

Memo

Sp C Jun 2/25

To: Angila Bains, Director of Legislative and Protective Services/Corporate Officer
From: Colton Whittaker, Committee Clerk
Date: April 30, 2025
Subject: Cecelia Creek Falls Park Funding and Concept Plan

At the March 19, 2025, Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee meeting, the Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society gave a presentation. The committee discussed several aspects of the park, including a concept plan. This discussion resulted in the following motion:

That the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee recommend that Council:

- **reaffirm that the community amenity contribution funds of \$30,000 from 2014 for Cecelia Creek Falls Park (Inverness Road Parkland) still exist and are available to be allocated; and**
- **direct staff to investigate the feasibility of the Cecelia Creek Falls Park concept plan and how and where it would fit within the prioritization of Parks projects.”**

An excerpt of the March 19, 2025 minutes and relevant supporting documents are attached for information.

Colton Whittaker

Colton Whittaker
Committee Clerk

FRIENDS OF CECELIA CREEK FALLS PARK SOCIETY

The Chair for the Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society gave a presentation (PowerPoint on File), and the following was noted in response to questions and during committee discussion:

- Members expressed interest in receiving staff input on how this project aligns with other Parks initiatives and competing priorities.
- The park, originally three municipal lots, is now zoned as parkland and measures 60 feet by 150 feet.
- The previously proposed concept plan includes tree removal, but replanting efforts would restore and enhance the canopy.
- In 2009, the Quadra Cedar Hill Community Association sought community grants for funding. Currently, the Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society is seeking partners to assist in securing funding, reducing reliance on municipal resources.
- Members discussed how this park fits into broader public land strategies and potential public land acquisitions.
- The Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society have a vision for reforestation, daylighting the storm drain, and creating a hectare of parkland, aligning with the Quadra McKenzie Plan (QMP).
- In 2009 and 2022, Saanich Parks staff presented two conceptual plans for a stream daylighting project to Council. However, funding for detailed design and construction in subsequent budget processes was not allocated.
- The Natural Areas Crew restores approximately 100m of the Colquitz River system annually at a cost of about \$750 to \$1000 per metre which includes riparian area restoration and planting.
- Students and parents have shown strong enthusiasm for using Bowker Creek as an educational resource. Lessons from Bowker Creek could be applied to Cecelia Creek Falls Park.
- The Friends of Cecelia Creek have requested that the Mayors and Councils of Saanich and Victoria ask the CRD to initiate a watershed assessment for Cecelia Creek.
- The Uptown-Douglas Plan states that Saanich supports the CRD in conducting a multi-jurisdictional watershed assessment.
- Parks maintains a five-year rolling capital plan, updated annually. However, because Council has not approved the concept plan for Cecilia Creek Falls Park, it is not included in the capital plan.
- Capital funding is determined by Council based on asset valuation, with a portion dedicated to replacements. For new work at Cecelia Creek Falls Park, a separate, one-time funding request would be required as it would be a new asset.
- Restoration projects near schools may be more likely to succeed if the school dedicates volunteer time.
- Members emphasized the need for strategic funding allocation given the number of projects requiring financial support.
- Developers could potentially contribute funding through Community Amenity Contributions (CACs). CACs can be specifically to the relevant park and if so, cannot be used elsewhere.

MOVED by H. Hodson and Seconded by K. Bridge: “That the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee recommend that Council:

- **reaffirm that the community amenity contribution funds of \$30,000 from 2014 for Cecelia Creek Falls Park (Inverness Road Parkland) still exist and are available to be allocated; and**
- **direct staff to investigate the feasibility of the Cecelia Creek Falls Park concept plan and how and where it would fit within the prioritization of Parks projects.”**

The following discussion ensued:

- The previously allocated \$30,000 was for general park improvements, not specifically for a concept plan.
- It is important to formally request that staff evaluate where and how this concept plan fits within Parks project prioritization.
- Previous concept plans were endorsed by NAPT and presented to Council in 2014 and 2022. The 2022 revised concept plan was estimated to cost \$160,000, though costs have likely increased due to contaminated soil issues.

RESULT: Carried 6 TO 3

IN FAVOUR: Little, Chambers, Hodson, McIvor, Bridge, Watt

OPPOSED: Anderson, Humphrey, Wilkes

Memo

To: Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Committee

From: Paul de Greeff, Manager of Parks Planning & Development

CC: Suzanne Samborski, Director of PRCS; Eva Riccius, Senior Manager of Parks

Date: March 11, 2025

Subject: Cecelia Creek Falls Park - Backgrounder

The Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park (FCCFP) have requested an opportunity to present to the NAPT Committee meeting scheduled for March 19th, 2025. FCCFP have been advocating for a stream daylighting project in Cecelia Creek Falls Park for many years. Saanich Parks staff have advanced two conceptual plans for the park to Council in 2009 and again in 2022. In both cases, the NAPT Committee (formerly PTR Committee) supported the project concept plans in principle and endorsed them by forwarding them to Council. Also in both cases, Council supported the project in principle but in subsequent budget processes, failed to provide necessary funding for detailed design and construction.

To help facilitate a fruitful conversation with the FCCFP, Staff are providing the committee with the following background information for consideration prior to the March 19th meeting:

1. The attached slides presented to Council in July of 2022 provide an overview of the 2009 and 2022 concepts presented to Council. In essence, the 2009 concept was for a partial stream daylighting project, while the 2022 concept was for a scaled-down stormwater demonstration project that attempted to reduce project complexity, costs and risks.
2. Since 2022, all Saanich departments have encountered dramatic escalation of project construction costs. Staff anticipate that the construction cost estimate provided to Council in the 2022 staff report for the stormwater demonstration concept (\$160,000) is likely more than double that today, depending on the condition of the soil material found on site during excavation.
3. The BC provincial government has implemented a revised Contaminated Sites Regulation as of March 2023. The risk related to excavation projects in Parks has increased since this regulation has come into effect, as any soil leaving a construction site now requires testing. If soil is found to contain contaminants, special disposal is required at significantly higher cost than regular soil disposal. Given that Cecelia Creek Falls Park is a known fill site, it is possible that contaminated soils may be encountered, though no testing has been conducted to date.

4. The 2022 staff reports to Council is available through the Saanich Council Meeting Schedule, Agendas and Minutes web page at [MetaViewer.php](#) while the 2009 report is available upon request to staff (i.e.: retrievable from archives).

Attachments: July 2022 Parks staff presentation slides to Council.



Cecelia Creek Falls Park

Revised Concept 2022

Council

July 4th, 2022

Paul de Greeff, M.L.A., R.L.A.



- Res...
- may...
- Cyclists...
- control...
- others...
- At night, wear...
- and carry a light...
- Respect wildlife...
- Do your part to keep...
- and trails clean. Put litter...
- waste containers.

CYCLING IN SAANICH

Please cycle on designated trails...

Cycling is prohibited (except on paved roads) according to Saanich bylaw in the following parks:

- Mount Douglas Park
- Mount Tolmie Park
- Knockan Hill Park
- Swan Lake Christmas Hill Nature Sanctuary
- Rithet's Bog Conservation Area
- Glencoe Cove Kwatsech Park

Site Location:

Quadra/Cedar Hill Neighbourhood

General Site Information:

- Park (approx. 9,000 ft² or 800 m²)
- Inverness Road right of way green space (16,000 ft²) or 1,500 m²)





Background:

1992



2009



2020

- Start of process to establish this park, originally known as 'Inverness Park'.
- A 2007 engineering feasibility study was the foundation for a 2009 concept plan to daylight a small section of the creek.
- High costs, technical challenges, and lack of funding prevented the plan from being realized.
- In February 2020 Council asked for options to achieve the 2009 Vision with a funding partnership with the QCHCA.



Background:

The [PTR] Committee recommend that Council direct staff to:

- Consider an interpretive installation and minor park improvements using the Community Amenity Funds; and
- Explore the opportunities and costs of the creation of a dry creek bed to commemorate the historical creek.”

↓
2021

↓
2022

Revised Concept Plan –
Stormwater Management Demonstration

Three Pillars of Watershed Restoration:



1. Flood Mitigation & Water Volume Management
2. Water Quality Enhancement
3. Stream Daylighting



Stormwater Management Example:

