



Date: April 6, 2011

TO: Board Members – Vancouver Park Board
FROM: General Manager – Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Accomplishments Report 2010

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Board receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

Mission: *"to provide, preserve and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit people, communities and the environment"*.

The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is responsible for:

People: leisure and sports, education, arts and culture, youth, children and seniors, ensuring accessibility

Places: community centres, rinks, pools, fitness centres, restaurants, concessions, marinas, clubhouses

Parks: city-wide and neighborhood green spaces, remnant woodlands, beaches, display gardens, playing fields, conservatory, golf courses, street trees

The wide range of park and recreation programs, delivered directly and through partners, contributes to healthy communities and families and to a healthy environment and economy for the City. Many activities benefit people's lives no matter their age, ability, interest or economic means. The Park Board champions personal and community well-being - connecting neighbours, improving the natural landscape and keeping lives in balance.

Programs are diverse and popular:

- 223 parks, comprising 1,300 hectares or 11% of the City's land area
- 24 community centres, 9 indoor and 5 outdoor pools, 8 ice rinks, 25 fitness centres
- 3 full-length golf courses and 3 pitch & putt golf courses
- 153 playing fields, 174 tennis courts, 58 other sport courts, 7 skateboard parks
- 158 children's playgrounds, 127 diamonds, 6 cricket pitches
- 18 kilometres of beaches, 2 marinas
- 100+ kilometres of pathways
- 138,000 street trees

DISCUSSION

This report highlights the key accomplishments, enhanced programs and new services of the Board, staff and partners in 2010, all focused at the five directions of the Strategic Plan 2005-2010: Greening the Park Board, Engaging People, Working Together, Managing Resources and Meeting Future Challenges. The five-year plan assisted the Park Board to stay relevant, manage its resources wisely and deliver on its mission.

Development of a new Strategic Plan is underway to take the organization forward into the future. The new plan will be rolled out in the Fall of 2011.

The Board is committed to measuring its performance against organizational objectives in order to remain accountable, continuously improve and evaluate success. A number of performance indicators are presented in each strategic area to track progress. (*Note: 2007 figures were affected by the 12 week work stoppage.*)

2010 Accomplishments

1. Greening the Park Board

“Develop sustainable policies and practices to achieve environmental objectives while meeting the needs of the community”

The preservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a core responsibility of the Park Board. The organization continued to pursue a more sustainable approach to doing business.

The Park Board’s drive towards sustainability was again spearheaded by the City’s Corporate Change Action Plan. Phase II was completed by Spring 2010, with a total of 120 projects at 30 sites and an investment of \$8.65 million. The program’s goal was to conserve energy and reduce greenhouse gases through upgrades of ventilation, heating, hot water, control and lighting systems at parks and recreation facilities.

The Vancouver Aquatic Centre and Sunset Community Centre were included in BC Hydro’s Continuous Optimization energy management program, providing daily oversight and web based tracking of energy consumption. As part of the Greenest City Action Team initiatives, a small solar panel system was commissioned at Stanley Park’s Brockton Oval, reducing both natural gas and electricity consumption.

High standards of building sustainability and performance were integrated into all new facility projects. The Park Board received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum – the highest level - at Creekside Community Recreation Centre; received LEED Gold at Sunset Community Centre; is targeting LEED Platinum (as well as the Cascadia Living Building Challenge) at VanDusen Botanical Garden Visitor Centre; is targeting LEED Gold at Hillcrest Centre, Mt Pleasant Centre and Killarney Rink and Trout Lake Community Centre; and is targeting LEED Silver for Trout Lake Rink.

In addition to ensuring future buildings are green, the Board took steps to transform everyday activities and practices to reflect our green strategic priorities. LED lights illuminated popular holiday displays, providing longer life and greatly reduced consumption levels, and ethical and sustainable purchasing initiatives continued at Park Board offices and facilities to collectively reduce impacts on the environment.

During the year, the Park Board continued to promote and advocate for urban ecology and the environment. Staff hosted guided tree walks as part of the annual Spring Cherry Blossom Festival. With community partners and volunteers, Earth Day celebrations with tree plantings and family activities were expanded to include Stanley and Jericho Parks as well as VanDusen Garden. Community events and park clean-ups were held by the volunteer groups under the ParkPartners program. The first of three fruit tree orchards was planted in Falaise Park to foster stewardship and educational opportunities with school students and other partners.

