



Date: March 27, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
**SUBJECT: Allocation of Community Amenity Contribution:
Improvements at Pigeon Park and
Development of the Downtown Skateboard Plaza**

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board expresses its support for the proposal to allocate \$120,000 from the Community Amenity Contribution collected from the rezoning of 550 Taylor Street to improvements at Pigeon Park, and \$20,000 toward the development of the Downtown Skateboard Plaza.

POLICY

Community Amenity Contributions (CACs), which are collected at the rezoning stage, can be used for a variety of park projects, including land acquisition, park development and park upgrades. The allocation of CACs requires Council approval.

BACKGROUND

The property at 550 Taylor Street, also known as 599 Carrall Street, was rezoned to permit residential uses in 1997. At the time of rezoning, there was an agreement to collect a Community Amenity Contribution of \$1,054,070. No CAC allocation was specified in 1997.

City and Park Board staff have prepared a report to Council (see Appendix A), which recommends, amongst other items, an allocation of \$120,000 to improvements at Pigeon Park and \$20,000 toward the development of the Downtown Skateboard Plaza at Quebec and Union Streets. The report is scheduled for consideration by Council on April 6th.

PIGEON PARK

Pigeon Park, also known as Pioneer Place, is a small park (0.04 hectares or 0.09 acres) located at the northwest corner of Hastings and Carrall Streets. It is located at a key intersection in the Downtown Eastside and is well used by the community as a gathering place. The park currently includes nine trees, five benches and a drinking fountain, and is framed by significant heritage buildings. The last major upgrade of the park occurred in the mid-1970s.

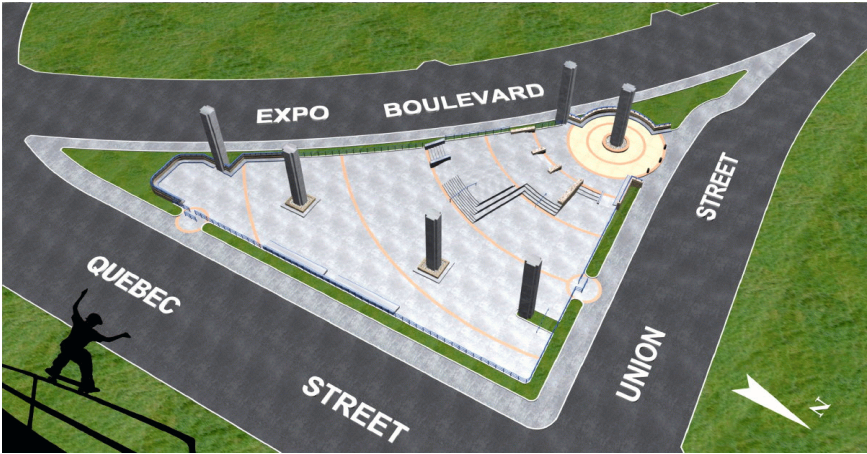


Improvements that are being considered include replacement of existing elements in the park (concrete surface, benches, drinking fountain, and lamppost) and provision of additional elements (trees and shrubs, historical references, public art, etc.). Staff are also exploring how Pigeon Park will be integrated in the Carrall Greenway, a current initiative led by the Greenways Branch at City Hall.

A public consultation exercise with park users and community members has been initiated. Exploration of design options will be undertaken this spring, with staff reporting to the Board on recommended improvements in July or September. If approved, the improvements to Pigeon Park would be completed in 2005. Staff have estimated that \$120,000 is sufficient to cover hard and soft costs associated with this project.

DOWNTOWN SKATEBOARD PLAZA

The downtown skateboard plaza was approved by Park Board on February 24, 2003 and by Council on April 24, 2003. It will be located immediately south of Andy Livingstone Park, in the triangular block bounded by Expo Boulevard, Union Street and Quebec Street. A design consultant (van der Zalm + associates inc.) was hired last fall, and work has progressed on refining the layout of the plaza and its skateboard features.



A total of \$195,000 is available from the 2000-2002 Capital Plan for this project. The additional \$20,000 requested in this report will cover the escalation in construction costs (labour and materials) since the project was approved in early 2003. There is a possibility that another nearby rezoning may generate some additional funds to provide for improved skateboarding equipment and enhancing the edges of the site. If these two funding requests are approved, the available funding will cover hard and soft costs associated with the plaza development and some measures to mitigate impact on neighbouring residences.

Construction on the skateboard plaza will start later this spring and be completed by July 2004.

CONCLUSION

Two important park projects in the eastern portion of the downtown are being recommended for receiving CAC funding: \$120,000 for improvements at Pigeon Park and \$20,000 toward the development of the downtown skateboard plaza. The Board is requested to endorse these two initiatives prior to Council considering the allocation of the CAC on April 6th.

Prepared by:
Planning & Operations
Board of Parks & Recreation
Vancouver, B.C.
MD