

Cullen Central Park Master Plan

Summary of Phase 2/3 Workshop held on May 22nd, 2008

Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Phase 2 and 3 public workshop held on May 22nd, 2008 and a synopsis of the consultant's evaluation of 3 potential use scenarios for the Tableland Areas.

Background and Discussion

The Cullen Central Park Master Plan study has 4 Phases, including:

- Phase 1 – Background, Inventory and Analysis, and Overall Strategic Principles
- Phase 2 – Identification of Potential Uses
- Phase 3 – Assessment of Potential Uses
- Phase 4 – Final Recommendations

Phases 2 and 3, which specifically involved developing scenarios for the property, identifying relevant potential uses, and developing equally weighted criteria to evaluate the scenarios were recently completed. A public workshop was held on May 22nd, 2008 to solicit input into proposed uses. Results from the public workshop have been tallied and analyzed. A summary of the analysis is presented below:

- It was interesting to note that some of the uses typical to Town Owned and Operated Facility (e.g. branch library, splash pad, etc.) were not well-supported while uses that could be private sector operated (e.g. restaurant, banquet/meeting rooms) were better supported. This may reflect the opinion that Cullen Central Park should remain a unique, destination-oriented site.
- Generally, uses that were active (e.g. tennis, bocce, etc.) scored low compared to passive uses (e.g. trail, public gardens, museum);
- Uses geared to children (youth centre, splash pad) scored low in relation to seniors activities. However, this may be due to the demographics of the participants, which were mainly older adults and seniors. A different result may have occurred if there was greater representation by youth, and young families with children; and
- Commercial uses also scored low, but again, this may be due to the demographics of the participants as those who may be supportive of commercial and tourism activities such as younger persons, the business community, or persons looking for employment were not well represented at the workshop.

As discussed in a report to Operations Committee on May 5th, there were 3 scenarios to evaluate for the Tableland Areas, including Town owned and

operated uses, Educational or Institutional uses, and Private Sector owned and operated uses. Six equally weighted criteria were created to evaluate the scenarios, including:

- Financial Implication to the Town
- Economic Opportunities and Benefits
- Compatibility with Natural Features
- Compatibility with Heritage Features
- Compatibility with Surrounding Uses
- Opportunities for Access to Recreation/Social Interactions and Benefits

The consultants applied the criteria to the scenarios and found that the equally weighted criteria led to relatively similar total scores for the three scenarios (see Appendix A). There was great variation in scores within individual criteria (e.g. financial), but the total scores varied by just over 10% between the highest and lowest scenarios. Staff conclude that based on the present scoring process, any of the scenarios, or a combination thereof could provide acceptable outcomes for the Town.

Staff observations of Public Input and Consultant's Evaluation

As discussed earlier, the public input received at the May 22nd Public Workshop also appears to support a combined scenario: participants at the workshop were more supportive of commercial-type uses such as restaurants and banquet facilities than certain typical municipal uses (e.g. splash pads, accessible playgrounds, etc.). The concern with private enterprise involvement is directed towards the sale, long-term lease, and addition of commercial buildings at the site. This was the case even though written and verbal comments from the public workshop suggest that they support the Town-owned scenario overall.

Based on the consultants' evaluation and the public input, none of the scenarios received particularly strong support. This suggests that a combination scenario would be acceptable for the Town. The consultants will develop their recommendations for Phase 4 based on these considerations.

Next Steps

The consultants are currently undertaking Phase 4 of the study, including developing recommended strategies and a site concept plan to illustrate proposed uses. These tasks will be completed by this fall. Staff will report to Committee and Council to seek authorization to bring draft Phase 4 findings to a Public Meeting. The Public Meeting will allow input into the strategies and the site concept plan. The input will be incorporated into a Draft Master Plan Report. This will be followed with a presentation of final recommendations to Operations Committee and a Presentation to Council.