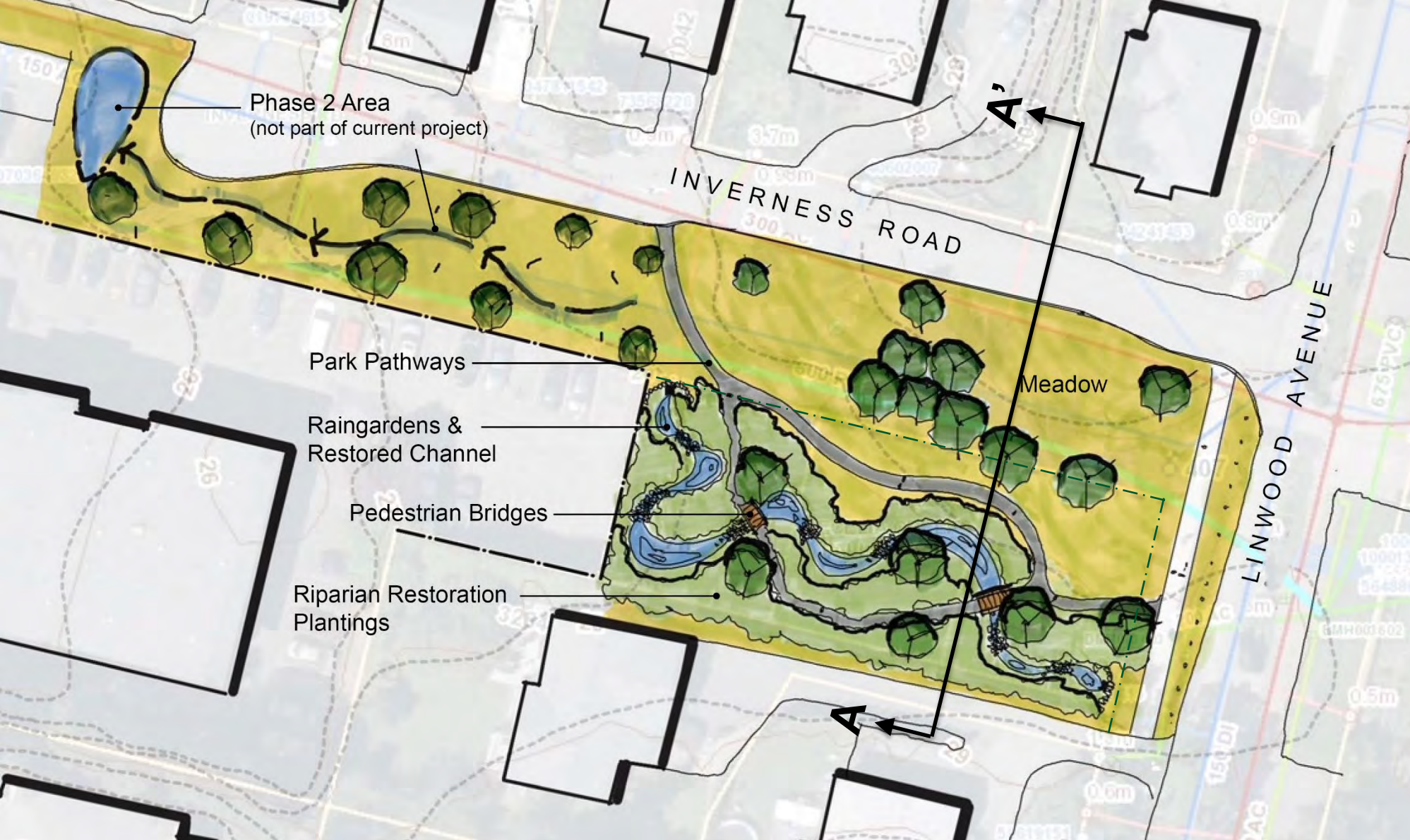
Yarrow Park (Esquimalt)

- Similarly Scaled Project
- Water Quality Polishing
- Wildlife Habitat Enhancement

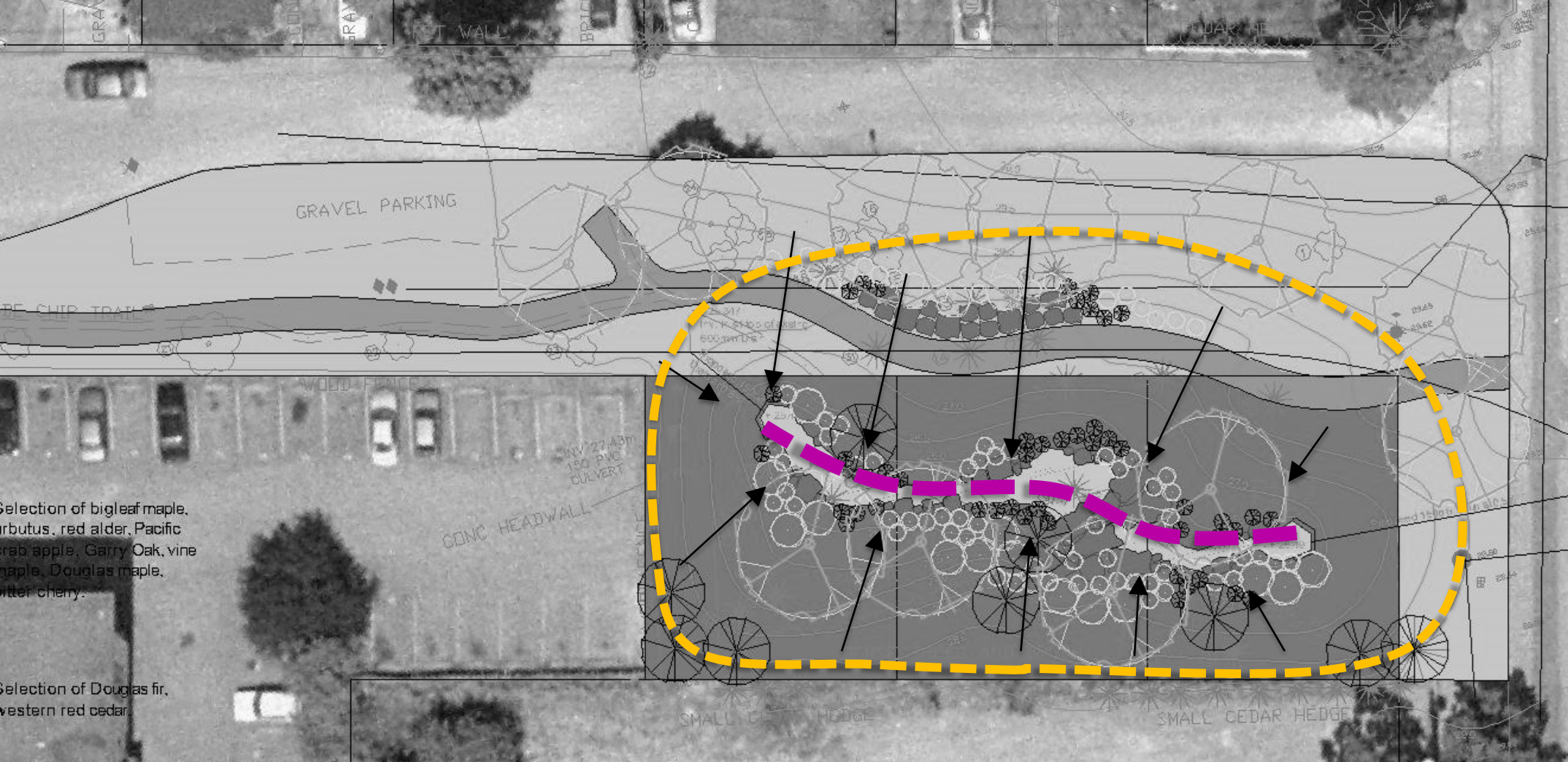


Revised Concept – Stormwater Demonstration

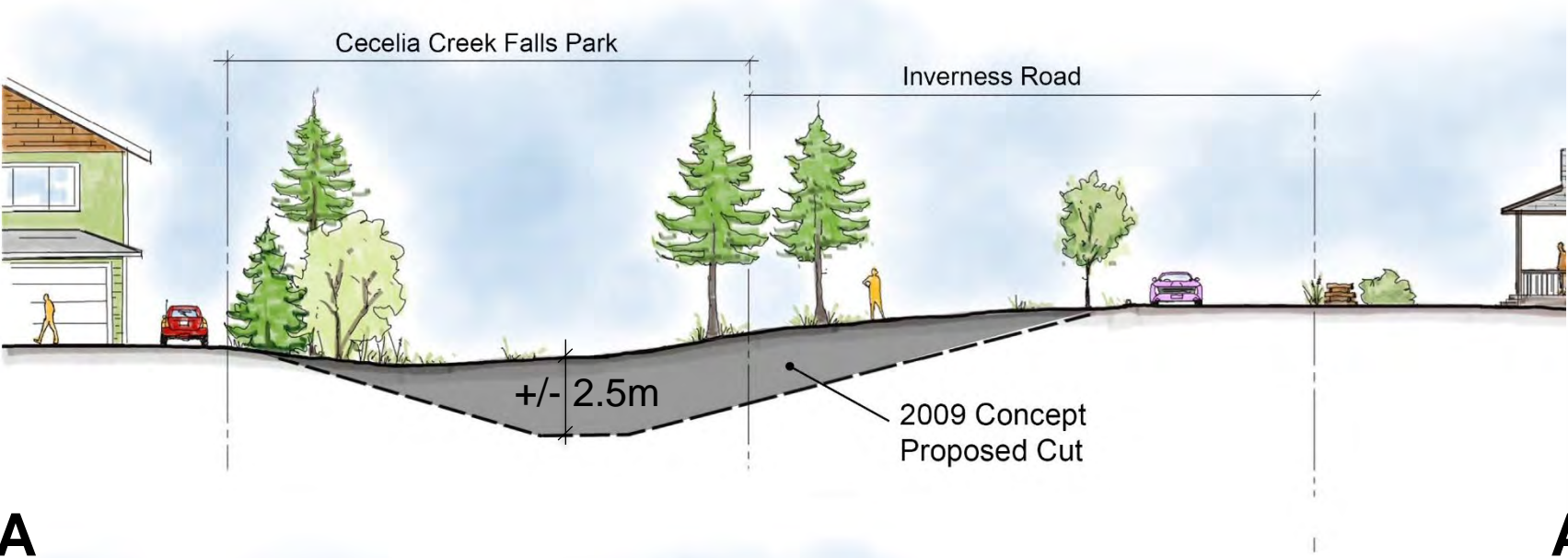
- Proposed Project Area & Phase 2 Option



