



# SKAHA LAKE PARK EAST PLAN

March 2021

## **FOREWORD**

Skaha Lake Park is known for its beauty, ambiance and serene environment. We have inherited this gem and have a responsibility to be the custodians of the park so that it remains for all people, for all time and for the health and wellness from the youngest to the elderly. Nature has blessed this park with gifts such as pristine water, soft sands, emerald green grasses, deciduous and stately coniferous trees and many wondrous and unique creatures. Through this plan, we attend to and care for the man-made features. The plan for the marina, riparian area, the boathouse, the promenade and a new location for the parking lot reflect the guidance of the community expressed in our Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

Many minds and talents have invested energy and time in developing this plan and making new partners and friends in the process - a human salad of those who love this park. We have all worked to do it right and make sure the environmental gifts are cared for in the process. Let's never forget that the park calls for our attention when it is threatened.

Enjoy.

Peter Osborne  
Protect Penticton Parks Society

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

To the City of Penticton residents who gave their time and shared their ideas in the development of this plan through the workshops, information sessions, and feedback forms – thank you for providing us with your insights.

The City would like to also acknowledge the contributions or support of the Penticton City Council, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, Penticton Indian Band staff, the Penticton Racing Canoe Club, the Dragon Boat Festival Society and the Skaha Marina as well as the members of the Protect Penticton Parks Society.

Also deserving of special recognition is Peter Osborne of the Protect Penticton Parks Society for his invaluable knowledge and contributions to the development of this plan and his unwavering commitment to protecting Skaha Lake Park for the residents of Penticton.

The City would also like to acknowledge the following organizations for their work in support of this plan.

- Landform Architecture Ltd.
- Outland Design – Landscape and Architecture
- South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program
- Waters Edge Engineering Ltd.

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## 1. PLAN SCOPE

One of the main priorities of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is the development of a plan for Skaha Lake Park. Recognizing that much of the park is functioning well and there is a pressing need for direction on the future of the marina, boat house and spray park, the scope was narrowed to the east end of the park.





*Skaha Lake Park East Plan Project Area*





## 2. PARK CONTEXT AND EXISTING CONDITIONS



An analysis of the condition of this area of the park and its amenities within the project area is provided in Table 1 below to inform the plan objectives.

Table 1: Existing Park Features and Conditions

Feature	Description	Key Strengths	Key Issues
<b>Marina Building</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Built in 1960s</li> <li>Private operators</li> <li>Full-service marina including boat repairs, rentals and moorage</li> <li>Currently houses a café</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support from boating community</li> <li>Viable business opportunity</li> <li>Recognized asset for the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Straddles City and Provincial property</li> <li>Minimum investment of \$400K needed to replace major building systems</li> <li>License to operate with the Province expires in four years</li> </ul>
<b>Marina Docks</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Four docks and fingers providing 94 slips</li> <li>Primarily local use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only marina on Skaha Lake</li> <li>Rubble mound breakwater in good condition</li> <li>Moorage reduces congestion</li> <li>Only fuel station on the lake and provides safe fuelling</li> <li>Recognized asset for the community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Docks beyond service life and unsafe (replacement 50% complete)</li> <li>\$698K in improvements needed</li> <li>Environmental considerations (i.e. efforts to restore sockeye and kokanee, home to zebra mussels)</li> <li>License to operate with the Province expires in four years</li> </ul>



Feature	Description	Key Strengths	Key Issues
<p>Splashpad</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Estimated to be built in the 1990s</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popular, no-fee amenity</li> <li>Safe outdoor recreation for children</li> <li>Rotary interested in funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outdated systems are expensive to maintain</li> <li>Approaching end of service life</li> <li>Asphalt surface unsafe</li> <li>Replacement cost approximately \$450K</li> </ul>
<p>Concession</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Concession licensed to private service providers</li> <li>Public washroom and change rooms attached</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simple construction and is structurally sound</li> <li>Washroom siting in proximity to splash pad, playground and boat house is ideal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dated aesthetic</li> </ul>
<p>Boathouse</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shed constructed in 1960s converted to storage for dragon boats and canoes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High level of participation in paddling activities</li> <li>Facility close to shore convenient for user groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building is past useful life and targeted by vandals</li> <li>Space is inadequate for paddling groups</li> <li>Boat ramp does not extend to lake</li> </ul>
<p>Riparian / Natural Area</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engineered creek built to provide overflow from detention pond to lake</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May be home to species-at-risk such as turtles and reptiles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area adjacent to creek populated by invasive species</li> </ul>




Feature	Description	Key Strengths	Key Issues
<p>Paths</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paths allow pedestrians to walk along the lakeshore and access some amenities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Popular waterfront promenade</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited connection between west and east end of park</li> <li>• Unsafe passage across boat launch and parking area</li> <li>• Limited accessibility</li> </ul>
<p>Beach</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistently one of the favorite beaches in Canada</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most prized area of the park</li> <li>• Popular destination for locals and tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges with sand erosion</li> <li>• Structural challenges with retaining wall interface between beach and parking lot</li> </ul>




### 3. PARK USER AND INTEREST GROUPS

A summary of the primary interest and user groups in the park area is provided in Table 2 below to inform the plan objectives.

