
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CDP-01-2021 Cayuga Parks Consultation Final Report For Consideration by Council in Committee on March 30, 2021



OBJECTIVE:

To present the results of Cayuga Parks Consultation process including the project scope, stakeholder engagement process, assessment of service gaps and opportunities, current and future parks and recreation trends, final concepts and estimated budgets.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CDP-01-2021 Cayuga Parks Consultation Final Report be received;
2. AND THAT the proposed implementation plan as outlined in Report CDP-01-2021 be approved;
3. AND THAT the order of work and associated budget for each of the four Parks included in this report be assessed during future Capital Budget deliberations.

Prepared by: Katrina Schmitz, Manager, Community Development & Partnerships

Reviewed & respectfully submitted: Mike Evers, MCIP, RPP, BES, General Manager of Community & Development Services

Approved: Craig Manley, MCIP, RPP, Chief Administrative Officer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

In 2019, Haldimand County Council requested that Staff undertake a facilitated community engagement process to develop concept plans for Parks within Cayuga. The initiative—intended to reflect longer-term recreation and leisure needs for the community—focused on four Parks which had, or were going to be, impacted by other major County capital initiatives, specifically: Bob Baigent Park, the Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre Parkette, the Cayuga Administration Building property (also the site of the Haldimand County Museum & Archives) and the Village Green Park. The process was intended to incorporate data which had been recently gathered through the Parks & Recreation Service Plan process, a vision for the County's recreation and leisure services for the next ten to twenty years.

Two rounds of in-person stakeholder consultation were conducted, as well as an online survey, over the course of eight months. The outcome is concept plans for the four Parks (**Attachments 1-4**)—based on community input—as well as industry estimates for the associated construction (**Attachment 5**). These plans and construction cost estimates are proposed to be used as the basis for future Capital Budget planning, detailed design and construction at each of the four (4) park sites. However, the timing and phasing of construction will be subject to the County's annual Capital Budget prioritization process and funding capabilities.

BACKGROUND:

Beginning in 2010 with the creation of the Community Development & Partnerships Division, Haldimand County committed itself to undertaking a more collaborative approach with its community, including

offering more meaningful opportunities for residents and other stakeholders to have input into the development of the recreation and leisure facilities, assets and parks in its communities and creating a more fair, clear and consistent partnership approach to building some of these new amenities.

In 2017, with many County and partnership projects completed that enhanced the municipality's recreation, leisure and cultural assets (including trails, skate parks, splash pads, heritage installations and much more), Haldimand County initiated a process to update its Parks and Recreation Service Plan to reflect the work completed, potential service gaps and future opportunities in consideration of the significant growth anticipated for the County over the next 20 years. In order to complete this strategic plan, the County retained Stempski Kelly Associates Inc. (SKA), and a draft final report was presented to Staff in July 2019.

Concurrent with the development of the Parks and Recreation Service Plan were a number of major capital projects in Cayuga, which Council identified would impact Parks planning in the immediate future. These included:

- Completion of the Cayuga Bridge replacement by the Ministry of Transportation (Ontario), which included enhancements to a portion of the adjacent Bob Baigent Park;
- Construction of a new Haldimand County Administration Building adjacent to the Cayuga Memorial Arena, along with the subsequent vacating and demolition of the old administration building;
- Construction of a new Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre, which impacted both Village Green (as the former home of the Library) and the Cayuga Administration Building (CAB) property after the Haldimand County Museum & Archives (HCMA) moved into the Heritage Centre; and
- The construction of a new Fire Hall and resulting demolition of the Fire Hall at Village Green Park.

In 2019, in order to ensure the redevelopment of the Parks most directly impacted by these capital projects would include opportunities for public input, Council directed Staff to undertake a formal Cayuga Parks Consultation process. This initiative would allow Staff—upon completion of the above-noted capital projects—to:

- Once approved in the Capital Budget, be able to move quickly to redevelop the Parks—with detailed input from the public—at the four locations; and
- Based upon the outcomes of the draft Parks and Recreation Service Plan, ensure that any improvements align with the needs, wants and desires of residents in each community.

Through a Request for Proposal process, the County once again retained SKA—which had already completed considerable foundational research and review with the community as it related to the County's long-term parks and recreation planning—to work with Staff on the Cayuga Parks Consultation.

