



Date: July 5, 2004

**TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: Open Spaces Sculpture Exhibits**

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## **RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Board approve the development of an agreement with The Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale as per the terms in this report to regulate eighteen month sculpture exhibits for up to 10 years on Vancouver parks at no cost to the Board and with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager.**

## **POLICY**

The Board has an Arts Policy which states that the Board provides a vibrant public realm and supports the experience of public art and cultural events in parks.

## **BACKGROUND**

In May, 2004, staff were approached by the Buschlen Mowatt Gallery with a request that the Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale, a not for profit corporation, be given a 10 year mandate to sponsor 5 - eighteen month temporary sculpture installations on Park Board parks and beaches. The project's mandate is "to create a sustainable biannual internationally renowned sculpture 'festival' that will become the envy of cities everywhere." The organizer is interested in partnering with educational institutions to create a strong educational component which is accessible to all ages, in hosting and recording lecture/workshop series of the participating artists, and in providing guided and self-guided tours by volunteer students/senior project docents. The request is to use parks throughout the city - New Brighton, CRAB, Vanier, Spanish Banks, English Bay, David Lam, Harbour Green and Sunset Beach Parks. The installations would also create opportunities for benefactors to purchase works to remain in the region and city.

In addition to installing artwork on parkland, the organizers are asking for special permission with regard to sponsorship, sale of goods and hosting events. The organizer is requesting permission to seek sponsors to offset costs associated with the exhibitions (installations, shipping, insurance, promotion, etc.) as well as fund educational and interactive programs. The sponsors including the Park Board would be acknowledged on all signage and promotional materials (i.e. buttons, clothes, posters, ads, banners, books,

catalogues, post cards, etc.). The Corporation also wishes to sell and or license merchandise to raise monies and promote the project worldwide with 20% of all profits after costs being paid to Vancouver Parks to assist in the infrastructure of future sculpture projects and/or the purchase of sculptures from the projects. The organizers would also like to host special tented or cordoned off events on beaches/park lands in the promotion of the project.

In addition, the organizer is also asking the Board to cost share the provision of electrical service to various installations. The service would be used to light the sculptures.

## **DISCUSSION**

Since 1998, the Board has had a relationship with Buschlen Mowatt Galleries whereby temporary sculpture exhibits have been sited in Parks along English Bay and Coal Harbour. Historically, these have been a series of one year exhibits. The public's response to these exhibits has been very positive and while there are a few who don't like to see art interfering with their park experience many have taken the time to express their enjoyment and appreciation of the sculptures. Many agree that these exhibits have enhanced their park experience. This exhibit presents an opportunity for many to experience work by some of the best known sculptors from around the globe.

There continues to be some concern expressed about the limited scope of opportunity offered to local, regional and national artists and about the perceived commercial nature of the proposal. The proposal suggests a future exhibit for local artists in New Brighton Park.

The renewed request of the Board asks to expand the term and scope of the exhibits. While generally supportive of the proposal, staff are unable to recommend all the requests:

### *Cost*

Staff recommend that all costs be born by the organizer. The Board has no identified source of funds to supply power to each site.

### *Term*

This request extends the term from one year to ten and each exhibit to 18 months. This time period covers the Olympics and there may be an interest on the part of other parties to provide concurrent exhibits. Park space cannot be guaranteed for the purpose of Open Spaces to the exclusion of other initiatives without a call for proposals.

Staff recommend that a formal review based on the terms of the agreement be conducted after each exhibit before proceeding with permission for the subsequent. This permission may be given without returning to the Board unless there is reason to change the agreement.

### *Special Events and Activities*

The organizer will need to apply for Special Event permits for all activities on parks related to the exhibit. All major parks are heavily used and there are regulations around tent use, amplification, sale of goods, etc. that each event must meet.

### *Educational Programs*

This will greatly expand the scope of the exhibits and provide a valuable resource to schools and the broader public.

### *Sponsorship and Signage*

Staff will negotiate with the Corporation the extent to which sponsorship appears on signage. Basic signage content will feature the name of the exhibit, the name of the Biennale, the artist and the name of the work.

### *Sites*

The proposal calls for a number of park sites. Some of the parks identified have considerable programming and may not be suitable for exhibits. All locations will require sign-off by a Park Board District Director. Site reviews are required for each new site to check such things as underground utilities, proximity to trees and impact on operational maintenance, soil factors.

No exclusive park use can be recommended without a proposal call to ascertain if others are interested as would be done for any protracted exclusive use of a park.

### *Technical Reviews of the Work*

Park Board requires sealed engineer's drawings for each work installed on park land as well as as-built plans. Each work will need to be reviewed for risk management concerns.

### *Insurance and WCB*

The corporation will need to supply third party liability insurance naming the Park Board, property insurance on the work and WCB coverage for anybody working on installation or maintenance.

### *Public Art Committee Advice*

The timeframe within which this proposal was received has not allowed for a formal comment from the City's Public Art Advisory Committee.

An agreement on protocol was established for past art installations. This agreement is currently being reviewed by Law. This review combined with the contents of this report will form the basis for an updated agreement for the exhibits.

## **SUMMARY**

Open Spaces provides opportunities for the people of Vancouver to enjoy a wide range of sculpture in parks at no cost to the Board. A legal agreement will detail the responsibilities of the Park Board and the Biennale in providing these exhibits.

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