The Stanley Park Environmental Art Project continued with the forest itself taking over the development of the semi-permanent artworks and community members crocheting ivy for bird habitat sculpture in CRAB Park at Portside's bird marsh. Video, photo and written documentation was completed to share the experiences of ecologists, park staff, the artists and members of the community with the many parties interested in learning from the project.

Performance Measures

Park Board environmental programs are achieving results:

Cumulative reduction in water from conversion of irrigation to central control

2006 - 18 million gallons

2007 - 22.5 million gallons

2008 – 27.0 million gallons

2009 – 31.5 million gallons

2010 – 36.0 million gallons

The Corporate Climate Change Action Program (CCCAP), which is approximately 95% complete by dollar value), has reduced CO₂ emissions by 2,000 tonnes, the equivalent of 380 cars off the road a year (805,000 litres of gasoline).

The drive to reduce fuel consumption within the Park Board fleet has continued. Total fuel consumed has dropped from 689,000 L (2008) to 659,000 L (2009) to 600,000 L (2010) – a combination of vehicle downsizing and recognising the negative impacts of idling.

The total result from CCCAP Phase II and fleet fuel consumption initiatives is a reduction of nearly 900,000 L of fuel per year since 2008.

2. Engaging People

“Integrate the concept of wellness into park and recreation services and provide opportunities for everyone to access these services”

The concept of wellness means practicing all the things that keep people well and happy: enjoying the arts, learning new skills and building community spirit. All people must be able to participate.

Working as a partner with VANOC and the City and with a focus on community, the Park Board contributed to the spectacular success of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games - delivering great service and tackling many challenges.

Among the many Games initiatives that the Park Board led or facilitated were:

- Official protocol and hosting duties for visiting dignitaries, athletes, officials and guests
- Planning of and staging events for the Olympic and Paralympic Torch Relays
- Partnering on Public Art programs initiated by the City for artworks on park lands and in facilities
- Helping to operate legacy facilities for practice and competition events
- Managing a temporary RV park for visitors
- Producing special horticulture and lighting displays
- Enforcement of park by-laws
- Organizing, staging and promoting special community events
- Working with the world's media
- Developing public information materials for residents and tourists
- Involvement of more than 60 Park Board staff on the Host City Team
- Staff engagement initiatives to build awareness and excitement around the Games

Communication strategies continued to inform residents about Park Board activities and their benefits through a number of channels including the Board's Annual Report (published in both English and Chinese), the semi-annual Leisure Guide and the public web site (vancouverparks.ca) which had just under 2.7 million visits. Social media expanded communication with citizens, partners and staff, with over 1,300 Park Board Facebook friends and 1,700 Park Board Twitter followers at year end. The newly designed Stanley Park Map & Guide was produced for the second year with participation from park stakeholders and greater distribution to reach tourists and residents.

Information on Park Board services and programs was formatted to be more consistent for use by the City's 311 centralized phone service, and by year end three community centres were participating in a pilot program with 311 to provide recreation information to residents.

During 2010, approximately 100,000 rounds of golf were booked using the internet reservation system. Online registration for recreation programs, with 39,666 transactions, was up 35% from 2009.

Active Communities Vancouver continued to inspire and equip residents and City staff to “Step it Up 20%”. They developed 14 destination and 12 themed walks around topics such as history (including the Yaletown Steam Line), architecture and nature; promoted Healthy Food and Beverage programs at all 24 community centres; implemented a Recreation and Fitness survey on Healthy Choices; sponsored a Stay Active Eat Healthy forum, and provided Active Adventure Days featuring the SportFit program for thousands of elementary school children across the City.

The City’s diversity was celebrated through a series of 12 ‘Remarkable Women’ posters featuring women’s achievement in sport which were created to mark International Women’s Day, and was also embraced at a number of community centres through such public celebrations as Diwali (ten workshops culminated in a city wide celebration attended by over 5,000 people). The Park Board sponsored youth creation of anti-homophobia films at the NO HATE filmmaking boot camp and again cosponsored the Cultural Harmony Awards which recognized community work that results in better understanding and acceptance of diversity.

