



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks Recreation & Cultural Services
Committee
From: Dave Semple
Director Parks Operations
Re: **Memorial Bench Program**

Date: March 19, 2003
File: 7200-01

Staff Recommendation

1. That Council repeal the existing Policy #7004 "Tree and Bench Donation" adopted by Council on March 11, 1991; and,
2. That Council approve the Tree, Bench and Picnic Table Donation Policy as outlined in Attachment 2, and proposed fee schedule in attachment 3.

Dave Semple
Director Parks Operations
Local 3350

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FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER <i>Leah White</i>

Staff Report

Origin

The City of Richmond Tree and Bench Donation program was introduced February 1991. To date 365 benches and picnic tables have been donated throughout Richmond. The purpose of this report is to recommend an updated policy for the Tree, Bench and Picnic Table donation program that will introduce improved cost and management practices, and increase the sustainability of the program.

Analysis

Current Program

The existing Tree, Bench, and Picnic Table program in Richmond has been very popular with the residents of Richmond. Given the emotional nature of the sponsorship, the bench program administration requires sensitivity, tact, and empathy for the donor's requests.

- Approximately 330 benches and 35 picnic tables have been provided along the entire dyke trail system, Garry Point Park, Minoru Park and a variety of neighbourhood and community parks. In addition over 1,200 benches and 250 picnic tables have been installed by the City.
- Many trees have been sponsored over time. The presence of the living tree commemorates a given donation.
- Each bench has a unique bronze plaque designed by the sponsor and dedicated to a resident in memoriam.
- To date the;
 - approximate capital donation amount received for benches is \$331,000.
 - approximate capital donation amount received for picnic tables is \$53,000.
 - present asset replacement value of \$384,000.
- Due to the popularity of the scenic locations, no new applications for benches and picnic tables are being accepted for the following areas:
 - Middle Arm Trail from No. 2 Road west to end of River Road.
 - West Dyke Trail from Terra Nova south to Garry Point Park.
 - Garry Point Park.
 - Steveston Greenways from Garry Point Park east to No. 2 Road.

There is a waiting list of 85 people wishing to have benches placed in these areas.

Attachment 1 is the current process for sponsorship, as well as a program application form.

Issues

The following are some of the significant issues relating to the current management of the bench and picnic table program:

Issue # 1 Bench and Picnic Table Sunset Date

Demand for the bench program has reached a maximum in some areas. For example, Garry Point and the dyke trail have a wait list of over 50 people.

Many residents are turned away from the program or placed on the wait list for future openings in newly developed areas. Significantly popular locations are in proximity to view corridors or along the waterfront.

Opportunities/Recommended Policy Amendments

The donation covers the cost of the base, the bench and 10 years guaranteed maintenance in its original location, or in an area near its original location. If the bench or picnic table must be moved, the City will make reasonable attempt to contact the donor on file.

After 10 years:

- donors will have the opportunity to continue their sponsorship by paying the current fee;
- if the donor is not interested in continuing the donation or could not be contacted (within a six months of the 10 year term expiring), the bench or table will be removed and/or a new donor will have the opportunity for sponsorship at the site.

It will be the responsibility of the donor to keep their contact information current with the City of Richmond.

Two options are available for consideration:

1. Existing benches will be grandfathered for 10 years from the date of policy approval. Should any of these benches be in the need of replacement, the City will be responsible for costs; or
2. Existing benches installed prior to the date of this policy will continue in its present location. Should any of these benches require maintenance or replacement the City will be responsible for that cost.

Staff are recommending Option 1, which allows for donor cost accountability. After 10 years the donor has the option of renewing, as outlined above. If they do not renew, the memorial bench will be offered to those on the wait list.

Issue # 2 Modifications to Site

Sponsored benches from time to time have small memorial shrines erected at the site, including unauthorized plantings which introduce non-native species and potential hazards to park, trail, dyke or natural area sites.

Opportunities/Recommended Policy Amendments

Placement of wreaths, flowers, other items or any modifications to the tree, bench or picnic table will not be permitted.

Issue # 3 Tree Species and Bench Types

The current Policy #7004 allows for "...all requests for special tree species/varieties, or particular planting areas, or special types of benches, shall be accommodated, whenever possible."

Donated tree species may vary depending on-site conditions. The current Parks standard for planting a tree is a seven centimetre calliper opposed to the two inch (5 mm) calliper, as outlined in the policy.

Opportunities/Recommended Policy Amendments

The purchase and planting costs of the seven centimetre calliper tree shall be charged to the donor.

The City shall have final approval of the tree type and planting location. All requests for special tree species/varieties or particular planting areas shall be accommodated, whenever possible.

The style of bench or picnic table will be established by the City of Richmond. Requests for special types of benches or picnic tables will not be permitted.

Issue # 4 Cost to Sponsor

Detailed in Attachment 3 is the proposed fee policy for the Tree, Bench, and Picnic Table Donation Program. This schedule has been developed to take in to account the true costs for ensuring program sustainability.

Benches:

A survey of similar programs offered in other cities, shows the average cost amongst them was \$1,500 per bench. The highest was Vancouver at \$2,500 and the lowest was Penticton at \$950. Richmond's current costs are \$1,000. Note: the product quality and installation costs vary from city to city.

Current bench costs:

Manufacture	Delivery/Installation	Maintenance
\$1,000	\$500	\$500 (\$50/yr x 10 yrs)

Staff are recommending that the cost to sponsor a bench be set at \$2,000 to recover the cost of maintenance of the asset over the 10 year sponsorship period and to off-set the true acquisition and installation cost.

Picnic Tables:

A survey of similar programs offered in other cities, shows the average cost amongst them was \$1,500 per table. The highest was Burnaby at \$1,850 and the lowest was White Rock at \$950. Richmond's current costs are \$1,500. Note: the product quality and installation costs vary from city to city.

Current picnic table costs:

Manufacture	Delivery/Installation	Maintenance
\$1,600	\$700	\$500 (\$50/yr x 10 yrs)

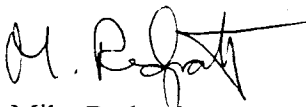
Staff are recommending an increase of \$1,300 per picnic table to recover the maintenance costs and also the actual cost of acquisition and installation. The cost to sponsor is therefore recommended to be \$2,800 per picnic table.

Financial Impact

With the introduction of the proposed 10 year sunset date and the creation of a perpetual care reserve fund for the benches and picnic tables, staff will be better able to manage the program, which currently does not provide for annual maintenance or eventual replacement. This report recommends the establishment of a perpetual care maintenance reserve account which all maintenance revenue collected from donated benches and picnic tables would be held.

Conclusion

The Tree, Bench and Picnic Table donations program has been very successful since its inception. The proposed policy amendments will allow the City to better sustain the program in the future, and also increase opportunities for more individuals to become involved in the program.



Mike Redpath
 Manager, Parks – Programs, Planning & Design
 Local 1275

ATTACHMENT 2

PROPOSED TREE, BENCH AND PICNIC TABLE POLICY

It is Council policy that:

1. The cost of the purchase and planting of the tree shall be charged to the donor. This is to be based on the average cost for purchase and installation by City forces of a seven-centimetre calliper tree, subject to annual review.
2. The City shall have final approval of the tree type and planting location. All requests for special tree species/varieties or particular planting areas shall be accommodated, whenever possible. Higher costs incurred by these requests shall be charged to the donor.
3. The cost of the purchase, installation and maintenance of the bench shall be charged to the donor. This is to be based on the average cost for purchase, installation and maintenance by City forces of a standard city bench for a 10-year period. City staff will review and adjust costs annually. The maintenance funding is placed into a perpetual care reserve account for the purpose of supporting the bench program.
4. City Staff will acknowledge the bench donation for a period of 10 years from the date of installation.
5. Donors will have the opportunity to continue their sponsorship of the bench or picnic table after the 10 year donation period by paying the current fee for replacement of the bench or picnic table. If the donor is not interested in continuing the donation or cannot be contacted (within six months of the 10-year term expiring), the bench will be removed and/or a new donor will have the opportunity for sponsorship at the site. It will be the responsibility of the donor to keep their contact information current with the City of Richmond.
6. Existing benches will be grandfathered for 10 years from the date of this policy approval. Should any of these benches be in the need of replacement, the city will be responsible for that cost.
7. The City shall have final approval of the location and style of the bench.
8. The City shall have final approval of plaque size, style, and wording. A maximum of two plaques per bench.
9. The City shall include the tree in its normal schedule of care or maintenance and shall replace when possible

