



Date: April 30, 2001

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF AN OUTDOOR 12 COURT VOLLEYBALL FACILITY

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board proceed with a community consultation process for a 12 court sand volleyball facility in Jericho Park.

POLICY

In 1998, the Board approved the recommendations in the Management of Volleyball on Vancouver's Beaches Report. In 1999, the Board approved designating sand volleyball courts at Locarno, Spanish Banks and Kitsilano Beaches. The Board has allocated \$90,000 in the 2000-2002 Capital Plan for the construction of a separate sand volleyball court facility.

BACKGROUND

The installation of a sand court volleyball facility has a history in Vancouver. In 1997, staff proposed the installation of a 16 court sand volleyball facility on the grass area to the west of Spanish Banks West parking lot. Based on concerns raised by the public during the community consultation process, the Park Board decided not to proceed with a facility at this location. Conversion of green space, the appearance of the facility and lack of washrooms were the primary concerns raised by the public. In addition, many respondents indicated that the facility would be better suited on an existing beach.

The creation of a sand court volleyball facility was discussed in the 1998 Management of Volleyball on Vancouver's Beaches Report. The Report discussed the options of designating areas of beaches which had historically been used as volleyball sites as well as relocating play to "off-beach" sand volleyball facilities. Given the difficulty in locating a suitable site for a sand pit facility, the Board chose to designate sand volleyball areas on the following beaches: Locarno (8 courts), Spanish Banks East (8 courts), Spanish Banks West (8 courts) and Kitsilano (7 courts). The Report indicated that there are limited opportunities to accommodate additional play on existing beaches. In the future, if more sand volleyball play is to be accommodated, the focus will have to shift to the creation of sand pit areas.

In 1999, the BC Volleyball Association requested that the Board include a 12 to 16 court sand volleyball facility in the Board's 2000-2002 Capital Plan. This facility would accommodate both league and tournament play. The Volleyball Association suggested that the \$90,000 facility be financed through users fees over a period of years. At a September 1999 meeting, the Park Board approved the following recommendation:

That the Board encourage staff to identify a site for the self funded beach volleyball proposal of BC Volleyball Association.

Given the difficulties associated with funding this project from user fees, the Board later allocated \$90,000 towards this project from the 2000-2002 Capital Plan.

DISCUSSION

The Vancouver Park Board is the primary provider of sand volleyball courts in the Lower Mainland. Volleyball on Vancouver beaches is primarily dedicated to casual or unorganized play. Organized volleyball is restricted to one night per week per site for league play and one tournament per site a month for tournament play. Unfortunately, this level of scheduling does not meet the demand for organized volleyball. To accommodate the excess demand for organized volleyball, staff are proposing to build a 12 court sand court volleyball facility.

In determining if a site was appropriate for consideration to install a 12 court sand court volleyball facility, staff evaluated the location against the following criteria:

Impact of the facility on the site/existing users:

Given that the facility is approximately 3/4 the size of a soccer field, a relatively large site is required. Ideally, the facility would have minimal impact on other uses and/or users of the park. Aesthetically, a location adjacent to a beach or the waterfront is preferred as the sand surface of the courts would better "blend in" with the existing landscape.

Maintenance of the facility:

Maintenance costs (sand cleaning) are lower if the site is located next to an existing beach area. In addition, the sand cleaning machine does not travel well to sites not located adjacent to the beaches.

Availability of auxiliary facilities:

Ideally the site would have auxiliary facilities such as parking and washroom facilities.

Staff recognize that independent of site selection, a sand court volleyball facility will raise concerns with regards to dedication of park space to single use, the “seasonal” operation of the facility (five months) as well as the impact of the facility on the immediate neighbourhood (parking, noise, etc.).

Site Evaluation and Selection

The criteria outlined above limits the possible sites for a sand court volleyball to a few parks: Jericho Park, New Brighton Park and Spanish Banks. Appendix 1 rates each park against the criteria.

The analysis indicates that while both Jericho or New Brighton Parks have the size, location and auxiliary facilities to accommodate a sand volleyball facility, the Jericho site would appear to have less of an impact on existing uses and users of the park. New Brighton Park is a primary site for this type facility, however this specific location could be impacted by the long term goal of daylighting a stream through the eastern side of the Park. This site would also require the removal of four tennis courts.

SUMMARY

Staff recommend that a 12 court sand volleyball facility at the Jericho site be forwarded for community consideration and comment. This consultation process will involve notifying various community groups and Park stakeholders of the proposal, posting a “facility proposal” sign on the site and holding a meeting in the community. This process would be completed by July 2001.

Prepared by:

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APPENDIX 1

Site	Existing Use/ Suitability for Conversion	Maintenance	Auxiliary Facilities	Impact on other Park Users/ Adjacent Neighbourhood
Jericho Park - area to the east of the sailing centre, south of the marginal wharf	passive area adjacent to sports fields, waterfront location	lower maintenance costs as site is adjacent to a beach area	parking, washrooms available on site	large park, passive features of the park maintained; minimal impact on adjacent neighbourhood and other park users
New Brighton - eastside of the park	tennis courts surrounded by a large grass area; waterfront location; facility could be impacted by long term goal of daylighting of a stream	higher maintenance costs due to eastside location, probably would require manual sand cleaning maintenance	parking and washrooms on site	loss of tennis courts, minimal impact on adjacent neighbourhood
Spanish Banks West - adjacent to the western parking lot	large grass area has a mix of active and passive uses including grass volleyball; waterfront location	lower maintenance costs as site is adjacent to beach area	parking available, no washrooms on site	minimal impact on adjacent neighbourhood, loss of green space