

Date: April 19, 2012



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Creekway Park – Concept Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the final proposed concept plan for Creekway Park as shown in Figure C3 of Appendix C.

POLICY

The Board approves major changes in Vancouver parks including the design and development of parks.

BACKGROUND

In December 2010, Vancouver City Council adopted the Hastings Park/Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) Master Plan. The Plan proposes to transform the Hastings Park of today into a greener, year-round destination for park use that includes an amusement park, the annual Fair and places for festivals, culture, sport and recreation, leisure and fun.

Outlined in the Plan is a strategy to almost triple the amount of park space, currently 27 acres, to an eventual total of 76 acres. The Master Plan is also an opportunity to significantly improve the sustainability and ecological performance of the Hastings Park and PNE, consistent with City Council's [Greenest City](#) Action Plan priorities and the Park Board's Leader in Greening and Excellence in Resource Management Strategic Goals. The multi-purpose nature of the Plan reflects the challenging balancing act that the Master Plan achieves:

‘A Fair in a Park’ – a significantly greener and more publicly accessible Hastings Park which renews Vancouver's historic annual fair and amusement park, while ensuring economic vitality and long-term sustainability.

The Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan determined that a safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connection to New Brighton Park was a top priority. In addition, a stream connection from the existing constructed wetland in Hastings Park, the Sanctuary, to Burrard Inlet, as proposed in the 1997 Restoration Plan, was also to be brought forward as a key component of the Master Plan. This was to be accomplished by establishing a 9

acre riparian corridor with a daylighted stream that would terminate at a future constructed salt-water marsh in New Brighton Park. Creekway Park plays a strategic connecting role for these two Master Plan components with its location between Hastings Park and New Brighton Park.

In addition to the adoption of the Master Plan in December 2010, City Council endorsed the recommendation that a number of early implementation priorities focused community priorities: the reinstatement of Empire Field, development of park greenways and Creekway Park.

Funds for the design and construction of Creekway Park were approved in the 2011 Capital Budget and through a request for proposal process the firm of HB Lanarc Golder was retained in 2011 to design the park.

On February 20th 2012 staff briefed Park Board Commissioners on the Creekway Park concept development and community engagement initiatives mid-process.

The purpose of this report is to provide the Park Board on the results of the public consultation process, the park design development process, and to recommend a final concept plan for this area.

DISCUSSION

Site Description

The Creekway Park site (Figure A1 Appendix A) is strategically located between Hastings Park to the south and New Brighton Park to the north. Bounded by Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail line to the north, McGill Street to the south, an access tunnel to New Brighton to the west, and Bridgeway Street to the east, the park has an east/west linear orientation and is approximately 3.2 acres in area.

Currently the site of Creekway Park is a non-descript gravel lot that serves as a parking area for New Brighton Park, Hastings Park and the PNE. The site slopes gently to the west and drops off to accommodate a vehicle and pedestrian tunnel under CP Rail. A section of the Trans Canada Trail runs through the park in an east/west orientation, this route is also the proposed alignment of the City's Portside Greenway. A number of above and below ground utilities run through the site.

Active Transportation and Accessibility

Rather than a destination park, Creekway Park will serve as a place to accommodate active transportation connections for a range of users. These connections focus on three main components:

1. **Bridgeway Tunnel** - A grade separated multi-use pathway is proposed for the west side of the tunnel. The existing on-street bicycle lanes will be removed and a widened off-street pedestrian and bicycle connection will be provided. It will be universally accessible.

2. CP Rail Tunnel – The conversion of the roadway through the tunnel to a multi-use trail (service & emergency vehicles only) and the addition of lighting will further enhance the convenience and safety of this key connection to New Brighton Park for all users.
3. Connection to Trans Canada trail and Portside Bikeway – A smooth transition of the exiting trails to the east and west is provided on the gently curving multi-use trail (asphalt 4m width) through the park. The trail will provide a safe and visually open route for pedestrians and cyclists traveling along the waterfront. A pedestrian-scaled gravel path adjacent to the daylighted stream will provide a slower-paced, meandering option.

Greening the Park and Daylighted Stream

Due to the current absence of reliable base water flows, underground utilities and fish passage barriers, Creekway Park will not support native salmon populations. It will, however, be an ecologically significant corridor with a biologically rich habitat. In the short-term stormwater and on-site ground water will provide water for the stream and adjacent wetland landscape. In the long-term, the stream is designed to carry flows from the Sanctuary in Hastings Park once the final stream connection is completed and, pending water supply, it has the potential to accommodate resident trout.

