

Date: November 25, 2008



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: ActNow Seniors’ Community Park

RECOMMENDATION

- A. *THAT the Board approve the location of the Seniors’ Community Park in the northwest sector of Tisdall Park, adjacent to the existing children’s playground as illustrated in Appendix 1;***
- B. *THAT the Board accept the Province’s financial contribution of up to \$100,000 towards this project, and authorize the General Manager to arrange for the necessary documentation in this regard.***

POLICY

The Board approves park development projects.

BACKGROUND

The Provincial Government recently announced that they would establish a number of ActNow BC Seniors’ Community Parks throughout the province as a way of keeping seniors “mobile, physically active and healthy”. The program provides for specialized outdoor fitness equipment designed for seniors, some of which have been adapted from indoor fitness equipment (Appendix 2). Under the program, the municipality is required to provide site preparation, project management and ongoing maintenance. In this initial phase of the program, funds are provided to 18 municipalities throughout the province for the purchase and installation of this equipment and necessary surfacing within an existing park, up to a maximum of \$100,000 per municipality. The City of Vancouver applied for the grant and was notified in September 2008 that it was one of the successful applicants.

Tisdall Park, bounded by Tisdall, Ash, 46th and 49th, was the approved site. The park is 4.86 hectares and is located in an area with a high percentage of seniors, many of whom regularly use the park, in particular the pedestrian walkway that meanders through the treed and grassed park. Tisdall Park is next to the major bus routes along Cambie and 49th Avenue, and is close to George Pearson Centre, Sunrise Senior Living Centre, and other supportive living and senior-orientated housing. It is near facilities with established seniors’ programs at Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre, Kerrisdale Community

Centre, Oakridge Seniors' Centre and the Jewish Community Centre. The park is adjacent to Dr. Anne B. Jamieson Elementary School, which would enhance opportunities for interaction between different age groups.

DISCUSSION

The addition of this seniors' park would meet the goals of the Active Communities Vancouver program in promoting the benefits of active living to citizens of all ages and abilities. In particular, it integrates into our existing Seniors Programs in meeting the social and physical needs of our older citizens.

An Open House was held on November 19, 2008 and was attended by about 30 people, most of whom were seniors who live adjacent to Tisdall Park. The proposed installation of the fitness equipment in the northwest sector of the park, adjacent to the existing children's playground, and next to the walking pathway was well received by the attendees. They saw the fitness equipment as something that would contribute to their general health and fitness, and would integrate well into the park.

Staff recommend the location as illustrated in Appendix 1 and further recommend that the General Manager be authorized to execute the necessary documents to receive the provincial contribution of up to \$100,000. Site preparation costs are estimated at \$25,000. Funding for this element and project management costs are available in the 2006-08 Capital Plan. Future maintenance costs would be requested through the operating budget process. It is anticipated that the installation of the fitness equipment will be completed in the spring of 2009.

SUMMARY

The ActNow Seniors' Community Park proposed for Tisdall integrates well into the Park Board's Active Communities and Seniors Programs that currently exist in Vancouver's parks and recreation system. The proposal and location within Tisdall Park was well received at the Open House on November 18, 2008. Staff recommend to proceed with the next steps in creating a Seniors Community Park at Tisdall Park, and seek the Board approval on recommendations A and B above.

Prepared by:

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
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