



June 29, 2018

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Britannia Renewal Master Plan

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board endorse the City of Vancouver's "Britannia Renewal Master Plan", attached as Appendix A, as the basis for renewing and transforming the site over the next ten to twenty (10-20) years.

OVERVIEW

This report provides an overview of the Britannia Renewal Master Plan which is the culmination of a comprehensive multiple-partner planning and community engagement process. The Master Plan lays out a long-term vision for the renewal of the Britannia Community Services Centre (BCSC) and the 18 acre site on which it sits. The project represents a significant collaboration of the five (5) site partners who are the City of Vancouver (COV), the Britannia Community Services Centre Society (BCSCS), Vancouver School Board (VSB), Vancouver Public Library (VPL) and Vancouver Park Board (VPB). The Master Plan provides a clear long-term framework to guide development of the Britannia site. The Master Plan was shaped by site partner and community priorities established through a robust year-long public engagement process.

Situated in the heart of Grandview-Woodland, a thriving medium-density neighbourhood, Britannia is a community facility co-located with a community centre, childcare, family place, seniors and youth centre, library, swimming pool, ice rink, elementary school and secondary school. Britannia provides a wide variety of services and programs to support the northeast quadrant, including the diverse populations of Grandview-Woodlands, Strathcona to the west and Hastings-Sunrise to the east.

This community is home to members of the local Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations, and a significant number of urban Indigenous peoples including First Nations, Métis and Inuit from across British Columbia and the rest of Canada. By raw numbers, the community's 2195 Indigenous residents account for almost a fifth (18%) of Vancouver's off-reserve urban Indigenous population, the largest number living in any neighbourhood.

The Master Plan seeks to reinforce and build on existing successes by renewing the 1976 facility and public realm while providing new spaces to meet expanding current and future community needs. Key partner and community values, sound urban planning principles, and important city objectives addressing affordability, sustainability, reconciliation and liveability form the foundation of the Master Plan. The Master Plan strives to maintain the distinct character of the area, improve housing diversity and renew the site in a phased approach that allows the five site Partners to continue to deliver programming during construction and meet their strategic objectives throughout the entire renewal process.

City staff have sought alignment and received support from the Partner Board at significant milestones throughout the project, including sharing the preferred Master Plan concept in spring 2018. The final Master Plan report is being shared with the Park Board for endorsement. The BCSS provided approval in principle on June 13, 2018 and the VPL Board endorsed the report on June 27, 2018. City Staff will bring the Master Plan report to the VSB on July 2, 2018 to seek their endorsement.

PARK BOARD POLICIES & STRATEGIES

- [Vancouver Sport Strategy](#) (2008): The Vancouver Sport Strategy is a roadmap for sport in Vancouver. We are the first city to create a sport strategy within the Canadian Sport for Life framework.
- [Park Board Strategic Framework](#) (2012): Includes five strategic directions, one of which is Greening the Park Board. The plan states that that the “preservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a core responsibility of the Park Board” and that the Board “will develop sustainable policies and practices that achieve environmental objectives while meeting the needs of the community”.
- [Building a Path to Parks and Recreation for All](#) (2014): Outlines 77 recommendations to reduce barriers for trans* and gender diverse community members. The steering committee implements the reports mid- and long-term recommendations
- [Urban Forest Strategy](#) (2014): Policy and operational guidelines to enhance the urban forest on private lands, streets, and parks.
- [Bird Strategy](#) (2015): Celebrates the importance of birds in Vancouver, and provides voluntary landscape and architectural guidelines to enhance urban bird habitats.
- [Economic Access Policy](#) (2016): To ensure that all residents of Vancouver have access to basic programs and services provided by the Board of Parks and Recreation.
- [Biodiversity Strategy](#) (2016): Increase the amount and ecological quality of Vancouver’s natural areas to support biodiversity and enhance access to nature.
- [VanPlay - Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan](#) (in process - 2019): VanPlay will provide a comprehensive understanding of recreation needs at a citywide scale, new park and recreation provision standards, and level of service targets (e.g., amount, accessibility, connectivity, quality) for parks and recreation amenities.
- [VanSplash - Vancouver Aquatic Strategy](#) (in process - 2019) delivering a wide range of aquatic experiences for residents and visitors that support Vancouver as a highly-livable, world-class coastal city

BACKGROUND

Britannia has its origin in cooperative community action. Local citizens and various civic agencies created the BCSCS organization in 1974 to coordinate and integrate a wide range of human services. When opened in 1976, the BCSC pioneered an integrated service delivery model. Over the years, this model has garnered much interest from other communities who have sought to learn from its innovative methods.

