

# 2025 Pottery Studio Changes Feedback Summary Report



February 28, 2025

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## Project Overview

North Vancouver Recreation & Culture (NVRC) operates pottery studios at the Parkgate Community Centre and Delbrook Community Recreation Centre and delivers recreational pottery programs for participants of all ages and abilities.

We are changing how we operate the pottery studios to ensure fair access for all and increase the number of participant spaces. The key change to both studios is a shift from a membership model for studio time, which primarily serves the same people year to year, to a seasonal passholder model that provides an equal chance for all community members, with appropriate levels of NVRC pottery experience, to purchase a pass four times a year. Fairness and equal access are the primary reasons for the change, which reflects NVRC's mandate as a public sector entity.

This shift will be implemented in July 2025, with registration opening in April 2025.

## Communications and Feedback

The coming changes were announced at a series of information sessions held from December 11-14, 2024, and posted online at [nvrc.ca/pottery](https://nvrc.ca/pottery). We invited 481 people with known associations to NVRC Pottery, including approximately 80 studio members, as well as members of the broader public to attend the sessions. 59 people attended.

At the sessions and in the months since, NVRC has received concerns, questions and feedback from members at the Delbrook and Parkgate studios, as well as individuals on the membership waitlists, students in NVRC pottery programs, and other interested community members. Key themes and issues raised included accessibility and equity, community and artistic values, the desire for input into NVRC pottery decisions, studio capacity, storage and operations, and potential alternative solutions, among other topics.

## Purpose of this Report

This report summarizes the feedback received and provides NVRC's responses. It also communicates next steps as we move towards the transition to a seasonal pass model in July, including using a more equitable and accessible lottery registration process, meeting with interested studio users on April 14-15, 2025 to discuss implementation of the changes, and ensuring there is a robust studio orientation process in place for passholders.

Further details, such as registration instructions, topics for the upcoming meetings and a final firing schedule for current members will be provided in early April 2025.

### **Why the change to NVRC's pottery studios?**

NVRC is an entity of the City and District of North Vancouver and funded by the municipalities to operate public facilities on their behalf. Its mandate is to provide recreation and arts programming to North Vancouver residents. Therefore, it has a responsibility to provide systems and services that give fair access to all community members and ensure the benefits of those services (including social, lifelong learning, creative, and mental health) can be experienced by as many community members as possible.

In addition, NVRC will continue to explore ways to increase the number of people who can access the studios as this is a high demand service.

### **Why is NVRC making changes now?**

When Parkgate Community Centre first opened over 25 years ago, service delivery, staffing and volunteers were a blend between Parkgate Society and NVRC. Societies have different mandates and responsibilities than public sector entities such as NVRC. The pottery studio membership model originated in this blended environment and was later extended to the Delbrook studio. Over time, the respective roles became more clearly differentiated so that Parkgate Society focused on community services and NVRC focused on recreation and arts, in alignment with its mandate. Complaints about the lack of access to the pottery studios resulted in NVRC taking a closer look at the studio membership model.

### **Acknowledging concerns**

We understand that this upcoming change has resulted in concerns from some of the members of the Parkgate and Delbrook studios, as well as some on the membership waitlists. We hear the frustration and disappointment expressed by those affected and recognize how important the membership model has been to those who have built personal connections within these studio communities.

We know that this shift will be difficult for those who have a membership, and we acknowledge that it represents a significant change. We are making it so that the whole community has the opportunity to access and benefit from this high-demand public sector service and we hope members will continue to participate in pottery at NVRC under the new model.

## What We Heard

We appreciate the time and effort many of you have taken to provide us with feedback and suggestions in writing or in person at the December 2024 information sessions.

The following key themes emerged from the feedback shared by studio members, waitlisted individuals, students and other community members:

- Strong appreciation for the studio membership communities. Concern that the changes could impact knowledge-sharing, social connection and sense of belonging studio members value.
- Disappointment in the lack of consultation and interest in greater involvement in shaping service offerings for studio members, staff and experienced students.
- Concerns about the accessibility and equity of a first-come, first-serve seasonal pass registration process.
- Requests to maintain the current membership system, with some members and waitlisted individuals preferring to keep the existing model.
- Recognition of the contributions of studio volunteers, including their efforts in community-building and supporting the studios over the years.
- Excitement from students and waitlisted individuals who are looking forward to gaining access to independent studio time.
- Appreciation that NVRC is addressing a long-standing concern from non-members about very limited opportunities to gain access to these public facilities.
- Appreciation for the creative, mental health and social benefits of being part of the pottery studio communities.
- Interest in ensuring the studios are well-supported and resourced with appropriate staffing and oversight.
- Suggestions for a hybrid model to increase accessibility while maintaining the membership model for current members.
- Proposals to introduce daytime and evening/weekend passes to accommodate different schedules and spread-out demand.
- Requests for more clarity on the seasonal pass system, including how many passes will be available and what the requirements will be to get a pass.
- General agreement on the need for increased access, with recognition that demand for pottery services remains high.

- Concerns about potential overcrowding, particularly during certain times of the seasonal creation cycle.
- Concerns regarding NVRC's process in developing the changes and desire for more data collection and research.

For a full summary of the feedback we received, organized by category, along with NVRC responses, please see the "Expanded Feedback Summary" (pages 9 to 39).

## Next Steps: What We're Doing

### **We are moving ahead, and we are changing the registration process**

We heard clearly that you are concerned about the online, first-come, first-serve registration system, particularly for those who may not have strong computer skills or reliable internet access.

We are pleased to confirm that a new lottery-based registration system will be implemented for seasonal studio passes:

- This system gives all registrants up to 3 weeks to enter their information online, by phone or in person at our facilities.
- Staff will confirm that all who registered meet the prerequisites of either being a previous member of the Parkgate or Delbrook studio or having completed at least two pottery classes at NVRC within the past three years. Pottery experience from outside NVRC will not be accepted.
- The registration software will randomly select eligible registrants and notify all entrants of their status. This lottery process is carried out instantly and automatically by the computer system, ensuring complete impartiality. Successful registrants will have a designated number of days after they receive notification to confirm their registration by submitting payment. Those who are not selected will be placed on a waitlist in random order and notified if a spot becomes available.

Lottery registration will be open from April 7 -27, 2025 for the summer seasonal pass session (beginning in July 2025). We will run the lottery in May 2025, at least one week before registration for summer pottery programs. Step-by-step instructions for how to register will be provided via email, on our webpage at [nvrc.ca/pottery](https://nvrc.ca/pottery) and in hardcopy in the studios in early April 2025.



## **Meetings with studio users**

We will be holding in-person meetings at Parkgate on Monday, April 14 at 6 pm (in Mary Hunter Hall) and at Delbrook on Tuesday, April 15 at 1:30 pm (in the Arbutus Room) to discuss the implementation of the seasonal studio passes. Discussion topics for these meetings will be shared in early April 2025, and will include conversations around clay type and operational details. There will be an opportunity at the end of these meetings to get assistance entering your name for the registration lottery. You can attend whatever session is most convenient for you.

