



Report Date: April 28, 2024

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-30

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TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners  
FROM: General Manager, Board of Parks and Recreation  
SUBJECT: Alcohol on Beaches – 2024 Re-Pilot

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. THAT the Board approve the proposed implementation of the Alcohol on Beaches Re-pilot for the summer of 2024 on Jericho Beach, John Hendry Beach, Kitsilano Beach, Locarno Beach, New Brighton, Spanish Banks, and Stanley Park Second Beach contingent upon incremental operating budget funding being allocated by Council to support the successful implementation as outlined in this report.
- B. THAT if the Board approves A, that the Board, in keeping with the Auditor General's recommendation #1, direct staff to provide a report to Council on the Alcohol on Beaches pilot and request the funding necessary to implement the re-pilot.
- C. THAT the Board approve the updates proposed to the Parks Control By-Law to update the pilot launch dates for permitting Alcohol Consumption on beaches from June 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024 limited to the same seven beaches as 2023: Jericho Beach, Trout Lake Beach (John Hendry Park), Kitsilano Beach, Locarno Beach, New Brighton Park Beach, Spanish Banks and Second Beach (Stanley Park).

## PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

This report summarizes a proposal for the Board to consider, with the support of Vancouver Police Department (VPD), the implementation of the Alcohol on Beaches Re-pilot for the summer of 2024. This report includes highlights, outcomes, and learnings from the 2023 pilot, including internal operational challenges, public input, and analysis conducted by staff and the Vancouver Police Department (VPD).

The proposed Alcohol on Beaches (AOB) Re-pilot Program responds to a growing interest by the public to consume alcohol on Vancouver's beaches safely and without recrimination. However, as raised in the [Board Briefing Memo](#) (December 18, 2023), there was a significant increase in operational and enforcement issues and challenges for those beach pilot sites and into the downtown area.

The 2023 pilot generated a great deal of data and information to help staff determine service levels and associated costs to successfully implement consumption of alcohol on beaches in the

future. However, given the complexity and multi-department impacts, it has been determined that another year is required to test these measures to determine level of success and inform future decision making.

**BOARD AUTHORITY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS**

On December 5, 2022, the Board directed staff via a motion to “*pilot the responsible consumption of alcohol on an appropriate Vancouver beach or beaches where adequate facilities exist to support such a beach pilot program.*” Following Board approval of the sites and program on April 24, 2023, the pilot launched to the public at seven (7) beaches from June 1 to September 4, 2023,

**CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND**

In April 2023, the consumption of alcohol in parks was approved for 48 park sites across the city with additional direction to staff to implement the piloting of alcohol on beaches. Staff reviewed all parks with beaches and recommended seven Beach Pilot sites for inclusion in the summer of 2023 that were adjacent to the permanent Alcohol in Parks program:

In line with the piloting approach used with parks, beach sites were selected based on their adjacent amenities such as washroom facilities. Sites with known enforcement challenges or are difficult to reach from an operational perspective were excluded from the pilot.

The following table summarizes the included and excluded beaches:

Included	Excluded
- Jericho Beach	- English Bay Beach
- John Hendry	- Sunset Beach
- Kitsilano Beach	- Crab Park Beach
- Locarno Beach	- Third Beach
- New Brighton	- Beaches along the Fraser River
- Spanish Banks	
- Stanley Park Second Beach	

The temporary pilot was launched on June 1, and concluded on September 4, 2023. During this time, and in the period since then, staff has been compiling and analysing data from staff surveys, public engagement, a 3<sup>rd</sup> party conducted opinion poll, and a number of working group meetings consisting of senior staff from a variety of departments, Park Rangers and the VPD as well as data collected from Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH). The following summary describes the findings from the analysis of the data.

**Data Collection & Analysis Summary**

**VPD Calls for Service Data**

VPD provided staff with data for both calls for service as well as the number of violent incidents reported at English Bay and Kitsilano Beach between 2018 and 2023. During this time frame, calls for service have slowly declined from 2018 to 2023 both city wide and at the two beaches. However, the reported number of violent incidents has tripled at Kitsilano beach (from 4 in 2018 to 12 in 2023), and quadrupled for English Bay (from 6 in 2018 to 28 in 2023). The number of violent incidents city wide has slowly increased since 2018 from 2539 incidents to 3170 incidents

in 2023 (a 25% increase) but are not on the same steep trend line as the beaches.

This implies that while there are not more calls for service to English Bay and 3<sup>rd</sup> Beach than before the pandemic, more incidents are turning violent. We cannot determine if alcohol consumption was the cause of this increase or if it merely reflects the higher number of people visiting beaches through the pandemic, however, the jump in the number of violent incidents cannot be ignored at these two beaches.

#### Park Ranger Incidents

Park Board rangers' data also shows the highest incidents at English Bay and Kitsilano during the same time period.

#### 311 Complaint Log Analysis

An analysis from 3-1-1 complaints from summer 2023 where the word "drinking" was referenced, only resulted in 19 complaints. The top beaches for complaints were Trout Lake (John Hendry Park), Sunset Beach, and Spanish Banks Beach.

English Bay and 3<sup>rd</sup> Beach were not part of the pilot, but as they are two of the most visited beaches in the park system, and as there was evidence to suggest drinking took place there regardless, a broader analysis of 3-1-1 complaints for these two beaches over the last 5 years was conducted. This showed that complaints have quadrupled between 2018 and 2023 (from 200 to over 820). Complaints that reference people drinking, are consistent across the majority of those years but did increase in 2023. Large crowds and drinking have long been the subject of complaints at both beaches, however, mentions of the word "drinking" in complaints in 2023 saw a 50% increase in August compared to same month in prior years.

#### Staff Impacts

Approximately 60 Park Board staff across all departments were surveyed to understand how alcohol consumption on beaches affected their work. Responses showed that those most affected were lifeguards and park rangers, while park operations staff, film and special events, and the communications team also indicated that their work had been impacted. The main impacts to staff consisted of dealing with public outrage or disrespect, inadequate staffing/support on the beach, and impacts to physical safety.

According to Park Rangers, the main issues revolved around their inability to enforce unruly behaviour and to mandate valid ID. With respect to disorderly and abusive behaviour, particularly at English Bay and Sunset beaches, the VPD had to get involved to settle behavioural and law-breaking issues. There were concerns around glass bottles posing a safety risk to the public. In the case of lifeguards, increased alcohol consumption meant the necessity for increased vigilance on inebriated swimmers and parents, thereby increasing their workload and finding inadequate supervision on the beach.

The Park Board communications team had considerable challenges with the pilot taking place at some beaches and not on others. The team had to quickly pivot their communications plan to clarify to the public where alcohol was allowed and where it was not. Their forms of communication included additional social media posts, responding to individual queries, and adding supplemental signage at the beaches. This required more than expected staff time and resources.

### Waste Monitoring Surveys

Paper pickers monitored the litter conditions at the beaches over the course of the summer of 2023. Kitsilano Beach reported excessive litter conditions all over the beach - three times more than any other beach. Western beaches (Kitsilano, Jericho, Locarno and Spanish Banks) reported litter more often than downtown beaches, as well as more broken glass. Overall, staff noted that waste bins were rarely reported as full, which implies that the excessive litter was due to people not carrying their litter to the available waste bins.

