

TOWN OF FORT MACLEOD ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

July 7, 2025

The Town of Fort Macleod
Fort Macleod, Alberta
T0L 0Z0

Attention: Brennan Orr, Director of Operations

Dear Sir:

Re: Response to Town Regarding the Donation to Improve Pathway and Parking Lot at Wilderness Park

As per your request, please consider this letter the Committee's response to the referenced matter.

On June 25, 2025, the Environment Committee met with a majority of members in attendance. Below are the points that came from that discussion.

1. The Committee fully supports the use of the donation to makes improvements in the park.
2. The Committee is concerned that asphalt paving has been proposed for the main pathway and the parking lot. In our opinion, asphalt is a last choice for use in the area due to:
 - a. The possible environmental impact of a petroleum-based product in a flood zone (contaminated runoff). While the committee acknowledges that flood control is in place, the possibility of a damaging flood is always present.
 - b. The potential for breakage and subsequent need for repairs
 - c. Asphalt is not a native product and as such does not fit the definition of a wilderness park.
 - d. The potential of users on wheels going excessive speeds and either having accidents or causing accidents to users.
 - e. The potential dangers of having sharp edges to the pathway.
 - f. Asphalt is not conducive to the movement of animals in the park.
3. There are other products that are more conducive to the nature of the park with the ability to provide accessibility for users. This does require research to confirm those products that are available, and the costs involved. A couple of committee members are currently looking into alternatives and we will share this information when ready.

4. One product that is readily available and native to the area is gravel. The pathways were originally developed using fine gravel well packed. Possibly upgrades to that systems would be a decent choice.
5. The Committee feels that in addition to pathway and parking lot upgrades, the monies might be better spent on repairs and upgrades to the benches, signage, and the playground. Perhaps a picnic shelter could be installed in a prime location with a citation acknowledging the donor. Other additions could include additional signage and plantings to emphasize and share information on the nature of the wildlife corridor.

In conclusion, more time and research is required in order to use the donation in the best way possible for both the users and for the benefit of the park itself. Please note that it is possible that not all respondents to the survey sent out on this topic were aware that the location of the paving refers to the park pathway (despite the title of the survey) and not to additional pathway paving on the south side of the river.

If you have any comments, questions, or concerns, we will be pleased to respond. We look forward to participating in ensuring that the Wilderness Park continues to be a wonderful asset to the Town and to its citizens.

Sincerely,

Susan Glover

on behalf of the members of the Environment Committee