

METROPOLITAN PARK POLICIES

1. INTRODUCTION.

In order to establish the Parks on a correct footing, it is necessary to develop them according to policies which have been properly determined.

A series of policy statements relating to the various facets of park operation are attached for consideration. It must be stressed that policy is not unalterable, but may be amended by the Board from time to time as experience shows the need for the change. No doubt there will be revisions, additions and deletions as conditions require.

It is extremely important that these be used to guide the planning, development and operation of the parks.

The statement of policy is intended to be, and to remain a live continuing, useable and used instrument for the Metropolitan Park section and the staff concerned with its implementation.

These statements, once adopted, should be available to the Board, Planning Committee, Planning Branch, Metropolitan Parks Division and to any interested persons, institution or organisation.

2. OBJECTIVE.

The parks are being set up to provide diverse recreational and educational experience for people of all ages. A programme is to be implemented to develop and improve on the existing conditions in order to provide a satisfying landscape and environment.

The parks will be designed to cover the regional rather than the local aspects of recreation or leisure time activities.

3. PLANNING.

Both current and advance planning are required to ensure the best development of the parks.

The planning shall anticipate the type, qualities and extent of public needs and determine the potential areas, land carrying capacity and the developments and services required to meet these needs.

The following procedures will be adopted:

- (i) An outline master plan is to be prepared for the whole of each park covering a five year period.

- (ii) Detailed development plans of specific areas selected for priority development shall be prepared.
- (iii) Advance planning shall be done in co-operation with local municipalities, appropriate Government Departments and Advisory Committees.
- (iv) The public shall be given an opportunity to take part in the planning process.
- (v) The outline master plan is to be reviewed periodically.

#### 4. FEES AND CHARGES.

Reasonable charges shall be levied where facilities are available or service provided and where it is practical to collect the fees.

Charges may be levied for the following functions:-

- (a) Entrance, parking or entry of vehicles.
- ( ) Use of a particular facility.
- (c) Booking fees for the use of a facility.
- (d) Transport within the park.
- (e) Purchase of produce.
- (f) Services or sales by lessees.
- (g) Services or sales by park.
- (h) Any other fees as approved by the Planning Committee.

Rates should be set with due consideration for comparable commercial rates.

#### 5. OPERATION OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

A high standard of facilities and services will be required. The Board may operate these facilities and services or may arrange leases or licences with individuals or firms to provide such services and facilities as may be appropriate for the benefit of visitors to the parks.

#### 6. INFORMATION AND EDUCATION.

##### (a) General.

Media for information and education should include local conferences, news releases, radio and television, folders and pamphlets, exhibits, motion pictures and other types of visual aides, full time and seasonal park naturalists and historical leaders.

A continuous effort must be maintained to see that all personnel, and in particular, the field personnel in regular contact with the public, are well informed on the activities of the Metropolitan Parks and the Board.

(b) Education.

It is appropriate that educational activities be undertaken within the parks and visits by students and teachers should be encouraged.

(c) Research.

Research shall be encouraged by the Board and the Board may undertake or arrange research into any matter affecting the environment, management or operation of the Parks.

Permission may be given for research work particularly where the research work is considered to be valuable in producing basic information and for techniques applicable to Park Management. Amateur scientific work will generally not be considered unless supported by a professional referee.

(d) Interpretation Services.

The enjoyment of the parks is increased by knowledge and understanding of the natural and cultural facets, and of areas of historical significance. One of the functions of the park system is to develop and present such knowledge to the general public. The following activities and techniques may be employed.

Museums, nature walks, bulletin boards, brochures,  
tape recordings, radios, motion pictures, slides.

Schools are to be encouraged to make full use of such interpretation services.

Interpretation signs of uniform design shall be placed at appropriate locations describing special features of the parks.

(e) Regulatory Signs.

Preservation of park values requires regulation signs; bulletins and folders in each park informing the public of these rules shall be firm but friendly and, where space permits, with an explanatory reason for the regulation.

(f) Individual Park Brochures.

There shall be a park brochure which shall contain a simple statement of activities, pertinent information, basic regulations and a map and shall be distributed at the Park.

7. ENTRANCE, APPROACH SIGNS AND FENCES.

Metropolitan Parks lands should, wherever possible be delineated from the surrounding property by ordinary farm type fences, vegetation etc.

Entrances to Metropolitan Parks should be prominently marked, not only by the park sign at the gate, but also by several approach signs.

Ideally, entrances should be minimal and controlled. Control is a most important aspect of park operation and in all stages of planning and development, unnecessary entrances are to be eliminated.

8. OTHER OCCUPANCIES WITHIN OR CONTIGUOUS TO PARK AREAS.

If the objectives of the Park are to be realised then it will be necessary to seek the co-operation of the occupants who are within or contiguous with the boundary of the Metropolitan Park areas to ensure that their use does not impair the quality of the Park.

