



Date: December 5, 2003

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: 2006 CPRA/BCRPA National Conference and Trade Show
Bid Submission**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the submission of a bid to the 2006 CPRA/BCRPA National Conference and Trade Show.

BACKGROUND

Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA), each year calls for expressions of interest in jointly hosting its national conference with one of its provincial partner organizations. The British Columbia Recreation and Parks Association (BCRPA) has forwarded an initial letter of intent expressing its interest in the 2006 Conference in partnership with Class Software Solutions. BCRPA have requested that Vancouver be the host city for this Conference and Trade Show, inviting the Vancouver Park Board to participate in the submission of a formal bid for the event. Vancouver last hosted this National Conference in 1988 and we successfully hosted the 2003 BCRPA Conference with a strong staff team who reached out to other Lower Mainland municipalities for support.

DISCUSSION

CPRA's mission is to build healthy communities and enhance the quality of life and environments for all Canadians through collaboration with their members and partners. They are a national voice for Parks and Recreation; they communicate and promote the values and benefits of parks and recreation and they are advocates of parks and recreation as essential to individuals, family and community, health and well being.

Our proposal for the National 2006 Conference is that it be held from April 26 - 29, 2006. We anticipate that we could attract more than 700 delegates from across Canada and other parts of North America. The host city will be providing its expertise and input into the program, marketing, sponsorship and trade show areas as well as planning and delivering social/ entertainment events and companion and children's programs that contribute to an overall positive conference experience.

Although the National Conference has typically been held in late August or September, in 2006 the US National Recreation & Parks Conference will be held in Seattle in October. To avoid overlap and the potential for reduced Canadian participation a conference in Vancouver would focus on the beauty of the springtime in this city and continue the BCRPA traditional conference timetable of April/May.

Staff have begun to assess the potential conference and trade show venues in the city to ensure their availability and suitability. We believe that hosting this event will showcase our city to many members as a preview to the 2010 Winter Games and reconfirm the strength in both our volunteers and municipal staff who have demonstrated their capabilities. We also have many people in British Columbia of professional stature and with expertise to address almost any program area, perhaps even leading Canada in many new and unique areas.

BCRPA have requested the Park Board's support for Vancouver being identified as a host city in the bid that is to be submitted to CPRA in early January. The bid would also include the description of support from BCRPA (including financing) and from the corporate sponsor Class Software Solutions. Letters of support from all of the partners, including the Park Board would be submitted.

Staff support for the planning and implementation for this event would be similar to the levels that were used in this year's BCRPA Conference. Approximately 20 staff were involved in the various committees including representatives from neighbouring municipalities.

The National Conference and Trade Show is organized and managed through a series of Task Groups with varying levels of local participation. However there is a Host Task Group which would plan and deliver the social program, recruit local volunteers and manage logistics for all of the conference activities. This group will also host a promotional social at the National Conference in 2005 in Edmonton.

SUMMARY

BCRPA has requested the Vancouver Park Board to be a partner as the host city in the submission of a bid for the 2006 CPRA/BCRPA National Conference and Trade Show.

Staff believe that our previous experience in hosting a successful conference, the attraction of Vancouver as the host city and the profiling of Vancouver in advances of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games are strong factors in promotion of the Bid.

Prepared by:

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