We've also heard that opportunities for mentorship, idea-sharing, skill learning and creative exchange are important to you. We would also like to get your feedback on the kinds of classes, workshops or other opportunities could be offered to seasonal pass holders, students and other interested parties to help facilitate relationships, learning, idea exchange and community ties.

## **Developing a robust orientation process for seasonal pass holders**

In addition to the basic requirements of either being a previous member of the Parkgate or Delbrook studios or having completed at least two pottery classes at NVRC within the past three years, our Pottery Studios Supervisor is developing an orientation and assessment process with input from studio staff and instructors to ensure that all seasonal pass holders can work independently and safely in the studios.

The Pottery Studios Supervisor will lead these orientations, confirming that participants can consistently and safely use equipment, maintain cleanliness and demonstrate the necessary skills to work independently in the studio. If someone is unable to work independently, the pass will go to the next person on that season's waitlist.

We will provide more information on the specifics of the orientation process in April 2025, at the meetings noted above and on our webpage at [nvrc.ca/pottery](https://nvrc.ca/pottery).

## **Commitment to monitor and make adjustments**

We are working diligently on evaluating and introducing studio operations details that will support the transition to the seasonal pass model. In order to support our target of approximately 500 seasonal passholders per year and ensure good pottery processes, some of the ways of working in the studio will be different under the seasonal pass model

than they are now. Our goal is to make sure the transition goes well and to support participants' pottery creativity.

We recognize that this shift will take some adjustment, and we are committed to monitoring the new model as it rolls out. We will assess studio usage, demand for passes and classes and overall participation trends. If certain times in the studio become particularly busy, we will explore potential solutions, including the option of offering separate daytime and evening/weekend passes, as suggested by several individuals.

### **Clear communication with current members throughout the transition**

We will provide a detailed final firing schedule in April 2025 to help you plan your final works under the membership model.

## **Communication & Feedback: Dec 2024-Feb 2025**

### **Information sessions – December 11-14, 2024**

NVRC hosted four information sessions on the upcoming changes to provide notice to pottery studio members, pottery program students, waitlisted individuals and other parties interested in NVRC's pottery program in December 2024.

481 people with known associations to NVRC Pottery were invited by email. We also posted notices in both pottery studios, and on our pottery webpage. 59 people attended the sessions. Dates, locations and attendance numbers for the four information sessions are listed in the table below. Members from the Delbrook studio were welcome to attend the Parkgate sessions and vice versa.

Date	Time	Location	Attendees
Wednesday, December 11	1-2:30pm	Parkgate Community Centre, Large Multi-purpose Room	21
Thursday, December 12	6-7:30pm	Parkgate Community Centre, Mary Hunter Hall	12
Friday, December 13	11am-12:30pm	Delbrook Community Recreation Centre, Arbutus Room	10
Saturday, December 14	2-3:30pm	Delbrook Community Recreation Centre, Arbutus Room	16



A fact sheet and questions-and-answers document about the changes were shared with participants at the information sessions. The content was also shared at [nvrc.ca/pottery](https://nvrc.ca/pottery) following the first information session.

### **Written submissions – December 2024 to February 2025**

31 written submissions from a total of 34 individual interest holders were received between mid-December 2024 and early February 2025. Submissions were sent to NVRC's pottery email inbox ([pottery@nvrc.ca](mailto:pottery@nvrc.ca)), to NVRC Commission and staff members, and to District and City of North Vancouver Council members.

A summary of feedback received during the information sessions and through the written submissions is recorded below.

## **Expanded Feedback Summary & Responses**

### **Feedback and NVRC responses by category**

This summary represents the collective feedback received from studio members, waitlisted individuals, students and other community members regarding the upcoming changes to NVRC's pottery studios. Comments have been collated and consolidated, with similar feedback grouped together to reflect the most common themes and concerns.

The feedback is organized roughly in order of frequency, highlighting the most widely shared sentiments first. While we have made efforts to minimize redundancy, some occasional repetition may occur to ensure that key information is easily accessible within each section. This allows readers to quickly find relevant information.

We appreciate the time and thoughtfulness that went into this feedback and will continue to consider these perspectives as we move forward with the seasonal pass model.

### **Retaining membership model or a hybrid membership model**

#### **Feedback:**

- High levels of concern expressed for moving away from a membership model and associated loss of a sense of community for the members at both Parkgate and Delbrook.
- Acknowledgement that there is high demand for studio space, and a need to increase access, but desire for solutions to be found to increase access without changing everything the membership communities have built at Parkgate and Delbrook.
- Concern that the proposed changes do not take into consideration pottery's unique processes and timelines or respect the established communities in the studios.
- Comment that pottery is a creative, therapeutic, community-oriented pursuit, different from other types of recreation programs and does not fit well into a seasonal registration cycle.
- Assertion that the current studio membership model is a community-based model that is fair and equitable, not exclusionary.
- Anxiety, sadness and anger voiced regarding proposed changes.
- Concern expressed that new individuals coming into the studio will not know how the studio works and will not be good stewards of the space.
- Appreciation for the pottery studios as spaces for creativity, development and connection. Appreciation for the positive and therapeutic experience of becoming a studio member and being able to practice pottery regularly. Concern that the changes will damage these benefits.
- Concern that the approach taken to develop the changes is disrespectful to the potters and the arts community and will have a negative impact on many people.
- Appreciation expressed for the special community of the Parkgate membership, and comment that members waited their turn to be part of the community.
- Question as to whether maintaining membership for senior members was considered.
- Concern regarding a decline of the level of service that is currently offered under the membership model due to more crowding in the studios, a reduction in workspace, and a stressful registration process, time constraints, and loss of community, alongside an increase in price.
- Concern that the changes prioritize quantity and money over quality.
- Comment that membership is important to foster stewardship and caring for the studio spaces.

- Request for NVRC to retain the membership system, determine how many additional members the studios can support, and open up that many new membership spaces to address demand.
- Concern that the changes are unfair and remove people from the studios who have a strong interest in stewardship of the space. Concern that members are being pushed out of the studios and will be barred from registering for a seasonal pass. Comment that members feel like they have been fired from the studios, despite giving time and energy to develop the spaces and the community.
- Disappointment expressed as some individuals have waited on the waitlist for many years specifically because they want to be part of the community that exists at Parkgate studio.
- Comment that NVRC's behaviour is not in line with what a community organization should be about.
- Concern that changes will fail and cause lasting harm.

**NVRC Response:** We will be transitioning to a seasonal pass model for pottery studio access starting in summer 2025, in accordance with the public sector principles of fairness and equal access for all. We recognize that this change has raised concerns among many studio members at Parkgate and Delbrook, as well as those on the waitlist. We hear the frustration and disappointment expressed by those affected and acknowledge how meaningful the membership model has been for those fortunate to have a membership year to year.

