



# Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 18, 2026

4:30 p.m.

Vancouver City Hall

Aspen Room

### Commissioners Present:

Cavaness, Fletcher, Thompson, Wille, Luce

### Commissioners Absent:

Striplin, Robbins, Piland and Panter

### Item 1: Call to Order

Chair Cavaness called the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission (PRAC) regular meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. in the Aspen Room at Vancouver City Hall and online via Microsoft Teams. Commissioners Striplin, Robbins, Piland and Panter were absent.

### Item 2: Approval of Minutes

PRAC approved January 21, 2025, meeting minutes by consensus with minor changes.

### Item 3: Public Comment

Mary Keltz, long-time resident of Vancouver, hopes to get a better understanding of the Comprehensive Plan Park Chapter update. Keltz shared concern about the decrease in visual and physical breathing space among new developments due to urban density, stating that a 10-minute walk may not be accessible to all demographics. The approach to incorporating landscaping and benches into civic plazas and public spaces was a suggested consideration for condensed spaces. She shared that community gardens can also provide a rest from the built environment to sit and spend time in nature. With the amount of anticipated density anticipated, she urged the prioritization of advancing natural spaces in the shorter term.

## Members

**Jayne Cavaness**  
President

**Angilo Fletcher**  
Vice President

Jeremy Robbins  
Stephen Wille  
Valerie Striplin  
James Luce  
AJ Panter, VPS  
Cale Piland, EPS  
Jenny Thompson, Parks  
Foundation

**Parks, Recreation and  
Cultural Services  
Department**

P.O. Box 1995  
Vancouver, WA 98668  
360-487-8311  
TTY: 711  
cityofvancouver.us

**To request accommodation or other formats, please contact:**

Alicia Nilo | 360-487-8311 | TTY: 711 | parksrecculture@cityofvancouver.us

## Item 4: Workshops

### a. Our Vancouver Comprehensive Plan Update

Bryan Snodgrass, Community Development Principal Planner, and Dave Perlick shared an overview of the comprehensive plan update, providing project background on the project overview and process. The purpose of the plan is to serve as a guide for the city's growth and development over the next 20 years.

#### Key Drivers and Priorities:

- A changing landscape – Rising housing costs, climate change, evolving transportation needs, community safety and economic shifts require a new approach.
- Economic and employment trends – Capacity for 43k new jobs, continued remote work, desire for jobs closer to home, access to family wage jobs, shifts in commerce and support for small businesses.
- Growing community – Transition from suburban to urban: continue transition from suburban expansion to compact, connected neighborhoods where daily needs can be met within a 15-min walk.
- Opportunity for all – Address disparities in outcomes and provide equal access to housing, jobs, parks, schools, healthcare, and essential services for all community members.
- Climate action – Net-zero emissions by 2040; adapt to heat, wildfire smoke, flooding through compact, connected growth and resilient infrastructure.
- Legal and policy requirements – Room for 38k new units by 2045 in range of income bands, allow new housing types in all neighborhoods, integrate climate and equity into comprehensive planning.

#### New State Laws:

- At minimum, allow up to 4 units per residential lot and up to 6 units if near transit.
- Make room for housing units of all income levels, over 30k new units citywide.
- Account for racially disparate impacts.
- Allow min 2 ADUs per residential lot
- No parking minimums for affordable housing
- Only one stairwell is required for residential buildings 6 stories or less.
- Align impact fees to size of housing.
- Allow for permanently supportive housing.

#### Engagement overview will include:

- Visioning
  - Tabling at 19 events
  - 7 community partner meetings
  - 3 Council, 2 Planning Commission, 1 joint workshop
- Land Use Alternatives
  - 59 events/activities, including 13 mapping activities
  - 10 community partner and 9 community work group meetings
  - 8 Council and 7 Planning Commission workshops
- Goals, Policies, and Code
  - 10 events/activities, including 3 climate-focused workshops
  - 5 community partner and 19 community work group meetings
  - 8 Council and 8 Planning Commission workshops
  - Upcoming Community Presentations

New Zoning Districts include low-scale neighborhood, mixed-use neighborhood, medium-scale neighborhood, institutional/campus, regional activity center, industrial/employment, manufactured home, parks, natural areas, and heavy industrial.

