



# NOTICE OF MEETING AND AGENDA REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, June 15, 2026, 5:30 PM  
 Memorial Hall, 290 Esplanade Avenue,  
 Harrison Hot Springs, BC V0M 1K0

**THIS MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED IN-PERSON AND VIA ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCE**

<b>1. CALL TO ORDER</b>
Meeting called to order by Mayor Talen.
<b>2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT</b>
Acknowledgement of Sts'ailes traditional territory.
<b>3. PUBLIC HEARING (if required)</b>
<b>4. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS</b>
<b>5. APPROVAL OF AGENDA</b>
<b>6. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST</b>
<b>7. ADOPTION OF COUNCIL MINUTES</b>
(a) THAT the Regular Council Meeting Minutes of June 1, 2026 be adopted. <span style="float: right;">Page 1</span>
(b) THAT the Special Pre-Closed Council Meeting Minutes of June 8, 2026 be adopted. <span style="float: right;">Page 11</span>
<b>8. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</b>
<b>9. DELEGATIONS AND PETITIONS</b>
(a) Dave Eidet, Sergeant at Arms/Executive – Royal Canadian Legion Re: Veteran’s Crosswalk & Remembrance Day Veteran’s Banners
<b>10. CORRESPONDENCE</b>
<b>11. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE</b>
<b>12. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS</b>
<b>13. REPORTS FROM MAYOR</b>
<b>14. REPORTS AND MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS</b>
THAT the following adopted minutes be received for information:
(a) Communities in Bloom Committee Meeting Minutes of May 21, 2026 <span style="float: right;">Page 13</span>

**15. REPORTS FROM STAFF**

- (a) Report of Chief Administrative Officer dated June 15, 2026  
Re: Civic Campus Project Update

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Recommendation:

THAT Council receive the Civic Campus Update report dated June 15, 2026 for information; and

THAT Council direct staff to prepare a report to Council that includes costs/funding models to engage consultants to perform a danger tree assessment, to evaluate the health and safety of existing vegetation within the area, an ecological/environmental assessment to provide valuable baseline data regarding site conditions, habitat value, and potential constraints; and

THAT Council direct staff to forward the revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to School District No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade) for consideration; and

THAT Council, upon agreement by the School District, authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the MOU.

- (b) Report of Director of Operations dated June 15, 2026  
Re: Ayelexw Qwo'Is: Reviving the Hot Springs

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Recommendation:

THAT Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$250,000 toward a feasibility study of the Hot Springs Source to identify requirements for a future project supporting public access to hot springs mineral water, of which \$50,000 will be funded by the Community Works Fund, and the remaining \$200,000 will be funded by grants; and

THAT staff issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to define scope, methodology, and costs to undertake a feasibility study of the hot springs source.

- (c) Report of Chief Financial Officer dated June 15, 2026  
Re: 2025 Annual Report

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Recommendation:

THAT the 2025 Annual Report be approved.

- (d) Report of Corporate Officer dated June 15, 2026  
Re: Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42

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Recommendation:

THAT Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42 be adopted.

(e) Report of Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator dated June 15, 2026  
Re: Temporary Off-Leash Dog Park – Spring Park

Recommendation:

THAT Council approve the reinstallation of a temporary off-leash dog park within Spring Park during the 2026 peak tourism season, located between the two sports courts and operating from the end of June to the end of September 2026, from dawn to dusk; and

THAT staff implement a public feedback survey open to all users of Spring Park throughout the temporary trial period; and

THAT staff report back to Council with updated findings, additional public feedback, concept options, and associated costs for future consideration.

**16. BYLAWS**

**17. NEW BUSINESS**

**18. NOTICES OF MOTION**

**19. QUESTION PERIOD FOR ITEMS RELEVANT TO THE AGENDA**

**20. ADJOURNMENT**



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Amanda Graham  
Corporate Officer



**VILLAGE OF HARRISON HOT SPRINGS  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes**

**DATE:** Monday, June 1, 2026  
**TIME:** 5:30 p.m.  
**PLACE:** Council Chambers, Memorial Hall  
290 Esplanade Avenue, Harrison Hot Springs, BC

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Mayor Fred Talen  
Councillor Leo Facio  
Councillor Allan Jackson  
Councillor Michie Vidal  
Councillor Mark Schweinbenz

**COUNCIL ABSENT:**

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chief Administrative Officer, Tyson Koch  
Chief Financial Officer/Deputy CAO, Scott Schultz  
Corporate Officer, Amanda Graham  
Community Services Manager, Christy Ovens  
Communications and Community Engagement  
Coordinator, Kalie Wiechmann  
Planning Consultant, Ken Cossey  
Corporate Clerk, Tyler Kafi

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Talen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mayor Talen acknowledged the traditional territory of Sts'ailes.

**3. PUBLIC HEARING (If required)**

Mayor Talen declared a non-pecuniary conflict of interest. In the winter of 2023/2024 prior to becoming Mayor, Mayor Talen signed a letter of support for this proposed development of 889 Hot Springs Road. Mayor Talen exited council chambers at 5:30 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Vidal assumed chair of the Public Hearing.

Deputy Mayor Vidal read the statement and procedures for conducting the public hearing pursuant to sections 464 and 465 of the *Local Government Act*.

**Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026 – 889 Hot Springs Road**

The Public Hearing was opened at 5:30 p.m.

### **Report from Staff**

The planning consultant provided an overview of Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026, which proposes to amend section 7.1.2 of Zoning Bylaw No. 1115, 2017 to allow “Personal Service Uses” as a permitted use in the C-2 Zone.

### **Report from Applicant**

The applicant provided an overview of the proposed development project at 889 Hot Springs Road.

### **Public Submissions**

Eight (8) written submissions were received.

Deputy Mayor Vidal invited the public to provide input regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026.

#### John Allen, 398 Hot Springs Road

- Is concerned that the proposed project has not been referred to the Advisory Planning Commission. He believes there is not much point in having an APC if council does not refer development items to them.
- While the direct mailed notices of public hearing are nice, he believes that regulations and statutes still require that the Village advertise the public hearing in the local newspaper, which was not done.
- Opposes the proposed zoning amendment as a mini-storage facility should be considered industrial use, not commercial use.
- Disputes the interpretation that mini-storage qualifies as “personal services” noting that the precedent set out by the province and other municipalities label personal services as “services provided to the body, clothing or grooming of a person”.

#### Kim Verigin, 216 Balsam Avenue

- This is the first time she has heard of the proposal and wonders if this was the only proposal brought forward for developing the land.
- Has seen things come and go as a resident of 20 years, including The Front grocery store that was there already which wasn’t successful due to expensive produce which was not of good quality.
- Questions the need of a storage facility and what percentage of the population it would serve.
- Notes that storage for extra recreational items seems to be a luxury service compared to other services the Village could use and would like to know more about the possibilities of what could be put there and how we want to serve the majority of the public.

Walter Galvao, 259 Miami River Drive

- (Regarding a different property) Believes that the notion that the overflow parking lot is underused is absurd especially between June and August.
- The overflow lot is constantly used for events and parking, particularly from mid-June to the end of August.
- There is no need for a storage unit.
- If the overflow lot is disrupted or destroyed for a development that the Village doesn't need, it would cause massive parking issues wherein all vehicles that would normally park in the overflow lot will park on the streets in residential areas.

Jean Bereti, 217 Miami River Drive

- Concerned about the beautification of the corridor into Harrison. It doesn't seem like it's getting beautified with a storage unit.

Deputy Mayor Vidal called a second time for public input regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026.

John Allen, 398 Hot Springs Road

- Believes that the written submissions submitted before the public hearing and made available in the public hearing package should be read out at the beginning of the public hearing.
- In the District of Kent, storage lockers are a permitted use in the "service industrial" areas as "enclosed rental storage units" which is considered an industrial use in their bylaws. The City of Chilliwack firmly puts storage facilities in the industrial areas.
- The applicant and the Village have been wasting everyone's time on a project which should never have been considered, as the Village does not allow such industrial uses.
- Believes that Council will try to approve the proposed facility anyway despite their being zero support from the zoning or the OCP bylaws
- Disagrees that the OCP supports this use. Council is supposed to only entertain developments which are consistent with the OCP objectives, referring to the map in the OCP bylaw that labels the property use as "low density residential".
- States that by ignoring the OCP designation, Council is non-compliant with the law and good planning practices.
- Referred to page 42 of the OCP under item 6.3 – Policies, which says to continue working on the beautification of the entrance corridor into Harrison Hot Springs. Believes the proposal is the exact opposite of this policy. An industrial use on the main road into the Village would be aesthetically disastrous.
- Council is required to follow the OCP and to consider the form and character of all developments.

Walter Galvao, 259 Miami River Drive

- Wished to amend his earlier comments as he was mistaken about the overflow lot and meant to say the lot at 889 Hot Springs Road, which still supplements residential parking.

Deputy Mayor Vidal called a third time for public input regarding Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026.

John Allen, 398 Hot Springs Road

- Council is required to follow the OCP and consider the form and character of all developments
- Council must reject this scheme and stick to either the C2 commercial zoning or change it to low density residential in compliance with the OCP.
- Reiterated that the written submissions should be read into the record of the public hearing.

The Public Hearing for Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 1244, 2026 was closed at 5:58 p.m.

Mayor Talen returned to Council Chambers at 5:59 p.m. and reassumed chair of the meeting.

**4. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

- Item 9(a) delegate Tyrone Gibson was unable to attend and will reschedule at a later date.

**5. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Moved by Councillor Facio**  
**Seconded by Councillor Schweinbenz**

THAT the agenda be approved.

**Amendment moved by Mayor Talen**  
**Seconded by Councillor Vidal**

THAT item 9(a) be removed from the agenda due to the delegate having to reschedule.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-01

Council voted on the main motion as amended.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-02

**6. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Both Mayor Talen and Councillor Schweinbenz declared conflicts of interest regarding Item 15(b). Both are members of the Harrison Paddling Club, an applicant for the Grants to Groups funding, and they will recuse themselves from the meeting when the item arises.

**7. ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

- (a) Regular Council Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2026
- (b) Special Pre-Closed Council Meeting Minutes of May 22, 2026

**Moved by Councillor Vidal**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT the minutes be adopted.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-03

**8. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

None.

**9. DELEGATIONS AND PETITIONS**

- (a) Leanne Bird  
Re: Civic Campus Proposal

Leanne Bird advised Council that she is a mother of two young children who will soon attend Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School and she lives in the immediate vicinity of the school and Fire Hall Park. She spoke about the proposed Civic Campus project, including concerns about the level of public engagement conducted to date, a desire to maintain the forest and trees in Fire Hall Park and the importance of forests to learning and education. She noted sections of the Urban Forest Management Plan and Parks and Trails Master Plan which speak to retaining trees and the usage of Fire Hall Park. She requested that Council pause the process and not sign a Memorandum of Understanding.

**10. CORRESPONDENCE**

- (a) Letter dated May 11, 2026 from UBCM  
Re: Provincial Response to 2025 Resolutions
- (b) Letter dated May 19, 2026 from the District of Saanich to Premier Eby, Minister Dix, Minister Greene, Minister Boyle and Minister Bailey  
Re: BC Local Government Climate Action Program (LGCAP) Funding Continuation

- (c) Letter dated May 21, 2026 from the District of Central Saanich to Minister of Housing and Municipal Affairs & Minister of Finance  
Re: Request for Dedicated Provincial Funding to Support Municipalities that Achieve Provincially Mandated Housing Targets

**Moved by Councillor Jackson**  
**Seconded by Councillor Vidal**

THAT all correspondence be received.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-04

## **11. BUSINESS ARISING FROM CORRESPONDENCE**

**Moved by Councillor Schweinbenz**  
**Seconded by Councillor Facio**

THAT staff be directed to write a letter to Premier Eby, Minister Dix, Minister Greene, Minister Boyle and Minister Bailey advocating for the continuation of the Local Government Climate Action Program.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-05

## **12. REPORTS FROM COUNCILLORS**

### **Councillor Vidal**

- Corrections Canada Citizen's Advisory Committee – No report but wished to recognize resident Joyce Seidel who recently was awarded the James. A. Murphy award for her volunteer work with the Committee
- Agassiz-Harrison Healthy Communities
  - Attended a meeting on May 21, 2026
- Kent Harrison Joint Emergency Program Committee – No Report
- Attended Civic Campus Engagement event at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary on May 20, 2026
- Attended the final Lunch & Learn session at the Village Office on May 26, 2026

### **Councillor Facio**

- Fraser Valley Regional District Board (Municipal Director) – Attended a Regional and Corporate Services Committee Meeting on May 28, 2026
- Fraser Valley Regional Library Board (Alternate Municipal Director) – No Report
- Attended a fundraiser event for the Guide Dog Society at the Agricultural Hall on May 30, 2026
- Reported on the Accessibility Committee meeting on May 25, 2026
- Attended Civic Campus Engagement event at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary on May 20, 2026
- Attended the Go By Bike Event on May 31, 2026

**Councillor Jackson**

- Fraser Valley Regional Library Board – No Report
- Tourism Harrison – No Report
- Attended Civic Campus Engagement event at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary on May 20, 2026
- Reported on the Communities in Bloom Committee

**Councillor Schweinbenz**

- Agassiz-Harrison Historical Society
  - Attended a meeting last week
- Community Futures North Fraser Board of Directors – No Report
- Agassiz-Harrison Food Coalition
  - Attended a meeting
- Attended the Go By Bike Event on May 31, 2026

**13. REPORTS FROM MAYOR**

- Attended Civic Campus Engagement event at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary on May 20, 2026
- Reported on the Age-Friendly Committee meeting on May 21, 2026
- Reported on a Harrison Festival Society meeting on May 21, 2026
- Reported on a Mayor's briefing on Canadian-European Free trade agreement on May 25, 2026
- Attended the Environmental Advisory Committee meeting on May 26, 2026
- Attended an Agassiz-Harrison Community Services Board meeting on May 26, 2026
- Attended a C2C meeting on May 27, 2026
- Attended the Go By Bike event on May 31, 2026

**14. REPORTS AND MINUTES FROM COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS**

- (a) Accessibility Committee Meeting Minutes of March 4, 2026
- (b) Age-Friendly Committee Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2026
- (c) Communities in Bloom Committee Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2026
- (d) Environmental Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 28, 2026

**Moved by Councillor Facio**

**Seconded by Councillor Schweinbenz**

THAT the adopted committee meeting minutes be received.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-06

- (e) Report of Corporate Officer dated June 1, 2026  
Re: Accessibility Committee Report

**Moved by Councillor Vidal**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT Council approve the following recommendation from the Accessibility Committee:

*THAT staff be directed to install a three way stop on the corner of Miami River Drive and Walnut Avenue near the Ruth Altendorf Bridge.*

**Amendment moved by Councillor Vidal**  
**Seconded by Councillor Schweinbenz**

THAT the motion be amended to read: *THAT staff be directed to install a three way stop and a marked crosswalk on the corner of Miami River Drive and Walnut Avenue near the Ruth Altendorf Bridge.*

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-07

Council voted on the original motion as amended.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-08

- (f) Report of Corporate Officer dated June 1, 2026  
Re: Environmental Advisory Committee Report

**Moved by Councillor Jackson**  
**Seconded by Councillor Schweinbenz**

THAT Council approve the following recommendation from the Environmental Advisory Committee:

*THAT Council direct staff to research a bylaw prohibiting certain herbicides for cosmetic purposes.*

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-09

**15. REPORTS FROM STAFF**

- (a) Report of Chief Financial Officer dated June 1, 2026  
Re: 2025 Statement of Financial Information

**Moved by Councillor Facio**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT the 2025 Statement of Financial Information be approved.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-10

- (b) Report of Community Services Manager dated June 1, 2026  
Re: 2026 Grant to Groups

Mayor Talen and Councillor Schweinbenz recused themselves from the meeting due to the earlier stated conflicts of interest and left council chambers at 7:11 p.m.

Deputy Mayor Vidal assumed chair of the meeting.

**Moved by Councillor Facio**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT the following community groups be provided with funding under the Grants to Groups program:

Agassiz-Harrison Community Services	\$2,000
AHA Swim Club	\$800
Fraser Valley Paddling Club	\$1,350
Harrison Community Garden	\$1,500
Kent Harrison Arts Council	\$2,000

**Moved by Councillor Jackson**  
**Seconded by Councillor Facio**

THAT the list be amended by changing the Fraser Valley Paddling Club's name to their new name, Harrison Paddling Club.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-11

Council voted on the main motion as amended.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-12

Mayor Talen and Councillor Schweinbenz returned to Council Chambers at 7:19 p.m.

**16. BYLAWS**

None.

**17. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**18. NOTICES OF MOTION**

None.

**19. QUESTION PERIOD FOR ITEMS RELEVANT TO THE AGENDA**

Questions from the public were entertained.

**20. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Councillor Facio**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

**CARRIED**  
RC-2026-06-13

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Fred Talen  
Mayor

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Amanda Graham  
Corporate Officer

**VILLAGE OF HARRISON HOT SPRINGS  
Special Pre-Closed Council Meeting  
Minutes**

**DATE:** Monday, June 8, 2026  
**TIME:** 10:00 a.m.  
**PLACE:** Council Chambers, Village Office  
495 Hot Springs Road, Harrison Hot Springs, BC

**COUNCIL PRESENT:** Mayor Fred Talen  
Councillor Leo Facio  
Councillor Allan Jackson  
Councillor Mark Schweinbenz  
Councillor Michie Vidal

**STAFF PRESENT:** Chief Administrative Officer, Tyson Koch  
Chief Financial Officer/DCAO, Scott Schultz  
Corporate Officer, Amanda Graham  
Director of Operations, Jace Hodgson  
Community Services Manager, Christy Ovens

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Talen called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Mayor Talen acknowledged the traditional territory of Sts'ailes.

**3. RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC**

**Moved by Councillor Facio**  
**Seconded by Councillor Jackson**

THAT pursuant to Sections 90 and 92 of the Community Charter, this Special Meeting of Council be closed to the public as the subject matter being considered relates to the following:

- Section 90(1)(c) – labour relations or other employee relations;
- Section 90(1)(e) - the acquisition, disposition or expropriation of land or improvements, if the council considers that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality;
- Section 90(1)(f) – law enforcement, if the council consider that disclosure could reasonably be expected to harm the conduct of an investigation under or enforcement of an enactment

- Section 90(1)(k) - negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of a municipal service that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the municipality;
- Section 90(2)(b)(ii) – the consideration of information received and held in confidence relating to negotiations between the municipality and another local government or between another local government and a third party.

**CARRIED**  
SC-2026-06-01

Adjourned to Special Closed Council Meeting at 10:03 a.m.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Fred Talen  
Mayor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Amanda Graham  
Corporate Officer



VILLAGE OF HARRISON HOT SPRINGS  
Communities in Bloom Committee  
Minutes

**DATE:** Thursday, May 21, 2026  
**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.  
**PLACE:** Muddy Waters  
328 Esplanade Avenue, Harrison Hot Springs, BC

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Councillor Allan Jackson, Chair  
Susan Caley  
Susan Galvao  
Janice Moffat

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Margaret Shier  
**STAFF PRESENT:** Corporate Officer, Amanda Graham

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Councillor Jackson called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

2. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Councillor Jackson acknowledged the traditional territory of Sts'ailes.

3. **INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS**

Susan Caley requested to add "Adopt a Road" program as Item for Discussion 6(g).

4. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

**Moved by Janice Moffat**  
**Seconded by Susan Galvao**

THAT the agenda be approved as amended with the addition of the late item.

**CARRIED**  
CIB-2026-05-01

5. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**Moved by Janice Moffat**  
**Seconded by Susan Galvao**

THAT the Communities in Bloom Committee Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2026 be adopted.

**CARRIED**  
CIB-2026-05-02

## **6. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

### (a) Earth Day in May Debrief

The Committee raised \$131.50 through the plant sale. General Committee feedback noted that having the plant sale was a real highlight of the event and it allowed people to stop and learn more about CIB at the same time. The Committee discussed doing their own workshop next year to have people build a basket or something similar, and that advertising the plant sale more would be helpful. It was also noted that having more materials for the table about what the Committee does and has planned would be helpful.

### (b) Community Planting Day – Lagoon Garden Bed

The Committee set the date for Thursday, June 4. Staff will confirm that this date works for the Public Works staff and will begin advertising for community volunteers to come help plant.

### (c) Garden of the Week

The Committee determined that it would continue to try and identify new gardens for 2026 to win each week, but would reach out to 2025 winners to determine any interest in participating in the Garden Tour. The idea of having themed weeks was supported, such as a business, strata, campground, drought resistant, etc. Staff will develop a proposed schedule and themes for Committee members to sign up for. It was also noted that when advertising starts for Garden of the Week, the promotional materials could highlight last year's winners.

### (d) Canada Day Float

Councillor Jackson advised that there has been some back and forth at Tourism Harrison and with the Canada Day Committee regarding the parade start time. An answer on the start time is expected in the coming days.

The Committee discussed reaching out to determine whether any community members would be willing to drive a truck and utility trailer for the parade and a call for donations of artificial flowers. Alternatively, the Village can provide one of the Public Works pickup trucks. The Committee also noted the need for a larger speaker.

### (e) Garden Tour

It was determined that the Garden Tour date would be changed to July 25 so as not to coincide with the Festival of the Arts.

### (f) Judges Visit: July 8-10

The judges have been identified as Mr. Tom Meyer and Mr. Kerry Bysouth. There is a to-do list of items that need to be addressed prior to their arrival which will be circulated by email. General discussion ensued on the Welcome Event and the consensus was that

having it take place outdoors was very successful. Staff will look into hosting it at Woods Park or maybe the Community Garden area. Councillor Jackson advised that he would reach out regarding accommodations.