(a) Private Occupancies Within Proposed Public Open Space (Metropolitan Park).

As it will be many years before all the land set aside and reserved as Public Open Space for Metropolitan Parks will be purchased, it will be necessary to ensure that land is used in such a way as to be compatible to the character and landscape of the parks. The ways in which this may be achieved are by seeking the co-operation of the land holder or by the application of regulations under the Planning Scheme.

(b) Council-Owned Land.

To ensure uniformity in the operations on Council-owned land, consultations are to be held with Councils to seek their co-operation in having the by-laws that apply to the Board-owned land, applying to land owned by the Council. Co-operation with Councils will be sought regarding land use, building design and activities within the park area.

(c) Crown Lands.

Where Crown Lands are contiguous with the parks, the Board should seek the co-operation of the Lands Department and local municipalities to have the Board made a Committee of Management over the land. The Board should also seek to have the regulations covering the Parks applied to the Crown Land.

(d) Institutions.

Where institutions with a low building / land area ratio are to be located within the proposed public open space area, co-operation is to be sought from the authorities concerned to see that:

- (i) Public use of open space is retained.
- (ii) Action taken to minimise the effect of activities on the Park area.
- (iii) Buildings and services to be designed in such a way that they have a minimum effect on the landscape.

9. MODIFICATION OF TOPOGRAPHY.

Major or minor modifications to the topography will be permitted provided that they are designed sympathetically with the landscape. In flood plains, any additions or restrictions to the capacity of the land to absorb floods shall be compensated by constructing an equivalent storage capacity in the vicinity.

10. ANIMALS.

Animals will be only permitted into Parks in those areas set aside specifically for such animals. All animals must be controlled by a leash or headgear or approved restraint. However in areas set aside for a specific activity which requires that the animals are free to move within that area, these restraints may be temporarily removed.

(a) Cat and Dog Control.

Feral cats or dogs may be disposed of by an Authorised Officer.

(b) Horses.

The movement of horses will be restricted to those trails and areas set aside for the purpose.

Some areas may be set aside for the agistment of horses and/or a leasee may be given the right to conduct a riding school and hire horses to visitors to the park.

11. TREE PLANTING AND LANDSCAPING.

A programme of tree and shrub planting and landscaping shall form an important part in the development of the parks. This planting and landscaping programme is to be put into effect even in advance of complete master planting. The fact that some of these plantings may have to be removed to fit a future plan is not a reason to delay present planting.

It is desirable that indigenous trees be planted wherever appropriate, but this does not preclude the use of introduced plants, either Australian native or exotic, in certain areas.

12. BUILDINGS.

All buildings shall be designed so that they blend with the surroundings as much as possible. They are not to dominate the landscape. Plantings shall be used wherever possible to help tie the building into its surroundings.

Such buildings as are required to develop the objectives of the parks and provide for public needs including the provision of amenities and facilities, may be constructed within the parks.

13. CAMPING OR CARAVAN PARKS.

In the development of these Parks, consideration shall be given to providing facilities for camping. In order to avoid residential occupancy of campsites, occupation shall be limited to a maximum of 14 continuous calendar days. More restrictive time limits may be placed where the attendance pressures justify this action.

14. GROUP PICNIC AND CAMP AREAS.

Where space is available, overnight and/or day use areas may be established for organised groups; but only on a casual basis. Facilities may be shared with other campers/picnickers.

15. PHOTOGRAPHY.

Photography for commercial purposes may be carried out in the Metropolitan Parks, where in the opinion of the Manager, Metropolitan Parks, such filming can be accomplished without damage to park values, disturbance to park operations or to park visitors. Appropriate fees shall be paid.

16. VOLUNTEER LABOUR.

Volunteer labour may be employed in a number of ways to assist the parks staff to carry out activities within the park. They may be used on the following projects or activities.

- (a) Construction of facilities.
- (b) Park maintenance.
- (c) Operation of special facilities.
- (d) Act as guides.
- (e) Plant trees and shrubs etc.

17. ACCESS.

(a) Transit System Within Park.

Consideration should be given to the use of a public transit system throughout the parks. Transport may be provided by bus, tractor driven carriages, horse drawn vehicles, or possibly a small gauge railway line.

(b) Roadways.

Vehicular access by private car within the Park is to be kept to a minimum, although in the early stages of development, it may be necessary to allow private vehicle access along certain tracks during the quieter periods when the transit system may not be operating.

(c) Parking.

Car parks will be provided in areas set aside and will be consistent with the use of the Park by visitors. They shall be located to prevent damage to the park. Car park capacity should be limited to the carrying capacity of the particular area.

