

Date: January 12, 2009



**TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board**  
**FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation**  
**SUBJECT: Olympic Games related Public Art - Update**

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## RECOMMENDATION

*THAT the Board receive this report for information.*

## POLICY

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation adopted the *Arts Policy and Recommendations* in November 1993 and a renewed *Arts Policy* (Appendix A) in December 2003. The *Arts Policy* states that the Board provides a vibrant public realm and supports the experience of public art and cultural events in parks.

In 1988, the Park Board adopted the *Acceptance Guidelines for Long Term Gifts of Public Art* (Appendix B) and in 1997 the Board adopted the *Guidelines for the Review of Proposed Donations of Public Art and/or Memorials to City-Wide Parks* (Appendix C). These guidelines are designed to ensure that high quality artwork can be added to Vancouver's public spaces, and that community response is included in the considerations for the siting of the works.

The core principle of these policies is shared decision-making. The Park Board controls and approves the use of park land and park facilities, reviews the technical analysis conducted by staff and the consultation with the public, and ascertains that Park Board rules and policies were properly implemented. The decision over the aesthetic and artistic merit of proposed artworks is placed into the hands of juries or art panels consisting of artists, curators and community representatives.

## BACKGROUND

In September 2008, Vancouver City Council adopted the final *Olympic and Paralympic Public Art Plan* (OPPAP) with a budget of \$5.95 Million to develop a variety of permanent and temporary art projects, some of them intended for park land or Park Board facilities.

In addition, the Vancouver Organizing Committee for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games (VANOC) is developing a Vancouver 2010 Aboriginal Arts Program (VAAP) - with a budget of \$2 Million - that seeks to commission art pieces for all Games venues and their venue lands, including those that already are or will become Park Board facilities.

This report provides an update on projects from both initiatives as they relate to the jurisdiction of the Park Board.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Olympic and Paralympic Public Art Plan (OPPAP)**

The City's OPPAP is founded on the principle that public art, in cooperation with the Games, can create remarkable places and experiences that provide lasting memories and permanent legacies while encouraging ongoing community awareness and participation in sport, culture and environmental stewardship long after 2010. OPPAP is offering a broad range of art opportunities through three streams, two of which have implications for the Park Board:

- Legacy Projects are site-specific commissions, awarded to artists selected by jury, of significant scale and high visibility in prominent locations such as the Georgia Street entrance to Stanley Park and the plaza in the Olympic Village in Southeast False Creek;
- Artist Initiated Projects are opportunities for artists to propose their own projects and their own sites; these are competitions adjudicated by juries.

The City and the Park Board have a history of working cooperatively to place newly commissioned, City-funded artworks on park land. While these commissions are not considered donations for the purpose of Park Board guidelines, the same categories of technical review, independent aesthetic assessment and community consultation are implemented where appropriate. Past examples include the sculpture by Alan Storey "Leaning Towards Frame Dragging" in Killarney Park, and the artwork by Susan Point "People Amongst the People" in Stanley Park near the totem poles.

#### ***Legacy Projects proposed for sites of Park Board interest:***

- Georgia Street entrance to Stanley Park

The Georgia Street entrance to Stanley Park site consists of two concrete circles that were designed as public art sites in conjunction with the widening of the Stanley Park causeway, the re-alignment of the s-curve and the construction of the new pedestrian underpass, as approved by Council and Park Board in May 2001. The southerly concrete circle is under the jurisdiction of the Park Board, the northerly circle is under the jurisdiction of the City's Engineering Services.

Public consultation for this site was conducted in fall 2008 by notification of residents in a two-block radius and signs on site. The majority of responses were very positive, as reported to the Park Board in the Committee Meeting of October 20, 2008.

The City's call for artist credentials for this site garnered 128 responses. A jury composed of artists, curators and a neighbourhood resident have selected a short list of six artists to prepare proposals. The jury will reconvene for the final artist selection on February 2, 2009. Park Board staff will be part of the technical review of preliminary and final proposals.

- Olympic Village plaza in Southeast False Creek

The village plaza in Southeast False Creek is currently under the jurisdiction of City Council. Since the plaza is intended to come under Park Board jurisdiction after the Games, Park Board staff are involved in all aspects of the planning and development of the plaza.

