

**A Guide to  
Special Events in Vancouver Parks**

**November 20, 2003**

# Table of Contents

1.	Introduction .....	1
2.	Management of Parks .....	3
3.	Management of Special Events .....	5
4.	Allocation and Application Process .....	7
5.	Conditions of Use	
	Revenue Generation .....	15
	Park Preservation .....	19
	Site and Service Requirements .....	22
	Safety and Security .....	25
6.	Appendices	
	Event Organizer’s Checklist .....	26
	Service Vehicles Operating in Parks .....	27

## INTRODUCTION

Civic open spaces such as parks are traditional sites for civic entertainment and celebrations and these events are very popular with Vancouver residents. These activities fall within the Board's mission of providing a wide variety of leisure opportunities to enhance the well being of individuals and communities. Such activities include multi-cultural festivals, cultural events, sporting tournaments and various celebrations.

Special events are of great value to the City. These events contribute to the cultural richness and milieu of the City. A number of these events also have significant economic benefit through increased tourism and many events also serve as major fund raisers for various non-profit societies.

The Park Board defines special events as those activities which require the designation of exclusive use of an area and/or require the approval of conditions of use as outlined under a Park Control by-law. The Board works in partnership with event organizers and societies to facilitate a diverse level of programming in parks and beaches. Most of the City's special events are sponsored by non profit societies who organize and conduct these activities. The Board's role in the provision of special events is primarily limited to that of host - accommodating the events and activities in parks. In fact, most of the City's outdoor special events occur in parks. Since the Board does not directly provide celebrations or entertainment, it requires a mechanism to delegate the control of a site to an event organizer/sponsor. This is accomplished through the special event permit approval process.

In 2002, the Park Board issued approximately 300 permits for special events, runs and walks. Events ranged from small neighbourhood park concerts of 50 people to city wide celebrations such the Celebration of Light, with nightly attendance of 400,000. Approximately two-thirds of special events occurred in city-wide destination parks (Stanley Park, Spanish Banks, beaches, Vanier, Queen Elizabeth Parks); and one third of all events occur in Stanley Park and/or downtown waterfront parks. Fees collected from these events were approximately \$28,000 plus the recovery of \$ 9,000 in event supervisory costs. In addition to special events, the Board also issues permits for sporting activities, filming, and picnics.

The objective for this report is to outline the policies, guidelines and the administrative process for special events accommodated on parks. This is accomplished through the provision of a consolidated document which will both guide and direct Board/staff decisions with regards to special events as well as clarify the rationale behind the decision making process for event organizers and the various park stakeholders (other users, park neighbours, public, etc.).

The report is divided into four sections:

**Management of Parks:** outlines the applicable statutes, by-laws and policies which enable the Park Board to manage park activities - Vancouver Charter, the Park Board's Park Control By-laws, various City by-laws, as well as Federal and Provincial statutes and legislation.

**Management of Special Events:** outlines the Board's objectives for the provision of special events; the nature and scope of activities, definitions of special events and activities.

**Application and Allocation Process:** outlines the application process for event organizers, defines the allocation process including the evaluation criteria and allocation priorities; consultation requirements; and fees and charges.

**Conditions of Use for Special Events:** outlines specific conditions of use with respect to revenue generation, park environment preservation, site and service requirements and safety and security concerns.

It is a goal for both the Board and staff to work with event organizers to ensure a successful event. Special event staff are available to answer any questions regarding the application, evaluation and approval process. Ultimately, the responsibility for the event rest with organizer. Following the policies, guidelines and practices outlined in this document will assist in achieving a successful special event.

## MANAGEMENT OF PARKS

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is granted the authority to manage park activities through the Vancouver Charter. Under this provincial statute, the Board is given jurisdiction and control of all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks. The Charter further defines the powers of the Board with respect to accommodating activities in parks, the charging and collecting of fees, the closing (restricting free access) of parks, the selling of commodities, the controlling of assemblies and the regulating of signs. The accompanying table outlines those sections of the Charter which are applicable to special events.

### Excerpts from the Vancouver Charter Applicable to Management of Special Events

<b>Section 488</b>	<p><b>Parks in care of Board</b></p> <p>(7) Exclusive jurisdiction and control of parks and the property comprising them also includes the power to prohibit the selling of anything, and the provision of services or performances of any type without the permission of the Board. In granting permission the Board may impose such terms and conditions as it deems appropriate.</p>
<b>Section 489</b>	<p><b>Powers of the Board</b></p> <p>The Board shall have power to provide for:</p> <p>(a) constructing, acquiring, maintaining, equipping, operating, supervising, and controlling such buildings, structures, and facilities as may be required for the recreation, comfort, and enjoyment of the public while within the parks;</p> <p>(c) entertainment through musical, theatrical and other activities in the parks, making a charge for admission thereto;</p> <p>(d) charging and collecting fees for admission to any building or place in the park set aside for sports or games whether by spectators or participants;</p> <p>(e) closing to the free use of the public the whole or any part of any parks at such times and for such periods as may be deemed advisable; and charging and collecting a fee for admission to the parks; and providing penalties for unauthorized entry during such periods.</p> <p>(r) organizing and conducting, and contracting with others to organize and conduct recreational programs of all kinds, either in parks or in other such locations as may be approved by Board or any of its employees designated for this purpose, and for fixing and collecting fees for such programs.</p>

<b>Section 491</b>	<p><b>Board's Power to Make By-laws</b></p> <p>In the exercise of any of its powers, the Board may from time to time pass, amend, and repeal by-laws to be observed in the parks, or any of them, for the control, regulation, protection, and government of the parks and of persons who may be therein, including:</p> <p>(b) the assembling or gathering of persons in any of the parks, and if necessary, the prohibition of such assemblies or gatherings;</p> <p>(c) the regulation of advertising or signs of any kind in any of the parks;</p>
<b>Section 494</b>	<p><b>Enforcement of By-laws</b></p> <p>The provisions of section 151 shall, mutatis mutandis apply to the Board, and with respect to any by-law passed under this part the provision of section 333 shall, mutatis mutandis, apply.</p>

The Charter also provides the Board with the ability to impose terms and conditions as it deems appropriate when granting permission of use to organizations.

