





Since reporting to Council on this project in April 2017, staff have worked with external consultants to update the public realm waterfront plans to include options for interim phasing, refinements to the Northern Junk plaza to address stakeholder concerns, a new design for the triangle island (Downtown) informed by the public art commission, and updated cost estimates.

Implementation of the public realm designs are proposed to be financed using unspent budget from 2017 for the smaller areas (Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection, completion of the Janion plaza, Johnson Street centre traffic island, and triangle island). It is proposed that the future waterfront park in Victoria West be funded through development cost charge (DCC) funds pending amendment to the City's Development Cost Charges Bylaw to merge and pool the funding for parks acquisition and improvements resulting in sufficient funding to create this new park space. Financing of the Northern Junk plaza will be determined following consideration of the rezoning application for 1314 Wharf Street. In the immediate term, upon opening of the new bridge and decommissioning of the old bridge, operational pedestrian connections on and off the bridge on both the east and west sides can be provided for under PCL's contract.

The updated public realm waterfront designs fulfill City objectives related to the provision of quality, enlivened public space and a gateway expression on the east side of the Johnson Street Bridge approach. The public art commission is still under development, but the high-level concept has informed a revised design for the triangle island, and demonstrates how artist collaboration during early and ongoing planning of public space and infrastructure can heighten the quality of the public realm.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to present Council with updated public realm waterfront designs, including interim plans for phased implementation and budget considerations. This report will also present an early concept for the public art proposal by the City's Artist in Residence and Indigenous Artist in Residence that is under development as part of the Johnson Street Bridge project.

## BACKGROUND

At the meeting of April 13, 2017, Council passed the following motion:

1. *That Council receive the attached Johnson Street Bridge Public Realm Design, dated February 21, 2017 and consider implementation as part of future budget processes.*
2. *That Council direct staff to:*
  - a. *Prepare an interim design based on the Johnson Street Bridge Public Realm Final Design plans, but of a minimum standard for the former 'S-Curve' lands, Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection, Triangle Green and work needed to complete the Janion Plaza, and report back to Council;*
  - b. *Put the design for the Northern Junk Plaza on hold pending the outcome of the Northern Junk rezoning application, following which further design refinements and public engagement will be undertaken to address stakeholder concerns;*
  - c. *Commission the City of Victoria's Artist in Residence and Indigenous Artist in Residence as the artists for this project, with a project budget of up to \$250,000 currently allocated within the Johnson Street Bridge project budget and direct the Artist in Residence to propose a name for the green.*



Since this direction was provided, the City re-engaged Connect Landscape Architecture to assist with preparing an interim plan, preparing a new design for the triangle island informed by the public art commission, and undertaking refinements to the Northern Junk plaza in response to stakeholder concerns. Please refer to Attachment A: Johnson Street Bridge Public Realm – Revised Design Concept, dated December 1, 2017.

## ISSUES & ANALYSIS

### 1. Victoria West Park

A future waterfront park in Victoria West is proposed at the former 'S-curve' lands and comprises the largest area of the public realm proposed for improvement as part of this project. The full design concept (page 2 of Attachment A) features connections to and from the West Song Walkway, E&N Trail and the new bridge, in the form of both pedestrian and cycling connections. The park also features terraced landscaping that will provide gathering space and seating with views of the Inner Harbour, including a lookout deck. The proposed design helps to further the objectives of the Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan including expanding the variety of experiences and activities within the system through a variety of social gathering spaces as well as areas that encourage mental restoration and relaxation.

The full design is estimated to cost \$2,993,000. Should Council wish to phase implementation of the park, an interim design is also provided (page 3 of Attachment A) that would focus construction on the perimeter connections, including accessible options, and the lookout deck. The interim design is estimated to cost \$1,575,000. Staff are recommending that this future waterfront park be financed through development cost charges. This would require an amendment to the Development Cost Charges Bylaw to merge parks acquisition and park development charges. Such an amendment will also require provincial Ministerial approval, so in the immediate term, it is recommended that operational connections be provided through PCL's existing contract and responsibilities. Should provincial approval be received and the Development Cost Charges bylaw be amended, staff recommend implementing the full design at \$2,993,000 rather than the interim solution to better align with the purpose of the fund (as the full design offers park gathering space and the interim design focuses on connections through the space).

