

DATE: May 13, 2021

FILE: 8020-02

TO: Chair and Members
Comox Valley Recreation Commission

FROM: Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

Supported by Russell Dyson
Chief Administrative Officer

R. Dyson

RE: Comox Valley Regional District Exhibition Grounds Conceptual Site Study

Purpose

To provide the Comox Valley Recreation Commission (CVRC) with information regarding the 2021 Comox Valley Regional District (CVRD) Exhibition Grounds conceptual site study and to inform next steps to strategically invest in Comox Valley recreation services.

Recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer:

THAT the 2021 draft Comox Valley Regional District Exhibition Grounds conceptual site study be received.

Executive Summary

The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds (CVEG) is home to the Comox Valley Farmer's Market, Comox Valley Exhibition Fall Fair, and curling rink, therapeutic riding, Comox Valley Musicfest, Ribfest and several canine and equine user groups. The need for the exhibition grounds conceptual site study was identified in the 2020-2024 financial plan.

Highlights include:

- In the summer of 2020, the CVRD retained Urban Systems and their team to conduct a conceptual site review study of the Exhibition Grounds/Stonehenge Grounds.
- Exhibition/Stonehenge Grounds has evolved over time. It has been recognized that a plan is needed to better integrate and plan for the future development of CVEG and Stonehenge sites' seven sub-areas and adjacent road and river boundary interfaces.
- The newly consolidated Exhibition Grounds and Stonehenge properties have been considered holistically, along with the surrounding transportation network, land uses and natural features such as the Tsolum River and Forest.
- Cost estimates and timing for the proposed infrastructure and amenity improvements have been provided for each of the sub-areas, as well as road, parking, pathway and utility infrastructure that will service several areas of the site. In alignment with the CVRD's strategic goals, the Concept Plan considers a 10-year planning horizon. The cost to implement the total plan is \$7.6 million.
- Design and costing of the multi-purpose facility was not included in the scope of work for this project, however proponents considered and incorporated the potential future siting of a multi-use facility (as described in the 2017 master plan), within the Conceptual Site Plan.
- The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds Service (Function 660) provides for the funding and maintenance and capital costs of the exhibition grounds and Stonehenge property.
- Once received by the CVRC staff will share the plan with its primary user groups.

Prepared by:

Concurrence:

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Community Services

Background/Current Situation

The CVRD has invested in significant infrastructure assets to provide recreation services to the region including:

- **CVRD Sports Centre** on Vanier Drive which includes a six lane pool, sauna, hot tub, wellness centre, two ice arenas, outdoor track and field, and meeting rooms;
- **CVRD Aquatic Centre** on Lerwick Road which includes a wave pool, two indoor waterslides, tot slide, eight lane pool, fitness studio, sauna, steam room, hot tub, meeting room and swim shop; and
- **CVRD Exhibition/Stonehenge Grounds** on Headquarters Road which includes horseback riding, special events and other seasonal activities.

Background

2002 – The first Master Plan for the Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds was prepared.

2008 – Revitalization Study that explored master plan options was conducted.

2011/2012 – Site water and electrical infrastructure were upgraded.

2015 – Curling rink has been renovated and is now called the Curling Centre (the 2008 study assumed it would be removed).

2016 – The adjacent property, Stonehenge Farm, was acquired by the CVRD.

2017 – A more recent Master Plan was prepared incorporating the recently acquired Stonehenge Farm.

At the March 5, 2019 planning session the CVSCC (Comox Valley Sports Centre Commission) identified asset management – Utilize the Asset Management process to develop the long-term plan for recreation infrastructure and sustainable service delivery that support and enhance the delivery of recreation services to all citizens in the Comox Valley, as one of five strategic priorities for the CVRD recreation department.

Given the significant aging infrastructure assets invested by the CVRD to provide recreation service and the need to maximize available funding for maintaining and upgrading these key community facilities, the department has been focusing on enhancing its asset management practices in recent years.

Given these new conditions and opportunities, the CVRD required a conceptual site plan that would encompass both properties together as one site. The conceptual site study would meet the needs of the community and stakeholder groups as described in the 2017 master plan, and incorporate potential economic opportunities and actions to support growth in the agriculture sector.

Envisioned as a gateway to recreation and agricultural support, with a strong commitment and focus on the preservation, restoration and celebration of the site's ecosystem, extensive research and analysis of the physical, environmental, cultural, public use, future use and long-term sustainability of the site is has been carried out during this project and in the years of work and engagement that preceded it.