The Charter gives the Park Board the legal capacity to exercise the powers bestowed on it as well to enforce these powers. This is accomplished through Park Control By-laws. It is through the application of these by-laws that the Board is able to manage park activities. For special events, the Board's management mechanism is the permit approval process.

**Excerpts from the Parks Control By-law  
Applicable to Management of Special Events**

<b>Section</b>	<b>By-law Description</b>
4. (a) (i)  (ii)	<p>Except with the permission of the Board, no person shall, in any park, sell, offer to sell, or expose for sale any food, beverage, or article or thing of any kind;</p> <p>Except with the permission of the Board, no person shall, in any park, provide or offer to provide for a fee any service.</p>
8. (a)  (b)  (c)	<p>No person shall take part in any procession, drill, march, performance, ceremony, concert, gathering, or meeting in or on any park or driveway unless with the written permission of the General Manager first had and obtained.</p> <p>No person shall make a public address or demonstration or do any other thing likely to cause a public gathering or attract public attention in any park without the written permission of the General Manager first had and obtained.</p> <p>No person shall operate any amplifying system or loud speaker in any park without the written permission of the General Manager first had and obtained.</p>
10.	No person shall ...obstruct the free use and enjoyment of any park or place by any other person.
11.	No person shall erect, construct or build or caused to be erected, constructed or built in or on any park any tent, building, shelter, pavilion or other construction whatsoever without the permission of the General Manager.

14.	No person shall, without permission of the General Manager first had and obtained,
(d)	post, paint, affix, distribute or deliver any advertisement, handbill, poster or advertising card of any kind in any park;
(f)	drive any vehicle over any grass area of flower bed in any park; drive any vehicle over any footpath or promenade in any park.

In addition to Park Control by-laws, event organizers are required to adhere to Federal, Provincial and other civic legislation, statutes, laws and by-laws. The Park Board will not issue special event permits to groups for activities which violate these laws, bylaws or statutes.

## **MANAGEMENT OF SPECIAL EVENTS**

The Park Board manages special events activities so as to achieve the following objectives:

- promote a diverse range of activities and opportunities
- ensure fair and equitable access to parks
- balance needs of casual and organized park users, event participants as well as park neighbours;
- ensure efficient and effective use of park space while at the same time protecting and preserving park environments;
- ensure events are conducted in a safe and responsible manner.

It is recognized that these objectives are often at odds with one another. The key to successfully managing special events is balancing these potential conflicting interests. These conflicts can be greatly reduced through the scheduling of events in the appropriate spaces and at appropriate frequencies.

The Park Board manages special events activities through various policies, guidelines and procedures. The objectives for special event management outlined above serve as the framework for the development of such policy and guidelines. A policy is governing principle that regulations action(s) and is approved by the Board to ensure system wide application and compliance. Guidelines outline the steps which are followed to ensure compliance with policy. More flexible than policy statements, guidelines represent an interpretation of policy which allow for its implementation and often include options and/or cautions/warnings. Procedures are employed by staff to achieve “best practices”.

It is important to note that the system of governance for special events is flexible as the Park Board has strived to balance the adherence to rules with a common sense approach. Flexibility has been included in the special event approval process to reflect the unique nature of events and the ability of parks to accommodate them. No two events are exactly the same or have identical needs. Historically, this flexibility has resulted in the vast and diverse level of special events in parks. Most events and parks have differing features and requirements thus what is appropriate in one park may not be appropriate in

another. While balancing the adherence to rules with common sense introduces subjectivity into the decision making process, it also recognizes that a strict “cookie cutter” approach for event approval would not result in a satisfactory provision of events and activities.

### Definitions of Special Events

Special events are defined as activities which require the designation of the exclusive use of an area of a park to an organization to conduct an event(s) and/or require the approval of conditions of use as outlined under a Park Board by-law. Generally, these events have some impact on others’ use of the park and/or the surrounding neighbourhood. Most are one day events although a few are scheduled over a weekend. Events which occur on a more frequent basis are handled through licencing agreements or leases.

Types of events which occur in parks vary in terms of activity, audience (public/private functions), conditions of use, associated ancillary activities and whether they are restricted to designated site.

Types of Events	Description
Picnics	Private functions with food services, generally restricted to designated sites.
Weddings	Under 50 people with no set-up can occur in most parks without a permit. Larger functions restricted to designated picnic sites.
Runs and Walks	Participation open to public, runs and walks focus on fund raising and/or “cause” awareness. Events may involve the use of a p.a., staging, tents and/or the sale of event related items.
Sporting Events	Tournaments are restricted to designated locations (fields, diamonds and beaches). Possible food and beverage services, sales of event related items, use of a PA system, etc.
Celebrations	Community, cultural or religious events, participation open to the general public. May involve entertainment, food and beverage service, staging, PA systems, sale of event related items, etc.
Festivals	Multi faceted events, participation open to the public. Usually involve staging, tents, pa systems, sale of event related items, etc. May involve food and beverage services. Large festivals have extensive set-up and take down requirements. Gated events are restricted to specific sites.
Concerts	Musical events, participation open the general public. Majority of concerts are offered free of charge - limited number by admission and these occur in designated areas.
Rallies and Protests	Participation open to the public, restricted to parks with hard surfaces. Most rallies and protests occur on the Art Gallery Steps (City Engineering). Most require the amplification of sound. Given the nature of protests and rallies, most organizers do not get Park Use Agreements.



