



BARD ON THE BEACH PILOT PROGRAM

Park Board Committee Meeting
October 21, 2024



PURPOSE/OBJECTIVES

- Present potential Bard on the Beach (BOTB) pilot program opportunity
- Review why this initiative is needed, how it would be executed, and the associated benefits
- Seek Board approval for this proposal



BOARD AUTHORITY & POLICY

- Per the Vancouver Charter, the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over park land use in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs, activities, fees, and improvements within parks
- Approves the use of all lands under its jurisdiction on such terms as the Park Board may decide



BACKGROUND | Bard on the Beach

- Established in 1990, BOTB is Western Canada's largest not-for-profit Shakespeare Festival
- Presented in Sen'ákw/Vanier Park
- Offers Shakespeare plays, related dramas, and special events from June to September
- Welcomed approximately 90,000 guests in 2024
- BOTB educational division offers year-round program opportunities



BACKGROUND | Bard on the Beach

- Number of issues have emerged as the Festival has grown/matured over past 35 years and park use evolved over the same period
- BOTB and Park Board staff have been working collaboratively to explore solutions for these challenges
- Immediate opportunity has emerged that could provide benefits for all stakeholders



PILOT PROGRAM OPPORTUNITY

- Historically, all BOTB infrastructure is removed from event site during the offseason period
- Offseason runs from November 2024 to March 2025
- Proposed pilot program would involve leaving the Festival's mainstage tent arches onsite during this timeframe



WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

- Financial/logistical realities of BOTB's tents have become increasingly challenging and threaten Festival sustainability:
 - Cost of erecting and taking down infrastructure is increasing rapidly and will continue into the future
 - Seasonal labour and equipment required for the work is becoming a greater risk
 - Heavy equipment required for installation causes significant disturbance to the event site



HOW WOULD THIS BE EXECUTED?

- Festival mainstage arches would be left onsite; tent fabric removed
- Arches would be cladded for safety and protection; showcase art or key messages – specific interest in exploring MST artwork
- Lighting elements would be added to create appeal and enhance public realm aesthetic
- Activation would also be supported by security oversight



HOW WOULD THIS BE EXECUTED?



BENEFITS

- Offer cost reduction opportunities for BOTB
- Provide revenue stream for the Park Board
- Decrease wear and tear on the event site; reduce remediation requirements
- Opportunity to gauge public opinion to inform future initiatives
- Short term pilot is low risk (winter season, no user displacement)



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Financial – all expenses related to the delivery of this pilot program would be borne by BOTB
- Learning opportunity – will be able to gauge public response/feedback and inform future initiatives with BOTB
- Low risk – winter season initiative; no park user displacement



SUMMARY

- BOTB is longstanding Vancouver summertime favourite
- Number of issues have emerged as the Festival has grown and park use evolved
- Staff have worked collaboratively to explore solutions for these issues
- Immediate opportunity has been identified that will provide meaningful benefits
- Staff have reviewed and confident this initiative can be delivered successfully



RECOMMENDATIONS



- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (“Park Board”) authorize staff to negotiate to the satisfaction of the Park Board’s General Manager and the City of Vancouver’s (the “City”) Director of Legal Services and enter into a contract with Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival for a pilot program that will enable the Festival’s mainstage arches to remain onsite at Sen’ ákw/Vanier Park during the event’s off-season between November 2024 and March 2025.
- B. THAT the City’s Director of Legal Services and Park Board’s General Manager be authorized to execute on behalf of the Park Board the contract contemplated by Recommendation A above.
- C. THAT no legal rights or obligations will be created by the Park Board’s adoption of Recommendations A and B above unless and until such contract is executed by the authorized signatories of the City as set out in these Recommendations.