During the summer of 2020, the CVRD retained Urban Systems and their design team to conduct a conceptual site study of the Exhibition Grounds/Stonehenge Grounds, including conceptual site plan, road cross-sections and Class D cost estimate. Staff have received the draft report as attached Appendix A.

Together with Urban Systems, CVRD staff have developed a proposed implementation strategy, with recommended improvements the following planning horizons:

- Short term (1-2 years);
- Medium term (3-5 years); and
- Long term (6-10 years)

Current **short-term priorities** include:

- Farmers' Market Vendor Area (most of Zone D, including portion of Main Spine Road)
- Food Hub Building (Zone F)
- Relocation of Teaching and Education Plots
(from Zone D to Zone G – if required for Zone D redevelopment)
- Property-wide Wayfinding Signage and Map Kiosk(s)

In summary, there are several strategic options available for consideration, as further discussed in the financial section. As summarized above the proposed investments are quite comprehensive and include architecture, site infrastructure (drainage, electrical), multi-modal transportation and pedestrian safety and visitor amenity improvements (e.g. crosswalks, washrooms), while respecting the rural character and sensitive ecosystem of the site and surrounding area.

This conceptual site study serves as a guiding background document for providing high level strategic direction, identification of priorities, and tactical recommendations for continued service using the existing grounds and infrastructures.

Policy Analysis

Bylaw No. 136 grants the powers of acquiring, constructing, equipping, operating and maintaining exhibition and recreation services for the Comox Valley.

The following COVID-19 response and renewal framework for the CVRD services are supported:

- Maintaining core services at an affordable cost- Careful management of recreation services and assets essential to providing affordable and reliable services to citizens in the CVRD and this Conceptual site study helps us plan for the future.
- Adapting to changing community priorities – Assessing recreation services for updates and improvements.

The following Sports Commission Strategic Plan Goals are supported.

- Strategic Goal 1-Asset Management Outcome -Utilize the Asset Management process to develop the long-term plan for recreational land and infrastructure and sustainable service delivery.

In the sustainability strategy Objective 5.4.2 states;

- Enhance sports and recreation infrastructure. Public recreation facilities are a cornerstone of a good quality of life in the Comox Valley, especially for families. Because each municipality has a constrained tax base and because all residents use facilities in each community, an overall strategy on how best to continue to enhance the exhibition/Stonehenge grounds is important.

Options

This report is for information only.

Financial Factors

In April 2020, the CVRD Board adopted the Exhibition Grounds service function 660 2020-2024 financial plan which included professional fees of \$40,000 to conduct a CVRD Exhibition Grounds conceptual site study for year 2020.

Good staff oversight maintaining the Exhibition/Stonehenge Grounds through the recent addition of a good land maintenance program, including safety risk management as part of the management, has helped extend the health and usage of the land/infrastructure. Enhancements to equipment, and guidance from industry professionals and our own parks department has led to the development of a maintenance calendar and procedures manual which will guide the refurbishment of existing trails and property infrastructure.

As demonstrated in Table 1, the projected overall financial impact of the proposed scope of work is \$7,617,000, including soft costs, permitting and 30 per cent design/construction contingency. The Zoning Map appended within the overall report can be used to visualize the zone-by-zone breakdown of the cost estimate provided in Table 1.

Table 1

Roads and Multi-use Pathways	\$1,510,000
Zone A: Dove Creek Field	\$79,000
Zone B: Lower Field	\$10,000
Zone C: Rotary Bowl	\$171,000
Zone D: Market Field	\$914,000
Zone E: Curling Centre and Kin Hut Field	\$1,021,000
Zone F: Upper Ring and CVTS	\$528,000
Zone G: Stonehenge	\$818,000
Subtotal	\$5,051,000
Site Survey, Investigations, Permitting and Soft Costs	\$808,000
Contingency (30%)	\$1,758,000
Total	\$ 7,617,000

A phased approach to implementation over the following 10 years has been proposed as follows:

- **Short-term (1-2 years) Cost estimate implementation \$2.619,000**
 - Farmers’ Market Vendor Area (most of Zone D, including portion of Main Spine Road)
 - Tsolum Way trailhead and washroom (Zone E)

- Food Hub building (Zone F)
- Relocation of Teaching and Education Plots to Stonehenge (from Zone D to Zone G)
- Property-wide wayfinding signage and map kiosk(s)

