Great Streets BTV
City Hall Park Update
Introduction
Three-Part Initiative

A
Create
Downtown Street Design Standards
- Stormwater
- Trees
- Lighting
- Furnishings
- Pathways

B
Create
Main Street Concept Plan
- Main Street (6 blocks)
- City Square
- St. Paul Street (2 blocks)

C
Design & Build
Park & Main Project
- Main Street (2 blocks)
- City Hall Park
- St. Paul Street (2 blocks)
• Plans to reimagine City Hall Park began in 2011 through the Mayor’s City Hall Park Task Force

• Group’s shared interest was to restore park’s role as a central gathering place through short- and long-term solutions.

• Public and stakeholder engagement resulted in a concept plan for the reconstruction of City Hall Park, as well as interim solutions for providing more activity, improving cleanliness and security.
City Hall Park Plan History & Process

- 2014 City Council resolution encouraged the City to proceed with Phase 2 design and construction of the park as funding became available.

- City, BCA include park in Capital Plan, seek grants and philanthropic donations for construction.

- 2016 launch of Great Streets Initiative planning for the streets bounding the park; give park plans a fresh look to integrate into forthcoming plans for Main Street.
• Redesign Main Street edge to integrate with concept plan

• Organize Farmer’s Market around the park, rather than within to reduce soil/turf compaction, erosion

• Smaller central kiosk; eliminated restroom in kiosk, but explored options

• Retained flexible spaces for events throughout park, modest changes to size and orientation

• Stormwater infrastructure more integrated throughout the park

• Strengthened connections to City Hall, Church Street and buildings/streets bounding park
Public, Board & Commission Input
Collected public feedback through Dec 2016; visited all City NPA’s; presented plans to Parks Commission, Planning Commission, Council PACC, DAB and DRB for input
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Additional Due Diligence
Worked with design team, city staff to further evaluate feasibility of plan, identify additional plan refinements necessary in the next Phase of project
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Advanced plans for St. Paul Street
Critical milestone reached in Eagle’s Landing construction timeline; advanced St. Paul St ahead of park and Main St to coordinate construction, test Great Streets Standards
Burlington’s central public space was originally conceived and named as a public court house square: an entire block extending from building face to building face. As it was converted to a park and the adjacent streets became busier with traffic, it has seemed to lose its connection to its surrounding edges.
City Hall Park has had many names - and forms - since its inception, but these are the key character-defining features that have been constant:

1. Public / civic space
2. Path radiating from or near center
3. Central focal point with a water feature
ECOLOGY

- Improving health, management of soil, trees, grass important; addition of rain gardens positive

- Size, location and edge treatment of pathways important to encourage walking on paths rather than “cow paths” in lawn

- Trees & vegetation:
  - Don’t remove any trees
  - Too many trees, impacting lawn
  - Remediate or replace trees in poor condition,
  - Improve soil condition & don’t overprogram
  - More gardens/plants for visual interest in all seasons
ACCESSIBILITY

• Many advocated public restrooms and concern about safety, cleanliness; suggestions for stand-alone facility rather than a building

• Park as both a destination and part of the network walking routes downtown-pathway locations & width

• Paths should be smooth, level, ADA tested, and elements should not impede people with mobility challenges

• Range of seating options positive

• Accountability for behavior without displacing users of the park
ACCESSIBILITY

- Other suggested additions: drinking fountain, trash cans, more bike parking, lights
- Bulletin boards easy to use and uncurated
- Some advocated for no “hard” edges
MODERN CIVIC USES

• Many felt that plan strikes balance between active/passive uses, challenges, and role as an urban gathering space

• Others proposed “Central Park” or naturalized approach to redesign

• Food or other vending: permanent vs. temporary vs. none at all (except the Farmer’s Market)

• Vending opportunities solicited through RFP, not to the exclusion of non-paying customers

• Keep Farmer’s Market, relocate the Farmer’s Market
MODERN CIVIC USES

• Flexible spaces for variety of events and purposes positive; however, avoid large, ticketed events

• Some feel park’s challenges are just about deferred maintenance, but most feel that maintenance will be key in future regardless of plans

• Other suggested additions: fire feature, ice skating, public art, game tables, children’s play equipment, climbing rocks, free wifi
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Historic significance is as a gathering place; reorganizing paths, caring for trees, and rethinking fountain are part of history, not destruction of it.

- Stick closely to the straight, radial pathway design and maintain existing fountain, benches, lights.
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Historic preservation orgs: changes will not destroy park’s contribution to historic district

- Suggested refinements to better reflect historic character-defining features:
  - Paths straighter, converge closer to center
  - Central terrace more round, water feature closer to center
  - Changing fountain ok, but need an upright “focal element”
  - Activation, enhancement of public buildings on edge good, but be mindful of amount of paving
More bike parking, additional location

Removed steep, mid-block to mid-block path

Location, utility connections for standalone restroom
Eliminate terraces behind City Hall, maintain trees if health allows;

Continue to refine terraces; prioritize activation of College St.
Additional modifications to occur to size, material for elements; maintain planned infrastructure.
Location, utility connection for kiosk, pilot before building
Change to shape of central terrace, addition of sculpture as vertical “central focal point”
Additional Presentations

- Council Parks, Arts and Culture Committee presentation August 29 @ 10am
- Parks Commission presentation September 5 @ 5:30pm

Phase 2 Design

- Request contract amendment to continue developing designs- September

Next Steps for Plan

- Visit Design Advisory Board and Development Review Board for approval of plan
- More detailed design work and construction document development
- Construction Spring 2019
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Questions & Comments

More information at www.greatstreetsbtv.com