



March 25 2022

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

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

SUBJECT : **Korean Pavilion at VanDusen Botanical Garden - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to inform you of plans to remove the Korean Pavilion from VanDusen Botanical Garden due to significant structural damage and replace it with a commemoration, as per the request received from the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea. Park Board staff and the Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association (VBGA) are supportive of this commemoration.

Background

In October 1986, at the conclusion of the Expo 86 World Exposition, the Park Board approved the acquisition of the Korean Pavilion as a gift from the Korean government. All moving, installation and landscaping costs were covered by the VBGA, and the pavilion has remained a feature at VanDusen Botanical Garden ever since.



In 2005, the Korean government and business community came together to fund a group of Korean artists to travel to Vancouver in order to restore parts of the pavilion using an ancient technique called *dan cheong*. This technique is used primarily to decorate and prolong the life of wooden structures and involves staining the wood rather than painting over it.

Over the years, the pavilion gradually deteriorated from exposure to the elements. In 2015, considerable structural safety concerns were identified requiring the pavilion to be fenced off from the public until repaired, which would occur once funding for those improvements was determined.



In March 2021, a windstorm caused a large tree limb to fall on the roof of the pavilion resulting in its complete collapse. Although the windstorm was the primary cause of the collapse, the existing degraded structural integrity of the pavilion contributed to the overall extent of the damages.

Park Board staff contacted the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea to inform them of the storm damage and current state of the Korean Pavilion. In consultation with the Deputy Consul General, it was agreed that the

Park Board would contract a heritage conservation engineer to complete a condition report and then would advise the Consulate on possible treatment options. The engineer explored a number of approaches, which included both short-term and long-term options.



Short-term Options – Interim Protection

Two short-term scenarios were considered: a) in-situ shoring and stabilization of the current structure, or b) removal and storage. Both of these approaches would allow more time for planning the longer term solutions while ensuring the structure is protected from further damage. The estimated cost of in-situ shoring and stabilization was \$25,000, and the estimated cost of removal and storage was \$70,000 (for one year of storage).

Long-term Options – Full Restoration

In order to return the pavilion to its original character and appearance, only light repairs are expected for the roof framing above the main beams, but supporting framing would be replaced by BC sourced yellow cedar, with original timber re-used as much as possible to preserve the integrity of the structure. All work would be completed based on conservation principles.

Two options were available for completing the rehabilitation: a) in-situ, where the structure is shored in place to allow for replacement and repair of damaged components, or b) offsite, where the structure is transported to a facility for restoration and returned to the site for re-assembly. The estimated costs were \$430,000 for in-situ rehabilitation, and \$685,000 if done offsite.

Demolition and Commemoration

The final options considered were a) demolition and debris removal, and b) commemoration, which would be informed through engagement with the Korean Consulate and key community stakeholders and undertaken by a heritage professional. The estimated cost for demolition is \$30,000 to 50,000, and \$30,000 for commemoration.

In September 2021, Park Board staff reviewed all options with the Consulate General of the Republic of Korea. The Consulate advised staff in November that they would like to move forward with demolition followed by commemoration. Park Board staff are prepared to manage the demolition work, and once the area is landscaped, would work with the Consulate to develop a commemoration plan. The future commemoration will be in consultation with the Decolonization, Arts and Culture department, and informed by the forthcoming City-wide Commemoration Framework.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donnie Rosa".

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)

General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/et/jh/clc

Copy to: Vancouver Botanical Garden Association
PB Leadership Team
PB Decolonization, Arts and Culture