



Date: June 26, 2003

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation  
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: DOWNTOWN SOUTH PARK NAMING INFORMATION

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## RECOMMENDATION

*THAT the Board receive this report for information.*

## POLICY

### Guidelines For Naming Parks, Trails, Roads Or Other Features Coming Under the Park Board's Jurisdiction

1. In the first instance, the park, trail, road or other feature being named generally should relate to a "constant" feature either nearby or within that park. This could relate to a bordering street name or a natural or man-made feature. This does not preclude the consideration of a name already in "common" use for the park. Criteria such as the above gives ease of identification with relation to the park.
2. When no such "constant" feature is present or it is desired to commemorate an historical event or person important to the Park Board, City of Vancouver, or a person having made a substantial donation to the Park Board, a park may be named for that person.
3. When deemed appropriate, the Park Board will submit a short list of suggested names to concerned community groups for their input regarding the selection of a name.

## BACKGROUND

Phase One of the Downtown South park site, bounded by Davie, Richards, Helmcken and Seymour Streets, is scheduled to officially open in September 2003. Cost to purchase the site for park purposes was \$16 million and was primarily funded through an area specific development cost levy. Phase One is just under 1 acre in area and will cost \$1.4 million to develop. Park elements will include many ornamental trees, flower beds a lovely water feature and benches. A large central lawn will serve as a community focal point with many smaller garden room spaces located off the main axis. The park has been designed with safety in mind, avoiding low canopy tree species and shrubs which block site lines.

The new Downtown South Neighbourhood was first envisioned in 1991 following a Council approved community planning process which suggested the zoning change from office space to residential. In 1992 an area specific Development Cost Levy of \$6.18 per ft<sup>2</sup> was approved on each new property to fund future public benefits such as parks, childcare and social housing. The burgeoning population for this area has now reached nearly 10,000 people, well ahead of early projections. The Downtown South park site was designed by Stevenson + Associates and is being constructed by UCC Group Inc.

Additional funding in the amount of \$50,000 from the Vancouver Rotary Club has been donated to the Downtown South parksite with a further pledge contained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work with the community and local businesses for the park's continued development and success through programming. The MOU also states that the Vancouver Rotary Club will be given the opportunity to comment on the suggested park name.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Process**

Earlier this spring, Park Commissioners asked staff to engage the new park's local community in a name suggestion process. The naming process for this parksite has been highly promoted in the neighbourhood adjacent to the area starting the first week in June and ending at the deadline of June 20<sup>th</sup>. Prominent signage on the park, flyers to residents, newspaper advertising in the Courier's downtown edition, news releases (*see Appendix I*) and Park Board website exposure have solicited public response and participation regarding naming submissions for this new park. Further, a large graphics display featuring plans for the park and information on how to easily submit a name was created at the Roundhouse Community Arts & Recreation Centre along with a ballot box. Special name proposal ballots and boxes were also placed at *Choices* food store (located across from the parksite) and at the Gathering Place neighbourhood centre. As well, the Park Board website displayed a front page feature on the naming process with a ballot that could be faxed or e-mailed to staff.

### **Results**

The results of this public process are that 241 names were submitted from the community (*see Appendix II*).

In addition, the Board had requested that staff contact the City Archives in order to gather historical information with respect to the park's surrounding street names and the adjacent Yaletown neighbourhood. This information follows.

**Davie Street:** Named for Alexander Edmund Davie, British Columbia Attorney General from 1885-1887 and then Premier of British Columbia from 1887-1889.

**Richards Street:** Named for Albert Norton Richards, Lt. Governor of British Columbia from 1876-1881.

**Helmcken Street:** Named for John Sebastian Helmcken, Surgeon for the Hudson's Bay Company and in 1855 a member of the first Legislative Assembly for Vancouver Island.

**Yaletown Neighbourhood:** When Vancouver became the new terminus for the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1888, the City of Vancouver offered the CPR tax free use of land on the north shore of False Creek if they moved their repair/maintenance staff and facilities from the town of Yale located on the Fraser River. CPR agreed and the new location was quickly nick-named "Yaletown". The Yale Hotel in the area also dates from this era.

## **SUMMARY**

The public process phase for the naming of the Downtown South parksite has now been completed. With 241 submissions, this can be ranked as a very positive response from a community participation perspective. Additional park naming opportunities will be brought before the Board later this year.

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