



June 12, 2017

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Gathering of Canoes - Pulling Together Canoe Journey - Canada 150+ Event

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve a request from the City of Vancouver Canada 150+ project team to host the Gathering of Canoes - traditional landing of the Pulling Together Canoe Journey, at Hadden Park & Beach on July 14, 2017, from 11:00am to 4:00pm, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board.

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

Canada is commemorating the 150th anniversary of Confederation in 2017. This important milestone will be celebrated across the country with numerous events and activities. Here in Vancouver, the city's year-long cultural celebrations have been branded as "Canada 150+" to reflect the city's official role as a City of Reconciliation and its deliberate strategy to view this key milestone through an Indigenous lens. The Canada 150+ Program is grounded in community consultation, direction from Vancouver's Urban Aboriginal Peoples Advisory Committee, and support from the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations (Host Nations). The Program is focused on strengthening relations with the three Host Nations and the Urban Aboriginal community, as well as promoting Aboriginal peoples, arts, culture, awareness, and understanding.

As part of its Canada 150+ program, the City of Vancouver is partnering with the Pulling Together Canoe Society to produce an event called Gathering of the Canoes - Pulling Together Canoe Journey, which has evolved out of the Vision Quest Canoe Journey that traveled down BC's coast in 1997. Envisioned as an opportunity for both healing and reconciliation, the Vision Quest Canoe Journey brought together RCMP officers and First Nation peoples. Now held annually since 2001, under the leadership of the Pulling Together Canoe Society, the journey travels different waterways each year and cooperates with different BC First Nations. Through this initiative, the journey fosters reconciliation at a grass roots level and strengthens future relationships.

DISCUSSION

As part of a 10-day trip along traditional highways from the Sunshine Coast to Vancouver, pullers from the Pulling Together Canoe Journey will travel from Ambleside Park in West Vancouver to Hadden Park & Beach to participate in a traditional landing of their annual voyage. At the conclusion of that trip, the Gathering of Canoes - Pulling Together Canoe Journey event, which is a Signature Canada 150+ initiative, will be held between 11:00am and 4:00pm on Friday, July 14, 2017. The City of Vancouver is supporting the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh (MST)

First Nations, represented by MST Liaisons on the Canada 150+ Working Group, to co-manage ceremony and traditional protocols to welcome up to 30 canoes with First Nations, Public Service Agencies, and youth paddlers, to land on their traditional territories.

On July 14, 2017, Vancouverites will be invited to witness the traditional landing, on-shore and on-stage Cultural Protocols, followed by 1.5 hours of entertainment (Appendix A). From 11:30am to 12:30pm, the Host Nations will deliver the on-shore and on-stage Cultural Protocols. Representatives from the Park Board, City of Vancouver, and the Government of Canada will be invited to participate in the on-stage remarks. From 12:30pm to 2:00pm, there will be lunch with local food trucks and traditional drummers and dancers from the three Host Nations, invited dance groups from other territories, and contemporary beats from an Indigenous DJ. Other site activities will include children's activities, vendors, and community booths. The canoes will depart between 2:00pm and 2:30pm. Activations will continue until 4:00pm. A citywide marketing campaign is underway which will acknowledge the significant support of the Park Board, City of Vancouver, and Government of Canada towards this unique Canada 150+ event.

The onsite event coordination and production, which will deliver the Canada 150+ operational needs and the Host Nations' programming vision, will be managed by BrandLive. BrandLive is a leading event production and creative agency based in Vancouver. They produce some of the most innovative events in the region and have worked collaboratively with the Park Board for several years to deliver notable marquis events such as the Honda Celebration of Light, Stanley Park 125, and most recently, the Beedie Group's Rock'n the Park event at Malkin Bowl. BrandLive has also produced numerous other high-profile events such as the Squamish Valley Music Festival, New Year's Eve Vancouver, and several Grey Cup Festivals.

In order to deliver this event, site set-up will begin on Thursday, July 13, 2017, and teardown will take place immediately after the conclusion of the event, at 4:00pm on July 14, 2017. Park Operations will be involved in grooming and re-purposing the beach and grass area both prior to and after the event. The event organizers will be responsible for neighbourhood and stakeholder notification, and the development of comprehensive event plans (site and traffic management, Green Events, etc.).

SUMMARY

Vancouver's Canada 150+ initiatives aim to recognize and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of Aboriginal culture in Vancouver. As a signature event in the Canada 150+ Program, the Gathering of the Canoes event will bring together families and friends for an afternoon feast and celebratory gathering. Park Board staff have carefully considered the many aspects of this application with the event organizers and key stakeholders, and are confident that this initiative can be executed successfully. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve this application as outlined above.

General Manager's Office
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Gathering of Canoes - Preliminary Site Plan



Legend

1. Landing of canoes
2. Storage of canoes and viewing areas
3. Tent for Elders of Host Nations
4. Ferry dock for support boats
5. Area for speeches & entertainment
6. Picnic area
7. Food trucks, first aid & volunteer tents
8. Portable washrooms
9. Food tent for families of paddlers
10. Museum interior