



Date: May 5, 2005

TO: Board Members – Parks and Recreation

FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation

**SUBJECT: Riley, Hillcrest and Nat Bailey Stadium Parks
Master Plan**

RECOMMENDATION:

- A. THAT the Riley, Hillcrest, Nat Bailey Stadium Park Master Plan as illustrated in Appendix A be approved;*
- B. THAT the Board confirm the location of the Olympic Curling Venue as shown in Appendix A and that the City and VANOC be so advised;*
- C. THAT the Board establish a stakeholder/community working committee that will work with staff and representatives from the City Engineering Department to address:*
- a. the detailed location of on site and offsite parking*
 - b. the details of the proposed controlled intersection at Ontario/30th Ave*
 - c. the identification of further traffic control and parking measures in the adjacent residential neighbourhood*
 - d. the preparation of a transportation management plan for Nat Bailey Stadium*

POLICY

The City of Vancouver is party to a "Games Venue Agreement - Hillcrest Curling and Community Centre" which recognizes the City's intent, with the Park Board, to conduct a Master Plan review and make a final determination of the location of the Olympic Curling facility on or before July 31, 2005.

In September 2000, Park Board approved a Master Plan for Riley Hillcrest Nat Bailey Stadium Parks. The Master Plan established a location for the Millennium Sports Facility at the corner of Midlothian Avenue and Clancy Loranger Way and proposed options for expanding the Riley Park Community Centre. On February 11, 2004, the Board approved a consultancy to revise and update the 2000 Master Plan for the Riley, Hillcrest and Nat Bailey Stadium Parks, factoring in two major developments for this area announced since the 2000 Master Plan was approved:

- The 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games Curling Facility, (July 2003) and
- A major aquatic facility to replace Percy Norman Pool (March 2002).

On February 25, 2002, the Board approved the Community Centre Renewal Plan. Riley Park Community Centre was identified as a major scale renewal project of high priority.

On March 11, 2002, the Board approved the Aquatic Services Renewal Strategy. The Plan calls for Percy Norman Pool to be replaced by a new multi-purpose Aquatic Centre with “two or three main swimming areas, each optimized for specific uses, including long-course (50 meter) training. There will also be a wide range of supporting aquatic and dry floor spaces to broaden the experience of patrons. This will be similar to a complete water park and will have an outdoor swimming option or component.”

BACKGROUND

Riley, Hillcrest and Nat Bailey Stadium are contiguous neighbourhood parks, almost exactly at the geographic centre of Vancouver. The parks together total 16 hectares (39.5 acres) and adjoin the north edge of Queen Elizabeth Park, a large (53 hectares/131 acres) destination park. The north-south Ontario Street Greenway/Bikeway runs between Riley and Nat Bailey Stadium Parks.

The three subject parks contain a high number of city-wide and neighbourhood serving recreation facilities. Some of these are operated directly by Park Board, some are jointly operated with a non-profit community association, and others are operated under lease by 3rd-party organizations. There are 10 buildings on the three parks:

- The recreation complex (3 buildings in Riley Park): Riley Park Community Centre and Ice Rink, and Percy Norman Pool.
- Non-profit sports clubs (4 buildings bordering Midlothian Avenue: Little Mountain Little League, Vancouver Curling Club, Vancouver Racquets Club, Millennium Sports Facility (the latter soon to open and house the Pacific Indoor Lawn Bowls and Phoenix Gymnastics Clubs).
- Nat Bailey Stadium: Formerly a Triple A Franchise, the stadium is currently the home field of a Single A professional baseball team.
- Park Fieldhouses (2): Riley Park Fieldhouse and Hillcrest Park Fieldhouse.

The Master Plan described below was developed in the context of an extensive public process, which is summarized in Appendix B.

DISCUSSION

Master Plan

The proposed Hillcrest/Riley Master Plan sets the stage for the implementation of a significant renewal of recreational infrastructure. The Master Plan in its post Olympic configuration creates a new recreational campus with two new buildings which will include:

- Community Centre
- Community Ice Rink
- Curling Club
- Aquatic Centre (including outdoor component)
- Library
- District Office
- Fieldhouse

And retains:

- Nat Bailey Stadium
- Vancouver Racquets Club
- Millennium Sports Facility
- Current inventory of playfields and baseball diamonds on Hillcrest Park in both their summer and winter configurations.

The existing Riley Park Community Centre and Rink, Percy Norman Pool and the Vancouver Curling Club building will be demolished returning the building sites to green space.

