

Parks and Recreation

The Park Board leads the parks and recreation services for the City of Vancouver. It maintains a network of over 230 parks (approximately 1,300 hectares) including sport fields, playgrounds, and beaches, and is responsible for 24 community centres, including nine indoor pools, eight ice rinks, and 14 fitness centres. The Park Board also manages public marinas, golf courses, concessions, fields and clubhouses, and work yards.

Key Services Delivered

Recreation Facilities: Provide access to community centres, pools, rinks, sport fields and fitness centres. Provide permits for use of community centres and park space.

Recreation Programming: With Community Centre Association partners, provide programs and classes for registrants.

Parks and Green Spaces: Provide and maintain parks and green space for public use.

Accomplishments Supporting the City's Mission

The Park Board has recently celebrated the completion of a number of high-profile infrastructure projects that enhance parks and recreation services. The new, state-of-the-art VanDusen Botanical Garden Visitor Centre has resulted in a 25% increase in visitors. This LEED-Platinum facility is striving to meet the Living Building Challenge, which would make it a leader in Canada. The Hillcrest Centre, converted from its Olympic uses to an award-winning civic facility, welcomed 2.7 million visitors in its first year. The new Trout Lake Community Centre complements the recently completed Trout Lake Ice Rink and offers an expanded fitness centre (with a lake view) and more functional community space.

Park renewal at Norquay, Grandview, and Fraserview parks, as well as new park development in three neighbourhoods, responds to community need and delivers beautiful and environmentally sustainable green space. Two new synthetic turf fields, both with lights, at Jericho and Memorial South help to meet the public demand for a quality play surface and extended playing season. Smaller projects such as seawall restoration and washroom and field house upgrades also improve the quality of the park experience for residents and visitors.

We continue to find more contemporary methods of maintaining our parks and open spaces. The 2012 year saw the introduction of four new sixteen-foot-cut self-propelled rotary lawn mowers, which are more efficient and improve the quality of cut for both sport and passive use.

The urban forest continues to grow as staff planted over 3,000 new trees, including several fruit tree orchards. The species and location diversity for trees continues as we pursue the goal of 150,000 new trees by 2020.

On the waterfront, the Park Board opened a new dock at Southeast False Creek to support the growing boater population. Also, a new beach was opened at the site of the former Jericho Wharf, which was removed for environmental reasons. This beach provides a unique opportunity to launch kayaks, canoes, and small sailboats for recreational boaters as well as creating a wonderful sandy beach and swimming location.

Community groups big and small held special events in our beautiful parks, ranging from family reunions to the "Voices in the Park" concert at Stanley Park that attracted thousands of people. As well, both recreational and high-performance athletes held road races and marathons along our seawall and through our park system, attracting local, provincial, and national athletes.

New outreach programs, developed in conjunction with our partners, enrich community life. The Artist Studio Residency Project will provide workspace for 30 local artists in Park Board field houses and provide new exposure to and opportunity for engagement in the arts at a neighbourhood level. The Happy Hearts cardiac rehabilitation program has grown beyond the traditional hospital setting and into two community centres, which will make it more convenient and accessible to patients and potentially increase program participation across the network of community centres.

The Arts and Health Project promotes healthy ageing through the arts and offers seniors weekly arts workshops with a professional artist, an intern artist, and a seniors worker. The project facilitates seniors' creative contributions to their communities while improving their health and strengthening their sense of well-being. Additionally, a partnership with MoreSport provides sustainable sport and physical activity opportunities for children and families living in Vancouver.

Staff are actively working with partners and the community to meet the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan goal that has Vancouver residents enjoy incomparable access to green spaces, including the world's most spectacular urban forest.

