



MOTION ON NOTICE

Submitted at the Regular Board meeting held on November 19, 2018

Horticultural Standards in Vancouver Parks

MOVER: Commissioner Coupar

WHEREAS:

1. The mission of the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit all people, communities, and the environment;
2. The Park Board is established under the Vancouver Charter and has possession, jurisdiction and control of all areas designated as permanent public parks of the City;
3. In recent years, the Park Board and its budget have experienced significant challenges related to declining operational maintenance standards of our major horticultural assets including VanDusen Botanical Gardens, Bloedel Conservatory, Queen Elizabeth Park, Stanley Park, Sunset Nursery, and Tree Farm, additionally it is clear that parks and gardens city wide do not have the level of care necessary to provide excellent park experiences for residents and visitors;
4. This decline in standards has been noted and communicated by the public, and Park Board Commissioners and staff have received numerous expressions of concern from residents and visitors who frequent Vancouver parks;
5. The existing Park Board budget for journeyman gardeners and park maintenance is inadequate to address the significant challenges related to care and maintenance and is a result of the continuing operational budget shortfall;
6. It is public knowledge that the Park Board has only 30 journeyman gardeners for 230 parks city wide;
7. Further when you remove the number that are involved with VanDusen, Bloedel Conservatory and Stanley Park, the number of gardeners across the city is clearly inadequate and additional resources need to be found;
8. It is widely recognized that parks and gardens are a significant economic generator to Vancouver's tourism industry; and
9. Vancouver has a long history of horticultural excellence and our staff team does amazing work with often limited resources; it is time to address and begin to rebuild our capacity to deliver excellent experiences for all in our Vancouver Parks.



THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation formally requests Vancouver City Council to authorize additional funding for the Park Board – on a priority basis for the 2019 Operating Budget – to enable increased care and maintenance in our cherished parks and gardens at all Vancouver parks impacted by the significant challenges of 10 years of declining standards, as well as additional funding to maintain the cleanliness and safety of impacted Vancouver parks on an ongoing basis;
- B. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation directs Park Board staff to expeditiously draft a revised budget, for submission to Vancouver City Council and the City of Vancouver, outlining the Operating Budget funding necessary to enable increased care and maintenance in our cherished parks and gardens at all Vancouver parks, as well as the funding necessary to maintain the cleanliness and safety in time for the 2019 season; and
- C. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation directs staff to report back with a review of horticultural staff levels with comparable parks systems, botanical gardens, and horticultural attractions, with metrics to compare and allow staff to provide recommendations to the Board and to create a needs analysis so the Board can be aware of the actual needed funds to maintain our parks and gardens to verifiable acceptable standards, further that this report be received prior to consideration of the 2020 Operating Budget.