## **ALLOCATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS**

### **Park Permit Agreements**

Organizers of special events are granted permission to conduct their event through a Park Permit Agreement. This agreement includes the specific conditions of use for the event. Depending on the requirements for exclusive use, the impact the event has on other park users/neighbours and the approval of conditions of use restricted under Park Board by-laws, the following approval process is followed:

No permit required:	under 50 people, shared space, no special requirements (no set-up, structures, public address system, etc.).
Permit required - Staff approval:	up to 1,000 people, exclusive use, minimal impact on a park's environment, other park users, neighbours, e.g., picnics, tournaments, "small scale" events, etc.
Permit required - Board approval :	over 1,000 people and/or events which significantly impact on a park's environment, regular park users and neighbours, have extensive set- up/take down or events which are in variance with one or more Park Board's policies or approved event guidelines: charging of an admission fee, selling of goods other than event related items, requesting a liquor licence which does not meet the Board's policy, etc.

### **Priority for Allocating Park Space**

The allocation of parkland for special events is based on the following priorities:

First Priority	Park Board activities.
Second Priority	Park Board partners (Community Associations, Stanley Park Ecology Society, etc.), other government agencies, school board, etc.
Third Priority	Non profit organization whose event is primarily of interest to the general public.
Fourth Priority	Non Profit or private group whose event is of primary interest to the organization.
Fifth Priority	Commercial Venture - an event organized for profit.

History also plays a major role in the allocation of park space. Generally, renewal requests are given preference for their historical dates and location. This procedure allows event organizers to market an established date, time and location to the public.

### **Application Process**

All event organizers are required to apply annually to the Board to hold their event on parkland. Special event applications are forwarded to Park Board's Special Events and Filming staff. Through this process, the organizers must fully disclose the purpose of the event, the sponsoring organization, contacts, associated activities, set-up and take down requirements as well as any other special activities which require approval (food preparation, sales, structures, amplified sound, etc.). In addition, applicants are required to provide staff with a site plan clearly indicating the area (s) of intend use.

The processing of applications differs depending on whether the event is a new or renewal request or if the event involves more than park use.

### New Request

Staff process these applications by:

- evaluating the compatibility of the event with the Park Board's mandate;
- determining the suitability of a site to accommodate the event;
- consulting with various park stakeholders and Park Board staff;
- obtaining Board approval as per policies or guidelines;
- establishing conditions which govern set-up and event activities;
- ensuring the applicable permits and licences have been obtained;
- charging and collecting applicable fees including staff time;
- ensuring clean-up and repair;
- debriefing with event organizers after the event.

Deadlines for new applications greatly depends on the complexity of the application as well as the approval body. Staff approval for simple, straight forward events can be done relative quickly although more

complex events may require up to six weeks for approval. The accompanying Special Event Approval - Timelines tables illustrate the estimated processing time for both Board and staff approved events.

### **SPECIAL EVENT APPROVAL - TIMELINE**

The following timelines are estimates only as the time required for approval greatly depends on the complexity of the event and the time of year when applications are received.

<b>Timeline for Events requiring Board Approval</b>					
<b>Application Received</b>	<b>Four Months Prior to the Event</b>	<b>Three Months Prior to the Event</b>	<b>Two Months Prior to the Event</b>	<b>One Month Prior to the Event</b>	

Completed application form received by staff including: detail site plan; copy of society status; and event budget if applicable.	Staff Assessment: compatibility with Parks mandate, suitability of location, set-up requirements, etc.  Consultation: Parks staff and City Departments.	FEST Committee Review (if applicable).  Park Board Committee Review: consultation with Park stakeholders, community groups, residents.	Park Board Approval: if event is approved, development of specific conditions of use, site meetings with staff, application for applicable City permits (tents, electrical, food, etc.).	Document Verification: Copies of insurance, applicable City permits, Special Occasion Licence (if applicable); list of event sponsors and food vendors; route signs for runs & walks, copies of promotional information  Payment of applicable Park Board fees	<b>Special Event</b>
---	---	--	--	--	----------------------

<b>Timeline for Events requiring Staff Approval</b>			
<b>Application Received</b>	<b>Two Months Prior to the Event</b>	<b>One Month Prior to the Event</b>	
Completed application form received by staff including: detail site plan; copy of society status; and event budget if applicable.	Staff Assessment: compatibility with Parks mandate, suitability of location, set-up requirements, etc. Consultation: Parks staff and Park Stakeholders, etc. FEST Committee Review (if applicable). If event is approved, development of specific conditions of use, site meetings with staff, application for applicable City permits (tents, electrical, food, etc.).	Document Verification: copy of insurance, applicable City permits, Special Occasion Licence (if applicable), list of event sponsors and food vendors, route signs for runs & walks, promotional information  Payment of applicable Park Board fees	<b>Special Event</b>

New major events which require Board approval can be process through Board’s annual Calendar of Special Events or individually when they are received. Every November, the Board approves the

inclusion of new major events into its Annual Calendar of Special Events for the following year. Ideally, new applications should be received by October 1<sup>st</sup> to be included in this process.

