



January 19, 2023

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Special Events Calendar 2023 - Major Events

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## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the Special Events Calendar 2023 – Major Events as outlined in this report and attached as Appendix A.

## REPORT SUMMARY

Civic open spaces such as parks and plazas, as well as admission-based facilities such as VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory, are popular sites for entertainment and celebrations of all natures and sizes. The Park Board's role in supporting special events is primarily that of a host, issuing over 1,300 permits annually for special events and other activities across its open space network and facilities; the Park Board also organizes several events for the benefit and enjoyment of Vancouverites and visitors to the city. The purpose of this report is to present the 2023 Calendar of Major Special Events for the Board's review and approval.

## BOARD AUTHORITY, POLICY, PREVIOUS DECISIONS/UPDATES

Per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements that occur within those parks.

The Park Board compiles an annual list of major special events scheduled to take place over the coming year. In addition, as informed by the [Guidelines for Special Events](#), the [Special Events Policy \(2003\)](#), as well as current practices, the Park Board reviews and approves new major special events, as well as significant changes or revisions to existing major special events.

On May 13, 2019, the Board [directed staff to update the aforementioned policy and guidelines](#). Concurrent with this direction, the Board also instructed staff to maintain and support the Park Board's current portfolio of commercial events and activities, but issued a moratorium on the introduction of any new commercial initiatives until after the Special Event Policy & Guidelines have been updated and approved by the Board.

On December 5, 2022, the Board [directed staff to lift the moratorium on new commercial event initiatives in Vancouver parks](#), and communicate this decision to the public and the festival and event community. The Board further directed staff to report back by the end of January 2023 regarding the current status of the Special Events Guidelines, including a timeline for presentation of updated Special Events Guidelines for the Board's review and consideration.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Special Events in Parks and Plazas**

Civic open spaces such as parks and plazas, as well as admission-based facilities such as VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory are popular sites for entertainment and celebrations of all scopes and sizes. These activities fall within the Park Board's mission of providing a wide variety of leisure and engagement opportunities for Vancouverites, and include community festivals, arts and cultural events, music concerts, sports tournaments and various celebrations.

These initiatives activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, enhance the vibrancy of our city, provide enriching arts and cultural experiences, and deliver important economic benefits by supporting tourism and enabling fundraising activities for many not-for-profit and charitable organizations. The Park Board's role in supporting special events is primarily that of a host – accommodating events and activities in park spaces and plazas. Accordingly, the Park Board issues over 1,200 permits annually for special events and activities across its open space network, and over 100 permits for events and activities at VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory. The Park Board also organizes and delivers numerous events for the benefit and enjoyment of Vancouverites and visitors to the city.

### **Special Events Permit Process**

Designating use of a park location to an event organizer is accomplished through the special event permit process. The Park Board's Special Event Policy & Guidelines set out the permit application requirements for event organizers, define the process for evaluation and selection, and inform event terms and conditions.

Large scale events involving spaces outside of the Park Board's jurisdiction are coordinated in collaboration with those jurisdictions and also with the City of Vancouver's Festival Expediting Staff Team Committee (FEST Committee). FEST Committee members include the Vancouver Police Department, Vancouver Fire Rescue Services, BC Ambulance Service, BC Liquor and Cannabis Regulation Branch, City Special Events, Traffic Management, and Park Board Special Events staff. The FEST Committee also reports to City Council with an annual calendar of major special events.

### **Review and Approval Process**

The Park Board reviews and approves new major special events, as well as significant changes or revisions to existing special events as they emerge. Major special events are defined as those activities which can have sizable impacts on public access to park space, influence on surrounding neighbourhoods, require exclusive use of an area, and/or require approval of specific conditions of use as outlined under Park Board by-laws (e.g. notification requirements, vending, licensed/alcohol service, ticketing, etc.). Subject to successful execution, new and modified events are added to the Park Board's annual Calendar of Major Special Events.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Special Events Calendar 2023 – Major Events is attached for the Board's review and approval (see Appendix A). The Calendar is based on events which have confirmed their intention to move forward in 2023 at the time this report was prepared. Also included in the Calendar are annual special events that have been approved in past years but do not yet have confirmed dates/sites for 2023, or are still awaiting confirmation.

