



November 22, 2019

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **Bloedel Conservatory Portable Building Feasibility Review – Report Back**

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Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to report back on the Board's direction to explore the feasibility of providing a portable/modular building for the Vancouver Botanical Garden Association (VBGA) to conduct public education at Bloedel Conservatory.

On July 22, 2019, as part of the recommendation approving the program and funding for the [Bloedel Conservatory 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration](#), the Board introduced a motion to explore the feasibility of allocating up to \$150,000 from the operating budget to provide a portable building in concert with the facility's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary program. As outlined in the [Board report](#), the anniversary program consists of a series of celebratory initiatives delivered by both the Park Board and the VBGA, to be executed between October 2019 and January 2020.

Upon receiving the Board's direction, Park Board staff engaged and began working with the City of Vancouver's Real Estate and Facilities Management (REFM) team to more accurately identify the requirements and timelines necessary to support this concept, and to estimate the costs associated with delivering the proposed portable/modular building.

While the installation of a portable/modular building at Bloedel Conservatory is a relatively simple concept, the analysis indicated that the cost associated with advancing this initiative would very likely exceed the proposed budget of \$150,000 and cannot be completed within a timeframe that is aligned with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

As such, staff are exploring other options that could support expanded programming at the conservatory, including reviewing the feasibility of modifying operations at the Celebration Pavilion to permit greater and more flexible use of that facility for programming and other activities. Longer term, the Queen Elizabeth park master plan will examine overall park amenities and needs, and the strategic business review currently underway with the VBGA will also help to provide direction on future investments at Bloedel.

For your reference, further details from the modular feasibility review are summarized below:

- **Building Permit Requirements** – Since the City of Vancouver building code applies to portable/modular buildings, a building permit would be required to advance this initiative and the structure would need to meet all code requirements, including washrooms, accessibility, seismic design, and life-safety requirements (which could include emergency lighting, fire alarms, and sprinklers). Further, portable/modular buildings used as classrooms fall under the City's assembly use occupancy, meaning that more stringent code requirements would apply. Building code timelines would be determined by the building authority, but based on recent similar sized projects, it is estimated that 3 to 6 months would be required for a permit.



- **Development Permit Requirements** – REFM representatives also advised that a City of Vancouver development permit would be required to pursue this initiative. While the required permit review time varies and would need to be confirmed with the development authority, it is anticipated to take several months.
- **Site Servicing Requirements** – Only a portion of the costs associated with smaller projects in park space are attributable to the structures themselves -- instead, much of the costs are incurred to connect the facility to services. In this case, site servicing would be required to provide water, electrical, data, and potentially sanitary services to the portable/modular structure. Sanitary connection costs at this location may be reduced if nearby public washrooms can be utilized, however, the acceptability of this solution in meeting code requirements would fall under the jurisdiction of the building authority, and would also need to take into account functional impacts (e.g. would there be sufficient staff to escort children to unsecured washrooms while simultaneously carrying out programming).
- **Scope of Work/Design Responsibility** – Engineered designs would be required for the portable/modular building, as well as for the foundations, site work, electrical, and mechanical servicing.
- **Procurement Requirements** - Delivering a project with costs up to \$150,000 would require three or more bids. If the project exceeds \$200,000, then a public process would be required, and would likely take 3 to 4 months to complete.

Although it is not possible to provide a facility for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations, staff will continue to work with the VBGA toward the goal of increased programming capacity for Bloedel Conservatory.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Malcolm Bromley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

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Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team  
PB Business Development  
PB Communications