



Date: April 22, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Alcan Dragon Boat Festival

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT the Board approve the use of Creekside Park for the Alcan Dragon Boat Festival from June 18, 2004 to June 20, 2004.***
- B. *THAT the Board grant permission to extend a Special Occasion License in conjunction with the event to 11:00 p.m. on Saturday June 19, 2004.***

POLICY

Board approval is required for major events not included on the annual Special Event Calendar and/or are in variance with one or more Park Board policies (see Appendix A):

Gated Events

Gated or admission fee events are limited to designated areas in larger parks. The majority of the park including the park's circulation network (pathways, bikeways, etc.) must remain open to the public.

Special Occasion Licences

Staff can approve requests for special occasion licenced areas when:

- the sale of alcohol is supplemental to an event.
- the event is not being held in a mini or neighbourhood park.
- minors are not the prime focus of the event.
- the event is operated by a community service organization and profits from the sale of alcohol are used to support the community service activities of the organization.
- the hours of operation for the licenced area parallel the event or between the hours of noon and 9:30 p.m.
- organizers have an approved security plan in place.

Requests for special occasion licenced areas which do not meet these criteria may be considered by the Board on a case by case basis.

BACKGROUND

The Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society is a non-profit organization founded in 1989. The Dragon Boat Festival was created as a showcase of Vancouver's growing cultural diversity and to promote racial harmony and cross cultural understanding to all Canadians. The Society fosters learning and exploration of Canada's diverse multi-cultural heritage through the presentation of performing, visual & culinary arts and dragon boat racing. The Dragon Boat Festival attracts over 90,000 people and more than 180 dragon boat teams from across the Lower Mainland and around the world. Historically, the Festival site has included the Plaza of Nations and the eastern portion of Cooper's Park. The event organizers have been given the permission by the Board to gate the eastern section of Cooper's Park. Due to the increasing costs of utilizing the Plaza of Nations venue, organizers are requesting permission to relocate the Festival site from Cooper's Park & the Plaza of Nations to Creekside Park and Science World.

2004 REQUEST

Festival organizers are requesting the exclusive use of the north side of Creekside Park with a closure of the seawall path from the south side of Science World to the north end of the park and extending partially onto the Concord Pacific property (see Appendix B). The Racers village will be located in the parking lots adjacent to the park. Pedestrian and bike seawall traffic will be diverted onto a designated lane through the parking lots.

In addition, the organizers are also requesting permission to have entertainment and a special occasion license in the enclosed area of Creekside Park. The Festival will have scheduled entertainment on Saturday from 11:00 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. Set-up includes an outdoor stage 30' x 40' with speakers directed towards the water. The special occasion license area will have a capacity of 500 people and serve only beer and wine. Security and food services will be provided as well as the development of an emergency evacuation plan. A residential notification letter has been distributed and festival passes will be made available to City Gate residents. All net proceeds from the sale of alcohol support the Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society's cost of hosting the festival.

DISCUSSION

Staff are recommending the Board approve both the relocation of the Dragon Boat site to Creekside Park and extending the special occasion licence for this year only. The City's FEST committee has endorsed this recommendation. The organizers have notified City Gate Strata Councils regarding their festival. The Strata Councils' have not expressed any concerns at this time.

Given the current configuration of the Park, staff are not recommending this proposed site plan as long term site plan for the Dragon Boat Festival. Staff have concerns regarding the closure of a significant portion of this Park; especially the sea wall and two playground areas for a three day period. In addition to this event, the Park and seawall are also gated for three days during the Molson Indy. Park Board staff will monitor the impact this event has on the Park and the neighbourhood and we will work with the organizer to determine a more acceptable site configuration and/or location which mitigates these concerns for any future dragon boat events.

CONCLUSION

The Alcan Dragon Boat Festival will be celebrating it's 16th year and has developed into one of Vancouver's most popular annual family summer events which showcases an array of family activities, entertainment and food. The Festival is an extremely well-organized and well-conducted event. The organizers have an excellent history of hosting festivals and operating public special occasion licenses in a responsible and professional manner.

Prepared by:

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