



SPECIAL EVENT GUIDELINES

Proposed Update &
Interim Direction

Park Board Committee Meeting
May 13, 2019



Purpose/Objective

- Provide Board with overview of special event portfolio
- Review key challenges/limitations of existing framework
- Seek Board approval to update the framework
- Obtain clarity on Board position regarding hosting commercial events in parks during the update process



Board Authority/Previous Decisions

- Vancouver Charter
 - Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction/control over parks
- Special Event Guidelines
 - Board approval required for events in variance of by-laws
- Previous decisions
 - November 2003 - Special Event Guidelines
 - January 2017 - Permits & Special Events Motion
 - March 2018 - Safety at Concerts & Major Events Motion



Background

Special Events in Parks

- Parks popular locations for entertainment/celebrations
- Such activities fall within Park Board mandate
- Events come in wide range of shapes and sizes
- Park event space falls into two main categories
 - Publicly accessible/free locations
 - Admission-based or leased spaces (VanDusen, Malkin Bowl, etc.)

Background

Special Event Framework

- Delegating use of park space accomplished via Special Event Guidelines
- Framework sets out
 - Permit application requirements
 - Process for evaluation/selection
 - Informs terms & conditions
- Board called upon to approve events when required





Background

Special Event Framework

- Key pillars of the Guidelines include
 - Goals/objectives
 - Assessment/evaluation criteria
 - Hierarchy for prioritizing & allocating event locations



Background

Event Types & Distribution

- Park Board acts largely as event host (~1,300 events/year)
- 94% recurring; 6% new
- Vast majority of events:
 - Support public, non-profit or community initiatives
 - Small number of events are commercial or private
- Events can be very unique, both within and across event categories

Background

Event Types & Distribution

- PB staff support varies widely across initiatives
 - Smaller events – lower involvement
 - Larger events – significant oversight & resources
- Lead times also differ significantly across events
 - Smaller/simpler events – 2 months
 - Larger/complex events – 6 to 18 months





Background

Event Types & Distribution

- PB staff responsible for delivering growing inventory of PB events
 - Bright Nights, Holiday Heights, Festival of Lights, Symphony at Sunset, etc.
- Third party events, particularly commercial initiatives, help fund these PB event initiatives and contribute to overall revenues

Distribution by Event Type/Category (2018)



Event Type/Category	Number of Events	% Distribution
Picnics (private events)	738	58%
Community Events & Celebrations (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. Paws for a Cause, Ovarian Cancer Walk of Hope, RBC Race for the Kids, Punjabi Mela, Earth Dance, McSpadden County Fair, etc.)	271	21%
Weddings & Other Events (private events) (e.g. Beedie Rock 'n' Park)	103	8%
Sporting Events (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. Asahi Tournament, Coho Run, James Cunningham Seawall Run, BMO Vancouver Marathon, Wheelchair Tennis Tournament, Dragonboat Festival, etc.)	103	8%
Vendor Markets (farmers markets) (e.g. Riley Park, Trout Lake, Kitsilano, Thornton, Hillcrest, etc.)	24	2%
Festivals & Concerts (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. KitsFest, Folk Fest, Bard on the Beach, Powell Street Festival, African Descent Festival, Festival of India, Pride Sunset Beach Festival, etc.)	17	1%
Commercial Events (concerts, sporting events, etc.) (e.g. Lululemon SeaWheeze, Diner en Blanc, SKOOKUM, Bacio Rosso, GranFondo, The Park Show, MEC Vancouver Road Race, etc.)	15	1%
Total	1,271	100%

Distribution by Revenues (2018)



