



Report Date: April 26, 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: Monstercat Compound – Special Event

### Recommendations

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve an application from Monstercat to host the Monstercat Compound special event at Jonathan Rogers Park on Saturday, August 24, 2024, from 2:00 to 10:00pm, with all arrangements to the satisfaction of the General Manager of the Park Board.
- B. THAT the Park Board approve an application from Monstercat for a Special Event Permit from the BC Liquor & Cannabis Regulation Branch to serve alcohol at the aforementioned location and dates, with a maximum capacity of 6,000 guests.

### PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

The Monstercat Compound is a one-day festival-style event proposed for Jonathan Rogers Park, in the heart of Vancouver's Mount Pleasant neighbourhood. Originally introduced as a block party for the company's employees and neighbors, the Monstercat Compound features live music, art installations, beer gardens, food trucks, vendor village, interactive technology, and gaming exhibits. The proposed event brings together local and international talent, a variety of vendors, art and technology activations by local and global artists, collectives, non-profit organizations as well as well-known brands such as Red Bull, Skullcandy, and Canucks Sports & Entertainment.

The organizer of the festival, Monstercat, is seeking approval to host this event at Jonathan Rogers Park on August 24, 2024. The purpose of this report is to present the Monstercat Compound event to the Park Board, review the event organizers' application to use Jonathan Rogers Park, and seek the Board's approval for this request.

### BOARD AUTHORITY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS

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.

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 October 19, 2020, the Park Board approved the [VanPlay Framework](#), for Vancouver's [Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan](#). VanPlay sets out priorities and provides tools and policies to support the pursuit of equity, connectivity and access to parks and recreation for all. The Framework provides a succinct method for referencing and implementing VanPlay directions. The Monstercat Compound supports and aligns with VanPlay's directions to "Welcome Everyone" (parks and recreation experiences that improve quality of life) and "Weave the City Together" (parks, nature, recreation and culture integrated into everyday life).

On December 5, 2022, the Board [directed staff to lift the moratorium on new commercial event initiatives in Vancouver parks](#), and communicate the 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 validated the preliminary revenue-generating opportunities presented in Appendix D, which included activating public spaces and hosting new corporate and commercial special events.

## CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

### Monstercat Event

The Monstercat Compound festival has been held annually since 2017 (with the exception of 2020 due to the pandemic) in Railtown within Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, where Monstercat's headquarters was located until December 2023. Originally introduced as a block party for the company's employees and neighbors, the Monstercat Compound has grown into a festival-style event featuring live music, art installations, beer gardens, food trucks, vendor village, and interactive technology and gaming exhibits. The festival brings together local and international talent, a variety of vendors, art and technology activations by local and global artists, collectives, non-profit organizations as well as well-known brands such as Red Bull, Skullcandy, and Canucks Sports & Entertainment.

The festival will support the local economy by boosting the presence of neighbourhood businesses through on-site activations and online marketing campaigns. Local vendors will be invited to showcase their businesses through creative activations on the festival grounds and online using Monstercat's platform and festival networks.

The event will also support local charities through online donations, on-site awareness building and promotional activities (select local charities will also be provided booth space inside the festival grounds at no cost).

### Monstercat

Monstercat is an independent record label that specializes in electronic music. Founded in Waterloo, Ontario in 2011, Monstercat has since expanded its footprint globally with offices in Vancouver, Los Angeles and Singapore. Backed by passionate employees, driven artists, and the dedication of fans worldwide, Monstercat has successfully established themselves in the music industry as an independent label and made its mark in the industry landscape. Monstercat was involved in 35 events across 17 countries in 2023, including partnerships with Tomorrowland Belgium, World DJ Festival Korea, Imagine Music Festival USA, Amsterdam Dance Event, and

Les Mills x Adidas Fitness Live Los Angeles.

The Monstercat Compound is produced in partnership with Blueprint Events, one of the foremost producers of live music in western Canada. Their event properties include Celebrities Nightclub, FVDED In The Park, Contact Music Festival, and Badlands Calgary.

### **Festival Location**

Jonathan Rogers Park is located in Vancouver's Mount Pleasant neighbourhood, bounded by Cambie Street, Main Street and Broadway in a largely industrial/commercially zoned region of the city. The park features a playing field, playground, fieldhouse, and a community garden. The park is also frequented by dog owners and visitors who take advantage of the sloped grass area to take in the views of the North Shore mountains.

Jonathan Rogers Park has successfully hosted a variety of special events since 2018, including:

- Carnaval del Sol; cultural event; 15,000 attendance over 3 days; July 2022
- Pride Fest; community event; 2,200 attendance; August 2021
- The Park Show; music concert; 5,500 attendance; August 2019
- Mural Festival Celebration Concert; music concert; 5,500 attendance; August 2018

These initiatives were well-received and have established Jonathan Rogers Park as a desirable special event location.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Event Proposal**

The organizer of Monstercat Compound, Monstercat, is seeking approval to deliver a ticketed and licensed, 19+ event at Jonathan Rogers Park on Saturday, August 24, from 2:00 to 10:00pm. The festival will feature live music, art installations, beer gardens, food trucks, vendor village, and interactive technology & gaming exhibits. Capacity for the festival will be capped at 6,000 guests. A preliminary site plan for the event is provided in Appendix A.

The event will require a modest fee from the entrants in order to offset the costs of delivering the event. Pricing is yet to be finalized, but it is estimated that general admission tickets will be in the \$20 to \$25 range per person. The organizer intends to keep the ticket price as low as possible in the spirit of their tradition, which originally started as an admission free community event.