A study of options for stream alignment under McGill determined that utilization of the existing McGill tunnel was the most feasible approach and it strengthened the connectivity concept by maintaining the stream's adjacency to the multi-use trail. The streams will daylight through a portion of the tunnel in a grated channel then pass under the McGill on-ramp and daylight again in Creekway Park. The creek will take on the form of a series of widened floodplain ponds held back by concrete weirs with the stream connecting in between.

Native plant communities will be chosen to create a biologically rich habitat that will be the home for many types of birds, amphibians and butterflies. They will also filter and clean stormwater as it passes through the channel. Subject to a viable consistent source, groundwater will be used for irrigation purposes in the summer months, thus reducing the demand on municipal water supply. Like many natural wetlands and small streams, flow will dwindle to a trickle in August and September, but moist soils will sustain wetland plants. Storm flows in early fall will fill the wetland channel and floodplains. The greenway trail will cross the stream channel and provide a destination for park visitors and commuters to watch how water flow and ecological communities change with the seasons.

Project Process

The consultants and City staff worked the project in three phases. Public consultation events occurred at all stages of the project as outlined below.

- 1) Research, Assessment and Information Gathering
- 2) Schematic Design and Options
- 3) Finalized Concept

The Hastings Park/PNE planning group is advised by Technical and Steering Committees that are comprised of Park Board Design, Construction and Operations staff as well as guidance from the project Steering Committee which includes in its membership the General Manager of the Park Board. The Park Board staff's role on the project is to ensure the design and construction meet Park Board standards.

Public Consultation

The Hastings Park Open Space Advisory Group (OSAG) has been established to provide on-going stakeholder input into the open space projects being implemented as a result of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan. The OSAG is comprised of a broad range of on-site, community, and city-wide representatives who have experience or a specific interest in the initial park developments. Representation includes (but is not limited) to following group or interest areas:

- Circus West
- Cycling and walking (commuting or leisure)
- Hastings Park Conservancy
- Leaside Tunnel users
- Pacific National Exhibition
- Residents from Hastings/Sunrise Neighbourhood
- Vancouver Field Sports Federation
- Vancouver Sports Network
- Youth

Since the project inception the OSAG has met 5 times to review park design and public engagement plans for Creekway Park (and other initial park developments of the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan) and provide feedback to City staff and consultants. The OSAG's input has augmented additional public feedback gathered at two open houses held at the Pacific Coliseum in October 2011 and February 2012.

Table 1: 2011/12 Public Consultation Activities

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting Type</i>	<i>Attendees</i>
May 18	OSAG	OSAG members
September 07	OSAG	OSAG members
October 13	OSAG	OSAG members
October 26	Open House	Residents and stakeholders
November 28	OSAG	OSAG members
February 8	OSAG	OSAG members

February 22	Open House	Residents and stakeholders
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The notification process for each open house involved: advertisement in the Vancouver Courier; pamphlets to 11 local elementary and secondary schools; posters at two local community centres and local businesses; emails to the Hastings Park project mailing list and social media (Facebook and Twitter); and letters to businesses within the Bridgeway Business Park. Comments were received through questionnaires that were hosted on the project website and distributed at each open house.

At the October 26, 2012 Open House the overall park program and two options for the park layout were presented. In Option One (Figure C1 Appendix C) the trail was laid out with gentle curves, Option Two (Figure C2 Appendix C) the majority of the trail ran in a straight alignment through the middle of the park. The majority support was for the curving path option (45% Option One support and 15% Option Two support). A question on the size of the parking lot was posed in the questionnaire (the lot was the same size in both options 20 spaces). The majority indicated that the parking lot in Creekway was necessary (58%) but the remaining balance of the responses (42%) indicated that the parking lot should be removed or reduced to allow for more park space and to be consistent with the City's transportation priorities.