### Public Perspectives

Public feedback was collected via a public opinion poll conducted by Leger Consulting in the fall of 2023 (refer to the Public Opinion Poll Report in Appendix A). Approximately 1,000 Vancouver and 1,000 Metro Vancouver residents were surveyed, and a summary of the findings are provided here:

- Of all respondents, most (70%) believed that alcohol should be allowed on most or all beaches. Nearly one quarter of respondents noted that they consumed alcohol on beaches in 2023
- A majority of respondents (64%) were aware of the pilot. Of those aware, this came largely through TV (50%), social media (30%), radio (23%), word of mouth (20%) and park signage (11%)
- When asked about the benefits of allowing alcohol in beaches, the top responses were *'an affordable option to socialize' (45%), 'a nice setting to socialize' (44%), and 'being treated like an adult' (41%)*. A quarter of respondents felt there were no benefits to allowing alcohol on beaches.
- When asked about the drawbacks to allowing alcohol on beaches, top responses included *'attracting rowdy/loud/disruptive visitors (52%), an increase in litter/waste on beaches (48%), underage drinking (43%) and concern for public safety (38%)*.
- Respondents reporting positive experiences said they *'felt safe on the beach (79%), and felt the beaches were clean (65%) and peaceful (62%)*'. The top negative feedback cited *'disruptive behaviour (31%), litter (33%), and excessive alcohol consumption (25%)*'.
- Despite not being included in the pilot last year, English Bay was the most visited and popular beach by respondents (23%), followed by Kitsilano Beach (15%), and Spanish Banks (10%), while approximately 28% of respondents note that they rarely visit Vancouver's beaches

### Alcohol on Beaches Staff Working Group

To effectively work through the complex issues experienced and concerns raised around the potential future AOB Pilot/Program, a staff working group was formed to review the above analyzed data, workshop potential mitigation approaches and develop an implementation plan. Included in the working group were senior staff from Planning & Park Development, Park Operations, Rangers, Communications, COV Engineering (Sanitation), Recreation (Lifeguards & Beach Experience Team), Special Events, Finance and VPD. Following four working group meetings, the project staff conducted separate meetings with the City's Risk and Legal specialists, Alcohol in Plazas project team, and Vancouver Coastal Health. The outcomes of these meetings fostered the development of the implementation plan including service level measures, resource needs and funding requirements to enable a more successful rollout of the 2024 pilot.

## **DISCUSSION**

In general, the public's reaction was favourable towards the pilot. Staff noted a number of unanticipated and significant staff challenges, requiring a different operational plan for future pilots. Staff followed up the data collection with numerous internal working group meetings with staff who summarized their challenges and resource needs should future pilots be implemented.

Staff reviewed all the 2023 pilot beaches and determined that another year of data collection, observations and evaluation of the impact of additional operational and staff resourcing through a re-pilot is needed before making the Alcohol on Beaches program permanent.

### **Pilot Beach Site Selection**

The 2024 re-pilot plans to allow drinking on the same beaches that were piloted in 2023, while continuing to exclude the same beaches excluded in 2023 (APPENDIX B). The re-pilot will exclude English Bay, Sunset Beach and 3<sup>rd</sup> Beach (Stanley Park) due to known enforcement issues from before the Alcohol on Beaches pilot in 2023. While it would be easier from a communications and public education perspective to allow alcohol on all beaches, VPD were not supportive of an expanded pilot based on their findings from 2023. Operational resources are needed for all of the pilot beach sites, as well as at locations excluded from the pilot, however, limiting the pilot to not include these beaches will limit the level of effort to manage ongoing and expected enforcement challenges. VPD and Park Staff feel it is necessary to better understand and assess the significant operations and enforcement issues at English Bay, Sunset Beach and 3<sup>rd</sup> Beach for one more pilot season with additional resources to determine if this program could be successful in a future pilot or permanent roll out.

### **2024 Pilot Implementation Plan**

Given the concerns raised from the 2023 pilot, a number of operational changes are recommended by staff.

#### **Public Safety**

It is a generally accepted notion that the start of this pilot and the longstanding behaviour of the public has established a broad acceptance of alcohol consumption on beaches, and therefore certain measures must be in place to ensure public safety. The Park Board Rangers require additional staff to create a presence on the beach and enforce the bylaws that they are capable. The VPD requires additional staff at the beaches, including English Bay and Sunset Beach, to maintain peace and safety, and manage incidents that involve dangerous or criminal behaviour.

The addition of VPD and Rangers will assist in reducing the responsibility of lifeguards and increasing vigilance so that their attention is not required elsewhere. VPD has committed to recording more details with calls for service and violent offences, confirming the connection to alcohol consumption to support future data analysis and decisions.

Rangers will continue their collaborative working relationship with the VPD, communicating daily to assess and manage situations on all the beaches over the summer months. Lastly, given the experiences of lifeguards of dealing with public outrage, repeating the pilot for the summer of 2024 will require de-escalation training especially those staffed at beaches with a higher degree of incidents.

To further support this effort, Park Bylaw revisions may be brought to the Board in advance of the pilot, which may include rules related to the use of glass bottles, noise and illegal vendors.

### Waste Management

The City's Engineering Sanitation team has committed to reviewing the number of public waste bins and locations and considering opportunities to add additional recycling stations at the Western beaches, Kitsilano Beach and Second Beach. Any expansion of services provided by Engineering Sanitation Services in these areas will be managed within existing budget.

Encouraging beach users to appropriately dispose of their waste will be a focus for the broad communications campaign and signage at all beaches, with extra focus at Kitsilano Beach. Due to the success of onsite monitoring and data gathering from paper pickers last summer, it is proposed that this program be repeated for 2024 to monitor waste levels and for post-pilot data analysis.

### Communications

The Communications team identified public education as the key goal for a successful re-pilot. The three major areas in the communication plan to educate the public with respect to alcohol consumption are:

1. Consuming alcohol safely and with an understanding of the health risks;
2. Being respectful neighbours at the beach;
3. Ensure that litter gets disposed of.

A rigorous communications program is required to reach a wide range of park users both at and en route to the beach through a combination of digital and targeted out-of-home messaging. Additional resources are required to share messages across many forms of media, including television, radio, social media, and print. The opinion poll demonstrated that signage at the beaches cannot be relied upon in adequately educating the public on where they can and cannot drink alcohol, so further effort is required to clarify the included and excluded locations. The Park Board Communications team is also working with an external graphic design agency to develop a suite of assets to communicate the key messages identified above.

Staff have also worked closely with Vancouver Coastal Health to ensure Park Board communication and messaging will align with their aspirations that alcohol consumption, if legalized on beaches, will be conducted safely with focus on the health risks of increased alcohol consumption. In addition, education around the safe consumption of alcohol at the beach is essential to support the lifeguards, rangers and VPD who need to step in when safety measures are not in place. This would also align with Vancouver Coastal Health's guidelines around alcohol.

### Events and Concessions

The Alcohol on Beaches Pilot affected Park Board's Special Events team due to confusion around the event areas and locations where the public can drink. This team requires additional support by way of Park Rangers or security staff when non-profit event organizers cannot afford to provide an enforcement presence at the beach.

The Board has formally endorsed the proposal to offer alcohol sales at concessions. This decision stems from the proximity of park space permitting alcohol consumption, necessitating a patio license. It's a logical step towards aligning with this policy 'Alcohol at the Beaches'. Should Alcohol on Beaches continue after this summer, staff will be considering how sales from alcohol can help offset the costs required for additional resources down the road.

### Project Coordination and Data Monitoring

Staff will also be continuing the highly effective staff working group on a bi-weekly basis to discuss issues as they arise, adjust as required, provide support to all departments, and will include additional public engagement, staff feedback, third party observations and intercept surveys in order to provide improved data to help with future, informed decision making.

