

March 13, 1997

SUBJECT: STANLEY PARK JITNEY SERVICE - CONTRACT AWARD

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. **THAT the Board approve the award of the contract for the Stanley Park jitney service to The Vancouver Trolley Company for a base price of \$164,502 to provide service from May 19 to September 14, 1997, generally between 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. daily.**
- B. **That additional services may be purchased at a rate of \$55.31 per hour per bus up to a maximum of \$20,000 and that additional hours of service are to be determined based on consumer response.**
- C. **THAT no legal rights shall arise hereby, and none shall arise until execution of the contemplated contract in Recommendations A and B. The Board may rescind this resolution at any time up to the execution of the contemplated contract in Recommendations A and B.**
- D. **THAT parking fees in Stanley Park be increased from \$1.00 per two hours to \$1.00 per hour, and from \$3.00 to \$5.00 maximum rate per day.**
- E. **THAT a dedicated lane for the jitney and buses be implemented on North Lagoon Drive from May 1 to September 30.**
- F. **THAT approximately 595 roadside parking spaces along the jitney route on Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive be eliminated.**

BACKGROUND

The Board approved the STANLEY PARK TRANSPORTATION AND RECREATION REPORT 1996 on October 18, 1996. The report recommends the installation of a summertime jitney, a transportation service that will carry passengers over a regular route around the park on a frequent schedule.

OVERVIEW

The Stanley Park jitney is a key initiative in reducing automobile dependency in the park, offering visitors an alternative means of access to various destinations. The jitney service is intended to encourage visitors to leave cars in parking lots, or to leave the car at home and arrive by walking, cycling, in-line skating or public transit, and take the Jitney to the intended park destinations. Perimeter areas of the park will become more accessible to those on foot, offering visitors a greater diversity of recreational settings.

In order to test the service, the jitney will be contracted for one season from May 15 to September 14, 1997. Based on a review of its performance, the

Board could decide after the first season whether to extend the contract for additional years. In the first year, the jitney would be provided free-of-charge to park visitors. Fares may be introduced in subsequent years.

DISCUSSION

A Request for Proposal was issued in January 1997. Newspaper advertisements were placed in the Vancouver Sun and the Toronto Globe and Mail. About thirty transportation companies were contacted directly. Twenty-eight companies requested the proposal documents. On February 14, nine proposals were submitted. A variety of vehicle types were proposed, ranging from horse-drawn trailers to so-called people movers, safari-style modified pickups, tram-trailer combinations, minibuses and full-size highway coaches.

The proposals were evaluated regarding the degree to which they meet or exceed the service specifications in the proposal call; the financial cost to the Park Board; the reputation and experience of the bidder; and the technical credibility, financial resources and environmental responsibility of the bidder.

The proposed vehicles were analysed for a variety of factors including compatibility with the environment of Stanley Park functionally and aesthetically; provision of open-air or semi open-air seating; suitability during inclement weather; ease of entry and exit; seating capacity; possibility for standing passengers; roadworthiness; attractiveness as a car-alternative; Motor Carrier Commission license status; comfort at park-appropriate speeds; and accessibility.

Given the short duration of the initial contract and the capital cost of acquiring new vehicles, the Board allowed bids proposing interim vehicles for the short term, and different vehicles for the longer term. All bids were analysed regarding the performance of both interim and long-term vehicles.

The financial proposal was analysed in particular for overall cost, cost per passenger per trip, and the potential for advertising revenue offsetting a portion of the operational cost.

It was determined that the proposal of The Vancouver Trolley Company represents the overall best value to the Board. The base value of the contract is \$164,502. This amount could be reduced by the Park Board's share of advertising revenue. These revenues in a full year of operation could be as high as \$30,000, but that is not expected to be achieved in the first year. The basic contract price provides for three vehicles in daily continuous operation from 10:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. If required, additional service hours can be purchased at a rate of \$55.31 per hour to provide a fourth vehicle on weekends and holidays, or to simply extend service hours. A 9:30 A.M. start is recommended. Staff estimate that an additional \$20,000 of service may have to be purchased. The contract will also contain a flexibility clause to shift service hours in response to consumer demand. The base price contemplates a May 19 start, but it is recommended that the service be tested four days earlier on May 15. Starting date is subject to expeditious completion of the contract and implementation of the necessary signage and minor road alterations (see also below).

