



IN CAMERA COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: May 4, 2024
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VanRIMS No.: 08-2000-20
Meeting Date: May 7, 2024

TO: Vancouver City Council
FROM: Deputy City Manager
SUBJECT: NHL Playoffs Public Watch Activations

In Camera Rationale

This report is recommended for consideration by Council on the In Camera agenda as it relates to Section 165.2(1) of the Vancouver Charter:

(d) the security of the property of the city; and

(k) negotiations and related discussions respecting the proposed provision of an activity, work or facility that are at their preliminary stages and that, in the view of the Council, could reasonably be expected to harm the interests of the city if they were held in public.

Recommendations

- A. THAT Council endorse the PNE to activate a licensed watch-party / Live Site as described in this report, with the assurance that the City will offset any financial losses incurred, source of funding the City's 2024 Operating Budget.
- B. THAT Council approve a budget of up to \$200,000 to activate Community Living Rooms across the city as described in this report, to be managed within the City's 2024 Operating Budget.
- C. THAT Council approve a budget of up to \$840,000 to activate up to 28 larger family friendly watch events as described in this report (Option 3), to be managed within the City's 2024 Operating Budget.
- D. That Council delegate to the City Manager authority to implement whatever measures are necessary to enable these events.
- E. THAT Council approve release of information related to planned activations arising from in camera following any approvals by Council.

Approval of Recommendation D requires the support of 2/3 of all Council members in accordance with section 161 of the *Vancouver Charter*.

Purpose and Executive Summary

In recognition of the extensive and growing public interest in opportunities to come together to watch and celebrate the Vancouver Canucks during the 2024 Stanley Cup Playoffs, City staff have been working with various site operators and VPD to identify various options for community watch parties that are in alignment with the 2011 Stanley Cup Playoffs riot review recommendations.

This report recommends City financial and operational support for a series of activations outside of the downtown peninsula.

Council Authority/Previous Decisions

September 6, 2011, Council approved recommendations in the report *2011 Stanley Cup Riot - Internal Review Report* ([Minutes - Special Council Meeting: 2011 Sep 6 \(vancouver.ca\)](#)).

City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

Context and Background

As the Canucks progress through round one of the Stanley Cup Playoffs, City staff have been working across City Departments and Agencies to consider and begin to plan for the potential for the Canucks to advance through the various playoff rounds. Based on the NHL playoffs history here in the Metro region, a primary consideration is the risk of civil disorder should the Canucks lose a decisive game at home. There are a total of four rounds in the Stanley Cup Playoffs with Round 4 being the Stanley Cup Final. The riots in 1994 and 2011 both occurred following the Canucks losing the decisive game seven of the final round.

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In discussions with VPD, staff determined that activating some live sites – licensed and family focused – outside of the downtown peninsula would be prudent s.17(1)

The secondary positive impact of such activations is leveraging the Canucks' potential playoffs participation as an opportunity to support positive and fun community gatherings, make the Canuck's playoffs run accessible to all Vancouverites, and – hopefully – reset the reputation of Canucks fans and the region as a place of playoff riots.

The work is informed by the recommendations from the *2011 Stanley Cup Riot Internal Review Report* which also included references to the 1994 Stanley Cup riot in Vancouver. All materials can be found online: [Special Council Agenda - September 6, 2011 \(vancouver.ca\)](#).

Discussion

Staff are working with various partners to activate a number of opportunities for community viewing. The intent is to scale up the activations should the Canucks advance through the playoffs to Round 2, 3 and 4.

Public Safety: Downtown Peninsula

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. It is important to note that downtown has and will continue to host large crowds of people safely and responsibly. s.17(1)

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Given the events are not hosted or organized by the Canucks, the City will bear any costs associated with these activations.

Public Viewing: Activations across the city

1. Large Licenced Live Site: PNE

The City is working with the PNE to establish a larger licenced Live Site, effective May 22.

The Live Site will be outdoors in a space between the Agrodome and the PNE Forum ("Centre Grounds") with privacy screening to prevent viewing from the outside. The space will have a capacity for 6,000 people and licensed with food and beverage sales. The event will be ticketed for crowd control purposes but is currently planned to be free. PNE staff have noted that free ticketing often results in high no-shows (as much as 50%) which is not ideal for a high demand gathering. Accordingly, they have suggested charging a nominal ticket fee (e.g., \$5-10/ticket). This fee could potentially serve to offset some financial risk. s.17(1)

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That noted, should Council want to direct the event to be free, recognizing the risk of having a significant volume of under-utilization, that direction to staff now would be preferable.

Should the Canucks proceed to round 4, the PNE anticipates being able to activate the Forum from June 3 onward, adding a further 4,000-person indoor capacity to the Live Site.

Given the event will be free or nominal admission, at this point the PNE does not expect to earn any revenue in excess of expenses and there may be some financial losses given the need to preschedule staff in advance of confirming games are proceeding and the unknown attendance. Should any opportunities for additional revenues arise (e.g., merchandise sales), those opportunities will be pursued as practicable and feasible.

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2. Private Licensed Activations: Theatres

The City has worked with Sportsnet to secure the feed for the Stanley Cup. The City will be offering the feed to various independent theatres across the city, outside of downtown.

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s.17(1). Theatres that accept the feed will be responsible for their own operations and the City will bear no costs.

Independent theatres who will be approached collectively represent up to 5,700 seats. It is unlikely that all of these theatres will be willing to or able to activate for all games.

Staff are planning on extending this concept to Vancouver Civic Theatres should dates allow and subject to ongoing VPD assessment as the playoffs proceed.

Staff are working with Sportsnet to confirm any license agreement terms and then will reach out to the theatres with the offer to access the feed.

