



June 17, 2021

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: East Fraser Lands New Park – Concept Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the proposed concept plan for the East Fraser Lands new park, as outlined in this report and as shown in Appendix A.

REPORT SUMMARY

The proposed concept for a new park, as described in this report, is part of 10+ hectares of parks planned for the East Fraser Lands neighbourhood. The concept is informed [by design guidelines](#) that were endorsed by the Park Board in 2008. Staff completed public engagement on the proposed park concept in summer 2020 and received favourable feedback. The purpose of this report is to share details of the proposed concept and results of the public engagement process, and to seek a Board decision on the proposed park concept plan (see Appendix A) to allow staff to proceed with detailed design followed by park construction.

BOARD AUTHORITY/ PREVIOUS DECISIONS/ POLICY

As per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements or major changes that occur within those parks.

In 2004, the [Policy Statement for East Fraser Lands \(EFL\)](#) was approved by City Council and [endorsed by the Park Board](#).

In 2006, the [EFL Official Development Plan](#) (By-law No. 9393) was approved by Council and [endorsed by the Park Board](#).

In 2008 City Council approved the Area 1 Rezoning and [Design Guidelines](#) for East Fraser Lands.

The proposed concept for the new park in East Fraser Lands is supported by principles outlined in the following plans and strategies:

- [Greenest City Action Plan](#) (2010): Sets two targets to improve access to nature; 150,000 trees and 5 min walk to greenspace.
- [Urban Forest Strategy](#) (2014): Policy and operational guidelines to enhance the urban forest on private lands, streets, and parks.
- [Vancouver Bird Strategy](#) (2020): Celebrates the importance of birds in Vancouver, and provides voluntary landscape guidelines to enhance urban bird habitats.

- [Biodiversity Strategy](#) (2016): Supports the increase in amount and quality of Vancouver's natural areas to support biodiversity and access to nature.
- [People, Parks & Dogs](#) (2017): The People, Parks & Dogs (PPD) Strategy, approved by the Board in October 2017, provides an evidence-based and data-driven policy to deliver well-planned and designed parks that accommodate park users with and without dogs for the next 10 years. The strategy includes policy for access, design, stewardship, and enforcement.
- [VanPlay](#) (2019/2020): VanPlay, the Board's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan set priorities and provides tools and policies to support the pursuit of equity, connectivity, and access to parks and recreation for all.
- [Rain City Strategy](#) (2019): Reimagines and transforms how the City manages rainwater with the goals of improving water quality, resilience, and livability by creating healthy, urban ecosystems across the City of Vancouver.

BACKGROUND

The East Fraser Lands (EFL) precinct is located in the southeast corner of Vancouver on the north bank of the Fraser River (see Figure 3 Appendix A). The area includes the land between Kerr Street and Boundary Road south of Marine Way, as well as a triangle shaped site north of Marine Way at Boundary Road. The site is located on the unceded, traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations.

The Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rail corridor runs parallel to Kent Avenue and divides the 52-hectare site into north and south sections. Until its closure in 2001, the Canadian White Pine sawmill operated on the land south of the rail corridor. Following the sawmill closure, a decision was made to transition this area from industrial use to residential and commercial development. Wesgroup Properties is developing the area to eventually house approximately 15,000 new residents, and public amenities, such as parks are being delivered as surrounding residential projects are completed. The [EFL Official Development Plan](#) set expectations for all 10+ ha of new parks in the new neighbourhood.

The new park in East Fraser Lands is a 0.3-hectare park at the intersection of Marine Way and Sawmill Crescent. The park is generally referred to as *Promontory Park* in the design guidelines and an official name will be identified through the park naming process.

Design Process

Through engagement, the [EFL Design Guidelines](#) were embedded with the values identified by the community. In the guidelines, Promontory Park is envisioned as a neighbourhood park that forms an important green space connection from the Champlain Heights community to the riverfront. The main design elements included in this initial vision were:

- lawn areas;
- trees;
- a playspace;
- pathways for walking and rolling; and
- a rain garden to manage on-site water runoff.

Through 2020, staff developed a concept plan for the new park that incorporates the main elements from the design guidelines, features to help meet targets from the strategies referenced above, and feedback from the community and Park Board operational staff.

Finances and Funding

The development of the new park in East Fraser Lands is funded by Development Cost Levies in the 2019-2022 Capital Plan. The anticipated construction budget for this park is \$1,700,000. Based on standard maintenance and operation practices for parks of similar size and program, the operating budget for this park is estimated at \$34,000 per year. The exact budget will be refined during the design development and working drawing stage.

DISCUSSION

Public Engagement Process

In response to Provincial COVID-19 restrictions, all public engagement for this project was completed online. Public feedback on all elements of the park design was sought through a survey between August 24 to September 13, 2020. Notification for the survey was accomplished through mail-outs, signs posted in the park site, email-blasts, and posts on the Park Board's social media channels.

The public were asked to provide feedback on:

- general design goals;
- playground elements;
- site furnishing;
- circulation; and
- planting.

A total of 211 respondents completed the survey and overall, a positive response to the design was received (76%). The most notable requests were for a dog off-leash area and a bigger playground. Staff were able to maximize the play area however, an off-leash dog area is not planned for this park as per discussion below.

A detailed summary of the public engagement is provided in Appendix B.

First Nations and Archaeology Consultation

The site is located on the unceded, ancestral territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. An archaeological assessment has been completed and no archaeological site has been recorded. A project referral for all work in the East Fraser Lands was sent to the local Nations in September 2017.