### Financial Considerations

The Auditor General’s Report approved on November 27, 2023, recommends that the Board should “make efforts to ensure that strategies and initiatives that have funding or investment requirements have the support of Council. While some of the elements required to continue Alcohol on Beaches in 2024 can be addressed with existing resources, additional funding will be required to safely implement the program to the satisfaction of all departments and partners.

Initial costs for park board staff and equipment for 2024 would be \$480,300 with a breakdown of these costs provided in the chart below. Funding for VPD support in the amount of \$450,000 is also required and would be included in the request to Council for additional funding. Without additional funding the pilot cannot be implemented.

**Table 1 - Alcohol on Beaches - 2024 Implementation Costs**

<b><u>Park Board Costs</u></b>	
Rangers	\$154,700
Lifeguards	\$8,700
Park Operations (paper picking)	\$90,200
Communications	\$119,900
Project Management & Planning	\$106,800
<b><i>Subtotal of Park Board Costs</i></b>	<b><i>\$480,300</i></b>
<b><u>City Department Costs</u></b>	
VPD	\$450,000
<b><i>Subtotal of Other City Department Costs</i></b>	<b><i>\$450,000</i></b>
<b>Total Alcohol on Beaches 2024 Costs</b>	<b>\$930,300</b>

The costs above reflect the minimal potential costs to cover the implementation of the pilot this summer. Through the implementation of the pilot, staff may need to adjust resource requirements upward to support a successful pilot. If this is the case, staff will look to absorb these costs through existing budgets by reducing service levels in other areas. In the event the costs cannot be absorbed, an additional funding request may be needed, or the pilot time frame may need to be shortened.

If a future permanent program is approved, ongoing funding would be requested through the annual operating budget process, and staff would also look for partnerships, concessions and other revenue generating opportunities to help fund this program.

**Conclusion and Next Steps**

Due to the popularity of beaches as Vancouver's primary public space, the dramatic increase in the use of parks since the pandemic, and the use of certain beaches by larger crowds with underage drinking, the Alcohol on Beaches pilot created significant challenges to all staff involved. Staff require this improved implementation plan and supporting resource and funding needs, to repeat the pilot this summer and confirm that these improvements resulted in a more successful pilot and are feasible to continue. The repeated pilot is wholly contingent upon Council allocating additional funding to Park Board and VPD.

To monitor the progress and determine the success of the Alcohol on Beaches program, staff intends to continue collecting data and information throughout the summer of 2024 to inform what measures are required before continuing the program or making it permanent. Staff will report back to the Board with a summary of findings and make recommendations for 2025 and beyond.



**APPENDIX B**

**2024 Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Locations**

Included	Excluded
- Jericho Beach	- English Bay Beach
- John Hendry	- Sunset Beach
- Kitsilano Beach	- Crab Park Beach
- Locarno Beach	- Third Beach
- New Brighton	- Beaches along the Fraser River
- Spanish Banks	
- Stanley Park Second Beach	

Note that these are the same included and excluded locations as the 2023 pilot.

# Report

## Assessing Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program: Opinion Poll



Prepared for the Vancouver Board of Parks and  
Recreation, December 21, 2024

**DATE** 2024-04-23    **PROJECT NUMBER** 42319-001

**Leger**



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## KEY OBJECTIVES

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (“Park Board”) engaged Leger to conduct an opinion poll on the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program. The consumption of alcohol was allowed on the following beaches from June 1<sup>st</sup> to September 4<sup>th</sup> 2023 : Spanish Banks, Locarno Beach, Jericho Beach, Kitsilano Beach, Second Beach, Trout Lake Beach, and New Brighton Beach.

### The main objectives of this research are:



***Understanding the beach experience in summer 2023:*** Was the experience negative or positive? Did they consume alcohol and, if so, how often and where?



***Establishing the level of awareness and opinions residents have regarding the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program:*** Have they heard of the program? Did the program impact their decision to drink alcohol on certain beaches? Are there benefits/drawbacks to alcohol on beaches?



***Identifying differences between key demographic groups:*** Are there differences between specific groups including age, gender, and where people live and, if so, what are they?

# METHODOLOGY



Data for this poll was collected via online surveys using Leger's online general population research panel, LEO.



This survey was completed by residents of Metro Vancouver, consisting of those who live in the city of Vancouver (n=1,031) and those who reside in other Metro Vancouver municipalities (n=1,013), for a total sample of n=2,044. The report details results from Metro Vancouver residents (total), City of Vancouver residents (CoV/ City of Van) and Metro Van residents who live outside the City (MV/ Metro Van).



For comparison purposes, a probability sample of n=2,044 yields a margin of error of no greater than  $\pm 2.2\%$ , (19 times out of 20) for all of Metro Vancouver, while the city of Vancouver and other Metro Vancouver municipalities samples each have margins of error of  $\pm 3.1\%$ , 19 times out of 20.



Surveys were completed from the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November to the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2023.



Data is weighted for age, region and gender according to 2021 Census figures to ensure correct representation given the disproportionate quota structure put into place (City of Vancouver) and to correct for any response biases. A disproportionate quota was used for City of Vancouver to ensure we had an adequate number of respondents for demographic breakdowns. The weighted data is representation of the population and shown throughout the report.



# KEY FINDINGS

# SUMMARY: TOTAL METRO VANCOUVER RESIDENTS

INCLUDING CITY OF VANCOUVER



- Four in ten visited a beach in the city of Vancouver at least once a month during the Summer of 2023 with English Bay Beach being the most popular beach.
- Of the summer beachgoers, nearly one-quarter consumed alcohol, with six in ten of those drinking at least once a month.
- Two-thirds are aware of the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot.
- Over one-third of those who consumed alcohol on beaches believe it should only be allowed on beaches deemed suitable by the Park Board.
- Differences between City of Van and Metro Van residents outside of the city are noted in the key findings and throughout the report.

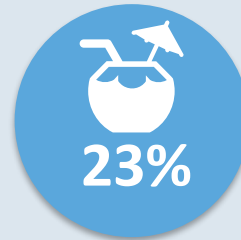
## FREQUENCY OF BEACH VISITS

during Summer 2023

	<b>14%</b>	WEEKLY
	<b>26%</b>	MONTHLY
	<b>25%</b>	LESS THAN MONTHLY
	<b>35%</b>	NONE

## ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

on the beach during Summer 2023



**20%**

Weekly

**41%**

Monthly

**38%**

Less Frequent

## ALCOHOL ON BEACHES PILOT

**64% AWARE**

OF THE PILOT PROGRAM

Heard about it...

**50%** TV

**30%** Social Media

**23%** Radio

## FUTURE OF THE PROGRAM

Alcohol should only be allowed on beaches deemed suitable by the Park Board

**35%**

## MOST VISITED VANCOUVER BEACHES



**23%**

English Bay Beach



**15%**

Kitsilano Beach



**10%**

Spanish Banks Beach



**8%**

Jericho Beach



**3%**

Second Beach, Third Beach, Trout Lake Beach and Sunset Beach

**28%**

I rarely visit Vancouver beaches

## TOP 3 BENEFITS OF ALLOWING ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

**#1**



**45%**

An affordable option to socialize with friends and family.

**#2**



**44%**

Nice/beautiful setting to socialize or enjoy alone.

