



**Parks Master Plan
Steering Committee Meeting #4
Parks Training Room
February 13, 2007 7pm**

Present: Vernon Wiebe, Dennis Seed, Helen Tremaine, Lynette Hiebert,
Hal Gibbard, Katia Gauvin, Councillor Pam Madoff

Staff: Alison Meyer, Planner; Gary Darrah, Manager – Park Development,
Deirdre Peters, Recording Secretary

Regrets: Bryan Melnyk, Larry Hutching

1. Review of Agenda

- Agenda reviewed and accepted

Alison explained the format for the 'Parks Master Plan Event'

- Event will commence with Councillor Madoff doing a 'welcoming speech'
- Gary Darrah will explain 'what a Park Master Plan is.'
- Guest speaker Douglas Patterson will do a presentation
- Participants will be seated in groups of 10-12
- City staff member to facilitate each group
- The exact time/length of the event is not determined yet it will likely begin around 10am and end at 2pm

2. Trial Fun of 'Favourite Parks in the World Exercise'

- Members explained what they liked about their favourite parks
- Themes emerged, elements that people liked were:
 - Parks with an element of surprise/landscape changed
 - Parks offering a variety of experiences
 - Natural parks in one way or another
 - Children having fun
 - Parks as a meeting place
 - Parks for relaxation
 - Parks with water features
 - Parks as an oasis/refuge from urban/chaotic life
 - Parks with attractions for children

What worked with this exercise, what needs improving?

- Will participants glue pictures, etc to global map – perhaps too distracting

- To facilitate mapping exercise perhaps we should supply stock images: waterfalls, playgrounds
- Need a clearer definition as to what is meant by the question
- Allow for freedom of expression; do not place too many restrictions on responses/response time
- Let people express what they like
- Committee members agreed that this exercise should be restricted to an urban context – focus on ‘city’ parks
- Recording of ‘favourite parks’ information should include location of park, ie: country or city
- Facilitator at each table should highlight emerging themes
- Not necessary to have the collaging/mosaic component of the exercise because it is distracting.

3. Trial Run of “Visioning Exercise”

- Close your eyes, travel in time to 2032 and think about the following questions that will be posed by facilitator:

Demographics

- **Question:** Who are the biggest users of the parks and public open spaces?
 - ✓ **Answers:** tourists, food growers, youth, everybody, well-heeled retirees, people in the workforce, families, wildlife.
- **Question:** Why do they go there?
 - ✓ **Answers:** laid off, lots of leisure time, parks in good condition, seeking refuge, healthy environment, peace & quiet, exercise, social meeting place, to connect with nature, visit historical site/sense of history, people using parks because they are more highly valued as greenspace grows scarce.
- **Question:** What activities take place in City parks and public open spaces that people really enjoy?
 - ✓ **Answers:** walking, walking cats, playground use, games, drinking coffee/wine, gazing/contemplating, producing food, market gardens, collecting seeds –‘seedbanks’, horticultural development, community gardens, volunteerism, conservation.

Physical

- **Question:** What will parks & public open space look like in 25 years from now?
 - ✓ **Answers:** green, connect to each other, water features, trees, open to the air – no geodomes, watch movies, more treed space opposed to wide-open spaces, flowers, native material – need to incorporate water conservation, free, accessible, secure, sports.
- **Question:** What qualities make the parks & public open spaces engaging, safe, convenient and lively?

- ✓ **Answers:** free, secure, accessible, well-lit, diverse activities, sports, programmed and nonprogrammed activities, spontaneous activities.
- **Question:** What types of parks & public open spaces will be most popular?
 - ✓ **Answers:** natural park (they will be rarer), linear parks, corridors for walking/greenway, interactive activities for a variety of groups, welcoming, safe, ability to view wildlife in the park, zoo-like.
- **Question:** Where will the new parks & public open spaces be located, in 2032?
 - ✓ **Answers:** along the shoreline, earthquake/hazardous zones, continuous walkways- along the water, school, along streams, sewage treatment plants, industrial parks, business donating space, rooftops, bios wells.

🌍 **Environmental:**

- **Question:** Over the next 25 years, what aspects of the natural environment do you imagine people will really appreciate/value?
 - ✓ **Answers:** anything alive, respite, natural areas, what we value now – getting closer to nature, community connection, nature that is healthy, security, integrated health issues.
- **Question:** How will these values be reflected in the Parks system?
 - ✓ **Answers:** not covered in all weather fields, seating areas, being able to hear the wind, leaves, birds.
- **Question:** In 25 years, what will the citizens of Victoria appreciate/value in a park?
 - ✓ **Answers:** anything alive, flowers, trees, natural areas, community connection, healthy environment, aware of and appreciate the natural features, the opportunity for the integration of different age, groups, respite, refuge.
- **Question:** How will this show up or be reflected in parks?
 - ✓ **Answers:** Parks will not be all-weather fields/artificial turf fields, ability to hear nature, hear the wind, birds, sound of water.

