

## MEMORANDUM

July 18, 2019

TO : Mayor, Council & Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Sadhu A. Johnston – City Manager, City of Vancouver  
Malcolm Bromley – General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks & Recreation

SUBJECT : **Impacts and Costs of 2019 4/20 Cannabis Protests**

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The purpose of this memo is to provide Mayor and Council and Park Board Commissioners with an overview of the cannabis protest events that took place at Sunset Beach Park on April 20, 2019, including costs incurred for public safety operations.

### OVERVIEW

4/20 is the name adopted by cannabis-legalization protest events that occur annually around the world on April 20. In Vancouver, these events were traditionally held at the Vancouver Art Gallery commencing in 1995. Due to space constraints and associated public safety issues, as well as redevelopment of the Art Gallery north plaza, organizers relocated the primary event to Sunset Beach Park starting in 2016.

Similar to past years, the 2019 4/20 protest events were conducted without permits from either the City of Vancouver or the Vancouver Park Board. However, due to the size and impact of the protests, the City, Park Board, and Vancouver Police Department were compelled to undertake significant public safety planning and operations. In addition, in order to reduce impacts on neighboring residents and ensure a more orderly load-in with the objective of decreasing park damage, the Park Board allowed organizers to set up large equipment and infrastructure the day prior to the event (April 19).

On April 20, 2019, the Vancouver Police Department estimated that 55,000 people were present at Sunset Beach Park at the peak of the protest. Furthermore, it is estimated that there were approximately 204 vendor tents at the event.

The VPD had no major incidents at Sunset Beach and report the following:

- One fight occurred with one of the combatants being hospitalized
- Pepper spray was released on the beach creating panic, but luckily only one party required treatment by EHS for self-exposure to that spray
- Several gang groups were checked in the area, including two Full Patch wearing Hells Angels members that walked through the vending area
- Liquor consumption was more prevalent than previous years

## IMPACTS

The following tables summarize the number of complaints received via 3-1-1, parking enforcement actions and medical responses at the two protest locations. Additional impacts of the event included diminished air quality, amplified noise/music, traffic disruption, public service disruption and restricted access to the seawall adjacent to Sunset Beach. The grass field at Sunset Beach Park also sustained damage and was closed for over five weeks.

### Complaints to 311

Site	2017	2018	2019
Sunset Beach Park	60	53	96
Vancouver Art Gallery	9	2	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>99</b>

Trends in the feedback included:

- Concern that the City is not enforcing its bylaws (i.e. permitting, noise, use of park space); unsure why this event is given leniency
- The organizers' defense of the event as a protest has been rendered ineffective now that cannabis has been legalized
- Noise, particularly from live music at the Sunset Beach event
- Smoke
- Suggestions that the City should take measures to deter or physically stop the Sunset Beach event, including:
  - Manure on the field
  - Irrigation sprinklers
  - Fencing around the site
  - Having the VPD stop setup of the event, and/or to disperse attendees
- The event organizers should be paying costs (of cleanup, policing, etc.), especially since they are charging vendors for booth space

### Parking enforcement actions

Type of Parking Enforcement Action	2017	2018	2019
Total Bylaw tickets issued	320	209	234
• # of Vehicles towed	240	170	207
• # of tickets not marked for towing	80	39	27

### Medical response

Type of Medical Response	2017	2018	2019
Transport to St. Paul's Hospital	19	13	12
Treated by MedTech in 2017 & 2018 and Odyssey Medical in 2019 (the first aid providers contracted by the event organizers)	6	30	104
Subjects refused treatment	14	17	n/a
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>116</b>

## COSTS

As is the case with other large, unpermitted protest events, the City, Park Board and VPD incurred significant operational costs to maintain public safety during these initiatives. The costs associated with supporting the events are outlined in the table below.

Department	Sunset Beach Park Site			Vancouver Art Gallery Site			Total		
<b>Incremental Costs (e.g. materials, overtime, staff called-out for the event)</b>									
	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
Vancouver Park Board	\$34,630	\$37,554	\$48,003	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$34,630	\$37,554	\$48,003
Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services		\$18,023	\$17,014		\$0	\$0	\$11,760	\$18,023	\$17,014
Vancouver Police Department	\$127,245	\$139,699	\$162,321	\$43,425	\$44,968	\$17,076	\$170,670	\$184,667	\$179,397
Engineering (Streets, Traffic, Parking Enforcement & Sanitation)	\$5,760	\$11,285	\$11,385	\$20,189	\$17,205	\$8,054	\$25,949	\$28,490	\$19,439
Emergency Management	\$2,370	\$807	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,370	\$807	\$0
311			\$1,002					\$982	\$1,002
<b>Total incremental costs</b>							<b>\$245,379</b>	<b>\$270,523</b>	<b>\$264,855</b>
<b>Non-Incremental Costs (e.g. regular wages for staff redeployed from regular activities)</b>									
Vancouver Park Board	\$32,126	\$27,316	\$21,557	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$32,126	\$27,316	\$21,557
Vancouver Police Department			\$14,165			\$1,490	\$0	\$0	\$15,655
Engineering (Streets, Traffic, Parking Enforcement & Sanitation)	\$2,360	\$1,690	\$0	\$2,360	\$2,030	\$0	\$4,720	\$3,720	\$0
<b>Total non-incremental costs</b>							<b>\$36,846</b>	<b>\$31,036</b>	<b>\$37,212</b>
<b>Total Costs (combined incremental and non-incremental costs)</b>							<b>\$282,225</b>	<b>\$301,559</b>	<b>\$302,067</b>