The strategy of replacing the 10 existing buildings, currently spread out over the three parks, with a central campus of 5 buildings supports the creation of vibrant public spaces that allow the community to come together, both literally and figuratively. The strategy maximizes operational synergies between uses as well as facilitating increased off season use of seasonal facilities.

The site's principal access will be off Midlothian Avenue, with a secondary controlled access and/or egress off Ontario Street at 30th Avenue. Some 550 permanent parking stalls and 210 temporary parking stalls will be provided on site, meeting the peak demand estimated to be generated by the new buildings.

Some traffic and parking issues require further resolution and a traffic management plan dealing with stadium related events will be developed.

The proposed Master Plan responds to the Board's community centre and pool renewal strategies and captures a major partnership opportunity created by the 2010 Olympics. The recreational campus becomes a focal point for customer service and sustainability initiatives, including the potential for a significant energy exchange between the pool and rinks.

Issues

During the public process a number of issues were raised, particularly during the April 12, 2005 Planning and Environment Committee meeting. The proposed Master Plan responds to these issues as follows.

Traffic

Reduction of traffic impacts through the neighbourhood is a key concern. The relocation of the existing Riley Park Community Centre, Rink, and Pool complex away from Ontario Street and 30th Avenue to the Centre of the site, along with making the principal access off Midlothian Avenue, go a long way in achieving this objective. Although the pool is larger and the library is an additional traffic generator, traffic projections have shown that traffic volumes on Ontario Street can be maintained at similar levels as today with the implementation of traffic measures including the creation of a controlled access and/or egress at 30th and Ontario. Some of the traffic measures require more work with stakeholders, the community and City Engineering, since a number of the initiatives will be on streets which are outside the Park Board's jurisdiction. The nearby RAV station (at Cambie and King Edward), which will be operational by 2009, will also prove to be a transportation alternative to the site.

Parking

On site and off street parking demand have been an issue throughout the public process. The high winter and summer demands generated by the buildings on site, exclusive of the stadium, are estimated to be 580 and 530 respectively. The Master Plan proposes 550 stalls on site and 210 temporary stalls. Suggestions of underground parking have been made and while this would create parking in a more convenient location, the capital costs involved are high. A traffic management plan for Nat Bailey Stadium will also be undertaken, in order to reduce and better arrange off site parking demands.

Any changes in off site parking will be subject to a further process, but the addition of street parking along both sides of Midlothian Avenue will provide convenient parking near the principal buildings. The proposed Midlothian bike lane could be relocated into Queen Elizabeth Park.

Aquatic Centre Location

Much public feedback was received on the proposed location of the Aquatic Centre. Originally proposed to be sited at the east side of the site near Ontario Street and 30th Avenue, adjacent residents and neighbours expressed concern about the scale of a large building so close to the residences. Suggestions from the community have included relocation of the facility along Midlothian Avenue. In one scenario this would necessitate the relocation of the recently (re)built Little League concession, bleachers and diamond. The second suggested location is to the south of the Millennium Building. Both these sites reduce customer service and energy exchange possibilities and are less efficient from staffing and co-programming perspectives.

The proposed location places the Aquatic Centre some 400 feet from the nearest residential building, and offers greater potential for customer service, operational efficiency and energy exchange. It also creates an interesting urban design concept.

Next Steps

Upon Board approval of the Master Plan as a conceptual guide for future park development, project implementation will go through further consultation and approval stages.

With the approval of the plan the City and VANOC can be advised of the Board's decision, setting the stage for more detailed programming and design of the Olympic Legacy facility. The second piece of work to be concluded with VANOC is the delineation of the boundaries of the site area to be used during the Olympics.