Green space will be built into code to employ landscaping as a buffer between districts, support tree preservation, and increase open space requirements for larger master plans.

Draft plan in the Parks and Recreation chapter responds to uneven access to parks, trails, and recreational opportunities. The chapter establishes parks, natural areas and cultural spaces as essential infrastructure and aligns parks planning to ensure that park investment keeps pace with growth.

- Increase community health through recreation
- Parks, trails and natural spaces
- Community health and wellness
- Thriving cultural landscape.

Key Parks Policies:

- Broaden equitable access to natural spaces and parks
- Acquire land for public parks
- Improve connectivity between parks and open spaces
- Create inclusive and affirming environments
- Sustainable parks funding
- Regional trail and open spaces networks
- Community centers, community gardens, and community streets

Implementation will include parks funding strategies, level of service standards, park district boundaries, PIF programs, capital investment strategy, refining recreation offerings, focus on natural systems, development of the Arts Hub, and Arts, Culture & Heritage Plan with approved cultural access funding.

The project timeline will release drafts for public review in mid-February, Council and Commission review in February and March, and initiation of the adoption process in April and May for Council.

Wille asked if the comprehensive plan accounts for provisions to purchase land as properties expand east. Perlick shared that this is part of the Parks planning standard for acquisition as the competition for land is a primary challenge. Fletcher noted the significant change in the economic demand of population growth and asked how we are going to factor and adapt once the population reaches the anticipated level. Snodgrass shared that we have an estimated capacity from the preferred alternative map based on our current targeted demand.

Thompson asked how frequently we revisit comprehensive plans. We produce them every 10 years, with adjustments as needed every year. Thompson inquired about annexation timeline, and Snodgrass shared that there would need to be further discussion between the communities and elected bodies in the County.

Cavaness expressed support for commercial PIF and suggested considerations for utilizing and repurposing older buildings. Regarding acquisition, it was confirmed that PRCS has an active application open for the Parks Planner position. Cavaness asked about positions for trails and open space networking. Perlick confirmed that our ability to work with internal partners and countywide partners will bring this work forward as there is a lot of interest in investing in trails countywide.

**b. Budget Memo & Recreation Cost Recovery Update**

Perlick and Stokke shared an overview of the PRCS budget history and trends ranging from 2007 to current. It was highlighted that there is a long-term “structural deficit”, as Vancouver has grown with a 30% increase in population between 2007-2025.

A summary of the PRCS FTE measured against the Vancouver Population was shown by year. Department staffing has been reduced by 35.5 FTEs despite population growth of over 47,000 residents in that time period. This is a reduction of 37.5% in department FTEs from 2007-2025.

The Vancouver FTE per 10,000 is much lower compared to the national medians. Between 2007-2025, PRCS FTEs per 10,000 population decreased by more than 50%. As of 2024, Vancouver is less than 50% of the national median in this measure.

The next measure presented is annual operating expenditures. While expenditures have grown over time, they have not paced with cumulative inflation during this period. PRCS has become a smaller portion of the City’s overall budget now at just 3% of the overall City Budget in 2025. Vancouver is also shown to be below national medians in operating expenses per capita.

Recreation Cost Recovery is part of a resource allocation to help:

- Ensure responsible stewardship of public resources
- Guide service offerings and fee setting
- Optimize community impact

Costs not recovered through revenue are subsidized by General Fund taxes. Cost recovery factors in the balance of individual and community benefits.

Our calculation includes direct Recreation program and facility costs and revenues, plus some administrative and indirect costs. This does not include Parks and Cultural Services divisions’ costs and revenues.

Interfund transfers are costs charged to the Recreation division from other departments, which include facilities maintenance, Risk (insurance, etc.), other internal city services such as IT and HR support, and Grounds Maintenance supporting Recreation.

