



November 13, 2018

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: VanSplash: Vancouver Aquatics Strategy - Advisory Group Selection Process

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the proposed selection process for the VanSplash Advisory Group, as outlined in Appendix A, and direct staff to initiate recruitment.

BOARD AUTHORITY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS

As per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over park land use in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements that occur within parks.

The [Park Board Strategic Framework](#), includes four strategic directions:

- Parks and Recreation for All: Accessible, diverse and quality amenities and services that encourage participation and meet current and future needs.
- Leader in Greening: Through our actions we demonstrate leading green and horticultural practices and preserve, protect and create green space.
- Engaging People: Working openly together to understand and achieve goals and strengthen relationships.
- Excellence in Resource Management: Use existing resources effectively and efficiently, and be innovative in developing additional resources to deliver best value for money and meet community needs.

On March 11, 2002, the Vancouver Park Board approved the [2001 Aquatic Services Review](#).

On May 30, 2016, the Board approved a motion directing staff to [explore quick start strategies to expedite the construction of a new outdoor pool](#).

At the December 11, 2017 Park Board Committee meeting, the [Draft VanSplash Aquatics Strategy](#) was presented to the Board. The decision was deferred to January 29, 2018, when the Board [unanimously approved a new full-sized outdoor pool for South Vancouver](#) to be co-located with the Marpole Community Centre in Oak Park, and referred the overall draft strategy to staff “for further consideration, including the role of neighbourhood pools in relation to the qualitative experience they offer residents”.

BACKGROUND

In 2002, the Vancouver Park Board approved the 2001 Aquatic Services Review, setting the stage for the transformation of Vancouver's aquatic system. The review focused on meeting current and future demand, operating services and facilities in a fiscally sustainable manner, and balancing local neighbourhood services with those of the City as a whole. Over the following decade, the Park Board implemented the Aquatic Services Review recommendations, which included rebuilding Killarney Pool as a community-scale pool (2005), renovating Renfrew neighbourhood pool (2006) and building a new, city-wide facility at Hillcrest (2010).

With these major implementation priorities complete, and a number of aquatic facilities needing significant upgrades, combined with significant population growth and changes in demographic and use trends, the Park Board again needed to undertake a city-wide plan to guide the equitable delivery of aquatic facilities.

The 2017 Draft Vancouver Aquatic Strategy (VanSplash) follows on the mandate of the 2001 Aquatic Services Review in taking a long-term, city-wide approach to planning for the future of aquatics in Vancouver. In addition, and consistent with extensive public feedback, VanSplash expands the definition of aquatic services to include not only indoor and outdoor pools, but also beaches, wading pools and spray parks, and proposes an innovative approach for aquatic service delivery. VanSplash complements quantitative metrics for success by including the broader measures of improving well-being, enhancing social inclusion, creating a wider range of experiences and providing for flexible facility design, in anticipation of a growing, changing and aging population.

The draft strategy is informed by a technical study summarizing research and data analysis, precedent review, and community and stakeholder engagement. The document proposes a 25 year vision, a set of recommendations, and a 10 year implementation plan for the delivery of aquatic services in Vancouver.

Over a 19 month period, the VanSplash stakeholder engagement process resulted in over 7,000 interactions with stakeholders and the public to inform the recommendations. This included 5 open house outreach events, 6 focus group sessions and 2 TalkVancouver online surveys with a combined total of over 6,300 responses, in addition to over 185 email submissions.

The process aimed to engage both aquatic facility users and non-users, and included outreach to over 150 groups including aquatic user groups, community centres, neighbourhood houses, immigrant services, City of Vancouver advisory committees, LGBTQ2 representatives, diverse advocacy groups, persons with disabilities and seniors. The engagement process was one of Park Board's most extensive processes to date in terms of numbers and diversity of groups engaged.

VanSplash sets out strategies to maintain or improve geographic coverage of aquatic facilities and amenities. Having seen significant population growth, Vancouver is expecting a further increase of up to 15% over the next 25 years, and so the strategy focuses on not only serving the existing population but addresses key areas of growth and density. With an aging population and changing demographics, VanSplash also addresses the need for a flexible and resilient system that will enable programming and facilities to adapt to changing needs over time.

