

Terms of Reference for
West Point Grey Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment

March 12, 2004

OBJECTIVE

The Vancouver Park Board and the West Point Grey Community Association have agreed to conduct a needs assessment focused upon park and recreational facilities in West Point Grey (WPG). This assessment will be conducted by Parks Planning Branch Staff, with assistance as required by external consultant(s). The work will be guided by the terms of reference outlined herein.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The West Point Grey neighbourhood is bounded by English Bay to the north, Alma-Dunbar Streets to the east, 16th Avenue to the south, and the City boundary with the University Endowment Lands to the west, a total area of 4.56 square kilometers (456 hectares). In 2001, 12,680 people lived in West Point Grey, a slight decline from the 1996 census results, over a period when the city as a whole experience a 8.9% increase in population.

A total of 78 hectares of park are currently provided in the neighbourhood:

- C Spanish Banks Park (9.3 ha)
- C Locarno Park (9.1 ha)
- C Jericho Park (54.3 ha)
- C Hastings Mill Park (1.0 ha)
- C West Point Grey Park (3.8 ha)
- C Westmount Park (0.4 ha).

All of the waterfront along English Bay in West Point Grey is park, except for two parcels between Hastings Mills Park and Jericho Park. To the west and south of West Point Grey is Pacific Spirit Regional Park (809 ha), operated by the GVRD Parks Department. Spanish Bank, Locarno, Jericho as well as Pacific Spirit attract residents who live outside West Point Grey, and therefore act as city-wide or regional parks.

The Park Board operates Lord Byng Pool and, jointly with the West Point Grey Community Association, the West Point Grey Community Centre. Community Centre programs take place in five separate buildings (Aberthau House, the new gymnasium, the Pottery Studio, the Jericho Arts Centre and the Jericho Hill Centre). Again, as with the neighbourhood parks, the community centre programs draw both neighbourhood and city/region wide participation.

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West Point Grey is a low density neighbourhood that, on a per capita basis, is well supplied with parks and recreational facilities. However, these circumstances would change significantly if redevelopment of the Provincial and Federal Jericho properties (37 hectares of land bounded by 4th Avenue, Highbury Street, 8th Avenue, and the Discovery Street right-of-way) were to occur. A moderate amount of density on these upper Jericho lands could accommodate several thousand residents, and result in a 30 to 50% increase over the neighbourhood's current population.

It is probably that such redevelopment will proceed at some point in the future, giving rise to a number of challenges and opportunities, including:

- (1) Possible loss of existing open space and public recreation facilities on the upper Jericho lands
- (2) Increased pressure on other park and recreation facilities due to displaced current usage and the population growth resulting from this development;
- (3) Potential consolidation of the West Point Grey Community Centre from multiple program sites into a single, highly visible location.

A number of Park Board facility renewal plans are relevant to the WPG needs assessment, in that they provide an inventory of condition issues and map out a long term strategy of capital investment to sustain service provision:

- C The 2001 Community Centres Renewal Plan identifies as a medium priority the rebuilding of the WPG Community Centre to effect a consolidation of existing programming sites. The opportunity to proceed with the renewal project is linked with the (re)development of Federal and/or Provincial Jericho lands. The specific renewal objectives for WPG described in this plan are Appendix B to these Terms of Reference.
- C The 2002 Aquatic Renewal Plan calls for the redevelopment, within the next 10 years, of Lord Byng Pool as a neighbourhood pool, which would be a facility on the same scale as what currently exists, but with more modernized components serving a wider range of leisure uses.
- C The 2003 Playfield Renewal Plan provides an inventory of Park Board and School Board sport fields and ball diamonds in the city, assesses the demand trends for field sport participation and outlines a strategy for keeping pace with this demand.

The Park Board also has current and archival files containing planning studies and reports, leases, correspondence and memoranda related to Jericho Park, and most other facilities, services and parks in WPG. Supplementary data in the form of statistics, reviews, verbal accounts, etc. related to the existing recreation services are available at the community centre, or from the

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WPG Community Association. The Needs Study can also draw on the land and facility records in digital formats, such as AutoCad and GIS.

