June 16, 2015
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To: City Manager
From: General Manager Parks, Recreation & Culture

Subject: Mundy Park Forest Management Plan

For: Council

Recommendation:
That Council:

1. Approve the final Mundy Park Forest Management Plan (the “FMP”) as per the report from the General Manager Parks, Recreation and Culture dated June 15, 2015 entitled “Mundy Park Forest Management Plan”; and

2. Integrate the Mundy Park FMP into the Parks, Recreation and Culture (“PRC”) final Master Plan and endorse staff bringing forward for Council consideration future priority initiatives, as well as corresponding capital and operating budget requests, necessary to implement the FMP as part of the City’s annual budget and priority-setting process.

Report Purpose:
To present for Council consideration and approval the final Mundy Park FMP, and endorse staff proceeding with immediate and long-term actions to implement the FMP and safeguard Mundy Park Forest for future generations.

Strategic Goal:
The initiatives described in this report address the City's strategic goals of supporting sport, culture and recreation, enhancing community safety and developing sustainable assets. The development of the Forest Management Plan began in 2013 and is a "C" priority in the 2015 Corporate Business Plan Priorities.

Executive Summary:
Mundy Park is the City of Coquitlam's largest park at 440 acres, including 400 acres of forest dedicated as an Urban Forest Park through bylaw in 1993. The development of a Mundy Park Forest Management Plan (the “FMP”) for this premier natural forest was identified as a priority in 2013 and is now a “C” priority in the 2015 Corporate Business Plan Priorities. The intent of the FMP is to lay out a road map for managing the dedicated Urban Forest to ensure that the full range of public benefits will be sustained and celebrated by current and future generations of Coquitlam residents.
Public consultation on the Draft FMP highlighted broad public support for the proposed directions and recommended actions outlined in the FMP. The feedback confirms how much the community values the opportunity to recreate in this natural forest environment and wants to see it preserved into the future. The feedback also highlighted concerns related to dog management in the Park, which will be the focus of a separate staff report.

Staff recommends that Council approve the Mundy Park FMP, and that the FMP be integrated into the PRC Master Plan to ensure the plan is fully implemented and to safeguard the value of Mundy Forest in perpetuity. The FMP will also form the basis for future actions that will be highlighted for Council as part of the annual priority setting and budget processes.

**Background:**

Mundy Park is the City of Coquitlam’s largest park at 440 acres, including 400 acres of forest dedicated as an Urban Forest Park through bylaw in 1993. This Urban Forest includes two lakes, three streams, and a 16 km trail network that provides tremendous recreational, aesthetic, environmental, and overall health benefits for the community. The breadth of natural assets and public benefits offered by Mundy Park Urban Forest also means that these uses need to be managed over time.

The Forest Dedication Bylaw No. 2699, 1993 defines Urban Forest Park as:

“*A large tract of wooded land located within a populous community, dedicated for the public’s use and enjoyment and to the management, conservation and enhancement of the native flora and fauna.*”

The development of a management plan for this premier natural forest was identified as a priority in 2013 and is now a “C” priority in the 2015 Corporate Business Plan Priorities. The intent of the FMP is to lay out a road map for managing the dedicated Urban Forest to ensure that the full range of public benefits can be managed, sustained and celebrated by current and future generations of Coquitlam residents.

Currently, staff manages the diverse issues inherent to the public enjoyment of the Park in a responsive manner as these arise, and based on available budget and resources. These issues include trail/ bridge/ boardwalk maintenance, hazard tree management, invasive plant management, dumping, signage, litter, and graffiti. Under the Parks Division, the City spends approximately $80,000 to manage and operate Mundy Urban Forest on an annual basis.

**Mundy Park Management Plan - Process**

Staff began working with a Community Focus Group (the “CFG”) and the City’s consultant, Diamond Head Consulting Ltd. (the “Consultant”), in January 2014 to complete the FMP based on an approved Terms of Reference.
On January 20, 2014 Council-in-Committee received a report entitled “Mundy Park Forest Management Plan – Preliminary Concept” updating Council on the progress on the development of the FMP. This included the work that had been completed to date with the CFG including the Vision and Principles that were included in the Preliminary Concept. On September 8, 2014, Committee received a report entitled “Draft Mundy Park Forest Management Plan” that provided a complete Draft FMP for Council information and the plan for community consultation and engagement. Staff completed the community engagement in late 2014.

Following the completion of the public consultation, staff prepared a report to Council-in-Committee entitled “Final Draft Mundy Park Forest Management Plan - Public Consultation Results” on April 20, 2015. This report summarized the results of the consultation process, including substantial feedback related to dog management conflicts highlighted by users of the park. The report also included information on future operational and budget needs to effectively implement the FMP in the long term. A separate report is being prepared to address Council direction on the management of dog conflicts in Mundy Park.

Discussion/Analysis:

**Mundy Park FMP- Public Consultation and Engagement**

The following table outlines the community engagement program that was completed in the fall of 2014:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 15</td>
<td>Community Focus Group Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>Public Information Session – Incorporated with PRC</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 24</td>
<td>Master Plan Public Open House</td>
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<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>Sustainability and Environmental Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 25, 27, 29</td>
<td>Mail outs to nearby residents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 1, 4, 6</td>
<td>Information booth in Mundy Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept – Nov</td>
<td>Online information and feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept – Nov</td>
<td>Social Media postings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Through this engagement process staff was able to speak with more than 500 park users in Mundy Park and 209 people completed the comment form and provided invaluable feedback on the FMP as well as the Park in general. A summary of the responses and detailed feedback received from these 209 respondents is included as Attachment 2. The public consultation on the draft FMP highlighted broad public support for the direction outlined in the Plan. The feedback confirms how much the community values the opportunity to recreate in this natural forest environment and wants to see it preserved into the future.
**Final Mundy Park FMP**
The Final Mundy Park FMP (Attachment 1) has been streamlined and made more user friendly than the previous version, but no substantial changes have been made to the content. The key findings from the consultation are categorized into either FMP Priorities, Additional Park Amenities or Dog Conflict Management.

