



July 3, 2026

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Director, Park Planning and Development

SUBJECT : **Spanish Banks Creek Culvert Replacement - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

Between July and October 2026, a road and culvert project by the BC Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT) will replace the culvert that connects to the lower reaches of Spanish Banks Creek, located under NW Marine Drive, west of the City boundary and adjacent to Spanish Banks Park (see Appendix). This memo summarizes the ecological benefits of the project, the planned closure of a portion of Marine Drive from July 27 to September 30, and plans to mitigate impacts for park users, and park operations.

Project Purpose and Ecological Benefits

Spanish Banks Creek is a salmon-bearing stream. Following the heavy rains of November 2021, concerns were raised about the culvert's structural integrity, flood conveyance capacity, and ability to support salmon passage. BC MOTT plans to replace the existing culvert with a long-term solution that will improve flood conveyance and restore fish passage upstream of NW Marine Drive.

In conjunction with the culvert replacement work, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) will undertake habitat restoration works to improve salmon access from English Bay and the Spanish Banks Creek system. This work includes removing the accumulated sediment within the daylighted section of the creek downstream of the culvert.

The project will provide long-term ecological benefits for coho salmon and other wildlife species, including river otters and mink. Since 2001, coho salmon have returned to the creek to spawn, highlighting the ecological value of this urban watershed. The project also addresses public concerns regarding fish passage barriers within the Spanish Banks system following the 2021 atmospheric river event.

Project Schedule and Park Access Impacts

Construction is anticipated to occur between July 27 and September 30, 2026, with all in-stream works scheduled within the approved DFO fisheries timing window. Culvert replacement requires digging up the full width of the NW Marine Drive roadway. It is not possible to undertake this work at any other time of the year, due to the fisheries window, and staff have made every effort to limit impacts to the park with MOTT.

Traffic management on NW Marine Drive is anticipated as follows, subject to adjustments in the Ministry's project schedule:

- **Full road blockage (no thru traffic) at the culvert:** July 27 – September 30, 2026



The affected stretch of NW Marine Drive does not have parallel adjacent roadways available for convenient detours. The localized closure of the road at the culvert will block motorized vehicle thru traffic, creating a temporary dead-end at each side of the construction site. Vehicle access to the western portion of Spanish Banks West including the off-leash area and Canyon Creek will be via UBC during this period, through W. 4th Avenue and Chancellor Blvd. MOTT will implement a traffic management plan including detour signage reviewed by City and Park Board staff. Cycling and pedestrian connections adjacent the construction zone will remain open on the multi-use pathway in the park.

Park Board parking lots will remain open during the construction period, but construction laydown activities and traffic management zones will temporarily occupy approximately 24 parking stalls in the lots immediately adjacent to Spanish Banks Creek. Staff are negotiating a Temporary Workspace Agreement with MOTT that includes compensation for lost parking revenue. All other park areas and services will remain open during the construction period.

Park Operations and Events Impacts

Staff are coordinating internally to ensure routine operations activities and services in the park will be uninterrupted. The Park Board Special Events team has coordinated with the T100 Triathlon event organizer who has arranged alternate race routing solutions to enable the T100 event to continue as scheduled on Aug 15-16, 2026.

Communications

Park Board Communications staff are working closely with BC MOTT and communications staff in Engineering Services to inform the public of project activities, anticipated traffic disruptions and alternate routes, and the appropriate channels for inquiries and feedback.

Regards,

Tiina Mack (she/her)

Director, Park Planning and Development – Vancouver Parks and Recreation

Copy to: PB Leadership Team
PB Communications
Andrew Seeton, Associate Director – Archaeology, Infrastructure & Environment

APPENDIX A

Culvert Replacement Project Location and Traffic Impacts

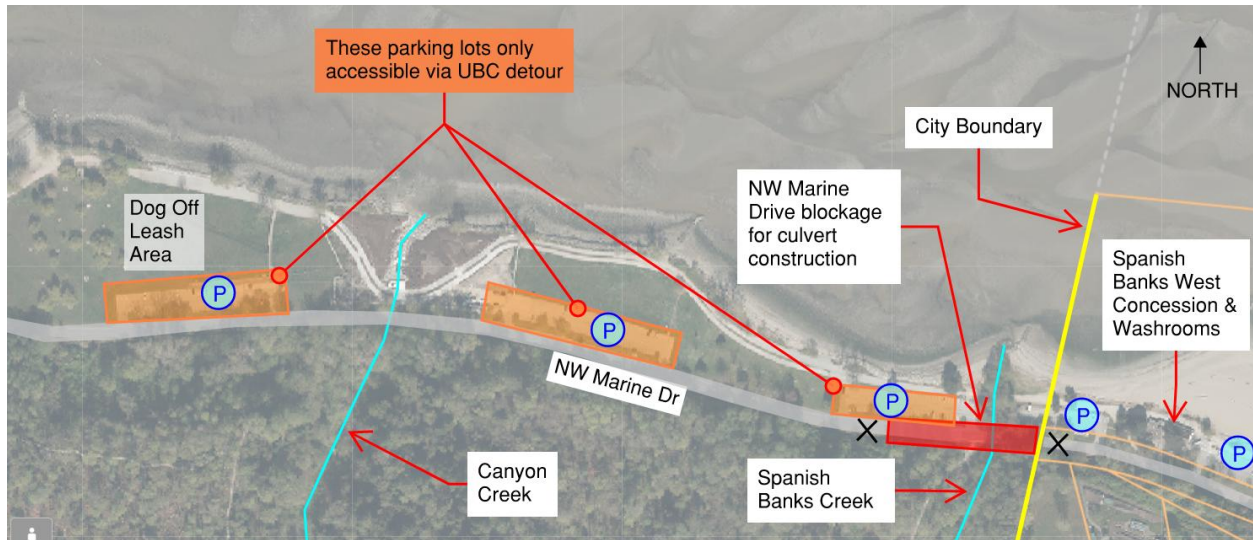


Figure 1: MOTT Culvert Replacement Project location and vehicular traffic impacts during full closure period.