



Date: April 11, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Victory Square - Design Concept

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the attached design concept for the redevelopment of Victory Square.

BACKGROUND

On November 5, 2001 the Board approved a community initiated project to add lighting to Victory Square. A further initiative was then launched to design and construct an overall upgrading of the park and to launch a fund-raising program to help pay for these further improvements (memo to Commissioners dated January 23, 2002 is attached).

DISCUSSION

Planning staff have been moving forward on two fronts since last report to the Board.

A contract has been let for the design and fabrication of the decorative lighting \$142,000. This was fast tracked to meet the March 31, 2002 closing date for the expenditure of the Federal grant from the Western Diversification Fund.

The conduit and concrete bases for the tree uplighting were also installed in March by City electrical engineering crews.

Parallel to this development activity, the design process for the renewal of the park and cenotaph plaza has been going on since mid-January, 2002. Staff have been meeting weekly with the "Friends of Victory Square" representatives to clarify design parameters. Consultants were also retained to do a park heritage assessment report on the park. This was presented to the City's Heritage Commission and delivered in final form to the Board on April 11, 2002. The attached design reflects the significant heritage directions offered in the report.

A design open house was held on March 16, 2002 in the immediate neighbourhood. Approximately 20 people attended and suggestions and concerns were also incorporated in the concept plan.

Representatives of the Remembrance Day Observance Committee who manage the annual November 11th Memorial were also extensively consulted to ensure that design changes did not affect the established ceremony.

The resulting compilation of inputs was brought forward as a plan to the Friends of Victory Square on April 9, 2002. The meeting offered four modifications to the plan which have been incorporated in the design concept shown in this report.. The presence of a skateboard element in the park remains a contentious issue and will be resolved as the design development proceeds.

The initial rough estimate to construct the concept plan is \$375,000 above and beyond the lighting costs as previously noted.

The next steps in the design and fund-raising processes are set out below:

April 27th - second public open house to present the concept plan before the Board tonight.

April 29th - May 6th - concept plan revisions and refinements as required

May 27th - presentation of final design for approval by the Board

June 7th - Friends of Victory Square fund-raising dinner

July - Board decision on capital funding for 2003–2005 plan.

Summer/fall - ongoing fund-raising initiatives

- installation of decorative lighting on the cenotaph plaza.

CONCLUSION

The design process with the Friends of Victory Square has progressed to a design concept for Board approval. Heritage issues have been addressed, memorial ceremony needs integrated in the design and one open house held in the adjacent neighbourhood. Also representatives of DERA and Covenant House have attended 6 of the weekly meetings which have produced the design.

With Board approval, the design concept can be taken back to the neighbourhood to confirm and or refine the design to ensure local acceptability. The Friends of Victory Square are seeking approval of this plan so that they can proceed with a fund-raising banquet on June 7, 2002.

The final product will be back to the Board for approval in late May.

Prepared by:

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Board of Parks & Recreation

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JDL