



Date: April 17, 2001

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: LITTLE MOUNTAIN RESERVOIR SEISMIC UPGRADE PROJECT

This report is for information.

BACKGROUND

The Little Mountain Reservoir is located in Queen Elizabeth Park on a property owned by the Greater Vancouver Water District (GVWD), see map. The surface area of the property is leased to the City of Vancouver for park and recreational purposes. To most visitors the GVWD property is indistinguishable from the rest of the park.

The Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) is planning to reconstruct the reservoir. An



initial public open house is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15, 6 - 9 p.m. Attached to this report is relevant information distributed by the GVRD to stakeholders and neighbourhood residents. The GVRD's public consultation plan includes further mail-outs, another open house at the end of the year, ongoing public contact, as well as media strategy and interpretive displays on site.

In anticipation of this construction project, the Park Board conducted a public process on the desired long range vision for the park in 1998/99. The Park Board received the final report on May 3, 1999, a copy of the staff report is attached. Subsequently, capital funds for the initial implementation steps were approved.

DISCUSSION

The scope of the construction project is large. The existing reservoir roof will be demolished, extensive internal reconstruction and a new roof are planned. The construction zone will extend beyond the perimeter of the GVWD property due to access requirements, extensive upgrades to pipelines in the park, the need for lay-down and staging areas, and possibly an expanded reservoir footprint. The particulars have not been fully determined, but the construction project will have a significant impact on park and park users.

The Park Board endeavours to minimize and mitigate negative impacts on park environment and visitors during construction and after, while taking advantage of the opportunity to improve the park. Some of the key issues:

- Expansion of the reservoir capacity. The City of Vancouver desires to increase the capacity of the reservoir to have more emergency water storage. The options under discussion include steepening of the sloping reservoir sides, lowering the base, raising the top, and expanding the footprint.
- Routing of pipelines through the park. At minimum, a section of the 37th Avenue pipeline in the park need replacements, but more pipeline work is necessary. The Park Board is participating in finding the least problematic routes, and devising terms of reference for this work that lessens vegetation and habitat impacts.
- Location and exterior design of valve chamber. The proposed two-cell reservoir requires a valve chamber of roughly 45 by 70 feet, 30 feet high, preferably located outside the reservoir close to the wall separating the two reservoir cells.
- Environmental impacts such as removal of vegetation and habitat, construction noise, dust, and traffic. The GVRD has hired private consultants to assess impacts and propose mitigation measures, including specialists in landscape architecture, environmental planning and arboriculture. Their work is reviewed with participation of the Park Board.

- Park use during construction. Some favoured park activities will have to be completely relocated such as the tai chi exercises that currently take place on the rooftop, while other activities may be partially affected such as bus access and parking. The Park Board has contributed to an extensive stakeholder list that the GVRD will keep informed. Detailed planning of park activities during the construction will have to occur.
- New rooftop program and design, loading requirements. The long range vision for Queen Elizabeth Park identifies some programming elements: multipurpose open and covered activity areas, landscaping, room to play and relax, water features, reduced parking. The Park Board is in the process of hiring a consultant to assist with developing a more detailed program and design as a basis for calculating rooftop loading requirements.
- Bus parking. The long range vision identified the existing bus parking as unsatisfactory. The Park Board's consultant for the rooftop design will also study bus parking options in the park including bus parking on the reservoir roof.
- Loss of revenue. The construction project will have a negative impact on Park Board revenues due to the loss of pay parking on the reservoir. Additional revenue impacts on park facilities such as the Bloedel Conservatory and the Pitch and Putt Golf Course, or on stakeholders such as Seasons Restaurant are possible.

These and many other issues will have to be resolved in a cooperative process involving Park Board, GVRD and the City of Vancouver Engineering Services. It is expected that a memorandum of understanding between Park Board and GVRD will set out the rights and responsibilities of each party including financial obligations.

The proposed schedule is that GVRD staff will seek funding approval for the construction late in 2001; that pre-construction will start in Spring 2002, that demolition and construction will begin in Fall 2002 with completion expected in Fall 2003. Park reconstruction will continue beyond that date.

Park Board staff will prepare reports to the Board at critical junctions, including program and design of rooftop, temporary use of park for construction-related activities, permissions for changes to rights-of-way where needed, criteria for the memorandum of understanding mentioned above, and other topics as they may arise.

Prepared by:

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