



February 16, 2024

**TO:** Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
**FROM:** General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
**SUBJECT:** Special Events Calendar 2024 – Major Events

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## RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board receive for information the report back on 2023 events with location changes as outlined in this report;

FURTHER THAT the Board approve the Special Events Calendar 2024 – 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 1,500 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 report back to the Board on 2023 events with location changes and present the 2024 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.

On January 16, 2023, the Board passed the ["Think Big" Revenue Strategy motion](#) to prioritize and enable opportunities for increased commercial revenues. Subsequently, on July 17, 2023, the Board endorsed the Think Big Action Plan as presented in Appendix A in the ["Think Big" Revenue Strategy – Report Back: July 6, 2023](#), and further action the preliminary revenue-generating opportunities presented in Appendix D, including attracting new corporate and commercial special events.

## 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 1,500 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 a number of 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 supporting 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 and Data Management, and Park Board Special Events staff.

### 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

### Report Back on 2023 Special Events with Location Changes

While the vast majority of major events in 2023 were executed in the same manner and locations as in previous years, three events – Carnaval del Sol, African Descent Festival and Dîner en Blanc – were delivered in new locations last year.

- ***Carnaval del Sol*** – Carnaval del Sol, the largest Latin American festival in the Pacific Northwest, celebrated its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary at David Lam Park in July 2023. The event was successfully delivered and well attended, however, due to the park's close proximity to surrounding residential buildings, the noise impacts to the adjacent community from the weekend long festival were identified as an issue of concern. Organizers also expressed their intention to expand the festival and indicated that David Lam Park would not be large

enough to accommodate their events in the future.

This year, Carnaval del Sol is scheduled to return to Jonathan Rogers Park where the festival was held in 2022. Working in partnership with City Special Events staff, three of the four streets surrounding Jonathan Rogers Park will be closed to increase the festival's footprint at that location. Looking beyond 2024, Park Board staff are working collaboratively with the organizer to explore the possibility of relocating the festival to Jericho Beach Park in future years.

- ***African Descent Festival*** – The African Descent Festival, a longstanding and valued cultural event, was held in August 2023 at English Bay Beach for the first time (the festival had been held at Thornton Park since 2015). The event was enjoyed by many and was generally well received by the surrounding community. Due to the operational and logistical complexities involved in event delivery at this location, there were a number of safety and operational improvements identified by the FEST Committee if the event were to return to English Bay Beach in future years.

The event organizer has expressed their interest in returning to this location again in 2024, pending further discussions with Park Board staff and the FEST Committee to finalize permitting, operational and logistical requirements.

- ***Dîner en Blanc*** – Dîner en Blanc was held at Cooper's Park in August 2023. The event celebrated Dîner en Blanc's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary in Vancouver, and also the final year under its founding organizer, The Social Concierge. The event was well executed and enjoyed by thousands of event-goers.

The event is anticipated to return to a different Vancouver park in 2024, under the leadership of a new organizer.

### **2024 Calendar Overview**

The 2024 Calendar of Major Special 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 2024 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/locations for 2024, or are still awaiting confirmation.

The Calendar contains 98 major special events, including:

- 6 Park Board organized and delivered events;
- 2 events delivered by external partners at VanDusen Botanical Garden; and
- 90 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, downtown and waterfront parks. The Calendar also sets out the required road closures in Stanley Park to accommodate marquee events.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications.

### **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 major special events planned for 2024 and are confident that they can be executed successfully and as intended. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve the Special Events Calendar 2024 – Major Events attached as Appendix A.