**#3**



**41%**

Being treated like an adult (personal responsibility)

## DECISION TO DRINK

ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

**61%**

I would consume alcohol on beaches (NET without considering if allowed + if no legal consequences)

**31%**

I would not consume alcohol on beaches where I knew it was not allowed

# KEY FINDINGS (P. 1 OF 2)

## Vancouver Beach Visits

- **English Bay Beach is the most popular beach** in the city of Vancouver, followed by Kitsilano Beach.
  - Metro Vancouver residents outside of the city of Vancouver are less likely to visit Vancouver beaches.
- **Two-thirds (65%) of Metro Vancouver residents visited a beach** in the city of Vancouver during the Summer of 2023.
  - Visits increased to eight in ten for the city of Vancouver residents and dropped to one-half for those 55+.
- Not surprisingly, city of Vancouver residents visited the beaches more frequently (31% weekly) than those who live in other Metro Vancouver municipalities (8% weekly).
- **Walking on the beach/seawall is the top beach activity** (58%). Relaxing on the beach by myself/with another person (43%) or with a small group (32%) were other popular beach activities.
- Beachgoers mostly had positive experiences during the Summer of 2023. ***I felt safe on the beach (79%) was the most agreed with beach experience*** followed by *the beaches were clean (64%)* and *the beaches were peaceful (63%)*.

## Alcohol on Beaches

- Nearly **one-quarter (23%) of Summer 2023 beachgoers consumed alcohol**.
  - Consumption increases to three in ten for those who live in the city of Vancouver and decreases to two in ten for Metro Vancouver residents outside of the city of Vancouver
- **Six in ten (62%) of those who drank alcohol did so at least once a month**.
- For Metro Vancouver residents, the top benefits of allowing alcohol on beaches are related to socializing: *an affordable option to socialize (45%)*, *a nice setting to socialize or enjoy alone (44%)*, and *more spaces to socialize (38%)*. As well, four in ten (41%) selected *being treated like an adult*.
  - Nearly **one-quarter (23%) feel there are no benefits** to allowing alcohol on beaches.



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## KEY FINDINGS (P. 2 OF 2)

- *Attracts rowdy/loud/disruptive visitors (52%), an increase in litter/waste on beaches (48%), underage drinking (43%), and concern for personal safety (38%) are the top drawbacks seen by Metro Vancouver residents for allowing alcohol on beaches.*
  - **Less than one in ten (6%) feel there are no drawbacks** to allowing alcohol on beaches.

### Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program

- **Nearly two-thirds of Metro Vancouver residents (64%) are aware** of the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program.
  - One-half of those aware heard about the pilot on TV.
- **One-quarter (24%) of those who drank at city of Vancouver beaches did so exclusively at locations in the pilot**, while nearly **two in ten (18%) imbibed at beaches not included in the pilot only.**
- Beachgoers consumed alcohol on beaches **not included** in the pilot because they *didn't think it was a big deal and/or because everyone does it.*
- **Six in ten** beach drinkers hold the opinion that they would **consume alcohol on beaches without considering if it was allowed or not** or **if they knew it was not allowed and there wouldn't be legal consequences.**
- Over one-third feel the future of allowing alcohol on beaches is **up to the Park Board to determine which locations are most suitable** and another third feel **alcohol should be allowed on all beaches.**
  - Nearly one-quarter (23%) believe it should not be allowed on any beaches, this figure is significantly lower (15%) for those 19-34.

## CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Despite around two-thirds awareness of the pilot, only one-quarter of beachgoers consumed alcohol.
- However, despite drawbacks relating to potential rowdiness and an increase in litter, many see benefits to allowing alcohol on beaches especially more socializing opportunities.
- Also, interesting to note six in ten beachgoers who drank alcohol in Summer 2023 would do this even knowing it was not allowed with two in ten only drinking on beaches that were not part of the pilot and four in ten only drinking on pilot beaches by chance and not due to knowing about the pilot program.
- All in all, there is support for allowing alcohol on beaches, with seven in ten Metro Vancouver residents agreeing with this at either some or all beaches in the city of Vancouver and less than one-quarter feeling it should not be allowed at all. This would complement the allowance of residents to be able to drink alcohol in specific city parks. At a minimum, the Park Board may consider another pilot in Summer 2024 and then assess again afterward. With that said, as noted above, six in ten people who drank on the beach in Summer 2023 say they would do so regardless.

A magnifying glass with a black handle and frame is the central focus, resting on a document. In the background, a calculator and a pair of glasses are visible, all slightly out of focus. The scene is lit with a warm, orange glow from the top left. A semi-transparent grey banner is positioned at the bottom of the image.

DETAILED RESULTS



# Vancouver Beach Visits

# VANCOUVER'S MOST VISITED BEACHES

English Bay Beach is the most popular beach in the city of Vancouver, with nearly one-quarter (23%) stating it is the beach they visit most. Kitsilano Beach is the second most visited beach with higher visitation from city of Vancouver residents. Unsurprisingly, Metro Vancouver residents in other municipalities are generally less likely to visit city of Vancouver beaches.

		City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
English Bay Beach	23%	21%	23%
*Kitsilano Beach	15%	19% ▲	14%
*Spanish Banks Beach	10%	10%	10%
*Jericho Beach	8%	10%	7%
*Second Beach	3%	4%	3%
Third Beach	3%	4%	3%
*Trout Lake Beach	3%	6% ▲	2%
Sunset Beach	3%	4%	2%
*Locarno Beach	2%	3%	2%
*New Brighton Beach	1%	3% ▲	1%
Crab Park	<1% bar"/> <1%	1%	<1%
I rarely visit Vancouver beaches	28%	15%	33% ▲

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

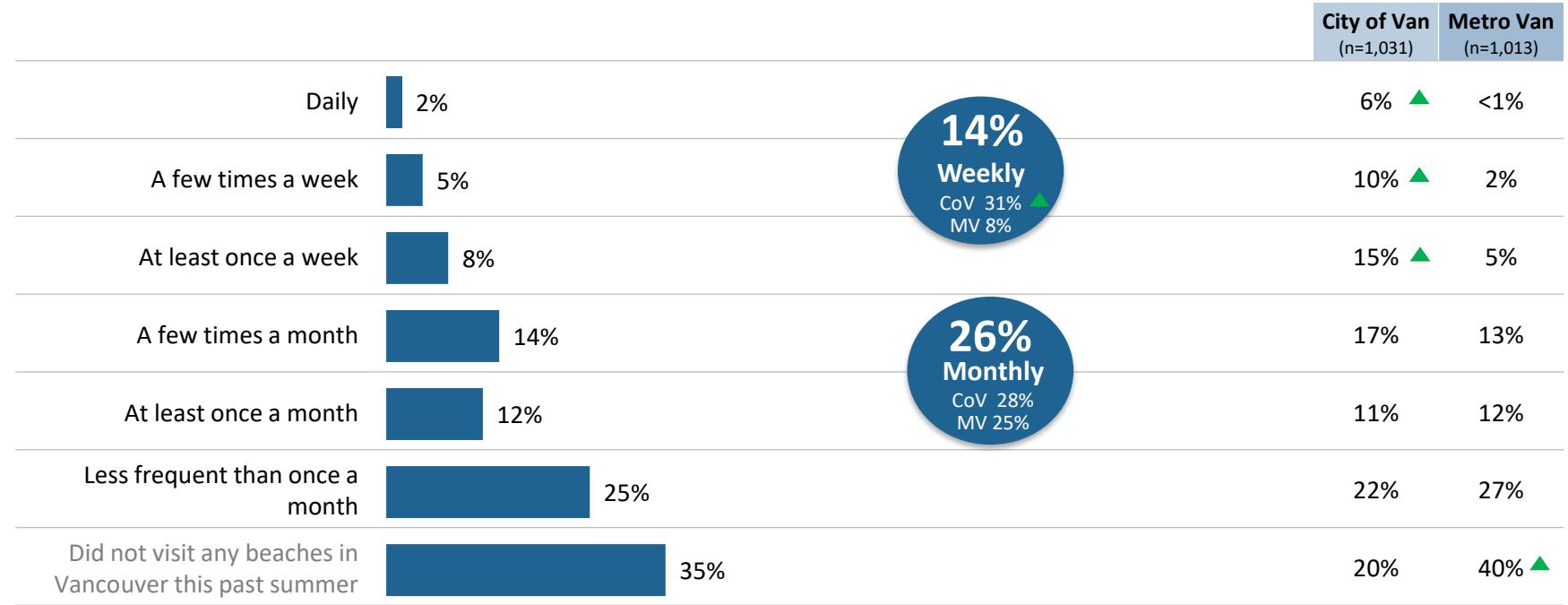
Q3. Which beach in the city of Vancouver do you visit most often?

