



March 31, 2017

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Vancouver Folk Music Festival - Program Expansion

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## RECOMMENDATION

- A. **THAT** the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from the Vancouver Folk Festival Society, organizers of the Vancouver Folk Music Festival, for an additional concert date on Thursday, July 13, 2017, from 7:00pm to 10:00pm, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board; and
- B. **THAT** the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from the Society to operate the Vancouver Folk Music Festival's licensed area on the aforementioned concert date between 7:00pm and 9:30pm.

## POLICY

Park Board approval is required for special events not included in the annual Calendar of Major Special Events and/or that are in variance with one or more Park Board by-laws.

## BACKGROUND

The Vancouver Folk Music Festival (Festival) is a Canadian cultural institution - a unique community-based celebration with an internationally-renowned reputation for presenting the finest traditional and contemporary folk/roots music artists from around the world. Celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2017, the Festival continues to be one of the city's most beloved and respected events, drawing over 38,000 attendees annually to beautiful Jericho Beach Park to enjoy the music and culture of more than 60 international, national, and local acts. This year's regular Festival program is scheduled to take place between Friday, July 14 and Sunday, July 16.

## DISCUSSION

To commemorate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary milestone, the Vancouver Folk Festival Society is proposing to offer a free public concert on Thursday, July 13, 2017, from 7:00pm to 10:00pm at Jericho Beach Park for up to 3,000 people (doors would open at 6:00pm). Having received partial funding from the Department of Canadian Heritage, this initiative will also celebrate Canada 150+. The concert will feature seasoned and emerging artists, choirs, and solo artists, who represent a wide range of genres, perspectives, cultures, regions, and generations. The concert program will celebrate traditional Canadian music from its 150+ year history, plus key Canadian songbook compositions by Joni Mitchell, Hank Snow, Buffy Sainte-Marie, and Leonard Cohen. The audience will be invited to participate and engage in this special evening.

The program for this free public concert will feature acoustic music with solo artists and choirs, thereby producing lower sound impacts than regular Festival programming. At the end of the event, Festival volunteers will guide concert-goers out of the park with a lantern procession ensuring a safe, quiet, and efficient egress. Neighbourhood notification for this initiative will be included as part of the overall Festival communication plan. No changes to the event site plan (see Appendix A) will be required to deliver this initiative.

To support this free public concert initiative, the organizers have requested permission to operate their licensed area on Thursday, July 13, from 7:00pm to 9:30pm. It is anticipated that activation of the licensed area will enhance guest experience and generate additional revenues to offset event expenses.

The Society's request for an additional concert date and activation of its licensed area has been reviewed and conditionally approved by key FEST Committee members, including the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services, and the City of Vancouver's Special Events Department.

## **SUMMARY**

The Vancouver Folk Music Festival has proven to be a popular and very well-organized annual event. Through this free public concert initiative, the Festival organizers will be inviting Vancouverites and neighbours to share and participate in their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and Canada 150+ celebrations. Staff have carefully reviewed this initiative and are confident that it can be executed successfully and in accordance with all permit conditions. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the application as outlined above.

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Vancouver Folk Music Festival - Preliminary Site Plan

