



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To Parks, Rec & Culture - Jan 23, 2007

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee

Date: January 11, 2006

From: Dave Semple Director, Parks & Public Works Operations

File: 03-1087-01.

Mike Redpath Manager, Parks - Programs, Planning & Design

Re: British Columbia 150th Anniversary Spirit Squares and Local Motion Fund Grant Opportunities February 2007

Staff Recommendation

- 1. That an application be submitted to the Province of British Columbia Spirit Square Program to facilitate the enhancement of the Riverside Waterfront Park on the Middle Arm adjacent to the Richmond Oval.
2. That an application be submitted to the Province of British Columbia Spirit Square Program to facilitate the installation of the Minoru Park Plaza Sculpture and Gathering Place.
3. That an application be submitted to the Province of British Columbia Local Motion Fund for the City Centre and Middle Arm Greenways connecting the Canada Line to the Richmond Oval.

[Signature of Dave Semple]

Dave Semple Director, Parks & Public Works Operations (3350)

[Signature of Mike Redpath]

Mike Redpath Manager, Parks - Programs, Planning & Design (1275)

Att. 3

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Staff Report

Origin

On October 27, 2006, at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities conference, the Province of British Columbia announced the provision of up to \$20 million in grant opportunities to develop public open spaces in celebration of British Columbia's 150th anniversary of its founding as a Crown Colony in 2008 as well as \$10 million per year for four years (\$40 million in total) to help build bike paths, greenways, improve accessibility for persons with disabilities, and support programs that help get children playing in parks.

On December 18, 2006, the Province of BC formally issued the program details for the BC 2008 Spirit Squares Program and LocalMotion Fund.

The purpose of this report is to present the BC Spirit Squares and LocalMotion Fund grant programs for information and to recommend potential opportunities in Richmond for this cost-share funding.

Analysis

1. What is the BC Spirit Squares Program?

“The Province will support Spirit Square projects that:

- Advance the BC2008 vision and strategic objectives;
- Have the clear and demonstrable support of the community;
- Enhance the social, cultural and economic well being of the community;
- Support compact, walkable communities and improve the pedestrian network;
- Demonstrate excellence in urban design; and
- Recognize the unique history, culture and natural features of the community, including the contribution of Aboriginal people.

To advance these principles, the BC Spirit Square program will be supported by criteria that are:

- ***Application Driven*** – a community-sponsored/supported application for provincial consideration. While the province encourages participation, the program is voluntary in nature.
- ***Province-wide*** - funding will be shared across B.C.'s communities as equitably as possible, based on eligible funding requests.
- ***Partnership-oriented*** – projects will be cost shared. Provincial contributions will be matched by applicant sponsor contributions. Applicant contribution agreements must be in place prior to a commitment of provincial funding. Contributions from other programs sponsored by ministries/agencies of the government of British Columbia ministry/agency programs may be considered eligible as part of applicant contributions.
- ***Budget Bound*** – in order to maximize distribution of provincial funding under the program, provincial contributions will be capped at 50% of the eligible project costs to a maximum grant of \$500,000. Certain in-kind contributions will be defined as acceptable applicant contributions. Provincial contributions will support planning, feasibility, design and construction costs. There is no support for on-going operating costs.
- ***Adaptable and Responsive to Community Needs*** - not a “one-size fits all” model. The program recognizes that some communities may have existing sites and detailed plans for spaces that would

qualify as Spirit Squares, while others will need to identify and acquire sites and develop them from scratch. To support communities at different stages in the process, the project awards cover 50% of the eligible costs for up to \$50,000 in Phase 1 to support planning and design prior to a Phase 2 commitment for project construction up to \$500,000. Applicants may enter the program at either phase.”

2. What is the LocalMotion Fund?

“The LocalMotion program has been established to assist local governments in creating vibrant and integrated communities. At the 2006 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Annual Convention, Premier Campbell shared a vision of communities that “are safe, healthy places, where people can choose to walk or bike to work, where they can breathe clean air, and have access to clean water and proper sewage treatment.”

