

Parksville Splash Park Project Underway

The Parksville Lions Club and the Rotary Club of Parksville AM are ready to make a splash to raise \$100,000 to replace the outdated spray park in the Parksville Community Park. The public is invited to the campaign kick-off event on Friday, May 19 at noon in the Lions Ventureland Playground hosted by the Parksville Lions Club and the Rotary Club of Parksville AM. These two clubs have come together to support this significant fundraising project and raise the funds to make a new splash park a reality for the Oceanside community.

The new splash park will cost about \$300,000 to construct which will include dismantling of the existing spray park, waterlines, drain infrastructure, new equipment to meet current regulations, new surface or pad, equipment installation, signage, landscaping and commissioning of the new splash park. The City of Parksville will contribute \$200,000 and the Rotary and Lions have committed to raising \$100,000 from the community, including their own club contributions. Any additional funds will be used to assist with ongoing maintenance of the splash park.

The existing spray park, added by the Parksville Lions Club to the Ventureland Playground in 1992, will remain open for this summer as usual, from May 12 to September 5 when it will be dismantled and replaced with a new splash park to be ready by May 2018.

The City of Parksville is grateful for the commitment and endorsement of the Rotary and Lions Clubs and for the enthusiastic support of the community to ensure this project is a success. The clubs have created a website with a variety of sponsorship opportunities, at all levels. www.parksvillesplashpark.com. Their efforts will be evident over the summer with such fundraising efforts as 50/50 tickets and the sale of candied salmon at the Summer by the Sea Street market.

A splash park is a water play area that has no standing water. Water is pumped through decorative structures which children can either stand under or run through. It's perfect for families with young children. The little ones have fun creating their own games and just letting their imagination run wild, all the while being close to their parents who are able to enjoy the fun with less worry. Most importantly, the new splash park will be completely wheelchair accessible, so all children will be able to participate.

Open from May to September, the splash park is used by Oceanside residents as well as the thousands of tourists who visit our region annually. Ventureland Playground and is well-loved by many generations. Parents who played in the park as children, now bring their children and their parents now bring the grandchildren. As well, hundreds of school age children visit with their classrooms each year.

**Kickoff for splash park fundraising project - Friday May 19 at noon
Lions Ventureland Playground, Community Park. Hotdogs and pop by donation.**

For more information:

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The City of Parksville had previously identified \$15,000 in the 2016 budget to replace aging equipment in the spray park and \$60,000 in 2017 to install the equipment and replace the existing asphalt surfacing. During pre-planning discussions with the Lions Club and a supplier of spray park equipment, it was quickly discovered there was insufficient funding in the City's budget to complete the work. It was learned during an onsite meeting with the Lions Club, City staff and an equipment supplier that since 2015, any new spray or splash parks constructed (or significantly renovated) require the submission of a construction permit to Island Health and structures and proposed decks and surfaces must meet current Island Health standards. Spray parks are treated the same as playparks or playgrounds and inspected on that basis. This includes inspections for fall heights, spacing of equipment and other aspects of the playground inspection program.

Taking this new information into consideration, understanding the standards and regulations imposed by Island Health and knowing the existing spray park requires total replacement, the City of Parksville initiated a process to fully understand the true costs of replacing the existing spray park which have been determined to be about \$300,000 which will include dismantling of the existing spray park, waterlines, drain infrastructure, new equipment to meet current regulations, new surface or pad, equipment installation, signage, landscaping and commissioning of the new splash park. Any additional funds raised will be used to assist with ongoing maintenance and towards ongoing upgrades and repairs to the splash park.

About the Lions Ventureland Playground

The Parksville Lions Club was chartered in 1969 with its first meeting held in the old community hall in the park. In 1985, the Lions Club took over the park playground and renamed it "Ventureland." In 1992, the water spray portion of the park was added and in 1998, the Lions helped the City build the skateboard park. In 2013, with help from the City, PDBA and federal funding, an outdoor gym was added. In 2014, the Lions Club installed the wheelchair accessible swing and this year, the Lions Club made significant upgrades to the *Ventureland Playground* with new equipment and repairs to existing structures.

The Parksville Lions Club estimates since 1985 it has spent more than \$500,000 for equipment as well as an annual \$5,000 for maintenance of the playground. Lions Club members volunteer about 2,000 hours each year at the playground and continue to raise funds to maintain and upgrade the equipment. Members work closely with City of Parksville parks staff to facilitate equipment maintenance and new installations. In July each year, the Parksville Lions Club hosts the annual International Kite Festival and popular teddy bear drop in the Community Park.

For more information and how you can help with this project:

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