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

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/yf/os/vt

**VANCOUVER BOARD OF PARKS & RECREATION  
SPECIAL EVENTS CALENDAR 2024 – 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	29-Mar	1-Apr	V & T
Symphony at Sunset*	Sunset Beach Park	Vancouver Park Board & Vancouver Symphony Orchestra	TBD	TBD	
Ghost Train	Stanley Park Railway	Vancouver Park Board	11-Oct	31-Oct	V & T
Bright Nights*	Stanley Park Railway	Vancouver Park Board & BC Professional Firefighters Burn Fund	29-Nov	1-Jan	V & T
Festival of Lights	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Vancouver Park Board	29-Nov	5-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	13-Apr	14-Apr	V & L & T
All British Field Meet	VanDusen Botanical Garden	Westco Marketing Ltd	18-May	18-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	Kitsilano Park John Hendry Park	City of Vancouver Engineering	6-Jan	7-Jan	
Riley Park Winter Farmers Market	Riley Park and Riley Park Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	6-Jan 2-Nov	30-Mar 21-Dec	V & L
Spring Festival Celebration	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Plaza	Chinese Benevolent Association	10-Feb	11-Feb	V
First Half Marathon	David Lam Park English Bay Seawall Stanley Park Seawall	Vancouver International Marathon Society	11-Feb	11-Feb	
St. Patrick's Day 5K	Stanley Park Pipeline Rd. & Park Dr. East	St. Patrick's Day 5K	16-Mar	16-Mar	
The Big Picnic	David Lam Park	Vancouver Cherry Blossom Festival Society	29-Mar	1-Apr	V & L
Trout Lake Farmers Market	Trout Lake Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	6-Apr	26-Oct	V & L
Riley Park Summer Farmers Market	Riley Park Plaza	Vancouver Farmers Markets	6-Apr	26-Oct	V & L
Vaisakhi Parade	Sunset Community Centre & Adjacent Spaces	Khalsa Diwan Society	13-Apr	13-Apr	
<b>BMO Vancouver International Marathon</b>	<b>Stanley Park</b>	<b>Vancouver International Marathon Society</b>	<b>4-May</b>	<b>5-May</b>	
Kitsilano Farmers Market	Kitsilano Community Centre Parking Lot	Vancouver Farmers Markets	5-May	27-Oct	V & L
Knockout Dragon Boat Regatta	Creekside Park	False Creek Racing Canoe Club	11-May	11-May	V

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Khalsa Diwan Sports Day	Memorial South Park Moberly Park Kensington Park Killarney Park Champlain Park	Khalsa Diwan Society	17-May	20-May	V
Vancouver International Children's Festival	Sutcliffe Park	Vancouver International Children's Festival Society	27-May	2-Jun	V & T
Marpole Oakridge Community Day	Oak Park	Marpole Oakridge Community Association	1-Jun	1-Jun	
Dragon Boat Vessi 500M Regatta	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	1-Jun	1-Jun	V & L
Local Makers Summer Market	Kitsilano Beach Park	BMGM Enterprises Inc.	1-Jun	14-Sep	V
ACCESS Festival	Emery Barnes Park	The Gathering Place	1-Jun	1-Jun	
World Partnership Walk	Lumberman's Arch Stanley Park Seawall	Aga Khan Foundation	2-Jun	2-Jun	V
Commemorate Tiananmen Square Massacre Candlelight Vigil	David Lam Park	Vancouver Society Support of Democratic Movement	4-Jun	4-Jun	V
Ride Don't Hide*	Queen Elizabeth Park	Canadian Mental Health Association	2-Jun	2-Jun	
False Creek Farmers Market	Creekside Park	Vancouver Farmers Markets	6-Jun	3-Oct	V & L
The Vegan Market*	Locarno Beach Park	Peaces	6-Jun	29-Aug	V
Go by Bike Week Wrap-up Event	Creekside Park	HUB Cycle	7-Jun	7-Jun	

