
HALDIMAND COUNTY

Report CDP-10-2022 Community Partnership Program – Dunnville Rotary Club Thompson Creek Viewing Platform



For Consideration by Council in Committee on June 21, 2022

OBJECTIVE:

To approve a request from the Dunnville Rotary Club to undertake the construction of a fully-accessible viewing platform adjacent to the existing bridge over Thompson Creek in Dunnville Lions Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Report CDP-10-2022 Community Partnership Program – Dunnville Rotary Club Thompson Creek Viewing Platform be received;
2. AND THAT the request from the Dunnville Rotary Club to undertake the installation of a viewing platform at the Grandview Lodge end of Dunnville Lions Park be approved;
3. AND THAT capital funding to an upset amount of \$14,000, representing 35% of the total anticipated budget of \$40,000, with related funding from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, be approved;
4. AND THAT project funding and approval are conditional upon compliance with Policy 2011-01 and County installation standards, permits, and processes;
5. AND THAT the revised budget as outlined in Report CDP-10-2022 be approved.

Prepared by: Sheryl Sawyer, Senior Community Partnership Liaison

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

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

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

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The request from the Dunnville Rotary Club is a proposal to construct a viewing platform over Thompson Creek in Lions Park, adjacent to the existing bridge to Centennial Park. The viewing platform will be fully accessible from the pathway from Grandview Lodge.

Staff have reviewed and support the group's request, including the proposed location and the estimated budget of \$40,000.

BACKGROUND:

Haldimand County's Community Partnership Program (CPP) is intended to encourage and enhance strategic partnerships to the benefit of community stakeholders and the municipality, offering a simple, streamlined, and customer-focused approach (2011-01-CPP-Policy). The program is intended to

balance the rigor of the review process – necessary to ensure legitimate public interest issues are addressed – with flexibility and respect for the volunteer commitment of the groups.

The Dunnville Rotary Club has a track record of community engagement and regularly undertakes fund-raising and special events to support activities, programs, and projects in the community. The current request from the group is for:

- (i) Approval to undertake this project, with an estimated budget of \$40,000, on Haldimand County property; and
- (ii) Capital funding from Haldimand County's CPP Capital Reserve to an upset amount of \$14,000, representing 35% of the project value, to support the construction of a viewing platform in Dunnville Centennial Park.

ANALYSIS:

The Proponent:

Dunnville Rotary Club is a member club of Rotary International, whose mission is to 'enrich the local and world community by providing humanitarian service and youth development'. Locally, the group is comprised of 20+ volunteers who are actively involved in the community. In 2021, Dunnville Rotarians contributed more than \$30,000 to various projects serving the Dunnville area, including grants to support youth development, childhood literacy and nutrition, local theatre, and mental health causes. As well, the group has historically cared for the 'Muddy the Mudcat' art structure and associated garden bed in Centennial Park through an operating agreement with Haldimand County. The group has expressed its interest in continuing with this agreement, which recently expired.

Financially stable, the Dunnville Rotary benefits from a robust volunteer base and the proposed viewing platform is identified in its strategic plan, as shared with County staff.

Property Description:

The proposed deck is intended to be installed in Dunnville Lions Park, adjacent to the bridge that crosses to Dunnville Centennial Park (Attachment 1).

Project Details:

Using licensed contractors, the proponent proposes to construct an engineered viewing platform on concrete piers alongside the existing pedestrian bridge which connects Lions Park to Centennial Park over Thompson Creek. This area benefitted from significant investments between 2016 and 2019, including:

- Through Report PED-COM-22-2016, the Dunnville Horticultural Society (DHS) received approval to restore the public art fountain and create a butterfly garden in Centennial Park;
- Through planned capital work and Report PED-COM-20-2017, the County paved the pathways in both Centennial and Lions Parks, widened the approaches from those pathways to the bridge and added handrails to enhance accessibility and safety; and
- Through Report PED-COM-09-2018, the DHS received approval to undertake the rehabilitation of Thompson Creek Park—which is adjacent to both Centennial and Lions Parks—to create an outdoor classroom and eco-centre.

Fully accessible, the proposed platform will allow people of all abilities to better enjoy the Creek, wetlands and associated flora and fauna. It is anticipated residents and visitors of Grandview Lodge will particularly benefit from this recreational opportunity.

The Dunnville Rotary Club has also indicated to staff its commitment to perform any site clean-up and/or remediation required during or after installation.

Fund-Raising Plan:

The group has informed staff that its share of funding (\$26,000) is in place for construction to begin as soon as the project is approved by Council.

Community Need and Benefit:

Centennial, Lions and Thompson Creek Parks—which surround Grandview Lodge—are popular greenspaces in Dunnville and are used by a wide demographic. The Parks are at the west entrance to the community and include many welcoming amenities: the Thompson Creek Eco-Centre and arboretum, public art fountain, butterfly garden, ‘Muddy the Mudcat’ statue, paved pathways that can take visitors to into downtown, benches, a pavilion and more.