Table 2: Interest and User Groups

Interests and User Groups	Description	Key Strengths	Key Issues
<b>Indigenous Relationship</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The park is in the traditional territory of the Okanagan Syilx</li> <li>Legend has it that the park was home to the Syilx leader Chief Nkwala</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PIB is working to restore Kokanee and Salmon populations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No awareness of significance of park to Okanagan Syilx</li> <li>May be of archaeological and environmental significance</li> </ul>
<b>Outrigger Paddling</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Penticton Racing Canoe Club has 50 members and youth program</li> <li>Stores 36 small boats and 3 large boats</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hosts two events each season</li> <li>One in May which attracts 500 attendees and one in August that attracts 150</li> <li>Club is growing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate storage</li> </ul>
<b>Dragon Boats</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dragon Boat Festival Society has 400 members</li> <li>Offer programming to the public</li> <li>7 boats and desire to add 3 more</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Known for two signature events - one in June that attracts about 800 and a second in September that attracts 2,000.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inadequate storage</li> <li>Boats weigh approximately 800 lbs and are difficult to store</li> </ul>

<p>Motorized Boats</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Actively used by locals and tourists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Important to tourism and economic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parking lot congestion and safety concerns</li> <li>Parking availability during peak times</li> </ul>
<p>Nautical Dog Café</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Café located in the marina building offering breakfast, lunch and coffee</li> <li>Sub-license to marina operators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very popular with locals</li> <li>Generated year round activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building condition</li> <li>May not be sustainable with short-term license arrangement</li> </ul>
<p>Skaha Marina</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 + 1 year license to provide marina services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Viable business</li> <li>Popular operator</li> <li>Numerous improvements made</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Condition of building and docks</li> <li>Short-term license limits investment</li> </ul>
<p>Tickleberries</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Three-year license to use East concession</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Popular operator</li> <li>Condition of the building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aesthetic of building</li> </ul>

## 4. PLAN OBJECTIVES

Through the analysis of the existing conditions of the park and its amenities and the interests of the park's primary users, the following needs were identified for the plan. These needs were confirmed with the community through the engagement process.

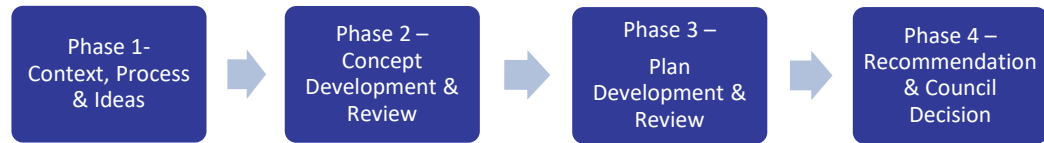
- Provide direction for aging City facilities and amenities (marina, docks, splashpad, boat house)
- Gauge support for the current recreational and commercial users in the park
- Develop a strategy to address ecological vulnerabilities
- Recommend opportunities to recognize the Indigenous relationship to the park
- Improved pedestrian connections and integration with the rest of the park
- Align on approach to fund marina improvements (i.e. private or public funding)
- Ensure recommendations align with Parks & Rec. Master Plan and Park Land Protection and Use Policy



*The Parks and Recreation Master Plan was developed with significant involvement of the community and was approved by Council in 2018 along with the new Park Land Protection and Use Policy and the Parks Dedication Bylaw.*

## 5. PROCESS

The process to develop the Skaha Lake Park East Plan was conducted in four phases beginning in 2019.



### Phase 1 – Context, Process & Ideas

The first phase of the process gathered the information and resources needed to prepare the plan. Steps included:

- Overview of the project for Council and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Reviews of historical documents and existing technical analysis
- Assessment of current conditions of the park and amenities such as the riparian area, foreshore, marina, boathouse and splashpad
- Development of the project and engagement plans
- Discussions with key stakeholders and user groups to understand needs
- Video, open houses and online community engagement to inform the community and gather ideas

### Phase 2 – Concept Development & Review

The second phase of the process involved preparing concepts for consideration of stakeholders and the community. The concepts are shown in Figure 1. Steps included:

- Review of the findings from consultation and community engagement
- Work with landscape architects to develop three concepts to reflect options for the park and estimated costs
  - Concept A focused on the balance of uses that exist today
  - Concept B maintained the focus on non-motorized boating while transitioning motor boat usage to day use only
  - Concept C strongly emphasized non-motorized boating while still supporting the multi-use character of the park
- Work with building architect to explore options for boathouse and create boathouse concept
- Update for Council and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee
- Online workshops, videos, materials and feedback forms to raise awareness of the concepts and gather feedback
- Consultation with stakeholders and user groups
- Analysis by environmental and engineering professionals to understand impacts of concepts

### **Phase 3 – Plan Development & Review**

The third phase of the process compiled the findings of the second phase to prepare a draft plan for review with the community. The draft plan is shown in Figure 2. This phase included:

- Work with landscape architect to prepare consolidated draft plan and refined costs. The draft plan featured:
  - completing the replacement of the marina docks;
  - a refurbishment of the marina building;
  - a new and expanded boathouse near the existing footprint;
  - a new splash pad;
  - an extension of a promenade to the marina building;
  - naturalization of the riparian areas;
  - and, other enhancements to trails and green space.
- Host community engagement activities to review draft plan and new options with the community including online information sessions and a self-guided walking tour
- Further discussions with stakeholders and user groups to gather feedback on draft plan
- Update for Council and the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee

As part of reviewing the draft plan, the City also introduced two new options for consideration by the community:

- Inclusion of a licensed restaurant as part of the marina building
- Relocation of the boat trailer parking lot to the south of the park and return the existing site to park use (See Figure 3 for the alternative location.)

### **Phase 4 – Recommendation & Council Decision**

Based on the results of the third phase, staff finalized the plan for consideration by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for a recommendation and Council for a decision. The recommended plan features:

- completing the replacement of the marina docks;
- a renewal of the marina building;
- a new and expanded boathouse near the existing footprint;
- a new splash pad;
- an extension of a promenade to the marina building;
- naturalization of the riparian areas;
- allowing for a café and licensed restaurant in the marina building
- a reconfiguration of the boat trailer parking lot away from the shore
- and, other enhancements to trails and green space.

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Skaha Lake Park is the most highly valued of Penticton's parks. Community involvement was a priority throughout the process. In each phase, the community had the opportunity to learn more about the needs and opportunities in the park and share their ideas and feedback. The following is a summary of the activities conducted and the findings.

### **Pre-Project (2019)**

Prior to the project kick off, a group of citizens belonging to the Protect Penticton Parks Society undertook their own study, analysis and engagement in the development of a plan for this end of the park. The result of their work was a model for the east end of the park that was integrated in the process conducted by the City and influenced the recommendations in the plan.

### **Phase 1 – Context, Ideas and (Dec 2019 / Jan 2020)**

The focus in the first phase of the process was to raise awareness of the work to develop a plan and invite citizens to learn more and share their ideas and feedback. The following activities were conducted to support the involvement of the community:

- The engagement program was kicked off with a presentation to Council
- Awareness of the program was raised through a press release and advertisements in social media and local newspapers as well as emails to the City's [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](http://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca) database.
- Skaha Lake Park was included in two multi-topic open houses attended by 408 citizens on Dec. 4 and 5.
- All of the information shared at the open houses was also available on the City's [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](http://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca) website which was accessed by 561 citizens.
- Citizens were invited to formally share their feedback by completing a feedback forms. 240 forms were received.

Through these activities, the City learned there is support to:

- Continue to offer beach vending (i.e. concessions)\* (82.3% support)
- Renew the splash pad / spray park\* (75.6% support)
- Rebuild a boat house for dragon boats / outrigger canoes\* (74.2% support)
- Continue to have a café associated with the marina\* (74% support)
- Continue to offer a marina with boat rentals, moorage and fuel sales\* (67.1% support)
- Add a "green" pedestrian connection along the waterfront\* (55.7% support)



- Expand food/drink offerings at the marina (i.e. restaurant / pub) (53.4% support)
- Add a 150' wharf to separate motorized / and non-motorized watercraft\* (50.4% support)
- Reconfigure or reduce parking to increase greenspace\* (27.1% support)

## **Phase 2 – Concept Development and Review (November 2020 – January 2021)**

In the second phase of the process, the City prepared three concepts to reflect the ideas heard in Phase 1 and reviewed them with the community. Staff conducted a number of activities to involve the community while respecting the restrictions on gatherings due to COVID-19. These activities included:

- Communication or consultation with key agencies and stakeholders including:
  - Dragon Boat Festival Society
  - Protect Penticton Parks Society
  - Penticton Indian Band staff
  - Penticton Racing Canoe Club
  - Skaha Marina
  - South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program
- Raising awareness through advertising, local media and social media prior to the holidays. A video prepared to inform citizens about the project received 10,200 views.
- Three interactive, online workshops on Jan. 7, 8 and 9 attended by approximately 100 citizens representing a wide range of interest.
- Video presentation and feedback form available through [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](https://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca) completed by 287 citizens.
- Print materials available at the City's kiosks.

