



Report Date: February 26, 2025

VanRIMS No.: 08-3000-30

[Submit comments to the Board](#)

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: Director, Strategic Operations and Board Relations
SUBJECT: Park Board Flag and Illumination Policy

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation approve the Park Board Flag and Illumination Policy, as outlined in this Report, and attached as Appendix A.
- B. THAT the Vancouver Park Board delegate authority to the General Manager to make any further decisions to alter or amend the policy to include any additional programmable commemorative lighting infrastructure as they may be added to the Park Board system.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

To clarify and ensure that written policy accurately reflects longstanding practice and provide consistent direction to staff with respect to the protocol and management of flags flown under Park Board jurisdiction.

BOARD AUTHORITY / PREVIOUS DECISIONS

As 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.

On May 16, 2023, per [Board direction](#), three flags representing the Host Nations of xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) were permanently raised at Brockton Point in Stanley Park.

There is currently no Park Board Policy pertaining to flags flown under Park Board jurisdiction, or the illumination of Bloedel Conservatory. Should this policy be approved, subsequent changes to the policy would require Board approval.

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

Vancouver City Council approved an initial Flag Policy on October 8, 2002; the policy was most recently amended in September and November, 2024, resulting in the current [Civic Protocol Policy \(COUN-009 \(formerly known as the Flag Policy\)\)](#).

Without a policy of its own, Park Board staff take guidance from the City's Civic Protocol Policy, to guide decisions related to flags and the illumination of Bloedel conservatory.

The draft policy is in line with Council's [Civic Protocol Policy](#)

DISCUSSION

Flags, particularly those representing a nation, province, or city, embody the honour and pride of the people they represent, and therefore it is important that they be treated equally and with respect.

Canadian Flags within Park Board Jurisdiction

This policy is intended to cover locations under Park Board jurisdiction that fly the Canadian flag and is being introduced to ensure that written policy accurately reflects longstanding practice, thereby providing clear guidelines for the management of flags under Park Board jurisdiction.

This policy does not apply to flags on “flag islands” which are overseen by Engineering Services and adheres to the City’s Civic Protocol Policy.

Half-masting of the Canadian Flag

To half-mast a flag, the flag is first raised to the masthead and immediately lowered slowly to the half-mast position. Half-masting of the Canadian flag is a symbol of mourning or in observance of a significant occasion. This well-established practice is exercised to bestow honour and express a collective sense of sorrow.

Requests related to Flags

The policy provides the Board with opportunity to pass a motion and direct staff to change a flag. The policy also provides the Host Nations opportunity to request the same.

Illumination of Bloedel Conservatory

Aspects of the policy related to the illumination of the Bloedel Conservatory are intended to align with current staff practice, which generally aligns with events taking place at the conservatory or in coordination with Council-approved [official celebrations and observances](#).

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

There are no financial implications associated with this report’s recommendations.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

Approving the attached policy will assist in clarifying and confirming established staff practice as well as provide consistent direction to staff with respect to the protocol and management of flags flown under Park Board jurisdiction and the illumination of the Bloedel Conservatory.

* * * * *

APPENDIX A

PROPOSED PARK BOARD FLAG AND ILLUMINATION POLICY

POLICY TITLE	DRAFT Park Board Flag and Illumination Policy
POLICY NUMBER	<i>To be assigned</i>
POLICY OWNER	Park Board General Manager's Office
ACCESS	Public

PURPOSE

To govern the flying of flags under the jurisdiction of the Board of Parks and Recreation, and the Illumination of the Bloedel Conservatory.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all flags flown by the Board of Parks and Recreation and the illumination of the Bloedel Conservatory.

This policy does not apply to flags flown on flag islands throughout the City which are overseen by Engineering Services.

This policy does not apply to the illumination of the Dancing Fountains at Queen Elizabeth Park Conservatory, which is overseen by Real Estate and Facilities Management.

INTERPRETATION

All references in this policy to an employee, elected official, or other representative of the Board of Parks and Recreation, is deemed to include any person authorized in writing by the General Manager of Parks and Recreation to act in that person's position.

