

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

To: "[Direct to Mayor and Council](#)"

Date: 6/24/2025 4:28:20 PM

Subject: ENG - Memo - 100 Block of Robson Street as a Dedicated Fan Zone

Attachments: ENG - Memo - 100 Robson Street Fan Zone as a Dedicated Fan Zone. pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached Memo from Lon LaClaire regarding 100 Block of Robson Street as a Dedicated Fan Zone. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- Staff provide an update for formalizing the 100 block of Robson Street into a dedicated fan zone, including a work plan, timeline and emerging design considerations .
- The work plan will include coordination with nearby private and City projects, engagement with stakeholders and feasibility testing of different infrastructure upgrade, funding and partnership opportunities.
- Initial discussions with stakeholders and other fan zone operators across the world have highlighted several considerations for the design and operations of a future space. Council can expect an update on this process by the end of Q4 2025.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Lon LaClaire at 604-873-7336 or lon.laclaire@vancouver.ca

Best,

Paul

Paul Mochrie (he/him)

City Manager

City of Vancouver

paul.mochrie@vancouver.ca



MEMORANDUM

June 24, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Paul Mochrie, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief Communications Officer, CEC
Teresa Jong, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Trevor Ford, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office

FROM: Lon LaClaire
General Manager, Engineering Services

SUBJECT: Formalizing the 100 Block of Robson Street as a Dedicated Fan Zone

RTS #: N/A

Purpose

This memo sets out the work plan, timeline and emerging design considerations for formalizing the 100 block of Robson Street into a dedicated fan zone.

Background

In November 2024, Council directed staff to explore permanent improvements to the 100 block of Robson Street, between Beatty Street and Cambie Street, to facilitate efficient regular conversion into a temporary fan zone.

Today, 100 Robson Street's temporary fan zone hosts 6-8 events per year. However, event setup can be expensive and complex, since utilities and services must be brought in each time.

Permanent infrastructure can improve event readiness at 100 Robson, incentivizing more frequent use for larger events, enabling uptake by operators of different scales, and increasing economic benefits to downtown businesses. Permanent design features can also be explored to help facilitate road closures for vehicles, potentially also reducing public safety costs. Staff have developed a work plan to move this direction forward with a goal to update Council by the end of Q4 2025 to enable coordination with the 2027-2030 Capital Plan process.

Work plan

Coordinate with nearby projects

Staff have started coordinating with two projects adjacent to the Fan Zone:

- *Beatty St upgrades*: To minimize future rebuild costs, Robson Street and Beatty Street has been redesigned as a raised intersection. Construction will begin this summer.
- *828 Cambie St (118-150 Robson St) hotel and residential redevelopment*: Amacon (developer) will be involved in the design process to look for opportunities to align the site's services, infrastructure and surface treatments with the fan zone design.

Engagement with key stakeholders

Staff have started early engagement with a number of groups and organizations and plan to undertake a more in-depth design process with the following stakeholders:

- BC Pavilion Corporation (PavCo), owners and operators of BC Place
- The DV BIA and Yaletown BIA (YBIA) and other neighbourhood stakeholders
- Businesses on Beatty and Cambie Streets
- City of Vancouver Special Events Advisory Task Force (SEATF), which represent a range of event industry interests including professional and grass roots organisers.
- Vancouver Whitecaps and BC Lions, core tenants of BC Place
- Public Safety stakeholders, including Vancouver Police Department

Exploration of funding and implementation opportunities

To help aid in the feasibility of the Fan Zone, staff will be looking at:

- The potential for private donations and future sponsorship opportunities
- Lower-cost interim implementation methods, if appropriate

Emerging design considerations

Initial discussions have highlighted several considerations to deliver a successful fan zone:

- **Event Management and Operations** are cost-effective, scalable, safe and flexible
- **Fan Zone User Experiences** are inviting, seamless and accessible by all
- **Access and Circulation** is predictable, supports easy navigation and minimizes impact
- **Safety** is paramount and embedded into all design decisions.

These design considerations are covered in more detail in **Appendix A**, together with initial stakeholder feedback in **Appendix B**. Additionally, staff are integrating learnings from successful fan zones in other cities (Liverpool, Toronto and Bilbao), shared in **Appendix C**.

Please feel free to contact me directly if you have any further questions about this project.