We know that this shift will be challenging for many. We received valuable feedback from you, and we have adjusted the registration process to improve accessibility and equity. Existing studio members are welcome to continue participating with NVRC pottery and we hope you will try the seasonal pass model.

### **Transitioning to a seasonal pass model**

#### **Feedback:**

- Support from pottery students, waitlisted individuals and other interested parties for the coming seasonal pass system. Belief that it will provide more equitable access to the studio spaces for all.

- Acknowledgement that this is a positive change for non-members, especially those who have been on the waitlist, but will be a very challenging change for existing members.
- Comment that the long wait to get into the membership system discourages participation with NVRC pottery.
- Gratitude expressed for a change that will allow more users to get into studio. Excitement about the possibility of gaining access to studio time.
- Hope that opening up access to studio time will free up spaces in pottery classes that are currently taken up by experienced potters who cannot get access to the studios any other way.
- Comment that a lack of membership availability forces some to take their business to other establishments with drop-in programs and weekly registration.
- Gratitude expressed for the communication regarding the upcoming changes.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC, as a public service, has a responsibility to provide fair and equal access to pottery opportunities for our entire community. We appreciate the empathy expressed towards current studio members by students, people on the waitlist, and other interested individuals, alongside the statements of support for this change. We look forward to working with everyone to create an environment at both studios that is accessible to more people and continues to be a positive and inspiring place for people to create with clay.

### **Fairness and equity of access to studios and registration process**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern that the transition to a seasonal pass system will create barriers for seniors, newcomers, neurodivergent individuals and people with disabilities, and is not in line with NVRC's commitments around access and inclusion.
- Concern that the seasonal pass registration system (particularly online registration) will create barriers to access for some users.
- Anxiety and stress regarding the seasonal pass registration process, especially the online and time-sensitive aspects of it.
- Desire for an alternative, accessible way for those who don't have access to digital knowledge or the technology to register online.

- Concern that the way the studio membership currently runs prevents other people from accessing the studios.
- Concern that NVRC is taking away access from current members to provide access to others. Desire for a list of government contacts to share concerns with.
- Comment that some studio users are only interested in handbuilding as the wheel can be challenging for those with conditions such as arthritis.
- Desire for registration assistance to be provided to those who may need additional support to participate in technology-based registration, especially seniors.
- Concern that those who are not technologically savvy and/or do not have access to a new computer or fast internet will not have a chance to register.
- Concern that the seasonal pass registration system is ageist, inequitable, ableist and competitive, restricting access and removing consistency and predictability.
- Concern that seniors and individuals with disabilities will struggle, causing negative mental health outcomes.
- Concern that limits on storage will disproportionately impact those with disabilities.
- Concern that restrictions on type of clays that can be used in the studio will create limitations for people with disabilities, as clay choice is often related to physical abilities due to differences in weight, texture, pliability, etc.
- Concern that a busier, more crowded studio will create additional access issues for neurodiverse individuals who struggle to find quiet hours in the studio to work, even under the current system.
- Concern that the seasonal pass system is not equitable, and that NVRC is focusing on fairness instead of equity.
- Comment that it would not be inclusive to offer dedicated types of passes to seniors or other groups.
- Concern regarding how challenging it has been historically to gain access the studios. Concern that many people likely gave up on accessing the studios and have moved on.
- Concern that the option to access independent studio time is not well known outside of the membership and that this will lead to one-sided feedback about the changes. Desire for NVRC to better communicate offerings to the community at large.

**NVRC Response:** We heard clearly that you are concerned about the online, first-come, first-serve registration system, particularly for those who may not have strong computer skills or reliable internet access.

We are pleased to confirm that a new lottery-based registration system will be implemented for seasonal studio passes:

- This system gives all registrants up to 3 weeks to enter their information online, by phone or in person at our facilities.
- Staff will confirm that all who registered meet the prerequisites of either being a previous member of the Parkgate or Delbrook studio or having completed at least two pottery classes at NVRC within the past three years. Pottery experience from outside NVRC will not be accepted.
- The registration software will randomly select eligible registrants and notify all entrants of their status. This lottery process is carried out instantly and automatically by the computer system, ensuring complete impartiality. Successful registrants will have a designated number of days after they receive notification to confirm their registration by submitting payment. Those who are not selected will be placed on a waitlist in random order and notified if a spot becomes available.

Lottery registration will be open from April 7 -27, 2025 for the summer seasonal pass session (beginning in July 2025). We will run the lottery in May 2025, at least one week before registration for summer pottery programs. Step-by-step instructions for how to register will be provided via email, on our webpage at [nvrc.ca/pottery](http://nvrc.ca/pottery) and in hardcopy in the studios in early April 2025.

We also recognize that some members have raised accessibility concerns regarding changes to in-studio storage, the types of clay that will be available, and the potential for a busier studio environment. Individuals who may require accommodations to address these or other concerns are encouraged to contact the Pottery Studios Supervisor to discuss their needs. NVRC is committed to providing inclusive programming and routinely works with individuals with disabilities or other accessibility challenges to support their participation in our programs.

## **Seasonal pass registration process**

### **Feedback:**

- Concern and anxiety regarding high demand for registration, the online registration process and the possibility that individuals may not be able to get a pass. Concern that it may be inaccessible for some studio users.
- Question as to whether the registration system will track who does and doesn't get a pass, if there will be a waitlist, and whether there will be a limit on the number of seasonal passes a person can get in a year, to ensure fairness.
- Comment that an early morning registration process that is competitive and first-come, first-served (similar to swimming) will have a big impact on people's lives.
- Concern that first-come, first-served registration creates an atmosphere of scarcity and urgency.
- Desire for the pottery studio seasonal pass program to be open to North Vancouver residents only because of high demand.
- Comment that the Shadbolt studio has a drop-in pass system that is similar to the studio seasonal pass system presented.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC will be implementing a lottery-based registration system (as described above) for seasonal pottery studio passes. This approach helps address concerns about access to technology, competition, and time constraints by allowing a longer window for individuals to enter the lottery and providing multiple ways to sign up—online, by phone or in person at one of our facilities.

At this time, there will be no limits on the number of seasonal passes an individual can have in a year, nor will we be enforcing a residents-only restriction. However, as with other aspects of the program, we will closely monitor the system during the initial seasons and adjust if needed.

## **Alternative solutions**

### **Feedback:**

- Desire for a hybrid seasonal pass and drop-in system to allow those who do not get a seasonal pass to still access the studio.



