

Local councillor wants to make a splash

By Sarah Sobanski

For the last few years I've always dreamed, and I know the community has dreamed, about having a splash pad at Riverside Park, Bancroft Councillor Tracy McGibbon said, sitting down to talk about a possible water haven for community members.

As a scorching summer settles into its last month, McGibbon dreams of having a community splash pad for 2018.

About three or four years ago, we held a series of meetings in town called Destination Bancroft where we met in groups and discussed what we'd like to see, explained McGibbon. A splash pad was definitely one of the number one items.

A splash pad could cost the town anywhere from \$200,000 to \$300,000. This depends on the size and intricacy of the water playground.

McGibbon suggested that a splash pad would be best for the size of Riverside Park. It would also be on the lower side of the possible budget.

I think when you're putting that kind of money out for something, [you need to] find something that's usable for more than three months, explained McGibbon, discussing different ways the pad could make its possible \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year upkeep budget worthwhile. If we chose something that we could turn into a skating park in the winter, that would be incredible.

She added, There is another community where they have a splash pad in the summer and in the winter it becomes a little outdoor skating rink. We have a lot of outdoor rinks in our area, but for those who live in town that have a hard time getting to those, this will be a great opportunity for them to have somewhere to skate in the winter too.

McGibbon said right now she is researching what types of splash pads would be best for the community. She suggested a splash pad would draw in tourist traffic and encourage spending at local businesses.

Any pad would mean having to establish a committee, developing fundraisers to help it into fruition, and taking the plans to Bancroft council for approval.

With the Town of Bancroft being the heart of North Hastings, and the hub of North Hastings, it would be great if we could see surrounding municipalities also contribute to it, she said.

She added, Ideally, I'd like to see it next year, but if we can have this up and running by 2018 that would be great. Depends how fast we get the cash.

Anyone looking to donate or get involved can email McGibbon at tmcgibbon@bancroft.ca.