

January 8, 1998

SUBJECT: NEW BRIGHTON PARK - REVISED PLAN

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. THAT the Board approve the revised plan for New Brighton Park, as described in this report and illustrated in Appendix A.**
- B. THAT staff report back with a phasing plan and budget for implementation.**
- C. THAT the Board request the City's Street Naming Committee to name the roadway leading to the Alberta Wheat Pool "Brighton Road".**

BOARD POLICY

The Board approves the design of new parkland and of parkland that is proposed to be renovated in any significant manner.

BACKGROUND

In 1987, the Board acquired 2.3 hectares of land immediately west of New Brighton Park (currently 9.0 hectares). The new parkland would be developed after the Port Overpass was completed, due to the fact that land would have to be exchanged between the Park Board, the Vancouver Port Corporation and a private landowner.

A land exchange package was agreed upon in 1992. The Park Board then prepared a park plan with the community and the assistance of a landscape consultant, Guzzi & Perri Inc. The park plan was approved by the Board on December 13, 1993. The plan was never implemented because the necessary environmental approvals by senior levels of government were not received.

A new land exchange package was agreed upon in early 1997. The Park Board hired a landscape architect, Phillips Farevaag Smallemberg Inc., in July 1997 to assist with re-evaluating the 1993 plan. A draft park plan was prepared in October 1997 and presented to the public for comments. Revisions have been made to the plan and are summarized in this report.

In anticipation of eventual development, a total of \$1.75 million was allocated

in the 1994-96 Capital Plan for improvements to New Brighton Park.

DISCUSSION

The revised plan for New Brighton Park is shown in Appendix A, and will be presented by the landscape architect consultant at the Park Board meeting. Key features in the plan are:

Improved shoreline: as part of the land exchange package, the Vancouver Port Corporation is adding 0.45 hectares of fill to the area west of the swimming pool, mostly as a 15-meter wide addition to the shoreline. A cobble beach (about 125 meters in length) will be provided west of the swimming pool.

Access to the shoreline will be made much easier for pedestrians with the building of a waterfront walkway that will extend from the east end to the west end of the park (a distance of about 600 meters). Though the walkway will have a hard surface, it will not be exactly at the water's edge so that the character of the shoreline remains natural.

Brighton Bowl: a new grassy area of about 2 hectares will be provided north of the newly constructed Port Overpass. This area will be suitable for informal play, community events, festivals, picnicking, strolling, sunbathing, and viewing. It is proposed that a promontory be built at the water's edge. A picnic shelter with washrooms will be built at the eastern edge of Brighton Bowl. Paths will be provided along the water's edge and to connect with the sidewalk on the new Port Overpass.

Existing Meadow: the existing field west of the pool suffers from poor drainage. It is proposed to raise the ground level and to provide drainage pipes in this section. This area would be usable for some organized sports (e.g. soccer, football, grass volleyball), but would mainly served as a picnicking and informal play area.

Pedestrian/bicycle landbridge: as part of the Restoration Plan for Hastings Park, which was approved by the Board on March 10, 1997, a pedestrian/bicycle landbridge will eventually be built over McGill Street, the C.P. railroad and the new road to the Alberta Wheat Pool. The landbridge will likely not be built for at least 5 years.

The land would have to be raised in New Brighton Park in the location where the bridge would enter the park. A staircase would be built as well as a pathway for wheelchairs, parents with strollers and cyclists. All this will be done without damaging oak trees that are planted along the old Douglas Road.

Historical markers: it is proposed to add to the existing historical marker. A pathway named Douglas Way will be built along the right-of-way of the old Douglas Road, and will connect the swimming pool to a staircase leading onto the new Port Overpass. The footprint of one or several of the original buildings at the Hastings Townsite can be rebuilt. The edge of the original shoreline can

be highlighted in the park, similarly to what has been done in the new park in Coal Harbour.

