



## New Park for South Jubilee Neighbourhood

Date: Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020

For Immediate Release

VICTORIA, BC — A new park has arrived in the South Jubilee neighbourhood thanks to the City's purchase of a 12,700 square foot parcel of land comprised of a Garry oak meadow at the corner of Leighton Road and Bank Street.

The new park will be named Agamemnon and Eleni Kasapi Park in recognition of the family's preservation of the property in its natural state for the benefit of the community. The City will maintain the open space with a few enhancements, such as a wood chip pathway, benches and signage, including information about the Indigenous history of the land. The property has environmental significance as Garry oak ecosystems are endangered, with less than five per cent remaining in Canada.

Local residents have long expressed a desire to see this property preserved as green space for public use, leading the City to initiate discussions with the property owner about acquiring the land to create a new neighbourhood park.

Appraised at \$1.21 million, the City purchased the property for \$1 million with funding from its Parks Acquisition Fund and the issuance of a charitable donation receipt in the amount of \$210,000 for the remainder of the purchase price. The family has donated the proceeds from the sale to the University of Victoria to establish an endowment supporting two undergraduate scholarships in the Faculty of Science.

The City's Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan lays out a roadmap to guide planning, management and investment over the next 25 years. The plan was developed with extensive public engagement and highlights the importance of prioritizing acquisition of land that has ecological value. The City is committed to preserving natural areas and ensuring quality green space for residents throughout the municipality. For information on the Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan, visit [victoria.ca/parks](https://victoria.ca/parks).

### Quotes:

#### Mayor Lisa Helps

"The City is always looking for opportunities to expand its public parks and green spaces for people to enjoy the outdoors, especially during these challenging times with the pandemic," said Mayor Lisa Helps. "This land acquisition will provide more publicly accessible green space to the South Jubilee neighbourhood, a goal that has been identified in both our Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan and Official Community Plan."

#### Mario Kasapi

"It was important to my father who passed away last year that we see the land used in ways that were beneficial to the community, and selling the land to the City ensures it will always be accessible to the community to enjoy," said Mario Kasapi. "The annual UVic scholarship will also go further and give back to the community for many years to come."

**Matt Dell, President, South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association**

“Our community is growing so new park space will ensure future generations have a quiet and beautiful Garry oak ecosystem to gather in, enjoy and learn about Indigenous history. Special thanks to the Kasapi family, the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations, South Jubilee liaison Councillor Marianne Alto and the Mayor, Council and staff for their hard work to make this park a reality.”

**ATTACHMENT:** Photo of Agamemnon and Eleni Kasapi Park with Mayor Lisa Helps and members of the South Jubilee Neighbourhood Association

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**For More Information:**

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