



To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee

Date: July 10, 2007

From: Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
Jane Fernyhough

File: 11-7140-01/2007-Vol 01

Re: Manager, Heritage & Cultural Services
Steveston Museum

Staff Recommendation

1. That staff be authorized to negotiate a shared-use agreement (licence to occupy) between Tourism Richmond, Steveston Historical Society and the City of Richmond and that the General Manager, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services be authorized to sign the agreement; and
2. That up to \$200,000 is included in the 2008 one-time additional level requests to upgrade the exhibits in the Steveston Museum.

Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services
(4129)

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ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER	
Economic Development	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
Budgets	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the June 11, 2007 Council meeting the following motion was passed:

That the report regarding the Steveston Museum and Post Office (dated May 3, 2007 from the Director of Recreation and Cultural Services, and the Manager of Heritage and Cultural Services) be received for information; and

That staff liaise with the Steveston Historical Society to explore the most viable options for the Steveston Heritage Museum Building.

That staff meet with the owner of the Steveston Grocery Store to confirm it will be Canada Post's new location for a post office in Steveston; and

That staff meet with Tourism Richmond to explore viable options for the Steveston Museum building and to speak to Councillor Steves about acquiring Heritage post mark stamps and post cards.

Analysis

In 2006 Canada Post indicated to the Steveston Historical Society that they were searching for an additional postal outlet in Steveston. After extensive discussions they agreed to defer an additional outlet if services in the Steveston Museum outlet could be improved.

The increased service included increased hours of service, more space devoted to merchandise such as packaging and 90 postal boxes. Canada Post indicated they would delay discussions with the owner of the Super Grocer to open a full service outlet.

In addition, Canada Post has indicated to the Society that they expect the Society to expand the range of tender payment opportunities. Currently, the Post Office only takes cash transactions. This expectation will increase the expenses of operating a post office likely impacting the financial viability of operating a post office out of the museum.

Staff have been in contact with Mr. Sam Loo, owner of the Super Grocer. They have confirmed that they are interested in opening a full service postal outlet. They are waiting to hear from Canada Post regarding a postal outlet in his store. Canada Post has indicated that should discussions with Super Grocer not be satisfactory, they will search for another suitable location.

The Steveston Historical Society has indicated via letter to Canada Post, that they are unable to provide the requested improvements. They are prepared to operate the post office in its current manner. They feel this will inevitably result in the closure of the post office in the Steveston Museum building when another outlet is opened.

The current agreement with the Steveston Historical Society has two clauses specific to this issue:

- 2.3 The Society agrees " *To takes full responsibility for the operation and management of a museum in the building*".

- 3.3 *“That the Society may sublet a portion of the building for a post office and that any income derived therefrom or from the sale of souvenirs shall be the property of the Society.”*

Under the current contract, there is no obligation that the Society must operate a post office.

Options for Consideration

Staff and Society board members have investigated the following two options as the most viable for the Steveston Museum building:

Option 1 (Recommended)

The Museum & Heritage Strategy recommendation for the Steveston Museum is to “remove the Post Office and create a dynamic Steveston Visitor Centre” with the theme, *Steveston Village Lifestyle: Past, Present and Future*.

To accomplish this, staff recommend closing the Post Office operation and entering into an agreement with Tourism Richmond to operate a Visitor Centre (approved by Tourism BC) within the current post office space. This includes removal of post office equipment and installation of signage, a computer system and brochure racks. These costs would be paid by Tourism Richmond.

City Heritage staff would train Visitor Centre staff on the heritage of the Village and the exhibits within the Museum. Canada Post has indicated their willingness to allow the Visitor’s Centre to sell stamps, and postcards could be added to the inventory.

The Steveston Historical Society would continue to operate the museum walking tours, sell historical brochures, work with the City on appropriate exhibits and aid in the training of the Visitor Centre staff.

In order to animate the museum portion, current exhibits require upgrading at an estimated cost of \$200,000. The City will work with the Society to apply for appropriate grants and seek funding from 2008 one time additional levels.

Pros:

- Prominent location would attract more visitors, increasing opportunity for them to find out more about attractions, dining and accommodation in Steveston and Richmond and to promote events and activities throughout Richmond
- Historic building and exhibits would be accessible to the public year round
- As part of the Tourism BC network, Steveston and Richmond would be promoted by over 100 visitor centres throughout BC
- Steveston Historical Society could engage in activities that fit with their mandate of telling the story of the Steveston town site

Cons

- The City would have to manage a tripartite agreement with two tenants in the same building (Tourism Richmond & Steveston Historical Society)

Option 2 (Not recommended)

Close the Post Office and operate the Steveston Museum as a satellite facility to the Richmond Museum.

A one time capital cost of approximately \$275,000 would be required for removal of current post office space and renovation of walls and floors, additional exhibits installed and existing exhibits upgraded.

Additional operating costs of \$83,000 annually for additional staffing are required.

Pros:

- Historic building and exhibits would be accessible to the public year round
- Expanded attraction in Steveston

Cons:

- Capital and ongoing operating not funded.

Potential Exhibit Upgrade

The existing exhibits in the Steveston Museum were installed over 20 years ago. The exhibits could be upgraded to better tell the story of Steveston Village using different media including hands-on components to make the museum more interactive. These costs are estimated up to \$200,000 (400 square feet @ \$300 – 500/sq ft) according to industry standards. In either of these options, improving the exhibits would be a benefit and result in increased interest from residents and tourists.

Staff recommend that the City consider improving these exhibits and work with the Society to fund through grants and through 2008 additional level funding.

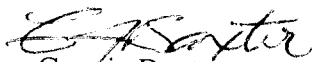
Financial Impact

Should the City enter into an agreement with Tourism Richmond, they would be responsible for the renovations required to implement the Visitor's Centre.

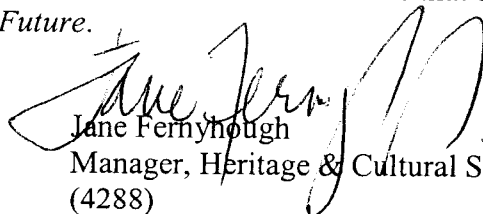
The City & Steveston Historical Society would be responsible for the exhibit upgrades. A funding request will be submitted to the 2008 capital program for up to \$200,000. City staff will work with the Society to apply for appropriate grants to decrease this request.

Conclusion

The Museum & Heritage Strategy suggests a network of museums, historic sites and heritage areas. Removing the Post Office and creating a Tourism BC approved Visitor Centre operated by Tourism Richmond would expand the network in Steveston and therefore Richmond. Residents and visitors alike would benefit from enhanced services and exhibits that celebrate *Steveston Village Lifestyle: Past, Present and Future*.



Connie Baxter
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