\* Included in the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.

# FREQUENCY OF BEACH VISITS IN SUMMER 2023

Two-thirds (65%) of Metro Vancouver residents visited a beach within the city of Vancouver during the Summer of 2023--this increases to eight in ten for city of Vancouver residents and drops to one-half for those aged 55+. Not surprisingly, those living in the city of Vancouver visit the beaches more frequently than those residing in other Metro Vancouver municipalities; frequent beach visits are also driven by those under 55.



Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

Q1. How often did you visit any of the beaches in the city of Vancouver this past summer, if at all?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group.

# BEACH ACTIVITIES

Walking on the beach/seawall is the top activity for beachgoers. Relaxing on the beach by myself/with another person (43%) or with a small group (32%) were other popular beach activities.

		City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
Walk on the beach/seawall	58%	59%	57%
Relax on the beach myself/one person	43%	44%	43%
Relax on the beach with a small group	32%	31%	32%
Eat food from beach concessions	23%	21%	24%
Dine at sit-down restaurants	20%	18%	21%
Large gatherings with friends	13%	13%	13%
Swim	11%	12%	11%
Large gatherings with family	11%	11%	11%
Play with my dog	10%	10%	10%
Exercise	9%	13% ▲	7%
Play small beach games	7%	10% ▲	6%
Use watercraft	5%	5%	5%
Play beachside court sports	4%	5%	3%
Play large beach team sports	4%	6% ▲	3%
Other	3%	3%	3%
I rarely visit Vancouver beaches	18%	12%	20% ▲

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

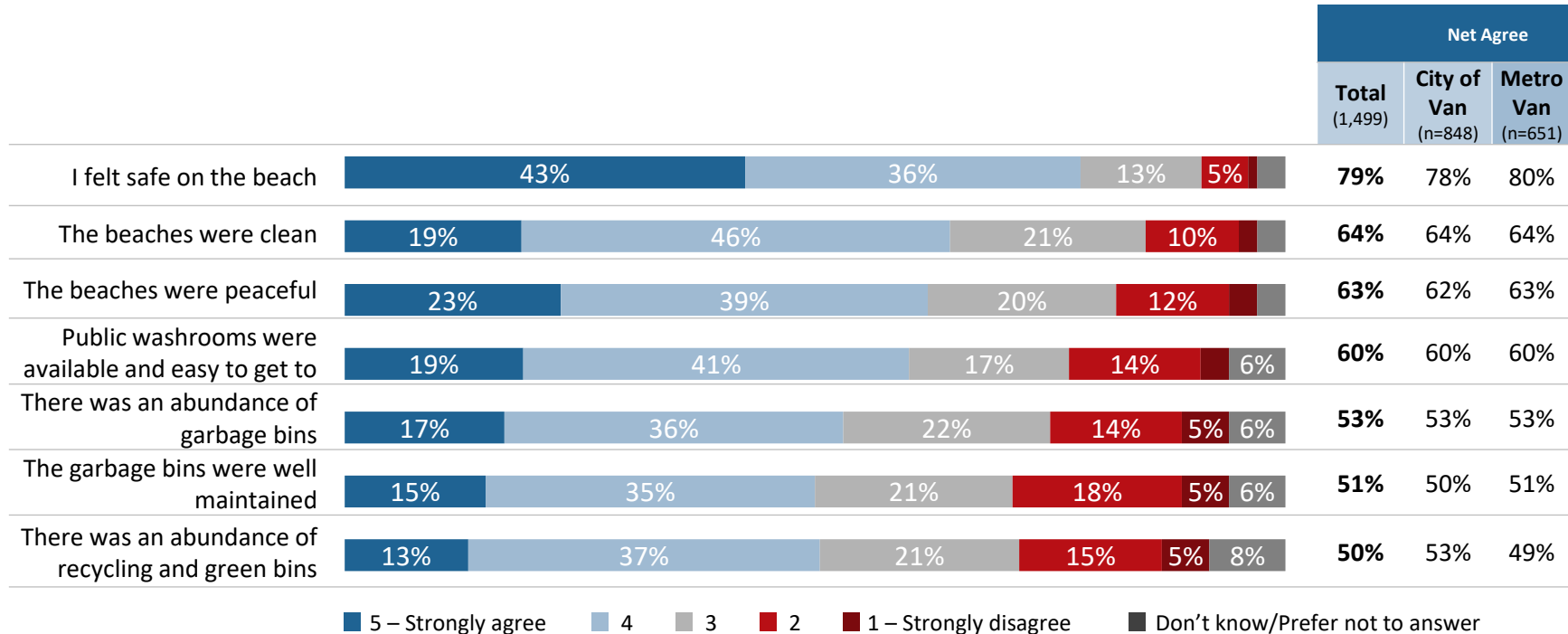
Q2. What activities do you typically engage in when you visit the city of Vancouver's beaches, if any?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group.



# BEACH EXPERIENCE IN SUMMER 2023 (POSITIVE EXPERIENCES)

Beachgoers had mostly positive experiences during the summer of 2023. *I felt safe on the beach* (79%) was the most agreed with experience selected by beachgoers followed by *the beaches were clean* and *the beaches were peaceful*.

