

March 12, 2021

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Art Phillips Park & Burrard SkyTrain Station Project – Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide project background and an update on design changes at Art Phillips Park as they relate to TransLink’s Burrard Skytrain Station upgrades. Public engagement related to the changes at the station and in the park will be available through the Shape Your City platform between March 15 and April 9, 2021.

Background

Art Phillips Park, originally named Discovery Square, was purchased by the City in 1974 for the purpose of providing park space in the downtown core and supporting future transit needs. The park was constructed in 1979 and the Burrard SkyTrain Station was opened 1985 as part of the Expo Line construction. The station is owned and operated by TransLink, and as one of the busiest stations in the SkyTrain system it has reached capacity in some areas. In 2018, TransLink approached the City of Vancouver through the City’s Rapid Transit Office (RTO) with a proposal to expand the existing station. The station upgrades, which almost double pre-COVID-19 passenger capacity, are expected to start in fall of 2021 and be complete by spring of 2024.

Burrard Station Upgrade Project and Plaza Design

As part of TransLink’s proposed Burrard Station Upgrade project, the existing station entry on Burrard Street will be relocated and expanded to increase capacity. The entry will move from the southern portion of the site near Melville, further north and closer to Dunsmuir Street. The existing open space on Burrard, a grassy area with public art, would be relocated to where the current station entry sits. Park Board staff, working with RTO and TransLink staff have developed a concept design for the new public space to support the needs of both park and transit users (see Figure 1).

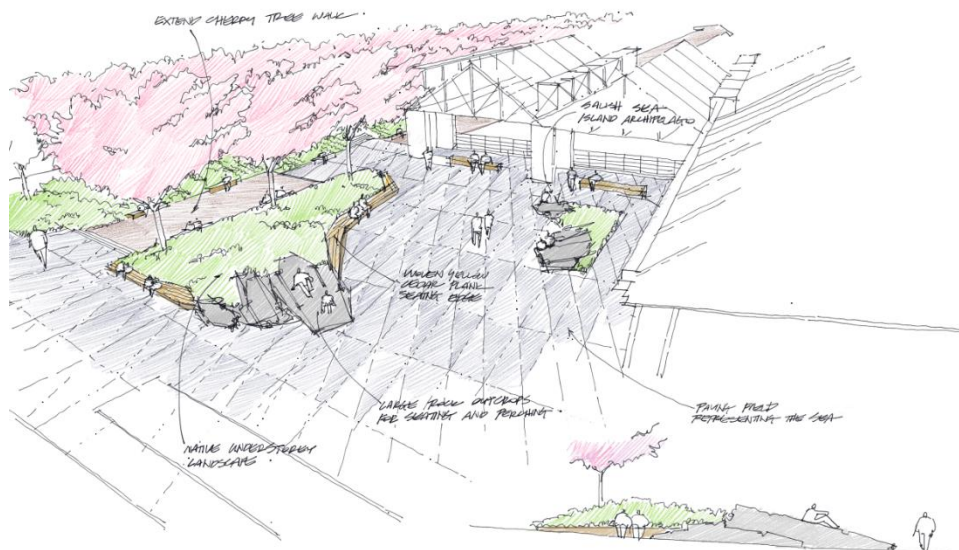


Figure 1: Art Phillips Park Redesign – schematic working drawing perspective

The concept design being presented as part of the public engagement also focuses on preserving and extending the popular row of cherry trees through the park to Burrard Street (see Figure 2), making improvements to site accessibility, adding seating to support park and transit users, and creating open space to support site programming.



Figure 2: Art Phillips Park Redesign – Cherry tree walk extension to Burrard Street

Next Steps

Upon completion of the public engagement period, staff will be submitting project referrals to Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh Nations (MST) seeking input on the current concept design and direction on how to incorporate Indigenous history, story-telling, land use practises, artwork, and values into the design. Some Indigenous place making, history, and storytelling have been identified in an Indigenous Heritage Assessment report recently produced for the site by Sky Spirit Studio + Consulting.

Once staff have received input from MST and have made any necessary design changes, the finalized concept design will be presented to the Park Board for decision in mid to late 2021. Subject to Board approval, the concept design will be issued to TransLink to be incorporated into the overall station upgrade design and construction timeline.

Regards,



Donnie Rosa (*she/they*)
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/ha/amb/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
Planning & Park Development Project Team
PB Communications