



April 30, 2025

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Director, Recreation Services

SUBJECT : **Update on Vancouver's Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy and BSCP Sustainability Plan – Board Briefing Memo**

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Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to highlight the achievements of the *Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy*, including the Building Safer Communities Program (BSCP) implementation plan established by the City of Vancouver, and the opportunities this program is supporting in 23 community centres across Vancouver. This item will go before City Council on Wednesday May 7, 2025. Links to the Council documents can be found here:

- [Report - Update on the Youth Safety and Violence Prevention Strategy 2023-2026 and Building Safer Communities Program Sustainability Plan - May 7, 2025](#)

The [Park Board VanPlay Implementation Plan](#) identified in *R.2 Sport for Life* the need to support ongoing improvements to youth services, resources, programs and amenities in the parks and recreation system that enhance social, environmental, sport, fitness, arts and culture opportunities. To support this VanPlay recommendation, since 2022, the Recreation Community Youth Development team has been working closely with 23 community centres to implement programs and initiatives funded through the Building Safer Communities Program as detailed in this memo. Please note that most youth programming in community centres is offered in partnership with the Community Centre Associations across the city through Joint Operating Agreements.

The Building Safer Communities Fund is a contribution program by the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada that provided the City of Vancouver \$4.2 million dollars over four years (2022-2026) to develop a youth violence prevention strategy and a comprehensive approach to support community-based interventions that address the risk factors associated with youth gun and gang violence. The City has led, together with youth serving agencies, public partners and young people, a multifaceted program guided by the priorities outlined in the *Youth Safety and Violence Prevention (YSVP) Strategy* adopted by Council in November 2023. As part of the BSCP workplan, the City established a \$2.7 million community granting program; coordinated a policy implementation and community mobilization process including a youth engagement program to promote upstream early youth violence prevention efforts; and, supported citywide strategic planning projects to strengthen sector capacity, promote network building, and increase coordination of youth services.

The Building Safer Communities Granting Program was structured to operationalize the priorities outlined in the YSVP Strategy, allocating \$2.7 million dollars over the 3 years (2024-2026) that the program will operate, to deliver early youth violence prevention programs, support community-based organizations to build the capacity of the sector and carry out youth-led action projects in alignment with the strategy.



Through a strategic granting approach, youth serving organizations were identified to lead early youth violence prevention initiatives within specific programmatic areas as outlined in the strategy. A community-based adjudication model that included a multisectoral review panel comprised of municipal partners, young people and City and Park Board staff guided the selection of program partners and project grant recipients.

To date, the BSCP-supported grant funded programs have reached over 33,000 children and youth in Vancouver through its grantees and direct engagement efforts. A total of 9 program implementation partners, including one host Community Centre Association representing 23 participating community centres, were selected to receive multiyear funding grants to deliver upstream early violence prevention programs that address risk factors associated with gun and gang violence between 2024 and 2026. Further, to respond to local, neighborhood, and community specific priorities, two one-time funding streams were made available to youth groups and non-profit organizations to implement time limited projects. To date, 11 unique projects have focused on sector wide capacity building to establish community-based wraparound service models, reaching approximately 70 agencies.

The impact of key partnerships has been extensive. Notably, 23 community centres were recipients of BSCP funding of \$250,000 over three years (\$100,000 in 2024; \$100,000 in 2025, and \$50,000 in 2026). City-wide programmatic reach has been facilitated by Park Board youth and community development staff in collaboration with these community centres and Community Centre Associations. BSCP funds have been used to increase equal and equitable access to youth programs and spaces across the city to bolster and solidify upstream youth violence prevention programming that is consistent across neighbourhoods. Additionally, BSCP has funded 8 projects allocating a further \$55,000 to Community Centre Associations to support youth led projects. Examples of initiatives funded through this program include employment readiness training, leadership development, community safety engagement, and land-based learning opportunities for youth.

Based on preliminary findings from activities to date, young people who participate in BSCP upstream violence prevention program activities delivered through the program partners, such as those at community centres, are showing statistically significant better outcomes compared to youth in the broader community, as it relates to a greater sense of safety, belonging, ability to engage in different complex social situations, youth voice in decision-making, and stronger connections to positive role models and peer groups.

An Associate Director, Recreation Services, and a Recreation Services Coordinator, Community Youth Development, have served as the Park Board representatives in guiding this work and actively contributed to the scope and direction of the Building Safer Communities Program.

Staff will present a final report to Park Board regarding the Building Safer Communities Program in 2026.



VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF  
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Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'S' followed by a horizontal line.

Steve Kellock (*he/him*)  
Director, Recreation Services – Vancouver Parks and Recreation

Copy to: Lanny Libby, Social Planner II, Jody Sydor Jones, Managing Director, Social Policy and Projects,  
Arts Culture Community Service