From: "van Dyk, Donny"
To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"
Date: 6/11/2026 8:41:56 AM
Subject: EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM FRIDAY: Upcoming news release: Granville Street is ready to play: Downtown pedestrian zone kicks off for FIFA World Cup 2026™

EMBARGOED UNTIL 10AM FRIDAY

Dear Mayor and Council,

The City will be issuing the below news release launching the first Granville Street Pedestrian Zone.

Please keep this news release embargoed until it goes live from the City media email account at 10 am on Friday, June 12.

Angela will reply to this email with the relevant Vancouver.ca link and social media links, once these are live.

Thanks,

Donny

Donny van Dyk (he/him)

City Manager

City of Vancouver

City of Vancouver

News release

June 12, 2026

Granville Street is ready to play: Downtown pedestrian zone kicks off for FIFA World Cup 2026™

Whether fans are following every kick, header and goal on a screen or soaking in the atmosphere, Granville Street is the central place for celebration, connection and culture.

The City of Vancouver, in partnership with the Downtown Vancouver Business Improvement Association (Downtown Van), has launched the Granville Street Pedestrian Zone, transforming the heart of downtown into a vibrant, car-free destination ready to welcome residents and the world.

Running through July 19, 2026, while Vancouver hosts seven FIFA World Cup 2026™ matches, the five-block stretch of Granville Street (Georgia Street to Davie Street) is set to be a welcoming space for World Cup celebrations in Vancouver.

“I am excited for residents, families and visitors to come to the heart of downtown and experience Vancouver’s largest pedestrian zone on Granville Street where they can soak up the excitement of the World Cup,” said Mayor Ken Sim. “I’d like to applaud our partners Downtown Van for working with us to create such an inviting, fun and free space for everyone to come together, support local businesses, and celebrate the beautiful game together.”

“We look forward to welcoming the world to Granville Street this summer,” says Jane Talbot, President and CEO of Downtown Van. “This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity for Vancouver as a host city, and the Granville Street Pedestrian Zone will be at the heart of the celebration. We invite locals and visitors alike to come downtown, experience the energy of the World Cup, and be part of an unforgettable summer in our city.”

The City is supporting the pedestrian zone with enhanced infrastructure, including additional seating, sanitation services, and resources to support local businesses and community activations while Downtown Van leads programming and activations to bring the space to life.

Throughout the pedestrian zone, residents, families and visitors can expect specially themed blocks with interactive experiences, soccer-themed games, water misters, giant light installations, and more:

- Selfie Central (W Georgia to Robson) - Capture the moment in this Instagram-worthy block, filled with selfie stations and photo opportunities around every corner.

- Enchanted Forest (Robson to Smithe) - Step into a distinctly Canadian Pacific Northwest experience inspired by Vancouver's landscape, complete with mushroom water misters, vibrant greenery, and immersive natural elements.
- Game On! (Smithe to Nelson) - Kick off the fun with interactive games, photo ops, and towering light installations inspired by the beautiful game.
- Awesome Art Zone (Nelson to Helmcken) - Unleash your creativity at our hands-on arts and crafts stations.
- Rainbow Realness (Helmcken to Davie) - Bold, colourful installations and decorations honouring Vancouver's LGBTQIA2S+ community.

The pedestrian zone also features more than 25 expanded patios and additional public seating throughout the area for dining and gathering. Visitors can explore a mix of market vendors and local businesses offering food, with live entertainment running Thursday to Sunday from 1 to 7 pm (excluding Vancouver match days), and pop-up performances on weekends. Throughout the tournament, Granville businesses will also host activations, watch parties, and other events.

Transit and transportation

Transit will play a key role throughout FIFA World Cup 2026 Vancouver.

"We're excited for the opportunity to showcase our world-class system on a global stage," said TransLink CEO Kevin Quinn. "TransLink is working closely with the City, the Host Committee, and other partners to help people move safely and efficiently during the pedestrianization of Granville Street. That includes re-routing buses to Seymour and Howe streets, adding a new downtown bus route to accommodate increased demand, and having staff and signage on the ground to make it clear where customers can catch their bus."

As part of the temporary street changes:

- Cross streets including Robson, Smithe, Nelson, and Helmcken will remain open to vehicle traffic throughout the pedestrian zone. Emergency vehicle access will be maintained at all times.
- TransLink buses that operate on Granville Street will be rerouted to Seymour Street and Howe Street, supported by new bus lanes for the duration of the pedestrian zone.
- Cyclists and scooter riders are encouraged to slow their roll or dismount while in the pedestrian zone.
- Visit translink.ca/alerts for updates to your bus service.

We can't wait to see you there. Learn more at Granville Street Pedestrian Zone.

City of Vancouver

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