

# **Final Report**

**Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation**

**Special Events Focus Group Consultation**

**Anne K. Morrison Consulting Ltd.**

**June 16, 2003**

## Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Summary of Themes, Issues & Suggestions:	5
Park Board special event philosophy	6
Criteria to govern acceptable community & commercial activities in parks	7
Criteria for frequency and scheduling of events	8
Park Board resource allocation	9
Appropriate site protection processes	10
Site requirements criteria	10
Fee structure experience	10
Special event application process & relations with Park Board staff	11
Generating revenue	12
Gated events	13
Insurance requirements	13
Consultation between staff and special event organizers	14
Consultation with park users and neighbours	14
Consultation with others	15
How event organizers can mitigate consultation concerns	15

## Introduction

This report presents the findings from the Vancouver Park Board Focus Group Consultation that was conducted by Anne Morrison, Consultant, in May – June, 2003. Focus groups were facilitated for the following four stakeholders: staff, community groups, not for profit event organizers, and corporate/contract event organizers. All of the focus group participants were positive contributors to this consultation and were very appreciative of the opportunity to take part.

### Report Format:

The report summarizes the main themes, issues and suggestions that surfaced for each of the 16 subject areas that were addressed by the four focus groups. A grid was created to organize the input from each focus group by discussion topic.

### The Big Picture:

Overall, there were many common themes and suggestions that surfaced from the focus groups, some of which include:

- Lack of understanding of the current special event guidelines and a wish to have them organized into a clear, easy to read event guidebook (with check lists) as a common reference for staff, community groups, and event organizers;
- Inconsistent application of some guidelines and lack of understanding of the rationale; wish for more transparency;
- Lack of understanding of Park Monitor role and wish for more direct communication between that person and event organizers;
- Wish by staff to partner more closely with special event groups and enable easier direct access for them to the park supervisors;
- Strong wish by community groups and event organizers to be given more recognition for their ability to manage their events and work with staff - not at cross purposes;
- A wish by staff and organizers to work more closely to minimize park impacts; event organizers want to help build more public stewardship of the parks;
- Wish for clearer communication, and more mutual support, between community centre park facilities' staffs and event organizers;
- Wish for less one-on-one meetings for individual events and more ways for staff and organizers to come together, a few times per year, for longer term planning that addresses several events at once;
- A wish for more shared responsibility by community members and staff, including building stronger partnerships and exploring the potential of more Park Partners programs, and/or citizen committees, to determine shared use criteria, and/or community stewardship committees to draft environmental agreements for users, assist with park beautification etc;
- Mutual recognition of shrinking park resources and increasing demand, necessitating a more thorough approval process (that gives more weight to local community events) and a more efficient evaluation system (including recognition of what has gone well as well as not well);
- Need to examine new revenue sources and let staff and organizers know where the special event revenues are spent (including parking fees and vending

- machines), explore cost recovery ideas for staff and organizers, including Park Board assistance on ways to pool resources and share equipment rentals etc.;
- Need to re-evaluate how neighbourhood input is sought and how a few critical voices are received, so that the overall benefits of events are not lost through a few individuals' protests;
  - Strong shared values about the importance of events as building community with an appeal for all the citizens and the need to ensure access and inclusivity;
  - View that Park Board can provide more of a "connecting function", brokering communication between co (event)-tenets, facilitating event organizer dialogue from sports, arts, culture sectors etc, establishing ways for more park user consultation, and enabling a partnership between everyone on the park;
  - Wish for Park Board to have a more seamless partnership with other City Departments, including re examination of tent policies, ways to enable City insurance benefits, special event websites, a Van Map event calendar, and access to City revenues, such as DCC's;
  - Wish for the Park Board to take on an active marketing role in attracting untapped audiences to events, including tourists, as the events are jewels of community spirit and celebration.

The report outlines many specific suggestions of ways to address issues. Because few of the participants knew the current guidelines, they did not frequently have specific policy recommendations; rather, their recommendations tended to centre on the types of relationships and ways of working together for staff, community, event organizers, and the Park Board. There was a consensus that organizers be treated more as partners with staff and that there be ways to confirm the common vision and principles of park use which both staff and organizers uphold. Some organizers wished for more recognition of their responsible park use and more leniency for visible sponsor promotions, including product sales and competition. There also seemed to be consensus that the whole area of alcohol use be revisited and more leniency be explored, in light of actual current practices. Regarding consultation, there was consensus that it is important at strategic points, such as when planning a new or radically changed event, or when an event will have major neighbourhood impacts. There was also agreement that if the vision, principles, values, and guidelines are clear and transparent, repeated consultation may not be necessary.

