



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services
Committee

Date: December 4, 2020

From: Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services

File: 11-7141-01/2020-Vol
01

Todd Gross
Director, Parks Services

Re: London Heritage Farm Master Plan

Staff Recommendations

That the London Heritage Farm Master Plan as outlined in the report "London Heritage Farm Master Plan," dated December 4, 2020, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be endorsed to guide the future development and operation of London Heritage Farm Site.

Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
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Todd Gross
Director, Parks Services
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Att. 1

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

Staff Report

Origin

On April 24, 2019 staff received the following referral from Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Services Committee:

That staff update the London Farm Master Plan and investigate the cost, and potential, of reconstructing a timber barn, similar to the barn re-constructed, with a barn-raising event, in Ladner by Delta Municipality.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

2.4 Increase opportunities that encourage daily access to nature and open spaces and that allow the community to make more sustainable choices.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #3 One Community Together:

3.4 Celebrate Richmond's unique and diverse history and heritage.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

4.2 Ensure infrastructure meets changing community needs, current trends and best practices.

4.3 Encourage wellness and connection to nature through a network of open spaces.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

6.4 Recognize Richmond's history and heritage through preservation, protection and interpretation.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #8 An Engaged and Informed Community:

8.1 Increased opportunities for public engagement.

Analysis

Background

Site History

London Heritage Farm is a four acre heritage site on Dyke Road located between No. 2 and Gilbert roads overlooking the South Arm of the Fraser River. The site has been developed as an agriculturally-themed park with the historical London family farmhouse as its centrepiece.

London Farm was designated a municipal heritage site in 1978 and opened to the public as an historic site in 1983.

The site is one of the earliest farm sites in the South Arm. The London Farmhouse has heritage value for its historic association with the London family, an important South Arm family which established London's Landing, a small settlement on the river with a wharf from which farm products were shipped and supplies received.

The site includes gardens designed to represent the London family's tenure, along with heritage fruit trees, a reconstructed barn, agricultural equipment exhibits, chicken coop, beehives, community gardens and public amenities. An original slough in the centre of the site has been rehabilitated into a pond providing habitat for birds and waterfowl.

The last Master Plan for the site was developed in 1986 and was never fully implemented. Over time, different elements have been added to the site by the London Heritage Farm Society (the Society) so that the 1986 Master Plan no longer represents the current presentation of the site.

Currently, London Heritage Farm serves to interpret early Richmond's farming and agricultural history through the stories of the London family and other Richmond farmers. The site highlights farm methods and the relationships between the people, land and animals that lived on the farm.

London Heritage Farm Society

The Society is a non-profit Society and Registered Charity established in the 1970's. The Society's original purpose was to contribute to the social, educational and recreational resources of Richmond and to provide opportunities in heritage education, agricultural awareness, outdoor recreation and appreciation of arts and crafts. The Society worked with the City to save the farmhouse prior to the City's purchase of the house along with four acres of farmland for the creation of a park.

The Society has managed operations of the London Heritage Farm Site in conjunction with the City of Richmond since it opened to the public in 1983. Since that time, the Society has overseen most day-to-day operations including the tearoom, gift shop, exhibits and collections, heritage house tours, rentals, allotment and heritage gardens, bees and chickens. The Society currently has one regular part-time staff, 54 members, and contributes 610 volunteer hours to the site.

In 2019, the Society requested that the City take over management of the operations of the heritage house and interpretation of the site. The Society continues to support the maintenance of the perennial and rose gardens, care for the chickens and bees, manage the allotment gardens and conduct an annual plant sale. Staff are working with the Society to determine the potential for future renewed tea service and gift shop sales. This relationship is captured in the five-year operating agreement with the Society which Council approved in January 2018 and the Society signed in December 2020.

Planning Process

The proposed Master Plan for the London Heritage Farm site was developed by staff in collaboration with the London Heritage Farm Society. Planning began with a facilitated workshop with Society board members to explore areas of the site that were working well and features that were missing, or could use improvement. A draft Master Plan was created based on this input, and subsequent drafts of the Plan were shared with the Society Board of Directors for feedback. The Society supports the proposed Master Plan. (Attachment 1)

Additionally, the concepts in the Master Plan were developed in coordination with on-going work on the Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan. Proposed enhancements and additions both support improving the visitor's park experience and provide opportunities to better share the history of London Farm and Richmond's agricultural heritage.

