



Park Board General Manager's Report November 15, 2021

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

VanDusen Festival of Lights

VanDusen Festival of Lights (FOL) will be returning this year, running from November 26, 2021 to January 3, 2022. Working closely with the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority, a number of COVID-19 safety measures will be implemented to provide a safe event experience. Safety measures include: requiring proof of vaccination, requiring masks indoors, and limiting capacity and entry time tickets sold online. Staff will also be removing features that are high touch, such as the carousel, photos with Santa, and live entertainment. The event experience will include holiday music, themed areas, and over a million lights covering 15 acres of the garden. FOL is a Park Board event set up by VanDusen gardeners and operations staff and produced and facilitated by the special events and front of house staff.

Bright Nights in Stanley Park

Bright Nights is returning to Stanley Park and will be open to the public from November 26, 2021 to January 2, 2022. This year's event features the train ride, a smaller light display installed by Burn Fund volunteers and food trucks on the plaza. The Park Board concession will be reopening for the event. Train capacity is set at 60% of maximum – offering approximately 85,000 tickets over the 5 week duration. Ticket sales started on October 25 and are offered online only. Proof of vaccination status is not required as no indoor spaces will be open to the public. Other safety measures such as masks and physical distancing are recommended and encouraged.

Burn Fund volunteers will be present for weekend showings only to collect donations. During the week, the Burn Fund tent will feature signage with QR codes and messaging encouraging online donations. After its success last year, the virtual Bright Nights experience will return – providing access for those who won't have the opportunity to ride the train in person- with release planned for early December. Videos will include links to the Burn Fund donation and 50/50 pages.

Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement

Effective December 6, 2021, all City of Vancouver staff and volunteers, inclusive of Park Board staff and volunteers, are required to be fully vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine series. Notification of this requirement was communicated Monday, October 18, 2021. The policy to support this requirement was finalized and circulated to staff and volunteers November 1, 2021. The policy is publicly posted on the City of Vancouver website.

Summer 2021 – Citywide Recreation Services

Outdoor Sports Facilities

The "Public Access to Green Space" project, implemented this past summer, identified and reserved three-hour blocks of time at 24 natural grass fields, providing free public access to these spaces. 1,104 hours of public access was provided. A temporary increase of weekly permitted hours on natural grass fields was also implemented for the summer season. This allowed sports user groups to access approximately 816 additional permitted hours across 34 playing fields.

Fitness Services

Updates to fitness equipment layout at several community centres have created more accessible and inclusive environments. The Fitness Services team was able to increase



the available registered spots through extending operating hours at all Park Board Fitness Centres. The overall fill rate was 81% (prior to restrictions being lifted). Fitness services have returned to near-full pre-COVID capacity.

Arenas

Arenas have returned to 100% permitting in prime time rentals.

Arenas Services and the Access Services teamed up to successfully restart the Adapted Skating Lessons.

Aquatics

Outdoor pools attendance reached 5,000 swims daily. Summer attendance for indoor pools was 142,900 and 326,400 for outdoor pools. The use of a ticketing app for outdoor pools enabled close to pre-COVID attendance through the programming of sessions throughout the day.

A new initiative this year was the introduction of a uniform that conforms to the Sun Smart policy, providing wider coverage for protection, and aligning colours with the International Life Saving Federation.

Swim Lessons were re-introduced at all indoor pools, and capacity was redesigned to support day camps at both indoor and outdoor pools. Fourteen wading pools were opened, previously closed in 2020, providing another option for the community to cool off during the summer heat.

Sport Field Strategy Update

Phase 1 of Engagement is scheduled to start at the end of November and includes a City-wide External Advisory Group, a General Public Survey (open from November 29 to December 13) and a Targeted User Group/Permit Holder Engagement (December to January 2022).

Currently underway is a scientific review of Turf Typologies, Trends and Environmental/Health considerations as well as City-wide inventory, Mapping and Spatial Analysis of Sport Field Facilities.

Rupert & Renfrew SkyTrain Stations Area Planning

At the November 16 Council meeting, Council will consider directing staff to initiate a planning process for the area around the Rupert and Renfrew SkyTrain stations in alignment with and as an early implementation of the Vancouver Plan. The concept would include a key step to advance ecosystem restoration: an update of the Still Creek Rehabilitation and Enhancement Study. An update would address changes to creek enhancement science as well as new policies and priorities, including the Rain City Strategy, climate change mitigation and adaptation policy. It would also provide an increased understanding of the co-benefits of natural infrastructure including ecological and potential public realm benefits. If approved, Park Board will be part of staff team, to advocate for both Still Creek, and existing/ potential future greenspaces within the watershed.

Bat Survey in Parks and Golf Courses

Parks staff contracted Echo Ecological Consulting to complete bat presence surveys on parks and golf courses with natural areas and ponds this past summer. Their work showed that seven species of bats were present in our parks and golf courses, and all but one (South Memorial Park – primarily mown turf grass) survey site had bats. The report provided staff with a better



understanding of how naturally managed areas support the overall habitat quality indicator species bats, and made recommendations for further action and site management. Echo Ecological also led a community bat event on September 3 where residents around Trout Lake could learn about bats and participate in the surveying.

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

A Report on [Rupert and Renfrew Station Area Planning and Enhanced Rezoning](#) for 3200 East Broadway and 2625 Rupert Street recommending that Council direct staff to initiate a planning process for the area around the Rupert and Renfrew SkyTrain stations in alignment with the Vancouver Plan.

Board Briefing Memos and Emails: October 19 to November 15, 2021

| Date | Topic |
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| Oct 20 | Indoor Aquatics Services Lifeguard Shortage |
| Oct 20 | Metro Vancouver Kersland Reservoir Upgrades in QE Park |
| Oct 22 | Bloedel Conservatory 2021 Holiday Event |
| Oct 28 | CitySkate Strategy: Phase 2 Public Engagement Update |
| Oct 29 | Seaside Greenway Kits Beach Park – Project Update |
| Nov 4 | Jericho Lands Policy Statement: Phase 3 Public Engagement Update |
| Nov 5 | Lumiere Festival 2021-22 Update |
| Nov 5 | Broadway Plan Public Engagement – Refined Directions |
| Nov 8 | Outdoor Pool Study Report |