### **2023 Calendar Overview**

After the pandemic's devastating impact on the event sector in 2020 and 2021, which resulted in the cancellation of all but a few initiatives during this period, the 2023 Calendar continues to demonstrate signs of significant recovery in the major event sector. Accordingly, the Calendar contains 96 major special events, including:

- 7 Park Board organized and delivered events;
- 2 events delivered by external partners at VanDusen Botanical Garden; and
- 87 events delivered by external partners across Vancouver parks and plazas.

These events are distributed throughout the year and throughout the Park Board network, with a noticeable seasonal peak during the spring and summer months, and a concentration of activity in Stanley Park. The Calendar also sets out the required road closures in Stanley Park to accommodate marquee events.

### **Key Changes**

While the majority of major events in 2023 will be executed in the same manner and locations as in previous years, there are a couple of notable changes. Specifically:

- ***African Descent Festival*** – The African Descent Festival is a recurring event which has taken place since 2015. Due to the construction of the new St. Paul's Hospital, necessary parking and street space surrounding the Festival's traditional location at Thornton Park will be negatively impacted in 2023 and future years, impeding the delivery of the Festival at this location. Accordingly, Festival organizers have selected English Bay Beach as the Festival site in 2023 due to the location's strong historical connection and significance to the Black community in Vancouver (the legacy of Joe Fortes). Event activations at English Bay Beach involve higher complexity and diligent execution due to stakeholder impacts, high traffic activity (pedestrian, vehicle and bicycle) and loss of public space access. Consistent with other events in this location, many of these impacts can be mitigated and Park Board staff will work with the Festival organizers and other supporting partners to address potential issues and ensure the successful delivery of this important cultural initiative on August 12 & 13, 2023.
- ***Carnaval del Sol*** – Carnaval del Sol is another recurring event which will be celebrating its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023. The event was successfully held at Jonathan Rogers Park in 2022, however, due to the festival's size and logistic issues at the site, it was determined that a new location would be required for 2023 and future years. Accordingly, this year's event is planned for David Lam Park or Jericho Beach Park (in the event the Vancouver Folk Music Festival does not take place) on July 14, 15 & July 16, 2023. David Lam Park is a recognized event site with established delivery processes in place. As with all events taking place in park spaces, Park Board staff will work with the Carnaval del Sol organizers and other supporting partners to mitigate potential issues and ensure the successful delivery of this valued cultural initiative.

### **Other Considerations**

Consistent with current practice, both of these event relocations will be subject to a Board report back and review in late 2023/early 2024 before being added in perpetuity to the annual Special Events Calendar.

## **CONCLUSION**

Large scale special events in Vancouver parks, plazas and facilities activate public spaces, foster community connectedness, enhance the vibrancy of the city and provide enriching cultural experiences. Park Board staff have carefully considered the requirements and potential impacts of the major special events planned for 2023, and are confident that they can be executed successfully and as intended. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the Special Events Calendar 2023 – Major Events attached as Appendix A.

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**VANCOUVER BOARD OF PARKS & RECREATION  
SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

**Park Board Organized Events**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Polar Bear Swim	English Bay Beach	Vancouver Park Board	1-Jan	1-Jan	
Easter Train*	Stanley Park Railway	Vancouver Park Board	To be determined	To be determined	V & T
Symphony at Sunset	Sunset Beach Park	Vancouver Park Board & Vancouver Symphony Orchestra	8-Jul	8-Jul	
Vancouver Symphony Orchestra in the Garden*	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Vancouver Park Board	To be determined	To be determined	V & L & T
Ghost Train	Stanley Park Railway	Vancouver Park Board	06-Oct	31-Oct	V & T
Bright Nights	Stanley Park Railway	Vancouver Park Board & BC Professional Firefighters Burn Fund	24-Nov	1-Jan	V & T
Festival of Lights	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Vancouver Park Board	24-Nov	1-Jan	V & L & T

