

From: "Freek, Chris" <Chris.Freek@vancouver.ca>

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

Date: 5/27/2026 10:41:37 AM

Subject: Memo to Mayor and Council - 2026 Pre-election communications quiet period

Attachments: Memo to Mayor and Council - 2026 Pre-election communications quiet period.pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find the attached memo from the Civic Engagement & Communications Department outlining the scale-down of the City's public-facing communications activity in respect of the pre-election period.

The 2026 pre-election communications quiet period will begin August 14 and conclude October 17.

If you have questions regarding any of the attached, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Thanks,
Chris

Chris Freek
Senior Director, Communications & Engagement | City of Vancouver
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The City of Vancouver is on the unceded traditional territories of the x m k y m (Musqueam) Indian Band, S wxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and s liiw ta (Tseil-Waututh) Nation.

MEMORANDUM

May 27, 2026

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
Jason Twa, City Clerk
Teresa Jong, Administrative Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Mellisa Morphy, Director of Policy, Mayor's Office
Steve Jackson, General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

FROM: Chris Freek, Senior Director Communications & Engagement

SUBJECT: 2026 Election Communications Quiet Period: Effective August 14, 2026

PURPOSE

This memo outlines the scale-down of the City's public-facing communications activity in respect of the pre-election period. The 2026 pre-election communications quiet period will begin August 14 and conclude October 17.

DISCUSSION

The City has adopted a convention of entering a quiet period prior to a municipal election. Historically, this quiet period has started after Council concludes its final meeting at the end of July, preceding an election in October. While 2022 was the first time a formal memo was issued to Council advising them of this operational mandate, the practice itself was long-standing operationally with internal guidance provided for implementation.

Election campaign timelines

The pre-campaign period is defined in section 10 of the *Local Elections Campaign Financing Act* (LECFA). That section establishes three distinct periods for local elections: the election period, the pre-campaign period, and the campaign period. For 2026, the calendar is as follows:

Election Milestone	Statutory Timing	Date (2026)
Pre-campaign period begins	89 days before GVD	Monday, July 20
Pre-campaign period ends	29 days before GVD	Friday, September 18
Campaign period begins	28 days before GVD	Saturday, September 19
Advanced voting dates		October 3, 7, 10 and 13
General Voting Day (GVD)	3 rd Saturday in October	Saturday, October 17

Selective interpretive information: [Election advertising and campaign financing rules \(BC\)](#).

What is a quiet period?

A quiet period is a defined period before or during an election when public service and operational communications, engagement and related activities are deliberately limited to avoid influencing voters or creating a perception of partisanship. Common directions are to pause or scale back advertising, public announcements, public engagement or institutional communications so that elections are conducted fairly and that governments, candidates, or organizations do not use or are not perceived to use their position or resources to gain an unfair advantage. The quiet period also supports the need for residents to have clear and immediate access to election and voting information, which will be prioritized across City channels during this time.

Quiet periods may be established by law, policy, or convention, depending on the type of election and jurisdiction. At the City of Vancouver, the quiet period is not required by statute but is established by operational convention, and it applies to matters or business related to the City of Vancouver and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation.

When is the City’s quiet period?

The 2026 communications quiet period will begin on August 14, 2026, and will continue through General Voting Day on October 17.

While this operational quiet period begins within the 89-day statutory pre-election period, it is a voluntary convention, and both Council and the Park Board do not conclude their scheduled business until the end of July. Communicating with the public following decisions of these elected bodies is a normal and necessary part of City operations. Beginning the election quiet period two weeks after Council’s final meeting — rather than immediately upon adjournment — reflects the operational reality that while formal decision-making has ended, the responsibility to explain, implement, and operationalize decisions remains. Major motions, budget directions, service changes, and policy approvals often require follow-up communication to support transparency, clarity, and public understanding. A short transition window allows this information to be shared in a factual and complete manner before entering a period when communications are appropriately more limited due to election-related sensitivities.

This is in alignment with the previously announced [engagement quiet period](#) of June 5 through November 3. The engagement quiet period dates commence earlier as the planning, execution and time in market for engagements are longer and more complex than other types of public communications.

How does this affect City programs and initiatives?

During the quiet period:

- Routine, business-as-usual communications activities and public engagements with specific GM exceptions will continue.
- Announcements, initiatives, or engagement activities that may generate debate, contention, or heightened public scrutiny should be postponed until after Election Day.
- Major communications, campaigns or promotional efforts should be assessed to avoid any perceived influence on the election or distraction from election-related messaging.

Advertising, earned media, and promotional activity should be limited to operational, emergency or election-related information, including content that supports civic participation.

During the quiet period, City communications will not reference or feature the name or image of a member of Council or Park Board Commissioner. In no circumstance will the City comment on partisan or campaign-related matters.

Examples of quiet period communications

Would proceed during the quiet period	Would not proceed during the quiet period
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tweets about closures/maintenance (e.g., event-related road closures, facilities maintenance)• Emergency communications (e.g., heat event, public health)• Promotional “register to vote” content across City channels• Informational Instagram stories (e.g., watering restrictions, recreational programming)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint housing announcement with the Federal government and BC Housing• In-person or online engagement about plaza upgrades• Amplifying non-City news on social media channels• City spokesperson commenting on partisan campaign-related matters or matters that may be perceived as such

Guidance for sitting Council members seeking re-election

Sitting members of Council or Commissioners seeking re-election:

- Must ensure that City funds provided for the communications operations of each member’s/Commissioner’s office are not used toward communications or advertising related to the election or election efforts.
- Should follow advertising rules set by Elections BC. All political advertising questions should be directed to Elections BC’s Electoral Finance department.

More detailed requirements related to election activities are set out in *Council’s Code of Conduct Bylaw*:

Election Activities

4.11 A member must not use, or permit the use of, city land, facilities, equipment, supplies, services, employees or other resources for any election campaign or campaign related activities, unless those resources are similarly available to all candidates and any associated fees have been paid for with election campaign funds.

4.12 A member must not compel city employees to engage in partisan political activities or be subjected to threats or discrimination for refusing to engage in such activities.

FINAL REMARKS

If you have any questions, please contact me directly at chris.freek@vancouver.ca.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Freek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Chris" and last name "Freek" clearly distinguishable.

Chris Freek
Senior Director, Communications & Engagement
External Relations