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**CITY OF KELOWNA**  
**MEMORANDUM**

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**Date:** April 1, 2003  
**File No.:** 6140-20  
**To:** Ron Born, City Manager  
**From:** Joe Creron, Parks Manager  
**Subject:** Downtown Waterfront and Stuart Park

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**THAT** the City of Kelowna sponsor a design competition process for the preparation and selection of a Master Plan for the Downtown Waterfront area from Bernard Avenue to the Water Street Boat Launch, including Kerry Park, and for the selection of a qualified design team to prepare a detailed design for Stuart Park.

**BACKGROUND:**

In a resolution adopted by Council on July 2nd, 1996, the final offer to purchase the current Stuart Park site from BCBC for \$2.25 million was accepted. Council adopted a subsequent resolution that, in recognition of his dedication and years of service representing the City of Kelowna, that Stuart Park be developed on the site as a tribute to the former mayor, James H. Stuart.

As the last portion of undeveloped property at the hub of the City's Business, Governance and Cultural Districts, the park site represents an opportunity to be the crowning jewel in the string of significant urban parks along Kelowna's waterfront. To initiate development of the park based on several planning documents that have provided guidance, a Project Brief has been prepared including a design and construction timeline. The brief has been attached as "*Appendix A*" for consideration.

In order to prepare a concept plan and detail design drawings for Stuart Park, it is proposed that a Master Plan for the downtown waterfront from Bernard Avenue, including Kerry Park to the Water Street Boat Launch be completed. This area is the last portion of underdeveloped waterfront and a potential jewel at the hub of the Retail, Governance, and Cultural Districts in the Downtown Core. The Master Plan would take its direction from previous planning done in the area and would provide the context required to develop Stuart Park in a manner that complements an overall vision for the waterfront in this area.

Discussions over the years indicate that the senior's would be pleased with an alternate site in the downtown area if similar amenities and adequate parking could be provided. When the seniors are relocated some time in the future, the parking between the Yacht Club and the Seniors Centre can be converted to urban park use. Urban parks and plazas function best when surrounded by complementary uses that generate foot traffic and activity. To enhance activity in the Park, the Cultural District and Downtown, the vision for this waterfront park includes complementary uses in the area of the existing Seniors Centre and complementary commercial uses along the North side of Queensway Avenue. The commercial use proposed on the northside of Queensway Avenue could be independent or flexibly incorporated into a larger and

more comprehensive mixed-use development, if such a development were to add public value to Stuart Park and adjacent areas. The locations proposed would attract visitation to and enjoyment of the park but would not block views or hinder public movement along the waterfront.

At present, the Yacht Club is proposing to expand its facilities at its current location as a centennial project and has requested the opportunity to expand southward onto Stuart Park. However, the age and structural integrity of the existing facility along with the encumbrance on linear waterfront park development in the downtown core must be considered. Because the current Yacht Club location restricts public access along the waterfront and reduces park and public programming opportunities in the area, the Parks and Leisure Services Department will investigate and propose an alternate location, one that would enhance opportunities for the Yacht Club and the community as a whole. Prior to the development of the Master Plan, the Parks and Leisure Services Department will prepare an evaluation of the costs and benefits of alternate Yacht Club locations including the status quo and through a report to City Council recommend a long-term plan for the Yacht Club.

As the first step in completing development of Stuart Park, the Parks and Leisure Services Department proposes that the City of Kelowna sponsor a design competition. A design competition can be used to attract the best professional talent to generate a number of top quality concepts for development of this area and park. A design competition will ensure a quality design and build excitement associated with the City's Centennial. The design competition will also provide a unique and interesting public process and streamline the conceptual design process.

For the competition, it is proposed that the City conduct a Request for Qualifications from which 3 consulting teams will be selected to compete. The competitors would prepare a concept design for the entire study area, from Kerry Park to the Water Street Boat Launch, with a more detailed concept for Stuart Park. Submissions would include a proposal to provide detailed design services for the park as well as an estimate prepared by a quantity surveyor of the cost to develop the park within the prescribed budget. For their submissions, it is proposed that each of the 3 teams be awarded \$20,000. The public would be given the opportunity to review and comment on the competition submissions and a selection team would be established to review the submissions and make a recommendation to Council for the preferred design/design team. A model may be completed for the winning entry.

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Joe Creron  
Parks Manager

Enclosure

Cc     Director of Parks and Leisure Services  
        Director of Planning and Development Services  
        Director of Finance and Corporate Services



Parks Division

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PROJECT BRIEF  
**Stuart Park**

## Vision

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It is the intent of this brief to outline the vision and propose a process that could, if desired by Council, see that Stuart Park is developed and open to the public in time for the City of Kelowna's centennial (2005).

Stuart Park will be the focal point of Kelowna's downtown waterfront and the hub for the city's business, government and cultural districts. It will be the jewel in a necklace of parks along our waterfront. The downtown waterfront, and Stuart Park in particular, has year-round appeal for all Kelowna's citizens. It will also be a major attraction for visitors to our community. Stuart Park will be an ideal venue for a variety of events, performances and ceremonies to attract the interest of our regional and provincial neighbours. The park's location on the waterfront maximizes the visual and recreational appeal of Okanagan Lake.