Applications for major events which do not meet the deadline for the Calendar of Special Events are forwarded to the Board for consideration as they are received. These applications must be submitted in writing to the Board at least three months prior to the requested date. This ensures adequate time for processing the application (compatibility with mandate, suitability of site, etc.) as well as staff, stakeholder and public consultation. The Board will receive a staff report with recommendations when it considers the proposal.

### Renewal Request

Most renewal requests are processed in the fall for inclusion in the Board's Annual Calendar of Special Events. Through this process, event organizers are able to secure dates, times and location for the following year. Board approval is required for major special events for the first three years of an event's operation. After three years, the event is automatically included in the Calendar of Events. However, any significant changes to and/or unresolved problems with existing events are forwarded to the Board for consideration.

### Civic Event Request

Large scale events which impact more than just parkland are also forwarded to the City's FEST Committee for consideration. The FEST Committee consists of representatives from various civic departments including Engineering, Police, Fire, Health, Permits and Licences, Transit and Parks. The FEST Committee also reports to City Council with an annual calendar of major events. Examples of "FEST" events include the Celebration of Light (Fireworks), Pride Parade, Sun Fun Run, etc.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

A key component in the application process is the evaluating a proposed event's compatibility with the Park Board's mandate as well as determining the suitability of a site to accommodate the event.

### Compatibility with Park Board's Mandate

As previously mentioned, the Park Board is granted the authority to manage park activities through the Vancouver Charter. The Charter entrusts the Park Board to determine which activities are appropriate in parks. Historically, park activities include both active and passive recreational activities which are physical, social, cultural, artistic or environmental in nature.

An initiative of the Park Board's Strategic Plan is to establish and sustain new partnerships consistent with the Board's mandate. As previously mentioned, the Board works in partnership with event

organizers and societies to facilitate a diverse level of programming in parks and beaches - sponsors organize and conduct events while the Board allocates the park space to accommodate the event. Thus, the Board gives priority in the allocation of park space to those special events which are compatible with the its mandate.

For the purposes of special event approval, compatible events can be defined as those which focus on recreational activities which are physical, social, cultural, artistic and/or environmental in nature. Events whose primary purpose is not compatible with the Park Board’s mandate are not generally approved although they may be considered by the Board on a case by case basis.

The Park Board does on occasion approve events which are not compatible with the its mandate but have a significant interest to the city. Examples include events of economic or tourism interest (e.g., Molson Indy) and/or civic, provincial, national or international events. It should be noted that these events may have additional special conditions of use place on them.

Site Suitability

It is important to recognize that sites which accommodate special events are parks first thus the regular use of a park must be respected. Most of Vancouver’s parks accommodate a variety of uses including both active and passive recreational opportunities which may occur on a casual and/or organized level. The majority of parks have not been designed to accommodate large scale events as most lack the necessary amenities such as washrooms, parking, access to water or power to support major special events. In addition, most parks have differing features and requirements thus what is appropriate in one park may not be appropriate in another. With this in mind, the objective for the Board is to match events to an appropriate park site. This is accomplished by evaluating the event and the site using the following criteria:

<b>Site Suitability Criteria</b>	<b>Evaluation Description</b>
Compatibility of the event with existing uses/users of the park including public safety.	Compatibility refers to regular park use in the general sense - passive, active or natural as well as the impact the event on other’s enjoyment of the park, etc. The evaluation will be based on: whether the area is appropriate for the event; whether other users of the park can continue during the event; whether the event impacts more the immediate site (e.g., noise); and whether there are any safety concerns regarding the scheduling of the event in the area..
Intensity and frequency of other park uses/users	Intensity and frequency refers to the level of both scheduled and casual park use. It is recognized that it is possible to over “program” a park. Thus efforts are made distribute events across the park system as well as regulate the frequency on a specific site.

Park Condition - protection and preservation	The scheduling of an event can not be at the expense of the park's regular use; especially with regards to environmental sensitive areas. It should be noted that parks differ in the level of programming that they can accommodate. Thus, the intensity of programming may differ from park to park. The evaluation will focus on whether the area's current condition can withstand the activity as well as whether the scheduling of an event could possible damage the park beyond immediate repair.
Availability of Amenities on Site	To lessen their impact on the immediate surroundings, large events are scheduled into parks with the necessary support amenities such as washrooms, off street parking, access to alternate transportation, etc.

As a rough guideline, neighbourhood events are appropriate in parks with a local focus and city wide events are appropriate in parks which have a city wide focus. The Park Board has three categories of parks - neighbourhood, district and destination parks. The accompanying table serves as a guideline in determining appropriate venues for special events. It is recognized that destination and district parks have the capacity to accommodate a significant number of smaller events without impacting other park use or park neighbours.

<b>Park Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Appropriate Events</b>
Neighbourhood Park	Small parks (under 2 ha) which primarily serves local needs - e.g., playground, passive areas, playfield, may or may not have washrooms, no off street parking. Generally, they are bordered by residents.	Small scale events with local or neighbourhood focus and have limited site requirements. Limited programming opportunities.
District Park	Mid sized parks (2 to 15 ha) which serves multi-neighbourhoods needs. Include passive/natural parks, parks with multi play fields and/or other recreation facilities. May include amenities such as washrooms and off street parking, etc.	Medium scaled events in terms of size and participants with limited set up requirements. Increased level of programming possible although most district parks also serve as neighbourhood parks to adjacent residents. Guideline - one large scale special event per month.
Destination Park	Large parks (over 15 ha) which accommodate citywide interests; waterfront parks and beaches; variety of uses accommodated, include park amenities such as washrooms, off street parking, concessions, etc.	Large scale events, events requiring extensive set up, events with a city wide focus. More frequent programming possible.