Sincerely,



Lon LaClaire, M.Eng., P.Eng.
General Manager, Engineering Services

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Appendix A – Emerging Design Considerations

Event Management and Operations	
Goals	
Time and cost efficient Layout can be scaled to various crowd sizes	Safe and secure Flexible for rapid shifting between layouts
Considerations	
Staging area utilities and communications: Explore integrated utility service connections and spare conduits for power, water, Wi-Fi and emergency communications. Storage: For staging, barriers or furniture. Traffic and Transit Planning: Work with partners (Translink, Vancouver Police Department (VPD) etc) on traffic management plans, including transit detours and provision for pick-up & drop-off.	Vehicle access control: Assess (bollard) options, scope emergency and service access options inc. delivery protocols and diversion signage. Safety and Security: Assess hostile vehicle mitigation (HVM), perimeter fencing and emergency lane operations options. Work with VPD and event organisers on safety related operational protocols.
Fan Zone User Experience	
Goals	
Accessible by all Flexible towards new event possibilities	Welcoming for all Supportive of distinctive event identities
Considerations	
Distinctive identities (event and everyday): Explore decorative lighting options, as well as temporary furniture, planter or art elements. Welcoming for all: Explore intuitive wayfinding, shade structures, cafe zones, hydration stations.	Accessible by all: Explore accessible rest rooms, high-contrast signage, tactile paving, seating options. Enable event possibilities: Explore screen/speaker mounting points and cable management.
Movement and access	
Goals	
Predictable, legible routes for all modes Minimised disruption to neighbouring buildings	Smooth transition between event and non-event movement routes
Considerations	
Smooth pedestrian movement: Explore event arrival, movement or queuing options across crowd sizes. Accessible and intuitive: Explore design features such as lighting, surface textures and tactile treatments to support pedestrian navigation. Walkable to transit or nearby destinations: Assess comfort, legibility and accessibility of walking routes to transit, nearby commercial streets or other key local destinations.	Predictable vehicle access: Assess emergency service routes, as well as loading and access routes for nearby hotels, buildings, businesses and local operators. Develop planned diversions and operational protocols that support predictability. Support for different travel modes: Explore design features to support safe movement through the fan zone by all modes on non-event days. For example, how pedestrians may share space or be separated from those cycling, rolling or driving.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Engagement

Initial conversations have taken place with stakeholders including representatives of B.C. Pavilion Corporation (PavCo), Amacon (real estate development and construction), the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (DVBIA), the Yaletown BIA (YBIA), and the Special Events Advisory Task Force (bringing together the City of Vancouver, Parks and special event community members). These conversations highlighted valuable insights and design considerations for a fan zone.

Event planning and set up: Design considerations

Overall, stakeholders reflected that their biggest challenges were access to utilities, and therefore the amount of equipment that need to be brought in temporarily to enable events. Stakeholders also emphasised the importance of predictability and flexibility. A fan zone that can operate like a venue, perhaps with a pre-prepared set of event space layout options can help set expectations and create predictability for operators.

- **Permitting and licensing:** Processes today perceived as time consuming and restrictive.
- **Closing an event site to traffic:** Retractable bollards, for example, could support safety and help speed up event set up and take down.
- **Site preparation:** Relocating permanent street furniture perceived as very onerous.
- **Access to utilities:** Built in water and power access can help reduce the need to bring in generators and portable water-sources.
- **Event layout options:** Flush ground floor surfaces can enable different event layouts, such as stage or bar positions. Ready to go layout options can support event operators to plan.
- **Installation of permanent event infrastructure** including stages, shading, seating, and other key elements that are currently only set up on event day.

Event operations: Design considerations

Several stakeholders reflected on the importance of permitting and licensing requirements working with the built environment; wayfinding both in and around an event; accessibility for all; and the importance of a visually distinctive or branded event space.

- **Wayfinding:** Important to have clear signage in the event site and in the surrounding area.
- **Lighting:** increased lighting in the area including along key access routes to the 100 block of Robson Street.
- **Accessibility for all:** Important to support everyone's comfort in and around the event site.
- **Emergencies:** Dedicated emergency vehicle access and clear communication protocols.
- **Guest access to hotels:** Important to facilitate pedestrian and vehicle access to hotels.
- **Visual or brand identity:** Stakeholders would welcome options for enhanced lighting, decorative features or other placemaking elements.
- **Post-event safety and comfort:** Important to both manage crowds safely and support a vibrant post event atmosphere.

Further discussions with stakeholders will take place through summer 2025. Additional stakeholders are likely to include the Vancouver Whitecaps, BC Lions and other key neighbourhood stakeholders.