The term of the contract is one year. By mutual agreement the Board and the operator can renew the contract after the first season of operation for an additional four years.

JITNEY SERVICE DESCRIPTION

The Jitney service would be provided in the long term with heritage-style trackless trolleys modelled after the San Francisco street cars, akin to the vehicles currently operated by the Vancouver Trolley Company in the City of Vancouver but with a distinct visual Stanley Park identity. The current vehicles are manufactured locally, and are fuelled by propane. The seating capacity is 34 to 35 passengers. The Board would support the operator's application to the Motor Carrier Commission to allow an additional 20 standing passengers. The trolleys are currently not wheelchair-accessible but the operator has proposed to make changes to one of the vehicles to accommodate wheelchairs in the future.

Initially, the jitney service will be provided with standard suburban transit buses having a seating capacity of 35 passengers. These interim-vehicles will be suitably decorated identifying them as the Stanley Park Jitney. The intended trolleys will be phased in as they become available, but would definitely be available at the onset of the second season. The phasing-in schedule will be negotiated with the operator.

Three vehicles would be in constant rotation, resulting in ten-minute frequencies during average traffic conditions. On weekend and holiday afternoons, a fourth vehicle may be used to maintain the ten-minute frequency in more congested traffic situations.

The operating season is scheduled to start on May 15, just before Victoria Day; and extend to September 14, 1997, two weeks past Labour Day. Every day during the operating season, the first vehicle will depart the Lower Zoo stop at 9:30 A.M.; the last vehicle will depart at 6:00 P.M.

The jitney route consists of a loop around the park on Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive. The full trip takes approximately thirty minutes. Visitors will be able to get on or off the jitney at any of eleven stops: Lower Zoo, Totem Poles, Brockton Point, Empress of Japan, Lumbermen's Arch, Ravine Trail, Prospect Point, Hollow Tree, Third Beach, Second Beach and Lost Lagoon.

See Appendix A for a route map.

JITNEY SERVICE IMPLEMENTATION

Introducing the Jitney service into Stanley Park requires changes to the way the park currently functions.

Parking

As outlined in the Stanley Park Transportation and Recreation Plan 1996, the long-term goal is to discourage private car use within the park while accommodating it as a way to get to the park. Parking is to be focussed in the

core area close to park entry and exit, and reduced along the perimeter of the park. Part of the current roadside parking on Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive will be removed:

- to allow safe entering and exiting for Jitney passengers,
- to provide full use of both lanes on Park Drive with fewer impediments by parked vehicles sticking out into moving traffic and forcing sudden lane changes,
- to make way for the approved bike route between the cut off at the Totem Poles and Lumbermen' s Arch,
- to permit two traffic lanes on North Lagoon Drive thus reducing a perennial summer congestion problem at the causeway underpass,
- to allow for a park experience less impeded by the aesthetic blight of long rows of parked cars.

Roadside parking would be retained where the space is not needed for jitney stops or traffic flows. The target lane width for both lanes is 12 feet. In order to keep roadside parking, overall pavement width has to a minimum of 32 feet for parallel parking.

Stanley Park currently has about 3,400 parking spaces, including 1243 roadside parking spaces along the jitney route on Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive. The Board previously approved taking out 190 parking spaces on Park Drive between the Totem Poles and Lumbermen' s Arch for the construction of a cycle/in-line skate path. Of the remaining 1,053 roadside parking spaces along the jitney route, approximately 597 would be taken out and 456 would be retained. These changes are necessary for operating the jitney service, and would be made before the first season of operation. The following roadside parking spaces along the jitney route would be retained along Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive:

- 52 between the park entrance and the Totem Poles,
- 41 at Brockton Point,
- 153 north of Lumbermen' s Arch,
- 126 at Prospect Point
- 54 at Second Beach in addition to existing parking lot, and
- 30 on North Lagoon Drive.

Roadside parking in Stanley Park outside the jitney route and parking lots will not be changed. See Appendix B for location of retained roadside parking along jitney route.

It is recommended that a new parking lot be built in the location of the old service yard for approximately 300 cars, out of sight but close to many park destinations and the jitney route. The parking lot runoff would be collected in green swales, biofiltered through plant material and then pumped and routed to Beaver Lake.

Due to time constraints, it is not recommended to build this new parking lot this spring, but have it ready for next year. This will allow also to await the Board' s decision on extending the jitney service after the first season, and make appropriate provisions in the design of the parking lot to include it as a

stop on the jitney route if required. Such change would also bring the jitney route closer to the public transit stop of the #19 Stanley Park bus in the location of the Upper Zoo parking lot.

