



Date: July 11, 2012

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: Proposal for Landscape Enhancement
Commemorating Irish Canadian Contributions, in
Thornton Park**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board accept the donation of a landscape feature commemorating the contributions of Irish Canadians to Vancouver and Canada, in Thornton Park with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.

POLICY

In 1998, the Park Board adopted the Acceptance Guidelines for Long Term Gifts of Public Art. These guidelines are designed to ensure that high quality work is added to Vancouver's public spaces. Included in the guidelines are procedures for accepting or rejecting proposed donations of art and memorials in a manner fair to the donor and fair to the public. The guidelines also outline a consultation process which includes independent assessments by artists and other members of the professional art community as well as feedback from both local representatives and the general public.

BACKGROUND

The Board has received a proposal from The Ireland Canada Monument Society to sponsor the donation of a landscape feature in Thornton Park, to be located along the walkway between the Skytrain station and the Pacific National terminal building. The feature will consist of a circular garden bed containing several concrete monument columns commemorating the contributions of Irish Canadians to Vancouver and Canada. (See Appendix A)

DISCUSSION

The Ireland Canada Monument Society wishes to donate the landscape feature which will commemorate the contributions of Irish Canadians to Vancouver and Canada. The proposed monument will consist of a central column approximately 3 meters (10 feet) in height and a series of shorter columns approximately 1.2 meters (4 feet) in height. Each column will be decorated with traditional Irish art. Five of the columns will include plaques acknowledging the contributions of Irish Canadians to Canada. The design also

includes three additional benches matching those already in place and ornamental trees, shrubs and flowers.

In keeping with the Park Board's standard process for donations, the following steps have been taken:

- A formal letter from the sponsor proposing the donation and accepting responsibility for all costs* associated with the project was received;
- Technical meetings were convened, process and site approvals were obtained;
- Community consultation, involving site signage and brochure distribution in a two block radius and information online, was completed. Members of the public were given a three week window in which to respond. A total of 56 responses were received; 53 were "positive" responses, 2 were "neutral", and 1 response requested location clarification.
- The Public Art Committee (PAC) was consulted in October 2009 with an earlier version of the proposal (different design and location) and at that time the PAC recognized the conceptual value of a monument to "the innumerable contributions to Canada made by persons from Ireland and their descendants," however they did not approve the design or location. The Ireland Canada Monument Society continued to work with the Park Board to determine the appropriate location and design as is proposed at this time. The new proposal was brought forward to the Public Art Committee for aesthetic review on September 12, 2011 at which time the Committee endorsed the project.

*All costs associated with the design and construction of the landscape feature will be the sole responsibility of the Society. In addition, the Society will provide a contribution of 10% of the capital costs to the Park Board to be applied towards the ongoing maintenance needs of the new park feature.

Staff is recommending the Board approve this proposal.

SUMMARY

This proposal meets the Board's criteria for "Long Term Gifts of Public Art and Memorials". The landscape feature is a significant donation from an established segment of Vancouver's population.

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