

**To:** COUNCIL

**Meeting Date:** 2/28/2023

**Subject:** Soper Park Conceptual Amenity

**Submitted By:** Kevin De Leebeeck, Director of Engineering

**Prepared By:** Claire McLoughlin, Landscape Architect

**Report No.:** 23-152-CD

**File No.:** A/01275-30

**Wards Affected:** Ward 4

### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

THAT Report 23-152-CD Soper Park Conceptual Amenity be received;

AND THAT Council endorse the Soper Park Conceptual Design Option 1 as the preferred amenity concept which includes a large splash feature (330 m<sup>2</sup>), mid-size playground (490 m<sup>2</sup>), picnic areas, open activity space including yoga areas and community gardens;

AND THAT Council endorse Building Option 3 which includes full demolition of the existing building and construction of a new smaller building with universal washroom and change room to support the preferred amenity concept;

AND FURTHER THAT Council approve additional funding in the amount of \$51,000 from the Capital Works Reserve Fund to the existing Soper Park - Amenity Replacement Design Project (A/01275-30) for the detailed design of Building Option 3.

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

#### **Purpose**

This report has been prepared to present the preferred Soper Park Amenity conceptual design and the preferred building option to support the amenity for Council endorsement prior to proceeding with detailed design. The preferred amenity conceptual design was prepared based on feedback received from two community consultation events regarding options for re-activating the area originally occupied by the Kinsmen Soper Park Pool, while the most feasible building option was identified through a high-level assessment and evaluation of alternatives.

## Key Findings

Results of community consultation and feedback indicate that the top two amenity choices for re-activating this space are a splash feature and a playground. Additional features which had high community support include a neighbourhood skating rink, picnic tables, shade structures, bench seating, pickleball courts and a community garden.

Part of the 2022 Kinsmen Soper Park Pool Decommissioning capital project (A/00906-40) included the removal of the existing building. Demolition of the existing building has been delayed until selection of a preferred amenity concept in case any portions of the existing building could remain to support the preferred amenity concept. A high-level assessment of building alternatives and associated costs was undertaken which identified that Building Option 3, full demolition and a new smaller washroom building, as the most feasible building option to support any amenity conceptual design with a splash feature.

## Financial Implications

Additional funding in the amount of \$51,000 is needed from the Capital Works Reserve Fund in order to proceed with the detailed design of the preferred Building Option 3 as part of the Soper Park - Amenity Replacement Design Project (A/01275-30).

## STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

- ☒ Strategic Action; or
- ☐ Core Service

**Objective(s):** Not Applicable

**Strategic Action:** Create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do

**Program:** Not Applicable

**Core Service:** Not Applicable

The design of the preferred conceptual amenity features supports the community's desire for a variety of recreational activities in the area and activates a space of community significance within the City.

## BACKGROUND:

In November 2020, as part of Report 20-236 (CRE) Future Outdoor Pool Operating Strategy, a motion was passed by Council for the permanent closure and decommissioning of the Kinsmen Soper Park Pool. In connection with the closure of the pool in September 2021, an initial public consultation and survey page was undertaken to receive high level feedback about the future for this area of Soper Park. The survey

titled "Soper Park: What Could it Be?" gathered information and feedback on what park visitors would like to see in place of the pool. The project page received 492-page views, and the survey and ideas page received 168 responses. The community feedback and survey results, provided in Appendix B, were used to develop the scope of work for the conceptual design of the Soper Park amenity replacement.

In 2022, the swimming pool was decommissioned as part of approved Capital Project A/00906-40, however the demolition of the existing building has been delayed until selection of a preferred amenity concept in case any portions of the existing building could remain to support the preferred amenity concept. As part of the Soper Park Amenity Replacement Design assignment (A/01275-30) a high-level assessment of the existing building and options analysis was completed to determine the most feasible approach to support the preferred amenity concept. Further to Report 22-043 (CRS) Soper Park Amenity Design award, the detailed design and associated construction and/or renovation of the existing building is not included in the current scope of work.

## **ANALYSIS:**

### **Introduction**

In November 2022 a hybrid engagement process was undertaken to collect feedback from the community on three (3) conceptual designs. A brief summary of each conceptual design option is provided below, with illustrations provided in Appendix C.