Finally, a connection from the park area to the E&N Rail Trail is proposed on the former roadway portion of the 0.2 Mile Bridge (over Harbour Road). Structural and functional assessments were completed for the structure and anticipated use, and no significant structural repairs are required at this time to ensure safe and functional performance in the near term. Given the upcoming provincial government study of the E&N corridor, however, significant investment in the 0.2 Mile Bridge structure at this time is considered premature. To minimize expenditures while still providing a viable link for pedestrians and cyclists, staff recommend the following rehabilitation work:

- removing the centre handrail on the 0.2 Mile Bridge to provide greater usable space for pedestrians and cyclists
- upgrading outer railings to a 'bike-friendly' standard
- resurfacing the existing deck
- providing discrete safety upgrades to increase overall user safety, and
- upgrading fencing around the rail portion of the bridge to prevent unauthorized access.

The proposed work (approximately \$55,000) can be funded through existing budgets.



## 2. Esquimalt and Harbour Road Intersection

The Johnson Street Bridge Public Realm – Revised Design Concept also carries forward previously-proposed landscaping at the Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection to mark the approach to the Johnson Street Bridge from the west side and provide a higher quality pedestrian realm. The plans propose bermed landscaping, boulders, trees and lighting. The full design is estimated to cost \$451,500 which includes 10% overhead costs and 25% contingency. No interim design is proposed as any cost savings would simply be a choice to reduce the amount of landscape elements installed (i.e. the number of trees and boulders, etc.). During the detailed design stage, mechanisms to reduce this overall cost will be considered including, eliminating the tree up-lighting, eliminating the plaza area and reducing the overall extent of rock retaining walls and shrub/tree planting areas while maintaining a similar design intent.

## 3. Janion Plaza Completion

The Janion plaza is nearing completion as PCL has finished construction of the hardscape and has installed lighting, and City staff are currently installing plaza trees and landscaping. The remaining items to be completed are one strip of boulevard trees adjacent to Pandora Avenue, estimated to cost \$28,200, and plaza furnishings in the form of benches, garbage receptacles and bike racks, estimated to cost \$10,000 and consistent with the recently approved Downtown Public Realm Plan. In total, the cost to complete the Janion plaza is estimated at \$38,200.

## 4. Northern Junk Plaza

While staff had previously recommended that the Northern Junk plaza design be placed on hold pending the outcome of the Northern Junk rezoning application, it was necessary to revisit the design at this time to consider phasing options as connections through this site will be necessary when the old bridge is decommissioned to ensure that pedestrians walking off the new bridge can connect to Wharf Street or the Harbour Pathway. Revisiting the Northern Junk plaza design at this time was also an opportunity to try to address design concerns brought forward by some stakeholders.

Staff convened a meeting on November 24, 2017 with stakeholders representing the Downtown Residents' Association, the Greater Victoria Placemaking Network and Reliance Properties to determine if solutions or compromises could be found given the constraints with the site, while ensuring the objectives and desired elements determined through previous public engagement processes could be upheld.

The previous public engagement process included a charrette (design workshop) in late 2015 with more than 25 stakeholders representing both the Victoria West and Downtown areas. The design concepts that resulted from the charrette were presented at an open house for public feedback, at which 50 people attended. From May to June 2016, an online survey was provided as another way to submit feedback on the design elements, options and concepts, with 253 surveys completed.