Whether we partake in a winter evening of ice skating and hot chocolate, enjoy a jazz ensemble with a colleague at lunch in the summer, or simply have a waterfront stroll with visiting relatives, Stuart Park will be an icon that symbolizes the City of Kelowna's attractive, active, stimulating and culturally refined lifestyle.

## Background

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### Site Location

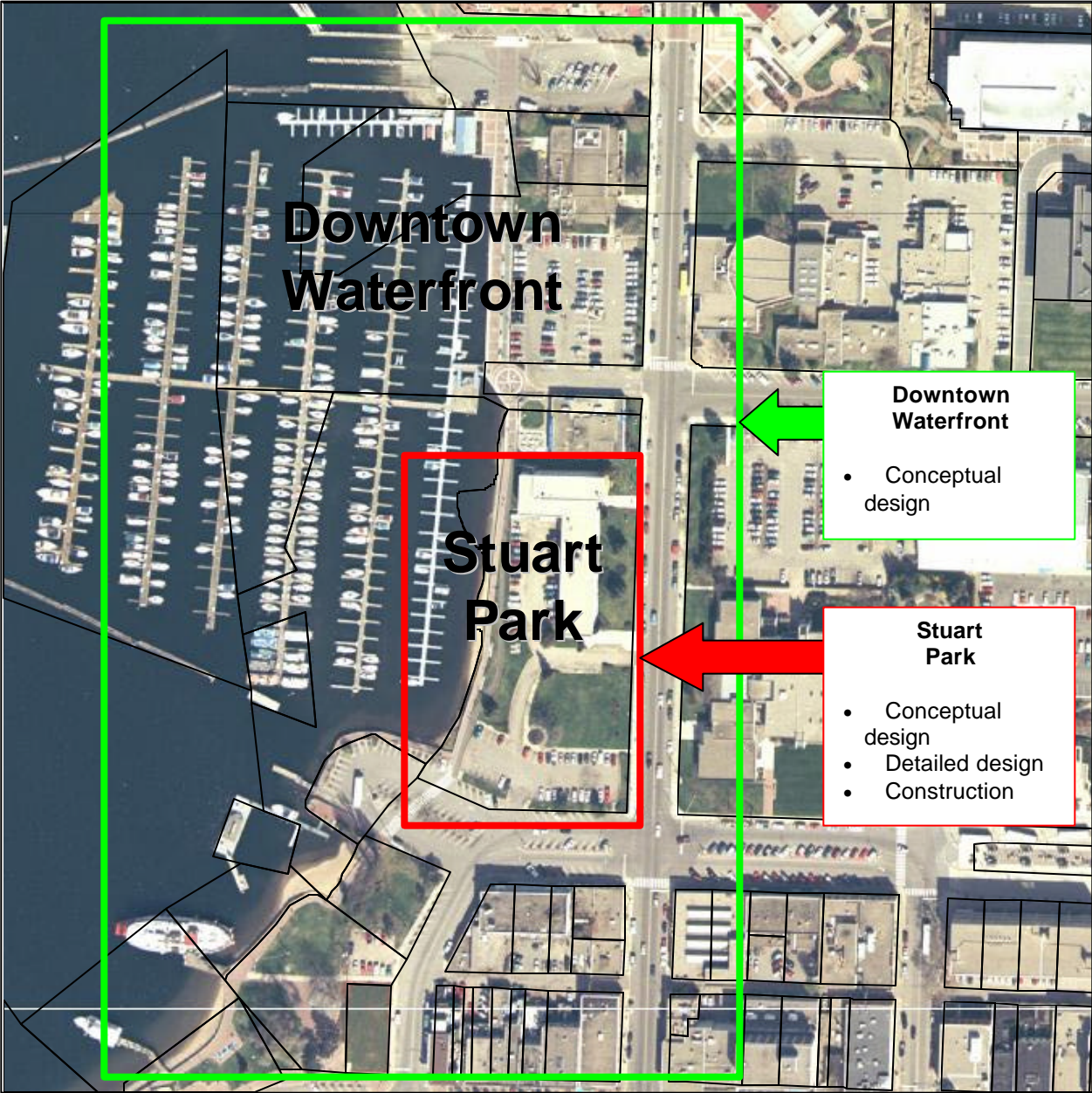
Stuart Park is located along the waterfront, in the centre of Kelowna's inner city. It is 0.986 hectares (2.43 acres) in size. Water Street, Queensway Avenue, Okanagan Lake and the Kelowna Yacht Club define the edges of the park. The park is set within a larger context – 1.4 hectares of the downtown waterfront. This area is roughly defined by Okanagan Lake, City Hall, Kerry Park and the Water Street boat launch. The area of interest for this initiative is composed of two parts: a) the downtown waterfront and b) Stuart Park. The map on the following page identifies these areas.

