



Date: April 22, 2004

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation

FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Dog Off-Leash Program Enhancements - Funding Request

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the Board approve funding of \$83,000 for the improvements to the Dog Off-Leash Program, the source of funds to be the Corporate Sponsorship Program*
- 2. That staff report back to the Board on the Responsible Dog Ownership Program and the potential support to be provided by the Park Board when further elements of the program have been finalized.*

POLICY

The Board's policy on the approved use of Corporate Sponsorship Funds contains the following criteria:

1. To fund one-time expenditures to a limit of \$50,000 that will support revenue-generating activities and the money repaid into the Corporate Sponsorship account from the increased revenues within a period of three years.
2. To fund initiatives with one-time expenditures to a limit of \$50,000 that will result in improved efficiencies.
3. To fund one-time expenditures over and above the existing funding level in the operating budget which are beneficial to the overall Parks and Recreation system.
4. All expenditures require Board approval.

BACKGROUND

At its meeting of February 9, 2004, the Board approved a series of strategies to improve the Dog Off-Leash Program. These improvements included the proposals to add 3 new sites, extend hours at 7 existing sites, improve amenities, signage and boundary definitions and contribute to a new Responsible Dog Ownership Initiative. The funding for these enhancements was referred to the 2004 Budget Process.

The Board also commented at the February meeting that concerns about turf wear and tear on several off-leash sites might warrant further consideration of a program to repair and restore those sites with the greatest problems.

DISCUSSION

Staff have finalized plans and begun the process of obtaining community input on the proposed extended hours for some existing off leash sites. Costs for these and other strategies to improve the Off-leash Program were reviewed and the project nature of these improvements met the guidelines of the Corporate Sponsorship Program. Staff are recommending that this be the source of funds for this program.

The initial cost estimate for \$30,000 included the following:

Public Involvement	
Extending hours	- \$2,000
New Sites	- \$5,000
Signage Changes	- \$5,000
Bag Dispensers	- \$7,000
Park Improvements	
Boundary Markers	- \$3,000
Dog Activity Equipment	- \$3,000
Responsible Dog	
Ownership Program	- \$5,000
(contribution)	
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	\$30,000

Expanded Community Consultation

Most of the proposed costs remain the same as those identified in the Board report of February 9, however the Board's revised motion to expand the extent of Community consultation on the extended hours at the seven existing sites will increase the estimated cost from \$2000 to \$5000. The initial consultation proposed was limited to the immediate neighbours within a two block radius of the site. The Board expanded this consultation to the neighbouring community which has increased our activities to include site signage, a broader distribution of information on the proposal and the potential for other meetings or notification depending on the community response.

Responsible Dog Ownership Program

Staff have proposed initial support of \$5,000 for a Responsible Dog Ownership Program that is being developed in conjunction with the City of Vancouver, the SPCA and other agencies concerned about responsible pet care. While this request is for seed funding, the full extent of the program is not yet complete. Staff may request that the Board consider additional funding support for the program in the future.

Turf Repair Program

The Board also asked staff for further information on turf conditions and specific sites that would require repairs and strengthening to continue to support both general and off-leash use. Based on a condition survey of the 29 existing off-leash locations, 6 locations have been rated as moderate to heavily worn. At these locations aerating, fertilizing, overseeding and topdressing will be done to produce a stronger turf.

The following is an estimate for these repair activities at the most critical sites:

Nat Bailey Stadium Park	\$ 7,000
Balaclava Park	\$12,000
Valdez Park	\$ 3,000
Charleson Park	\$10,000
Coopers Park	\$ 6,000
Trout Lake (John Hendry)	<u>\$12,000</u>
Total Cost	\$50,000

SUMMARY

Staff are requesting that the funding for the enhancements to the Dog Off-leash Program come from the Corporate Sponsorship Program and that the original request considered in the Board report of February 9, 2004 be increased to \$83,000 to include additional costs for expanded community consultation of \$3,000 and \$50,000 for turf repair activities at heavily used sites.

Prepared by:

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LM