The top themes identified by the public for the plazas were the provision of green space, accessibility and connectivity, and for the southeast plaza (Northern Junk plaza) in particular, the provision of café or patio space, a gathering area, and festivals and entertainment. Regarding the design options for the Northern Junk plaza, when reviewing the option with the ramped walkway path to the waterfront (featured in the proposed option), 57% of respondents indicated it was a preferred design element in that option. When reviewing the option with the meandering pathway to the waterfront (featured in an alternate option), 48% of respondents indicated it was a preferred



design element in that option. Regarding other elements, 51% preferred the plantings and turf along the walkway to the waterfront and 48% preferred the multiple connection points to the waterfront.

At the November 24, 2017 meeting, outstanding concerns with the design concept for the Northern Junk plaza were discussed and relate to the following:

- Not having flat lawn area as a gathering space
- Not having a means to connect across the site between the ramp and the plaza area
- Concerns related to the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design with some of the central trees between the plaza and the ramp that may impede sight lines through the site
- Lack of clear delineation between semi-private patio space and public space in the plaza area that may discourage the public from using the space if it all reads as private patio space
- The existing crosswalk design at the Johnson and Wharf Street intersection and related amount of traffic lanes and hardscape.

The following design refinements were discussed by the group as potential solutions for consideration:

- Provide lawn in the terraced steps for seating opportunities in the green space
- Delineate a patio area
- Consider one or two connections across the site to connect the upper plaza with the ramp and/or connect the terraced steps with the ramp
- Keep the ramp to the minimum 3m width (required for occasional service vehicle access) and do not widen at the bottom
- Pursue opportunities to extend green space south towards the Harbour Pathway
- Consider overhead lighting that extends from the proposed Northern Junk building adjacent to the plaza over the space to attract users
- Staff indicated that changes to the Johnson and Wharf Street intersection can be considered when the Wharf Street protected bike lane is designed, so there may be opportunities for improvement.

The above suggestions were considered and the concept design has been refined as follows:

- More green space has been provided, both adjacent to the upper plaza area and at the bottom landing that adjoins with the Harbour Pathway
- The accessible walkway ramp has been reduced in width to 3m, however, a slight widening at the bottom was maintained to invite people into the walkway and to transition to the Harbour Pathway
- Benches have been added approximately halfway down the walkway ramp to provide an area of respite
- Trees have been adjusted to allow for views through the site (this can be further considered during detailed design when tree species are selected to ensure sightlines and transparency are achieved)
- Flat lawn has been added to the terraced benches that overlook the Inner Harbour to provide seating opportunities in the green space adjacent to the steps
- Overhead lighting has been added to the plaza area to further attract people to the space.

The suggestion to better delineate a patio area will be considered during a subsequent sidewalk café permit process where proposals must demonstrate consistency with the Sidewalk Café Bylaw and guidelines, and the defined area of a proposed sidewalk café can be considered.



## 5. Public Art and Triangle Island Design

Council directed the City of Victoria's Artist in Residence and Indigenous Artist in Residence to be the artists commissioned for this project. There is \$250,000 earmarked for public art as part of the Johnson Street Bridge project budget.

In his role as Artist in Residence, Luke Ramsey has been working directly with the public realm project team to develop a sculptural work of art for the triangle island site. Luke and Lindsay Delaronde, Indigenous Artist in Residence have been collaborating on an interactive site specific work that will incorporate sound in and around the sculpture. The desire for this collaborative aspect of the work is to create a dynamic interactive sensory experience. The title for the work and the triangle is still in development.

The sculpture and interactive elements informed the final site planning and landscape design for the triangle island. The proposed sculpture is to be sited perpendicular to the sidewalk to provide viewing opportunities from adjacent vantage points (the Janion plaza and future Northern Junk plaza). The triangle will include a viewing plaza with feature lighting that will direct pedestrians to the sculpture and provide seating opportunities. The north side of the triangle is proposed to have bermed landscaping and a screen to help mitigate the appearance of the existing utility kiosks and to provide a planted backdrop with plantings that may evoke water-like movement. The sculpture will punctuate this area and contribute to achieving a gateway appearance.