(g) Adopt a Road

Susan Caley advised that the Harrison Paddling Club board is interested in participating in Adopt a Road. Councillor Jackson noted that this was a very successful program in the past especially regarding cleaning up McCombs Drive which was a common place for dumping at the time. This program has not been active in the Village for several years and would take some work to get up and running again, including details surrounding which roads would be part of the program, how frequently the roads would need to be cleaned, who would provide the signage, pickers, waste disposal, etc. Susan will report this back to the Harrison Paddling Club board and advise that the Village is looking into restarting this program in the future.

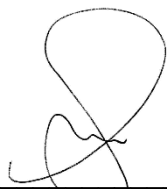
(h) Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, June 9, 2026, 9:00 a.m. and Thursday, June 25, 9:00 a.m.

**7. ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Susan Galvao**  
**Seconded by Janice Moffat**

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 10:09 a.m.

**CARRIED**  
CIB-2026-05-03



Councillor Allan Jackson, Chair  
Communities in Bloom Committee



Amanda Graham  
Corporate Officer



File No:0890-20-03  
Date: June 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Tyson Koch, Chief Administrative Officer  
Subject: Civic Campus Project Update

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council receive the Civic Campus Update report dated June 15, 2026 for information; and

THAT Council direct staff to prepare a report to Council that includes costs/funding models to engage consultants to perform a danger tree assessment, to evaluate the health and safety of existing vegetation within the area, an ecological/environmental assessment to provide valuable baseline data regarding site conditions, habitat value, and potential constraints; and

THAT Council direct staff to forward the revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to School District No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade) for consideration; and

THAT Council, upon agreement by the School District, authorize the Chief Administrative Officer to execute the MOU.

## **SUMMARY**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the proposed partnership between School District No. 78 and the Village of Harrison Hot Springs regarding the potential development of a multi-use Civic Campus and the replacement of Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School.

This report also summarizes the outcomes of recent public engagement, outlines revisions to the draft MOU, and reinforces that the project remains in the early conceptual stage. Entering into an MOU does not constitute project approval, it merely means that both parties agree to work together within specific parameters.

## **BACKGROUND**

For more than a decade, School District No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade) has identified the replacement of Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School as a priority within its Capital Plan. The existing school facility is over 75 years old and no longer meets modern educational, capacity, or program requirements.

Recognizing an opportunity to align long-term educational infrastructure needs with municipal priorities, early discussions between the Village and the School District led to the exploration of a Civic Campus model. This concept contemplates the construction of a new elementary school on a portion of Fire Hall Park, paired with the future repurposing of the existing school site into a multi-use civic facility.

Since mid-2025, both organizations have worked collaboratively to:

- Develop a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU);
- Establish a phased Project Plan; and
- Initiate a comprehensive phase one public engagement process.

In January 2026, the Village and the School District jointly announced the project and launched Phase 1 public engagement. Village staff, School District representatives, the Fire Department, the Parent Advisory Council, and community stakeholders participated in a well-attended community event held at the elementary school gymnasium on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026.

Feedback gathered through the engagement process, community correspondence, and Council delegations has helped inform refinements to the project concept, including the incorporation of tree protection and retention measures within the draft MOU.

The project remains in the early conceptual stage, with significant steps still required before it can proceed, including:

- Provincial approval and funding for a new school;
- Further technical and design analysis;
- Ongoing public engagement; and
- A legislated approval process to remove park dedication, including elector approval.

This report builds on that background and provides Council with an update on engagement outcomes, revisions to the MOU, and recommended next steps.

## **DISCUSSION**

### Recent Engagement and Participation

A civic engagement event was held in the gymnasium at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School and saw excellent community participation. The feedback received has been compiled and is reflected in the attached *What We Heard Report*.

The event included strong representation from across the community, including:

- All exempt Village staff, who were present to answer questions and provide information;
- Village Council and School Board Trustees;
- Harrison Hot Springs Fire Department;
- Parent Advisory Council (PAC);
- Community committee members; and
- Representatives from School District No. 78.

The level of engagement and constructive dialogue is appreciated and reflects the type of meaningful participation the Village seeks to foster.

### Community Feedback

Through the engagement process, written correspondence, and Council delegations:

- There has been broad support for the overall concept of a Civic Campus and school replacement project; however,
- There is strong and consistent opposition to the removal of trees within Fire Hall Park
- Relocation of the Public Works Yard raised some concern.

In response to this feedback, the draft MOU has been modified to include provisions related to:

- Tree protection; and
- Tree retention considerations as part of any future planning work.

Additionally, community feedback has focused on the use of Fire Hall Park by the students and children in the community. Discussions with representatives from School District 78 indicate that while students regularly play in the forested area located on school property, Fire Hall Park is not well used formally by the school as an educational or play area. This discrepancy highlights the need for clear communication and clarification of the distinction between the school's forested property and the area formalized as Fire Hall Park.

### Status of the Memorandum of Understanding

The revised draft MOU reflects:

- Public feedback received to date;
- Clarified roles and expectations; and
- Enhanced tree protection measures and commitments.

It is important to emphasize that:

- The MOU is non-binding in terms of final project delivery;
- It is intended to support continued planning and collaboration only; and
- Execution of the MOU does not approve the project.

As the MOU is non-binding and the project is in an early conceptual stage, staff are recommending that Council seek approval from SD78 regarding the updated draft MOU. The project, shaped by community input, still has potential especially if the two parties both recognize and acknowledge the significance of the existing greenspace to the community.

### Project Status and Next Steps

This initiative remains in the very early stages of planning and it should be noted there will be multiple additional opportunities for public engagement before any final decisions are made. Advancement of the project is also contingent on Provincial funding approval for a new elementary school, without Provincial funding, the project will not proceed.

Next steps could include obtaining additional technical assessments to better inform decision-making and respond to community feedback. Specifically, Council could direct staff to consider engaging consultants to perform a danger tree assessment, to evaluate the health and safety of existing vegetation within the area, an ecological/environmental assessment to provide valuable baseline data regarding site conditions, habitat value, and potential constraints. Undertaking these studies would help determine whether concerns raised by residents are supported by objective evidence and would ensure that any future planning or improvements are guided by reliable, data-driven analysis.

### Approval of the Electors

A critical component of this project involves the potential use of parkland (Fire Hall Park) for the construction of a new school.

In accordance with the Community Charter, the Village would be required to:

- Remove the park dedication (raise title) from the affected lands before they can be repurposed; and
- Obtain elector approval through either an Alternative Approval Process (AAP) or Assent Vote (commonly called a referendum).

Key elements of seeking approval of the electors include:

- Public notification outlining the proposed use of parkland;
- An opportunity for eligible electors to formally vote on whether the land exchange should proceed

Seeking approval of the electors represents a significant decision point for the community, and further detailed information will be provided should the project advance to that stage.

### Future Public Engagement

The Village remains committed to a transparent, inclusive, and iterative engagement process.

Council and the public are reminded that:

- This project will include multiple phases of engagement;
- Feedback will continue to directly inform project development; and
- No final decisions will be made without ongoing public input.

### Acknowledgement and Next Steps

Staff would like to sincerely thank:

- All residents who attended the engagement event;
- Those who provided written feedback or appeared as delegations; and
- Community partners who participated in the dialogue.

This level of engagement is exactly what the Village is striving for; thoughtful, informed, and community-driven input.

Residents are encouraged to continue participating and stay informed by visiting:

[getintoitharrison.ca](https://www.getintoitharrison.ca)

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

It is reiterated that Provincial funding for the new school is a prerequisite for the project proceeding. Without this funding approval, the Civic Campus concept cannot advance beyond the current exploratory stage.

The Civic Campus project represents a significant long-term opportunity; however, it remains at an early planning stage, with key approvals, funding decisions, and community processes still ahead.

The revised MOU reflects community input to date and provides a framework to continue collaborative exploration with School District No. 78.

## **POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

2025 Village Lands Master Plan

2023 Urban Forest Management Plan

2025 Parks and Trails Master Plan

2015 Age Friendly Action Plan

2025-2026 Strategic Plan

Infrastructure Development – To provide for the needs of a growing community

Public Safety – To ensure and enhance public safety

Healthy Livable Community – To promote and enhance a healthy lifestyle for all ages

Respectfully submitted by:



---

Tyson Koch  
Chief Administrative Officer

- Attachments (3):
1. What We Heard Report
  2. Revised Redlined Draft MOU
  3. Various Written Correspondence Received from Members of the Public



**SCHOOL DISTRICT 78**  
**FRASER-CASCADE**  
EVERYONE PULLING TOGETHER



**HARRISON HOT SPRINGS**

*Naturally Refreshed*

# **CIVIC CAMPUS: BUILDING TOMORROW TOGETHER**



## **What We Heard Report: Phase 1 Community Engagement**

**Phase 1 Engagement: January 29, 2026 – June 10, 2026**

# Introduction

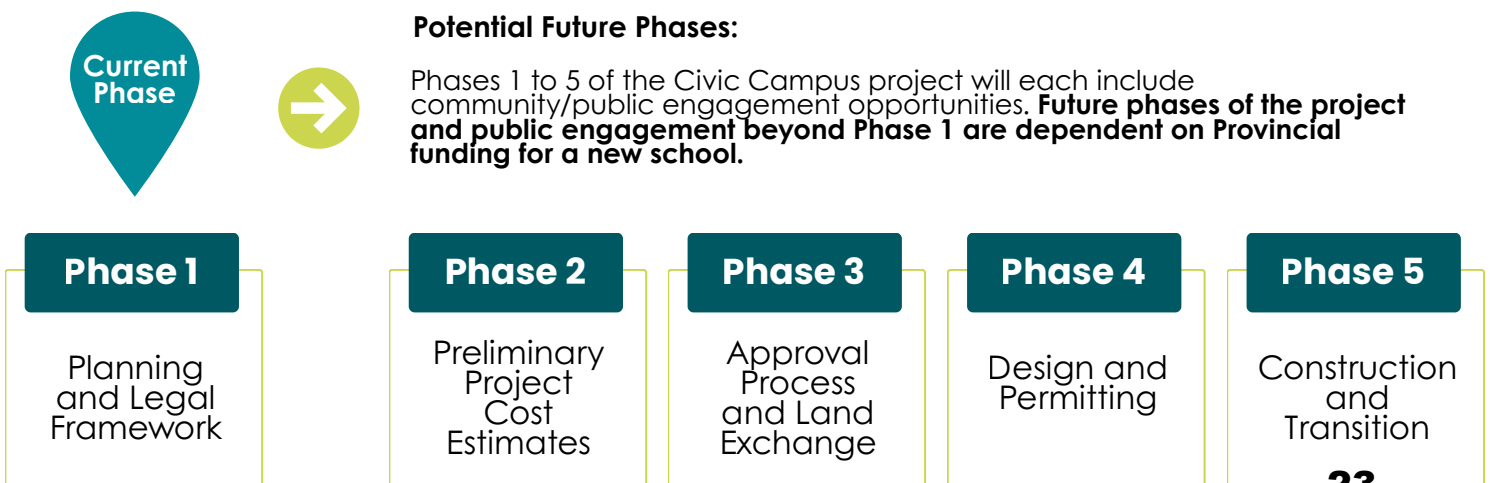
The Village of Harrison Hot Springs and School District 78 are exploring a shared vision for the future of education and community spaces in Harrison Hot Springs. This early-stage concept includes the potential construction of a new, modern elementary school and the repurposing of the existing school site into a multi-use civic area. The purpose of the project is to create a shared Civic Campus that will improve safety, strengthen community connections, and make efficient use of public land. The goal is to create spaces that could serve the entire community if funding and approvals are secured.

As part of Phase 1 engagement, the Village and School District 78 co-hosted a Civic Campus Community Engagement Evening on May 20, 2026, using an Open Space Technology format. Rather than a traditional presentation, the event was intentionally designed to create space for community-to-community dialogue, questions, ideas, concerns, and collaborative discussion involving both partner organizations.

At this conceptual stage of the project, there are no finalized plans or designs. The purpose of engagement is to help inform the future direction of the project through early conversation and co-creation with the community, Village, and School District 78.

**This report summarizes feedback received to date during Phase 1 of engagement. Feedback remained open until June 10, 2026, as part of Community Feedback Checkpoint #1.**

## A Phased Approach



# Phase 1 Engagement and Communication

Since the project launched in early January 2026, the Village of Harrison Hot Springs and School District 78 have been working in partnership to share information and opportunities for participation.

## **Phase 1 communication and engagement activities have included:**

- A public press release on January 29, 2026
- Direct consultation with residents living near the proposed project area
- An active public feedback poll through Get Into It Harrison since January 29, 2026
- Presentation of the project at a Regular Council Meeting on February 2, 2026
- Project featured as the cover story in the Agassiz-Harrison Observer on February 6, 2026
- Promotion through the Village website
- Promotion through Village communication channels including social media
- Information shared on [www.getintoitharrison.ca](http://www.getintoitharrison.ca)
- Event posters distributed throughout the Village
- Project and event information and hyperlinks provided through the Village's monthly e-newsletter and the HHS Elementary School e-newsletter
- Engagement event and project highlighted in the Agassiz-Harrison Observer on May 15, 2026
- Civic Campus Engagement Evening held at Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School on May 20, 2026

The Village and School District 78 also received feedback from at least one resident indicating that they were unaware of the project and questioned the level of public outreach. Both organizations recognize that not all communication methods reach everyone equally and appreciate this feedback.

Engagement remains ongoing, and the Village and School District 78 are committed to improving awareness, accessibility, and transparency throughout the process.

Following the completion of Community Feedback Checkpoint #1, this What We Heard Report will be finalized and shared publicly with the community, Village Council, and School District 78 prior to consideration of any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the two partner organizations. A potential MOU would establish a framework for continued collaboration and joint exploration of the Civic Campus concept, and would not represent approval of any specific land exchange, site layout, or development proposal. Any decisions related to land use, facility location, or implementation would require further analysis, approvals, and additional public engagement.

If the project proceeds beyond Phase 1, additional engagement opportunities will continue to be jointly delivered by the Village and School District 78.

# Phase 1 Engagement Received

## Online Poll – Get Into It Harrison

During Phase 1 engagement, an online poll was available on the Civic Campus project page on Get Into It Harrison from January 29, 2026 through June 10, 2026. At the time of writing this report, responses indicated:

- 21% of respondents support the Civic Campus concept as presented.
- 66% of respondents do not support the Civic Campus concept as presented.
- 13% of respondents indicated they require additional information before forming an opinion on the concept.

Poll results provide a snapshot of community sentiment at this stage of the project and should be considered alongside feedback received through the engagement event, written submissions, and other engagement activities.

## Civic Campus Engagement Event

At the Civic Campus Community Engagement Event held on May 20, 2026:

- 130 written comments were submitted by participants
- 183 stickers were placed on comments to indicate agreement or support
- Additional feedback was collected through facilitated topic-table discussions

The volume of comments, discussion, and participation demonstrated a high level of community interest in the Civic Campus concept and generated feedback across a broad range of topics, opportunities, and concerns.



# Phase 1 Engagement Received

## Written Feedback Received

**Nine written submissions were received during Phase 1 engagement. The summary below highlights the primary themes raised through written feedback; complete submissions are included as attachments to this What We Heard Report.**

The most common theme was concern regarding the potential loss of Fire Hall Park and the surrounding forested area. Respondents described the area as an important community asset, highlighting its ecological value, role as a wildlife corridor, contribution to the community's urban tree canopy, and importance as a natural space for recreation, learning, and connection to nature.



Many submissions acknowledged the need for a new school and recognized existing and future capacity pressures. However, several respondents expressed concerns with the conceptual site layout and encouraged exploration of alternative configurations that could better balance educational, civic, and environmental objectives while minimizing impacts on existing green space.

Additional concerns related to traffic circulation, public safety, fire hall operations, emergency access, and the proposed relocation of the public works yard. Respondents also emphasized the importance of considering existing Village planning documents, including the Official Community Plan, Village Lands Master Plan, Parks and Trails Master Plan, and urban tree canopy objectives.

Several submissions commented on the engagement process itself, requesting continued opportunities for public participation and ongoing consultation with First Nations and other stakeholders as planning for the Civic Campus concept moves forward.

# About the Community Engagement Event

The Community Engagement Event was structured using an Open Space Technology format. This approach encouraged participants to move between themed topic tables and engage in open dialogue with one another.

The event intentionally did not include a formal presentation. Given the project is still in its early conceptual stage, the goal was to create a collaborative and conversational environment where community members could share ideas, raise questions, identify concerns, and help shape priorities from the beginning in partnership with both the Village and School District 78.

## Participants were invited to:

- Visit topic tables focused on specific aspects of the project
- Share comments, questions, and ideas
- Identify areas of support or concern
- Add stickers to comments they agreed with
- Participate in community-to-community dialogue

## Key Themes Identified



### **Environmental Stewardship and Protection of Natural Areas**

*Environmental protection and preservation of the existing forested area emerged as the strongest and most repeated theme throughout engagement.*



### **School Planning, Growth, and Capacity**

*Participants recognized existing school capacity pressures.*



### **Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Concerns**

*Transportation, access, and circulation concerns were also prominent.*



### **Fire Hall and Emergency Services Concerns**

*Participants raised concerns about emergency services operations and response times.*



### **Accessibility, Inclusion, and Universal Design**

*Accessibility and inclusion were identified as key priorities.*



### **Community Identity, Recreation, and Shared Spaces**

*Participants expressed interest in expanded community amenities.*



## Environmental Stewardship and Protection of Natural Areas

**Environmental protection and preservation of the existing forested area emerged as the strongest and most repeated theme throughout engagement.**

**Participants consistently expressed concern regarding:**

- Potential removal of mature trees at Fire Hall Park
- Loss of wildlife habitat
- Impacts to outdoor learning opportunities
- Reduction of green space for children and families
- Climate and environmental impacts
- Maintaining the natural character of Harrison Hot Springs

**A significant number of comments emphasized that the forested area is viewed not simply as landscaping, but as an ecological, educational, and community space.**

**Participants described the area as:**

- An outdoor classroom and learning environment
- A play and exploration space for children
- One of the last mature pocket forests in the area
- Habitat for owls and other wildlife
- An important contributor to community character and wellness

**Highlighted Comments:**

*“Please preserve as many trees as possible.”*

*“The school forest is an important learning environment we would like to keep.”*

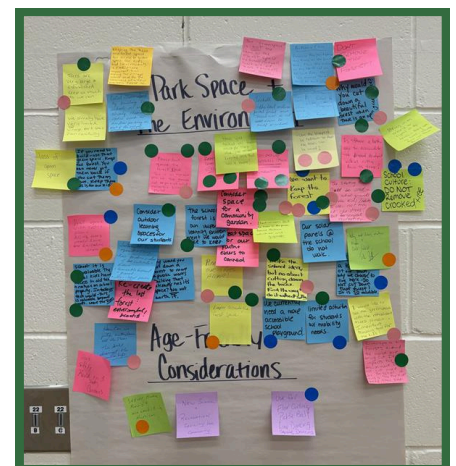
*“I am a teacher here. I teach in the forest area — save it.”*

*“You can never get them back if you cut them down. Keep them for our kids.”*

*“A key part of our town, why we choose to live here.”*

**Participants also proposed alternative approaches including:**

- Locating buildings within already cleared areas
- Reconfiguring the site layout
- Relocating parking or public works functions elsewhere
- Retaining forested buffers
- Preserving mature trees where possible
- Incorporating sustainable design approaches





# School Planning, Growth, and Capacity

Participants recognized existing school capacity pressures.

## Key themes:

- Overcrowding
- Limited classroom space
- Accessibility limitations
- Need for inclusive learning environments
- Childcare and daycare demand
- Flexible classroom needs

## Highlighted Comments:

*"Our school is not accessible, we only recently got ramps."*

*"Our school is at capacity with more coming in."*

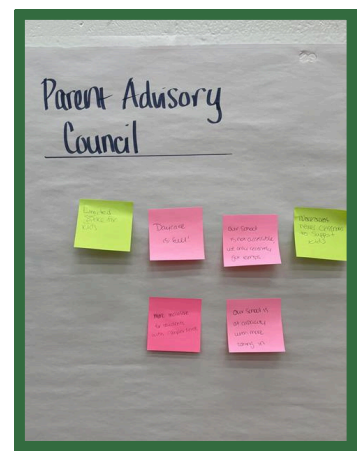
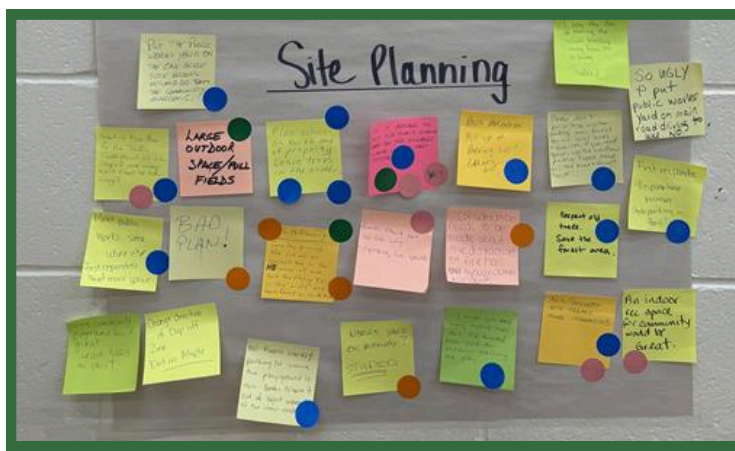
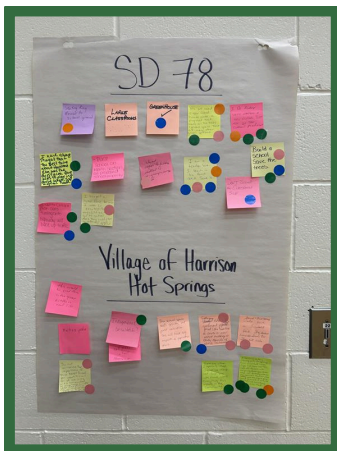
*"Limited activities for students with mobility needs."*

*"Daycare is full."*

*"More inclusive for students with complex needs."*

*"Newer classrooms to support kids."*

Many participants supported improved school facilities while emphasizing interest in alternative layouts that better preserve trees, green space, and emergency access.





## Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Concerns

Transportation, access, and circulation concerns were also prominent.

### Participants raised concerns related to:

- School pick-up and drop-off traffic
- Highway congestion and turning movements
- Emergency response access
- Parking pressures
- Pedestrian safety
- Accessibility for seniors and people with disabilities
- Long-term transportation impacts

### Highlighted Comments:

*"What is the plan for the traffic choke point of the drop off one-way exit road to the highway?"*

*"With current plan, cars turning onto highway will back up traffic."*

*"The traffic flow onto the highway doesn't make sense, especially for emergency services."*

*"Safe routes for children walking and biking should be a priority."*

*"Wider sidewalks, no more little narrow sidewalks."*

*"Parking for seniors near event venues that is accessible and free."*



## Fire Hall and Emergency Services Concerns

Participants raised concerns about emergency services operations and response times.

### Concerns included:

- Fire Department training areas
- Delayed emergency response times
- Traffic circulation affecting emergency access
- Long-term capacity for emergency services



### Highlighted Comments:

*" Firefighters need space to train. They also need quick road access to get to the emergency."*

*" Limited to no access to fire hall, difficult to respond efficiently."*

*" Move public works somewhere else. First responders need more space."*

*" The traffic flow onto the highway doesn't make sense, especially for emergency services."*

*" Consider school drop off lane and front door at south-east corner."*

*" I love the idea of moving the school building away from the highway - safety!"*

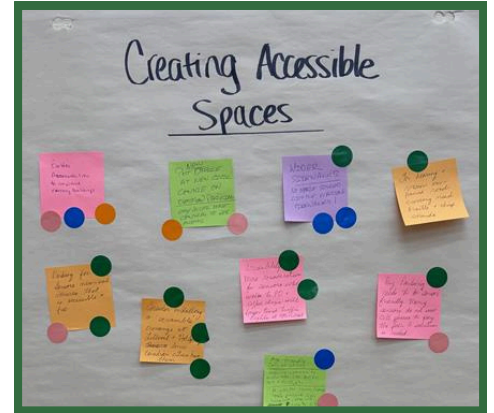


# Accessibility, Inclusion, and Universal Design

Accessibility and inclusion were identified as key priorities.

## Feedback included:

- Improved accessibility in new and existing buildings
- Inclusive playgrounds
- Accessible pedestrian infrastructure
- Senior-friendly design
- Accessible parking
- Mobility and sensory accessibility features



## Highlighted Comments:

*"We currently need a more accessible playground."*

*"Better accessibility to new and existing buildings."*

*"For hearing/vision impaired road crossing need braille and chirp sounds."*



# Community Identity, Recreation, and Shared Spaces

Participants expressed interest in expanded community amenities.

Ideas included:

- Indoor recreation space including youth and seniors programming spaces
- Arts and cultural spaces
- Community gardens, library and counselling spaces
- Multi-purpose gathering areas
- Intergenerational programming

## Highlighted Comments:

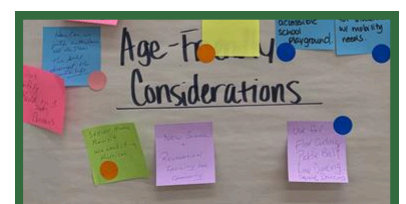
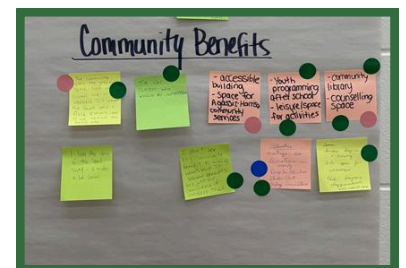
*"An indoor recreation space for community would be great."*

*"Youth room/space — no pressure, can hang out, use wifi, places to sit and hangout."*

*"Create space for our youth and elders to connect."*

*"Community library, counselling space."*

*"Use for floor curling, pickle ball, line dancing, square dancing."*



# Questions Raised During Engagement

## Participants asked:

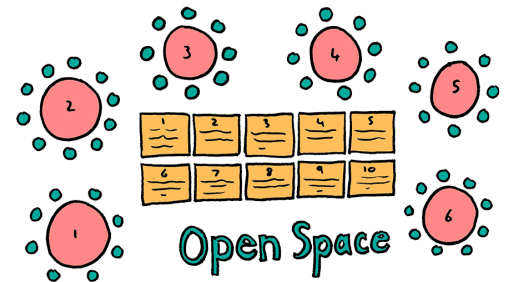
- What is the overall scope of the project?
- How will environmental impacts be addressed?
- What transportation planning will occur?
- How much green space will remain?
- What recreation opportunities are included?
- How will accessibility be incorporated?
- What is the project timeline?
- How will funding be secured?
- What role will School District 78 play moving forward?
- How will residents continue to be involved?
- What if Provincial funding is not approved?

## Observations on Engagement Format

The Open Space Technology format encouraged meaningful dialogue.

### Key observations included:

- Strong peer-to-peer discussion
- Open sharing of ideas and concerns
- Collaborative conversation across topics
- Focus on discussion rather than presentation response
- Ability to identify shared priorities through engagement tools



The format supported early-stage exploration in partnership between the Village and School District 78.

## Next Steps

The project is approaching Community Feedback Checkpoint #1.

Feedback will be reviewed jointly by the Village of Harrison Hot Springs and School District 78.

### Next steps include:

- This What We Heard Report will be shared publicly with community, Council, and School District 78
- Continuing to collect and review feedback
- Identifying key themes collaboratively
- Determining next steps between both partner organizations

Potential future phases will include continued joint engagement.

Advancement beyond Phase 1 remains dependent on Provincial funding approvals related to a future school component.

## Thank You

*Thank you to everyone who participated in the Civic Campus engagement process to date. Community feedback, ideas, concerns, and questions are essential in shaping the early vision for this potential Civic Campus.*

*Both organizations encourage continued participation throughout the engagement process.*

**Questions or comments can be sent to: [info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)**

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

### BETWEEN:

#### **The Village of Harrison Hot Springs**

A municipal corporation incorporated under the laws of the Province of British Columbia

Address: 495 Hot Springs Rd, Harrison Hot Springs, BC V0M1K0

(the “Village”)

### AND:

#### **School District No. 78 Fraser-Cascade**

A public school district constituted under the *School Act* of British Columbia

Address: 650 Kawkawa Lk Rd, Hope, BC V0X 1L0

(the “School District”)

Collectively referred to as the “Parties.”

### 1. PURPOSE

- a. This Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) sets forth the mutual understanding and intent of the Parties to collaborate on:
  - i. The construction of a new public school facility on existing School District land and parkland presently owned by the Village; and
  - ii. The transfer of ownership of the existing school site to the Village for the purposes of redeveloping the building into a multi-use Civic Campus for the benefit of the community.
- b. This MOU is non-binding and intended to guide future formal agreements and cooperative actions between the Parties, and is subject to all applicable statutory approvals and requirements.

### 2. BACKGROUND

- a. The School District owns lands located along Hot Springs Road.
- b. Fire Hall Park is located adjacent to the School District lands as a park vested in the municipality by a subdivision plan.
- b-c. Fire Hall Park contains established, mature trees, forested area and ecological features that contribute to community character, climate resilience, biodiversity, public amenity value and educational enhancement. The Parties acknowledge these features as significant assets warranting careful protection and management.

c.d. By exploring an opportunity to exchange some of those lands<sup>1</sup>, the Village and the School District can explore opportunities to:

<sup>1</sup>See attached possible exchange concepts.

- i. Modernize educational infrastructure to support projected growth and meet the evolving needs of students and families in the Village of Harrison Hot Springs; and
- ii. Repurpose the existing school site to create a Civic Campus that would address civic infrastructure needs and enhance community services.

### **3. TERMS OF UNDERSTANDING**

#### **3.1 NEW SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT**

- a. The School District will undertake the planning, design and construction of a new school facility.
- b. The Parties will work together to identify land currently owned by the Village that is available for a new school facility.
- c. The new school will be designed to accommodate current and projected student populations and may include shared-use spaces accessible to the community, subject to future agreement between the Parties.

#### **3.2 REPURPOSING OF EXISTING SCHOOL SITE**

- a. The Parties will work together to identify existing School District lands that, after completion of the new school facility, will be transferred to the Village.
- b. Upon completion and occupation of the new school, the School District will vacate the existing school site and transfer ownership of the building(s) and lands to the Village.
- c. The Village intends to redevelop the site into a Civic Campus, which may include the following components:
  - i. Council Chambers
  - ii. Municipal Administrative Offices
  - iii. Seniors' Amenity Space
  - iv. Community Centre
  - v. Public Works Yard
  - vi. Expansion of the Fire Hall
  - vii. Recreational and/or Leisure Space
  - viii. Other Village or Community Uses

#### **3.3 COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

<sup>1</sup> See attached possible exchange concepts.

- a. The Parties acknowledge the following anticipated benefits:
  - i. Educational Advancement: Improved learning environments and facilities for students
  - ii. Civic Infrastructure: Centralized and modernized municipal services
  - iii. Social Inclusion: Enhanced programming and facilities for seniors, youth and families
  - iv. Emergency and Public Services: Expanded capacity for fire protection and public works
  - v. Sustainable Land Use: Efficient use of public assets and long-term planning alignment, including
  - vi. Environmental Stewardship: The preservation, protection and enhancement of existing trees, mature forest and ecological functions as a defining community feature
  - vii. Public Safety: Relocating the school away from Highway 9/Hot Springs Road

### **3.4 TREE AND FOREST PROTECTION**

- a. The Parties acknowledge that the protection of mature trees, forest cover and ecological systems within the proposed project area shall be a primary consideration in all planning, land exchange, design and development decisions arising from this MOU.
- b. The Parties will work together to minimize and mitigate impacts to existing forested areas wherever possible.
- c. Prior to any site alterations, the Parties will ensure:
  - i. That an arborist assessment and tree inventory is conducted;
  - ii. That a Tree Protection Plan is agreed to by both Parties; and
  - iii. That a Tree Replacement Plan is agreed to by both Parties, where tree removal is unavoidable.
- d. The Parties will work collaboratively to explore opportunities to incorporate design strategies that prioritize the retention of trees and integration of natural areas into the site design.

vi. —

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION AND GOVERNANCE**

- a. The Parties will establish a Joint Working Group to oversee the planning, coordination, and implementation of the initiatives outlined in this MOU.

- b. The Joint Working Group will meet regularly and report to the respective governing bodies of both Parties.
- c. The Parties will engage in public consultation and stakeholder engagement as appropriate.

**5. LEGAL STATUS**

- a. This MOU is not intended to, and does not, create legally binding obligations.
- b. This MOU serves as a statement of mutual intent and cooperation.
- c. Any binding commitments will be subject to applicable statutory approvals and requirements and will be set forth in subsequent agreements duly authorized and executed by both Parties.

**6. TERM AND TERMINATION**

This MOU will remain in effect for a period of two (2) years from the date of execution, unless extended by mutual written agreement or terminated by either Party upon thirty (30) days written notice.

**7. AMENDMENTS**

This MOU may be amended at any time by mutual written consent of both Parties.

**8. SIGNATURES**

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties have executed this MOU as of the dates written below:

**For the Village of Harrison Hot Springs**

**For School District No. 78 Fraser-Cascade**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

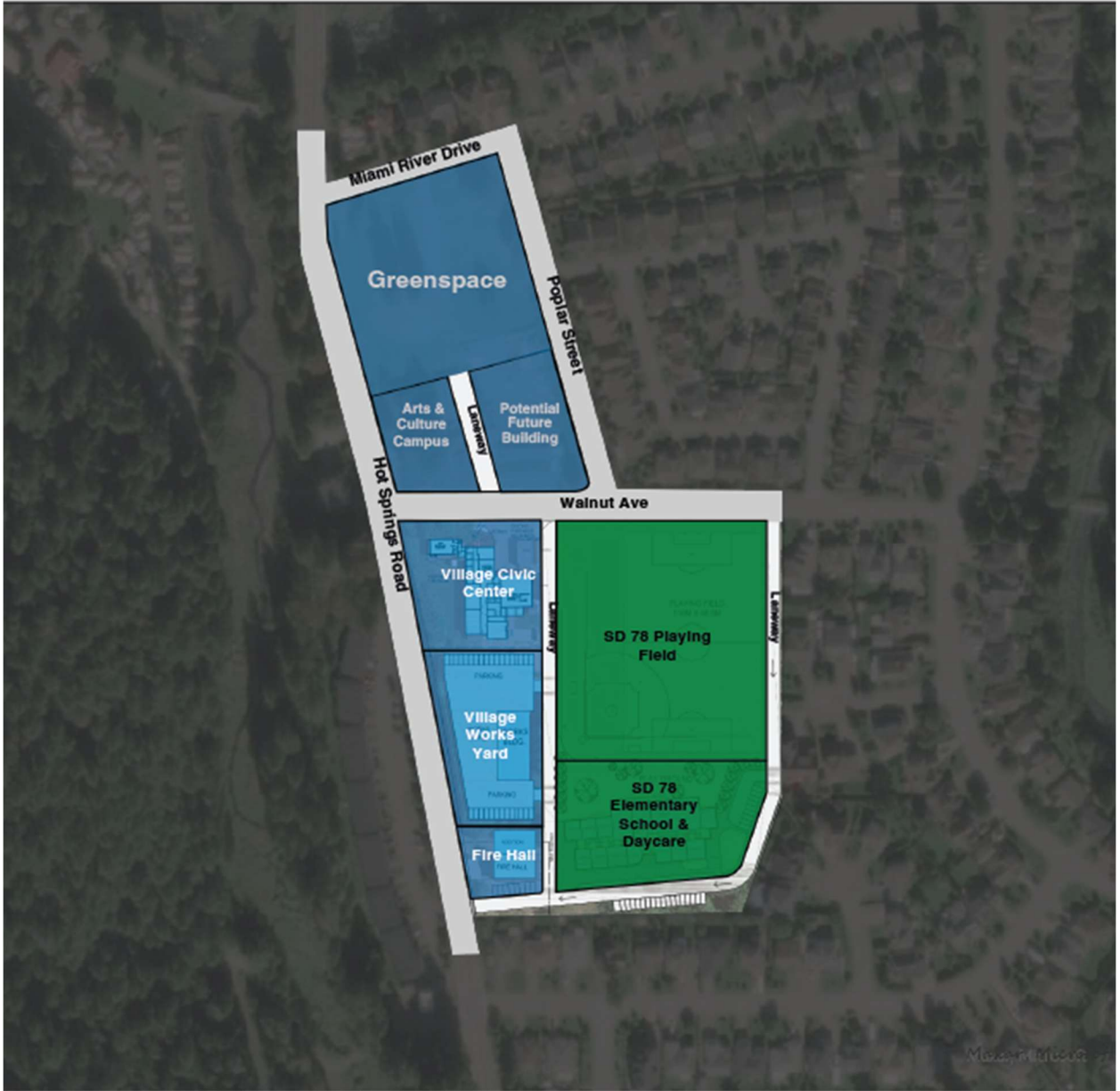
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

DRAFT

# EXISTING PROPERTIES



**PROPOSED RECONFIGURATION OF PROPERTIES**



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-----Original Message-----

From: Karen Smith-Black

Sent: June 1, 2026 1:18 PM

To: Vivian Li

Subject: Civic Campus Proposal Concerns

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

Dear Mayor Talen and Council members Facio ,Jackson ,Schweinbenz and Vidal:

To begin ,my husband and I live adjacent to the school on Hot Springs Road in the Branches by the Lake TownHouse Complex.

The Elementary School ,/Play ground area and FireHall of the Village is truly an asset for the whole of Harrison Hot Springs with its towering Cedars ,Basket ball Court and large play area for Students ,Residents and Visitors to our Community as well as the overflow parking lot on Miami River Drive.

We recently reviewed the major new development which has been tied to the construction of a new elementary school which we agree is needed in light of current school enrolments and Village population growth.As we understand from the information provided ,this will mean a removal of the Forested area where children and visitors spend time communing with nature ; as well as a change to the Firehall access off HotSprings Road which will negate timely responses and heighten safety concerns for foot traffic/Pedestrians , as Volunteer FireFighters negotiate a narrow school lane way to quickly reach the Firehall for Emergency responses.

Further,The Village plan to relocate the Public Works yard directly across from Branches by the Lake complex ,will bring in “a loud industrial depot of work trucks ,heavy machinery ,equipment and materials.”This will not only disfigure this very Public Corridor along Hot Springs Road but devalue Property.We strongly suggest that Public works remain in its current location ,out of Public view across the street on Walnut Avenue as we understand ,the justification for such relocation is for Staff convenience.

In Closing ,while we have since completed the “Village Poll” sadly ,the May20/26 engagement event did not foster greater attendance perhaps because of lack of awareness , therefore ,we suggest that Mayor and Council reflect on such when considering both Poll results and Residents feedback.

Thank -you for your consideration,  
Karen Smith-Black and Jim Black  
HotSprings Road

██████████ Balsam Avenue  
Harrison Hot Springs  
BC V0M 1K0

RECEIVED

MAR 23 2026

BY VILLAGE OF HARRISON HOT SPRINGS

18 March 2026

**The Mayor and Councillors**

Village of Harrison Hot Springs

**Re: Concept Plan for Elementary School**

While we acknowledge the need for a new elementary school, given the future enrolment figures projected in your proposal, we have identified some concerns that we ask you to consider.

We have concerns about the number of trees that you envisage having to be removed. This plan appears to be contrary to the adopted Official Community Plan which shows advocacy for retaining the urban canopy in the village.

We are puzzled by the plan to provide lane ways on three sides of the school property. We presume these are for vehicular traffic, given the directional arrows on the plan. Parking spaces are shown on the southern border of the property, which leads us to suppose that parents and teachers will be using the lane way to access the school. This would appear to be an inadequate traffic flow plan for both the elementary school and the daycare.

This leads us to question whether enough forethought has been given to parents dropping off children for the daycare before going to work and collecting them at day end.

Having given some thought to this, we have two proposals for your consideration.

---

Place the school on the north third of the property with the middle third to be used as a playing field, and the south third treed area available for a nature park. By doing this, access to the school would be from Walnut Avenue, eliminating the need for lane ways and the urban canopy will be preserved.

Or

Place the school on the middle third of the property with the playing field on the north third of the property along with access to Walnut Avenue for better traffic control. The treed area to the south could be utilized as a nature trail for the education of students and public.

As citizens of Harrison Hot Springs, we greatly value our parks and green spaces. We request that the Firehall Park remain as it is in its entirety until the moment that construction of the new elementary school is about to start. This includes that no trees be cut or removed in advance of the project and that the proposed relocation of the Public Works Yard not happen prior to the imminent construction of the school.

We respectfully request that this letter is made public at any future public meeting and that you consider the merits of these suggestions when moving forward with plans for the school.

From Tania and Doug Hart at [REDACTED] Balsam Avenue

John and Judy Duffus at [REDACTED] Balsam Avenue  
[REDACTED]

## **Subject: Formal Concerns Regarding the Proposed Civic Campus Development — Harrison Hot Springs**

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**Dear Mayor Talen and Members of Council,**

*“We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.”*

I am writing as a Harrison Hot Springs resident, a parent of young children who will soon attend Harrison Elementary, and someone who cares deeply about the future of this village. I am the spouse of a volunteer with the Harrison Hot Springs Fire Department, and I work professionally in the field of mental health — both of which inform the concerns I raise below. I live immediately adjacent to the proposed development site. My family and I walk and play in the forested area surrounding the school and firehall regularly — it is where my children run, explore, and connect with nature, and it is the green space our family loves and relies on most. To us, and to many local families, it is our neighbourhood park. It simply has never been officially designated as one.

I want to be clear from the outset: I support the need for a new elementary school, and I genuinely welcome the vision of bringing more services, supports, and accessible community spaces to Harrison Hot Springs. These are goals worth pursuing and I appreciate the intention behind this proposal.

What I am asking — respectfully, firmly, and with deep care for this community — is that Council pause and reflect before committing to this specific plan. I have significant concerns about what it would require, who has truly been consulted, whose interests it serves, and whether this is truly the best we can offer our children and our village.

**In summary, this letter formally raises the following concerns and requests:**

- The Village’s proposal would require significant clearing of the forested area surrounding Harrison Elementary and the firehall — a space the community uses daily as a neighbourhood park. This has not been clearly disclosed in any public materials.
- The “Greenspace” shown on the proposal map is a tourist overflow parking lot, described in the Village’s own 2022 Parking Master Plan as a “vacant lot.” It does not replace what would be lost.
- The proposal raises serious unaddressed public safety concerns regarding firehall emergency access, response times, and training capacity.
- Neither the children who use this forest daily, nor the Sts’ailes people on whose unceded territory this land sits, appear to have been meaningfully consulted.
- The community engagement event of May 20th was inadequately promoted and did not clearly disclose the forest clearing. It should not be cited as sufficient public consultation.

