

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



Report Date: 30 October 2006
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TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
FROM: General Manager, Park Board
SUBJECT: Vancouver Sport Strategy: Resources and Funding Required

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council receive for INFORMATION the report on the process for the development of a Vancouver Sports Strategy with required funding of \$150,000 in 2007. Approval and funding to be deferred to the 2007 Interim Operating Budget.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager, Park Board, recommends approval.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

On July 13, 2006, Council approved the development of a comprehensive Vancouver Sport Strategy with a request that staff report back with details on resources and funding required to complete the study. This report outlines the parameters of this study along with a request for \$150,000 of funding. As was noted in the Preliminary Estimates of the 2007 Operating Budget, this funding request needs to be considered in the context of overall budgetary priorities. Therefore, it is recommended that Council defer approval of this funding request to February 13, 2007, when the Interim Estimates of the 2007 Operating Budget is reported.

COUNCIL POLICY

On July 13, 2006, Council approved the development “of a comprehensive Sport Strategy to guide the direction of sport infrastructure, programming and support for events, to be developed in conjunction with the sport community, sport tourism stakeholders and other groups and that the Board of Parks and Recreation be requested to lead and facilitate the project and report back with details on resources and funding required to complete the study.”

PURPOSE

This report outlines a process and associated costs for the development of a civic sports strategy. When complete, the sports strategy will provide:

1. an overview of the entire continuum of sport in Vancouver, including
 - a. Unaffiliated sport activity and Informal “pick-up” games,
 - b. Community-based sport programming and leagues,
 - c. Provincial, national and international amateur athletic training and events, and the
 - d. Commercial/professional sports sector.
2. a baseline of current City and Park Board involvement with sport, and the respective roles of both bodies;
3. analysis and policy recommendations focused on those aspects of sport where the city has the means and the authority to make a positive contribution, and where identifiable benefits to the city are most likely to be realized, and
4. a strategy and sequence for the implementation of actions and policies proposed in the strategy.

The strategy will look forward to 2015 as a planning horizon, and be designed to serve as a reference document up to that point in time.

BACKGROUND

The need for a civic sport strategy is underscored by an increasing number of sport related initiatives, many generated or inspired by the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games, which are requiring support, regulation or other kind of attention from the City. These initiatives are of various types, including the following:

- Competitive sporting events choosing or considering Vancouver as a venue prior to or after the 2010 Olympics: FIFA World Youth Championship, 2009 World Police and Fire Games, VANOC test events and many others.
- Mechanisms to provide financial assistance to sport-related events or tournaments: Vancouver Sport Hosting Policy, Liaison with HostingBC.
- Programs to encourage broader public participation in sport and fitness activities: Active Communities Strategy, Get Out, MoreSports.
- Development or renewal of public sport and recreation infrastructure: Park Board Playing Field Renewal Plan; Aquatic Renewal Plan; Skateboard Strategy, etc.

Currently, most of the City's involvement with sport is the responsibility of Park Board. The Board provides gymnasias, fitness centres, indoor and outdoor racquet courts, swimming pools, ice rinks, playing fields and various other indoor and outdoor facilities mainly directed towards the informal and community-based sport activity in the continuum described above. Athletes who compete at provincial, national or international levels in various sports often make use of Park Board amenities for training, but the Board has not traditionally oriented its facilities and services to the needs of elite athletes or advanced competitive events. Instead, most of the local provision in this regard derives from athletic curriculum and designated centres of excellence at local universities. The commercial/professional sport sector generally provides its own facilities for training and competition (which typically require an extensive additional footprint for spectator seating, parking and other services), however in some instances these facilities are on public land under lease arrangements with the City or other level of government. As well, this sector is most likely to engage directly with City processes that review and regulate infrastructure development proposals.

Recently the City has become more directly involved in other sport-related matters, including the approval in July of a Sport Hosting Policy and Grant Programme, which is the genesis of this report. The Sport Hosting Policy report noted the lack of "a comprehensive strategy to optimize the potential for all participants, from grass roots to elite athletes, at all stages from playground to podium, and for all members of our community." The report proposed that such a strategy be developed, with "key areas of focus to include:

- Inventory and assessment of sport facilities such as gymnasias, fields and tracks;
- Innovations for potential facility development funding models;
- Inventory of local skill development and participation programmes;
- Coordination of permitting to maximize utilization;
- Sport Event Hosting capability and coordination;
- Communication and networks of various sport groups; and
- Planning for growth".

