



Memo to Council

Date: July 25, 2023
Subject: OCP – Rocky Point Park Westward Expansion – Motion Served by Councillor Lurbiecki

Motion Served

Notice of the following motion was provided at the July 11, 2023, Regular Council meeting:

THAT staff report back with proposed changes to the Official Community Plan to include a significant expansion of Rocky Point Park westward;

AND THAT this include a plan and timeline for gathering community feedback.

Background

The city of Port Moody is currently undertaking development of a Parkland Strategy. The need for a parkland acquisition strategy was first identified in 2015 as part of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The results of the first phase of public engagement on the development of a Parkland Strategy were presented to council at the July 11th, 2023, regular meeting. A key result from the online survey (282 respondents) included that the top barrier for park use was 'parks are too crowded' and that most respondents felt the top park that is too crowded is Rocky Point Park. These results¹ were consistent with several other city surveys over the past decade.

From the Parks and Recreation Master plan² engagement in 2015, to the recent Official Community Plan household surveys³ that saw the largest response rate in the history of our city, to the current Parkland Strategy survey, it is clear that: people love our parks, they are concerned about overcrowding as we rapidly grow in population both locally and regionally, and residents want to see the expansion of Rocky Point Park to handle population growth.

While the Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified the expansion of Rocky Point Park as a community priority and used a population growth of 5000 people in our city core by 2024, as of 2022 Port Moody had fully approved and is building housing for 8000 new residents. Staff-produced data⁴ shows we are on track to double our population, with most of this growth – 20,000+ people - set to occur in condos within walking distance to Rocky Point Park.

Waiting for a Parkland Strategy to be completed almost ten years after its need was identified – and while we are at the same time reviewing and approving the largest developments in our

¹ pub-portmoody.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=20363

² portmoody.ca/en/City-Hall/resources/Documents/ParksandRec_Master_Plan.pdf

³ https://engage.portmoody.ca/portmoody-2050?tool=news_feed-tool_tab

⁴ <https://pub-portmoody.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=13420>

history - renders its ability to have a meaningful impact largely moot. Every day that goes by – every development that is approved – is a day that relative park space per person in our city decreases while opportunities for meaningful parkland expansion disappear. The time to act is now.

There are many options the city has for expanding Rocky Point Park. For example, we collect Developer Cost Charges for parkland acquisition. The city already has a policy of buying private land on the North side of Murray Street and could expand this policy westward. However, buying land is not the only option. We could also explore working with partners like Metro Vancouver. There are many possibilities. But it needs to start with a clear vision. Our Official Community Plan (OCP) indicates our land use intentions as a community.

The current OCP vision westward of Rocky Point Park is for a substantial high-density development up to 38 stories adding 7000 population. The community through the OCP household surveys clearly indicated residents instead want lower density and expansion of parkland in this area⁵.

While our city needs to determine parkland expansion and enhancement planning in other locations of the city, there is nothing can replace the need for expansion of our signature oceanfront park.

Council Strategic Priorities

Expansion of Rocky Point Park contributes to council's Strategic Goal to Enhance and expand parkland and open spaces.

Council Options

The following options are available for Council consideration:

1. Receive for information.
2. Refer to staff for a report back on the feasibility of the proposed motion considering budget, alignment with Council's Strategic Priorities, and work plan implications, including but not limited to operational capacity, policy, legality, etc.
3. Other.

⁵ [Survey #3](#) (1,271 responses): 66% of respondents disagreed with the current OCP vision with the top reasons given being level of density, building heights/high-rises, congestion, and need for more park. [Survey #2](#) (1,802 respondents): 92% of respondents indicated they are concerned about the impact of population growth on parks and greenspaces. 54% indicated that expansion of Rocky Point Park was a top priority for parks and greenspace.