### **Review of Site Suitability**

Occasionally, it may be necessary to revisit a park's suitability to accommodate a particular special event. Park conditions or park use can change over time and this may necessitate changes to the programming of a site. In addition, an event may be so popular that the site can no longer accommodate the event's attendance. If this occurs, staff will work with event organizers to investigate

possible options such as moving the event to a different site, scheduling a series of events, limit participation if applicable, etc.

## **Consultation**

The process for approving events usually involves some form of consultation. Groups which may be consulted include:

- staff: Park Board operations staff; senior management; other civic departments;
- stakeholders: organized user groups, community groups, park businesses;
- park users and/or the public: unorganized, casual park users.

The degree of consultation greatly depends on the impact the activity will have on park conditions, park users and/or park neighbours.

Community consultation (park users/public) is usually reserved for new large events which will have a significant impact on other park users and/or park neighbours. The event organizer will be responsible for all costs associated with the consultation process. The results of the consultation process will be included in a staff report to the Board for its consideration.

## **Fees and Charges**

Organizers of special events are charged a permit processing fee to offset the administration costs associated with managing special events. It is recognized that the vast majority of events are organized by non profit societies and that many are raising funds for charities. However, there are significant administrative costs associated with the processing of special event requests and the revenues from special events partially off set these costs. Administrative fees for special events range depending of nature and scope of the event as well as the facilities being utilized. There are three levels of processing fees applicable to special events:

- simple events: minimal set-up, minimal impact on park or other users, no site meetings;
- complex events: special approvals required, site consultations, extraordinary arrangements;
- Fest: Fest and Park Board approval.

In addition, event organizers are responsible for special services requested from the Board; site monitoring costs (see Park Preservation - Site Monitoring section) as well as facility rental costs. For current special events fees and charges, please refer the Board's current fees and charges schedule.

Fees for gated events and corporate events are negotiated with event organizers during the event



approval process.

Special events fees apply to all events except those which meet all of the following criteria:

- no admission/entrance fees are charged;
- organizers are not paid event organizers;
- sole purpose of the event is to raise funds for charity;
- all donated funds go to a charitable cause.

In addition, events organized by the Park Board or the City and Vancouver school programs (grades K to 12) are exempt from special event fees.

### **Insurance Requirements**

The City of Vancouver requires that event organizers obtain Comprehensive General Liability Insurance protecting the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation, and the Vancouver Police Board against liability for bodily injury, death or property damage, arising out of the activity. The minimum limits shall be \$ 2,000,000 inclusive per occurrence, maximum deductible \$500 per occurrence, with a cross liability clause. Special events with higher risk activities may require higher limits. Proof of insurance must be received by the Board prior to the use of any facility covered under the Park Permit Agreement. It is important to note that these limits satisfy the City's minimum insurance requirements and that the City does not warrant that this insurance is adequate for the organizer's needs.

### **Issuing of Park Permit Agreements**

It is important to recognize that although special events may be initially approved in principle, final approval is subject to the organizer meeting all conditions of use - i.e., payment of applicable fees, copy of insurance, security deposit, etc. This process must be complete 14 days prior to the event's date. Once this is complete, the organizers will be issued Park Permit Agreement to conduct the event.

## **CONDITIONS OF USE**

### **REVENUE GENERATION**

Event organizers may be given permission by the Board to generate revenues to off set organizational costs and/or raise funds. Revenue generating activities include admission or registration fees, sponsorship opportunities, the sale of goods and food as well as special occasion licences. Permission to generate revenue from events is primarily limited to events sponsored by non-profit associations. In general, revenue generating activities must:

- focus on event participants and not the general public;
- be ancillary to a larger event.

Revenue generation activities are subject to any applicable government regulations (e.g., licensing requirements, gaming legislation, etc.). Commercial activities which are not part of a larger event and are not within Park Board's mandate are generally not approved by the Park Board although they may be considered on a case by case basis.

### **Registration Fees**

Event organizers wishing to charge a registration fee for an event are required to include an event budget with their event application for the current year and (if applicable) a financial statement from the previous year. If the event raises funds for charity, the organizers must disclose the proceeds forwarded to the designated charity. The event organizers must follow the provincial regulations governing fund raising activities.

### **Admission Fees - Gated Events**

As a general principle, special events should be open to the general public. They should not restrict the public's access to park space; either through physical or financial barriers. However, the Board does recognize that under certain circumstances, the diversity of special event programming can be increased through permitting gated events with admission fees.

Gated events are primarily only permitted in large, destination parks. This ensures that the majority of

the park remains open to the public. In addition, gated events can not interfere with the park's circulation network (pathways, bikeways, etc.). To ensure public access, the frequency of allowing gated events at a particular site may be restricted -especially on smaller destination parks. As a result, gated events are permitted in designated areas such as Malkin Bowl and Prospect Point Picnic site. Event organizers wishing to charge an admission fee for an event are required to include an event budget with their event application for the current year and (if applicable) a financial statement from the previous year.

The charging of admission fees on parks outside of the designated sites are not generally approved by Park Board although they may be considered on a case by case basis. Such cases will be assessed on event's overall contribution to the city vs. the more immediate impact of the nature and extent of the site restriction.

### **Event Sponsorship - Signage and On-Site Promotions**

It is recognized that most large special events have at least one major sponsor. Event sponsorship usually centers on event promotion, supply of product or general financial support. In return for their financial contributions, event sponsors request significant profile on event promotional material as well as at the event site.