In conclusion, all of the stakeholders were excited to be part of this focus group process. They look forward to hearing the results. Each focus group independently expressed their appreciation for the current Park Board Special Event staffs, who are seen as extremely supportive in the midst of increasing demands and numerous new issues. They would welcome the opportunity to continue to be part of a process that enhances working relationships and creates more clearly understood guidelines that build in more accountability and ways to celebrate how inclusive events can build more community pride and ensure sustainable park spaces.

## Summary of Themes, Issues & Suggestions

[by discussion topic]

### Park Board special events philosophy:

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common staff wish to welcome special events but need to manage park resources wisely so people can enjoy parks</li> <li>• Wide range of staff perceptions of their key roles from green space stewards, to recreationists, to community partners</li> <li>• Lack of clear philosophy, rationale and guidelines for staging special events creates different operational interpretations</li> <li>• Often inconsistent and ineffective direct communication between local, on site staffs and event organizers</li> <li>• Unrest with filming (re exclusive use, environmental impacts, how to work together)</li> <li>• Inconsistent staff comfort with how to manage more events with fewer staff resources</li> <li>• Different viewpoints of how staff are seen – hard to please bureaucrat, or there to serve the public and make process easier</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wish for PB to be more proactive, to minimize and manage impacts</li> <li>• Establish more thorough evaluation processes and tighter scrutiny before event approval</li> <li>• Limit amount of exclusive use</li> <li>• Address filming issues – ensure person who plans filming is person on site during filming</li> <li>• Continue staff discussions about their key functions and how to support successful special events that protect park spaces, including ways to partner more effectively</li> </ul>
<b>Community Groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events are great for the City</li> <li>• Sponsoring groups not well connected; wish to share experiences and resources</li> <li>• Need greater appreciation of diversity of events – small, large, local, regional, different audiences</li> <li>• Great respect and value for the “park floor”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take on a greater PB facilitative, connecting role to bring together event organizations and community groups</li> <li>• Establish greater PB visibility and marketing of the diversity of special events and their benefits</li> <li>• Extend the events’ reach by spreading and spacing the events around the city more.</li> <li>• Give greater value for local events; scrutinize the regional ones more heavily</li> </ul>
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks belong to those who live in the City to be used in variety of ways as they wish</li> <li>• “Parks as Festivals” – be inclusive, welcoming to variety of responsible use</li> <li>• Large untapped tourist market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB offer more resources to event organizers</li> <li>• Let organizers know where the revenues go and who can access</li> <li>• Offer more concrete PB support to organizers (easier equipment access etc)</li> <li>• Be more proactive, partner with</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
		Tourism Van., to market events to tourists
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Welcome events but don't overload parks</li> <li>• Concern with undue voice of a few individuals which prevents community access to special events</li> <li>• Need to be positive and make it easy for contractors to stage events on parks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enable wider variety of groups to stage events, including youth and less resourced groups, who can build community</li> <li>• Encourage events on smaller parks too</li> <li>• Ensure front line staff see benefits of events as way to entice positive park activity</li> <li>• Give greater recognition of corporate event benefits and offer them more input</li> <li>• Ensure stronger PB support through offering new resources, such as DCC revenues to provide equipment and supplies etc.</li> </ul>