Staff presented the Draft Strategy recommendations to the Board on December 11, 2017. The Board deferred its decision to January 29, 2018, when the Draft Strategy was referred to staff

“for further consideration, including the role of neighbourhood pools in relation to the qualitative experience they offer residents”.

To address the Board direction provided in January 2018, a VanSplash Advisory Group is being assembled. An external facilitator (Delaney + Associates) has been retained to establish and lead the external stakeholder review process. The goal of the Advisory Group is to obtain broad perspectives and input from a range of stakeholder and user groups, along with members of the public who access a variety of aquatics services. The Advisory Group will review in detail and provide input on the refinement of the Draft VanSplash Aquatics Strategy recommendations to be brought back to the Board for consideration in 2019.

DISCUSSION

The selection process is the foundation of an effective advisory group. Drawing from a review of the terms of reference for several existing Park Board advisory groups, community engagement best practices, and their own expertise, the external facilitator has developed a Draft Selection Process.

Following is a summary of the Draft Selection Process (see Appendix A):

1. Member Recruitment

- Open call for applications through various media, and outreach to stakeholders and contacts developed through the VanSplash Process.

2. Proposed Advisory Group Structure

- Maximum 20 members, with four from each of the following five categories of aquatics usage:
 - o Recreation, leisure, socializing;
 - o Skill development;
 - o Fitness;
 - o Sport training / competitive; and
 - o Therapy / rehabilitation.
- Mix of members affiliated with aquatics groups and unaffiliated members; and
- Actual makeup of the advisory group will depend on applications received.

3. Application Process

- 2-week application period;
- Applicants asked which of the five aquatics usage categories best describes them;
- Other information will be collected, including:
 - o Diversity of geographic location, aquatics use, specific facility use, age and gender identity;
 - o Interest in serving on the advisory group;
 - o Other community connections and networks; and
 - o Previous participation in VanSplash engagement.
- Includes a requirement for operating values, to be developed collaboratively by the Advisory Group but to include the following as foundational:
 - o Mutual respect;

- Adoption of a City-wide view that benefits all City residents; and
- Spirit of collaboration and compromise.

4. Selection Process

- Development of selection criteria, per desired advisory group make-up;
- Assessment of applications;
- Suggested membership list reviewed with Park Board staff;
- List presented to Park Board Commissioners in-camera for decision;
- Members of Board-approved advisory group list invited to Meeting 1; and
- Notification of applicants not selected with rationale for non-selection.

NEXT STEPS

Recruitment for the VanSplash Advisory Group will proceed, subject to the Board's approval of the proposed selection process. There will be an open application available for all interested parties to apply to be part of the membership. The advisory group applications will be vetted based on approved selection criteria and a scoring matrix to ensure balance. The suggested membership list will be presented in-camera to Commissioners for decision.

Once membership is finalized, the work of the VanSplash Advisory Group will begin. The Advisory Group Draft Process Framework is outlined in Appendix B. This framework, as well as timeline and terms of reference, will be discussed and confirmed by the VanSplash Advisory Group. Park Board staff will provide updates to the Board throughout the process.

SUMMARY

The development of a VanSplash Advisory Group to provide detailed input and refinement on Draft Aquatics Strategy recommendations is an essential step in further addressing stakeholder interests and responding to the Board's January 2018 direction. Once the selection process is approved, the external facilitator will recruit, organize and facilitate the VanSplash Advisory Group, as well as provide a list of the potential group members to be appointed by the Board.

General Manager's Office
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
Vancouver, BC

lt/dh/clc

Proposed Advisory Group Selection Process



1. Recruitment

- Open call for applications: VanSplash webpage, Go Volunteer website, Park Board social media channels (Twitter and Facebook), email blast to VanSplash listserv, social media ads
- Postcards and posters at aquatics facilities – with URL to VanSplash page for more info and to apply
- Direct outreach to key stakeholder groups
- Direct outreach to facility managers to help identify and suggest members of the public who may be interested in applying, to help achieve the goal of diverse membership