Master Plan Highlights

The proposed Master Plan retains many of the existing elements of the park and heritage features at London Heritage Farm. The following provides a summary of the changes proposed in the Master Plan. These changes support the following goals:

1. Improve the park experience for drop-in visitors and regular users;
2. Improve accessibility to the site;
3. Add heritage interpretation; and
4. Enhance visibility.

Many elements of the Master Plan are enhancements or additions to existing features which are no longer functioning as they were intended. These include:

- Gravel pathways;
- Garden plantings;
- Site signage;
- Heritage farm equipment displays;
- Park furnishings;
- Parking and vehicle access;
- Site entrance and gating;
- Bee house;
- Chicken coop and run; and
- Bike parking.

New elements include:

- A farm demonstration garden which would add interpretation about agriculture and highlight the original use of the site, as well as disguise the current septic field.
- An outhouse display which would add interpretation of early farm life.
- A vintage farm equipment feature which would offer an interactive, photo opportunity for visitors.
- A heritage-style open pole barn which would provide covered space for park visitors, group programs, and rentals.

- A boardwalk over the pond which would offer opportunities for added interpretation of the dyke and wetlands as well as a new park experience.

Additionally, the Plan introduces the idea of zones for different areas of the site. These zones would help guide future changes to the site to ensure the heritage character is preserved around the London Farmhouse while allowing for the addition of important community amenities in other areas.

Historic Barn Reconstruction and Cost

The approach for the construction and use of a historic barn at London Heritage Farm could be similar to the barn erected in Delta in August 2012. For the Delta project, a hay barn from the early 1900's was given to the Corporation of Delta who then carefully moved it from its location on Tilsbury Island to Hawthorne Grove Park. Part of the project included a barn-raising event which involved the participation of hundreds of local volunteers. The barn was reconstructed with a two-level 8,000 sq ft finished interior that showcases Delta's agricultural history and is currently used for community programs and special event rentals. The project cost for Delta's Harris Barn was reported to be \$600,000 in 2012.

Should an opportunity to relocate and reconstruct a heritage barn arise in Richmond, staff will investigate the opportunities and costs at that time. At this time costing is not provided for this option as more information would be required in order to provide an order of magnitude cost estimate. The 2,500 sq. ft. barn proposed in the London Farm Master Plan is new construction and the order of magnitude cost for this type of barn is estimated to be \$910,000 in 2020 dollars. Any barn would have to be considered in the context of the Major Facilities List.

Next Steps

Should Council endorse the proposed Master Plan, staff will work with the Society to implement some of the smaller changes that are within existing funding sources. These elements include:

- Signage;
- Plantings;
- Heritage display enhancements;
- Chicken coop and bee house enhancements; and
- Entry gate.

The remaining elements of the Plan will require additional dedicated capital and/or operating funding and will be considered as part of future annual budget processes.

Staff will work with the London Heritage Farm Society Board of Directors to identify opportunities to engage volunteers in the development and implementation of all elements of the London Farm Master Plan, including the barn.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to the endorsement of the London Heritage Farm Master Plan at this time. \$38,499 is available from a 2017 one-time additional level for interpretive and directional signage at London Heritage Farm. Funding for detailed design, implementation and any operating budget impact will be submitted for Council consideration as part of the budget process.

Conclusion

London Heritage Farm is a significant heritage asset for the City of Richmond. The London Heritage Farm Master Plan offers many opportunities to enhance the existing site to improve the experience of park users. The adoption of the London Heritage Farm Master Plan will help further many Council Terms Goals and the current work on the Steveston Heritage Sites Interpretive Plan.

The addition of an open pole barn at London Heritage Farm as proposed in the London Heritage Farm Master Plan would offer space for new programming and provide a needed City amenity. Further investigation on the approach and feasibility of this structure is required.



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Att. 1: London Heritage Farm Master Plan



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The London Heritage Farm Master Plan offers an overall, unified vision for the holistic future renewal of this important, unique, heritage, cultural, park site.

The purpose of the Master Plan process and document is to:

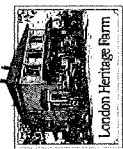
- + Capture input from the London Heritage Farm Society and key City staff on the challenges and opportunities for the existing site in terms of form, function and program.
- + Help set priorities for future site renewal and development
- + Guide capital, grant and operational funding requests towards implementation of future development.

