

Staff Report

Report To: Community Services Committee
Report From: Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services
Meeting Date: September 23, 2026
Report Code: CS-26-083
Subject: Capital Projects Update – Weaver’s Creek, 9 Bends Trail, Kelso Beach at Nawash Park Playground and Splashpad and Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge

Recommendations:

THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-26-083 respecting Community Services Capital and Project Status Update, the Community Services Committee recommends that City Council:

1. Allocate \$10,000 of funds previously allocated to the 9-bends trail to consulting support for the preparation of the tender; and
2. Request staff add additional funds to the capital budget at the next update relating to the Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge replacement.

Highlights:

- Weaver’s Creek Boardwalk and Nature Trail project is substantially complete. The \$189,000 Harrison Park project opened to the public on September 11, 2026, following consultation with Saugeen Ojibway Nation and the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. Design changes include durable fiberglass structural panels intended to reduce future lifecycle costs.
- The Kelso Beach playground and splash pad rehabilitation is moving into procurement. The \$638,800 project will replace an aging playground and upgrade the 2011 splash pad, supported by a City–Scenic City Order of Good Cheer partnership. Civil works are

expected to begin in October 2026, with substantial completion anticipated in spring 2027.

- Nine Bends Trail remains closed due to slope and drainage failures. Council approved up to \$80,000 for engineering analysis, preliminary design, and consultation. The consulting engineer could not recommend safe interim measures to reopen the trail. Staff propose using the funds to support the preparation of an RFP for full engineering analysis, repair options, and cost estimates.
- Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge requires replacement planning. Vehicle traffic remains prohibited following identification of structural steel deterioration, though pedestrian and mobility-device access continues. Replacement is now estimated at approximately \$160,000; staff recommends adding funds through the next capital-plan update and targeting implementation in 2027, with an interim winter snow-clearing plan.

Vision 2050 - Strategic Plan Alignment:

[Strategic Plan](#) Priority: City Building – Enhancing urban development, planning and place-making processes to create places and spaces that contribute to complete communities for existing residents, future residents and tourists.

Previous Report/Authority:

Weaver's Creek Boardwalk and Nature Trail

- [Report CS-26-005](#) Re: Weaver's Creek Boardwalk

Kelso Beach at Nawash Park Playground Replacement and Splashpad Upgrade

- [Report CS-24-106](#) Re: Partnership with the Scenic City Order of Good Cheer - Kelso Beach at Nawash Park
- [Report CS-26-036](#) Re: Kelso Beach at Nawash Park Playground Replacement and Splash Pad Revitalization
- [Report CS-26-057](#) Re: Kelso Beach at Nawash Park – Playground and Splash Pad Concept Design

9 Bends Trail

- [Report CS-26-038](#) Re: Nine Bends Trail and Roadway (1st Street West) Condition Update

Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge

- [Report CS-26-073](#) Re: Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge Structural Assessment

Background:

Each year, each department within the City undertakes a number of operating and capital projects. As part of the Committee orientation in February of 2026, staff shared some highlights of projects from 2025 and shared a number of projects that would be upcoming in 2026.

Attached to this report is a report card summary (Attachment 1) and status of the various projects that are within the Community Services Department area. This report provides a more detailed update on 4 projects:

- Weaver's Creek Boardwalk and Nature Trail
- Kelso Beach at Nawash Park Playground Replacement and Splashpad Upgrade
- 9 Bends Trail
- Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge

Analysis and Options:

Weaver's Creek Boardwalk and Nature Trail

Located in Harrison Park, in the West Woodland Escarpment area, the replacement of the Weaver's Creek Boardwalk and Nature Trail was a high-priority action identified in the Harrison Park Master Plan.

GSS Engineering was retained to undertake an assessment of options respecting the trail and boardwalk and this was presented to Committee in January of 2026.

Based on initial project design and construction estimates, Committee and Council approved a modified budget for the project of \$189,000.

Consultation was undertaken with SON, and the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee. Based on feedback, the design was

finalized, and the tender was completed and issued on May 13, 2026 and closed on June 8, 2026 in compliance with the City's Procurement Policy.

The tender (RFT-26-007) was awarded to TDI International Ag. Inc Land Restoration.

Work began on site August 4, 2026 (because of the location's proximity to Weaver's Creek, the work could not start prior to July 15 and must be substantially completed by September 15).

