



Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

4:30 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

Commissioners Present:

Cavaness, Fletcher, Thompson, Luce, and Wille

Commissioners Absent:

Robbins, Striplin, Piland and Panter

Guests:

Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Cavaness called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) regular meeting to order at 4:31 p.m. in the Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Commissioners Piland and Panter were absent.

Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved the September 17, 2025, meeting minutes by consensus with no changes.

Item 3: Public Comment

None presented

Members

Jaynee Cavaness

President

Angilo Fletcher

Vice President

Jeremy Robbins

Stephen Wille

Valerie Striplin

James Luce

AJ Panter, VPS

Cale Piland, EPS

Jenny Thompson, Parks

Foundation

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Item 4: Workshops

a. Grounds Management Budget Cuts and Impacts

Perlick introduced Michael Cero (Grounds Operations Manager, Public Works) who shared an overview of Grounds maintenance scope and capacity.

Cero shared that as part of the biennium budget cut process, Grounds ultimately lost half of their seasonal employees this year, and the other half will be leaving next year. The largest impacts in crew loss will be less frequent garbage removal, as well as restroom vandalization cleanup.

Luce asked about staffing impacts, and Cero confirmed that we will not have the 8 seasonal employees who will do the restroom cleaning and park trash. We will be losing correction crews who work on pruning. Cero anticipates further budget cuts, which will impact Grounds ability to care for open spaces, tree maintenance, and trails. Luce expressed concern and asked how best to advocate to Council for more support. Perlick confirmed that further conversations will be held in mid-2026 to prepare for the next biennium.

Perlick noted that we do typically close several restrooms on a seasonal basis. Due to the loss of part-time staffing, restrooms that remain open will have a shorter operating day starting on November 1.

b. Strategic Capital Investments and Repairs

Perlick, Stokke, and Snyder gave an overview of the PRCS strategic capital investments and repairs. The purpose is to learn about programs that address capital repairs and replacements in parks, review funding sources and limitations, and describe current approaches and challenges.

Parks Capital Programs are split among three categories:

New Parks Development (96% of budget)

- Funded primarily through PIF
- Added support from donations, grants, and other City funds
- New parks and expanded amenities
- Acquisitions
- Generally cannot be used for repairs or in-kind replacement

Playground Replacement (3% of budget)

- Funded primarily through the Business License Surcharge (2023)
- Replace or repair existing playgrounds
- \$1M annually

Parks Capital Repair (2% of Budget)

- Funded primarily through the City's Real Estate Excise Tax
- Some committed general funds

- Repair and preserve existing parks, trails and natural areas
- \$400k annually

Playground Replacement Program priorities:

- Safety: Replace playground equipment that has reached the end of safe use or warranty
- Accessibility: Design with current best practices in play; replace aging surfacing
- Variety: Create unique themes that diversify play experiences and build neighborhood pride

Playground replacement analysis: data-driven decisions for replacing timing. Play Equipment Quality Report strategically scores all playgrounds to guide investments. Weighted criteria include condition, based on loss severity and probability, equity, based on the City's equity index, and geography, based on distribution and level of service.

Surfacing considerations include accessibility, safety, durability, cost, and environmental impacts.

The team shared a list of playgrounds that meet the new standard, both for playground replacement program sites and for new parks development program sites. A map summarizing upgraded playgrounds was reviewed.

Playground replacement looking ahead, the most unsafe playgrounds have been removed, and replacements have been planned where appropriate. Parks has expanded the evaluation criteria to include surfacing. 16 of 67 existing playgrounds now meet our current standard with three more playgrounds in design (28%). The replacement program has been embraced by the community and has increased visibility and popularity of Vancouver parks across the region. Current plan accounts for expected life cycle of play equipment; we will begin incorporating expected life cycle of play surfacing.

Capital Repair Program

- \$400k per year for all parks and natural areas
- Collaborate with Grounds Maintenance on selection
- Plan approximately 2 years in advance
- Often a "demand" response for emergent needs

Active Capital Repair Projects in 2025 (current scope of capital repairs completed)

- Picnic shelter at David Douglas Park
- Pathways at Forest Ridge Park and other sites
- Interpretive kiosk at Marine Park
- Playground resurfacing at Heritage, Waterfront, and Nikkei parks
- Safety lighting at Leverich Park
- Board replacement for benches at Esther Short Park
- Trash can replacements throughout the parks system
- Other emergent needs as identified

Major Capital Repair Needs: critical repair projects that exceed available funds include the Burnt Bridge Creek Trail pedestrian bridge repair, design, and permitting; the Marine Park Boat Launch; and systemwide ADA improvements.

