



# THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF VERNON

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Patti Bridal, Chief Administrative Officer **FILE:** 5225-20

**PC:** James Rice, Director, Operation Services **DATE:** May 7, 2024  
Mark Dowhaniuk, Manager, Infrastructure

**FROM:** Mathew Keast, Water Resources Engineer

**SUBJECT: POLSON PARK VERNON CREEK NATURALIZATION - PROJECT UPDATE**

Phase 1 of the Vernon Creek Naturalization project (Project 2024-06) through Polson Park is currently on schedule to start in June of this year with Phase 2 planned for 2025 (see Figure 1 below). This memorandum outlines the progress and details related to the project and provides updated funding recommendations.



Figure 1 – Polson Park Vernon Creek Naturalization Phase 1 and Phase 2

### Procurement

Administration has completed a competitive procurement process encompassing both phases of the project. Phase 2 was listed as optional work in the contract, providing the City with flexibility to continue with Phase 2 construction based on the outcomes of Phase 1, successful permitting, and approved funding.

The project budgets have been updated based on the procurement process results. The revised budgets for Phase 1 and 2 including construction, professional services, permitting and contingencies are as follows:

Phase 1: \$3.8 million  
 Phase 2: \$4.9 million  
 Total: \$8.7 million

**Project Budget**

Phase 1 of the project was originally funded in 2023 at an estimated cost of \$1.95M (Attachment 1) but was delayed due to permitting requirements. As part of the 2024 budgeting process, Council committed an additional \$1.31M to the project to address increased costs associated with construction cost escalation/inflation (Attachment 2), for a total Budget of \$3.26M.

The City's grant application to the Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation Funding Stream by the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund was successful, securing \$2,529,931.25 in funding for Phase 1 of the project. The updated project budget results in a decrease in approved funding from the Casino Reserve from \$3.26M to \$1.27M as a result of the grant funding. A summary of the recommended updated Phase 1 project budget and funding sources is provided below:

<b>Phase 1 (2024-06)</b>	<b>Casino</b>	<b>Community Emergency Preparedness Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>
Updated Budget	\$1.27M	\$2.53M	\$3.80M

Administration will provide an updated Phase 2 funding request for Council's consideration as part of the 2025 budgeting process.

**Construction Timeline and Activities**

The project is anticipated to have a significant impact on the park for several years. Construction is currently on schedule to start this year. The instream work needs to be completed within a specific fisheries window. Regulations dictate that the instream work must occur during this period to minimize the impact on fish habitat. One of the necessary activities that need to occur prior to the instream works is tree removals which will commence in June. The construction activities will occur from 7 am to 5 pm, with the contractor having the ability to work seven days a week. The one exception is the Canada Day Long weekend where construction work will be paused to accommodate Canada Day celebrations. The City's Communications team will provide updates to the public as details are worked through with the City and Contractor.

**Fencing**

The project area will be fenced off to the public during construction, and the contractor will maintain a 24-hour presence on-site until completion of Phase 1. To minimize disruption to park users and for safety reasons, construction fencing will be installed around the entire perimeter of Phase 1 as shown in Figure 2 below.

