



# A5

## ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: April 20, 2009  
Contact: Kirsten Baillie and  
Sandra James  
Contact No.: 604.873-7458/7679  
RTS No.: 08077  
VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20  
Meeting Date: May 5, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Planning

SUBJECT: Allocation of Funding for My Own Back Yard (MOBY) Community Association  
Playground

### *RECOMMENDATION*

- A. THAT Council approve an allocation of up to \$115,000 for site preparation of a community playground and neighbourhood greenway on East 11<sup>th</sup> and East 12<sup>th</sup> Avenues, east of Commercial Drive; the source of the funding to be the Broadway and Commercial Community Amenity budget previously approved by Council.
- B. THAT the Park Board base operating budget be increased by \$2,700 for maintenance without offset commencing in 2010, subject to annual Budget Review.

### *GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS*

The General Manager of Community Services approves RECOMMENDATION A and B.

### *COUNCIL POLICY*

The Kensington Cedar Cottage Community Vision, approved by Council in 1998, includes directions calling for more greening of public places (Vision Direction 24.1) and more community action on greening initiatives (Vision Direction 24.2).

### *PURPOSE*

The purpose of this report is to recommend to Council the allocation of funds from the Broadway and Commercial Community Amenity budget to fund site preparation for a community playground on East 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a landscaped pathway on East 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, east of Commercial Drive. Playground equipment costs will be provided by the My Own Back Yard (MOBY) Community Association.

## **BACKGROUND**

As part of the 2000 Access Agreement between the City and the Provincial government on the construction of the SkyTrain Millennium Line, the Province committed to build a new community policing centre (CPC) in the Broadway/Commercial Drive area to a maximum cost of \$220,000. A location for the office was identified under the SkyTrain guideway on East 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue and work began on designing the facility. Subsequently, the provincial government terminated funding of all community policing centres in Vancouver and in June 2003, Council endorsed a new model for community policing which did not include operating funding or police support for a CPC in this area. Council then affirmed its commitment that the remaining funds of \$208,000 (\$12,000 had been spent on design fees) be spent on a community amenity in this area and asked staff to consult with the community to determine a plan for spending the money.

In November 2003, City staff hosted a community workshop to develop a framework to evaluate proposals for a new community amenity in the Broadway and Commercial Drive area. In January 2004, staff invited residents and community organizations to submit proposals for a community amenity project. Interested parties were sent information on the three vacant TransLink properties east of Commercial Drive on East 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue (see Appendix A). TransLink staff indicated they would consider community uses on these properties. Four proposals were reviewed and rated by City staff using the community developed criteria. The My Own Backyard (MOBY) proposal to develop a community garden, playground and neighbourhood greenway was ranked highest by all reviewers.

MOBY Community Association is a registered non-profit organization comprised of local residents working with community organizations including Mosaic daycare, Pacifica Treatment Centre, Trout Lake Community Centre, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House, Collingwood Community Policing Centre, Dickens Community Group, City Farmer and community garden groups.

In 2004 Council approved the proposal from MOBY Community Association to use the \$208,000 earmarked for a community amenity in the Broadway and Commercial Drive area to develop a community garden, playground and neighbourhood greenway on three vacant sites on East 11<sup>th</sup> and East 12<sup>th</sup>, east of Commercial Drive (RTS #4061). Lease agreements between TransLink and the City of Vancouver were negotiated and are in place for these properties.

The project was divided into two phases. Phase one, a community garden was approved to a maximum cost of \$93,000 and phase two, a children's playground and neighbourhood greenway was approved to a maximum cost of \$115,000. The community garden phase of the project is complete and is comprised of 40 garden plots, 5 accessible gardens plots, a cob shed, a water connection, a community notice board, public pathway and additional lighting. The remaining \$115,000 will be used for site preparation for the community playground and neighbourhood greenway including: site grading, lighting installation, a water connection, landscaping and a public pathway. Playground equipment costs will be provided by the MOBY Community Association. The playground and greenway portion (phase two) of this amenity is currently being designed and a community build day is scheduled for June 6, 2009.

In addition to the funding from the City of Vancouver, the community group MOBY and a local daycare Mosaic have secured a significant amount of additional funding. In 2007, MOBY in partnership with the grocery store, *Capers*, raised \$45,000 earmarked for playground

equipment. More recently, MOBY received a national award from the *Let them Be Kids* non-profit organization. The award provides a 40 per cent match to all the money that the community has raised for the playground (approximately \$20,000). *Let Them Be Kids* ([www.ltbk.ca](http://www.ltbk.ca)) is an all-volunteer non-profit organization that builds community capacity through the creation of community playgrounds. The award will also provide MOBY with fundraising support, mentoring, and playground experts to assist the community in the design and construction of their playground. Fundraising efforts are on-going with a raffle and fundraising night at a local business scheduled for May 2009.