- Question as to whether the changes will be moving ahead as-is, or whether there is a possibility of going back to the drawing board.
- Suggestions to implement a pass/membership system that is split up by hours of availability, including a weekdays option for those with flexible hours, an evenings/weekends option for those who are not able to come during the day, and quarter-time, half-time and full-time memberships to accommodate different lifestyles and availability.
- Desire for a drop-in or book-a-visit type system for studio time, similar to what was in place during the pandemic, where members would book their time slot. Comment that this would help to maximize use of the space, spread out attendance to avoid crowding, and allow for certainty around being able to access the studio.
- Desire to maintain current memberships, while also opening up a limited number of new spots for three- to six-month passes. Comment that a similar model worked at another local studio with success.
- Desire to grandfather current memberships, while adding some seasonal passes, and allow for the two access systems to run at the same time in recognition of the existing memberships' efforts and energy to build up the studios.
- Desire to explore ways to maximize studio space or repurpose underutilized spaces within NVRC facilities for pottery.
- Desire to look at alternate solutions to increase membership and studio access, such as part time memberships or registration for time slots.
- Suggestion to implement a staggered registration process, where 30 people at a time would get a six-month pass, and you would stagger these four to eight times a year, in order to create some continuity between passholders seeking connection with others and spread out the demand for equipment and storage at different stages of the process.
- Request to allow current members to automatically be registered for a seasonal pass as this would provide consolation to those who built the membership community, while still allowing new people to join.
- Request to allow current members to register for a seasonal pass one day early.
- Desire for changes to be trialled at the Delbrook studio first.
- Desire to retain current memberships in order to retain a core of people who are mentors, stewards of the studio, while introducing seasonal daytime passes and evening passes to allow more opportunities for access.

**NVRC Response:** We will be proceeding with the transition to a seasonal pass model in July 2025. The new model, which operates in approximately three-month cycles, is designed to provide fair and equal access to all community members—including current membership holders, waitlisted individuals, and new participants—while providing more opportunities (four times a year) to purchase a studio pass. This model also allows for dedicated cleaning and maintenance periods between seasons and helps keep costs at an accessible price point.

To ensure fairness, there will be no grandfathering or early registration for current members. We encourage and welcome all current members to register for seasonal passes and continue participating in the studios. As part of the transition, all seasonal pass holders—including current members—will be required to participate in a studio orientation.

We are committed to monitoring the system as it rolls out. We will assess studio usage, demand for passes and classes and overall participation trends. If certain times become particularly busy, we will explore potential solutions, including the option of offering separate daytime and evening/weekend passes, as suggested by several individuals.

### **Value of community and mentorship**

#### **Feedback:**

- High levels of concern expressed for the move away from a membership model and the associated loss of community, knowledge sharing, camaraderie and expertise.
- Appreciation for the unique benefits of pottery: community, mental health, and social connection. Concern that these have not been considered in the announced changes.
- Concern the seasonal pass cycles will disrupt the natural mentorship process and community atmosphere where long-standing members provide mentoring, share specialized skills and foster a culture of learning.

- Assertion that the current studio membership model is a community-based model that is fair and equitable, not exclusionary. Comment that all members waited their turn to be part of the community.
- Appreciation expressed for the Parkgate membership community and the spirit of collaboration, stewardship and artistry that has been developed there.
- Concern that the proposed changes will not preserve a sense of community. Concern for loss of support that may result from the changes—especially for seniors, especially at Parkgate.
- Acknowledgement that there is a need for increased accessibility to the studios, and desire for a solution to be found that does not damage the existing community.
- Comment that the experience of some members and the volunteerism and mentorship they provide is key to studio operations.
- Concern that existing members will move on and not continue under the new model.
- Concern the changes will create bad feelings between existing users and new ones.
- Concern regarding the time constraints of the three-month seasonal pass model for building connections with others in the studio. Comment that six months would be better for fostering a sense of community.
- Concern that the proposed changes do not acknowledge or value the years of time, expertise and care that have built the Parkgate studio.
- Appreciation for the benefit of members and more experienced students sharing their knowledge and work with those with less experience.
- Comment that members and volunteers were heavily involved in the development of the studios, including helping to purchase equipment and supplies.
- Appreciation for the mental health and healthy aging benefits of pottery and belonging to a studio community.
- Concern that the changes prioritize numbers over the humanity of the people participating. Quantity over quality.
- Appreciation for pottery studios as a rare space that promotes intergenerational friendships.
- Appreciation expressed for the community at the Parkgate Studio. Concern that the changes will destroy what has been built.
- Comment that the community spirit is what makes the studio function, as volunteerism, collaboration, mentorship, friendship, kindness and stewardship of the space are key to the studio's success.

- Concern that the atmosphere of trust, mentorship and freedom to share ideas and honest feedback developed over years will be lost.
- Concern that NVRC's process has caused anxiety and stress and disregards the work of studio members in developing the studio communities.
- Desire for NVRC to encourage more supportive communities, like the one at the Parkgate Studio, not undermine existing ones.

**NVRC Response:** We recognize that the pottery studios are more than just creative spaces—they are communities where members find connection, belonging and support. This change is about expanding those opportunities so that more individuals can access and participate in these positive environments.

We hear the frustration and disappointment that members have expressed. We know this transition will take time to adjust to and we hope you will continue to be part of NVRC's pottery community under the seasonal pass model. Our goal is to ensure that both studios remain vibrant, inclusive spaces where creativity thrives, and more people have the chance to work with clay.

### **Desire to provide input into the decision-making process**

#### **Feedback:**

- High levels of concern regarding the lack of consultation with the pottery community and request for consultation with studio members, staff, instructors, and experienced students to inform any changes made to the studios.
- Concern that consultation has been missed, the decisions being made impact users, and that members and instructors have a lot of valuable experience and knowledge to share.
- Comment that members at both Parkgate and Delbrook feel disrespected by NVRC's approach and lack of consultation.
- Question regarding what consultation was done to support the proposed changes and whether studio members, staff, instructors, or experienced students were consulted.
- Question regarding how the decision not to consult with the community was made.
- Request for contacts to reach out to communicate concern regarding the process.

- Concern that NVRC does not acknowledge that Delbrook members are also unhappy about the announced changes. Comment that some Delbrook members provided feedback at the information sessions that were held at Parkgate in December 2024.
- Concern that Delbrook members don't feel heard by NVRC and don't have the same opportunities to voice their concerns as there has historically been less of a leadership presence in the Delbrook studio.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC's pottery service offers two key components: pottery programs and independent studio time. Our programs provide participants with the opportunity to learn pottery skills from qualified instructors, while independent studio time allows them to practice these skills and explore their creativity in a self-directed environment.

We believe that offering both structured learning and independent practice creates a well-rounded, high-quality experience for our community.

NVRC decided to move to a three-month seasonal pass model to keep space for the individual practice of pottery skills to continue, while aligning with the principles of fairness and equal access for all community members. This move means we can allow as many people in our community to benefit from independent studio time as possible, while still supporting the unique timelines of making pottery.

We understand that many studio members and some individuals on the waitlist at both Parkgate and Delbrook believe consultation prior to the decision may have changed the outcome. The primary reason for the change was to align with our responsibility as a public entity and mandate to provide accessible recreation and arts opportunities for all North Vancouver residents, as well as the principles of responsible resource management. These foundational principles don't align with the membership-based model, and as a result the decision to move to a seasonal pass model was not something to consult on.