- I am formally requesting that Council pause this proposal before any Memorandum of Understanding is signed, commission an independent safety assessment, develop alternative proposals that preserve the forest, and investigate formally designating this land as protected parkland.

*Full detail, supporting evidence, and ten specific formal requests follow below.*

## **1. The Forest Clearing Is Not Being Clearly Disclosed**

This proposal would require significant clearing of the forested area surrounding Harrison Elementary and the firehall — a space that local residents know and use as a neighbourhood park, and that the children of the school and daycare treat as their daily woodland playground. **Not once, in any of the Village’s promotional materials, their website, the event signage, or anything presented at the May 20th engagement event, was the plan to remove this forest clearly stated. This is not a minor omission. It is the single most significant consequence of this proposal — and it was nowhere to be found in anything the public was shown.** I only pieced it together by carefully studying the site maps, and when I found a Village staff member and asked him directly whether this plan meant removing these trees, he confirmed: yes, clearing this area is part of the plan. I went home that night and couldn’t stop thinking about it.

I want to share something I feel deeply, because I believe it matters to this decision. This forest is part of the soul of Harrison Hot Springs. Yes, we are beautifully surrounded by mountains and forest on all sides — that is one of the great gifts of living here. But those forests are out there, beyond the village. This small, forested area around the school and firehall is the one place where the forest comes into the village itself — where nature is woven into the everyday life of our neighbourhood. To local residents, it is a park. To the children of Harrison Elementary and the local daycare, it is a beloved playground. It carries no official designation as either, but that is how this community knows it, uses it, and loves it. It is where children play every day, where families walk, where teenagers hang out, where the village breathes. Losing it would change the character of this community in ways that cannot be undone.

I know that might sound dramatic. But I genuinely believe it.

To be clear about what this forest is: it is a real forest, with mature trees, wildlife, shaded pathways, and the kind of living ecosystem that takes generations to grow. The forested area includes:

- The treed area within the current school grounds — a safe, fenced space that local children treat as their own little woodland. Every school day, children cannot run up to the surrounding mountains, but they can, and joyfully do, run and play in this forest right on school grounds. For many children, this may be their most regular and meaningful connection to nature. It is irreplaceable.

- The forest beside and behind the firehall — a quiet, accessible green space used by residents for walks and treasured as a rare pocket of nature within the developed heart of our village. Local teens and younger children have naturally made use of the dirt patches here as an informal bike park — a lovely example of how communities organically find and love their green spaces.
- The treed land between the firehall and the school along Hot Springs Road — a stretch of beautiful forest that forms a natural, welcoming gateway on the main road into the village and the lake, the first impression visitors have of Harrison Hot Springs.

This consequence is not stated anywhere in the public-facing materials. I formally request that the Village clearly and explicitly communicate — in all future public materials — the full extent of tree and green space removal required by this proposal, including the number of trees affected and the impact on wildlife currently inhabiting the area.

## 2. Who Is This Plan Truly For?

I want to ask Council a question I think deserves honest reflection: who does this specific proposal truly serve — and what does it actually change?

The term “civic campus” sounds compelling. But I want to ask practically: what is truly different about this proposed civic campus compared to what the Village already has? The Village currently has its offices, public works yard, information centre, and Sasquatch Museum all situated together on Walnut Avenue. Is that not already a campus of sorts? Under this proposal, those same offices and functions would simply relocate across the street to the old school building — and the works yard would move a short distance to the forested land between the firehall and the school. The buildings and services already exist. The staff already work nearby. Moving them across the street and giving it a new name does not create something meaningfully new for the community. What it does create is the clearing of a beloved forest, the loss of children’s play space, and a works yard placed beside a school — in exchange for a relocation that, by the Village’s own account, is largely about staff convenience. That is not a civic campus. That is a very expensive reorganisation of what already exists, at significant cost to this community’s green space and natural heritage.

It is also worth asking directly: did this proposal come from requests by local residents? The need for a new school, yes, that has been expressed by this community. But the works yard relocation, the civic campus rebranding, the clearing of the forest — did anyone in this community actually ask for that? Or did those elements originate from within the Village administration itself, packaged together with the school in a way that makes the whole thing harder to question? A new school is a community need. The rest deserves scrutiny.

I want to state this plainly, because I think it is important that both Council and School Board trustees hear it clearly: a new elementary school does not have to be built this

way. The School District could pursue a new school without partnering with the Village's civic campus development plan. A new school could be built on or near the existing school site without requiring the clearing of the surrounding forest, the relocation of the public works yard, or the creation of new road access through Village land. These elements are not prerequisites for a new school — they are prerequisites for this specific joint proposal, which serves the Village's development interests alongside the school's needs. The two goals — a new school, and Village development — have been packaged together in a way that makes them appear inseparable. They are not. The School District is entitled to pursue a new school. **The community is entitled to ask that it do so in a way that does not cost us this forest.**

It is also worth reflecting on how proposals of this kind tend to emerge. Large-scale planning and development projects are often initiated from within institutional structures — by people whose professional role is to plan, build, and develop. That is their job, and they do it with good intentions. But institutional momentum can build around a project once it gains traction internally, and it is worth asking whether the vision behind this proposal genuinely emerged from community need or from within the planning process itself. The people who choose to live in Harrison Hot Springs do so because of its natural character — its trees, its quiet, its pace. They are not, generally, asking for more development or cleared land. Before proceeding, Council should be confident that this plan truly reflects the community's vision for their village, and not simply an institutional one.

### 3. Questions About the Village's Development Intentions

I also want to raise a harder question with respect: how much of the Village's interest in this joint project is genuinely for the benefit of locals, children, and families — and how much is it an opportunity for the Village to gain access to and develop that forested land? It is my understanding that the Village has limited land available for development, and that the forested area between the firehall and the school — while technically Village land — is not currently accessible for development given how the existing school is situated. I want to ask openly: does this partnership provide the Village with an opportunity to gain access to, and begin developing, land and road access that would not otherwise be available to it? These are not accusations. They are questions a community has a right to have answered transparently before an irreversible decision is made. I would ask Council to consider whether keeping these projects clearly separate — a new school on one hand, and any Village development on the other — might better serve clarity about who each space is truly for.

I am also aware that the Village has been running a separate process — the Village Lands Master Plan — focused on planning the future development of its existing civic lands site, which includes the Village offices, works yard, Visitor Centre and Sasquatch Museum. I would ask Council to clarify how the Civic Campus proposal relates to that separate planning process, and whether the two are connected in ways that have not been made transparent to the community. If the Village has development ambitions for

its existing civic lands, and is simultaneously proposing to relocate onto the school and forest land through a joint project with the School District, the community deserves a full and transparent account of how these two processes are related and what the Village's broader development intentions are.

For School Board trustees considering this partnership, I would ask you to reflect on a question worth sitting with: is the Village's enthusiasm for this joint project truly about building a better school for the children of Harrison Hot Springs — or does it also serve a broader development agenda that uses the school as a vehicle to access land and infrastructure that would not otherwise be available? If the school is to be rebuilt, the land it sits on and the forest surrounding it should remain dedicated entirely to the children and their school environment — and for the local residents who use it daily as a well-loved recreational green space. The Village's development interests, whatever they may be, should be pursued separately and on land that does not require clearing a forest that belongs, in every meaningful sense, to this community — and above all, to the children who play in it every single day.

#### **4. Have School Board Trustees Been Fully Informed?**

It is easy to understand why the School District would welcome this joint proposal — the need for a new school in Harrison Hot Springs is real, and a partnership with the Village may represent an attractive path toward making that happen. But I want to gently raise the concern that School Board trustees — many of whom do not live in Harrison Hot Springs and may not be familiar with this specific site — may be saying yes to a partnership without fully understanding what currently exists on the ground, and what would be lost.

What I want them to know is this: the current school grounds include a beautiful stretch of large, mature trees — old growth that gives the school yard a genuine feeling of forest. It is enclosed within the school fence, part of the school grounds, safe and accessible to the children every day. Beyond the fence, the forested area deepens around the firehall and Village Park, forming one connected natural space that the community uses and loves. I live in the immediate area and walk past this space daily. Every single day — before school, at recess, at lunch, after school — I see those children out among those trees. Running, exploring, playing, simply being kids in nature. I have heard that the children have names for different trees. This treed space is not a peripheral amenity. It is part of the soul of this school, and part of how these children experience their education and their days.

If the full implications of forest clearing have not been clearly presented to the School Board — including the fact that the forest being cleared is the one their own students play in every single day — then their support for this proposal may be based on incomplete information. I would ask that School Board trustees be provided with the same transparency I am asking of Council, including a clear account of exactly what trees and green spaces would be removed, what the community currently uses and

values in that space, and what the children of Harrison Elementary would lose if this plan proceeds as designed.

And perhaps most importantly — has anyone asked the children of Harrison Elementary what they think about this plan? Do they know it would mean losing the forest they play in every day, the trees they have named, the space they love? Their voices matter too.

If the Village wants to develop additional space independently, there are other options worth exploring: the overflow tourist parking lot adjacent to the current Village offices, Memorial Hall — a beautiful, Village-owned facility in the heart of Harrison Hot Springs that often appears underutilised — or other already-cleared land that does not require removing a forest or displacing a community park.

## **5. Have the Children Been Consulted?**

If this plan is for the children — and I believe the intention is that it should be — I want to ask directly: have the children been consulted? Have the students of Harrison Elementary been told that their beloved trees, their forest playground, the space they run through every school day, is planned to be cleared? Have their voices been sought, gathered, or given any weight in this process? Have they been asked what they want?

I was at the May 20th engagement event. I observed that the vast majority of the feedback posted on the feedback wall — the post-it notes left by attendees — expressed concern about the trees and the forest. I have photographs of this if Council wishes to see them. The community, even in that limited and poorly-attended event, spoke clearly. I would ask that this feedback be formally acknowledged rather than set aside.

In our modern world, children are spending more and more time indoors, on screens, disconnected from nature. The research on this is clear and growing — daily access to natural spaces has profound benefits for children’s mental, emotional, and physical health and development. As someone who works in mental health, I can speak to this directly. The forested school grounds are not a luxury. For the children who play there every single day, they are a genuine health and wellbeing resource. A modern plastic and metal playground will never replace what that forest gives those children. Once it is gone, it is gone forever.

I think about my own children running in those trees, learning to ride their bikes on the dirt mounds, and finding the kind of treasures that only a child can truly appreciate. The thought of losing this place breaks my heart.

I also want to raise a practical point that I think deserves attention. The site where the public works yard is proposed to relocate is currently forested land — trees would need to be cleared to make way for it. But that is not all. This same site also contains two existing playgrounds and a brand new basketball court, all in good condition and actively used by children every day. In fact, just this past summer the basketball court was redone and expanded — with several trees already removed to accommodate it.

That court is brand new. So this proposal would require clearing trees, removing playgrounds, and displacing a newly built basketball court — all to make way for an industrial works yard. These are real, functional, deeply loved spaces for children that would be lost under this proposal. **If the genuine goal is to serve the children of this community, why is the plan not designed around preserving and building near these existing assets rather than clearing everything and starting again? A new school does not require the destruction of everything that already serves children well.**

I ask Council: have the children’s voices been heard? Do their opinions matter in this process? And if this decision is made without them, what does that say about whose interests are truly being served?

## **6. Have the Sts’ailes People Been Meaningfully Consulted?**

Harrison Hot Springs sits on the unceded traditional territory of the Sts’ailes people — a sovereign Coast Salish First Nation whose ancestors have lived on this land since time immemorial. The name Sts’ailes means “the beating heart.” This land is not merely a location. It carries deep spiritual, cultural, and ecological significance.

I want to ask directly: have the Sts'ailes people been meaningfully consulted about this proposal? Have they been clearly and explicitly informed of the extent of tree and forest removal involved? Do they know how many trees would be cleared, how many animals currently inhabit that forest, and what would replace it? Do they know how deeply loved those trees are — that the children of Harrison Elementary play among them every single day, that some of those children have given names to the trees they have grown up with? Have they been given a genuine and unhurried opportunity to review the full proposal and share their perspective?

In British Columbia, the duty to consult with Indigenous peoples on decisions that may affect their rights and title is not optional — it is a legal obligation. On unceded territory, that obligation carries particular weight. I would ask Council to confirm, in writing, that meaningful consultation with the Sts’ailes Nation has taken place or is formally planned, and that the Nation has been provided with full and transparent information about the environmental impacts of this proposal.

## **7. The “Greenspace” on the Proposal Map Is Misleading**

The proposal map labels an area as “Greenspace” that is identical to what appears on the current map — it already exists and is not new. It functions primarily as overflow parking for tourists visiting the lake on busy days. It is unfenced and bordered by open roads on three sides, including busy Hot Springs Road. It is not a park, not accessible nature, and does not serve local families the way the forested school grounds do. I walk past this area regularly and have never once seen a family playing there. I would not

allow my own children to play there — it is simply too exposed to traffic. I am concerned this label misleads both residents and decision-makers reviewing this proposal at a distance, who may assume meaningful green space is being preserved when it is not.

It is worth noting that the Village’s own 2022 Parking Master Plan, prepared by a professional consulting firm on behalf of the Village, describes this same area as a “vacant lot typically used for overflow parking during special events.” That the Village would label this same space “Greenspace” on a community proposal map is a meaningful inconsistency — one that residents and decision-makers deserve to have clarified.

I request that this area be accurately and transparently labelled — including clearly identifying it as tourist overflow parking — and that all spaces on the proposal map be described in a way that reflects what they actually are.

It is worth noting that the overflow parking lot adjacent to the Village offices — the area labelled “Greenspace” on the proposal map — would seem an obvious alternative development site. However, it is my understanding that previous attempts to develop or repurpose that space have met with community resistance, largely because of the genuine need for tourist parking in a village that welcomes a significant number of visitors. That is a legitimate concern. But it raises a question worth asking openly: if we are preserving that space for tourist parking, and now proposing to clear this forest for Village development, who are we truly prioritising? Tourists who visit, or the local families and children who live here? The forest surrounding the school and firehall serves local residents every single day. It deserves at least as much protection as a parking lot for visitors.

## **8. The Public Works Yard Relocation Requires Clear Justification**

The proposal moves the Village public works yard — a loud, visually industrial depot of work trucks, equipment, and materials — from its current well-screened location on Walnut Avenue to the forested land between the firehall and the school along Hot Springs Road. This would place it directly beside the new school, daycare, and playing field, and would replace a beautiful stretch of the main road into the village with an industrial yard. The only justification offered was staff convenience.

The works yard already has a perfectly functional home just across the street, largely hidden by mature trees. Moving it to one of the most prominent and beautiful stretches of road in the village — the main gateway to the lake — would permanently degrade that entrance for residents and visitors alike. I genuinely cannot see how this serves the children, families, or residents this proposal claims to benefit.

I request a full and transparent explanation of why this relocation is necessary, what it would cost, and whether the forest could be preserved by leaving the works yard where it already functions well.

## 9. Serious Public Safety Concerns at the Firehall

This proposal raises three public safety concerns that do not appear to have been assessed:

- Response times: Direct firehall access off Hot Springs Road is eliminated. Volunteer firefighters — who drive from off-site when a call comes in, with multiple personal vehicles converging quickly before the truck can leave — would instead navigate a longer route via Walnut Avenue and a small school laneway. Every additional minute matters in an emergency.
- Pedestrian and safety concerns: That same laneway is the proposed access route for the school and daycare. Multiple emergency vehicles converging quickly through a lane where children and families are present at drop-off and pick-up is a foreseeable and serious safety conflict that appears to have been built into this layout without public discussion.
- Training capacity: The firehall currently uses the surrounding space — the parking area, the open grass, and the forested land around the hall — for training exercises that build the practical skills our volunteers need to protect this community. Under the proposed plan, much of this surrounding land would be consumed by new roads, buildings, and the relocated works yard. Losing access to this training ground would directly impact the department's ability to train, develop, and grow its capacity to serve the public.

Our volunteer firefighters give their time freely to protect this community. They deserve a plan that supports them, not one that makes their work harder and puts children at risk in the process.

I formally request an independent safety assessment of this proposal's impact on firehall access, emergency response times, and training capacity.

## 10. The Community Engagement Process Has Been Inadequate

The May 20th event was minimally promoted and contained no formal presentation. What this proposal would actually require — including the clearing of a beloved neighbourhood forest — was not made clear to anyone who attended. I became aware of the event only through a personal connection to the firehall.

The room appeared reasonably full, but on closer inspection, much of that attendance was made up of people who had been asked to be there in various capacities, many of whom had limited knowledge of the proposal's details. In terms of local residents who had independently heard about the event and chosen to come, attendance felt sparse. Even at booths related to the natural environment and green spaces, there was little clear information available about the extent of tree removal involved. I left feeling more confused than when I arrived, and honestly, more worried.

I am also deeply concerned about the absence of Indigenous representation at this event. To the best of my knowledge and observation, I did not see or hear of any Sts'ailes community members in attendance. There was no land acknowledgement offered at the event. I saw no clear evidence of their presence or voice in the process. I want to ask directly: were the Sts'ailes people formally and meaningfully invited to this engagement event — or was the outreach limited to the same loose social media posts and posters that much of the broader community also missed? On unceded territory, their inclusion is not a courtesy. It is a responsibility.

Beyond the event itself, I want to raise the question of how it was promoted. As far as I am aware, promotion was limited to posts on the Village's social media accounts and a small number of posters placed around town. I would ask Council to consider honestly: is that sufficient outreach for a proposal of this scale and consequence? Not every resident uses social media, and a single post is easily missed. More importantly, nothing in that promotion — not the posters, not the social media posts — clearly stated that this proposal involves the clearing of a neighbourhood forest. Residents reading about a new school and improved community spaces had no reason to suspect that forest clearing was part of the plan. I genuinely believe that if the promotion had clearly stated what this proposal requires, many more residents would have attended. And based on what I observed at the event — where the vast majority of feedback on the post-it wall expressed concern about the trees and the forest — I believe Council would be receiving a far greater volume of concern from the community about the loss of a neighbourhood park that local residents deeply love.

**I am concerned this event will be cited as adequate community consultation. It was not.**

I formally request:

- A new engagement event, properly promoted through multiple channels including direct mail, with all consequences of the proposal clearly and explicitly presented
- That the Sts'ailes Nation be formally, directly, and meaningfully invited and included in any future engagement process
- Written clarification of the Village's legal obligations to notify residents and Indigenous peoples of proposals involving removal of public green space and trees
- Formal acknowledgment of the feedback gathered at the May 20th event, including the significant volume of concern expressed about the forest

## **11. My Core Requests**

I support a new school. I support more services and community supports for Harrison Hot Springs residents. I do not support this specific proposal as currently designed.

I formally and respectfully request that Council:

1. Pause this proposal before any Memorandum of Understanding is signed

2. Ensure that any new school development preserves the children's access to the forested areas of the school grounds. The children of Harrison Elementary should not lose their beloved forest simply because they need a new school building. The forested school grounds must be treated as a non-negotiable part of the school environment — preserved, protected, and kept entirely for the children who use them every day, not as surplus land available for other uses. Council and the School Board should seriously consider whether separating the school project from the Village's civic campus development plan entirely is the best way to guarantee this — ensuring the school and its grounds remain purely dedicated to the children, and that Village development interests cannot be advanced under the cover of a school build.
3. Clarify in writing whether this joint proposal provides the Village with access to land or road infrastructure not currently accessible, and explain what the Village's intentions are for that land
4. Clarify how the Civic Campus proposal relates to the Village Lands Master Plan process, and provide a transparent account of the Village's broader development intentions for its civic lands
5. Conduct meaningful consultation with the Sts'ailes Nation with full disclosure of environmental impacts
6. Ensure the voices of Harrison Elementary students are formally gathered and considered before any commitment is made — including informing them clearly of what this proposal would mean for their forest
7. Commission an independent firehall safety assessment
8. Pass a bylaw under Section 30 of the Community Charter formally dedicating the Village-owned forested land surrounding the firehall and along Hot Springs Road as protected municipal parkland. Once dedicated by bylaw, this land can only be repurposed with elector approval. This would give the community permanent, legally meaningful protection for a space it has always used and loved as a park, at no cost to the Village. The school grounds portion, owned by School District 78, could be addressed through a formal agreement with the District to preserve that forested space as part of any school redevelopment plan
9. Hold a new, properly promoted, fully transparent public engagement event before any commitment is made
10. Formally share this letter with School District 78 trustees, so that their support for this joint proposal is fully and transparently informed

This community deserves the opportunity to consider more than one option. And it deserves to make that choice with full and honest information.

If this decision is made, we can never go back. We cannot recreate a forest. We cannot give those children back the magical natural space they play in every day. The mountains surrounding our valley are beautiful — but they are not the same as a forest woven into the heart of a neighbourhood, accessible to every child, every family, every resident, every day.

I ask that this letter be entered into the official record. I welcome the opportunity to meet, present at a Council session, or correspond further. I have photographs from the May 20th event documenting community feedback if they would be of use.

Harrison Hot Springs is a special place. The forest around our school and firehall is part of what makes it special. Let's find a way to build something wonderful here without losing something irreplaceable. I believe we can, and I hope you'll join me in asking for that.

