



September 16, 2021

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

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

SUBJECT : **Air Force Garden of Remembrance Relocation Project Advisory Group**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to inform you that an Advisory Group has been assembled for the Air Force Garden of Remembrance relocation project. The goal is to enhance stakeholder and community engagement and to obtain feedback on the proposed design and site options in Queen Elizabeth Park. The first meeting will be held virtually on September 16, 2021.

Background

The Air Force Garden of Remembrance is a memorial garden currently located in Stanley Park – just west of the transit bus loop and just north of the Stanley Park Pavilion. The memorial was initiated in 1946 with funding from the Woman’s Auxiliary of the Air Services, and designed by park superintendent, Alex Dickson. It was built in 1949 to commemorate the airmen from Vancouver who fought and lost their lives in World War II. Over time, the garden took on a role of honouring airmen of the Commonwealth Air Training Program and other world airmen and air forces. Since 1949, the garden has hosted the annual Battle of Britain Memorial Ceremony each September. Today, this ceremony is funded through the Battle of Britain Memorial Fund (BBMF) managed by the Air Force Officers Association.

Project Overview

Recognizing that the memorial had outgrown its location in Stanley Park, on January 28, 2019, the Park Board approved the [Air Force Garden of Remembrance – Relocation Plan](#), which directed staff to work with the Battle of Britain Memorial Fund to develop options for a new garden plan in Queen Elizabeth Park. The goal of the garden relocation to Queen Elizabeth Park is to respectfully memorialize the WWII air forces by providing a more suitable site that is highly visible, accessible, and can accommodate an annual event and procession.

In accordance with the Park Board’s current [monuments and memorial guidelines](#), a public engagement process is underway to guide the development and siting of the new memorial. The establishment of an Advisory Group is one component of this engagement process.

Advisory Group Mandate

The Advisory Group is an external body that represents key stakeholders with an interest in the historic Air Force Garden of Remembrance, as well as air force history and contemporary air forces. The Advisory Group members will be responsible for representing their respective organizations, as well as considering Vancouver residents as a whole.

The group will be asked to:

- provide feedback on the design options (3 potential sites, each with a proposed design);
- enhance outreach and communication with stakeholders and the community at large; and
- help the project team interpret engagement results.



Advisory Group Selection

The Park Board project team invited stakeholder groups directly in an attempt to achieve broad representation from organizations with an interest and background in the air forces. In addition, a heritage expert and the neighbourhood community group were invited to join. Following is a list of the groups invited to participate:

- Battle of Britain Memorial Fund (BBMF)
- Army, Navy, & Air Force Veterans Association Vancouver (ANAVETS)
- Royal Canadian Air Force
- Air Force Officers Association
- British Ex-Servicemen's Association
- Chinese Canadian Military Museum
- Riley Park South Cambie Community Visions Committee
- Heritage Professional

Advisory Group Members

The following individuals have confirmed their participation in the group:

- John Atkin - Heritage Consulting
- Richard Dunn - Battle of Britain Memorial
- Varouj Gumuchian - Riley Park South Cambie Community Visions
- David Smythe - Army, Navy and Air Force Veterans in Canada
- Dan Thomas - Royal Canadian Air Force – Western Canada
- King Wan - Chinese Canadian Military Museum (& ANAVETS)
- Col. Robert (Bud) White* - Air Force Officers Association

**also a member of the Battle of Britain Memorial Fund*

Timeline & Next Steps

A second Advisory Group meeting is anticipated for later this fall to share any design refinements and to confirm decisions made at the first meeting. Using the Advisory Group's input, a preferred option(s) will be brought forward through a public engagement process (Q4 2021/Q1 2022). This stakeholder and community engagement will then inform the preferred concept to be presented to the Board for consideration (Q1/Q2 2022). Once a preferred concept has been approved, detailed designs will be completed with construction targeted to commence in summer 2022.

Regards,

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

Donnie Rosa (*they/she*)

General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/nt/jh/ke//clc

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
PB Project Team
PB Communications