

February 27, 1998

**SUBJECT: THE GREENING OF GRIMMETT PARK AND THE
RELOCATION OF THE PACIFIC INDOOR LAWN BOWLING
CLUB**

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. THAT park development on the westerly 96 feet of Lot E at Grimmatt Park be pursued immediately and the associated impacts on neighbourhood parking be minimized, in consultation with the community and the Parking Branch of the City's Engineering Services.**
- B. THAT park development for the completion of Grimmatt Park commence no later than June 1, 2001.**
- C. THAT Pacific Indoor Lawn Bowling Club be advised that the month to month lease will not be extended beyond June 1, 2001, and the Club is to vacate the building at Grimmatt Park no later than that date.**
- D. THAT the \$250,000 Park Board capital contribution toward the Lawn Bowling Club redevelopment be available only up to June 1, 2001.**

BOARD POLICY

Though not a formal policy, the Board attempts to provide neighbourhood parks in every district of the City.

BACKGROUND

There is not a single park or schoolyard in the residential area bounded by Main, 16th Avenue, Cambie and King Edward, an area greater than 80 hectares (200 acres). Though parks are available nearby (e.g. Mount Pleasant Park, Prince Edward Park, Douglas Park), they are all located across arterial streets from this community.

In the mid 1980s, the Board determined that the relocation of the Pacific Indoor Lawn Bowling Club from Grimmatt Park was necessary in order to provide green space in this park-deficient community.

On April 8, 1991, the Board commissioned development of a concept plan for the greening of Grimmatt Park (see Appendix A), which was developed after

consultation with nearby residents.

DISCUSSION

Relocation of the Lawn Bowling Club

The greening of Grimmatt Park has been linked to the relocation of the Pacific Indoor Lawn Bowling Club, a tenant at this site since 1938. In the last 10 years, a number of relocation sites have been pursued, but none have been successful. Sites included a provincially-owned property between the YMCA and Langara College, the Sunset Nursery site and Hillcrest Park.

Lawn Bowling at Hastings Park

More recently, relocating the Club to one of the buildings to be retained at the new Hastings Park has been pursued, but more work is needed to determine the viability of this proposal.

Of the four buildings at Hastings Park that will be managed by Park Board, the north end of the Forum building is suitable for indoor lawn bowling. It is estimated that about \$700,000 is needed to bring this portion of the building up to the necessary standards. This capital amount is generally within the Club's financial capability.

Unfortunately, the Hastings Park planning process relating to the use and allocation of the buildings is far from complete and the initial reaction from the community towards lawn bowling was less than a warm welcome. A second factor affecting the Hastings Park site was City Council's decision to extend the PNE lease by a further 2 years, until the year 1999.

The building use and allocation process could likely be completed by the end of 1999. Should this result in a positive outcome from the lawn bowlers' perspective, redevelopment of the Forum could commence at the earliest in January 2000. It is unlikely that the Club could commence their fall 2000 schedule in a new facility at Hastings Park, but the fall 2001 is definitely achievable.

Lawn Bowling at Other Sites

A second avenue for the Club to pursue is to revisit the location at Hillcrest Park, since the Board has received enquiries from the Vancouver Racquets Club as well as the Phoenix Gymnasium Club to utilize this piece of land for a recreational facility. The Lawn Bowling Club has also been encouraged to look for land and buildings not owned by Park Board.

Termination Date for the Lease at Grimmatt Park

Based on the scenario of the Club relocating to Hastings Park, a reasonable date for terminating their lease at Grimmatt Park would be at the end of their 2000-2001 season. A June 1, 2001 deadline would allow the Club enough time once the season is over in April to remove the Club's assets from the

building and to transport them to their new facility.

If the Hastings Park option fails to materialize, the Club will know this result probably by the end of 1999. A June 1, 2001 deadline still gives the Club a year and a half to secure a new facility.

In the event that a new facility is not available by June 1, 2001, Park Board staff recommend that the \$250,000 in the Park Board' s account for the relocation of the Lawn Bowling Club be reallocated for alternate uses, to be determined by the Park Board of the day.

Park Development

The complete greening of Grimmett Park (a total of 0.25 hectares or 0.6 acres) could therefore commence shortly after the building is demolished in the summer of 2001, and completed in late 2001 or early 2002 at the latest.

In the meantime, staff recommend that an interim park development be pursued with the community, which would provide about 0.1 hectares (0.25 acres) of parkland as early as 1999. This approach will permit some greening to take place prior to the termination of the lease with the Lawn Bowling Club in 2001.

The interim park development would occur on the westerly 96 feet of Lot E. This land is comprised of: a) the westerly parking lot for the lawn bowling facility (a total of 20 spaces); and b) a 32 foot wide lot that is currently leased to and used by the four houses located along the east side of Quebec Street.

The interim park would include a children' s playground and a lawn area, which would cost approximately \$125,000 to build. The Board would have to earmark 1998 or 1999 Capital funds to achieve this.

The interim park plan involves 2 issues. Firstly, Park Board would have to reappropriate the 32 foot wide strip of land currently used by 4 houses located along Quebec Street.

These home owners have been granted the use of the park property by Park Board for many years, and as a result, these home owners have extended their backyards onto park property. In 1990, the owners were advised that lease arrangements would continue but only on a month-to-month basis. This was done in order to facilitate the greening of Grimmett Park.

Secondly, the land currently used by the Club as a parking lot, if converted to parkland while the lawn bowling facility is still in operation at Grimmett Park, will result in some overspill within a block of the facility. On average, Park Board staff only expect an additional 5 to 10 cars to park on surrounding streets. This, however, may be a concern raised by neighbouring residents.

The Parking Branch of Engineering Services at City Hall is willing to explore ways to minimize the impact of this overspill parking by designating spaces along the streets as "resident parking only" spaces. A drop-off zone in front of the Lawn Bowling building would also be considered.

A community planning process will be undertaken to prepare the interim park plan and to determine the most appropriate parking strategy to compensate for the reduction in surface parking west of the lawn bowling building. A handout and questionnaire have been prepared and will be delivered to residents in the vicinity of Grimmett Park shortly (see Appendix B).

CONCLUSION

Park Board Commissioners have asked for a timetable which achieves the following two objectives: the relocation of the Pacific Indoor Lawn Bowling Club and the greening of Grimmett Park. The proposed termination of the lease in 2001 provides sufficient time for the Club to relocate, either at Hastings Park or elsewhere. An interim park development strategy can lead to early greening of at least a portion of the site by 1999, with completion of the park in the spring of 2002.

Prepared by:
Planning & Development Division
Board of Parks and Recreation
City of Vancouver
PR:ad