- **Medium-term (3-5 years) Cost estimate implementation \$4,137,900**
 - Curling Centre urban plaza and parking lot redevelopment (north section of Zone E)
 - Off-site crosswalk across Headquarters Road connecting to CVRD Sports Centre and Fields, Vanier Secondary and parking lots
 - Central and West portions of Main Spine Road (Zone D, E, F, G)
 - Relocated Upper Ring and additional Covered Ring at Stonehenge, incl. access and parking improvements (Zone G)
 - Dove Creek Field trailhead parking (Zone A)
 - Rotary Bowl access lane (Zone C)

- **Long-term (6-10 years) Cost estimate implementation \$857,800**
 - Upgraded Main Entry road access from Headquarters Road at Vanier intersection (Zone G)
 - Events Plaza and Logistics Centre (Zone E)
 - New washrooms near CVTRS (Zone F)
 - Amphitheatre at Kin Hut (Zone E)

The CVRC oversees a strategic funding and implementation as part of the CVRD's asset management strategy. This study together with the others aids in future decision making.

Ongoing reserve contributions for each service help support outcomes of these study's and reports, additional funds may need to be allocated; ongoing asset management implementation will result in a strategic funding strategy moving forward to ensure funds are available to meet ongoing infrastructure investment and to meet community service needs.

With the completion of the conceptual site study staff will be putting forth recommendations for 2022 and beyond for the Exhibition Grounds Service site upgrades which will see utilizing the appropriate reserve funds in future years. The 2021-2025 exhibition grounds budget includes ongoing upgrades to the grounds but does not contemplate this significant level of investment required to complete/maintain this conceptual site study/plan. A comprehensive asset management implementation plan for recreation services will be brought to the commission in the fall of 2021 which will provide an overview of upgrades to the Exhibition Grounds Service and a sustainable and palatable funding strategy to maintain this key community recreational site over the short and long term.

The CVRD is working through asset management implementation which includes developing long-term capital plans through asset inventory and condition studies, and built from this a financial stability framework utilizing reserves, debt and grant funding when available to maintain and upgrade key community facilities.

The opportunity to apply for any future grants relevant to this service plus the potential for related projects would significantly alleviate future funding pressures for this service for ongoing asset management improvements to achieve sustainable service delivery for the exhibition grounds in the Comox Valley region that provide opportunity for community members of all ages have opportunities to maintain healthy life styles through movement and socialization.

Careful management of services and assets is essential to providing affordable and reliable services to citizens and businesses in the CVRD.

Legal Factors

There are no legal concerns generated by this report.

Regional Growth Strategy Implications

- i Public health and safety: Support a high quality of life through the protection and enhancement of community health, safety and well-being:
 - Objective 7A-5: Support the promotion of healthy lifestyles and invigorating community spirit through physical activity.

Intergovernmental Factors

Participating areas are: Town of Comox, City of Courtenay, Village of Cumberland, and, Electoral Area A, Electoral Area B and Electoral Area C. The study area remains within the Agricultural Land Reserve and some of the proposed changes when implemented will require Agricultural Land Commission approval. Furthermore traffic circulation and building permits will require approval of the City of Courtenay.

Interdepartmental Involvement

Although the recreation department has taken the lead on this initiative, the finance department provides input and will continue to do so as implementation of the conceptual site study recommendations and asset management plan occurs.

Citizen/Public Relations

The Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds property is enjoyed by many Comox Valley residents. From the large rentals such as Vancouver Island Musicfest and Comox Valley Exhibition, to the consistent long-term renters, Comox Valley Farmers Market and Comox Valley Therapeutic Riding Society, to the equestrian and canine user groups, horse boarders, dog walkers and free styling detectorists looking for coin spills, the grounds have thousands of visitors each year. As well, for the past three years, one of the valley's local service clubs have held the ever-delicious Rib Fest which has grown into an annual event. It is important that the residents in the Comox Valley have access to recreational and agricultural opportunities that are affordable and in addition promote and maintain a healthy active lifestyle.