Based on the feedback from the October 2011 Open House, a more developed concept plan based on Option One was presented to the public at an open house in February 2012 (Figure C3 Appendix C). Based on the responses to parking in the October 2011 Open House, the parking lot was reduced to 12 spaces in the finalized option which gave greater flexibility in the layout of the constructed watercourse. The stream corridor was developed in further detail and plant list of native riparian species for the stream corridor was assembled. The finalized option was supported by a majority of respondents:

- Ecology (daylighted stream) 81% support
- Access & Connections (greenways) 77% support
- Overall Concept 72% support

A summary of the consultation responses for both the October 2011 (B1) and February 2012 (B2) events is presented in Appendix B.

Environmental and Sustainability Considerations

The active transportation and ecological/daylighted stream components of Creekway Park meet several of the City's and Park Board's strategic green priorities. The conversion of the former gravel parking lot to a lush riparian landscape will capture and treat water from roads and paved surfaces surrounding the park will dramatically transform the ecological performance of this new park site.

Accessibility Considerations

The inclusion of all potential user groups is considered in this plan, and will be further improved upon in the development of detailed construction drawings. Features such as greenways, the parking area, benches and interpretive elements are all designed to be accessible and inclusive.

Funding and Schedule

The total project budget is \$1,450,000 and is provided for in the 2011 Capital Budget. Construction is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2012 with completion in early 2013.

SUMMARY

The final proposed concept plan is supported by residents and stakeholders. The plan combines separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities that provide safe and convenient access to New Brighton Park and the Trans Canada Trail. The daylighted stream component of the Creekway Park will dramatically transform this former parking lot into an ecologically rich riparian landscape that will signal the first section of the stream connection to Burrard Inlet.

Creekway Park's dual program themes of active transportation and ecology are consistent with the City and Park Board's sustainability and accessibility aspirations. These include the Greenest City Action Plan's "Access to Nature" and "Clean Water" goals and the Park Board's "Leader in Greening" and "Parks and Recreation For All" strategic directions. Staff recommends that the Board approve the concept plan for Creekway Park as shown in figure C3 of Appendix C.

Prepared by:

Hastings Park/PNE Planning Project Manager, Community Services Group, City of Vancouver

and

Director of Planning and Operations, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

RC/DH/TM/DD

Appendix A – Creekway Park site – location and context

Appendix B – Consultation Summaries: October 2011 (B1) and February 2012 (B2)

Appendix C – Figure C1 October 2011 Open House – Option 1
Figure C2 October 2011 Open House – Option 2
Figure C3 February 2012 Open House - Final Concept Plan

Appendix A

Creekway Park is strategically located between Hastings Park to the south and New Brighton Park to the north. Bounded by Canadian Pacific (CP) Rail line to the north, McGill Street to the south, an access tunnel to New Brighton to the west, and Bridgeway Street to the east, the park has an east/west linear orientation and is approximate 3.2 acres in area.



Project Objectives

There are three broad objectives that the park development strives to satisfy:

1. A PLACE TO **CONNECT**



2. A PLACE FOR **ECOLOGY**



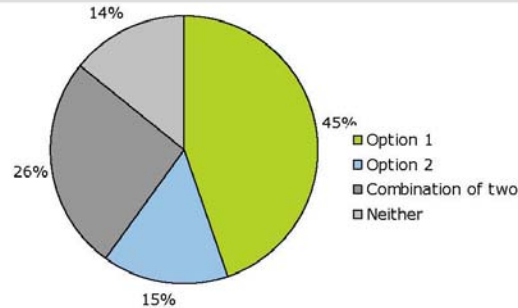
3. A **SAFE** PLACE



Appendix B1 October 2011 Consultation Summary:

Creekway Park: Option 1 or Option 2

Question 7: Which of the concept options for Creekway Park do you prefer?



Option 1

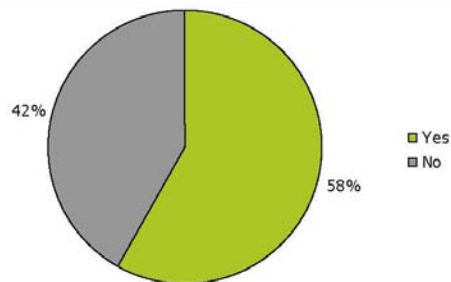
- Fluid, attractive, engaging, and interesting
- More natural, park-like
- Better surveillance of parking lot
- Farther from power lines

Option 2

- Better for commuter cyclists
- Better sightlines
- Path buffered from tracks
- More connected green space (path crosses less)

Parking Lot in Creekway Park

Question 8: Do you think a parking lot in Creekway Park is necessary?



