

Date: September 1, 1999

SUBJECT: UPGRADE OF ALEXANDER PARK

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Park Board develop working drawings and provide labour and funding up to \$40,000 to improve Alexander Park in a cooperation with the Port Authority and City Engineering.

BACKGROUND

The Park Board was approached by the Port Authority requesting collaboration regarding the upgrading of Alexander Park. This property is owned by the Port Authority and maintained for by the Park Board.

The Port has received numerous complaints from Gastown residents and businesses, over the years, about the parksite becoming a “hangout” for drug users. Anti-social behaviour includes climbing onto and inhabiting the ledges of the existing north facing retaining wall adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Railway.

DISCUSSION

The Port Authority documented a proposal for the upgrade of the parksite which included rebuilding of the existing retaining wall in order to eliminate the existing ledges, removal of all existing pavers where drugs are currently being hidden and replacing them with a new walkway, removal of shrub beds and replacing them with lawn, and installation of lighting fixtures. The attached conceptual plan developed by Park Board staff shows the landscaping elements in the upgraded park.

Landscaping elements include removal of existing soft and hard landscaping, installation of a new concrete pathway and lookout, installation of an irrigation system, plant material and lawn, and lighting in the parksite.

The Port Authority originally volunteered to provide drawings for the reconstructed retaining wall, and to provide partial funding for elements in the upgrade such as lighting and the wall, while the Park Board would provide plans and financing for the soft landscaping materials. City Engineering has since taken on construction documentation including design of the wall and cost estimating. City Engineering took over the design detailing of the wall in order to keep down costs of the project when the Port Authority stated it could provide cost sharing only to a maximum of \$20,000 for the entire project. The estimate to replace the wall is \$35,000. The Park Board will cover the costs of the landscaping elements (\$25,000), and provide funding required for the wall beyond the \$20,000 that the Port has available for the entire project. The funds could come from an existing capital park improvement account.

City Engineering has stated that it will attempt to find funding in the future to reimburse the Park Board for up to \$15,000 for the wall.

The following shows a breakdown of project costs and financial commitment:

Element	Who	Costs
Landscaping including: lawn, plant, material, irrigation, park signage, lighting, drawings, tendering and administration	Park Board	\$25,000
Replacement of existing vertical wall at north end of the parksite (NB: City Engineering may reimburse Park Board up to 15,000)	Port Authority Park Board	\$20,000 \$15,000
TOTAL PROJECT ESTIMATE		\$60,000

SUMMARY

The community around the parksite is extremely eager to see commencement of the upgrade in the park. City Engineering has urged the Park Board to complete drawings and begin work on the parksite this Autumn. Approval of this report will allow the project to get underway immediately.

Prepared by:

Planning and Operations
Board of Parks & Recreation
Vancouver, B.C.
KDJ/ab