The Premier’s speech outlined the following qualities of a vibrant community and thereby established the goals of the LocalMotion program:

- Improved physical fitness for all British Columbians;
- Reduce the risk of traffic crashes;
- Reduce air pollutants; and
- Meet the diverse needs of seniors, young families, and all British Columbians.

If a project meets the proposed goals of the LocalMotion program it can improve the physical fitness levels of a community by providing safe facilities that encourage cycling and walking, provide children a safe route to school, support the local economy (by creating trails or greenways that the traveling public can use to access tourism destinations), or meet the mobility needs of seniors and people with disabilities.

By providing local governments funding assistance for the construction of bike paths, walkways, greenways and projects that improve accessibility for people with disabilities, LocalMotion supports the Province’s Great Goals of:

- Healthy Living;
- Support for Persons with Disabilities;
- Environmental Management; and
- Jobs and the Economy.

Maximum funding from LocalMotion for a local government will be capped at \$1 million per year.

3. Key Decision Criteria for Potential City Projects

The Spirit Square and LocalMotion grant opportunities can provide significant capital to advance and enhance existing parks and open space and trails infrastructure projects that satisfy the grant criteria as described below.

3.1 Timing

The opportunity to leverage the potentially available capital requires that the City formally endorse an application for the grants in January 2007. The urgency of Council endorsement is a result of the tight timeline presented for the grant programs. Applications must be made to the Ministry of Community Services by February 16, 2007, with funding made available in Spring 2007.

3.2 Mandatory Requirement for City Funding:

The Spirit Square and LocalMotion programs require that Cities demonstrate that the City's share and existing capital funding is in place - for 2007 this would mean only approved 2007 Capital Program projects are eligible.

3.3 Demonstration of Council Approval:

The Provincial programs both require demonstration of a local Council's support for the proposed grants, thus the requirement for this report.

4. Potential Projects for Consideration

4.1 Spirit Square Program

Spirit Square Program:

1. Riverside Open Space at the Richmond Oval, Fraser River Middle Arm.

There is a significant opportunity to pursue Spirit Square Program funding for the Riverside Open Space adjacent to the Richmond Oval on the Middle Arm Waterfront (Attachment 1).

Spirit Square Principles:

As a key component of the open space concept for the Oval development, Riverside meets the Spirit Square application principles, as follows:

- "Enhance the social, cultural and economic well-being of the community": Riverside will be the main public gathering place associated with the Oval, and as such will be a venue for major outdoor events promoting wellness, recreation, and the unique cultural character of Richmond.
- "Support compact, walkable communities and improve the pedestrian network": As a hub in the Middle Arm trail system, Riverside will contribute to the enhanced Fraser River waterfront that realizes the goals of walkability and healthy outdoor space, stated by the Provincial Government and outlined in the City Centre Area Plan. It is a key part of the landscape that will attract pedestrians to the Oval site and the River.
- "Demonstrate excellence in urban design": Part of the City's vision for the Olympic Oval site is to deliver a world class venue in a dynamic urban core, which promotes Richmond as an international city. To this end, the City has worked with a team of award-winning consultants including architects, landscape architects, urban designers, and public art planners, to produce an open space scheme that is an excellent example of urban design.
- "Recognize the unique history, culture and natural features of the community, including the contribution of Aboriginal people": Riverside represents a new shift in Richmond's urban development towards the Fraser River. It will provide a strong connection between the City and the Fraser River and estuary environment, as well as the cultural landscape of the dyke trail system. The development also evokes the millennia of history that the Musqueam people have on the site and on the Fraser River delta in general. Huge concrete buttresses on the Oval building feature Coast Salish-themed sculptural concrete work designed by Musqueam artist Susan Point. The storm water runoff from the buttresses is visibly conveyed through the Riverside landscape and ultimately into the Fraser River, dynamically illustrating the site's cultural and natural heritage.

Minoru Park Plaza Sculpture and Gathering Place

Criteria for eligibility in the Spirit Square Program is celebrating a community's past and future and the intent is to create places and spaces that are: "...well-designed and optimally-located squares, parks, trails and plazas, that enhance the social, cultural, and economic life of the community and build on it's distinctive history and natural features."