What we could do and did do was provide ample notice for members to prepare for the transition. We have also set aside time for meetings on April 14-15, 2025 to discuss the implementation of the changes and get feedback on some of the operational aspects of the change.

We do not take decisions about changes to our operations lightly as we recognize that any changes to how we manage our resources and facilities will affect our users and may create an experience that differs from what many are accustomed to.

There are other operating models for pottery studios in Metro Vancouver where municipalities delegate studio operations during specific times of the week to non-profits or rent out their studio space to interested organizations to run. These organizations operate independently, which allows them to establish their own operating practices and priorities to serve their members. This is different from NVRC, which is mandated to serve the community as a whole.

While it's important for us to make this shift in order to align with our mandate, we hear and understand the disappointment and concern from members.

### **NVRC and pottery services**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern that the pottery studio model transition does not adhere to the collaborative spirit highlighted in NVRC's mandate. Request for NVRC to pause implementation of changes and collaborate with the pottery community.
- Concern that changes do not align with NVRC's mandate because they prioritize quantity over quality and disregard the community dynamic of the studios.
- Desire for NVRC to share a copy of their mandate.
- Concern that NVRC's actions destabilize the existing pottery community, fail to support the pottery studios as hubs of artistic collaboration and recreation, and will cause some individuals to leave for private studios.
- Concern that by making the proposed changes, NVRC is abandoning the existing pottery community.
- Concern that NVRC's announcement of the changes during the busy winter holiday season demonstrates disrespect and a lack of faith.
- General concern with recreation and sports receiving more funding and attention than arts & culture.

- Concern that changes do not align with NVRC's priorities of planning grounded in data, community feedback and professional expertise.
- Concern that the proposed changes do not take into consideration pottery's unique processes and timelines.
- Concern that there has been insufficient research and data-gathering to support the proposed changes. Comment that research on studio usage will show that there are times when the studio is currently not busy and can accommodate additional members.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC's mandate, vision, values, and goals can be found at [nvrc.ca/about-us](http://nvrc.ca/about-us). We are mandated to provide accessible recreation and arts opportunities for all North Vancouver residents. Our role is to minimize barriers to participation and ensure that everyone has a fair opportunity to participate in our programs.

The transition to a seasonal pass model supports this mandate. This decision aligns with NVRC's responsibility to serve the broader community and ensure everyone has a chance to experience the benefits of working with clay.

Our goal is to maintain vibrant, inclusive studio spaces where creativity thrives and where more individuals have the opportunity to take part in North Vancouver's pottery community. We know there will be some challenges and growing pains during this change. We will continue to monitor how the new system is functioning and make adjustments as needed.

### **Artistic expression and exploration**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern that the change to a seasonal pass model limits artistic expression and exploration by discouraging larger or more complex work in favour of simple production pottery.
- Concern that the seasonal studio pass model will not work as the timeline and structure do not support creativity or the process of producing artwork.



- Concern that the seasonal studio pass model is attempting to apply a recreation model to a creative pursuit that does not fit in the same business model.

**NVRC Response:** As a community recreation centre, NVRC's focus is on providing opportunities for artistic exploration, skill development and creative experiences for the broader community. Our goal is to ensure that all residents, regardless of skill or experience level, have access to arts spaces and programming. Our mandate does not focus on supporting artistic mastery or expert levels of craftsmanship above other uses, though we do celebrate and value creativity, skill development and the talent of participants.

Three months is sufficient time to create artworks on a scale appropriate to the community recreation centre setting. We understand that this may require some adjustments to planning, scheduling and the scope of your pieces. To assist with this, we will post a detailed firing schedule for each seasonal session to help you organize your projects. See "Scheduling and space" on pages 30 to 32 for more details about firing schedules.

### **Demand for pottery services**

#### **Feedback:**

- Comment that demand has been high for several years, and question as to why it was not addressed earlier.
- Desire to understand where the pressure is coming from in terms of access to the studios and why demand has increased so much in the last few years.
- Desire for NVRC to advocate to Councils and Commission on behalf of potters and communicate high levels of demand.
- Comment that other municipalities have restrictions and limitations on their pottery facilities as well.
- Comment that there has been a large increase interest in pottery as well as in the population of the North Shore. Concern that there has been no planning for new pottery spaces.

- Comment that the current surge in interest in pottery is a phase—like the one in the 1970s—and will die down at some point. Desire for NVRC to consider the long-term consequences of this change.

**NVRC Response:** In the years following the pandemic, recreation and cultural services across the country have seen a significant increase in demand for arts and recreation programs. This increase in interest is a positive development for our community, and we are working to meet this demand as best we can with available facility space and resources.

### **Desire for new pottery facilities**

#### **Feedback:**

- Request for new pottery facilities to be built to address demand and question as to whether any new pottery facilities are in the planning stages now.
- Desire to look at usage of space in NVRC facilities and consider expanding pottery into underused spaces.
- Comment that there are issues with access to recreation services in general in our communities.
- Question as to how members can advocate for new pottery facilities in North Vancouver.
- Request for details regarding the art studio space at the new Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre and what pottery functionality it will include.
- Question as to whether a full pottery studio was considered at new Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre, and whether there is any opportunity to add one there.
- Question as to why NVRC did not come to members to seek help with funding for a new studio space.
- Desire to understand the process of pottery studio planning with the DNV and CNV.
- Concern that pottery spaces are not being prioritized in planning.
- Concern that this change is intended to hide demand in order to avoid including pottery facilities as a priority in planning for new recreation facilities. Concern that fair access is being used as a reason to erase the arts.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC evaluates facility space, usage, and potential improvements to ensure our resources are being used effectively. As part of our mandate, we also provide recommendations to the City and District of North Vancouver on priority indoor and outdoor spaces, facilities and amenities needed to support public participation in arts, recreation, and sports. This information is shared as part of broader planning processes.

We recognize the strong interest in pottery within our community. Pottery studios are unique spaces as they are designed for a specific purpose. This is unlike multipurpose rooms, art studios or gymnasiums, which can be adapted hourly, day to day, season to season and year to year for other purposes. Additionally, pottery spaces have unique health and safety considerations that must be carefully managed.

The new Harry Jerome Community Recreation Centre, currently under construction and scheduled to open in 2026, will replace the existing Harry Jerome and Memorial Community Recreation Centres. As part of its design, the new facility will include a multipurpose art studio with two kilns and table space for handbuilding programs, similar to the current setup at Memorial Community Recreation Centre.

