



MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

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TO: Community Services Committee

DESTINATAIRE : Comité des services communautaires

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FILE NUMBER: ACS2025-RCF-GEN-0011

SUBJECT: Mooney's Bay Park - Hill Modification Study

OBJET : Parc Mooney's Bay - Étude de faisabilité pour la modification de la pente

PURPOSE

This memo provides information to the Community Services Committee on the results of the Mooney's Bay Hill Modification Study prepared by Engineering and Landscape Architectural consultants for the Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services (RCFS) Department.

BACKGROUND

The Mooney's Bay Park Hill is a large human-made hill created from construction landfill in the 1970's. Originally designed as a junior ski hill; the slopes are extremely steep for winter sledding in all directions. The hill was approved as an official City of Ottawa winter sledding facility in 2007 as part of a formalized city-wide sledding risk mitigation initiative. The Mooney's Bay Park Hill quickly became a destination location, widely used by residents and visitors. Over the subsequent 10 years, a significant number of sledding injuries were reported at the Mooney's Bay Park Hill, both to sledders and other park users in the vicinity of the hill. Following a risk assessment, the Mooney's Bay Park Hill was closed for sledding in 2017. Safe sledding signs were removed, signs indicating hill closure/sledding prohibited were erected, and similar messaging was communicated on Ottawa.ca and by Terry Fox Athletic Facility staff to advise and educate park users/clients.

Despite this closure, sledders continued to use the hill and further accidents and injuries occurred, including a fatality on December 27th, 2021. In early 2022, a Critical Incident Review was conducted to examine the overall safety management and operation of the City's sledding hill program and to consider possible improvements to the program to prevent any recurrence of similar incidents. The review led to a series of physical safety measures implemented within days of the incident, as well as patrols by by-law officers and public service announcements and advisories.

An external municipal risk consultant was also retained to examine the Mooney's Bay Park Hill and determine whether any part of the hill could be used for sledding or if there were any measures that could be implemented to make the hill reasonably safe for sledding. The final consultant's report, delivered on January 31st, 2022, concluded that due to the size and slope of the hill, along with the multitude of hazards found at the bottom (run-out) area of the hill, no portion of the hill offered an acceptable level of risk for sledding.

Finally, a Coroner's Review investigated the fatality of the child involved in the December 27th, 2021, incident. The coroner submitted five recommendations for

consideration to reduce risk at approved sledding hills. The City agreed with all the coroner's recommendations and either instituted new measures to comply with the recommendations, or improved measures already in place. To date, all studies, reviews and assessments undertaken have supported the City administration's position that there were/are no mitigating measures that could be implemented to make the Mooney's Bay Park Hill and surrounding parkland (run-out areas) reasonably safe for sledding without severely impacting the all-season use and programming of the hill and surrounding area of the park. As a result, the Mooney's Bay Park Hill has remained closed for sledding.

On May 1st, 2024, City Council approved a motion to fund an external engineering and landscape architectural feasibility study to determine the potential for a safer sledding concept, including preliminary costing for modifications to the hill and surrounding parkland. Following the completion of the study, City staff was directed to report back with the findings and recommendations for further action and funding if appropriate. In the interim, Council also directed staff to keep the hill closed for sledding using seasonal temporary fencing during the winter months until the safety issues are resolved.

DISCUSSION

The Mooney's Bay Hill Modification Feasibility Study undertook a thorough review of background reports, previous recommendations and an analysis of other local sledding hills to develop potential design standards for potential hill modifications. With these design standards and "lessons learned", tri-dimensional conceptual design software was used to model, analyze and visualize potential Mooney's Bay hill modifications within the context of the existing built and natural environment of the park. This complex tri-dimensional modeling allowed for a thorough examination of numerous potential hill modifications and sledding layouts.

Three potential hill modification design options were developed and refined. These design options include a range of potential hill modifications requiring varying degrees of earthworks. Each option includes slope modifications to accommodate multiple user

groups and ages while providing appropriate hill height, slope, screening, runout space and return routes to allow for safer sledding on the Mooney's Bay hill.