The Art in Public Places Committee reviewed the concept on November 27, 2017 and will review a second more developed concept including interactive sound elements and maquette on December 11, 2017.

### OPTIONS & IMPACTS

The following table provides options for Council's consideration, including full cost estimates for each area and interim cost estimates where appropriate. Staff have provided recommended approaches after confirming that there will be some unused funds from the 2017 budget that could be used to finance completion of the smaller areas and to support implementation of the public art installation. Funding strategies are also recommended for the larger sites for consideration (the future Victoria West park and Northern Junk plaza):

Public Realm Area	Full Cost Estimate (includes soft costs and contingencies)	Interim Cost Estimate (includes soft costs and contingencies)	Recommended Approach	Funding Source
Victoria West park (former 'S-curve' lands)	\$2,993,000	\$1,575,000	Proceed with construction of connections in accordance with PCL's contract.  Proceed with full design following	PCL contract (no additional funding needed)  DCCs

<b>Public Realm Area</b>	<b>Full Cost Estimate</b> (includes soft costs and contingencies)	<b>Interim Cost Estimate</b> (includes soft costs and contingencies)	<b>Recommended Approach</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
			amendment of Development Cost Charges Bylaw	
Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection	\$451,500	N/A	Proceed with completion of landscaping at a reduced scope up to a maximum of \$250,000	Unused funds from 2017 budget
Triangle island	\$343,350	N/A	Proceed with construction of new landscape design to accommodate public art	Unused funds from 2017 budget
Johnson Street centre traffic island	\$20,070	N/A	Proceed with completion of landscaping	Unused funds from 2017 budget
Janion plaza	\$38,200	N/A	Proceed with completion of landscaping and plaza furnishings	Unused funds from 2017 budget
Northern Junk plaza	TBD	Included in PCL contract	Proceed with construction of interim design in accordance with PCL's contract	Funding source to construct full design dependent on outcome of Rezoning Application No. 00294

### *Accessibility Impact Statement*

The public realm waterfront designs provide accessible connections through each of the areas and the interim plans ensure that accessible connections are included should Council choose to implement some areas in phases.

During the public engagement process to establish the design concepts, representatives from the Accessibility Working Group were included in the stakeholder groups invited to participate in the charrette (design workshop). As the designs become firmed up during the upcoming detailed design stage, and given the concept design for the Northern Junk Plaza has been refined to address other stakeholder concerns, it is recommended that the detailed design plans be referred to the Accessibility Working Group for additional input.



In February of 2017, the Chair of the Accessibility Working Group attended an Art in Public Places Committee meeting and provided advice on considering the needs of those with disabilities to experience art. It was requested that a disability lens be applied to all future projects. A specific suggestion was to incorporate multi-sensory access, such as sound. The Artists in Residence are considering this advice as part of this public art proposal.

### *2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan*

The Strategic Plan includes a specific 2017 outcome to complete the Johnson Street Bridge (under Objective 9: Complete a Multi-Modal and Active Transportation Network) and a 2018 outcome to enliven public spaces and that Victoria is a people-centred place, in reference to Centennial Square and the Harbour front (under Objective 3: Strive for Excellence in Planning and Land Use).

### *Impacts to Financial Plan*

Implementation of the public realm designs for the Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection, triangle island, Johnson Street center traffic island, and completion of the Janion Plaza are proposed to be funded by reallocating funding from projects that came in under budget in 2017. The unspent funds total \$650,000 and result from the following projects:

- Surface Infrastructure \$80,000 (under budget)
- 0.2 Mile Bridge upgrade \$200,000 (under budget)
- Centennial Square Washrooms \$58,000 (under budget)
- Cameron Band Shell Roof Repair \$22,000 (under budget)
- VCC upgrades and repairs \$150,000 (under budget)
- CNG fuel station refurbishment \$140,000 (cancelled)

While the costs of the above-noted areas exceed the available unspent funds (approximately \$855,000), staff propose to implement the design vision to the extent possible using the resources available. This will result in a reduction in some landscape features at the Esquimalt and Harbour Road intersection, however, staff will ensure any reductions in scope fulfill the broader design objectives noted in these concepts. During the detailed design stage, mechanisms to reduce this overall cost will be considered including, eliminating the tree up-lighting, eliminating the plaza area and reducing the overall extent of rock retaining walls and shrub/tree planting areas while maintaining a similar design intent.