Public art remained an important part of the Park Board’s promotion of the arts in everyday life. Working in partnership with the “Aboriginal Art In the Venues Program”, First Nations artists works were installed at all Park Board facilities utilized during the Olympics. As well, the Vancouver International Biennale completed installations of sculptures in parks, on beaches and for the first time inside a community centre.

Participation in the arts was once again supported as five groups of seniors worked with artists in a unique community cultural development and health initiative in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health. As well two locations – Sunset/Moberly and Riley Park Community Centres - completed Park Board “Artists in Communities” projects and a new pilot Dance Residency project was launched at Creekside offering opportunities for parents with babies in strollers to enjoy creative movement. A city-wide “Draw Down” was held in partnership with other cultural institutions and people across the city got together and reconnected with the pleasure of drawing.

Five new community projects were approved under the Neighborhood Matching Fund for creative greening, environmental education, mural and mosaic projects for installation at a number of parks and facilities. An additional 11 Matching Fund projects funded in previous years were completed in 2010. Free summer concerts were held at Haywood Bandstand in the West End.

Backed by a new by-law, a complete smoking ban for Vancouver’s parks and beaches was launched to promote a healthy urban environment. The program had the support of a number of community partners including Clean Air Coalition, Canadian Cancer Society (BC & Yukon), Vancouver Coastal Health Authority and Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services.

Performance Measures

Park Board neighborhood facilities continue to offer fun, affordable and accessible recreation. Income at pools, rinks and fitness centres reflects user participation.

Revenues at Pools (admissions, rentals, lessons)

2005 - \$4.2 million

2006 - \$5.1 million

2007 - \$3.8 million

2008 - \$5.6 million

2009 - \$6.0 million

2010 - \$7.1 million

Revenues at Rinks (admissions, rentals, lessons)

2005 - \$1.4 million

2006 - \$1.9 million

2007 - \$1.5 million

2008 - \$1.6 million (note: Trout Lake and Killarney Rinks under construction)

2009 - \$2.1 million

2010 - \$2.6 million

Revenues at Fitness Centres (admissions, rentals, lessons)

2005 - \$1.4 million

2006 - \$1.5 million

2007 - \$1.3 million

2008 - \$1.8 million

2009 - \$2.1 million

2010 - \$2.7 million

Recreation-related web site visits account for 56% of the top 60 visited pages on vancouverparks.ca (up from 50% a year ago).

Total Web Site Visits

2005 - 1.6 million

2006 - 2.5 million

2007 - 2.3 million

2008 - 2.9 million

2009 - 2.83 million

2010 - 2.67 million

3. Working Together

“Integrate public involvement in decision-making and services and expand partnerships with community groups and other agencies”

As a cornerstone to decision-making, the Park Board listened to and actively sought the ideas of partners, stakeholders, employees and residents.

Public meetings, open houses and workshops were opportunities to have direct dialogue, to share information, build consensus, reduce conflicts, and plan together for the future. During 2010, the Board held four regular meetings out in community centres and 23 open house and workshop events were hosted. By working together, residents are given an opportunity to review and provide input into concepts, designs and plans for park and facility projects including improvements to Norquay, Fraserview and Grandview Parks, a legacy sport court at Ray-Cam, new Kensington skateboard park, synthetic turf playfields at Jericho and Memorial South Parks, upgrades to Prince Edward Park playground, new neighbourhood park in East Fraserlands, proposed community gardens in David Lam Park and at Sunset Beach, regreening of Mt. Pleasant Park, new Vanier Park BMX/mountain bike park, master plan for Hastings Park/PNE, repairs to the Downtown Skate Plaza, proposed siting for commemorative monument to the Komagata Maru incident, playground replacements for Charleson and Strathcona Linear Parks, 2010 Fees & Charges and 2010 Operating Budget.

Two new dog off leash areas were added in Emery Barnes Park and the Southeast False Creek park site.

In the summer, the Park Board partnered with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to present Klahowya Village, a popular First Nations cultural showcase in Stanley Park's Miniature Train area. The event was well received, attracting over 160,000 visitors, and contributed to increased Train, parking and concession revenues compared to 2009.