Event Type/Category	Event Revenues	% Distribution
Commercial Events (concerts, sporting events, etc.) (e.g. Lululemon SeaWheeze, Diner en Blanc, SKOOKUM, Bacio Rosso, GranFondo, The Park Show, MEC Vancouver Road Race, etc.)	238,550	44%
Picnics (private events)	79,090	15%
Community Events & Celebrations (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. Paws for a Cause, Ovarian Cancer Walk of Hope, RBC Race for the Kids, Punjabi Mela, Earth Dance, McSpadden County Fair, etc.)	71,432	13%
Sporting Events (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. Asahi Tournament, Coho Run, James Cunningham Seawall Run, BMO Vancouver Marathon, Wheelchair Tennis Tournament, Dragonboat Festival, etc.)	54,581	10%
Weddings & Other Events (private events) (e.g. Beedie Rock 'n' Park)	45,595	8%
Festivals & Concerts (charitable/non-profit) (e.g. KitsFest, Folk Fest, Bard on the Beach, Powell Street Festival, African Descent Festival, Festival of India, Pride Sunset Beach Festival, etc.)	45,082	8%
Vendor Markets (farmers markets) (e.g. Riley Park, Trout Lake, Kitsilano, Thornton, Hillcrest, etc.)	9,183	2%
Total	543,513	100%

Background

Impact of Special Events

Positive impacts

- Support diversity, inclusion, accessibility & cultural vibrancy
- Encourage social connections
- Foster skills development & community building
- Activate new places & spaces
- Enable fundraising opportunities
- Support tourism & regional economic development
- Generate important incremental revenues for Park Board





Background

Impact of Special Events

Negative impacts

- Loss of public space use during event periods
- Competing uses/conflicts between stakeholders
- Environmental impacts such as sound & light emissions, increased traffic, congestion, etc.
- Damage to grass and other park assets

Background

Impact of Special Events

- Key objectives/ responsibilities of PB special events staff
 - Maximize overall benefits
 - Mitigate/eliminate negative impacts
- Goals can be achieved by
 - Understanding the impacts associated with each event
 - Placing events in appropriate locations
 - Scheduling events at acceptable frequencies/times



Discussion

Need for Updated Guidelines

- Current guidelines dated and not aligned to changing needs
 - Board motions approved in recent years to address gaps
 - Operational practices have shifted/evolved organically
- Comprehensive update required to address
 - Park Board, public & industry needs/requirements
 - Tackle emerging issues & market pressures





Discussion

Issues & Market Pressures

Vancouver market conditions

- Inventory of large event spaces have decreased due to development & other uses
- Organizers increasingly looking to park spaces as potential event sites
- Pressure further exacerbated by attractiveness of locations
- Expect trend to continue

Discussion

Issues & Market Pressures

Growth of event/festival sector

- Events/festivals are one of the fastest growing tourism sectors
- Play important roles in destination development & animators of public/static spaces
- Catalysts for other benefits
- Expect trend to continue





Discussion

Issues & Market Pressures

Commercial events and activities

- Park Board receiving increasing number of unsolicited proposals
- Gating approach has been utilized with some success but has drawbacks
- Updated framework will provide greater clarity regarding commercial activities in parks, and improve processes

Discussion

Issues & Market Pressures

Reconciliation Strategy

- New strategy approved in 2016
- Creates opportunity for Park Board to partner with MST to preserve significant locations
- Current framework does not take strategy into account; updated framework will
 - Establish approval processes for activities at sensitive sites
 - Determine compatibility of events at these locations
 - Outline conditions of use





Discussion

Project Timeline & Scope

- Subject to the approval of Recommendation A, several components of work will be completed
 - Comparative/best practice review
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Review & update of the framework
 - Fee structure review
 - Allocation policy review
- Opportunity to align with COV work and VanPlay

Discussion

Project Timeline & Scope

- Project anticipated to take 12 to 15 months to complete
- While this work is underway, staff are seeking clarity from Board regarding commercial activities in parks
- Two options to choose from





Discussion

Project Timeline & Scope

Option 1

Continue with the existing Park Board practice of reviewing, assessing, and enabling commercial events and activities as applications and proposals are received

