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**TO:** CITY MANAGER **DATE:** 2009 February 04

**FROM:** DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION &  
CULTURAL SERVICES

**SUBJECT: DEER LAKE PARK FESTIVAL LAWN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

**PURPOSE:** To provide an update regarding the Deer Lake Park Festival Lawn Implementation Plan.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** this report be received for information purposes.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be forwarded to the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission, and the Community Heritage Commission for information.

**REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

This report outlines the progress made to date in the design development for the Deer Lake Park Festival Lawn improvement project. This project is supported with partial funding from the Provincial Spirit Squares Legacy Program. This report provides background on the Deer Lake Park Management Plan, and current staff work completed for planning, design and site works for the proposed improvements for the Festival Lawn.

**BACKGROUND**

Deer Lake Park is widely considered a “jewel” in Central Burnaby. The Arts Precinct within the park contains several significant fine arts and cultural facilities, provides a home for various special events, and offers a high-quality public outdoor venue in a lakeside setting unique in the Lower Mainland. The Arts Precinct historically draws significant numbers of people to activities in the park for various non-music festivals and cultural events, and in patronage to the Burnaby Village Museum, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts and the Burnaby Art Gallery during all seasons. In addition to facilitating organized outdoor events, the City has provided large areas of land in the Arts Precinct for passive recreation, and has protected significant heritage and ecosystem resources. The opportunities for recreational and cultural activities are many as are the complexities of managing and improving the park amenities to serve the public better.

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In 1997 May, the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Commission approved a multi-phased management plan review process for Deer Lake Park. Through this process, a thorough review of the resources within the park, both built and natural, a review of the cultural, recreational programs, and the operational needs for those programs were assessed. This review process included an extensive public consultation program through three open houses, a public forum and key stakeholder group meetings to ensure public opinion on environmental, cultural and recreational issues was heard. The resulting management plan, approved by Commission and Council in 1999, encapsulates the vision, provides conceptual plans and makes recommendations for improvements to the park.

One of the goals identified in the planning process, was the provision of “appropriate cultural and recreational experiences in the park”. This goal is expanded into specific objectives:

1. Improve and increase opportunities for civic arts and cultural activities.
2. Expand outdoor arts and cultural programs and activities.
3. Establish a public art program for the park; and
4. Improve and diversify events and festivals complementary to park resources.

The Management Plan recommended that outdoor concerts, arts exhibits, special events and other uses be accommodated within the context of a re-contoured Festival Lawn south of the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts with improved services. The Plan also recommended that these works be designed and undertaken to protect and enhance both the cultural heritage and environment values of the park.

Following the goals and objectives outlined in the Management Plan, improvements to the Festival Lawn began incrementally. In 2000, an upgrade to the electrical services at the south end of the lawn was installed to reduce the need for portable generators. In 2005, the first major renovation to the lawn began. The work entailed re-grading the stage and seating area to create an improved, terraced lawn surface suitable for outdoor concert events of various sizes up to 10,000 people. Features included extensive lawn reinforcing components under the stage area and service vehicle approaches, improved electrical service (which replaced gasoline-powered generators) and potable water services, a new subsurface drainage and irrigation network, and a new biofiltration pond that filters and cleans the run-off from the site. The project successfully managed to retain the natural lawn character of the site and to protect the natural attributes of the adjacent lakeshore, and it was very well received by the public

Planning for the second phase of site improvements began in 2007. With fortuitous timing, the BC Spirit Square Legacy Program was announced by the Provincial Government, and the criteria for the program closely matched additional improvements envisioned for the Festival Lawn. One criterion for grant eligibility was a demonstration of clear and open public involvement process which was clearly demonstrated through the extensive consultation undertaken in the development of the 1999 Management Plan.

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On 2007 March 28, Council approved in principle the funding of improvements to the Festival Lawn on the understanding that the project may be successful in receiving a grant through the Provincial Government Spirit Squares Legacy Program. Of the \$1.7 million project budget, the City will receive a \$500,000 contribution from the Legacy Program.

The previous completion of the consultation process was accepted by the granting agency enabling the design team to move forward to meet the strict and tight timeline for project completion of 2009 October 31.