*With deep respect, warmth, and hope for our village — and for the children who will inherit what we decide today,*

**Leanne Bird**

*Harrison Hot Springs Resident*

*I live immediately adjacent to the proposed development site. My young children will soon attend Harrison Elementary and use the forested school grounds regularly. My husband is a volunteer with the Harrison Hot Springs Fire Department. I work in the field of mental health and understand deeply the documented value of accessible nature for the wellbeing of children and families.*

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# New Concern & Requests Submission Received:

**Date of Submission:** 5/27/2026 6:19:40 PM

**Name:** Gordon Mcknight

**Address:** Hot Springs Road, Harrison Hot Springs, BC V0M 1K0

**Contact Email:**

**Contact Number:**

**Location of Concern:** Hot Springs Road

**Details of Concern or Request:** I am against the zoning amendment bylaw no.1244,2026 I live across the street from were the new maintenance yard is going to be moved to, it's bad enough with the fire department building is lite up like a Christmas tree all night never mind having to deal with more lighting from the new works yard. The current works yard looks like a mess and I don't want to look at that everyday. The idea of making the fire fighters drive around when there is a call to get to the fire hall is stupid, not to mention having a road that close to the fire hall is dangerous to everyone the fire fighters and the public . Why not just build the new school next to the current one and knock the old one down and replace it with the field why move the works yard at all waste of tax payers money

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**From:** jacquelyn ravenstein  
**Sent:** May 28, 2026 1:45 PM  
**To:** Vivian Li <[info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>  
**Subject:** Civic Campus Elementary

Hello,

I would like to make a formal complaint about the proposed “civic campus”. Please record it in the official record of community feedback.

We recently purchased a home in Harrison hot springs. One of the reasons we did so was because of all of the parks and trees, and especially because of the elementary school. I loved the idea of my children going to a small safe school with nature and large old growth trees right in their school yard. I think it would be a tragedy if you removed those. It is possible to build a new school without removing those trees and forest. Please find another way.

I have also heard the plan to move the public works yard onto the same “campus” as the school. I have serious concerns about that. This seems to be an obvious safety risk to have many work trucks and heavy machinery in the same area as a school field and a school. It also seems loud and distracting to children. This seems unsafe and unnecessary. Why would you remove forest and put children and risk when the works yard already has its own space? Nothing about that part of the plan makes sense to me. It has nothing to do with a school, or with community services. I strongly encourage you to take that out of any future planning.

I request as a mother of children who would attend that school, you find a way to keep the school yard as quiet and peaceful as it is now. With all those trees and easy, safe access to nature for the kids. And please do not consider to tear down a beautiful park and forest space to move your work truck parking lot that already has a perfectly fine home.

Thank you,

A local mother.

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-----Original Message-----

From: Dennis Bakken

Sent: May 30, 2026 5:05 PM

To: Vivian Li

Subject: Civic Campus Concept

Caution! This message was sent from outside your organization.

To Mayor Talen and Council:

We missed the Civic Campus Concept Engagement Meeting as we only heard about it on Sunday May 24th, perhaps it was not communicated to the residents of Harrison Hot Springs well enough as there were very few, if any, actual residents attended, just delegates for the School Board, Council and some of the Fire Department.

We have been Residents of Harrison Hot Springs since 2008, we have lived at Branches by the Lake (across from the Fire Hall) since 2017.

We are not opposed to the building of a new school if necessary, but do not agree with the Village moving into the old School and moving the Maintenance Yard.

By doing this project, we will lose all the old beautiful trees and the scenic look coming into Harrison Hot Springs.

If the school is going to be renovated to accommodate the Village Office, why not renovate and add on to the school to accommodate the lack of space in the school.

If a new school needs to be a new building, why not build at the back of the property, which is open space with grass and then where the school sits now, take down and make it into the play ground and open field, leaving the trees.

We definitely do not want "no" trees and a Maintenance Yard on the Main Road into Harrison Hot Springs (an eye sore) it should not look like an Industrial Site. Where the Maintenance Yard sits now is behind the Tourist Building and the Village Office so as it cannot be seen from Harrison Hot Springs Road.

When looking at the proposed plan, it has a road for the School and the Firehall combination. We believe this would be unsafe for the children walking to school!

These are the reasons we are not in favour and have voted against it on the Project Poll. Please consider our opinions and suggestions and relook at this proposed project.

Thank You

Dennis and Tegwyn Bakken

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**From:** Ross Buchanan  
**Sent:** June 4, 2026 2:46 PM  
**To:** Vivian Li <[info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>  
**Subject:** Strongly Opposed...

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The purpose of this message is to advise council that I am strongly opposed to Councils Plan with the stated objective to:  
“facilitate the construction of a new school and repurposing of the current school for a civic building via land exchange...”

Please do not sign a MOU for this Council Plan.

...Ross Buchanan

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**From:** Stephanie Blue

**Sent:** June 5, 2026 8:29 AM

**To:** Fred Talen <[ftalen@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:ftalen@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Leo Facio <[LFacio@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:LFacio@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Allan Jackson <[ajackson@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:ajackson@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Mark Schweinbenz <[mschweinbenz@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:mschweinbenz@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Michie Vidal <[MVidal@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:MVidal@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Vivian Li <[info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>

**Subject:** Civic Campus Proposal — Wildlife Corridor and Environmental Concerns

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*Please ensure this letter is entered into the formal record of concerns regarding the Civic Campus proposal.*

**RE: Civic Campus Proposal — Wildlife Corridor and Environmental Concerns**

Dear Mayor Talen and Members of Council,

I'm writing about the proposed Civic Campus development in Harrison Hot Springs. I have a 17 year career as a British Columbia Park Ranger and lived in Hope for 12 years (adjacent to Harrison Hot Springs) where I facilitated several outdoor education programs with the Hope Mountain Centre for Outdoor Learning in that exact Forrest. When I heard about the proposal that intended to remove that stand, I had to say something, as I think there's a dimension of this conversation that has not been addressed.

### **What this forest actually is**

The forested area around the school and firehall isn't just a pleasant patch of trees. It is a structurally significant piece of connected forest — old growth trees with established canopy, understory vegetation, soil ecosystems, and wildlife habitat that has developed over generations. That kind of ecosystem doesn't just happen. It takes decades to build, and it cannot be recreated by planting new trees elsewhere. What you would be clearing is not a random collection of trees. It is a functioning, connected forest ecosystem within the developed heart of the village.

### **The wildlife corridor issue**

Ecologically, this forest functions as a wildlife corridor — a connected passage that allows animals to move safely through the developed part of the village between Harrison Lake, the river valley, and the surrounding mountain forests. This is a specific ecological concept, and it matters here because of Harrison's geography. The village sits between water on one side and steep mountain terrain on the other. The developed area is a narrow band. The

forested strip around the school and firehall is one of the last connected patches of natural habitat within that band — and it links the larger wild spaces on either side.

Wildlife corridors support not just large mammals but the full range of species that depend on connected habitat — birds, pollinators, amphibians, small mammals, and the insects and plants they depend on. Urban greenways and small woodlots all play a role in corridor conservation. When those connections are broken, species don't just move somewhere else. Populations fragment, genetic diversity drops, and local biodiversity quietly declines over time.

When a corridor is removed, animals that relied on that passage still need to move. They don't disappear — they find other routes, through developed areas rather than through forest. BC's own recovery plans now include corridor protection as a core tool, recognizing that restoring corridors is not just about movement — it is about rebuilding the conditions that allow species to thrive. Removing this corridor creates conditions for exactly the kind of human-wildlife conflict that BC communities are increasingly working to prevent. The solution to that problem is not to clear more habitat — it is to protect what remains.

### **What the Province's own guidelines say**

There is a directly relevant provincial document here: *Develop with Care 2014*, BC's environmental guidelines for urban and rural land development. It was written specifically for situations like this — development proposals that affect natural habitat within communities. As far as I can tell, no biological inventory or environmental assessment has been done on this forested area as part of this proposal. That is a significant gap, and one that the Province's own guidelines say should be addressed before development proceeds.

### **My requests**

Here's what I'm asking Council to consider ;

1. Commission a formal wildlife corridor and biological inventory assessment before any commitment is made. This is standard practice for proposals affecting connected natural habitat, and it's what BC's *Develop with Care* guidelines call for. If the assessment confirms this forest functions as a wildlife corridor — which I strongly believe it will — that finding should directly shape what happens next.
2. Designate this area as an Environmental Development Permit Area in the Village's Official Community Plan. This is a tool BC municipalities use to protect ecologically sensitive land. Once designated, any future development affecting it requires a formal environmental review and Development Permit. It is a stronger protection than parkland designation alone, and the right tool for land with confirmed ecological corridor value.
3. Request a Wildlife Management Area assessment from the BC Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship. WMAs in BC formally protect habitat corridors and linkages between protected areas — sometimes essential to enable movement of species during seasonal migrations or in response to longer-term climate changes. Given that this forest connects Harrison Lake and the river valley to the surrounding mountain forests, it may well qualify for this designation — which would give it provincial-level protection that no municipal bylaw can override.
4. Ensure the Sts'ailes Nation is part of any assessment process. Wildlife corridors in BC are increasingly recognized as part of Indigenous land stewardship. The Sts'ailes people have lived with and cared for this

landscape for generations. Their knowledge of how wildlife and ecosystems move through this territory is directly relevant and should be part of any formal assessment.

### **A note on the kids**

I want to end with something more personal. I've spent years facilitating outdoor education programs and taking children into natural spaces — including into this exact forest, beside the firehall in Harrison Hot Springs. I have brought groups of children into that space and used it as a living classroom. I've watched what happens when kids are in there — the way they slow down, start noticing things, pick up sticks, look under logs, point at birds. It is a genuinely rich educational environment. Those old trees, that established understory, that feeling of being in a real wild place steps from a school — it works in a way that no manufactured nature space can replicate.

When children have regular access to a real, living forest — with big trees to climb, dirt to dig in, birds to watch, and the feeling of being somewhere genuinely wild — something shifts in them. They pay attention differently. They're calmer, more curious, more connected. The research on this is extensive and clear. But you don't really need research to know it. You just need to watch a group of kids given an hour in a real forest versus an hour on a rubber mat under a plastic structure.

The children of Harrison Elementary have something genuinely rare — a real forest right on their school grounds, accessible every single school day. I have seen firsthand, in that exact space, how children respond to it. Taking it away would be a real and lasting loss — not just for this generation, but for every child who comes after them.

I would ask that a formal environmental and wildlife corridor assessment be conducted before this proposal moves any further forward, and that this letter be entered into the official record as feedback on the Civic Campus proposal.

Thanks for your time.

Stephanie Blue

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Stephanie Blue

Date: June 5, 2026

File No: 0360-20-07

Mayor and Council  
Village of Harrison Hot Springs  
PO Box 160, 495 Hot Springs Road  
Harrison Hot Springs, BC V0M 1K0

Board Chair and Trustees  
School District No.78 (Fraser-Cascade)  
650 Kawkawa Lake Road  
Hope, BC V0X 1L0

Dear Mayor and Council, and Board Chair and Trustees:

**RE: Civic Campus Project**

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On behalf of the Environmental Advisory Committee, I'd like to extend our thanks to Council and School District No. 78 (Fraser-Cascade) for involving the Committee in the May 20, 2026 Civic Campus Engagement Event. We appreciated the opportunity to learn more about the proposal and to engage with the public. There were many productive conversations, and we were pleased by the amount of feedback received, especially as it pertains to the environmental considerations which are at the core of our mandate as an advisory committee to Council.

During the most recent Committee meeting of May 26, 2026 we discussed the feedback received during the event. We resolved to write to Council and School District No.78 (Fraser-Cascade) to bring forward several items and request that they be taken into consideration as the project evolves.

Fire Hall Park holds significant environmental, community and educational value to the residents of Harrison Hot Springs and students of Harrison Hot Springs Elementary. From an environmental stewardship perspective, this area is home to many large trees which serve to mitigate climate concerns and greenhouse gas emissions, provide wildlife habitat and support biodiversity. The area supports education by offering a place for children to play, explore and learn about the natural world that surrounds them. During the public engagement event, we heard many comments regarding the community significance of these mature trees. They represent a vital piece of our community identity as part of the natural character of Harrison Hot Springs.

The community clearly places significant importance on preserving and managing trees in this area. While we can appreciate that this proposal has great potential to enhance educational and civic spaces in the Village, we wanted to bring these concerns to your attention. We urge you to consider these comments with respect to any future planning or development of this area.

Thank you again for your consideration and continued commitment to involving the community in these important discussions.

Sincerely,



Councillor Schweinbenz  
Chair, Village of Harrison Hot Springs Environmental Advisory Committee

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**From:** boucary M  
**Sent:** June 9, 2026 2:43 PM  
**To:** Vivian Li <[info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>  
**Subject:** Civic Campus Proposal, Feedback and Safety Concerns

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To the Village of Harrison Hot Springs,

**Please add this email to the official record of feedback on the Civic Campus proposal.**

My name is Boucary. I have lived in Harrison Hot Springs for four years. I am also a volunteer with the Harrison Hot Springs Fire Department, where I have served for the past three years.

I am writing because I have concerns about the Civic Campus proposal and I want to make sure my feedback is on the record before the deadline.

I want to share some concerns I have about this proposal. I agree with the concerns others have already raised about Firehall Park. It is a park that locals use every day. My family uses it. The children who go to that school use it every day. I do not think it should be given away and cleared. I also have concerns about what this proposal would mean for the firehall and how it could affect our response times and our ability to operate and train. These are real concerns for those of us who volunteer there.

But I also want to raise something different.

I have been a volunteer firefighter here for three years. In that time, the question of what we would do in a major emergency has come up more than once. Harrison Hot Springs has one road in and one road out. We are surrounded by mountains, forest, and water. We face real risks. Wildfires, floods, landslides. If that one road was ever blocked during an emergency, I think about what that would mean. For families. For our neighbours. For the children at that school. It is something I think about seriously.

It is already June. We are officially in fire season. There have already been wildfires in areas near us this year. This is not a distant risk. Our village could need to evacuate this summer. This month. And we still have only one road out.

I know the Village is aware of this. It has come up. But there is no plan yet.

So my question is simple: why is this the project we are focusing on right now? Moving village office buildings across the street. Relocating a works yard that already has a home. These do not feel like an urgent or important use of our community's time and money. But making sure our community can get out safely in an emergency is something we need.

A new school is important. But getting funding for a new school is the school district's job, not the Village's. The school already has a large piece of land they could build on. The Village does not need to give away a beloved park to make that happen.

I believe the Village's most important role is to take care of the people who live here. I think the most important thing the Village could be doing right now is working seriously on a second evacuation route for this community. That is a basic safety need. It should come before a development project that, when you look at it, does not really change what we already have. We already have a civic campus across the road. Village offices, a works yard, community buildings. What this proposal would change is that we would lose the forest and the park that locals actually want and use. That doesn't seem like the right trade.

I hope Council will consider stopping this proposal and making resident safety the priority instead.

Respectfully,  
Boucary Mouhamadoussene

Harrison Hot Springs Resident and Volunteer Firefighter

## Amanda Graham

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**Subject:** Follow-Up Comments - Civic Campus Proposal

**From:** Leanne Bird [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 9, 2026 10:29 PM

**To:** Fred Talen <[ftalen@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:ftalen@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Leo Facio <[LFacio@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:LFacio@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Allan Jackson <[ajackson@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:ajackson@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Mark Schweinbenz <[mschweinbenz@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:mschweinbenz@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>; Michie Vidal <[MVidal@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:MVidal@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>

**Cc:** Vivian Li <[info@harrisonhotsprings.ca](mailto:info@harrisonhotsprings.ca)>

**Subject:** Follow-Up Comments - Civic Campus Proposal

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*Please record this email as formal feedback on the Civic Campus proposal.*

Dear Mayor Talen and Members of Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to present to Council as a formal delegation on June 1st, and for the warmth and kindness of your responses. It genuinely meant a lot.

One thing has stayed with me since that evening. Several of you described this proposal as conceptual, and I want to respectfully address that, and to share these concerns while this decision is still being made.

### **On “conceptual”:**

I understand that a project of this scale has many details yet to be determined. But the central premise of this proposal is a land swap of Firehall Park, and that is not conceptual. The specific reason a partnership is being proposed between the Village and the School District is centred around that land swap. That is why this proposal to partner exists at all. The school district needs provincial funding for a new school. They do not need land. The Village Lands Master Plan suggests this land swap is connected to a broader Village interest in developing its existing civic lands. And when you look at the Civic Campus proposal itself: detailed site maps exist on the Village website, documents have been prepared specifically addressing the legal process for swapping protected parkland, and Phase 3 of the proposal is explicitly about the land exchange. People spent significant time on this. This does not feel like an initial brainstorm or an early stage concept. It appears to be a plan that is already well underway.

I understand there are many more steps and potential roadblocks ahead. But signing a Memorandum of Understanding is a meaningful commitment. It is a statement of intent to pursue this land swap. That decision matters, regardless of what comes after. And once that process is set in motion, the risk that one day that park is gone becomes very real.

There is also a timing issue I cannot ignore. The Village’s own Parks and Trails Master Plan was finalized in October 2025, formally documenting Firehall Park as one of the most visited and loved parks in Harrison Hot Springs, and rating its development as a HIGH PRIORITY community park with trees preserved. According to the Village’s own timeline, the Civic Campus concept was being developed at virtually the same time, in the very end of 2025. The Village was consulting residents about how to make Firehall Park better, while also developing a plan to swap it away and clear it. I genuinely hope Council was not fully aware of that contradiction. But even at a conceptual stage, a misalignment this significant needs to be addressed before this proposal moves any further.

**Public Works Yard Concern:**

I also want to raise one specific question before the feedback period closes, as I think it deserves a transparent answer. At the May 20th engagement event, a Village staff member made a passing comment suggesting there may be soil contamination concerns at the current works yard site from years of oil and machinery use, and that the land would need some work before it could be redeveloped. I want to ask Council directly: is there a soil contamination issue at the current works yard site? Has a formal assessment been conducted? And if remediation of that site is a factor in the decision to relocate the works yard, the community deserves to know that. The Village Lands Master Plan already documents that relocating the works yard is motivated by a desire to unlock that land for future redevelopment. If soil remediation is an additional motivation, that should be transparently disclosed. It would help explain why moving a perfectly functional works yard to a site beside a school, and into a well loved and used forested space that would need to be cleared, is being presented alongside a proposal that is promoted as being for children and the community.

And I want to note the troubling irony: if soil contamination is indeed a factor, the Village would be proposing to address one environmental problem by creating another: clearing irreplaceable old growth forest and permanently removing the ecological and climate benefits of mature trees. Cleaning contaminated soil is possible, costly and time-consuming, but possible. You cannot clean your way back to an old growth forest, full of wildlife, that took generations to grow. Once those trees are gone, they are gone for generations. I would gently ask Council to consider whether that is truly the trade-off this community would choose if fully informed.

**On transparency:**

I want to return to the question of transparency once more, because a comment was made on June 1st suggesting that the Village posts all updates and information on their website. I understand that, and I appreciate it. But I want to be very clear about the distinction I am drawing, because I don't think it was fully heard.

I have re-read the press release about the Civic Campus proposal and the posters promoting the May 20th information event. Not once is there any mention of a land swap. Not once is Firehall Park named. At no point was it stated that the Village is considering swapping away legally protected parkland to be cleared and built upon. The public was told the Village wants to help children get a new school. That is very different from being told: we are considering exchanging one of your most loved community parks so it can be cleared and developed on. The first invites support. The second invites the informed consent this community deserves.

**My final request:**

Please do not sign the Memorandum of Understanding. Signing it is not a neutral administrative step. It is a statement that the Village intends to pursue this land swap. The school district can pursue a new school without this partnership. The children need provincial funding, not Firehall Park.

I am asking Council to stop this specific proposal, protect Firehall Park permanently, and find a way to get our children a wonderful new school without this land swap.

With respect and genuine care for this community,

*Leanne Bird*

Harrison Hot Springs Resident

June 9, 2025

## **RE: Additional Written Submission: Civic Campus Proposal Feedback**

Dear Harrison Hot Springs Village Staff,

Please ensure this submission is added to the formal feedback record for the Civic Campus proposal.

### **Why I Care About This**

I live in Harrison Hot Springs because I chose to. Harrison is not Vancouver, not Surrey, not the kind of developed suburban community most people default to. People choose to live here, to raise their children here, because it is different. Because there are more trees than buildings. Because the pace is quiet, the community is small, and nature is not something you drive to on weekends. It is something you walk through every day.

Fire Hall Park and the forested area within the school grounds have always felt like the heart of that difference. Not a mountain hike, but an easy daily walk within our own neighbourhoods, through a dense, genuine block of old forest right in the middle of the village. Schoolchildren play in it daily. Families walk through it. I have loved it many times without ever once thinking it might be at risk. I assumed, as I think most residents assume, that we all understood its value. That it was simply not in question.

### **How I Came to Understand What Was Being Proposed**

I only learned about the Civic Campus proposal by chance, when I happened to hear about the engagement event. I went along curious, and it was there, looking at the before-and-after maps, that I started to piece together what the proposal would actually mean. When I confirmed with a Village staff member that the plan would indeed require clearing Fire Hall Park's forest, I was genuinely shocked.

My first instinct was that this must be a misunderstanding. That the Village simply didn't know how loved and used that space was. That they didn't fully appreciate what it meant to the community, or what clearing an intact interior forest block would mean ecologically. I thought if residents just knew how loved that space was, it would be enough.

Then I began preparing for my presentation to Council, and I read the Village's own planning documents.