## **Resourcing and volunteerism**

### **Feedback:**

- Concern that hundreds of volunteer hours at Parkgate will be lost under the seasonal pass system, along with the community of mentorship and support that currently exists within the studio.
- Appreciation expressed for the ongoing hard work of studio staff. Concern regarding capacity of studio staff to take on additional duties related to the seasonal pass system due to orientation of new members, the loss of member volunteerism, etc. Concern that staff will become overworked and leave.
- Acknowledgement that members do a lot of volunteer work in both the Parkgate and Delbrook studios, and that more staff will be needed to fill in the gaps if the model changes.
- Concern the seasonal pass cycles will disrupt the natural mentorship process and community atmosphere where long-standing members mentor others, share specialized skills, and foster a culture of learning.

- Comment that studio operations and classes are heavily supported through volunteer hours by members.
- Comment that NVRC did not act in good faith when volunteers were asked to participate in the major clean out at the Delbrook studio in Summer 2024, despite NVRC knowing they would be cancelling memberships the following year.
- Comment that many of the pieces of equipment and supplies within the Parkgate studio are owned by studio members.
- Question whether staff will be monitoring the use of the studio and studio etiquette with many new individuals in the studios.
- Question as to how NVRC will support orientation of new users in the first weeks of each season and whether there will be extra staff supports in place to manage this process.
- Appreciation for volunteerism and artistic expertise of Parkgate members who have contributed to the studio.
- Desire for people who do voluntary labour in the pottery studios to be included in the change process.
- Interest in volunteer opportunities in the studios.
- Comment that volunteering is a vital part of the learning process at the Parkgate studio as the studio functions as a community studio.
- Question as to who will be responsible for studio operations after the change and whether staffing will be increased.
- Question as to whether senior studio members have been asked to volunteer to help with oversight of the studios.
- Comment that members have helped to purchase equipment and supplies within the Parkgate studio.
- Comment that the Parkgate studio was developed by a collaborative, supportive, passionate community, not by administrators.
- Comment that the Parkgate studio was founded by members and has operated successfully for decades.
- Comment that the Delbrook members have contributed many volunteer hours to keeping the studios clean and well equipped, including assisting with donating tools and buying cleaning supplies.
- Comment that the Delbrook volunteers provide continuity in the studio, providing guidance during student drop-ins on techniques, health and safety.

- Comment that Delbrook members happily give their time to volunteer during annual inventory and throughout the year, in the interest of creating a safe and inclusive place to do pottery.
- Concern that NVRC requested volunteers clarify their roles and duties in the studio following the information sessions in December. Question as to why NVRC wanted this information.

**NVRC Response:** We greatly value our dedicated studio staff and the expertise they bring to our pottery studios. A key part of the Pottery Studios Supervisor role will be to ensure that staff and studio users have the assistance they need throughout the transition.

The Pottery Studios Supervisor will be regularly present in the studios and will lead the seasonal orientation process to confirm that all seasonal pass holders have the necessary skills and experience to work independently. Additionally, studio technician shifts will be scheduled during pass holder studio times, particularly in the first few weeks of each seasonal session to provide extra supervision and guidance as new participants become familiar with the studios.

The feedback we received emphasized the contributions of time and energy members have been making to the studios over many years. In response, the Pottery Studios Supervisor has been taking stock of the contributions of members and is in conversations with pottery studio staff to ensure we have the support needed as we transition.

NVRC also recognizes and appreciates volunteerism and stewardship that members at both studios have contributed over the years. As part of the transition to the new model, there will be changes to how the spaces operate, including how volunteer opportunities are structured. We are working with our NVRC volunteer programmer and the Parkgate Society to formalize volunteer opportunities to support both pottery classes and the studios more broadly.

### **Request for data informing the change**

**Feedback:**

- Request for a copy of the consultant's report regarding NVRC's pottery services referenced by staff during the information sessions.
- Request for clarity regarding the consultants' credentials and experience and their relevance to pottery.
- Question as to how the needs of all users were considered in developing the pottery studio changes as studio members and staff were not consulted.
- Concern that the consultant was not real, and that staff have developed a fictional reason to harm the pottery community at Parkgate and Delbrook.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC acknowledges the requests for access to internal documents and information. The consultant's report was not a public document and was shared through a formal Freedom of Information request process.

Research and data were gathered by staff and a consultant. The consultant's report was just one part of the information-gathering process. The primary reason for the change was to align with our responsibility as a public entity and mandate to provide accessible recreation and arts opportunities for all North Vancouver residents, as well as the principles of responsible resource management. See page 4 for more information.

**Pottery programming****Feedback:**

- Concern that some experienced students continue to take beginner classes because they cannot get into popular intermediate classes or get a membership for studio time, and that this prevents others from accessing beginner classes.
- Concern that the pottery classes, especially intermediate classes, are very popular and difficult to get into. Desire for additional program/class offerings for intermediate potters during evening hours.
- Comment that demand for classes is high.
- Comment that an accessibly scheduled program of intermediate classes needs to be established so people can gain the necessary skills to work independently in the studio.

- Appreciation expressed for having some individuals in classes with experience to share with others.
- Comment that it takes more than one beginner class to learn the techniques.

**NVRC Response:** NVRC recognizes the strong demand for pottery classes and is aware that some students continue to enroll in classes geared to a lower experience level to access studio space, due to the limited availability of memberships. We anticipate that with more people being able to access studio time four times a year through an equitable seasonal pass system, less people will register for classes for the purpose of gaining access to the studios.

We actively track registration data, including waitlist numbers and the speed at which programs fill up, to ensure our offerings align with community needs. As we transition to the seasonal pass model, we will continue to evaluate and adjust our pottery programming to support the skills needed for independent studio use.

We have heard the requests for additional intermediate classes, particularly during evening and weekend hours, and we are exploring this possibility. However, several factors influence the availability of intermediate-level programming:

- Facility availability: Evenings and weekends are peak times at community centres, with high demand for space across various programs, including adult and children's classes. Over the school holidays, camps also add to demand.
- Instructor expertise: Intermediate pottery techniques require specialized instruction, and we must ensure we have instructors with the right expertise to deliver high-quality learning experiences.
- Staff availability: Many instructors have limited evening and weekend availability, which can impact scheduling.
- Program demand: While there is strong interest in intermediate classes, beginner classes continue to have the highest demand, which must also be considered in programming decisions.

We remain committed to providing a balanced and accessible pottery program and will continue to assess and refine our offerings based on community interest, instructor availability and studio capacity.