**Criteria to govern acceptable community & commercial activities in parks:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two viewpoints: (1) we have reached our limit and (2) we cannot turn down events (Van. Charter)</li> <li>• Movie making is "on the edge" of acceptability: exclusive use, impact on park, lack of responsible follow up, etc</li> <li>• Don't give a few neighbours' undue weight in decisions – that limits the public good that events bring</li> </ul>	
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major criteria: how does this activity improve the park or is good for the park? What legacy will it leave?</li> <li>• Inclusivity; no one should be excluded from the park</li> <li>• Accountability and credibility of org. group</li> <li>• Stewardship; don't allow any activity destructive to environment</li> <li>• Clear guidelines for commercial events</li> <li>• Preference for Community driven events that appeal to and build greater community</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create "environment assessment pact" to ensure accountability – with criteria for noise, traffic and lasting impacts</li> <li>• Support more community ownership – groups who want to educate public about how to take care of the park; groups who want to assist in stewardship of park</li> <li>• Be more of a facilitator; teach groups how to stage events on parks</li> <li>• Share decision making and review process with affected organizing groups</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policies appear control/regulations/staff positioning based; need to have them flow from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before set criteria, PB needs to step back and decide clear vision and principles of how to treat organizers</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
	<p>principles and then more support based</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't promote political protests</li> <li>• Accessibility; ensure no harassment of park users</li>   <li>• Don't let private functions take over a park</li> <li>• "Too much effort trying not to make people uncomfortable."</li> <li>• Ensure events are financially viable for public with reasonable fees or free access</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB build more positive relationships with event organizers, less based on "preaching."</li> <li>• Ensure policies and guidelines are transparent and clear</li>   <li>• Be proactive; head off what might go wrong and treat event organizers as responsible adults.</li> <li>• Rethink how much filming to allow; it takes over spaces.</li> </ul>

**Criteria for frequency and scheduling of events:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need more consistent scheduling practice</li> <li>• Some felt need more thorough review of requests and ensure cost recovery (or ways to offset)</li> <li>• Some felt need broader community and stakeholder consultation to ensure issues identified and addressed</li> <li>• Differing staff perceptions of the benefits of events when their business flow is interrupted</li> <li>• If don't limit events, then need more resources (like welcoming signage for park users) so they still will access park with event</li> <li>• Need more complete planning for new parks so they not over capacity</li> <li>• Need to look at other venues for events like streets</li> <li>• Can have poor communication between event organizers and on site facility and park staffs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take more time to plan for new parks that can handle capacity</li> <li>• Ensure more complete review of requests; don't automatically say "yes"</li> <li>• Establish better communication between on site Parks facility staffs and special event organizers, processes to examine use of facilities and ways to work together</li> <li>• Ensure good quality management/leadership from PB and event organizers</li> </ul>
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little understanding of current scheduling practices or guidelines; would like to know what is scheduled where and when</li> <li>• Concerns about too much park use and impact on residents,</li> <li>• Want limits but also flexibility and ways for small neighbour</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need effective centralized scheduling mechanism so every one knows what event is scheduled where and when</li> <li>• Establish community connections so residents understand criteria and feel a part of decisions</li> <li>• Ensure any adverse affects on parks are corrected</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
	celebrations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to involve community in deciding use of their assets</li> <li>• Need to ensure use does not have permanent adverse affect on the park</li> </ul>	
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of knowledge of current criteria</li> <li>• Need for more integrated scheduling of similar events occurring simultaneously on same park</li> <li>• High costs of required equipment</li> <li>• Inconsistent access to current resources due to uneven awareness of what available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure criteria and guidelines are visible and communicated, perhaps through a vanfestivals website</li> <li>• Conduct shared decision making with similar groups wanting similar events at same time on same space</li> <li>• Create easy access web site calendar</li> <li>• Facilitate groups' sharing resources</li> <li>• Increase PB promotion and marketing of events – greater use of PR Dept.</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of knowledge of current criteria</li> <li>• Ensure a fit between event and PB mandate esp. re access/equity</li> <li>• Realistic size and location of park for event</li> <li>• Greater access for corporate events during peak summer seasons</li> <li>• Conflicts around shared use of a space</li> <li>• Need for flexibility with regulations</li> <li>• Unclear conflict resolution guidelines; often one user group is against another</li> <li>• Regulations based produces reactive decisions with out community ownership</li> <li>• Could handle wider variety and bigger events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set a few broad clear criteria from transparent vision</li> <li>• Establish a grid for organizers with points for meeting criteria</li> <li>• Engage the community for shared use discussions; invite them out</li> <li>• Ensure key stakeholders know of events, such as park caretakers</li> <li>• Review criteria for international events and tourism benefits</li> <li>• Create intentional permanent outdoor stage space to address larger event demand</li> </ul>

**Park Board resource allocation:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better management practices for Parks Board staff and event managers</li> <li>• Need for more diversified, multi use parks design</li> <li>• Need for permanent infrastructure for some events</li> <li>• Need to allocate more resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Multi use parks and multi use parks design, such as pathway a truck can drive on</li> <li>• Establish a permanent infrastructure for some events</li> <li>• Build a capital reserve fund from special event revenues</li> <li>• Promote “pack it in and pack it out” to</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to address level of post event sanitation clean up</li> </ul>	<p>large event organizers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Market Vancouver brightly; especially positive flow from events</li> <li>• Create an organizers' forum to build ownership and solutions</li> <li>• Revisit staff purpose and the cost of service; "providing service is more important than costs to do business."</li> <li>• Enlarge Park Partner Program to connect with community to build solutions</li> </ul>