The report furthermore proposed that the strategy be developed "with the involvement of the local sport community, key stakeholders and other organizations such as the Vancouver School Board, local colleges, universities and membership based clubs" and that "broad community consultation should be undertaken as a key component of this process."

Also relevant to the development of the Vancouver Sport Strategy is the Active Communities Initiative, unanimously approved by Council on September 26, 2006. Although 'Active Communities' as a concept covers much more than involvement in sport, one likely impact of Active Communities over the medium to long term will be to increase public demand for recreation and sport related amenities and services.

Finally, it should be noted that other cities in Canada have recently engaged with planning in relation to sport. In 2005, Toronto completed a "Sport Framework for the City of Toronto" which focuses mainly on that city's sport facility development priorities. In the same year, Calgary completed its "Civic Sport Strategy", which outlines action priorities and defines a working relationship between the City and two previously-appointed independent agencies: the Calgary Sport Council and the Calgary Sport Tourism Authority. The City of Kamloops has, for some time, designated itself as the "Tournament Capital of Canada" and has invested extensively in facilities and programming that support sport hosting as an economic driver for the city.

DISCUSSION

Outlined below is a proposed process for the development of a Vancouver Sport Strategy, including details on objectives, methodologies, phasing and resource requirements. This outline was developed with input and advice from representatives of the following agencies and organizations:

- Sport BC
- Tourism Vancouver
- BC Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts
- 2010 Legacies Now
- UBC Department of Athletics and Recreation
- Vancouver Field Sports Federation

DESIRED OUTCOMES

The Sport Strategy will be a valuable reference document with respect to future decisions by Council and Park Board, and administrative actions by City staff. Beyond providing benchmark information on sport activities and facilities in the City, the Strategy will articulate roles and objectives for the City and the Park Board regarding improvements in the following areas:

- Logistical support for and coordination of sport events;
- Facility booking, permitting and allocation processes;
- Programs to encourage and support public participation in sport, and access to appropriate facilities;
- Communications and networking with and between sport organizations;
- Liaison and policy alignment between the City, senior governments and other concerned agencies on sports related issues;
- Priorities in Vancouver for sport program and facility development and renewal;
- Innovative capital funding approaches, particularly ones which leverage City funds with assistance from other sources; and
- Planning and development approval processes for sport facilities.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND STAFFING

The scope of work contemplated in the preparation of the sport strategy overlaps the interest and responsibilities of Park Board with those of other City Departments, including Engineering (Events) and Community Services (Planning, Cultural Affairs). Staff from these Departments were consulted in the development of this report, and a steering committee has been identified which will meet at regular intervals and give overall direction to the project.

The project will also be facilitated through the appointment of a review committee composed of staff, external experts and stakeholders, who will assess the project outcomes at key milestones and advise on subsequent work elements to be pursued.

Day to day responsibility for the project will be assigned to a project manager, supported by auxiliary staff at planning assistant or other appropriate level(s), and reporting to the Park Board Manager of Research and Planning. The project manager will:

- Conduct research and analysis where required;
- Schedule and assign work to auxiliary staff or consultants as appropriate;
- Report to and facilitate meetings of the steering and review committees; and
- Perform other project related tasks as may seem advisable by the steering committee.

To complete the Sport Strategy, it is anticipated that supplementary staff and/or consultant resources will be required with expertise in:

- Research methodologies;
- Sports governance;
- Events organization;
- Survey design and administration ;
- Public consultation and group facilitation;
- Zoning and facility development processes; and
- Facilities assessment.

Information Gathering

There is a considerable body of sport-related studies, reports and other literature dealing with program, policy and facility issues, which the steering and review committees will identify for the consultant at the outset of the project. The consultant will assemble, review and collate pertinent information from these and possibly other sources. This step will ensure that previous research is not duplicated unnecessarily though subsequent stages of the project.