Some of the key findings from these activities include:

- There was a high level of participation by the paddling and motorized boating community as well as park advocates.
- There is strong interest in continuing to support the range of recreation activities in this section of the park. The majority of participants selected Concept A as their first preference. Concept A focuses on the balance of uses that exist today.
- There was also strong support to invest in continuing the services of the marina (docks and building) as it is today with 64.8% preferring this option.
- There is strong interest in improving support for the paddling community by allowing for a new boathouse to be constructed. Support for the possible location was split between the existing site (47%) and a new option that combined the concession with a new boathouse and received support from 30% of participants.

- The engagement also explored opportunities to fund the range of options and specifically gathered feedback on the community's interest in leasing the marina building and docks as a way to offset the costs of the nearly \$1.1 million estimated to restore these facilities. 59% agree that the City should pursue opportunities to privately fund these improvements including through a lease. 19% would prefer to see it funded by taxpayers to ensure that parklands are not commercialized.
- Through the engagement process, suggestions to relocate the parking lot away from the shore and incorporating a licensed restaurant at the marina resurfaced. Staff decided to include these new options in the final round of engagement to understand broad community support.

The results of the engagement program and key findings were shared with the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee (PRAC) at their meeting on January 18, 2020. At the meeting, the committee supported staff preparing the Draft Plan and moving to the next phase of engagement.

### **Phase 3 – Plan Development and Review (January 2021 – March 2021)**

Based on the results of the second round of engagement and further technical analysis, a draft plan was prepared based on Concept A for review with the community. The draft plan featured:

- Completing the replacement of the marina docks
- A refurbishment of the marina building;
- A new and expanded boathouse near the existing footprint;
- A new splash pad;
- An extension of a promenade to the marina building;
- Naturalization of the riparian areas;
- Other enhancements to trails and green space.

A concept was also developed to support discussion about the option for an alternate location for the boat trailer parking lot.

The City conducted a third and final round of engagement to confirm the direction of the plan and gather feedback on the new options. Activities to review the draft plan and new options included:

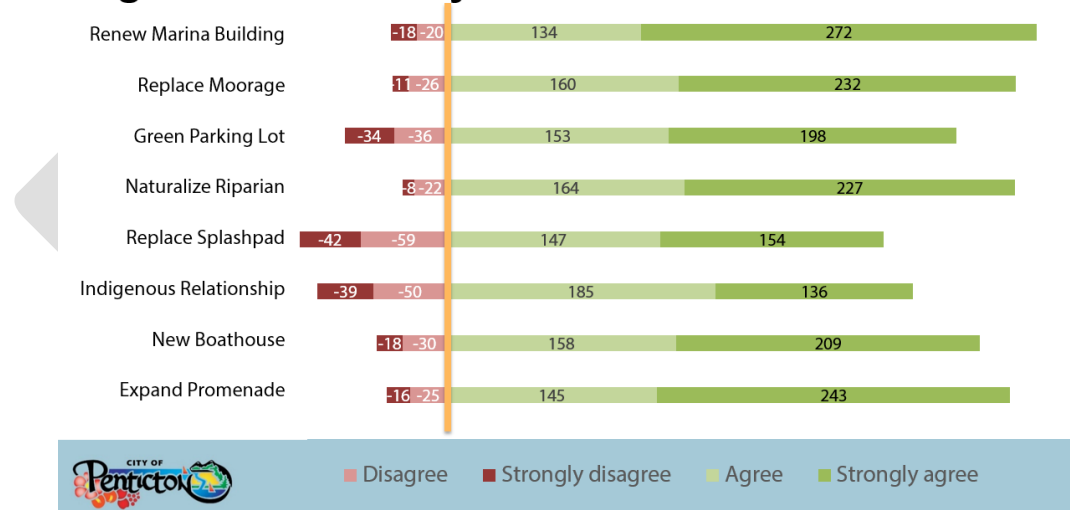
- Follow up correspondence with Penticton Indian Band staff and meetings with the following user and interest groups to update on outcome of engagement, discuss options and confirm the direction of the plan:
  - Dragon Boat Festival Society
  - Penticton Racing Canoe Club
  - Protect Penticton Parks Society

- Skaha Marina
  - South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program
- Newspaper ads, social media posts and a promotional video watched by 7,200 people to raise awareness.
- Self-guided walking tour featuring nine stations at Skaha Lake Park in place for duration of the engagement program. Anecdotal feedback indicated it was very popular.
- Outdoor drop-in session for the community on Feb. 27 between 10 am and 2 pm at Skaha Lake Park.
- Two online information sessions for the community on Feb. 25 and Mar. 4 attended by approximately 100 citizens including members of Council, the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, user groups and the general public.
- Materials and feedback form online at [shapeyourcitypenticton.ca](http://shapeyourcitypenticton.ca). Feedback was provided by 455 citizens and documents were downloaded 842 times.
- Print materials available at the engagement kiosks located at Nautical Dog Café, City Hall and the library.