The BCSC spans over two parcels of land owned by the VSB and COV (see Figure 1), and operated through a tripartite agreement with the BCSCS. Although the review of ownership and operating agreements was not part of this Master Plan, the Plan has been developed with the

consideration of clarifying future operational responsibilities. City staff, who are leading the project, will continue to work closely with site partners through the next phase of rezoning work. VPB's current role on the site is in overseeing the maintenance of the pool and rink at Britannia. A number of Park Board recreation staff work at the centre, overseen by a coordinator who reports to the Britannia Society's Executive Director.



Figure 1 – Aerial of Existing Britannia Site

There is wide-ranging community support for the renewal of the BCSC, and there has been a considerable amount of community-based effort to advocate for the renewal of Britannia prior to this Master Plan:

- In 2007, the BCSCS developed a Facilities Master Plan to investigate and assess the condition of the buildings and to establish a basis of space programming on the site.
- In 2011, the BCSCS developed a Strategic Master Plan that provided the BCSC with a vision, principles, and a number of site concept options intended to guide future planning work. This BCSC-led study was developed with some involvement and feedback from site partners, but without a collaborative governance model in place or dedicated Partner staff assigned to the project.
- This 2018 Britannia Renewal Master Plan builds on previous work and defines the scope, priorities and phasing of the renewal of the entire 18-acre site. It has been led by CoV staff, and developed with the full participation and support of the five (5) Site Partners (COV, VPB, VPL, VSB, and BCSC) and a robust year-long public engagement process that builds on community direction established through the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan.

The 2015-2018 Capital Plan allocated funding for the first phase of the Britannia Renewal process. Although the 2015-2018 Capital Plan indicated that the initial phase of work is focused on the portion of the site which contains the swimming pool, fitness centre, the Gym C building and the information centre, an overall site phasing strategy was required to prioritize renewal in

a way that accommodates the needs of all Partners and community. Phasing recommendations needed to be confirmed based on a vision and program verification developed in consultation with the Site Partners and greater community. This project was guided by the recommendations of the Grandview-Woodland Community Plan, including directions from the plan to seek ways to mobilize air parcels in the Britannia site to achieve plan objectives for affordable housing through co-location with other public facilities, provided there is no loss of green space.

The Britannia Renewal Master Plan is the result of a comprehensive engagement with community members, service providers and Partner staff and Boards. It represents a distillation of many voices and a record of the needs, dreams and aspirations of the community for Britannia's renewal.

DISCUSSION

Strategic Analysis

1. Reconciliation

Reconciliation informed both the project process and the Master Plan outcome. As a key part of the project process, the Partners have engaged with Indigenous community members, service providers, and advisors to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are reflected in the design of the Master Plan. The process also included liaising on the project at a government-to-government level with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations at regular meetings and an Open House held at the Musqueam Community Centre. Indigenous-focused public engagement on the project included: a visionary speaker from Reconciliation Canada, focus groups led by Indigenous facilitators, one-on-one meetings with community leaders, regular visits with Indigenous elders to build relationships and seek guidance, an Indigenous youth workshop, online and print surveys, walking tours and an Indigenous-led design charrette.

The entire year-long public engagement process was opened and closed with Indigenous ceremony. The first visionary speaker who set the tone for the project was Yvonne Rigsby-Jones of Snuneymuxw First Nation who spoke on the significance of grounding the Master Plan process in a dialogue of Reconciliation. The engagement process also saw some significant innovation in Indigenous Engagement for the COV. The City's first ever Indigenous Engagement Specialist was dedicated to the Master Plan project, and led a unique, relationship-focused process. Part of this process was the first ever Indigenous-led Design Charrette co-lead by BC's first and only female Indigenous architect.

2. Community Engagement

An in-depth community consultation process was undertaken to gather feedback and ideas from the community including service providers, residents in the area, BCSC users, and those who do not currently access the facilities. A Vision Report documents the first phase of the engagement process where the community was engaged through a wide variety of events and workshops with the goal of creating a substantive basis for the Master Plan process. Partner and community engagement continued throughout the phases of work, including Program Verification, exploration of Master Plan concepts, and the development of the preferred Master Plan. Park Board staff was embedded in a project team and attended public events and presented to stakeholders at a number of workshops, highlighting Park Board initiatives and the Park Board's policy framework as it pertains to recreation, arts and culture, and the site's public realm and site planning, including greening of the site.