Attachments: Appendix A – Urban Systems – Comox Valley Regional District Exhibition Grounds Conceptual Site Study

LEGEND

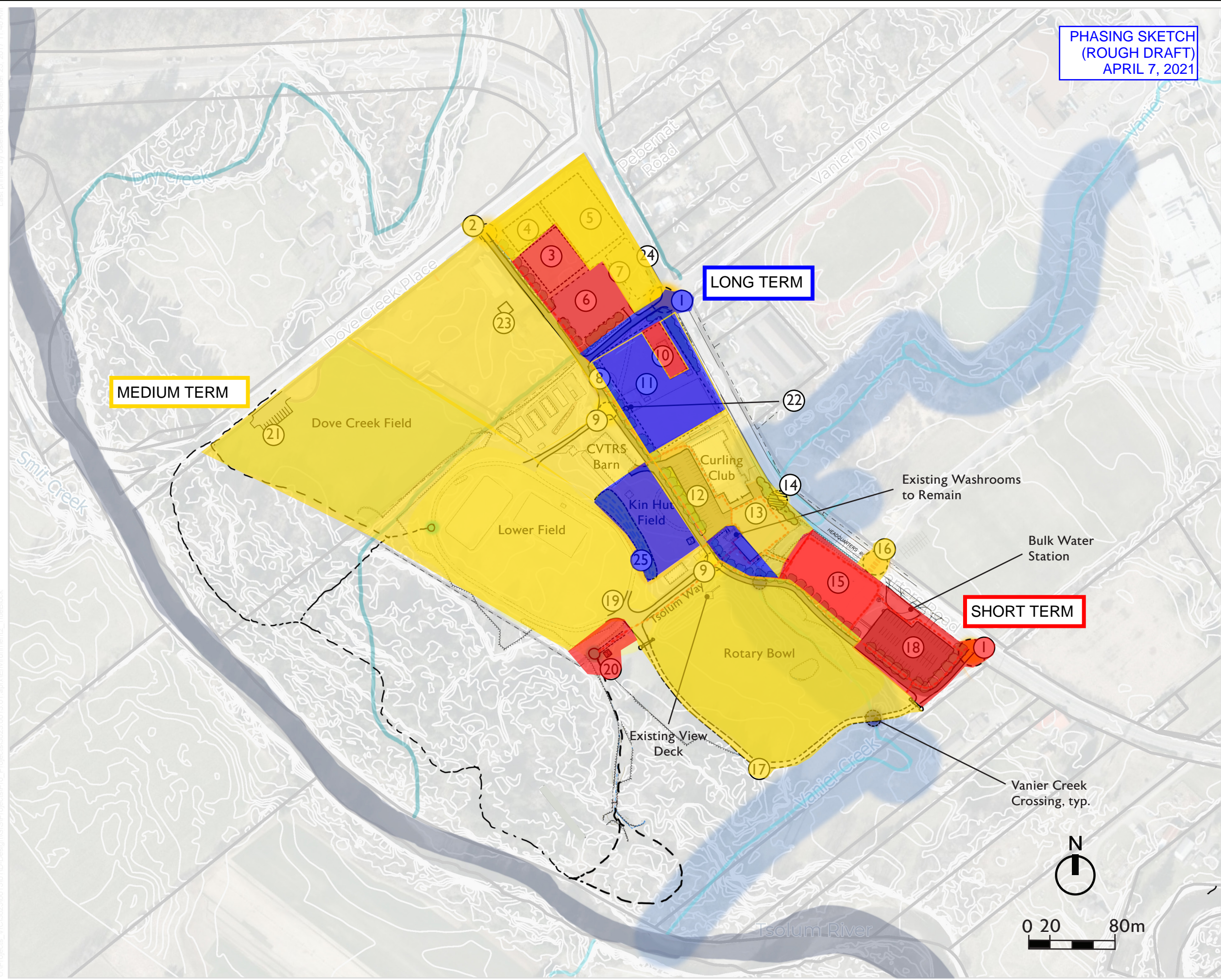
1. Proposed Main Entries
2. Proposed Secondary Entry
3. Relocated and Expanded Teaching and Education Plots
4. Proposed Covered Riding Ring
5. Relocated Upper Ring
6. Stonehenge Gravel Parking Lot
7. Horse Trailer Drop-off and Staging Area
8. Multi-modal Circulation Spine
9. Access Control Points
10. Consolidated Storage Area
11. Future Development Area with New Parking and Connection to Existing Curling Club Building
12. Reconfigured Curling Club Parking
13. Urban Plaza - Flex for Expanded Farmers' Market/ Event Parking
14. Decommissioned Entry - Emergency and Events Access Only
15. Proposed Farmer's Market (approximately 110 stalls)
16. Proposed Pedestrian Crossing
17. Proposed Access Road w/ Stream Crossing
18. Reconfigured and Expanded Parking (58 Stalls)
19. Widened Access to Lower Field
20. Trailhead with Covered Shelter and Improved Washrooms and Bike Parking
21. Trailhead Parking (10 Stalls +/-)
22. Proposed Washrooms
23. Proposed Open Air Shelter
24. Retain Existing Driveway as Emergency Access Only
25. Amphitheatre Seating