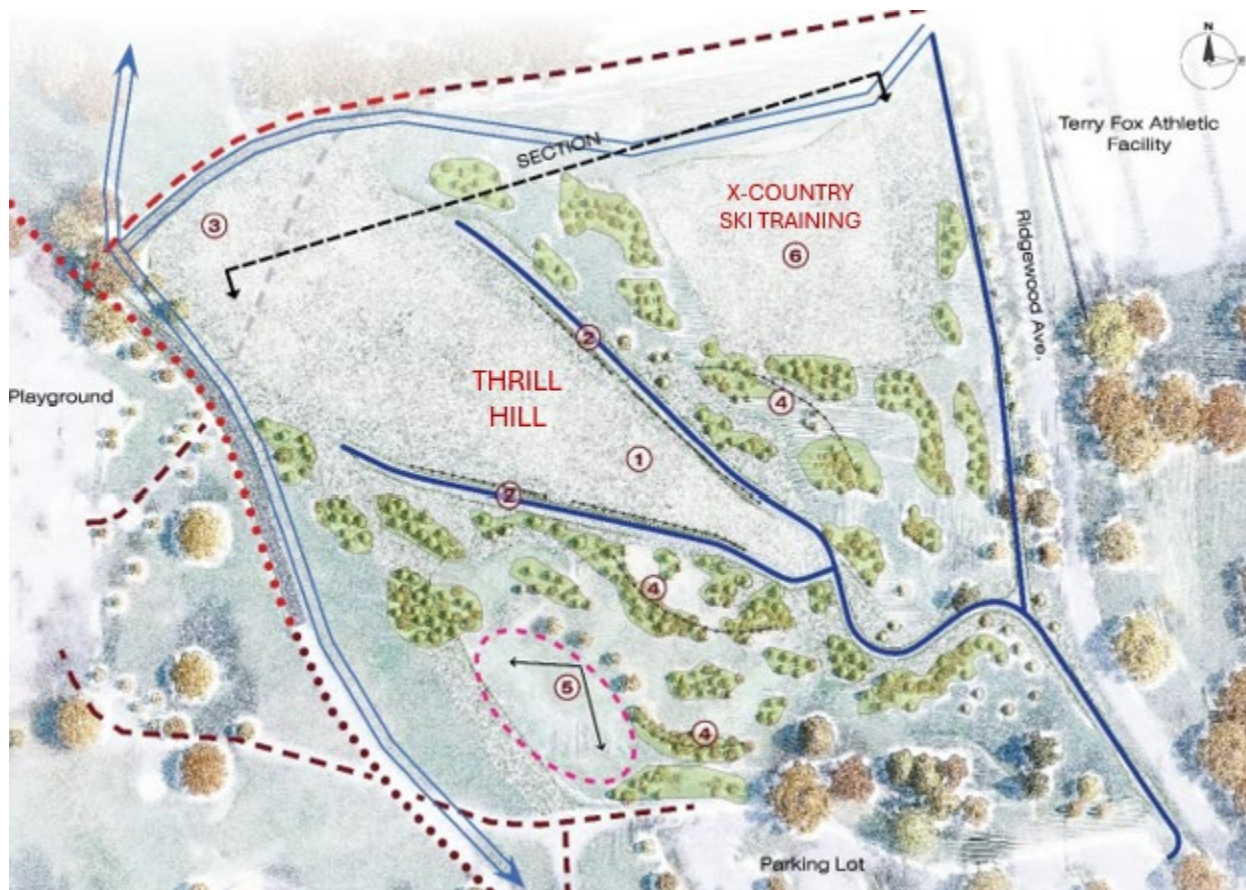
A review of previous environmental assessments and soils analyses undertaken in Mooney's Bay Park confirmed that the fill used to create Mooney's Bay hill contains levels of soil contamination that exceeded provincial guidelines. As a result, soil management measures (clean fill capping and disposal of excess soils) are required in conjunction with any earthwork and grading modifications to the Mooney's Bay Hill.

