



Date: May 31, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: Musqueam Park - Statutory Right-of-Way for
Crown Street "Special Environmental Treatment" Project**

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That the Board support the "Special Environmental Treatment" project for the reconstruction of the 5800 to 6100 blocks of Crown Street.**
- B. That the Board support the inclusion of a small portion of Musqueam Park as part of the project, subject to the final design being to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks and Recreation and the project being completed and maintained at no cost to the Park Board.**
- C. That the Board approve the granting of a statutory right-of-way in Musqueam Park in favour of the City of Vancouver for road purposes, with all details to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks and Recreation.**

POLICY

On May 27, 2002, the Board endorsed the "Creating a Sustainable City" report as a guide to advocate and advance sustainability initiatives both within the Board and among its partner organizations.

The Vancouver Charter (Part XX111, 488 (1)) states that "the Board shall have exclusive possession of, and exclusive jurisdiction and control of all areas designated as permanent public parks".

Although there is no approved Board policy regarding statutory rights-of-way in parks, the practice has been to evaluate requests for rights-of-way on a case-by-case basis.

BACKGROUND

A small portion (about 500 m² or 5,500 square feet) of Musqueam Park located along Crown Street has been used as a roadway for at least 37 years (an aerial photo from 1965 shows the road). The roadway in Musqueam Park (see Photo 1) is about 100 m long and accommodates

primarily southbound traffic (northbound traffic typically travels along the roadway located within the street right-of-way).

The City’s Engineering Services is working with owners and residents along Crown Street (5800 to 6100 blocks) on a Local Improvement project that would see this portion of the street being rebuilt with a “special environmental treatment”.

Engineering Services has asked the Park Board for a statutory right-of-way over the portion of Musqueam Park currently being used as a roadway so that it could be incorporated into the project. Musqueam Park is a “permanent park” as defined in the Vancouver Charter.

Photo 1: Existing Situation



DISCUSSION

What is a street with “special environmental treatment”? Instead of having curbs and gutters which send rainwater into the storm sewer system, the narrow roadway would be bordered by

swales and drainage areas (see Photo 2) which will filter the street run-off and result in fewer contaminants reaching the Strait of Georgia. And because rainwater will percolate into the ground, more water will be available for trees and plants in the vicinity.

In the case of Crown Street, there is a specific benefit to Musqueam Creek in Musqueam Park, which is the only salmon-bearing creek in Vancouver. The swales along Crown Street will store rainwater during storms and gradually discharge it over time. This will help to reduce peak flows into the creek during storms and augment the volume of water in the creek during dry periods. As a result, this will support the existing and future salmon enhancement efforts for Musqueam Creek.

Photo 2: Example of street with “special environmental treatment”



Although the project is technically feasible within the Crown Street right-of-way, the Park Board has been asked to include the portion of roadway in Musqueam Park as part of the project since the roadway has been there for several decades, and more owners and residents along Crown Street may support the Local Improvement if the roadway in the park was included.

Engineering Services has estimated that a typical “curb and gutter” project would cost about \$400,000 to construct. The environmental features will require an additional \$200,000. On May 14, 2002, Council authorized “an increase to the City’ s portion of funding above the rate for Local Residential Pavement and Curbs to cover additional costs for this demonstration project”.

Park Board staff support the initiative for creating a street with “special environmental treatment” and the continued use of a small portion of Musqueam Park for road purposes. Firstly, the Crown Street project will yield environmental benefits related to storm water management in general and to Musqueam Creek in particular. Secondly, if the project is built and receives ongoing support from the community, it can serve as a model for street reconstruction elsewhere in the city. Thirdly, the continued use of a small portion of the park for road purposes will not change the natural character of the park.

Staff therefore recommend support for the project and the granting of a statutory right-of-way in Musqueam Park in favour of the City of Vancouver for road purposes, subject to:

- the statutory right-of-way being no greater in area than the portion of Musqueam Park that is currently used as a roadway;
- the “local improvement” project incorporating the “Special Environmental Treatment” as described in an April 25, 2002 report to City Council;
- the detailed design and maintenance provision being to the satisfaction of the General Manager of Parks and Recreation; and
- the project being completed and maintained at no cost to the Park Board.

CONCLUSION

An opportunity exists to create the first street in Vancouver with “special environmental treatment”. The Park Board is asked to participate in the project by granting a statutory right-of-way over a small portion of Musqueam Park. Park Board staff support this initiative subject to the conditions outlined in this report.

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