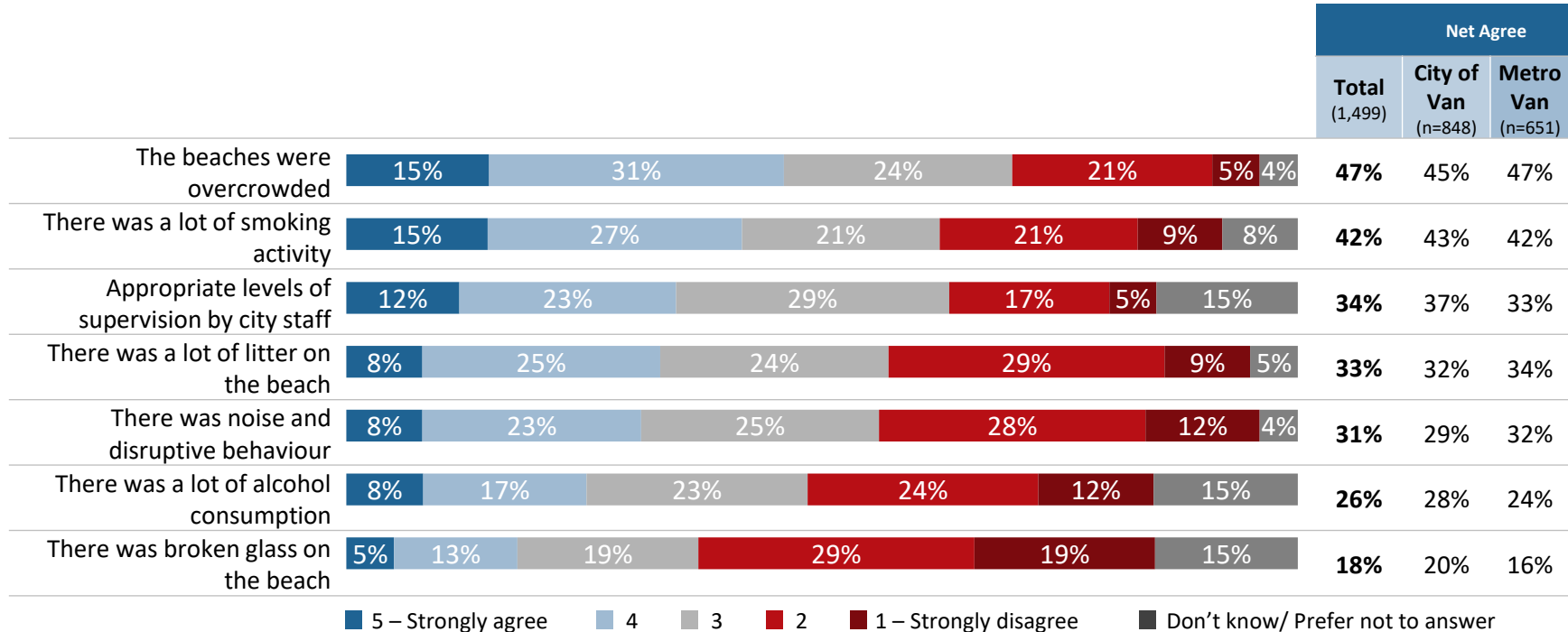


Base: Those who visited a beach in the city of Vancouver this past summer respondents (n=1,499)  
 Q4. Based on your overall experience at Vancouver's beaches this past summer, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? \*3% and less not shown



# BEACH EXPERIENCE IN SUMMER 2023 (NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES)

Although many beachgoers had a positive experience, nearly one-half (47%) felt the beaches were overcrowded, and around one-third thought *there was a lot of litter* (33%) and *noise/disruptive behaviour* (31%). One-quarter (26%) felt there was *a lot of alcohol consumption*.



Base: Those who visited a beach in the city of Vancouver this past summer respondents (n=1,499)  
 Q4. Based on your overall experience at Vancouver's beaches this past summer, how much do you agree or disagree with the following? \*3% and less not shown

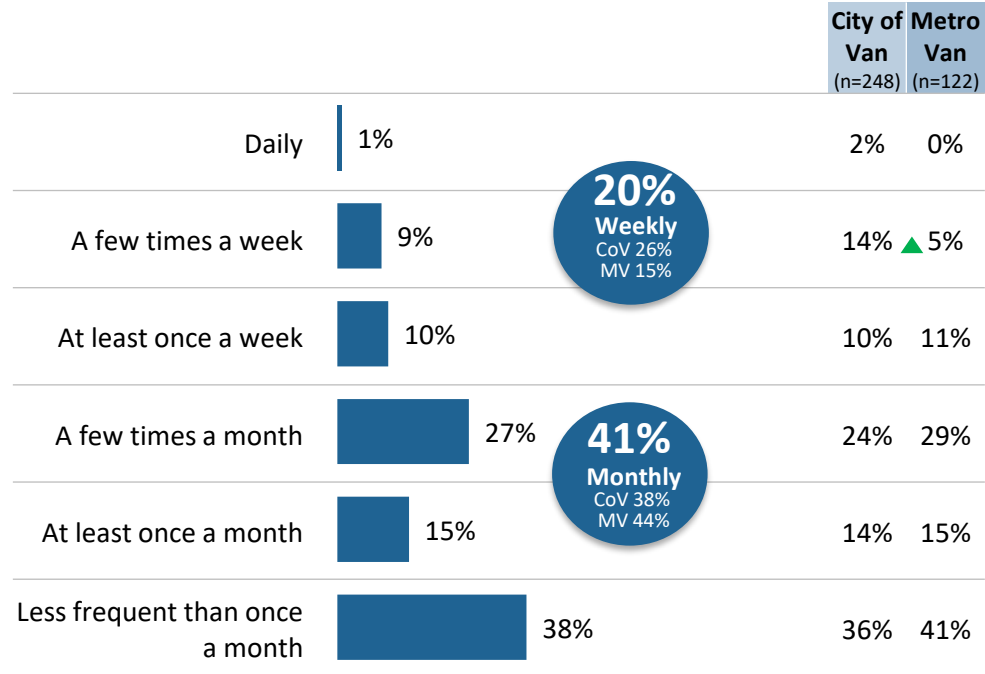
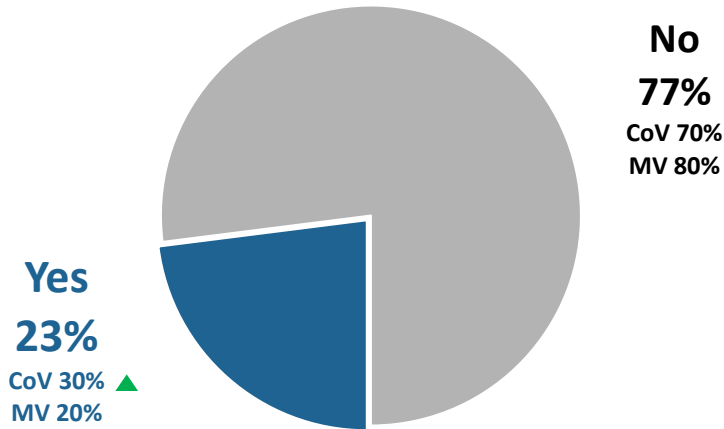


# Alcohol on Beaches

# ALCOHOL ON BEACHES IN SUMMER 2023

Nearly one-quarter (23%) of summer 2023 beachgoers consumed alcohol, increasing to three in ten for those who live in the city of Vancouver, those under 55, and those with children. Of those who consumed alcohol on beaches, two in ten (20%) did so at least once a week and six in ten (62%) at least once a month.

## Drank Alcohol on Beaches



Base: Those who visited a beach in summer 2023 (n=1,499)/ Those who drank alcohol on the beach this past summer (n=370)

Q5. Did you drink alcohol on the city of Vancouver's beaches this past summer?

Q5a. How often did you drink alcohol on Vancouver's beaches this past summer?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group.

# ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION AND OUTDOOR SPACES

City of Vancouver residents who consumed alcohol on a beach during the summer of 2023 tend to do so more frequently (a few times a week) than those who live in other Metro Vancouver municipalities. There were no significant differences between alcohol consumption frequency and residents' available private outdoor space.

	TOTAL	City of Vancouver	Metro Vancouver	Backyard	Rooftop/Large Balcony	Small Balcony	No outdoor space
n=	(370)	(248)	(122)	(176)	(55)	(93)	(46)*
Daily	1%	2%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%
A few times a week	9%	14% ▲	5%	11%	4%	8%	9%
At least once a week	10%	10%	11%	12%	16%	4%	7%
A few times a month	27%	24%	29%	23%	33%	35%	18%
At least once a month	15%	14%	15%	16%	8%	14%	18%
Less frequent than once a month	38%	36%	41%	35%	39%	39%	48%
<b>Net Weekly</b>	20%	26%	15%	25%	20%	12%	16%
<b>Net Monthly</b>	41%	38%	44%	40%	41%	49%	36%

Base: Those who drank alcohol on the beach this past summer (n=370)

Q5a. How often did you drink alcohol on Vancouver's beaches this past summer?

\* Caution small base size

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.

# BENEFIT OF ALLOWING ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

An affordable option to socialize, a nice setting to socialize or enjoy alone, being treated like an adult, and more spaces to socialize are the top four benefits seen by Metro Vancouver residents for allowing alcohol on beaches. Nearly one-quarter (23%) feel there are no benefits to allowing alcohol on beaches, an opinion more likely to be held by women (28%) and those aged 55+ (30%).