Yes

- Not enough parking in area
- Pool in New Brighton Park makes it a city-wide destination

No

- There is already enough parking in the area
- Creekway is small enough
- Encourage cycling and walking
- Not an efficient land use if parking only needed 2 months/yr
- Follow City's transportation priorities
- Needed for people with children or disabilities

Other Ideas for Creekway Park

Question 9: What other ideas or concerns do you have for Creekway Park?

- Noise reduction and safety
- Native vegetation or edible landscape
- Better park name
- Relocate power lines to north or southern edges of Creekway Park

Additional Comments

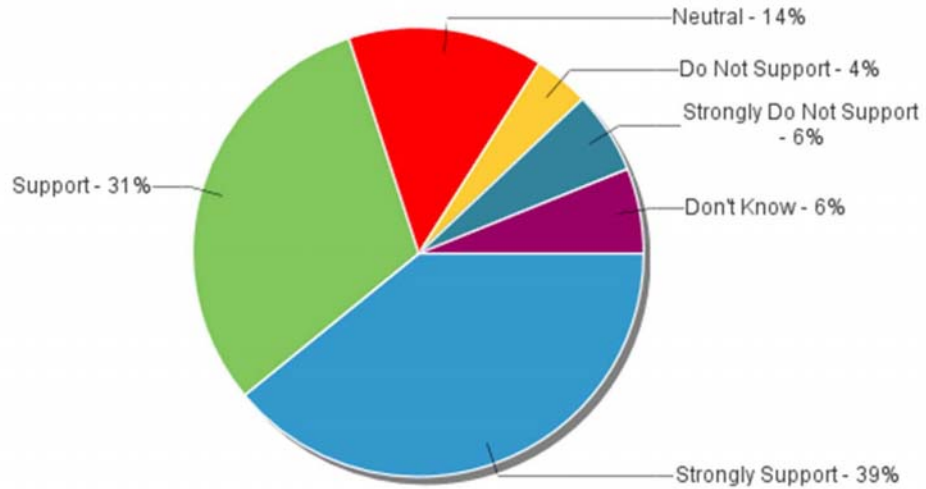
Question 10: What additional comments do you have?

- Keep Leaside
- Improve safety throughout the park e.g. lighting, bike routes, etc.
- Overpass to New Brighton Park
- Off leash dog area

Appendix B2 February 2012 Consultation Summary:

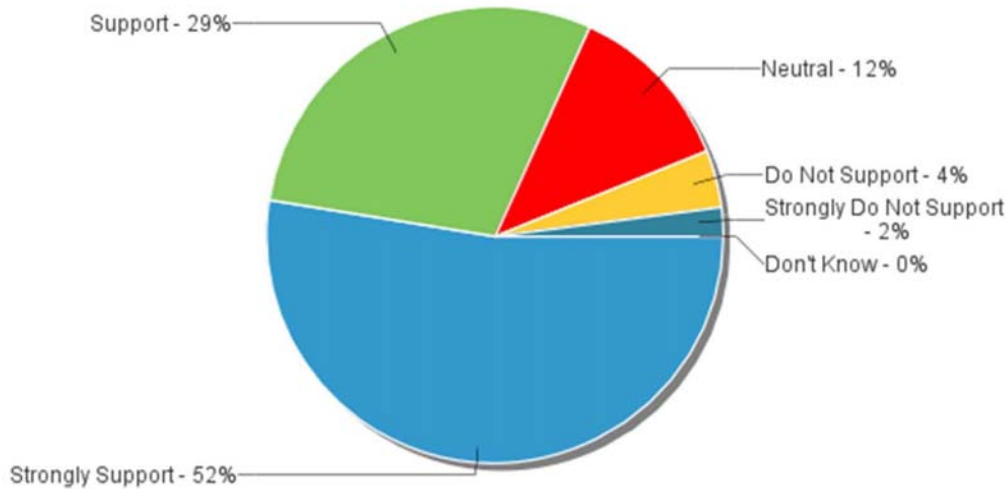
Consultation Summary - Open House February 22, 2012

