

Permanent Outdoor Location for an Iconic Vancouver Sign Update

Council Update | May 2025



Purpose

Provide an update on the implementation approach, proposed location, costs and funding sources, of an iconic **VANCOUVER** sign

A large, red, illuminated 'VANCOUVER' sign with white dots, positioned on a wooden boardwalk overlooking a body of water and mountains. The sign is made of large, blocky letters with a grid of small white dots on each letter. The background shows a modern building with large glass windows, a body of water, and mountains in the distance under a blue sky with some clouds.

Summary of Recommendations

That Council:

- A. Approve, in principle, **the placement of a VANCOUVER sign** at 1055 Canada Place, with an implementation target for the end of Q1 2026;
- B. Approve a **\$300,000 in capital project budget** for the VANCOUVER sign, to be funded by an additional contribution to capital from the **2025 operating budget**;
- C. 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. Direct staff to continue to **discuss opportunities with local Nations** on representation as part of the VANCOUVER sign;
- E. 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. Direct staff to **report back on progress** for the VANCOUVER sign in Q4 of 2025.

March 2024 Council Motion

Council direction to report back on:

- Locations, funding sources, and implementation timelines
- Considerations for:
 - Indigenous design elements
 - Visibility
 - Accessibility
 - City's aesthetic and cultural identity
 - Upcoming major events scheduled in the city such as the Grey Cup, Invictus Games, and FIFA 2026 World Cup;
- Work with various partners and stakeholders, and consult with local First Nations

Partnerships

Community Partners:

- Destination Vancouver
- Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA)
- Vancouver Convention Centre
- Vancouver Hotel Destination Association (VHDA)



Local Nations Referral

- x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam Indian Band), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation) and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh Nation) have expressed interest
- Highly visible public education opportunity with proposed additional site signage
- Clear opportunities for each Nation



Photo credit: City of Toronto

Example temporary art wrap installed on TORONTO sign

Case Studies



TORONTO Sign

Cost: \$760,000 (2020)

- Sign is illuminated with internal programmable lights
- Includes customizable vinyl art wrap
- Sign is durable
- Recommend maintenance funding



OTTAWA Sign

Cost: \$150,000 upgrade (2019)

- Original sign was temporary replaced in 2 years
- Was upgraded to permanent in 2019 to have internal programmable lighting
- Technology is limited
- Recommend high quality materials in initial design
- Recommend maintenance funding

Guiding Principles

- Highly **visible** location
- **Accessible** (transit network, surface material etc.)
- Alignment with **city's aesthetic + cultural identity**
- Alignment with **large city events**
- Create **durable and programmable** permanent sign
- Partner with **local Nations** to develop design and programming opportunities
- Establish **community partnerships** to help support funding, design and ongoing management

Locations Explored



- ① Jack Poole Plaza
- ② Coal Harbour Waterfront
- ③ šxʷł'ənəq Xwtl'e7énk Square
- ④ Creekside Park
- ⑤ Kitsilano Beach
- ⑥ Sunset Beach

Preferred Location

Between Convention Centres

- ✓ Prominent location with views
- ✓ Accessible (transit, surface treatments)
- ✓ Location was previously well received
- ✓ Long term partner support



Funding approach

High quality sign with durable materials, programmable lighting/display options, and local Nations representation

Design + Construction = \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

Annual Operations = \$40,000 - \$60,000

CoV: \$300,000 capital + \$50,000 operating

Destination Vancouver: \$200,000

VHDA: \$200,000

Convention Centre: site prep + in kind

DVBIA: confirmed support

**= \$700,000 -
\$1,000,000**

Timeline

- Summer 2024 – Feasibility Assessment
- Fall / Winter 2024-25 – Nations Referral+ Funding Sources
- **Report to Council**
- Spring / Summer 2025 – Concept Design + Procurement
- Fall / Winter 2025-26 – Fabrication
- Spring 2026 – Installation
- Spring 2026 (FIFA) – Construction Complete

Photo credit: The Globe and Mail



Next Steps

- Develop **operating agreement** outlining ownership, decision making authority, funding, programming and other details
- Define opportunities for **local Nations representation**
- **Concept sign design** and detailed estimate
- **Site preparation** scoping and sequencing
- **Council update** in Q4 2025

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Thank You