## **Scheduling and space**

### **Feedback:**

- Concern regarding the time constraints of the three-month seasonal pass model for planning and executing pottery work as it requires a prolonged, continuous and predictable timeline for creation. Comment that there are unique time constraints involved with ceramics (construction, drying, trimming, decoration, bisque firing, glazing, etc.)
- Concern that the seasonal pass system will increase simultaneous demands for studio space, equipment, storage, and kiln access at different points in the season, as everyone will be on the same schedule.
- Concern that there will not be sufficient kiln capacity to accommodate additional users. Desire to understand the current firing schedule and what adjustments will be made to accommodate higher volume.
- Concern regarding limited kiln capacity causing delays to the critical step of bisque firing and creating further time limitations within the seasonal pass window.
- Concern that time constraints were not adequately considered in developing the change due to lack of consultation with studio users.
- Concern that the time constraints and fragmentation caused by the seasonal pass system are not conducive to creative exploration and skill development.
- Concern regarding the time constraints of the three-month seasonal pass mode for newer potters who are still in the early stages of learning the craft and take longer to complete some tasks.
- Comment that timing of registration should be carefully determined so seasonal pass holders will know whether or not they have a space in the next season with enough time to allow them to plan to finish their current work and/or start a new one.
- Concern that potters will get frustrated with NVRC's restrictive timelines and go elsewhere because pottery is a continuous process.
- Question as to what the cleaning schedule will be in the studios and how it will impact the seasonal pass cycle.
- Question as to how the transition between seasons will be managed.
- Concern that with a studio cleaning period built in, the season is not actually three months long, and that advertising it as such is misleading.

- Question regarding the number of hours or visits seasonal pass users will have access to each week.
- Comment that there needs to be a system in place to allow passholders to finish their current works if they are not successful in getting a pass for the next season.
- Question as to what will happen if someone starts a piece that is too big or involved to dry and be finished before that season's firing time.
- Desire for a membership firing day to be considered to ensure all items can be fired before the end of June deadline.
- Concern that new members are not utilizing the Delbrook studio and leaving shelves empty.

**NVRC Response:** We are working diligently on evaluating and updating operational details that will support the transition to the seasonal pass model. Some of the ways of working in the studio will be different than they are now, in order to support the target of approximately 500 seasonal passholders per year. Our goal is to make sure the transition goes well and to support participants' pottery creativity.

A detailed firing schedule, including final firing deadlines to the end of June 2025, will be shared in April to help current members plan their final projects under the membership model accordingly.

Three months is sufficient time to create artworks on a scale appropriate to the community recreation centre setting. We understand that this may require some adjustments to planning, scheduling and the scope of your pieces. To assist with this, we will post a detailed firing schedule for each seasonal session to help you organize your projects.

At the end of each seasonal session, all works and materials must be cleared from the studio to allow for deep cleaning and preparation for the next session. This includes all clay and artworks (finished or in-progress), regardless of whether you have registered for the following season. To ensure smooth operations from season to season, all works must be ready for glaze firing by the final firing deadline. Greenware and bisqueware that are not ready by this deadline must be removed from the studio and cannot be brought

back in a subsequent season due to risk to the kilns and as kiln space will be needed for the next season's passholders and classes.

The firing schedule for seasonal pass holders and registered classes will be staggered by about two weeks to ensure students and passholders have equal opportunity to have their pieces fired.

In some cases, a slightly longer closure may be required between seasonal sessions for cleaning and maintenance. If this occurs, we will provide advance notice to keep participants informed.

### **Studio capacity**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern regarding the large increase of people into the studios and that the seasonal pass system will lead to overcrowding and people being pushed out due to lack of access, especially during evenings and weekends.
- Question as to how studio capacity and attendance will be managed.
- Question as to how many memberships are available now, and desire to understand how many passes will be available per year and per season at each studio?
- Desire to understand how much capacity will be added by removing storage from the studios.
- Desire to understand the actual maximum capacity of the studios now, and under the new system.
- Concern that there is a lack of understanding from NVRC regarding how the pottery studios currently function and what occupancy is at different times.
- Request for research and data gathering on studio usage and occupancy to inform data-driven solutions. Request for a sign-in, sign-out process to gather data on studio traffic and capacity.
- Question as to whether NVRC investigated current studio usage and traffic.
- Comment that the studio is mostly used by classes. Concern that studio log-in was informal until 2024, so data regarding studio use over past several years is limited.
- Desire for clarity around the change from 80 memberships to 500 seasonal passes, and the methodology behind it.

- Question as to what level of demand is expected for the seasonal passes.
- Suggestion that NVRC should consider offering separate weekday and weekend/evening passes to suit different lifestyles.
- Comment that the increase in users created by this change is not actually very significant.
- Comment that the current membership works to accommodate all users by adjusting their schedules to allow others with less availability to attend outside of working hours.
- Desire to understand whether and how NVRC reviewed the waiting lists for studio membership and how much movement there has been in the past few years.
- Question as to what the studio time hours for pass holders will be and if they will be different from the current schedule.
- Question as to whether NVRC will consider limits on the number of visits per week or amount of project storage space to ensure there is more space for everyone.
- Concern that the math regarding the increased spaces is misleading and does not actually add up to many more membership equivalents. Comment that it would be more logical to add some additional annual memberships if the studios have capacity.
- Desire for NVRC to explain how the increase in studio users will be managed.

**NVRC Response:** We are targeting approximately 500 seasonal pass holders per year across our two locations. We are working to have 60–75 seasonal pass holders per location per season, with registration occurring four times per year. The number of passes will be different at Parkgate and Delbrook and will be dependent on kiln and studio space. Our plan is to gradually increase the number of passholders over the course of the first year (July 2025–July 2026). We are currently reviewing storage, physical space and kiln capacity, to finalize the exact numbers for each studio at the initial stage and will strive to add more people as adjustments to the studios can be made. We will share the number of available pass holders in each studio for the first season (starting in July 2025) ahead of lottery registration opening in April.

As the new system rolls out, we will closely monitor studio usage, demand for passes and classes, and overall traffic patterns in the studios. If certain times become

particularly busy, we will explore potential solutions to improve access. This may include introducing separate daytime and evening/weekend pass options.

Our goal is to ensure that the seasonal pass model provides fair access while maintaining a positive and functional studio environment for all participants.

### **Eligibility for a seasonal pass**

#### **Feedback:**

- Question as to what the requirements to get a pass will be and who will have access to register. Desire to understand the orientation and confirmation process for pass holders.
- Concern that seasonal pass requirements/pre-requisites will be inadequate to meet demands of independently working in the studios. Two classes will not provide sufficient training and experience.
- Call for pass eligibility pre-requisite to include having taken at least two recent NVRC pottery classes.
- Desire for NVRC to ensure that new people coming into the studios have the appropriate experience and training and are not going to cause damage to the facility or to the work of others.
- Desire for seasonal pass requirements/pre-requisites to be measurable, objective, and quantifiable—not subjective or opinion-based.
- Question as to whether accommodations will be available for people who are unable to get into NVRC pre-requisite classes due to high demand but have recent pottery experience from other studios.

**NVRC Response:** To be eligible to register for a seasonal pass, individuals must either be a previous NVRC studio membership holder or have completed at least two NVRC pottery programs within the past three years. They must also be 19+ years of age. Pottery experience or training from other studios will not be considered for eligibility.

We are also developing an orientation and assessment process with input from studio staff and instructors to ensure that all seasonal pass holders can work independently and safely in the studios. The Pottery Studios Supervisor will lead these orientations,

confirming that participants can consistently and safely use equipment, maintain cleanliness and demonstrate the necessary skills for independent studio use. If a pass holder is found to be unable to work independently in the studio, their pass will be cancelled and given to the next person on that season's waitlist.