Plans for Improvements in 2013

The Park Board completed a new Strategic Plan for the years 2012-2017. For 2013, our focus will be on five key areas:

- Proactive service planning and delivery
- Improved inclusivity and accessibility
- Improved communications and engagement
- Enhanced fiscal planning and management
- Sustainable operations

Proactive Service Planning and Delivery, and Improved Inclusivity and Accessibility

Working in partnership with the Community Centre Associations, the Park Board will implement new ways to improve recreation services for all residents. Key components include:

- Expansion of the Leisure Access Card, which provides financial assistance to qualified residents at all community centres
- Reducing membership barriers to all community centres in our network
- Introducing high-quality core activities system-wide, which aim to improve the health and social inclusion of residents
- Provide a new opportunity for participatory budgeting by residents via a \$1.0 million minor capital fund, overseen by our Community Centre Association partners across the City, to be used to enhance facilities and public spaces
- The long-awaited completion of the seawall connecting Coal Harbour to the Convention Centre will ensure full accessibility for residents and visitors

Improved Communications and Engagement

Much of the work at the Park Board is best done when residents and users are fully engaged. Improvements will be made to ensure that we maximize this opportunity through the expanded use of online and digital tools. Working in partnership with the Public Engagement office, Park Board staff will continue to build on our commitment to listen to residents and embrace the voice of the public. Community Centre Associations will play a key role in representing the opinions and ideas of residents across Vancouver.

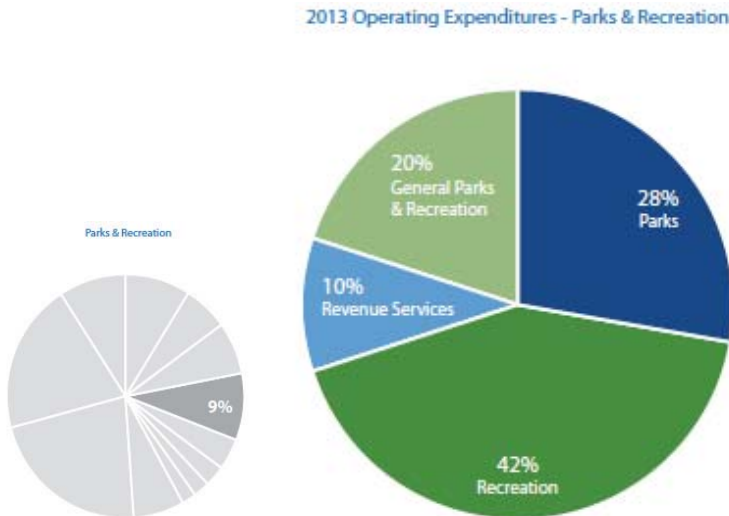
Enhanced Fiscal Planning and Management, and Sustainable Operations

Park Board staff will introduce new tools for managing our financial resources and maximizing our revenue opportunities. Through responsible planning and use of business intelligence tools, staff will optimize our resources and the millions of dollars invested in community centres and park

infrastructure. As service demand grows, the Park Board will develop creative partnerships with other groups such as the Vancouver School Board and the YMCA. These partnerships will ensure city-wide coordination and the most efficient use of public space and resources.

The Greenest City 2020 Action Plan recommends the creation of a city-wide Urban Forest Management Plan, recently affirmed by Park Board and Council motions. Development of the strategy will be a collaborative effort between City departments, external advisors, consultants, and the public.

2013 Operating Expenditures – Parks and Recreation



Year-over-Year Budget Changes

Department Budget Changes				
Major Category	Proposed Budget 2013	Approved Budget 2012	Net Change (\$)	Net Change (%)
Revenues				
Parks	\$ 3.1	\$ 2.7	\$ 0.4	14.8%
Recreation	19.7	18.2	1.5	8.2%
Revenue Services	25.5	27.0	(1.5)	-5.6%
General Parks & Recreation	0.3	0.0	0.3	100.0%
Total Revenues	\$ 48.6	\$ 47.9	\$ 0.7	1.5%
Expenses				
Parks	\$ 30.0	\$ 29.3	\$ 0.7	2.4%
Recreation	44.2	41.4	2.8	6.8%
Revenue Services	11.0	12.1	(1.1)	-9.1%
General Parks & Recreation	21.0	21.0	0.0	0.0%
Total Expenditures	\$ 106.2	\$ 103.8	\$ 2.4	2.3%
Net Operating Budget	\$ 57.6	\$ 55.9	\$ 1.7	3.0%

Explanation of Changes: Revenue

The proposed 2013 revenue budget increased by \$0.7 million or 1.6% compared with 2012.

