



## COUNCIL REPORT

Report Date: April 17, 2025  
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Meeting Date: May 21, 2025  
[Submit comments to Council](#)

TO: Standing Committee on City Finance and Services  
FROM: General Manager of Engineering Services  
SUBJECT: Permanent Outdoor Location for an Iconic Vancouver Sign Update

### Recommendations

- A. THAT Council approve, in principle, the placement of a VANCOUVER sign at 1055 Canada Place, with an implementation target for the end of Q1 2026;
- B. THAT Council approve a \$300,000 capital project budget for the VANCOUVER sign, to be funded by an additional contribution to capital from the 2025 operating budget;
- C. THAT Council direct staff to incorporate ongoing operating costs related to the VANCOUVER sign totaling to \$50,000 as part of the 2026 Operating Budget for Council consideration;
- D. THAT Council direct staff to continue to discuss opportunities with local Nations on representation as part of the VANCOUVER sign project;
- E. THAT Council instruct the Director of Legal Services to prepare an operating agreement between the City, the Vancouver Convention Centre, the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA), Destination Vancouver, and the Vancouver Hotel Destination Association (VHDA), for the delivery and management of a VANCOUVER sign; and
- F. THAT Council direct staff to report back on progress for the VANCOUVER sign in Q4 of 2025.

## Purpose and Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the proposed location, funding sources, partners, and timelines for implementation of an iconic VANCOUVER sign with a goal to implement by the end of Q1 2026.

Through discussions with partners including the Vancouver Convention Centre, Destination Vancouver, VHDA and the DVBA, the proposed location for a permanent VANCOUVER sign is along the waterfront pathway between the Vancouver Convention Centre West building and Canada Place (see Appendix A). The sign is estimated to cost \$550,000 to \$1,000,000 and over \$400,000 in partnership funding has been identified to date. This report seeks Council support for the proposed location and a City contribution of up to \$300,000 towards the capital costs of the sign. Given the long-term maintenance and programming requirements for this project, this report also seeks Council support for \$50,000 in the 2026 Operating Budget for this program.

If approved, staff will proceed with developing agreements with partners to specify ownership and decision-making authority; outline the details of the design, commission and installation process; and identify ongoing partner roles and responsibilities for programming and maintenance for a permanent VANCOUVER sign.

Staff have also begun discussions, through the referral process, with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). To date, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw have expressed interest in being included in the VANCOUVER sign project. If this project proceeds, staff recommend that the local Nations be provided with meaningful opportunities and time for participation for both the initial signage design as well as for site programming.

## Council Authority/Previous Decisions

- [March 13, 2024](#) – Council directed staff to explore locations, funding sources, project partnerships, and implementation timelines for a high-profile permanent public outdoor VANCOUVER sign.

## City Manager's Comments

The City Manager concurs with the foregoing recommendations.

## Context and Background

In winter 2023 and 2024, a temporary VANCOUVER sign was installed in Coal Harbour initially as part of Liven UP Coal Harbour. The temporary VANCOUVER sign was a result of an investment made by the VHDA, in partnership with the Vancouver Convention Centre and the Port of Vancouver. As identified in the March 13, 2024 Council motion, the success of the temporary VANCOUVER sign in Coal Harbour has shown the benefits that a permanent sign, situated in a prominent location, would have for the City.

Staff have been working with partners including Destination Vancouver, VHDA, Vancouver Convention Centre and the DVBA to scope partnership opportunities, locations, funding

sources and implementation timelines. Community partners are highly supportive and are committing both funding and implementation capacity to the project.

## Discussion

### Location

Site selection criteria that was considered for a permanent VANCOUVER sign include:

- A sense of place with a connection to iconic Vancouver backdrops including, the ocean, mountains and other city landmarks.
- Ease of access and visibility including locations close to transit, bike and pedestrian infrastructure and tourism connectivity.
- Partner support, including site ownership, funding, ongoing operations and maintenance, and tourism and branding opportunities.
- Space to safely accommodate groups of people, while easily fitting a large sign into a photo frame.
- Access to infrastructure including utilities, seating, and lighting, among others.

A number of locations across the city were explored with partners. Although other locations met some of the criteria for space requirements and iconic background, only Jack Poole Plaza and the proposed location had committed partnerships for funding, as well as ongoing programming and maintenance responsibilities. In discussion with Vancouver Convention Centre, it was determined that a large permanent VANCOUVER sign located in Jack Poole Plaza would conflict with regularly programmed events and would take away the ability to program an already highly used location. As such, the proposed site for the VANCOUVER sign is near the original temporary installation in Coal Harbour, on the waterfront pathway between the Vancouver Convention Centre West building and Canada Place (Appendix A). This location is on Vancouver Convention Centre property and would require site preparation work to remove an existing seating area, planter bed, and light pole (Appendix A). The proposed location, along with the required site alterations, would allow for the permanent installation of a large VANCOUVER sign in a tested location that is highly visible, accessible, receives regular tourism traffic, and does not interfere with regularly programmed large events.

### Local Nations Referral

City staff have begun discussions, through the referral process, with xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam Indian Band), Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation). As of March 2025, xʷməθkʷəy̓əm and Sk̓wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw, have expressed interest in being included in the VANCOUVER sign project. Unless City staff receive a request otherwise, all the local Nations will continue to be included in regular project updates and will be updated with specific design and/or programming opportunities once project funding is confirmed and opportunities for collaboration are verified.

Depending on level of interest, further calls for expression by local Nations artists to include meaningful and permanent cultural representation are anticipated. City staff will provide updates as conversations and referral processes continue along with any potential changes to timelines.