18. LEISURE ACTIVITIES.

A large range of activities will be provided within the parks. Activities will include -

(a) Water-Based Activities.

It is important that water features be introduced into the parks wherever possible as they enhance the landscape and provide many opportunities for both passive and active recreation.

Activities could include the following - fishing, boating, swimming, yachting, model boat operations. In addition, ponds could be provided for wildlife and plants.

(b) Educational Activities.

The educational activities would include a number of opportunities seeking to broaden the experience of the visitor and so to enhance his enjoyment of the park. Examples are - following nature trails; attending campfire lectures, indoor lectures, nature walks led by a naturalist; taking part in environmental studies; undertaking plant, mammal, bird and insect studies; attending museums and art classes and inspecting fruit and orchard activities.

(c) Physical Recreation.

There will be a need to provide both formal and informal opportunities for active recreation. Where it is necessary to provide a special type of organised recreation activity it could be appropriate to provide a separate access, and perhaps isolating that activity from the rest of the park.

- (i) Outdoor Activities could include archery, athletics, badminton, baseball, bowls, cricket, cycling, football, golf, hockey, kiteflying, rugby, softball, swimming, netball, tennis and volleyball, and using adventure playgrounds.
- (ii) Indoor Activities. It may be appropriate to provide buildings for physical recreation during inclement weather or at night. Types of activity that may be included are - badminton, basketball, bowls, skating (roller), squash or swimming.

(d) Passive Recreation.

Passive recreation activities including those of a minor activity and in particular would provide interest for the older or handicapped people and may include - travelling on transit system, playing chess, reading, undertaking nature studies, strolling, viewing landscapes, fauna and flora, cultural displays and activities.

(e) Cultural Activities.

Provision shall be made, where appropriate, for classes in and exhibitions of painting, sculpture and for the production of ballet, opera, musical works, and concerts.

(f) Activities Associated with Noise.

There is a need to provide facilities for some of the noisy activities which are not permitted in small municipal reserves. However in accepting these uses, stringent controls will be imposed regarding noise levels from individual machines, the number permitted at any one time, and the times of operation. Special attention is to be paid to landscaping around these areas to provide dense vegetation in order to provide a visual buffer.

Types of activities would include operating model aeroplanes, model power boats, and riding mini-bikes and go-carts.



(g) Farming Activities.

There are limited opportunities for many people to see or understand farming activities. Effective interpretation will be required to enable the visitors to gain full benefits from these activities. Farming activities could include grazing stock, cultivating orchards of various types, berry fruit growing, flower and vegetable growing, raising of a types of animals and birds, fish farming, operating a plant nursery, haymaking and producing cereal crops. It would be appropriate for produce from these activities to be sold to visitors.

(h) Picnic Areas.

Facilities shall be developed to enable visitors to picnic in selected areas. Facilities provided shall include barbecues, water supply, toilets and picnic shelters. Provision should be made to allow groups to book on a casual basis only, some of these facilities and areas would be shared with others.

(i) Extended Activities.

Provision is to be made for walking trails, horse trails and cycling trails, the various users being separated wherever possible.

19. BOTANIC GARDENS.

It is appropriate that an arboretum or botanic garden type development be established within the parks. Particular emphasis shall be placed on minimum maintenance type development. Special provision may be made for a scented garden.

20. FAUNA ENCLOSURES.

The development of areas for native and some introduced fauna is desirable and attention should be given to providing areas where animals may be readily seen by children.

21. REGULATIONS.

Appropriate regulations shall be drawn up to facilitate the management of the parks and to enable visitors to enjoy the facilities without detriment to the Park or to interfere with others quietly enjoying the Park. These regulations will provide the opportunity for the Authorised Officer to control any activities which may interfere with the management of the park, damage buildings or the environment or interfere with other people within the park.

22. RANGERS.

Rangers shall be employed to control the activities of visitors, to interpret the park to the visitors, and to encourage them to use facilities in the proper manner. To assist the Rangers in their task, the Rangers shall be provided with a uniform.

23. RECYCLED WATER.

Whenever possible use should be made of recycled water for water displays, irrigation of lawns, shrubs, trees and crops.

24. HISTORICAL ACTIVITIES.

A detailed investigation should be made into the feasibility of creating a late 19th Century farming type village. It may be practical to demonstrate some land cultivation and husbandry techniques of that period.

25. HANDICAPPED PEOPLE.

Special provision shall be made for the provision of facilities for handicapped visitors and shall include specially designed facilities in toilets, and where possible, specific areas set aside for their recreational use.

26. NON-EXCLUSIVE USE OF FACILITIES.

On land within the Metropolitan Park and in Board ownership, the use of a facility or an area shall be on the basis of non-exclusive use. Any facility developed should be for the use of a general group, not a specialist section.