

SUBJECT: STANLEY PARK JITNEY SERVICE - CONTRACT AWARD, AMENDED REPORT

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 16 to September 13, 1998, 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 during the summer from \$1.00 per two hours to \$1.00 per hour, and from \$3.00 to \$5.00 maximum rate per day, from May 1 to September 30, starting in 1997.**
- E. THAT a new parking lot for approximately 300 vehicles be built in the location of the service yard prior to the start of the jitney service, at a cost estimated at \$450,000, to be funded in part by additional pay parking revenue generated by the increase in parking fees in Stanley Park, and in part by a temporary reallocation of funds from the Zoo Development Account.**
- F. THAT approximately 600 roadside parking spaces along the jitney route on Park Drive and North Lagoon Drive be eliminated in 1998.**
- G. THAT a dedicated lane for the jitney and buses be implemented on North Lagoon Drive from May 1 to September 30, starting in 1998.**

BACKGROUND

On March 24, 1997, the Board received a report recommending the awarding of the contract for the jitney service, and implementation of the service in 1997 (see attachment). A number of public delegations raised concerns over various aspects of the implementation, including appropriateness of diesel-fuelled interim equipment, impacts of proposed reductions in roadside parking on park accessibility, accessibility for wheelchair users, a potential conflict with the BC Transit Act, and lack of advance notice for stakeholders to adapt to the proposed changes in parking.

This amended report has two key changes to the original report: to award the contract now for a start-up of the jitney service in 1998 with the desired equipment, and to mitigate the loss in roadside parking by building a new parking lot in the service yard prior to the reduction in roadside parking.

DISCUSSION

Subsequent to the Board meeting on March 24, 1997, the proposed operator of the jitney service advised the Board that he would be able to provide the service with the intended heritage-type trolley equipment under a one-season contract if the contract is awarded now, and service start in May 1998. This report recommends to do so. The time between contract award and start-up of service allow:

- the operator to obtain financing, order and acquire the intended vehicle type for the first season, foregoing the use of interim diesel-fuelled equipment;
- the Park Board to construct a permanent parking lot in the old service yard before implementing the proposed reductions in roadside parking along the jitney route, and thereby mitigate some of the impacts;
- the Park Board to obtain partial funding for the construction of the service yard by raising trolley parking fees this year;
- the Park Board and stakeholders to cooperate on the implementation of mitigation measures described in this report;
- stakeholders to prepare for and adapt to the proposed changes a year in advance;
- the operator to provide a more successful advertising program which will lower the cost of the jitney service; and
- the Park Board, the operator and stakeholders to cooperate on a marketing program advising visitors of the jitney service.

Vehicle Fuel Choice

The vehicles used for the first operating season of the Stanley Park jitney will not be interim equipment such as the diesel buses proposed earlier, but the heritage-style trolley vehicles are similar to the ones currently in service on the operator's existing sightseeing routes. These vehicles are fuelled by propane. The operator has also advised the Board that he will continue to research fuel options that are yet more environment-friendly.

Stanley Park 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. This report recommends to go ahead with the reduction in roadside parking as proposed in the original report, but to build a new parking lot in the location of the old service yard prior to taking out roadside parking.

The new parking lot will accommodate about 300 cars, out of sight of most park visitors but close to many park destinations and the jitney route. These 300 new parking spaces in the park core will partially mitigate the proposed reduction of 787 parking spaces (497 for the jitney route and 190 previously approved for the bike route) along the perimeter of the park. The following chart shows how the reduction in parking inventory will be phased in:

East side of Stanley Park		West side of Stanley Park		Total Stanley Park
Parking	Roadside	Parking	Roadside	

	Lots	parking	Combined	Lots	Parking	Combined	
1996	598	740	1,342	1,343	784	2,127	3,454
1997	598	740	1,342	1,343	594	1,937	3,285
1998	598	339	941	1,643	398	2,041	2,984

The cost of the new parking lot is estimated at \$450,000. Approximately \$170,000 will be generated by increased pay parking revenue in 1997 as the Park Board's share if the Park Board approves Recommendation D, and are recommended to be allocated toward the construction of the parking lot. It is proposed to allocate the remainder temporarily from the Zoo Development Account, and to replenish that account by either making the parking fee increase applicable year-round for an expected additional revenue of \$78,000 per year, or by eventually charging a fare for riding the jitney. The redevelopment of the Lower Zoo is a multi-year project relying in part on outside fund raising. The proposed temporary reallocation may potentially slow the progress of the project.

