



Date: January 29, 1999

**TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: PHOENIX GYMNASIUM PROPOSAL**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Board refer the proposed construction by the Phoenix Gymnastics Club of a gymnastics facility in Hillcrest Park to a public consultation process.**

## **POLICY**

The Board requires public input prior to the consideration of significant projects.

## **BACKGROUND**

The Phoenix Gymnastics Club (PGC) approached the Park Board in 1997 with a proposal to construct a gymnasium in one of our parks. Following consultation with staff and the Riley Park Community Association the club has selected Hillcrest Park. The group has engaged in a consultation process with staff and the Riley Park Community Association. The club presented a proposal to the Board at a recent workshop.

## **DISCUSSION**

The PGC proposes construction of a gymnastics facility on Hillcrest Park. The proposed site is trapezoidal in shape, bordered on the west by Midlothian Street, on the north by the Nat Bailey Stadium outfield fence, on the east by Ontario Street, and on the south by the Vancouver Racquets Club. The facility will have a floor area of approximately 15,000 s.f. and will house a 10,000 s.f. gymnasium, wash/changeroom, offices, and a meeting room. The proposed plan is appended to this report.

The PGC sponsors recreational and competitive gymnastics programs primarily for young people between the ages of 18 months and 10 years, but also for youths and adults. The club currently has a membership of 1,500. Being centrally located in the City of Vancouver, the club will provide opportunities for athletes both in the immediate community and from other parts of the city as well.

The proposed facility would be accessed from Midlothian Street, where a parking lot to accommodate approximately 59 cars could be located. East of the parking lot, and located between the stadium outfield fence and the Vancouver Racquets Club would be the gymnastics facility.

The building will be so designed that it could accommodate a future addition to the east of approximately 17,000 s.f. on a single level, fronting on Ontario Street. This could potentially be the location for the additional space that Riley Park Community Centre has hoped to be able to provide. The Phoenix facility would be designed so that its mechanical and support spaces could be shared by a future addition.

The proposed plan allows for pedestrian routes between Queen Elizabeth Park and Riley Park. Ontario Street would ideally be closed to through automobile traffic, thereby permitting the establishment of a “green” corridor between Queen Elizabeth Park and Riley Park. The partial closing of Ontario Street has garnered some support from staff of the Engineering Department, but has received no official sanction at this time.

This particular site was the subject of a previous proposal to construct an indoor lawn bowling centre combined with additional programmable space for community use, and was considered appropriate for that use by both the Board and the Riley Park Community Association. The Riley Park Community Association has provided conditional support for the Phoenix proposal, as expressed in their letter of July 31, 1997, a copy of which is attached to this report.

It is envisaged that the PGC, if successful in their drive to raise funds for this project, would be granted a license of up to 20 years by the Park Board. The club is intending to raise the majority of funds through donations, with a minority amount being funded by a mortgage to be amortized with income from membership charges. The Club’s schedule anticipates their raising the funds within three years.

Construction of the facility, including any related site development, would have to meet all Park Board standards and requirements for design and construction.

If, after it receives the results of the public process, the Board is in favour of the proposal, it could give PGC a finite time period within which to obtain the required funding, subject the Board’s approval of a license, an operating agreement, design and working drawings, and receipt of required permits and other approvals.

The PGC will present the basic design concept at the Board meeting.

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Attachments