		City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
An affordable option to socialize	45%	45%	45%
Nice setting to socialize or enjoy alone	44%	45%	44%
Being treated like an adult	41%	38%	43%
More spaces to socialize	39%	39%	39%
More opportunities for alcohol with food	31%	29%	31%
Convenient and easy, no reservation	29%	30%	28%
Not being surveilled by law enforcement	26%	24%	27%
Safer consuming alcohol in visible spaces	21%	19%	22%
More locations to consume alcohol	16%	16%	15%
Other	1%	1%	1%
No benefits	23%	20%	24%

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

Q11. In general, what do you think are the benefits of allowing alcohol on beaches?

▲ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group.

# DRAWBACKS OF ALLOWING ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

The top drawbacks selected by Metro Vancouver residents in allowing alcohol on beaches are *attracts rowdy/loud/disruptive visitors, an increase in litter/waste on beaches, underage drinking, and concern for personal safety*. Less than one in ten (6%) feel there are no drawbacks to allowing alcohol on beaches.

		City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
Attracts rowdy/loud/disruptive visitors	52%	49%	53%
Increase in litter/waste on beaches	48%	47%	48%
Underage drinking	43%	31%	48% ▲
Concern for personal safety	38%	34%	40% ▲
Increased noise	20%	23%	19%
Concern for aquatic safety	20%	18%	21%
Concern for the general health of people	12%	15%	11%
Increased visitation to the beaches	4%	5%	3%
Other	1%	1%	1%
No drawbacks	6%	8%	6%

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

Q12. In general, what do you think are the drawbacks of allowing alcohol on beaches?

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.



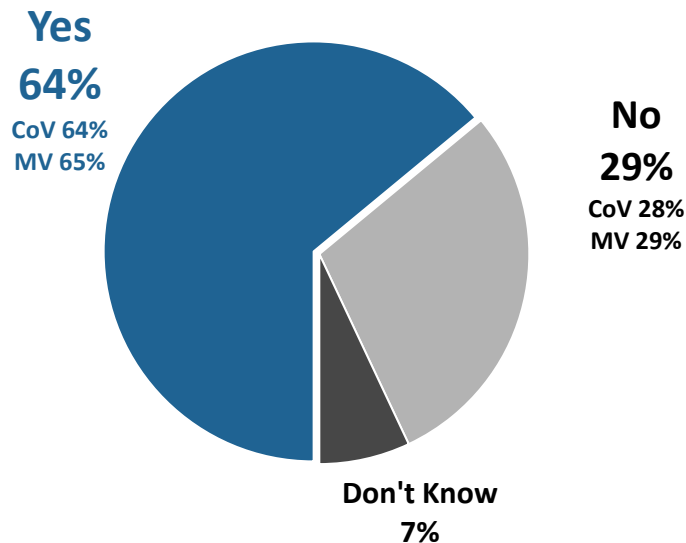
A scenic sunset over a beach. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The sun is a bright, glowing orb on the horizon. In the foreground, the silhouettes of people are visible on the beach, and several sailboats are scattered across the water. A large, dark, abstract shape, possibly a person's head or a piece of equipment, is in the center foreground, partially obscuring the view.

# Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program

# ALCOHOL ON BEACHES PILOT PROGRAM: AWARENESS

Nearly two-thirds (64%) are aware of the Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program, with one-half of those aware hearing about the pilot on TV. Awareness through TV is higher for those who live in Metro Vancouver municipalities outside of the city of Vancouver, while awareness through social media, word of mouth, park signage, and park rangers is higher for the city of Vancouver residents.

## Aware of the Pilot



## How did you hear about the pilot?

		City of Van (n=721)	Metro Van (n=648)
TV	50%	43%	53% ▲
Social media	30%	36% ▲	27%
Radio	23%	19%	24%
Word of mouth	20%	28% ▲	17%
Signage in the park	11%	22% ▲	7%
Newspaper	3%	3%	3%
Park Rangers/ VPD	2%	4% ▲	1%
Other	2%	2%	2%
Unsure	4%	4%	4%

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)/ All those who are aware (n=1,369)

Q6. Have you heard about the city of Vancouver's Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Program, that ran from June 1st to September 4th this past summer?

Q7. How did you hear about the pilot?



# ALCOHOL ON BEACHES NOT INCLUDED IN THE PILOT

The 23% of people who drank on beaches during the Summer of 2023 were asked “If you drank alcohol on beaches that were **not** included in the pilot, why?”. The main reasons for consuming alcohol on beaches **not included** in the pilot was that they *didn't think it was a big deal* and because *everyone does it*.

One-quarter of those who drank alcohol on beaches say they only did so on beaches that were part of the pilot--women were more likely to select this (37%, men 14%).

		City of Van (n=248)	Metro Van (n=122)
I didn't think it was a big deal	38%	37%	39%
Others were drinking alcohol/everyone does it	30%	31%	29%
I wasn't aware that drinking alcohol was not allowed on ALL beaches	25%	25%	25%
I was not aware of any legal consequences	23%	15%	30% ▲
The signage on the beach was not visible or understandable	10%	10%	10%
Other	2%	5%	1%
I didn't drink alcohol on beaches that were not part of the pilot	24%	22%	26%

Base: Those who drank alcohol on the beach this past summer (n=370)

Q8. If you drank alcohol on beaches that were not included in the pilot (e.g. English Bay, Sunset Beach, Third Beach), why did you do so? \*Don't know less than 1%

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.

# ALCOHOL ON BEACHES INCLUDED IN THE PILOT

The 23% of people who drank on beaches during the Summer of 2023 were asked ““If you only drank alcohol on beaches that were included in the pilot, why?”. The main reasons summer 2023 beachgoers consumed alcohol on beaches **included** in the pilot were *by chance, it was my preferred or local beach* and because they *generally follow the rules/law*.

Nearly two in ten (18%) of those who drank on city of Vancouver beaches did not do so on beaches which were in the pilot.

		City of Van (n=248)	Metro Van (n=122)
By chance, it was my preferred or local beach/ not due to the pilot	38%	39%	37%
Generally, I follow the rules/law	37%	37%	38%
Due to a potential ticket/fine from the VPD	12%	13%	11%
Due to getting a potential verbal warning from Park Rangers	10%	12%	7%
Due to Vancouver Police presence	6%	4%	8%
Other	1%	2%	0%
I didn't drink on beaches that were part of the pilot	18%	13%	22%