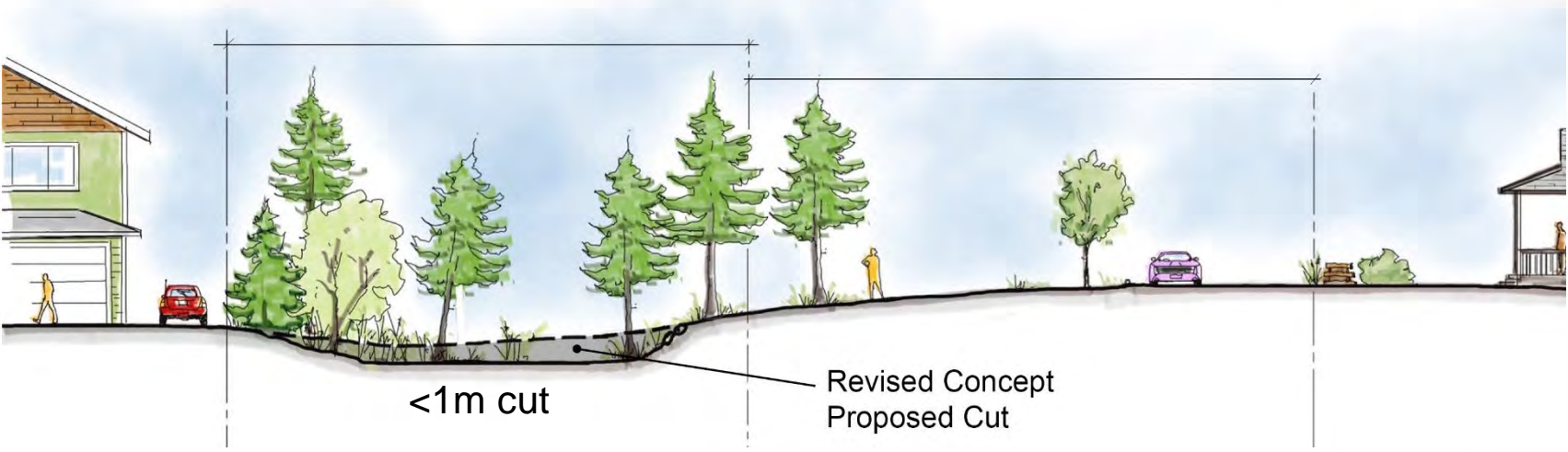
Revised Concept – Stormwater Demonstration



2009 Concept : Channel Length & Sloped Area



**2009 Concept
Section A-A'**



**Revised Concept
Section A-A'**

- Reduced Excavation, Reduced Tree Loss, Accommodates Future Greenway Improvements, More Usable Park Space.

Revised Concept Benefits

- Reduced Excavation & Retaining Walls
- Reduced Tree Loss
- Reduced Cost
- Reduced Project Risk
- Accommodates Future Inverness Road/Greenway Improvements
- Stormwater Pollution Treatment
- Habitat Enhancement
- Public Access Improvements

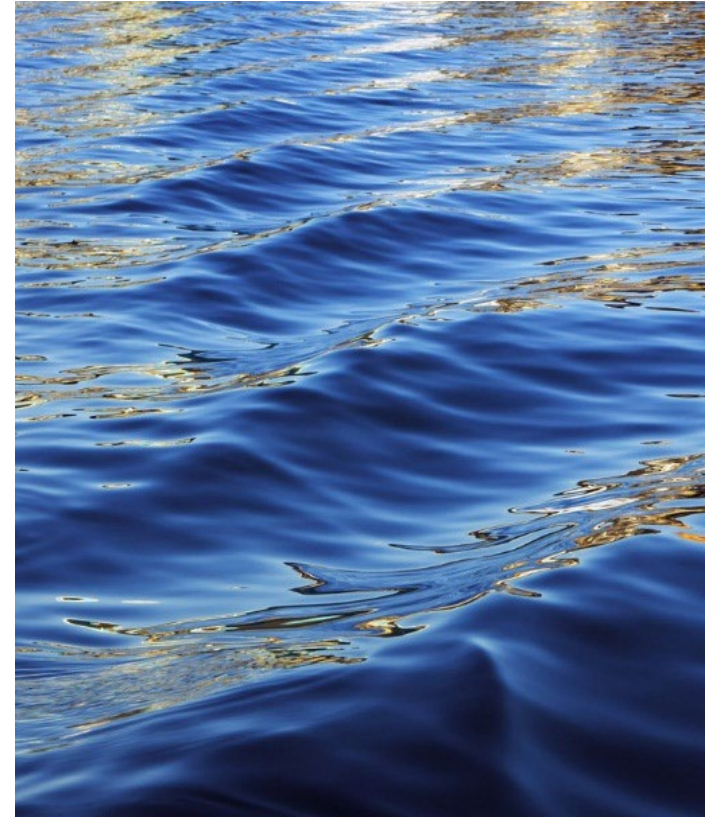


Presentation to Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee

By

Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park
Society

March 19, 2025



Purpose of Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society

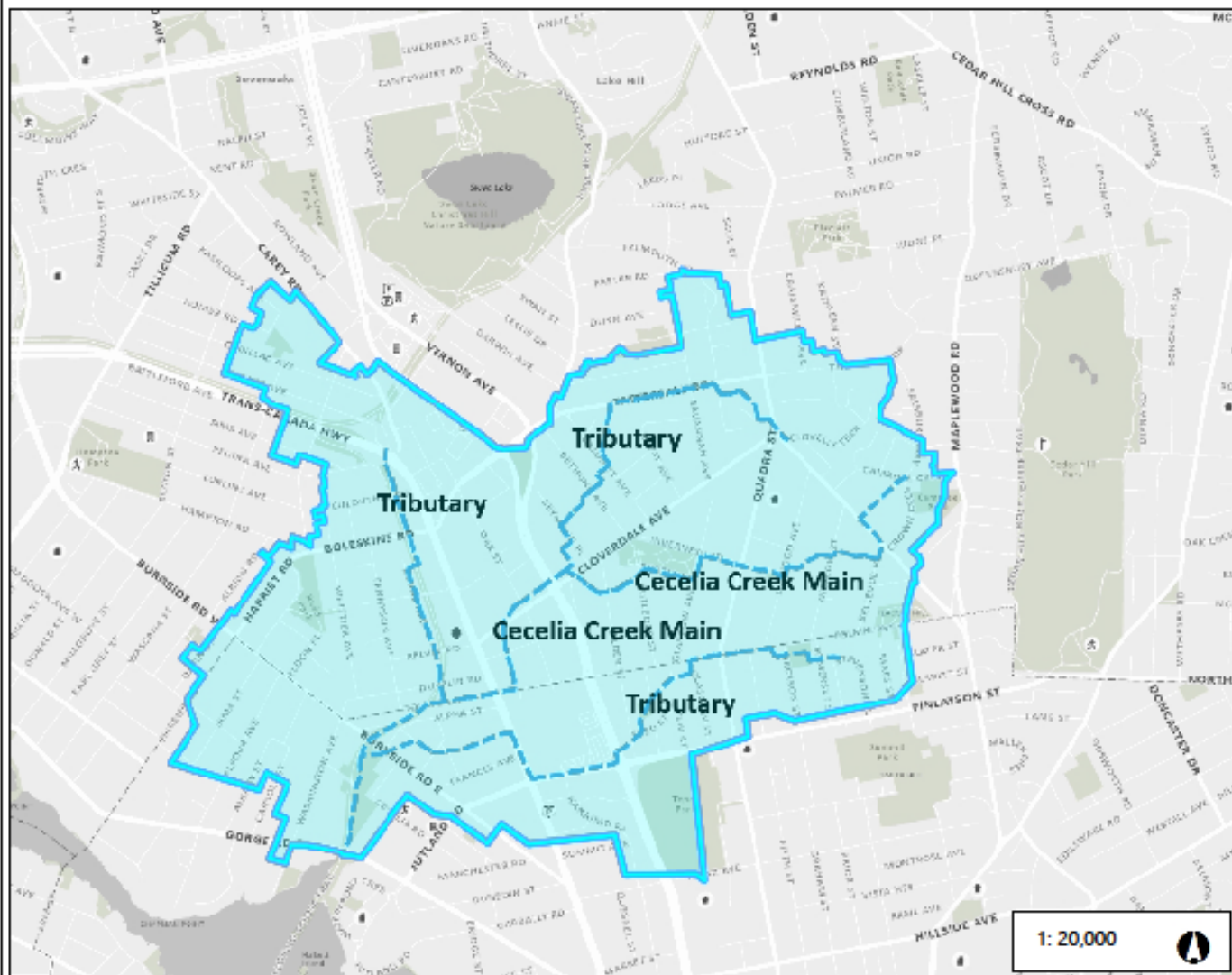
(BC Society #0076360)

- To fulfill the Creek and Forest **vision** from the approved 2009 concept plan for Cecelia Creek Falls Park.
- To advocate for the enhancement, function and health of the Cecelia Creek Watershed.
- To increase the health and well-being of the community including our Indigenous brothers and sisters.
- Increase Creek education for the community and elementary students.

Overview of the Cecelia Creek Watershed

- The watershed is a 351-hectare urbanized watershed which eventually flows into the lower Gorge Waterway.
- 246- hectares of the watershed are located in Saanich and other 105- hectares are located in the City of Victoria,
- The watershed consists of a main creek stem and three (3) tributaries.
- The main creek stem is located mainly in the Saanich portion of the watershed as are two of the tributaries.
- The end of the main creek stem and the third tributary are located in the City of Victoria's portion of the watershed.
- The Upper section of the main creek stem of the watershed where Cecelia Creek Falls Park is located, contains large amounts of non impervious area on large sized lots, compared to higher amount of effective impervious surfaces in the lower areas of Uptown.

