

**From:** ["Levitt, Karen" <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)  
**To:** ["Direct to Mayor and Council"](#)  
**Date:** 3/18/2025 9:54:57 AM  
**Subject:** Stanley Park Train Shutdown

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Below is an email from Steve Jackson, GM, Board of Parks and Recreation, laying out the decision pathway that led to the shut down of the Stanley Park Easter Train, and clarifying some facts related to assertions that were made by a Park Board Commissioner yesterday in a [radio interview](#).

Thanks,

Karen

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Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
[karen.levitt@vancouver.ca](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)

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From: Jackson, Steve <[Steve.Jackson@vancouver.ca](mailto:Steve.Jackson@vancouver.ca)>

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Sent: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 9:37 AM  
To: Levitt, Karen <karen.levitt@vancouver.ca>  
Subject: Stanley Park Train

Hi Karen,

Thank you for flagging this. I have attempted to summarize below the decision pathway that led to our shut down, along with some other clarifying points. I am sharing the below to ensure there is transparency between our two organizations – and to ensure transparency in regards to actions taken by staff. If you feel this would be valuable to share with Mayor and Council, I'll leave that decision to you.

- The decision to not move forward with operating the Easter Train was at my direction as General Manager. Factors included:
  - We do not have sufficient grounds to seek a return to operations by our regulator, TSBC – issues from December remain unresolved as modifications installed since the December closure were proven to be unsuccessful in reducing emission concerns.
  - Supported by our consultation with Hedgehog Technologies (Engineer of Record) and Engineering FMS, we did not have line of site to other repair/modification options that were seen as highly probable in resolving the known emissions concern in the time we had available.
  - My assessment of the value associated with timely transparency for the public and our partners (the Burn Fund, who holds an annual fundraising event on the train grounds)
- Further to the above, we received no direction from the Mayor's Office, City Council, or the Park Board on this matter.
- To date, no formal request has been made to City Council to fund an electric conversion of the existing asset. While staff have performed some work to understand the requirements and scoping for retrofitting our existing fleet, staff acknowledge that a more fulsome analysis of "total costs to operate," inclusive of site costs, along with qualitative considerations is required to inform such an ask. This fulsome analysis is what we have mapped out as the key next step concerning the Stanley Park Train.
- In 2022, in preparation for the 2023-2026 Capital Plan, staff had performed exploratory work to assess the cost for a full replacement of the

- trains (with 2 electric locomotives, 12 carriages) and to convert the train track to modern 24-gauge technology; this was included in preliminary potential Capital Plan submissions, but was deprioritized via a staff prioritization exercise, and therefore was not brought before Council for decision.
  - As is normal practice, the staff-led internal “de-prioritization” was not shared with either the Park Board or City Council.
  - The estimate to replace the train and the tracks was \$2.3 million (2022 dollars) – of note, OEM costs have increased substantially since the time this estimate was made, and foreign exchange USD/CAD compounds this escalation in costs.
  - It is noted that a track replacement was expected to trigger a review of the sites trestle (bridge) for compliance with wider gauge – this work was never completed, but it is noted that the cost to do this work would be incremental to the \$2.3 million 2022 estimate noted above.

Thanks,

Steve



Steve Jackson, CPA, CA (he/him)

General Manager – Board of Parks and Recreation

t. 604.257.8448 c.604.358.8359

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From: Levitt, Karen <[karen.levitt@vancouver.ca](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)>

Sent: Monday, March 17, 2025 5:40 PM

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To: Jackson, Steve <[Steve.Jackson@vancouver.ca](mailto:Steve.Jackson@vancouver.ca)>

Subject: Stanley Park Train

Hey Steve –

I understand in a [radio interview](#) today, one of your Board members stated that there had been political interference by the Mayor's Office concerning the decision to close down the Stanley Park Train for the spring season.

Concerning this, could you please clarify the decision pathway that led to the decision to shut down the train?

Much appreciated,

Karen

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Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager  
[karen.levitt@vancouver.ca](mailto:karen.levitt@vancouver.ca)

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