

Grange Park Revitalization

Date:	April 9, 2009
To:	Government Management Committee
From:	Brenda Patterson, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	Ward 20 – Trinity Spadina
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council authority to negotiate an amendment to the 1911 agreement between the City and the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) for park improvements to create a restored and revitalized Grange Park.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry, and Recreation recommends that authority be granted to negotiate and execute an amendment to the current 1911 Grange Park agreement between the City and the Art Gallery of Ontario for the fundraising, design, construction and enhanced maintenance of the park, and such agreement be on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager and the City Solicitor.

Financial Impact

Three park improvement projects have been approved for Grange Park in the Parks, Forestry and Recreation's 2009 Capital Budget totalling \$0.235 million, funded by development agreements.

Once more details are known regarding the financial implications of this agreement, revisions will be recommended by staff and submitted as part of the 2010 Capital Budget submission.

The estimated annual operating cost for Grange Park is \$0.041 million. Any enhanced maintenance activities and costs for the park in support of the new park design will be the

responsibility of the AGO. (This does not include recreation programs provided in Grange Park).

The Deputy City Manager and Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Grange Park is a 1.7 hectare (4.2 acre) public open space. It is included in the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties, and was designated under Part IV of the *Ontario Heritage Act* by City Council on February 25, 1991 (By-law No. 130-91). The park is owned primarily by the AGO (see Attachment 1: Park Ownership Map).

In 1818-20, the Grange was constructed for D'Arcy Boulton Jr., the son of a former Solicitor General of Upper Canada. William Boulton, a four-term Mayor of Toronto, inherited the property in 1846, and in 1875, it passed through the marriage of his widow, Harriette Boulton, to Goldwin Smith.

The Grange residence and lands were willed to the Art Museum of Toronto (now known as the Art Gallery of Ontario) in 1909. The will bequeathed the property with the understanding that the Museum (AGO) could never sell, rent, lease, or transfer ownership of the land.

In 1911, an agreement was made between the Art Museum of Toronto and the Municipal Corporation of the City of Toronto, in accordance with Harriette Boulton Smith's will, that requested, "...the use of the available lands surrounding 'The Grange' residence, as a public park". Under terms of the 1911 Agreement, the City is responsible for making by-laws, rules and regulations, maintenance and operations, as well as all park state of good repair and capital improvements. The Agreement requires that all proposed changes to the park be approved by the AGO.

During the 1970's Grange Park was expanded through the neighbourhood planning process which led to the closure of part of Grange Road and part of John Street. The proposed improvements to the park include the property owned by the AGO as well as the publicly owned lands.

A park improvement plan for Grange Park was developed in 2007 by a consultant team for the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division of the City of Toronto, in consultation with the Grange Park Working Group and the AGO. The improvement plan included a heritage study, an archaeological study, an arborist's study, as well as a park design plan. The new councillor for Ward 20 (Adam Vaughan) in 2007 saw an opportunity to enhance this study and investigate options for AGO funding to support further design work, the Capital work to renovate the park and the ongoing maintenance of Grange Park.

In 2007, the Councillor began facilitating discussions between local residents and the AGO about Grange Park, which generated the concept of a committee comprised of local

residents, representatives of neighbouring institutions and City staff, to advise on a capital project to restore and revitalize Grange Park and its subsequent maintenance. The Grange community held a public meeting and endorsed the formation of the Grange Park Advisory Committee (GPAC) in 2008. The Committee members include the Ward 20 Councillor, City of Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation representatives, AGO representatives, residents, and other stakeholders. The GPAC will oversee the restoration and design of Grange Park and work with the AGO in the creation of an endowment fund for maintenance enhancements and stewardship of the park.

COMMENTS

The AGO has proposed a new process to restore and revitalize the park in consultation with the GPAC. The proposal would give the responsibility of fund raising and project management of the design and implementation of the park revitalization to the AGO.

The vision statement adopted endorsed by the GPAC and the AGO calls for, “...*a restoration and revitalization plan for Grange Park that will be green, strikingly beautiful, resilient, sustainable, accessible, interactive as well as providing a place for contemplation while welcoming all neighbours, residents and visitors to our community by utilizing design excellence, state of the art conservation techniques and outstanding works of art*”.

The AGO expects to reach their fund raising targets by Spring/Summer 2009. Once the target is met, consultants will be commissioned and park design is expected to begin during the summer of 2009, with construction expected to begin in spring 2010.

Grange Park is currently maintained by the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. There is a regular maintenance schedule for the park which includes: turf cutting, washroom maintenance, garbage collection and litter pick-up, horticulture, spring and fall cleanup, snow removal, graffiti removal, and minor repair of furnishings.

Enhanced maintenance activities and standards for the park in support of the new park design will be discussed as part of the partnership arrangement between the AGO, GPAC, and the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division. A formal agreement, between the City and the AGO, will provide the framework for the contribution of each of the parties to this undertaking and will also provide for on-going neighbourhood involvement in park management through GPAC, or its successor structure. City forces, from the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division will be supplemented by the contribution of labour and expertise secured through the AGO to provide enhanced maintenance for this facility. The revitalization program of Grange Park is scheduled for completion in 2011...

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SIGNATURE

Brenda Patterson
General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Grange Park Ownership Map

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