

# HALIFAX

P.O. Box 1749  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
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## Item No. 3

Halifax Regional Council  
June 18, 2019

**TO:** Mayor Savage and Members of Halifax Regional Council

**SUBMITTED BY:** Original Signed by   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Denise Schofield, Director, Parks and Recreation

Original Signed by   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Jacques Dubé, Chief Administrative Officer

**DATE:** June 18, 2019

**SUBJECT:** Park Plan for Rehab Lands on Bissett Road

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### INFORMATION REPORT

#### ORIGIN

- May 24, 2016, Regional Council Motion:

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee

THAT Halifax Regional Council

1. Designate approximately 16 hectares of the lands associated with the Former Halifax County Rehabilitation Centre PID, #00402982, as parkland as outlined in Attachment 2 of the staff report dated May 5, 2016;
2. Direct staff to work with the Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association to create the necessary connections from Bissett Park to Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Heritage Park through the Rehabilitation Centre Lands; and
3. Direct staff to review the remainder of the property under the Administrative Order 50 process for potential disposal. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

- June 5, 2018, Regional Council Motion:

MOVED by Councillor Nicoll, seconded by Councillor Mancini

THAT Halifax Regional Council request staff prepare a comprehensive park plan for the Rehab Lands on Bissett Road, to be completed as a 2019/20 Business Plan deliverable, which shall incorporate community engagement, the Cole Harbour Open Space Plan, and consideration of an Off-Leash Dog Park. **MOTION PUT AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY**

*Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, Section 79 (1)* The Council may expend money required by the Municipality for; (k) recreational programs; (x) lands and buildings required for a municipal purpose; (ah) playgrounds, trails, including trails developed, operated or maintained pursuant to an agreement made under clause 73(c), bicycle paths, swimming pools, ice arenas and other recreational facilities;(ai) public grounds, squares, halls, museums, parks, tourist information centres and community centres; (aq) parking lots and parking structures; (as) wharves and public landings.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2011, Regional Council approved the Cole Harbour Open Space Plan as guidance for parks and public open space decision making in the area. That plan identifies an important potential open space connection between Bissett Park and Cole Harbour Provincial Park through the Rehabilitation Centre lands. The Plan also identifies important views from the Rehab Lands west to Bissett Lake and the urban areas, and east to the Cole Harbour Marshes and rural areas. The Plan recommends retention of areas of the Rehab Lands as an extension of Bissett Lake Park in order to achieve a connected park and trail system involving the Cole Harbour Common, Colby/Forest Hills Trails, Bissett Lake Park and the Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Heritage Provincial Park. That connected system is intended to be the center piece for public open space for the area providing sport and recreation, active transportation, preservation of community and cultural identity, water access and contact with nature.

On May 24, 2016, Regional Council passed a motion which designated approximately 16 hectares of the lands associated with the Former Halifax County Rehabilitation Centre as parkland; directed staff to work with the Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association to create the trail connections from Bissett Park to Cole Harbour Lawrencetown Heritage Park through the Rehabilitation Centre Lands; and directed staff to review the remainder of the property under the Administrative Order 50 process for potential disposal.

To achieve an overall approach for the future use of the lands of the former Rehab Centre, Councillor Nicoll put forward a motion that a park plan be completed as a deliverable in the 2019/20 Business Plan and Budget. Regional Council subsequently passed the motion.

## **DISCUSSION**

The following considerations were identified in the report dated May 5, 2016 to be included as part of the review of the overall site:

- Retain the capped contaminated areas associated with the former buildings at the top of the hill as public park;
- Provide vehicular access to the site through the former driveway to the site opposite the Provincial Park access and trail head;
- Link the Rehab lands to the Provincial Park and Bissett Lake Park through visual and trail connections;
- Retain the steep slopes and shoreline as protection for Bissett Lake;
- Protect views to the lake, surrounding community and Cole Harbour marsh by maintaining them within public ownership;
- Retain adequate public lands to accommodate future district requirements such as off-leash areas;
- Retain a small portion of the Rehab lands within the Municipal Service Boundary for future park needs requiring water and sewer;
- Work with the Cole Harbour Parks and Trails Association to create recreation and active transportation trails through the park;
- Phase opening the site for public use in accordance with the pace of park improvements;

- Review flanking portions of the former Rehab Centre property (approximately 4.5 hectares in total) not required for parkland purposes in the Municipality's internal Real Property Review process for consideration for other municipal uses or to be designated as surplus by Council under Administrative Order 50 Respecting the Disposal of Surplus Real Property.

Staff is currently completing park plans for Lake Echo District Park, Gorsebrook Park, and Eastern Passage Common. A typical process for park plan development includes the following:

- Early investigation and site assessment;
- Community engagement;
- Park concept development;
- Community engagement;
- Park concept refinement;
- Report to Regional Council;
- Detailed design development; and
- Park implementation.

