

ITEM	1
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	23
COUNCIL MEETING	93/04/13

TO : CITY MANAGER  
DATE: 1993 APRIL 08

FROM : DIRECTOR RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

RE : KENSINGTON PARK PITCH AND PUTT FOREST MANAGEMENT

PURPOSE : To respond to concerns expressed by Mr. Dave Mitchell regarding tree and shrub pruning at Kensington Park Pitch and Putt.

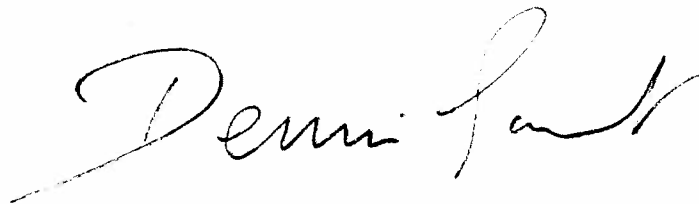
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**RECOMMENDATION:**

1. THAT copies of this report be forwarded to Mr. Dave Mitchell and Mr. Don Fraser.

**REPORT**

At its meeting of 1993 April 07 the Parks & Recreation Commission received the attached report on the above subject and adopted the recommendation contained therein.



DENNIS GAUNT  
DIRECTOR RECREATION &  
CULTURAL SERVICES

tc  
Attach.  
A/1681

RE: KENSINGTON PARK PITCH AND PUTT FOREST MANAGEMENT

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council be requested to forward copies of this report to Mr. Dave Mitchell and Mr. Don Fraser.

REPORT

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Appearing under correspondence is a copy of a letter addressed to Councillor Derek Corrigan from David Mitchell of the DM Group. A portion of the letter concerns the tree preservation bylaw questionnaire published by the Planning and Building Department, but of relevance to the Commission is the section regarding tree and shrub pruning in Kensington Park Pitch and Putt. Mr. Mitchell's concerns, and those of his associate, Don Fraser, is that recent golf course maintenance work represents poor forest management practices.

This report addresses their concerns by outlining the extent of work done, the reasons for the operation and identifies reforestation actions which are used within the limits of a golf course operation.

2.0 FOREST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The recent forestry work at the golf course needs to be considered within the context of the surrounding land-use. In fact, a hierarchy of forest management practices exist which reflects the purpose and level of intended use of the site. At one extreme, we have forest management practices for the protection of forested conservation lands where the objective of the land use is forest preservation. At the other extreme, we have highly manicured, ornamental areas with little or no forestry work needed. In between is the full range of forestry practices tailored to meet the specific needs of the site. A brief summary of that range is presented below:

- .1 **Conservation and Ravine lands**
  - no intervention
- .2 **Forested area with trails**
  - remove hazard trees, clear underbrush next to trails
- .3 **Open gladed areas**
  - remove hazard trees/limbs
  - maintain tree health
  - supplementary planting as required

- .4 **Open park/picnic areas**
  - remove hazard trees/limbs
  - maintain open space/surveillance
  - ornamental/native supplementary planting
  
- 5. **Golf courses**
  - remove hazard trees/limbs
  - maintain open space/surveillance
  - manage to preserve turf health and support intended golf use
  - ornamental/native supplementary planting
  
- 6. **Sportsfields/specialty areas**
  - provide tree cover where appropriate
  - manage to ensure usability of the site

The hierarchy reflects that with increasing use and increasing levels of development there are some restrictions on the retention of native forests where the intended land-use requires large open lawn space.

### 3.0 EXTENT OF WORK IN KENSINGTON PITCH AND PUTT

Kensington Pitch and Putt golf course is a 22 acre facility that accommodates 55,000 rounds of golf per eight month season. This is a very heavy use for such a small area. Over the last nine years the facility has seen a 72 percent increase in use. The only way to accommodate such use is to maximize the space available and to manage the course in such ways that maintain an uninterrupted speed of play. If more park acreage was available more native woodland could be preserved, however, in order to meet existing demand, open space must be maximized on a limited land base.

Kensington Pitch and Putt has been managed according to typical golf course maintenance standards that facilitates such demands. The maintenance standards and procedures are routine practices and are the same at Kensington Pitch and Putt, Central Park Pitch and Putt, and Burnaby Mountain Golf Course. If the site had an alternative land-use as in one of the categories described above, different management prescriptions would be applied.

This fall, approximately 280 trees plus native shrubs were either pruned or removed from the pitch and putt. The primary reason for the work was to remove dead diseased or dying trees that posed a hazard to public safety. It is estimated that approximately sixty percent of the trees removed fall into this category including native dogwood trees infected with anthracnose. The native trees in the pitch and putt are in fair to poor condition. Native trees adapt poorly to the extent of development required to build a golf course. When a forest is opened up, native trees are exposed to stresses which cause a continual decline in tree health. Some necessary golf course maintenance practices such as maintaining limited understorey, aggravate the worsening tree conditions. The result is a gradual loss of trees which can only be corrected by replanting. In Kensington, ongoing tree removal and replacement may be required for several more years.