## **FESTIVAL LAWN AND SHADBOLT CENTRE TERRACE IMPROVEMENTS**

A consultant team was engaged in July 2008 to proceed with design development for the Spirit Square Festival Lawn improvements. With staff input, a number of changes were identified to streamline operations and minimize disruption by noise and temporary operational set-ups that are required to stage events. There is also recognition of the need to maintain open access to the park during non-event periods to facilitate the passive recreational needs of the general public. With the identification of these two key program requirements, a preliminary design concept has been developed by staff through a landscape consultant for an improvement program for the Festival Lawn to be implemented in 2009. The preliminary conceptual improvements are illustrated in Attachment #1 and include:

- Expansion of the Festival Lawn seating area to the west. This will increase seating capacity by 25% and will require removal of trees and two planting beds in the area. Select plant material will be salvaged and relocated to other areas of the Park. It is noted that a tree inventory has been conducted and heritage trees were identified. No significant landmarks are affected. Some trees will be relocated temporarily to facilitate construction activity, and new replacement trees will be planted in the Park.
- Construction of perimeter fences, in defined locations on the site, to replace approximately 60 percent of the temporary industrial fencing erected during the weeks of the concert season. The fence concept includes decorative stone piers at points of entry that reflect the stone work of the Shadbolt Centre building with metal fence infill panels, and lighting features to aid crowd access and egress.
- New hedgerow plantings are proposed along the east and west boundary with species identified as having heritage relevance.
- Expansion of the Shadbolt Centre terrace to facilitate large groups, community festivals and special events. The expansion also enhances the indoor/outdoor uses for facility rentals. Special treatment of this space includes accent paving, a large planter with a seating ledge and large ornamental tree, and feature lighting.
- Minor improvements to the drainage, electrical and irrigation systems.

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- Resurfacing of the east and west service roads with a special ‘country lane’ treatment consisting of two concrete strips with a grass median to reduce dust in summer and facilitate the movement of large trucks, concert equipment and emergency vehicles.
- Rebuilding and slightly realigning several paved paths to better accommodate large crowds and service vehicles, notably to the concession area, and adding one paved path to the west ticket gate where no path currently exists. All paths will be wheelchair accessible with the exception of the new west gate path which is steeply graded due to the site geography. It is anticipated that the new paths (coupled with new lighting) will greatly enhance the public’s enjoyment of the site at all times of the year.
- To streamline and reduce the need for portable generators that produce considerable noise, additional underground power supply connection will be made between the existing hydro kiosk and transformer pad at the south end of the site subject to approval through the City’s Environmental Review Committee process

These works are expected to enhance the operational efficiency and provide greater cost effectiveness of the concert venue and all related outdoor events, as well as improve site aesthetics with high-quality design. Parks staff have also prepared the scope of works for the project in reference to Council’s adopted Deer Lake Management Plan. The features of the plan are generally consistent with the vision and goals outlined in the Deer Lake Management plan.

## **NEXT STEPS**

As noted above, Phase Two of the preliminary design concept for the 2009 Festival Lawn improvements has been completed. This concept is presently being reviewed and refined through the City’s Preliminary Plan approval (PPA), and Engineering stormwater management and sediment control approval processes.

With PPA and Council approval, the project will move forward to detailed design. Appearing elsewhere on the agenda is a report requesting Council award the detail design contract for the project. Upon award of the contract, construction drawings would be completed for tender, with construction to follow in the April to October period.

## **CONCLUSION**

The extensive consultation process that resulted in the Deer Lake Management Plan has provided a clear vision for improvements and changes to significant program areas around the lake. While many areas of the lake will be preserved and enhanced specifically as habitat, other zones will continue to be developed and operate for recreational and cultural purposes.

Significant investment has been made on improvements to the Festival Lawn, creating a strong economic and cultural nucleus in the Arts Precinct. The proposed Festival Lawn improvements for 2009 have been moved forward on the agenda due in part to the financial contribution of the Spirit Square Legacy program, celebrating B.C.’s sesquicentennial in Burnaby.

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Significant improvements for public access around the lake were achieved recently by adding a boardwalk and trail connection along the south side of the lake. Improvements to the beach area, playground, parking and stream habitats on the east side of the lake are a high priority for the future.

Further improvements and works on the heritage, environmental and recreational components of the park will be addressed as future funding is made available.