Work has progressed well and substantial completion was given on September 11. The area was then opened to the public. Three change orders were issued during the course of the project. One was minor and extended the length of the drainage culverts that extend under the boardwalk and trail (see photos in attachment 2).

The second change order relates to the material that is the interface between the clear stone base and the wood deck. In January, when the Committee had reviewed the design, there was significant discussion regarding the materials and the anticipated lifespan of the project.

GDI Land Restoration proposed a change order to replace the wooden structure with fiberglass panels (see photos in attachment 3). These fiberglass panels have an extended warranty, and the lifespan should allow in the future replacement of the deck boards, with the understructure being able to be reused, significantly reducing lifecycle costs.

The final change order related to the installation of 3 posts for signage and soil matting. The soil matting was preferred over seeding the area so as not to introduce any non-native vegetation into this natural area.

Project Status:



Kelso Beach at Nawash Park Splashpad Upgrade and Playground Replacement

Kelso Beach at Nawash Park is a unique part of Owen Sound's system of parks and open spaces. It has a complex combination of active and passive facilities and spaces – some very specialized – and is home to a number of significant, well-attended events.

The existing playground is 25 years old and many of the components have been taken out of service due to age and condition. The Splash Pad at Kelso Beach at Nawash Park opened June of 2011. The City and Order of Good Cheer had entered into a partnership agreement in late 2024 around this project.

In 2024, Council approved certain amendments to the capital budget for the Parks & Open Spaces Division. This included a modification to the Kelso Beach at Nawash Park playground capital project. In 2024, through Committee, Council approved a Contribution Agreement with the Scenic City Order of Good Cheer (SSOGC). The project budget is set at \$500,000, with equal contributions from the Scenic City Order of Good Cheer and the City. The Order's commitment will be made over a 5-year period.

In the fall of 2025, the City issued RFP-25-020 for Landscape Architect Services for concept development, public consultation, detailed design, tender preparation, and construction administration for the project. The project was awarded to C.F.Crozier & Associates Inc. (Tim McCormick, LA, Project Lead). Since that time, work has been underway on concept development honouring the commitment in the Contribution Agreement around design and planning, with the SSOGC.

Public feedback was obtained through a public open house as well as through a public survey. The final design was presented to Committee in June of 2026 as well as to the Grey County Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Through the summer of 2026, detailed design was completed along with the tender package.

The work was tendered on September 9, 2026 and will close on October 5, 2026 with a voluntary site meeting scheduled. Work is scheduled to start in October of 2026 and will be completed in May of 2027.

The work will be completed in 3 parts:

- Splash pad components will be purchased directly from ABC Recreation (supplier of existing splash pad components);
- Playground will be purchased directly from Jambette through the Canoe Procurement Program;
- The civil work will be tendered separately with work expected to start in the fall of 2026 with completion in spring 2027 (RFT).

The splash pad will close at the end of September to allow site works to commence. The playground components are being purchased directly by the City and will be installed by the manufacturer. In early October, ABC will close and winterize the splash pad and then remove the features for refurbishment. The upgraded and new equipment will be installed in spring.

The pre-purchase of playground equipment will mitigate potential manufacturing and delivery lead times that could impact construction timelines.

This tender is anticipated to be awarded in Fall 2026 with a Spring 2027 substantial completion date.

Sole sourcing of the splash pad equipment was recommended to ensure compatibility with the City's existing splash pad infrastructure and equipment. This is permitted under Section 25 of the City's Procurement Policy. This will ensure that new components, replacement parts, and systems integrate with the current equipment, while minimizing potential compatibility issues, additional costs, or operational challenges.

The City and Scenic City Order of Good Cheer have applied for 2 grants to support this project:

- Enhancing Access to Spaces for Everyone Grant (application: May 7). No response has been received to date on this application.
- Walden Family Foundation Fund. The Order of Good Cheer has received \$100,000 from this fund toward their contribution to the project. This donation has been confirmed.

Overall project budget:

Survey and Design	\$72,600
Construction and Playground	\$497,000

Construction Administration	\$69,200
Total	\$638,800

Project Status:

While the project has just been tendered and this has not closed, the project design and the tender have established a framework for a competitive bidding process.



9 Bends Trail

At the Special Council meeting in June of 2026 (Capital Budget Update), Council received Report CS-26-038 with a condition update respecting the 9 Bends Trail and Roadway.