Given this, one opportunity is to enhance the planned public art installation "Minoru Horse" to be installed adjacent to the Minoru Place Senior's Centre at the Minoru Park Plaza. This site, already a gathering place for community functions, would be enhanced with additional seating areas, an extension of the existing plaza and a commemorative installation of the Minoru Horse sculpture being funded by a private donor (Attachment 2). An application for this project would be made to Phase 2 of the Program, which provides funding support for the construction of projects.

4.2 LocalMotion Fund

City Centre and Middle Arm Greenways

An opportunity exists to pursue the LocalMotion Fund to advance the City's desire to develop a premiere urban waterfront in the City Centre. The Middle Arm waterfront from Cambie Road to Hollybridge Way at the Oval site (Attachment 3) links the future Aberdeen Station of the Canada Line, the Richmond Yacht Club, UBC Rowing, and the Oval site. Cost-share funding could be pursued to provide an enhanced and accessible pedestrian/cycling trail that links a potential Spirit Square with the Oval site and the planned Canada Line Aberdeen Station at No. 3 Road and Cambie Road.

The Middle Arm presents a park and trail development opportunity that strongly satisfies the Provincial criteria established for the LocalMotion Fund program. In addition, the Middle Arm project design process is currently underway and is a currently funded capital program. The Middle Arm Waterfront Park concept plan has been in progress for several years, and builds on Richmond's existing waterfront strategy, the evolving City Centre Area Plan, the recent addition of the UBC Boathouse, and the 2010 Trails strategy. The proposed scope of work in 2007 includes:

- Construction of dyke trail access linking Cambie Road to the Middle Arm trail;
- Preparation of the Middle Arm Dyke Trail accessible trail surface;
- Installation of seating areas and site interpretation; and
- Establishment of linear park area and Phase 1 implementation of the Middle Arm Open Space Strategy.

Financial Impact

The Riverside Open Space along the Middle Arm Oval site satisfies the necessary criteria for the Spirit Square program. Funding requirements for the grant would be met, since the City has already identified funding for the Oval site. The design of Riverside and the rest of the Oval development are to be completed in 2007, and construction is estimated to be completed by the fall of 2008, which meets the program's scheduling requirements. The Spirit Square grant is capped at 50% of project costs to a maximum of \$500,000. The Riverside Park project would therefore be eligible for grant money up to that maximum.

The BC Spirit Square Program presents an opportunity to leverage grant capital in matching funds to develop a key section of Richmond's premier City Centre Park – Minoru Park – as a place for community events and gatherings. With respect to the planned installation of the Minoru Horse, design development is currently underway, a private donor has committed \$100,000 for the creation and installation of the sculpture, and \$50,000 has been allocated through the Parks 2007 General Development fund for

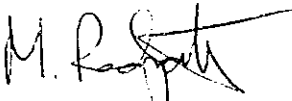
improvements surrounding the installation. This project would be eligible for an additional grant of up to \$150,000 for a total project cost of \$300,000.

The BC LocalMotion Fund presents an opportunity to seek up to \$1,000,000 in provincial grant funding to create accessible pedestrian, wheelchair and cycling public access to Richmond's Middle Arm waterfront linking the Canada Line Aberdeen Station to the Richmond Oval. Available currently approved City Centre Park and Waterfront Development capital for 2007 is approximately \$2,000,000.

Conclusion

The Spirit Square and LocalMotion programs present Richmond with an excellent opportunity to pursue joint provincial funding to enhance the quality of planned open space improvements in the community. If successful in the grant review process, the BC Spirit Square Program and LocalMotion Fund can both provide for an enhanced special events plaza at the Riverside Waterfront Middle Arm Park adjacent to the Richmond Oval, and second, in the heart of the City centre at Minoru Park.