Some of the key findings from this round of engagement include:

- The main recommendations in the draft plan were well received by participants as shown in the following chart.

## Agreement with key recommendations



- The option of allowing for a licensed restaurant as part of the marina was supported by participants with 75% agreeing or strongly agreeing with the option. Participants who support the idea believe it will be a much-needed, year-round amenity in the east end of the park. Those that are opposed are concerned about commercialization of the parkland and making alcohol available near motorized boats.

- The option of relocating the boat trailer parking southeast of the marina was also supported by 63% who agree or strongly agree with the idea. While the benefit of the added greenspace was well received, many boaters expressed concern about moving the proposed location offering that it would increase congestion, traffic problems and remove functionality others suggest it is “change for the sake of making change”.
- Despite some concerns about the final design of some of the recommendations, including the boathouse and boat trailer parking lot, participants agree with the plan as a whole with 82% being very (48%) or somewhat (34%) supportive.

The City also discussed the draft plan with representatives of the Penticton Indian Band and the user and interest groups who are active in the park. A summary of their feedback is provided below.

- In a conversation with staff, a representative with the Penticton Indian Band indicated that the Band Council is generally supportive of the recommendations and will be forwarding a letter to the City outlining their official position with regards to the plan.
- Staff have had many conversations with the Penticton Dragon Boat Festival Society, the Penticton Racing Canoe Club, and the Skaha Marina. The representatives of these user groups have been very supportive of this process and the outcome.
- Staff have worked with the Protect Penticton Parks Society throughout the process. In a letter from member Peter Osborne, the Society outlines a few specific requests including a 48’ separation between the walkway to the doors of the new boathouse to improve sightlines. They also would like to see a minimum of a 16’ wide and 240’ long section of greenspace along the promenade with the relocation of the parking lot which is supported. They also commented that they do not support allowing for a licensed restaurant and their view is that the proposal for a licensed restaurant does not align with the direction in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## 7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

With the results of the third and final round of engagement, a final version of the plan was prepared. A description of the key features of this plan and some of the considerations for implementation are provided below.

### **Rebuild and Expand the Boathouse**

The plan proposes to support paddling by replacing the existing boathouse with a new, expanded facility. The boathouse will be located near the existing site. The building will be approximately double the current size to accommodate the growth of the paddling community. The building will incorporate attractive, sustainable design and the final concept will be developed in collaboration with the user groups.

The ramp on the beach will be extended to the water to make it easier to load and unload the boats and provide access to the water to people with disabilities.

Implementation of this will occur through:

- Partnership with the user groups and community; and
- Identification of funding, detailed design, siting and eventual construction.

### **Reinvestment and enhancement to the Marina lands**

The plan proposes to retain a marina and moorage to continue to serve the community in the long term. More details about each of the components, and how they have been incorporated into the plan, are as follows:

- **Complete Moorage Replacement**

The plan proposes to support motorized boating by continuing to provide the current moorage and complete the replacement of the remaining docks with environmentally-safe materials. The availability of moorage is deemed to be important to reduce congestion during the busy summer season and contributes to the viability of the marina for licensed operators. The plan also recommends replacing the fuel dock and relocating it to the shore to reduce environmental risks. Additional sections of floating dock will be added to improve safety and access for boaters launching and retrieving boats. No expansion to moorage will be considered to minimize potential environmental impacts.

- **Renew the Marina Building**

The marina building will also be renewed as part to provide space for the marina operations and café services. The addition of vertical storage racks in the parking lot behind the building is featured to address the need for more storage and allow for a valet service.

Given the existing condition of the building, the option of replacing the building at or near the existing footprint within the fenced compound would also be considered. This would make it possible to shift the location of the building which currently straddles City and Provincial lands entirely on to City property.

- **Allow for a Licensed Restaurant**

As part of a renewal or replacement of the marina building, the plan allows for a licensed restaurant. The addition of a restaurant would increase the year-round vibrancy, surveillance and public safety of the area and transform the facility into an attractive destination for residents throughout the entire year and visitors during the tourist season. The intent would be to allow for both a café and a licensed restaurant to serve different markets at

different times of the day. Parking requirements would need to be considered in the detailed design.

