

# **ADMINISTRATION UPDATES**

## **August 12, 2024 REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING**

### **PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES**

#### Vernon Girls Trumpet Band Proposed Memorial Stone

Staff are working with members of the trumpet band to receive further information regarding the proposed stone design and location. A recommendation will be presented at a later Council meeting once this information is finalized.

#### Rural Community Immigration Pilot Regional Funding Contribution Updates

Administration has been notified by Community Futures North Okanagan that all of the communities within the North Okanagan who were requested for funding towards the Rural Community Immigration Pilot (RCIP) application have committed funding through Council resolutions. Community Futures North Okanagan is expecting to hear from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) in Q3 regarding the outcome of their application. Administration will provide an update to Council with the outcome of the RCIP application.

### **OPERATION SERVICES**

#### Parks – Cemetery

As part of the 2018 Cemetery Master Plan, several improvement projects were identified to increase the amenities, service life and visitor experience of the Pleasant Valley Cemetery. Staff are currently working on the irrigation design for the site.

The installation of an information Kiosk located on the main service road into the site is well underway and is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

The design of the entrance improvement project is nearing completion. The new entrance will feature modifications to the existing entrance gate, signage, additions to the retaining walls and entrance gardens, and a new pedestrian pathway north of the vehicle access. A rendering of the new entrance area is shown below. Tendering for this project is scheduled for the fall of this year. Construction timing will depend on weather and contractor availability.



## **Capital Projects**

### 43rd Street Vernon Creek Crossing ([Project 2024-05](#))

Instream work to construct a bypass and start the removal of the existing crossing structure has started in accordance with regulatory permits. Detours are in place and the contractor continues to work with the adjacent businesses and residents regarding the change in traffic patterns.

### Polson Park Vernon Creek Naturalization ([Project 2024-06](#))

Instream work to construct a bypass and start the excavation work has started in accordance with regulatory permits.

### BX Sediment Pond (Project 2019-2)

The City will be making changes to the fencing, installing a temporary irrigation system, and replanting the vegetation near the pond to meet the obligations of our permits with Department of Fisheries and Oceans over the next couple months. The fencing will be modified to completely enclose the vegetation on either side of an access to the water for the park users.

### Becker Bike Park Phase 2 ([Project 2024-01](#))

The Becker Bike Park Phase 2 is now open for the community, including the pumptrack, dirt jumps, bike trails, and multi-use trails. There will be a short-duration closure of the pumptrack in order to complete the line painting in the coming weeks.

### 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue – 18<sup>th</sup> Street to 20<sup>th</sup> Street Reconstruction (Phase 2) ([Project 2024-9](#))

This phase of the project is complete and now open to traffic.

### 32<sup>nd</sup> Avenue – 15<sup>th</sup> Street to 18<sup>th</sup> Street Reconstruction (Phase 3) ([Project 2024-24](#))

Construction of this phase of the project continues and is planned for completion in October 2024.

### Forcemain Replacement – Cummins Lift Station to Okanagan Landing Road (Planned 2025 Project)

Administration is currently designing a replacement pipe for the force main from the Cummins Lift Station to Okanagan Landing Road. Design is in progress and administration may request early budget approval following the completion of the design.

## **RECREATION SERVICES**

### Lakeview Wading Pool Hours of Operation

The Lakeview “Peanut” Pool Hours of operation were set based on a number of factors. Historically the Peanut Pool was operated from 10am to 7pm every day. Knowing that the new facility would be far more popular and see much higher bather loads, the hours were set to 11am-1:30pm and 2pm-6pm every day for the following reasons.

- These hours allow 4 lifeguards working seven-hour shifts (maximum allowable under the collective bargaining agreement) to operate the pool at maximum capacity for the scheduled hours of operation. Increasing the operating hours would require 3-4 additional lifeguard staff each day depending on attendance numbers. At the time of setting the operating hours for the 2024 season, the number of available lifeguards was limited.
- Closing the pool from 1:30-2:00pm allows the lifeguard staff to have their mandatory meal breaks and also gives public who are waiting to use the pool an opportunity to come in at a prearranged time if the pool is at capacity.
- The hours were also chosen to align with the hottest part of the day and historical peak attendance times for outdoor facilities.

Recreation Services is currently planning to extend operating hours next season if more lifeguards are available to work. There is an ongoing lifeguard shortage across the country but Recreation Services is actively looking for opportunities to increase the number of available lifeguards in Vernon.

Recreation Services is committed to increasing the number of lifeguards in Vernon and will continue to look for strategies and opportunities to promote lifeguarding as an ideal job or career in Vernon.

## **FIRE SERVICES**

### **Mutual Support with Other Communities**

Recently the Fire Chiefs from the Cities of Penticton, West Kelowna, Kamloops, Kelowna and Vernon developed a Terms of Reference to formalize an arrangement to provide quick access to a strike team of four (4), fully equipped and staffed fire engines, along with up-to-four (4) Chief Officers. This arrangement works in addition to the existing mutual aid agreements and fills in the gaps of time between an immediate need, and mobilization of Provincial resourcing. The authority to participate with this arrangement is provided through Fire Services Bylaw #5635 and the permission needed to operate in another municipality is documented through the Terms of Reference, and the recorded request for assistance. The arrangement engages the task force immediately and for up to 24 hours with the costs bared by the providing municipality.

## **CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION**

### **Alertable**

The City of Vernon uses Alertable to communicate emergency information with the community during fast-moving events. Alertable is a digital alerting system that is free for the community to access and use. Through Alertable, the City's Emergency Program is able to send direct notifications to subscribers through a smart phone app, phone call, or text message, to share emergent information and directions related to large scale emergencies such as wildfires, floods, evacuations or other hazards. Throughout the

year, the City reminds the public about the need to sign-up for Alertable and provides refreshers on how to sign-up to keep it top of mind.

The City of Vernon reserves the use of Alertable for emergent situations to ensure that residents do not become desensitized to our messaging and potentially not reading it.

### Sewer Line Break in Okanagan Landing Background

On Saturday, July 6, 2024, Administration was notified of a sewer line break in the Okanagan Landing area. The location of the break was adjacent to water bodies and waterways, with the potential to enter them. Out of an abundance of caution, swimming at the south-east arm of Okanagan Lake from Kin Beach to Paddlewheel Park was not recommended due to potential exposure to high bacterial counts. Beaches within the proximity of the break, were temporarily closed as a precaution until testing could confirm water quality was safe. Administration is currently reviewing existing work procedures relating to spill response, reporting and public notification and will continue to improve our readiness for possible future events.

### Public Notifications

For non-emergent messaging, the City utilizes a variety of channels such as: media releases posted to [vernon.ca](http://vernon.ca) and distributed to approximately 3530 (resident and media) subscribers, social media updates, webpage updates and physical signage.

From July 6 to July 9, Administration issued four media releases, posted five social media updates, posted large physical signage on sandwich boards at Kin Beach.

The first media release issued on July 6 was distribute to over 3,520 subscribers (residents and media) and garnered 17,392 views on Facebook and Instagram. The second media release and social media updates garnered double the views at 34,700 which would indicate that the messages were broadly shared in the community. The third and fourth media social media posts garnered a more average number of views (2-3000).

### Heat Preparedness Communications

In early July, Administration added a new section to the website, [vernon.ca/heatpreparedness](http://vernon.ca/heatpreparedness). This new section includes:

- tips on how to prepare for hot weather,
- places to cool off in Vernon, symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke, and
- information on what the City will do in an Extreme Heat Emergency.