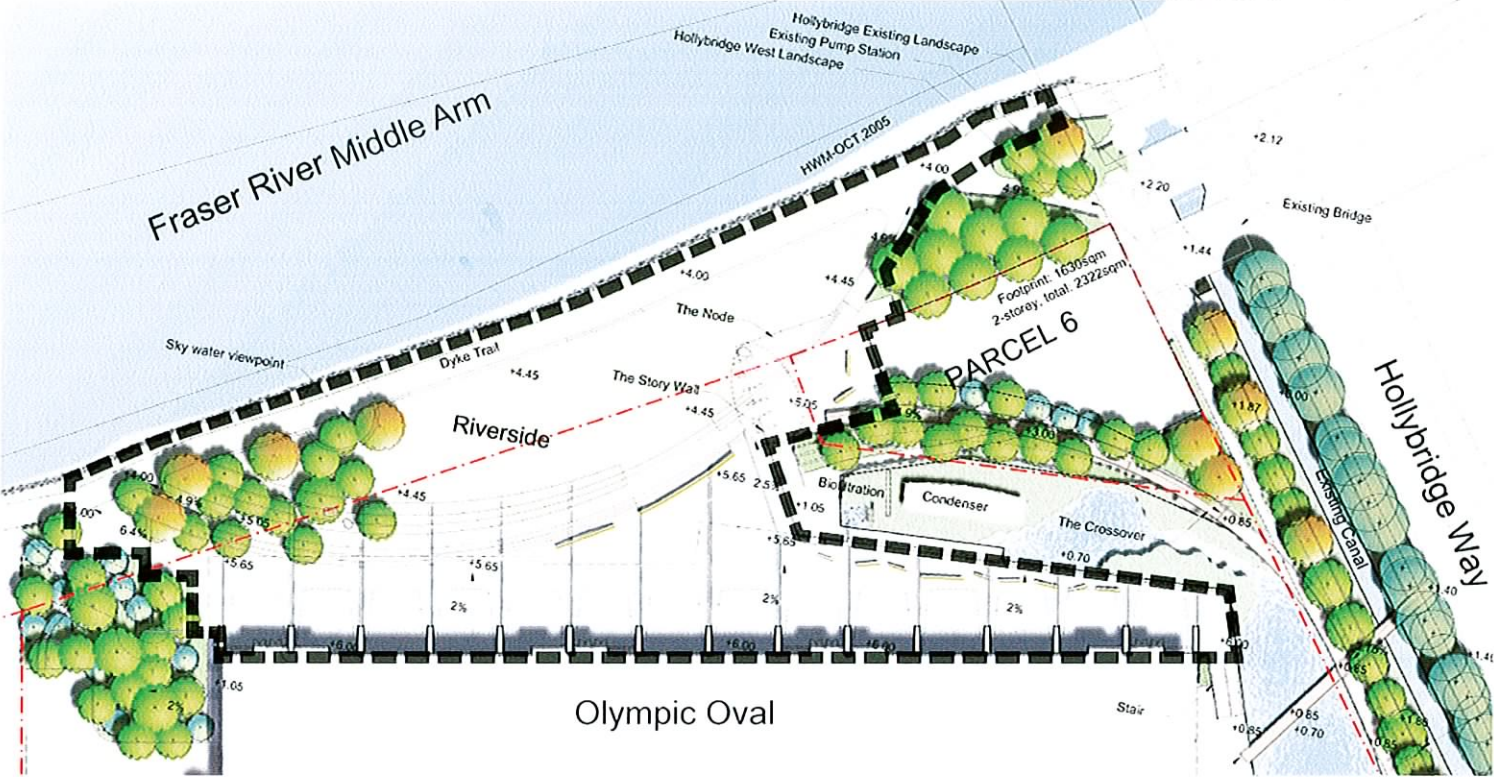
In additions, the Local motion Program can assist in the installation of a significant accessible pedestrian and cycling trail link between the Canada Line, dyke trail system and the Richmond Oval along the City Centre Middle Arm Waterfront. Approval of the recommended projects for submission will also permit staff to seek community letters of support to accompany the grant applications.