The key drivers for the increase in revenue are in Recreation, with an increased number of visitors at the Hillcrest Centre, Trout Lake Community Centre, and VanDusen Botanical Garden (\$1.5 million). A number of strategic initiatives, including the opening of the Cactus Club at English Bay and the Tap & Barrel at Creekside Community Centre, are expected to increase revenues by \$0.8 million.

Fee increases were approved by the Board in September 2012, with an impact of \$1.0 million in revenues. The budget for golf operations has been reduced (both revenue and expenses) to reflect trends over several years and better align to expected revenues.

Explanation of Changes: Expenses

The 2013 expense budget increased by \$2.4 million or 2.3% compared with 2012. The key drivers are funding for increased service levels at new and larger facilities, conversion to greener operations, and inflation. This is offset by lower golf expenses and efficiencies generated through the City's ongoing transformational shared service initiatives.

Additional operating budget (\$0.6 million) supports increased service levels at new and larger facilities such as Hillcrest Centre and Trout Lake Community Centre.

The Park Board is committed to greening its fleet and has initiated a fleet and equipment replacement program to increase operational efficiencies (\$0.6 million). Budget was made available (over \$0.3 million) for maintenance costs associated with LEED-certified facilities and for lifecycle costs associated with increased tree planting (1,100 trees planned in 2013).

Fixed costs such as hydro, gas, insurance, and rent are subject to annual inflationary increases and the budget includes a total of \$0.4 million to cover expected increases. In addition, budgets for bank and credit card charges were adjusted to reflect increased usage as the public takes advantage of online registration through our new website. Changes for wages and benefits are also incorporated into the budget, including increases for the recently settled CUPE 15 agreement.

These increases are partially offset by ongoing efficiencies generated during 2012 transformation projects.

Notable Capital Projects

Project Name	Spent as of Dec 31, 2012 (Forecast)	2013 Budget	Future Years	Total Project (\$ dollars)
Kensington Community Hall	0.1	1.5	2.0	3.6*
Trillium Synthetic Turf Fields and Park	4.5	1.1	0	5.6
New street trees and replacement of existing street trees	1.1	1.0	ongoing, annual program funding	ongoing, annual program funding
Bloedel Conservatory	0	1.0	0	1.0
Kits Beach Tennis Courts	0.1	0.7	0	0.8
Main and 18th Mini Park	0.4	0.1	0	0.5
Jericho Pier	0.1	0.3	0	0.3
Burrard Marina Infrastructure	0	0.1	0	0.1

*Includes funding for design and initial construction.

Kensington Community Hall

The existing Kensington Community Hall building is to be replaced by a larger facility and will include childcare facilities for 69 children, multi-purpose programming space, a family support centre, and a pottery studio. The projected building area is approximately 11,400 square feet.

Trillium Synthetic Turf Fields and Park

In 2011, two new synthetic turf field facilities, which include accessible washrooms, opened for play at Trillium Park. The final portion of this project is the passive park to the north of the fields. The Park Board approved the concept plan for this portion of the park in 2012 and construction is to begin in the spring of 2013.

Street Tree Planting

The Street Tree Planting program includes the planting of trees on street boulevards currently without trees, and the replacement of existing trees that have declined in health and are at risk of becoming a safety hazard.

Bloedel Conservatory

In this phase of the Bloedel Conservatory capital project, approximately half of the existing acrylic roof panels will be replaced.

Kits Beach Tennis Courts

The Kits Beach Tennis Courts will be fully renovated. The project, including public consultation, is scheduled to be completed by fall 2013.

Park at Main and 18th Avenue

The 0.089 hectare (0.22 acre) park at Main and 18th Avenue will provide a key urban linkage between the Mount Pleasant and Riley Park neighbourhoods. The park, which is under construction, will consist of an urban plaza with passive seating and contemplative spaces. The planting of new trees will contribute to Vancouver's urban greening goals.

Jericho Pier

After the demolition of the Jericho marginal wharf and restoration of the beach and upland park area, the Jericho Pier will be repaired and restored to provide safer access for pedestrians and boaters.

Burrard Marina

An investment in the infrastructure at Burrard Marina will enhance access for that boating community.