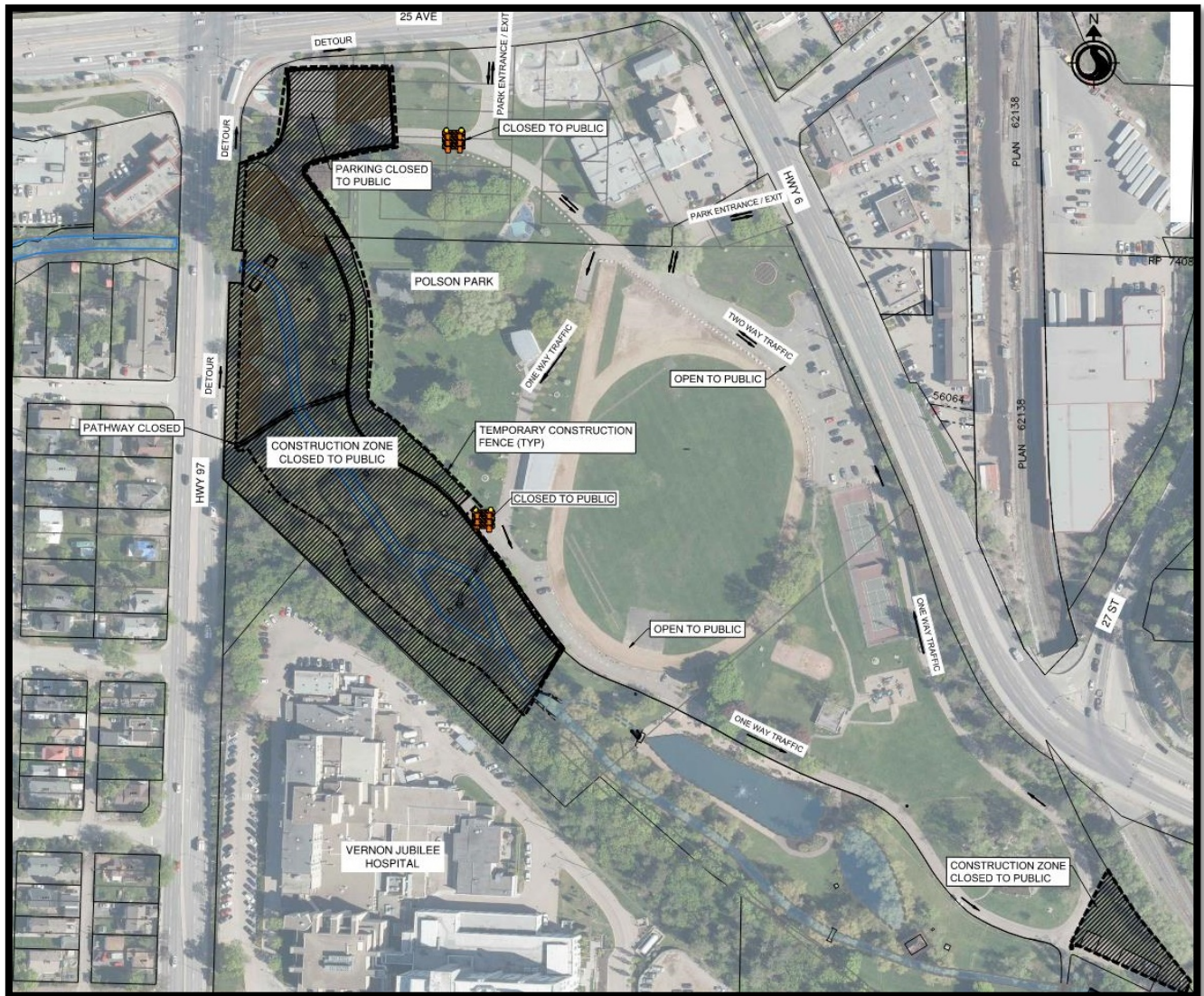


Figure 2 – Phase 1 Traffic Management Plan

The construction fencing will remain in place for the duration of the project (June to November 2024) and will be reduced as much as possible over the Canada Day long weekend. The internal road to the far north side of the park, including the parking lot next to the lawn bowling area, will be closed off to the public. The City is working with the contractor and user groups to supply additional temporary parking during construction. The City and contractor will continue to collaborate with user groups to mitigate the impact of the project while the park remains open.

User groups are being notified of the anticipated construction schedule, and updates regarding the project are available on the [project webpage](#), which is being updated regularly.

### **Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) Authorization**

The authorization from DFO for Phase 1 of the project is part of riparian planting and fish habitat compensation requirements from the 2022 BX Sediment Pond project. Several conditions were included in the authorization for Phase 1, including the requirement for habitat compensation. The City was also required to submit a Letter of Credit to be held by DFO for a period of not less than 5 years until plantings are self-sustaining and providing canopy cover.