IMPACT OF PARKING SPACE REDUCTIONS

Over two years, a total of 487 parking spaces will be eliminated in Stanley Park, 14% of the total parking inventory. Of these, 86 are on the east side of the park, and 401 on the west side. These reductions will cause access and convenience impacts for visitors used to the status quo.

On the east side where most of the popular attractions are located, the loss of 86 parking spaces is not expected to have a significant impact on accessibility. To the contrary, for many visitors headed for the park core the new parking lot in the service yard is conveniently located, allowing easy entry and exit from the park without having to negotiate the typically slow moving summer traffic on Park Drive. In addition, removing roadside parking from Park Drive will enhance traffic flows and make for a more scenic experience. However, convenience impacts may apply to visitors headed for the Brockton Oval and nearby grounds due to the loss of some parking immediately adjacent to their destinations.

On the west side, the loss of 401 parking spaces will cause a more significant impact. While roadside parking on Park Drive between Prospect Point and Second Beach is rarely used, it does serve as overflow parking for the beaches on busy summer days. The parking to be eliminated along North Lagoon Drive is mostly used by visitors headed for Ceperley Meadow, Lost Lagoon and the forest trails. No new parking is planned to be constructed on the west side of Stanley Park.

IMPACT MITIGATION

The intention of the recommendations in this report is to make visiting Stanley Park a more enjoyable experience for all. To maintain existing visitor numbers, or even accommodate growing numbers, alternative means of getting to and around the park have to be improved.

Following is a list of some measures already underway, and some to be developed and implemented in cooperation with other administrations, stakeholders and the public at large

- o Public Transit: BC Transit's 1997/98 Annual Transit Service Plan announces enhanced service to Stanley Park. Details will be available at the Committee meeting. In addition, there is a possibility to provide improved service between the West End and Stanley Park using the existing #52 service on a reconfigured route should BC Transit decide to pull

service during the operating season of the jitney. According to BC Transit, the existing #19 service to Stanley Park was well used during peak times but had extra capacity outside of peak times. Better usage of existing service should be promoted, as well as using bus lines operating in the vicinity of the park.

- Walking: A number of projects planned or already underway will make walking to and in the park more attractive. These include the imminent opening of the Coal Harbour Seawall, the planned Bayshore Seawall, improvements to the Stanley Park Seawall, to the pedestrian precinct at Ceperley Meadow, to the Lower Zoo area, and finally the new signage of forest trails.
- Cycling and In-line Skating: Projects planned or underway that will make cycling and in-line skating to and in Stanley Park more attractive include the imminent opening of the Coal Harbour Seawall, the planned Bayshore Seawall, improvements to the Stanley Park Seawall, the English Bay bike route, the Ceperley Meadow bike route, and the False Creek Seawall.
- Driving: While available parking is rare during the busiest time of the year, outside of peak times there is ample parking available. To make better use of the existing parking inventory, a strategy to shift some visitors from peak times to off-peak times should be developed by stakeholders and Park Board, after more detailed data on usage, peak times, and preferred locations has been compiled. In addition, measures such as leading tourists staying in downtown hotels to use car-alternatives seem promising because tourists acquire information from a few sources only, they are in general a captive audience. As well, stakeholders such as the Cricket League or the Aquarium may be able to adjust their activities to make better use of off-peak hours, to promote car-pooling or to encourage staff and volunteers to use parking areas less taken up by the public at large.
- Jitney: Most importantly, the jitney will mitigate some of the impacts, allowing visitors to choose parking at a distance from the intended destination and use the jitney to get there, resulting in a better overall usage of existing parking. Also, the jitney will make it more attractive to leave the car outside at home or outside the park while having access to all areas of the park.

IMPACT SUMMARY

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 the reduction of pollution and noise in Stanley Park.

WHEELCHAIR ACCESS

The operator's proposal includes one vehicle equipped with a wheelchair lift, translating into a wheelchair-accessible jitney passing any jitney stop every thirty to forty minutes every day. Currently, a wheelchair-accessible BC Transit bus passes stops along the #52 route every sixty minutes, and only on weekends and holidays.

To provide wheelchair lifts on all jitney vehicles would require roughly an additional \$20,000 per year.

BC TRANSIT ACT

According to information from BC Transit, BC Transit does not, under the BC Transit Act, have exclusive jurisdiction in providing transit service in the Lower Mainland.

The proposed Stanley Park jitney will operate solely on park property. Staff's interpretation of the BC Transit Act is that operating the Stanley Park jitney would not bring the Park Board into conflict with the BC Transit Act.

**FOR A COPY OF THE ATTACHMENT
PLEASE CONTACT TILO DRIESSEN AT 257-8404.**

Prepared by:
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