



Date: April 1, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Stanley Park Signage Program

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the completion of the Phase 1 signage program for Stanley Park as outlined in attachment 1.

POLICY

On June 14, 1999 and June 25, 2001 the Board passed the following resolutions which initiated the Stanley Park signage program.

- **THAT John Peachey and Associates be retained to design a signage program for Stanley Park at a cost of \$6,000.**
- **THAT the Board allocate \$31,000 from the Corporate Sponsorship Account to fund the signage design program and the purchase of new signs for installation in 1999.**
- **THAT the Board allocate \$71,000 from the Corporate Sponsorship Account to fund the first phase of the Stanley Park signage program. (Reports attached).**

BACKGROUND

Over 20 years, Stanley Park suffered aesthetically from a growing confusion of signage. There were no co-ordinated signage guidelines: designs varied greatly; installation was not governed by any agreed policy; some signboards had become so cluttered as to be unreadable by motorists. Also, the objective of providing appropriate wayfinding for park visitors was becoming misdirected to become commercial advertising. This led to growing public criticism of the declining beauty of the park.

DISCUSSION

In 1999 staff established a sign program team to review and recommend a signage design and installation protocol. It included representatives from communications, revenue services, maintenance and operations and planning and design. A sign consultant was also retained to provide professional input to the decision-making process.

The scope of the project was to develop a co-ordinated information package which included park maps as handouts, permanent map signs with “you are here” badges, direction and distance signs as well as the wayfinding signage related to the park road system.

The objectives were to:

- 1) create more durable, low maintenance signs which were more elegant than the old wooden blades and did not deteriorate as quickly;
- 2) provide only enough signage to allow visitors to make choices at decision making points - e.g. intersections, parking lots;
- 3) reduce sign pollution in the park by eliminating redundant signage where visitor decisions were not required or where excessive pay parking or no parking had been placed on roadside locations;
- 4) make signage understandable by not creating processing overload from too many signs in one location, and
- 5) eliminate off site commercial advertising.

The proposed new roadside sign design and wayfinding objectives were brought to a meeting of park commercial and non-profit tenants for discussion, and were subsequently approved and funded through the corporate sponsorship fund.

Two additional phases of the sign program remain incomplete. Phase 2 was destination information on forest trail markers. This is 85% complete and will be completed before summer. Phase 3 is destination signage for the pedestrian paths in the eastern or developed portion of the park. It will be green metal sign trees using a single square post and blades pointing in up to four directions. No funding source has been identified for this phase of the work.

Sign installation was completed with the S-Curve park entrance project in late 2003.

In November 2003, staff retained a second signage consultant to do an audit of the Phase 1 (road related) work that was in place. As part of that audit, all the stakeholders were contacted by the consultant and sent a series of questions about the signage to consider. They were then interviewed by the consultant. A summary of their concerns is included in the report, and those which were felt to be substantive are included in the recommendations. The consultant, Karo Design, reported out in March, 2004, and their recommendations are included as attachment 2.

Staff presented the report findings, the staff response and the proposed action plan to the Planning and Environment Committee on April 1, 2004. Eight tenants attended the Committee Meeting and five of them made presentations to the Commissioners. The Committee received the action plan which is contained in attachment 1 of this report, essentially calling for 18 new or modified sign locations, and referred it to the Board Meeting of April 19th.

CONCLUSION

While staff do not recommend that we significantly increase individual sign sizes as the consultant report puts forward, all other recommendations have been addressed and the attached action plan will provide satisfactory way finding for the park road system. Staff also strongly support the limited extent of personalized commercial tenant signage put forward in the report.

Stanley District
Board of Parks and Recreation
JDL