



June 25, 2017

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Vancouver Biennale 2018-2030 Partnership Agreement

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board enter into an agreement to host three temporary artwork exhibitions over the period of 2018 through to 2030, curated and funded by the Vancouver Biennale Foundation with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager and the Director of Legal Services.

POLICY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS

The Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over the use of Vancouver parks, which includes all structures, activities, and improvements within those parks.

In December 2003, the Board reconfirmed its commitment to the arts by adopting the renewed [Park Board Arts Policy](#). This policy supports the provision of a vibrant public realm and the experience of public art and cultural events in parks.

In the Park Board's Strategic Framework, Objective 2.3 is to provide Vibrant Arts & Culture Experiences: Actively facilitate public participation in and access to the arts.

BACKGROUND

Between 1998 and 2003, two temporary exhibitions of sculptures from around the world were installed in parks along the waterfront on Vancouver's downtown peninsula. These exhibitions were sponsored and funded by Buschlen Mowatt Galleries. By 2004, the galleries had established a non-profit society, the Vancouver International Sculpture Biennale, and proposed a larger scale and longer term agreement with the Park Board.

Based on the popular successes of the past sculpture exhibitions, the Park Board approved entering into an agreement with the Biennale that would govern a series of 18 month exhibitions to take place in parks over a 10 year period. The agreement was signed in August 2005. Over this period the Biennale:

- installed three exhibitions of between 6 to 20 artworks on park land and in community centres;
- expanded their activities to include artist residencies, bike tours and a cinema festival;
- instituted a highly regarded educational program delivered through the school system;
- installed artworks on City of Vancouver land and in several other municipalities in the region including Richmond, New Westminister, North and West Vancouver and Squamish; and

- created an extensive archive through printed catalogues and a [Vancouver Biennale website](#) which provides substantial information about the artworks to the general public.

Two of the artworks installed as part of Biennale exhibitions have been donated to the Park Board. The Vancouver Biennale Legacy Foundation donated Michel Goulet's work "Echoes" installed at Kitsilano Beach and, and "A-maze-ing Laughter" by Yue Minjun, was purchased by the Wilson Family and donated to the Park Board "for the ongoing enjoyment of the people of Vancouver".

The Vancouver Biennale Foundation is now proposing a new agreement for a series of three exhibitions of up to 15 artworks each in Vancouver parks, to take place over 12 years. The conditions of the new partnership are substantially the same as those from the previous agreement, with the Biennale Foundation providing curatorial leadership and funding the installation, insurance, maintenance, and de-installation of the artworks. Park Board staff will again provide technical and risk management reviews of the works and installation plans; and maintain the grounds around the exhibits.

Key new aspects to the currently proposed agreement include:

- Identification, review and agreement in advance on 15 sites available for the 12 years;
- Large concrete, multi-use sculpture bases will be installed below ground or at grade by the Biennale for the 12 year duration (where appropriate);
- Between exhibition periods, the multi-use bases will be managed by the Park Board potentially including installation of soil and turf;
- Park Board to provide landscaping following the removal and back-filling of the multi-use bases by the Biennale, at the end of the 12 year term; and
- If at any time during an exhibition period either party requires an artwork be moved, it will be at the expense of the requesting party.

Additional details are included in Appendix A.

DISCUSSION

Past Biennale exhibitions have proven their curatorial vision and have been popular with the general public and visitors to the City. The extension of community interaction with the artists and the artworks through residencies and the educational program aligns with the Board's strategic objective to provide vibrant arts and culture experiences. The aforementioned artworks "Echoes" and "A-maze-ing Laughter" are excellent examples of the positive legacy this exhibition program can provide.

The new proposition of multi-use bases will provide efficiencies. Site reviews are necessary for every installation and require significant staff time from both the Biennale Foundation and the Park Board. While engineering reviews will still be required for the attachment of each sculpture, the sites with multi-use bases will not require reviews for every installation, thereby reducing the staff time required over the 12 year period.

Determining the 15 locations which will be utilized for the new 12 year period will involve reviewing any previously Biennale artwork sites, as well as any new ones under consideration. Reviews will include archeological, ecological, technical, and cultural considerations. Any sites not previously utilized will also undergo community consultations with signage on site, social media, brochures, etc. The Board will be asked to approve the final list of proposed sites.

The Park Board has taken on some new responsibilities in this iteration of the partnership with the Biennale Foundation including: landscaping of cement bases in between the exhibition periods; expenses for re-landscaping at the end of the 12 year contract; and responsibility for expenses incurred if at any time during an exhibition period the Park Board requires an artwork to be relocated. However the value to the public of the temporary exhibitions of international artworks is substantial.

A summary of the key aspects of the new Agreement for the exhibition series is attached as Appendix A to this report.

SUMMARY

The proposed agreement with the Vancouver Biennale Foundation will provide three exciting temporary exhibitions of multiple artworks over the 12 year term. These artworks would not otherwise be available to the Vancouver public. These exhibitions meet the Park Board's policy and strategic objective of supporting the provision of a vibrant public realm and the experience of public art and cultural events in parks. Previous exhibitions have provided positive legacies for the Vancouver Park Board. Staff therefore recommend proceeding with the proposed 12 year agreement with the Vancouver Biennale Foundation.

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Park Board/Biennale New Contract: Key Aspects Summary

Contract to cover key aspects of exhibition series including:

- Contract to cover 12 year period
- During the 12 years there will be 3 exhibitions, each cycle taking 4 years
- Each exhibition cycle will consist of:
 - 6 months of planning and installation
 - 18 months of exhibition
 - 8 months of de-installation
 - 16 months during which no artworks will be exhibited unless specifically approved by the Park Board
- For each exhibition the Biennale is responsible for curatorial and artwork selection process
- The Park Board will review all proposed installations and installation plans for risk management and technical considerations.
- 15 exhibition sites will be identified, reviewed and agreed upon by Biennale and Park Board for the entire 12 year period. Some sites may have size, weight or other constraints. If at any time during the 12 year period one of the locations is removed from the inventory another site will be identified reviewed and agreed upon.
- Where appropriate large multi-use bases will be installed. As-built Engineer's stamped drawings will be provided for each base and Engineer's stamped drawings will be provided for each and every artwork installation proposed for each and every base.
- Biennale will be responsible for:
 - Installation of artworks including landscape repairs,
 - maintenance of artworks during exhibitions,
 - de-installations,
 - removal of all bases at end of 12 year period
 - filling of holes left by base removals.
- Park Board will be responsible for:
 - Maintenance of grounds during exhibition periods
 - Any aesthetic treatment of bases when not in use, potentially including installing dirt and turf,
 - Landscaping following removal of bases
- If at any time during the 18 month exhibition period the Biennale requires an artwork to be moved, the Biennale will be responsible for all expenses.
- If at any time during the 18 month exhibition period the Park Board requires an artwork to be moved, the Biennale will relocate the work to another agreed upon site and invoice the Park Board for reasonable expenses incurred.
- If at any time a site needs to be removed from the inventory, another site will be agreed upon by the Park Board and the Biennale.