**FMP Priorities**
The work on the FMP has highlighted the fact that Mundy Park is a regionally significant, ecological jewel that also has the potential to serve as a regional hub for nature education. The Implementation Plan in the FMP provides a prioritized set of actions to sustainably manage the forest and fully achieve the Park’s potential. Some of the implementation actions that are being planned for 2015 using existing base operating budgets include:

- Invasive Plant Free Mundy Forest in 2015. Park Spark will invite the community to a world record setting weed pull event this fall with the goal being to accomplish in one weekend what the FMP anticipated taking 5 years to complete;

- Work with schools and seniors is underway to construct and install 25 chickadee, 4 wood duck and 2 barn owl nest boxes; and

- Begin pruning of lower limbs of trees along trail edges in higher risk forest types to reduce wildfire risk.

Future priorities that may require funding support and will require Council consideration as part of the annual budget process may include:

- Major trail and boardwalk improvements;

- The creation and implementation of a Volunteer Park Host program that will offer nature interpretative tours, monitoring and enhancement of rare and endangered flora and fauna species in the forest. This program will increase community awareness and engagement in the stewardship of the forest, enhance monitoring and oversight of the Park, and gather information about Park use;

- Nature education (may potentially be considered as part of the new Field House planned for construction in 2016); and

- The decommissioning of the Priority 1 and 2 unsanctioned trails as identified in the FMP, as well as some additional trail development when appropriate.

**Additional Park Amenities**
Additional park amenities requested through the public consultation process will be included in the upcoming Parks, Recreation & Culture Master
Plan Implementation Strategy. This list includes additional washroom facilities, enhanced way finding signage, a nature interpretive centre, benches, garbage cans, etc.

Dog Conflict Management Initiatives
Although not a focus of the FMP or specifically mentioned in the survey, 60 feedback forms included concerns related to the management of dog owners using the Park. The significant conflicts and public concerns related to undesirable behaviors of dog owners is well documented in the latest report to Council-in-Committee. As a result, Council provided direction for staff to identify additional measures to manage dog conflicts, and these are outlined in a separate companion report to Council along with required resource and funding considerations.

Financial Implications:
There are no immediate financial implications with the adoption of the FMP; once adopted, staff will continue to manage the park within existing operating and capital funding resources. However, the FMP has highlighted important issues that need attention to manage the Forest in the long-term, and to do so effectively, additional operating and capital funding will be needed over time. The potential immediate and longer-term financial implications are noted in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MUNDY PARK FMP- Potential Additional Funding Needs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>YEARS 1 – 2 of the FMP</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Operating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMP $35,000 - $40,000</td>
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As reported previously to Council, in the longer term, a rationalization of operating budgets to match the required level of work in the Forest will likely need to be considered. The City currently spends approximately $80,000 in operating dollars each year managing Mundy Forest. Although efficiencies can be found in existing budgets to target key projects, in the next 5 year period, it is estimated that an increase in operating funding of $40,000 - $45,000, and potentially an additional one-time $150,000 - $180,000, in capital expenses will be needed to fully meet the goals of the FMP. However, should Council support funding and proceeding with dog conflict management initiatives in Mundy Park, which include increased trail improvements as outlined in a separate report, these initiatives will advance and off-set approximately $35,000 of proposed future capital works, including new trails and park signage, and infrastructure (gates, garbage cans, etc..) which is presently included in the above-noted capital costs.
It is noted that staff can prioritize key issues identified in the FMP, as these arise, within existing operating and capital budgets; however, existing resources and competing budget priorities will dictate the level of management actions in various areas over time if no additional funding is allocated. Should Council support the FMP, these costs and possible funding options will be identified for consideration in future budget and priority-setting processes for Council consideration and approval.

Conclusion:
Mundy Park is a significant local and regional amenity that provides outstanding recreational, wildlife habitat, and educational opportunities. The public has provided feedback and support for the Draft Mundy Park Forest Management Plan that was developed with the Community Focus Group and the Consultant. The FMP has been identified as a “C” priority in the 2015 Business Plan and provides a concrete framework to manage Mundy Urban Forest in a way that will ensure the community values of the forest are maintained for current and future generations.

Staff recommends that Council adopt the Mundy Park FMP and integrate it into the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan when it is completed later in 2015. The implementation of the FMP in the long-term will require monitoring, and staff will bring forward priority initiatives for managing Mundy Forest as part of the annual priority-setting and budget processes.

Raul Allueva, RPP

Attachments:
1 - Final Draft Mundy Park FMP
2- Mundy Park FMP- Public Consultation and Detailed Feedback Summary

This report was prepared by Lanny Englund, Urban Forestry & Park Services Manager and reviewed by Kathleen Reinheimer, Manager Parks, Andrea McDonald, Manager Bylaw and Animal Control Services, Kathleen Vincent, Manager Corporate Communications, and Sheena MacLeod, General Manager Finance.