

## Commission REPORT

**TO:** CHAIR AND MEMBERS  
PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURE  
COMMISSION

**DATE:** 2020 Feb 21

**FROM:** DIRECTOR - PARKS, RECREATION &  
CULTURAL SERVICES

**FILE:** 61100-20

**SUBJECT:** RHODODENDRON GARDEN ON BURNABY MOUNTAIN

**PURPOSE:** To provide information regarding the Rhododendron Garden that was located on Burnaby Mountain.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Commission receive this report for information.
2. **THAT** a copy of this report be sent to Mr. Barry Jones of the Burnaby Rhododendron and Garden Society.

**REPORT****1.0 INTRODUCTION**

At the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meeting held on 2019 June 11, Mr. Barry Jones appeared as a delegation representing the Burnaby Rhododendron and Garden Society to request the restoration of the Rhododendron Garden on Burnaby Mountain. The following report provides a brief description of the original context for development and the site conditions that impact redevelopment of the garden.

**2.0 POLICY SECTION****Goal**

- An Inclusive Community
  - Serve a diverse community –  
Ensure City services fully meet the needs of our dynamic community
- A Healthy Community
  - Healthy life –  
Encourages opportunities for healthy living and well-being
  - Healthy environment –  
Enhance our environmental health, resilience and sustainability

**3.0 BACKGROUND**

The Rhododendron Garden at Centennial Park on Burnaby Mountain and the Rhododendron Garden at Deer Lake Park were created as a Canada Centennial Project in 1967. The

To: Parks, Recreation & Culture Commission  
From: Director - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services  
Re: RHODODENDRON GARDEN ON BURNABY MOUNTAIN

.....Page 2

horticultural beds at each location was centered on the rhododendron, Burnaby's official flower, as displayed with a bronze plaque to commemorate the garden ([Attachment #1](#)). The Burnaby Mountain location was selected to allow visitors arriving by bus to stop and view the garden on their way to the top of Centennial Park, where they could enjoy the view of the City. Since that time, the Horizons Restaurant with parking, the Rose Garden and the Playground of the Gods have been installed at various times in Centennial Park and have become focal points for tourists on Burnaby Mountain.

In the 40 years since the development of the original garden on Burnaby Mountain, the site has been overtaken with tree roots, salmon berry, black berry, butter cup and native grasses. The location on the side of the Mountain has presented maintenance access issues.

Over time the site issues that have led to the decision to remove the bed from the landscape include:

1. The maintenance of the garden on the slope became a safety issue. To improve the access, a pullout/service lot would need to be constructed across a ditch. The addition of an access road would diminish the aesthetic nature of the park.
2. This site is not an area of high public use and parking along the road is discouraged.
3. The Rose Garden is now the attraction at Burnaby Mountain
4. The Rhododendron Garden at Shadbolt Centre's Festival Lawn has been and will continue to be the focus.

#### **4.0 RECOMMENDATION**

Although the Rhododendron Garden of 1967 was an attractive feature in its day, current attractions further up the Mountain, safety for patron and crew parking on the side of the road make it not an ideal location to re-establish a display garden. It is recommended that the site be maintained as a general grass area. Addition of a rhododendron bed could be considered in future projects on the top of Centennial Park where adequate parking and spectacular views exist. At the direction of the Commission, this could be included in the 2021-2026 Capital budget.



Dave Ellenwood  
DIRECTOR - PARKS, RECREATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

SB:tc  
Attachment

THE OFFICIAL FLOWER OF BURNABY  
"THE RHODODENDRON"

THIS PLANTING WAS INITIATED BY THE  
BURNABY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
IN THE YEAR 1967 TO COMMEMORATE  
THE CENTENNIAL OF CONFEDERATION

---

A. B. STEWART - CHAIRMAN  
MRS. E. M. LAWSON - DEPUTY CHAIRMAN  
J. A. BARRINGTON   C. H. E. MCLEAN   A. H. PRIDE  
J. D. DRUMMOND   P. SEIFNER