These can be activated during round 2 based on each operator's capacity and availability as per their existing programming.

3. Community Living Rooms: community centres and libraries (TBC)

City public service sites such as community centres and libraries will also activate temporary viewing locations similar to what was done during 2010 Games on an as feasible basis. This is basically showing the game in the lounge area or a programming room of the community centre. It is very small scale and should be easily activated by the local site. These can be activated as early as round 2.

Eleven (11) community centres have shown interest thus far in activating a Community Living Room. Their collective capacity is 470 people. Their geographic range is diverse, and should they all activate, there would be opportunity across all quadrants of the city. VPL is also exploring Living Room activation possibilities at various neighbourhood branches.

We do not expect significant costs associated with these drop-in locations, but there may be some additional costs for screens, staff time, security guards, or other requirements.

4. Large Family-Friendly Activations: Outside of downtown

City staff are also exploring the activation of 1-3 larger scale outdoor viewing opportunities in neighbourhoods outside of the downtown peninsula. Sites under consideration at the time of report writing are Oak Meadows Park (up to 5,000 capacity), John Henry Park (est 1,000 people), Killarney CC gravel field (est 2,000 capacity). VPD are being consulted on the locations and site-specific plans as these viewing opportunities do present some public safety considerations.

The intention is that they would be free events and may be fenced for crowd management, to be confirmed and/or adjusted as implemented. Some mix of security and VPD presence will be required, and – if outdoors – consideration will need to be given to water and washroom access. Power sources and viewing technology would likely need to be rented.

Oak Meadows Park presents an opportunity for an established outdoor site that does not require take-down between games making it easier and cost efficient to activate for each game. For the other sites, depending on the site or activation plan, the site may need to be set-up and taken down with each activation or 24/7 security may need to be implemented. In order to implement these larger family friendly activations, staff would seek to engage an events organizer to ensure that the viewing opportunities are properly setup and managed.

At this point, staff are modelling different activations: one site for round 2 (R2), two sites for the semi-finals (R3), and potentially 3 sites for the finals (R4). Should the Canucks progress to the finals, each round could have anywhere from 4-7 games. There are options for activation:

1. Activate only Oak Meadows Park as a large-scale family friendly outdoor site for all rounds. Activation schedule could be either: (a) all games (b) decisive games only for all rounds, (c) decisive games rounds 2-3 and all games R4.
2. Increasing sites from one site to three sites as the playoffs proceed through the rounds (R2 - 1 site; R3 - 2 sites; R4 - 3 sites):
 - i. All games: from 24 to 42 activations over the remaining three rounds.
 - ii. Only decisive games: Assuming there are up to 4 decisive games per round, activation could be as follows: R2 – 1 site, up to 4 activations; R3 – 2 sites, up to 8 activations; R4 – 3 sites, up to 12 activations. This could mean up to 24 activations.
 - iii. Only decisive games for R2 and R3 and all games for R4: R2 – 1 site, up to 4 activations; R3 – 2 sites, up to 8 activations; R4 – 3 sites, up to 21 activations. This could mean up to 33 activations.
3. Activate Oak Meadows Park for all games of all rounds; and for Round 4 only, activate one additional site for all games. This could mean up to 28 activations.

The City would incur the costs for these events. Potential financial impacts are outlined below.

Recommendation: For clarity – both for community and staff – this report recommends Option 3.

Other Considerations

Respectful and Responsible Celebrations

One of the 2011 Riot review recommendations was directed at the Canucks organization and was related to developing a fan code of conduct. Since 2011, the NHL has developed a fan code of conduct for in-arena events. For the playoffs ahead, the Canucks organization has agreed to develop communications materials related to responsible and respectful fan conduct and celebrations outside of the arena for use should the Canucks proceed. City Communications will work with the Canucks to amplify any materials they may produce.

Emergency Operations Centre Activations

The City is planning to activate the EOC in a staged manner should the Canucks proceed through the playoffs. Currently, the intent is to activate the EOC during round 2 for decisive games only, in round 3 for home games and decisive games, and round 4 for all games. VEMA staff will stay in close contact with the VPD and will modify activation on an as needed basis.

Celebration

Should the Canucks proceed through the Playoffs and be the winner, then there will also be some expectation of a celebratory event such as a parade. Typically, the Team and the host City cover these costs. These costs could be significant (in the millions). Should it look like the Canucks are advancing toward a Playoffs win, staff will return to Council for authorities related to a celebration.

Regional Celebrations

The City is also in contact with other municipalities with regard to their intentions for licensed watch parties should the Canucks progress through the playoffs.

Financial Implications

At this point in the planning and given the uncertainty of the Canucks' success in advancing through various rounds, the variable length of each round, etc., it is impossible to provide any certainty regarding costs. Accordingly, there is a high level of financial risk associated with these activations. For now, staff are recommending a broad approval by Council to enable agile planning and activation:

- For the PNE activation, the City would need to offset any financial losses the PNE may incur, noting that losses are not certain. At this point, staff cannot offer any projections and simply suggest Council approval of the activation and assumption of the financial risk.
- To activate Community Living Rooms, staff seek approval to expend up to \$200,000.
- To activate the larger family-friendly outdoor watch events as described in Option 3, using an estimate of \$30,000 per activation, implementation could cost up to \$840,000 for 28 activations. Please note that staff believe this could be a high per-activation cost estimate but have suggested this due to the high-level of uncertainty of various operational considerations. Staff will work to manage costs and not utilize the full budget if approved. Should activations prove more costly, then staff would either scale back as necessary or return to Council for additional approvals.

As noted above, should the Canucks proceed to the finals, staff would return to Council for discussion related to a celebratory event.

Legal Implications

If approved, the Recommendations in this report will enable community watch parties in the City.