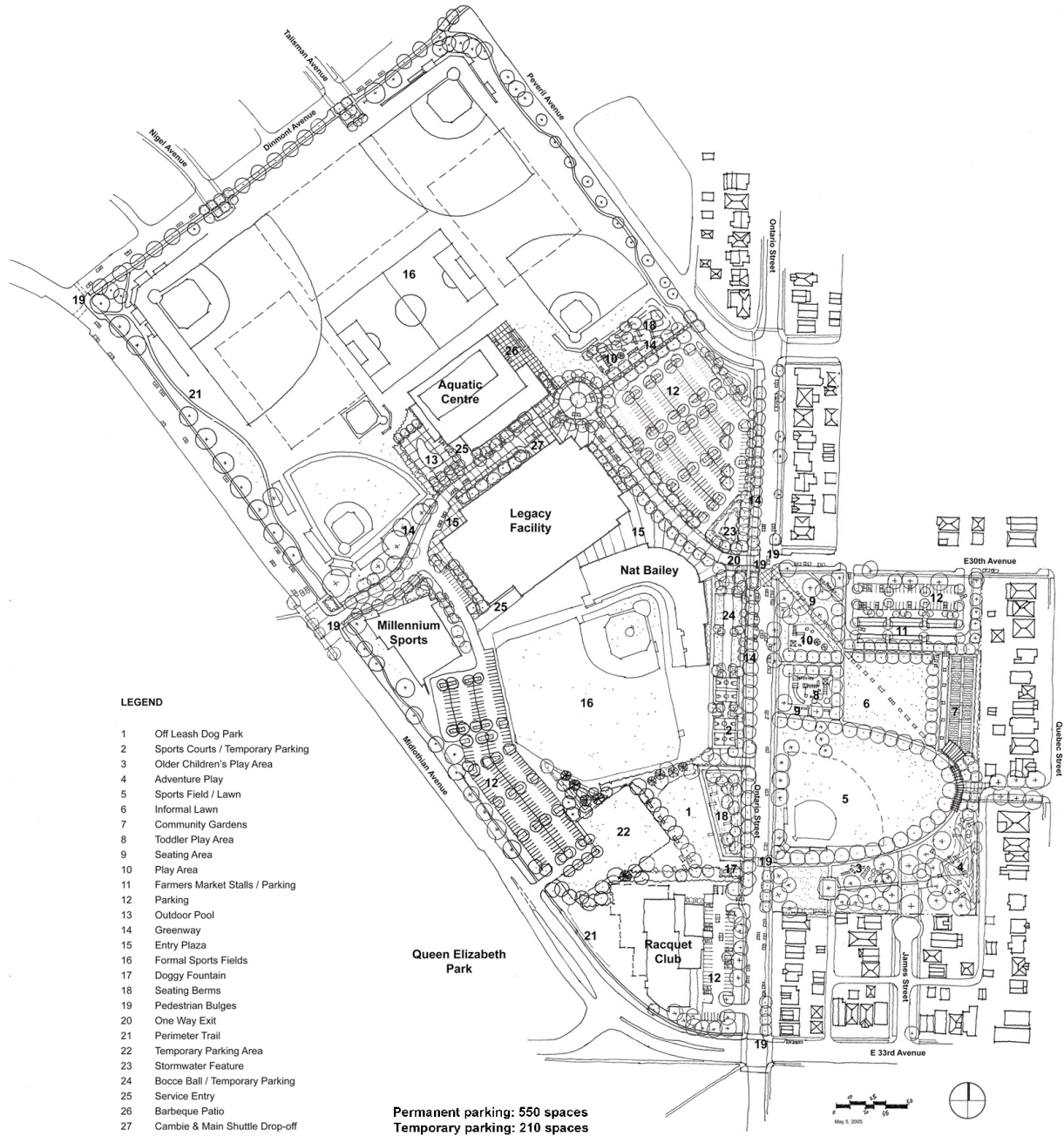
Should the new Percy Norman Pool be included in the Board's 2006-08 Capital Plan, programming and design for the new pool can also start.

Both buildings will be subject to the City's normal regulatory processes, which includes the development permit process. This process offers further opportunity for public input.

This report acknowledges that resolution of some of the traffic and parking issues need to be developed in a broader neighbourhood context involving the community, stakeholders, and the City Engineering Department. The principles of the traffic management approach are focussed on minimizing traffic and parking impacts on the residential areas of the neighbourhood, and creating the principal entrance and exit to the site off Midlothian Avenue. The refinement of the traffic management and parking measures can start shortly and should ideally be completed prior to the Development Permit process.

Prepared by: PR/MV
Planning and Operations
Board of Parks & Recreation
Vancouver, B.C.

APPENDIX "A - 1"



Riley Hillcrest Park Masterplan

Revised Option: May 5, 2005

Proposed Master Plan

PWL Partnership Landscape Architects Inc.
 Hughes Condon Marler : Architects

APPENDIX "A - 2"

PRELIMINARY BUILDING PROGRAM	Square Feet
Community Centre	30,000
Community Ice Rink	40,000
Curling Club	36,000
Library	10,000
District Office	5,000
Aquatic Centre	60,000
Field House	2,000

This building program is preliminary. The Olympic Legacy building has a COV/VANOC agreed upon total size of 116,150 square feet, the distribution of space is subject to further review.

APPENDIX “B”

Process Summary:

The Master Plan went through an extensive public process; the key milestones are summarized below.

