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## **REPORT TO REGIONAL PARKS COMMITTEE MEETING OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2017**

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**SUBJECT**      **Consultation for Future Uses of the Land Acquisition Fund**

### **ISSUE**

Staff are seeking endorsement of a plan for consultation with municipalities, electoral areas and the public regarding future uses of the Land Acquisition Fund.

### **BACKGROUND**

The Regional Parks Land Acquisition Fund was established in 2000 for a 10-year period (2000 to 2009) at a rate of \$10 per average residential household assessment. In 2010, the Fund was extended for 10 years (2010 to 2019), starting at a rate of \$12 per average residential household assessment and increasing by \$2 per year to a maximum of \$20 in 2014 through to 2019. The Fund now generates approximately \$3.7 million per year. The Land Acquisition Fund is scheduled to be terminated at the end of 2019.

The acquisition of new parks also requires funds for management and development of facilities, such as trails, washrooms and parking lots, as well as ongoing maintenance. The money obtained through the Land Acquisition Fund is currently not used to support these costs. Management and development costs for each acquisition are identified in a report to the Capital Regional District (CRD) Board when it considers acquisition of a specific parcel. Budgets are confirmed through the CRD's service planning process.

In February 2017, the Regional Parks Committee directed staff to "report back to the Committee in 2017 with a consultation plan, to be incorporated into Regional Parks' service plan and budget for implementation in 2018, that explores and confirms the public's views on the Land Acquisition Fund and sources of funding for the development and renewal of park infrastructure and enhancement of parks and trails."

### **ALTERNATIVES**

#### *Alternative 1*

That the Regional Parks Committee recommend to the CRD Board:

That the attached consultation plan and schedule for the land acquisition fund be approved.

#### *Alternative 2*

That the Regional Parks Committee refer the report back to staff with direction.

### **ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed 2018 budget for Regional Parks includes a one-time increase of \$35,000 to complete the consultation process.

## **SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

In 2016, the CRD conducted a resident survey regarding regional parks and trails, which included a question asking respondents whether they supported the extension of the Land Acquisition Fund for another 10 years. Results of the survey demonstrate strong public support for renewing the Fund (see Attachment 1 for details). The proposed consultation therefore focuses on the uses of those funds to acquire land and/or to support capital investments in parks and trails. If the Land Acquisition Fund is renewed in 2019, future land acquisition will proceed under the guidance established in the Board-approved Regional Parks Strategic Plan 2012-2021.

## **CONCLUSION**

In February 2017, the Regional Parks Committee directed staff to report back with a consultation plan to be implemented in 2018 to confirm the public's views on the Land Acquisition Fund and sources of funding for the development and renewal of park infrastructure and enhancement of parks and trails. The proposed consultation plan will provide statistically representative information on the public's views on this topic. The estimated cost of \$35,000 for this project is included in the Regional Parks 2018 budget request. Results of the consultation plan are anticipated to be reported out to the public and the Regional Parks Committee in early 2019.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Regional Parks Committee recommend to the Capital Regional District Board:

That the attached consultation plan and schedule for the land acquisition fund be approved.

Submitted by:	Mike Walton, PhD, Senior Manager, Regional Parks
Concurrence:	Larisa Hutcheson, P.Eng., General Manager, Parks & Environmental Services
Concurrence:	Robert Lapham, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

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Attachments: Attachment 1 – Proposed Consultation Plan  
Attachment 2 – Proposed Project Schedule