Cecelia Creek Main & Tributaries




Legend

Notes

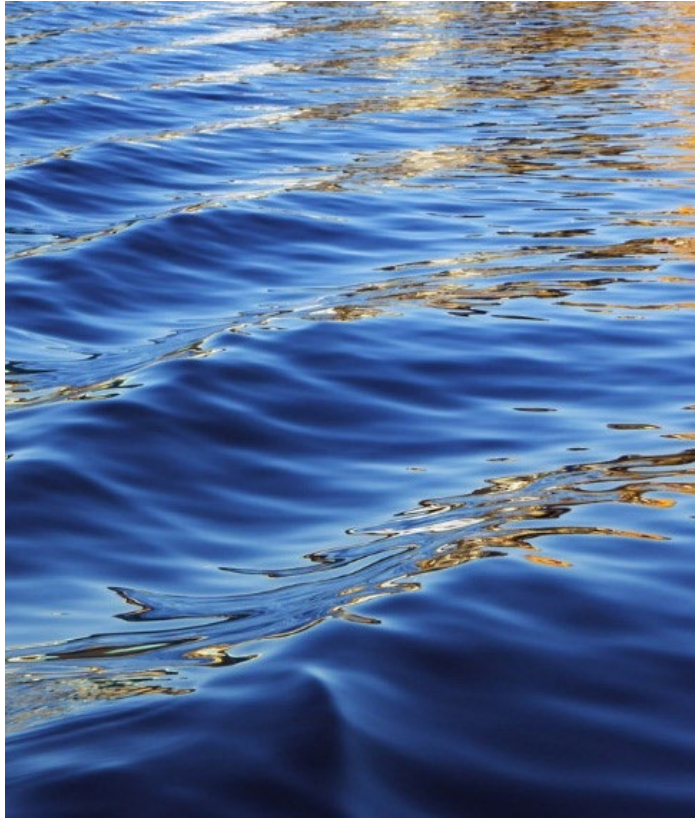
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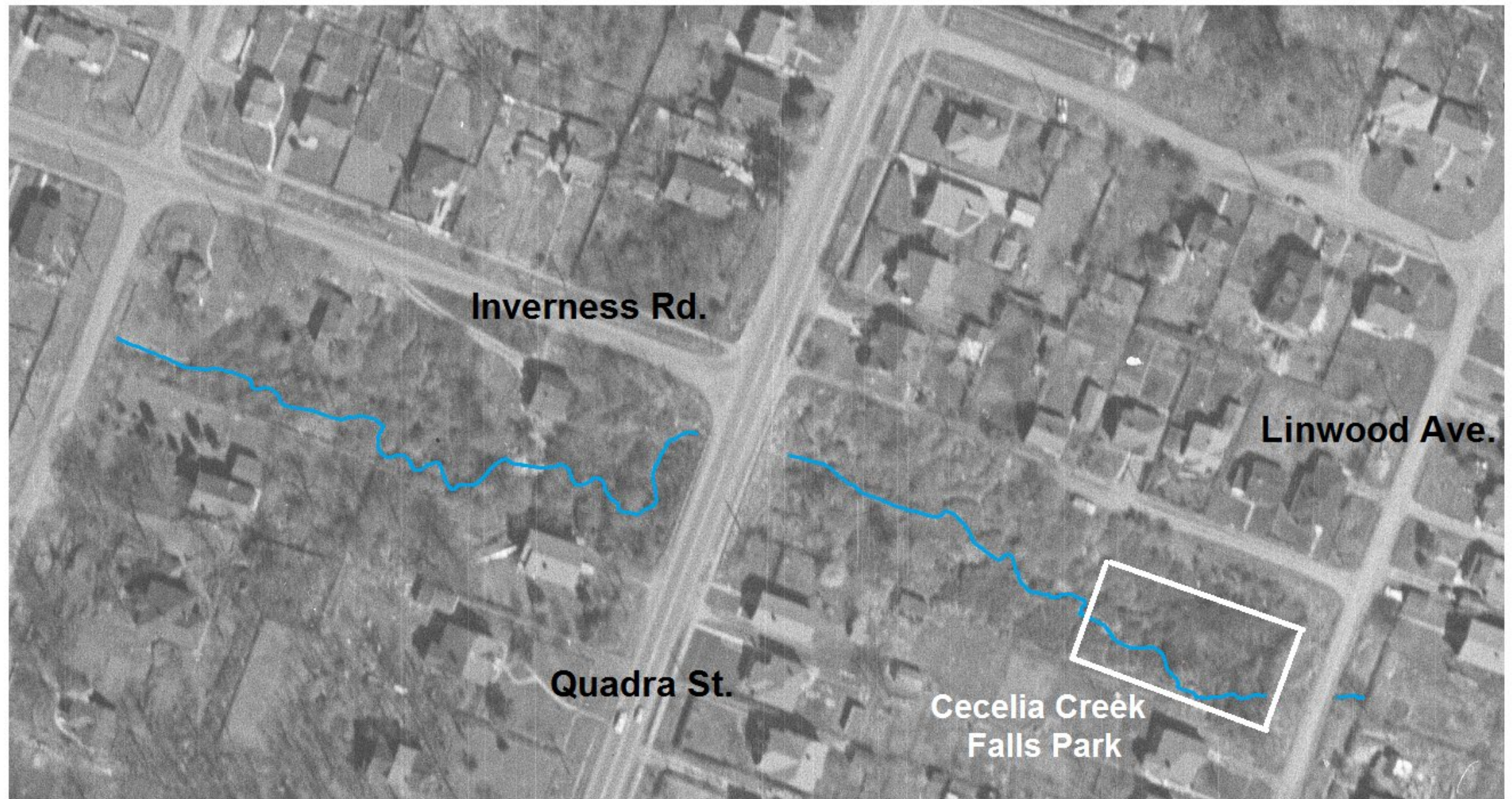


Cecelia Creek Falls Park Location




The park is located at the corner of Inverness Rd. & Linwood Ave. one block east of Quadra St.



