



May 8, 2017

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Honda Celebration of Light - Relocating Sunset Beach Park Festival Area to Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from the Vancouver Fireworks Festival Society, organizers of the Honda Celebration of Light Fireworks Festival, to relocate their festival area from Sunset Beach Park to Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park on July 29, August 2, and August 5, 2017, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board; and
- B. FURTHER THAT the Board approve an application from the Fireworks Festival Society to obtain a Public Special Event Permit from the Liquor Control & Licensing Branch at the aforementioned location and dates, from 2:00pm to 9:00pm, with a maximum capacity of 5,000 people.

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

Vancouver's Honda Celebration of Light Fireworks Festival is the largest offshore fireworks competition in the world and the City of Vancouver's largest event, attracting upwards of 400,000 spectators nightly to English Bay. Owned and operated by the not-for-profit Vancouver Fireworks Festival Society (the "Society"), the 2017 event marks the 27th consecutive year of the competition, which contributes over \$40 million annually in incremental tourism and hospitality spending.

The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Park Board are long-standing supporters of this event and contribute numerous in-kind resources, such as site preparation assistance, sanitation services, and other civic amenities.

DISCUSSION

In 2015, the Park Board approved the introduction of a 750-person licensed festival area at Sunset Beach Park, previously called the Sunsetter Bistro, which operated from 2:00pm to 7:30pm. The all-ages experience provided an affordable opportunity for festival goers to gather as a community and enjoy activities, live music entertainment on the LG104.3 main stage, food & beverage services, and sponsorship activations. Additional amenities included picnic tables, a children's play area, washrooms (with accessible facilities), and cultural

programming. The Bistro was actively promoted as a free cultural, family-friendly, food and entertainment focused site where licensed beverages sales were secondary to the guest experience.

While the Sunsetter Bistro activation was successfully delivered, attendance at the location was low during the primary afternoon operating hours. In 2016, in an attempt to remedy this situation, the Park Board supported a 1.5 hour extension to the Bistro's operating hours until 9:00pm. Although food & beverage sales improved, the Bistro continued to operate in a deficit financial position.

For 2017, the Society is proposing to move its festival area from Sunset Beach Park to Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park in order to situate the activation in closer proximity to the primary event viewing areas. The relocated festival area (which would be renamed to better reflect the new location) would continue to feature live music entertainment on the LG104.3 main stage, food & beverage services, sponsorship activations, children's play areas, picnic tables, and cultural programming. Other amenities would include, bike valet, baby change tent, stroller valet, and portable washrooms. The relocated festival area would also allow stage entertainment from both the Sunset Beach Park and English Bay Bathhouse venues to be consolidated at Ceperley Meadow. The preliminary entertainment program, which would be delivered from 2:30pm to 9:30pm, is summarized below:

- 2:30-4:00pm - Ambient music
- 4:00-4:45pm - Local BC music or DJ performance
- 5:00-5:45pm - Cultural/dance performance
- 6:00-6:45pm - BC-based Aboriginal artist
- 7:00-8:15pm - Local BC music performance or BC-based Aboriginal artist
- 8:30-9:30pm - BC headline artist

In addition to anticipated improvements in financial performance, moving the activation from Sunset Beach Park to Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park will enable the organizers to access a newly installed event power kiosk at Ceperley. Tying into this new power source will lower overall event delivery costs and contribute to a more sustainable and greener event. The relocation to Ceperley would also reduce festival impacts to residents adjacent to the previous Sunset Beach Park site.

To support the festival area relocation to Ceperley, and improve the financial performance of the activation, the Society is also seeking approval to apply for a public Special Event Permit from the Liquor Control & Licensing Branch to serve liquor on July 29, August 2, and August 5, 2017, from 2:00pm to 9:00pm, with a maximum capacity of 5,000 people.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned changes, admission to the all ages festival area will continue to be free for the public and no alterations will be required to the event's traffic management plan. While the Stanley Park roadway system and parking lots will support car access to the new location prior to road closures in the West End, festival area attendees will be encouraged to walk, bike, and use transit. Once road closures are in effect, access to the festival area will be largely through walking and biking.

The Society's request for relocation and a Public Special Event Permit have been reviewed and conditionally approved by the City's FEST Committee members, subject to Park Board approval and submission of final event plans.

SUMMARY

The Honda Celebration of Light Fireworks Festival is one of Vancouver's premier summer events. It enhances the vibrancy of the city and enables residents and visitors alike to experience stunning fireworks displays. The proposal submitted by the event organizer represents an attempt to build on the Festival's successful activations and proactively address an underperforming component of the event. Park Board staff have thoughtfully considered the many aspects of this application with the organizers and are confident that this initiative can be executed successfully. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the relocation of the festival area to Ceperley Meadow in Stanley Park and an application from the Fireworks Festival Society to obtain a Public Special Event Permit from the Liquor Control & Licensing Branch, with a maximum capacity of 5,000 people.

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Preliminary Site Plan: Celebration of Light - Ceperley Meadow Festival Area

