



November 1, 2017

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Lumière Festival Seasonal Lighting Installations - Special Event

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve a request from the West End Business Improvement Association to install temporary seasonal lighting installations, as part of the Lumière Festival, in Morton Park and Alexandra Park from December 1, 2017 to February 18, 2018, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board.

POLICY

Park Board approval is required for special events not included in the annual Calendar of Major Special Events and/or that are in variance with one or more Park Board by-laws.

BACKGROUND

The West End Business Improvement Association (WEBIA) has collaborated with the Lumière Festival Vancouver Society, British Columbia chapter of the Illuminating Engineering Society, Burrard Arts Foundation, Vancouver Pride Society, and dozens of other partners to host the annual Lumière Festival over the past several years.

One of the key objectives of Lumière Festival is to animate and beautify areas in close proximity to key arterial streets in the West End for the enjoyment of Vancouverites and visitors to the city. The Lumière Festival has grown into a popular community event and features lighting installations in the West End that align with directions/recommendations identified in the West End Community Plan. These lighting initiatives utilize a variety of lighting technologies from common rope LED lights, to more complex lighting activations. At a high level, the Lumière Festival takes its inspiration from successful lighting initiatives in Lyon, France.

DISCUSSION

Past Lighting Initiatives

In September 2015, the Vancouver Park Board approved the following lighting installations:

- Morton Park - an illuminated three-dimensional whale motif, named Luna the Whale; and
- Alexandra Park - an illumination of the Haywood Bandstand featuring decorative umbrellas installed by the Burrard Arts Foundation.

The two installations were well received and dozens of positive comments were collected by the organizers, especially with the introduction of Luna the Whale. Neighbourhood comments related to the lights being left on overnight were addressed in 2016 with the installation of timers that automatically turned off the illumination at 11:00pm nightly.

Proposed Lighting Initiatives in 2017

In 2017, the Luna the Whale installation will continue for the third year at Morton Park. In addition, the organizers are proposing a new lighting installation, called the Art Tree, on the south side of Morton Park (often referred to as Flag Island; see Appendix A). The Art Tree is a 17 foot high by 15 foot wide artificial tree that will be lit by RGB colour alternating string lights. The installation will be secured by three to four steel pins on each leg. The plans have been reviewed and approved by the Park Board's Park Operations team. Proper mitigation, including flower bed protection, ground scoping, and a BC One Call will be completed. Power for the installation will be provided by the City of Vancouver.

At Alexandra Park, the Hayward Bandstand activation featuring decorative umbrellas has been discontinued. In its place, the organizers are proposing a lighting installation called Luminous Birds. The Luminous Birds activation consists of a flock of origami-style birds suspended in the air. As night falls, synchronized lighting sequences create the effect of birds flying overhead. The action of many birds, flocking together, is an amazing natural phenomenon (see Appendix B).

Luminous Birds will be installed amongst the trees on the north side of Alexandra Park on Burnaby Street, with strings of lights also running from these trees to the bandstand. The birds will be illuminated to mimic the flight of birds. A sound scape, which will only be audible directly underneath the installation, will also accompany the activation. Like Luna the Whale, the Luminous Birds installation will be turned off automatically at 11:00pm.

The Park Board's urban forestry and electrical teams have been consulted and approved both the rigging method and power supply. In addition, the organizers will work with staff to ensure appropriate neighbourhood notification is completed. The organizers have been very responsive in addressing past neighbourhood comments, and staff expect that the same diligence will be applied with these proposed installations as well.

Subject to Park Board approval, staff will work with the WEBIA to ensure appropriate safety and security plans are developed. Installation of all the above mentioned activations would begin on November 26, 2017, with removal completed by February 28, 2017.

SUMMARY

The temporary seasonal lighting initiatives proposed by the WEBIA for the Lumière Festival are designed to animate Morton Park and Alexandra Park for the benefit of both Vancouverites and visitors to the city. These lighting initiatives, which are entering their fourth year, are expected to beautify and enhance the vibrancy of the West End neighbourhood. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the request from the organizer as outlined above.

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Artist Rendering - Art Tree - Morton Park



Artist Rendering - Luminous Birds - Alexandra Park

