that the funding will be confirmed in early July, along with a successful fund-raising campaign. The money will be followed by the development of a draft work-plan by the Parks Committee. Council and administration will then be consulted, followed by a public consultation to receive input prior to a final Council decision on the details.

For further information on the above please contact
project lead Arnold Moerth at 780-451-9117 or Deputy
Mayor Ron LaJeunesse at 780-669-9517

NOTE: In addition to the projects mentioned above, the Summer Village of Crystal Springs Parks and Recreation Committee is interested in other future community projects including improvements to other day parks in the village. Citizen ideas and recommendations are invited. Please contact the above.

July, 2018 update