



Park Board General Manager's Office Report May 31, 2021

The following report is intended to provide an overview and update on recent and upcoming activities within the Park Board.

Staff Highlights - Aquatics

With summer approaching, we anticipate an increase in attendances to our pools, beaches and waterfronts. This increase brings a heightened approach and attention to those members of our community who choose to enter the water for leisure and recreation, which also places the Vancouver Lifeguards in the forefront of ensuring their activities are safe, fun and well supervised. With drowning prevention being the primary focus of our lifeguards, the safety of the bathing public is dependent on their skills and abilities, professionalism and devotion to their role.

I would like to take this moment to formally recognize the Vancouver Park Board Lifeguards, both indoors and outdoors, for their commitment to their craft and the actions they perform each year to ensure our pools and waterfronts are safe. Vancouver employs approximately 670 lifeguards, in full time, part time and auxiliary capacities, who collectively perform an average of 170 water related rescues each year across our beaches and pools – indoor and outdoor.

New International Lifesaving Society (ILS) Standards for Vancouver

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation will be launching its new uniform for outdoor lifeguards, which will see them wearing the International Life Saving Federation standard colours for the first time. This will position our outdoor lifeguards in the globally recognized ILS colours of yellow and red that has been established as easy to recognize by the public.

Community Centre Associations (CCAs) & COVID 19 – A Year of Adaptation

Moving from Community Centres being shut down, to identifying the best way to reopen, the Community Centre Associations (CCAs) sent a Community Needs Survey to members across the city for their feedback on what were their highest priorities and needs. Over 5,000 people responded, which provided strong analytics for the newly formed Park Board/Association Presidents Group (APG) Recovery Task Force comprised of Park Board Management and five (5) CCA representatives to identify the top areas to focus on supporting for reopening. Summer Day Camps were at the top of list. With that, a pilot project was launched with Vancouver School Board (VSB) and CCAs to provide dedicated spaces to children identified through VSB to be most in need. It was highly successful across the City with over 95 spaces provided for children who required additional support.

More specifically, here are some initiatives and/or adaptations from some of the CCAs:

Mount Pleasant CCA

- Recognizing that food security risk was higher due to COVID and through a collaboration (local businesses, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, Aboriginal Transformative Justice Society) began a 'soup kitchen' providing soup, sandwiches and drinks that has operated every day for 3 hours per day. It serves approx. 50 people per day.
- Youth isolation was also identified and in September 2020, they restarted a socially distanced onsite youth program that kept the connectivity with youth intact and safe during the second and third waves of the pandemic.

Strathcona CCA

- Adapted their onsite backpack food program with the assistance of BC Housing to delivering food hampers to those living in the surrounding BC Housing sites. Up to 1,400 per day were served from mid-April to mid-October.

Douglas Park CCA

- Utilized this time to enhance and formalize Board policies and added new committees: Inclusion, Infrastructure and Climate.

Kerrisdale CCA

- Mobilized to address isolation with seniors in their community with an extensive calling program to provide health and welfare check ins.

Trout Lake CCA

- Introduced a highly successful Online Preschool Programming to complete the school year and to keep kids/families engaged.
- For Earth Day, a tour through the Park with information stations which was enjoyed by many, topped with Dr. Henry Seed Pack Prizes.

False Creek CCA

- Shifted their special events outdoors with a winter weeklong scavenger hunt and for Family Day, created DIY craft kits to complete at home.

Through this challenging time, our CCA partners have worked creatively and collaboratively with Park Board to support our communities.

Strathcona Park – Neighbourhood Engagement

Staff have been in conversation with a wide range of groups in the neighbourhood to welcome them into a process of healing at Strathcona Park. Staff have heard from residents groups, CCAs, Indigenous peoples, stewardship groups and youth. Working with partners, staff are taking steps to reach seniors and families in social housing. Staff have heard about the importance of green space during the pandemic, interest in the park serving local communities, the value of the community gardens, a desire for a vision for the park and that we should work with nature, not against it. Staff will continue to engage with the community.

Alcohol in Parks Pilot Update

Parks will be launching the Alcohol in Parks Pilot from June to October 2021 and between the hours of 11:00am and 9:00pm daily. This pilot will allow members of the public to consume their own alcoholic beverages at designated drinking sites within 22 parks around the city. This Board-initiated pilot and its approved pilot sites were selected based on access to public washrooms and waste disposal facilities, and to eliminate overlap with essential park spaces such as playgrounds, sports fields, beaches, ecologically sensitive areas, and community gardens.

To prepare for and mitigate against potential management issues, on-site signage and new waste totes will be installed at every pilot site. Additionally, Park Rangers will be visiting each site once to multiple times daily to manage disorderly behaviours – accompanied by VPD at high-demand locations. Paper picking services and washroom capacity may be expanded should the need arise during the pilot. Park Rangers, Operations, and washroom maintenance staff will conduct on-site monitoring on a regular basis throughout the pilot.