Swimming pool: it is proposed to add a green lawn area to the pool, similar to what is provided at Second Beach Pool, so that swimmers can sunbathe on a grassy area. Trees would be planted to provide some shade. A water play area for children is proposed to be built east of the pool.

Salt-water marsh: it is proposed to build a salt-water marsh in the area east of the swimming pool, which would become the mouth of the creek that originates in Hastings Park. The tennis courts would have to be removed, which staff consider acceptable since new tennis courts will be provided in Hastings Park. The salt-water marsh will be an interesting ecosystem for visitors in the park. (A salt-water marsh was proposed in the 1993 plan.)

Pedestrian access into the park: There is currently only one official access point to New Brighton Park by foot: the pedestrian tunnel under the railway (it is still possible today to cross the railway at grade at the foot of Yale Street, but this is neither an official nor a recommended entry into the park).

An additional pedestrian access will be provided with the opening of the Port Overpass in early 1998. The easterly sidewalk on the overpass will provide access above the railway and into the western section of New Brighton Park. In the medium to long-term, a pedestrian landbridge will connect Hastings Park into New Brighton Park, which will provide a third access point.

Despite these initiatives, residents at the October 14th public meeting stated that access into the park should be made much easier. One suggestion was to provide an official at-grade crossing at the foot of Yale Street. Parks and Engineering staff cannot support this option, since the railway is very active and, in this location, is curved, hampering visibility of oncoming trains.

Another option was to eventually built a pedestrian overpass at the foot of Yale Street. Staff note that land would have to be secured prior to any construction, and staff will discuss these matters with the Planning and Engineering Departments.

Parking: there were 134 spaces in the parking lot south of the railroad and west of the tunnel. This parking lot will only have 53 spaces once the widening of McGill Street is complete, for a loss of 81 spaces. The plan for New Brighton Park foresees about 100 spaces north of the railway. Parking capacity for New Brighton Park will therefore marginally increase.

It should be noted that the parking lot south of the railroad and east of the tunnel is currently leased by the City to the P.N.E., and that once the lease is terminated, this parking lot (about 100 spaces) could be accessible to Park Board for additional parking for New Brighton Park.

Greenways: an east-west greenway, called the Harbour Route, will someday weave its way along Burrard Inlet from downtown to Burnaby. The current proposal is to locate the greenway along Wall Street, through the parking lot located between the railway and McGill Street, and eastbound along

Bridgeway. People using the greenway will be able to access New Brighton Park by going above the railway on the new Port Overpass or using the existing tunnel under the railway. Eventually, the future landbridge over the railroad will be designed to accommodate the east-west greenway, thereby making it easier for people travelling along the greenway to access both New Brighton Park and Hastings Park.

PUBLIC PROCESS

Prior to the October 14th public meeting:

- a. a newsletter showing the proposed plan for New Brighton Park was mailed out to about 400 individuals;
- b. newsletters were available at the Hastings Community Centre, the Hastings Library, Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, City Hall, and the Park Board offices;
- c. an advertisement was put into the Vancouver Echo and the Vancouver Courier;
- d. a sign was placed at the entrance of the park.

A total of 24 people attended the public meeting. The minutes of the public meeting are attached as Appendix B. Those who attended the meeting supported all aspects of the park plan, with the exception of pedestrian and car access to the park. On this issue, calls were made for better access because current and planned access to the park was felt to be insufficient. As noted above, there appear to be no obvious opportunities to do so.

TIMING

The new Port Overpass and the reconstruction of McGill Street should be completed by February 1998. Fill along the shoreline in New Brighton Park will be completed by March 1998. The road work associated with the Alberta Wheat Pool and park improvements in the area west of the pool could begin in 1998. This would be organized to minimize disruption during June, July and August, the peak season for the outdoor swimming pool.

