



Date: July 30, 2003

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: REDEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAYING FIELDS AT HILLCREST PARK

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the redevelopment of the playing fields at Hillcrest Park from funds provided by the 1997-99 Capital Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Hillcrest soccer fields and baseball diamonds are in poor condition due to the inadequate and deteriorating drainage system. These playing fields are under utilized and closed for most of the soccer season as they are unplayable. Money was allocated in the 1997-1999 Capital Plan to upgrade Park Board sports facilities. Due to the deteriorated condition of this otherwise excellent site, the Park Board Staff recommended this location to the Vancouver field-users' representatives. This group is comprised of all of the major user groups of Park Board fields. They met in July and endorsed the Hillcrest location for redevelopment. A community survey was conducted in September. The scope of the project was described in a pamphlet which was distributed to 900 residents within two blocks of this park site (Appendix A).

This proposal recommends the complete redevelopment of the drainage system at Hillcrest Park and the renovation and replacement of four soccer fields and five ball diamonds. These facilities will renew Hillcrest Park to a top quality recreational sports park.

DISCUSSION

The redevelopment of the Hillcrest sports fields will return four soccer fields and five ball diamonds to top quality playing condition. This location is unique in Vancouver as it provides an ideal space to improve and restore so many fields with one renovation project. Restoration of these centrally located fields will significantly improve the quality of our recreation field-sports facilities and reduce booking and scheduling limitations for baseball and soccer.

The Capital Plan budget for this project is \$1,340,000. Normally, this restoration and upgrading would cost substantially more but renovation of all these facilities at one park site will ensure that we stay within budget.

Community Consultation

The proposed plan for Hillcrest Park is the product of a community consultation process. During the past year, the Vancouver field-users' representatives, local sports organizations and the local community association have been consulted. More than 900 "proposal" pamphlets were distributed to the park neighbours and the community groups (Appendix A). From this process, staff received responses from three residents. The only areas of concern included:

Comment	Evaluation
Increased parking may require residential only parking	The restoration of Hillcrest Park will result in a return to the earlier levels of use for which the park was designed. Creation of "resident only parking" may be necessary if park users choose not to use the available parking lot.
Increase the size of the backstops	This will be done. Diamonds adjacent to city streets will be extended to reduce foul balls landing on city streets.
Dogs off Leash	Hillcrest is currently designated as a "dogs off leash" location. This designation will need to be re-evaluated after this field is renovated. The renovated fields will be sand based and will be susceptible to damage if dogs start to dig in the field.

SUMMARY

The redevelopment of Hillcrest Park will help maintain the quality of the sports fields in Vancouver. Currently, the demand for "A" calibre sports fields exceeds the supply. These four soccer and five baseball facilities will reduce the demand on our other over extended fields and diamonds by providing top quality facilities for the Little Mountain area.

Prepared by:
Recreation Division
Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation