

From: "Mochrie, Paul" <Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council"

Date: 4/9/2025 8:42:06 AM

Subject: Vancouver Aquatic Centre Key Messages (updated: April 8, 2025)

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Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see below key messages from the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation as it relates to the recent Vancouver Aquatic Centre decision. Given the timeliness of this request, we have shared in advance of the weekly Council Q&A issuance.

You are welcome to use these key messages in conversations with media, stakeholders and members of the public as you see fit.

Should you have any questions about this matter, please reach out to me directly.

Best,

Paul

**Paul Mochrie** (he/him)

City Manager

City of Vancouver

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The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

**Key Messages**

- The City of Vancouver and Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation staff are collaboratively planning the renewal of the Vancouver Aquatic Centre (VAC) as the facility nears the end of its lifespan. This exciting new chapter aims to create a vibrant and inclusive space for the community.
- On March 31, Park Board Commissioners approved the program to renew the VAC.
- This decision follows a report back from staff outlining that they are not able to proceed with a 50-metre pool under the current budget and timelines.
- The City acknowledges the significant change from the current 50-metre pool and is committed to optimizing the renewed facility to offer a range of aquatic activities. Key factors in developing the recommended direction include budget, schedule requirements, site size and community priorities.
- The plan approved includes a 25-metre lap pool, leisure pool, large hot pool, dive towers, and a variety of other aquatic and recreational amenities.
- The existing VAC currently operates at approximately 30% of its potential capacity, mainly due to the temperature, depth and configuration of the lap and dive tanks, as well as the facility's age and condition.
- The design of the renewed aquatic centre will support competitive dive and swim groups while offering a variety of leisure options. Key benefits and activities could include:
  - 25-metre pool for lap swimming and competitive events
  - Diving tank equipped with various diving board heights to support a range of training and competition
  - Leisure pool
  - Wellness amenities including a hot pool and sauna
  - Expanded fitness room offering more space and equipment
  - Multiple-purpose room for various activities and community events
  - Modern, accessible washroom and change room facilities
- As part of their decision, Commissioners also directed staff to reallocate \$7.6 million from the West End Waterfront Parks Implementation Project to help fund detailed design and construction of the new facility.
- Additionally, staff were directed to update the "Recommendations for Service Delivery" section of the Park Board's long-term road map for aquatics in the city, VanSplash, to include a 25-year vision that reflects the current state of the Park Board's aquatic inventory and aligns with other strategies and plans. This update will also incorporate provisions for a 50-metre pool within the next 10 years.
- Staff have also been directed to report back on the feasibility of adding a temporary pool basin to the Vancouver Aquatic Centre to accommodate swimmers during the renewal.
- Council approval would still be required for any additional funding beyond the initial \$140 million allocated toward the project in the City's 2023-2026 Capital Plan.
- If Council approves the additional funds, the project will proceed to detailed planning and design, with start of construction anticipated in late 2026.
- We acknowledge that this change will affect some users, and our goal is to support the community through this transition. Staff will work to understand how all aquatics and community programming will be supported and prioritized at a City-wide level. A reallocation of programming will take place throughout the entire aquatic system, including a significant expansion of 50m lane access at Hillcrest Pool.

**From:** Klassen, Mike <[Mike.Klassen@vancouver.ca](mailto:Mike.Klassen@vancouver.ca)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 08, 2025 12:11 PM  
**To:** Mochrie, Paul <[Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca](mailto:Paul.Mochrie@vancouver.ca)>  
**Subject:** Vancouver Aquatic Centre

Hi Paul.

Competition swimmers are continuing to contact councillors critical of the decision. Has a clear communication been released by PB on the rationale? I realize this is a passionate topic for some people, and I'm feeling a little underprepared to defend it with constituents.

Reattaching the confidential memo sent to us in February.

Thank you.

**Mike Klassen** (*he/him*)

Councillor – City of Vancouver

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I am humbly thankful that I live and work on the territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm ([Musqueam](#)), Skwx̱u817 \_wú7mesh ([Squamish](#)) and səłilwətaʔ / səłilwitulh ([Tsleil-Waututh](#)) Nations.