



To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee

Date: June 12, 2024

From: Todd Gross, Director, Parks Services

File: 06-2345-20-
MNOR1/Vol 01

Re: **Garden City Community Park Gathering Space Contribution**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Garden City Community Park Gathering Space Contribution”, dated June 12, 2024, from the Director, Parks Services, be received for information.

Todd Gross
Director, Parks Services
(604-247-4942)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO: Finance Department	CONCURRENCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

The Rotary Club of Richmond Sunset (the Club) engaged with Parks Services in the summer of 2022 via the City's Partners for Beautification Adopt-a-Garden Program to develop a concept for a gathering space at Garden City Community Park. Since then, staff have supported the Club's fundraising efforts through development of preliminary design ideas and costing. To date, the Club has raised \$100,000 of their fundraising goal of \$300,000 and submitted a letter of intent to the director of Parks Services on March 25, 2024, with a commitment to fully fund the gathering space so that it can be implemented by 2026.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Provide an overview of the Club's long-standing co-operative relationship with the City;
- Summarize the collaboration between the Club and City for development of the gathering space at Garden City Community Park to date; and
- Outline next steps.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

1.3 Increase the reach of communication and engagement efforts to connect with Richmond's diverse community.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.

6.2 Enhance the City's network of parks, trails and open spaces.

6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.

Analysis

Background

The Club was established in 1998. They have a longstanding history of serving the local and global community through provision of services, infrastructure donations, and scholarships. Their vision is, "to be a growing, active and vibrant club working in harmony to create positive outcomes to serve humanity". Their mission statement is, "we create lasting change in our local

and global communities by bringing together community leaders, individuals and club resources dedicated to serving others”. Some examples of their contributions to the Richmond community include organizing the grand opening of Richmond City Hall in 2000, fundraising for the Garden City Community Park arboretum in 2009, and arranging the Winter Wonderland fundraiser at Richmond City Hall for the past 22 years.

Partnership with the Club for Creation of a Gathering Space

In the summer of 2022, the Club engaged with Parks Services via the City’s Partners for Beautification Adopt-a-Garden Program for creation of a gathering space at Garden City Community Park. The Partners for Beautification Program is a unique opportunity for Richmond residents of all ages, community groups, service clubs and businesses to get involved with one or more of the adoption programs to help make a difference in the parks, streetscapes and dike legacy. The Adopt-a-Garden Program provides opportunities for community members and groups to become involved in the maintenance of existing and creation of new garden areas in Richmond’s open spaces and community parks. Richmond is known as the "Garden City" and the Adopt-A-Garden Program is one way to enhance and preserve this legacy. To formalize their commitment and partnership with the City, the Club submitted a formal letter of intent to the director of Parks Services, on March 25, 2024 (see Attachment 1: Letter of Intent).

Gathering Space Location

Building on the success of the arboretum that the Club helped develop in 2009, the Club would like to fund development of a gathering space at Garden City Park. The vision for the proposed area is to serve as a place of quiet contemplation and reminder of the importance of peace, intercultural harmony, community belonging and social connections in the Richmond community and beyond. It is the Club’s aspiration that it provides a “unique experience for the Richmond community and visitors, reminding them of the importance of peace, especially given the mental health effects of current world events”. The Club has seen the “divisive impact that disputes have globally and in our community and they hope to work towards greater understanding, benefiting those looking for a place to reflect and connect”, through creation of this space.

The arboretum is an ideal location for a new seating area focused on cross-cultural unity because, just like the residents of Richmond, it is a collection of trees from varied regions across the globe that are well-suited to grow and thrive in Richmond. The proposed location is nestled within an opening between existing large trees in the northwest area of the park and arboretum (see Attachment 2: Proposed Location). The gathering space will provide opportunities for people to rest, connect and enjoy this special space in Garden City Community Park.

Gathering Space Description

The gathering space is envisioned to include benches, shade trellises, a small recirculating water feature (rock bubbler), perennial planting and sculptural elements that include messages of peace in multiple languages. The space would also feature a ginkgo tree seedling which survived the bombing of Hiroshima during World War II. This tree will serve as an emblem of hope and

resilience in the face of conflict and despair while also adding a unique feature to the arboretum. All existing trees surrounding the gathering space will be retained and protected.