What I found there has stayed with me. The Parks and Trails Master Plan, adopted by Council just months ago in October 2025 through two full rounds of community

engagement, describes Fire Hall Park as a forested natural area widely loved and used by residents. It designates developing it as a community park, with trees preserved, as a HIGH priority action. It states explicitly that the trees should be maintained to the greatest extent possible, with any amenities nestled within the forested site. The Urban Forest Management Plan, submitted to Mayor and Council in 2023, states that the most important and critical goal for the Village is to protect the trees that are already there, and calls for specimen trees and natural forested areas to be protected as a legacy for future generations.

What troubled me most was not just the contradiction between these plans and the Civic Campus proposal. It was discovering that the Urban Forest Management Plan documented that residents of Harrison Hot Springs *already felt the Village was not transparent about tree removal and development*. Not one survey respondent said tree protection was working. Residents had already told the Village, through its own consultation process, that they felt excluded from decisions about trees, that they didn't trust the process, and that they wanted greater transparency and public consultation. The Village received that feedback in 2022 and 2023, included it in an adopted planning document, and then advanced a proposal to remove the last interior forest in the Village without making that clear to residents.

## **A Tension Between Village Documents**

While preparing for Council I also came across the Village Office Masterplan, a report on the Village's own civic lands produced in December 2024. Reading it gave me pause. In it, Village-owned land is described as *"underutilized,"* and the guiding principle for how to treat it is *"highest and best use."* The public works yard is identified as something to relocate in order to *"unlock additional opportunities for redevelopment,"* enhancing the site's long-term value. The same Key Takeaways section also notes that the community values preserving existing trees. That finding is there, but it sits uncomfortably alongside everything else in the document.

There is genuine appetite in the community for some of what this proposal touches: better facilities, improved services, and a new school. Those are real needs. But I don't believe residents want those things at the cost of the last interior forest in the village. That was never made clear to people during the feedback process.

## **What Follows This Letter**

I have already asked Council directly not to sign the Memorandum of Understanding for this proposal. I want to say again, briefly, that I believe it is possible to build a new school for Harrison's children without swapping this parkland and clearing this forest. Those two things are not the same ask.

While preparing to speak to Council on June 1st, I found myself going deeper and deeper into the Village's own planning documents. What I found there was striking. The

contradictions were not minor or technical. They were direct, specific, and recent. I could not cover all of it in a ten-minute delegation. I also wanted to ensure these points were properly documented and included in the formal feedback record for this project, not just spoken aloud in a council chamber.

So I have compiled a document that brings together some of the most significant passages from three Village planning documents. There are more I could have included. I am submitting it here so that it is on the record.

Thank you for reading this.

Sincerely,

Leanne Bird  
Harrison Hot Springs, BC

## Supporting Evidence

### Context and Purpose of This Document

The purpose of this document is to place on the formal record how the Civic Campus proposal contradicts the Village's own adopted Parks and Trails Master Plan — a document shaped by two rounds of community engagement, reviewed by Fraser Health Authority, and approved by Village Council in October 2025. Every passage cited below is drawn directly from that plan.

**How to read this document:** *This document draws on three Village planning documents. Each quoted passage is labelled with its source. ■ Green border and label = Parks and Trails Master Plan (October 2025). ■ Amber border and label = Urban Forest Management Plan (May 2023). ■ Purple border and label = Village Office Masterplan / Civic Lands Report (December 2024). Bold text within passages highlights language of particular significance. Italic notes beneath each passage provide context.*

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## 1. How the Community Values Parks, Nature, and the Forest

### The Village's Own Introduction: Why Parks and Trails Matter

*“People come to enjoy the hot springs for health benefits, the **scenic beauty of the lake and forests**, the charming village center, and the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities.”*

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Introduction (p. 2) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

The forest is explicitly named as one of the core reasons people visit and live in Harrison Hot Springs — not an amenity to be traded away, but one of the community's defining natural assets.

“The parks and trails in the Village offer valuable benefits to both residents and visitors. They provide free and low-cost accessible spaces for outdoor activities that support physical fitness and mental wellbeing. The Village parks and trails also showcase the **beautiful scenic landscape of the lake and surrounding mountains, giving residents great joy and attracting tourists**, which in turn boosts the local economy.”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Benefits of Parks and Trails (p. 12) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

## Community Survey: Residents Use Parks Every Week

“The most common activities for survey respondents using Village parks and trails were **walking/hiking (97%)**, community events/festivals (71%), cycling (65%), live performances (58%), outdoor gatherings (55%), and water sports (52%). **Most respondents (87%) use Village parks and trails on a weekly basis.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Online Survey Summary (p. 74) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

“Engagement participants appreciate that **Village parks and trails celebrate Harrison's scenic beauty**. The Village's parks and trails are valued for their ability to support passive recreation and community events.”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Engagement Highlights (p. 27) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

## Open House: Fire Hall Park Is One of the Most-Visited Parks in the Village

“The most visited parks by open house attendees were Beachfront Park, Rendall Park, Spring Park, and **Fire Hall Park.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Open House Summary (p. 77) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

Fire Hall Park ranked among the four most-visited parks in the Village — **despite having no formal amenities whatsoever**. Its draw is entirely the forest itself. This is the space the Village is proposing to transfer to the school district and clear.

## Residents' Vision for the Future Includes Celebrating Natural Features

“Survey respondents were asked about their vision for the future of parks and trails in the Village. Responses included: ... **celebrating natural features**... managing parks and trails for climate resiliency...”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Online Survey Summary (p. 76) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

## Residents Support Investment in Parks — Including Willingness to Pay More Tax

“Most of the 31 respondents said they would **support a tax increase to fund parks and trail development (68%)**, 16% were opposed.”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Online Survey Summary (p. 76) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

Residents value their parks so highly that a strong majority would accept higher taxes to support them. The proposal to dispose of Fire Hall Park as parkland was not before them when they expressed this support.

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## 2. The Plan’s Commitment to Protecting Trees and Natural Areas

### The Adopted Vision Statement

“The Village of Harrison Hot Springs will: ... **Protect and enhance its natural setting through environmental stewardship and sustainable management practices.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Vision Statement (p. 30 and Executive Summary p. ii) ■ **Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)**

This vision was developed through community engagement and approved by Council. It is the Village’s own stated commitment. Disposing of Fire Hall Park’s forest is inconsistent with this adopted direction.

### Recommendation 2.8: Protect the Urban Forest — Rated HIGH PRIORITY

“The Village’s urban forest provides the community with ecosystem services, holds significant localized ecological benefits, and is responsible for much of the Village’s natural beauty. **Trees in parks contribute substantially to the urban forest and provide shade, heat mitigation, flood mitigation, and biodiversity.** The Village should continue to manage, protect, and grow its urban forest...”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Recommendation 2.8 (p. 33) ■ **Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)**

Rated HIGH PRIORITY by the plan. The trees at Fire Hall Park are part of the urban forest this recommendation exists to protect. Clearing them to make way for a school building is the opposite of managing, protecting, and growing the urban forest.

### Open House and Survey Participants: Protect Public Trees

“Open House attendees shared ideas about how the Village could improve its parks... including: **adding and protecting public trees.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Open House Summary (p. 77) ■ **Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)**

“Survey respondents had many ideas for improving parks and trails in Harrison, including: ... **protecting trees and adding street trees.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Online Survey Summary (p. 76) ■ **Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)**

### Participants Asked for Stronger Conservation Goals in Parks

“When asked if anything was missing from the Plan’s recommendations, participants suggested ... **exploring conservation/environmental protection goals in parks.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Round 2 Outcomes (p. 81) ■ **Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)**

When directly asked what was missing, residents called for more conservation protection in parks — not less. The conclusion of the engagement process stated plainly that participants believe the Plan should work to “protect, enhance, and promote access to natural features.” This was captured in the Village’s own engagement process.

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### 3. What the Plan Specifically Says About Fire Hall Park — And What It Requires

#### The Plan Describes Fire Hall Park as a Forested Natural Area

“Fire Hall Park is a **forested natural area** between the Harrison Hot Springs Fire Hall and the Harrison Hot Springs Elementary School site. An informal trail connecting Clover Place and Balsam Avenue to the school field runs along the park’s outer edge. The park is **widely used by locals despite having no formal amenities.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Inventory (p. 16) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

The plan’s own language recognizes Fire Hall Park as a forested natural area that is widely used precisely because of its natural character. This is the land the Village is proposing to transfer and clear.

#### Recommendation 5.2: The Plan’s Adopted Direction for Fire Hall Park

“As a centrally located, Village-owned park space, Fire Hall Park is well-suited to be developed into a community park. New amenities like walking pathways, a small off-leash dog park, a nature play area, and/or a pump track would complement the Village’s existing park network... **The existing trees should be maintained to the greatest extent possible for the shade and biodiversity benefits, with amenities nestled within the forested site.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Recommendation 5.2 (p. 35) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

This recommendation was adopted by Council. It is unambiguous: the trees at Fire Hall Park are to be **maintained to the greatest extent possible**, and any new amenities are to be **nestled within the forested site** — not built in place of it. The Civic Campus proposal directly contradicts this adopted Council direction.

#### Recommendation 5.2 Is Rated HIGH Priority — The Sharpest Contradiction in This Document

“Goal 5: Improve the Quality, Diversity, and Accessibility of Park Amenities  
Recommendation 5.2: Develop Fire Hall Park as a community park with amenities —  
Priority: **HIGH** | Timeframe: Medium-term | Resources: \$\$\$”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Executive Summary Recommendations Table (p. iv) and Implementation Plan (p. 46) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

This priority rating appears twice in the adopted plan: once in the Executive Summary and once in the full Implementation Plan. Both say **HIGH**. This means the Village of Harrison Hot Springs, in October 2025, formally adopted a plan that designated Fire Hall Park as a high-priority site for development as a community park — with trees preserved and amenities nestled within the forest.

The Civic Campus proposal was being developed at the same time this plan was being written, consulted upon, and finalized. **The community was being engaged about how much they loved Fire Hall Park and asked for their vision for its future as a park — while a separate process was underway that would transfer this same land to the school district and clear the forest entirely.** These two processes were running in parallel. The Parks and Trails Master Plan, which residents shaped and Council adopted, says Fire Hall Park should be a HIGH priority community park. The Civic Campus proposal says it should be a school construction site. The Village cannot pursue both. It must choose — and its own adopted plan has already answered the question.

## The Plan Formally Classifies Fire Hall Park as a ‘Natural’ Ecosystem

“The Village’s proposed maintenance standards assign parks to maintenance levels. Fire Hall Park is classified at the **‘Natural’ maintenance level** — defined as: maintenance is low in order to **maintain ecosystem functioning and habitat quality.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Appendix C — Parks Maintenance Standard (p. 61) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

This is the Village’s own technical classification of the site. Fire Hall Park is formally designated as a natural ecosystem to be maintained for habitat quality. It is not classified as a development site, a school site, or a land asset to be disposed of. **This classification sits in direct conflict with the current proposal.**

## Community Ideas for Fire Hall Park: All Compatible with the Forest

“Suggestions for recreation amenities to be developed in Fire Hall Park included **an adventure/nature playground, an off-leash dog area, walking trails, and a pump track.**”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Round 2 Outcomes (p. 80) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

Every amenity residents suggested for Fire Hall Park is compatible with retaining the forest. Not one suggestion involved clearing it. The community’s vision for this space and the Village’s current proposal are irreconcilable.

## The Village’s Own Parkland Criteria Require Protection of This Site

Appendix B of the plan sets out formal criteria the Village uses to evaluate and manage parkland. Several criteria apply directly to Fire Hall Park and confirm it should be retained and protected as a natural park — not transferred or developed.

“Parkland should be considered where it **protects ecosystems not otherwise represented in the system ... and where significant natural features are located.** Parks should **conserve, enhance and restore the natural physical character of the site and contribute to the Village’s climate objectives.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Appendix B — Parkland Acquisition Criteria, Criteria 6 & 7 (pp. 56–57) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

By the Village’s own criteria, Fire Hall Park qualifies for protection on multiple grounds: it contains significant natural features, its natural character should be conserved, and it contributes to climate objectives through its mature tree canopy. **Transferring this land to the school district and clearing the forest fails each of these criteria.**

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## The Village Has a Recognized Shortage of Parkland — Not a Surplus

The Civic Campus proposal involves the Village disposing of existing designated municipal parkland. The Parks and Trails Master Plan makes clear that the Village does not have surplus park space — it has a recognized deficit, and is actively seeking to acquire more.

*“Harrison Hot Springs parks are concentrated near the Village’s lakeshore, and **residents living south of Harrison Lake Estates do not have a community park within a 15-minute walk of their residence.** A new community park would ensure all Village residents have an easily accessible greenspace to recreate and gather.”*

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Recommendation 4.1 (p. 34) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

The Village’s own plan rates acquiring more parkland as a **HIGH PRIORITY** action. Fire Hall Park is one of the only centrally-located natural green spaces serving residents away from the waterfront. **Disposing of it through the Civic Campus land swap — while retaining the traded school land for potential development — is the direct opposite of what this plan calls for.**

It is worth noting that the plan does mention land swaps — but explicitly as a tool for **acquiring new parkland**, not for disposing of existing parkland: “The Village should explore procuring parkland through land development, including parkland dedication, using cash-in-lieu payments to fund park acquisition, and land swaps.” (Recommendation 4.1, p. 34). **The Civic Campus proposal inverts this intent entirely.**

*“Parks and trails are vital for providing low-cost and free opportunities for people to stay healthy and active, as well as creating community connections that are vital for **combating social isolation, supporting mental health and well-being, and retaining residents.**”*

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Economic Profile (p. 10) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

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## 4. A Health Authority Recommendation: Protect Shade Trees for Public Health

Fraser Health Authority formally reviewed the draft Parks and Trails Master Plan and submitted recommendations that were incorporated into the final adopted document. Their input focused specifically on the public health importance of shade trees in parks.

### Fraser Health Authority’s Formal Recommendation

*“Fraser Health provided recommendations to ensure the Parks and Trails Master Plan appropriately advocated for climate resiliency in Village parks and trails. This included: **ensuring the benefits of shade trees in parks are appropriately raised and communicated in the document**; incorporating the addition of shade structures into the recommendations; and adding information on climate-resilient tree species selection for parks and green spaces.”*

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Fraser Health Authority Review (p. 81) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

A regional public health authority formally required the Village to advocate for shade trees as a public health asset. **The mature forest at Fire Hall Park is the most significant existing shade resource in the central Village.** Clearing it would directly contradict the health authority’s direction — incorporated into the Village’s own adopted plan.

## The Plan Identifies Heat Mitigation as an Urgent Priority

“Trees in parks contribute substantially to the urban forest and provide **shade, heat mitigation, flood mitigation, and biodiversity.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Recommendation 2.8 (p. 33) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

“Measures to help people manage heat should also be considered, such as **adding trees and shade structures... Hotter, drier summers are increasing the risk of forest fires** and wildfire management is an increasingly important consideration for parks and trails in rural communities.”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Parks and Trails Trends — Climate Resiliency (p. 13) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

## Community Participants Called for More Shade Trees

“Participants wanted to see **more shade trees and shade structures in Village parks.** Participants advocated for selecting climate-resilient trees for use in Village parks and green spaces.”

— Engagement Summary — What We Heard Report, Key Themes — Climate Resiliency (p. 85) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

Residents, Fraser Health, and the plan’s authors are aligned: Harrison needs more shade and mature tree cover in its parks. **The established forest at Fire Hall Park cannot be replaced on any meaningful timeline.** A mature forest cleared today would take generations to recover its canopy, cooling capacity, biodiversity, and ecological function. No replanting commitment can substitute for what is already standing.

## The Plan Names Fire Hall Park’s Trees Specifically

“The existing trees should be maintained to the greatest extent possible for the **shade and biodiversity benefits, with amenities nestled within the forested site.**”

— Parks and Trails Master Plan, Recommendation 5.2 (p. 35) ■ Parks and Trails Master Plan (2025)

The plan does not speak generally about trees elsewhere — it names the trees at Fire Hall Park specifically and identifies shade as the reason for their preservation. This language is now part of the Village’s adopted planning framework.

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## 5. The Urban Forest Management Plan: A Second Village Document Directly Contradicted

The Village of Harrison Hot Springs also commissioned an **Urban Forest Management Plan (UFMP)**, completed in May 2023 by B.A. Blackwell & Associates and submitted directly to the Mayor and Councillors. This is a separate document from the Parks and Trails Master Plan, but its findings compound the contradiction created by the Civic Campus proposal. The UFMP was produced specifically to address the protection and management of trees and forested areas within the Village — the same trees and forest that the Civic Campus proposal would clear.

Fire Hall Park contains the **last large block of undeveloped, dense forest within the Village boundary**. Forest exists outside the Village, but within it, this is the only remaining interior forest stand. It contains old, large-statured trees — exactly the category the UFMP identifies as most valuable and least replaceable. The passages below are drawn directly from that plan.

## The Village’s Own Vision: The Most Important Goal Is Protecting Existing Trees

*“The vision for the Village’s urban forest is one in which the existing tree resource of Harrison Hot Springs is well-protected and maintained by the Village in a way that is both sustainable over time and provides an opportunity for the forest to grow and flourish. **Therefore, the most important and critical goal for the Village is to protect and care for the trees that are already there.**”*

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 2.5 — A Vision for Harrison’s Urban Forest (p. 21) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*This is the UFMP’s own stated vision, presented to Mayor and Council in 2023. **“The most important and critical goal” is to protect the trees already there.** Fire Hall Park’s mature forest is exactly what this vision exists to protect. Clearing it wholesale for a school building is the direct opposite of this stated priority.*

## The Executive Summary: Specimen Trees and Natural Forested Areas Must Be Protected as a Legacy

*“For both tourists and residents, trees comprising the urban forest in the Village of Harrison Hot Springs are an important aspect of its appeal. **The Village has a unique mix of specimen trees and natural forested areas, which should be protected to secure this legacy for future generations of residents and visitors.**”*

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Executive Summary (p. i) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*The UFMP’s opening sentence frames the urban forest as central to Harrison’s identity and appeal — for both residents and the tourism economy. It explicitly calls for protecting specimen trees and natural forested areas **as a legacy for future generations**. The Civic Campus proposal would permanently erase the most significant remaining natural forested area within the Village boundary.*

## The Urban Forest’s Benefits: Health, Climate, Ecology, and Property Value

*“Numerous studies have shown that trees within urban areas **improve mental and physical health**, as well as providing an aesthetic improvement to urban areas and increasing property values. The shade these trees provide is not only welcome for its own value in the summer, but it can also reduce energy costs for shaded buildings. Urban forests provide other environmental benefits, such as **decreasing soil erosion, air pollution, and flood risks** throughout the community. Tree cover also provides **wildlife habitat and ecosystem connectivity**. Growing trees sequester carbon and reduce emissions – valuable tools for climate change mitigation and*

adaptation. Trees are also known to **reduce the urban heat island effect** – a phenomenon in which the increased presence of concrete, asphalt, and other impenetrable surfaces of urban areas increases the overall temperature.”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 3.1 — Benefits of the Urban Forest (p. 22) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

Every benefit listed here — health, shade, air quality, flood mitigation, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, cooling — is provided at its highest level by a dense, mature, intact forest stand. These are not benefits that can be replicated by planting new trees on a cleared site within any reasonable timeframe.

## Retention of Large, Mature Trees Must Always Be the Primary Planning Consideration

“Policies and guidelines that support tree compensation should not be considered a ‘green light’ for wholesale removal of trees for development projects, as **it takes decades for trees to mature and begin to make substantial contributions to the urban forest canopy.** ... Therefore, **retention of existing healthy and large-statured trees should always be the primary planning consideration.**”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.3.3 — Tree Replacement Standards (p. 67) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

This is the Village’s own forestry consultants stating — in plain terms — that tree compensation policies are **not a green light for wholesale removal**, that replacement trees take decades to contribute meaningfully to the canopy, and that retention must always come first. **This directly answers the argument that trees at Fire Hall Park could simply be replanted elsewhere: according to the Village’s own plan, that is not an adequate substitute.**

## Large-Scale Tree Removal on Public Land Requires a Professional Forester

“**Recommendation 38: Require reforestation prescriptions by a registered professional forester for large areas of tree removal on public or private land.**”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Recommendation 38 (p. 68) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

The UFMP explicitly requires that any large-scale tree removal on public land be subject to a formal reforestation prescription by a registered professional forester. Clearing Fire Hall Park’s forest would constitute exactly such a large-scale removal on public land — and would require this process under the Village’s own adopted recommendations.

## Residents: 100% Said Tree Protection Was Not Working. Deeply Concerned About Development.

“In the online survey, **46.4% of respondents said that they did not feel the tree protection guidelines were working and 53.6% were unsure. No respondents said that they thought the current tree protection guidelines were working effectively.** ... Many respondents were very concerned about trees being removed for development without replacement trees. ... **The public requested greater transparency and public consultation for changes in policy around the urban forest.**”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 5.0 — Staff and Public Consultation (p. 36 and p. 72) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

Not a single survey respondent said tree protection was working. Every respondent was either dissatisfied or uncertain. **The community’s most consistent demand was transparency and public consultation before trees are removed for development.** The Civic Campus proposal — which would clear the Village’s last interior forest block without clearly disclosing this to the public — is precisely the kind of action residents were expressing alarm about when this plan was written in 2023.