The riparian plantings must meet a minimum 80% survivability rate at both locations after a period of 5 years. If riparian area is not self-sustaining or is not properly functioning, additional inspections and restocking will be completed each year until the riparian area is deemed functional and overhanging vegetation is present or as approved by DFO. A monitoring report must also be submitted for the riparian planting success each year for each of the offsetting locations.

The costs of the monitoring reporting and planting have not been included in the project budgets due to the lengthy period of these efforts. An annual program with funding to support the Environmental Effectiveness Monitoring will be included in future annual budget requests to support the effectiveness monitoring efforts related to this project, 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Vernon Creek Crossing project and Vernon Creek Stabilization at VWRC projects.

### **Fencing after construction**

Similar to the BX Sediment Pond, following construction, the construction fencing will be replaced with temporary fencing around the entire perimeter of the Phase 1 site. The fencing will remain in place for the first two years following completion of Phase 1 (November 2026) to allow the riparian plants to become established. The fencing is there to protect the sensitive riparian plants from animal damage, vandalism or other. For those first two years, the contractor is responsible for maintenance of the plants, irrigation and maintaining the fence with exception to damage outside of the contractor's control (such as drought, vandalism, etc.). Following the two year warranty period, the City will take over maintenance of the area which will be funded by the proposed Environmental Effectiveness Monitoring Program.

### **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT Council receive the memorandum titled "Vernon Creek Naturalization through Polson Park – Project Update" dated April 22, 2024 and respectfully submitted by the Water Resources Engineer;

AND FURTHER, that Council amends the approved Capital Budget for Phase 1 of Polson Park Creek Naturalization Project (2023-04, 2024-06) of \$3.26M funded from Casino Reserves to a reduced amount of \$1,270,069;

AND FURTHER, that Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$3,800,000 for the construction of the Polson Park Creek Naturalization -Phase 1 project to be funded \$2,529,931 from the Community Emergency Preparedness Fund grant (Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaptation Funding Stream) and \$1,270,069 from Casino Reserve.

Respectfully submitted:

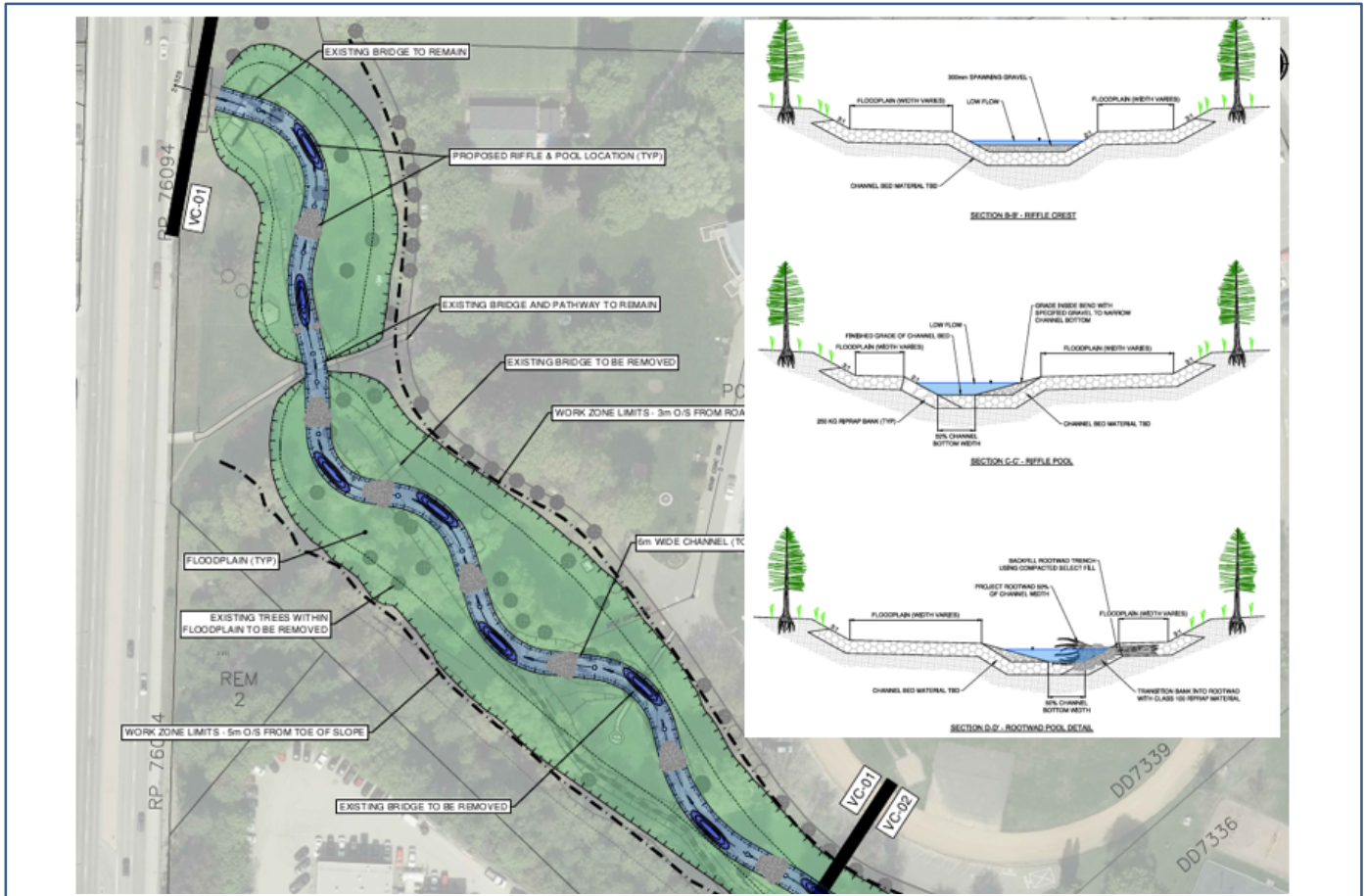
Mathew Keast, P.Eng.  
Water Resources Engineer