The organizer will also offer free tickets through a partnership with the Unitea mobile app, which allows users to earn free tickets by streaming and sharing music released by artists performing at the festival.

The event is a self-sustaining initiative, with ticket sales and sponsorship expected to cover the event delivery costs. All expenses related to the delivery and execution of the festival will be borne by the event organizer, including the site remediation costs if applicable.

The event has received preliminary support of the FEST Committee (Festival Expediting Staff Team), subject to Board approval and sign-off on operational plans.

### **Event Set-Up/Tear-Down**

Set-up for the event will begin on Friday, August 23, 2024, to prepare the event site for the festival on Saturday, August 24, 2024. Tear-down will be completed by the morning of Sunday, August 25, 2024.

A post-event restoration plan for the event site (if required), with expenses to be covered by the organizer, would be implemented to ensure the fields are ready for use after load-out.

### **Compliance with Park Board By-Laws**

Consistent with all events taking place in Park Board spaces, the event organizer would be responsible for attendee compliance with applicable Park Board by-laws. Accordingly, a robust plan will be developed and implemented to inform and enforce by-laws.

Key plan elements would include, but not be limited to, advance notification/communications, on-site signage, stage announcements, and Park Ranger oversight. Staff would also work with the organizer's security team, the Vancouver Police Department, and Park Rangers to ensure the plan is delivered successfully.

### **Transportation & Traffic Management Plan**

Jonathan Rogers Park is easily accessible by public transit, including the Canada Line and also by alternative modes of transportation, such as cycling, walking and rideshare services. The surrounding streets, West 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Columbia, and Manitoba Streets will be closed off for the duration of the festival to support the event activations, and safe and efficient access to and from the event site.

The event organizer will develop an integrated transportation and traffic management plan to ensure efficient and effective ingress/egress to/from the venue and to mitigate any potential public safety concerns and neighbourhood impacts. This plan will be developed in collaboration with the FEST Committee (Festival Expediting Staff Team) and supporting agencies.

### **Event Benefits**

Staff recognize that sensitivities and concerns exist when access to public spaces is restricted, and as a result, consider all requests of this nature very carefully. Staff are supportive of pursuing this initiative due to the significant benefits that would accrue to the public, the Park Board, and community partners, including:

- New placemaking and community building opportunity that engages residents, visitors and local businesses, through dynamic and interactive programming;
- Collaboration and support for local artists and artisans;
- Collaboration and support with community partners and charities;
- Promotion of Mount Pleasant neighbourhood as a place to connect, celebrate community spirit, and support local economic activity; and
- Generation of important incremental revenues that can be used to support Vancouver's parks and recreation system and donations to support community services.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Subject to Board approval, Park Board staff will work with the organizer to finalize the financial terms and conditions for the use of Jonathan Rogers Park in a manner consistent with the Park Board's annual Fees & Charges framework. As noted earlier in the report, all expenses related to the delivery and execution of this event will be borne by the event organizer; accordingly, there will be no costs to the Park Board related to this initiative.

## **OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Neighbourhood Impact**

The festival has the support of the Mount Pleasant BIA and nearby independent businesses that welcome the event as an opportunity to showcase and add vibrancy to the community. The local Mount Pleasant Residents Association is not currently active; however, the event organizer will ensure that event notification is conducted in a timely manner and take effective action to mitigate any potential impacts to area residents.

### **Fieldhouse, Washrooms & Community Garden**

The fieldhouse, washrooms and community garden at Jonathan Rogers Park will all remain outside the festival fence line in order to maintain public access. Additional details include:

- The fieldhouse is currently home to the Park Board's arts and social engagement residency program, The Fig Tree Palace, led by the New Page Foundation. The event has the support of the residency program;
- In order to prevent overuse, the park's washrooms will be closed; the organizer will be required to provide portable toilets to offset the park's washroom closure; and
- The event has the support of the community garden program.

### **Playground & Field**

The playground and playing field will be left open for as long as safely possible during event set-up and tear-down to minimize impact on park users. The playground will remain open and accessible throughout the event.

### **Field User Group**

There are two field user groups with historical bookings at Jonathan Rogers Park over the course of the festival. Little Kickers, a pre-school soccer academy, has agreed to relocate its booking on August 24 to Hinge Park to accommodate the event. The Vancouver Architecture Softball League's evening field booking on Monday, August 26, will not be impacted since festival structures and equipment will be removed from the park on the morning on Sunday, August 25.

### **Future Festivals**

Consistent with current practices, the event will be subject to a detailed review and a Board report back before future events are scheduled and/or added to the annual Calendar of Major Special Events.

## **CONCLUSION & NEXT STEPS**

The Monstercat Compound is a new addition to the exciting series of community events planned for Jonathan Rogers Park in summer 2024. The festival welcomes Vancouverites and visitors to Mount Pleasant and engages local businesses to support a new community-building and placemaking initiative. The festival will enhance civic vibrancy, foster community connectedness, and provide enriching cultural experiences. The Monstercat Compound will also showcase Jonathan Rogers Park as a strategically located event space in one of Vancouver's most vibrant and fastest growing neighbourhoods.

Park Board staff have carefully considered the various aspects of this application and are confident that this initiative can be executed successfully and as intended. Accordingly, staff recommend that the Board approve this application as outlined above.

APPENDIX A

MONSTERCAT COMPOUND – PRELIMINARY SITE PLAN

