



**Chair's Report
Board Meeting - December 10, 2012
Highlights of 2012 Strategic Accomplishments**

Introduction

The Vancouver Park Board is in the prioritization and action planning phase of its renewed Strategic Plan. It has made significant progress against all four priority directions, which provide the blueprint for our work. Below are some highlights of 2012 strategic accomplishments.

Priority: Leader in Greening

Local Food Assets Task Force

The Board approved the terms of reference for the Local Food Assets Task Force and appointed Commissioners Aaron Jasper and Niki Sharma as co-chairs of the board advisory group which will make policy recommendations and identify opportunities to increase and integrate food assets into the parks and recreation system.

Street-to-Park Conversions

The Board is working to improve access to nature in the Mount Pleasant neighbourhood as part of the implementation of the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan, and the Mount Pleasant Community Plan, and is currently looking at converting streets into small parks.

Electric Vehicles

The Board added two more electric vehicles to its fleet, bringing the total to three. Our green fleet also includes ice resurfacers and edgers, material transport vehicles and lawn mowers, all powered by batteries!

Integrated electric vehicle and cellular infrastructure

The Board approved the installation by TELUS of three integrated electric vehicle charging stations and cellular poles in parking lots along Beach Avenue. The innovative initiative will provide recharging capabilities for electric vehicles and improved cellular network for the West End neighbourhood. The project supports the Park Board's commitments to sustainability by encouraging the use of low carbon vehicles to meet green transportation goals.

Golf Courses

The Board continued its environmental leadership at its three championship golf courses by installing six bat houses which provide a safe habitat for bats, a major insect-controller. More than 400 native trees and plants were recently planted at Langara Golf Course.

Jericho Wharf

Work continued at the site of the former Jericho Wharf. Activities included remedial work in the uplands area of Jericho Beach, as well as foreshore protection, beach cleanup, invasive plant removal and the planting of native trees and shrubs.

Community Gardens

The Board approved new community gardens for Woodland and Guelph parks.

Priority: Engaging People

New map app

People with iPhones, iPod touch and iPad can now more easily navigate their way around Vancouver's parks following release of the Park Board's free smart phone application or 'app'.

Dog off-leash areas

The Park Board approved the dog off-leash area guidelines and engaged residents through an online discussion forum. The guidelines are based on principles endorsed by the Board and public comment to date, and include fencing, rules, location, design and signage.

Strategic Plan

During the past year, the Park Board met with hundreds of residents, staff and partners to finalize the strategic plan. The Board identified 27 draft objectives in the strategic plan, of which five will be implemented in 2013-2014. The plan will focus Park Board efforts and resources for the next five years.

Public Website

A new City website with a contemporary design went live in August. One of the most significant developments was that Park Board information was fully integrated. The site is citizen-focused with new technologies and tools ... one that will improve our information and services online as more business functions and interactive features are added over time.

Social Media

The Park Board continues to engage the public and staff by delivering news, celebrating projects, posting photos and promoting public consultations through social media. The Park Board now has almost 3,000 likes on Facebook and more than 6,000 followers on Twitter.

Public Consultation

About 25 open houses, workshops and online consultations were held this year to give residents the opportunity to review and provide input into concepts, designs and plans for park, facility, art projects and policies.

Partnerships

For the third year in a row, the Park Board partnered with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC in bringing the First Nations experience to Stanley Park with Klahowya Village.

Priority: Excellence in Resource Management

Food carts in Parks

The Board approved a pilot program to test the feasibility of seasonal street food cart locations in Stanley Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and beside Coal Harbour Community Centre.

Tap & Barrel Restaurant Opening

The stunning new restaurant opened in the summer and is an important feature of the Village in False Creek and a great addition to our Creekside Community Recreation Centre. A percentage of all sales go to the betterment of Vancouver's parks and recreation system.

Fundraising and Development

The Park Board raised close to \$1-million in donations this year through fundraising initiatives that include commemorative gifts and legacy endowments providing sustainable funding for park conservation and recreation programming, reducing our reliance on tax dollars.

Financial Accountability

Staff continues to monitor budgets carefully and adjust expenditures accordingly to ensure a balanced year-end position. The 2012 forecast shows a balanced net budget of \$55.9 million.

Awards and Recognition

One important means of measuring our successes is through peer and industry recognition. This year:

- VanDusen Botanical Garden Visitor Centre received seven local and international awards including first place in the World Architecture News Engineering Awards
- Hillcrest Centre won three awards including Athletic Business Facility of Merit Award for the community center's open design
- Oppenheimer Park Activity Centre was recognized by the Architectural Institute of BC for a consultative public process
- And the Park Board was awarded the Architecture Canada Architecture Advocacy Award.

Priority: Parks and Recreation for All

Vancouver Inspiration Pass

The Park Board partnered with numerous agencies including the Vancouver Public Library on the free Vancouver Inspiration Pass, which opens the door to the city's most popular attractions including the Park Board's many pools, fitness centres, rinks, pitch and putt golf courses and display gardens.

Stanley Park Cycling Plan

The Park Board adopted the Stanley Park cycling Plan to provide direction for further cycling improvements in the park, and approved the implementation strategy which will ensure the highest priority projects are put in place or designed.

Public Bike Share in Parks

The Board approved the Public Bike Share station network to integrate park destinations, subject to the General Manager approving all technical station details on a site by site basis. City staff is working to launch this transportation initiative in 2013.

Arts and Culture

A number of significant public art installations were completed:

- the A-maze-ing Laughter sculpture by artist Yue Minjun will remain on permanent display in Morton Park at English Bay thanks to a generous donation to Vancouver Biennale
- in July, a public monument commemorating the Komagata Maru, a ship that arrived in Vancouver harbour in 1914 carrying East Indian passengers, was unveiled in Harbour Green Park; the monument was paid for by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration with support from the Khalsa Diwan Society
- a new public art exhibit called a Geyser for Hillcrest Park was unveiled in September

New Facilities

The city was enhanced by a number of new facilities:

- the Roundhouse Turntable Plaza, downtown Vancouver's newest outdoor public and community performance space
- phase 3 of Emery Barnes Park completes the park with an entry plaza at Davie and Seymour Streets
- and the new light-filled Trout Lake Community Centre in East Vancouver with stunning views of John Hendry Park

Sport Hosting Grant

So far this year, six Sport Hosting Grants have been issued, including to FIFA 2015 Women's World Cup and the Davis Cup. The grant provides financial support for sporting events that have the potential to bring direct or indirect economic, social, health, and community development benefits to Vancouver.

Park, Playground, Spray Park, Tennis Courts

- Mount Pleasant Park received extensive upgrades such as an accessible children's playground, community garden, and sports court
- Oak and Prince of Wales parks got new playgrounds
- Prince Edward Park has a new spray park
- five public courts located on the parkade rooftop at 600 Moberly Road received a new acrylic surface.

Repurposing Field Houses

More than 30 local artists were selected to participate in the Vancouver Park Board's artist studio residency project in seven locations. The artists, many working as collectives, responded to a public call for proposals to work out of vacant field houses across the city.

Power to Be

The Park Board Committee approved the Power to Be proposal to provide inclusive outdoor education programs in Stanley Park for the summer 2012 as a pilot, including the location of a temporary storage unit at Second Beach to support their programming. The program aims to enrich the health and quality of life for youth, families and adults living with significant life challenges.