



# Vancouver Parks and Recreation Services: Proposed Governance Transition – Planning Update

*RTS 016199; February 7, 2024*





## Vancouver Parks and Recreation Services: *Proposed Governance Transition - Planning Update*

Purpose: To update on the Transition Plan

- Overall Project Approach and Workstreams
  - Governance, Regulatory, Legal
  - Operational Integration
    - Permanent Parks Designations
  - Staff and Unions
  - Engagement with local First Nations
  - Public Communications
- Next Steps



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## Project Approach

# Overall Approach: Timelines and Considerations

## General Approach

- Focus on addressing critical issues for transition, while laying foundation for early post-transition moves and longer-term opportunities
- Opportunity: significant service improvements, process simplification and faster decision-making, reduction in duplication, opportunities to better leverage expertise across departments, increased permanent park designations

## Timelines

- Seeking timely amendments to the Vancouver Charter by the Provincial government
- Legislative amendments are typically in force upon Royal Assent which is usually shortly after third reading

## Considerations

- Park Board direction to staff to not support planning for a transition
  - Impacts planning for operational integration
  - Creates uncertainty for Park Board staff
- Province seeking specifics on how the City would approach aspects of the transition and integration



# Overall Approach: Work Streams and Phases

## STREAM 1: GOVERNANCE, REGULATORY, LEGAL

*Phase 1: Decisions & Implementation Planning/Readiness*

VC amendments, Council structures & processes  
By-laws, Policies, Legal Agreements, Delegated Authorities

## STREAM 1: GOVERNANCE, REGULATORY, LEGAL

*Phase 2: Implementation*

Transition implementation  
Short-term and Longer-term

## STREAM 2: OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION

*Phase 1: Prioritization & Initial Planning*

- (a) Identify & begin planning near-term opportunities: simplification, integration, deduplication, etc.
- (b) Identify longer-term opportunities: scoping
- (c) Identify permanent parks designation opportunities

## STREAM 2: OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION

*Phase 2: Planning and Implementation*

- (a) Near-term opportunities: finalize & implement
- (b) Longer-term opportunities: Finalize phasing & initiate planning
- (c) Designate new permanent parks

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Staff and Unions

Engagement with local First Nations

Public communications



STREAM 1: GOVERNANCE, REGULATORY, LEGAL

## STREAM 1: GOVERNANCE, REGULATORY, LEGAL

- A. Governance
- B. Legislation and Regulatory
- C. Policies and Delegated Authorities
- D. Existing Legal Obligations

## A. GOVERNANCE – Transition Working Group

- Terms of Reference for Working Group adopted by Council; chaired by Mayor.
- **Scope:** How Council will structure its governance responsibilities and manage engagement with key community stakeholders and the public in relation to parks and recreation services.
- **Timeline:** Working group mandate limited to 6 months (per adopted resolution).

### *Important Note:*

- *Relationships with the First Nations are treated as government-to-government relationships.*
- *Some engagement with Nations will be requested via the WG on the WG's focused scope of engagement.*
- *Ongoing relations with First Nations Council-to-Council and through the MSTV UNDRIP Task Force are key places to discuss matters specific to City relations with the local Nations.*



## B. LEGISLATION AND REGULATORY

### (1) Vancouver Charter Amendments

While the Community Charter provides a working example of how all other local governments across BC already effectively govern parks and recreation, there are unique considerations arising from the VC that require further consideration.

### (2) By-laws

- There are 6 Park Board By-laws.
- As a first measure, staff will likely recommend to the Government of BC that all the by-laws be continued by the Province, until Council can repeal and replace them.
- A closer look at by-laws that represent governance and administrative duplication will almost certainly allow for the repeal of some by-laws, but that review is incomplete.

## C. POLICIES AND DELEGATED AUTHORITIES

### (1) Policies

- Council and City Administrative policies will need to be reviewed and updated to ensure they encompass staff and work formerly under the purview of the Park Board.
- Park Board policies will need to be reviewed for adoption, revision, or repeal.
- Motions and other standing directions fit within this category of work.

### (2) Delegated Authorities

- Delegated authorities will need to be established for matters previously under the purview of the Park Board.
- Of note, the Park Board currently addresses issues on a relatively granular level – there may be significant opportunity for faster decision making, and a simplified process for community stakeholders.

## D. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

- The Park Board is a party or signatory to many legal and other agreements:
  - Leases, service contracts, grant agreements, joint operating agreements; memoranda of understanding, letters of agreement, etc.
- For administrative simplicity and to provide assurances to those who are party to the various agreements, the City proposes assuming responsibility for all contractual obligations outlined in these agreements. This will likely be accomplished through an amendment to the VC. Legal Services is considering the most expeditious approach.
- There are no implications for ownership of land or other assets; those assets are held by the City.
- The City is already the insurer for the Park Board so there is no assumption of additional risk management or insurance issues.
- The City is already the employer of all Park Board workers, so there appears to be no additional considerations related to existing employment contracts or collective agreements.