Partnership and Process to Date

Since the Club reached out to Parks Services in the summer of 2022, staff have provided support for their fundraising initiatives by offering conceptual ideas, developing preliminary costing and identifying a suitable location. So far, the Club has successfully raised \$100,000 towards the estimated budget of \$300,000 for implementation. The Club will continue to fundraise until they reach the full amount. As noted in the letter of intent, the target to complete implementation of the gathering space is the summer of 2026. Staff will continue to support and collaborate with the Club throughout the process.

Gathering Space Recognition and Naming

To recognize the Club's contribution to the gathering space, a plaque placed on a boulder will be incorporated into the design of the area. Plaques and signs recognizing community contributions is in keeping with other park enhancement projects such as South Arm Community Park Playground Renewal, which was created with a contribution from the South Arm Community Association and the Steveston Community Park Water Play Area, which was created with contributions from the Steveston Community Society as well as a number of other local organizations and businesses.

The Club currently refers to the proposed gathering space as the Rotary Peace Garden or Peace Garden. If there is a desire to formally name the space, as per Council Policy No. 2016, Naming of Public Buildings – Parks or Places, staff will bring forward a report with naming options for Council consideration.

Next Steps

The next steps will be concept design, costing refinement and preparation of capital submissions for 2025 and 2026, funded by external contribution with an operating budget impact estimate for Council's consideration as part of the annual budget process. The funding for the gathering space will be phased and span over two years to help accommodate the Club's fundraising capacity and fiscal year planning. Should Council approve the capital submission as part of the Capital Budget, staff will proceed with detailed design, project phasing as required, and implementation, with a target of completion in the summer of 2026.

Financial Impact

At this time, there are no financial impacts. A capital submission for a Garden City Community Park Gathering Space, funded by external contributions, along with an operating budget impact, will be submitted for Council's consideration through the annual budget process.

Conclusion

The Club has a longstanding history of successfully partnering with the City of Richmond to make a positive impact within our community. The Club engaged with Parks Services in the

summer of 2022, via the City's Partners for Beautification Adopt-a-Garden Program to create a gathering space at Garden City Community Park. A letter of intent from the Club was submitted on March 25, 2024, with a commitment to fully fund implementation of the gathering space. The gathering space would be a welcome addition to the Garden City Community Park arboretum, serving as a tranquil seating area for reflection and symbol of peace within our diverse community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Miriam Plishka', written in a cursive style.

Miriam Plishka, BCSLA, CSLA
Park Planner
(604-204-8917)

- Att. 1: Letter of Intent
- 2: Gathering Space Proposed Location

Letter of Intent



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Todd Gross

Director, Park Services

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604-247-4942

March 25, 2024

Please let me introduce myself. I am a Rotarian from the Rotary Club of Richmond Sunset. Our club was chartered in 1998, and we were the club that organized the grand opening of Richmond City Hall in 2000. We are honoured to have the City of Richmond as a partner on numerous projects for many years. In particular, we did the first Winter Wonderland fundraiser at Richmond City Hall in 2000, and we have run it for 22 years now with the support of City staff.

In 2009, we worked closely with City staff and Michael Redpath to create the Garden City Park and Arboretum. We helped to sell some of the Indigenous trees of the Pacific Northwest. Since then, the size of the park has increased with many elements to support the needs of the community. We have recently proposed to the City, Mayor, Council and Jason Chan that we would like to create a Rotary Peace Garden in a location that Jason helped us identify. On July 10, 2022, Rotary International President Jennifer Jones visited the site and revealed the plans to create the park alongside Mayor Malcolm Brodie. We would like to formally express our intent to develop this garden with the help of the City. Included here is a link to the article that was released in the Richmond News that announces the plans of this Garden: https://www.richmond-news.com/local-news/richmondites-to-see-a-new-city-centre-garden-in-the-next-three-years-5571235#google_vignette.

The Rotary Peace Garden will serve as a peaceful and tranquil sanctuary within Garden City Park, in line with Rotary's focus on promoting peace. One unique feature will be the addition of a ginkgo tree seedling, which survived the bombing of Hiroshima during World War II. We hope to provide a unique experience for residents of Richmond and visitors, reminding them of the importance of peace, especially given the mental health effects of current world events. We have seen the divisive impact that disputes have globally and in our community, and we hope to work towards greater understanding, benefiting those looking for a place to contemplate and connect.