"BRIGHTON ROAD"

The new roadway at the southern edge of New Brighton Park has always been referred to as the "Alberta Wheat Pool Road", principally because it will access that industrial site. It was suggested at the public meeting to find a more suitable name for the road. Park Board staff suggest the name "Brighton Road". If the Board agrees, this suggestion will be forwarded to the City's Street Naming Committee.

CONCLUSION

A revised plan for New Brighton Park has been prepared, based on the recent land exchange agreed to by Park Board. The plan incorporates many of the features of the plan prepared in 1993 and has generally received support from the public this fall. Once a phasing plan is in place and more detailed construction drawings are prepared, it is proposed to begin construction as soon as possible in 1998.

Prepared by:
Planning and Development Division
Board of Parks and Recreation
City of Vancouver
MD:ad
Attachments

APPENDIX 'A'

**REVISED PLAN FOR
NEW BRIGHTON PARK
FOR A COPY OF THE MAP
PLEASE CONTACT MICHEL DESROCHERS AT 257-8402**

APPENDIX 'B'

New Brighton Park - Revised Plan

Summary of Public Meeting

Date: Tuesday, October 14, 1997

Time: 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Place: Hastings Community Centre

3096 East Hastings Street

Attendance:	Sheila Adams	Mary Cheung	Hugh Davidson
	M. Feltham	Cynthia Flood	Victor Gallagher
	Debra Graham	Betty Greenwell	Eric Harms
	M. Jackson	Rick Kwan	Mac McLaren
	Amanda Negri	Piero Negri	Marion Olivieri
	Randy Pecarski	Rob Roodenburg	Maxine Shannon
	Tim Shannon	Ed Shaw	David Stemler

Susan Taylor	Mark Vulliamy	Nancy Wormald
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Staff:	Pieter Rutgers, Vancouver Park Board
	Michel Desrochers, Vancouver Park Board
	Christopher Phillips, Consultant to Park Board
	Ken Larsson, Consultant to Park Board
	Ted Batty, Vancouver Engineering Department

1. Presentation by Vancouver Park Board

Pieter Rutgers welcomed everyone and listed recent events related the New Brighton Park. He explained that Park Board had purchased 2.3 hectares of land immediately west of the existing park in 1987. This land was going to be developed once the Port Overpass would be completed.

A park plan was prepared by Park Board and the community in the fall of 1993, but this plan was not built because it did not receive the necessary environmental approvals from senior levels of government for the design of the proposed shoreline, which included an island.

Environmental approvals were received for the design of the shoreline in 1996. The island is no longer included, but, as compensation, Park Board is receiving more land west of the existing park. As a result, the land that will be added west of the existing park will be about 150 meters in width (in the east-west direction), which is about 50 meters wider than the 1993 proposal.

Because the land configuration is now settled, Park Board hired a landscape architect, Mr. Christopher Phillips of Phillips Farevaag Smallemberg Inc., to revise the New Brighton Park plan. Mr. Phillips, with the help of a slide presentation described the revised plan.

Mr. Phillips described the western addition to the park as "Brighton Bowl", a large grassy area that will be for the most part flat for picnics, sports, kite flying, etc. A lookout would be built on the water' s edge. A cobble beach will be included. Part of the slope on the hillside of the port overpass could be a "toboggan hill". Pathways would connect the new grassy area with the port overpass, the swimming pool, etc.

He said that the drainage would be improved for the existing grassy area west of the pool. Pathways would be built near the shoreline and along the old Douglas Road. He encouraged the marking of the original shoreline with perhaps a small stone wall built into the landscape. South of the grassy area would be the landing point for the pedestrian/bicycle landbridge connecting to Hastings Park.

He said that the pool area would be improved by including a grassy area and trees within the pool fence. A children' s water play area could be included adjacent to the pool. Vehicular drop-off to the pool would be via the new Alberta Wheat Pool road and no longer through the tunnel.

He said that a salt-water marsh would be built east of the pool, which would connect with the restored stream in Hastings Park. The four tennis courts would be removed.