**Appropriate site protection processes:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<p><b>Staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can have events on inappropriate sites – Jazz Festival on Grade 1 A sports field</li> <li>• Sometimes lack technical expertise to host the event, so inappropriate venue</li> <li>• Clean up issues</li> <li>• Need for greater organizer awareness of how to protect trees etc</li> <li>• Need more funding for required repair work</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create multifunctional assets that can be used safely for various functions and events</li> <li>• Build a facility to host musical events</li> <li>• Consider charging event organizer for the clean up</li> <li>• Give more funding for PB repair work</li> </ul>

**Site requirements criteria:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<p><b>Community groups</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to ensure adequate recovery time in between events to ensure health of park</li> <li>• Community center budgets can be inadequate to cover site protection costs</li> <li>• Can have irresponsible use of space</li> <li>• Neighbours can have too loud a voice with PA system etc impacts</li> <li>• Neighbours need to know the impacts before the event</li> <li>• Event organizers inconsistently promote site protection processes</li> <li>• Larger revenue generating events need more scrutiny</li> <li>• Sometimes events in environmentally sensitive areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have clear repercussions if park is trashed</li> <li>• Give some revenue back to community center for site repair</li> <li>• Have organizing group create a plan for responsible space protection that addresses traffic, parking, etc</li> <li>• Have organizers create "environment plans" with point system for compliance</li> <li>• Advertise the PA policy and perhaps be looser with criteria, but ensure neighbours know</li> <li>• Insist that all event organizers promote public transportation for events</li> <li>• PB assist with neighbour notification</li> <li>• Avoid environmentally sensitive areas, such as Avalon Pond</li> <li>• Add more events to South Vancouver parks</li> </ul>

### Fee structure experience:

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees are fair, especially when compared with private sector</li> <li>• Some fee inconsistency and lack of understanding why</li> <li>• Wide discrepancy in level of support offered groups</li> <li>• “No one knows the rules”</li> <li>• Site monitoring fees are reasonable</li> <li>• Rarely have clean up fees, because felt all leave park cleaner than when arrived</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clearly lay out fee structure, rationale etc</li> <li>• Clearly lay out rationale for staff assistance with certain equipment (snow fencing) etc</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fees are reasonable, especially when compared with City</li> <li>• Question - what are the fees for?</li> <li>• Don't know role and purpose of Park Monitor</li> <li>• Citizens feel left out of fee discussions</li> <li>• Too much red tape re parking needs</li> <li>• Some on site staff not enthusiastic or supportive of events</li> <li>• Changing special event staff means changing interpretations</li> <li>• Don't always know why an event is turned down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce event organizer handbook that includes fee schedule, rationale, with clear policies re level of staff assistance for what kinds of needs etc</li> <li>• Provide explanation of how fees and revenues work; what they provide etc</li> <li>• Establish easier way to sort out parking lot needs for event patrons</li> <li>• Give fuller understanding of Park Monitors' purpose and how to connect with them for their post event feedback, positive and negative.</li> <li>• Consider ways to raise public awareness of fees and benefits from fees; perhaps involve them in setting criteria and categories</li> </ul>