Panel 11: Greenways



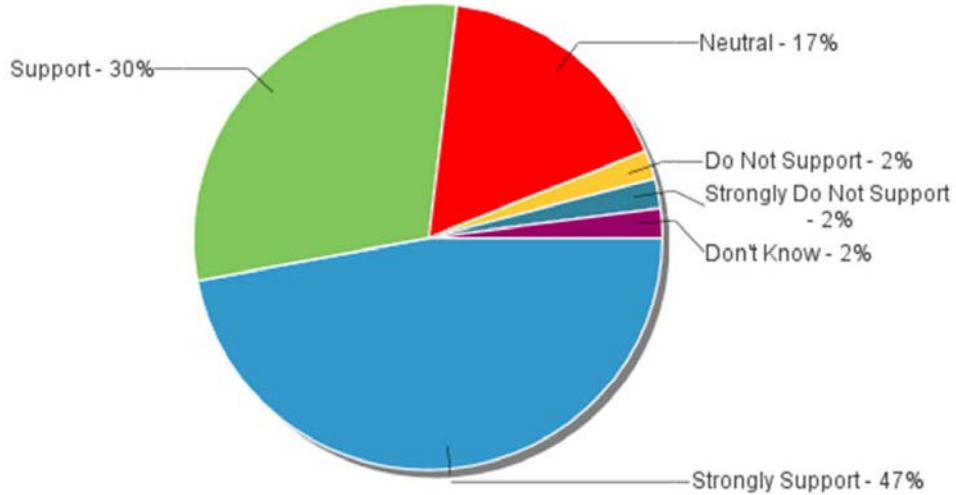
- Historic signage along walkways provide interest points and appreciation for the park usage.
- Full support of connection to New Brighton Park.
- As you transition to permanent, please maximize safe and ecological pathways shielded from Hastings Street and consider an overpass at Windermere or Lillooet.
- Great. Please use native species.
- Must invest what's needed in making McGill underpass appealing and perceived as safe. To draw people to New Brighton, it's worth spending on lighting and public art to transform this space.
- A safe pedestrian access between the two area will greatly enhance and prompt their use.
- This community has wanted this connection to New Brighton for years.

Panel 15: Creekway Park - Ecology



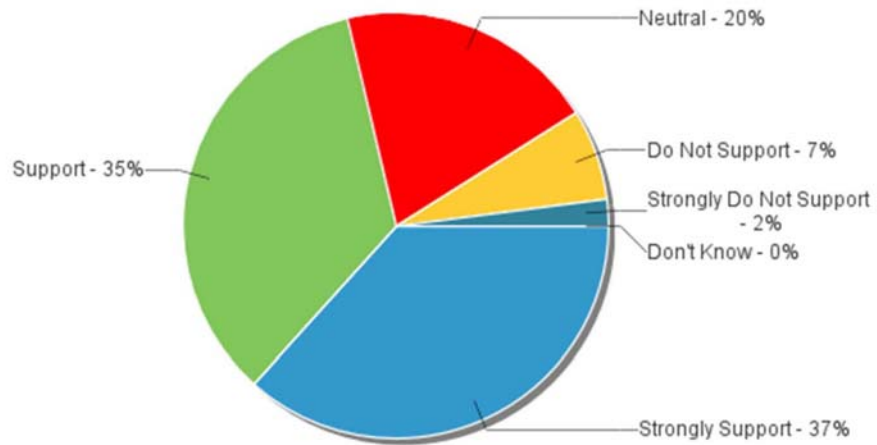
- Really support this part of the redevelopment.
- The stream from Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet should be day-lighted. Creekway Park is a start and should be done well for wildlife and native plans.
- Looking forward to daylighting from Sanctuary to Burrard Inlet.
- Yes! This is very important! Our East Van community needs more “alive” parks.
- Be careful that the stream isn’t bringing garbage and waste into Burrard Inlet.
- The idea appears somewhat ill-developed. Having a grate in the McGill tunnel for the stream defeats its ecological purpose. I would prefer that the stream is better developed to prevent squandering our resources on a dirty stream. I am aware there is more greenspace further down to “filter” the bad water, we need more!
- It is nice to see streams returned to the area and will greatly enhance the park concept.
- I don’t know why this is the first phase. No one will want to spend any time between the freeway and the railroad tracks. Other areas are more important.