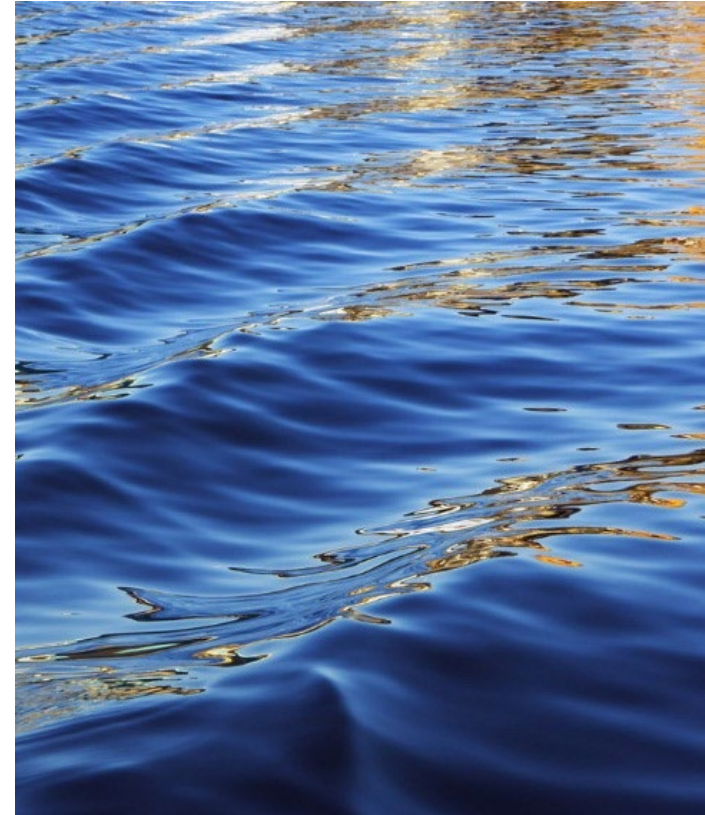


Location of Cecelia Creek in 1952

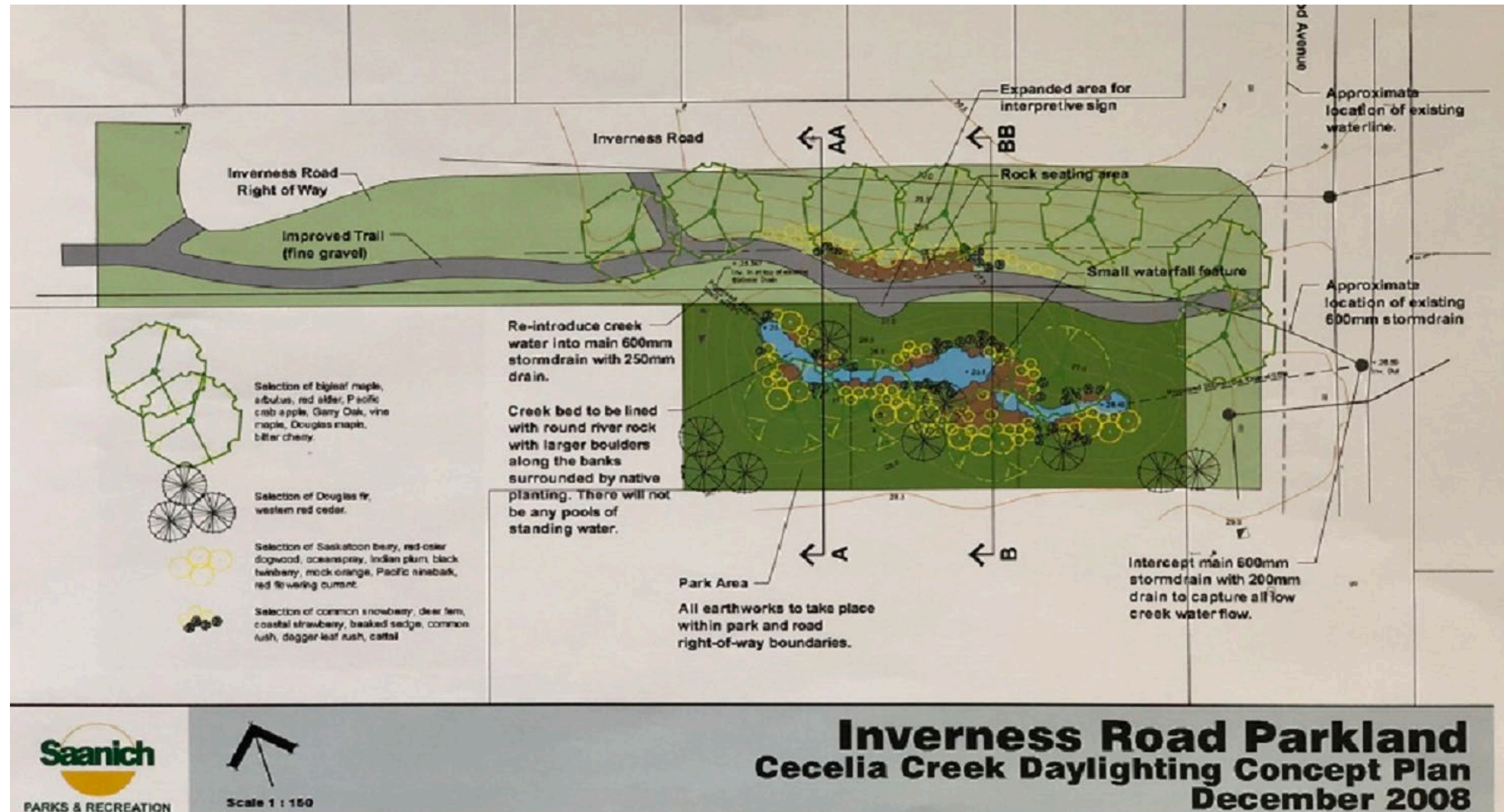


Cecelia Creek Falls Park formerly named Inverness Road Parkland 2009 Approved Plan

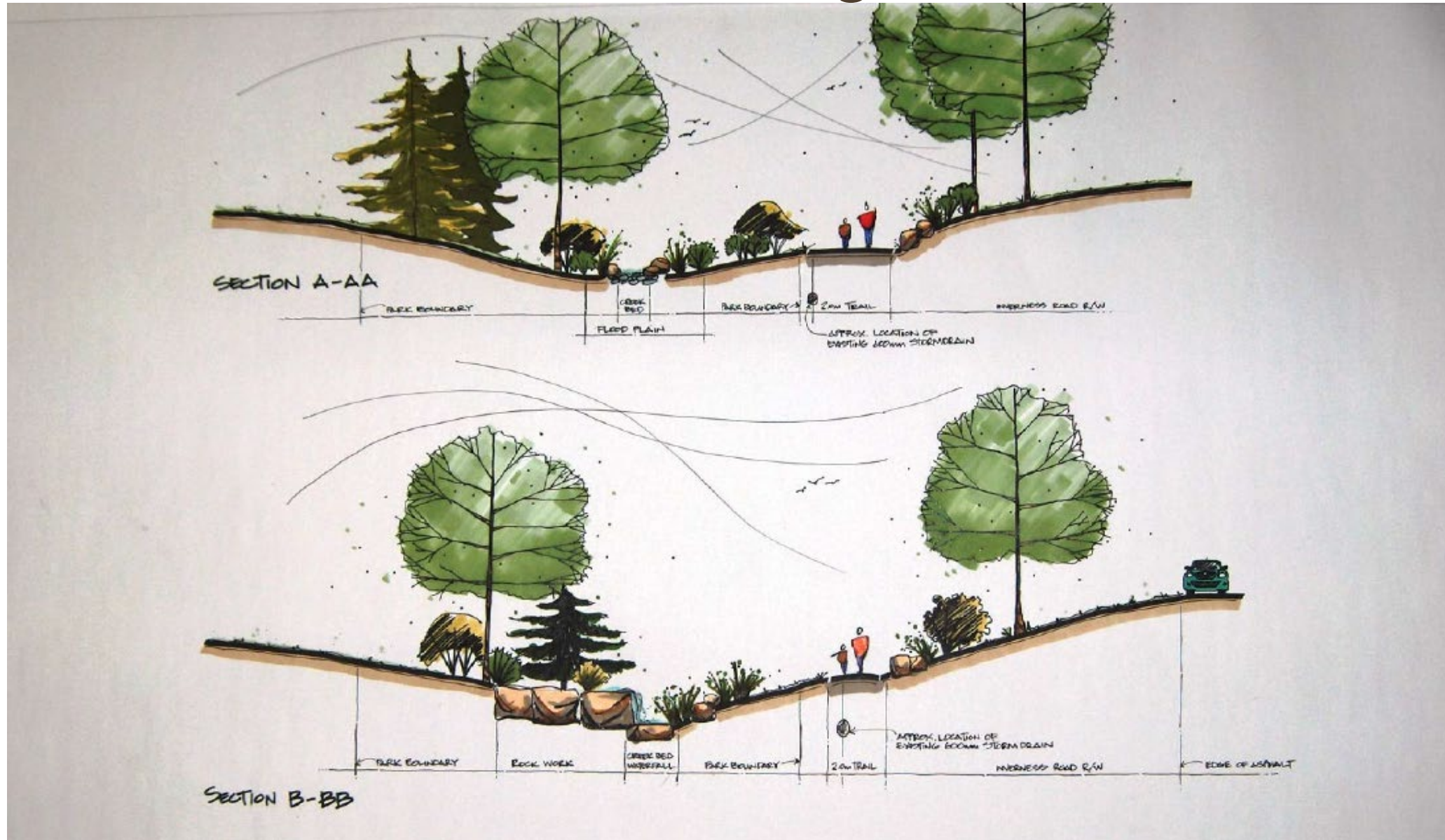
Cecelia Creek Watershed

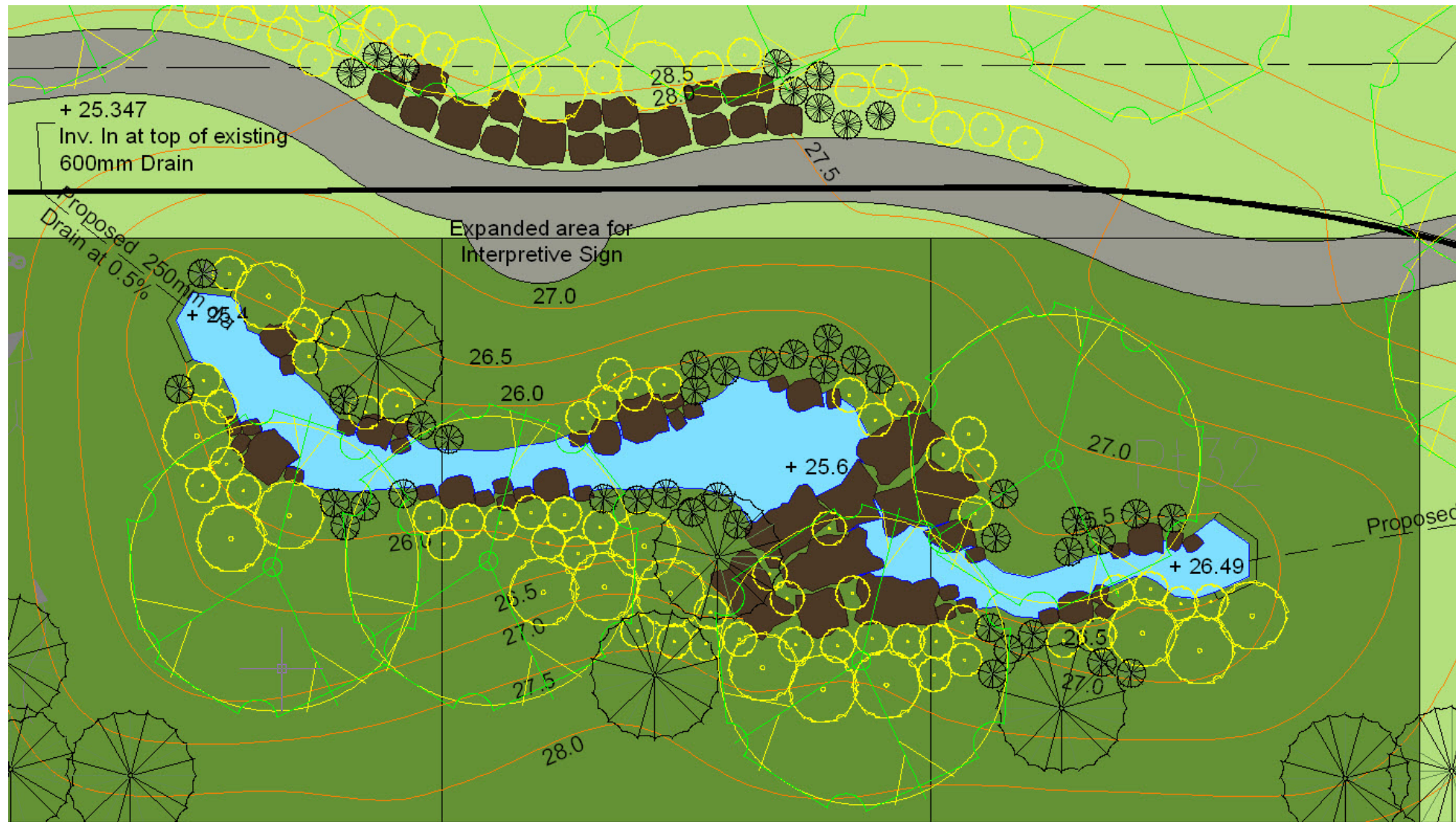


Inverness Road Parkland 2009 Approved Plan



Cross Section 2009 Plan





Highlights of 2009 Approved Plan

- Quadra Cedar Hill Community Associations 2006 Centennial Legacy Project.
- Returning a portion of Cecelia Creek to Daylight.
- Regenerating the Park area back into a natural Coastal Douglas-Fir Forest with associated native ground cover.
- Controlled water flow rate providing safety for the community during higher flow rates.
- Allows the piped water flow the opportunity to naturally recharge the water table.
- Provides Cloverdale Elementary School a hands on outdoor environmental classroom.
- Community Environmental Grant applications to fund the implementation of the concept.