The Park Board's is concerned with "on site" sponsorship and promotions. The Board's role is to balance the sponsor's "on site" profile with the preservation of the non commercial nature of parks. All sponsorship signage must be pre-approved by staff prior to installation. The signage must be limited to event area and be directed at event participants and not the general public. Signage should be discreet and kept to a minimal level. The Park Board does not allow inflatable promotions.

On site sponsor promotions range from the distribution of written materials (informational or promotional) to product sampling. Staff must approve the distribution of written materials. Due to litter concerns, only the passive distribution of materials is permitted. Event organizers will be responsible for any clean-up from the distribution of material.

With the exception of food and beverage products, the sale of sponsors product is not permitted during the event. This is based on the premise that the sponsor is contributing towards the event and not purchasing the right to sell product. Food and beverage products of a sponsor are permitted only if the product is sold as a component of the on site food and beverage service offered to event participants only.

## **Event Sponsorship - Signage and On Site Promotion Policy**

### **Sponsorship Signage**

- sponsorship signage is limited to the event area and must be directed at event participants only;
- signage should be discreet and kept to a minimal level;
- sponsorship signage must be approved by staff prior to installation.

### **On Site Promotions**

- sampling of sponsors' product and product displays are permitted with staff approval;
- sales of event sponsor's product is not permitted;
- Passive distribution of written material may be permitted with staff approval.

## **Sale of Goods or Services**

The sale of goods or services may be permitted if they are ancillary to a larger event. Sales must be directed at event participants and not the general public. Merchandise and services must be event related and compatible with a public park - event related items and souvenirs. Festivals are permitted to sell a wider range of arts and cultural items providing that they are an integral part of the event. As previously mentioned, sales of event sponsor's product are not permitted.

### **Sale of Goods and Services - Permitted Items**

- items with the event's name or logo;
- items or services which support the theme of the event (i.e., light sticks for night events, lantern making, kite making, etc.)
- Festivals: expanded artistic products including art and crafts, musical recordings, etc.

## **Food Services**

Permission can be obtained to provide food services to event participants only and the food service is ancillary to a larger event. Thus, the scale of food service will be in relation to the size of the event.

Event organizers are to ensure that any food services associated with the event comply with City regulations. Food services is subject to by-law requirements of the City's Health Department.

Depending on the situation, individual food vendors may be required to have their own business licence.

### **Special Occasion Licence**

Permission for the serving of alcohol may be obtain depending on the nature and location of the event. Special occasion licenced areas will only be considered for adult oriented events in larger parks. The scale of the service area must be in relation to the event's attendance and service is restricted to event participants only. An assessment will be made regarding the impact of the special occasion licence on adjacent neighbours.

Staff can approve special occasion licences for adult oriented events which occur in larger (district or destination) parks and which meet all of the criteria outlined in the accompanying Policy for Sale and Consumption of Alcohol in Parks. Board approval is required for event's requesting special occasion licences which do not meet the outlined criteria.

#### **Policy - Consumption of Alcohol in Parks**

Requests for special occasion licenced areas will only be granted when:

- the sale of alcohol is supplemental to an event.
- the event is not being held in a mini or neighbourhood park.
- minors are not the prime focus of the event.
- the event is operated by a community service organization and profits from the sale of alcohol are used to support the community service activities of the organization.
- the hours of operation for the licenced area parallel the event or between the hours of noon and 9:30 p.m.
- organizers have an approved security plan in place.

## **PARK PRESERVATION**

In most instances, the programming of activities in parks will have some impact on others' use of the park and/or has the potential to cause damage to the condition of a park including its natural environment or infrastructure. To minimize the impact events have on parks, the Park Board applies a variety of measures such as site monitoring, restricting activities, controlling amplified sound, limiting vehicle access and collecting security (damage) deposits. By ensuring that park preservation measures are in place and adhere to, event organizers and the Board are ensuring the site's continued use for hosting special events.

### **Park Protection Measures**

Event organizers are responsible for implementing measures to protect park condition and infrastructure. Such measures include fencing of landscaped areas, placing plywood under parked vehicles as well as restricting vehicle movement to hard surfaces. Protection measures required will reflect the potential damage to the park. Any property damage which occurs as a result of the event, its set-up and take down will be the responsibility of the event organizer (including second and third party actions). In some cases, the Board may request a security deposit from the event organizers.

### **Site Monitoring**

Events which have the potential to significantly impact park conditions, other park users or park neighbours are charged a fee for staff monitoring. Park Board site monitors primary responsibilities are to ensuring that the event's "conditions for use" are followed. In addition, site monitors are empowered

to make “on site/day of” decisions due to changing park or weather conditions or requests from event organizers. It is recognized that failure to adhere to the conditions of use not only impacts a specific event’s continued use of the site but may also impact the use of the site for other events.

Level of monitoring required for an event varies based on the potential impact the event could have on the park, its users and neighbours. In addition, new events are more closely monitored than more established events. The level of monitoring required for an event is determined during the event approval process.

**Activity Restrictions**

The Park Board reserves the right to restrict specific activities in parks. Reasons for restricting activities relates to potential damage to park, the impact the activity will have on other’s enjoyment of the park as well as risk management and/or public safety considerations. In addition, any activities which are prohibited by law are not permitted in parks.

Guideline restrictions for specific activities/facilities are outlined in the accompanying table. These guidelines represent a compromise between accommodating special events and regular park use.

<b>Restriction Guidelines</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
Weddings under 50 people with no set-up can occur in most parks without a permit.	Shared use, no set-up, with little to no impact on regular park users. Larger weddings are restricted to designated picnic sites.
Seawall: runs restricted to under 2000 participants.	Shared use required as the Seawall is the Park Board’s most popular facility. Restriction relates to congestion/safety concerns.
Stanley Park Road Closures for Running Events: one closure per month to 10:00 a.m. (no closures during the months of July and August).	Road closures significantly impact the public’s access to Stanley Park. In addition, most park tenants require access to conduct business.
Tournaments on Beaches: restricted to one tournament per month per beach.	City has a limited supply of and high demand for beach space. Beach events have a significant impact on site.

