



Date: January 6, 2011

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Metro Regional Growth Strategy Recreation and Conservation Designations

RECOMMENDATION

That Park Board endorse the recommendation of Council, approved April 8, 2010, regarding the designation of lands protected from development as part of a new Conservation-Recreation land use designation (what was known as the “Green Zone”) as clarified in this report.

POLICY

The Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP), the region’s current Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), was endorsed by Vancouver City Council in 1995 and adopted by the regional district in 1996.

The Vancouver Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan which demonstrates how the City’s plans and policies support the LRSP, was adopted by Council in 1999, Vancouver’s existing Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan will need to be replaced/updated once a new RGS is approved. A Regional Context Statement is required by Provincial legislation from each municipality within two years following adoption of a RGS and regional Board approval is required initially and for any later changes.

Vancouver’s Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan notes that Vancouver City Council approved the inclusion of the areas in the Green Zone shown on Map 1 of the ODP (please refer to p.4 of the ODP at <http://vancouver.ca/commsvcs/BYLAWS/odp/rcs.pdf>) on September 16, 1993 (previously approved by Park Board). It also recommended the nomination of John Hendry Park for inclusion in the Green Zone, to be undertaken in consultation with Metro which is reflected in the new designations.

BACKGROUND

Metro has been working on a new Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) aimed at maintaining and improving livability and sustainability as the regional population grows from 2.2 million to 3.4 million by 2041. A new RGS will update/replace the current regional growth strategy from 1996, the Livable Region Strategic Plan (LRSP).

The Metro Board released a second draft of a new RGS in November 2009 and requested comments. Much of the second draft was very similar to what was previously supported by Council in consultation with Park Board staff earlier in 2009.

Comments on the second draft in the report to Council included a request to confirm the continuing Green Zone designation of City lands protected from development as part of the new Conservation-Recreation area.

On April 8, 2010, Council approved the following recommendation related to park land being designated Conservation/Recreation in the second draft of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS), *Metro Vancouver 2040*, dated November 2009:

“D. THAT - with respect to Conservation/Recreation designations in Vancouver - Council confirm continuing with the existing designations (from the Livable Region Strategic Plan and Vancouver Regional Context Statement Official Development Plan), and also confirm addition of John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park, New Brighton Park, CRAB Park at Portside, and waterfront parks along South and Southeast False Creek and the Fraser River – as described in this report and subject to Park Board endorsement and confirmation with the Port for CRAB and New Brighton.”

DISCUSSION

The section of the Council report as it relates to the Conservation-Recreation Designations is included here. The complete report can be found at: <http://vancouver.ca/ctyclerk/cclerk/20100408/documents/penv2.pdf>

The report noted that the recommendations regarding Conservation-Recreation designation are subject to endorsement by the Park Board. Park Board staff reviewed and support the recommended designations. Notes have been added to this report to provide clarifications where appropriate.

CONSERVATION-RECREATION DESIGNATIONS (RECOMMENDATION D)

The draft RGS continues the LRSP approach of designation of what was known as the “Green Zone.” These are areas protected from development. Recommendation D supports continued designation of Vancouver lands already in the green zone in the LRSP, and suggests adding some new regionally significant green space, primarily to continue to acknowledge the importance of waterfront parks. (In the new draft RGS, the Green Zone is divided into two parts: Agricultural areas and Conservation-Recreation areas).

Note: A map showing the recommended lands to be designated Conservation-Recreation is included in Appendix A.

Agriculture: For Vancouver, the specific area for Agricultural designation in the draft

RGS is carried forward from the LRSP and Vancouver Regional Context Statement, continuing to follow the same boundary as the Agricultural Land Reserve in Vancouver – i.e., in Southlands.

Note: McCleery Golf Course is included in this designation but the western half of Fraser River Park is designated Conservation-Recreation even though located within the ALR.