Reason why the 2009 concept plan failed to advance forward

In 2009 the approval process for park concepts were approved without funding unlike they are today.

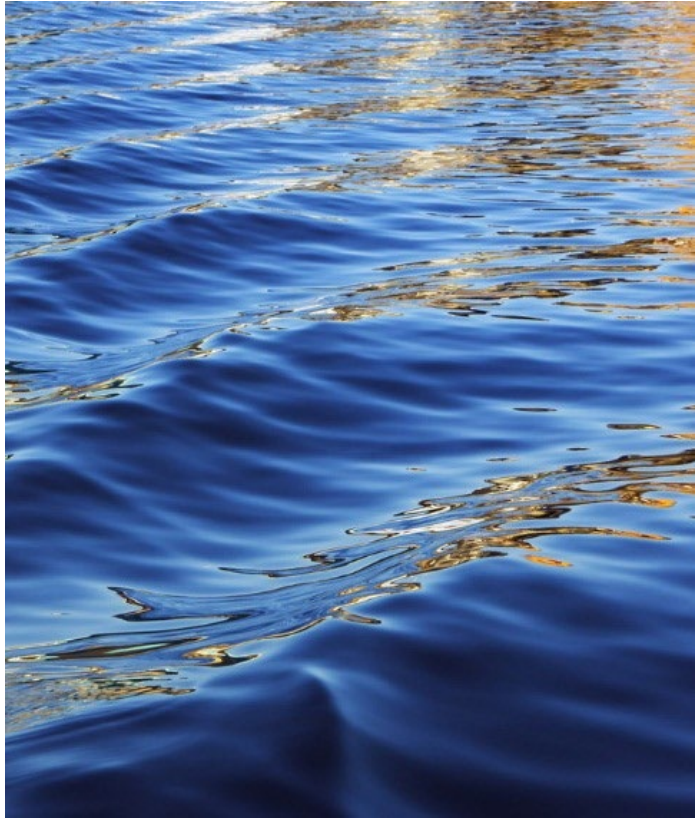
When the 2009 concept plan was supported by parks and engineering staff and the community it was then approved by Council at a public hearing where Council then directed staff to seek funding in the 2010 budget deliberations cycle to create a set of working drawings.

The 2009 concept plan never actually made it into the 2010 budget deliberations cycle as it was intended to by Council, so funding was never actually declined by Council. Which then put the plan on a self.

Unlike the budget request for the 2022 revised plan where it was actually declined by Council.



Council's Motion from February 3 2020




Council's Motion

“ that council direct staff to provide Council a report with options on how to achieve the **vision** of the Cecelia Creek Falls Park as envisioned in the 2009 concept plan. Including a funding option that partners the District of Saanich and the QCHCA”

This motion from Council expresses council's support for the Creek and Forest **vision** for Cecelia Creek Falls Park or the motion would never have been passed by Council.

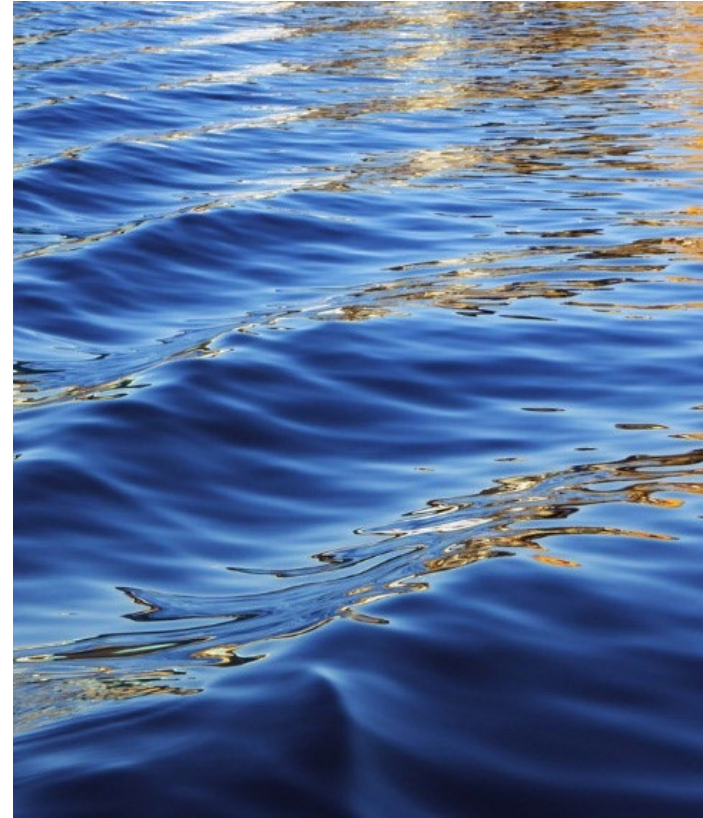
This motion by Council was never implemented.

The Alternative Daylighting option being presented today could have been one of those options.



In 2022 staff created a revised concept to replace the 2009 approved plan.

Cecelia Creek Watershed



Why Council did not support the funding request for the 2022 revised Concept in 2023

- FOCCFP provided Council with clear evidence that the revised concept would provide **no** ecological benefits to the watershed.
- Having only one option of a water supply only when it's raining to treat, being a single roadside catch basin which collects a low volume of runoff from the road, due to the configuration of the road, would not achieve an economical or beneficial outcome from 800 square meters of parkland space.
- To access the water from the single roadside catch basin it would need a park elevation to be one meter below existing grade to supply that water to the revised concept. That one meter of elevation is shown in the cross section drawing for the revised concept.

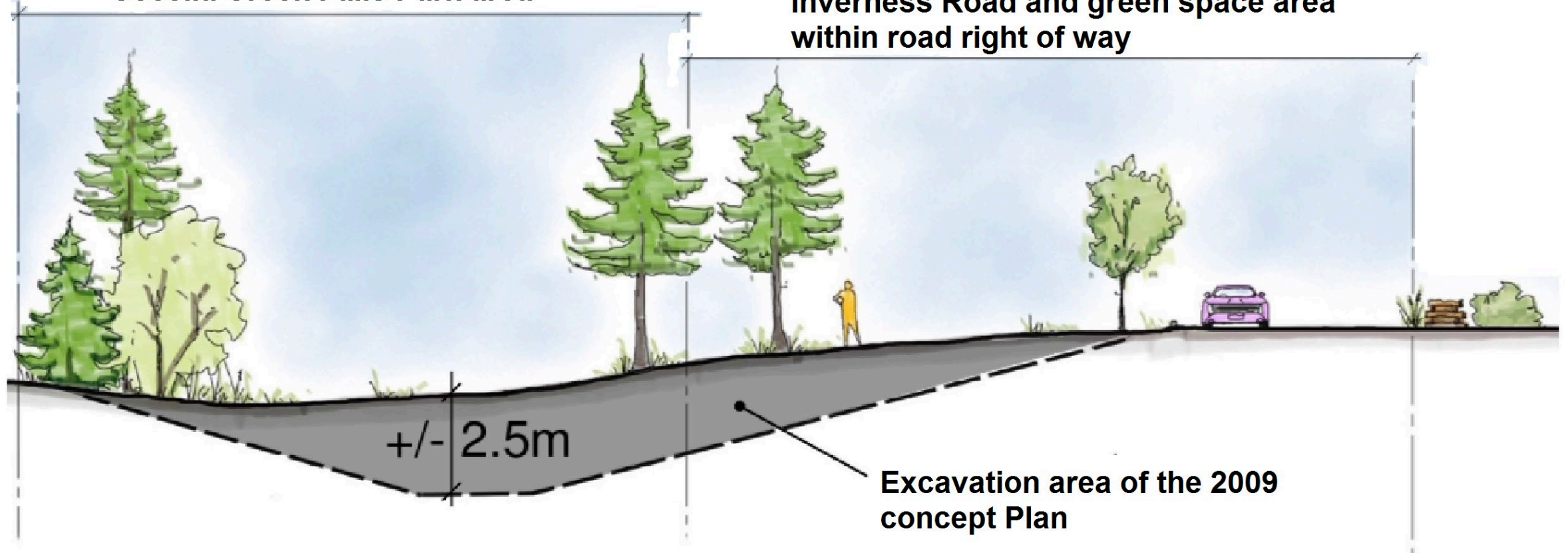
- As shown in the cross section drawing this required one meter depth of excavation would be from one side of the park to the other side and from one end to the other end of the park.
- The total volume of material to be removed with the revised concept would be roughly 800 cubic meters a much greater total volume than the total volume of roughly 500 cubic meters required to be removed to achieve the alternative daylighting option.
- Today the Contaminated Sites Regulation would also be applied to the revised concept.
- The Contaminated Sites Regulation will create a higher cost to the revised concept having a greater material volume than the alternative daylighting option.
- With Council not supporting the funding request in 2023 for the revised concept based on the above reasons, it's unlikely Council will support another budget request for the revised concept.

Staff's main concerns for no longer supporting the 2009 concept plan

- Engineering's concerns over the area of excavating work encroaching into the green space portion of the road right of way and Engineering's desire to maintain potential future use of the road right of way.
- Parks concerns over the increased excavation costs over time in relation to the size of the park concept since it was approved.
- Parks concerns over the removal of a number of mature trees through the excavation work within the green space area of the road right of way.

