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Iqaluit council accepts updated cemetery design Public consultations on new Iqaluit cemetery design lead to changes

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The people of Iqaluit have spoken, and the city's engineering department have included their ideas within the new cemetery's design plans, which received city council's approval June 11.

Presented by the city's director of engineering, Meagan Leach, at a regular council meeting, the cemetery's updated concept design includes advice offered earlier this month by residents, elders, and city council.

The size and shape of the cemetery site, located at the eastern end of Apex just north of Rotary Park, remains the same.

Plans presented at an open house event in Apex on June 4, and an engineering and public works committee meeting June 5 were updated with several features. These include a cross and memorial wall in a central gathering area, an infant garden for deceased children, and a cremation garden with scattering ring, also in the central area of the cemetery.

The ring road in the "Phase 3" area of the site was diminished in size, and a maintenance area added. The new plans also include added space for vehicles to turn around on the narrow road to Rotary Park, which lines the front of the cemetery.

Plans for concrete grave boxes will be put back to council's approval at a later time, Leach said.

Following the advice of elders, most graves will be oriented east-west, Leach said, and some areas will allow for other orientation. The cemetery will be bordered by boulders and rocks, bearing in mind that these might cause snow to load at the site, as was mentioned at the June 5 committee of the whole meeting.

"We'll monitor it," Leach said. "If we feel we need to add something else to improve the perimeter, we will handle it at a later date."

The next stage of the project calls for an engineering plan, which may bring slight alterations to the design, Leach said. The city allocated \$500,000 to the project. The department will provide final cost estimates once engineering plans are complete.

"We're just showing all the major elements and what our intentions are," she said.

Designed by Vancouver-based Lees and Associates landscape architects, the 3.4-hectare cemetery is divided into three phases.

The first will take on 413 graves, which is expected to last for 10 years, and Phase 2 will take on 933 burials. The entire site will last more than 30 years.



Iqaluit's department of engineering presented this revised design of the cemetery to city council on June 11. The plan incorporated advice taken from city residents, Inuit elders and city council. (FILE IMAGE)