Conservation-Recreation – Existing Designations: For Vancouver, the specific areas for Conservation-Recreation in the draft RGS carry forward all the designations from the LRSP and Regional Context Statement, including Stanley Park, Queen Elizabeth Park, Renfrew Ravine, waterfront walkways and parks, Central Valley Greenway, and Langara and Fraserview golf courses. (Park Board staff is working with Metro staff to resolve some minor mapping errors to ensure correct legal boundaries for these areas).

Note: This includes Renfrew Community and Renfrew Ravine Parks and completed permanent sections of waterfront walkways.

The draft RGS also carries forward the Grandview Cut and the Arbutus Corridor. (There is a note in Vancouver's Regional Context Statement ODP that these areas are submitted for inclusion in the Green Zone "which the Transportation Plan proposes are considered for a combination of rail, transit and greenway uses." This dual transportation-recreation use is also confirmed in the Arbutus Corridor ODP.)

Conservation-Recreation – New Designations: In addition to the carry forwards from the LRSP and Vancouver Regional Context Statement, the following are recommended in this report for addition to Vancouver Conservation-Recreation designated areas in the new RGS:

- John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park: John Hendry is a regionally significant park that was nominated for the green zone by Council as part of the Vancouver Regional Context Statement (1999), but since then there had been no opportunity to update the RGS until now. Draft #2 of the new RGS shows John Hendry included.
- New Brighton Park: This is also included in draft #2 of the RGS in keeping with the regional significance of waterfront parks and walkways. Its inclusion should be subject to Park Board confirmation with the Port, as it is on Port land.

Note: Its inclusion was confirmed by the Port in October, 2010.

- CRAB Park at Portside: Also waterfront and also subject to Park Board confirmation with the Port.

Note: Its inclusion was also confirmed by the Port in October, 2010.

- False Creek South Shore Parks: The LRSP and Vancouver Regional Context Statement were inconsistent in whether parks adjacent to waterfront walkway were or were not

included. To be consistent, False Creek south shore parks should be added, along with the waterfront walkway. This would also bring the RGS up to date with the new Southeast False Creek waterfront walkway, parks and wildlife island.

Note: This category also includes Creekside Park which extends from Southeast False Creek around the east end of False Creek. Permanent, completed walkways whether in parks or not have been included. Metro has a concern about designating lands that are not parcel based, though, which includes many sections of the waterfront walkways not located in parks. This should be resolved at a later date.

- Fraser River waterfront: This is more of a clarification than addition. The LRSP and Vancouver Regional Context Statement did include the Fraser River “waterfront” with a conceptual line, but did not specify the parks as well, as was done with most other Vancouver waterfront walkways and parks. This would now include waterfront walkways and parks along the frontage including Deering Island Park, the Shaughnessy Street park site, Riverfront Park, Gladstone Park, and new walkways and park in East Fraser Lands.

Note: The proposed walkways and parks in East Fraserlands will not be designated until they are completed as permanent facilities.

As noted above, only permanent completed walkways and parks will be designated as Conservation-Recreation areas, noting the designation of walkways not part of waterfront parks needs to be confirmed through further discussions with Metro.

Staff will report back later with recommendations on a process to add new (and possibly remove existing) areas in the future.

Several public events were held by Metro across the region for the first and second drafts, some of these in the City of Vancouver. Vancouver staff provided Metro staff with lists of Vancouver stakeholders; put links on the City’s web page; and attended the Vancouver events. Members of the public and stakeholders have also contacted Vancouver staff directly with questions or issues. When Council considered draft #1 of the RGS last May, several delegations provided their input directly to Council. The various interested groups and individuals were also notified that the subject report would be at Council on April 8th.

SUMMARY

The draft Regional Growth Strategy continues the approach of designating areas protected from development in what was known as the “green zone.” City Council supported, subject to endorsement by the Park Board, continued designation of lands already in the green zone in the Livable Region Strategic Plan and the addition of some new regionally significant green space, primarily to continue to acknowledge the importance of Vancouver’s waterfront parks.

When appropriate, staff will report back with recommendations on a process to designate new areas in the future.

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