



Date: January 14, 2002

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: THORNTON PARK UPGRADE MASTER PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the conceptual design for the redevelopment of Thornton Park.

POLICY

Board approval is required at the conceptual stage of design prior to developing drawings and specifications for tender and construction of the park.

BACKGROUND

On April 30, 2001 the Board approved the award of the contract to Jonathan Losee Ltd for \$36,100 to design the upgrade of Thornton Park. Expenditure of \$250,000 from the Bosa CityGate Development Park Payment-In-Lieu Fund was approved by Council on June 14, 2000 for design consultant fees, project management, construction, contingency and GST. A balance of \$200,000 remains for construction. The initiative to upgrade the park came from the residents of CityGate. The allocation of the funds for the upgrade of Thornton Park was agreed to by residents of the neighbourhood (CityGate Intertower Committees) in a townhall meeting in October 1999.

DISCUSSION

Thornton Park is a 3.80 acre ornamental park with large specimen trees located at Main Street and Terminal Avenue, immediately west of Pacific Central Station (the former CNR train station). The park was originally developed in 1923 under the auspices of the Park Board. The park's proximity to existing and proposed high density residential development, the train/bus station and Sky Train has resulted in increased pedestrian traffic flows and modified traffic patterns in the park. The heritage park is unique in the Park system, being one of the significant gateways to the City.

Three programming and conceptual design workshops have been held with the steering committee comprised of representatives from CityGate, community groups, DERA, Translink,

Vancouver Heritage Commission and the Women's Monument. In addition, an open house was held, and the plan was presented to and reviewed and approved by relevant City staff groups and the Vancouver Heritage Commission.

As a result of the workshops and reviews a conceptual plan has evolved (see attachment). The concept for the upgrade is "Layers of Change" recognizing the diverse history of the area and the park, its original design, and the architectural significance of the train station while at the same time responding to the changes taking place in the neighbourhood and addressing the social problems currently associated with the park. Foremost in the design is making the park safe for pedestrians by increasing its transparency from the perimeter by removing shrubs and replacing them with annual and perennial flowering plants and improving the night lighting. Other ideas present in the concept include historical interpretive kiosks, a hard surface pedestrian plaza adjacent to Sky Train, bike lockers, improved walkways and circulation, a larger entry plaza and crossing at Central Pacific Station, improved lawn drainage, an automatic irrigation system, benches, and picnic tables.

The Consultant's estimated cost of construction for the upgrade of Thornton Park is \$516,000 including contingency. TransLink is considering contributing the bike lockers and to the construction costs of the plaza at the SkyTrain station. Depending on the size of TransLink's contribution, the project will likely have to be phased in over time and additional funding will have to be found. There are sufficient funds remaining in the Bosa CityGate Payment-In-Lieu Fund. City Council approval will need to be secured. The Consultant, Jonathan Losee will be at the Board meeting to present the plan in detail.

SUMMARY

The Consultant's design team including landscape architects and historians have worked with community groups, special interest groups, the Vancouver Heritage Commission and City and Park Board staff to develop this concept. The concept has evolved from a thorough public process and the Board's approval of the design will allow detailed design and working drawings to proceed so that construction can begin in the spring of 2002.

Prepared by:

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