

Date: August 16, 2005



**TO: Board Members – Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: New Park for Marpole at West 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and Osler Street and Selkirk Street**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT the Board approve the concept plan for the proposed New Park and Playground as described in this report and illustrated in Appendix 1.*

**POLICY**

The Board approves new park designs.

**BACKGROUND**

In October 1999, Park Board and Council agreed to the creation of a new park in this location, and Council approved the purchase of a 0.17 hectare (18,425 square feet) parcel for park purposes. In May 2001, Council approved the purchase of an additional 0.06 hectare (6,208 square feet) parcel. The final property acquisition was in September 2001, with the purchase of a 0.17 hectare (18,479 square feet) parcel. The three parcels of land account for about 0.40 hectares (1 acre). The total cost of the land acquisition was \$3,363,000. A preliminary investigation for soil contamination has been carried out, with the conclusion that there is little probability of contamination.

The existing parks in the area include: Eburne Park (.90 h) with 4 tennis courts on the east side of the Oak Street Bridge on-ramp, with very difficult pedestrian access from the area west of Oak Street; Marpole Park (.27h), with a playground located in the southwest corner of the neighbourhood between 72<sup>nd</sup> and 73<sup>rd</sup> Avenues and French and Cartier Streets; and William Mackie Park (.40h), with a playground and a half basketball court, located one block west of Granville Street, a distance of about 500 meters for most residents between Granville and Oak Streets.

The area bound by West 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Oak Street, S.W. Marine Drive and Granville Street is primarily residential with apartments and condominiums under five storeys. David Lloyd George School, located two blocks north of 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue on Cartier Street, has over 400 students, with a majority of them living in the neighbourhood south of 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Historically, the area was home to a number of Japanese fisher families until their internment in early 1942.

## **DISCUSSION**

As part of the public process, the residents of the area were given the opportunity to help design the park at an Open House held June 1, 2005, by discussing what features and facilities they thought the park should have. This meeting was attended by 48 residents, and 33 questionnaires were completed. Park Board staff used this information to develop two conceptual plans that were presented at a subsequent Open House on August 11, 2005, which was attended by 32 residents. Twenty-seven of 29 residents preferred the attached concept. The concept will be fully presented at the Board meeting.

Park features that the majority of the residents support include: lawn, trees, shrubs and flowers, benches, picnic tables, a drinking fountain, paths, entry features and a children's playground. The inclusion of active sports facilities was not supported and the size of the park also limits the opportunity for sports facilities. Generally, the residents preferred a park with an area for children to play and a quieter area for relaxing and for seniors. The configuration of the park parcels lends itself to this idea. Beyond features or amenities desired for the park, the historical context of the area presented an opportunity to reference Japanese garden design for entrances, screens, pathways/boardwalks, a stream, and plant material.

The concept includes three accessible "gateway" entrances. A meandering paved path connects three corners of the park. A playground, surrounded by trees and lawn, is located in the northwest corner of the park. The lane would have paved driving lanes with grass verges. Tactile pedestrian crossings and speed humps would also be incorporated. The east parcel of the park drops about three meters in elevation from the North to the South. A pine forest or pinetum with a carpet of lawn is proposed for the slope, along with a dry river of large rocks with flowing grasses cascading down the slope and terminating in a "quiet" garden of specimen Japanese varieties of plant material. Benches and picnic tables will be placed throughout the park. Existing healthy trees on the site will be retained.

The park site is divided by the existing lane which is used for deliveries and garbage pick-up at existing businesses south of the park. Closure of the existing lane to traffic (it would remain a street right-of-way) and the construction of a new east-west lane off Selkirk Street was investigated with Engineering. This would result in a loss of parkland. In consultation with the community, staff recommended that the existing lane be retained and designed such that traffic be restricted from speeding and measures taken to provide safe pedestrian crossings. It is also recommended that the lane south of the park have speed control humps installed. Retention of the existing lane with a "Country Lane" design was supported by 88% of those attending the Open House.

The park has been designed by staff and the construction budget for the park is \$475,000. The recommended Concept Plan is illustrated in Appendix 1.

## **SUMMARY**

The proposed Park will provide a needed amenity in a growing neighbourhood. The population of the area will increase with the continued residential re-development of the commercial lands to the south of the park. The public consultation process has resulted in a user designed park which will accommodate a wide range of recreational pursuits.

Prepared by:

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