Including the new parking lot, these changes to parking constitute a net loss of 297 parking spaces, a significant reduction that will gradually lower the volume of car traffic on Park Drive.

Traffic conditions will be monitored throughout the season to determine whether additional changes to parking in Stanley Park should be recommended in the future.

Required Roadwork

The Stanley Park Transportation and Recreation Plan 1996 recommends a dedicated lane for the jitney and buses, allowing them to pass congested areas with little delay. Given that the first year of operating the jitney service is considered a trial year, it is recommended that the dedication of a jitney/bus lane on the entire jitney route not be considered for the first year.

Instead, it is recommended to address the worst traffic problems first by installing two lanes on North Lagoon Drive, and dedicating the left-hand lane to the jitney and buses only along that section. North Lagoon Drive is frequently the most congested area in Stanley Park. Such congestion would make a reasonable adherence to the jitney schedule difficult, even with a fourth jitney vehicle in operation. A dedicated lane along this stretch will allow the jitney to pass by the congestion. In order to install two lanes on North Lagoon Drive, all existing parallel parking will be stripped, and the existing angle parking converted to parallel parking. Thereby, about thirty parking spots will be retained. In addition, about twenty metres of pavement will have to be widened by about 0.6 metres. No existing trees will be removed for this work.

The removal of parking will also enhance travelling times by removing the delays associated with manouvering in and out of parking spots.

Staff will monitor the adherence of the jitney service to the desired ten-minute headway in various traffic conditions during the summer and other impacts of the service on park users. Some field staff may have to be retained at a cost not exceeding \$3,000. Should traffic congestion prove to be the cause of unreliable jitney service, dedicating an exclusive lane for jitney and buses or implementing an HOV lane with a minimum passenger load of five will be considered in the second year.

At the intersection of North Lagoon Drive with Pipeline Road, a two-way stop will be installed to ensure that the jitney is not held up unduly by traffic exiting the park. In addition, implementation of the jitney service will require re-stripping the lanes, eliminating or replacing some signage, and taking out some parking ticket dispensers.

Long-term Jitney Operation

During the first year, the Board and the operator' s staff will monitor the performance of the jitney service regarding schedule, ridership, customer satisfaction, operating hours, convenience, and other aspects of the operation. Traffic counts will be taken, and congestion problems assessed. In addition, parking and concession stand revenues will be compared to previous years to determine the financial impact of introducing the jitney service and raising parking fees.

After the first season, staff will analyse the data and public feedback, and report back to the Board regarding a possible extension of the contract.

IMPACTS

The service is expected to cost a maximum of \$185,000 this year. Minor road improvements, relining, signage and monitoring are estimated to be \$ 35,000. The latter expenses could be covered out of existing capital accounts. The jitney service itself could be covered in the first year from increased parking revenues in Stanley Park.

Projected additional income from increasing parking charges from \$1.00 for 2 hours and \$3.00 per day maximum to \$1.00 per hour and a \$5.00 per day maximum would be \$170,000 if the increase applied to the period May 1 to September 30. If the Board wishes to have these rates in effect year round it is estimated that an additional \$78,000 could be raised.

The decrease in available parking is expected to have a negative impact on park revenues in the order of \$80,000. This revenue decrease is expected, in the longer term, to be offset wholly or partially by offering new parking in the old service yard in the core area of the park.

The increase in parking fees may deter some visitors and thereby lower visitor numbers, although raising the maximum daily rate to \$5.00, an increase of \$2.00, constitutes only an increase of about \$0.70 per car passenger if the average car occupancy of close to three passengers per car is considered.

While the loss in parking spaces and the parking rate increase may be considered a negative impact by some park visitors, this has to be weighed against the positive impacts. The total number of cars in the park will be reduced, far fewer cars will be cluttering the views from Park Drive, and for the first time there will be reliable, frequent and attractive jitney service. The overall environmental impact is positive, given that there will be less pollution and noise.

SUMMARY

The Stanley Park jitney would provide an alternate means of access to park destinations and is an important step toward reducing the impact of the automobile on the park environment, and increasing the opportunities for enjoyment and relaxation of park visitors.

Prepared by:
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**FOR A COPY OF THE APPENDIX A & B
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