

Framework for Evaluating Community Group Proposals for New, Upgraded or Enhanced Facilities, Infrastructure and Equipment

March 22, 2017

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Framework for Evaluating Community Group Proposals for New, Upgraded or Enhanced Facilities, Infrastructure and Equipment (“Framework”) is to articulate the policy and process that will be used by the District of West Vancouver (“District”) to evaluate proposals for projects by community groups to build, upgrade or enhance District assets in a consistent, transparent and clear manner.

2.0 Background

The District recognizes the significant financial contribution of community organizations that bring enriched community vitality, health, culture and physical activity into the lives of our residents by providing funding for building new or improving existing community assets.

Community assets support sport, recreation, cultural, environmental and/or social activities, and in doing so, help provide for the physical, cultural, mental and social well-being of the community.

The community is welcome to approach the District with proposals for projects to:

- 1) Build new community assets: this applies to proposals to develop new assets that do not currently exist (e.g. sport fields, playgrounds, clubhouses, change rooms) or to significantly change the use of an existing structure or asset to deliver a new or greatly enhanced level of service. New assets generally encompass new capital, new operational funding, asset maintenance, and replacement costs;
- 2) Upgrade or enhance existing assets and associated services. Such upgrades may impose new operating costs, (but may also decrease operating costs, for instance by providing energy efficiencies) and likely impose new capital asset maintenance and replacement costs; and/or
- 3) Provide funding to complete or expedite asset enhancement or replacement as identified in the District’s capital and asset management plans.

This Framework applies to circumstances described by 1) and 2) above, and may apply to 3), as these projects are already included in the District’s existing plans.

The Framework outlines a lengthy and thorough process and is therefore limited to projects with an initial capital cost of over \$75,000. Projects of \$75,000 or less will continue to be evaluated by staff and aligned with the District's annual budget process.

Public assets of all types impose three types of costs on the taxpayer: operational, ongoing maintenance, and asset replacement. Once a capital asset is added to the District's inventory, all three types of costs occur.

This Framework is intended to clarify the community benefits of community proposals for projects; the process for review and approval; and funding expectations for the initial capital, operational, ongoing maintenance and asset replacement costs.

3.0 General Criteria for Evaluation

The following criteria will be used by the District to evaluate community proposals.

- a. Community proposals for capital assets will be considered by the District in a spirit of collaboration.
- b. The asset should strive to provide universal access for persons with accessibility issues.
- c. Expenditures of public funds, use of public lands and creation of public assets will be evaluated in terms of Council's identified goals and priorities for the community. Alignment with Council goals and objectives is a prominent consideration.
- d. Funding to meet existing identified asset requirements will receive more prominence. This includes funding to accelerate planned enhancements or replacements already identified in the District's 5-year capital plan.
- e. The asset should demonstrate overall community financial, social and environmental benefits.
- f. The capital to construct or enhance the asset should be funded at least 50 percent by the community group(s) proposing the project.
- g. Ongoing operational subsidy by the District for new or expanded services cannot be assumed. Ideally, the asset should place no additional operational burden on the District, i.e., be operationally self-supporting.
- h. Grants or other external funding may be considered as a portion of the community's contribution.
- i. The new or enhanced public asset should have a multi-use capacity, deliver core services, be accessible to the general public at least 25 percent of the time and be in public use (i.e. by a group or groups to which interested members of the community may join) for the remainder of the time.

- j. The plan for the asset should employ strategies to reduce the consumption of electricity, gas and water and to minimize asset maintenance costs in alignment with the District's Corporate Energy and Emissions Plan.
- k. All community proposals for projects will be required to go through a community consultation process as outlined in the District's Community Outreach and Engagement Policy.

4.0 Phased Approach for Evaluating Proposals for Projects

The following phases will be used by the District in considering and advancing community groups' proposals for projects for new, upgraded or enhanced community assets.

Phase One: Concept

A preliminary proposal, which should include how the proposed project meets the District's General Criteria (section 3.0) is submitted by way of a formal letter from the community group(s) to Mayor and Council. The request is then part of the public record.

If Council requests staff to explore the proposal further, staff will review the proposal to ensure it meets the general criteria for project consideration. Staff may seek further clarification on the proposed project from the community group(s). Staff may also seek legal review of the proposal. The proposal will then be forwarded to the Finance Committee of Council for preliminary review and consideration of the financial impact on the District.

If directed by the Finance Committee, a Council report will be submitted by the Director of Financial Services to Council to seek approval from Council for the proposed project to proceed to the Business Plan Preparation Phase.

If the Finance Committee advises that the proposed project should not proceed, or wishes to seek further information or clarification before proceeding, the community group(s) will be informed in writing by the Director of Financial Services of this decision and rationale.

Phase Two: Business Plan Preparation

A business plan for the proposed project, in a format acceptable to the Director of Financial Services, will be submitted by the community group(s), detailing the costs being projected, and the assumptions being made for supporting the capital and operational costs associated with the proposed project. District staff may be consulted for advice at this stage. Community groups are encouraged to work with District staff; however, the business case needs to be prepared by the proposing community group(s) and not District staff.