Working together with Vancouver Fire & Rescue, Metro Vancouver and BC Forest Service, the Park Board continued its long-standing participation in an inter-agency, coordinated approach to prevent and prepare for fires in the urban forest.

The Happy Hearts Alliance program continued at Kensington Community Centre. This program promotes long-term cardiac health and is a partnership between the VGH Centre for Cardiovascular Health, the Heart Centre at St. Paul's Hospital, and the Park Board.

The Terms of Reference for the new Marketing & Business Development Committee were developed and approved by the Board; preliminary membership work has begun.

Performance Measures

Residents are invited to be part of the discussions and decisions around park and facility development and art projects.

Public Consultations Conducted

2005 - 33

2006 - 39

2007 - 15

2008 - 14

2009 - 34

2010 - 23

4. Managing Resources

“Strengthen fiscal responsibility and pursue alternative sources of funding”

The Park Board is committed to maximizing available funds and demonstrating financial accountability.

Close monitoring of the Park Board’s 2010 operating budget of \$60 million ensured effective use of resources. Overall the Board was underspent by \$0.9 million at year end. However the Global Budget arrangement with the City recognizes that a number of costs are not under the direct control of the Board. Once the \$1.3 million net savings of these costs are excluded from the Board’s accounts, the Park Board financial statements show an over expenditure of \$338,000 or 0.6% of the net operating budget. Given that the Park Board had unbudgeted expenses of almost \$760,000 in 2010 for retired staff no longer at work, the City agreed to fund the Board’s 2010 deficit.

The Donation program collected an additional \$1.2 million in funds in 2010. After all program expenses were deducted, there was a net increase of \$585,000 in the year which brings the total donation balance as of December 31, 2010 to \$3.3 million. The Donations program continues to provide opportunities for the public to participate and support the Park Board; the sustainable funding helps reduce the reliance on tax revenues.

During 2010, the Stanley Park Restoration Project earned \$19,000 in interest. Once expenses of \$198,000 are accounted for, the Project spent a total of \$179,000 in 2010, leaving a balance of \$734,000 remaining in the fund to carry out the sustainment work outlined in the Stanley Park Forest Management Plan.

The Park Board participated in the City’s comprehensive Vancouver Services Review (VSR) project aimed at maximizing service levels and financial efficiencies through evaluating, sharing and streamlining services across departments. In 2010, VSR service transformations which impacted the Park Board included a new work group combining parks and engineering responsibilities to handle Sanitation Services; common standards, policies, service levels, management and support groups for Information Technology services; and the initiation of electronic pay advice for staff instead of paper notifications. In addition to these completed projects, work was also begun on new procurement policies for contracting goods and services; a new reporting and management structure for capital plan programs; redevelopment of the city’s web site; review of facilities planning, design, building, operations and security; and review of financial services and processes.

Other activities supported the Board’s goal of careful management of resources:

- The marketing program for Recreation Services (Go Play!) contributed to a revenue increase of 21% at Park Board rinks, pools and fitness centres.
- Despite challenging market conditions, Vancouver Parks Golf increased brand recognition, enhanced player experiences, and improved customer service;

- Relationships were leveraged with the City, VANOC and key industry partners to deliver incremental revenues of approximately \$700,000 from Olympic-related activities such as facility/location rentals and broadcasting/filming agreements;
- Requests for Expressions of Interest were issued to seek outside partners to assist the Board in finding other funding options for the Bloedel Conservatory and the Children's Farmyard in Stanley Park; and work with the successful proponent for Bloedel (a partnership between the Friends of the Bloedel and VanDusen Botanical Garden Association) was begun to transfer responsibility for Bloedel Conservatory to VanDusen Botanical Garden Association including a review of the joint 5-year business plan for the facility;

Performance Measures

The Park Board seeks to reduce its reliance on tax payers and increase revenues from user fees and charges and business operations.

Share of total operating expenditure not funded by taxes.

2005 - \$33.2 million (38.6%)

2006 - \$36.1 million (39.5%)

2007 - \$28.2 million (36.4%)

2008 - \$37.5 million (38.7%)

2009 - \$42.3 million (41.2%)

2010 - \$45.8 million (43.6%)

Income generated from parking, golf, marinas and food operations helps to subsidize the delivery of other park and recreation programs.