- *Sport activity profile*: Summary of the range of sport activity in Vancouver, including mainstream, culturally-specific and adaptive (special needs) sports. Overview of organizational structures, as well as programs in place to encourage participation and develop skills. General assessment of the overall volunteer base and other resources, and of levels of engagement by players, officials and spectators. Itemization of current type and frequency of competitive sports events hosted in Vancouver.
- *Facility inventory/assessments*: Itemization of public and private sport facilities in the city; more in-depth assessment of those facilities with existing or potential capacity to accommodate formal competitive events (e.g., meeting some recognized standard for competition, having spectator capacity, etc.). Also other relevant data on existing support facilities (e.g., centres of excellence, coaching/training amenities).
- *Best Practices identification*: Benchmarking of municipal sector processes, policies and governance in relation to sports.
- *Demand analysis*: How well/poorly are needs met by existing facilities? What are the stress points, what are the trends (e.g., new sports types, technologies, competition standards, and participation by age, gender, ethnicity)? Potential unmet demand for hosting major sports events/tournaments.
- *Benefits analysis*: Outcomes of sport involvement in terms of the health and well being of participants, community engagement, and civic pride. Direct and indirect economic activity generated. To what extent and how do elite sports influence active lifestyles? In what ways might a strong community base support improved performance of elite athletes?

- *Risk assessment*: Consideration of potential liabilities, financial risks and other downsides (e.g. hosted events displacing community use of facilities) and identification of prevention/mitigation strategies.
- *Needs summary*: Identification of gaps in terms of facilities, other resources, programming, organization, communication, allocation.

The compiled information will be reviewed with the steering committee, and any supplementary information deemed to be necessary will be collected by the consultant through targeted interviews and/or surveys of sporting groups and governing bodies

Information analysis

The next stage of strategy development will involve evaluation of the information compiled, with the principal objective of identifying key issues which can be addressed in whole or in part through actions by the City.

An initial sort of collected data will be conducted in a facilitated workshop involving members of the review committees, and including others with relevant technical expertise. The workshop will organize the data, identify apparent issues and outline provisional policy/action responses to these issues. Staff will assist the process by providing information on the broader framework of existing City and Park policy and procedures relating to capital planning, special events, and other areas as may be relevant to the discussion. The issues and policy options will be organized into graphic presentation formats for broader public review.

Public review

A broad based public consultation will take place through a series of open houses, supported by opinion survey and a dedicated web page. Formal input will be invited from a broad range of sport organizations, agencies involved with sport tourism and sport governance bodies. At least one session will be dedicated to soliciting feedback from people who actively participate in sport, either as players or volunteers, but are not official representatives of any organization.

The presentations will be open-ended; the issues and options put forward will be intended to encourage feedback, not to impose limits on public discussion and exploration. Those who engage will have opportunity to add to or comment on the issues to be addressed, and to register their preferences with respect to proposed options, or to help shape new options.

All the inputs received will be considered in the development of a draft policy document, which will be made available for review and comment from all participants in the consultation process. Key policy preferences will be tested with a scientific survey to compare/contrast the preferences of interested stakeholders with those of the wider public.

Reporting Back/Implementation

The development and conclusions of the sport strategy initiative, including research findings, issues identification and policy options, will be reported to Council and Park Board. Recommendations will be made as to implementation steps in terms of timing, costs, investment priorities, and any other proposed actions or policy enactments which may emerge through the project development process.

The project will be initiated upon Council approval of the 2007 Operating Budget, and the work program will be completed approximately within a six month timeframe.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The proposed project budget is estimated at \$150,000 as shown below:

Category		Anticipated Expenditure
<i>Project Management:</i>		\$45,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Manager 6 mos. (staff position or contract) • Administrative/clerical support • Materials and supplies 	33,000 7,000 5,000	
<i>Community Engagement/Consultation</i>		\$55,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public process: Workshop design & facilitation • Communications: Translation, advertising, mailing, meetings, graphic design/production • Review Group: facilitation, honoraria 	30,000 20,000 5,000	
<i>Research and Analysis:</i>		\$50,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data gathering and consolidation, facility program assessment, policy drafts, survey design & administration. 	50,000	
TOTAL		\$150,000

Approval of this proposal along with the funding is recommended to be deferred to the 2007 budget process.

CONCLUSION

Council is asked to receive the proposed process and resources required for the development of a civic sport strategy for INFORMATION only. The project will be led by Park Board staff, with input and assistance from other City departments. The project will commence upon Council approval of the 2007 Operating Budget with a final report planned for the end of that year.

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