The Business Plan will be evaluated by District staff using the District's General Criteria (section 3.0) articulated in this document and, if acceptable, will be signed off by the Director of Financial Services to move the proposed project forward to the Council Consideration Phase.

Phase Three: Council Consideration

A staff report will be provided to Council that contains a detailed overview of the proposed projects, articulates the community benefits the project provides, outlines a financial business model for capital and ongoing operating and facility maintenance and details any impact on land use or potential impacts on other District priorities. If applicable, the proposed general structure of any future agreement (such as a licence to occupy or cost-sharing agreement) between the group(s) and the District will be agreed upon prior to the Public Consultation Phase.

The staff report will request authorization from Council to approve the proposed project, including a detailed overview of the financial model, for the purpose of moving it to the Public Consultation Phase. Council may impose other steps or requirements for the project to meet prior to moving to the Public Consultation Phase.

Phase Four: Public Consultation

A public consultation process will commence to seek input from residents on the community project, using the District's Community Outreach and Engagement Policy.

Following community consultation on the project, staff will report back to Council with:

1. the results of the consultation;
2. a review of the project and recommended next steps;
3. a recommendation to approve any District funding required for the project subject to support from the community and agreed upon community group funding; and
4. a recommendation to request approval to move the project to the Funding Phase.

Phase Five: Funding

During this period, the community group(s) are responsible for fundraising and obtaining all necessary funds and/or secured pledges within an agreed upon time period. One option may be for the community group(s) to direct fundraising through the West Vancouver Community Foundation who have played an important role in monitoring pledges and collecting private funds on behalf of community groups in the past.

Once all of the external funding is secured, the project will be moved forward into the District's annual budget process for inclusion as a Community Project.

The District's annual budget strives to balance asset investment needs from many sectors for the entire community. The project will be considered in terms of the overall budgetary impacts on the District in the annual budget process. Please note that the District may not be able to provide the resources to proceed with the project immediately, and that all projects must be evaluated in terms of Council's overall priorities and the District's existing work plans.

District staff will request Council's final approval to proceed to the Project Construction Phase once final confirmation of community and District funding is approved.

Phase Six: Project Construction

District staff and the community group(s) will form a collaborative project management team to execute the project. Prior to execution, the expectations and roles of this team should be defined and agreed upon in a legal document.

During the Project Construction Phase, all construction required to provide the asset or enhancement will be managed using District processes and purchasing policies. If applicable, the terms of any agreement (such as a licence to occupy or cost-sharing agreement) between the community group (s) and the District will be signed before any work commences on the asset.

District staff will regularly apprise Council of the status of the project through to the completion of the project.

The District's Communications Department will play a lead role in collaboration with the project management team in providing regular communication on significant milestones of the project to the greater community.

5.0 Project Completion

Once the project is completed, an official opening of the project will be coordinated through the District's Special Events Department and the District's Communications Department in collaboration with the community group(s).

Table A

General Criteria for Project Consideration

| | Replace | Enhance | New Facility / Service |
|---|---|---|---|
| Project Proposal | <p>Contributing to maintain or replace existing assets for benefit of whole community and assets that District is responsible to replace.</p> <p>Maintains existing level of service.</p> <p>On District's 5 year replacement plan.</p> | <p>Contributing to enhance existing asset replacement for benefit of whole community and assets that District is responsible to replace.</p> <p>May involve provision of a new level of service.</p> <p>May be on District's 5 year replacement plan. If so, will be identified as a Community Project.</p> | <p>New asset is recommended for the benefit of a specific program / service in the community.</p> <p>May also involve provision of a new service.</p> <p>Ordinarily would not be on District's 5 year plan.</p> <p>May be added to plan based on Framework evaluation.</p> |
| Required contribution – capital | 0-100% | 50-100% of cost for enhancement from external sources | 50-100% of capital from external sources |
| Required contribution – operating, maintenance of capital or replacement | Nil | 0-100% | Ideally, 100% of incremental operating costs including maintenance of capital or replacement |
| Examples of projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Lawson Park playground • John Lawson Park picnic shelter | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Altamont Park • Ambleside Playground | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rutledge Field • Memorial Park Rearing Pond |
| Amount of time asset is available for general public use | 100% | 25-100% | 25-100% |
| Other criteria that apply to all projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community group is non-exclusionary and has open membership • Access for persons with accessibility issues • Have a strategy to reduce utility use • Have a strategy to minimize asset maintenance costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community group is non-exclusionary and has open membership • Access for persons with accessibility issues • Have a strategy to reduce utility use • Have a strategy to minimize asset maintenance costs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community group is non-exclusionary and has open membership • Access for persons with accessibility issues • Have a strategy to reduce utility use • Have a strategy to minimize asset maintenance costs |

In some cases, grants or other external funding may be considered as a portion of the community's contribution.