The plaza is the site for a major new art work in accordance with OPPAP. Vancouver artist Myfanwy MacLeod has been awarded the commission after a juried international competition. The artwork is currently under development. Park Board staff are part of all technical reviews.

- Future Legacy Projects

OPPAP includes two additional art projects of Park Board interest, one in conjunction with the future Southeast False Creek Community Centre, a building that will serve as the village mall and office of the village mayor during the Games. The other project is intended for the Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre in Hillcrest Park. Both of these projects are expected to be developed in cooperation with the Park Board at a future date.

***Artist Initiated Projects proposed for sites under Park Board jurisdiction:***

- Mapping and Marking

A public call was conducted for artists to propose artworks based on their own ideas and art practices, at public sites of their choosing, and responding to the broad concepts of mapping and marking. The call garnered over 100 applications. A jury composed of artists and curators selected a short list of fourteen artists who have been asked to prepare more detailed proposals. Seven of the fourteen proposals, some of which are for temporary and some for permanent artworks, are proposed at least partly for park land and facilities. The jury reconvenes for the final selection on January 8 and 9, choosing up to nine of the proposals. Park Board staff have been involved in an advisory capacity, and the Arts and Culture Office will continue to assist in community consultations and technical reviews as the projects develop. The Board will receive a report on the outcomes of reviews early in the spring 2009.

- Intersections

A public call was conducted for curatorial proposals to develop and produce a program of light and media artworks in the Downtown Eastside (DTES) over the course of the Games.

A committee composed of artists and curators selected 'Centre A' as the lead organization for a consortium of DTES groups. Park Board staff have been involved in an advisory capacity; and the Arts and Culture Office will continue to assist in community consultations and technical reviews as the project develops if any of the resulting artworks are proposed for park land. The Board will receive a report on the outcomes of reviews if this is the case.

#### VANOC's Vancouver 2010 Aboriginal Art Program (VAAP)

VANOC approved a program and budget for Canadian aboriginal art at Olympic Venues and is seeking partnership with the City and Park Board to enhance the works created and installed as part of this program. In 2008, the VANOC Project Manager Venues Aboriginal Art Program approached the Park Board's Planning and Arts and Culture Offices. A number of works created through the VANOC Aboriginal Art Program are proposed for a special donation to the Park Board after the Games. Key elements of the program proposed for park land and facilities include:

- Welcome Works (the concept of Welcome Works is derived from Coast Salish traditions such as welcome figures and house posts, but will encompass work from traditional to contemporary styles) for all venues, created by artists from the communities represented by the Four Host First Nations (FHFN);
- transformed graphic works by emerging artists, textiles (women's traditional arts), two dimensional works and educational, informative signage for venue artworks; and
- a major Canadian Aboriginal Collective work for the Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre (the future Riley Park Community Centre in Hillcrest Park), and a major Aboriginal Artwork to encompass the Olympic Truce Program at Olympic Village plaza in Southeast False Creek.

The Park Board's Arts and Culture Office, Planning and the City's Cultural Services Department are currently working with VAAP to determine processes which comply with City and Park Board policies and processes, and which respect aboriginal cultural practices and VANOC's FHFN priorities.

Initial requests-for-proposals have been drafted by VANOC for Welcome Works proposed for three Park Board sites: adjacent to Trout Lake, Killarney and the future Riley Park Community Centres. Project managers and Planning staff have been part of

site reviews; and community centre associations will be consulted on community information for inclusion in the documents.

## **SUMMARY**

These Olympic Games related public art initiatives offer an exciting opportunity for the Park Board to advance the creation of a vibrant public realm and support the experience of public art and cultural events in parks. The development of public art intended for sites under Park Board jurisdiction needs to align with existing practices between City and the Park Board, with the processes defined in the Park Board's *Acceptance Guidelines for Long Term Gifts of Public Art* as well as any other pertinent policies and permitting practices. Park Board staff will continue working with these various initiatives and bring forward recommendations for Park Board approval once process requirements are met.

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