

Date: December 2, 1999



**TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL SCULPTURE EXHIBIT**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Board approve a temporary sculpture exhibit along English Bay during the summer of 2000 at no cost to the Board and with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.**

## **CONSIDERATION**

**THAT the Board charge the exhibit sponsor a fee of \$20,000 per season for the use of the site.**

## **BACKGROUND**

During the summer of 1998, the Buschlen Mowatt Foundation (the sponsor) installed an International Sculpture Exhibit of nine sculptures along Beach Ave and English Bay and in Morton Park. Public response to the exhibit was very favourable and many positive comments, e-mails and letters were received by the Board. Two of the works from this exhibit are still in place and will be removed at a future date. (a seated figure in Morton Park and Couple on a Bench on the bikeway past the English Bay bathhouse) In January, 1999 the Board considered a report to grant the request of Buschlen Mowatt to hold a second exhibit in 1999. The Board granted this request subject to receipt of financial statements from the Buschlen Mowatt Foundation on transactions related to the 1998 exhibit and subject to two sites being allocated to local or regional artists and requesting that staff consider the appropriateness of the allocation of exhibit space on an annual basis.

The exhibit did not happen in 1999 but Buschlen Mowatt has indicated an interest in sponsoring an exhibit for 2000.

## DISCUSSION

In the spring Park Board and Office of Cultural Affairs staff met with curators from the Vancouver Art Gallery and the Contemporary Art Gallery to discuss the potential for having either of these public galleries sponsor an exhibit. Both indicated that this was not possible at this time.

In the fall of 1999, a letter, setting out terms and conditions for an exhibit, was sent to 11 galleries in Vancouver inquiring if there was interest in sponsoring a temporary exhibit. Buschlen Mowatt was the only gallery to respond.

Staff also met with a number of local sculptors to discuss the potential of an exhibit Vancouver area sculpture possibly in Devonian Harbour Park and along the Coal Harbour waterfront. There was a range of opinion on the feasibility of doing this, funding being one of the barriers and the possibilities for such an exhibit are still at an exploratory stage.

Park Board staff propose establishing a number of permanent pads to alleviate ongoing costs in anticipation that this project might become an annual or biennial event. Pads would facilitate ease of installation and restoration of the site. Flexibility on siting directly on grass would be maintained. In the event that exhibits are discontinued, pads will be constructed in a way that will allow installation of a picnic table on the site.

Facilitating temporary exhibits of sculpture is one of the recommendations of the Park Board Arts Policy (Recommendation 2.1). However, the Board doesn't have the resources to support this other than through the provision of space. A partnership with a private gallery is one way to meet this objective.

There is concern among staff that this form of public exhibition represents a significant marketing opportunity for the sponsor. To the extent that displays are sold as a result of the exhibition, there becomes a commercial component to this use of park land and the Board should derive a fee from this use as it does from the Painters Corner. A flat fee is suggested rather than a percentage of profit over costs because of the difficulty of establishing costs of and revenues that derive directly from the exhibit.

As a counterpoint to this argument, this form of exhibition has proven to be very popular with a broad spectrum of the public and is provided at no cost to the public or the Board. In addition, some of the work to be presented will not be for sale and the sponsor must still cover all costs of insurance, transportation and exhibition.

Buschlen Mowatt is currently in discussion with the British Council and the director of the Yorkshire Sculpture Park in England to bring an exhibit of 20th Century British sculpture including such established artists as Henry Moore, Lynn Chadwick (Couple on a Bench), and Sophie Ryder (The Minotaur and the Hare). With the assistance of the British Council, Buschlen Mowatt will host a public lecture series on the exhibit. Because this exhibit will have a British theme, no local or regional artists' work will be shown.

Conditions for the exhibit are the following:

- 1) The exhibit sponsor will assume all costs which include:
  - a fee to the Park Board of \$20,000.00 - CONSIDERATION
  - all approval and review costs
  - engineered plans for installation
  - installation and removal
  - lighting
  - security
  - insurance
  - maintenance
  - site restoration
- 2) All work sited will need to meet risk management standards and will be reviewed by Park Board staff for public suitability.
- 3) Any programmed activities on the park related to the exhibit require Board approval.
- 4) Any work proposed for permanent installation will be referred to the City's Public Art Committee.
- 5) The Board acknowledges that some of the work installed will be for sale but requires discretion in the means of promoting this.

## **CONCLUSION**

This event meets the vision outlined in the Arts Policy to make the arts a part of everyday life and has, at no cost to the Board, proven immensely popular in 1998.

Prepared by:  
Stanley District  
Board of Parks & Recreation  
Vancouver, B.C.  
SG/sg