



Governance and Priorities Committee Report

For the Meeting of November 5, 2015

To: Governance and Priorities Committee **Date:** October 22, 2015
From: Chris Coates, City Clerk
Subject: Balfour Avenue Playlot – New Lease

RECOMMENDATION

That Council authorizes the Mayor and Corporate Administrator to execute a lease with the United Church of Canada, in a form satisfactory to staff, for the children's playlot on Balfour Avenue commencing March 1, 2015 and ending February 28, 2018.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City's playlot in the 3000 block of Balfour Avenue is leased from the United Church of Canada. The City's previous lease expired February 28, 2015 and the church has now agreed to enter into a new lease for a further term of three years.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to enter into a lease with the United Church of Canada for the children's playlot on Balfour Avenue.

BACKGROUND

In March, 2008 Council approved the development of Ellice Street Park for a social housing project. One of the outcomes was to look at providing additional playground in this neighbourhood. Acquiring additional parkland to replace Ellice Street Park remains a key goal and work is continuing in this regard.

Discussions with the United Church of Canada resulted in a lease for the development of a playlot in the 3000 block of Balfour Avenue, part of the church's property occupied by the Gorge View Housing Society at 11 Chown Place. The lease expired February 28, 2015 and the City has been holding over on a month to month basis since that time whilst negotiations continued with the church's lawyers.

Play equipment was installed in 2012 and is in excellent condition. This is a well-used playground and contributes to the overall health and well-being of the children and residents in this neighbourhood. The leased area is maintained by City Staff and is part of the Parks division's regular work plan.

The church has now agreed to enter into a new lease for a further term of three years, which will allow for the continuation of this much needed community playground. A location plan and photograph are attached in Appendices A and B respectively. A copy of the lease plan is attached in Appendix C.

ISSUES AND ANALYSIS

The playground surface and equipment were installed three years ago at the start of the previous lease and are in very good condition. The playlot is popular with local parents and children.

There is a notional rent payable of \$1.00 per annum. Although the lease requires the City to pay the property taxes on the subject portion of the Chown Place property, Council passed permissive bylaw 15-072 which provides the City with an exemption for the playlot.

OPTIONS AND IMPACTS

Option 1 – Enter Into the New Lease (Recommended)

This option will continue an existing facility in the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood which is well used by local parents and children. The staff resources to enter into the new lease are minimal.

Option 2 – Decline To Enter Into the Easements

The City has the option of not entering into the lease. This would, however, result in the closure of the playlot as neither the United Church of Canada nor the Gorge View Housing Society wish to assume responsibility for it.

Alignment With City Objectives

2015 – 2018 Strategic Plan

The recommended course of action complies with Objective #7 of the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan that sport and recreation opportunities exist for children and adults.

Impacts to 2015 – 2018 Financial Plan

There is no impact on the 2015-2018 Financial Plan as the new lease is for a nominal sum of \$1.00 per year and the City is already responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the facility.

Official Community Plan Consistency Statement

The recommended course of action is consistent with Goal #9(A) of the OCP that "Victoria is an active community where everyone enjoys convenient access to community parks, open spaces, facilities, amenities and programs close to where they live".

CONCLUSION

Entering into a new lease will keep open a popular facility in the Burnside Gorge neighbourhood with no additional costs falling on the City to do so.

Respectfully submitted,



Neil Turner
Property Manager



Chris Coates
City Clerk



Thomas Soulliere
Director, Parks, Recreation and Facilities



Jocelyn Jenkyns
Deputy City Manager

Report accepted and recommended by the City Manager: _____

Date: _____



October 29, 2015

List of Attachments

- A. Location Plan.
- B. Photograph of Playlot.
- C. Lease Plan.

Appendix A
Location Plan



Appendix B The Playlot



Appendix C Lease Plan

BC Land Surveyors Site Plan of Proposed City Playground at Gorge View Housing

Legal - Lot A (DD 270373), Section 10 and 11,
Victoria District, Plan 11749

Scale - 1:200
Separate buildings shown - shown
not shown on a uniform
Building are shown in yellow

Proposed Lease Area = 568.4 m²