- Conceptual Design Option 1: Includes a large splash feature (330 m<sup>2</sup>), and mid-size playground (490 m<sup>2</sup>), picnic areas, open activity space including yoga areas and community gardens. Preliminary Cost Estimate: \$1,565,000
- Conceptual Design Option 2: Includes a large playground (590 m<sup>2</sup>) mid-sized splash feature (210 m<sup>2</sup>), picnic areas, open activity space including yoga areas and community gardens. Preliminary Cost Estimate: \$1,450,000
- Conceptual Design Option 3: Includes separated playground areas (590 m<sup>2</sup>), pickle ball courts, picnic areas, open activity space including yoga areas, community gardens and fitness stations. Preliminary Cost Estimate: \$1,450,000

A survey was provided to those who attended the in-person and virtual engagement sessions to gather additional feedback on potential smaller amenity features, that could be interchanged within the three conceptual design options. Community feedback revealed the highest interest in the following amenities:

1. Splash Feature (125 votes);
2. Playground with Slides and Swings (125 votes);

3. Neighbourhood Skating Rink (119 votes);
4. Picnic Tables (115 votes);
5. Shade Structures (70 votes);
6. Quiet Seating with Benches (66 votes);
7. Pickleball Court(s) (60 votes); and
8. Community Garden (58 votes)

The community's feedback and comments best align with Conceptual Design Option 1, however, to further embrace the community's feedback and preferences of amenity options a Modified Conceptual Design Option 1A was developed for Council's consideration that also includes disc golf course improvements (\$10,000) and new pickleball courts (\$190,000). The preliminary cost estimate of the Modified Conceptual Design Option 1A (illustrated in Appendix A) to include these features is \$1,765,000.

### **Existing Building Considerations**

Part of the 2022 Kinsmen Soper Park Pool Decommissioning capital project (A/00906-40) included the removal of the existing building, however demolition of the existing building has been delayed until selection of a preferred amenity concept in case any portions of the existing building could remain to support the preferred concept. Report 22-043 (CRS) Soper Park Amenity Design Award outlined that a washroom/change room building is likely needed if the preferred concept includes a splash feature. As part of the Soper Park Amenity conceptual design process a high-level assessment and options analysis of various building alternatives was completed. The building alternative evaluation also considered potential additional space for recreational purposes above the base operational requirements to support an amenity concept with a splash feature. Potential recreational space opportunities include:

- Sports amenity storage (e.g. Pickleball Court, Neighbourhood Skating Rink);
- Community Active Transportation Hub (i.e. bike rentals & storage);
- Storage for the garden amenity program (e.g. Community Garden); and
- Indoor programming and storage space for recreational uses

Four (4) high level estimates were prepared to help compare different building alternatives, as summarized below, with further detail provided in Appendix E. Costs associated with any building option are in addition to the conceptual amenity estimates provided above.

- Building Option 1: Full renovation of the existing building with universal washroom/change room to support a splash feature with remaining space allocated for other recreational programming (\$1,122,250)
- Building Option 2: Partial demolition and partial renovation with a universal washroom/change room to support a splash feature with limited space for other programming (\$947,250)
- Building Option 3: Full demolition of the existing building and new smaller building with minimum footprint for universal washroom/change room to support a splash feature (\$650,250)
- Building Option 4: Full demolition, with no re-build (\$210,000)

While Building Option 1 and Building Option 2 consider the opportunity for additional recreation space, given the associated costs of these options staff are recommending Council endorse Building Option 3 to support any of the amenity conceptual designs that include a splash feature. Furthermore, the smaller footprint of Building Option 3 provides additional onsite space to accommodate the community feedback of pickleball courts within the Modified Conceptual Design Option 1A.

#### **EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):**

There is no existing policy/by-law.

#### **FINANCIAL IMPACT:**

Additional funding in the amount of \$51,000 is needed from the Capital Works Reserve Fund in order to proceed with detailed design of the preferred Building Option 3 as part of the Soper Park - Amenity Replacement Design Project (A/01275-30).

The preliminary estimated construction cost of the recommended Conceptual Design Option 1 is \$1,565,000. In addition to the amenity replacement cost the high-level estimate of the preferred Building Option 3 is \$650,250. As detailed design progresses further updates to the capital construction project (A/01275-40) will be completed as part of future capital budget cycles.

#### **PUBLIC VALUE:**

##### **Collaboration:**

The project addresses the Public Value Objective of Collaboration by working in partnership with community stakeholders, local residents, community organizations, neighbourhood associations and advisory committees towards an amenity that best serves the interests of the community.

