

## **South Lawn Renewal Project Conceptual Design**

### **Introduction**

The South Lawn of Christ Church Cathedral (an area bounded by the south side of the Cathedral, Quadra Street, Burdett Avenue and the Cathedral's south parking lot) is a much-treasured green space in the downtown core of Victoria, appreciated by parishioners, the local community and visitors. It is one of the few green spaces in the downtown area where people can relax, reflect, meditate or enjoy their coffee or lunch in a peaceful natural setting.

In addition, the South Lawn serves an important community function as a recreation space for the Cathedral School's students, a play area for children in the YMCA/YWCA's childcare program and a site for music events during the summer.

The Cathedral recognizes the South Lawn is showing wear and needs renewal to continue to meet the needs of the Cathedral and community. In response, the Cathedral has initiated the South Lawn Renewal Project.

The renewal of the South Lawn will:

- a) Enhance the aesthetic appeal of the Cathedral precinct,
- b) Support the needs of the key stakeholders,
- c) Provide a safe space that reflects the spiritual mission of the Cathedral,
- d) Provide interpretive signage that communicates the rich history of the Cathedral and its lands.

A central theme of the South Lawn Renewal Project is to provide opportunities to strengthen the Cathedral's relationship with First Nations peoples in the spirit of reconciliation.

### **Overall Concept**

The concept for the South Lawn Renewal Project is to develop a multi functional green space that:

1. Provides parishioners, neighbours and visitors with a beautiful spiritual space for quiet reflection and meditation,
2. Provides a recreation and learning space for students of the Cathedral School,
3. Enhances the beauty of the Cathedral precinct,
4. Provides an opportunity for visitors to learn about and appreciate the beauty of plants native to South Vancouver Island,
5. Provides an opportunity to link the space to First Nations' history and culture,

6. Builds upon the existing structures and assets of the South Lawn, e.g. walkways and mature trees.

## Proposed Conceptual Design

The proposed conceptual design for the South Lawn is illustrated in the attached South Lawn Conceptual Design drawing. This conceptual design is intended to illustrate a possible solution to the renewal of the South Lawn area that will meet stakeholders' needs, minimize project costs, enhance the aesthetics of the Cathedral precinct and respect the heritage value of the space.

The key elements of the proposed design are: shown on the drawing by numbered yellow circles (1 – 11).

1. Install a **4 foot high metal fence** along the Burdett Ave and Quadra Street sides, similar to the fencing around the Deanery,
2. Replace the existing asphalt walkway with a **8 foot wide concrete walkway**,
3. Install concrete bench pads to accommodate more **benches**,
4. Renovate the **main lawn area**,
5. Install **interpretive signs**,
6. Create a **border of native plants** with four seasons interest (shrubs, perennials and ground covers) along the east, south and west sides of the space,
7. Install garden lighting throughout the native plant garden and borders to enhance security and provide interest at night,
8. Update irrigation system,
9. Convert the current lawn area between the Cathedral and the walkway into a **native plant garden**,
10. Install **gateposts** on either side of the 2 South Lawn entrances, e.g. from Quadra Street and from the south parking lot. They would be carved by local First Nations artists to illustrate important culture traditions.
11. Install some form of donor recognition for those individuals and organizations that provided funding of the South Lawn Renewal Project.

## Description of Project Components

### 1. **Metal 'Wrought Iron Style' Fence**

A metal fence will be installed along the south and west side of the garden. The fence will be similar to the current fence in front of the Deanery on Burdett Avenue. An entrance to the garden area will be provided on the west – Quadra Street side.

### 2. **New Concrete Walkway**

The existing asphalt walkway, which is showing some age, and presents some safety issues, will be replaced with an 8-foot wide concrete walkway. Consideration will be given to some form of decorative concrete work, stamped concrete.

### **3. Benches**

The design provides for up to 12 benches around the perimeter of the South Lawn area. The intention is these benches will be paid for by donors. Concrete pads will be poured for the 10 benches at the same time as the walkway is poured.

### **4. Lawn**

The lawn area will be renovated to provide a safe, hardwearing play area. This will involve smoothing out the lawn and installing a hardwearing variety of grass that requires a minimum of irrigation in the dry season.

The size of the lawn area will be reduced along the Quadra Street and Burdett Avenue to create a new perimeter bed of native plants. The new planting bed will be about 7 – 8 feet deep. It will provide four seasons interest to the South Lawn area and will help protect existing trees from damage caused by heavy foot traffic. (Soil compaction and root damage).

The existing irrigation will be adjusted/extended as needed to ensure adequate watering in the dry season.

A regular maintenance program will be developed for the lawn to ensure a long and healthy life. This program will include annual dethatching, aeration, fertilizing and cutting.

### **5. Interpretive Signage**

Interpretive signage will be installed to provide visitors information on such topics as: the history and culture of local First Nations' communities, history of the Christ Church Cathedral precinct, the labyrinth, and information on traditional native plants in the garden.

### **6. Perimeter Garden Beds**

The perimeter garden beds will be designed to provide interest to the visitor and a sense of privacy while ensuring safety. The beds will be about 7 – 8 feet deep. Planting will be similar to the native plant garden with an emphasis on shade loving plants such as ferns.

### **7. Garden Lighting**

Decorative garden lighting will be installed in the native plant garden and the perimeter garden beds to enhance security and provide night-time interest in the garden.

### **8. Update the Irrigation System**

The current irrigation system will be upgraded to provide irrigation to the new native plant gardens and ensure the new lawn is properly irrigated.

### **9. Native Plant Garden**

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The Native Plant Garden will occupy the grassed area between the south side of the Cathedral and the existing asphalt walkway. This garden area will be about 150 feet by 12 feet.

The two existing trees in this space will be retained: a magnolia and a hawthorn.

An access strip 2 feet wide will be created along the edge of the Cathedral.

Shrubs will be planted at the back of the garden closest to the Cathedral. Typical native shrubs may include: red flowering currant, Pacific rhododendron, Oregon grape, red huckleberry, snowberry and salal.

Typical native perennials, bulbs and annual may include: vanilla leaf, chocolate lily, fawn lily Shooting star, western meadow rue, false Solomon's seal, foamflower, bunchberry, and goat's beard.

### **10. Gateposts**

The South Lawn area has 2 entrances – one off Quadra Street and the second off the south parking lot.

The design provides for each entrance to be flanked by 2 wooden gateposts approximately 8" by 8" square or 10" by 10" square and 7 – 8 feet high. These gateposts create a sense of entrance into a special, spiritual space.

The intention is to work with local First Nations' artists to carve these posts to provide:

- A learning experience for visitors about First Nation's culture,
- A recognition of the traditional lands of local First Nations,
- A symbol of reconciliation between the Anglican Church and First Nations peoples

### **11. Donor Recognition**

Some form of donor recognition will be incorporated into the design of the South Lawn. The particulars of the recognition will be decided after discussion with donors.