Lease revenues

2005 - \$1.6 million

2006 - \$2.1 million

2007 - \$1.9 million

2008 - \$2.2 million

2009 - \$2.1 million

2010 - \$2.2 million

Concession revenues

2005 - \$2.7 million

2006 - \$3.1 million

2007 - \$2.5 million

2008 - \$3.3 million

2009 - \$3.6 million

2010 - \$3.1 million

Many residents choose to make a difference by investing in the future of parks and recreation.

Annual Donations and Commemorative Gifts

*2005 - \$1 million
2006 - \$1.2 million
2007 - \$0.9 million
2008 - \$0.8 million
2009 - \$0.8 million
2010 - \$1.2 million*

Financial contributions from community groups and governments allow the Park Board to do more with less taxpayer funding.

Capital Donations

*2005 - \$0.3 million
2006 - \$1.4 million
2007 - \$1 million
2008 - \$1.3 million
2009 - \$0.5 million
2010 - \$0.8 million*

Infrastructure Grants

*2005 - \$2.2 million
2006 - 1.5 million
2007 - \$0.7 million
2008 - \$0.1 million
2009 - \$0
2010 - \$16.5 million*

Reserves are set up to accumulate funds from outside sources for specific purposes. They provide opportunities to engage the public in providing programs which augment basic services.

Reserve Balances

*2005 - \$2.9 million
2006 - \$3.7 million
2007 - \$8.5 million
2008 - \$5.6 million
2009 - \$6.0 million
2010 - \$8.1 million*

5. Meeting Future Challenges

“Renew aging infrastructure and adapt park and recreation facilities to accommodate growth and meet changing needs”

As the City’s population continues to grow and demographics change, the Park Board will need more parkland and recreation facilities to keep pace.

In 2010, capital budget expenditures totaled \$54.8 million. Capital projects usually span several years, so the spending in any one year does not necessarily reflect the total cost of a project. During 2010, capital expenditures of \$26 million were spent on projects that were partially funded by the federal government's Infrastructure Stimulus Fund and Recreational Infrastructure Canada programs. These included local park improvements, new artificial turf fields, repaving of roads, upgrades to lights, field houses and pump stations, seawall reconstruction and developments at Malkin Bowl in Stanley Park, Roundhouse Plaza and VanDusen Botanical Garden Visitor Centre. Two community centre renewal projects at Trout Lake and Hillcrest had 2010 expenditures of \$6.9 million and \$8.5 million respectively. Other major capital projects included Aquatic Centre at Hillcrest Park (\$1.5 million), Trillium artificial fields (\$2.2 million) and Emery Barnes Park Phase II (\$1.6 million). The remaining funds were spent on major maintenance (\$0.6 million), facilities (\$3.6 million), parks (\$3.7 million) and land planning and partnership programs (\$0.06 million).

During 2010, a number of important park and facility projects were completed:

- The stunning Creekside Community Recreation Centre, the city's 24th, was opened on the waterfront in the former Olympic Village as a legacy of the 2010 Winter Games.
- Vancouver's largest pool, the Aquatic Centre at Hillcrest Park, opened as the first phase of the impressive community recreation complex on the site of the Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre.
- The first fully accessible playground was opened in Kitsilano Park. A 2010 Winter Games legacy, the new inclusive playground was developed with community, corporate and government partners.
- A decorative kiosk with information panels was unveiled in Fraser River Park, featuring interpretation of the working river's ecology, history and natural environment.
- The city's seventh skate board park, featuring a unique retro style bowl, opened in Kensington Park.
- Vancouver's first dedicated mountain bike/BMX park, offering elements for beginner, intermediate, and expert riders was opened in Vanier Park.
- Historic Oppenheimer Park in the Downtown Eastside was upgraded with many new features including a new field house and washrooms, lawns, trees, seating areas and playground.
- East Vancouver's Tecumseh Park was redesigned with a red 1940s tractor serving as a magnet for neighborhood children.
- The Hudson Street portion of the Fraser River Trail was opened, providing increased access along the city's only riverside greenway.

Performance Measures

The Park Board continues to work closely with the School Board and community sports groups to maximize field use through development of artificial turfs and other initiatives.