### **Costs & financial justification**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern that NVRC is making this change to increase revenue from the studios. Question as to whether potential for additional revenue was a driver for this change.
- Question regarding what the seasonal passes will cost.
- Request for clarity regarding the cost of classes versus the cost of studio time and desire to understand the process and justification for pricing pottery services.
- Concern that there is a discrepancy between the price of classes and studio time as classes are very expensive.

**NVRC Response:** The primary goal of these changes is to improve accessibility to the studios for more people, not to generate additional revenue.

Current membership fees for 2025 are set at \$77.18 per month. The seasonal studio pass fees will be announced in spring 2025 and will be in line with the per-month cost of a studio membership. As with all NVRC fees and charges, seasonal pass fees will be subject to periodic review and updates.

Pottery classes cost more than independent studio time because they are led by an experienced instructor. Pottery instructors are highly skilled professionals with extensive artistic expertise, and NVRC must offer competitive wages to attract and retain quality instructors.

If you are a North Vancouver resident who is experiencing a financial hardship that limits your ability to participate in recreation and culture activities, you may be eligible for financial support through NVRC's financial assistance program. Visit [nvinc.ca/about-us/access-inclusion](https://nvinc.ca/about-us/access-inclusion), email [financialassistance@nvinc.ca](mailto:financialassistance@nvinc.ca) or call 604-987-7529 for more information.

## **Studio operations, health & safety**

### **Feedback:**

- Question as to how kiln space and firing schedules will be addressed.
- Concern regarding demand for kiln and storage space, classes getting precedence in the kilns, and the potential inability to fire everyone's items in a timely fashion.
- Concern regarding not being able to bring in outside clay.
- Question as to whether a deep clean like the one that was done at Delbrook in summer 2024 will be done at Parkgate.
- Concern that an increase in crowding and less-experienced potters in the studio will create health and safety hazards for all due to inexperience and improper handling of materials.
- Concern regarding inexperienced potters causing damage to kilns and other studio equipment as well as the work of others and the negative environment this creates for all users.

**NVRC Response:** Firing schedules for seasonal pass holders will be posted at the start of each season. To ensure all participants have the opportunity to fire their work, firing times for pass holders and student projects will be staggered by about two weeks.

To maintain kiln safety and studio standards, only clay purchased from NVRC will be permitted for use in the studios. Outside clays will not be allowed unless explicitly approved by the Pottery Studios Supervisor, as untested materials can pose safety risks and potentially damage the kilns. Clay choice and selection will be one of the items on the topics for discussion at the April 14-15, 2025 studio user meetings described on pages 8-9.

We appreciate the dedication and care that both studio staff and members have contributed to maintaining safe and healthy studio spaces. To uphold these high standards, our Pottery Studios Supervisor—working alongside studio staff and instructors—will ensure that both studios remain well-managed and check that new seasonal pass holders have the skills to work independently while maintaining a safe and healthy environment for all.



Before the first seasonal pass session begins, we will do a thorough clean at the Parkgate studio. This process is expected to take few days—less time than the summer 2024 clean at the Delbrook studio.

### **Studio storage**

#### **Feedback:**

- Concern regarding the new limitations on storage and needing to bring in tools and materials every time.
- Concern regarding the new limitations on storage will affect seniors, people with mobility challenges, and people who use active transportation or transit to get to and from the studios.
- Question as to whether seasonal pass holders will need to remove all works and materials from the studios at the end of the season if they do not have a seasonal pass in the next season.
- Question as to whether the change to a seasonal pass system will affect the shelves that are allocated for current members.
- Question as to what storage space will be allocated for seasonal pass holders.
- Question as to when members' personal supplies need to be removed from the studios.
- Question as to whether pass holders could rent shelves for storage.

**NVRC Response:** Storage for clay and works-in-progress is one of the key factors determining studio capacity. Beginning in July 2025, each seasonal pass holder and pottery class student will have a designated space for storing clay and works-in-progress.

We are limiting in-studio storage to clay and current projects only to accommodate more project and clay storage in the studios for additional users. Personal tool storage will not be permitted in the studios, and seasonal pass holders will need to bring their tools and personal supplies with them each time they visit. Additional storage space will not be available for rent.

We know that these changes are less convenient than what members are used to and may present challenges for some individuals. If you experience difficulties related to a disability and the lack of storage, we encourage you to contact the Pottery Studios Supervisor to discuss potential accommodations.

At the end of each season, all artworks created by seasonal pass holders and program students must be removed from the studios to allow for cleaning and maintenance. This includes any unfinished greenware or bisqueware, which cannot be brought back into the studio for firing in a subsequent seasonal session due to kiln safety considerations and space demands for next season's passholders and classes. Sticking to the firing schedules provided each seasonal session will be essential to ensuring that your pieces can be completed on time.

### **Studio hours**

#### **Feedback:**

- Question regarding whether the changes will include increased hours at the studios. For example, keeping the studio open for the same hours as the community centre.
- Comment that hours at the studios are very limited and desire for hours to be increased. Comment that other studios in Metro Vancouver offer 24-hour access.
- Comment that early studio hours will be a preference for one individual upon retirement.
- Concern that the Delbrook studio is being underutilized and is often empty.
- Question regarding whether hours will be expanding at the studios with these changes.
- Request for additional studio hours for members up until July, especially on weekends.

**NVRC Response:** We anticipate maintaining approximately the same number of hours for independent studio use.

As a public organization, NVRC must balance competing demands for facility space. The pottery studios serve multiple user groups, including children's and adult programming, summer and school holiday camps, and independent studio users.

Weekends and evenings are peak times for overall facility use, which limits the ability to expand independent studio hours.

We will continue to monitor studio occupancy, program participation, and demand to ensure that space is allocated fairly and effectively across all user groups.

NVRC is unable to offer 24-hour access to the studios, as they are public amenities housed within larger facilities with set operating hours. Additionally, health, safety, security and staffing requirements must be considered. Studios that offer 24-hour access are typically privately operated and function under different models than public community spaces.

### **Pottery sales**

#### **Feedback:**

- Request for additional firing times before the pottery sales.
- Question regarding how potters can participate in the pottery sales if they were not successful in getting a seasonal pass.
- Concern that the pottery sales are not in line with the goal of the recreation centre, which is to provide spaces for recreational activities, not to allow people to make things to supplement their income.
- Request to increase capacity of the studio for pass holders before the pottery sales in order to support participants in producing items before the sales.
- Disagreement with the idea of supporting increased production before the pottery sales.

**NVRC Response:** The May 2025 pottery sales will proceed as usual. For the September (Parkgate only) and December 2025 pottery sales, which occur after the change to the seasonal pass system, all individuals who are members, passholders or students aged 19+ in NVRC pottery programs will be invited to participate. Individuals can participate in the sales associated with the studio where they do independent studio time or take classes.