



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 2, 2009
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Meeting Date: June 16, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: General Manager of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Recreation Infrastructure Canada (RInC) Funding Applications

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the application by the Park Board to the Recreation Infrastructure Canada (RInC) program, as detailed in this report, for supplemental funding totalling \$2,000,000 (\$1,000,000 each) to the following projects anticipated in the 2009-2011 Capital Plan:

- i. incremental enhancements to the neighbourhood park renewal program, and
- ii. additional sport and exercise amenity related to one synthetic turf playfield installation.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager, Park Board, RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY (Do not remove)

On September 30, 2008, Council approved the 2009-2011 Capital Plan for Parks, including allocations of \$5,500,000 for 'Synthetic Turf Playing Fields' (ref. # P4b) and \$2,125,000 for Other Park Renewals (ref. # P1d).

BACKGROUND

On May 11, 2009, the Government of Canada announced the Recreation Infrastructure Canada Program (RInC). The fund is part of Canada's Economic Action Plan, the Federal Government's plan to respond to the current economic downturn.

The program is a new infrastructure fund that will invest \$500 million in recreational facilities across Canada over a two-year period to renew, upgrade and expand recreational infrastructure in Canadian communities. Western Economic Diversification Canada will distribute the Federal funds in Western Canada, investing almost \$54 million allocated on a regional per capita basis in recreational infrastructure projects in the four western provinces.

Projects approved under RInC can receive up to \$1 million in federal funding, which will normally represent one-third of project costs (total federal funding, including funding received through RInC, cannot exceed 50% of total project costs). The remaining funding is to be leveraged from other project stakeholders such as provincial, territorial, municipal and other partners.

Project application deadlines are May 29 and June 19, 2009 (A second call for proposals may be made depending on the volume of applications received).

Projects eligible for funding through RInC will fall within the following categories of recreational infrastructure:

- Arenas, gymnasias, swimming pools or sports fields;
- Tennis, basketball, volleyball or other sport-specific courts;
- Parks, fitness trails or bike paths; and
- Other multi-purpose physical recreation facilities.

Eligible projects will also:

- Normally be for the rehabilitation or repair of recreational facilities;
- Begin and materially conclude construction before March 31, 2011; and,
- Be incremental, i.e. projects would not have occurred, as proposed, without support from RInC.

In addition to meeting the eligibility requirements described above, projects will be assessed on construction-readiness, planned completion date, the extent to which other funding is leveraged, and local and municipal government support. Depending on the volume of applications received, other criteria may be applied.

All direct incremental costs related to the project that have been incurred and paid by a successful applicant are eligible to be funded under RInC. This includes, by exception, the applicant's employee cost. Costs and services normally provided by the applicant are not eligible.

A second and larger scale Infrastructure program, the \$4 billion Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, was announced by the Federal Government in January, but has yet to be implemented. Park Board has identified three major facility renewal projects that are appropriate candidates for application to this program when the time comes:

- VanDusen Gardens Building Renewal
- Trout Lake Community Centre Renewal
- Stanley and Queen Elizabeth Parks Asphalt Resurfacing.

DISCUSSION

The RInC program offers a potential means to advance park infrastructure renewal objectives while at the same time supporting the development of active living and fitness opportunities for city residents. Accordingly, Park Board proposes to apply for RInC funding to supplement previously approved allocations for neighbourhood park renewal and for synthetic turf playing field development.

Projects associated with neighbourhood park renewal and playing field development are proposed to be advanced for RInC consideration because these areas meet the program

eligibility criteria and, in the opinion of staff, the projects are achievable within the stipulated timeframe (i.e., completion by March 31, 2011). As well, the City allocation to these Capital Plan line items each exceeds \$2,000,000 and therefore allows in both instances for the maximum program contribution of \$1,000,000 to be achieved.

Provisional work program elements for both initiatives, assuming that full RInC funding is received, are outlined below. This programming would be subject to modification as design concepts are developed based on site technical evaluation and input from public consultations.

Neighbourhood Park Renewal

Additional or enhanced features are proposed for Grandview, Norquay and Fraserview Parks, all three of which are listed for park renewal work in the 2009-2011 Capital Plan. In each case, park improvements requests received from the community cannot be fully addressed within the current Capital allocation. The proposed distribution of supplementary funds and provisional work elements are as follows:

Grandview Park	\$200,000	Update and improve existing water spray park.
Norquay Park	\$600,000	Convert existing wading pool to water spray park; add exercise/t'ai chi surface and/or perimeter jogging path.
Fraserview Park	\$200,000	Provide age appropriate play facilities (note that the Fraserview Boys and Girls Club is located on this park).
Total	\$1,000,000	

Synthetic Turf Playing Fields

The 2009-2011 Capital Plan contains provision for the development of two new lit synthetic turf fields at \$2,500,000 each, plus \$500,000 for support facilities in connection with previously developed synthetic turf fields.

At its meeting of April 6, 2001, Park Board endorsed a shortlist of Memorial South Park, Rupert Park and Beaconsfield Park as potential sites for artificial turf playing field installation, and directed staff to conduct further technical review and a public process in relation to this initiative.

Given supplementary RInC funding, the proposal would be to provide enhanced sport and fitness elements in connection with one of the two new synthetic turfs, with priority given to upgrading the existing gravel/cinder running track around the field at Memorial South Park.

It is strongly advisable that a combined field and track installations be developed or upgraded as one project to ensure level transitions between the two components. As well, field lighting will illuminate both surfaces at once, greatly increasing the utility of the track component at no extra cost. Therefore, successful application to the RInC program for the added track element would enable the creation of an ideal facility for field sports, athletic training and casual exercise, through all seasons of the year.

Given Council approval of this report and successful application for RInC funding support, in whole or in part, Park Board staff would engage in public consultation at the neighbourhood level to develop concept plans based on the programming outlined above. The projects would be subject to the normal processes of Park Board review and oversight of parks and recreation capital works. In this instance, as well, project implementation would be expedited to ensure that the targeted work is substantially complete within the stipulated timeframe.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Potentially, additional funding of up to \$2,000,000 would be received by the City, leveraged by the 2009-2011 Parks Capital Plan. Neither the grant application process nor the potential receipt of funds would entail additional capital or operating commitments by the City. However, given the requirement to complete RInC funded capital works in a timely manner, advance approvals from the 2010 Parks Capital Budget may be necessary upon confirmation of funding award.

CONCLUSION

Council is asked to approve application to the Recreation Infrastructure Canada (RInC) for \$2,000,000 in funding to augment the scope of capital works line items in the 2009 - 2011 Capital Plan, specifically in the areas of neighbourhood park renewal and synthetic turf playing fields.

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