Panels 14 - 16: Creekway Park - Access and Connections



- Make sure gravel paths are high enough to DRAIN and be permeable so that they are dry, not puddles and lakes.
- Put greenway along Dundas.
- The only time I ride my bike is from spring to Sept. East/West Connector will be closed at that time. If you open it we will have huge parking issues in Van Heights - expanding Playland is a no win situation for this park.
- Bicycle trails that are well maintained mean that our entire family (including kids) can ride and use Hastings Park. Yay
- Yes - more!

Panel 14: Creekway Park - Overall Concept



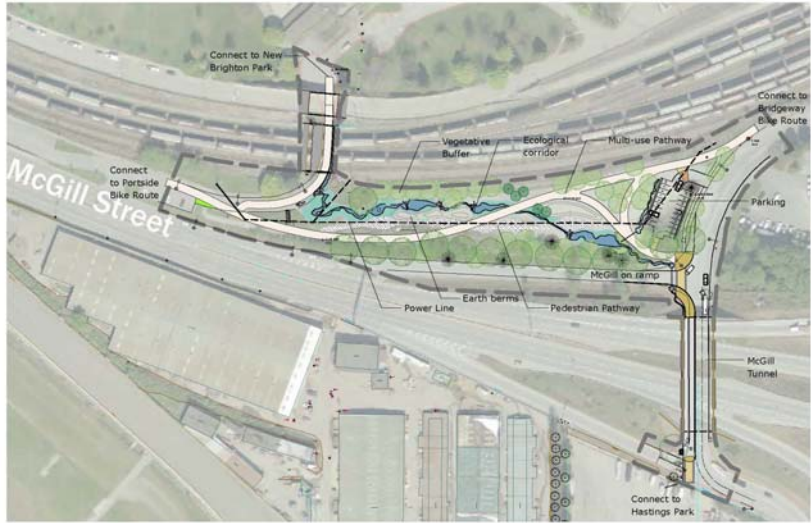
- Follows a natural waterway and establishes a safe bridge to New Brighton supporting the ecology of the area.
- Would like the greenway from Burnaby to Wall St. at Dundas to be further developed for pedestrians, cyclists and as a scenic portion of the Trans-Canada Trail on Vancouver's portside greenway.
- As above, strongly support ecological issues, less noisy as a transit corridor.
- Now that the daycare is by the racetrack, more needs to be done to control traffic for parents walking kids to daycare. The access at Renfrew and Cambridge is dangerous. Cars don't stop for pedestrians and with 3 lanes heading north, cars fly down to Renfrew.
- Should be much better than it's been for decades.

APPENDIX C

FIGURE C1 OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE OPTION 1

Option 1 includes:

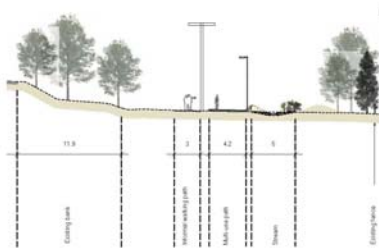
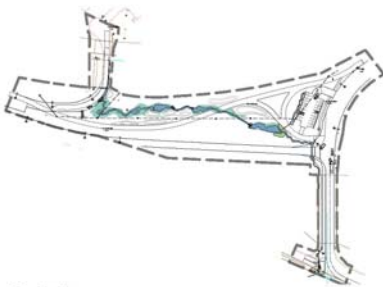
- Curving path connects east and west
- Path configuration which provides more distance to high voltage power line
- An informal pedestrian path alternative within the park, but close to multi-purpose path
- Visual interest with creek crossing and planting
- Parking close to street for visual surveillance



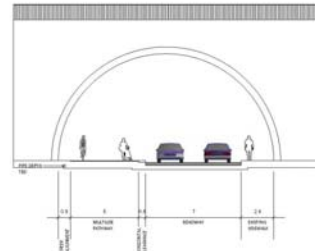
Concept Option 1

Option 1 Layers

Watercourse

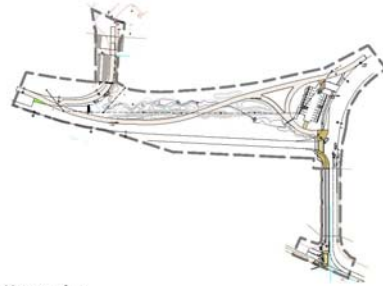


Option 1 Typical Site Cross Section
Due to underground utilities, there will be only shallow excavations and earth works possible. The embankments will provide growing medium for tree planting to offer shade and habitat within the park.