### Special event application process & relations with Park Board staff:

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very positive relationships with S.E. staff</li> <li>• A few would like previous, centralized system back; others would like more direct personal access to event organizers and help make their PB access easier</li> <li>• Debriefing – some thought let it be initiated by those with a problem; others like giving their feedback to SE staff to process + record</li> <li>• Some difficulties for event organizers with police presence</li> <li>• Different interpretations of whether staff or organizers should take lead for post event repairs</li> <li>• Limited debriefings; need for them to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a simpler process for applications; allow staff to help make it easier for organizers</li> <li>• Staff as sounding boards and liaison with police</li> <li>• Establish protocol on when and how to have debriefings</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
	be candid and not cosmetic	
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SE staff very helpful; some problems with some planners</li> <li>• Groups unable to get site maps from planning</li> <li>• Sometimes surprises with park site changes that impact regular events</li> <li>• Some park staff defend the park against the organizers</li> <li>• Can have arts,sports etc sectors in competition</li> <li>• Confusion over who is in charge of sites; leads to conflict</li>   <li>• Approval process can be skewed by a “single voice”s over representation</li> <li>• Evaluation process works well; email within a week, unless special issue meeting required</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish more regular, communication and ongoing relationships/partnerships between staff and regular event organizers</li> <li>• Facilitate staff and organizers collaboration; common park commitment</li> <li>• Broker stronger relationships between different sectors that sponsor events</li> <li>• Share organizational structure/responsibility with organizers</li> <li>• Make it easier for groups to get site maps</li>   <li>• Support organizers’ orientation of new PB members re their events + benefits; find ways to educate complainant</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All staff very good to work with, except regarding tent issues</li> <li>• Too long a timeline for Board approval process</li> <li>• Preference given to annual events/tournaments</li> <li>• Evaluation – confusion over Park Monitor role</li> <li>• Difficulties for some groups with police presence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address tent issues through Fest Committee</li> <li>• Explore ways to streamline approval process</li> <li>• Establish clear criteria for why some groups given preference</li> <li>• Clarify Park Monitor role</li> <li>• Provide liaison assistance with policing relationships</li> </ul>

**Generating revenue:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for more use of local products</li> <li>• Question how to handle groups getting free space while sell food</li> <li>• Various opinions regarding liquor sales, from lift all restrictions, restrict family or daytime events, eliminate roped areas – overall, consider liberalizing restrictions</li> <li>• Corporations are here to stay and need to be recognized as community contributors</li> <li>• Event organizers want more corporate sponsor recognition and freedom to facilitate it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow more competition for food sales</li> <li>• Address liquor restrictions in consultation with organizers; allow some liberalization</li> <li>• Find a way to work with corporate sponsors in more positive way and make guidelines more flexible</li> <li>• Review guidelines around corporate sponsor logos and visibility, which some would like bigger than PB’s</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of awareness of current guidelines and questions about who makes decisions and what is rationale</li> <li>• Inconsistent direction about selling products</li> <li>• Misconception amongst some staff and Centre Boards that they out to “make money”</li> <li>• Inconsistent application process; from 3-6 weeks to 3-6 months</li> <li>• Lack of awareness about alcohol restrictions and corporate sponsor restrictions; some had never been asked</li> <li>• Others find restrictions too restrictive and police themselves</li>   <li>• Need to find more resources, including corporate sponsors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More support for corporate sponsors; including help to find them</li> <li>• Review alcohol and sponsor guidelines; allow more flexibility</li> <li>• Have the PB be a corporate sponsor</li> <li>• Determine consistent application processing timeline</li> <li>• Ensure all guidelines are transparent and communicated to all organizers</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonable guidelines for food sales, though some question why can't compete with PB concessions</li> <li>• Little understanding of rationale for different decisions</li> <li>• Hastle to have each group get separate liquor license</li> <li>• Sponsors become dissatisfied if cannot sell their products</li> <li>• “Any viable company should have a chance”</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review alcohol and sponsor guidelines; allow more flexibility</li> <li>• Consider the event; a private frat party is different from the Van. Symphony</li> <li>• Consider letting liquor license be in name of catering company, rather than client</li> <li>• Make more room for corporate sponsorships; allow them to sell products</li> </ul>

**Gated events:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow as long as event is of value to those who attend</li> <li>• Are benefits with regional appeal, city amenity, tourist attraction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support gated events as long as not exclusive use of a park</li> </ul>
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are fine and do not take away park access</li> </ul>	
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks are culture; widen the scope of gated events</li> <li>• Larger events hard to accommodate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include musicals that could be staged on a park</li> <li>• Try to establish larger park areas for</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
		larger events • Get commission from totally private events

**Insurance requirements:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is a financial hardship for many</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PB talk to City so NFP's could come under self insurance scheme</li> <li>• NFP groups should organize group advocacy to PB</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very efficient</li> <li>• Not a hardship</li> </ul>	