**Events at VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory Organized by External Partners**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Sakura Days Japan Fair	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival & Japan Fair Association of Vancouver	15-Apr	16-Apr	V & L & T
All British Field Meet	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Westco Marketing Ltd	20-May	20-May	V & T

Events in Parks and Plazas

*Events denoted in bold text require road closures in Stanley Park; additional details are provided at the end of Appendix A*

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Lions Club & City of Vancouver Tree Chipping Event	Kerrisdale Park Kitsilano Park John Hendry Park Sunset Beach Park	City of Vancouver Engineering	7-Jan	8-Jan	
Winter Farmers Market	Nat Bailey Stadium Parking Lot Hillcrest Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	7-Jan	25-Mar	V & L
Spring Festival Celebration	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Plaza	Chinese Benevolent Association	21-Jan	22-Jan	V
First Half Marathon	David Lam Park English Bay Seawall Stanley Park Seawall	Vancouver International Marathon Society	12-Feb	12-Feb	
St. Patrick's Day 5K	Stanley Park Pipeline Rd. & Park Dr. East	St. Patrick's Day 5K	11-Mar	11-Mar	
The Big Picnic	David Lam Park	Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society	31-Mar	1-Apr	V & L
Trout Lake Farmers Market	Trout Lake Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	1-Apr	28-Oct	V & L
Riley Park Farmers Market	Riley Park Plaza	Vancouver Farmers Markets	1-Apr	28-Oct	V & L
Pacific Populaire	Riley Park	BC Randoneurs	2-Apr	2-Apr	
Vaisakhi Parade	Sunset Community Centre & Adjacent Spaces	Khalsa Diwan Society	15-Apr	15-Apr	
<b>BMO Vancouver International Marathon</b>	<b>Stanley Park</b>	<b>Vancouver International Marathon Society</b>	<b>6-May</b>	<b>7-May</b>	
Kitsilano Farmers Market	Kitsilano Community Centre Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	7-May	29-Oct	V & L
Knockout Dragon Boat Regatta	Creekside Park	False Creek Racing Canoe Club	13-May	13-May	V

**SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Khalsa Diwan Sports Day	Memorial South Park	Khalsa Diwan Society	19-May	22-May	V
PMC Sierra Science Fun Run*	Creekside Park	Science Fair Foundation	20-May	20-May	
Women’s Dragon Boat Regatta	Creekside Park	False Creek Women’s Dragon Boat Team	27-May	27-May	V
Salmonberry Days	Memorial Park West	Dunbar Community Centre	27-May	27-May	V
Vancouver International Children’s Festival	Sutcliffe Park	Vancouver International Children’s Festival Society	30-May	4-Jun	V & T
Marpole Oakridge Community Day	Oak Park	Marpole Oakridge Community Association	3-Jun	3-Jun	
Dragon Boat Vessi 500M Regatta	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	3-Jun	4-Jun	V
ACCESS Festival	Emery Barnes Park	The Gathering Place	3-Jun	3-Jun	
Commemorate Tiananmen Square Massacre Candle Light Vigil	David Lam Park	Vancouver Society Support of Democratic Movement	4-Jun	4-Jun	
Ride Don’t Hide*	Queen Elizabeth Park	Canadian Mental Health Association	4-Jun	4-Jun	
Bard on the Beach	Vanier Park Festival Site	Bard on the Beach Theatre Society	8-Jun	30-Sep	V & L & T
Italian Day on the Drive	Grandview Park	Italian Day Festival Society	11-Jun	11-Jun	V & L
RBC Run for the Kids	Riley Park	BC Children’s Hospital Foundation	11-Jun	11-Jun	V
Fair in the Square	Victory Square	Central City Foundation	11-Jun	11-Jun	V
JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes	Stanley Park	Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation	11-Jun	11-Jun	
The Awesome Grand Prix*	Jonathan Rogers Park	Cycling BC/Bicicletta	11-Jun	11-Jun	
Recyclefest Hillcrest*	Nat Bailey Stadium South Gravel Parking Lot	Hillcrest Community Centre	17-Jun	17-Jun	
Paddlefest Vancouver*	Jericho Sailing Centre	MEC/Jericho Sailing Centre	17-Jun	17-Jun	

**SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Douglas Park Community Day	Douglas Park	Douglas Park Community Association	17-Jun	17-Jun	
Strawberry Festival*	Barley Heritage Square	West End Seniors Network	17-Jun	17-Jun	
Tri-It Triathlon	Templeton Park	Exceleration Multisport Club	18-Jun	18-Jun	
World Partnership Walk*	Lumberman's Arch Stanley Park Seawall	Aga Khan Foundation	18-Jun	18-Jun	V
Black Culture Celebration	Sunset Beach Park	Go SuperNova	18-Jun	18-Jun	V
National Indigenous Peoples Day*	John Hendry Park	Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society	21-Jun	21-Jun	V
National Indigenous Peoples Day*	Oppenheimer Park	Carnegie Centre	21-Jun	21-Jun	
National Indigenous Peoples Day*	Emery Barnes Park	The Gathering Place	21-Jun	21-Jun	
Point Grey Fiesta*	West Point Grey Park	Point Grey Fiesta	23-Jun	25-Jun	V
Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	23-Jun	25-Jun	V & L
Eastside Pride	Grandview Park	Vancouver Pride Society	24-Jun	24-Jun	V
Hillcrest Summer Festival	Riley Park	Riley Park-Hillcrest Community Centre Association	24-Jun	24-Jun	V
Vancouver International Jazz Festival*	David Lam Park	Coastal Jazz & Blues Society	30-Jun	2-Jul	V & L
False Creek Canada Day Celebration	Sutcliffe Park	False Creek Community Centre	1-Jul	1-Jul	V
Sunset Canada Day Celebration*	Sunset Park	Sunset Community Centre	1-Jul	1-Jul	V
Summer Cinema Series	Ceperley Park	Fresh Air Cinema	4-Jul	29-Aug	V & T
Stanley Park Open	Stanley Park Tennis Courts	Tennis BC	7-Jul	23-Jul	V
Recyclefest Trout Lake*	Trout Lake Park	Trout Lake Community Centre	8-Jul	8-Jul	



**SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Walk with the Dragon	Stanley Park Lumberman’s Arch	SUCCESS Foundation	9-Jul	9-Jul	
Vancouver Open Pro Beach Volleyball	Kitsilano Beach	Volleyball BC	14-Jul	16-Jul	V & L
Vancouver Folk Music Festival*	Jericho Beach Park	Vancouver Folk Festival Society	14-Jul	16-Jul	V & L & T
Carnaval del Sol*	David Lam Park	Latincoover Cultural & Business Society	14-Jul	16-Jul	V & L & T
Union Gospel Mission BBQ	Oppenheimer Park	Union Gospel Mission	15-Jul	15-Jul	
ILWU Pensioners Picnic	New Bright Park	ILWU Local 500	20-Jul	20-Jul	
Honda Celebration of Light	English Bay Beach Vanier Park Alexandra Park Sunset Beach Park	Vancouver Fireworks Festival Society	22-Jul	29-Jul	V & L & T
Collingwood Days Festival	Gaston Park	Renfrew Community Centre	29-Jul	29-Jul	V
Vancouver Dyke March*	McSpadden Park Grandview Park	Vancouver Dyke March & Festival Society	29-Jul	29-Jul	V
Pride in Chinatown*	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens	Dr. Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden	29-Jul	29-Jul	L & T
Powell Street Festival	Oppenheimer Park	Powell Street Festival Society	4-Aug	6-Aug	V
Vancouver Pride Festival & Parade	Alexandra Park Sunset Beach Park	Vancouver Pride Society	5-Aug	5-Aug	V & L
Taiwan Day	Bobolink Park	Great Vancouver Taiwanese Canadian Association	7-Aug	7-Aug	
KitsFest	Kitsilano Beach Park	Canada One Foundation	11-Aug	13-Aug	V & L
Beach Soccer Blast	Spanish Banks Beach	Beach Soccer Blast	11-Aug	13-Aug	V

**SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Rock'n in the Park	Stanley Park Malkin Bowl & East Meadow	BrandLive	12-Aug	12-Aug	L & T & P
African Descent Festival	English Bay Beach	African Descent Society	12-Aug	13-Aug	V
Festival of India*	Ceperley Park	ISKCON of Western Canada	18-Aug	20-Aug	V
Pinoy Fiesta*	Memorial South Park	Philippine Canadian Cultural Society	20-Aug	20-Aug	V
Bike the Night*	David Lam Park	HUB Cycle	26-Aug	26-Aug	
Cascade Ride	David Lam Park	Cascade Bicycle Club	27-Aug	27-Aug	
Victory Square Block Party	Victory Square Park	The Student Radio Society Of UBC	3-Sep	3-Sep	
<b>Vancouver Triathlon</b>	<b>Ceperley Park</b>	<b>Multisport Canada</b>	<b>4-Sep</b>	<b>4-Sep</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>RBC GranFondo Whistler</b>	<b>Stanley Park</b>	<b>GranFondo Canada</b>	<b>9-Sep</b>	<b>9-Sep</b>	
McSpadden County Fair*	McSpadden Park	McSpadden Country Fair	10-Sep	10-Sep	V
Terry Fox Run*	Ceperley Park	Terry Fox Foundation	17-Sep	17-Sep	
Renfrew Ravine Moon Festival	Renfrew Park Slocan Park	Renfrew Park Community Centre	23-Sep	23-Sep	V
Dragon Boat Fall Classic	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	23-Sep	23-Sep	
Day of the Longboat*	Jericho Sailing Centre Beach Area	UBC Recreation	23-Sep	1-Oct	V
National Day of Truth & Reconciliation Orange Shirt Day*	John Hendry Park	Nisga'a Ts'amiks Vancouver Society	30-Sep	30-Sep	
Butterfly Run Vancouver*	Milton Wong Plaza False Creek Seawall	BC Women's Health Foundation	7-Oct	7-Oct	V
Grandville Island Turkey Trot*	Creekside Park	Vancouver International Marathon Society	9-Oct	9-Oct	
Light the Night*	Lumberman's Arch Stanley Park Seawall East Lost Lagoon	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society	20-Oct	20-Oct	V

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Stanley Park Japanese War Monument	Japanese Canadian Memorial	11-Nov	11-Nov	
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Memorial South Park	South Vancouver Veterans Association	11-Nov	11-Nov	
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Victory Square	City of Vancouver External Relations & Protocol Office	11-Nov	11-Nov	
Santa Shuffle*	Stanley Park Lumberman’s Arch	The Salvation Army	2-Dec	2-Dec	
Winter Solstice Festival*	Various Locations	Secret Lantern Society	21-Dec	21-Dec	

- Events denoted with an ‘\*’ are subject to confirmation.
- Vending requests are subject to standard terms and conditions, unless otherwise approved by the Board.
- Licensed areas are subject to VPD, VFRS, and BCL&CRB approval.
- Ticketed events are subject to Board approval.

**Stanley Park Road Closures**

The following recurrent annual events require a morning road closure in Stanley Park. Historically, traffic closures in Stanley Park have been limited to once per month between 6:00am and 10:00am during the months of March, April, May, June and September, and between 6:00am and 11:30am during the month of October. Closures are generally not permitted in July and August; there are no restrictions during other months of the year. Early morning road closures prior to 10:00am tend to have minimal impacts on Stanley Park operations. Organizers are strongly encouraged to ensure their events have concluded by 10:00am and Park Board staff work closely with event organizers to inform all Park stakeholders in advance of event dates.

**Run/Walk Events**

March 11, 2023	BMO St. Patrick’s Day 5K 8:45am to 10:30am - Road closure on East Side of Stanley Park	St. Patrick’s Day 5K Attendance – 1,750
May 7, 2023	BMO Vancouver International Marathon 6:30am to 10:30am - Road closure on East Side of Stanley Park	Vancouver International Marathon Society Attendance – 20,000

**SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2023 – MAJOR EVENTS**

September 4, 2023	Vancouver Triathlon 6:00am to 10:30am - Full road closure	Multisport Canada Attendance – 1,200
September 9, 2023	RBC GranFondo Whistler 3:00am to 10:00am - Limited closure	GranFondo Canada Attendance – 4,500