The request for a park plan for the Rehab Lands was included in the Parks and Recreation Business Plan for 2019/20, which was recently approved by Regional Council. Based on this, it is expected that with the completion of the other park plans, work for this planning project will commence in the fall of 2019 with a report back to Regional Council in the spring of 2020.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report. Should there be any financial implications (including Capital budget considerations) associated with the proposed park plan developed through the review of the overall site, that would be the subject of a future Council report.

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

No community engagement was undertaken in the preparation of this report. It is expected that two rounds of community engagement will be involved in the development of a park plan for the Rehab Lands:

- Engagement one to collect high-level park values, issues and opportunities, and park priorities from the public; and
- Engagement two to unveil a park concept informed by engagement one and to further gather feedback for a final concept.

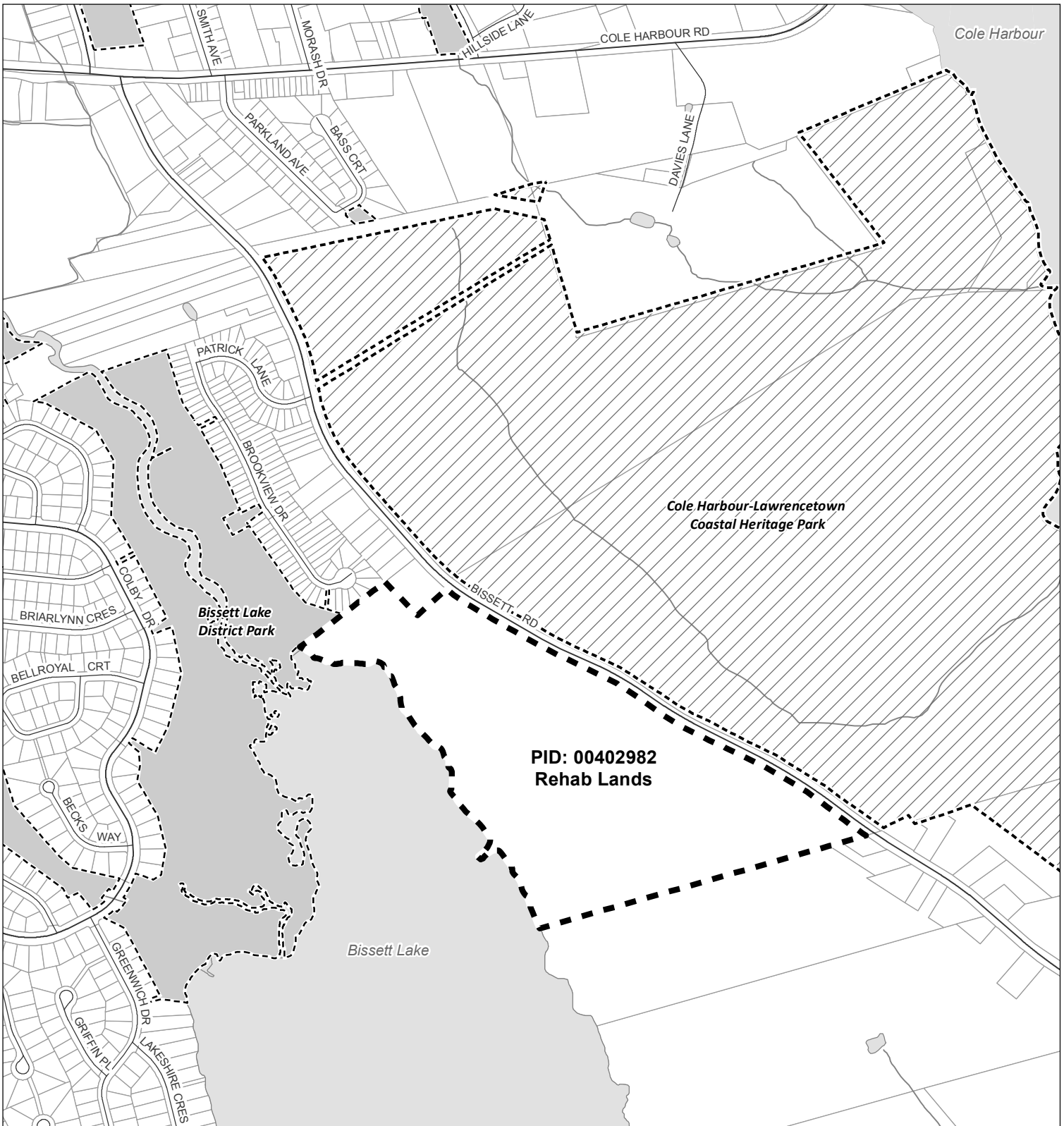
### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A: Site Plan – Rehab Lands




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A copy of this report can be obtained online at [halifax.ca](http://halifax.ca) or by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 902.490.4210.

Report Prepared by: Stephen Cushing, Landscape Architect, Parks and Recreation, 902-292-1565



### SITE PLAN - REHAB LANDS

-  Rehab Lands Boundary
-  Provincial Park
-  Municipal Park

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