### Timeline

Subject to Council approval of this report's recommendations, the next steps for this project include:

- Q2/-Q3 2025 – Designing the concept, establishing agreements with partners, and continuing the local Nations referral process with detailed design conversations
- Q4 2025 – Fabrication and site preparation. Council update / approval of scope and agreement
- Q1-Q2 2026 – Installation ahead of FIFA World Cup 26™

### **Financial Implications**

Based on information provided by other Canadian municipalities with similar signage, as well as recent high-level estimates from local manufacturers, a permanent VANCOUVER sign is estimated to cost \$550,000 – \$1,000,000 to design, construct and install, plus \$50,000 to maintain annually. Further details are provided in Appendix B.

To date, partnership funding has been identified from the following sources:

- Destination Vancouver: \$200,000
- VHDA: \$200,000
- DVBIA: Committed to partnership – funding amount to be confirmed by June 2025
- Vancouver Convention Centre: In kind contributions for site preparations

To cover the balance of the capital costs, staff recommend that the City contribute up to \$300,000 towards the permanent VANCOUVER sign, to be funded by an additional contribution to capital from the 2025 operating budget general government line item. It is anticipated that this amount of funding can be managed from surplus line items in the budget, however, this will reduce funding available to address potential future pressures.

As the partners will likely be unable to commit to ongoing funding for maintenance, staff recommends \$50,000 towards the maintenance and programming of the sign starting in 2026 to be incorporated into the 2026 operating budget for Council consideration.

### **Financial Risk**

Given the current state of global trade agreements and material cost uncertainties, all estimates are subject to sudden changes in costs and availability that could have significant impacts to overall budget and timeline.

### **Legal Implications**

No legal rights of obligations shall arise or be created by Council's adoption of this report's recommendations unless and until all legal documentation has been executed and delivered by the respective parties.

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## APPENDIX A PROPOSED LOCATION AND MOCKUP

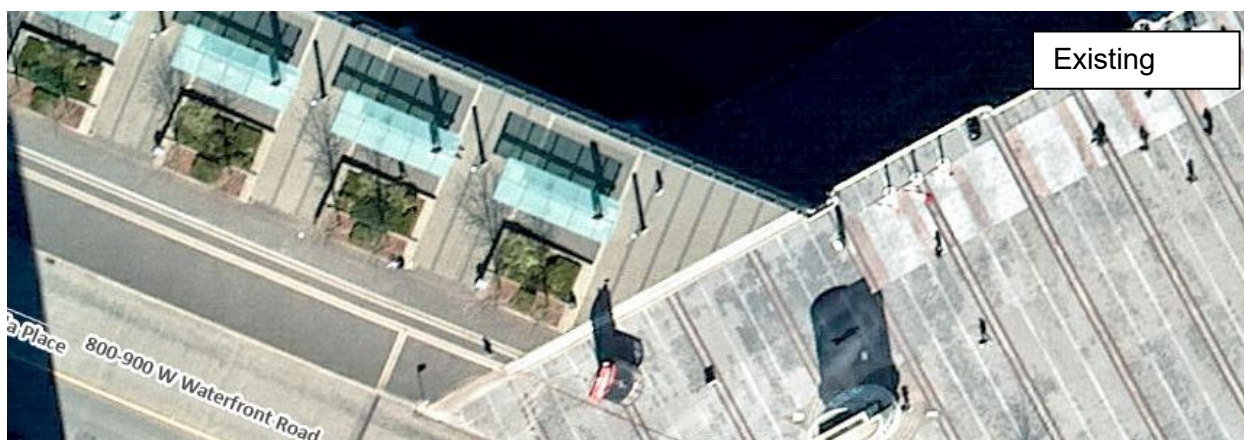
### Existing Site - Removals



Removals: 1 - Planter, 1 - Seating area, 1- light pole



Concept / Mock-up – For Discussion Only



## **APPENDIX B COST ESTIMATE**

- VANCOUVER sign: (\$250,000 – \$350,000)
  - 13.5m width x 1.8m height x 1.0m depth (Max size suitable for proposed location – subject to funding contributions)
  - Permanent landmark sign with steel frame, aluminum cladding, and translucent polycarbonate
  - Customizable LED lighting with Ethernet connectivity for remote programming
  - Higher end pricing could include more dynamic displays that would be unique to Vancouver
  - Warranty (typically 5 years) – to be determined
- Sign base + Electrical connections: (\$100,000 – \$200,000)
  - Reinforced concrete base
  - Electrical wiring + mounting hardware
  - Potential electrical capacity upgrades as required – to be determined
- Site Preparation: (\$80,000 – \$150,000)
  - Removal of existing seating area
  - Removal of existing planter
  - Removal of existing light structure
  - Paver installation on structure to match existing
- Local Nations Representation: (\$150,000 – \$250,000)
  - Consultation compensation
  - Initial 2D art / lighting installation and programming
  - Initial Artist/s call and compensation
  - Additional permanent interpretive signage and / or installations – to be determined
  - DOES NOT include specific ongoing funding
- Annual Maintenance + Programming: (\$40,000 – \$60,000 Annually)
  - Regular lighting design / programming with 3<sup>rd</sup> party
  - Day-to-day cleaning and litter removal
  - Graffiti and vandalism removal / repairs
  - General signage repair / maintenance
  - DOES NOT include funding for specialty events or added installations that would require additional event specific funding
  - DOES NOT include artist compensation for annual 2D art wrapping (if in scope) and/or special lighting programming. The funding for this item would be paid for through a Public Art and/or Placemaking program.
  - DOES NOT including funding for major repairs / one-off significant acts of vandalism or unforeseeable accidents / acts of nature