Budget Trend Table

Department Budget					
Major Category	2009B	2010B	2011B	2012B	Proposed Budget 2013
Revenues					
Parks	\$ 3.3	\$ 3.4	\$ 3.1	\$ 2.7	\$ 3.1
Recreation	\$ 12.2	\$ 13.3	\$ 17.4	\$ 18.2	\$ 19.7
Revenue Services	\$ 23.5	\$ 25.3	\$ 26.6	\$ 27.0	\$ 25.5
General Parks & Recreation	\$ 0.1	\$ 0.1	\$ 0.4	\$ 0.0	\$ 0.3
Total Revenues	\$ 39.1	\$ 42.1	\$ 47.5	\$ 47.9	\$ 48.6
Expenditure					
Parks	\$ 30.8	\$ 31.2	\$ 29.2	\$ 29.3	\$ 30.0
Recreation	36.8	38.1	41.1	41.4	44.2
Revenue Services	12.0	11.0	11.9	12.1	11.0
General Parks & Recreation	20.0	21.1	20.9	21.0	21.0
Total Expenditures	\$ 99.6	\$ 101.4	\$ 103.1	\$ 103.8	\$ 106.2
Net Operating Budget	\$ 60.5	\$ 59.3	\$ 55.6	\$ 55.9	\$ 57.6
Capital Budget	\$ 31.0	\$ 103.3	\$ 52.8	\$ 18.7	\$ 17.2

Parks					
Major Category	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012F
Regular Full Time Staff (Average)	710	709	714	694	669
Total Straight Time Hours Paid for All Staff, excluding Overtime	2,218,967	2,403,190	2,236,229	2,236,633	2,186,351
**Total Straight Time Hours: includes hours worked by all Regular, Temporary and Auxiliary Employees					

Employee Trend

FTE reductions can be explained by attrition and the transfer of work and associated staff to support City-wide shared service initiatives.

Department Service Metrics

Access to Recreation Facilities

Between 2008 and 2012, we increased available hours for rinks and pools by adding to our facilities. Park Board rinks and pools will be key partners in 2013 in the Vancouver Inspiration Pass Program to provide affordable recreation access to residents. The popularity of these activities was shown by a rise in the number of participants. The increase in permits for outdoor sport facilities is a result of increased capacity (i.e. artificial turf fields) which offer year round booking potential.

Service	Metric Type	Metric	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012F
Access to Recreation Facilities	Quantity	# of facility hours available for rinks (incl. dry floor)	34,670	39,230	43,700	48,550	48,550
		# of facility hours available for indoor pools	31,700	31,200	34,640	39,720	39,800
	Quality	# of participants for rinks (total attendance)	240,287	263,700	286,330	289,958	303,000
		# of participants / attendees for pools	1,243,662	1,331,625	1,831,124	2,678,220	2,799,000
		# of outdoor sport facility permits	684	1,088	1,110	1,395	1,602
		# of hours of outdoors sport facility usage	126,492	128,782	135,155	144,888	135,748
		# of lifeguard interventions at indoor pools	127	132	179	209	250

Recreation Programming

We are seeing a steady increase in usage of the Leisure Access Card (LAC) for low-income residents. This reflects a need in the community for affordable recreation and improved awareness about the program. We anticipate broadening the reach of LAC and the flexi-pass in 2013.

Service	Metric Type	Metric	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012F
Recreation Programming	Quantity	Low income access card usage for rinks	3,077	6,144	7,350	9,904	10,900
		% of total usage	1%	2%	3%	3%	4%
		Low income access card usage for pools	321,967	327,703	364,595	412,355	450,000
		% of total usage	26%	25%	20%	15%	16%
	Quality	# of children in learn-to-swim programs	337,346	343,797	361,590	397,678	408,000

Parks and Green Space

We continue to beautify our parks and green spaces by our annual plantings along with the addition of street trees, especially fruit trees. The Park Board has maintained and continues to renovate the existing park space in the city and we are committed to meeting the Greenest City goals.

The number of annuals planted has been reduced by the Park Board as a focus on planting perennials is part of a more sustainable strategy.

Service	Metric Type	Metric	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
Parks and Green Space	Quantity	Hectares of park space	1,301	1,301	1,305	1,305	1,305
		# of annuals planted	N/A	N/A	593,670	565,400	526,000
		# of new street trees	3,242	3,246	2,598	3,018	3,050
		# of new trees that are fruit trees	0	34	55	42	250