



Date: April 14, 2004

**TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: 2004 Operating Budget: Result of Public Consultation on Budget Initiatives**

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## RECOMMENDATION

*THAT the Board approve 2004 Budget Initiatives detailed in the 2004 Operating Budget to increase summer season hourly parking rates in Stanley Park and at Jericho Beach and increase low cost swim and skate rates for Adult patron from \$1 to \$2 effective May 1, 2004.*

## BACKGROUND

At its April 5, 2004 meeting, the Board approved the 2004 Operating Budget, which included a number of initiatives and proposals for funding them. The proposed initiatives reflect public needs and priorities of the Park Board's operations. These initiatives were reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee to support programs which have expanded over time. The funding proposed to support these initiatives reflect careful consideration of their effects and balanced against the need for expanded services. The Board approved a public consultation process on the funding sources to ensure that those who may be impacted by a change would have opportunities for input into the decision to fund the initiatives.

## DISCUSSION

The following funding proposals have been put forward by the Board for public consultation on their implementation:

1. Increase to summer season hourly Parking rate in Stanley Park
2. Increase to summer season hourly Parking rates at Jericho Beach
3. Increase low cost swim and skate rates for Adult patrons from \$1 to \$2 effective May 1, 2004.

For the two parking increases, on April 6, 2004, twenty-five organizations (eighteen for Stanley Park and seven for Jericho Beach) were faxed, e-mailed or otherwise notified of the proposed changes. The notification outlined the proposed increases, the length of time since the last increase to fees,

and the effective date. It also listed several options for providing feedback to the Board, including staff telephone and e-mail contacts, a Park Board website comments page, and attendance at the April 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting.

For the increase to low cost swim and skate rates for adults, on April 6, 2004 staff posted notices at more than 20 locations including community centres, pools and rinks. Also, all Community Associations received copies of the report outlining this and the other budget proposals. The notices highlighted that while adult rates were changing, fees for children, youth and seniors would remain constant. As well, the previous options for providing feedback were listed.

Two comments related to the Parking rates increases were received, one for Jericho Beach and one for Stanley Park. For Jericho Beach, concerns were expressed that parking fees are applied inconsistently at the beaches (i.e. none for Spanish Banks) and other Park Board facilities, such as Community Centres. For Stanley Park, the concerns expressed were that the increase would negatively impact businesses, such as restaurants, operating in the Park. No comments related to the low cost swim and skate increase were received.

The concerns expressed by stakeholders are valid. However, in recommending the proposed changes to the fee structure, many factors were considered, including impact on public access to park and recreation services, consistency of application, impact on services currently provided, ability to generate or realize the revenue for operating expenditures and availability of public transportation. Staff conclude that the proposed increases are the best options available to generate the revenues required to fund the Board's initiatives.

## **SUMMARY**

Given the minimal public response, staff recommend that the Board approve the changes to the fee structure to support the initiatives outlined at its meeting of April 5, 2004. Staff will continue to monitor the impact of these changes, while striving to balance the need to fund Park Board facilities and programs with options for funding those services.

Prepared by:

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