Grandview Lodge residents can walk or are assisted with mobility devices over the paved pathways to enjoy the Parks, local schools (Thompson Creek and Dunnville Christian Schools are adjacent to the Parks) bring children to enjoy the outdoor classroom or event space, and residents and visitors enjoy the pathways, wetland and grassland areas, arboretum, bird nesting sites and more.

The current project—a 7’ x 10’ x 11’ x 12’ deck at marsh level near the Lions Park/Grandview Lodge end of the bridge—will add an accessible element for the community to appreciate nature.

Project Review:

The Community Partnership Program (CPP) Staff Review Team – which assessed the proposal and engineered drawings at several meetings – was supportive of the project and the proposed location. Further review from Haldimand County’s Accessibility Advisory Committee resulted in enthusiastic approval of the accessible status of the viewing platform and adjacent pathway entry.

The Rotary Club has also reached out to Ducks Unlimited Canada, which is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Thompson Creek Park wetlands and grasslands through an operating agreement with Haldimand County, and the Grand River Conservation Authority. Both groups are supportive of the proposal and will continue to work with the Rotary Club and the County to ensure installation meets all regulatory and other specifications and standards.

Project Management:

Staff are supportive that the Dunnville Rotary Club will be responsible for the construction of the viewing platform, including obtaining and complying with all necessary permits and inspections, once approvals are in place.

Ongoing Operations:

The ongoing inspections and maintenance – including related costs – will become the responsibility of Haldimand County. Staff are aware of and support this approach.

FINANCIAL/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

Policy 2011-01 states the Community Partnership Program (CPP) will encourage and actively support partnerships with not-for-profit community groups. Within the Community Capital Projects Grant Program, Council has the responsibility to approve community capital projects with an overall budget of greater than \$10,000.

The overall proposed budget for this project is \$40,000; the group has requested 35% project funding (\$14,000) from the Community Capital Projects Grants Program, which is in keeping with the related policy.

Based on approved/recommended projects to date requiring funding from the Community Partnership Capital Reserve, including Report CDP-11-2022 being presented at this meeting, there are sufficient

funds available in the reserve. Should this initiative be approved, there remains approximately \$120,600 in the Community Partnership Capital Reserve which is unallocated.

The CPP policy (2011-01) requires all community funding for Council-approved projects must be in place with the County or secured/confirmed with the applicable community group prior to the start of any construction. The group has informed staff that all funding is in place for construction to begin as soon as the project is approved by Council.

As a result of the proposed project, the following amendment to the 2022 Tax-Supported Capital Budget is required:

	Current Approved Budget	Proposed Revised Budget
Expenditures:		
Dunnville Rotary Club Thompson Creek Viewing Platform	\$0	\$40,000
Total Expenditures:	\$0	\$40,000
Financing:		
Community Contribution (65%)	\$0	\$26,000
Community Partnership Capital Reserve (35%)	\$0	\$14,000
Total Financing:	\$0	\$40,000

In addition to the funding required for the requested installation, the Public Sector Accounting Board (PSAB) reporting standards require the County to record the fair market value of contributed assets. This enhancement will be amortized over the estimated life of the associated asset for accounting purposes.

Ongoing additional operating costs related to the viewing platform (inspections, maintenance, repairs and insurance), resulting in a levy increase, will be the responsibility of Haldimand County. Future capital repair or replacement of the asset—through a potential partnership with the community group—will impact the County’s existing long-range capital funding plan.

STAKEHOLDER IMPACTS:

This application was assessed and supported by the Community Partnership Program’s Staff Review Team, which is comprised of staff from all County Divisions. Additionally, the application was reviewed and supported by members of Haldimand County’s Accessibility Advisory Committee.

External stakeholders involved in activities with the Park have also indicated their support. Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC), whose legal interest in leased portions of Thompson Creek Park are outlined in Report CDP-04-2021, have written to the proponents indicating that the proposed deck is clear of the DUC grasslands offset project. Likewise, the Grand River Conservation Authority has indicated in writing that permits will be necessary if the project requires more than 1 dump truck (over 10 cubic metres) of fill and that it is willing to work with the group to ensure construction and placement of the deck doesn’t impede on sensitive wetland areas.

The Dunnville Horticultural Society, whose rehabilitation of Centennial and Thompson Creek Parks was instrumental in the revitalization of this area, has also provided its support.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: No

By-law: No

Budget Amendment: Yes

Policy: No

REFERENCES:

1. [Policy 2011-01-Community-Partnership-Program-Policy](#)

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Location Map – Dunnville Centennial & Lions Parks; Proposed Viewing Platform.