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Beach Soccer Blast	Spanish Banks Beach Park	Vancouver United FC	7-Jun	9-Jun	
Italian Day on the Drive	Grandview Park	Italian Day Festival Society	9-Jun	9-Jun	V & L
RBC Run for the Kids	Riley Park	BC Children's Hospital Foundation	9-Jun	9-Jun	V
Fair in the Square	Victory Square	Central City Foundation	9-Jun	9-Jun	V
JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes	Stanley Park	Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation	9-Jun	9-Jun	
Bard on the Beach	Vanier Park Festival Site	Bard on the Beach Theatre Society	11-Jun	21-Sep	V & L & T
Point Grey Fiesta	West Point Grey Park	Point Grey Fiesta	14-Jun	16-Jun	V
Hillcrest Summer Festival	Riley Park	Riley Park-Hillcrest Community Centre Association	15-Jun	15-Jun	
Strawberry Festival*	Barley Heritage Square	West End Seniors Network	16-Jun	16-Jun	
Tri-It Triathlon	Templeton Park	Exceleration Multisport Club	16-Jun	16-Jun	
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	
Vancouver Dragon Boat Festival	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	21-Jun	23-Jun	V & L
Eastside Pride	Grandview Park	Vancouver Pride Society	22-Jun	22-Jun	V
Recyclefest at Hillcrest*	Nat Bailey Stadium South Gravel Parking Lot	Hillcrest Community Centre	22-Jun	22-Jun	
Douglas Park Community Day	Douglas Park	Douglas Park Community Association	22-Jun	22-Jun	



EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Sunset Canada Day Celebration*	Sunset Park	Sunset Community Centre	1-Jul	1-Jul	V
Summer Cinema Series	Ceperley Park	Fresh Air Cinema	9-Jul	27-Aug	V
Stanley Park Open	Stanley Park Tennis Courts	Tennis BC	5-Jul	21-Jul	V
Walk with the Dragon	Stanley Park Lumberman's Arch	SUCCESS Foundation	14-Jul	14-Jul	
Vancouver Open Pro Beach Volleyball	Kitsilano Beach	Volleyball BC	12-Jul	14-Jul	V & L
Vancouver Folk Music Festival	Jericho Beach Park	Vancouver Folk Festival Society	19-Jul	21-Jul	V & L & T
Carnaval del Sol	Jonathan Rogers Park	Latincouver Cultural & Business Society	5-Jul	7-Jul	V & L & T
Union Gospel Mission BBQ	Oppenheimer Park	Union Gospel Mission	13-Jul	13-Jul	
ILWU Pensioners Picnic	New Brighton Park	ILWU Local 500	18-Jul	18-Jul	
Honda Celebration of Light	English Bay Beach Vanier Park Alexandra Park Sunset Beach Park	Vancouver Fireworks Festival Society	20-Jul	27-Jul	V & L & T
Collingwood Days Festival	Gaston Park	Renfrew Community Centre	20-Jul	20-Jul	V
Pride in Chinatown*	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens	Dr. Sun Yat Sen Classical Chinese Garden	27-Jul	27-Jul	L & T
Vancouver Dyke March	McSpadden Park Grandview Park	Vancouver Dyke March & Festival Society	3-Aug	3-Aug	V
Powell Street Festival	Oppenheimer Park	Powell Street Festival Society	2-Aug	4-Aug	V
Vancouver Pride Festival & Parade	Creekside Park	Vancouver Pride Society	3-Aug	4-Aug	V & L

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Taiwan Day*	Bobolink Park	Great Vancouver Taiwanese Canadian Association	5-Aug	5-Aug	
KitsFest	Kitsilano Beach Park	Canada One Foundation	9-Aug	11-Aug	V & L
African Descent Festival*	TBD	African Descent Society	10-Aug	11-Aug	V
Festival of India	Creekside Park	Festival of India	16-Aug	18-Aug	V
Dîner en Blanc*	TBD	Aly Armstrong Event Planning & Design	TBD	TBD	L & T
Circles Festival*	Sunset Beach Park	Land Back Records/VPB DAC	24-Aug	24-Aug	V
Pinoy Fiesta*	Memorial South Park	Philippine Canadian Cultural Society	24-Aug	25-Aug	V
Cascade Ride*	David Lam Park	Cascade Bicycle Club	25-Aug	25-Aug	
<b>Vancouver Triathlon</b>	<b>Ceperley Park</b>	<b>Multisport Canada</b>	<b>31-Aug</b>	<b>2-Sep</b>	<b>V</b>
Victory Square Block Party	Victory Square Park	The Student Radio Society Of UBC	2-Sep	2-Sep	
Vancouver Vegan Festival*	Kitsilano Beach Park	Peace People Project	7-Sep	7-Sep	V
<b>RBC GranFondo Whistler</b>	<b>Stanley Park</b>	<b>GranFondo Canada</b>	<b>7-Sep</b>	<b>7-Sep</b>	
McSpadden County Fair	McSpadden Park	McSpadden Country Fair	8-Sep	8-Sep	V
The Great Outdoors Comedy Festival	Stanley Park	Triostar Productions	13-Sep	15-Sep	V & T & L
Light Up Chinatown*	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens	Chinatown Foundation	13-Sep	15-Sep	L
Night Race	Stanley Park	Running Room Canada	13-Sep	13-Sep	L
Bike the Night*	Creekside Park	HUB Cycling	14-Sep	14-Sep	