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## STREAM 2: OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION

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- Opportunity: look across all City operations – significant service improvements, process simplification and faster decision-making, deduplication and leverage expertise, increased permanent park designations, improved policy coherence
  - *Important: these opportunities are evident on both sides of the current operational structure – City and Park Board – and arise primarily from areas in which decades of the dual governance structure have resulted in operational duplication, service complexity, inefficiencies, and/or additional costs.*
- Ability to plan impacted by Park Board direction to staff re: not participating
  - Recognize that this has created uncertainty for staff
- Nonetheless:
  - Immediate redirection/integration in some areas
  - Some clear areas of duplication – transformation work already underway we will continue
  - Near-term and longer-term transformational opportunities

## STREAM 2: OPERATIONAL INTEGRATION

### Guiding Principles

- Deliver the greatest benefit to users, residents and taxpayers
- Minimize disruption to public and ensure services continue to work.
- Seek administrative and service simplicity and efficiency
- Be clear and transparent on the public and taxpayer benefit: Measurable outcomes – service experience, financial, etc.
- Time is of the essence: Efficient, informed decision-making
- Be considerate as possible of the impacts of change and uncertainty on our employees
- Respect labour and employee relation obligations

## STREAM 2: PARK DESIGNATIONS

- As part of Stream 2, staff will identify for Council the list of potential temporary parks and “custody, care and management” (CCM) parks for designation as Permanent Parks.
- Staff aim to have this decision before Council once the VC amendments are made.

Type	Current Jurisdiction and Change of Use	Changes Proposed by Resolution	Impact on Park preservation
Permanent Public Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exclusive jurisdiction and control of the Park Board.</li><li>• Change of use requires a 2/3 vote by both Council and Park Board.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Change of use requires unanimous vote of Council</li><li>• Provisions for a public referendum</li></ul>	Strengthened
Temporary Public Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exclusive jurisdiction and control of Park Board.</li><li>• Change of use requires a 2/3 vote of Council.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes suggested</li></ul>	Same
Custody, Care and Management (CCM) Lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Powers prescribed by Council are granted to Park Board.</li><li>• Change of powers granted to Park Board requires a majority vote of Council</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No changes suggested</li></ul>	Same





CROSS-CUTTING WORK STREAMS:

- Staff and Unions (CUPE 15 and CUPE 1004)
- Engagement with Nations
- Public Communications

# STAFF AND UNIONS

## Park Board

- 2,617 employees (558 CUPE1004; 1943 CUPE15; 116 exempt)
  - 1,198 FTE: 682 RFTE, 126 TFTE, 52 RPTE, 357 Aux/Casual
- City is the employer

## City

- Multiple work areas will be engaged in this work, still TBC
- Near-term: Engineering Services, ACCS, REFM, Indigenous Relations, Communications

## Implementation

- With respect to any future operational integration and impacts on specific positions or teams within the Parks or City organizations, as feasible, we would aim to manage those impacts through attrition, existing vacancies, or reassignment.

## Unions: CUPE 15 and CUPE 1004

- Respect the commitments in our respective Collective Agreements
- Will engage regularly with the Unions to ensure they are updated and any concerns are addressed as feasible

## Internal communications

- Will communicate regularly with staff across the City about this work with opportunities for questions and feedback
- Multi-channel (face-to-face, town halls, online), phased communications that also supports change implementation

## ENGAGEMENT W/ LOCAL NATIONS

*We can confirm that there is no intent to disrupt any of the ongoing work with the Nations in relation to the Stanley Park Comprehensive Plan and its inter-governmental working group or other parks related work or considerations with the Nations. More generally, consistent with Council's foundational commitment to UNDRIP, we expect to maintain the close engagement with the three Nations in relation to parks.*

### Note:

- Relationships with First Nations are treated as government-to-government relationships.
- Ongoing relations with First Nations Council-to-Council and through the MSTV UNDRIP Task Force are key places to discuss matters specific to City relations with the local Nations.

### This Process: Multiple channels for engagement

- Mayor's Office is in direct engagement with Nation leadership.
- Working Group will seek to engage with local Nations regarding Council's Governance procedures.
- Council-to-Council discussions will continue and matters can be raised there as Nations see fit.
- MSTV UNDRIP Table continues its work and matters can be raised there as Nations see fit.
- City will be responsive to each Nation's preference for how they would like to provide feedback to Council.

### Ongoing

- The City remains committed to the implementation of the Calls for Action in the UNDRIP Action Plan.

# PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

## Public Communications

- Multi-channel communications strategy to keep the public informed, aligned with key timelines, milestones and at regular cadence
- Guided by principles of proactiveness, transparency, and accuracy of information
- Tactical approach includes:
  - Vancouver.ca webpage as single source for regular information sharing, project milestones and to house key documents
  - Media events at key intervals and regular media relations; media products and social updates
  - City spokesperson to articulate technical details of proposed governance and operational changes

## NEXT STEPS

- Continue discussions with the Province and Nations
- Continue with *Stream I: Governance, Regulatory, Legal* readiness work
  - Support the Working Group in their mandate
- Advance various streams of *Stream II: Operational Integration* planning, including identifying parks for potential designation
- Maintain updates on the public website





Thank you

