



Date: June 1, 2015

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Vancouver Parks Foundation

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to develop a plan to establish a Vancouver Parks Foundation; and

FURTHER THAT staff report back to the Board within five (5) months with a plan for implementation in 2016.

POLICY

Contributions to the Park Board are a means of supporting our mandate and assist the Park Board's long-term financial stability.

The Park Board's Strategic Plan supports increased community giving through entrepreneurial development.

BACKGROUND

The Park Board established the Gifts for Parks Program in 1986 as a mechanism to financially support the objectives of the Board; this program is still running. The program provides residents with opportunities to support the Park Board by making a donation to commemorate a loved one or to celebrate a special occasion through the dedication of a park bench or picnic table.

In 2004, the Board approved a fundraising and development initiative to increase awareness of the Gifts for Parks Program and develop new fundraising opportunities to secure sustainable funding. The Gifts for Parks Program has been expanded to include endowments, in-memory gifts, legacy gifts, gifts of stock and gifts made through bequest. Awareness of the program has increased and participation in the program continues to grow. Over one million dollars in donation revenue is raised annually and over 13,000 donors have made donations to park amenities, endowments, park conservation, recreation programming and capital projects.

DISCUSSION

Fundraising is a strategic priority of the Board and is identified in our Strategic Business Plan under 8.2 Entrepreneurial Development: Assess and pursue service-enhancing and revenue-generating opportunities.

Vancouver parks impact residents and visitors in such a way that decisions about their philanthropic goals are increasingly being made to direct donations through gifts or legacy gifts. This increasing interest provides an opportunity for the Vancouver Park Board to expand its current capability to secure new sources of sustainable funding for the growing needs of parks and recreation.

As fundraising has grown, so has the need for municipalities to establish charitable foundations to support regional parks. Some municipalities have established foundations such as Pacific Parklands Foundation (Metro Vancouver), Seattle Parks Foundation, and Calgary Parks Foundation.

Vancouver has a number of related foundations including the Vancouver Police Foundation, the Vancouver Public Library Foundation, and the Vancouver Firefighters Charitable Society.

SUMMARY

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is committed to its Strategic Plan objectives providing citizens of Vancouver with parks and recreation for all, being a leader in greening, engaging people and providing excellence in resource management. It is recommended that the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to develop a plan for the establishment of a Vancouver Parks Foundation and that staff report back to the Board with five (5) months with a plan for implementation in 2016.

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