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Terry Fox Run	Ceperley Park	Terry Fox Foundation	15-Sep	15-Sep	
Renfrew Ravine Moon Festival*	Renfrew Park Slocan Park	Renfrew Park Community Centre	21-Sep	21-Sep	V
Day of the Longboat*	Jericho Sailing Centre Beach Area	UBC Recreation	21-Sep	29-Sep	V
Mid-Autumn Festival*	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens	Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden Society of Vancouver	27-Sep	29-Sep	L & T
Dragon Boat Fall Classic	Creekside Park	Canadian International Dragon Boat Festival Society	28-Sep	28-Sep	L
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	5-Oct	5-Oct	V
ISEA XC Championships*	Jericho Beach Park	West Point Grey Academy	11-Oct	11-Oct	
Grandville Island Turkey Trot*	Creekside Park	Vancouver International Marathon Society	13-Oct	13-Oct	
Light the Night*	Lumberman's Arch Stanley Park Seawall East Lost Lagoon	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society	20-Oct	20-Oct	V
Cross Country Meet	John Hendry Park	Vancouver School Board	22-Oct	22-Oct	
Cross Country Zone Finals*	Jericho Beach Park	Vancouver School Board	30-Oct	30-Oct	
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Stanley Park Japanese War Monument	Japanese Canadian Memorial	11-Nov	11-Nov	

EVENT	SITE	ORGANIZATION	START DATE	END DATE	VENDING (V)
					LICENSED (L)
					TICKETED (T)
					PRIVATE (P)
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Victory Square	City of Vancouver External Relations & Protocol Office	11-Nov	11-Nov	
Remembrance Day Ceremony	Memorial South Park	South Vancouver Veterans Association	11-Nov	11-Nov	
Santa Shuffle*	Stanley Park Lumberman's Arch	The Salvation Army	7-Dec	7-Dec	
Winter Solstice Festival*	Various Locations in False Creek and Strathcona Areas	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 BCLCRB 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 10:30am during the months of March, April, May, June and September, as early morning road closures prior to 10:30am tend to have minimal impacts on Stanley Park operations and businesses. Organizers are strongly encouraged to ensure their events are concluded by 10:30am, and Park Board staff work closely with event organizers to inform park stakeholders in advance of event dates. Closures are permitted between 6:00am and 11:30am during the month of October when activities in the park are generally less concentrated. Closures are generally not permitted during peak summer season in July and August.

### Run/Walk Events

March 16, 2024	BMO St. Patrick's Day 5K 8:45am to 10:30am Closure on east side of the park	St. Patrick's Day 5K Attendance – 1,750
May 5, 2024	BMO Vancouver International Marathon 6:30am to 10:30am Closure on east side of the park	Vancouver International Marathon Society Attendance – 20,000

**Run/Walk Events (continued)**

September 2, 2024	Vancouver Triathlon 6:00am to 10:30am Full closure of the park	Multisport Canada Attendance – 1,200
September 7, 2024	RBC GranFondo Whistler 3:00am to 10:00am Closure on east side of the park	GranFondo Canada Attendance – 4,500