**Consultation between staff and special event organizers:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough pre planning according to consistent criteria</li> <li>• Reactive decisions can occur</li> <li>• Need more thorough screening process for new events with affected staff present</li> <li>• Questions around where revenue goes (filming, parking, vending machines)</li> <li>• Differing practices for consultation with organizers and who does what follow up</li> <li>• Inefficient, one on one, evaluation system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a check list for pre planning</li> <li>• Have fuller pre event consultation for new events, with more affected staff present</li> <li>• Have longer range planning sessions between park supervisor and event organizer(s); could combine planning for several events at one meeting</li> <li>• Or have Special Event staff do the consultation for site staff and keep them in loop</li> <li>• Review rationale for where event revenues go and how to address extra park costs</li> <li>• Meet 3 times per year to review how special event bookings are going + issues that need to be addressed</li> <li>• Perhaps have community center staff assist organizers with their events; work together more</li> <li>• Consider 3-5 year agreements with ongoing event organizers and longer range planning</li> </ul>

**Consultation with park users and neighbours:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not necessary for City to consult on all events; essential for new event or changed event</li> <li>• But hard for neighbours to find out what events coming to them</li> <li>• Consultation often happens after the planning is completed</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of criteria and impacts; need to be informed ahead of event</li> <li>• Facilities on the parks are also neighbours</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish easy way for neighbours to know what events coming</li> <li>• Focus on consultation to plan the new or changed event so not just informing; invite involvement</li> <li>• Don't make decisions according to squeaky wheel</li> <li>• Be upfront and truthful with expected impacts so no surprises</li> <li>• Include key park facilities in discussions</li> </ul>
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only consult if necessary; track record of growing events and lack of issues should suffice for support</li> <li>• Volunteer groups have finite time for consultation</li> <li>• Guard against undue influence of a few individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City could adopt policy: "will not stage unreasonable events at your doorstep and ensure balanced input"</li> <li>• Create a form for event organizers and decision makers so broader context than squeaky wheel for decisions</li> <li>• Distribute one page economic statement to educate Commissioners</li> </ul>
<b>Corporate/contract event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation is not very visible</li> <li>• Sometimes staff shirk their decision making for unnecessary further consultation</li> <li>• Important when special exceptions for guidelines</li> <li>• Need to let organizers know when criteria are being met</li> <li>• Sometimes staff hold undue decision making powers without bringing in community/public</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure executive decision making is transparent and follows Board vision and principles</li> <li>• Consultation only when necessary and as minimal as possible</li> <li>• Identify and inform stakeholders of major exceptions to guidelines</li> <li>• Establish a broad based citizen group to make recommendations to PB, who will direct staff</li> <li>• Or, establish a PB "Special Events Group" to decide special event park allocations – meet 2 x per year, like field users</li> <li>• Or piggy back public input through mechanisms like Van Trade Centre Convention Expansion Committee</li> </ul>

**Consultation with others:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One staff referenced new ways to connect with community and share leadership</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further implement the Park Partner Program</li> </ul>

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for closer liaison and collaboration with City departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More consultation with City Departments</li> <li>• More consultation with NE sector of the City</li> <li>• Maybe merge PB function with City and let PB keep revenues</li> <li>• Consult with City tourism</li> <li>• Consult with established user groups</li> </ul>
<b>Not for profit event organizers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge of fair representation of all the special event participants; they can be invisible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remember that each event organizer represents their participants</li> </ul>

**How event organizers can mitigate consultation concerns:**

Focus Group	Themes / Issues	Suggestions
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can have undue time allowed for set up and take down which interferes with operational tasks</li> <li>• Casual staff do not know issues and context</li> <li>• Lack of clear guidebook</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perhaps have organizers use own vehicles for set up and take down</li> <li>• Establish tighter timelines for set up and take down</li> <li>• Have Special Event staff at each event since know context</li> <li>• Create guidebook with clear check lists</li> </ul>
<b>Community groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizers often do not know what is expected until after the event</li> <li>• Organizers want to protect park spaces with proper use and have a voice</li> <li>• Community members would like more input and consultation, especially around commercialization issues</li> <li>• Like minded organizing groups not effectively linked</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before the event, give clear guidelines and expectations to the organizers</li> <li>• Ensure event organizers are honest with community about the costs and benefits of their events</li> <li>• Establish a “Stewardship Committee” of event organizers and other stakeholders to ensure site protection and proper use of park spaces</li> <li>• Use City’s public input guide for planning template</li> <li>• Reference Park partners program and GVRD Regional Park Partnership Program model of community roundtables and co planning, especially regarding commercialization issues</li> <li>• Facilitate like minded groups networking and resource sharing</li> </ul>

