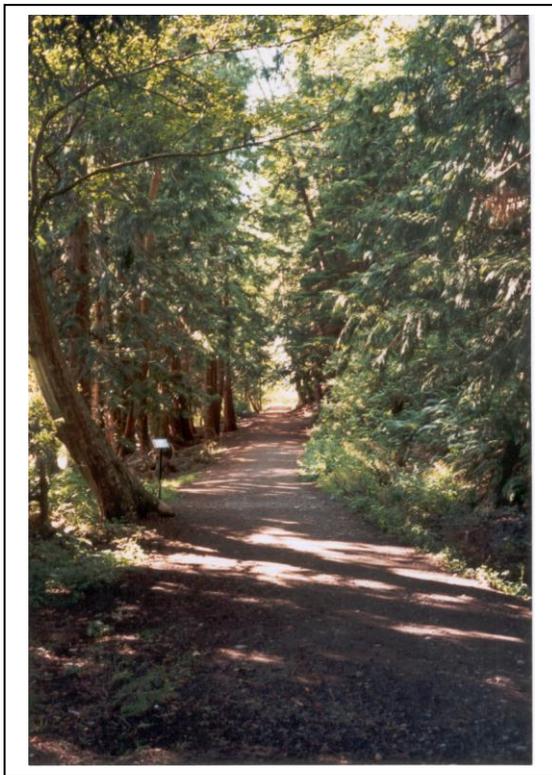


Millennium Park Update

Prepared for the candidates of the Civic elections in Powell River



Millennium Park Committee
October 8, 2008 update

Executive Summary

Powell River is blessed with a magnificent forested waterfront area in the heart of the community. This forest has a long recreational and historical significance to the people of Powell River. The Millennium Park Proposal is to use approximately 52 hectares of this timbered area to create a world-class park in the heart of Powell River. The Millennium Park Proposal includes the forested waterfront around the Historic Willingdon Beach Trail and upland forests around McFall Creek, a salmon stream. It will tie together the surrounding neighborhoods through a central park.

MAP



The proposed Millennium Park is located in the City of Powell River on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, Canada. This tract of forested waterfront land is surrounded by the various neighborhoods that make up Powell River.

The proposal for the Millennium Park was created ten years ago by a group of people with wide community representation and support. A Millennium Park Fund was created and over 2000 people have donated to date. The Millennium Park Proposal is well accepted by the community and is endorsed in the Official Community Plan. Recently, the City of Powell River has been offered to purchase the lower 37 hectares to create Millennium Park and it will ask the citizens of Powell River to vote on this purchase in a referendum during the next elections on November 15th. Negotiations for the timber and the remaining land are the next challenges.

The addition of the Millennium Park to the existing green space in the City will increase awareness and foster the well being of the people of Powell River and all its visitors now and into the future. This centrally

located park-like area will be as significant to Powell River over the long term, as Stanley Park is to Vancouver.

Historic Perspective

The Millennium Park Lands contain important cultural heritage sites from the Tla'amin First Nations, which have used these lands for thousands of years. The origin of the Town of Powell River is very much tied to the construction in 1910 by the Powell River Company of the largest Pulp and Paper Mill in the world at that time. The now Historic Townsite was built above the mill to house all the workers. At the time, the government granted a large tract of land surrounding the Townsite to the Powell River Company to be used as a green space in perpetuity. It is in this forested green space where the Millennium Park Proposal resides.

The green space surrounding the Townsite restricted any further expansion of the Townsite, and the town of Powell River evolved from a series of neighborhoods that were built on the other side of this green space. For almost 100 years this forested green space has been of recreational and historical significance to the people of Powell River. In fact, many citizens don't know it any better than a Powell River park.

Millennium Park Proposal

In the late 1990's the company that owned this green space gave notice that it would commence the logging of the timber on this green space and put the land up for sale. In response, in 1999, several organizations in Powell River got together and proposed the Millennium Park Proposal, which aims to preserve about 52 hectares of this green space for the people of Powell River as parkland.

The Millennium Park Committee was created in 1999 and has been active in promoting awareness of the importance of the Millennium Park Proposal to the future of Powell River. The committee is made up of the following members and representation:

Eagle Walz, Chair of the MP Committee, Powell River Parks and Wilderness Society
Rudi van Zwaaij, P.R. Forestry Museum Society which maintains the Willingdon Beach Trail
Gerry Durnin, P.R. Garden Club
Paul Nassichuck, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 798
Pam Begbie, Small Business
Hilary Bruhn, Treasurer

The committee established a Millennium Park Fund and has received contributions by over 2000 people to date. From this Fund \$75,000 was conditionally transferred to the City to contribute to the purchase of Millennium Park.

