

Subject: Installation of Permanent StoryWalk Signage in Woodstream Park

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council receive Report #2022-0142 – Installation of Permanent Stor Walk Signage, for Information.

Background:

StoryWalk is an educational activity that places the pages from children's stories inside protective cases along popular walking routes within a community, or neighborhood. The concept of StoryWalk was conceived as a way to inspire parents, teachers and children to enjoy reading stories together in an outdoor setting. StoryWalk is able to combine three critical elements of overall family health: early literacy, family engagement outdoors, and physical activity.

The Pelham Library has been providing StoryWalks for the past 5 years in locations around Pelham including: schools, daycares, the Meridian Community Centre, Summerfest, Bandshell, and around Library gardens.

In the past, Library Staff utilized wooden stakes, corrugated cardboard, and Velcro to set up the StoryWalk signs and pages. These materials were found to be adequate for short term installations, but were not weather or water proof and could not be left in place for more than a day or two.

In 2021 the Pelham Art Festival made a charitable donation to the Pelham Library for the purchase of a set of 20 permanent StoryWalk signs (Appendix A), which had a cost of approximately \$10,000.

Public Works and Recreational, Culture, & Wellness Staff worked in conjunction with Staff from the Lincoln Pelham Public Library to determine a suitable location for installation.

Analysis:

A permanent StoryWalk site will allow Lincoln Pelham Library Staff to leave the story pages up for a longer period of time to be enjoyed by a greater number of people. The design of the signage allows for the stories to be changed easily at intervals determined by Library staff.

Staff investigated a number of potential sites to install StoryWalk signs. These sites included all the major community parks, the Steve Bauer Trail system and neighborhood parks. After spending time in each location to observe people and how they utilize the outdoor space, Woodstream Park was chosen as the first permanent StoryWalk site.

Reading a StoryWalk with adults gives children the opportunity to learn new words, describe things and events, enjoy and tell stories, and learn how to follow a story in sequence through physically moving from page to page. The layout of Woodstream Park, including the 380m crushed stone loop, made the park the ideal candidate. StoryWalk Signage can be spaced every 18m along the inside of the pathway as shown in Appendix B.

Installation of the signs is a simple process that can be undertaken by Public Works Staff without any budget implications, and the signs pose no major issues in performing maintenance within the Park. The Lincoln Pelham Public Library had planned on setting up temporary signs in Woodstream Park on July 11, 2022 as part of their StoryWalk program. Public Works Staff intend on installing the signs prior to July 11th to accommodate the Library's timeline.

Financial Considerations:

There are no financial considerations pertaining to this report.

Alternatives Reviewed:

This report is for information only.

Strategic Plan Relationship: Build Strong Communities and Cultural Assets

StoryWalks promote early literacy and learning, outdoor activity, and physical health. They provide an opportunity for children to learn and experience books while playing outdoors.

Consultation:

Recreation, Culture, and Wellness, and Lincoln Pelham Public Library Staff were consulted in the preparation of this report.

Other Pertinent Reports/Attachments:

Appendix A – StoryWalk Design and Installation Specification

Appendix B – Woodstream Park, General Sign Layout

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