



Exhibition Place

Item No. 9

November 19, 2014

To: The Board of Governors of Exhibition Place

ACTION REQUIRED

From: Dianne Young, Chief Executive Officer

Subject: **2014 Capital Works Program - Splash Pad in Centennial Square**

Summary:

This report recommends cancelling the construction of a Splash Pad within Centennial Square near the vicinity of McGillivray Fountain, and to engage a heritage fountain repair consultant to provide methodology in retrofitting the McGillivray Fountain as per the recommendations of the Heritage Impact Assessment dated July 2014.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Board approve:

1. **The cancellation of the construction of a splash pad within Centennial Square near the vicinity of McGillivray Fountain;**
2. **The engagement of a heritage fountain repair Consultant to provide the methodology to retrofit the existing McGillivray Fountain;**
3. **The transfer of all remaining funds allocated to the splash pad to retrofitting the McGillivray Fountain;**
4. **Request staff to include consideration of a splash pad as one possibility in any future planning when returning the area of the former baseball diamond back to greenspace;**
5. **Work with Councillor Layton and City Parks, Forestry and Recreation to construct a new children's playground in Centennial Park; and,**
6. **Request Exhibition Place staff to contact the City PanAm and City Parks staff to consider some allocation of the City funding for the splash pad to the new children's playground.**

Financial Impact:

The total project cost of \$500,000 for the construction Splash Pad within Centennial Square under the Parks, Parking Lots and Road account was approved by the Board and City Council as part of the 2014 Capital Work Program and the costing for the engineering and construction is within this project budget.

Decision History:

The Exhibition Place 2014 – 2016 Strategic Plan had a Recognition & Public Understanding Goal *to establish Exhibition Place as a destination and gathering place for the community and as a Strategy to support this Goal we will increase community use of the grounds by animating and/or programming our parks.*

At its meeting July 5, 2013, the Board approved of the 2014 Capital Works Program along with the additional funding for this PanAm 2015 Budget, which was adopted and approved by City Council at its meeting of January 29 and 30, 2014.

Issue Background:

In the 2014 budget submission, the Board approved a \$500,000 funding to construct a splash pad within the Centennial Square at the west end of Exhibition Place. Of the \$500,000 funding, \$250,000 was to come from the City PanAm budget in the first instance but with a requirement for Exhibition Place to find a sponsor for the project to the value of \$250,000.

The original idea for the Splash Pad would be to locate it on the footprint of the existing McGillivray Fountain near the existing children's playground area and the community basketball courts. The McGillivray Fountain has not functioned for many years and there are several non-code compliant issues related to the Fountain. The idea would be to remove the fountain and reuse the existing plumbing and electrical services for a new attractive splash pad.

Comments:

During the design concept stage, there were two proposed concept options where the splash pad could be located: one is directly replacing the existing fountain at the very same location; and the other is located just west of the fountain closer to Dufferin Street. In both options, the fountain would be removed for safety reasons, and electrical and mechanical systems reused where possible for the new splash pad. In addition, given the very active use of Centennial Park by the CNEA for Kids World, the park could not accommodate both a splash pad and the McGillivray Fountain without detrimentally affecting the CNEA programming. In addition, the other community feature within Centennial Square is the children's playground which is a very active area, used at least 9 months of the year and again, actively used during the CNE period. Replacing the children's playground for a splash pad would not be recommended given this active use.

Although McGillivray Fountain is not listed on the City's Inventory of Heritage Properties, its recognized heritage value prompted staff to launch a Heritage Impact Assessment prior to the detailed design stage.

Through the prime consultant, Terraplan Landscape Architects, Archeological Sciences Inc. (ASI) was retained to do this Heritage Impact Assessment on the McGillivray Fountain in June this year. A final report in July by ASI was received. In summary, the report cited that based on the proposed plan for the construction of a splash pad within Centennial Square, the existing McGillivray Fountain will be severely impacted through removal. The three recommendations from the report are noted below.

- a. The primary goal of the Conservation Strategy is the conservation and preservation of the McGillivray Fountain. This can either be achieved by preserving the structure in-situ or as an acceptable alternative, relocating it to another suitable site within the grounds of Exhibition Place.
- b. Whether the structure remains in-situ or is relocated, the mechanical and electrical mechanisms of the fountain should be repaired if feasible. If repair is not possible, the mechanism should be replaced with a modern mechanism that will convey the original appearance of the fountain's water feature. If sympathetic replacement is not possible, the mechanism should be decommissioned and the structure be retained as a sculpture. Prior to replacement or decommission, the existing mechanism should be fully documented.

- c. Construction activities should be planned to avoid direct impacts to elements associated with the mid-to-late twentieth century path that crossed Centennial Park, including the stone and concrete planters and the light standards.

With the result and recommendations in this Heritage Impact Assessment, staff are recommending that the construction of a splash pad be cancelled and that a heritage fountain consultant be engaged to make recommendations on the methodology for the retrofitting the existing McGillivray Fountain. The remaining unused budget would be used for these purposes and in addition the \$150,000 approved by the Board in the 2015 Capital Budget for repair of fountains generally will be allocated to this fountain in 2015.

In an attempt to improve community use of Centennial Square, staff have had discussions with Councillors Layton and Perks and City Parks, Forestry and Recreation about use of some of the Parks Levy moneys allocated to the local ward to renew the children's playground which is over 15 years old. City Parks have indicated that they will be allocating approximately \$45,000 for this purpose in the 2015 Capital budget. This report is recommending that staff approach City PanAm staff and City Parks staff to request that some of the funds for the Splash Pad be reallocated to this children's playground

Contact:

Danny Chui, Manager, Capital Works

Tel: 416-263-3670

Fax: 416-263-3686

Email: dchui@explace.on.ca