Description of Modification Options and Costs

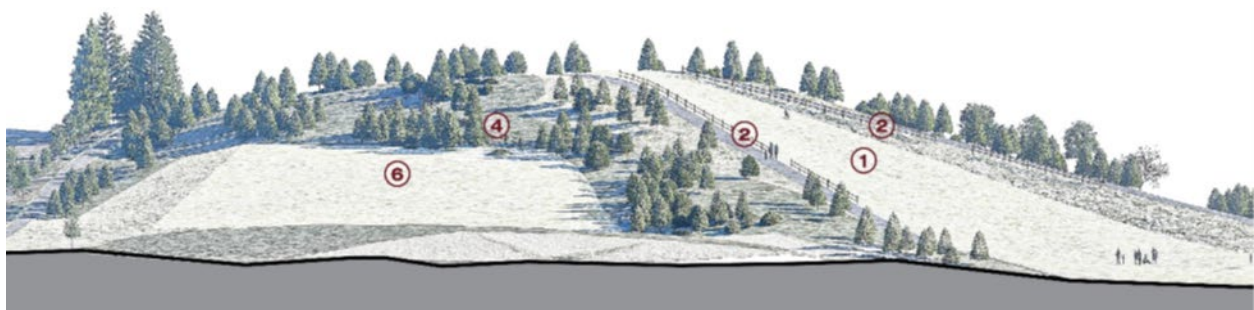
Option A: Thrill Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill - \$2.5M

- 14.6m high “thrill” hill with a consistent 18% grade on the northwest slope with an extended 70m runout zone
- re-located cross-country ski training hill on the adjacent north slope
- ascending pathways adjacent to the sledding zone to separate sledders from those returning to the top for another run
- limited tree removals to clear potential obstacles in or immediately adjacent to the sledding runout zone
- strategic placement of post and rail fencing and staggered vegetation to prevent sledding in undesignated areas of the hill.
- proposed pathways extending from the top of the hill to the Terry Fox Athletic Facility parking lot and Mooney's Bay Beach parking lot
- total hillside regrading including soil required to cap existing contaminated fill is estimated at 6570m³ of cut and 7450m³ of fill.

Option A: Thrill Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill Concept Plan