Implementation of the future Victoria West park (at the former 'S-curve' lands), is proposed to be funded using accumulated DCC funds, dependent on amendment to the City's Development Cost Charges Bylaw to merge park acquisition and improvement DCCs (this will also require provincial Ministerial approval). DCCs available for parks acquisition and development currently total approximately \$5.1 million. This would draw down the DCC fund by \$2,993,000, however, it is anticipated that DCCs earmarked for this neighbourhood will be replenished from future development that is ongoing and envisioned in the Core Songhees area. This also provides an opportunity to amend the DCC Bylaw to incorporate projects related to population growth as identified in the Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan.

Implementation of the Northern Junk plaza will be determined pending the outcome of Rezoning Application No. 00294 for 1314 Wharf Street, which proposes an increase in density and public amenities in the form of heritage conservation and the provision of public space, including extension of the Harbour Pathway and may include construction of part of the adjacent plaza. In the meantime, an interim connection for pedestrians can be provided as part of PCL's scope of work.



## Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

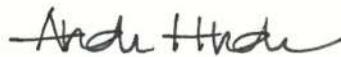
The public realm waterfront designs are consistent with the Placemaking objectives and policies within the *Official Community Plan* (OCP) by enabling continuous public access along the waterfront with special consideration to urban design features for pedestrian enjoyment and comfort (policy 8.14); considering urban design improvements along and near the Core Songhees waterfront (policy 8.15); and continuing to maintain views from public vantage points of the Inner Harbour (policy 8.16).

The OCP identifies a proposed park in Victoria West adjacent to the Johnson Street Bridge in Parks and Recreation Map 9. Implementation of the public realm design proposed for the former 'S-curve' lands would achieve this OCP objective.

## CONCLUSIONS

The public realm waterfront designs fulfill City objectives related to the provision of quality, enlivened public space. These phased improvements will coincide with and support the completion of the Johnson Street Bridge project and utilize DCC funds meant to provide park and infrastructure improvements related to population growth. The public art installation, proposed to be located on the triangle island and still under development, will contribute to a gateway expression in this area, which achieves one of the objectives in the Downtown Core Area Plan. The public art concept and how it has informed the final design of the triangle island demonstrates how artist collaboration during early and ongoing planning of public space and infrastructure can heighten the quality of the public realm.

Respectfully submitted,



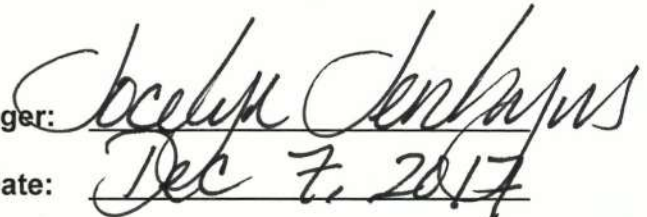
Andrea Hudson  
Assistant Director, Community Planning



Jonathan Tinney, Director  
Sustainable Planning and Community Development

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager:

Date:

  
Dec 7, 2017

## List of Attachments:

- Attachment A: Johnson Street Bridge Public Realm – Revised Design Concept, dated December 1, 2017
- Attachment B: Johnson Street Bridge Triangle Island Public Art Concept, prepared by Luke Ramsey, City of Victoria Artist in Residence and Lindsay Delaronde, City of Victoria Indigenous Artist in Residence (to be updated following the December 11 maquette meeting)