



May 28, 2007

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Recycling Racks for Park Board Garbage Containers

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

In 2003, the Board received the attached report ([Appendix A](#)) on recycling initiatives at the Park Board.

Since that time, there has been an ongoing interest in reducing the number of recyclable beverage containers going to the landfill. In late 2005, the City of Vancouver began installing recycling racks on their litter cans.

On April 2, 2007, the Board passed the following motion: “Therefore be it resolved that Park Board staff be directed to review and report to the Board the feasibility of attaching recyclable racks to garbage cans throughout the City’s park system”.

DISCUSSION

In 2005 the City Engineering Department installed 1,350 recycling racks to city garbage containers. In 2006, the City conducted a survey to see how the public was using the recycle racks.

The survey confirmed that the racks were serving their intended purpose. They found the racks popular with people wanting to keep recyclable beverage containers out of the land fill and for people collecting the containers for deposit.

While the overall results of the survey were positive, some concern was identified regarding the general garbage being placed in the recycle racks. Although the survey was inconclusive, items such as non-recyclables and newspapers were often found in the recycle racks.

The problem with people putting general garbage into areas designated for recycling is not new. In the 2003 Recycling Report to the Park Board, staff identified that it was common to find general garbage in their blue recycle totes. Given this experience, more work needs to occur in order to encourage people to separate their garbage from their recyclables.

To test whether recycling racks in a parks setting will work, staff have developed a prototype recycling rack for Park Board garbage containers.



Photo 1 – Prototype of Park Board Recycling Rack

As a pilot project, staff will attach 25 recycle racks to garbage containers throughout the park system. The cost for these racks is estimated at \$80.00 / unit and will be allocated from the sanitation budget. The pilot will be evaluated over a one year period and staff will seek answers to the following questions:

- 1) Are the recycle racks being used for their intended purpose?
- 2) What impact do recyclables left in the racks have on staff servicing the garbage containers?
- 3) Is general garbage in the racks a problem?
- 4) Are there any operational concerns with the prototype recycling rack?

During the pilot project, recyclables left in the racks will be put into existing blue recycle totes by the staff when they are servicing the garbage containers.

After completing the evaluation of the pilot project, staff will make recommendations aimed at enhancing Park Board recycling initiatives.

CONCLUSION

The Vancouver Park Board plays an important role in encouraging the public to recycle. By piloting a recycling rack program as part of our existing garbage containers, the Board will demonstrate a commitment to urban sustainability.

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