



November 15, 2023

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver – Special Event

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from Brandlive Group to host the LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver at Brockton Cricket Fields in Stanley Park on Saturday, September 7, 2024, from 1:00 to 11:00pm, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board.
- B. THAT the Park Board approve an application from Brandlive Group for a Special Event Permit from the BC Liquor & Cannabis Regulation Branch to serve alcohol at the aforementioned location and date, with a maximum capacity of 10,000 guests.

REPORT SUMMARY

Founded in 2017, the LOVELOUD Festival is a musical catalyst which brings communities and families together to celebrate, inspire, and explore vital conversations around how we unconditionally love our 2SLGBTQ+ Youth. If approved by the Park Board, Vancouver will be the first city in Canada to host this important and meaningful event. Accordingly, the organizers of the Festival, Brandlive Group, are seeking approval to host this inaugural event at Brockton Cricket Fields in Stanley Park on September 7, 2024. The purpose of this report is to present the LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver initiative to the Park Board, review the event organizer's application to use Brockton Cricket Fields in Stanley Park, and seek the Board's approval for this request.

BOARD AUTHORITY, POLICY, PREVIOUS DECISIONS/UPDATES

Per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements that occur within those parks.

As informed by the [Guidelines for Special Events](#), the [Special Events Policy \(2003\)](#), as well as current practices, the Park Board reviews and approves new major special events, as well as significant changes or revisions to existing major special events.

On May 13, 2019, the Board [directed staff to update the aforementioned policy and guidelines](#). Concurrent with this direction, the Board also instructed staff to maintain and support the Park Board's current portfolio of commercial events and activities, but issued a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Policy & Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board.

On October 19, 2020, the Park Board approved the [VanPlay Framework](#), for Vancouver's [Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan](#). VanPlay sets out priorities and provides tools and policies to support the pursuit of equity, connectivity and access to parks and recreation for all. The Framework provides a succinct method for referencing and implementing VanPlay directions. The LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver supports and aligns with VanPlay's three core directions to "Welcome Everyone" (parks and recreation experiences that improve quality of life), "Weave the City Together" (parks, nature, recreation and culture integrated into everyday life), and "Deliver Services Equitably" (a fair and effective parks and recreation system).

On December 5, 2022, the Board [directed staff to lift the moratorium on new commercial event initiatives in Vancouver parks](#), and communicate the decision to the public and the festival and events community.

BACKGROUND

LOVELOUD Festival

LOVELOUD is a non-profit organization that produces a yearly music concert that acts as a catalyst to bring communities and families together to celebrate, inspire, and explore vital conversations around how we unconditionally love our 2SLGBTQ+ Youth. Founded in 2017 by singer and song writer Dan Reynolds from Imagine Dragons, the LOVELOUD Festival has been held annually in Utah since 2017 (notwithstanding a hiatus in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic).

The Festival's goal is to celebrate and support 2SLGBTQ+ youth through the power of music and sharing of stories. Past musical artists and speakers have included Imagine Dragons, Linkin Park, VINCINT, Kesha, Tegan & Sara, NFL Hall of Fame Quarterback Steve Young, and Kalen Allen. The Festival also raises funds and offers grants to local and national charities, which reached \$550,000 in 2022.

Brandlive Group

BRANDLIVE Group is a leading Vancouver-based event production and creative agency. They produce some of the most innovative events in the region and have worked collaboratively with the Park Board for many years to deliver signature events such as the Honda Celebration of Light, Stanley Park 125, the Beedie Group's Rock'n the Park event at Malkin Bowl, and most recently, the SKOOKUM Music Festival. BRANDLIVE has also produced numerous other high-profile events such as the Squamish Valley Music Festival, New Year's Eve Vancouver, and several Grey Cup Festivals. They were also entrusted by the City of Vancouver and Park Board with the responsibility of producing several Canada 150+ events, including the Gathering of Canoes Pulling Together Canoe Journey, The Drum is Calling Festival, and the Walk for Reconciliation. Brandlive is committed to delivering events that are diverse, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable through their range of services.

Festival Location

The Brockton Fields complex is located on the southwest side of Stanley Park, framed by the natural beauty of the Park and with stunning sightlines to the North Shore mountains and the Downtown Vancouver skyline.

Since 2011, Stanley Park's Brockton Fields have hosted a variety of large-scale events, including the SeaWheeze Sunset Festival, Vancouver 125, Parks Canada's 100-Year Celebration, Sarah McLachlan's Voices in the Park, and SKOOKUM Music Festival. These initiatives were well

received and established Stanley Park as a desirable major event venue, similar to Central Park in New York City, Grant Park in Chicago, and Golden Gate Park in San Francisco.