Direct costs and revenues remained steady from 2024-2025, while charges from other departments grew 27%.

2026 Budget Adoption Schedule:

- April: Financial forecast and revenue options to City Council
- May-June: Department budget preparation
- July: Budget submitted by department
- August-September: Internal budget review
- October: Recommended budget published
- November: City Council review and adoption

The floor was open for discussion and questions from commissioners. Thompson and Fletcher commended staff for their efforts on providing the budget context. Stephen expressed appreciation for the background and big-picture information. Luce commended staff on the informative memo and outlined concern for the need for leaner FTEs in the department. He inquired about the cost to having the community centers open on Sundays

and the increased fees' impacts on memberships. Perlick noted the level of detailed review from Finance and voter-approved initiatives that contribute to changing complexities in the budget.

Cavaness inquired about plans for another community center, and Perlick shared that while this is not in the current comprehensive plan, this is part of active conversations around growing the city boundary. Cavaness expressed gratitude for the helpful visuals in the presentation and memo.

## **Item 5: Commission and Staff Reports**

### **a. Director's Report**

**Parks:** A large bigleaf maple tree next to the Elizabeth Austin Playground is decaying on the inside. This means it could break or fall without warning, so we need to remove the tree for public safety. Urban Forestry has contracted Arborscape to handle the removal next week, Feb. 23-27. The playground and portions of the park will be closed to the public during the removal. Signs were posted at the park, and notifications were mailed out to neighbors last week to keep them informed.

To help offset the loss of this significant tree, we are partnering with Urban Forestry to plant nine new trees in the park. You're welcome to join us for that replanting event on Thursday, March 19. You can register for the replanting event on the City website.

**Recreation:** We hope you'll join us for the Firstenburg 20th Anniversary Celebration on Friday, Feb. 27. All day long the center will be hosting special activities for the whole community including public swims, rock climbing, Zumba classes, sports and games, crafts and a family movie night. The event free and open to the community, so it's a great opportunity to invite people to explore what our community centers have to offer. You can see the full schedule of activities on the City's website.

**Cultural Services:** We want to congratulate our Cultural Services team on another wonderful weekend of Family Valentine's Ball dances. Erik Miletich and Meg Johnson organized some very memorable evenings for dance enthusiasts of all ages. And Hailey Heath coordinated an excellent team of volunteers to manage all the behind-the-scenes details.

Registration for Community Gardens opened today for returning gardeners and will open next Wednesday for new gardeners. This is the time when gardeners can reserve their plots online. Gardens open for planting in mid-April. Last year all the plots sold out before planting began, so if you know any gardeners, make sure they register early!

State of the City is happening March 9 with a focus on Arts, Culture and Heritage in Vancouver, and will be hosted at the Vancouver Arts Hub.

### **b. Chair Report**

Cavaness shared the following updates:

- She encouraged commissioners to like, share, and comment on PRCS social media posts
- Cavaness will be attending Native Plant Propagation class at SymbiOp

### **c. Evergreen School District Report**

None presented.

### **d. Vancouver Public School Report**

None presented.

**e. Parks Foundation Report**

- Thompson announced that May 7<sup>th</sup> is the [PFCC Annual Luncheon](#). The event will take place at the Marriott Hotel.
- Bricks are available at Esther Short to celebrate friends and family or to honor a veteran. Learn more about [Buy a Brick](#) on the PFCC website.

**Item 11: Open Discussion & New Business**

Wille inquired about a Transportation project near NE 137<sup>th</sup> that may have impacts on the wildlife in that habitat. Perlick can connect with Transportation to find out more. Wille has noticed a lot of electric bikes racing through the parks and inquired about existing policies. Perlick shared that Council has shared feedback on e-bike concerns, and that code needs updating citywide. Wille also noted foxtail grass in parks.

Fletcher asked if State of the City will be available online, and Burton confirmed it will be available on [CVTV](#).

**ADJOURNED**

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:57pm