Cecelia Creek Falls Park area

**Inverness Road and green space area
within road right of way**





Solutions to resolving the concerns of staff



Resolving Engineering & Parks Concerns

- Maintaining the road right of way concerns by achieving all daylighting excavation work with 3:1 slopes within the boundaries of the park with an alternative daylighting option.
- Reducing excavation costs, by reducing the depth of the excavation by eliminating the waterfall feature therefore reducing excavation material.
- Also reducing the length of the open creek bed by a meter off the downstream end reducing excavation material.
- Retaining all organic soils excavated on site to remain onsite for reuse, reducing trucking costs and lowering the cost of new organic soils.
- Retaining the mature trees of concern by eliminating the excavation work required in the area of the road right of way. However, 6-7 other trees will have to be removed, same number as the revised concept would have, but the trees with root base will stay onsite to be used for creating a healthy forest floor as wind fall trees .

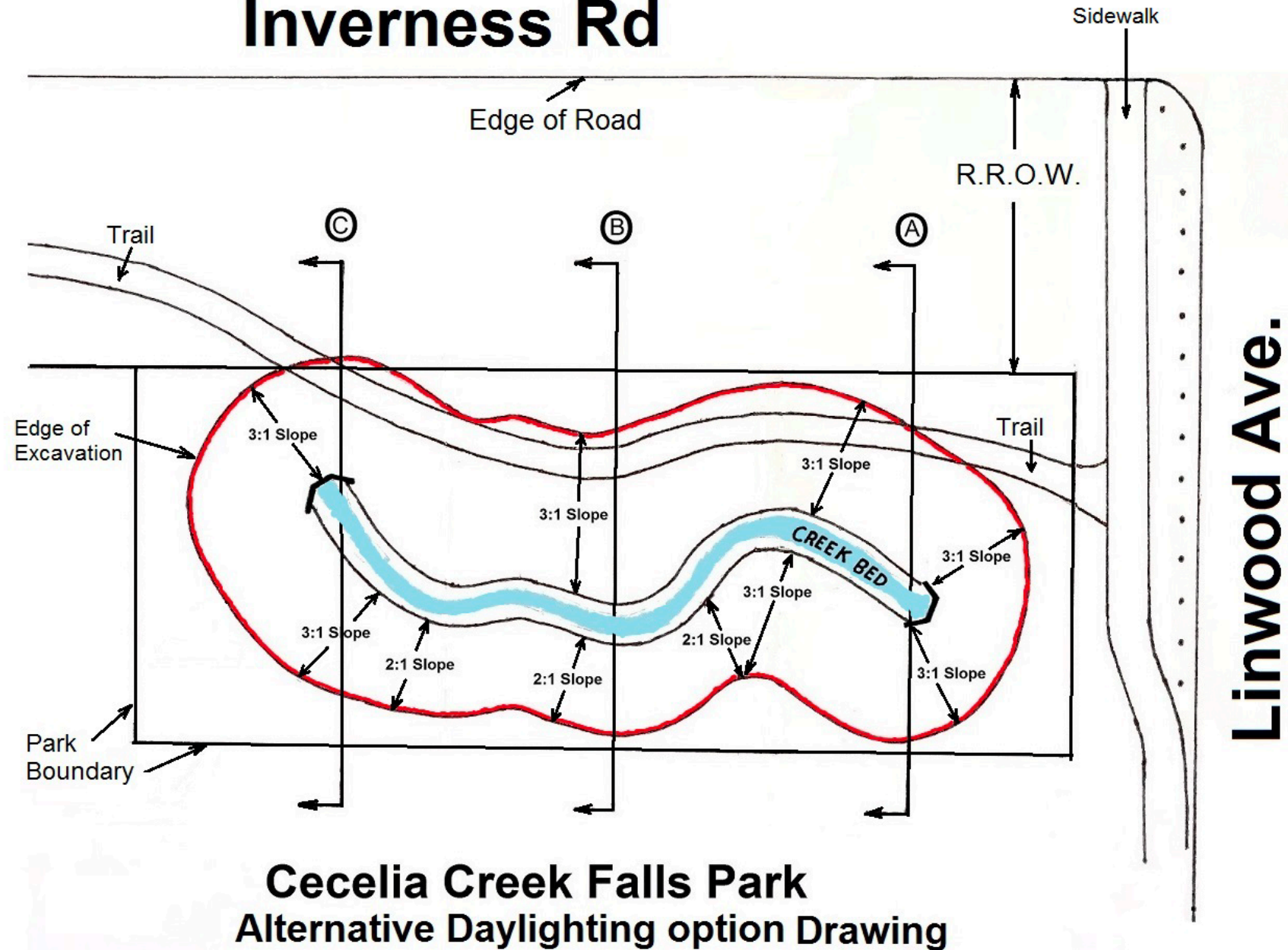
Inverness Road



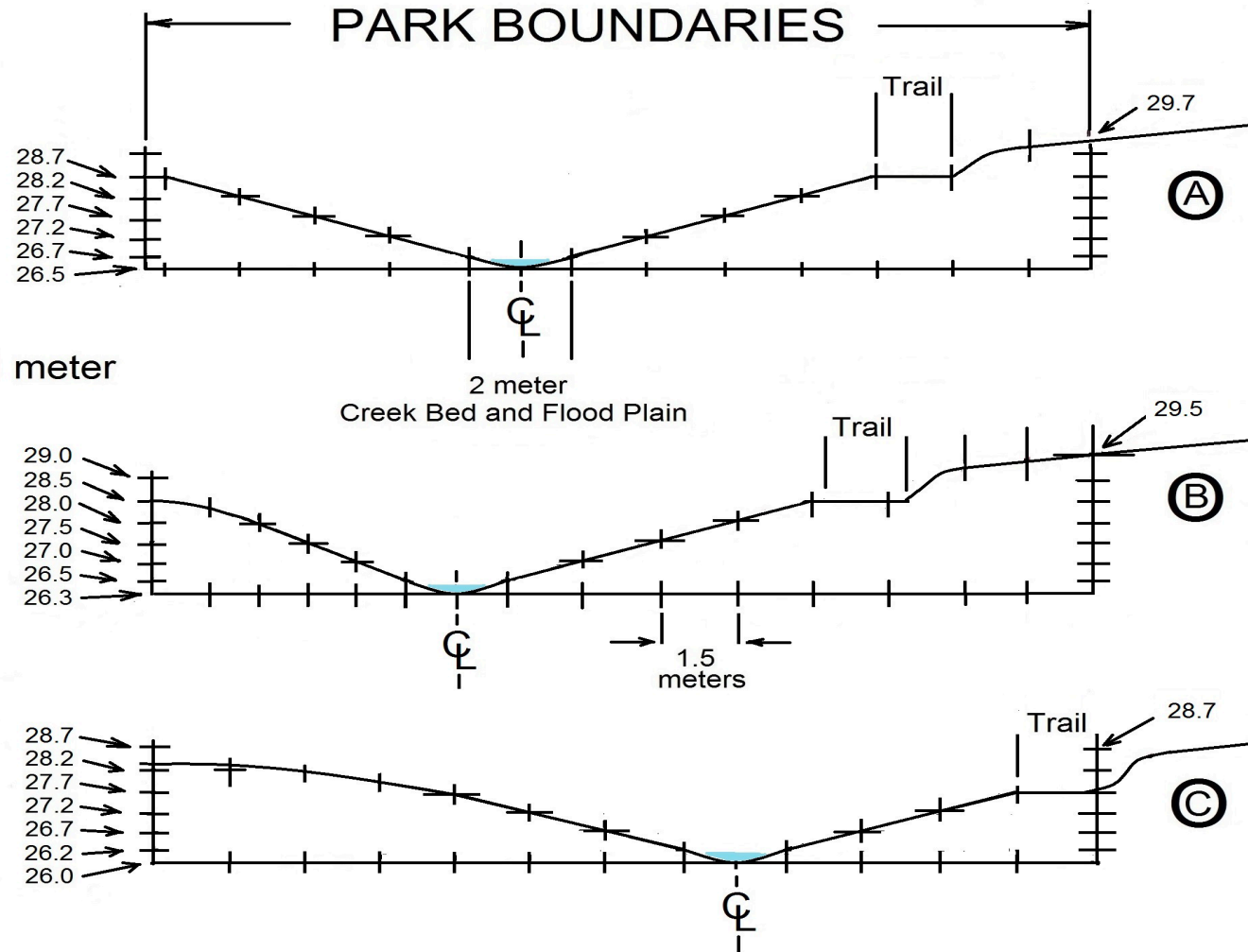
Linwood Ave.

Conceptual Alternative Daylighting Option

Inverness Rd



3:1 Slope
Scale: 5mm = 1 meter



Alternative Daylighting Option Cross Sections


Elevations of Alternative Daylighting option

- All elevations are from sea level.
- Elevation of the main pipe to intercept water for the alternative daylighting option in the junction box is 26.59 meters
- Elevation of the pipe at start of creek is 26.5 meters.
- Elevation of the pipe at end of creek is 26 meters.
- Elevation of the creek bed below existing grade is 2 meters.