**Noise Restrictions**

Noise from an event probably has the greatest impact on other’s use of the park as well as on park neighbours. The majority of complaints regarding special events center on excessive noise from both other park users as well as park neighbours. While it is recognized that most activities generate noise, it is the responsibility of the Board and event organizers to invoke measures to mitigate its impact.

All events must comply with the City’s noise by-law. The use of amplified sound will only be approved when required. The sound is to be directed at and at level to address event participants only. City staff

may monitor events to ensure that they are complying with city by-laws.

### **Noise and Amplification of Sound Guidelines**

For Special Events which occur in close proximity to a residential area:

1. The amplification of sound for special events will be limited to between 9:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. in areas where residents can be impacted.
2. The amplification of sound is to be directed at and at level to address event participants only.
3. The set-up/take down for special events will be required to be completed by 10:00 p.m. the preceding night and the early morning preparations will be completed without unnecessary or inappropriate noise.
4. All sound levels will be in accordance with the City Noise By-law.

### **Community Notification**

An event organizer may be required to notify residents of their upcoming community of event including a description of activities, set-up requirements, etc. Included in the notification will be the identification of a site contact and phone number residents can contact if they have concerns with the event's operation. Staff to review the notice prior to its delivery to residents.

### **Event Cancellation**

Although not a common occurrence, it is sometimes necessary to cancel an event right up to and including the day of the event. Reasons for cancellation can vary from unsafe park conditions to poor weather conditions (heavy rains, high winds, etc.). Park Board reserves the right to cancel an event and is not responsible for costs associated in cancellation. To protect both park condition and participant safety, event organizers of large special events may be required to outline the procedures to cancel the event.



## **SITE AND SERVICE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Site Plan**

Organizers are required to provide detailed site plans for their events. The plan will include the siting of the event's major components. The impact an event has on park condition/ infrastructure as well as on other park user can greatly be reduced through the siting of event's major components. Site meetings with Park Board staff may be necessary for complex events. Any changes to the site plan must be pre-approved by staff.

### **Vehicle Access**

Organizer may be given permission to use pathways and service roads during the set-up and take down of their events. Organizers of events must ensure that vehicle drivers adhere to the Board's "Service Vehicles Operating in Parks" Policy (see Appendix B). No vehicle movements are to occur during event times.

Vehicles are not permitted to be parked on parks, pathways or sidewalks unless they are an essential vehicle for the event and approved in advance. Event organizers, volunteers and sponsor vehicles are must be parked in parking areas (streets or lots) and not in the park.

### **Power**

The Park Board does not provide power to special event. Organizers are to provide their own generators. Electrical permits are required for the use of generators in parks. Please contact Permits and Licences for further information.

### **Structures**

Structures include tents, stages, fencing, bleachers, etc. - must be included in site plan and receive advanced permission. Structures may required a building permit (e.g., canopies, staging or tents larger than 10' x 10'). For more information, please contact Permits and Licences at 604- 871-6019.

### **Garbage Disposal**

If the garbage accumulation after the event is above and beyond the on site garbage receptacles, the organizer can either take responsibility to dispose of the refuse off site or make arrangement with Park Board Sanitation for extra bins and pick up at organizer's expense. Contact Sanitation Services at 604-257-8541.

The Park Board strongly encourages all event organizers to recycle. Larger events will be required to provide a recycling plan for their event; especially if food and beverage services are provided.

## **Washrooms**

Depending of the nature and scope of the event, event organizers may be responsible for providing washroom facilities for their participants. The requirement to provide washroom facilities is dependent on:

- expected attendance and duration of the event;
- the provision of food and beverage services;
- the availability of on site washroom facilities.

The following ratios serves as guidelines for washroom requirements:

- two water closets for every 40 participants up to 400 participants;
- two water closets for every 50 participants over 400 participants.

## **Event Notification and Directional Signage**

Event organizers are responsible for the provision and installation of any directional signage related to their events. The signs and installation location(s) must be approved by staff prior to installation. Directional signage should only be in place during the event.

Events requiring road closures or have a significant impact on a park are required to provide and install event notification signage. The purpose for these signs is to inform park users that a significant “change in use” will be occurring in the park. The signs, installation dates and location(s) must be approved by staff.

Under no circumstances should any signs be attached to trees.

## **Transportation Plan**

Organizers of larger special events are required to develop a transportation plan with the goal to reduce impact of automobile traffic on park and surrounding neighbourhood. It is an objective of the Board to encourage and promote the public’s use of alternate forms of transportation to and from parks - walking, biking, blading as well as public transportation. Most parks have limited parking opportunities and a major source of complaint is event participant parking in adjacent residential neighbourhoods.

Transportation plans may include the inclusion of transportation alternatives in promotional materials, the provision of bike racks at event sites and the use of off site parking areas. If traffic control is

required, the Vancouver Police Department and the City Engineering Department must be consulted. In addition, the event organizer may also be responsible for managing automobile traffic within a park - monitoring parking lots, moving barricades, ensuring participants do not park on grass, etc.

