



SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF A MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR DEER LAKE PARK

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT a copy of this report be sent to Council for information.

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

In 1977 a development plan was prepared for Deer Lake Park (Torrence) which recognized its diversity and importance as a major park for Burnaby and the region. The plan was revised and updated in 1987-88 in response to issues and values current with that time period. The Deer Lake Park Natural Resource Analysis and Recreational Land Use Plan and the Conceptual Master Plan integrated results of several studies recommended by the Torrence report and, with increased public consultation and input into the planning process, explored options for future park use. The study analysed consultant data on the biophysical and cultural resources of the park and assessed the desirability and suitability of the conceptual master plan for implementation. From this, a recreational land use plan was developed based upon the natural opportunities and constraints. This study recognized that the park is significant for its ecological and historical values and for the recreational and cultural opportunities it could provide. The recommendations of the 1988 plan were used to direct further study of the park and although the conceptual plan was not formally adopted by the Commission, it has guided land use decisions in the park.

Deer Lake Park, with its ecologically important and highly valued natural and historical resources, requires a comprehensive management plan to preserve and protect these resources while at the same time provide a balance of appropriate, quality recreational and cultural opportunities. A masterplanning process is being developed to address all major issues critical to the future management of the park. The full list of issues will be identified in the early planning stages through an interdepartmental working committee and public consultation. Main themes are expected to relate to Deer Lake water quality and lake management; protection, preservation and enhancement of natural resources; protection, use and integration of the heritage resources; appropriate recreational activities and amenities; public access; and opportunities for support and enhancement of the arts and cultural facilities. The products of the process will be, firstly, a set of goals, objectives, guidelines and recommendations for future management of the park, secondly, a detailed Master Plan that will graphically illustrate proposed land uses and facilities to support the management plan. The report will provide preliminary capital cost estimates and a framework within which subsequent detailed planning, design and implementation will take place.

The purpose of this report is to inform the Commission about the proposed process and schedule for completion of the management plan. Expenditure of the funding for a new master plan was recently approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The master plan process is proceeding concurrently with a water quality management study administered through Environmental Health. The results will be incorporated within the Deer Lake master planning process.

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### PARK CONTEXT

A brief summary of key issues and a planning context for the park is provided. A much more comprehensive list of planning issues will evolve throughout the process.

Deer Lake Park encompasses 304 hectares of green space, with the lake covering approximately 34.8 hectares. Surrounding the lake is a diverse landscape significant for its many natural resources and a rich cultural history. The park's forested areas, expansive grasslands, its many creeks and the lake provide habitat for a diversity of wildlife. The natural landscape is in succession with the previously logged old growth forest being replaced by primary native species, some of them quite invasive. The lake has historically been used for swimming and fishing. The water quality, however, has declined to the extent that swimming within the beach area is not permitted, because it cannot meet public health standards for primary contact. The lake, still a popular fresh water trout fishery, has to be stocked annually. The natural resources of the park provide many opportunities for a variety of recreational pursuits.

The historical resources of the park offer an opportunity for interpretation and are significant for their social value, being part of Burnaby's cultural heritage. The Deer Lake area was settled by Europeans in the late 19th century and before that by native people. Many of Burnaby's most prestigious residences and ornamental gardens were built between 1900 and 1930 around the lake and remain today within the park and have been preserved and are used as cultural facilities. Archaeological sites have been discovered primarily at the east end of the park and some native and settler artifacts unearthed. During the period 1912-72 Oakalla Prison inmates cultivated the south slopes and lowlands for forage and garden crops. The prison has since been replaced by the Oaklands residential development and the agricultural land has evolved into grass meadows now designated as a heritage resource. The interface of the Oaklands, and sense of park boundary and threshold of the entire park, require new consideration, as well as pedestrian and vehicular connections and parking.

Development of the park for recreational and cultural activities has taken place primarily at the east/north-east end of the lake. Deer Lake beach, initially developed in the mid-1950's and in need of upgrading, is dominated by a parking lot and has a sand beach, play equipment, picnic area, concession, change house, boat rental and wharf. Walking, nature observation, photography and scenic viewing are accommodated by a trail/boardwalk system developed through portions of the park, a lookout tower and Royal Oakland Park which rises to the south through the residential development on the Oakalla slopes. Planning is currently underway to extend the trail system to allow access around the entire perimeter of the lake. The cultural precinct in the northeast corner of the park including the Heritage Museum, Art Gallery, Century Gardens, and the recently expanded Arts and Cultural Centre (Shadbolt Centre) support a variety of activities both indoors and outdoors, such as musical and floral festivals, art displays and live theatre, with opportunities for enhancement as a concert bowl and festival site.

With the completion of the Royal Oak Avenue realignment a new opportunity is provided for connecting the park as a whole. The west end of the park has been physically separated from the rest of the park by the roadway and as a result has poor access and is little used.

### MANAGEMENT PLAN PROCESS

An integrated approach with public participation will help to ensure a thorough and detailed process. An interdepartmental committee, the "Deer Lake Park Committee", of staff from Parks and Recreation, Planning, Engineering, and Environmental Health will be formed to finalize a terms of reference for the hiring of consultants, and to detail and direct the master planning process. This inter-disciplinary team approach has been advocated by the Environment and Waste Management Committee for managing complex environmental projects.

