



Date: June 23, 2005

TO: Board Members - Parks and Recreation
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Falaise Park Wetland Garden

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board approve the concept plan for the proposed Falaise Park Wetland Garden Concept Plan as described in this report and illustrated in Appendix 2.

POLICY

The Board approves new park designs.

BACKGROUND

Falaise Park is a neighbourhood park located near Grandview Highway and Worthington Drive (one block east of Renfrew Street). The southern portion of the park currently consists of a north facing expanse of lawn sloping towards the existing baseball diamonds located in the north end of the park.

In June of 1999, the Park Board received a staff report describing the community's interest in investigating the possibility of "daylighting" an existing stream in Falaise Park. The group identified the stream from the Vancouver Old Stream Maps, (revised 1989), and realized that it is a tributary of Still Creek.

The community group's interest in exposing the stream was two-fold: (a) they wished to initiate and be part of the long term daylighting of existing water courses throughout the city to enhance and preserve the natural environment and (b) they wished to work with the entire community in the creek catchment area as part of an educational/awareness program to realize the potential of this natural resource.

After further investigation with the City Engineering Department, however, it was recommended that due to water volumes and fluctuations, a wetland project would be appropriate in the south half of the park.

The character of the south half of this park has historically been wet, draining poorly and periodically retaining storm water. The community representatives and Park Board agreed that a wetland enhancement project would increase the passive recreational potential of this portion of the park while providing the community with an opportunity for environmental educational awareness. Funding for the wetland project is \$150,000, approved in the 2003-2005 Capital Plan.

DISCUSSION

In April 2005, the landscape architecture consulting firm, Lees + Associates, was hired to work with Park Board and City staff, as well as area residents to develop a wetland garden concept plan for Falaise Park within the existing construction budget of \$120,000. The project goals are to capture surface runoff in a wetland garden, enhance local habitat, improve park aesthetics, provide educational opportunities and enable greater community use.

The community participated in the development of the recommended concept plan through an open house as well as a number of community steering committee meetings. Through this process it was determined that the wetland garden should include a series of small gardens along an open seasonal drainage channel terminating in a larger wetland garden south of the baseball fields (see attached Appendix 1).

The wetland garden concept plan (see attached Appendix 2) includes a series of three small and one large wetland garden. Bog plants and low growing native shrubs and grasses will be planted in the wetland gardens. Pathways and a short section of boardwalk will provide access near to and over the gardens. Recycled materials will be incorporated wherever possible through the garden, including recycled granite curbs for weirs and crossings.

SUMMARY

The proposed concept plan for a wetland garden in Falaise Park addresses the community's desire to increase the opportunities for the use and enjoyment of the park by area residents as well as enhancing local habitat and ecological educational opportunities.

Prepared by:

DB

Planning and Operations

Board of Parks & Recreation

Vancouver, B.C.