

Alternative Proposal - Coopers Green Hall Replacement Project

BACKGROUND

In July 2022, a significant obstacle occurred. In preparing for detailed design documents for tendering, the SCRD was informed by the geotechnical consultant that, based on updated guidelines and ocean flooding forecasts from 2019, the minimum building elevation would need to be 1.7 metres higher than the current design, and that the setbacks from the ocean and neighbouring property boundaries would need to be increased to 7.5 metres.

An elevated building would require substantial changes to the design created by the architects, relocating the building further toward the centre of the park with loss of park space and mature trees, and no clear solution to building accessible approaches to the hall. It would require additional funding over and above the approved \$4.5m budget to which the SCRD board had reluctantly agreed only two months before the new findings surfaced.

Following the SCRD Staff's Report to the SCRD Board on October 13th in which 3 Options to move forward were presented (all involved detailed analysis of other possible sites, involving additional costs and time delays) a task force of HBCA board engaged with SCRD staff to review the options. Faced with this situation, it was immediately clear that a hall as designed at the original location cannot fulfill the objectives of the project, and satisfy the wishes of the stakeholders, and fit within the approved budget.

We recognize, very reluctantly, that there is no way forward for this option nor for another site on the low lying terrain of the park that does not have the same challenges.

ALTERNATIVE OPTION AT COOPERS GREEN - the knoll on the north side of the park

This option would satisfy the original intent of the project (that the hall should be built in Coopers Green Park). However, following a review of this site, there are numerous serious challenges to the concept:

- The hall would need to be redesigned to fit the location/space/terrain of the new site.
- The location is intersected by a BC Hydro power line and right of way. BC Hydro may have the right to exercise a veto on any construction and, if not, the cost to reroute the power line would be a major added cost.
- Using this location would remove the parking area and increase the parking challenges associated with the park, hall and boat ramp.
- Waste water management on a largely bedrock area would be a significant challenge
- Construction here would require removal of many large mature trees.
- An accessible connection between the hall site and the lower park would be very hard to achieve.

Even if a smaller hall was designed, the above challenges could indeed lead to increased expenses and more project delays.

It should be noted that an option to renovate or extend the existing hall does not exist, based on advice from SCRD staff and consultants. The HBCA board concurs with this advice.

Alternative Proposal

Through several discussions over the past couple of weeks, SCR D staff and the HBCA Task Force has identified an alternative solution (Option D) that **we believe meets the original vision and goals of the community** as outlined in the 2016 Coopers Green Park Management Plan, albeit in two separate locations. The Coopers Green Park Management Plan vision states *“Coopers Green Park, a waterfront destination in Halfmoon Bay, connects people with nature, community, and healthy lifestyles. Visitors of all ages and interests are invited here to relax, build community connections, access nature-based recreation and celebrate ecological features for many years to come.”*

Option D:

We are proposing that we seek support by the SCR D Board and community to utilize the approved funding (including the ICIP grant) **to complete two concurrent projects**, within the existing approved budget, and within the time frame required by, and meet the requirements of, the ICIP grant. That is:

- construct a community hall at Connor Park; AND
- invest in park improvements at Coopers Green Park.

Connor Park Hall

The new Halfmoon Bay community hall is proposed to be constructed in the south-east sector of Connor Park, near existing park infrastructure. In order to maximize and adhere to the requirements of the ICIP grant, it is anticipated that the size of the hall would be reduced to be more in line with other SCR D halls. Such a hall location would not be suitable for larger gatherings and events as the replacement hall at Coopers Green would have been, but it could still accommodate many of the events and activities envisioned for a community hall, such as family celebrations, workshops, association meetings, fitness classes, etc. The hall would still include a kitchen that could be used for food-related activities that did not require preparation in a commercial kitchen.

The hall would be funded in part by the ICIP grant, which requires a contribution by the local government (at least 33% of the total cost).



Investment into Coopers Green Park (e.g. Performance Stage)

Using the Coopers Green Park Management Plan as a starting point, the remaining approved budget could be used for improvements within the park which may include a performance stage/pavilion, electricity, washrooms, park improvements, etc. that would be suitable for performances of all kinds, meetings and celebrations, weddings, etc., likely usable for 6-9 months of the year. Whereas many concepts might be considered, a structure of the scale and purpose of the Sechelt Hackett Park stage and amphitheater can be imagined. The old hall would be demolished.

The following is speculative only, since it needs to be properly estimated and then confirmed by the granting agencies and SCR D staff, and then agreed to by the SCR D Board. However, it is provided here as an illustration to explain the proposed concept.

Example of proposed total project budget for Connor Park Community Hall - \$2.8 - 3 million

Funded by	ICIP grant (73.33% of eligible costs)	~ \$2.01 million
Other contributions		~\$0.8 - \$1 million

Proposed funding sources could include:

- Community donations
- Gas tax funding
- Community amenity contributions
- SCR D debt

Example of proposed total project budget for Coopers Green Park Improvements - \$1- 1.4 million

Proposed funding sources could include:

- HBCA and community donations
- Gas tax funding
- Community amenity contributions
- SCR D debt

Next Steps

There are many steps that need to occur, including SCR D Board and ICIP approvals. SCR D staff will be developing a supplementary report for presentation to the Board late November/early December with Option D for consideration. It is also anticipated that the SCR D will seek community support for this option, which will be proposed to occur early in 2023, with a final report back to the Board anticipated before the end of Q1 2023, so that the hall replacement project can continue with minimal delay.

It will also be proposed that both elements of the project (a hall at Connor Park; and improvements to Coopers Green Park) will occur concurrently with the Hall construction project, which would include community engagement by both the SCR D and the HBCA Board.