



May 15, 2019

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT : **VanSplash Advisory Group Process - Midway Update**

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Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide you with an update on the VanSplash Advisory Group process, which commenced in January and has been very productive and insightful.

### **Advisory Group Scope**

The Advisory Group has been convening for meetings since January 16, 2019, and is proceeding in accordance with the [VanSplash Advisory Group Scope motion](#) unanimously approved by the Board on January 14, 2019.

Commissioners have recently received four emails regarding the VanSplash Advisory Group from non-Advisory Group members, with feedback that does not accurately represent the Advisory Group process or the discussions the group is having at the meetings. To date, all of the group's input has been focused on improvement and expansion of aquatics. Staff have responded directly to each of these emails to provide clarification.

### **Membership Roles & Support**

All Advisory Group members, as per the terms of reference, are to connect with their networks to encourage broad communication of meeting information. This requires that participants are able to follow the meeting format, understand presentations, and be able to discuss items relevant to the content of the meetings. In general this has taken place and the group has been functioning very well. Recognizing that not all group members are as comfortable or as adept at being in this role, staff and the facilitation team have provided additional support where needed in order to increase understanding and to encourage accurate communication of information externally. For example, the facilitation team has provided extensive one-on-one support to one member, including working through Advisory Group assignments by phone (all other members completed the assignments online).

### **Meeting Evaluations**

At the end of each meeting, the neutral third-party facilitator asks the group to complete an evaluation form. The evaluation includes questions to understand members' perspectives on session content, ability to share their input, their understanding of the advisory group process and their level of influence. The group is asked about what they most like and dislike about each meeting. Attached is the summary of evaluation responses from the most recent meeting held on Monday, May 13.

The evaluation feedback is used to continuously improve the process and adapt to members' preferences. An example of how this information assisted the process was to identify that members wanted more time for group discussions. The facilitators developed a short survey



that resulted in the group deciding to have an additional meeting, to extend meeting times (from 2 hours to 3 hours each meeting), and to complete assignments outside of meetings.

### **Meeting Content**

At the first meeting, the Advisory Group collaborated on developing a code of conduct for their meetings, and approved the process framework and terms of reference. Next was a learning phase, which included an aquatic tour of six (6) lower mainland facilities (3 Park Board, 1 Burnaby, 1 Surrey, and UBC) and presentations by various City, Park Board, and other aquatic experts on the topics of Planning Strategy, Capital Planning, Facilities Planning, and Trends in Aquatics. The Advisory Group is currently discussing the Draft VanSplash recommendations (from the 2017 Board report) and community concerns. Members undertook a prioritization exercise where they chose their level of agreement or disagreement with the draft recommendations. The discussions have been deep, diverse, and mindful of each member's different values and aquatic needs.

### **Communications with Public**

As part of the Park Board's commitment to transparency, all Advisory Group meeting material and detailed notes have been posted on the [VanSplash webpage](#). Efforts have been made to communicate this information to the broader public -- to date, staff have issued two email updates via the VanSplash e-blasts (2905 subscribers), inviting recipients to view Advisory Group meeting material and notes via the project webpage. Staff have also distributed posters to all Park Board community centres and swimming pools to encourage people to check-out the Advisory Group meeting notes and presentation materials. An email address is also provided so people can directly contact the VanSplash project manager with any questions or concerns. Any emails addressed to the Advisory Group that are received via the VanSplash project manager and/or the facilitator team are shared with the Advisory Group members.

### **Next Steps**

Over the next two meetings, the group will continue discussing and providing feedback on the Draft VanSplash recommendations, as well as discussing community concerns, feedback from Commissioners, and stakeholder input received during the 2017-18 VanSplash report process. Following these two meetings of deliberations, a summary report will be developed based on Advisory Group input, and the group will be informed on how their input will be used in the upcoming revision of the Draft VanSplash strategy. Staff expect to bring this revised draft strategy for Board consideration in the fall of 2019.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Malcolm Bromley'.

Malcolm Bromley  
General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/t/dh/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team  
VanSplash Project Manager  
PB Communications

**Total 14 completed evaluations received**

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

**1) The session content enhanced my knowledge of the draft VanSplash strategy and Vancouver’s public aquatics system.**

Agree 5      Somewhat Agree 6      Somewhat Disagree 2      Disagree 0      Not Applicable 1

**2) I was encouraged to share my thoughts and/or feedback during this engagement.**

Agree 10      Somewhat Agree 4      Somewhat Disagree 0      Disagree 0      Not Applicable 0

**3) I had the information I needed to participate in a meaningful way.**

Agree 9      Somewhat Agree 4      Somewhat Disagree 1      Disagree 0      Not Applicable 0

**4) I understand the VanSplash advisory group process and what the group can and cannot influence.**

Agree 10      Somewhat Agree 4      Somewhat Disagree 0      Disagree 0      Not Applicable 0

**5) What did you like most about this engagement?**

- The open floor concept that was used throughout
- Hearing the opinions and ideas of
- The committee’s honest comments and feedback
- Lots of participation
- Input
- More discussion time
- Equal opportunity to speak; people present are expressing their ideas
- The “lack of trust” exercise
- Discussion
- N/A

**6) What did you like least about this engagement?**

- The amount of times we get off track
- Some committee members still refer to their specific agendas and issues instead of bigger picture
- Narrow mind – one agenda focused input
- Not enough time
- N/A

**7) This meeting was facilitated in an impartial way by the third-party facilitators.**

Agree 12      Somewhat Agree 2      Somewhat Disagree 0      Disagree 0      Not Applicable 0

**8) If you selected “Somewhat Disagree” or “Disagree” to #7 above, please express your concern(s):**