

My wife and I are home owners and residents on McNair Street, in Victoria, a single-block street that borders on the east side of Summit Park. We are part of a group of home owners and residents on this street who have banded together for a common cause.

That cause is better access to Summit Park from the end of McNair Street, something the City of Victoria has already committed to in it's 2011 Seven Year Management Plan for Summit Park.

As a group (a bit less than 50% of the residents on our street), we met with Councillor Ben Isitt to discuss the Management Plan for Summit Park and the building of a proper and safe pathway access up to the park. We have Mr. Isitt's full support for this, and he suggested we contact other councillors to support this project as outlined in the Summit Park Management Plan, and get it voted into the 2019 Budget. Mr. Isitt estimates the path building will cost around \$40,000 to complete. Mr. Isitt explained to our group that this is a small budget "request" for a park improvement project, since many are in the \$250,000+ range.

So why should you support the building of this path up to Summit Park from the end of McNair Street?

There's an existing path:

There is an existing "path of desire" up from the end of McNair Street to the Telus Tower at the Eastern end of the park, one that has existed since McNair Street was created back in 1912. It is well worn and shows a clear desire for access to the park off the end of McNair Street, a desire that goes back over 100 years.

Safety Reasons:

The natural, well worn path is there and is frequently used by residents from all around our neighbourhood, but in its current state, it can be dangerous and slippery, and there are two parts of the path that require tricky walking over big rocks in the ground. Also, invasive species (Ivy, Blackberry) often start growing over the pathways too, but locals clear the path often. Further, because it is an informal pathway, there are the rare squatters and homeless who set up camp on the eastern side of Summit Park (we own the second closest house to the start of the path, and we noted two episodes last year with illegal campers some 50 meters off the rough path). We, as the McNair Street group, feel a formal stair / path system up to the park would discourage illegal campers and homeless from using the areas around the path, because they would not have nearly the same level of anonymity and privacy, and would be discovered and reported more often. Mr. Isitt also appeared to agree with this.

Protects the Garry Oak Ecology of Summit Park

A formal path and stair system up to Summit Park from McNair Street would go a long way to preserving the ecology of Summit Park and the Garry Oak vegetation system that the City wants to protect. With a formal path system in place, people will not be

meandering off the path system as much as they do now, thereby protecting the local growth around the path.

It's in the Summit Park Management Plan

Building a more formal pathway / stair system up to Summit Park from the end of McNair Street is in the 2011, 7 year Summit Park Management Plan. Many other elements of the Plan have been completed, but this one has not. We're near the end of the 7 years.

As mentioned, we've already got the support of Mr. Isitt on Council, to get this project in the 2019 City of Victoria Budget. We believe that Jeremy Loveday may also be on board, but we'd really like to get the support of all the City Councillors to get this small budget pathway completed, as per the Summit Park Management Plan. We believe it will improve the Park and help preserve it's ecology, that it will make our neighbourhood safer, and will encourage more locals to get out and enjoy Summit Park's unique nature, stature, and spectacular ecology.

My wife and I hope we can count on your support for this, and would love the opportunity to discuss this further with you if you would like. Once we get in contact with all Councillors, our next step as a group is to attend a Council Meeting to formally ask for this small project to go ahead and be included in the 2019 Budget.

Best Regards,

Mark Prince