## **Engagement:**

Public involvement through the participation of in-person and virtual engagement platforms early in the process to help inform the preferred conceptual amenity.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:**

### **Accessibility Advisory Committee (Legislated)**

The Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee was consulted in October 2022 where the conceptual designs were presented to committee members with discussion about the potential amenity features. The conceptual designs were well received and the project team received valuable feedback to take into consideration during the detailed design stage of the project.

A summary of the committee comments is provided below:

- Incorporate accessible washrooms and changerooms in the building
- Supportive of an area designated as a community rink
- Include more accessible considerations in the Community Garden
- Delineate accessible areas in parking lot and adjacent curbs/sidewalks
- Splashpads are a safe and an accessible friendly amenity
- Provide various seating options for all site users

Consultation with the Accessible Advisory Committee would continue to occur throughout the detailed design process.

## **PUBLIC INPUT:**

Opportunity for local residents and the community to take part in, provide feedback and comments, and to share their perspectives on the three (3) conceptual amenity designs occurred through two initiatives. An in-person Public Information Centre (PIC) took place on November 10<sup>th</sup> while an Engage Cambridge survey was posted concurrently from November 10<sup>th</sup> to November 27<sup>th</sup> 2022. The in-person PIC was held at the Galt Arena Gardens where 43 people attended a drop-in style session, with six (6) written comments/surveys received. The Engage Cambridge Virtual Engagement received 1,255-page views and 261 viewers submitted a survey/comment response through the online platform.

A summary of public consultation responses is presented below:

- Positive feedback on splash feature, playground and overall improvements
- Excitement around family and children's programming at the park

- Improvements and expansion of the existing disc golf course are desired
- Requests for sport courts/fields and for a community skating rink
- Desire for a dog park, and outdoor workout equipment
- Increase access to the park and create more naturalized spaces with trees and greenery
- include more parking or remove parking for more amenities
- Concern over removal of the pool, and desire for the pool space to remain
- Improve safety and cleanliness

All public comments and survey data, organized into major themes with responses is provided in Appendix D.

## **INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:**

### **Internal Consultation**

Staff from Engineering, Parks Operations, Recreation, and Facilities Divisions provided comment and feedback during the development of the concept designs.

### **External Consultation**

The Alison Neighbourhood Association was consulted in October 2022 where the three (3) conceptual designs were circulated in advance to allow for internal comments from the Association to be collected and provided at the meeting. The project team attended the meeting to speak with Association members about the proposed amenity features. The conceptual designs were well received and the project team received helpful feedback to take into consideration during the detailed design stage of the project.

A brief summary of Association comments is provided below:

- An Active Transportation Hub (bike rentals and storage) would be desired
- Conversation on LRT and considerations for future density in the area
- That Disc Golf remain a part of the park
- Playground and splashpad were favoured features
- Enthusiasm for Community Garden and desire to assist with programming
- Concerns about site access from Marion Way
- Safety, garbage, and lack of lighting within the park raised as a concern

## **CONCLUSION:**

In accordance with the City's Strategic Alignment to "create and activate spaces that offer things for people to do" three (3) amenity concept designs were developed and presented for public and stakeholder input. Amenity Conceptual Design Option 1 was selected by the public as the preferred conceptual design, however to incorporate public survey results and feedback a Modified Conceptual Design Option 1A was developed for Council consideration. The modified concept includes a splash feature, playground, picnic areas, benches, shade shelters, community skating rink, community garden and pickle ball courts.

A high-level assessment of building alternatives and associated costs was also undertaken to determine the most feasible approach to support any amenity concept with a splash feature. The evaluation identified that full demolition of the existing building with a new smaller washroom building (Building Option 3) as the preferred approach to support the preferred amenity concept.

## **REPORT IMPACTS:**

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

## **APPROVALS:**

Director

Deputy City Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

## **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. 23-152-CD Appendix A – Modified Conceptual Amenity Design Option 1A
2. 23-152-CD Appendix B – "Soper Park: What Could it Be?" Survey Results
3. 23-152-CD Appendix C – Conceptual Amenity Design Options 1, 2 and 3
4. 23-152-CD Appendix D – Public Engagement Summary and Detailed Responses
5. 23-152-CD Appendix E – Building Alternative Evaluation
6. 23-152-CD Appendix F – Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes & Summary