

VILLAGE OF LYTTON INTERIM PARK ENHANCEMENT + WAYFINDING STRATEGY

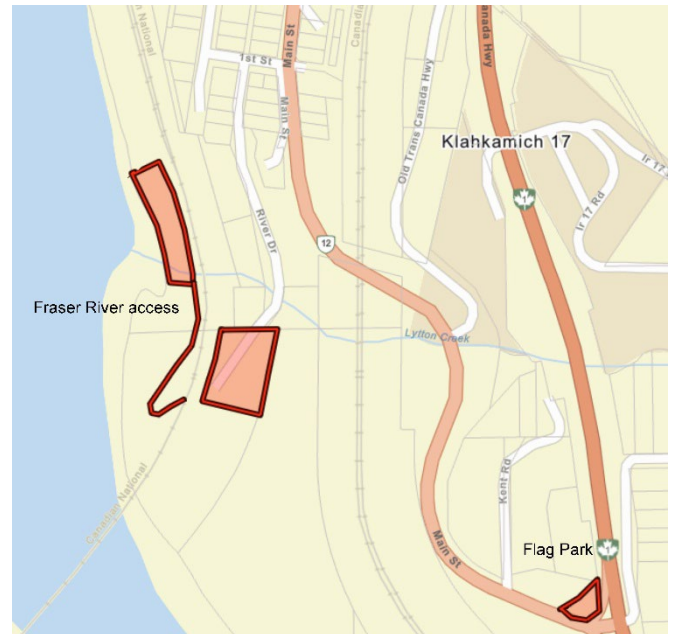
October 7, 2025

Residents and visitors are returning to enjoy Village amenities, following the 2021 fire and floods with the recently improved public spaces at Chief Spint'lum Park and Pocket Park. A key deliverable to Lytton's recovery is to improve existing public spaces that are important to the community, as this builds community and gives reason for visitors to explore. As stated in the 2024 destination tourism plan **Essentially Lytton**: *"the narrative of Lytton can be shifted to inspire both visitation and investment – from a town of devastation and risk to a town of opportunity, resilience, strength, and beauty"*. The Strategic Priorities for rebuilding indicate that the Village replace key community facilities that enhance safety, services and quality of life

This Interim Strategy focuses on enhancements to several Village parks and open spaces, a landscape design approach, and developing a wayfinding strategy as amenities are re-introduced into the community. A longer-term Strategy will be developed through the recently commenced Official Community Plan Update.

1. CONTEXT

The Village of Lytton's parks and open spaces were destroyed by the 2021 fire. This document focuses on improvements recommended for Pocket Park, O'Dwyer Park, Flag Park and the Fraser River park and raft launch, as illustrated in the Location Maps below.



The Village is about to commence an update of the Official Community Plan which will include extensive engagement with the greater community. This planning process will consider other potential parks and open spaces for future acquisition or improvement as well as policy considerations with landscape design approaches. The purpose of this interim strategy is to move forward with already established municipal parks and start exploring landscape design approaches and a wayfinding program.

2. PARK + OPEN SPACE IMPROVEMENTS

a. Park and Open Space Pre-Fire and Current Conditions

The following provides an overview of the four existing parks and open spaces, identifying their pre-fire character as well as post fire and flood conditions.

O’Dwyer Park – This park before the fire included lands within a portion of the Sixth Street Road end. This park continues to be a key destination given its spectacular views of the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, as well as a memorial to the park namesake Jim O’Dwyer, a plaque apologizing for the hardship and suffering to Chinese Canadians and Chinese people in Canada, Nlaka’pamux pictographs, and the legendary Hot Spot stone marker. The park was a grassed area with a picnic table, stone bench and a chain link fence with plantings.



The current conditions indicate that the grassed area, landscaping and fence has been compromised. Two benches have been re-installed.

Flag Park – Flag Park is the welcome entry to Lytton’s Village Centre. It is currently grassed and treed with the welcome sign (Canada’s Hot Spot) and the Canadian, British Columbia and Village of Lytton flags. In addition, the park had lighting for these improvements, and appears to have been irrigated, but the system was compromised by the fire.



River Access Open Space – The Village holds a long-term lease with CN Rail for purposes of parking, access and rafting facilities. This open space provides the community with access to the CN pedestrian bridge and gold pan reserve, as well as the boat (rafting) launch and parking.

The 2021 fire and flood compromised the lower access road and created risk with the many dead trees dangerously looming over the access. The launch is buried under several feet of sand.



Pocket Park – This park has completed its first phase of improvements with the installation of a shade structure. The second phase, funded in part by a grant from the Northern Development Initiative Trust, will include a new picnic table, misting station and enhanced landscaping. The proposed improvements are described in greater detail in the next section.



b. PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Staff has reviewed the condition of the existing parks and opens spaces and identified certain improvements.

O’Dwyer Park – It is important that O’Dwyer Park be improved as it is loved destination for both residents and visitors. The recommended improvements include:

- determine if soils requiring upgrading/replacement.
- Re-introduce irrigation.
- landscaping improvements with shrubs and seasonal plantings.
- replace the existing chain link fence with a more attractive more durable design (that will also prevent access to the railway tracks);
- a picnic table,
- water bottle fill station and
- a new sign.

