



The Corporation of the City of Courtenay

Briefing Note

To: Council

File No.: 0720-01

From: Director of Recreation, Culture, and Community Services

Date: February 28, 2024

Subject: Improvements to Bill Moore Park Baseball Diamond

PURPOSE: To inform Council of proposed improvements by the Comox Valley Baseball Association to the baseball diamond located at Bill Moore Park.

BACKGROUND:

The Comox Valley Baseball Association (CVBA) and Courtenay Recreation have been in discussion regarding improvements to the baseball diamond at Bill Moore Park. CVBA has submitted a proposal (see Attachment 1: CVBA Proposal) outlining a series of improvements to the baseball diamond that would enhance the baseball experience including a more stadium like setting through fencing improvements, addition of a bullpen, and installation of a scoreboard. CVBA has secured funding to proceed with these improvements at no or little expense to the City of Courtenay.

DISCUSSION:

Bill Moore Park is home to the Comox Valley Baseball Association and Comox Valley Raiders Youth Football Club. The sports fields at Bill Moore Park, consisting of two baseball diamonds and one rectangular grass field, are irrigated and have lighting, in addition to a concession, changerooms, and washrooms. The two clubs coordinate sharing of the field and diamonds, as well as a clubhouse to support their respective sport programs.

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) identifies the need for the development of a park plan for Bill Moore Park and the PRMP Implementation Strategy identifies it as a short-term priority. As such, the proposed 2024 Financial Plan includes the development of a park plan for Bill Moore in 2024. The financial plan also identifies capital drainage and irrigation improvements for the sports fields in 2025.

CVBA has approached the City of Courtenay with a proposal to make improvements to the baseball diamond at Bill Moore Park, funded by the CVBA through grants and donors. The proposed improvements include:

- Additional perimeter fencing to create entry points to the stands to create a stadium experience
- Addition of a bullpen along the first base fence to enable separate warm-up pitching areas for the home and away teams
- Relocation of perimeter fencing along third base to expand seating area
- Additional fencing in front of dugouts to expand dugout areas for teams and players
- Installation of a scoreboard

As per CVBA's proposal, these improvements would enable CVBA to expand its programming and provide high calibre U15 and U18 baseball programs for Comox Valley residents. Currently Comox Valley players are required to travel extensively in order to continue playing baseball at these levels. CVBA has indicated that making these improvements would result in an expansion of higher level baseball to the Comox Valley, in addition to extended community benefits including increased park activation, additional community events and attractions, and enhanced sport development opportunities for Comox Valley children and youth.

CVBA has indicated they would like these improvements to be complete by the start of the baseball season (mid-April 2024). Staff have consulted with CVBA, Comox Valley Raiders Youth Football, and internal City departments on the proposal. The fencing improvements proposed by CVBA are supported by staff and doable within the timeframe proposed.

Staff are continuing to review the scoreboard proposal and will work collaboratively with CVBA towards its installation in a timely manner however the electrical requirements and ongoing maintenance obligations require further exploration and as such may not be able to be completed by the mid-April date. Staff, CVBA, and Comox Valley Raiders Youth Football met to discuss opportunities for shared scoreboards however due to the nature of the sports and the unique field positions, the sports require separate scoreboards located in different parts of the park.

CVBA's proposal builds on the recommendations of the CVRD Sports Field Strategy by targeting investment in sport field infrastructure to maximize quality and add capacity. The CVRD Sports Field Strategy also identifies the need to develop a baseball hub site in the Comox Valley to support baseball's sport development, including tournament hosting. While a park planning process for Bill Moore Park will be initiated in 2024, it is envisioned that the sports field use by football and baseball will remain a key element of park use and the proposal by CVBA is not expected to interfere with or limit the park planning process or its outcomes.

Staff will continue to work with CVBA to bring their proposal to fruition, including exploring entering into a longer term memorandum of understanding regarding the development and improvement of the baseball facilities at Bill Moore Park, and or other City parks, to support CVBA's vision for baseball in the Comox Valley. This work will be done in collaboration with Comox Valley Raiders Youth Football regarding Bill Moore Park, and with the CVRD Recreation Commission as they undertake planning work to implement recommendations of the CVRD Sports Field Strategy.

POLICY ANALYSIS:

OCP, 2022

PR 27 Seek out partnerships to achieve the goals and objectives of the Parks and Recreation master plan including, but not limited to working with:

- d. Non-profit and private sector organizations to expand sport and physical activity options, and expand recreation opportunities for all residents.
- e. Citizens to foster resident-driven solutions and involvement in park use and community involvement.

Parks and Recreation Master Plan, 2019

3.2.2 Conduct park plans as per the process outlined in the PRMP.

- Bill Moore Park Plan identified as short term (1-3 years) priority in PRMP Implementation Strategy

3.2.5 Work on improving community parks as opportunities arise.

- Bill Moore Park identified as priority park for capital improvements.

3.3.11 Add and upgrade the following amenities as part of park development:

- More or better sports fields as the population grows in collaboration with other jurisdictions in the Comox Valley

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The proposal put forward by CVBA does not require any direct financial support from the City of Courtenay as all funding has been sourced from grants and donors. The project however will require in kind administration and project oversight from City staff to ensure it meets City requirements. Should there be any unexpected financial contributions from the City, funding could be made available through the City’s Partners in Parks capital funding program at the discretion of the Director of Recreation, Culture, and Community Services.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS:

Recreation, Culture, and Community Services will lead the development and administration of the project proposal, including any necessary agreements. However, the project will involve interdepartmental coordination and collaboration between RCCS, finance (procurement and risk management), and Public Works Services (Parks, Civic Facilities, etc).

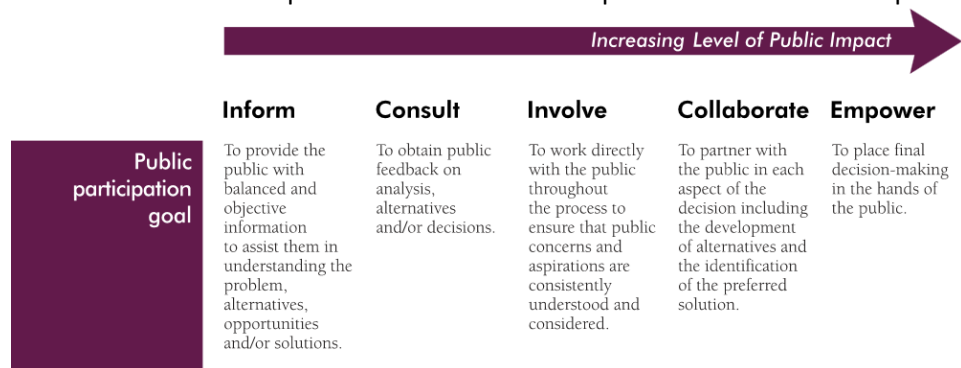
STRATEGIC PRIORITIES REFERENCE:

This initiative addresses the following strategic priorities:

- Parks and Recreation - Optimize active public spaces to respond to density increases and increased park use

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Staff would inform the public based on the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation:



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RECOMMENDATION: THAT Council receive the “Improvements to Bill Moore Park Baseball Diamond” briefing note.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. CVBA Proposal

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