Some parking would be provided along the Alberta Wheat Pool road, as well as a dozen spaces near the pool entrance. There will also be new parking in the cloverleaf of the new port overpass. The parking lots south of the railroad would also be used.

2. Questions & Answers

Is the park bigger than in the 1993 plan? Yes, the 1997 plan is about 0.25 hectares bigger than the 1993 plan.

How much money is available for the project? The Park Board has about \$1.7 million available for New Brighton Park. The landbridge to Hastings Park will be funded from some other source. Mr. Phillips estimated that the 1997 plan, as shown, would cost over \$3 million. Park Board has not yet prioritized items to be built in New Brighton Park.

What about Greenways? There are plans for an east-west Greenway that would be located along Wall Street west of New Brighton Park. It would go adjacent to the parking lot along McGill Street, along Bridgeway and eventually would connect with Bates Park at the north foot of Boundary Street. Connections into New Brighton Park can be made by using the port overpass or the future landbridge connecting Hastings Park to New Brighton Park.

Will there be public washrooms at the west end of the park? The plan shows washrooms in the proposed picnic shelter.

How wide are the pathways in the park? Mr. Phillips said that they would vary depending on the location in the park.

What aspects of the 1997 plan have not yet received approval from the various environmental agencies? The one aspect that has not yet been approved is the salt-water marsh east of the pool.

What is happening with the Maple Leaf Storage building? A rezoning application was submitted to City Hall in 1996, asking for converting the land from industrial to residential uses. The initial proposal was to build 135 units in two- and four-storey buildings. The application has yet to be considered because the developer is busy with other projects in the Greater Vancouver area, and they are not pursuing the Wall Street project with vigour. City

Council will decide at a Public Hearing if the application is approved/denied.

Is it possible to make "Yale Street" an official connection to New Brighton Park? Ted Batty said that the land in question is not owned by the City of Vancouver, but by a private landowner. A second problem is that the crossing of the railroad is an unmarked at-grade crossing, which is not generally considered safe along a busy railroad.

Will a scaled model be built for New Brighton Park? Pieter Rutgers said probably not, though the Hastings Park scaled model includes some information related to New Brighton Park.

What about security in the park? Pieter said that Park Board will work with Crime Prevention officers in the Police Department on the final design.

Is there going to be a sidewalk on the new port overpass? Yes. The sidewalk on the east side of the overpass will be 8 feet wide.

How many parking spaces will be provided? The rebuilding and widening of McGill Street will reduce the parking lot south of the railroad by 80 spaces, but the plan for New Brighton Park shows an additional 115 spaces provided north of the railroad (it should be noted that about 40 of these new spaces are along the Alberta Wheat Pool, which has not yet been approved by the Engineering Department).

What about bus service to New Brighton Park? Pieter said that has yet to be considered, and has not been raised with BC Transit.

Will there be any mounted police? Pieter said that this had been raised in the context of Hastings Park. He said that it is more likely to have police officers on bicycles patrolling New Brighton Park than on horseback.

3. Feedback Session

During the meeting, each person was given a comments sheet. The table below summarizes the 20 comments sheets filled in at the meeting:

Proposal for:				
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open grassy areas	19	0	1 (5%)	0

(both west of swimming pool)	(95%)			
Lookout at western end	18 (90%)	0	0	2 (10%)
Toboggan Hill (on central slope of port overpass)	18 (90%)	1 (5%)	0	1 (5%)
Cobble Beach (west of swimming pool)	16 (80%)	2 (10%)	0	2 (10%)
Swimming Pool: Lawn Area & New Water Play Area	18 (90%)	0	0	2 (10%)
Tennis Courts (to be removed)	16 (80%)	0	1 (5%)	3 (15%)
Salt-water Marsh (east of swimming pool)	19 (95%)	0	1 (5%)	0
Naturalized Buffer (along industrial edges)	17 (85%)	0	1 (5%)	2 (10%)
Path System	17 (85%)	0	1 (5%)	2 (10%)
Parking	10 (50%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	7 (35%)

Comments written down by participants:

Open Grassy Areas

- "It will give a better flow of water for drainage."
- "Picnic shelters (are) not near pool. Need open grass area near pool - marsh is taking up too much park land."
- "Good drainage is essential. (Currently, you) can only walk without boot about one month a year."
- "What happens to the area until the marsh is built?"
- "Drainage must be improved."