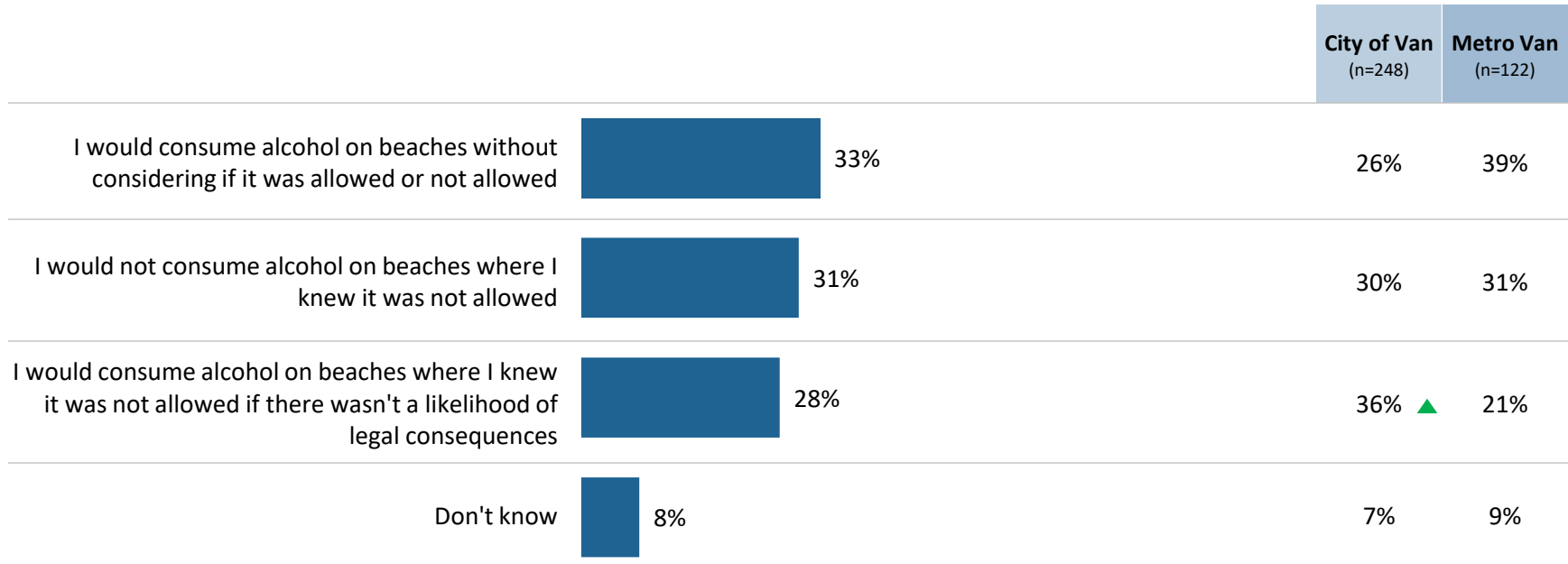
Base: Those who drank alcohol on the beach this past summer (n=370)

Q9. If you only drank alcohol on the beaches included in the pilot, why? \* Don't know 1%

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.

# DECISION TO DRINK ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

One-third (33%) of beachgoers who consumed alcohol hold the opinion that they would drink on beaches without considering if it was allowed or not and nearly three in ten (28%) would drink where it's not allowed if there wasn't a likelihood of legal consequences. On the other hand, almost one-third (31%) would not consume alcohol on beaches where they knew it was not allowed.



Base: Those who drank alcohol on the beach this past summer (n=370)

Q13. Which statement do you agree with most when thinking about your decision to drink alcohol on beaches?

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.

# FUTURE OF ALLOWING ALCOHOL ON BEACHES

All respondents were asked “if alcohol is permitted in the future on city of Vancouver beaches, which do you most agree with?” and they generally support allowing alcohol on beaches, as over one-third (35%) feel alcohol should only be allowed on beaches deemed suitable by the Park Board and another third (34%) feel alcohol should be allowed on all beaches. Nearly one-quarter (23%) believe it should not be allowed on any beaches; this proportion drops significantly lower (15%) for those under 35.

		City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
Alcohol should only be allowed on beaches deemed suitable by the Park Board	35%	32%	36%
Alcohol should be allowed on all beaches	34%	38%	33%
Alcohol should not be allowed on any beaches	23%	19%	24%
Alcohol should be allowed on all beaches except for...	1%	1%	1%
Don't know	8%	10%	7%

Base: All respondents (n=2,044)

Q10. The Alcohol on Beaches Pilot did not include all beaches.....If alcohol is permitted in the future on city of Vancouver beaches, which of the following would you agree with most?

▲ Statistically significantly **higher** than comparison group.



RESPONDENT PROFILE

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

	Total (n=2,044)	City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
<b>GENDER</b>			
Women	52%	52%	52%
Man	47%	46%	47%
Gender Diverse/ Non-binary	1%	2%	1%
<b>AGE</b>			
18 to 34	28%	32% ▲	26%
35 to 54	32%	33%	32%
55+	40%	34%	42% ▲
<b>Region – City of Vancouver</b>			
Downtown Vancouver	-	31%	-
Vancouver West	-	19%	-
Vancouver East	-	29%	-
Vancouver South	-	20%	-

	Total (n=2,044)	City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
<b>REGION</b>			
City of Vancouver	28%	100%	-
Surrey/White Rock	21%	-	29%
Burnaby/New Westminster	14%	-	19%
Richmond	6%	-	9%
Northeast Region	9%	-	12%
Langley/Langley Township/ Aldergrove	8%	-	11%
North Shore	4%	-	6%
Pitt Meadows/Maple Ridge	6%	-	8%
Delta	3%	-	4%
University Endowment Lands	2%	-	2%

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

	Total (n=2,044)	City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
<b># IN HOUSEHOLD</b>			
1	23%	32% ▲	20%
2	36%	33%	37%
3	16%	13%	17% ▲
4	16%	14%	16%
5+	9%	8%	9%
<b>CHILDREN &lt;19 LIVING IN HOUSEHOLD</b>			
Yes	26%	24%	27%
No	73%	75%	72%
<b>EDUCATION</b>			
High school or less	51%	42%	54% ▲
Post-secondary	27%	30%	26%
Graduate/Post-graduate	17%	21%	16%
Other	1%	2%	1%
Prefer not to answer	4%	3%	5%

	Total (n=2,044)	City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
<b>ETHNICITY</b>			
Caucasian/European	58%	47%	62% ▲
Chinese	19%	27% ▲	15%
South Asian	8%	8%	8%
Indigenous /First Nations/Metis	4%	3%	4%
Southeast Asian	3%	6% ▲	3%
Latin American	2%	3%	2%
Japanese	2%	1%	2%
West Asian	2%	2%	1%
Korean	2%	1%	2%
Black	1%	1%	1%
Arab	1%	2%	<1%
Other	1%	2%	1%
Prefer not to answer	4%	3%	5%

Base: All respondents. \*Prefer not to answer 1% or less not show

# RESPONDENT PROFILE

	Total (n=2,044)	City of Van (n=1,031)	Metro Van (n=1,013)
<b>Outdoor Space*</b>			
Backyard of a single-family detached house	39%	35%	40%
Backyard of a duplex/townhouse	17%	10%	20% ▲
Rooftop deck/balcony of a duplex/townhouse	5%	7%	5%
Large (more than 120 square feet) balcony of an apartment building	6%	7%	6%
Small (less than 120 square feet) balcony of an apartment building	20%	20%	20%
Do not have access to a private or shared outdoor space	13%	20% ▲	10%
<b>DISABILITY</b>			
No, I do not have a disability	85%	87%	83%
Yes, I have a disability/disabilities that <b>do not</b> impact my mobility	9%	6%	9%
Yes, I have a disability/disabilities that impact my mobility	5%	4%	6%
Prefer not to answer	2%	3%	1%
<b>HOUSEHOLD INCOME</b>			
<\$50K	23%	26%	22%
\$50K to <\$100K	34%	33%	34%
\$100K+	29%	28%	30%
Prefer not to answer	14%	12%	14%

Base: All respondents

▲ Statistically significantly higher than comparison group.\*



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**APPENDIX B**

**2024 Alcohol on Beaches Pilot Locations**

Included	Excluded
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Jericho Beach</li><li>- John Hendry</li><li>- Kitsilano Beach</li><li>- Locarno Beach</li><li>- New Brighton</li><li>- Spanish Banks</li><li>- Stanley Park Second Beach</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- English Bay Beach</li><li>- Sunset Beach</li><li>- Crab Park Beach</li><li>- Beaches along the Fraser River</li></ul>

Note that these are the same included and excluded locations as the 2023 pilot.