

Date: March 12, 2009



TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Mount Pleasant Centre at #1 Kingsway

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board:

- A. Receive the attached Council report for information.*
- B. Support Option 1 as the interim solution for the childcare programs offered through the Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association.*

BACKGROUND

The attached Council report details the new operating model and budget proposals for the Mount Pleasant Centre that is scheduled for completion in September 2009.

The Centre includes a new Library, a Child Development Centre, a Café space, a Community Centre to replace the existing Mount Pleasant Community Centre at Ontario and 16th and 98 units of market rental housing.

The civic portions of the building (Library, Community Centre and Child Development Centre) will be managed in a co-ordinated and collaborative way. The Child Development Centre will be leased to a non-profit operator but with the facility spaces available for public use during times when the childcare centre is not operating.

The Community Centre will be slightly larger than the existing facility (4,000 sq ft) with an expanded and more efficient layout. It will support greater community interests. At the Centre the partnership with the Community Association will continue and a new Joint Operating Agreement will be negotiated.

The Operating Model for the 50,100 square foot Mount Pleasant Centre places responsibility for the co-ordination of partner spaces and programs in the hands of the onsite Management Team (Park Board Community Recreation Supervisor and the Library Manager) and a Program Integration Committee made up of staff representatives from each program provider. The model also includes a Community Advisory Committee

to ensure the broadest range of community interests, advice and input to the services and programs being offered.

The Park Board's Community Recreation Supervisor will be responsible for working through day-to-day issues related to programs and the facility on behalf of the Management Team with support as required from Facility Design and Management. All of the civic spaces will be maintained and repaired by the Facility Design and Management Group of the City of Vancouver under service agreements with the program providers.

An evaluation of the success of this model will be undertaken by staff and the community two years after the Mount Pleasant Centre begins operation.

The Mount Pleasant Centre also includes a residential component that will be managed through the City's Real Estate Services and their Property Management contract. It is expected that many of the residents will wish to take advantage of the facilities and programs that are offered in the building.

The total 2009 additional funding request for the new facility is \$102,000 of which \$20,000 is allocated to the Park Board. Staff resources, equipment and budgets will be relocated to the new Centre except that previous costs to operate and maintain the existing Community Centre will be transferred to the City of Vancouver.

Mount Pleasant Community Association Childcare Programs – Interim Options

After the relocation of the existing Mount Pleasant Community Centre to the new building, the existing building and pool will be decommissioned. A public consultation process will begin in the Fall of 2009 to determine the nature and design of the future park.

Relocation of the programs and staff to the new Mount Pleasant Centre will have an impact on the childcare programs presently offered at the existing Community Centre. A new modular childcare facility, approved for the adjacent school site (Simon Fraser Elementary) will not be available at the time of the move to the new building. Discussions on potential solutions for the childcare programs during this interim period before the modular building is completed have been occurring with representatives of the PAC, the Community Centre Association, Social Policy and Park Board staff.

DISCUSSION

Before and after school care, kindercare and preschool programs are provided by the Mount Pleasant Community Centre Association (MPCCA) at the existing Community Centre.

Ideally the completion of the new modular building and the relocation to the new Mount Pleasant Centre would have occurred at the same time. The present estimate for the

completion of the modular building is early in 2010 between January and mid March 2010. Final costs for the modular building and the determination of whether there are sufficient funds available for construction will be known by June 2009. Only then will a more precise understanding of the length of the interim period be known.

Presently there are two options to continue to support the interim needs for childcare programs needed for children and families in the adjacent neighbourhood.

Option 1 – Use of Simon Fraser School for Before School Care and the new Mount Pleasant Centre for the balance of the childcare programs.

This option will provide these childcare programs using both the Simon Fraser Elementary School for the Before School Care and the new location of the Community Centre at #1 Kingsway for the KinderCare, Preschool and After School Care programs. There are minimal costs to the Association for the Before School care (approx. \$300/month for VSB charges) and the transportation costs for a bus to drive children between the school and the new Centre for the balance of the programs. These costs are estimated to be \$800-\$2200 per month depending on the number of children registered in the program. An approximate cost for a 6 month interim period is \$6600-\$15,000.

At the new Mount Pleasant Centre a number of spaces including multipurpose rooms, kitchen and the gymnasium already covered by the operating budget will be available for the childcare programs.

Representatives from the Parent Advisory Council have indicated that some parents may find this option inconvenient or unacceptable to their family situation.

This option, while minimizing the costs to the Association during this interim period, would also allow a focus on their fundraising efforts toward the new modular childcare building.

Option 2 – Continued Use of the Existing Mount Pleasant Community Centre

With all staff and resources moved to the new Mount Pleasant Centre, the Association proposes to use a portion of the existing Centre in order to continue the childcare programs. This would require costs to staff, operate and maintain the facility at the Association's cost.

At the most basic option the programs would use the lower floor of the Community Centre during the week for childcare with a cost of approximately \$11,000/ month for utilities, staffing, building maintenance and equipment. . Expanded use of the building and extending hours of use has also been considered with an associated cost of up to \$23,000/month. Over the 6 month interim period the costs could range between \$66,000 and \$138,000.

While this option may be more convenient to the families it is an additional financial cost to the Association increasing the need to fund raise in this difficult economic climate. The Association has indicated that these funds could be made available. A priority placed on providing funding for the interim option would however compete for the focus of completing the permanent modular childcare facility. Given the short time frame and the extent of costs involved it is important that an agreement with the Association for this funding be in place before May 30, 2009.

Continued use of the Community Centre will also delay the return of the land to park space in this park deficient neighbourhood and the implementation of a new park design long awaited by the community.

CONCLUSIONS:

The provision of childcare programs for the neighbourhood families adjacent to Simon Fraser Elementary School will be housed in a modular building to be constructed on the school site. Discussions on the best interim option for the programs once the existing Community Centre moves to the new Mount Pleasant Centre have focused on the interests of parents and children, the Association and the broader community. The option that best matches these interests, in the opinion of staff is Option 1. It shares the childcare programs between the school and the new community centre location but supports the parents for this six month period by providing transportation. It minimizes the costs for the Association allowing them to place priority on the funding required for the new modular building and this option also permits the neighbourhood to begin the process of designing a new park in the fall of 2009.

SUMMARY

Council will be receiving a report on the Operating Model and Budget for the new Mount Pleasant Centre for their information. This facility will be shared amongst key users and will be an example of collaborative programming and services for the community. Together with a Community Advisory Committee, engagement with the neighbourhood will be a priority to ensure the successful operation of the facility. Budget requests for 2009 have been submitted for approval by Council.

With the relocation of the Community Centre to the new building in September 2009 the childcare programs presently offered require an interim solution until the January 2010 availability of the new modular facility on the school site. While many alternatives were considered, two options are detailed in this report. Staff is recommending Option 1 which will use the Simon Fraser Elementary School for the Before School portion of the program and the new Mount Pleasant Centre for the balance of the Childcare programs.

Prepared by:

Liane McKenna
Vancouver East District
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC

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