Implementation of the Master Plan will:

- + Be incrementally realized over time as funding becomes available and in co-operation with the London Heritage Farm Society.
- + Require detailed design, offering additional opportunities for consultation and input from the London Heritage Farm Society and key City staff at each step.

Master Plan time horizon:

- + The London Heritage Farm Master Plan time horizon is 10 years.
- + The Master Plan can be revisited at any time should unanticipated challenges negate aspects of the master plan from being implemented, or opportunities present themselves that are outside of the master plan.



**LONDON HERITAGE FARM
MASTER PLAN INTRODUCTION**

SCALE N/A
DATE: NOVEMBER 13, 2020



**LONDON HERITAGE FARM
SITE VALUES, CHALLENGE**





SCALE: 350
DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2020

LONDON HERITAGE FARM UPDATED MASTER PLAN



London Heritage Farm



PRCS - 17

- LEGEND**
- 01 ADDITIONAL SITE IDENTITY AND WAYFINDING SIGNAGE ALONG DYKE ROAD
 - 02 EXISTING PARKING WITH NEW BOLLARDS AND SIGNAGE
 - 03 NEW ENHANCED ENTRY WITH NEW GATE AND SIGN
 - 04 NEW SPITTLE DROP-OFF AREA (TURNING RADIUS TO BE NEW SIGN)
 - 05 NEW SITE WELCOME/VIEW SIGNAGE AND ARRIVAL POINT
 - 06 NEW DEMONSTRATION FARM OF HAY OR OATS
 - 07 OUTLINE OF EXISTING SEPTIC FIELD
 - 08 LONDON FARMHOUSE
 - 09 RENEWED HERITAGE GARDENS AROUND FARMHOUSE
 - 10 NEW OUTHOUSE DISPLAY
 - 11 REDUCED EXISTING GRAVEL PATHROAD
 - 12 EXISTING RETAINED FLEX POND LAWN WITH GAZEBO AND TABLES
 - 13 EXISTING PERENNIAL GARDENS
 - 14 EXISTING HERITAGE GARDEN SUPPORT AREA WITH GREENHOUSES, WORKSHOP AND SHED
 - 15 EXISTING EXPANDED WASTE ENCLOSURE
 - 16 EXISTING ROSE GARDEN
 - 17 NEW WIDENED GRAVEL PATHWAY WITH FILTER CLOTH
 - 18 EXISTING BARN
 - 19 ENHANCED CHICKEN COOP AND RUN
 - 20 NEW FARM EQUIPMENT FEATURE ON PAD IN LAWN
 - 21 ENHANCED FARM EQUIPMENT DISPLAY AND INTERPRETATION
 - 22 EXISTING CARETAKERS HOUSE AND GARDEN
 - 23 EXISTING PUBLIC WASHROOMS
 - 24 EXISTING HERITAGE FRUIT TREES WITH ENHANCED INTERPRETATION
 - 25 NEW POWER AND WATER SERVICE AT WEST PASTURE FOR WASHROOM TRAILERS AND/OR FOOD TRUCKS, MIC ON PLAN - EXACT LOCATION TBD.
 - 26 EXISTING ALLIOTMENT GARDENS
 - 27 EXISTING BEE HOUSE, SHED AND RELOCATED APARTY WITH ENHANCED FENCING AND INTERPRETATION
 - 28 NEW MAINTENANCE VEHICLE HAMMERHEAD/TURN AROUND
 - 29 NEW LAVENDER GARDEN
 - 30 EXISTING WEST PASTURE
 - 31 NEW OPEN POLE BARNCOVERED OUTDOOR SPACE, EXACT LOCATION TBD.
 - 32 NEW BOARDWALK POND CROSSING WITH SEATING AREAS AT BOTH ENDS
 - 33 EXISTING POND AND WETLAND WITH ENHANCED INTERPRETATION
 - 34 NEW AND EXPANDED BIKE PARKING WITH POTENTIAL WEATHER PROTECTION