The floor was opened for questions and discussion regarding capital funding resources, playground replacement program, surfacing approach, and the capital repair program. Perlick spoke to the strategies consistent with the policies in the Comp plan, and being proactive in planning prior to the budget season.

Luce requested more facts to advocate to Council and request consideration of additional funding to support why our community is so vibrant. He brainstormed different ways to draw people's attention to needs in the parks. Perlick agreed that our goal is to tell that story without making us look dis-invested. Our best opportunity is to make a case before the next biennium.

Cavaness added that we can advocate by staying informed. Our parks are at a point where the community is falling in love with them; when they see things start to disappear, they will support and see the need.

c. Evergreen Park – Early Plan Update

Guzman shared a summary of Evergreen Park ARPA Improvements, giving context of the park location. The 4-acre neighborhood park is in West-Central Vancouver, serving the Fourth Plain Village Neighborhood. Amenities include walking paths, picnic tables, benches, playground, basketball court, drinking fountain, and an irrigated lawn.

This summer, the community was asked to vote for the playground theme, with the highest scoring result being Nature. The survey received 72 total votes, with 165 event visitors.

The master plan includes: existing bench, bollards, table, light pole, bike racks, dog waste station, drinking fountain and trash receptacle, park entry sign, chain link fence, bus stop, and gazebo. Proposed elements include another table, a restroom facility, play equipment, concrete walkway, basketball court, and retrofitted lighting along the path.

Example renderings were shown to illustrate the master plan.

Guzman shared the project timeline for Evergreen Neighborhood Park

- July-August 2025
 - Project start
 - Design development
 - Public survey
 - Summer Day Camp at Evergreen Park
- Sept-Dec 2025
 - Refining design
 - Share Master Plan Design with PRAC
 - Apply for permits
- June-July 2026
 - Summer Day Camp at Evergreen Park
 - Secure contractor
- August-Dec 2026
 - Start construction
 - Project complete

The floor was opened for questions from commissioners. Luce asked if this was in the budget, and Guzman confirmed that this park was funded by ARPA. Wille asked about parking around the park, and Guzman shared that with current proposed improvements, parking was not a key investment strategy. However, there is currently a side street and street parking available, with a transportation bus stop in front of playground. As a neighborhood park, will rely on mostly walk ins. Cavaness commended the increased safety and lighting considerations. Guzman add that the basketball court will be moved closer to playground as another safety

consideration. The bathroom is near the playground farther from transit area, with the play equipment very open for high visibility.

Item 5: Commission and Staff Reports

a. Director's Report

Perlick announced that the Clark County strategic funding task team is meeting tomorrow night. We have one councilmember from each city in the county, with the effort led by Clark County. The purpose of the effort is to explore funding options and needs countywide. City staff have contributed to the plan and organization, and we anticipate about 6 meetings this fall. We have begun comparing common metrics to learn organizational approach countywide.

Thanks to everyone who was able to make it out to Oakbrook grand opening event!

Jaggy Road Planning: there will be a Halloween event in the park on 10/29 to share the design and get more feedback. We are aiming for construction in spring 2026.

The Teen Late Night program has come back as a partner driven event. We are consistently adding back opportunities as we are able, thanks to staff efforts.

The Community Gardens program is winding down, on the last day 11/3. Thank you, Hailey Heath and Amanda Thompson, at Marshall for communications throughout the year.

We have Dia de Muertos this Saturday at Esther Short Park.

b. Chair Report

Cavaness shared some upcoming Urban Forestry events, including a free yard tree giveaway, a tree walk at the old cemetery, and a Four seasons lane tree planting with UF team on 11/8. The Arts Hub will have their first Friday event 11/7 celebrating native and indigenous artists.

c. Evergreen School District Report

None presented.

d. Vancouver Public School Report

None presented.

e. Parks Foundation Report

Thompson shared that Sean Janson, director of development at the Parks Foundation, will be honoring Sgt. Jeremy Brown on the Renaissance Trail. Thank you to PAL for support with teen nights. GiveMore24 was successful this fall!

Item 11: Open Discussion & New Business

Wille went to Old Apple Tree Festival and represented Parks at our booth. Luce requested talking points regarding Capital repair budget cuts and Grounds management budget cuts. Thompson shared that the Oakbrook opening was a highlight, as she knew community members who had attended.

ADJOURNED

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:54pm