Flag Park – This is the entrance to the Village centre and should reflect pride in the community. The park improvements consider the landscaping (although under a separate initiative the Village may want to consider the welcome sign as part of community re-visioning of the town’s motto or slogan). The recommended improvements include:

- repair irrigation, and
- landscaping improvements with seasonal plantings.

River Access Open Space – The access to the river is an asset for the community and visitors. The recommended improvements include:

- restrict vehicular access to the river, with a gate/signage and identify and sign a designated parking lot east of the rail crossing.
- resolve dangerous conditions resulting from the fire and flood, with removal of trees and repairing the access road from the rail crossing to the river,
- investigate the cost and timing to remove the sand build up on the rafting/boat launch; and

- consider future park infrastructure such as wayfinding, a park sign, benches, shade trees and a washroom. Once these works are completed and the open space is suitable for public use, the Village could formally name the park.

Pocket Park – The improvements proposed for Phase 2 of Pocket Park are progressing, and the Village recently received the landscaping design and rationale for the park slope. Attachment #1 provides this design as well as the planting rationale.

Phase 2 had been originally proposed that the landscaping be completed in early fall 2025, but due to the archaeological requirements (the work plan was approved on October 1st) the plantings will be undertaken in early spring, to ensure survival and the availability of recommended plantings. Landscape Architect Tom Barratt indicated that the planting design for the Pocket Park is entirely native with plants to be sourced from Splitrock Nursery in Lillooet. The Village is also proceeding with snow stays on the shade structure.

In considering improvements following the completion of Phase 2, the Phase 3 works could include:

- water bottle fill station
- a picnic table on the upper landing of the stairs, and
- a new permanent park sign.

3. LANDSCAPE DESIGN APPROACH

The Village has previously expressed interest in the moving towards plantings that consider more native and/or Indigenous plantings. The landscape architect for Pocket Park was directed by staff to research and source native plants, which would consider landscaping and lawn or ground cover. This approach known as “rewild planting” refers to designing landscapes—or even small garden spaces—to restore natural processes by introducing native plant species, minimizing interventions, and encouraging habitats that support local wildlife and ecological health. The Splitrock Environmental has a nursery in Lillooet, that is St’at’imc owned [Services — Splitrock Environmental](#) and focuses on growing native herb, grass, shrub and tree species from our surrounding bioregion, and is a tremendous resource.

The Key Principles of “rewild planting”, consider:

- Focuses on native plants adapted to the local environment, which provide food and shelter to native insects, birds, and mammals.
- Reduces or eliminates the use of chemicals, fertilizers, and non-native turf lawns, prioritizing natural soil health and ecological function.
- Embraces natural cycles like decay, seed dispersal, and self-seeding to allow ecosystems to regenerate more authentically.

As mentioned, the recent proposed Pocket Park landscape design has embraced the concept of “rewild planting” as well as the importance of seasonal colour to ensure vibrancy through the seasons.

The park improvement strategy recommends the Village consider “rewilding planting” principles in their future landscaping design and plans and, if and when, may include these design suggestions in the OCP Update through the Development Permit Guidelines for character of new landscapes.

5. WAYFINDING

The Village will continue to introduce new amenities for the community and visitors, and to ensure maximum enjoyment it is recommended that the Village prepare a Wayfinding Plan. Wayfinding allows people to navigate a community to find and discover public amenities such as parks, a visitor centre, trails, and community facilities.

It is recommended that the Village work with the community to develop a wayfinding plan that not only identifies the location of signs and other focus points but also the design, and costs of these installations.



6. IMPLEMENTATION

The Interim Park Enhancement + Wayfinding Strategy proposes that the Village embark on the following action items as part of the Village’s rebuilding and recovery. The budgets suggested are “ballpark” and will need further refinement. All the funding would be from Growing Communities Fund.

Initiative	Improvements	Budget Projections	Timeline
O’Dwyer Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Soil upgrading/replacement. ▫ Irrigation upgrade ▫ landscaping improvements ▫ new fence ▫ picnic table, and ▫ a new sign. 	\$25,000	Design Fall 2025 Upgrade early Spring 2026
Flag Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Soil upgrading/replacement. ▫ Irrigation upgrade ▫ landscaping improvements 	\$12,000	Design Fall 2025 Upgrade early Spring 2026

Initiative	Improvements	Budget Projections	Timeline
River Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ a gate/signage ▫ a designated parking lot ▫ removal of trees ▫ repairing the access road ▫ remove the sand build up on the rafting/boat launch, and ▫ future park infrastructure such as wayfinding, a park sign, benches, shade trees and ▫ a composting toilet. 	\$65,000	Start Summer 2026, continues through 2027.
Pocket Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ cladding or fence around washroom ▫ drinking fountain ▫ a picnic table, and ▫ a permanent park sign 	\$10,000	Spring 2026
Landscape Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ continue to work towards a landscape design approach that embraces “rewild planting” ▫ review this approach with the community in the OCP Update 	Part of other project budgets	OCP Update early Summer 2026
Wayfinding Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Develop a Wayfinding Plan ▫ Design and order wayfinding infrastructure 	\$50,000	Design Fall 2025 Commence installations early Spring 2026