## The Park Regulation Bylaw Protects Trees in Public Parks from Damage or Destruction

“Harrison Hot Springs’ Park Regulation Bylaw applies to trees and vegetation in publicly used areas (i.e., parks, beaches, boulevards) and **specifies that no visitor can destroy or damage a tree (or part thereof) in a public area.**”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.4.5 — Park Regulation Bylaw No. 1150 (p. 72) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

Under the Village’s own Park Regulation Bylaw, destroying trees in a public park is prohibited. The Civic Campus proposal would require the disposal of the park itself in order to circumvent this protection. **The bylaw that protects Fire Hall Park’s trees exists precisely because the Village has recognised this kind of destruction as something to prevent.**

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## 6. A Known and Documented Pattern: Residents’ Trust, Transparency, and Process Concerns

The concerns raised about the Civic Campus proposal — specifically that a significant consequence (the clearing of Fire Hall Park’s forest) has not been clearly communicated to the public — are not new. The Urban Forest Management Plan (2023) documents an established, named pattern of residents feeling excluded from and misled about decisions involving trees and development in Harrison Hot Springs. The passages below are all drawn directly from that plan.

### The Village’s Own Forestry Consultants Named Lack of Transparency as a Major Criticism

“One of the major criticisms brought forward in Open House #1 and the associated survey was the **perceived lack of transparency regarding tree care in the Village, especially on newly developed sites.** Village staff should increase outreach with the community via greater guidance on finding an arborist and the permitting process, as well as support for tree planting on private lands.”

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.6 — Community Engagement (p. 79) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

This is not a fringe complaint — it was named by the Village’s own professional consultants as **one of the major criticisms** to emerge from public consultation. The Civic Campus proposal, in which the land swap and forest clearance consequence has not been clearly communicated during the feedback phase, is this same pattern in its most consequential form.

## Residents Feared Development Would Keep Removing Trees — Councillors Acknowledged It

*“During the Council workshop on March 23, 2022, protection of existing trees was identified as a strong community value held by residents and stakeholders.*

***Councillors relayed that some residents expressed concern that anticipated development in the Village will continue to remove trees and not protect retained trees.”***

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.6 — Community Engagement (p. 78) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*This concern was raised directly with Councillors in 2022 and is formally recorded in the Village’s own planning document. Residents were already warning that development would continue to erode the tree canopy without adequate protection. The Civic Campus proposal — which would clear the last large block of interior forest in the Village — is exactly what they were warning about.*

## Residents Were Confused, Distrustful, and Unanimously Unsatisfied With Tree Protection

*“Residents were unclear on what the tree protection bylaws are in Harrison Hot Springs. Many respondents were very concerned about trees being removed for development without replacement trees. **Residents also expressed concern over the objectivity of arborist reports required for tree removal, as these often resulted in the removal of what residents perceived to be healthy trees.** Finally, the public requested greater transparency and public consultation for changes in policy around the urban forest. ... 46.4% of respondents said that they did not feel the tree protection guidelines were working and 53.6% were unsure. **No respondents said that they thought the current tree protection guidelines were working effectively.”***

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.4.4 (p. 72), Section 5.0 (p. 36) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*Not one survey respondent said tree protection was working. Residents did not trust arborist reports and explicitly asked for greater transparency and public consultation before trees are removed for development. **The Civic Campus proposal — which would clear the Village’s last interior forest without clearly disclosing that consequence — is precisely the kind of action residents were warning against.***

## Tree Protection During Construction Was Observed Not to Be Enforced

*“Based on observations made during field assessments in the Village of Harrison Hot Springs in June 2022, **tree protection measures required during construction are not actively enforced.**”*

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Section 7.4.6 (p. 73) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*The Village’s own forestry consultants observed and recorded, in the field, that tree protection during construction was not being enforced. This is the institutional context within which the Civic Campus proposal is being advanced — a Village that has already been found, by its own experts, to fail to enforce the protections it has on paper.*

## The UFMP Executive Summary Identified Transparency as a Core Community Concern

*“Survey results and feedback from public and stakeholder consultation show that residents of Harrison Hot Springs care deeply for the trees in the Village and are concerned regarding transparency and increased protection of trees during development.”*

— Urban Forest Management Plan, Executive Summary (p. i) ■ **Urban Forest Management Plan (2023)**

*This is the opening characterisation of community sentiment in the UFMP’s Executive Summary — the first substantive thing the document says about residents. **Transparency and increased protection during development are the two things residents most wanted.** The Civic Campus proposal, as currently being communicated, provides neither.*

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## 7. The Village’s Own Development Planning: A Third Document in the Picture

A third Village document is directly relevant to understanding the context of the Civic Campus proposal. In late 2024 — the same period the Civic Campus proposal was being developed — the Village produced the **Village Office Masterplan (Civic Lands Report)**, a summary report on redevelopment options for the Village’s centrally-located municipal lands. This document was produced by consultants for Council and municipal staff and was presented in December 2024.

The Civic Lands Report is focused on the Village’s existing land holdings and their development potential. Read alongside the Civic Campus proposal, it provides important context for understanding the strategic direction Village staff were pursuing with respect to their land assets at exactly the time Fire Hall Park’s future was being decided. The passages below are drawn directly from that report.

### The Village’s Own Lands Were Characterised as “Underutilized”

*“Current uses occupy only 37% of the study area. And while the balance of the site serves as an unprogrammed open space – including overflow parking during special events – there is a clear opportunity to consider how this asset might better serve community needs, current and future. **underutilized. ... optimized.** As illustrated here (at right), ideas explored within the site plan concepts present a far greater diversity of uses and efficient utilization (e.g. optimization) of space while better addressing community needs.”*

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Community Programming (p. 18) ■ **Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)**

*The framing of Village-owned land as “underutilized” and the explicit goal of “optimization” establishes a development-oriented lens through which the Village was viewing its land assets in 2024. **Fire Hall Park — a forested park with no buildings — would register as maximally “underutilized” under this framing.** It is worth noting that the community does not share this view: as documented throughout this record, residents value Fire Hall Park precisely because it is not developed.*

### The Guiding Principle: “High and Best Use” of Village-Owned Land

*“The Civic Lands Masterplan explores a range of “**highest and best use**” **opportunities** for the 4-acre Village-owned parcel in the heart of Harrison Hot Springs.”*

“High and best use” is a real estate and development planning term referring to the most profitable or intensive viable use of a piece of land. Its use as the guiding principle for Village-owned land planning sits in notable tension with the Parks and Trails Master Plan’s framework, which prioritises community value, environmental protection, and park preservation. **These two frameworks — one focused on development optimization, the other on park preservation — were both active within the Village at the same time.**

## The School Board Partnership Was Already Identified as a Development Strategy

“Collaboration with the School Board | **Partnering with the School Board presents an opportunity to explore shared uses and align development strategies with the adjacent school site.**”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Key Takeaways (p. 20) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

This Key Takeaway explicitly frames the school board partnership as a vehicle for advancing **development strategies** on land adjacent to the school. Fire Hall Park sits directly between the Village’s civic lands study area and the school. The Civic Campus proposal — which transfers Fire Hall Park to the school district — is the direct implementation of this stated strategy. It was not an incidental idea: it was identified as a goal in this December 2024 document.

## Unlocking “Other Civic Lands” Was an Explicit Goal

“Unlocking Opportunities for Other Civic Lands | **Community feedback on this site revealed what residents would like added to the Village, illustrating how similar opportunities could be explored for other civic lands.**”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Key Takeaways (p. 20) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

The report explicitly calls for taking the development approach applied to the current study area and extending it to **other civic lands**. Fire Hall Park is civic land. This statement signals an institutional intent to treat all Village-owned lands as potential development sites — which is the lens through which Fire Hall Park appears to have been assessed in the Civic Campus proposal.

## The Document Itself Noted That the Community Values Preserving Existing Trees

“Preserving Existing Trees | **The community values retaining existing trees for their environmental and aesthetic benefits.**”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Key Takeaways (p. 20) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

This is the Village’s own Civic Lands Report acknowledging, in its Key Takeaways, that the community wants existing trees preserved. This finding appeared in the same document that frames Village-owned land as “underutilized” and calls for “highest and best use” development. **The community’s expressed values and the document’s development framing are in direct tension — and the Civic Campus proposal resolves that tension in favour of development.**

## The Public Works Yard: Relocation to “Unlock” the Land It Sits On

One element of the Civic Campus proposal that has received little public explanation is the inclusion of a plan to relocate the Village’s public works yard to the old school site — land the Village would receive through the land swap, which is currently partly forested. The Civic Lands Report (December 2024) makes the rationale for this relocation explicit, and it is worth reading carefully.

“Relocating the Public Works Yard | While not an immediate priority, **relocating the public works yard could unlock additional opportunities for redevelopment or adaptive reuse, enhancing the site’s long-term value.**”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Key Takeaways (p. 20) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

The stated reason for relocating the public works yard is not operational necessity. It is to **“unlock” the land it currently occupies for redevelopment**. This is the Village’s own document recording that goal, in December 2024 — the same period the Civic Campus proposal was being developed. The works yard’s current location appears to be considered a development opportunity; moving it is how that land gets freed up.

“The Works Yard and Shed are envisioned as the market plaza.”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Open Space Idea: Destination Play & Market Plaza (p. 11) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

In the concept designs presented in this report, the existing works yard building is repurposed as a market plaza — confirming that the works yard’s current footprint is treated as development land to be unlocked, not an operational facility to be maintained in place.

“Phasing Strategy for with Repurposing of Existing Works Yard.”

— Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, Phasing Diagram Title (p. 13) ■ Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report (2024)

The works yard’s repurposing is not incidental to the development plan — it is named as a dedicated phase in the sequencing strategy. **The Civic Campus proposal’s inclusion of a works yard relocation to the old school site therefore serves a dual purpose that was not disclosed to the public during the feedback phase: it moves the works yard away from its current location so that land can be redeveloped, and it uses cleared forest on the land the Village receives through the swap as the relocation site.**

This raises questions worth noting on the record. The public works yard is understood to have a functional and adequate site at its current location. Relocating it to forested land on the old school site would require clearing additional trees beyond those cleared for the school building itself. This additional forest clearance was not prominently disclosed in the Civic Campus proposal as presented to the public, and the rationale for the relocation — as shown in the Village’s own planning documents — appears to be primarily about freeing the current site for development rather than improving operational function.

Clearing forest to relocate an operational facility that already has a functioning site, when the primary documented reason for relocation is to “unlock” the land for redevelopment, is **inconsistent with the Village’s own adopted goals of protecting and growing the urban forest, managing for climate resilience, and preserving natural areas within the Village boundary**. It is also an element of the Civic Campus proposal’s forest impact that has not been clearly communicated to the public as a component of what is being proposed.

## Summary

This document draws on three Village planning documents: the **Parks and Trails Master Plan (October 2025)**, the **Urban Forest Management Plan (May 2023)**, and the **Village Office Masterplan / Civic Lands Report (December 2024)**. All were produced by or for the Village of Harrison Hot Springs. Together, they establish the following:

- Fire Hall Park is designated municipal parkland, described in the Village’s own plan as a “forested natural area” that is widely used by locals despite having no formal amenities. Its community value is the forest itself.
- The Village’s adopted vision commits to “**protecting and enhancing its natural setting through environmental stewardship**” — language agreed by Council.
- Recommendation 5.2, adopted by Council, is rated **HIGH priority** in both the Executive Summary and the Implementation Plan. It explicitly states that “**the existing trees should be maintained to the greatest extent possible**” and amenities “**nestled within the forested site.**” This recommendation was being written and consulted upon at the same time the Civic Campus proposal was being developed. The two cannot coexist.
- The plan formally classifies Fire Hall Park at the ‘Natural’ maintenance level — defined as management to maintain **ecosystem functioning and habitat quality**. It is not classified as a development site or a land asset available for disposal.
- Fraser Health Authority formally required the Village to ensure shade trees are advocated for as a public health asset. **Clearing the mature forest at Fire Hall Park directly contradicts this health authority direction.**
- The Village’s own parkland criteria require parks to conserve the natural character of the site and contribute to climate objectives. **The Civic Campus proposal fails both.**
- The plan mentions land swaps only as a tool for acquiring new parkland — not for disposing of existing parkland. **The Civic Campus proposal inverts this intent.**
- The Village has a recognized and documented shortage of community parkland. Disposing of existing forested parkland through a land swap, while retaining the traded land for development, **contradicts the community’s expressed needs and the plan’s stated direction.**
- Throughout two rounds of community engagement, not one resident suggested clearing Fire Hall Park’s forest. Residents called consistently for protecting trees, celebrating natural features, and strengthening conservation goals.
- The Urban Forest Management Plan (2023) states that “**the most important and critical goal for the Village is to protect and care for the trees that are already there,**” and that specimen trees and natural forested areas “should be protected to secure this legacy for future generations.” Fire Hall Park contains the last large block of dense, interior forest within the Village boundary — including old, large-statured trees that the UFMP identifies as the least replaceable and most valuable assets in the urban forest.
- The UFMP explicitly warns that tree compensation is **not a green light for wholesale removal**, that it takes decades for new plantings to contribute meaningfully to the canopy, and that **retention of existing healthy and large-statured trees must always be the primary planning consideration.**
- 100% of residents surveyed for the UFMP said tree protection either wasn’t working or they were unsure. Their clearest demand was **greater transparency and public consultation before trees are removed for development.** The Civic Campus proposal — which would clear the Village’s last interior forest without clearly disclosing this during the feedback phase — is precisely what residents were warning against.

- The Civic Campus proposal has not been transparently communicated to the public. If it advances to formal park disposition proceedings, **the use of the Alternative Approval Process — which requires residents to opt out rather than opt in — would be an inadequate substitute for genuine public consent on a matter of this permanence and consequence.**
- The lack of transparency around the Civic Campus proposal is not an isolated incident. The Urban Forest Management Plan (2023) formally documents that lack of transparency around tree removal and development is **an established, named pattern in Harrison Hot Springs** — one that residents, Councillors, and the Village’s own consultants all acknowledged. Every resident surveyed said tree protection was either failing or uncertain. Residents explicitly asked for greater transparency and public consultation before trees are removed for development. The Civic Campus proposal has delivered neither.
- A third Village document — the Village Office Masterplan / Civic Lands Report (December 2024) — reveals the strategic context within which the Civic Campus proposal sits. That document frames Village-owned land as **“underutilized,”** applies a “highest and best use” development lens to Village land assets, explicitly identifies the school board partnership as a vehicle for “aligning development strategies with the adjacent school site,” and calls for similar opportunities to be explored across **“other civic lands.”** Notably, that same document also records that the community values preserving existing trees — a finding that sits in direct tension with the Civic Campus proposal’s consequence of clearing Fire Hall Park’s forest.
- The same Civic Lands Report explicitly identifies relocating the public works yard as a way to **“unlock additional opportunities for redevelopment or adaptive reuse, enhancing the site’s long-term value.”** The works yard’s relocation is shown as a deliberate phase in the development sequencing strategy, and the land it currently occupies is envisioned in concept designs as a repurposed development site. The inclusion of a works yard relocation within the Civic Campus proposal — to land that would require clearing additional forest — was not disclosed to the public as a component of the proposal, and the documented rationale for that relocation is development of the current site, not operational improvement. This is inconsistent with every other Village document’s stated goals of protecting and growing the urban forest.

The community has spoken clearly through these plans. Village Council adopted them. The Civic Campus proposal — whatever its merits as a school project — **involves the disposal of designated municipal parkland, the permanent clearing of the Village’s last interior forest block, and the relocation of a public works facility onto additionally cleared forest land, in a manner that contradicts the Village’s own adopted planning commitments at every level and that has not been transparently communicated to the public.** This document respectfully asks that those commitments be honoured, that the community be given full and plain-language disclosure of every element of what is being proposed, and that no park disposition proceed without a process commensurate with the permanence and irreversibility of what would be lost.

*Page references: Parks and Trails Master Plan, Final Report, October 2025; Urban Forest Management Plan, B.A. Blackwell & Associates Ltd., May 23, 2023; Village Office Masterplan — Civic Lands Report, December 2024. All Village of Harrison Hot Springs documents.*



File No: 1855-05-08  
Date: June 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Jace Hodgson, Director of Operations  
Subject: Ayelexw Qwo'ls: Reviving the Hot Springs

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council authorize the expenditure of up to \$250,000 toward a feasibility study of the Hot Springs Source to identify requirements for a future project supporting public access to hot springs mineral water, of which \$50,000 will be funded by the Community Works Fund, and the remaining \$200,000 will be funded by grants; and

THAT staff issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to define scope, methodology, and costs to undertake a feasibility study of the hot springs source.

## **SUMMARY**

To provide Council with an overview of public interest in accessing hot springs mineral water and to outline the proposed next steps for undertaking a feasibility study.

## **BACKGROUND**

Recent public engagement through the Parks and Trails Master Plan, along with ongoing correspondence received by staff, has demonstrated consistent community interest in exploring opportunities for public access to the hot springs mineral water. This interest aligns with historical Village records dating back over a century, which reflect a longstanding public desire to maintain access to this natural resource.

Engagement with Sts'ailes has further highlighted the site's deep cultural, spiritual, and healing significance. Historically, the hot springs attracted people from across the region for purposes of healing, ceremony, and rest. Through these discussions, Sts'ailes has provided a letter of support for undertaking a feasibility study related to hot springs mineral water and potential public access. A copy of this letter is attached to this report.

## **DISCUSSION**

On May 19, 2026, Council resolved to request a meeting at the 2026 UBCM Convention with the Minister of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship regarding hot springs source oversight.

To advance Council's direction, a feasibility study is required to better understand the opportunities and constraints associated with the hot springs source and to inform any future

project. The study would assess key components, including source water flow, regulatory requirements, water rights, and existing water licence and land tenure.

A current grant opportunity is available to support a minimum of 80% of feasibility study costs. Staff are recommending that a Request for Proposals (RFP) is issued to obtain submissions outlining cost, methodology, and approach for reviewing the hot springs source and evaluating opportunities for a future project.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Preliminary estimates have the cost of a feasibility study at approximately \$250,000. It is proposed that the Village contributes up to \$50,000, to be funded through the Community Works Fund, with the remaining amount anticipated to be supported through grant funding.

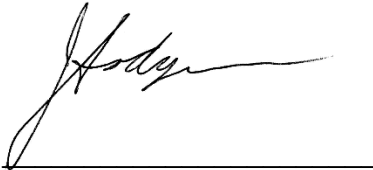
**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

2025-2026 Strategic Plan Priorities

Environmental Protection – To restore and protect the environment for future generations.

Healthy Livable Community – To promote and enhance a healthy lifestyle for all ages.

Respectfully submitted:



Jace Hodgson  
Director of Operations

Reviewed by:



Tyson Koch  
Chief Administrative Officer

Financial Considerations Reviewed by:



Scott Schultz  
Chief Financial Officer, Deputy CAO

Attachment: Letter dated January 2026 from Sts'ailes



January 27, 2026

To Whom It May Concern,

Sts'ailes is pleased to offer support for the Village of Harrison Hot Springs' application to re-establish the hot springs as a gathering place for healing, recreation, and connection with the natural environment.

The area known as Harrison Hot Springs, or Qwó:ls, has been a place of deep cultural, spiritual, and healing significance to Sts'ailes people since time immemorial. Our ancestors lived nearby in the village of Qwó:íls, and the hot springs drew people from across the region for healing, ceremony, and rest. These waters are part of a broader landscape that has long sustained Sts'ailes through our connection to the Harrison River, Harrison Lake, and surrounding territories.

Sts'ailes oral histories, including teachings of the Xe:xa:ls, speak to the origins and sacred nature of the hot springs. Long before settler development, our people and neighbouring Nations used the springs for their medicinal and restorative properties - knowledge later recorded by early visitors to the area.

We are encouraged by the Village's intention to recognize the hot springs as more than a recreational amenity, and to approach this project in a way that respects the history, cultural significance, and natural setting of Qwó:ls. Initiatives that support stewardship, learning, and respectful access align with longstanding Sts'ailes values of caring for land and water.

We wish the Village of Harrison Hot Springs success in their application and look forward to continued respectful relationships connected to this important place.

Sincerely,

Chief Chadley Paul, *Ches-Kin-Xen*  
4690 Salish Way, Agassiz BC.







# 15(c) COUNCIL REPORT

Regular Council

File No: 1880  
Date: June 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Scott Schultz, Chief Financial Officer  
Subject: 2025 Annual Report

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## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the 2025 Annual Report be approved.

## SUMMARY

To seek approval of the 2025 Annual Report.

## BACKGROUND

Section 98 of the *Community Charter* requires that an annual report be prepared by June 30<sup>th</sup> each year and made available to the public at least 14 days prior to the meeting.

Section 99 of the *Community Charter* requires that Council must annually consider the report at a council meeting or other public meeting. In accordance with section 99(3), public notice that the Annual Report would be considered at this council meeting was given on June 1, 2026.

## DISCUSSION

The annual report was made available for public inspection on May 29, 2026 on the Village's website. A hardcopy has also been available for inspection at the Village Office since that time. As of the date this report was written there have been no submissions from the public, however Council may wish to open the floor to public questions relating to the annual report at this time.

## FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial considerations to this report.

## POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

There are no policy considerations related to this report.

Respectfully submitted:



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Scott Schultz  
Chief Financial Officer, Deputy CAO

Reviewed by:



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Tyson Koch  
Chief Administrative Officer

File No: 0530-01  
Date: June 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Amanda Graham, Corporate Officer  
Subject: Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42

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**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42 be adopted.

**SUMMARY**

To present an updated Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42 to Council.