A multi-disciplinary team of consultants specializing in landscape architecture, park and recreation planning, environmental planning and resource management will be hired to assist in development of the plan and completion of the final report. The consultant team will prepare all conceptual and final Masterplan drawings and Management guidelines and final report, offering multi-disciplinary expertise under the direction of the Deer Lake Park Committee and responding to issues identified by the public and stakeholders.

Stakeholders will be invited to submit issues early in the process prior to, and at the first open house in June. The general public will be invited to attend the open house. This first open house meeting, with presentation materials produced by staff and attended by the consultants, will outline preliminary direction for future park development and may identify other park opportunities or constraints, new stakeholders, or additional issues requiring investigation. A questionnaire will be administered to park visitors during July and August by B.C.I.T. students and if possible, neighbouring residents. This questionnaire will establish user patterns and profiles. Organizations and groups to be contacted that have been identified to date include:

- Burnaby Art Gallery Association
- Burnaby Arts Council
- Burnaby Community Heritage Commission
- Burnaby Lake Systems Project (BCIT)
- Burnaby Stream Keepers Program
- Bicycle Advisory Committee
- Deer Lake Boat Rental (Mrs. Shirley Fisher)
- Deer Lake Citizens Group
- Environment and Waste Management Committee
- Friends of the Carousel
- Hart House Restaurant
- Oakalla Hawks RC Model Glider Club
- Vancouver Natural History Society

Taking direction from the first public meeting, the Deer Lake Park Committee and consultants will summarize issues raised for analysis and evolution of a draft Master Plan and Management Plan. These will be displayed (all drawings prepared by consultants) at a second public open house tentatively scheduled for September for comment by the general public. Comments received would be taken into consideration for the production of the final document in December.

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A six phased program to guide the process is outlined in Attachment #1, which will further evolve in detail with consideration of the Deer Lake Park Committee and consultant team.

**FINAL PRODUCTS AND SCHEDULE**

The final product will include a document that reviews the natural, cultural and heritage resources, identifies and discusses critical issues, defines goals and objectives for the park, and provides management strategies, guidelines and recommendations for the future. Included in this study will be a natural resource and environmental management plan, recreation management plan, plan for the incorporation and use of historical resources and archaeological sites, cultural program for the incorporation of arts, cultural facilities and activities and a park development program. Included with these plans and programs will be preliminary cost estimates and implementation strategies and phasing. In addition, a detailed park master plan will be produced that will graphically depict the overall existing and proposed park facilities and land uses. The plan will be supported by sketches that help to convey the design intent. The master plan will show how the land-use recommendations and park programming requirements can be achieved. A written report will accompany the master plan outlining rationale and briefly describe recommended new or renovated facilities and amenities.

A goal has been set for completion by the end of 1997, however, the schedule will have to be flexible to allow sufficient opportunity for public input and the proper sequencing of the master planning stages. The first public meeting in June will help determine the extent of further public consultation and research work required. The process will be managed to ensure a timely and expedient completion of a thorough and detailed plan.

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Attachment (1)  
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cc: Environmental Health  
Director Engineering  
Director Planning

**DEER LAKE PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN - TENTATIVE PROCESS****PHASE 1 - Initiation (May)**

- Meeting of Steering Committee
- Finalize Terms of Reference for consultant
- Refinement of process
- Hiring of consultant
- Steering Committee/Consultant clarification of study objectives

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT NO.	9
COMMISSION MEETING	97/05/07

**PHASE 2 - Data Collection (June-July)**

- Consultant review of current literature and summarize issues
- B.C.I.T. On-site user survey to determine user profiles
- Consultant draft recreation trends and needs
- Steering Committee review recreation trends and needs
- Consultant develop issues document of Deer Lake Park and surrounding influences with input from Steering Committee
- Steering Committee develop questionnaire for First Open House
- Staff prepare displays for First Open House
- Open House Meeting for general public and identified stakeholders
- Consultant review, summarize and analyze First Open House results and issues for Steering Committee review

**PHASE 3 - Issues Summary and Evaluation (August)**

- Draft issues document prepared by consultant and reviewed by Steering Committee
- Completion of issues document by consultant

**PHASE 4 - First Draft Management Plan Options (September)**

- Evolution of Master Plan Concepts and Sketches with Management strategies prepared by consultant and reviewed by Steering Committee including:
  - Resource management strategies and options
  - Heritage resource options
  - Land use concepts
  - Park and recreation programming
  - Cultural programming
  - Maintenance / Management Options
- Present draft Master Plan and Management Plan to Commission ready for public meeting
- Consultant prepare all drawings and displays for second Open House
- Consultant and Steering Committee prepare questionnaire for second Open House
- Second Open House held for the general public to review and comment on the draft Master Plan and Management Plan

**PHASE 5 - Resolution of Management Plan and Master Plan (November)**

- Consultant review, summarize and analyze Second Open House results and issues
- Consultant & Steering Committee meet to discuss any outstanding issues requiring resolution
- Commission approval of any specific contentious issues requiring resolution may be sought at this time.

**PHASE 6 - Final Design and Management Plan (December)**

- Consultant complete Master Plan and Management Plan document
- Consultant discuss phasing with Steering Committee
- Consultant complete implementation costing and scheduling
- Final presentation of plan to Commission
- Notification to public of final Master Plan