Attachment 1 – Project Sheet 2023-04 Polson park Phase 1  
Attachment 2 – Project Sheet 2024-06 Polson park Phase 1

# POLSON PARK VERNON CREEK NATURALIZATION PHASE 1



PROJECT #2023-04



**Total Capital Costs:** \$ 1,950,000  
**Operation and Maintenance Estimated Yearly Costs:** \$ 10,000

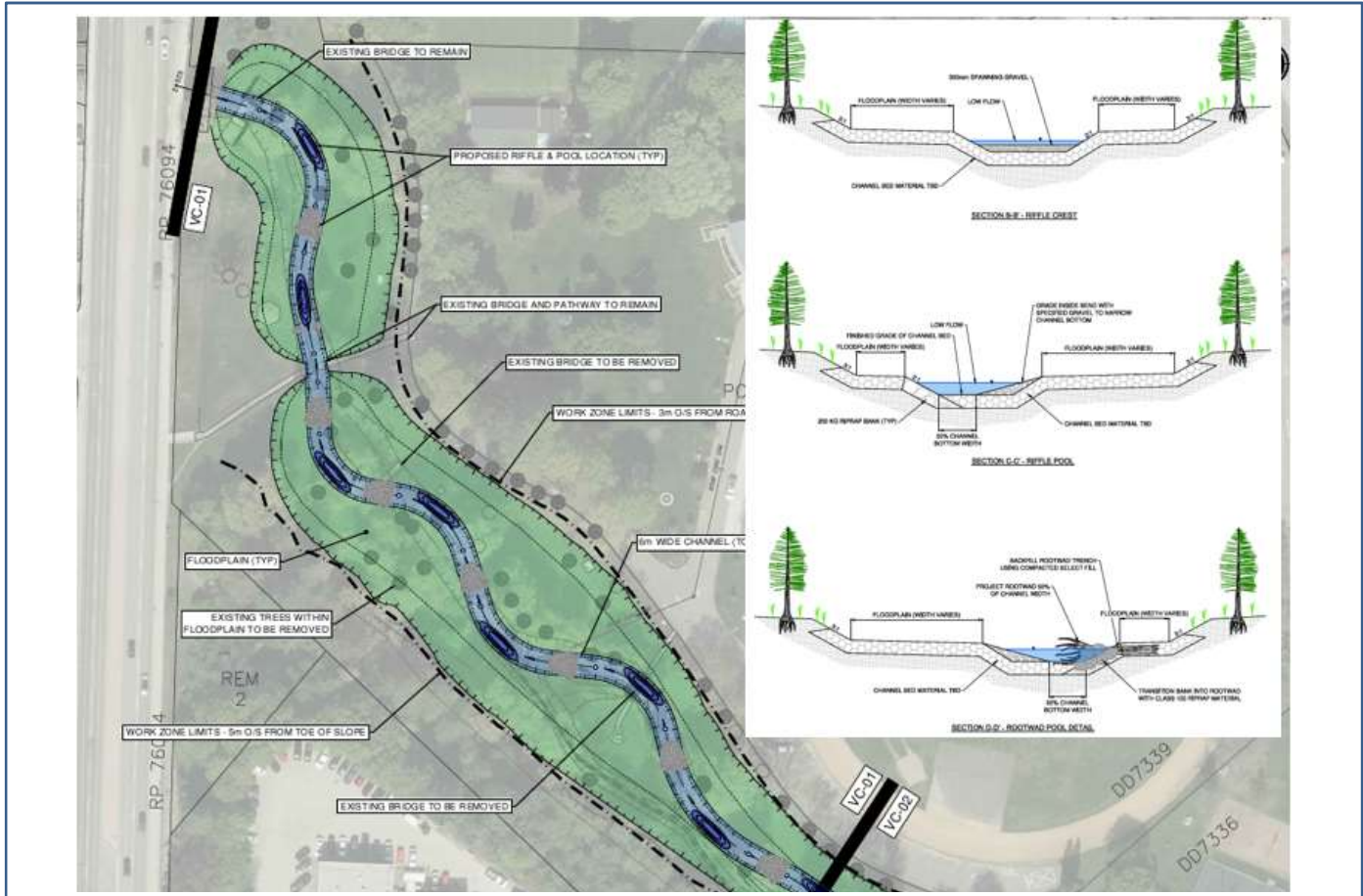
## Project Summary

As part of the permitting process to construct the BX Sediment Pond project in 2022, Department of Fisheries and Oceans required that the City improve riparian habitat and fish spawning habitat elsewhere within the City of Vernon. The chronic ponding and highwater issues seen in Polson Park in part due to the concrete channelized section of Vernon Creek and the duck ponds was seen as an opportunity to improve those issues and meet permitting requirements for the BX Sediment Pond.

The City intends to complete phase 1 of the Vernon Creek naturalization project in Polson Park in 2023 with these funds. Phase 1 of naturalizing Vernon Creek through Polson Park is a requirement from DFO for the BX Sediment Pond project. Phase 2 is anticipated for the following year and will enable the City to receive habitat compensation credits from DFO to apply to future projects to complete future in-stream work.

# POLSON PARK VERNON CREEK NATURALIZATION PHASE 1 – ADDITIONAL FUNDING

PROJECT #2024-06



**Total Capital Costs:** \$ 1,310,000

**Operation and Maintenance Estimated Yearly Costs:** \$ 10,000

## Project Summary

This project adds funds to the 2023-04 Capital Infrastructure Project to enable the City to complete phase 1 of the Vernon Creek Naturalization project in Polson Park in 2024. These added funds are a result of increased costs associated with construction cost escalation/inflation. These funds will also enable the City to meet the Site Alteration Permit material handling requirements and post construction environmental monitoring required as part of the environmental approvals. Council endorsed the following:

“AND FURTHER, that Council authorizes Administration to proceed with the project delivery method as proposed in the memorandum titled “Vernon Creek Naturalization through Polson Park – Project Update” dated September 5, 2023 and respectfully submitted by the Water Resources Engineer.”

Administration has also applied Disaster Risk Reduction – Climate Adaption funding from Community Emergency Preparedness Fund for this project but this potential funding was not included in the budget.