



February 17, 2021

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

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

SUBJECT : **New Park at Smithe & Richards Project Update & Quarterly Adjustment - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide a project update and details on an upcoming request to Council for a quarterly budget adjustment of \$1.7M to support the construction and development of the new park at Smithe and Richards.

Background

The new downtown park at Smithe and Richards is scheduled to be completed by summer 2021. The 0.3 ha (0.8 acre) park will include: a large accessible playground, and lush plantings and trees connected to an integrated stormwater management system; a flexible event and performance space; a fully accessible overhead walkway with viewing platforms, an in-ground water spray feature with grey water recirculation, a café building with public washrooms and green roof. The new park will be one of the hardest working parks and public space in the City supporting a significant number of residents and workers, nearly 30,000 within a five-minute walk, as well as attracting a significant number of visitors and tourists from downtown.

Budget Adjustment Details

On February 23, 2021, the [Quarterly Capital Budget Adjustments and Closeouts report](#) is scheduled to be presented to Council for decision. It includes a recommendation for a quarterly budget adjustment of \$1.7M for the Smithe & Richards park project, which if approved, would increase the multi-year capital project budget from \$16.2M to \$17.9M.

The bulk of the adjustment request (\$1.43M) is in response to a significant increase in the scope of work primarily due to unforeseen subsurface site conditions not identified during the initial site remediation. These conditions include two underground oil tanks, significant buried building foundations, footings encroaching from adjacent building, and a significant amount of buried building material including red brick, which require special handling and disposal due to asbestos content.

The budget increase also includes funding (\$94K) to outfit the café space at a base level for interim use, with the goal to have the café space operating when the park opens this summer. Owing to the challenges of finding a long-term café tenant during the current COVID-10 pandemic, staff, working with the Downtown Vancouver BIA, have developed a plan to operate the café as an incubator space for start-up small businesses focused on food and beverage.

In addition, and consistent with the Park Board's evolving understanding of what it means to work on Traditional Territory, the budget adjustment also includes funds (\$178K) for work with the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations on the identification of a park name and supporting public art.



If approved, the budget increase will be funded by the area-specific, development-funded Downtown South Development Cost Levy (DCL) account for parks, which has a balance of approximately \$6.2M. The quarterly budget adjustment was presented and approved by the City's Capital Planning and Delivery Oversight Committee (CPDOC) on January 28, and will be presented to Council for decision on February 23. The recommendation to Council will be to increase the multi-year capital project budget by \$1.7M with the funding available from the existing Downtown South DCL Fund.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Donnie Rosa". The signature is somewhat scribbled and loops around.

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

amb/is

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
Park Development
PB Communications