

## **HOWARD PARK SKATE PARK AND PLAYGROUND FINAL LAYOUT**

### **Issue**

The final layout of the future south side skate park and playground at Howard Park is provided to Council for review and approval.

### **Motion Proposed by Administration**

That Council direct Administration to move forward with planning for the skate park and inclusive playground at Howard Park as per site layout Option 2.

### **Report, Analysis and Financial Implications**

At the September 11, 2023 meeting of Council, Howard Park was selected as the most suitable location for a second skate park in Okotoks. The skate park was proposed to replace the existing aged playground. After this site selection approval, a \$0.100M grant was received from the federal government through the Enabling Accessibility grant program for upgrading the existing playground to an inclusive and accessible structure. The new playground will be proposed in the 2025 capital budget for Council consideration.

In Option 1, a new playground could be installed to the north of the existing structure. Option 1 shows the location of the future skate park and playground proposed at that time. Public participation occurred through an open house with strong desire to not lose a playground from the site. Some concerns were raised from nearby residents around the addition of a skate park to the site (see attached page Howard Park layout Option 1).

In spring of 2024, site exploration through boreholes revealed excessive depth of brown material in the preferred location of the skate park. It was estimated that 3,000m<sup>3</sup> of unsuitable material would be required to be removed from, or accommodated elsewhere, on the site. The volume of material to be relocated was estimated to add \$0.300M to the project cost and, if to be hauled offsite, a significant amount of construction traffic. Rather than seeking a budget amendment, a second layout was explored.

Option 2 replaces the playground in essentially the same location as the existing structure and shifting the future skate park about 30m to the east. Due to more favourable site conditions, Option 2 is expected to be managed within the original project budget of \$0.800M (see attached page Howard Park layout Option 2).

While Option 2 would maintain the setback of the existing playground, the edge of the future skate park would be set about 35m from the closest homes along Woodhaven Drive. While Administration could not find any setback requirements for skate parks, example setbacks observed from desktop analysis in the City of Calgary were as follows: Seton 38m, Deer Run 61m, Mid-Sun 96m, CKE (Elbow Drive) 53m, Bonavista 48m, Huntington Hills 55m, and Bowness 35m.

Option 3 is provided and offers a hybrid of Options 1 and 2 in allowing increased separation from the two amenities, and recognizing the different age demographics of users. Similar to Option 2, Option 3 is expected to be managed with the original project budget.

There are pros and cons to co-locating these two amenities. Many skate park users will visit the site unsupervised, increasing the potential of inappropriate language or behaviour, which may be unsuitable for younger children. On the other hand, positioning a skate park close to a playground can be beneficial for caregivers as it allows them to supervise children of different ages in one location, enhancing convenience. Additionally, the proximity increases natural surveillance, as the presence of more people can deter inappropriate behaviour, and enhance overall safety for both the playground and skate park users.

**Strategic Plan Goals**

<input type="checkbox"/>	Responsibly Managed Growth	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Demonstrated Environmental Leadership
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strong Local Economy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Enhanced Culture & Community Health
<input type="checkbox"/>	Organizational Excellence		

**Equity/Diversity/Inclusivity Impacts and Strategy**

n/a

**Environmental Impacts**

Hauling materials off-site is the primary consideration for cost control and emissions reductions. Potential for topdressing of nearby sports fields is an option, however, quality of materials would not enhance the field(s) and time for new turf establish would require select field(s) be out of play for at least 1 season.

**Governing Policies/Bylaws/Legislation or Agreements**

n/a

**Community Engagement Strategy**

Upon acceptance of the Option 2 layout, skate park design will be finalized based on the survey already completed and a What We Learned report will be prepared. Option 2 shows an initial playground concept. A second playground concept will be developed and provided to the community for selection upon 2025 budget approval.

**Alternatives for Consideration**

Option 1 layout may be considered, however, a sizeable budget amendment would be required, and is, therefore, not recommended by Administration.

**CAO Comments**

Administration has created alternatives to respond to site conditions that affect financial and environmental realities. Council direction is required.

**Attachment(s)**

1. 2024-07-02 Southside Skate Park Survey Results Summary
2. Howard Park layout Option 1
3. Howard Park layout Option 2
4. Howard Park layout Option 3

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