In summary, the report stated:

- The Nine Bends Trail is an important active transportation and recreation link.
- The lands adjacent to the trail are characterized by steep slopes, intermittent watercourses, open ditches, and trees. The Official Plan and Zoning By-law defines the area as Hazard Lands.
- Existing studies confirm the longstanding slope and drainage concerns. With recent failures, these studies are outdated and updated engineering study and design are critical to informing repairs and remediation.

The trail is a well-used connection. The last trail counter data reported use from July of 2021 to February of 2022. It is estimated that there were 4,800 pedestrians counted, with a monthly average of 2,925.

The slope adjacent to the trail and the drainage swales on either side of the trail have failed (see Attachment 4). The groundwater conditions on this steep slope have caused a slope failure around the mid-point. Trees have

been impacted by other trees that have fallen. One tree is currently across the trail, and others have been cut and are within the drainage swale. The trail has been signed and marked as closed due to public safety concerns.

Council approved the following direction:

S-260623-003

"THAT in consideration of Staff Report CS-26-038 respecting the Nine Bends Trail and Roadway (1st Street West) Condition Update, City Council approves:

1. An allocation of up to \$70,000 for engineering analysis and preliminary design from the capital reserve fund; and
2. An additional allocation of up to \$10,000 for immediate consultation services from the capital reserve fund."

Staff subsequently met on-site with a professional engineer to review the on-site conditions and characteristics. Although Council had hoped that the allocation of an additional \$10,000 for consultation services would allow the trail to be opened in the interim, based on a review of the conditions, the consulting engineer could not recommend interim works to allow public use of the trail to resume.

It is recommended that the \$10,000 be allocated to engage a consulting engineer to assist City staff in preparing the tender documents for the Engineering Analysis and Design Work of design alternatives and costing.

Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge

A July 2026 report identified structural issues with the Harrison Park Rainbow Bridge. In summary, the July report identified:

- Harrison Park is a major City and heritage asset, and the West Park Entry/Rainbow Bridge area is a critical access point supporting year-round community connectivity, with approximately 150,000 pedestrians and 300,000 vehicles using the entrance road and adjacent trail annually.
- The 2026 structural inspection identified notable deterioration in the Rainbow Bridge's steel components, and the engineering consultant has recommended immediately prohibiting vehicle crossings. Pedestrian and mobility device use can continue.

- This restriction creates an operational challenge for winter maintenance, as the bridge is the only winter-maintained pedestrian route and City vehicles can no longer use it in its current condition.

The engineering consultant had identified two options: repair or replacement, together with a preliminary costing for each. In July, it was noted that further analysis of the options was required.

Staff initiated contact with companies that would be qualified to manufacture, supply, and install a replacement structure. At this time, staff have 2 written quotes.

A meeting of City staff was held to review additional information regarding the project and costs. Based on budgetary estimates received, staff recommends a revised project budget of \$160,000 is anticipated.

Currently there is \$80,000 for bridge repairs in the 2028 capital budget.

It is recommended that additional funds be included in the next update to the capital plan and that this project be planned for implementation in 2027.

In the interim, while the structure is closed to vehicles, Parks & Open Space staff will develop a snow clearing plan for the structure.

Resource Alignment:

Financial Resources

These capital projects are included in the City's 5-year capital plan. The financial reporting regarding the 2026 capital plan will be done in detail at Corporate Services Committee.

Human Resources

The City's capital plan and various operating projects are supported by staff as well as consultants as outlined above.

Time and Scheduling

N/A

Technology and Infrastructure

N/A

Climate and Environmental Impacts:

The recommendation supports both the City's Corporate Climate Change Adaptation Plan and the City's Climate Mitigation Plan.

Several of the reported projects support active transportation. Design of the projects were designed to minimize environmental impacts with necessary permits from the Conservation Authority.

Communication and Engagement:

The projects reported are included in Master Plans developed in consultation with the public. The design of the Playground and splashpad included significant further consultation that was incorporated into the design.

Report Developed in Consultation With:

N/A

Attachments:

1. Attachment 1 – Report Card of Projects
2. Attachment 2 - Photos of Culvert and Soil Mats
3. Attachment 3 - Understructure of Boardwalk
4. Attachment 4 - 9 Bends Trail Photos of Slope Failure

Reviewed by:

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Submission approved by:

Tim Simmonds, City Manager

For more information on this report, please contact Pamela Coulter, Director of Community Services at pcoulter@owensound.ca 519-376-4440 x 1252.