Lookout At Western End

- "Check effect upon view corridors from pool."

- "Install five telescopes on all lookouts."
- "Bird watching - especially with water. A wide variety of ducks, also sea-life, seals, sealions."
- "I like the idea of telescopes."
- "Not having a hill at the western edge opens the views to west from rest of park."
- "I want to see the scaled model first. More (people) will use it at water' s edge."
- "Make sure wheelchair/stroller access is easy."

Toboggan Hill

- "Now all we need is snow!"
- "For winter sports."
- "No snow. How about dry land sledding?"
- "Opportunity for sledding will be minimal because snow does not accumulate near waterfront."
- "Good clearance (required) at bottom or a berm to stop toboggans."
- "Need the trees on the slope (truck accidents). Kids will find the slope area. Need trees to off-set pool glare."
- "Hang-gliding practice area? One spot/trail for mountain bikes. Usually not much snow near the water."
- "Put some good bumps in the toboggan hill!"
- "But in Vancouver, this is a bit silly to name."

Cobble Beach

- "Cobble - we need smaller than that."
- "How deep is the water out from the beach?"
- "I would like to see the pier incorporated."
- "As if our opinion can change this."
- "Smallest cobbles (as) possible."
- "It would be nice to add some sand near the water. Beach volleyball - (we) need something for teens. More "Kits-east" like."

Swimming Pool

- "Shade area (is) essential. Also be aware of glare problems on/in pool area due to sunset location in relation to water angle."
- "Wading pool only? A separate kiddies pool."
- "Granville Island model - separate pool & water park - safety (of) toddlers. Also water park - no charge."
- "Trees need to be located to provide shade."
- "The very small children will end up with zero. Don' t like new pool ideas- open grass outside to accommodate all family. Small pool separate."
- "Granville Island has free kids water park. Why not New Brighton? Water

park should be separate from pool. Not fenced in."

- "Put shade trees (not in tidy area but a bit randomly) around pool."
- "Trees were requested to provide shade - putting them on north side is wrong side! Shade trees required on south & west side."
- "Hopefully in first phase!"

Tennis Courts

- "With night light for security."
- "Is there a need for more tennis courts in Hastings Park. Survey should be taken regarding how extensively existing courts are used in Hastings East."
- "Marsh is much better use of the space!"
- "Still like the gift kept somewhere."
- "Are they used now?"
- "Lousy courts anyway."

Salt-Water Marsh

- "How effective will this be as a "marshland"? Experience in Richmond indicate that "man-made" may not be wildlife-friendly."
- "Personal favorite."
- "Stock with fish and bird feeders."
- "When? What' s the timing?"
- "Marsh and stream are the most important improvements to the park."
- "The marsh is taking up too much park land - should be to the extreme east and smaller."
- "(I) like the proposal very much."
- "Makes sense."
- "Hope consent will come from environmental bodies."
- "Great idea."

Naturalized Buffer

- "As dense as possible green buffer!"
- "West side depends on what goes in - fishing company or similar may in fact be interesting to watch."
- "High buffer to kill noise of trucks."
- "Make trees & shrubs a botanical feast for the eyes - a haven for the birds & wildlife."
- "Trees & shrubs along Alberta Wheat Pool road must not obstruct views of police cars that may be patrolling."
- "Don' t like the idea of moving all the trees."
- "Relocate existing trees."
- "New Alberta Wheat Pool road should also be buffered with trees & shrubs."

