




CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Environmental Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	September 21, 2020
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan (PW18056(a)) (Wards 7 and 8)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	Wards 7 and 8
PREPARED BY:	John Vandriel (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3662
SUBMITTED BY:	Craig Murdoch Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) That the Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan, as identified in Appendix "C" to Report PW18056(a), which recommends future park improvement projects and implementation strategies, be adopted;
- (b) That staff be directed to include the Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan project initiatives in future capital budgets, for Council consideration, as part of larger projects or as stand-alone project(s); and,
- (c) That staff be directed and authorized to pursue alternative funding sources and grant opportunities to assist with the funding of the various park improvement projects.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following recommendation was approved at the July 12, 2018 Public Works Committee meeting and by Council on July 13, 2018:

That staff acquire and work with an external consultant to undertake a design Master Plan for Sam Lawrence Park, to consider existing and future use and condition of the park considering escarpment degradation and life cycle of current infrastructure, to be funded in

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the amount of \$250,000 from Ward 7 Area Rating Reserve Account #108057 to the Sam Lawrence Park Project Id #4401656603.

The purpose of Report PW18056(a) is to present the recommendations and to seek authorization to adopt the Master Plan and to begin implementation planning.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 6

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: There are no immediate financial impacts from Report PW18056(a), as the recommendation of Report PW18056(a) is to refer the projects to future capital budget processes for consideration by Council.

The Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan Report estimates that the capital budget requirements to implement the park improvement projects will be approximately \$16.2 million over a 20+ year period. The estimate is a high-level order of magnitude cost for the construction of the proposed park amenities and upgrades to existing park amenities. The estimate includes design fees, permit fees, contingency, and allowance for applicable studies.

The Master Plan Report highlights new park improvement projects that will be identified for inclusion in the next Development Charges (DC) Background Study.

In addition, Recommendation (c) of Report PW18056(a) includes direction to staff to pursue alternative funding sources to support the implementation of the Master Plan. This will allow staff to seek out those opportunities that would support the Sam Lawrence Park improvement projects as they become available. Staff will report back to Council if matching funds are required with any grants or programs.

Staffing: No additional staffing is required in the immediate future as a result of the recommendations of Report PW18056(a). If additional FTE's are required to maintain the new park projects and park improvements, they will be identified as part of the capital budget detailed submission.

Legal: There are no legal implications for the adoption of this Master Plan.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In response to the recommendation in Report PW18056, Landscape Architectural Services staff retained The MBTW Group in March 2019 to prepare a Master Plan for Sam Lawrence Park. The consultant's mandated scope was to:

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.
OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.
OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

- Develop a Preferred Master Plan design;
- Develop a Master Plan Report document to:
 - Outline recommended park improvements (i.e. act as a 'blueprint' for future park improvements);
 - Provide an implementation strategy to guide the construction of park improvements; and,
 - Provide high-level costing for park improvement projects; and,
- Undertake extensive consultation with City staff, external stakeholders, and the wider Hamilton public.

The result is a recommended design that responds to feedback obtained from stakeholders and the wider community.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The following legislative requirements will affect some or all of the Master Plan project initiatives:

Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act: some of the park project initiatives are within or located in proximity to the Development Control Area regulated by the Niagara Escarpment Commission and the legislation is administered by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry. As per the Niagara Escarpment Planning and Development Act, proposed development within these areas will require a permit.

The following policy implications will affect all or some of the park improvement projects:

City of Hamilton's Cultural Heritage and Archaeology: Sam Lawrence Park is identified as a Cultural Heritage Landscape. A Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment was undertaken for this site with no archaeological elements of significance found; however, future park improvement projects will require the project lead to confirm detailed design intent with the City's Cultural Heritage Planners.

The above-mentioned policies and legislation will need to be verified with the authorities having jurisdiction to determine requirements for development at the time of implementation.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

The following internal stakeholders were consulted through a specially formed Staff Advisory Group and are in support of the recommendations:

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- Ward 7 Councillor;
- Ward 8 Councillor;
- Natural Heritage Planning Section, Development Planning, Heritage & Design Section, Planning Division - Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Cultural Heritage Planning Section, Development Planning, Heritage & Design Section, Planning Division - Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Development Planning, Heritage & Design - Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Placemaking, Public Art and Projects Section, Tourism & Culture Division - Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Transportation Planning Section, Transportation Planning & Parking Division - Planning and Economic Development Department;
- Transit Planning and Infrastructure, Transit Division - Public Works Department;
- Traffic Safety, Transportation, Operations & Maintenance Division - Public Works Department;
- Traffic Signals, Transportation, Operations & Maintenance Division - Public Works Department;
- Parks and Cemeteries Section, Environmental Services Division - Public Works Department;
- Forestry and Horticulture Section, Environmental Services Division - Public Works Department;
- Energy, Fleet & Facilities Management Division– Public Works Department;
- Healthy Built Environments Section, Public Health Services, Healthy Environments Division - Healthy and Safe Communities Department; and,
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design - Hamilton Police Services.

The following external stakeholders were consulted as part of a larger specially formed Public Advisory Group and are in support of the recommendations:

- Niagara Escarpment Commission;
- Bruce Trail Conservancy;
- Concession Street Business Improvement Area; and,

Staff consulted with Indigenous groups to share the findings of the Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment and seek input on interest in collaboration around future public art opportunities at the park. The following groups were consulted:

- Haudenosaunee Development Institute;
- Huron-Wendat Nation;
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation; and,
- Six Nations Lands and Resources.

