



Date: January 30, 2003

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Queen Elizabeth Park - Update on Reservoir Reconstruction and Park Design

This report is for information.

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) is in the process of re-building its Little Mountain Reservoir, at a cost of \$37.6 Million. The Little Mountain Reservoir is located in Queen Elizabeth Park on a property owned by the GVRD. The GVRD property is wholly surrounded by park property. The surface of the GVRD property including the rooftop of the reservoir is leased to the Park Board for park and recreational purposes; conversely, the Park Board has granted the GVRD multiple easements through the park for water lines and the smaller Kersland Reservoir. To most visitors the GVRD property is indistinguishable from the rest of the park.

The complexity of land ownership, easements and leases reflects the dual nature of the site as one of the City's most prominent parks and one of the region's most important water facilities. The planned reconstruction of the water reservoir therefore also necessitates a reconstruction of the centre of the park.

In anticipation of the reservoir project, the Park Board conducted a public process on the long term vision for the park, reported to the Board on May 3, 1999. More than 800 people participated in creating specific recommendations for different park areas. An information report providing a project update was received by the Board on April 30, 2001.

Since then, Park Board staff have cooperated with the GVRD and their consultants on the development of the project, and have participated in two well-attended open houses hosted by the GVRD. The Park Board has also retained the services of a landscape architecture consultant to develop a design concept for the rooftop.

UPDATE

Memorandum of Understanding: At its meeting of June 24, 2002, the Board authorized the execution of a Memorandum of Understanding with the GVRD that outlines some rights and responsibilities of the Park Board and the GVRD during and after re-construction of the reservoir and related waterworks. Included are the GVRD's commitment to provide extra loading capacity to the roof structure (at an incremental cost of \$1.5 Million) allowing a variety of uses, and

acceptance of the Park Board's concept plan. In turn, the Park Board agreed to granting the required rights and accepting responsibility for some aspects of park restoration (at a cost not to exceed \$0.5 Million. The memorandum has now been signed by the chief executives of both parties.

Reservoir reconstruction: The old reservoir has been demolished. The first new perimeter walls have been poured, also some sections of slab, columns, and roof forms. Work on the new valve chamber is also underway. By and large, construction is on schedule to bring the valve chamber and Cell 1 on line by May 15.

During the early planning phase of the project, a number of concerns were voiced regarding the impact of this construction activity on the park in particular and the environment in general: noise, dust, and traffic as well as impacts on park trees and wildlife. In response, the GVRD assessed these impacts, and commissioned an Environmental Protection Plan which is being implemented, and monitored weekly by the environmental consultant.

Park Design: The Park Board's landscape architecture consultant for this project, Kim Perry and Associates, has produced a concept plan - see attached summary - for the reservoir rooftop. The concept plan was presented to the Park Board on January 14, 2002. The concept was further reviewed in a public Open House at the Riley Park Community Centre in March, 2002. The overwhelming majority of respondents confirmed that the overall design met the intent of the long term vision, and commented favourably on the proposed components, including the accommodation of tai chi, the water and sculpture garden, the plantings, multi-purpose pavilions and the reduced parking configuration. The consultant will present the plans at the Board meeting.

Park Board staff have prepared terms of reference for the next phase of this consultancy including design development, also architectural, engineering and fountain design services. The consultant is currently working on developing a proposal in response. The upcoming phase of consultancy will be reported to the Board for approval.

Schedule: Staff project that design development of the reservoir rooftop and the preparation of construction and tender documents will be concluded by the end of this year, leading to a tender process in the beginning of 2004, and a construction process lasting until the end of 2004.

Funding: The current Capital Plan provides \$2.0 Million in the Water Capital Plan and \$0.9 in the Park Board Capital Plan for a total of \$2.9 Million for the restoration of the park and the creation of a new rooftop. A further \$0.5 Million is included in the 2003-05 Capital Plan to fund the Board's park restoration obligation under its agreement with the GVRD.

Prepared by:

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TCD

ATTACHMENT

Summary of Design Concept: The preliminary design concept is a dramatic re-interpretation of the original 1969 concept for the rooftop: water, sculpture, planting, and pavilions create a varied, lively setting on the northern half while parking is available in the southern half.

- **Water.** Evocative of the underground water infrastructure, water is featured in a number of fountains and small pools; sprays, bubblers, waterfalls, fog nozzles and other types of water animation playfully engaging the visitor.
- **Sculpture.** In 1969, Prentice Bloedel donated the sculpture currently gracing the rooftop, *Knife-Edge (Two Piece)* by Henry Moore, a masterpiece of arguably the best-known sculptor of the last century. It is proposed to integrate this sculpture into the new design, treating it as the first acquisition of a future sculpture garden.

Staff have made contact with members of the arts community to discuss the idea of a sculpture garden in that location, and met with sympathetic response to explore notions like curatorial leadership, appropriate maintenance, permanent versus temporary installations, and cooperation with the Vancouver Art Gallery or other public or private entities. The design concept is to create a variety of individual sculpture settings, varying light levels, scales, backdrops, materials, plantings, and water elements. These settings then can receive sculptures as they may be acquired over time.

- **Planting.** The public's vision for the rooftop has always included a greener appearance, more trees, shrubs and lawn so that the rooftop would look and feel more integrated with the park. The preliminary design concept softens the edge of the rooftop with planting that corresponds to the existing park landscape while toward the centre areas trees planted overtop reservoir columns punctuate and enliven the proposed hardscapes.
- **Pavilions.** As is currently the case, the new rooftop will feature a series of roofed structures, pavilions that are slightly elevated. The meandering layout of the pavilions is based on suggestions from tai chi practitioners, allowing these spaces to be flexibly used by groups of various sizes. Overall, the proposed pavilions will provide up to 25% more covered space. There is also the opportunity to include a wedding pavilion.
- **Bus parking.** The long range vision identified the existing bus parking in Queen Elizabeth Park as unsatisfactory. Staff have negotiated a memorandum of understanding with the GVRD that includes a structural roof design capable of handling bus loads, allowing to free up the entrance to the park that currently gets clogged with buses at peak times.