

February 25, 1997

**SUBJECT: GUIDELINES FOR THE REVIEW OF PROPOSED DONATIONS  
OF PUBLIC ART AND/OR MEMORIALS TO CITY-WIDE PARKS**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT the Board approve the guidelines and process for site approval for gifts of public art and memorials to city-wide parks, as described in this report.**

**POLICY**

The Board adopted an Arts Policy in 1993, part of which confirms support for public art in City parks.

The Board adopted the City's Acceptance Guidelines for long-term Gifts of Art in 1988. (Appendix A)

The Board has criteria and procedures for approving memorial plaques.

**BACKGROUND**

The Park Board has identified a need to formalize the process of site approval specifically for donations of Public Art in City wide parks. The Board already has a number of policies and procedures governing the acceptance of Public Art donations to parks in general. The intent of the gift and the type of park determines which procedure is applicable . The intent falls into roughly 5 categories which may overlap. These are:

- a. Public Art (aesthetic interest)
- b. Memorial Art (both aesthetic and memorial)
- c. Functional Memorial (benches, tables, trees)
- d. Functional Art (creative play structure, pathway, clocks)
- e. Memorial plaques

Types of parks fall into two general categories:

1. Local community parks (most neighbourhood parks)
2. City-wide parks

City-wide refers to such parks as Stanley Park, the Seawall, all beach parks, Jericho, Trout Lake, New Brighton, Vanier, Queen Elizabeth, VanDusen, Creekside and new parks such as Hastings and Harbour Green.

Approval processes vary depending on the nature of the donation.

The Board has processes to address acceptance of functional gifts through several programs operated by the Board. There is a policy to deal with memorial plaques. Gifts of Public Art to neighbourhood parks are given conditional site approval prior to going to the Public Art Committee (PAC) and based on: community centre association support, response to leaflets delivered to neighbours within a two block radius, comment from other affected community groups (eg. schools, neighbourhood houses, etc.) and conformation to maintenance and safety requirements. Projects arising from the Community Public Art program, already approved by the PAC, follow the same procedures for site approval by the Board but are not individually reviewed by the PAC.

The Review Guidelines and this report address approval processes for the higher profile gifts to city-wide parks. In the past, requests for siting public art and memorials in parks were referred to the City of Vancouver's Public Art Committee(PAC)prior to coming to the Board. At this time, the PAC has asked the Board to provide conditional site approval before it reviews the proposal. Board approval is conditional on the subsequent review processes of the PAC and on the further development of the proposal.

## **DISCUSSION**

### The Guidelines

The preamble to the Guidelines provides:

- a context for their inclusion in the Public Art Process
- a statement of intent in regard to gifts
- an affirmation the Board's commitment to existing policy an procedure.

The proposed guidelines (Appendix B) recommend a process by which proposals are reviewed.

In summary, the guidelines set out the following steps :

- a. submission of application form (Appendix C)
- b. technical review requirements
- c. consultation requirements and process, including an information report to the Board
- d. selection and appointment of Advisory Committee and review process

- e. Advisory Panel recommendations to Park Board
- f. Board consideration, and pending approval,
- g. consideration by the PAC
- h. final Board approval for donations commissioned after site approval

The Guidelines also include review questions to direct:

- the technical review of the site
- the technical review of the work
- analysis of the design and social issues
- and some direction on the consultation process

The staff time associated with administering this process at each stage is considerable and it will be necessary to hire additional staff to do this work. These guidelines make provision for a recovery of these additional costs and the actual costs for the consultation activities through the assessment of a fee identified at the application stage.

#### The Process for developing these guidelines

These proposed guidelines for site approval were developed by consultants, Gibson & Varney through a consultative process. A half day workshop was held to start the process. Landscape architects, community members, an artist, an arts administrator and City and Park Board staff participated. (Appendix D) Following this, a draft of proposed guidelines was sent out for comment to 58 people including representatives of community groups, individuals, planning professionals, artists and staff. (Appendix E) .

Many of the comments received have been incorporated (eg. Questions relating to heritage, view obstruction and the advisory group process).

One particular suggestion has not been not included, that all applications be submitted to the City's Development Permit Process. This is not included for a number of reasons:

- A proven process for park improvement is already in place and will be adapted for public art and memorials.
- The application process for donations will address the same issues that are covered in the Development Permit Process.
- The Development Permit system is heavily burdened and would create a considerably slower time frame in dealing with applications.
- All civic codes and requirements must be met on park land. Permits must be obtained for water hook-up and power. An engineers seal is required

for a structure.

- The Development Permit Process would mean a higher cost to the sponsor.
- The Park Board would lose the ability to communicate directly with those affected.

### Other Recommendations

In the course of the development of these guidelines, the consultants came up with a number of additional recommendations which staff will consider and bring back to the Board at a later date. These are:

1. to research and create an inventory of parks and specific sites within these parks that would be appropriate for accommodating public art.
2. to research the feasibility of designating a sculpture park and to explore operating models and costs.
3. to examine the possibility of designating the greenway along 37th Ave through Mountain View Cemetery as a site for memorials.

### **CONCLUSION**

These Review Guidelines outline a process that will enable a consistent but flexible approach to assessing the appropriateness of parks for donations of public art and memorials.

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