### Planning Context

With the purchase of the provincial government building, the assembly of City-owned land on the waterfront was complete. In 1996 this land was dedicated as future public parkland, to be named Stuart Park, after long-time mayor James Stuart. With the opening of the Chapman Parkade, the temporary parking lot at Stuart Park will be decommissioned and the site will be vacant – ready for development as park. Over the years several plans have been prepared that provide direction for the growth and development of the downtown and the waterfront. These documents include:

- *Official Community Plan*
- *Kelowna Centre Streetscape Improvement Plan*
- *Inner City Shore Zone Concept Plan*
- *Kelowna Center Plan*
- *Downtown Plan*

These plans were all received or adopted by Council and the preparation of each plan included a public and stakeholder consultation process.



**Site and Activity Context**

Waterfronts and the activities they support are highly visible features and irresistible human attractions. The development of Stuart Park will produce a strong civic symbol and physical landmark that will be an enduring source of pride and activity for the citizens of Kelowna. It is both physically and symbolically located at the heart of the downtown and the waterfront. Its pivotal location acts as a hub for, or transition between, several distinct and important districts.

In downtown, and particularly along the waterfront, the past 10 years has seen the development of many high quality, large-scale projects. There are many specific significant buildings and land uses that will influence or be influenced by the development of the park. It is important to note that Stuart Park represents one of the last under-developed portions of the downtown waterfront. The development of the park must enhance the character and vitality of the waterfront and the downtown. It must provide a unique experience and be a unifying element in the inner city.

## Program

A “program” refers to the types of activities proposed for a park and how they should function and be accommodated. Based on the work to date for the downtown and waterfront areas, and on recent site specific consideration by Parks and Planning staff, the program for Stuart Park should address the following:

- civic and tourism attraction, with landmark appeal
- an “urban” form and character to the open space
- focal point of activity, with linkages to other downtown amenities
- hard surfaced spaces to support a range of activities, both organized and casual
- opportunity for public art
- venue for performances, events and ceremonies
- visual relationship and physical connections to Okanagan Lake
- visual relationship and physical connections to adjacent land uses & activities
- symbolic and physical connection to City Hall
- pedestrian and bicycle circulation, particularly along the lake (e.g. seawall walk or boardwalk)
- year round use (e.g., outdoor winter ice rink with ice plant; summer shade)
- crime prevention through environmental design

These program elements will be used to guide the design and development of the park.

## Implementation

The task at hand is to develop Stuart Park in time for the City's 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The City is well poised to achieve this goal because all the required land has been assembled and all the necessary planning work has been done. The park can be considered as the first phase in re-development of the under-developed downtown waterfront, from Kerry Park to the Water Street boat launch. There are three issues to be acknowledged to achieve the vision for Stuart Park:

1. Preparing the best design possible for the park

As mentioned, Stuart Park plays a key role in the downtown and on the waterfront. The development of this critical section of downtown waterfront will benefit the citizens of Kelowna for the foreseeable future. In addition, if Council designates the park as a centenary project, it will have an additional legacy value to the city. For these reasons, it is important to ensure that the design for the park is of the highest possible quality.

2. Providing the financial resources appropriate to the vision

In order to implement the vision proposed for the site, it is important to understand that there is a significant financial commitment required. A preliminary estimate for development of Stuart Park puts the cost at approximately \$5.0 million. These funds will have to be included in the capital budgets for 2004 and 2005. Currently there is approximately \$660,000 committed to the design and development of the park.

3. Meeting the tight timeline

May 5, 2005, is the date of the City of Kelowna's centennial. This means that, if Stuart Park is to be a centennial project, all conceptual and detailed design must be complete in the next 12 months in order to take advantage of the 2004 and 2005 construction season for a 2005 opening.

As the first step in getting the park developed it is proposed that the City of Kelowna sponsor a design competition for the park. A design competition can be used to attract the best professional talent in the province to generate a number of top quality concepts for development of the park. It will also provide the opportunity to provide a unique public process and streamline the conceptual design process, thereby providing more time for detailed design and construction.

For the competition the City will conduct a Request for Qualifications, from which 3 consultant teams will be selected to undertake to compete. This must be done by the end of May 2003. These competitors will have 3 months to prepare a concept design for the entire study area and more detailed concept for James Stuart Park. Their submissions will include a proposal to provide detailed design services for the park as well as an estimate of the cost to develop the park. For their submissions, each consultant team may be awarded \$20,000. A selection team will review the competition submissions and make a recommendation to Council for the preferred design/designer.

## Process

There are 3 tasks that remain to be done in order to get the park built:

1. Final conceptual design of the downtown waterfront, including Stuart Park
2. Detailed design of Stuart Park
3. Construction of Stuart Park

The map on page 2 illustrates the area of interest and specifically the downtown waterfront and Stuart Park.

The diagram on the following page describes the proposed work program and schedule for getting Stuart Park developed.