We have currently raised \$100,000 towards the estimated budget of \$300,000 provided to us by Jason. We plan to work with all the Rotary clubs in Rotary District 5040, which encompasses 49 clubs in BC. Our goal is to complete the project by the summer of 2026.

We hope to have your support and welcome any questions you may have.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "MagdaLEN R. Leung".

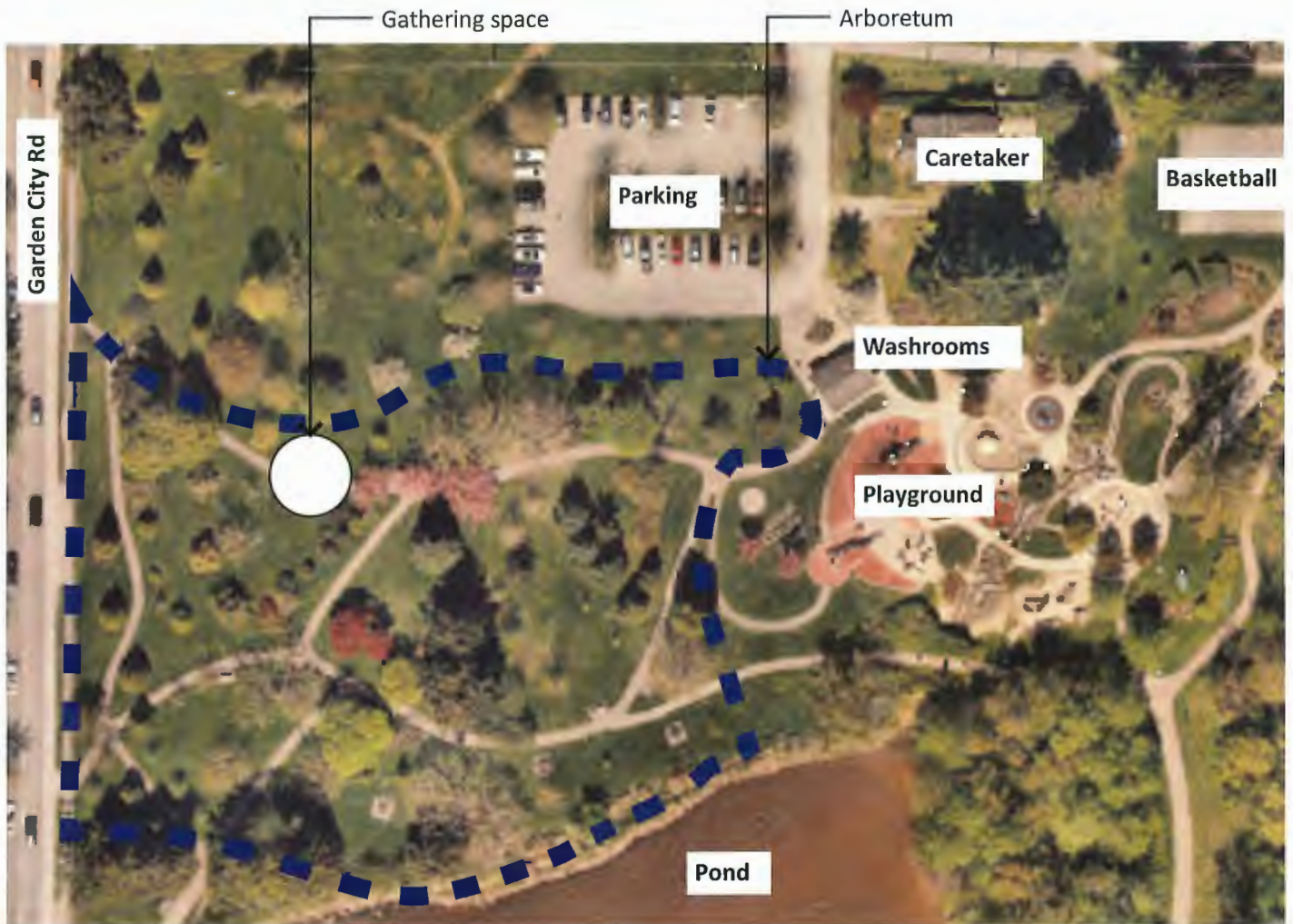
MAGDALEN R. LEUNG

Past President & Foundation Chair, Rotary Club of Richmond Sunset

Gathering Space Proposed Location



Context Plan



Site Location Plan