Implementation of these recommendations will depend on the funding method selected:

- If there is interest in private funding through a long-term lease, the following would need to occur:
  - Request assent of the electors to enter into a lease via the upcoming by-election
  - Pending the outcome, a further public process would be initiated to engage a potential proponent, including determining the specific terms/conditions of any long-term arrangement.
  - Undertake an open competitive expression of interest process to secure a long-term operator.
- If there is interest in continuing with short-term operator licenses (as with the current and historical arrangement), the following would occur:
  - Partnership with the user groups and community; and
  - Identification of funding for detail design, siting and eventual construction.
  - A public process to engage an operator consistent with past practice

Other considerations for implementation upon determination of funding option include:

- Identification of detailed design and siting
- Assessment of and application for required permits

### **Replace Splash Pad**

The plan proposes to replace the Rotary Family Splash Pad at or near its current location with a fully accessible and modern amenity. In recognition of the significance of the parklands to the Penticton Indian Band, the opportunity to incorporate an Indigenous theme that recognizes the importance of the environment and educates the children will be explored. Implementation of this will occur through:

- Partnership with the Rotary Club, Penticton Indian Band and the community; and
- Identification of funding for detail design, siting and eventual construction.



### **Expand Promenade and Pathways**

The plan proposes a number of improvements to enhance safety and the pedestrian experience in this end of the park. The promenade near the boathouse will be widened and incorporate seating. It will also be extended along the parking lot and receive special treatment across the boat launch to improve safety and connect pedestrians to the east end of the park. An additional path will be added on the south side of the marina to encourage better access to the south parking area. Implementation of this will occur through:

- Identification of capital plan items for implementation over the coming years.

### **Naturalize Riparian Area**

The plan seeks to address the ecological sensitivities in this area of the park. It proposes to enhance the natural environment by restoring the riparian area where the man-made creek enters the lake, preserving and adding to the tree canopy cover and incorporating native species where possible. Implementation of this will occur through:

- Completing an environmental assessment of this area to ensure continued support and future improvement of the riparian area.
- Identification of capital plan items for implementation over the coming years.

### **Boat Trailer Parking Lot Relocation**

The final round of engagement offered two options for the vehicle and boat trailer parking arrangements. The feedback from the engagement process suggested that there was value in relocating this parking lot away from the waterfront and replacing this space with usable waterfront park land. The feedback also identified some challenges to the motorized boating community with the proposed relocation to the south of the property west of the marina area.

In an effort to balance the opportunity to enhance the water front green space and minimize the impact to the motorized boating community the plan was revised. The result shifted the parking area to the east of the existing parking lot allowing for better usage of the high value water front parkland and continued functionality for the motorized boating community. Implementation of this will occur through:

- Identification of funding for detail design, siting and eventual construction.

### **Indigenous Relationship**

The City acknowledges the historical significance of the parkland to the Penticton Indian Band as well as the importance of restoring sockeye and kokanee populations to Skaha Lake. To this end, staff have initiated discussions with the Penticton Indian Band to understand their interests in the direction of the plan. Staff are planning to

conduct an archaeological assessment and a review by a Qualified Environmental Professional to support these efforts. Additionally, the plan proposes opportunities to recognize the Indigenous relationship to the park through inclusion of art, park signage, informational displays as well as the design of the splashpad. Implementation of this will occur through:

- Conduct an archaeological and environmental assessment as part of the plan's implementation.
- Work with Penticton Indian Band through the detail design stages to identify opportunities to recognize the Indigenous relationship to the park.

## 8. FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

The financial estimates for the plan are high level, order of magnitude estimates that are intended to provide to support consideration of the plan. Final costs will be confirmed as part of the detailed design process.

	Estimated Costs
Landscape Plan	\$811,000
Splash Pad	\$450,000
Marina – Building ( base upgrades)	\$400,000
Marina - Docks	\$700,000
Boathouse	\$456,000
Parking Lot Relocation	\$1,000,000*
Estimated Total	\$3,817,000*

*\*The estimated cost for the parking lot relocation is preliminary at this stage and will be refined through detailed design.*

With the adoption of the plan, financing/funding options for each of these elements will be further explored. This may include grant funding, partnerships (such as the Rotary Club for the splash pad), private funding (pending support for various lease options) or other more traditional municipal sources of funding (taxes or user fees). Recommendations for funding the recommendations in the plan will be considered as part of future financial planning processes.

## 9. ENVIRONMENTAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The City engaged a Qualified Environmental Professional consultant to review the draft plan including two options for the boat trailer parking lot. Their initial assessment consists of an inventory of environmental values of the area, guidance on all of the regulations, permits, and processes that will be required as this project matures to the construction stage. Additionally, they provided a habitat balance evaluation to assess the net change in overall habitat value pre- to post-development for each of the two proposed options. As the location of the parking lot has changed in the recommended plan, the QEP report will need to be updated. The following is a summary of the recommendations based on the draft plan:

- Keeping the parking lot in its current location is the most environmentally sound option;
- If it is possible to relocate the stream outlet to the south of the rock breakwater it would provide greater value to fisheries resources;
- Existing riparian vegetation is largely comprised of Russian Olive, a highly invasive non-native species which should be removed and replaced with suitable native alternatives;
- Efforts to widen and enhance the riparian areas and stream should be explored, ideally a 10 meter wide riparian area on either side of the stream should be planted with native species and protected;
- If possible pathways should be set back from the riparian areas where possible;
- Every effort to protect mature vegetation should be made, especially trees and mature vegetation. If trees must be removed they should be replaced with as large a diameter tree as possible; and
- Following the completion and determination of the final concept design and a survey of the existing conditions, a detailed habitat restoration plan should be prepared and the habitat balance memo should be updated to aid in the determination of appropriate compensation and/or restoration/enhancement plantings.