Where a position title is changed following the adoption of this policy, the Park Board General Manager will have authority to amend this policy to reflect such change or reorganization.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1 General Flag Etiquette

- 1.1 The Canadian Flag shall always be displayed in the position of priority:
- When flags are displayed at the same height, the Canadian flag is flown on the left as seen by the observer of the flags.
 - In a line of three flags, the Canadian flag should be in the centre.
 - When flags are displayed on an angle such that the centre flag is higher than the other flags, the Canadian flag is flown in the centre.

- 1.2 It is acceptable to fly the Canadian flag at night.
-
- 1.3 The flags of the x^wməθk^wəy̓ əm (Musqueam), S^kwx̄wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliiwətaʔ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations will be flown permanently on the three tall poles located at Brockton Point in Stanley Park.

2 Half-masting

2.1 Flags are flown at half-mast as a sign of mourning. The flag is brought to the half-mast position by raising it to the top of the mast and immediately lowering it slowly to half-mast. When one flag is flown at half-mast, all flags flown together should also be at half-mast.

2.2 All Canadian flags that are displayed on flagpoles with halyards will be flown at half-mast, when operationally feasible on the following occasions:

- On the death of a Sovereign or a member of the Royal Family related in the first degree to the Sovereign, the Governor General, the Prime Minister, a former governor general, a former prime minister, or a federal cabinet minister;
- On the death of the Lieutenant Governor or the Premier;
- On the death of a Member of the House of Commons or a Member of the Legislative Assembly when that member represents a Vancouver riding;
- On the death of the Mayor, former Mayor, a current Vancouver City Councillor or a former City Councillor;
- On the death of a current Park Board Commissioner or a former Park Board Commissioner;
- On the death of a Vancouver city employee when their death has occurred as a direct result of performing their duties;
- On the Commemoration of the Battle of Vimy Ridge (April 9);
- On the Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace (April 28);
- On the National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism (June 23);
- On the Firefighters' National Memorial Day (second Sunday in September);
- On the Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day (the last Sunday in September);
- On the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (September 30);
- On the Indigenous Veterans Day (November 8);
- On Remembrance Day (November 11) from 11 a.m. until sunset;
- On the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6);
- Upon the request of a representative from x^wməθk^wəy̓ əm, S^kwx̄wú7mesh, or səliiwətaʔ Nations' Councils;
- On the death of any person or persons or event as identified by an approved Board motion, as a symbolic gesture of community mourning.

2.3 In the case of a death, flags shall be flown at half-mast from the notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral, or from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service or on a designated day as directed by the City Clerk’s Office, External Relations and Protocol.

2.4 In the event of a death or a recognition not specified in this policy, the Park Board will follow the direction of the City of Vancouver.

2.5 When half-masting has been deemed appropriate based on 2.2 or 2.4 above, the Park Board General Manager or designate will notify relevant internal and external stakeholders and provide advice to City Departments/Business Units on matters regarding flags.

3 Responsibility and Maintenance of Flags

3.1 The decision to display the flag of another sovereign nation during visits by dignitaries shall rest with the discretion of the Park Board General Manager.

3.2 Maintenance of flags flown under Park Board jurisdiction are the responsibility of Park Operations.

3.3 The Canadian Flag will fly on the pole on the southwest side of the Park Board Administration Building. A Board motion is required to change this flag.

4 Illumination of Bloedel Conservatory

4.1 The illumination of the Bloedel Conservatory will be at the discretion of the Park Board General Manager, or designate, and may include important events and cultural occasions eligible for Illumination, such as, but not limited to:

- Ongoing, annual official celebrations and observances as approved by City Council.
- Coincide with scheduled events at the Conservatory.
- Requests submitted by xʷməθkʷəy̓ əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tseil-Waututh) Nations.

RELATED POLICIES

Civic Protocol Policy [COUN-009](#)

APPROVAL AND REVIEW HISTORY:

Version 1 approved by:	Board of Parks and Recreation	Click here to enter a date.
------------------------	-------------------------------	-----------------------------

Next review date

Click here to enter a date. *[three years after approval]*