10. The tree and bench shall become City property. Staff reserves the right to relocate or remove the tree or bench whenever necessary. A reasonable effort shall be made to notify the donor if their tree or bench is affected.
11. A tree and bench donation account shall be established for those unable to purchase a whole tree or bench, but who wish to contribute funds. No plaques shall be permitted in this case, but City recognition of some type shall be considered.
12. A City record will be established to record all commemorative trees and contributions.
13. Placement of memorial wreaths, flowers or other items or any modifications to the tree, bench or picnic table will not be permitted.

File: 1076-08

Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
Telephone: (604) 244-1208
Fax: (604) 244-1242

Re: Memorial Tree/Bench Donation Program

Thank you for your interest in the City of Richmond's Tree, Bench and Picnic Table Donation Program.

Please find enclosed an application form and notices that will provide you with some basic information regarding our program. As applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis, complete the form and return it as soon as possible to the Parks Department of the City of Richmond. We will keep your application on file, and will contact you when space becomes available. Please feel free to contact us at anytime for an update on your application's status.

You are not obligated to pay for the bench/picnic table until the exact location and availability has been mutually agreed upon. At that point you will be requested to pay to reserve the spot for you.

We regret that no new applications for benches and picnic tables are being accepted for the following areas:

- Middle Arm Trail from No. 2 Road west to end of River Road
- West Dyke Trail from Terra Nova south to Garry Point Park
- Garry Point Park
- Steveston Greenways from Garry Point Park east to No. 2 Road

City of Richmond Park Planners consider other park areas as locations for benches, picnic tables and trees. If you have any further inquiries, please call the Parks Department at 604-244-1208.

City of Richmond
Parks Department

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City of Richmond Tree Donation Program

Donation Amount

The minimum amount of donation required to purchase and plant a 7.0 cm (2.75 in.) caliper tree is \$500.00.

A tax receipt will be issued.

- ▶ Costs are subject to change without notice.

What species or variety of tree are you considering?

There may be special requirements at certain sites within the City. Discuss this with City staff.

THE TREE SHALL BECOME CITY PROPERTY, and will be placed on the City's regular schedule of maintenance. The tree will be relocated or removed whenever necessary; all reasonable effort will be made to notify the donor if their tree is affected.

- ▶ The identity of donors shall become part of the public record.
- ▶ Planting time will be at the discretion of the Director of Parks.
- ▶ Due to maintenance reasons, plaques are **not** accepted with the tree donation.

*For more information, please call the City of Richmond, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services,
at 244-1208, weekdays 8:15am – 5:00pm.*



City of Richmond Bench/Picnic Table Donation

Donation Amount

The minimum amount of donation required to construct and install a standard City of Richmond park bench, on a crushed limestone pad, is \$1,000.00 and \$1,500.00 for a picnic table (inclusive of all charges, except commemorative plaque).

There may be special circumstances where the donation amount required, or the type of bench/picnic table installed, will be changed. These cases will be identified when your application is discussed with City staff.

A tax receipt will be issued.

- **Costs are subject to change without notice.**

THE BENCH/PICNIC TABLE SHALL BECOME CITY PROPERTY, and will be placed on the City's regular schedule of maintenance. The bench/picnic table will be relocated or removed whenever necessary; all reasonable effort will be made to notify the donor if their bench/picnic table is affected.

- **The identity of donors shall become part of the public record.**

COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES ARE PERMITTED, but are the financial responsibility of the donor. Donors must also arrange for plaque manufacture, and delivery to City Works Yard, 5599 Lynas Lane, Richmond, B.C.,. Plaque size for a bench to be maximum 4" x 8", plaque size for a picnic table to be 3" x 11", design and wording must be approved by the City before installation. Please ensure you order the correct size of plaque. The plaque manufacturer is **Ornamental Bronze Ltd., 2800 Olafsen Avenue, Richmond, B.C., 273-9055**. Contact City staff prior to ordering your plaque.

