



Date: May 2, 2014

TO: Board Members - Vancouver Park Board  
FROM: General Manager - Parks and Recreation  
SUBJECT: A Public Outdoor Space to Commemorate Jim Green

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

*THAT the Board approve the development of a public outdoor space to commemorate Jim Green in the Trillium North park site, with all details to the satisfaction of the General Manager.*

## POLICY

The Board approves major changes in Parks.

## BACKGROUND

In February of 2012 the Park Board directed staff to "Work with Jim Green and his family to develop an outdoor space that recognizes and tells the story of Mr. Green's tremendous contribution to the City." Jim Green, the former City Councilor, mayoral candidate and advocate for the Downtown Eastside, democracy, and arts passed away on February 28<sup>th</sup>, 2012 after a battle with cancer.

## DISCUSSION

A first meeting with the family was held on April 18<sup>th</sup> at the Trillium Park site so that it could be introduced as a possible location for a new outdoor space to recognize Jim Green in Strathcona, the neighbourhood where he lived. At this time the park was in the design stage, with ready opportunities for creative integration of a new space.

Dialogue at this meeting generated initial ideas for the space including, but not limited to:

- The planting of Jim Green's favourite trees (cherry and southern magnolia)
- Reflecting the 70's era of Vancouver development and the time when the viaducts were built
- Poetry, performance, art
- Union workers and longshoreman's recognition
- Railway yards and Strathcona's Chinese heritage
- People of Vancouver, Vancouver pride, and First Nations art

This first meeting lead to several more: in October of 2012, in January 2013, and in November of 2013. Discussions at these meetings resulted in a confirmed direction with the family for the space design. Staff moved forward with a number of elements in the park design that were recommended for inclusion, as these same elements were

requested by unrelated working group participants during park planning and design for the park in 2011-2012.

These elements include cherry and southern magnolia tree plantings, space for future art installations, event power, and a carver's shed to support local First Nations art creation in the park.

The direction proposed for the Jim Green space is twofold: interpretive panels in triptych format to commemorate Jim Green's life and an 'Activation Station'. The Activation Station is a gazebo with these words affixed in bold colour metal lettering. This is a place where people can come together and be activated to think and dialogue about local issues as Jim Green did with his contemporaries. The location of the Jim Green space in the park is attached as Appendix A to this Report.

The park construction started in the summer of 2013 and is substantially complete. The park is scheduled to open in June 2014 when the grass lawns are well established.

### **Engagement**

A Working Group for the Trillium Park site formed during the north park site consultation phase. This Group, that includes representatives from Strathcona and City Gate residents, More Sports, and local artists, gave input to the park construction drawings, and continues to dialogue with staff as the park evolves. Staff shared the Jim Green proposal details with the Group and they indicate strong support for it. Additionally, an information sign will be placed on the site during the installation to provide information about the project for park visitors.

### **SUMMARY**

The layering of multiple meaning in the park design, including interpretations of Jim Green's life, enriches and deepens a park experience for local residents. This commemorative proposal is supported by the park Working Group and if the Board agrees, staff will continue to work with Jim Green's family to detail the interpretive panels and text for the gazebo, so that they can be installed in the summer of 2014.

General Manager's Office  
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
Vancouver, BC

Prepared by: T. Mack  
Park Development  
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**Appendix A:  
A Space for Jim Green in the Trillium North Park Site**

