

From: ["van Dyk, Donny"](#)

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

Date: 12/1/2025 3:15:43 PM

Subject: Council Memo - Plaza Stewardship Update - RTS 12639

Attachments: Council Memo - Plaza Stewardship Update - RTS 12639.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please see the attached memo from Lon LaClaire. A short summary of the memo is as follows:

- The Plaza Stewardship Strategy provides a management framework for city-owned public plazas, aiming to ensure they are welcoming, well-maintained, and supportive of community life.
- The Strategy emphasizes co-management between the City and community partners, outlining shared responsibilities in decision-making, operations, programming, and placemaking to reflect local needs and priorities.
- Ongoing updates are being made to strengthen Reconciliation efforts, further clarify partnership models, maintenance levels, and address evolving needs.

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

Thanks,
Donny

Donny van Dyk (he/him)
City Manager
City of Vancouver



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the x m k y m (Musqueam), S wxwú7mesh (Squamish), and s lilw ta (Tsleil-Wautl) Nations.

MEMORANDUM

December 1, 2025

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Donny van Dyk, City Manager
Armin Amrolia, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Sandra Singh, Deputy City Manager
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Maria Pontikis, Chief of External Relations
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: Plaza Stewardship Update

RTS #: 12639

In 2016, Council directed staff to prepare a stewardship strategy for city-owned plazas to provide a consistent and coordinated approach to managing existing and future public spaces in the city. This memo provides an overview of the city-wide *Plaza Stewardship Strategy* (the Strategy) and ongoing work to improve how we manage and support our public spaces.

Discussion

The [Plaza Stewardship Strategy](#) outlines how the City and plaza partners co-manage public spaces to ensure they are welcoming, inclusive, well-maintained, and foster community expression and public life. Stewardship is structured around three core areas: management and decision-making; maintenance and operations; and programming and placemaking.

The Strategy lays out a framework that includes:

- Guiding principles for public space management;
- Processes for establishing plaza partnerships;
- Defined roles and responsibilities for the City and plaza partners;
- City-provided services and programs that support community involvement;
- Examples of different plaza management approaches; and
- An equity and inclusion focused approach to public space stewardship.

This model enables the City to focus on delivering core services, maintenance and improvements, while plaza partners help support the day-to-day activation, programming, and placemaking that reflects community interests and needs.

Current work and next steps

The [Plaza Stewardship Strategy](#) is a living document. Staff are currently updating the Strategy based on best practices, recent work with xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliiwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and ongoing learnings from staff, plaza partners, and public feedback.

Key updates underway include:

- A strengthened and evolving approach to Reconciliation, emphasizing visibility and cultural expression in public spaces following corporate-wide work on UNDRIP.
- An updated approach for community-based partnerships, including further clarifying partnership types, roles and responsibilities, and available tools to support partnership and decision-making.
- An updated approach for City-provided maintenance services.
- Testing improved weather protection, seating, and strategies to streamline plaza activation.
- Developing more strategies to support plazas facing greater health and social challenges.

In parallel, staff continue to work closely with the plaza partners to establish plaza-specific management approaches aligned with the Strategy's framework, while allowing flexibility to reflect the size, neighbourhood context, and capacity of each partner.

The Strategy will continue to evolve as new information and best practices emerge. For example, in recent years staff have learnt from the Water Street Pedestrian Zones and the research supporting the Granville Street Plan about the management needs for larger scale pedestrian streets or entertainment areas. This learning will help inform future management strategies for these streets and other public spaces across the city.

Please contact me directly if you have any questions.



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

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