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In addition to support from the project Advisory Groups and Indigenous groups, staff conducted extensive consultation with the wider community, including:

- Hosting two (2) Public Information Centres;
- Attendance at community events with pop-up display booths;
- Facilitating two (2) online public surveys, soliciting feedback on park priorities and design concepts; and,
- Advertising project events through both social media and print media and providing project updates through a project web page on the City's website.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

The following provides the rationale for proceeding with the implementation of the Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan:

The park sits on the Niagara Escarpment (as shown in Appendix "A" attached to Report PW18056(a)), a designated United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) World Biosphere Reserve and an internationally recognized landform that is the cornerstone of Ontario's Greenbelt. It offers spectacular views and vistas of the lower city, Hamilton Harbour, and the Dundas Valley. The park is considered a unique and treasured geological, historical, cultural, and environmental resource for current and future generations. The Master Plan provides an implementation strategy to restore prominence of this important public park and re-imagine its role in Hamilton's park system for subsequent decades.

As the City and region continue to grow, this valued public space will take on more significance as a prominent City-Wide park. A Master Plan with targeted improvement projects ensures the park continues its valued role serving residents and the wider Hamilton region.

Many of the park's existing features are in decline due to age, escarpment weathering, slope movements and vandalism. The Master Plan takes a comprehensive approach in addressing existing health and safety concerns at the site, while proposing new future uses and features and addresses accessibility.

The Mountain Brow Trail Feasibility Study (approved per Report PW18053 on July 12, 2018) identifies multi-use trail connections through Sam Lawrence Park. The Master Plan addresses these critical connections to link the wider trail network across the City's Mountain Brow. The high level of demand for trail connections in strategic locations such as Sam Lawrence Park is evidence that these types of facilities are successful and are in line with the City's and Province's vision to support active lifestyles by providing the necessary infrastructure.

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The Master Plan Report includes the following key park updates, as outlined in Appendix “B”- Preferred Design and Appendix “C” - Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan Report attached to Report PW18056(a):

- Site-wide improvements that enhance connectivity, views and vistas and existing garden spaces;
- A pedestrian bridge over the Jolley Cut and a multi-use trail embedded within the park;
- Improvements to the Jolley Cut and Concession Street intersection that provide a safer pedestrian crossing experience, while maintaining the overall function of the intersection;
- Reconfigured parking areas to allow for public plaza space and a future park maintenance building; and,
- The addition of barrier free trails, gardens and new park features.

The Master Plan developed a multi-year implementation strategy. The prioritization and grouping of park improvement projects are based on their impact for park users:

1. Public Safety Projects;
2. Accessibility Projects;
3. Circulation Projects;
4. Amenity Projects;
5. Garden and Planting Projects; and,
6. Site-Wide Improvement Projects.

Each park improvement project includes an anticipated level of effort, broken down into three (3) categories: High effort, Moderate, and Basic improvement projects.

Detailed information on the project work can be found in Appendix “C” attached to Report PW18056(a).

The Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan is a high-level plan and only the first step of the implementation process. Each park improvement project will require the appropriate studies and relevant permits and go through detailed design prior to tendering and construction. Furthermore, it will be imperative that projects slotted later in the implementation timeline be re-confirmed based on any new available information and discussions with stakeholders.

The Master Plan will help predict and plan for future needs and inform future budget requests. It offers a solution to address these requests and / or concerns over a phased implementation strategy that is weighted based on need, pre-identified infrastructure projects and economic and environmental constraints.

ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

An alternative to the recommendation of Report PW18056(a) would be not to proceed with the adoption of the Master Plan and the proposed implementation strategy. If this alternative is preferred, the park will continue in its current state and use. By not adopting a Master Plan now, any degradation to the existing features of the park from rock fall, life cycle repair, or other causes will require a reactionary response and increasing maintenance effort by staff and funding over time. As costs increase every year, due to inflation and other factors, the required funding for park improvement projects may increase as well. There are no legal implications to this alternative.

Due to the current health and safety concerns with rock fall, the anticipated increasing resources required for maintenance in current state, as well as limitations with the current design for accessibility and safe pedestrian circulation, staff do not recommend this alternative.

Financial Implications: N/A

Staffing Implications: N/A

Legal Implications: N/A

A second alternative to the Recommendation of Report PW18056(a) would be to extend the time frame for implementation of the Master Plan to beyond 20+ years. Since many of the features are nearing the end of their lifespan, those features will require upgrading in the next several years or the features will require decommissioning. This alternative would require additional maintenance resources in the short term to keep the park in its current state. There are no legal implications to this alternative. Because of the implications outlined above, staff do not recommend this alternative.

Financial Implications: N/A

Staffing Implications: N/A

Legal Implications: N/A

ALIGNMENT TO THE 2016 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

Community Engagement and Participation

Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach to City government that engages with and empowers all citizens to be involved in their community.

Healthy and Safe Communities

Hamilton is a safe and supportive City where people are active, healthy, and have a high quality of life.

Clean and Green

Hamilton is environmentally sustainable with a healthy balance of natural and urban spaces.

Built Environment and Infrastructure

Hamilton is supported by state-of-the-art infrastructure, transportation options, buildings and public spaces that create a dynamic City.

Our People and Performance

Hamiltonians have a high level of trust and confidence in their City government.

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report PW18056(a) - Location Map

Appendix “B” to Report PW18056(a) - Preferred Design

Appendix “C” to Report PW18056(a) - Sam Lawrence Park Master Plan Report