Appendix C: Learning From Other Cities

Staff gathered valuable learnings from fan zones in Toronto (Maple Leaf Square), Liverpool (Paisley Square, Family Park) and Bilbao (Athletic Plaza). These were studied for their similarity to 100 Robson Street, for example physical proximity to their stadium and publicly accessible nature (see **Table 2** below). The learnings below are informed by desk-based research and meetings with staff.

Maple Leaf Square, at Scotiabank Arena, Toronto, Canada

Completed in 2010, **Maple Leaf Square** suggests what a Vancouver fan zone could feel like and how it might operate. Like 100 Robson Street, Maple Leaf Square is located downtown, is close to transit and is open to vehicles outside of event times.

- **Iconic surface treatments:** Paving oriented towards the Scotiabank Arena supports wayfinding and visually delineates the fan zone area. Maple leaf pavers support brand identity.
- **Economic viability:** Fan zone frequently used by the Toronto Maple Leafs and Toronto Raptors.
- **Watch parties work well:** Large, high-quality screen helps keep fans entertained. Street trees are placed out of key sight lines.

Paisley Square and Family Park, at Anfield Stadium, Liverpool, United Kingdom

Liverpool Football Club's Anfield Stadium sets up two fan zones on most match days, **Family Park** and **Paisley Square**. Both fan zones are publicly accessible to audiences that may or may not attend the match in the stadium, and typically open four hours before kick-off.

- Inclusive programming with separate **family-friendly area** (no liquor service) at Family Park.
- **Retractable bollards** at key intersections (Anfield Road and Alroy Road) to control vehicle access and support safety during events.

Athletic Plaza, at San Mames Stadium, Bilbao, Spain

San Mames Stadium was recently upgraded in 2014 and is a confirmed FIFA World Cup 2030 venue. It has strong similarities to Vancouver in terms of stadium capacity and the size of Athletic Plaza. Additionally, similar to Terry Fox Plaza and Robson Street, Athletic Plaza is managed together with the stadium and its adjacent thoroughfare Pozas is a popular gathering space for fans.

- Athletic Plaza can be **flexibly adapted** from a family-oriented fan zone into a secured ticket-checking and screening area using temporary fencing, access control points, and queueing systems. This configuration creates a secure perimeter around the stadium, enabling controlled entry, while reducing crowd congestion and ensuring safety before major events.
- Pozas is the main thoroughfare to the stadium for pedestrians and a popular gathering place for fans. The closest block to the Stadium is **pedestrian-orientated**, with smooth, flush surfaces and street trees. Many bars and restaurants on this block have retractable awnings or cantilevered canopies extending from their facades, offering weather protection during match days.

Table 2: Comparing the Vancouver Fan Zone to other, similar examples from other cities

Stadium – Fan zone	City	Team(s)	Stadium capacity	Used for	Next to stadium?	Near bars or eateries?	Publicly accessible?
BC Place – Terry Fox Plaza and 100 Robson St	Vancouver, Canada	Vancouver Whitecaps; BC Lions	54,400 (+/-0)	Soccer, Canadian Football, concerts, special events	✓	✓	✓
Scotia Bank Arena – Maple Leaf Square	Toronto, Canada	Toronto Raptors; Toronto Maple Leafs	19,800 (-34,600)	Basketball, Hockey, concerts, special events	✓	✓	✓
Anfield – Family Park and Paisley Square	Liverpool, UK	Liverpool Football Club	61,276 (+6,876)	Soccer, concerts	✓	✓	✓
San Mames Stadium – Athletic Plaza	Bilbao, Spain	Athletic Bilbao	53,289 (-1,111)	Soccer, concerts, special events	✓	✓	✓
Twickenham Stadium – West Fan Village	London, UK	England Rugby	82,000 (-27,600)	Rugby, concerts, special events	✓	✓	x
Nathan Philips Square	Toronto, Canada	n/a	n/a	Watch parties, special events	x	✓	✓

This table summarizes existing national and international examples of fan zones that may hold similarities to and therefore learnings for Vancouver. Two examples identified in the [Motion](#) were reviewed but not explored in more depth. This is because some were only accessible to match ticket holders, taking place on private property (“West Fan Village” at Twickenham Stadium, London). Others were not located adjacent to a stadium, rather functioning as separate, defined public spaces that can be programmed (Nathan Philips Square, Toronto).