**BACKGROUND**

On March 3, 2025, Council passed the following resolution:

*WHEREAS the Village of Harrison Hot Springs is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment for all residents, volunteers, visitors, staff, and council members, and*

*WHEREAS discrimination and racism in any form are unacceptable and contrary to the values of respect, diversity, and dignity that our community upholds, and*

*WHEREAS implementing a comprehensive anti-racism and anti-discrimination policy will strengthen our commitment to equity and upholding the principles of the BC Human Rights Code, therefore be it resolved*

*THAT Council direct staff to develop a formal Anti-Racism/Anti-Discrimination Policy which will provide the framework for reporting and responding to discrimination and racism within the Village of Harrison Hot Springs.*

RC-2025-03-25

On May 20, 2025 staff presented a draft Anti-Racial and Anti-Discrimination Policy 1.42 which Council referred to a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

At the June 18, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting, a resolution was passed to refer the policy to legal counsel. The draft policy was reviewed by Lidstone and Company and brought back before Council at the October 6, 2025 regular meeting. It was noted that legal counsel was generally supportive of the policy as drafted, having only made minor revisions and noting that it was based off the template that Lidstone created in 2020.

Several concerns were raised by Council at that time including the following:

1. Who may file a complaint?
2. Whether complaints, reports or investigator findings are made public and subject to disclosure via a Freedom of Information request.
3. Whether complaints that are vexatious or made in bad faith are kept confidential or made public and releasable via a Freedom of Information request.
4. Adding in definitions of bystander and management
5. A conflict between section 10(e)(iv) which protects complainants from retaliation and section 14 which states that vexatious or bad faith complaints may result in termination for just cause or legal action

On April 20, 2026 Council adopted the I.D.E.A. Framework and Action Plan. Identified as a priority action in the plan to be completed within year one is to clarify internal and public-facing pathways for reporting discrimination, harassment and access concerns.

## DISCUSSION

The policy as drafted would apply to staff, elected officials, volunteers and contractors of the Village. It is intended to address concerns within the organization, rather than external concerns from members of the public which would be addressed through the BC Ombudsperson or BC Human Rights Tribunal. The policy does not preclude anyone who experiences racism in the course of their duties as a staff member, volunteer, elected official or contractor of the Village from filing a complaint with the BC Human Rights Tribunal. Rather, it is intended to supplement the legislation and provide a framework for these types of complaints to be addressed internally.

Complaints of racism or discrimination are confidential, regardless of whether they are made in bad faith, substantiated, or result in a particular outcome. The complaint process often generates records which would be subject to a Freedom of Information request, as all Village records are. However, it is likely that most, if not all, of the records would be withheld under section 22 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA), which protects personal privacy. There may be other exceptions to disclosure depending on how the file progressed. For example, if the Village were to receive legal advice or consider a complaint naming an elected official in a closed meeting, other sections of FOIPPA may apply. The level of confidentiality and whether to release records requested under FOIPPA are determinations that would have to be made on a case-by-case basis depending on the details of the complaint, the identity of the requestor if seeking personal information and the wording of the specific request. In some cases, it is possible that certain details of a complaint may be made public, and staff would recommend that the Village seek legal advice on a case-by-case basis if it were to consider releasing any information publicly.

Regarding the identified conflict between sections 10(e)(iv) and 14, the intent of section 10(e)(iv) is to protect complainants who make a complaint in good faith, even if it is determined to be unproven. Section 14 is intended to limit that protection when it is determined that the complaint was made in bad faith.

Attached to this report is an updated redlined version of the policy with the following changes:

- Amended the name of the policy to “Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy” to align with the template and other local government policies of a similar nature
- Added a definition for the terms bystander and management

- Amended section 2(c) as this is addressed later on in section 3
- Added section 4 to incorporate the role of the Union

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

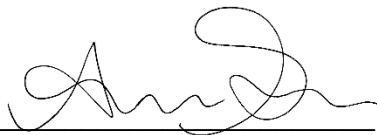
There are no financial considerations associated with this report.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

2026 Building Belonging: I.D.E.A. Framework and Action Plan

Respectfully submitted:

Reviewed by:



Amanda Graham  
Corporate Officer



Tyson Koch  
Chief Administrative Officer

Attachment: Updated Draft Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42

<b>POLICY NAME:</b>	<b>Anti-Racial and Anti-Discrimination</b> <b>Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism</b>
<b>POLICY NUMBER:</b>	<b>1.42</b>
<b>APPROVING AUTHORITY:</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislative (Council Approved) <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative (CAO Approved)
<b>DATE ADOPTED:</b>	xxxx, 2026
<b>LAST AMENDED:</b>	

## INTRODUCTION

The Village of Harrison Hot Springs (the Village) recognizes diversity in our community and believes that all members of our community, including, but not limited to, residents, elected officials, employees, volunteers and visitors have the right to live, work, do business and play in an environment that supports and asserts their fundamental rights, personal worth and human dignity.

## PURPOSE

This policy is intended to demonstrate the Village’s commitment to conducting day-to-day operations and governance in an anti-discriminatory manner and environment.

The implementation of this policy is a public commitment that the Village will continue to make best efforts to ensure that all who work and interact with the Village are able to do so in an environment and manner free of racism and discrimination.

The Village is further committed to respecting and upholding the vision and principles of British Columbia’s Human Rights Code, [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), and the implementation of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

## DEFINITIONS

**Barrier** - An overt or covert obstacle which must be overcome for equality and progress to be possible.

**Bias** - A subjective opinion, preference, prejudice, or inclination, often formed without reasonable justification, which influences the ability of an individual or group to evaluate a particular situation objectively or accurately.

**Bystander** – Means an individual who witnesses or becomes aware of an incident of racism or racial discrimination but is not directly involved as a Complainant or Respondent.

**Classism** - A prejudice against or in favour of people belonging to a particular social class, resulting in differential treatment.

**Colonialism** - The policy or practice of acquiring full or partial political control over another country, occupying it with settlers, and exploiting it economically.

**Colourism** - A prejudice or discrimination against individuals with a dark skin tone, typically among people of the same ethnic or racial group; a form of oppression that is expressed through the differential treatment of individuals and groups based on skin color.

**Committee or Commission Member** – A person appointed to a Committee, Commission or other Council established body under the *Community Charter* or the *Local Government Act*.

**Complaint** – An allegation in accordance with the procedure set out in this policy, that a person has breached this policy.

**Complainant** – A person who has submitted a Complaint.

**Cultural Racism** - Portrayal of Indigenous people, Blacks, people of colour and different ethnicities in the media, school texts, literature as inherently “inferior”, “savage”, “bad”, “primitive”. The premise by a host society that devalues and stereotypes minority populations.

**Discrimination** - The denial of equal treatment and opportunity to individuals or groups because of personal characteristics and membership in specific groups, with respect to education, accommodation, health care, employment, access to services, goods, and facilities. This behaviour results from distinguishing people on that basis without regard to individual merit, resulting in unequal outcomes for persons who are perceived as different. Differential treatment that may occur on the basis of any of the protected grounds enumerated in human rights law.

**Diversity** - A term used to encompass the acceptance and respect of various dimensions including race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, socio-economic status, religious beliefs, age, physical abilities, political beliefs, or other ideologies.

**Employment Equity** - A program designed to remove barriers to equality in employment for reasons unrelated to ability, by identifying and eliminating discriminatory policies and practices, remedying the effects of past discrimination, and ensuring appropriate representation of the designated groups (women; Indigenous people; persons with disabilities; and visible minorities). Employment Equity can be used as an active effort to improve the employment or educational opportunities of members of minority groups and women through explicit actions, policies or programs.

**Equity** - A condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people. Equity does not mean treating people the same without regard for individual differences.

**Inclusion** - The extent to which diverse members of a group (society/organization) feel valued and respected.

**Inclusive Language** - The deliberate selection of vocabulary that avoids explicit or implicit exclusion of particular groups and that avoids the use of false generic terms, usually with reference to gender.

**Indigenous** - Indigenous is understood to mean the communities, peoples, and nations that have a historical continuity with pre-invasion, pre-settler, or pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, as distinct from the other societies now prevailing on those territories (or parts of them).

**Individual Racism** - Individual Racism is structured by an ideology (set of ideas, values and beliefs) that frames one's negative attitudes towards others; and is reflected in the willful, conscious/unconscious, direct/indirect, or intentional/unintentional words or actions of individuals.

**Investigator** – Means an independent third party appointed to investigate a Complaint.

**Institutional Racism** - Institutional Racism exists in organizations or institutions where the established rules, policies, and regulations are both informed by, and inform, the norms, values, and principles of institutions. These in turn, systematically produce differential treatment of, or discriminatory practices towards various groups based on race. It is enacted by individuals within organizations, who because of their socialization, training and allegiance to the organization abide by and enforce these rules, policies and regulations. It essentially maintains a system of social control that favours the dominant groups in society (status quo).

**Management** – Means exempt employees of the Village who are excluded from the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement.

**People of Colour** - A term which applies to non-White racial or ethnic groups; generally used by racialized peoples as an alternative to the term “visible minority.” The word is not used to refer to Indigenous people, as they are considered distinct societies under the Canadian Constitution. When including Indigenous peoples, it is correct to say “people of colour and Indigenous peoples.”

**Racial Discrimination** - According to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (to which Canada is a signatory), racial discrimination is “any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin, which nullifies or impairs the recognition, enjoyment or exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”

**Racism** - Racism is a belief that one group is superior to others performed through any individual action, or institutional practice which treats people differently because of their colour or ethnicity. This distinction is often used to justify discrimination. There are three types of racism: Institutional, Systemic, and Individual.

**Respondent** - The person whose conduct is the subject of a Complaint.

**Systemic Racism** - Consists of patterns of behaviour, policies or practices that are part of the social or administrative structures of an organization, and which create or perpetuate a position of relative disadvantage for racialized persons. These appear neutral on the surface, such as racialized and colourblind norms and standard ways of operating, but nevertheless, have an

exclusionary impact on racialized persons, which lead to racially biased outcomes and experiences.

## PRINCIPLES

The Village:

- Acknowledges and recognizes the existence in our community of racism in all its forms;
- Is committed to breaking down barriers, deconstructing biases and fostering and promoting an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment for all, one that is free from racial discrimination and racism; and
- Acknowledges its role and responsibility in protecting every person's right to be free from racial discrimination and racism.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, elected officials, contractors, volunteers, and students working or volunteering for the Village or providing professional services to it. This policy applies to the interpretation and application of current and new bylaws, regulations, policies, procedures, contracts, procurements and activities carried out by the Village, all of which will be required to comply with the principles and particular requirements specified within this policy. The scope of this policy includes all aspects of the Village's activities, including its working environment, procurement, services, meetings and various public events. In addition, this scope will include ongoing relationships with individuals, businesses, community groups and contractors as well as with other local governments and public and private bodies.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1. Council and Committee/Commission Members

Village Council and Committee/Commission Members will take leadership in modeling inclusive behaviour and language and refraining from engaging in any form of racist or racially discriminatory conduct. Council and Committee/Commission Members will support, promote, and foster the principles outlined in this policy across all aspects of their work and interactions. Any incidents of racial discrimination shall be promptly reported to the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) or their designate. Council and Committee/Commission Members will cooperate and participate in good faith with any investigations conducted under this policy, ensuring the confidentiality of all individuals involved in a complaint.

### 2. Management

- (a) Village Management will ensure the principles of this policy are reflected in the execution of their duties, operational policies and practices. Management will model inclusive behaviour and language and not participate in racist or racially discriminatory conduct.

- (b) Management will include this policy in the training of Village Council at the beginning of each term of office and to Committee/Commission Members upon appointment to their respective positions. All employees, volunteers, and contractors will be provided with this policy at the commencement of their work with the Village.
- (c) ~~Management will report incidents of racial discrimination or racism experienced or witnessed immediately to a supervisor, the CAO or their designate.~~ Management will listen to any complaint, treating it sensitively, seriously and confidentially. Management will ensure this policy is reviewed at least every two years for effectiveness. When appropriate and required, management will provide an investigation of any allegations or appoint a third party to investigate when **allegations are serious, complex, or when timeliness or optics of impartiality and objectivity are critical.** The outcome of such an investigation may include education, training, or disciplinary action, depending on the findings.
- (d) The CAO is responsible for the implementation and administration of this policy.

### 3. Employees, Volunteers, Contractors

Employees, volunteers, and contractors must not engage in racial discrimination or racism and must behave in an inclusive manner. They will report incidents of racial discrimination or racism experienced or witnessed immediately to a supervisor or the CAO. They will maintain the confidentiality of all involved in a complaint under this policy and cooperate and participate in good faith in any investigation under this policy.

### 4. Union

The Union will take an active role as partners in supporting, promoting and fostering the principles of this Policy in all their work and interactions with their members, Management, and elected officials.

## POLICY

### 4.5. Governance

The Village is committed to achieving representation of the diversity of the community on its Committees and Commissions by ensuring that it has an equitable and transparent nominations process, that this process is communicated to all members, and that members are committed to outreach beyond the current membership if necessary to achieve this goal.

### 5.6. Employment

The Village is committed to achieving representation of equity seeking groups on its staff by ensuring that members of equity seeking communities have equitable access to employment.

This includes recruitment, selection, staff development, performance evaluation, retention, promotion, termination.

### **6.7. Services**

The Village is committed to ensuring that its services and programs are accessible to diverse communities. This involves review of current outreach, communications, program planning and evaluation, to ensure goals are met. The Village will take into consideration provision of services to underrepresented communities, vulnerable populations, those who experience intersectional discrimination, including equity-seeking groups and/or individuals.

### **7.8. Training and Education**

The Village is committed to ensuring that those involved in the delivery of services and programs have the knowledge, understanding and skills to work with and provide services to members of diverse communities, particularly equity-seeking communities.

### **8.9. Information and Communications**

The Village is committed to ensuring that all communications, including information on its services and programs, are accessible to diverse communities.

### **9.10. Complaint Process**

- (a) All members of Village Council, Council Committees and Commissions, management, employees, volunteers and contractors of the Village have a responsibility to treat all Complaints under this policy seriously and to report all Complaints of racism and discrimination.
- (b) Complaints must be made in writing to the CAO or their designate and must contain sufficient information for the Complaint to be investigated.
- (c) Upon receipt of a Complaint, the CAO or their designate may attempt to informally resolve the Complaint **and if unsuccessful, may retain an Investigator. or may retain an Investigator.**
- (d) The Investigator shall:
  - i. Be someone with expertise regarding investigations;
  - ii. Ensure the Respondent is informed of the allegations and all parties involved have been informed of their rights and responsibilities;
  - iii. Interview the parties concerned and any witnesses and collect all pertinent information; and
  - iv. Recommend a mediation process where appropriate, prepare a written report and ensure the investigation is completed in a timely and confidential manner.
- (e) Complainants have a right to:

- i. Make a Complaint and receive a copy of the Complaint;
  - ii. Be informed of the status and progress of the investigation;
  - iii. Be informed of a summary of the results of the investigation in writing, including a summary of corrective action that has or will be taken as a result of the investigation;
  - iv. Not be subject to retaliation; and
  - v. Withdraw a Complaint at any time during the procedure; however, depending upon the nature and severity of the allegations, the CAO or their designate may determine that an investigation is required, and the process will continue despite the withdrawal.
- (f) Respondents have a right to:
- i. Be informed that a Complaint has been filed;
  - ii. Be informed of the status and progress of the investigation
  - iii. Be informed of the allegations against them and be provided an opportunity to respond; and
  - iv. Be informed of a summary of the results of the investigation in writing.
- (g) Bystanders have:
- i. The right to not be subject to retaliation because they have participated as a witness; and
  - ii. A responsibility to meet with the Investigator and to cooperate in good faith with all those responsible for the investigation of the Complaint.

#### **10.11. Remedies**

Any individual covered by this policy who is found to have engaged in, or known about and took no action to report or stop racial discrimination or racist behaviour contrary to this policy may be subject to appropriate action depending upon the severity of the misconduct. The range of appropriate remedies may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (a) Manager or Employee:
- i. Oral and/or written apology from the Respondent and/or the Village
  - ii. Any administrative change that is appropriate (changes to reporting structure or work assignments, job site or position transfer, no contact requirement)
  - iii. Coaching, counselling, training or education
  - iv. Re-orientation to this policy and its purpose
  - v. Discipline up to and including termination of employment for just cause
- (b) Contractor or Volunteer: Termination of contract for service or of a volunteer opportunity
- (c) Elected Official: Sanction by Council (including, but not limited to censure, removal from appointments, referral to policy or legal action).

- (d) If the Respondent is not covered by this policy, the Village will take any and all steps reasonable and necessary to remedy the substantiated complaint to protect the Complainant from future harm.

#### **11.12. Unsubstantiated Complaints**

If an investigator finds insufficient evidence to support the Complainant's allegation, the investigator will submit that finding. There will be no records of the complaint on the Respondent's file, and there will be no sanction to anyone concerning the incident. A finding of no evidence is a simple reflection of the absence of evidence and nothing more.

#### **12.13. No Reprisals or Retaliation**

- (a) Any reprisal or retaliatory action that is related, in any way, to the circumstances noted above against a Complainant or person closely related to or associated with the Complainant, Bystander, Respondent, elected official or employee responsible for implementing this policy will not be tolerated.
- (b) Any individual covered by this policy who is found to have engaged in any reprisal or retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action. This action may include termination of employment for just cause, termination or a contract for service, or of a volunteer opportunity, or legal action.
- (c) Any elected official covered by this policy who is found to have engaged in any reprisal or retaliation in violation of this policy will be subject to Council consideration or appropriate sanctions, which may include censure, removal from appointments, referral to police, or legal action.

#### **13.14. Vexatious Allegations and Complaints**

Any individuals covered by this policy who makes an allegation or complaint under this policy that is subsequently found to have been made in a deliberately vexatious manner or otherwise to have been made in bad faith will be subject to the appropriate action which may include termination of employment for just cause, termination of a contract for service or of a volunteer opportunity, or legal action.

## **LIMITATIONS**

This policy articulates the position of the Village and demonstrates its support and commitment to an environment that is free of racial discrimination and racism. It is not intended to supersede or supplant the other processes available to individuals or groups wishing to pursue avenues of formal complaint or redress under other Village policies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**I ACKNOWLEDGE** that I have received a copy of the Village of Harrison Hot Springs' Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy 1.42, that I have read and fully understand the rights, duties and procedures contained in it.

**I UNDERSTAND** that the Village may change, withdraw or add, rules, duties or practices described in the Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy from time to time in its sole discretion without prior notice to me, provided that the Village advises me within a reasonable period of time.

**I ACKNOWLEDGE** that I have had opportunities to discuss the content of the Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy with my immediate supervisor, Human Resources representative or the CAO.

**I AGREE** to abide by the Village's Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy, and I understand that such compliance is a condition of my duties, responsibilities and obligations. I also understand that non-adherence to the Village's Anti-Racial Discrimination and Anti-Racism Policy or other rules may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment or the consideration of appropriate sanctions, which may include censure, removal from appointments, referral to police or legal action.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

RECORD OF AMENDMENTS	
DATE AMENDED	SUMMARY OF AMENDMENTS

File No: 6130-02  
Date: June 15, 2026

To: Mayor and Council  
From: Kalie Wiechmann, Communications and Community Engagement Coordinator  
Subject: Temporary Off-Leash Dog Park – Spring Park

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## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT Council approve the reinstallation of a temporary off-leash dog park within Spring Park during the 2026 peak tourism season, located between the two sports courts and operating from the end of June to the end of September 2026, from dawn to dusk; and

THAT staff implement a public feedback survey open to all users of Spring Park throughout the temporary trial period; and

THAT staff report back to Council with updated findings, additional public feedback, concept options, and associated costs for future consideration.

## **SUMMARY**

To provide Council with an update on feedback received regarding the temporary off-leash dog park and seek direction to continue with a second trial period.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2025, the Village set up a trial off-leash dog park on the south end of Spring Park near the lacrosse box. Following Council direction at the December 15, 2025 Regular Council Meeting, staff conducted consultation with neighbouring residents regarding a potential permanent off-leash dog park at Spring Park. Staff completed a direct mailout to neighbouring properties surrounding Spring Park and received feedback from four residents. Feedback identified concerns related to proximity to homes, maintaining the quiet character of the park, compatibility between user groups, parking constraints, and the limited duration of the previous trial period.

Based on the feedback received from both residents and users of the previous temporary dog park, staff are recommending an additional seasonal trial period within a revised location at Spring Park to further assess park functionality and user interactions during its peak season.

## **DISCUSSION**

The temporary off-leash dog park trial period in Fall 2025 was positively received by many dog owners and demonstrated community interest in dedicated off-leash space within the Village. However, neighbouring residents expressed concerns regarding compatibility with adjacent residential uses and other park activities.

Based on the feedback received, staff are recommending an additional temporary trial during the peak season from the end of June to the end of September 2026, to better evaluate how various user groups function within Spring Park during periods of higher activity.

Staff are proposing a revised location between the two sports courts, which would provide a larger enclosed area than the previous trial. Given the size constraints within Spring Park, a future small-dog-only configuration may also be considered.

Staff recognize that the temporary dog park was a valued amenity for residents with dogs, while also acknowledging the concerns expressed by neighbouring residents. The proposed additional pilot period is intended to help balance these competing interests and support informed long-term decision-making.



**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Village staff have purchased temporary fence panels utilizing existing budget to be able to have on hand for projects such as this, as well as to support other operational and safety demands. This will allow the temporary dog park to be implemented at no additional cost. Any future permanent dog park concept and associated capital costs would be brought forward separately through a future report and financial planning process.

**POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

2025-2026 Strategic Plan Priorities

Healthy Livable Community – To promote and enhance a healthy lifestyle for all ages.

Respectfully submitted:

Reviewed by:

Kalie Wiechmann  
Communications and Community  
Engagement Coordinator

Tyson Koch  
Chief Administrative Officer

Financial Considerations Reviewed by:

Scott Schultz  
Chief Financial Officer, Deputy CAO