DISCUSSION

Event Proposal

Brandlive Group, the organizer of the LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver, is seeking approval to deliver a gated and ticketed licensed all ages event on Saturday, September 7, 2024, from 1:00pm to 11:00pm. The Festival will include two performance stages, food trucks, general admission seating, VIP experience, elders and accessible viewing area, sponsor activations, and retail merchandise sales. Capacity for the Festival will be capped at 10,000 guests.

Pricing for the event has yet to be finalized, but it's estimated that event tickets will be priced between \$99 and \$299 per person. Given that this is a commercial and self-sustaining initiative, the event's ticket fees will be set at price levels required to generate sufficient revenues to offset event delivery costs. All expenses related to the delivery and execution of the Festival will be borne by the event organizer.

Event Site Use Period

Setup for the Festival would begin on Tuesday, September 3, 2024, and continue for four days leading up to the event date on Saturday, September 7, 2024. Tear down will require two days after the conclusion of the Festival and be completed by Monday, September 9, 2024.

A post-festival restoration plan for the event site, with expenses to be covered by the organizer, would be implemented to ensure the fields are ready for use after load out.

Compliance with Park Board By-Laws

Consistent with any event taking place in Park Board spaces, the event organizer would be responsible for attendee compliance with applicable Park Board by-laws. Accordingly, a robust plan would be developed and implemented to inform and enforce by-laws.

Key plan elements would include, but not be limited to, advance notification/communications, reminders at gate/bag check locations, on-site signage, stage announcements, and Park Ranger oversight. Staff would also work with the organizer's security team, the Vancouver Police Department, and Park Rangers to ensure the plan is delivered successfully.

Transportation Plan

The event organizer will develop a best practice informed transportation plan to reduce impact on the event location and surrounding areas. It is anticipated that this plan will depend heavily on active forms of transportation (e.g. walking, biking, transit, taxi, ride-hailing services, etc.). This plan will be developed in collaboration with the FEST Committee (Festival Expediting Staff Team) and applicable participating agencies.

Event Benefits

Staff recognize that sensitivities and concerns exist when access to public spaces is restricted, and as a result, consider all requests of this nature carefully. Staff are supportive of pursuing this initiative due to its uniqueness and meaningfulness, its marquis nature, and the significant benefits that would accrue to the public, the Park Board, and its partners/stakeholders, including:

- Large scale engagement of residents and visitors, particularly the 2SLGBTQ+ community, through live musical performances and sharing of stories;

- Promotion of Vancouver as a destination for tourism, support for long-term economic activity and enhancement of the City's reputation;
- Threading/inclusion of Indigenous representation throughout the Festival (which will recognize the Host Nations of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) peoples (“MST” or “Host Nations”) and the provision of opportunities for Host Nations members and the broader Indigenous community;
- Collaboration and support with existing Stanley Park partners/stakeholders;
- Collaboration and support for local artists; and
- Generating important incremental revenues that can be used to support Vancouver’s parks and recreation system.

Other Important Considerations

Brockton Fields are uniquely situated within a 1,000-acre urban park, making them an ideal venue to host large scale music events, where noise impacts on adjacent areas, residents, and stakeholders are reduced. Any potential concerns pertaining to sound bleed will be addressed and mitigated through the implementation of an appropriate sound management plan to minimize impacts to surrounding residential neighborhoods (including Coal Harbour, the West End, and the North Shore).

This event proposal has the support of sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation and no issues of concern were noted or identified through this engagement process. The Festival organizer will also consult and engage with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) and səliłwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations in the coming weeks and the event will move forward only with the support/endorsement of the three Host Nations. Brandlive will also work closely with MST and Two Spirited communities to deliver a series of offerings, which could include:

- Land acknowledgement and traditional welcome;
- Display of Indigenous history/storytelling on the Festival grounds;
- Showcasing of Indigenous performers and artists; and
- VIP invitations to Indigenous guests including designated viewing deck for elders.

Consistent with current practices, the Festival will be subject to a detailed review and a Board report back before future Festivals are scheduled and/or added to the annual Calendar of Major Special Events.

NEXT STEPS

Subject to Board approval, Park Board staff will work with both the organizer and FEST Committee members to develop the necessary detailed event plans (traffic & transportation management, public safety & security, communication, sanitation, etc.) which will be reviewed and approved by staff.

Engagement with Stanley Park stakeholders will also be completed by the organizer to ensure the Festival does not negatively impact their operations, while simultaneously leveraging opportunities for joint partnerships and cross-promotional initiatives.

CONCLUSION

Large scale special events activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, and provide enriching cultural experiences. The LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver represents a unique opportunity to showcase a diverse, inclusive, and safe experience that celebrates and supports 2SLGBTQ+ youth through musical performances and sharing of stories. If approved by the Board, Vancouver will be the first Canadian city to host this important and meaningful event.

Park Board staff have carefully considered the various aspects of this application and are confident that this initiative can be executed successfully and as intended. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve this application as outlined above.

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Preliminary Site Plan – LOVELOUD Festival Vancouver