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The second major reason for the maintenance program is to remove trees or thin clumps of trees which affect the health of the golf greens through shade reduced air circulation or roots close to the greens. Also, excessive leaf litter can cause a decline in the health of the turf.

The third type of work done was pruning and removal of understorey vegetation and the pruning of lower tree branches. This type of work is done in our golf courses to facilitate golf play, reduce maintenance costs and provide open surveillance opportunities which is important to help keep play moving and patrol for vandalism. In particular, in Kensington Pitch and Putt the clearing of undergrowth vegetation has been necessary in order to accommodate more users and to increase the speed of play. This treatment is requested frequently by the golfing public and maintenance staff receive complaints when the understorey vegetation hampers play.

In some areas, instead of removing the native understorey totally, maintenance staff pruned the shrubs to retain some undergrowth instead of removing it, and also to produce a more manicured look. While this has received some compliments from the public, as in the attached letter, it is also been a subject of concern. Normally, pruning practices used to maintain the native understorey vegetation need to respect the natural form of native vegetation. Where we may have deviated from this practice, we will monitor more closely in the future.

All of the work done, with the exception of this shearing of native shrubs, has followed traditional and routine maintenance practices and was essential in order to manage the site as a public golf course accommodating approximately 55,000 rounds of golf per year.

#### 4.0 ONGOING FORESTRY WORK AND REPLANTING

In common with all other park sites there is often a requirement for supplemental forestry work at all our golf courses which will enable us to improve the forest surroundings without sacrificing the objective of managing the site as a golf course. Such work is restricted by limited funds which are spread over a wide need and is carried out on the Commission's 128 park sites (3,683 acres). Public donations of trees, such as the 90 cedar trees recently planted in the Kensington Pitch and Putt golf course, does help. Plans include:

1. The forest management plan includes specialized practices that helps maintain a healthy forest without compromising the game of golf. This includes coniferous and deciduous tree planting using native species underplanted with native understorey shrubs to create landscaped islands. These islands will be located around the perimeter and areas out of play, so that the golf game is not interfered with. Some shrub understorey planting can occur to existing islands where it is expected not to interfere with play. Some regularly mown grass areas which are not used for golf play can be allowed to grow to meadow with infrequent mowing.

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2. Tree planting to compensate for loss of existing trees. Where appropriate new deciduous and coniferous trees will be planted as single specimens, and maintained in a condition which does not hamper play.

Annual funds contain an allowance to maintain sites to a modest level. In addition, the 1993 Capital Budget contains \$25,000 for additional work to be used on a priority basis throughout the 128 sites. In view of the expressed concerns regarding Kensington Pitch and Putt some of these funds can be used on that site in 1993.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

The Department is strongly committed to the premise of the "City in the Park", has supported many forestry initiatives and has implemented many programs to preserve and protect the urban forest including staff training in arboriculture and membership in the International Society of Arboriculture; but multiple objectives do not always permit full forestry operations to be conducted on every site. On golf courses, the forest management practices are needed not only to ensure the survival of the trees but also to allow the maintenance practices which facilitate the demands of the high number of users. These practices will not maximize wildlife habitat or diversity of native shrubs; limited provisions for these objectives can be made around the perimeter areas, and areas out of play but are primarily attained on many other of the 3600 acres of parkland in Burnaby.

JWK:d1

Attach.

D/Daily4/11

ATTACHMENT

ITEM 13  
DIRECTOR'S REPORT NO. 07  
COMMISSION MEETING 93/04/07

ITEM 1  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 23  
COUNCIL MEETING 93/04/13

105-3921 Carrigan Ct.,  
Burnaby, B.C.,  
V3N 4J7

March 16, 1993

Burnaby Parks Board.

Dear Sirs:

As a resident of Burnaby for almost 50 years, and a member of a foursome of seniors who play Kensington Pitch & Putt, sometimes as often as 4 to 5 times a week, I would like to express our appreciation to your grounds keeper for the excellent job he is doing.

During the past 5 years we have played the course we have never seen the greens and fairways in better condition. Also he has trimmed all the rough underbrush and dead limbs, and grass in the outlying areas. One never loses a ball here anymore as everything is neat and tidy.

It is a pleasure for us to play there, and to enjoy the neatness of the whole park.

Thank you again for a job well done "Don". We look forward to many more pleasurable hours of golfing there.

Sincerely,



Lloyd G. James