



# Canucks Playoffs Viewing Parties

Council Workshop, March 17, 2025



NEW WESTMINSTER

# Council Direction

On January 27, 2025, Council resolved:

1. THAT staff be directed to consult with the Arts, Culture, and Economic Development Advisory Committee, Downtown Business Improvement Association, the New West Chamber of Commerce, Tourism New Westminster, and the New Westminster Police Department before considering hosting a series of outdoor Canucks viewing events if they make it into the playoffs in 2025.
2. THAT staff report back to Council prior to March 31, 2025 with the operational and financial impacts as well as revenue generating opportunities associated with hosting outdoor/indoor Canucks playoff events.

# 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs

## Playoff Details

- Playoff games will begin April 19, 2025 and the last possible date for the final is June 23, 2025
- Playoffs are four rounds of best-of-seven series
- As of early March, Vancouver Canucks were predicted to have a 36% chance of making it to the playoffs and a 2% chance of making it to the final round

## Economic Impacts

- Playoff hockey can have positive impacts on the local economy for bars and restaurants and area spending, but can also have negative impacts for other businesses as fans cut back spending in other areas. For example, restaurants without TV screens could see lower than average spending.

(Source: Business in Vancouver, May 2024, <https://www.biv.com/news/hospitality-marketing-tourism/canucks-playoff-run-has-economic-winners-and-losers-8712134>)

# Consultation – ACEDAC Meeting

At the February 13, 2025 meeting of the Arts, Culture and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting, staff facilitated an opportunity to discuss large-scale Canucks playoff viewing opportunities, and followed up with groups in attendance.

- Tourism New Westminster – offered marketing support and use of their two large outdoor tents
- Chamber of Commerce has not provided a response
- Massey Theatre voiced concerns about access to Anvil Theatre for previously scheduled events and demands for parking in the event of a road closure necessitated by a street event
- The Downtown BIA surveyed both the public and businesses and provided staff with the results

# Consultation – Downtown BIA Survey (Public)

- 45 members of the public responded to the public survey
- Limited support for viewing inside a community centre or convention centre (9%) or in a public plaza or square (13%), and only moderate support for viewing at an event held in the park (31%)
- When asked where they would prefer to watch sporting events, most respondents selected at home (29%) or at a bar or pub (18%), and “location” was the most important factor in selecting where they would watch a sporting event
- 60% of respondents indicated they would only attend one or two events
- The survey also validated the potential for economic benefit to businesses: respondents indicated they would be willing to spend up to \$60 “while out celebrating,” though the question was not framed in relation to a specific location

# Consultation – Downtown BIA Survey (Businesses)

- 20 respondents
- Questions were framed related to “events” more broadly, rather than specific to the Canucks viewing opportunities.
- Majority of respondents (70%) found events put on by the Downtown BIA extremely helpful, very helpful or somewhat helpful.
- In terms of what days events should be hosted, responses were mixed. While Saturdays and Sundays were the most popular answer, one survey participant noted that Saturday was their busiest retail day, and that closing the street for an event would have unintended negative impacts to their business.

# Consultation – NWPD and Transportation

- Street closure required for safety, which adds costs for traffic management and policing. Traffic management costs roughly \$2,000 per game, and advanced warning signage would need to be created and installed
- Street closures for a Hyack Square event would be on Columbia Street from Begbie Street to Front Street, and extending up 8<sup>th</sup> Street to the Anvil Centre parkade entrance
- Would be required 2 hours for set up and 2 hours for tear down. Games run approximately 3 hours if there is no overtime; streets would be closed for up to 7 hours
- Several stakeholders would need to be informed, including TransLink, Royal City Taxi, and emergency services
- Police staffing needs would be determined based on what other municipalities are doing and what impact that could have on New West, however staff used a benchmark of another event that involved street closure to estimate a cost of \$15,000 for policing

# Financial Implications

Estimates are noted on a “per-viewing” basis.

Item	Cost per Game
Equipment rentals (outdoor LED screen, etc.)	\$4,500 - \$9,000
Potential rentals to protect turf, improve sound, etc.	\$2,000
Policing costs	\$15,000
Traffic management	\$1,800 - \$2,000
Staffing costs	\$1,250
Broadcast fees	TBD
SUBTOTAL	\$24,550 - \$29,250
Contingency (5%)	\$1,225 - \$1,460
<b>TOTAL ESTIMATED COST PER GAME</b>	<b>\$25,775 - \$30,710</b>



# Considerations for Large-Scale Viewing Events

## BUDGET

- No identified budget for this in 2025.
- Cost per viewing for an outdoor event is between \$25,000 - \$30,000

## LOCATIONS

Considered several other locations besides Hyack Square in Downtown – no clear best choice

## EQUIPMENT

Screen rental required as Council-approved screens and coordinator for FIFA 2026 have not yet been purchased or recruited. Planned for second half of 2025

## STAFFING

- Estimate four staff required at each event (Events and Eng Ops staff), plus advance staff time for planning
- Community Events Office at capacity with ~75 “event-days” already scheduled for 2025; additional inquiries coming in
- May and June is the busiest time for the Community Events Office

# Alternatives to Large-Scale Viewing Events

- Existing recreation facility monitors are able to broadcast playoff games where connections already exist (for example, Queen's Park Arena lobby, Queensborough Community Centre, etc.)
- Staff can work with business associations to develop a list of businesses that will be showing the games

Both of these activities can be advertised in Citypage, through Invest New West, on City social media channels, and through calendar of event listings on the City's website.

# Questions for Council

1. How would Council like staff to proceed for the 2025 NHL playoffs?
2. Looking ahead, does Council have direction for longer-term planning for Canucks viewing events?
3. Would Council like staff to bring a budget enhancement request forward for potential emergent, large-scale events such as these in 2026 and beyond?
4. The Community Advisory Assembly recently presented recommendations to Council on Cultural Observances. At a high level, they suggested the City should focus resources on producing a few large-scale events each year that have broad appeal, and otherwise support community groups in bringing forward and delivering the events they feel are important. Does Council have further direction for staff in terms of how to prioritize potential emergent, large-scale event ideas?