

Date: September 3, 2008



**TO: Board Members – Parks and Recreation**  
**FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: Tecumseh Park - Concept Design**

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

*THAT the Board approve the attached conceptual design for Tecumseh Park as illustrated in this report (Appendix 2).*

**POLICY**

Conceptual designs are approved by the Board.

**BACKGROUND**

Tecumseh Park is a 2.2 hectare (5.6 acres) neighbourhood park in the Victoria/Fraser/Killarney area, bounded by Commercial Street in the east and 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in the north. Existing park elements include mature trees, children's play equipment, and an undulating open grass area. (Appendix 1) Tecumseh Park is a designated dog off-leash park.

The City of Vancouver's Community Visioning process began in the Victoria/Fraserview/Killarney area June 2000. A subcommittee was formed in July 2003; it identified Tecumseh Park as the highest priority for improvements. In June 2004, the subcommittee hosted a community meeting in Tecumseh Park to discuss desired improvements. A workshop was held in July 2004 to put on paper some of the ideas that came forward.

The Board approved funding for Tecumseh Park improvements in October 2005 as part of the 2006–2008 Capital Plan.

In May of this year, Park staff began working with the Tecumseh Park Improvement Committee, composed of local residents advocating for improvements to Tecumseh Park.

**DISCUSSION**

In May 2008, Park Board staff held an open house where neighbouring residents were invited to provide input into the renewal of Tecumseh Park. This meeting was attended by 25 residents and resulted in 20 completed questionnaires. The community asked the Park Board to consider various improvements.

Priorities included:

- Upgrading the children's play area
- Leveling the lawn areas
- Providing a level /paved surface to practice Tai Chi
- Adding pathways to facilitate walking around the perimeter of the park
- Making the entrances more prominent
- Improving drainage in the park
- Adding permanent picnic tables
- Adding trees for shade around playground
- Beautifying the space with plantings

Park Board staff used this information to develop two conceptual plans that were presented at an open house on July 7, 2008. Of the 20 residents who provided feedback, 80% preferred Concept A (Appendix 2). The most significant difference between the two concepts is the addition of a fenced dog off-leash area and the location of the Tai Chi plaza on the west side in Concept B (Appendix 3). Instead of an enclosed dog run, Concept A uses low fencing around a portion of the children's playground to reduce the likelihood of off-leash dogs running through the space.

The upgrades featured in concept A include improvements to the children's playground. The design of the children's play area will improve accessibility with the use of a variety of surfacing as well as the type of play structures. Low fencing, planting and benches will help define the children's area. Natural elements will also be used in the playground including boulders and logs. There will be additional trees surrounding the playground to ensure areas of shade. A paved area on the south side of the playground will serve the many that practise Tai Chi daily in the park.

Underlying Tecumseh Park is a large peat deposit. Some areas appear relatively stable but a large portion of the park is undulating because of uneven settlement. The park will be re-graded to level the open areas and to improve drainage. Much of the water that runs off the open grass area will be directed into a new low planted area on the north side of the park. A low boardwalk will cross this water receiving area. Granite screenings paths will be added to improve the accessibility to the various elements in the park and allow pedestrians to walk around the perimeter. Many residents identified the need for people to walk through the park instead of the adjacent lanes and street which have no sidewalks. The central diagonal path that runs north-south will be slightly elevated during the re-grading of the park so it remains free of runoff.

The drainage will be upgraded in the park, where necessary, to help address the often wet conditions in the winter months. Two of the park's main entrances will be highlighted with park identification signs and new plantings. Of the 48 existing trees in the park, all will remain with the exception of two that are to be removed due to declining health.

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, the two concepts including a few revisions were brought to the park to solicit further feedback. Of the more than 20 people that came by to look at the proposal, all were pleased with the design in concept A and were looking forward to the planned improvements.

## **BUDGET**

The park has been designed by staff with a construction budget of \$400,000.

## **SCHEDULE**

The timing of the project is:

Contract drawings and documents	October – December 2008
Tender	January 2009
Board award	April 2009
Construction	May – August 2009

## **SUMMARY**

The proposed upgrades will provide needed improvements to Tecumseh Park. Approval of the conceptual plan will allow Park staff to proceed with the detailed designs and construction drawings with a view to installing the upgrade in the spring of 2009.

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