In 2003 Norske Canada, the owner of the mill and green space, announced that it planned to dispose non-strategic lands in the community, including those of the proposed Millennium Park. Of the many interested parties, a local Joint Venture proposal was favored by Norske Canada. The partners in the Joint Venture, known as PRSC, are Tla'amin First Nation, the City of Powell River and Catalyst Paper (formerly Norske Canada). Included in the properties that PRSC purchased is the lower 37 hectares of Millennium Park below the pole line. PRSC then developed a business plan for their properties it had purchased which included the creation of Millennium Park.

Millennium Park: The Numbers

In the summer of 2008 PRSC made an offer for the City of Powell River to purchase 37 hectares for \$1.5 million. These lands include the lower two parcels of the original proposal as can be seen on the map on page #2. During a Referendum on November 15, the City will ask the voters to approve borrowing this money to secure these lands for the creation of Millennium Park. The City tabled a Millennium Park Loan Authorization Bylaw (Bylaw 2213) to authorize the borrowing of funds to purchase the lower 37 hectares of the Millennium Park lands. The purchase price breaks down as follows:

Purchase Price:	\$ 1,500,000
Property Purchase Tax	28,000
Survey and Subdivision Costs	8,000
Contingency	<u>9,000</u>
Total	\$ 1,545,000
Less Deposit (City \$40,000, MP Fund \$ 75,000)	<u>115,000</u>
Borrowing Amount	\$ 1,430,000

Borrowing Period 25 years
Annual Payments \$ 113,703
Borrowing Rate 5.55%

What will it cost the tax payer?

Based on the average house value in Powell River of \$ 236,000 it will cost the average household:

Only \$ 12.75 annually !

Timber in the Proposed Millennium Park

The timber on the 52 hectares of the entire Millennium Park Proposal, as well as the land on the upper 15 hectares is owned by Island Timberlands, a private forest company based on Vancouver Island. The Millennium Park Tree Retention Committee has been in negotiations with Island Timberlands for several years, and is waiting for a response to its most recent proposal.

Significance to Powell River

Powell River is blessed with a magnificent forested area on the waterfront right in the heart of the community. This forest has a long recreational and historical significance to the people of Powell River. The Millennium Park Proposal is to purchase approximately 52 hectares of this timbered area to create a world-class park in the heart of Powell River. Most citizens can access this park within minutes of their residence.

The waterfront portion of the Millennium Park Proposal contains the Historic Willingdon Beach Trail. This trail is located on a former logging railway bed and contains displays of historic logging equipment. As the

trail is fairly level it is favored by many local citizens including young families and the elderly. Over 300 people walk, jog or cycle this trail daily. In former times this trail provided the only access for workers living in Westview to go to work at the Mill.

The Willingdon Beach Trail area contains significant cultural heritage features from the Tla'Amin First Nation. Its ecosystems are rich and diverse in flora and fauna including some very large old growth trees. The wooded foreshore is truly magnificent. The Willingdon Beach Trail is an important area for tourism and forest education.

Besides the Historic Willingdon Beach Trail, the Millennium Park Proposal contains important upland areas. These areas protect a strip of land along McFall Creek, which has the following significance:

- It will protect McFall Creek, which together with McGuffie Creek, are the only two salmon streams in the heart of our community.
- It provides a vital link for hiking or wildlife to upland wilderness and recreation areas.
- It will be a large enough tract of land with sufficient interior space to protect the integrity of this biodiversity-rich ecosystem along the salmon stream.
- It provides for educational opportunities that can be accessed from the Recreation Complex, such as a forest garden or the restoration of fish habitat.
- It will provide opportunities for the elderly and people in wheelchairs to enjoy nature at their doorstep.
- It connects the neighborhoods of Powell River through a central park.

The addition of Millennium Park to the existing permanent green space will increase awareness and foster the well being of the people of Powell River and all its visitors now and into the future. Several promotional events over the years have contributed to the fact that the Millennium Park Proposal is now well ingrained by the people of Powell River. This centrally located park-like area will be as significant to Powell River over the long term, as Stanley Park is to Vancouver.

What is Next?

It is vital that in the November 15th Referendum the first 37 hectares of the Millennium Park will be secured. This leaves approximately 15 hectares outstanding in the upper part of the proposed Millennium Park. In addition, all the timber in the entire proposed park area is not secured at this time and is still subject to being logged. The future goal is to secure the remaining land and as much of the timber in the proposed park as is possible.

On October 19th a Millennium Park Rally will be organized at the bandstand at Willingdon Beach. The public will be invited to show support for the creation of Millennium Park. We invite all candidates to attend this rally and offer them an opportunity to speak on this historic opportunity for Powell River.

People can make donations to the Millennium Park Fund at the First Powell River Credit Union.
The Millennium Park Committee can be reached through Eagle Walz at 604-483-9565.