Consistent with correspondence that was provided to the organizers in advance of the event, the Park Board has invoiced the organizers for their share of Sunset Beach event-related incremental and non-incremental expenses (including but not limited to the costs associated with restoring grass areas at Sunset Beach Park, staffing expenses, sanitation costs, lost revenues, etc.) in the amount of **\$69,560**.

The City of Vancouver has also invoiced the organizers for Sunset Beach event-related incremental staffing costs for Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services, Vancouver Police Department, Engineering Services (Streets, Traffic, Parking Enforcement & Sanitation) and 311, in the amount of **\$191,722**.

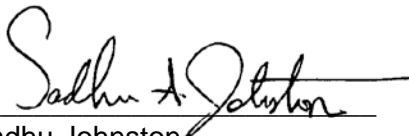
The Law Department is currently reviewing the City and Park Board's legal options for recovering these costs should the organizers fail to pay the invoices. Council and the Park Board will be informed of those options by way of an *in camera* memorandum.

## SUMMARY

While the City, Park Board and Vancouver Police Department have been successful in mitigating safety issues associated with the 4/20 protest events, the associated costs incurred by the City, Park Board, and VPD are significant as the scale of the event increases.

Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact either of us.

Regards,



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Malcolm Bromley  
GM, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation  
604.257.8448  
[malcolm.bromley@vancouver.ca](mailto:malcolm.bromley@vancouver.ca)

CC: City Manager's Correspondence Group  
Octavio Silva, Manager of Business Development, Park Board  
Deputy Chief Constable Howard Chow, Vancouver Police Department  
Tobin Postma, Director, Strategic Initiatives, City Manager's Office

July 18, 2019

Attention: Dana Larson & Jeremiah Vandermeer

Vancouver 420 Events Society  
307 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6B 1H6

**RE: Vancouver 420 Event at Sunset Beach Park**

### Invoice Details

**Incremental Staffing Costs For:**

Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services	\$	17,014
Vancouver Police Department	\$	162,321
Parking Enforcement	\$	1,024
Sanitation	\$	4,935
Traffic Operations	\$	5,426
311 Contact Centre	\$	1,002

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<b>Total Payable</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>191,722</b>
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**Payment of this invoice is due within 30 days.**

GST Number R121361042

**Mail cheque or money order payable to:**

City of Vancouver  
Attention: City Manager  
453 West 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V5Y 1V4



# INVOICE # 18220511

July 18, 2019

Attention: Dana Larson & Jeremiah Vandermeer

Vancouver 420 Events Society  
307 West Hastings Street  
Vancouver, BC  
V6B 1H6

**RE: Vancouver 420 Event at Sunset Beach Park**

## Invoice Details

### Lost Revenues (net of operating expenses):

Sunset Beach Park Concession	\$	264
Vancouver Aquatic Centre	\$	2,448
<i>Sub-Total Lost Revenues</i>	\$	<i>2,712</i>

### Incremental Costs For:

Materials/Supplies (light towers, field restoration, fencing rental, etc.)	\$	14,488
Vancouver Park Board Staffing	\$	17,223
City Protective Services	\$	4,280
Event Public Safety Plan	\$	9,300
<i>Sub-Total Incremental Costs</i>	\$	<i>45,291</i>

### Non-Incremental Costs For:

CUPE 15 & CUPE 1004 Staffing	\$	10,263
Exempt Staffing	\$	11,294
<i>Sub-Total Non-Incremental Costs</i>	\$	<i>21,557</i>

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<b>Total Payable</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>69,560</b>
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**Payment of this invoice is due within 30 days.**

GST Number R121361042

**Mail cheque or money order payable to:**  
City of Vancouver (c/o Vancouver Park Board)  
Attention: General Manager  
2099 Beach Avenue  
Vancouver, BC V6G 1Z4