NEED STUDY PROCESS AND TASKS

Staff and consultants (if any) will address the following components in the context of the assessment:

- C Meet with Park Board staff and WPG Community Association representatives at the outset of the project to set and clarify overall project directions, and thereafter to review progress at a mutually agreed upon frequency.
- C Compile and assess background information from the sources noted in the 'Background' section above and other material which may come to light. Pursue supplementary data if critical to the study outcome.
- C Identify recreation, leisure, social and demographic trends which will likely impact the WPG neighbourhood in a distinct manner. Summarize information on future changes to neighbourhood composition, including possible population density increases arising from residential developments within the WPG neighbourhood,.
- C Inventory existing WPG park and recreation amenities to identify what is missing, needs improvement or can be used more intensively in relation to current and projected future demands.
- C Explore and identify the distinctive character of parks and recreation programming in WPG, including consideration of the appropriate mix and configuration of Neighbourhood, District, City-wide and regional programming provided through WPG parks and recreation facilities.
- C Obtain public and stakeholder input regarding the services which are or should be provided by the WPG recreation facilities and the local park system.
- C Summarize desired service reconfigurations, enhancements or additions which would balance local needs and preferences with city-wide needs that could be accommodated in WPG. The consolidation of existing public recreation services will be a primary objective, possibly involving partnerships between the Park Board and other public, not-for-profit and for-profit agencies to achieve service objectives.
- C Develop at least two alternate scenarios for a community centre renewal and consolidation:
 - (1) renovation of the community centre at its current location, and
 - (2) construction of a new centre at a prominent location in the context of the future redevelopment of all or part of the upper Jericho lands.

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Describe in both instances how and on what timeline consolidation would be brought about and what would be the disposition of the facilities now being used for Community Centre purposes. Evaluate both options in terms of the implications for service delivery, capital costs, and operating costs.

PRODUCTS AND TIMING

- C Assemble previously completed background studies and reports and document new data compiled in the course of conducting the needs assessment for review by the steering committee, and for future public reference (April-May).
- C Prepare a draft needs assessment report based upon research and input received from stakeholder organizations and user groups (June-August).
- C Provide an opportunity for facility users and neighbourhood residents to respond to the draft needs assessment (Sept-October).
- C Prepare and present an overview of conclusions and recommendations pertaining to alternative scenarios for community centre renewal to the Park Board at a public meeting (November).

PROJECT DIRECTION

Resources dedicated to the needs assessment will be administered by the Vancouver Park Board. Regular progress reports on the project will be made to a steering committee composed of WPG Community Association representatives and Park Board staff.

[From Community Centre Renewal Plan (2001) p. 28]

West Point Grey Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — medium priority

West Point Grey is the most diffuse of all the City's community centres. Its core is the heritage Aberthau House, and the pottery studio and gymnasium/fitness centre immediately adjacent. However, centre programming is also conducted at a number of other sites, including the Jericho Arts Centre (south of the Hostel building), facilities on the upper Jericho Lands and Byng Pool.

Aberthau is a highly attractive building and one eminently suited to a certain range of activities, including meeting and social rentals, film shoots and seminars. Other program activities, including crafts, fitness and children's programs, are not so easily accommodated. The building's heritage status imposes further limitations. As well, Aberthau is not well situated in relation to much of the West Point Grey population.

The various satellite operations more than compensate for the limitation of the main centre. The main drawbacks are that the operation over multiple locations is very inefficient and that tenure at some of these locations (i.e., the provincially-owned facilities on the upper Jericho lands) is not secure.

The long term objective for West Point Grey Community Centre should be to consolidate all or most of the various program sites into one facility at a more strategic location. The opportunity to do so, in terms of land availability and possibly some funding as well, will likely coincide with the development of Federal and/or Provincial Jericho lands. Order of magnitude costs for renewal are estimated at \$5,000,000.