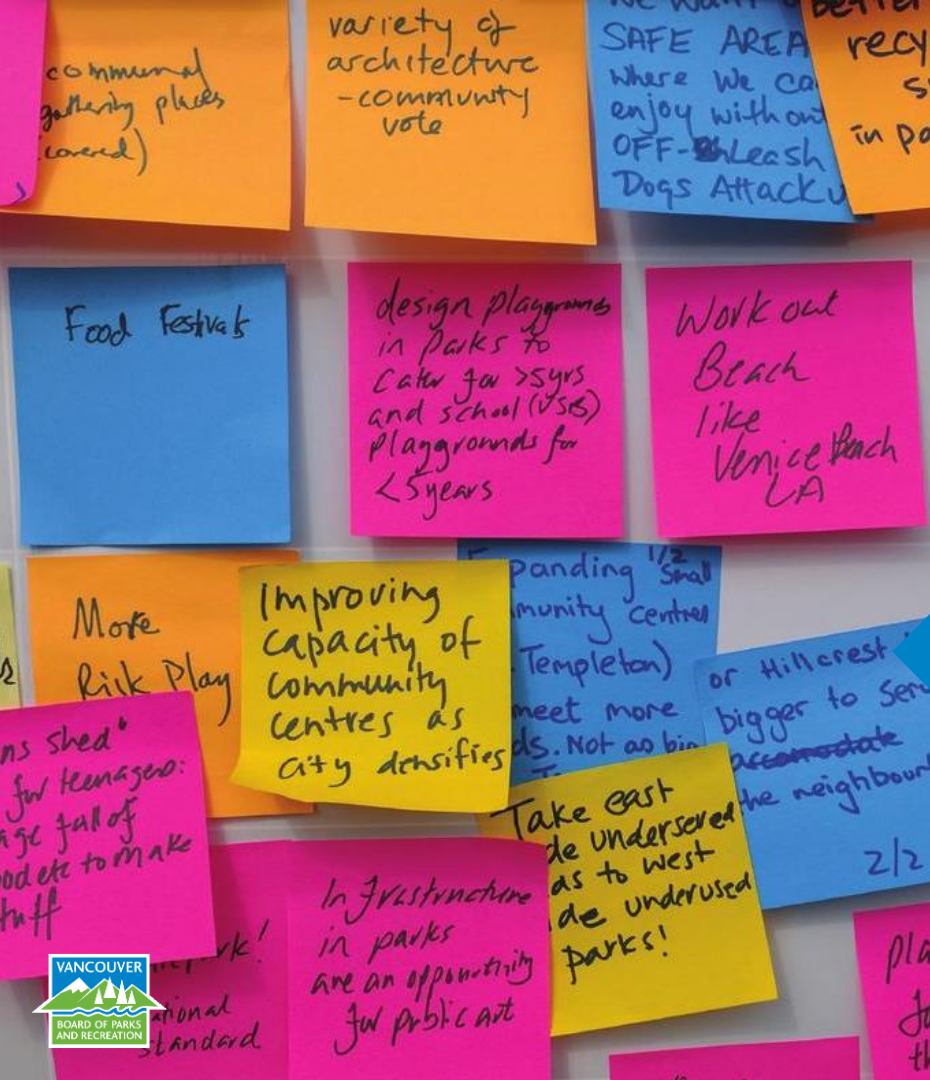
Discussion

Project Timeline & Scope

Option 2

Maintain and support the existing Park Board portfolio of commercial events and activities, but issue a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board





Next Steps

Subject to Board approval, staff will

- Develop detailed project plan
- Complete the tasks required to update the organization's Special Event Guidelines
- Concurrent with this work, staff will follow the approach selected by the Board with respect to Option 1 or Option 2

Conclusion

- Current Special Event Guidelines no longer meet PB or industry needs
- Given industry trends, market pressures, and emerging issues, staff recommend framework be updated
- While the work is undertaken, staff seeking direction on Board's approach to new commercial activities



Recommendation

- A. THAT** the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to update the Park Board's Special Event Guidelines, which were last updated and approved in 2003, to address current issues and ensure alignment with the values and principles of the Park Board, and to better support Vancouver's event community; and
- B. FURTHER THAT**, in the interim, the Board clarify its perspectives and principles regarding commercial events and activities in parks and direct staff to maintain and support the existing Park Board portfolio of commercial events and activities, but issue a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board.