

Date: July 3, 2007



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Hastings Park: Preparation of Implementation Plan

RECOMMENDATION

A. THAT the Board endorse the planning process and work program for the Hastings Park Implementation Plan, as described in this report and the Council report dated June 29, 2007.

POLICY

In 1992, Park Board approved the “Park Board Management Plan”, which included the following policy: “advocate the restoration of the existing P.N.E. site (Hastings Park) as a major park serving a variety of community and city wide needs”.

In 1997, Park Board approved the “Hastings Park Restoration Plan”, a long term plan for the “greening” of Hastings Park which included the horse racetrack but not the annual fair or an amusement park.

In 2004, Park Board reaffirmed its support for the restoration of Hastings Park into a major park serving residents in the northeast district of the city.

BACKGROUND

In 1995, Council asked the Park Board to prepare a long term plan for the “greening” of Hastings Park that would include the horse racetrack but not the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE) because the PNE, a provincial Crown corporation, had decided to search for a new home. The Hastings Park Restoration Plan was approved by both Park Board and Council in 1997 and included the following key elements:

- to create a large, natural area in the centre of the park which includes a pond and a wetland in the lowlands (“the Sanctuary”) and a meadow on the highland (“Windermere Hill”);
- to daylight the stream that once ran through the site and to create a good pedestrian connection between Hastings Park and New Brighton Park;
- to locate active park uses and parking at the edges of the park;
- to better integrate the park with the residential areas surrounding the park; and
- to better integrate the horse racetrack within the park.

Between 1998 and 2001, Council and Park Board approved the restoration of three areas: the “Sanctuary”, the “Italian Garden” and “Empire Fields”. A total of 11 hectares (27 acres) have been restored at Hastings Park (66 hectares or 162 acres). The air photograph below shows Hastings Park as it is today.



In 2001, the Province announced that it would not support any future relocation of the PNE. In March 2003, the Province entered into an agreement with the City for the transfer of the PNE to the City effective January 1, 2004.

In May and June 2004, both Park Board and Council supported a revised plan for Hastings Park, one that would include additional park space and accommodate the annual fair, an amusement park and the horse racetrack. Some issues required further work, including:

- the location of the stream and walkway connecting Hastings and New Brighton Parks;
- the size and configuration of the amusement park;
- relocation options for Hastings Community Centre; and
- the heritage value of the Livestock Building.

DISCUSSION

The next major step is the preparation of the Implementation Plan for Hastings Park. A report will be presented to Council on this topic during the week of July 9th. The report is attached as Appendix A, and is an update to the Implementation Plan originally presented to Council in December 2004.

The preparation of the Implementation Plan is a three year process and involves three phases of work:

- Preparatory phase (2007) that includes:
 - site analysis
 - location options for the renewal of Hastings Community Centre
 - a review of heritage issues
 - options for racetrack barns and pedestrian connection to New Brighton Park
 - an overall signage plan
 - a plan for a renewed Renfrew Street

- Planning phase (2008-2009) that includes:
 - thematic design and programming
 - facilities and open space review
 - master development and governance plan

- Design phase (2009-2010) that includes:
 - phasing plan
 - detailed design concepts
 - budget for capital investments

The study area for Implementation Plan will include Hastings Park, Hastings Community Park and New Brighton Park (when exploring connections to the waterfront). This is consistent with the study area when the Hastings Park Restoration Plan was prepared in the mid-1990s.

The project is being coordinated by City staff working in Cultural Services. It is anticipated that consultants will be hired to assist staff with a variety of work, including public consultation, park planning and design, adaptive reuse of heritage buildings, planning and management of fairs/exhibitions, planning and design of amusement parks, and governance.

Park Board staff will participate in each phase of work. Park Board has representatives on the Steering Committee and the Technical Committee that have been created for the Implementation Plan. Reports will be presented to Park Board and Council at key milestones.

The project will involve broad public consultation, including an ongoing 'key stakeholders group' that has members from operators/tenants at Hastings Park, the local community and the city at large.

The project budget is approximately \$1.5 million and will be funded from the Hastings Park Reserve.

SUMMARY

In 2004, both Park Board and Council supported a revised plan for Hastings Park, one that would include additional park space and accommodate the annual fair, an amusement park and the horse racetrack. The Implementation Plan will finalize unresolved programmatic, site planning and governance issues, and set the stage for major capital investments at Hastings Park.

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