Combined with feedback from the public survey, all data collected during the pilot will inform ongoing management needs and key pilot findings. After the pilot concludes in the fall, staff will report back to the Board on these key findings and the operational impacts and costs needed to support this initiative.



Community Centre (CC) Strategy Update

The Park Board's Community Centre Strategy is underway. The goal of the Community Centre Strategy is to establish principles and processes for community centre renovations, additions, and renewals, based on service needs and VanPlay objectives.

Project objectives include current state inventory and analysis, establishing optimum level of service targets, developing a process for CC renewals, and identifying a data collection and management approach for facilities planning.

The project team will engage with the Community Centre Associations, stakeholders and the public. Staff will provide a further update in the fall.

Park Environmental Stewardship Update

Hastings Park Nest Platform

In the last number of years, eagle nests at this park location have fallen, resulting in chick loss. Park Board staff planned work within a tight fall 2020 timing window to avoid disturbance. Urban Forestry staff pruned the hazard limbs of the tall cottonwood trees high above busy 1st Avenue and PNE. Hancock Foundation was then contracted to access and build a solid eagle-nesting platform in the traditionally favoured tree. Volunteer monitoring noted that the platform was successfully adopted, and eagle triplets have hatched. There are other active eagle nests located at Vanier and Stanley parks.

Local Food Action Plan update

Park Board staff are currently updating the Park Board's 2013 [Local Food Action Plan](#) (LFAP). The update is guided by VanPlay and Park Board's commitment to Reconciliation. Park Board staff and consultants have been researching food assets and services in other urban park systems; updating data and definitions of Park Board's food assets and services; assessing successes and opportunities coming out of the 2013 LFAP; and engaging with stakeholders, partners and the public for feedback on the update of the LFAP. Phase one of public engagement has been completed. Phase two of public engagement is underway. Staff will prepare the proposed draft of the updated LFAP for presentation to the Board in fall 2021.

Parks Canada Summer Environmental Education in Vancouver

Park Board recently received an offer to set up some temporary environmental education/national parks promotion in our municipal parks in July and August. This is a positive opportunity considering we have little in-person interpretative presence outside of Stanley Park Ecological Society (SPES) in Stanley Park, and are looking to build larger ties with federal protected areas. Park Board will not be paying for this service. Staff will work out more details with Parks Canada. The public can expect to periodically see temporary booths and green uniformed staff on site in a few of our destination parks.

Park Board and Parks Canada staff are also in early stages of discussing our potential involvement in the International Marine Protected Area Congress to be held in Vancouver in June 2022.

Sea2City Design Challenge

A Request for Proposals (RFP) will soon be issued by the City, with Park Board collaboration. This challenge is similar to an exercise in San Francisco that engaged the public to creatively develop concepts for sea level rise adaptation. Work will take place from September 2021 to



July 2022. Focus sites include Coopers Park. A similar exercise is anticipated in the future for Fraser River sites. Further information can be found at: www.shapeyourcity.ca/sea2city

Stanley Park Train Update

After a lengthy closure, the iconic Stanley Park Train reopened for May long weekend with COVID protocols in place to ensure a safe experience for visitors and staff. The response from the community was enthusiastic and visitation increased steadily throughout the weekend, peaking on the rainy Monday. The train will be open weekends until the end of June, when we transition to Wednesday to Sunday operations for the balance of the summer. The train will also be open for the summer statutory holidays.

Staff Retirement – Jenny Jung, Supervisor of Special Events and Filming

Jenny has retired as of May 14, 2021 after almost 40 years of service with the Park Board. Jenny started her career with the Park Board in 1983 as a Cashier at Stanley Park Railway and progressively worked her way through the organization. She has held various positions in Recreation Services and notably, as a Recreation Software Analyst, led the implementation of two major software systems. In 2010, Jenny assumed the position of Supervisor of Special Events and Filming and was responsible for the successful delivery and execution of all types of events and activations across the Park Board network – from small neighbourhood initiatives to some of the City’s most notable and high profile events. On behalf of the Park Board, I would like to thank Jenny for her decades of service to our City and congratulate her on a well-deserved retirement. It has been a privilege working with her and we wish her well in the years ahead.

Upcoming Council Business (related to or impacting parks & recreation):

Next Council meeting is scheduled on June 8. Agenda is not available at this time.

Board Briefing Memos and Emails: May 13 to 31, 2021

Date	Topic
May 13	On Water Strategy Implementation Update
May 19	Work Stoppage in Urban Forestry
May 20	Strathcona Park Encampment Update
May 21	Park Board Staff to Maintain All Types of Parks Motion – Report Back
May 21	Sunset Beach Protest
May 28	Strathcona Park Encampment Update