Comox Valley Exhibition Grounds
Master Plan - Concept Plan

2021/03/10



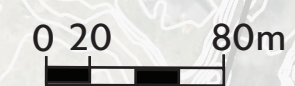
PHASING SKETCH
(ROUGH DRAFT)
APRIL 7, 2021



SHORT TERM

LONG TERM

MEDIUM TERM



Prepared by: Cassidy Jackson, Maureen Savage
 Checked by: Beth Hurford, Phil Rinn, Eric Sears

 Date:
 Job Number:

 April 7, 2021
 3023.0013.01

Item	Description of Work	Unit of Measure	Quantity	Unit Price	Total	
Roads and Multi-Use Pathways						
R1	Main Spine Road	m	800	\$ 1,700	\$ 1,360,000	8m wide bi-directional paved road w/ street lighting, 4m wide paved multi-use pathway, treed boulevard and vegetated swale, incl. stream crossing
R2	Secondary Road - Tsolum Way	m	100	\$ 1,000	\$ 100,000	6m wide bi-directional gravel lane w/ 3m wide granular pathway, pedestrian lighting and vegetated swale (redevelopment of existing lane)
R3	Map Kiosk and Wayfinding Signage (property-wide, incl. Tsolum Trails)	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance for set signage, some budget to be allocated for event specific/mobile wayfinding
Zone A - Dove Creek Field						
A1	Trailhead Parking (10 stalls)	ls	1	\$ 59,000	\$ 59,000	Gravel surface incl. base prep., hammerhead turnaround and signage
A2	Grading / Drainage Improvements	ls	1	\$ 20,000	\$ 20,000	Allowance
Zone B - Lower Field						
B1	Widened Road Access to Lower Field	ls	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Allowance
Zone C - Rotary Bowl						
C1	Maintenance / Emergency Access Lane	m	360	\$ 400	\$ 144,000	6m bi-directional gravel lane, incl. stream crossing
C2	Stream Crossing Allowance	ls	1	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	Assume culvert crossing
C3	Access Road Gates	ea.	2	\$ 6,000	\$ 12,000	Steel access gate
Zone D - Market Field						
D1	Reconfigured and Expanded Asphalt Parking	ls	1	\$ 303,000	\$ 303,000	Includes overhead lighting, signage, line painting, curb stops, signage, etc. (excludes islands)
D2	New Main Entry Road Access from Headquarters Road	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Includes widened road at intersection, signage, medians, crosswalk, etc.
D3	Farmers' Market Vendor Area (approx. 110 stalls)					
D3.1	Clearing/Grading	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance
D3.2	Power	ls	1	\$ 175,000	\$ 175,000	Allowance for 5 new kiosks, including: electrical kiosk purchase and installation, conduit and trenching, new concrete pad, minor electrical connection
D3.3	Porous Grass Pavers (e.g. Grasspave2 by Invisible Structures)	ls	1	\$ 254,000	\$ 254,000	Entire vendor area to be grass paved
D3.4	Perimeter Walkway	m2	750	\$ 42	\$ 32,000	3m granular path connecting the proposed Main Entry on Headquarters Road, the proposed crosswalk and the connection to the Curling Club Parking Lot
D3.5	Site Drainage Improvements	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance for subgrade drains or localized rock pits
Zone E - Curling Centre and Kin Hut Field						
E1	Urban Plaza - Flex for Expanded Farmers Market/Event Parking	ls	1	\$ 213,000	\$ 213,000	Asphalt surface with 4m wide paver path lining the perimeter (w/ simple barrier)
E2	Decommissioned Headquarters Road Access at Curling Club - Emergency and Events O	ls	1	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	Allowance includes \$6k gate, landscaping, signage, etc.
E3	Reconfigured and Repaved Curling Club Asphalt Parking	ls	1	\$ 256,000	\$ 256,000	Includes repaving construction and allowance for lighting, parking lot landscaping, and signage
E4	Enhanced Curling Club Entry Plaza and Drop-off Zone	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance includes site furnishing, pedestrian/traffic separators, etc.
E5	Events Plaza and Logistics Centre with Washroom	ls	1	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	Includes paved plaza and lighting
E6	Pedestrian Connection from Curling Club main entry to CVTRS barn	m2	225	\$ 120	\$ 37,000	Concrete; 2.5m width
E7	Amphitheatre	ls	1	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	Assumes 4 seat walls, 28m in length at \$800/lin.m
E8	Trailhead					
E8.1	Covered Shelter with Picnic Tables and Bike Parking	ls	1	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	Assume covered shelter with concrete slab, 2 picnic tables, inverted-u bike racks
E8.2	Replace Existing Washrooms	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Pit toilet with concrete vault (see Optional Items)
E8.3	Access Control Point	ls	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Includes gate and crosswalk