ANALYSIS:

Stempski Kelly Associates Inc. (SKA) met with Staff in early 2019 to develop the Cayuga Parks consultation framework, including:

Preparatory Work:

SKA's work on the Parks and Recreation Service Plan indicated the community's desired vision for Cayuga's parks included:

- Vibrant gathering spaces and civic squares;
- Places that support and celebrate Cayuga's commercial and tourism sectors;
- Useable park spaces for all ages and abilities;
- The protection and promotion of Cayuga's natural features, views and interconnectedness to the County's whole greenspace network; and

- Designated spaces of which the community is proud.

Further, Cayuga-specific recommendations included the potential for a basketball court, upgrading/resurfacing/relocating the tennis courts, addressing existing gaps in playground distribution, the MTO to repair/renovate (Bob Baigent) Park and river access and the enhancement of trail connections.

SKA's objectives for the engagement process also included alignment with best practices (e.g. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)), analyzing existing conditions, opportunities and constraints and ensuring that recommendations aligned with the overarching, County-wide Guiding Principles developed through the Parks and Recreation Service Plan, including:

- Local/County Identity;
- Opportunities for All;
- Natural Features;
- Health & Wellness;
- Sustainability; and
- Service Delivery.

SKA's intent was to provide a highly-visual engagement process which would be iterative; paring down and tweaking the various ideas and options, through consensus, into one preferred concept.

Community Engagement #1:

Understanding that the inclusion of residents, community stakeholder groups, Staff and decision-makers in the design process is imperative to the success of any parks development, SKA began its engagement with in-person workshops (morning and evening) in June 2019. Participants were presented with the Cayuga results of the Parks and Recreation Service Plan process and then participated in a series of exercises. Although the focus of the Cayuga Parks Plan was the four Parks directly impacted by recent County capital projects, the process encouraged participants to provide input about other existing or potential locations.

SKA next used the outcomes of the two workshops to create an online survey for public input.

Concept Development:

Following completion of the in-person and online consultations, SKA developed two draft concepts for each of the four Parks, including schematics and associated budgets. These were presented in the second round of community engagement.

Community Engagement #2:

During the second round of community consultation in February 2020 (again an afternoon and evening session was offered), members of the public 'voted' on their preferred concept for each Park and/or selected elements they did or did not like for each location.

During this process, it became clear that some general 'themes' were emerging for each Park; specifically:

- Bob Baigent Park: The preferred assets for this linear waterfront location included more passive seating/viewing/picnicking areas, potential spots for fishing and river access and enhanced adult fitness equipment;
- Cayuga Administration Building and Haldimand County Museum & Archives (HCMA): This large, open green space, adjacent to the Courthouse and the Grand Vista Trail, lends itself to family recreation such as active play areas (playground, splash pad, etc.). As well, as the home of the

former HCMA (which is slated for demolition due to its condition) and Log Cabin (which will remain on the site), participants indicated a desire to include heritage assets such as storyboards;

- Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre Parkette: This small ‘plaza’ in the downtown of Cayuga lends itself as a place for residents and neighbours to meet and enjoy the wares of local cafés, read and people-watch. As well, the site was the location of the Cayuga Lions Arch, gardens and amenities installed and cared for by the former Club and other community-minded volunteers. These assets—temporarily removed during construction of the adjacent facility—have also been recommended to be returned to this location; and
- Village Green: The former town square is already home to Light-Up Night and other town-wide activities and events, making it an ideal space for larger community socialization opportunities, including pop-up markets (e.g. farmers market, arts/crafts market, etc.).

Final Park Concepts & Budget Estimates:

Following the second round of community engagement, SKA provided results of the public input (e.g. preferences/dislikes for certain assets or concepts) and a final concept plan for each Park, as well as preliminary costing for each location. (It should be noted that some of the assets in the Parks were identified as requiring additional assessment to determine more detailed construction specifications and costs, and may therefore impact future budgets.) These were reviewed by Staff from multiple Divisions (Engineering Services, Facilities Capital & Asset Management, Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry) to ensure they aligned with County service standards, legislation and policies.

