

Date: March 23, 2009



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Stanley Park Forest Management Plan Report

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this management plan for information.

BACKGROUND

In April 2007, the Stanley Park Restoration Project Plan, under the “supporting legacies” section recommended the creation of a new Stanley Park Forest Management Plan. On May 26 2008, the Board retained the University of British Columbia, Faculty of Forestry as a consultant to the management plan team. A progress report was provided to the Board on November 24, 2008, at which time staff was directed to seek community input.

DISCUSSION

This document is intended to guide the current and future activities that are consistent with the overall vision for the forest. It does not deal with the policies of park use but is aimed at the current and future forest management. The major elements of the report are related to public safety, forest protection, ecosystem enhancement, and management strategies. It has a time horizon of approximately twenty years. Given the changing maturity of the replanted forest areas, it should be reviewed and updated after ten years.

The plan is authored by Park Board arborist Bill Stephen, with data collection and analysis, professional advice and peer review provided by the UBC Faculty of Forestry. It draws upon the Stanley Park Restoration Plan of 2007 in terms of its vision and goals. It is a two part document. The main body of the report part sets out the philosophy of the forest management process, and contains major subject modules which form the structure of the plan. The second part is made up of appendices, which are maps, lists, and more detailed descriptions of conditions and proposed activities. These appendices will be valuable tools in annual and capital budget plan development over the life of the forest management plan.

This plan differs in emphasis from the plan of the late 1980’s in that it focuses on the Stanley Park forest as an ecosystem as opposed to an earlier emphasis on the trees themselves. This is a reflection of current societal and environmental values and the strong partnership between the restoration team and the Stanley Park Ecology Society who have directly contributed to the content of the management plan.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

As an extension of the Restoration Plan of 2007, the forest management plan has built upon the community interaction that took place following the wind storm of 2006. This included the guidance of a steering committee made up of professionals and academics from the ecology and forestry community, the input from stakeholders, the implementation of a 'feedback' forum on the Park Board website, and the interaction at an open public discussion session at the Roundhouse auditorium. In October 2008, Park Board staff participated in and listened at a well attended free public forum entitled the "Biodiversity in Stanley Park" at the West End community Centre. The Stanley Park Ecology Society hosted a formal peer session, whereby a draft of this document was discussed by an array of professionals and environmental groups. The summary report of this session is available as a public document upon request. Two open house presentations were made in February 2009; the first at VanDusen Garden and a second at the downtown Public Library. A survey was given to attendees at the open houses, with the following results:

Approve of general direction of Plan	82 %
Disapprove of general direction of Plan	9 %
No opinion	9 %

FUNDING

At the time of this report, there are three sources of funds for the Park Board forest work in Stanley Park.

Operations funding	-	ongoing maintenance work
Capital funding	-	planting of trees other plants in pre existing open areas establishment of plantations < 10 yrs
Reserve fund	-	dedicated to forest recovery of blowdown areas Management Plan recommended enhancement projects

IMPLEMENTATION

Ongoing maintenance work is driven by the continuing work load provided by normal forest growth, mortality, and branch shedding. This includes the removal or modification of over two hundred hazard trees per year, the clearing and brushing of 16 km of roads and 33 km of trails edges, periodic storm cleanup, and the pruning of large ornamental trees.

The Capital and Reserve funding portions of the work will be requested in the fall of each year, with an accompanying progress report and proposed work schedule. Planned work

will advance the vision of the management plan, but will be adaptive to recent changes or disturbances in forest conditions. Progress toward the vision might be realized more in some years than others, depending on the necessity for reactive management.

CONCLUSION

This forest management plan presents an extension of the beliefs and concepts that underpinned the success of the Restoration Plan. It sets out our assumptions about our role in the care and management of natural processes and the values we wish to project. It also provides a detailed working document for the staff charged with the maintenance and management of the Stanley Park forest.

Prepared by:

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