

REPORT

Council

Meeting Date: February 28, 2022

FROM: Parks and Open Space Department

DATE: February 15, 2022

SUBJECT: Future Uses for Reservoir Park

LOCATION: 1185 Parkhill Road

WARD: Ward 5

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RECOMMENDATION:

That the report entitled “Future Uses for Reservoir Park”, from the Parks and Open Space department dated February 15, 2022, be received.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In 2018, Parks staff undertook a review of the system of parks within the College Park community including Reservoir Park.
- Applying the *Campus of Parks* network approach, each park is formally reviewed on current use, appropriateness of future facilities based on size, geography, adjacencies, demographics and amenities in other parks to ensure a range of potential facilities to meet broader community needs based on principles of the Parks and Recreation Masterplan.
- Based upon a detailed analysis, complementary facilities are proposed for various park sites recognizing that one park cannot accommodate all community needs. The draft plan is then reviewed through a comprehensive public consultation process.
- Reservoir Park is located at 1185 Parkhill Road within the College Park community.
- The land is currently owned by the Region of Halton and a portion of the site being taken up by the McCraney Reservoir (mostly underground infrastructure).

- Reservoir Park has been used by neighbourhood residents for several decades as open space. Access and public use of this land is important to the local community.
- The Region must complete a Master Plan on the future of the McCraney Reservoir before discussions can take place regarding the purchasing or longer term utilization of the portion known as Reservoir Park can proceed. At that point, the Region will advise if they are able to continue to accommodate recreational uses of the property while balancing them with land requirements for site security, ongoing maintenance and repair, or possible expansion of the reservoir. It is expected the Master Plan work will be completed in 2023.
- A follow up report on potential options for the park will be brought to Council upon conclusion of the Region's Master Plan for McCraney Reservoir.
- In the meantime, Reservoir Park will continue to remain open and available to neighbourhood residents while the Region undertakes its Master Plan.

BACKGROUND:

Reservoir Park is located within Ward 5. The lands are owned by the Region of Halton and the Town has utilized a portion of the site for park purposes for at least thirty (30) years. A large portion of the site is dedicated to an underground water reservoir. At the Council Meeting on May 25, 2021, the following resolution was approved;

"That staff report on the future uses for Reservoir Park in Ward 5 and the potential acquisition from the Region of Halton for future use as a playground and or splash pad".

This staff report responds to Council direction for a staff report on this matter.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Reservoir Park is located at 1185 Parkhill Road. The park is located on lands owned by the Region of Halton and a substantial portion of the site is dedicated to underground infrastructure for McCraney Reservoir. (Please Appendix A).

For at least 30 years the Town has operated Reservoir Park on the site and local residents have enjoyed use of park amenities and open space. Maintenance of the east side of the site (adjacent to Parkhill Road) and Petit Court) has always been the responsibility of the Town. The Region maintains the east side of the property

(which is left natural and sloped) including the driveway connecting to Trafalgar Road.

At the present time, there are no active park amenities on the site. There used to be a softball diamond and a parking lot on the property for community use. Approximately 10 years ago, the ball diamond and parking lot were removed which coincided with an expansion to the underground McCraney Reservoir infrastructure. The ball diamond was very small and was negatively impacting residents on both Petit Court and Parkhill. It was decided to remove the ball diamond and parking lot as other ball diamonds were being constructed north of Upper Middle Road. At present, the park provides passive open space for the local neighbourhood.

In 2018, Parks staff undertook a review of the system of parks within the College Park community including Reservoir Park. Applying the *Campus of Parks* network approach, each park is formally reviewed on current use, appropriateness of future facilities based on size, geography, adjacencies, demographics and amenities in other parks to ensure a range of potential facilities to meet broader community needs based on principles of the Parks and Recreation Masterplan. Based upon a detailed analysis, complementary facilities are proposed for various park sites recognizing that one park cannot accommodate all community needs. The draft plan is then reviewed through a comprehensive public consultation process.

Reservoir Park is an important open space for the local neighbourhood. It is also important to note based on geography, there is a need for a children's playground at Reservoir Park or nearby to better serve the local neighbourhood. When the *campus of parks* study was completed, Town staff initiated discussions with Region staff on this matter, but talks were paused due to the pandemic and other priorities.

Town staff have reinitiated the discussion with the Region of Halton with respect to potentially purchasing the open space known as Reservoir Park, or seeking permission for installing a playground or splash pad (or both). The Region has advised they are presently undertaking a Master Plan for the reservoir that will identify whether they are able to accommodate recreational uses of the property while balancing them with land requirements for site security, ongoing maintenance and repair, or if identified in the Master Plan, expansion of the reservoir. The Region anticipates commencing the study early this year for completion in 2023. The Region has indicated there will be ongoing consultation with the Town throughout the Master Plan process to continue exploring the potential for opportunities at McCraney Reservoir.

In the meantime, Reservoir Park will continue to remain open and available to neighbourhood residents while the Region undertakes its Master Plan. Town staff will continue discussions with the Region regarding the use of Reservoir Park as

open space and the potential addition of park amenities. When the Region's Master Plan is completed, staff will return to Council with another report.

CONSIDERATIONS:

(A) PUBLIC

The public has used Reservoir Park as open space and park amenities for multiple decades. It is an important open space for the local neighbourhood.

(B) FINANCIAL

There are no financial impacts associated with this report. Maintenance of Reservoir Park is included within the Parks and Open Space operating budget.

(C) IMPACT ON OTHER DEPARTMENTS & USERS

The Legal department has been involved in the discussions with the Region, have contributed to this report, and will continue to be involved in future discussions with the Region of Halton.

(D) CORPORATE STRATEGIC GOALS

This report addresses the corporate strategic goal(s) to:

- Provide a livable community
- Promote an engaged community
- Promote environmental stewardship and continued use and access to greenspace

(E) CLIMATE CHANGE/ACTION

Reservoir Park is a greenspace and therefore has numerous positive attributes from an environmental perspective in heat dissipation and reducing runoff.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Reservoir Park/McCraney Reservoir

Prepared by:

Christopher Mark
Director – Parks and Open Space

Recommended & Submitted by:

Colleen Bell
Commissioner – Community Services