2. Proposed Advisory Group Structure

- Maximum 20 members
- Four seats under each of the following five categories of aquatics usage:
 1. Recreation, leisure, socializing (includes thermal respite – i.e. those who use aquatics facilities to cool down in hot weather and warm up in cold weather)
 2. Skill development (includes swim lessons, water orientation, life saving, life guarding)
 3. Fitness (lane swimming, aquacise, water running etc.)
 4. Sport training / competitive (swimming, diving, water polo, synchronized swimming, etc.)
 5. Therapy / rehabilitation
- A mix of members who are affiliated with organized aquatics groups (i.e. swim clubs, advocacy groups, etc.) and members of the public who are not affiliated with a specific group
- The overarching goal is to maximize diversity of perspectives. In addition to a variety of types of aquatics use, we will aim for diversity in:
 1. Geographic location across the City (determined by home postal code)
 2. Types of aquatics facilities used (indoor pools, outdoor pools, wading pools, splash pads, beaches)
 3. Specific facilities used
 4. Age
 5. Gender identity
- The advisory group will be coordinated and facilitated by neutral, third-party engagement professionals (Delaney + Associates). There will be no advisory group chair position – all members will participate as equals
- Actual makeup of the advisory group will depend on applications received. Diversity and depth of the applicant pool will be assessed before the initial two-week application period has passed. If there is not a sufficient diversity of applicants, the application period will be extended and additional targeted outreach will be undertaken to recruit additional applicants.

Proposed Advisory Group Selection Process



- It is possible that not all 20 spots will be filled. For example, if less than four applications are received for the Therapy / rehabilitation seats, the remaining seat(s) will be recruited for; however, if they are not filled by that category of user, they will not be reallocated to another user category and the overall group total would be reduced accordingly. However, the goal is to solicit applications and recruit representatives for all 20 spots.
- The Park Board retains the right to further extend the application period or otherwise amend the process.

3. Application Process

- 2-week application period (with option to extend for additional one week, depending on diversity and depth of applicant pool)
- Applications will be completed online (using a secure online survey platform); however a paper application will be made available upon request
- The application form will first ask which of the five user categories best describes how the applicant currently uses aquatics facilities in Vancouver. Other information will be collected, in priority order of selection criteria:
 - Aquatics group affiliation(s)
 - Postal code (to determine location in City)
 - Type of facilities used (check all that apply – indoor pools, outdoor pools, splash pads/wading pools, beaches)
 - Specific facilities most often used (ranked order of top 3)
 - Frequency of use
 - Age and gender identity
 - Interest in serving on the advisory group (open text field; maximum 300 words)
 - Other community connections and networks (i.e. in addition to aquatics)
 - Previous participation in VanSplash engagement
- It is recommended that the application form include a section on operating values of the group. It would specify that the operating values of the group will be developed collaboratively with members at the first meeting, but the Park Board is committed to these three as a foundation of the advisory group's work:
 - 1. Respect will guide how we work together and will be our guiding light.
 - 2. Advisory group members will take a City-wide view to provide advice on a City-wide strategy that benefits all City residents.
 - 3. The group will work together in a spirit of collaboration and compromise. Applicants will be asked in the application for to agree to abide by these foundational principles.
- Delaney + Associates (D+A) will administer the application process, using its online survey platform subscription to collect responses.

Proposed Advisory Group Selection Process



4. Selection Process

- D+A will develop selection criteria, based on the application form information and desired advisory group make-up
- A minimum of two D+A staff members will work together to review and assess applications using the selection criteria and seeking to maximize diversity
- Based on this process, D+A will compile and present a suggested advisory group membership list to Park Board staff for review and feedback
- List of invitees to be presented to commissioners at in-camera meeting, due to privacy considerations
- The ultimate decision maker on the advisory group's membership will be the Park Board C Commissioners
- Final advisory group list will be invited to Meeting 1 (a Doodle poll will be used to determine best date/time for members)
- Applicants not selected for the advisory group will be notified by email, by D+A, with a brief explanation. Anticipated reasons for why an applicant may not be selected include:
 - Overrepresentation for a specific usage category
 - Overrepresentation in the selection criteria (i.e. geography, facilities used, age, gender)
 - Application was incomplete
 - Applicant did not agree to the proposed guiding principles

Advisory Group Draft Process Framework