- LEGEND**
- ENTRY ZONE**
 - SUGGESTED PROGRAM:
 - SITE IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE
 - WAYFINDING (SITE MAP)
 - FAMILY PICNIC ZONE**
 - SUGGESTED PROGRAM:
 - PICNICKING
 - SITTING AND RELAXING
 - WEDDINGS AND SMALL GATHERINGS
 - HERITAGE INTERPRETATION ZONE**
 - SUGGESTED PROGRAM:
 - SIGNAGE AND INTERACTIVE DISPLAYS
 - SELF-GUIDED TOURS
 - POND AND WETLAND ZONE**
 - SUGGESTED PROGRAM:
 - NATURE INTERPRETATION
 - SITTING AND RELAXING
 - COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT ZONE**
 - SUGGESTED PROGRAM:
 - ALLOTMENT GARDENS
 - POLLINATOR LAVENDER FIELDS
 - PLANT AND FARM SALES
 - PICNICKING
 - INFORMAL RECREATION
 - FUNCTIONAL ZONES**
 - STORAGE
 - COVERED BUILDINGS TO SUPPORT SITE FUNCTIONS
 - SEPTIC
 - CARETAKER

SITE PROGRAM ZONES

PRCS - 18



ALLOTMENT GARDENS



SEASONAL FARM AND PLANT SALES



LAVENDER GARDEN



COVERED OUTDOOR SPACE/OPEN POLE BARN FOR WORKSHOPS AND SEASONAL EVENTS



BOARDWALK CROSSING

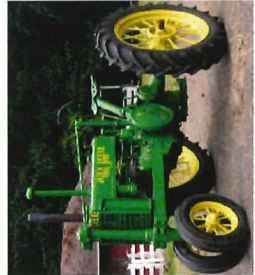


SEATING AND POND VIEWS

POND AND WETLAND ZONE



ENHANCED CHICKEN RUN



FARM EQUIPMENT FEATURE

HERITAGE INTERPRETATION ZONE



FARM DEMONSTRATION



RENEWED INTERPRETIVE SIGNS



FARM-INSPIRED ENTRY SIGN

ENTRY ZONE



WEDDINGS AND EVENTS



LAWN GAMES AND SEATING



PICNICS

FAMILY PICNIC ZONE



LONDON HERITAGE FARM SITE ZONES AND PROGRAMMING

SCALE: 600
DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2020





- LEGEND**
- NEW OR ENHANCED VISUAL POINT OF INTEREST
 - + FARM EQUIPMENT DISPLAY
 - + OUTDOOR COVERED AREA
 - + LAVENDER GARDEN
 - NEW OR ENHANCED INFORMATIONAL SIGNS
 - SUGGESTED NEW OR ENHANCED SEATING LOCATIONS
 - + COMFORTABLE BENCH WITH BACK AND ARM RESTS
 - + ADIRONDACK CHAIRS IN OPEN LAWN AREAS

POINTS OF INTEREST



SITE IDENTIFICATION SIGN WITH EYE-CATCHING, ATTENTION GRABBING COLOURS

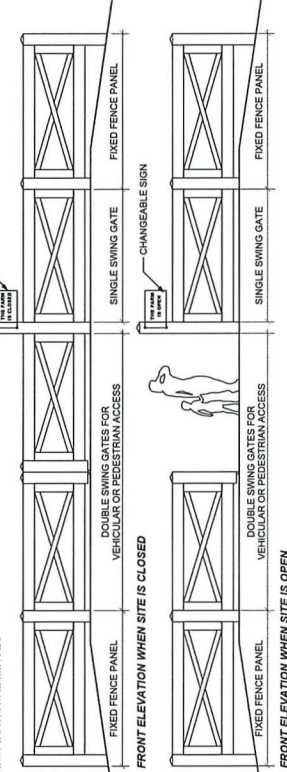


INCORPORATION OF FARM EQUIPMENT

FARM-INSPIRED ENTRY SIGN PRECEDENTS



INSPIRATIONAL IMAGES



PRELIMINARY ENTRY FENCE AND GATE CONCEPT



ADIRONDACK CHAIRS ON LAWN AREAS



COMFORTABLE BENCH WITH BACK AND ARM RESTS

SUGGESTED SEATING TYPES



LONDON HERITAGE FARM

POTENTIAL NEW/ENHANCED POINTS OF INTEREST AND PRELIMINARY ENTRY AND SEATING CONCEPTS

SCALE: 600
DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2020

