

Supports Item No. 7
CS&B Committee Agenda
July 28, 2009



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: July 22, 2009
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Meeting Date: July 28, 2009

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Olympic and Paralympic Operations

SUBJECT: Relocation of Vancouver House

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the location of Vancouver House will be changed from the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library at Library Square, to LiveCity Downtown at Georgia Street.

COUNCIL POLICY

On March 24, 2009, Council approved the allocation of \$1,550,000 to create "Vancouver House". The location identified in the Administrative Report was the Central Branch of the Vancouver Public Library at Library Square.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise Council that the location of Vancouver House will move from the Vancouver Public Library to LiveCity Downtown at Georgia Street and to explain the rationale.

BACKGROUND

Vancouver House is a major pillar of the City's 2010 Games' celebration program. It will showcase and celebrate for citizens, visitors and dignitaries the uniqueness of our City, its key attributes, important economic opportunities, and the broad diversity of our public. Council approved the original plan for Vancouver House in March 2009. Since that time,

intensive planning has resulted in a recommendation to the City Manager to change the venue of Vancouver House from the Vancouver Public Library to the LiveCity Downtown site.

Key among the factors considered in the decision to change the venue were:

- Impacts on accessibility to both Vancouver House and the VPL by the general public
- Ability to secure and control the site through Games time to support the logistics of the display and presentation
- The complexity and significant costs of the recommended security needs associated with Vancouver House in the VPL
- Ability to have Vancouver House open to the public during both the Olympic and Paralympic Games
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In consideration of these and other ancillary issues, we have determined that the preferred site for the Vancouver House is LiveCity Downtown. The change of location will not create any additional direct or indirect costs but will significantly mitigate the risk of cost overruns. The project will be delivered within the budget of \$1,550,000 as approved by Council. The increased flexibility and reduced operating and security costs afforded by locating at LiveCity Downtown, will result in a more accessible venue, during both the Olympic *and* Paralympic Games.

The VPL is a key public resource, and its iconic structure will be an attraction during the Games. It is the intent of the Olympic Secretariat to continue to work with senior management staff at the VPL to work on programming opportunities during the Games.

DISCUSSION

The original choice of the Library as the site for Vancouver House was made in recognition of its central and iconic location. While indisputably attractive, the Library atrium did present a number of challenges. One of these was the sheer size and design of the atrium. In order to create an environment where light and sound were controlled, additional cost unique to this location were identified.

Another challenge was to design an exhibition space and to plan for the flow of up to 10,000 people per day, while remaining respectful to the need of the Library to remain open and of the Library's patrons to maintain reasonable, unimpeded access. Additional to this, was the necessity of ensuring that the existing businesses located within the atrium were able to continue to operate.

To accomplish all of the above, while maintaining a security level appropriate for the venue and the displays within it, evolved into a complex and potentially expensive issue.

One of the shortcomings of the location was that, to operate the venue during both the Olympic and the Paralympic Games, was financially prohibitive.

As a result of serious consideration to these and other issues, it was determined that the LiveCity Downtown site would provide better accessibility, eliminate potential user conflicts and extraordinary security costs and - most importantly - provide a flexible, controlled display space that can be used for both of our Games.

CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Vancouver House be located within LiveCity Downtown, at Georgia Street.

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