



**Parks Master Plan
Steering Committee Meeting
Parks Training Room
January 16, 2007 7pm**

Present: Councillor Madoff, Larry Hutchings, Vernon Wiebe, Dennis Seed, Helen Tremaine, Bryan Melnyk, Lynette Hiebert, Katia Gauvin, Hal Gibbard

Staff: Gary Darrah, Manager-Parks Development; Alison Meyer, Planner; Joe Daly, Manager – Research, Planning & Design; Deirdre Peters, Recording Secretary

Action Items from the previous meeting were dealt with: Alison distributed binders for Steering Committee members, notes and contact list of members. Gary distributed a draft map of City Parks and Facilities and an organization chart of the Parks Division.

1. Review of Agenda

- Agenda reviewed and accepted
- Committee agreed that, if possible, any discrepancies in the minutes would be dealt with by emailing problems to Alison and through email communications in order to avoid spending time on this during meetings.

2. Observations, comments and discussion regarding Parks Master Plans reviewed by Steering Committee.

“What did we like?”

City of Kamloops

- outlined the current state of their inventory
- included environmental and financial aspects for each recreation facility
- outlined an action plan and strategy for each park

Capital Regional District

- outlined the purpose/classification of each park ie: neighbourhood park, community or regional park
- included tables which grouped parks by different classifications ie: management focus, specific ecosystems
- process was good

City of Calgary

- included an ‘open space plan’
- covered a wide range and defined the parks

- included a good visual tool for locating the parks and where they fit into the overall legislation
- included an implementation chart with strategies for each park and how the strategies were to be implemented (this was considered a good tool for review and follow up)

City of Vancouver

- was well laid out, short, precise and designed well

District of Saanich

- identified the objectives
- emphasized Municipal and Community partnerships
- identified surpluses and deficits in terms of neighbourhood and community parks
- recommended the need to work with other Communities to develop regional athletic facility
- acknowledged the need for more brochures, maps and information to be posted to their website
- included definition for the types of parks in their system ie: what constitutes a neighbourhood park versus a community park
- recognized that their Recreation Section was the biggest user of their parks system and the need for Recreation staff to consult with Parks Maintenance staff

City of Vernon

- was technically good and had a good classification system for their parks

“What didn’t we like?”

City of Kamloops

- Could have been better written

City of Victoria

- Active Living guide had too many categories and were not readily distinguishable as to what amenities were included in which headings ie: parks versus parkette
- Fisherman’s Wharf park is underutilized

Capital Regional District

- Too long
- Not applicable to the City of Victoria as parks in the CRD are more regional parks

City of Calgary

- Definitions too tightly defined
- Limited creativity

City of Vancouver

- Presented more as a policy document versus a plan

- No clear objectives nor timeframe or implementation strategy
- No factual basis
- No reports included
- No direction on how to conduct survey

District of Saanich

- No overall vision/lack of vision

District of Vernon

- Poorly developed
- Read list a wish list rather than a directional plan
- Vision was cumbersome

“Lessons we should remember for the City of Victoria’s Master Plan?”

- Need to have a good definition of the various types of parks (ie: neighbourhood versus community)
- Would be helpful if all municipalities adopted the same criteria/definitions for the various types of parks
- Definitions should be explained to Managers and Politicians
- Neighbourhood park define as within a five minute walk
- Community park defined as within a 20 minute walk
- Municipal park larger in size and more sophisticated equipment/amenities
- Ensure that you inventory the people and what they want
- Need a strategy for the urban forest within the Parks Master Plan
- If the word ‘sustainable’ is to be used it needs to be defined
- Master Plan should be a balance between policy document and action plan
- Determine the demographic profile of park users
- Include trends and demographics

3. Overview of the Greenway Planning Process

- Received \$15, 000 from Provincial Capital Commission
- \$10,000 contract with Common Ground – they do community mapping
- Early 2002 Council appointed a Steering Committee
- 3 prong approach
 1. Greenways Day Mary 11, 2002 – had people come to us
 2. Sent out survey to schools, seniors, community associations and other special interest groups – go to where the people are
 3. Greenway booths – this was an opportunity for education and a chance to ask those not normally asked
- Survey questions were categorized into themes and recorded in a matrix
- Steering Committee established the principles for the program
- Analyzed the feedback from the Community consultation

- Staff wrote a section of the plans and presented to Steering Committee for review
- Staff then revised and edited the plans
- Presented to Council
- Council referred to the Advisory Committees and neighbouring municipalities
- An Open House was held
- Steering Committee reviewed feedback and made revisions to plan
- Report sent to Council
- Public Hearings
- Council adopted plan

Discussion

- Were the questions on the survey design by professional? – No, staff and the steering committee. How the question is asked is important
- The mapping portion concept of the Greenways program could be incorporated into the Parks Master Plan
- The Committee would like to discover who is using Parks
- Committee wants to have clear objectives in the plan
- To look at demographics, social and health trends as well as trends in recreation – want to prepare for the future
- Don't want to miss surveying current non-park users—find out why they aren't using the Parks system
- Look at tourism industry (ie: the cruise industry) how to capture their opinion
ACTION: place on agenda researching trends
- Greenway Plan was instrumental in developing priorities
- Plan involved many of the neighbourhoods

4. Discussion and ideas for Parks Master Plan Planning Process – How to consult and engage the community

- like the idea of Community Associations' involvement
- Engage Service Clubs and Businesses to help with financing and developing the program
- Good to have Youth Council involvement
- Engage Naturalist Groups
- Input from Art Groups
- One big event?
- Daytime or nighttime?
- Not all groups like to attend meetings –how to include these people?
- Focus groups
- Telephone interviews
- Weekdays or weekends
- Offer an incentive to attend (free food, etc)
- Call in survey
- Post survey to website for online submissions

- “Planning Café” – different times, locations
- Local newspapers
- Survey forms and drop off boxes located at local businesses
- Create ‘neighbourhoods’ from map (max.6 might groups some together)
- Use of Community Associations
- Distribute surveys during local neighbourhood market days
- Hold a big event/meeting with some ideas and solicit feedback
- Need to establish a vision, objectives and principles
- Present to Public: here’s the trends & issues...solicit feedback
- Test existing Parks vision/mission statement with Public
- Opportunity hiring a consultant to design a planning process is unlikely
- Outside of sports organizations, need to discover who is using the parks and why...will help establish a baseline
- Have a current inventory and poll Public as to what people know/understand and what they think of it.

There was a discussion as to whether the group could agree on a process. It was decided that Gary and Alison would meet with Mike Leskiw, Joe Daly, and Donna Atkinson (Director) to discuss the process and would e-mail a recommendation / suggestion to the group.

ACTION: Alison Meyer will prepare a draft of the process and e-mail to the group.

5. Agenda and Dates for Field Trip

- **Field trip scheduled for February 17, 2007 9am to 5pm ??**
- Starting point at Parks Maintenance Yard
- Will travel by bus
- Lunch/Snacks to be provided
- Pictures will be taken and Alison will meet with anyone who can not make it to review to trip, learnings, etc.

6. Update on Public Survey

- Will be brought forth on next agenda

ACTION: Alison agenda item

7. Suitability of meeting space

- Room is okay
- Some discussion regarding starting time but for now will maintain the status quo

8. General discussion

- Where/how to distribute information regarding the Steering Committee and Master Plan – posting to the website
- Discussed **February meeting schedule –decided on February 13th & 20th**

9. Next meeting date:

- January 30, 2007