Benefits of the Alternative Daylighting Option

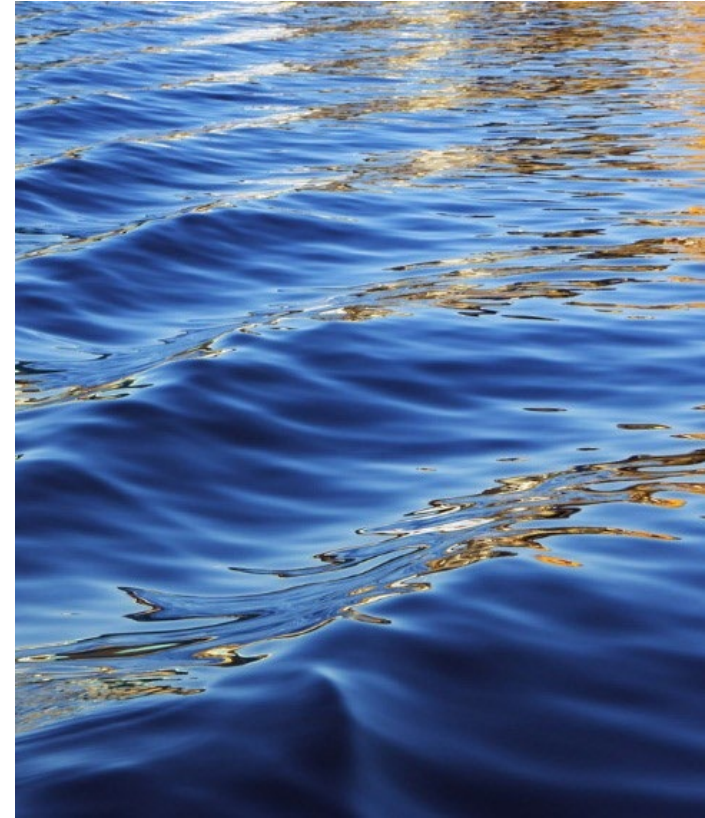
- Provides an ecological benefit to the health and function of the watershed.
- Creates wildlife habitat with a source of fresh water.
- Supports and increases biodiversity.
- Allows a continuous aeration of the piped water.
- Allows the continuous flow of piped water the opportunity to naturally recharge the water table.
- Riparian plants provide removal of contaminants from the continuous flow of water.
- Heavily increasing tree canopy volume supporting the fight against Global Warming.
- Having a controlled flow rate of water through the park will eliminate the need for armoring of the banks to allow for the creation of a natural cobblestone gavel creek bed with small flood plain mimicking the look of a natural small creek before any development started.
- Brings attention to the community that a creek exists in their neighbourhood.
- Brings awareness to the importance of the health and function of the creek and watershed.

- Gives an incentive to the surrounding neighbours to consider the importance of having stormwater management such as rain gardens on individual properties to enhance the health and function of the creek and watershed.
- By returning the land back into it's natural state is a clear show of respect to the Indigenous peoples' lands we now call home.
- Provides the opportunity for interpretive signage on the history of the creek and watershed and what it provided to the Indigenous people.
- Opportunity for displaying of Indigenous peoples' artwork.
- Creates a vital community asset in the way of a tranquil place of respite in the heat of summer.
- Benches along the path to enjoy the calming sight of moving water.
- Allows future stewardship opportunities for the community to care for the creek, forest and watershed.
- Creates a hands on outdoor natural environmental classroom for Cloverdale School.



How the Creek/Forest Vision aligns with Saanich's Environmental Strategies

Cecelia Creek Watershed



Vision Alignment

- Supports Theme 1, Theme 2, & Theme 3 of Saanich's Biodiversity Strategy.
- Supports the intentions of Urban Forest Strategy by increasing tree canopy density with corresponding native ground cover.
- Maintains biodiversity by supporting wildlife habitat with a source of water.
- Creates a small demonstration project that goes beyond just conservation of existing natural areas of old growth forest with the recreation of a future old growth forested natural area.
- Echo's the Uptown-Douglas Plan's objective to "Enhance and Restore" environmental assets including Cecelia Creek and its watershed.



Partnerships

Cecelia Creek Watershed

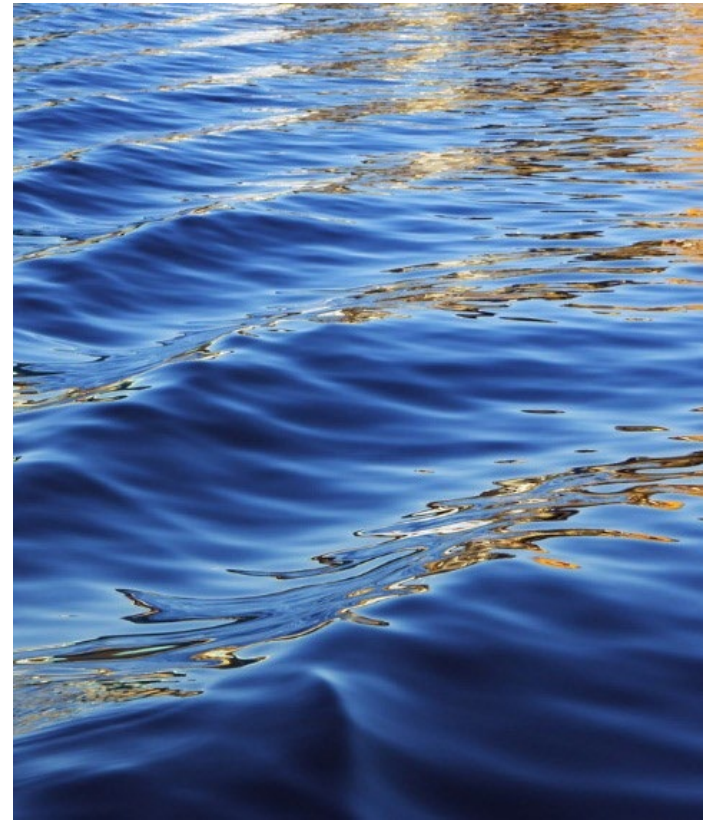


- Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park are members of the Gorge Waterway Initiative in representing and supporting the Cecelia Creek Watershed.
- FOCCFP are currently in discussions with Peninsula Streams Society to see if they can assist with the creek and forest vision for the park .
- FOCCFP have reached out to Habitat Acquisition Trust inquiring if they might assist with our Societies purpose.
- FOCCFP are engaging with the developers at 3300 Quadra who appear to be interested in the park and creek vision.
- FOCCFP are looking for every possible funding option to reduce the costs of implementing the creek and forest vision.



Community contributions

Cecelia Creek Watershed



Community Amenity Contribution

- From public hearing July 21 2014 for rezoning of: 1000/1006 Inverness Road and 3321/3329/3333/3339 Glasgow Avenue:

MOVED by Councilor Sanders and Seconded by Councilor Derman:

“That the community contribution for park development in the amount of \$30,000 (\$15,000 for Phase 1, \$15,000 for Phase 2) be allocated to Inverness Road Parkland.”

**The Motion was then Put and CARRIED
with Councilor Wade OPPOSED**

- Saanich Legacy Foundation Cecelia Creek Restoration Fund (\$2,000)



What's needed to move this Vision forward

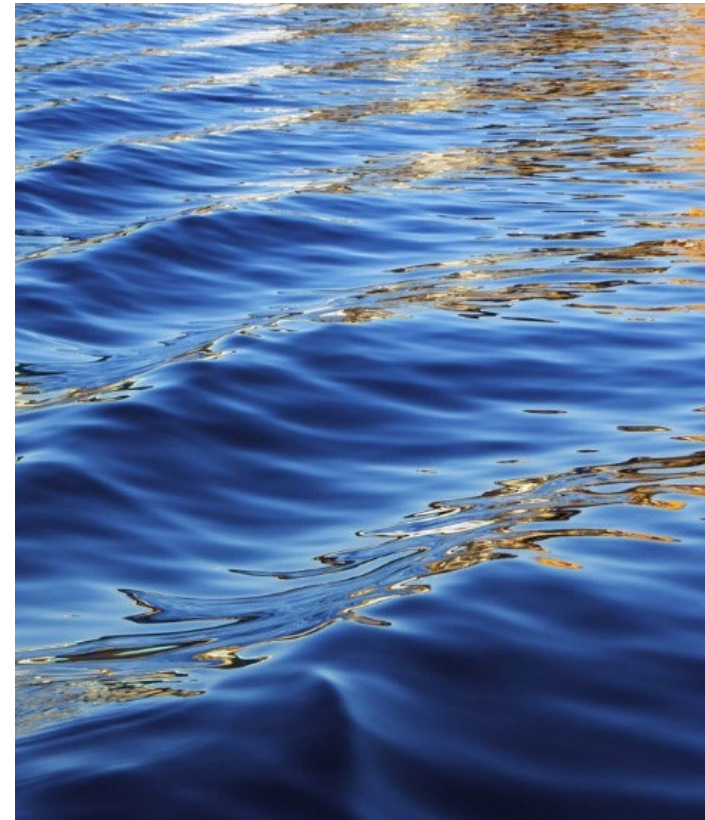
Cecelia Creek Watershed

- A recommendation to Council from the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory committee and support of staff.
- A set of working drawings to get an accurate cost estimate of the creek and forest vision concept based on the alternative daylighting option for the park to start the process of applying for grant applications to work towards implementation.
- Community Support: The community supported the Creek and Forest vision concept for the park when it was originally approved through an open house presentation and Public Hearing in 2009. Cloverdale School and the School Board also supported it as an environmental educational asset in 2009. The Creek and Forest vision concept is still supported by the community today through a feedback form from a meeting at Cecelia Creek Fall Park held on September 18, 2022



Request to Committee

Cecelia Creek Watershed



We the Friends of Cecelia Creek Falls Park Society request a motion to Council from the Natural Areas, Parks and Trails Advisory Committee recommending the advisory committee's support of the Creek and Forest **Vision** for Cecelia Creek Falls Park and that Council request staff to proceed with a set of working drawings based on the alternative daylighting option with approved funding from the July 21, 2014 Council motion.



Thank You

Email: friendsofceceliacreekfallspark@gmail.com

Questions

Cecelia Creek Watershed