Zone F - Upper Ring and CVTRS						
F1	Consolidated Storage Area	ls	1	\$ 58,000	\$ 58,000	Includes fencing, 2 vehicle gates, gravel lot Appendix A
F2	Upgraded Main Entry Road Access from Headquarters Road	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Located at Vanier Drive intersection
F3	Access Control Point	ls	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Includes gate and crosswalk
F4	New Washrooms	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Pit toilet with concrete vault and lighting (see Optional Items)
F5	Food Hub Building	sqft	1,800	\$ 200	\$ 360,000	2 storey building with appropriate service connections, includes kitchen and canning facility
Zone G - Stonehenge						
G1	Retain/Upgrade Existing Driveway (as emergency access only)	ls	1	\$ 10,000	\$ 10,000	Allowance for upgrading existing driveway to an emergency access point only
G2	Horse Trailer Drop-off and Staging Area	m2	1,000	\$ 62	\$ 62,000	Gravel parking lot for horse trailers
G3	Stonehenge Gravel Parking Lot	m2	4,000	\$ 62	\$ 246,000	Includes site preparation, gravel lot base and subbase
G4	Relocated Upper Ring	ls	1	\$ 90,000	\$ 90,000	100 ft x 60 ft ring, allowance for footing and fencing costs only
G5	Covered Riding Ring	ls	1	\$ 180,000	\$ 180,000	100 ft x 60 ft covered riding ring, allowance for footing and fencing costs only
G6	Upgraded Secondary Entry Access from Dove Creek Place	ls	1	\$ 30,000	\$ 30,000	2-way access that accommodates large/long trailers, includes allowance for signage, cedar fencing, basic landscaping
G7	Relocated and Expanded Teaching and Education Plots	ls	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance for site furnishings (shed, picnic tables), fencing, water servicing, onsite topsoil relocation and placement, tilling and potential soil amendment
G8	Open Air Shelter	ls	1	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	12m x 10m covered shelter
Sub-Total (On-site Infrastructure)					\$ 5,051,000	
Planning, Design and Contingency						
P1	Site Survey (e.g. Stonehenge), Investigations (e.g. geotechnical), Permitting (e.g. environmental)				\$ 50,000	Allowance for Geotechnical, Environmental and other permitting
P2	Soft Costs - Planning and Design Services (15%)				\$ 758,000	
P3	Contingency (30%)				\$ 1,758,000	
TOTAL (Capital and Soft Costs)					\$ 7,617,000	
Off-Site Improvements (by others)						
OS1	Headquarters Road Crosswalk	l.s.	1	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000	Allowance for thermoplastic sidewalk complete with overhead flashers and signage
Sub-Total (Off-Site Costs)					\$ 50,000	
Optional Items						
E8.2A	Improved Washroom with Water and Electrical Service	l.s.	1	\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000	Allowance for higher level of service washrooms which could include power and water connections, building and septic holding tank
<u>Notes:</u>						
1. This cost estimate does <u>not</u> include costs for the construction or renovation of buildings, costs associated with the 'future development area' within Zone F (Upper Ring and CVTRS)						
2. This cost estimate should be read in conjunction with Urban Systems' Exhibition Grounds Conceptual Site Plan, Zone Diagram, and Road Section						
Cost Estimate Summary (by Zone)						
	Roads and Multi-use Pathways			\$	1,510,000	
	Zone A: Dove Creek Field			\$	79,000	
	Zone B: Lower Field			\$	10,000	
	Zone C: Rotary Bowl			\$	171,000	
	Zone D: Market Field			\$	914,000	
	Zone E: Curling Centre and Kin Hut Field			\$	1,021,000	
	Zone F: Upper Ring and CVTS			\$	528,000	
	Zone G: Stonehenge			\$	818,000	
					Subtotal	\$ 5,051,000
	Site Survey, Investigations, Permitting and Soft Costs			\$	808,000	
	Contingency (30%)			\$	1,758,000	
					Total	\$ 7,617,000