🌍 **Social:**

- **Question:** In 2032, what social problems do you see affecting parks?
 - ✓ **Answers:** population and housing density, affordable housing or lack thereof, homelessness, tent cities, climate, cost of land to create a park, cost of maintaining a park, competing interests, drugs, prostitution, maintaining Public will, carrying capacity of a park.
- **Question:** How will these problems be addressed?
 - ✓ **Answers:** security, communication with surrounding municipalities, an engaged community active in the space around them, stewards/wards for parks, concept of “Friends of Parks”, people engaged, helping maintain the park.
- **Question:** How are parks made to feel safe?

- ✓ **Answers:** security, gates, lights, clean, enforcement of the regulations, wardens, well used park- with more people in it- integrated into the community at various times throughout the day.

🚦 **Benefits:**

- **Question:** In 25 years, what do the citizens of Victoria see to be the benefits of parks?
 - ✓ **Answers:** cooling, provision of food, recreation, warehouses for flora and fauna, place for family gatherings, health benefits- both mental and physical, ability to be out in the open/fresh air, place to walk/walk pets, place of community belonging, last democratic space.
- **Question:** What do business owners see as the benefits of parks?
 - ✓ **Answers:** people getting outside/foot traffic, revenue, fundraising, a venue to draw people in to town (ie: for special events/activities), sponsorship, in migration, publicity.

🚦 **Finance and Maintenance:**

- **Question:** Current annual budget is 6.5 million and approximately 90 employees. What will the annual budget be in 2032 and how many employees?
 - ✓ **Answers:** more money, fewer employees, somewhere between 12 and 24 million
- **Question:** How will this budget be supported?
 - ✓ **Answers:** Public support, volunteers, donations, marked funds- taxes, role of Parks and Recreation Foundation, 'adopt a park' program, lottery monies, tied into development plans, density bonus, some exchange with developers, development cost charges, increase in taxes, user fees.
- **Question:** Will there be a need for parks and open spaces?
 - ✓ **Answers:** yes
- **Question:** How will new parks and public open space be acquired over the next 25 years?
 - ✓ **Answers:** purchased land, land swaps/exchanges, land donations, legacies, expropriation, demolition of existing use, schools, bylaws.

🚦 **Possible question:**

- **Question:** What do you absolutely cherish about parks? Participants given Parks dollars (a paper representation of) to spend on what they cherish most.
 - ✓ **Answers:** wheelchair accessibility, place of wheelchair races, hope that grandchildren will be enjoying the parks, green-green-green, nature and wildlife, water.

What worked with this exercise, what needs improving?

- Possible rewording of question: "Where will the new parks & public open spaces be located, in 2032? to include "or will there be parks & public open spaces?"
- Third question from the 'social' section to be deleted
- Second question from the 'finance and maintenance' section to be deleted

- Committee liked the 'Rainbow' concept....good visual aid
 - Concept of 'parks dollars' nice idea
 - Liked the amount of information gathered
 - Exercise teases out the values
 - Discussion around 25 year timeframe:
 - too much guessing, too far to predict
 - most Parks Master Plans are 10 year span
 - some visioning needs to be grounded in reality
 - + 25 years elicits responses of 'what I wish' versus 'what I think is attainable'
 - 25 year time frame gets people to imagine what is possible
 - so far middle class white ideas have not factored in what migrating population may want
 - missing trends, ie: concept of part-time residents (live part of the year elsewhere)
 - facilitators need to be able to explain the questions clearly
 - good use of non-leading questions
 - Committee members will take home questions to review and make possible suggestions.
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- Committee discussed how have parks been acquired in the past?
 - Were acquisitions planned or ad hoc?
 - Gary will consult with long-term Parks staff members for information
 - Remainder of agenda tabled to next meeting

4. Reminder of field trip - Saturday, February 17, 2007

- Meet at Parks yard at 9am
 - Bus and driver arrange but backup discussed
 - Trip on regardless of weather
 - Wear walking shoes for tour of parks
 - Lunch arrangements have been made
 - Alison will email itinerary
- ACTION:** Alison

5. Next meeting date February 20, 2007 – Steering Committee will trial run remaining exercises

9. Next meeting date:

- February 20, 2007