<b>Support Services, Permits and Licences Contacts</b>		
Amplified Sound - sound checks, exemptions, etc.	Environmental Health	604-873-7566
Food Services	Health Department	604-736-2866
Power - electrical generators	Permits and Licenses	604-873-7611
Pyrotechnics - fireworks, fires, etc.	Fire Department	604-873-7860
Sanitation Services	Park Board - Sanitation Services	604-257-8541
Signage and road closures - City Streets only	Engineering Departments	604-871-6724
Structures - tents, stages, etc.	Permits and Licences	604-871-6019

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

The event organizer is responsible for ensuring that the assigned area is appropriate for the event, that the event is conducted in a safe, orderly manner area and that the activities do not adversely interfere with other park users. The event organizer is responsible for the site from set-up to take down. Safety and security measures include site security and emergency access plans, traffic management and the provision of comprehensive general liability insurance.

### **Site Security**

Depending of the nature and scope of the event, organizers may be required to provide staff with a site security plan. The objectives for a security plan are to ensure event patrons are safe and secure as well as to protect park property. A site security plan is required if:

- public access is restricted;
- crowding on the site is expected;
- the event includes a special occasion licence;
- an admission fee is charged;
- the event occurs at night.

The security plan will include one or more of the following components:

- trained volunteers or paid security personnel;
- police presence on site;
- communications plan (walkie talkies, cellular phones, etc.);
- fencing of restricted areas;
- provision of first aid services;
- access plan for emergency vehicles.

The FEST Committee evaluates site security plans for large events. If required, event organizers are responsible for extra policing costs associated with their event.

### **Traffic Management**

Traffic management refers to management of pedestrian, wheeled and well as motorized traffic. A traffic management plan is required if an event:

- impacts pathways or bikeways;

- involves road closures;
- creates parking concerns.

The traffic management plan will include one or more of the following components:

- “notification of restriction” signage - e.g. road closures, seawall congestion;
- on site marshals to control pedestrian and wheeled traffic or parking concerns; police presence for road closures.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS CHECKLIST**

All event organizers are required to complete a special event application form. Application forms can be downloaded from the Park Board website at [www.parks.vancouver.bc.ca](http://www.parks.vancouver.bc.ca).

Please include the following information with your application:

3. Copy of your Society Status
4. Detailed Site Map and/or Route Map
5. Detailed schedule of event activities

Completion of the application form and provision of the above information allows staff to initially process and evaluate your request with the following:

- Compatibility with Park Board’s mandate;
- Suitability of a site to accommodate the event;
- Consulting with stakeholders and staff

If application is approved, the following event information (if applicable to your event) is required 1-2 months prior to your event:

1. Copy of Insurance for your event – Applicants must obtain Comprehensive General Liability Insurance protecting the City of Vancouver, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation and the Vancouver Police Board (see Guide for details). Insurance can be obtained through any insurance agent. For your convenience, Sports BC’s insurance is familiar with the requirements, please call (604) 737-3018
2. Copy of City Health Department permit for the sale or service of food - Please call City Health Department (604) 736-2866
3. Copy of City Building Development permit for tents and staging - All tents larger than 10 x 10 and staging structures require a building permit, please call (604) 871-6019
4. Copy of City Electrical permit for all generators - Please call Permits & Licenses Department (604) 873-7611

5. List of food vendors and /or event related items which will be sold at your event subject to Park Board Special Event Staff approval and Income Operations Staff approval
6. List of event sponsors and promotional banners for your event
7. Press package or promotional material for your event
8. Route Signs - if applicable to your event ( ie. Road closure & directional signs) are required at least 2 weeks prior to your event
9. Payment of Park Permit fees

The Park Board Special Events and Filming staff are available to answer any questions regarding the special event application and approval process. Please phone 604 257-8494 for further information.

## **Service Vehicles Operating in Parks Policy**

### **Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation**

Organizers may be given permission to use pathways and service roads during the set-up and take-down of their events. It is important to recognize that this represents a shared use of pathways and service roads, thus caution must be exercised at all times. No vehicle movements should occur during event times. Vehicles are not permitted to be parked on parks, pathways or sidewalks unless they are an essential vehicle for the event and approved by staff in advance. Event organizers, volunteers and sponsor vehicles must be parked in parking areas (streets or lots) and not in the park.

Service vehicles are not to be driven in parks, other than on a pathway, or service road except in cases of emergency or if there is no reasonable alternative. This is in accordance to the City of Vancouver Service Vehicle Policy:

- X. In the interest of public and event participant safety, service vehicles are not to be driven in parks, other than a roadway, driveway or service road except in case of emergency or if there is no reasonable alternative.

If there is no alternative, the following procedures must be followed:

10. Before entering the park, stop the vehicle, observe the activities in the park and plan a route. While planning the route, limit the distance to be driven into the park and avoid areas being used by the public.
11. If the route is obscured, use a walking escort.
12. If the visibility on route is obstructed and an escort is unavailable, stop, exit the vehicle and re-check the planned route.
13. Vehicles equipped with audible and flashing safety warning devices must be in operation at all times when operating in these areas. With vehicles not equipped with the audible safety warning devices the operator will be required to sound the vehicle horn at regular intervals (approximately every two or three seconds). Establish eye contact if possible with any park

- user to ensure that they are aware of your presence.
14. Driver will place cones at the front and rear of parked vehicles and will only remove them immediately prior to leaving. The driver will circle the vehicle when removing the cones to ensure that there are no hazards.
  15. Avoid backing-up where possible. When backing-up, use a walking escort. If one is not available, exit the vehicle, inspect the area on foot, and use audible and visible safety warning devices. If there are park users in the area, especially children, do not move the vehicle until the area is clear.
  16. Speed limit in parks on surfaces not designed for vehicles access is walking pace.
  17. If there is any doubt about the stability of ground, pre-walk the approach and exit route.