The key features and associated high-level costing for each Park are as follows:

Park, Details	Potential Budget (2021 industry standards)
<p>Bob Baigent Park: Boat launch lookout, adult fitness stations, enhanced parking, viewing/seating pods, pathway and pavilion improvements, pedestrian water access, lighting, park amenities and landscaping.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Some improvements have been/will be completed through MTO project in 2021. Completion of the additional upgrades will lead to creation of an extensive connected linear park along the river.</p>	\$307,000
<p>Cayuga Administration Building/HCMA: Picnic pavilion, restrooms, log cabin restoration, playground, splash pad, shade sails, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian gateways, formalized pathways, lighting, park amenities and landscaping.</p> <p><u>Note:</u> Splash pad—although included in the potential budget at an estimated cost of \$854,550—would have to be a Community Partnership Project. Both the former CAB building and HCMA building would be demolished with services being preserved for re-use – e.g. water, sanitary, hydro for pavilion/restrooms.</p>	\$1,983,000
<p>Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre: Paving, lighting, park amenities, Lions Arch and landscaping.</p>	\$118,000

<p>Village Green: Entry plaza, refurbished/replaced gazebo, toddler playground, space for 'pop-up' markets, pedestrian gateways, formalized pathways, enhanced parking, park amenities, lighting and landscaping.</p>	<p>\$679,000</p>
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Additional Considerations:

Haldimand County Museum & Archives:

This building—constructed in the 1970s—is slated for demolition in spring 2021. Following the move of the HCMA assets and staff to the Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre, Staff from Facilities Capital & Asset Management inspected the facility to determine its suitability for repurposing as part of the site revitalization. Due to the modest construction standard of the building, which is no longer in keeping with legislated standards for public buildings, as well as the damage due to significant leaks and rodent infestation, FCAM Staff determined it was not appropriate to try to retain any portion of the building. This assessment was confirmed by Health & Safety Staff, in particular as it relates to the environmental condition of the building.

However, Staff did recommend that any servicing/utilities to the building should be preserved during demolition given the potential for a future pavilion (or other structure) in its place.

Enhancements:

During the consultation process, the public was made aware that some of the preferred amenities—such as a splash pad, heritage storyboards, other decorative or public art features, etc.—would be considered enhancements beyond the County’s service standards and would require a partnership approach through the Community Partnership Program (CPP). This grant program has been used by many other community organizations to construct similar assets in other communities.

Upper & Lower Kinsmen Parks:

Some members of the public identified concerns and opportunities in the above-noted Parks. The former is the location of the town’s lit ball diamond, concession building and a playground; the latter is adjacent to Bob Baigent Park and has a skate park, tennis courts and large open spaces along the river. Both will be considered in the context of development at the other Parks.

Boat Ramp Study:

The Ward Councillor has identified a community need and desire for an enhanced boat ramp at the end of Lower Kinsmen Park. This request will be considered as part of a larger review of boat ramps in several communities along the Grand River and Lake Erie during future Capital Budget processes.

Recommended Next Steps:

At this time, Staff recommend the following timeline for implementation of the outcomes of the Cayuga Parks Consultation:

Park, Details	Timing
<p>Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed designs and budget developed for 2022 Capital Budget 	<p>2022*</p>

Bob Baigent Park: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed designs and budget developed for 2022 Capital Budget 	2022*
Village Green: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community consultation and development of detailed design and budget is TBD; Construction budget included in future Capital Budget 	TBD
Cayuga Administration Building/HCMA: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community consultation and development of detailed design and budget is TBD; Construction budget included in future Capital Budget 	TBD

*Subject to funding capacity in the Capital Budget.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

These projects are not currently included in the 2021 Tax Supported Capital Budget and Forecast. Any future costs would be ranked and evaluated during the appropriate budget process.

The additional projects will ultimately impact the County's existing long-range capital funding plan as there is no dedicated reserve fund available for parks and recreation types of projects. The CRR-General Reserve currently has insufficient funds for the projects currently identified within the Capital Budget forecast, as discussed during the 2021 Capital Budget process.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

This report is the result of two rounds of in-person community consultation and an online survey. As well, the final concepts and draft budgets were reviewed and revised—as appropriate—by Staff from the Divisions of Engineering Services, Facilities Capital & Asset Management and Facilities, Parks, Cemeteries & Forestry.

Input regarding the condition of the Haldimand County Museum & Archives was provided by Facilities Capital & Asset Management and Health & Safety Staff.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: No

Policy: No

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Final Concept Plan – Bob Baigent Park.
2. Final Concept Plan – Cayuga Administration Building and Haldimand County Museum & Archives Park.

3. Final Concept Plan – Cayuga Library + Heritage Centre.
4. Final Concept Plan – Village Green.
5. Preliminary Park Budgets.