As the land within this plan has significant historical indigenous value an Archeological Assessment of the plan area will be commissioned in the near future. This assessment will ensure the preservation of indigenous artifacts and will assist in the environmental permits and processes that will be required.

## 10. POLICY ALIGNMENT

Penticton's parks are highly valued by City residents due to the social, economic and personal benefits they create. After extensive consultation with the community, the City adopted a new Parks and Recreation Master Plan, Park Land Protection and Use Policy and Park Dedication Bylaw in 2018 to direct the City's activities in Penticton parks. Alignment with these policies was identified as a need for this plan and the following is a summary of how the plan considers these documents, bylaws and policies.

### PARKS AND RECREATION MASTER PLAN DESIGN GUIDELINES

The plan provides design guidelines for the design of new and upgraded parks are comfortable, safe, accessible and attractive. The proposed concept for Skaha Lake Park East:

- Celebrates local artists by incorporating a sculpture in the park
- Improves seating by adding boardwalk seating and additional benches along the promenade.
- Introduces additional trees to green the large boat trailer parking lot
- Considers a restaurant to support year round vibrancy, an amenity for the public and visitors, and improved park surveillance and crime prevention
- Recommends to return the current parking lot to greenspace to allow for more gathering places adjacent to the lake
- Suggests relocating the parking lot to the southern perimeter of the park away from prime park land along the shore
- Incorporates measures to naturalize the riparian area and prevent erosion of sand
- Encourages creativity and interest with the incorporation of Indigenous themes and education into park design and amenities

### PARK LAND PROTECTION AND USE POLICY

This policy provides direction on the protection and use of public park land in accord with the Official Community Plan, Parks & Recreation Master Plan and Zoning Bylaw. The proposed concept for Skaha Lake Park East meets the following policies:

- **Support recreational opportunities, healthy living and enhance public enjoyment of parks** – The plan allows for a boathouse for the paddling community and a marina building and docks for the non-motorized boating community supporting motorized and non-motorized uses in the park. It also enhances pedestrian connections and the greening of the park for the enjoyment of all users.
- **Safeguard public access and community affordability** – The plan improves access with the creation of a path that extends from the boathouse to the southern perimeter around the park and the marina. While moorage at the

marina is membership based, the services of the marina (fuel, rentals) as well as use of the boat launch make it possible for boating enthusiasts to enjoy the lake. The boathouse would be operated by the paddling community and as a requirement of their license to use the facility, they would be required to support public programming.

- **Protect public ownership** - The City is asking residents to consider allowing a lease of the marina building and docks to attract a private operator and investment in these amenities. The City is following the process outlined in the policy to have a lease considered by the public through a referendum. This process will occur separately from the development of this plan and approval of this plan is not dependent on private funding.
- **Protect, preserve and promote park land** – The plan preserves all current greenspace and recommends enhancing the greenspace adjacent to the shore. It also invites citizens to consider a restaurant use as part of the concept for the marina building. The City is conducting public engagement to gauge support for this proposed use.
- **Engage the community in park governance and decisions** – Through the development of this plan, the City has consulted extensively with the community to gauge support for the recommendations. If it is approved, there are a number of additional processes that will need to be followed before options such as the relocation of the parking lot, the inclusion of a restaurant and funding through a lease can be considered as outlined above.

#### **PARK DEDICATION BYLAW**

This bylaw identifies the parks that are dedicated in the City and the requirements for considering license of use, license of occupation and leases in dedicated parks.

- Consistent with the Park Land Protection and Use Policy, the Park Dedication Bylaw also requires approval of the electors before the City can consider granting a lease of all or part of the land dedicated as park.



## **11. SUMMARY**

The process to develop the Skaha Lake Park East plan was initiated in 2019. Recognizing the importance of this park to the community and some of the significant decisions that need to be made, the City undertook an extensive consultation process to involve residents in each phase of the work to develop the plan and to share all information related to the project in a balanced and transparent manner. To this end, staff completed a multi-month public process to gather the ideas and feedback of the community and user groups, understand the environmental considerations and the Indigenous relationship to the park, estimate the costs and explored funding options, consulted experts in landscape and building design, and considered the guidance provided by the Park Land Protection and Use Policy and Parks and Recreation Master Plan. This work has resulted in the preparation of a plan that has the support of the community and addresses the needs in the park as follows:

### **1. Implement the direction provided in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and other guiding documents**

With the approval of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) in 2018, the City had a document to guide the process and the development of the plan to ensure alignment with the expectations of the community. This plan was closely followed from the design of the process to the final recommendations. Recommendations such as the inclusion of art, the addition of seating along the promenade, and the reconfiguration of the parking lot are some examples of how this plan follows the design guidelines in the PRMP.