Proposed Concept

The proposed concept (Refer to Figure 1 Appendix A) for the new park features a new playground, lawn areas, pathways and large planting areas with a focus on habitat creation and stormwater management. The concept takes advantage of the steeply sloped site, where accessible paths provide universal accessibility through the park and help to separate the park into different "rooms" for active play and informal recreation and socializing. In response to public feedback, staff were able to provide a larger playground by incorporating the natural slopes into play features such as an embankment slide and rope climbers. In general, the play features and surfacing have been chosen to accommodate a wide range of ages, mobility and sensory needs. At the highest point in the park, an open lawn area provides a flexible space and a good vantage point for views

south to the future Avalon Park Corridor and Fraser River. Rain gardens along Sawmill Crescent and Marine Way will collect and infiltrate stormwater on site and the overall planting design aims to enhance bird and pollinator habitat by providing nectar, foraging, and nesting opportunities, including approximately 50 new trees throughout the park.

In response to public feedback, the concept was further refined to include the following:

- more picnic tables, and bench seating;
- bike racks at park entries;
- water fountain with dog bowl; and
- stairs connecting the park to Marine Way.

The proposed concept plan for the new park in East Fraser Lands is illustrated in Appendix A.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Dog Off-Leash Area

A high number of survey respondents expressed interest in a dog off-leash area at this park. As per the approved People, Parks and Dogs Strategy, a “Neighbourhood Dog Run Off-leash Area” needs to be 0.04 to 0.4 hectares, which could not be accommodated at this park while providing a balance of other amenities. Furthermore, one of the city’s largest dog off-leash area is located nearby at Everett Crowley Park and staff are working on improved connectivity between that park and East Fraser Lands. Dog off-leash areas will be considered for future parks in the East Fraser Lands neighbourhood to accommodate the influx of residents.

NEXT STEPS

Subject to the Board’s decision on the recommendation outlined in this report, detail design for the new park in East Fraser Lands will commence. Construction is currently targeted to begin in summer 2022.

CONCLUSION

The concept design for the new park in East Fraser Lands has high overall community support and the project aligns with the Park Board’s policies to deliver services equitably, increase access to nature, create new habitat areas, and manage and treat storm water through natural features. Staff recommend the Vancouver Park Board approve the proposed concept for the new park in East Fraser Lands so that the project can proceed to detail design.

General Manager's Office
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC

Prepared by:
Zhiwei Lu, Landscape Architect I – Park Development

/zl/jl/lh/clc

New Park in East Fraser Lands – Proposed Concept Plan



Figure 1: Concept Plan of New Park in East Fraser Lands



Figure 2: Artistic Rendering of New Park in East Fraser Lands

New Park in East Fraser Lands – Proposed Concept Plan



Figure 3: Context Analysis of the New Park in East Fraser Lands

New Park in East Fraser Lands – Public Engagement Summary



NEW PARK IN EAST FRASER LANDS Engagement Summary - Fall 2020

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211

Responses

%65 live nearby

From August 24 to September 13, 2020, a digital survey was available to the public for feedback on the proposed conceptual design for a new park in East Fraser Lands. We notified the community about the survey through mail-outs, site signs, emails, and social media. The following highlights the key findings of the survey.



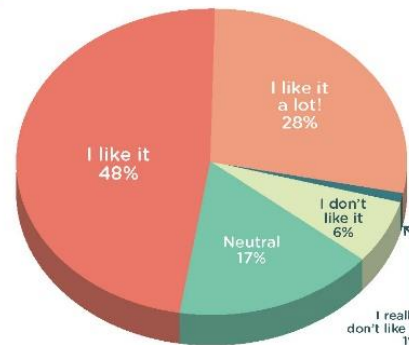
Q1

We heard from the community which design goals were most or least important to them. Here is how those goals were ranked:



Q2

We heard that the majority of the community liked the proposed design:



New Park in East Fraser Lands – Public Engagement Summary

NEW PARK IN EAST FRASER LANDS

Engagement Summary - Fall 2020

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Q3 The top 3 requests for additional park amenities were:

We heard		
 14% Dog park	 7% Bigger playground	 6% More seating & picnic tables
Our response		
On-leash dogs are welcome at all parks and a dog bowl will be added to a new drinking fountain. One of the city's largest off-leash areas is located nearby at Everett Crowley Park. To learn more, see our People, Parks & Dogs Strategy.	We are taking a balanced approach to provide spaces in the park for everyone. The playground has been maximized with the available space while still ensuring safety.	More seating has been added to the revised design including more wall seating, which was the most requested of all the seating types.

Q5 The top 3 requests for additional playground amenities were:

We heard		
 5% Splash pad	 3% Accessible equipment	 3% Natural materials
Our response		
Splash pads are great but this park is too small to accommodate one. For more information, see the Vancouver Aquatics Strategy VanSplash.	Accessibility is one of our top priorities too. We will make sure to include accessible play options.	When looking for playground equipment, we will look for equipment made from wood and other natural materials.

Q7 Respondents were asked which types of seating they liked the most:

1
 Wall seating

2
 Bench

3
 Picnic table

4
 Chairs

Q4 The top 3 requested items that will be included in the playground were:

1
 Obstacle Course

2
 Hill Slide

3
 Climbers

Q6 We heard from 211 respondents which park features they liked the most, and which they liked the least. Here is how the features ranked so that we know where to focus our efforts:

1
 Trees for Shade

2
 Rain Garden

3
 Path

4
 Flowering Trees

5
 Wildflower Meadow

6
 Lawn

7
 Boulders

8
 Stairs