Artificial sports fields available

2005 - 3

2006 - 4
2007 - 4
2008 - 5
2009 - 5
2010 - 5

Annual hours of permitted (booked) artificial field use

2005 - 4,086
2006 - 5,135
2007 - 5,550
2008 - 6,675
2009 - 8,006
2010 - 9,187

Capital funds are used to acquire, construct, maintain and renew the large, diverse and, in some cases, ageing system of buildings and open spaces.

Capital Budget Spending

2005 - \$21 million
2006 - \$17 million
2007 - \$22 million
2008 - \$64 million
2009 - \$27 million
2010 - \$55 million

Upgrading of buildings and green space helps accommodate demands of a growing city.

New/Renewed Facilities Opened (# and size)

2005 - 3 (9,192 square metres)
2006 - 3 (4,268 square metres)
2007 - 1 (2,890 square metres)
2008 - 0
2009 - 3 (9,667 square metres)
2010 - 1 (3,326 square metres)

New/Renewed Parks Opened (# and size)

2005 - 4 (3.15 hectares)
2006 - 3 (8.88 hectares)
2007 - 5 (9.30 hectares)
2008 - 3 (2.75 hectares)
2009 - 2 (0.44 hectares)
2010 - 1 (1.6 hectares)

New/Renewed Playgrounds out of total

2005 - 6/150
2006 - 11/151
2007 - 8/155
2008 - 5/154
2009 - 1/156

2010 – 3/158

Development of Internal Resources

“Recognize that staff is the greatest asset...”

The Park Board strives to build an organization that supports creativity, continual learning and innovative ideas.

In 2010, a number of initiatives helped to improve the quality of work for employees:

- A first ever Employee Survey was conducted, reflecting the commitment to engage with staff and get feedback on their work experience with an eye to using the information collected to identify strengths and priorities for improvement. 38% of Park Board staff participated.
- Management, technical, professional development and other job-related training opportunities were provided for staff. A range of courses were taken by front-line workers and management through the ‘City Learn’ program and in-service sessions.
- A half-day employee orientation was provided for 48 new employees to share the Park Board’s vision and values. The session included history, current issues, and employee roles and responsibilities.

Performance Measures

Health and safety training courses conducted

2006 - 18 (1,350 attendees)

2007 - 19 (422 attendees)

2008 - 20 (895 attendees)

2009 – 25 (988 attendees)

2010 – 21 (992 attendees)

Reduction in lost time injuries

since 2000 – 26%

Awards

“Strive for leadership, excellence and innovation in the delivery of parks and recreation services.”

The Park Board received two awards in 2010:

- International Award for Liveable Communities for Southeast False Creek project from [LivCom](#) (endorsed by the United Nations Environment Program) for leading innovation in the field of environmental and community initiatives (“built” projects).
- Consulting Engineers of BC Award of Merit was awarded to Stantec Consulting Ltd. in recognition of the mechanical and electrical systems at Hillcrest Centre (Vancouver Olympic/Paralympic Centre).

SUMMARY

The Park Board made significant progress in all areas of its operations, while meeting major commitments to the City and VANOC to help deliver the 2010 Winter Games. The year’s many accomplishments would not have been possible without the contributions of numerous partners and stakeholders, hard work and enthusiasm of employees and involvement of the public.

In 2011, the Park Board will continue to enrich the lives of Vancouver’s residents through completion of such exciting projects as: renewal of VanDusen Botanical Garden Visitors Centre; the new Trout Lake Community Centre; Hillcrest Centre with new community centre, ice rink, curling club, library and offices; a new legacy sport court at Ray-Cam; upgrades of Grandview, Norquay, Fraserview, Carleton and Emery Barnes Parks; opening of a new neighborhood park in East Fraserlands; greening of Mt. Pleasant Park; new playground for Prince Edward Park; reconstruction of the Seawall and roads in Stanley and Queen Elizabeth Parks; upgrades to Malkin Bowl performance centre; creation of an urban plaza at the Roundhouse; new synthetic turf fields at Trillium, Jericho and Memorial South Parks; development of waterfront restaurants on English Bay and at Creekside Community Recreation Centre; planting of two more fruit tree orchards; and development of a new long term Strategic Plan.

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