As Skaha Lake Park is dedicated park, the Park Dedication Bylaw and the Park Land Protection and Use Policy were also considered in the development of this plan. These documents both have an objective to protect public park lands and provide specific requirements for considering license of use, license of occupation, and leases in dedicated parks. As there is support for exploring a lease to fund the marina improvements, the City will follow the process outlined in the Bylaw and the Policy to have the community consider this option which includes a requirement for electoral assent. More information about the steps to complete this process is provided in the Implementation section.

### **2. Determine uses supported by the community**

The development of the plan provided the community with the opportunity to reconsider the uses supported in the east end of the park. With the creation of three different concepts, residents were invited to envision transitioning the park to a non-motorized future or continuing to support a range of motorized and non-motorized uses. Through the engagement program, the City learned that citizens support the

recreation activities enjoyed in the east end of the park today and want to see the non-motorized and motorized uses continue to be supported in the future.

### **3. Provide direction for aging facilities**

One of the main reasons for the development of this plan was to determine a plan for some of the aging facilities in the park. Through the engagement process, the City learned that there is strong support to provide the facilities needed to continue the uses currently enjoyed in the park. This includes completing the replacement of the docks, renewing the marina building, building a new and expanded boathouse and replacing the splash pad.

### **4. Improve integration with east end of the park**

Another core value of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is ensuring public access and enjoyment of the City's parks. Many citizens have observed that the connectedness with the east of the park is interrupted by the boat trailer parking lot. To improve integration, the plan recommends expanding and extending the promenade along the boat trailer parking lot and across the boat launch to improve pedestrian safety and experience. It also includes trails around the south perimeter of the marina and the east side of the parking lot to improve accessibility and provide safe passage.

### **5. Provide guidance on ecological sensitivities**

The importance of protecting the natural environment is a core value of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The development of this plan was viewed as an opportunity to address some of the sensitivities in this end of the park including the erosion of the sand on the beach, the naturalization of the riparian areas along the shore and ensuring the protection of at-risk species through the development. A review of the concepts was completed by a Qualified Environmental Professional and it was concluded that the recommendations gain riparian habitat, reduce the hardscape, and improve the overall habitat value of the park post-development. It also identifies the applications that may be required under the Water Sustainability Act, the increase in buildings in the park, and cautions about the potential to encounter species-at-risk during construction. The City will need to meet all permitting and regulatory requirements as part of implementation of the plan.

### **6. Recognize Indigenous relationship to the park**

The development of this plan was also seen as an opportunity to recognize the significance of this area to the Penticton Indian Band and the Syilx Okanagan Nation. The City has initiated the conversation about the park with staff of the Penticton Indian Band and discussed the need for an archaeological study as well as recognition of the culture and history in the park. As a result, the recognition of the

Indigenous relationship to the park is recommended in the plan through the inclusion of art work, informational displays and the theme of the splash pad. If the plan is approved, the City will continue to seek the guidance of the Penticton Indian Band to implement these recommendations.

## **7. Align on how the improvements can be funded**

Following adoption of the plan, financing/funding options for each of these elements will be further explored. This may include grant funding, partnerships (such as the Rotary Club for the splash pad), private funding (pending support for various lease options) or other more traditional municipal sources of funding. Through the engagement program, the City learned there is support to consider a lease for the marina operation. (59% of the 279 participants were in support of pursuing private funding through a lease. 19% wanted to see the improvements funded by taxpayers and 22% identified other options such as a combination.) An evaluation of this option and the required steps has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the Park Dedication Bylaw and the Park Land Protection and Use Policy and is provided in the implementation section.

## 12. FIGURE 1: CONCEPTS A, B AND C





### 13. FIGURE 2: DRAFT PLAN





## 14. FIGURE 3: PARKING LOT ALTERNATIVE



1 Seating Plaza w/ Tree Bosque



5 Promenade Paving Style



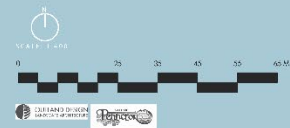
3 Boardwalk Seating



2 New and Expanded Boathouse (Design to be determined)



4 Waterfront Cafe/Licensed Restaurant



**SKAHA LAKE WATERFRONT**  
DRAFT PLAN PARKING LOT RELOCATED

## 15. FIGURE 4: RECOMMENDED PLAN



DRAFT