

# **SUBJECT: Providing a Year-Round, Free Stanley Park Shuttle Service**

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## **Information Report**

### **Background**

At its meeting on March 6, 2000, the Board passed the following resolution in respect of the Stanley Park Shuttle:

*"THAT the Board direct staff to report on the possibility of providing year round free shuttle service to remote areas of the park"*

In its discussion, Board members clarified that "remote" meant that the Shuttle would stay on roadways and not go on trails. This report assumes that the route would be the same as for the 1998 & 1999 summer service. The route is shown [here](#).

This report also only deals with the cost of a service for the winter season, from mid September to the end of May, as the Board has now approved a three year extension of the contract with Vancouver Trolley Company (VTC) for a fare paying service for the summer months.

### **Cost of Chartering Trolleys**

The cost to the Board to charter a VTC trolley, for a free Shuttle service, would be **\$63.33 per hour**. VTC has indicated that it would be able to provide service at whatever level the Board required, but that it would expect a trolley to be operating for a minimum of five or six hours on each day it was in service. **The charter cost to the Board per trolley, for a six hour day, would be \$380.**

The cost of a Shuttle service operating from mid September to the end of May annually would depend on the level and frequency of service required e.g. whether it would be as often as up to two trolleys operating daily, or as infrequent as one trolley operating on one weekend day only. It would also depend on the number of daily hours of operation. Suggested minimum hours for each day on the service would operate would be from 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. (six hours).

Some examples of possible levels of service, and their associated costs, are summarised in the following table. It shows only four of the many options available.

Each additional trolley used, and / or each additional hour of service each day, would add to the cost at the rate of \$63.33 per hour or \$380 per six hour day.

<b>examples of possible service levels</b>	<b># days</b>	<b>total trolley charter costs</b>	<b>other annual costs - advertising, signage, misc. (see below for details)</b>	<b>total costs of free trolley service</b>

<b>(6 hours / day / trolley)</b>				
weekends - 2 trolleys	74	\$127,000	\$15,000	<b>\$142,000</b>
weekdays - 1 trolley	187			
7 days/week - 1 trolley	261	\$99,000	\$15,000	<b>\$114,000</b>
weekends only - 1 trolley	74	\$28,000	\$15,000	<b>\$43,000</b>
Saturdays or Sundays only - 1 trolley	37	\$14,000	\$15,000	<b>\$29,000</b>

With one trolley operating in Stanley Park at a time, service frequency would be approximately every 40 minutes. Although the charter costs of such an infrequent service would be relatively low, it would require a disproportionate level of expenditure on advertising and promotion to remind the public of its existence. The Board should also consider whether such an infrequent service would be well used. In the early - mid 1990's, BC Transit provided an hourly bus service (the #52) round Park Drive on shoulder season weekends. Ridership was very low and the service was discontinued.

With two trolleys, service could be improved to every 20 minutes, but trolley charter costs would double.

### Other Costs

The Board would also incur other costs to provide a free service in the winter season, including:

- **one-time only costs** estimated at **\$10,000**, to create and produce signage, advertising and Shuttle identification for the free service,
- **annual costs** estimated at a total of **\$15,000**:
  - \$10,000 to advertise and promote the winter Shuttle service
  - \$ 5,000 for signage (installing signage twice annually on the changeover from summer fare paying service to winter free service, repairs & maintenance), and other miscellaneous costs

### Funding

The summer shuttle operating shortfall will be funded through pay parking fees in Stanley Park. This will amount to approximately \$134,000 in 2000. The balance of all other parking revenue plays a major role in the Board's operating budget and in 1999 its net contribution was approximately \$1.9 million.

If the Board wishes to implement a winter free shuttle service, with operating costs identified above at \$29,000 - \$142,000 and other costs at \$25,000, funds would have to be found from the Board's current operating budget. Taking into account the challenges incurred in meeting the present budget either reductions to existing services and programs or increasing revenues over present levels would have to be considered by the Board.

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