### ***DISCUSSION***

The tight timeline for this project is due, in part, to the *Let Them Be Kids* timeline and the community's desire to be part of a nation-wide celebration. *Let Them Be Kids* is hosting a nation-wide community playground build day on Saturday, June 6, 2009. On this day, four playgrounds across Canada will be built simultaneously by community volunteers. The MOBY community playground will be the culmination of the nation-wide community playground build day. These playground builds will be publicized and broadcasted nationally on morning television shows and will be live-streamed on web casts.

The Planning Department, in conjunction with Engineering Services, Park Board and Real Estate Services are working to expedite the approval and site preparation processes. The land lease agreements are in place and construction crews are available to complete the site preparation in the necessary time frame.

A ground-breaking of the site was held on April 1, 2009. There was a media advisory released by Corporate Communications (Appendix B). At this time, *Let Them Be Kids* Volunteer CEO Ian Hill, Deputy Mayor Andrea Reimer, and MOBY Chair Tina Dam announced that the playground would be built on Saturday June 6, 2009.

### ***FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

Funding of \$115,000 is available from the Broadway and Commercial Community Amenity budget approved by Council on June 24, 2004.

The playground site will require ongoing maintenance and liability and staff recommended that operating budgets be increased by \$2,700 without offset commencing in 2010, subject to annual Budget Review.

### ***PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS***

There are no personnel implications.

### ***ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS***

This project meets Council's priorities for Environment and Sustainability by creating a green community gathering space and a playground. A public pathway will provide pedestrian access to local shopping areas and transit.

### ***SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS***

This project enhances social capacity by providing a community led and built playground in an area with limited outdoor play area and green space.

*CONCLUSION*

Staff recommend the allocation of the remaining \$115,000 from the Broadway and Commercial Community Amenity budget to provide site grading, lighting installation, a water connection, public pathway and landscaping.




The playground structure will require ongoing maintenance and liability and staff recommended that operating budgets be increased by \$2,700 without offset commencing in 2010, subject to annual Budget Review.

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## Vacant Lots at 11th Avenue and Commercial Drive



### Legend

-  City-owned lane right-of-way
-  BC Transit owned
-  SkyTrain Guideway

### Notes

- A** 1727 East 11th Avenue  
*Lot 5, except part in Explanatory Plan 19599 of Lots C and D Block 162 District Lot 264A*
- B** 1737 East 11th Avenue  
*That Part of Lot 6 in Explanatory Plan 19599 of Lots C and D Block 162 District Lot 264A Plans 1059 and 1771*
- C** 1734 East 11th Avenue  
*Amended Lot 48 (Explanatory Plan 5587), Except Part in Explanatory Plan 19600 of Lots C and D Block 162 District Lot 264A Plans 1059 and 1771*
- D** 1736 East 11th Avenue  
*Lot 47, Except Part in Explanatory Plan 19600 of Lots C and D Block 162 District Lot 264A Plans 1059 and 1771*
- E** 1725 East 11th Avenue  
*Lot J of Lots C and D Block 162 District Lot 264A Plan 20879*



# MEDIA ADVISORY



City Hall, 453 West 12th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4 604.873.7011 vancouver.ca

March 31, 2009

**Attn: Photo Editors**

## **Award helps kick off community playground**

On behalf of Mayor and Council, Deputy Mayor Andrea Reimer, together with school children and volunteers, will turn the soil at a groundbreaking ceremony to launch the construction of a community playground on:

**Wednesday, April 1, 2009 at 2 pm  
East of Commercial Drive between 11<sup>th</sup> Ave and 12<sup>th</sup> Ave**

Also present will be Ian Hill, Volunteer CEO of Let Them Be Kids.

Earlier this month, Let Them Be Kids, a non-profit organization that provides financial and other support to build playgrounds, skate parks and fitness parks across the country, gave a grant under the Let Them Be Kids Kool-Aid Smile Award to the project to build the community playground on the City-leased land.

The project is led by My Own Backyard. Members of this City-funded community group are local residents, parents and business owners living in the vicinity of Commercial Drive and East 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue. My Own Backyard is one of the projects that came out of the Kensington-Cedar Cottage Community Vision process.

As the main users of the playground, children will have the opportunity to select their favorite design from a number of preliminary concept drawings proposed for the site by "dotmocracy".

**Media contact:**

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