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REPORT TO SALT SPRING ISLAND LOCAL COMMUNITY COMMISSION MEETING OF THURSDAY, AUGUST 13, 2026

SUBJECT Options for Providing Potable Water in Ganges

ISSUE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Salt Spring Island (SSI) Local Community Commission (LCC) with options and costs on the installation of a source of potable water in Ganges Village

BACKGROUND

At its June 18, 2026 meeting, the SSI LCC passed the following motion:

“That the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission request staff to report back on options for providing potable water withing Ganges, in addition to Centennial Park.”

In reviewing potential sites to provide public access to potable water, staff identified Capital Regional District (CRD) owned properties and considered accessibility and cost for installation as well as perceived public demand and need. Based on these factors, staff identified Rotary Park as the recommended site. An image of a potential potable water station is attached as Appendix A and a map of the proposed location for the water station is attached as Appendix B

Rotary Park is a 0.45-acre public park located in the centre of Ganges overlooking the harbour and adjacent to the waterfront boardwalk. The park features several benches, a garbage and recycle receptacle as well as a small dinghy dock used by local and visiting boaters coming in from the harbour.

The park is a popular tourist hub given the proximity to the centre of Ganges and serves a wide range of users including tourists passing along the harbour boardwalk or travelling to shops, members of the boating community coming ashore, residents from live aboard vessels anchored in the harbour and individuals from the unhoused community.

Given this is a busy public park, many users expect to find amenities such as a water fountain. Access to potable water is a need and challenge for many of the park users. Beyond access to water, a public fountain can provide heat protection in high temperatures and reduce the use of disposable plastics by limiting the sale of commercially bottled water.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

Rotary Park has an existing water connection and pays an annual connection fee to North Salt Spring Water Works despite not having any water consumption for a number of years.

The cost to establish the water fountain includes the initial purchase, installation expense plus a contingency for unforeseen expenses related to the existing water line. A chart summarizing these costs is found below:

Item	Cost
Fountain and Freight (water fountain with bottle fill station)	\$10,000
Concrete Pad	\$1,000
Installation	\$2,000
Project Management 10%	\$1,300
Contingency 30%	\$3,900
Total	\$18,200

Annual water consumption costs would need to be monitored during the first year of operation and included in future budgets. Increased costs associated with vandalism may also need to be included in future SSI Parks and Recreation operating budgets.

If the LCC supports the installation and ongoing expense of a water fountain in Rotary Park, the commission will need to provide direction for this item to be included in the 2027 Provisional budget.

Social Implications

Access to potable water is a need and challenge for various users of the public park, including members of the boating community living in Ganges Harbour and individuals experiencing homelessness. The provision of potable water in Rotary Park enhances access to drinking water for park users, including those who may have limited access to such services elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Rotary Park serves a wide range of users, including visitors, boaters, live-aboard residents, and members of the unhoused community, many of whom would benefit from access to potable water. Installing a public water fountain would help meet this need while also providing relief during hot weather and supporting waste reduction by decreasing reliance on single-use plastic water bottles. The estimated capital cost of installation is \$18,200, with ongoing operating costs to be monitored and incorporated into future budgets. Should the Salt Spring Island Local Community Commission wish to proceed, direction would be required to include the project in the Salt Spring Island Parks and Recreation Five-Year Financial Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

There is no recommendation. This report is for information only.

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Concurrence:	Stephen Henderson, MBA, P.G.Dip.Eng, BSc, General Manager, Electoral Area Services

ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Image of Potential Potable Water Station

Appendix B: Map of Rotary Park Area and Proposed Location for the Water Station