Mike Redpath
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(1275)

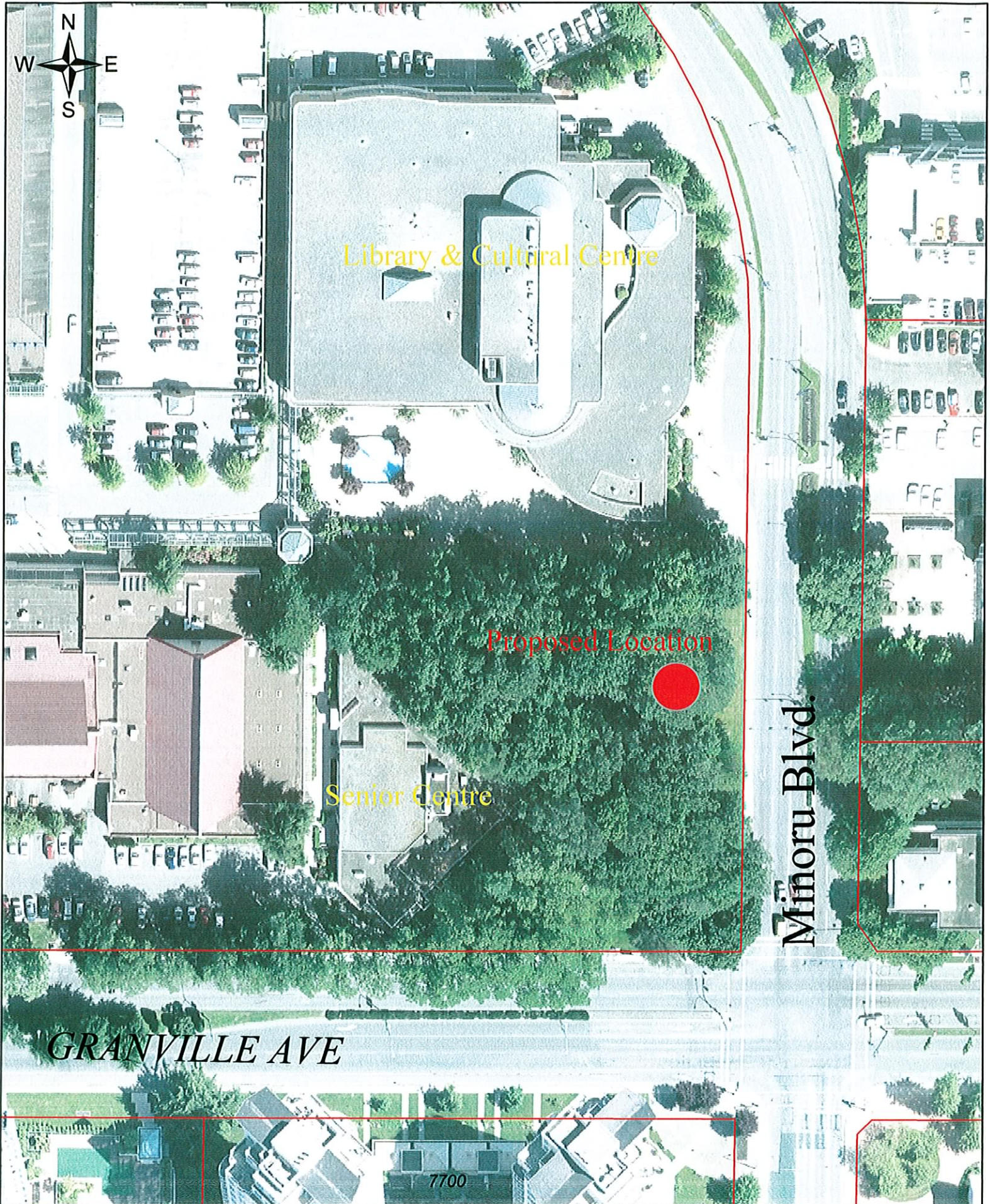
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Attachment 1



Riverside Open Space
Jan 10 2007

Minoru Park Horse Sculpture Installation - Attachment 2



Library & Cultural Centre

Proposed Location

Senior Centre

GRANVILLE AVE

Minoru Blvd.

7700

Middle Arm Greenway Park - Attachment 3