A maximum of two plaques is permitted with each bench/picnic table application. There is no extra charge if both plaques are installed at the time the bench/picnic table is placed on site. An installation fee of up to \$250.00 is charged if the second plaque is installed at a later date. This covers the cost required to bring the bench/picnic table to the City Works Yard, install the plaque, refinish the bench/picnic table, and return it to its site. Contact City staff for more information.

- **Please allow up to 60 days for installation.**

For more information, please call the City of Richmond, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services at 244-1208, weekdays 8:15am – 5:00pm.



**CITY OF RICHMOND
TREE AND/OR BENCH/PICNIC TABLE DONATION
APPLICATION FORM**

1. **NAME ON PLAQUE:** _____

2. **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

3. **DONOR INFORMATION:** Tell us who you are, and what you would like to donate:

tree bench picnic table

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

4. **INCOME TAX INFORMATION:** A tax receipt will be made out to the person writing the cheque unless a letter is provided at the time of payment indicating the individual donor names, addresses and amounts. (A minimum \$10.00 donation is required before a tax receipt is issued.)

5. **LOCATION INFORMATION:** Where would you like to have the bench/picnic table installed, or the tree planted? Think of two or three alternative locations. Attach a map or sketch, if possible.

6. **TREE INFORMATION:** What species or variety of tree are you considering?

7. **PLAQUE WORDING:**

Return to: City of Richmond
Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services
5599 Lynas Lane, Richmond, B.C., V7C 5B2
re: Tree/Bench/Picnic Table Donations

SIGNATURE: _____ **DATE:** _____

OFFICE USE ONLY: _____ **ID#** _____

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4. City Staff will acknowledge the bench donation for a period of 10 years from the date of installation.
5. Donors will have the opportunity to continue their sponsorship of the bench or picnic table after the 10 year donation period by paying the current fee for replacement of the bench or picnic table. If the donor is not interested in continuing the donation or cannot be contacted (within six months of the 10-year term expiring), the bench will be removed and/or a new donor will have the opportunity for sponsorship at the site. It will be the responsibility of the donor to keep their contact information current with the City of Richmond.
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7. The City shall have final approval of the location and style of the bench.
8. The City shall have final approval of plaque size, style, and wording. A maximum of two plaques per bench.
9. The City shall include the tree in its normal schedule of care or maintenance and shall replace when possible

10. The tree and bench shall become City property. Staff reserves the right to relocate or remove the tree or bench whenever necessary. A reasonable effort shall be made to notify the donor if their tree or bench is affected.
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City of Richmond Tree, Bench & Picnic Table Donation Charges Schedule

Effective April 2003, the following donation fee schedule will apply for City of Richmond Tree, Bench & Picnic Table Donations:

- 1. Donations will be levied so as to recover all or a portion of overall operating costs.**
 - To ensure the donor pays all or a portion of the direct operating costs for tree, bench and picnic table installation and 10 years guaranteed maintenance.
 - All rates and charges will be adjusted to accommodate the changes in operating and maintenance costs and tree, bench and picnic table acquisition costs.

- 2. The General Manager of Parks Recreation and Cultural Services or designate will have the authority to waive or reduce fees and alter fees for services for promotional purposes and to quickly establish fees for experimental services.**
 - To permit the General Manager or designate to make allowances for unusual circumstances.
 - Unusual donation requests for tree, bench or picnic table installations where a higher cost is involved will be considered on an individual basis, taking in to account the true cost of acquisition and installation, and maintenance costs.

- 3. Donation Classifications are as follows:**

Item	Includes	2003 Rate
Trees	Each donation will recover the full cost of tree acquisition, site preparation, and planting of the tree to City of Richmond standards.	Full cost recovery.
Benches	The donation amount for benches will be inclusive of installation, site preparation, plaque installation, and 10 years guaranteed maintenance.	\$2000.00
Picnic Tables	This donation amount will include the cost of picnic table manufacturing, site preparation, delivery, plaque installation.	\$2800.00