Option A: Concept Elevation

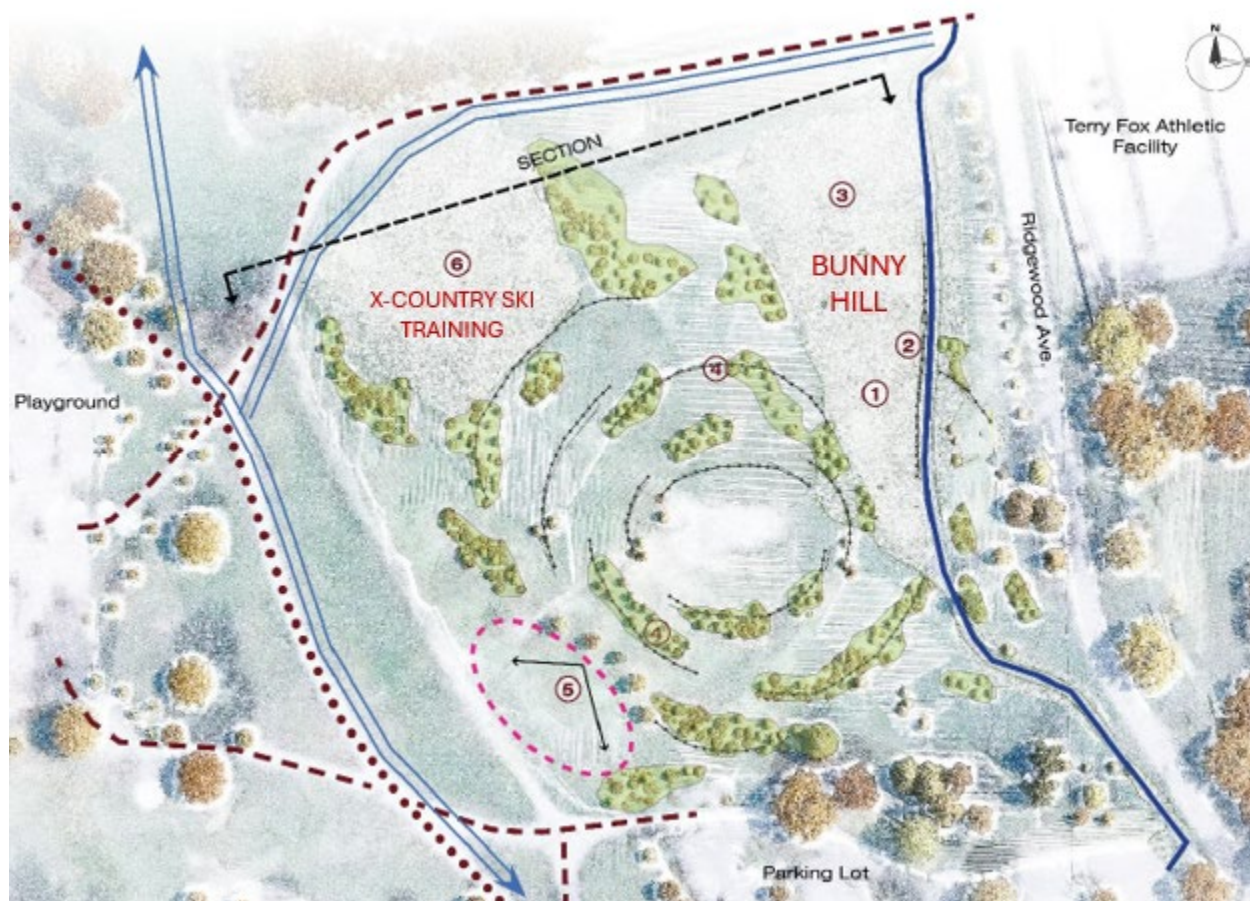


Option B: Bunny Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill – \$1.3M

- 5.7m high sledding “bunny hill” on the north slope, re-graded to a consistent 13% slope with a 40m long runout zone

- o cross-country ski training hill maintained in its current location
- o ascending pathways adjacent to the sledding zone to separate sledders from those returning to the top for another run
- o strategic placement of post and rail fencing and staggered vegetation to prevent sledding from the higher slopes / hilltop and create separation between the sledding bunny hill and cross-country training hill.
- o proposed ascending pathway adjacent to the bunny hill on the east slope extends from the Terry Fox Athletic Facility parking lot to the Mooney's Bay Beach parking lot.
- o total hillside regrading including soil required to cap existing contaminated fill is estimated at 1770m³ of cut and 2550m³ fill.

Option B: Bunny Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill Concept Plan