Dave Ellenwood  
DIRECTOR PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

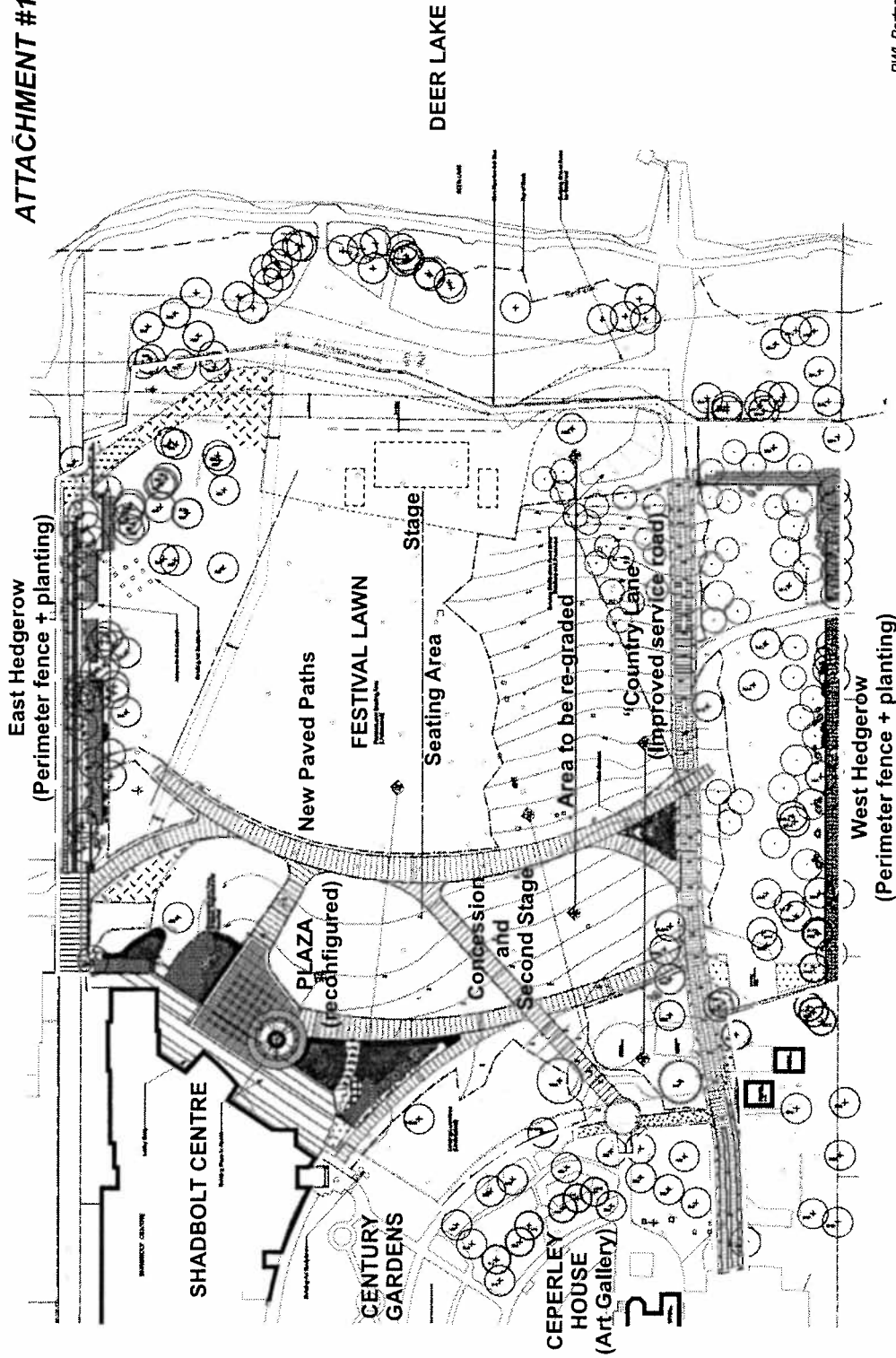
MB/HE/RS/DE/DN:tc

Attachment

PK- DEER LAKE PARK FESTIVAL LAWN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Copied to: Director of Engineering  
Director of Planning & Building

**ATTACHMENT #1**



PWL Partnership  
 park planning, design & development/MB  
 h. data/core/deer lake park/festival lawn site plan

Drawing: 09.02.11  
 Date: NTS  
 Scale: PWL / MB  
 Drawn: PWL / MB

**Deer Lake Park  
 Site Plan ~ Festival Lawn Improvements**

