



City of Delta
COUNCIL REPORT
Regular Meeting

To: **Council**

File No.: **6340-01**

From: **Parks, Recreation & Culture
Department**

Date: **April 24, 2025**

Reflective Lookout at Duck Island

The following report has been reviewed and endorsed by the City Manager's Office.

▪ **RECOMMENDATION:**

THAT this report be received for information.

▪ **PURPOSE:**

To provide Council with an update on improvements to create a reflective lookout at the shoreline area of Delta Link Business Park, known as Duck Island.

▪ **BACKGROUND:**

In January 2025, staff were directed to look at the suitability of providing a shoreline gathering space along the Fraser River ("River"), specifically at the shoreline area of the public trail connecting the Delta Link Business Park to the River, known as Duck Island ("Site"), for families and loved ones to scatter cremated remains and gather in remembrance.

To support the City of Delta's ("City") consideration of a potential shoreline scattering space, LEES + Associates ("LEES") were contracted to assess technical considerations, feasibility, and implementation opportunities for a shoreline scattering facility along the River.

▪ **DISCUSSION:**

To better understand the elements needed to support a successful shoreline scattering facility a list of key criteria was established drawing on LEES experience and expertise.

- Safe access to flowing water
- Easy site access (vehicles/transit)
- Easy pedestrian access (from parking to scattering area)
- Parking for 5 – 10 vehicles
- Accommodate 10 – 20 people

- On-site amenities, including washrooms, lighting, seating, plantings, and waste baskets

Other considerations include a slope to the water's edge, water depths that would allow for the dispersal of the remains, ground conditions to support added infrastructure (i.e. potential wharf, steps to water, etc.), and any potential tidal/flood risks. A review of legislation, environmental and regulatory issues were also considered in the analysis provided by LEES (Attachment A).

The creation of a formal scattering facility as identified in the attached, could satisfy many of the key site criteria with the installation of a wharf or pier to provide safe access to the River and amenities to support ceremonial gatherings. However, this option is very costly, with a rough order of magnitude in the range of \$3.5 million for the necessary upgrades.

In addition, various levels of government have jurisdiction over bodies of water and the foreshore, with current legislation prohibiting the disposition of cremated remains in and around the River. Support from all levels of government, including First Nations, and changes to current legislation is required to allow shoreline scattering.

Water lot tenure of the Site is also required (Attachment B). The City has an active application with the Province of British Columbia ("Province") for water lot tenure which was accepted for full review by the Province in January 2022 but has not yet been approved. A letter from Mayor Harvie on behalf of Council was recently sent to the Minister of Water Land and Resource Stewardship requesting that the Province prioritize the City's application.

Reflective Lookout

Given the legislative constraints and significant financial cost associated with establishing a formal scattering facility, staff have proceeded with the establishment of a reflective lookout at the Site (Attachment C) which satisfies some of the site criteria identified above and can be achieved with relative ease and limited cost. This concept does not endorse the scattering of cremated remains given the legislative context noted in the attached but does offer an opportunity for families to remember their loved ones in a serene and contemplative setting adjacent to the River. The upgrade will consist of landscaping improvements, additional seating, signage, and minor trail upgrades.

Renovations to improve accessibility to the Site from the parking area are not contemplated, but the scope does include modest improvements to existing undeveloped trails currently providing access to the River's edge for those who may wish to connect with the River while remembering their loved ones. Given the River's strong current, signage will be installed to deter entrance into the water.

It has been suggested that "Shanti Ghat" (meaning a peaceful space at the edge of a river) may be an appropriate name for a site of this nature.

Implications:

Financial Implications – The establishment of a reflective lookout at the Duck Island site is expected to cost between \$75,000 - \$125,000. This can be accommodated within the funding set aside for Mid-Year Priorities, which is included in the 2025 approved Capital Plan.

CONCLUSION:

The implementation of a reflective lookout at the Duck Island site offers opportunities for families to remember their loved ones in a serene and contemplative setting adjacent to the Fraser River. Modest improvements to existing undeveloped trails will provide families with a meaningful space to connect to the Fraser River.



Josh Turner
General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Culture

Department submission prepared by: Diana L. Cousins, Senior Policy Analyst
DLC/fb/dlc

This report has been prepared in consultation with the following listed departments.

Concurring Departments		
Department	Name	Signature
Corporate Services	Mike Brotherston	MB
Finance	Navin Chand	NC

ATTACHMENTS:

- A. Suitability of Shoreline Area for Scattering Cremated Remains
- B. Duck Island Tenure
- C. Shanti Ghat Site Design and Aerial View