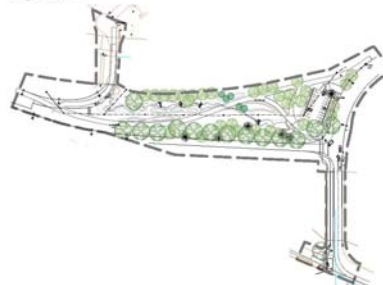


McGill Tunnel Section
There is sufficient room within the tunnel for a large multi-use greenway, two travel lanes, a sidewalk, and inclusion of a pipe or combination of pipe and channel to convey water from Hastings Park through to Creekway. This proposal is the same for both options.

Circulation



Vegetation

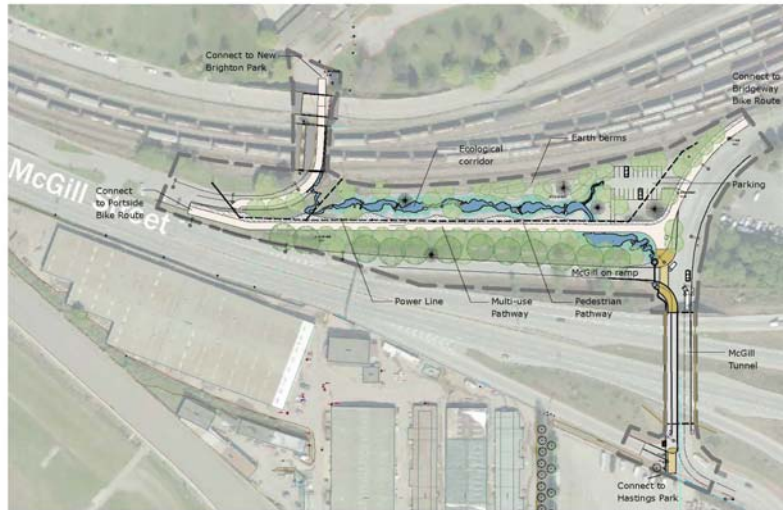


Option 1 Character Sketch

APPENDIX C FIGURE C2 OCTOBER OPEN HOUSE OPTION 2

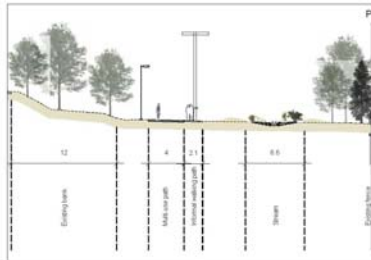
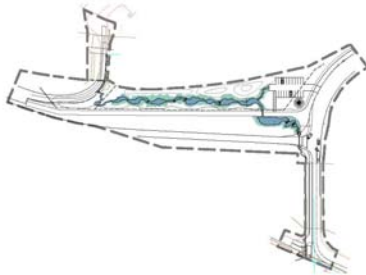
Option 2 includes:

- Simplified straight path connects east and west and takes advantage of existing grades at powerline location
- Pedestrian path is located close to multi-purpose path
- Visual interest with creek crossing and planting
- Parking is close to street for visual surveillance



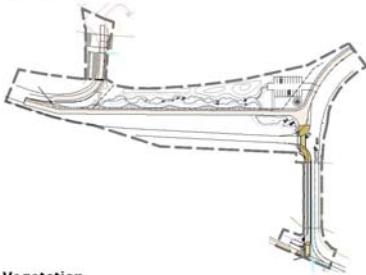
Option 2 Layers

Watercourse

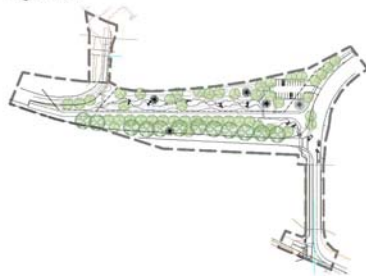


Option 2 Typical Site Cross Section
The linear greenway and pedestrian paths allow for an easy east-west connection through the park.

Circulation



Vegetation



APPENDIX C – FIGURE C3 FINAL CONCEPT PLAN



Connections

Safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to New Brighton Park and the waterfront are central to the overall pedestrian network of Hastings Park.

Creekway Park will serve as a place to accommodate active transportation connections, notably the Trans Canada Trail, and connections to Hastings and New Brighton Parks.