- "But not to shade pool! Tree(s) to diffuse afternoon sunlight to cut the dangerous glare (very bad this year). Loss of life. Friendship garden (sister city) - save the stump at east."
- "Is there also a fence?"
- "Plant more Lombardy poplars."
- "Lots required. Please keep brambles and wild plants. Useful habitat for wild animals."

Path System

- "Fast bicycles may be an issue. Separate paths or delete bicycles altogether in this park."
- "Do they all have to be paved? Some of a more natural design/materials."
- "Need plan to connect better with contingent residential neighbourhoods to west and east."
- "Make all paths for wide width for safety of baby buggies."
- "Wheelchair accessibility. Make sure grade is reasonable (unlike Crab Park)."
- "' Cyclist Dismount' signs in narrow marsh areas."
- "Add the present pathway just west of pool - not too many!"
- "Better access from Wall Street area."
- "Would like to see an additional access on the west side from the end of Yale Street and over the tracks."
- "Need separation of bikes and pedestrians."
- "Realistically, plan for rollerbladers. Separate their trails from those to be used by walkers and strollers."
- "Maybe cobbles inset to slow down rollerbladers."
- "What about tie to Greenways, bikeways? Port overpass should be extended over Wall Street into Hastings Park."

Parking

- "More consideration of transit connection (remember the discontinued Eton Street bus) and of future use of Lot 10 once PNE goes."
- "More parking for tour buses. Bays and HandyDart telephone. Purse & missing people - first aid."
- "6 police horses for public safety and stop vandalism to property and arson."
- "Don' t like the name of "Alberta Wheat Pool" road. Needs to be more something that would fit in. Transit."
- "What is the reason for the Alberta Wheat Pool road? Trucks don' t need access. Grain is moved by rail and train."
- "More vehicle access will improve safety of park - it' s now too cut off."
- "I can see the traffic going the length and having to return - all full! Lot 10 must be mostly parking. We wish no parking sounds and sighting, as at present - separate from park."
- "During peak events, Wall Street becomes a parking lot for the park. Is there sufficient parking? Maple Leaf Storage should be used for parking."

- "Parking to be kept to minimum in park. Too much roadway through park."
- "Why ask."
- "Bring in public transit."
- "We need more transportation. No parking."

General Comments

- "Good work."
- "Need to preserve and improve pedestrian access at extreme west of park from Renfrew and Wall Street intersection via overpass over tracks beside Maple Leaf Storage."
- "Please enhance the historic footprint area with interpretive information, photographs, etc."
- "I agree with all but the real problem is access. It was in 1993. It still is. If it' s only a question of money, let' s fix it."

The Good and the Bad

The participants formed four groups and, as a group, they had to list three good things and three bad things about the park plan. (If an item was listed more than once, it is followed by the number of times it was brought up.)

Good Items

- salt-water marsh/stream/wildlife (3)
- new shoreline edge (2)
- new water play area for children (2)
- lookout/views/pier (2)
- the whole plan
- "toboggan hill"
- the marking of the historic shoreline
- extension of pool with grassy area
- the separation between active/passive areas

Bad Items

- need for better pedestrian and bus access into the park, especially from west (4)
- don' t need roadway for Alberta Wheat Pool
- don' t want cyclists/inline skaters in park
- need better drainage
- need to cover swimming pool in fall and spring
- "toboggan hill"
- the plan does not address phasing and priorities
- marsh is too big/more green area needed near swimming pool
- need better name to replace "Alberta Wheat Pool road"

Additional Suggestion

It was suggested that the Hastings Mill Museum should be relocated from the park at Pt. Grey Road and Alma Street to New Brighton Park. (NOTE: the mill was not originally located at the Hastings Townsite, but closer to Gastown, at the north foot of Dunlevy Street.)

4. Closing Remarks

Pieter thanked everyone for attending and said that staff will write a report to the Park Board Commissioners in the near future. He hopes that some of the improvements can be completed for next summer.
