



June 12, 2017

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Walk for Reconciliation - Canada 150+ Event

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## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve a request from the City of Vancouver Canada 150+ project team to host the Walk for Reconciliation event at Strathcona Park on September 24, 2017, from 2:00pm to 3:30pm, 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 150<sup>th</sup> 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 (MST) First Nations (Host Nations). It 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.

The first ever Walk for Reconciliation was held at the PNE after the Truth and Reconciliation Conference in September 2013. Over 70,000 people of all Nations, ages, abilities, communities, and faiths walked together. The initiative was the brainchild of the inspirational Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, O.B.C., and was originally conceived as a healing tool among Indigenous peoples and all Canadians, in light of the legacy of Indian residential schools.

In order to achieve key Canada 150+ outcomes, all Canada 150+ initiatives are enriched with extensive Indigenous and non-Indigenous community partnerships and shared values of mutual respect and trust to strengthen Indigenous and non-Indigenous participation, cooperation, and reconciliation. Accordingly, the 2017 Walk for Reconciliation will be programmed and produced in partnership with Reconciliation Canada, which is advised by Host Nation Liaisons, Indian residential school survivors, and organizers from various events in Vancouver that represent Chinese, Sikh, Japanese, and Jewish communities.

## **DISCUSSION**

The 2017 walk will begin at the intersection of Georgia and Cambie Streets (between 10:00 and 10:30am) on Sunday, September 24, 2017 with participants crossing the Dunsmuir Viaduct and completing the walk at Strathcona Park (between approximately 2:30 and 3:00pm). Although the event program for the activation at Strathcona Park is still being developed, it is anticipated that from 3:00 to 4:30pm, after on-stage Cultural Protocols and speeches have been delivered, that participants will enjoy entertainment featuring established and emerging Indigenous artists, cultural performances, and food from local food trucks.

Set-up for this initiative will begin on Saturday, September 23, 2017, and take down will occur on September 25, 2017. A site plan for the initiative will be available closer to the event date.

The onsite event coordination and production, intended to deliver 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 signature events such as the Honda Celebration of Light, Canada Day at Canada Place, 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.

## **SUMMARY**

Vancouver's Canada 150+ Program aims to recognize and celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of Aboriginal culture in Vancouver. As a signature event in the Canada 150+ Program, the Walk for Reconciliation event will bring together people of all Nations, ages, abilities, communities, and faiths to walk together and experience the healing and transformational power of 'Namwayut - We Are All One, which will guide our journey to move forward together, in light of the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. 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 the application as outlined above.

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