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## Inquiry - Riverfront Rotary Park Noise Concerns and Mitigation Strategies

### ISSUE

Concerns regarding excessive noise have been raised by residents adjacent to Rotary Park, and a request to install a gate to prevent access overnight has been received. This report is in response to an inquiry brought forward by Councillor Block. In accordance with Bylaw No. 9710, The Procedures and Committees Bylaw, a comprehensive response to this inquiry will require resources in excess of \$1,000. This report therefore is provided for information and the Administration is seeking further direction prior to initiating a comprehensive review.

### BACKGROUND

At the City Council meeting on April 25, 2022, Councillor Block made the following inquiry:

Would administration please report back on options for a plan to mitigate noise concerns at Rotary Park, including a CPTED review and a security gate, as well as costs associated with potential options.

### CURRENT STATUS

Currently, vehicles can access the Rotary Park parking lot at all hours of the day as there is no gate at the entrance to the parking lot. Some parks along the river with adjacent parking lots have gates across the entrances and are closed / opened on a regular schedule, including Gabriel Dumont, and the Weir. Other parks along the river, including Meewasin Park, Kinsmen Park (adjacent to Wonderhub/Shakespeare site) and Rotary Park, are not currently gated.

The following table shows attributes of various parking lots along the river including address, number of parking stalls, if a gate is present, and the hours of operation. All sites have washrooms except the Weir. Operational hours stated below are relative to washroom operations except where a gate is actively used.

Park Name	Address	Parking Stalls (approx.)	Gate	Summer Hours	Winter Hours
Rotary	225 Sask Crescent East	52	No	8am to 10pm	Seasonal
Meewasin	150 Whiteswan Drive	31	No	8am to 10pm	8am to 8pm
Weir	1165 Spadina Crescent East	29	Yes	5:30am to 11pm	
Gabriel Dumont	825 Saskatchewan Crescent West	32	Yes	5:30am to 11pm	
Wonderhub/Shakespeare	954 Spadina Crescent East	98	No	8am to 10pm	10am to 8pm

Noise complaints are typically managed by the Saskatoon Police Service (SPS). The annual calls for service related to excessive noise from SPS for Rotary Park in 2020 and 2021, as well as a YTD comparison of calls for service, are presented in the following tables:

**Rotary Park Calls for Service  
(Full Years Jan. 1- Dec. 31)**

2020	2021
15	25

**Rotary Park Calls for Service (YTD Jan. 1- Apr 30)**

2020	2021	2022
2	7	5

*Data as of May 5, 2022 from SPS Crime Mapping*

**DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS**

To prevent the gathering of people in the Rotary Park parking lot after 11pm, adjacent residents are requesting that a gate be installed to prevent vehicle access to the parking lot. The estimated capital and additional annual operating costs to support the gate requirements at the Rotary Park parking lot include:

- Capital installation \$8,000 (including signage).
- Daily opening and closing of gates would be undertaken through a contract for services with the Commissionaires, and would cost an additional \$6,000 annually, if not aligned with washroom operating hours. Currently washrooms at Rotary Park operate between 8am and 10pm, whereas gate opening and closing operations would typically occur between 5:30am and 11pm.
- There is anticipated potential for an increase in vandalism and repairs of washrooms with extended operating hours to align with gate opening hours. The costs related to vandalism and repairs are currently unknown.

With the closing of the parking lot at night, vehicles that are still in the parking lot would need to be managed. Currently in other lots with gates, Commissionaires conduct a quick search for vehicle owners in the vicinity and usher them out of the lot. There have been very few issues with this approach in the current parking lots with gates. However, if the use of gates to prevent access is expanded, a vehicle management process should be formalized to include removal of vehicles from site to either the adjacent streets or to a secure compound. Logistics of ticketing and moving unauthorized vehicles to lock gates should be developed around full cost recovery and would require additional coordination for administration support, bylaw reviews, revenue, and parking.

In recent years, gates have been requested by the community in other parking lots adjacent to parks throughout the city. At these locations, concerns have been mitigated through a coordinated assessment between the City and the Community Association using principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED). This includes increased and consistent reporting to SPS, the installation of signage to support reporting and park use requirements, increase of visibility and sight lines around the lots, and park lighting assessments and/or modifications. Gates are typically installed as a last resort, as they may result in unanticipated outcomes such as park users taking alternate routes into the park and damaging the turf, restrictions to legitimate user groups, park operational challenges and the anticipated displacement of the noise issues and activities to other areas of the city.

To minimize the risk of unanticipated outcomes, the Administration suggests that a comprehensive review be undertaken prior to determining if the installation of gates is appropriate for this situation. The scope of the review would include:

- Coordinated risk assessment of the parking lot and adjacent area.
- Technical safety audit using the principles of CPTED, and in partnership with SPS, Recreation and Community Development, Community Standards, Facilities Management, and Parks Departments.
- Review of Police, Commissionaires and Parking Enforcement incident reports for this and other sites with public parking.
- In-depth review of the installation of security gates, vehicle management, parking enforcement and site assessment to address access / egress concerns.

The anticipated timeline for completion of the review is approximately four months. It may be necessary to reprioritize other planned work to undertake the comprehensive review, for which the impact has not yet been determined.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The direct costs associated with the gate installation are estimated as follows:

- Gate/sign installation: \$8,000
- Commissionaires' operations: \$6,000 annually

The estimated cost for the resources required for completing the comprehensive review and technical safety audit in line with CPTED principles is approximately \$8,000-\$10,000 of associated staff time.

There is currently no funding source available for the installation of the gates, ongoing operating costs, or the comprehensive review. Given the risks assumed in the current operating budget, as highlighted in the 2022 Budget Implementation Update report to Governance and Priorities Committee in March 2022, and the need to find savings to address some shortfalls, there is no funding source readily available for this request. The only possible options for funding include the use of the Reserve for Capital Expenditures, or alternately, directing Administration to submit a budget request for City Council's consideration during the 2023 Business Plan and Budget Deliberations.

### **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

If a gate is installed at Rotary Park, a strategy would be developed to communicate gate operational hours and user requirements such as onsite signage and information on the City's website, as examples.

### **NEXT STEPS**

The Administration will proceed based on direction from City Council.

#### **Report Approval**

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