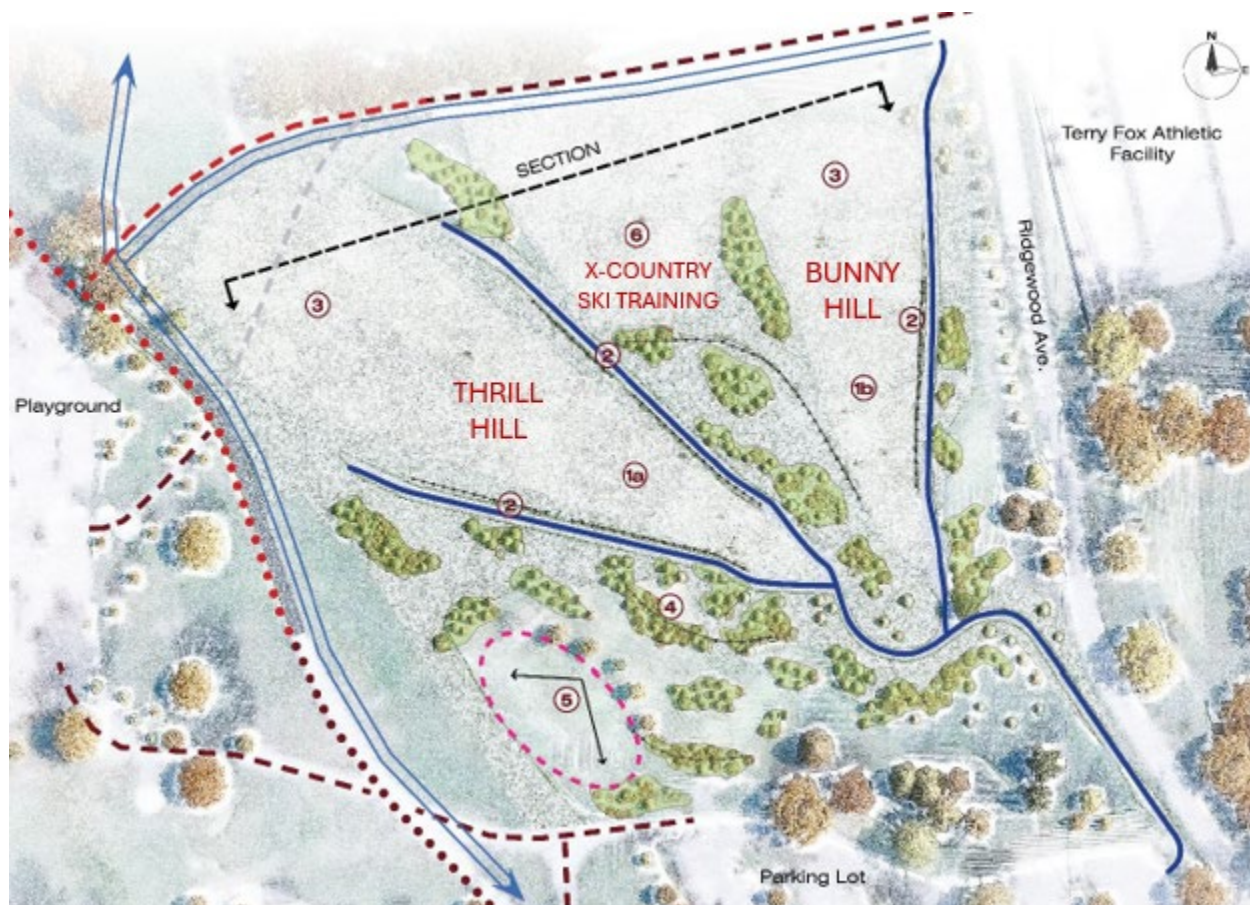
Option B: Concept Elevation



Option C: Thrill Hill, Bunny Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill – \$3.1M

- o combination of Options A & B
- o includes three separate slopes, including a 14.6m sledding high “thrill” hill, a 5.7m high “bunny” hill and a cross-country ski training hill between the two sledding hills
- o significant grading required to make the thrill hill slope consistent at 18% while rounding out the bottom of the sledding zone and extending the runout zone to 70m
- o minor grading required to relocate the cross-country ski training hill
- o regrading required for the bunny hill to lower the slope to 13% and create a 40m long runout zone
- o ascending pathways adjacent to the two sledding zone to separate sledders from those returning to the top for another run
- o strategic placement of post and rail fencing and staggered vegetation to prevent sledding in undesignated areas of the hill
- o pathways extending from the top of both hills to the Terry Fox Athletic Facility parking lot and Mooney’s Bay Beach parking lot.
- o Total hillside regrading including soil required to cap existing contaminated fill is estimated at 9050m³ of cut and 9150m³ of fill

Option C: Thrill Hill, Bunny Hill & Cross-Country Ski Training Hill Concept Plan



Option C: Concept Elevation



CONCLUSION

The results of the Mooney's Bay Hill Modification Feasibility Study indicate that it is feasible to modify the Mooney's Bay to allow for reasonably safer sledding for multiple user groups.

The three design options developed cover a range of potential hill modifications to accommodate different age groups for sledding and training activities. Understanding the attraction of this site to all levels of users, it is concluded that the significant investment required should meet the needs of beginner and advanced sledding enthusiasts as illustrated in Option C.

Estimates of probable construction cost (Class D) are presented for future budgeting consideration.

Dan Chenier
General Manager
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CC: SLT