February 2004: Project launch at the CityPlan Riley/South Cambie Community Visioning Ideas Fair. Park Board planning staff hosted a “Master Plan Update” display at this event, attended by upwards of 1000 local area residents. The display was intended to build neighbourhood awareness of the Master Plan and its objectives, and to record the issues and concerns identified by participants at this event.

May 2004: Initial consultations held with representatives of the various facilities and user groups connected with the three parks to identify operational concerns and potential synergies which could be realized on the site.

June 2004: First public open house: Six options for site development on display. Some of these involved changes to the orientation and scale of Nat Bailey Stadium and/or inclusion of the Racquets Club into the legacy program (subsequently, it was determined that the legacy and aquatic buildings should not alter or be integrated with these existing facilities).

Responses generated at the Open House and subsequently via the website helped to inform or confirm some guiding principles for the plan:

- Riley Park should be greened up and returned to a neighbourhood park character
- New buildings should be arranged with existing buildings to create a campus of facilities centered on Nat Bailey Park
- Public gathering spaces should be created, both indoors and outdoors.
- Greenway connections from the community through the parks to Queen Elizabeth Park should be maintained and enhanced.
- Ontario Street should be respected and enhanced as a greenway and bikeway. Increased traffic and parking should not be off-loaded into surrounding residential streets.
- There should be adequate parking in the right locations to meet the demand generated by the new facilities. Parking surfaces should be diverse: Hard surface to handle daily requirements; softer and possibly multi-purpose to handle exceptional event loads.
- The park and facility design should meet sustainability standards.
- The number and quality of playing fields on Hillcrest Park should not be reduced.

In the process of evaluating public response from the Open House, and informed by technical considerations, it was concluded that putting the legacy facility parallel to the Clancy Loranger Way alignment was better in several respects than leaving it at the location shown in the Bid Book. The new site is more flexible for Olympic venue purposes allowing for example the establishment of a less intrusive security perimeter during the games. As well, the new site opens up more design possibilities supporting an effective and accessible post-Games configuration.

July 2004 – January 2005: Various technical reviews and assessments, including discussions with other City Departments to highlight issues of overlapping concern and to identify requirements that would have to be met by proposed site facility developments at the formal approval stage. Also extended and in-depth examination of requirements for the Olympic venue and the Curling legacy components with VANOC and of the sport governing bodies.

March 2005: Second public open house. Display of proposed Master Plan (evolved from Option A2 shown at the first Open House) This event was well attended. 212 people signed in at the door, and 173 filled in questionnaires. The questionnaire was open-ended, and invited respondents to identify what they found successful and/or effective in the plan; what could be done to improve the plan; and what were their concerns. There was a broad range of interests represented: recreation centre patrons, playing field users, baseball fans; members of the various sport clubs on the park and local residents. There was a diversity as well of responses to the master plan, ranging from statements of overall support to expressions of general or specific concern.

Generally, those who identified themselves as connected with the various facilities and user groups on the parks were favourable in their response. Apart from general expressions of approval, specific positive comments were in relation to the following points:

- Public recreation facilities co-located with an expanded branch library.
- Inclusion of leisure elements in the aquatic facility program.
- Emphasis on Midlothian/Clancy Loranger as principal access point to the site.
- Distribution of parking lots, rather than all in one area.
- Retention of the existing number of fields in both summer and winter configurations.

There was also considerable criticism of the proposed Master Plan expressed at the Open House and subsequently in e-mail messages, as summarized below.

April 12, 2005 Planning and Environment Committee meeting. Delegations mainly of local residents outlined concerns with the scale of proposed developments and their possible impacts on the surrounding parks and residential neighbourhoods. The aquatic centre at the corner of Ontario and Peveril was seen as far too close to residences, and many expressed the opinion that, as a city serving facility, the pool can and should be detached from the other community recreation facilities and located as close to Midlothian as possible. Concern was expressed regarding the potential for traffic and parking to negatively affect the Ontario Greenway/Bikeway, and to spill over into surrounding residential streets. More on-site parking was asked for; there was also a view expressed that added parking should not entail loss of greenspace. Finally, the planning process was criticized as too rushed and not responsive to neighbourhood concerns.

Extensive revisions to the Master Plan were made in response to the concerns expressed at the Open House. Staff met with representatives of stakeholder organizations and local area residents to outline the proposed changes and clarify outstanding concerns

The planning process was supported throughout by a dedicated page on the Park Board public website, which has been used to display materials at various stages in the process and to collect public input.