Over 3,500 touchpoints have been recorded in the engagement process. Engagement activities and events in the visioning phase included:

- Indigenous Engagement;
- Focus Groups (Including LGBTQ2+, Newcomers, Seniors and Youth, and others);
- Spaces and Places Workshops;
- Open Houses;
- Visionary Speakers' Series;
- B-LAB! (Britannia Renewal Lab);
- Program Verification Workshops; and
- Community event outreach.

Engagement in the Concept Design and Master Planning phases included:

- Concept Options Open House; and
- Master Plan Presentation.

The goal of the first phase of public engagement activities was to develop the values and principles that should guide the Britannia Renewal. Through this and subsequent phases of the engagement process, staff have developed an effective working process with the site partners and community individuals and organizations.

Maintaining and building on those existing relationships will be a priority as the process moves into implementation through rezoning and detailed design in the next phases. Further public engagement will provide feedback on issues related to form of development. Public consultations built into the rezoning and permitting processes will serve as feedback mechanisms.

3. Shared Values

The engagement process worked to develop a set of shared values that were used to frame priorities for the renewal of Britannia. Key themes that emerged during visioning sessions with the Partners and community engagement included:

- Take action on reconciliation;
- Honour history and culture;
- Value sharing and caring;
- Be accessible, welcoming, and safe for all;
- Support wellbeing and growth of the individual and community; and
- Optimize resilience and sustainability.

4. Renewal of Britannia's Spaces and Places

The community places a high value on Britannia's vital role as a multi-use community services hub - a one stop shop for active living, learning, arts and culture, and social development. Recognizing that the facility can be more than the sum of its parts, it is important to capitalize on synergies between programs, service providers, and community members.

Throughout the engagement process, commonly identified barriers to use at Britannia include lack of flexible and integrated multi-use and gathering spaces, site and building accessibility challenges, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design concerns, and challenges in wayfinding and visibility within the community.

Through a series of Spaces and Places workshops and Program Verification sessions with staff and stakeholders, space needs were identified for specific program areas. These were grouped into broad categories based on the focus of services being provided as follows:

- Shared Public Space - Community living room, space for casual engagement;
- Food Hub - Community kitchen, garden and dining space;
- Social Development - Childcare, youth and seniors spaces, meeting space for advocacy, education, and organization;
- Arts and Culture - Spaces for making, rehearsing, and exhibiting and gathering spaces for performance, celebration, and ceremony;
- Library - Supporting life-long learning;
- Recreation - Active Living facilities including aquatics, ice rink, gymnasium, fitness centre, multipurpose fitness studios and specialized facilities such as martial arts or gymnastics;
- Public Realm - Outdoor places for performance, gathering, recreating and just hanging out; and
- Non-Market Housing – Opportunities to locate approximately 200-300 non-market housing units with no loss of green space have been identified in the Master Plan.

The outcome of the workshops resulted in overall program areas required to accommodate the identified space needs. Figure 2 below illustrates the relative proportion of program space for a renewed Britannia, and Figure 3 indicates existing program areas in lighter colour with growth through the Master Plan indicated in saturated colour above.

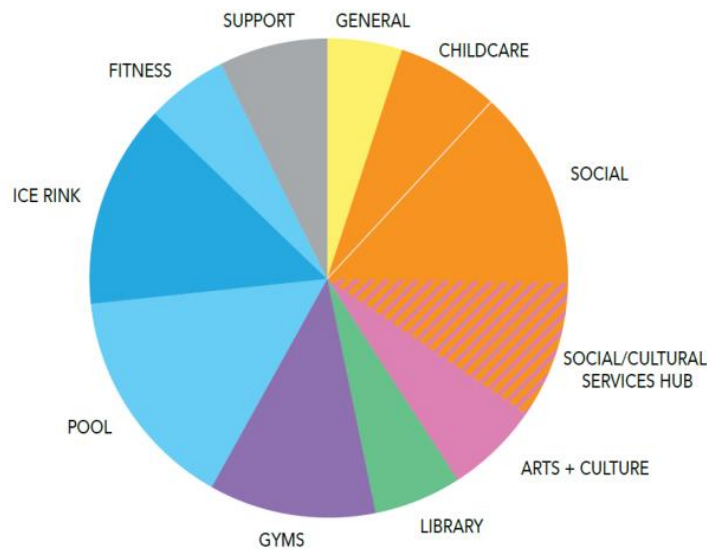


Figure 2 – Program Space in the Renewed Britannia

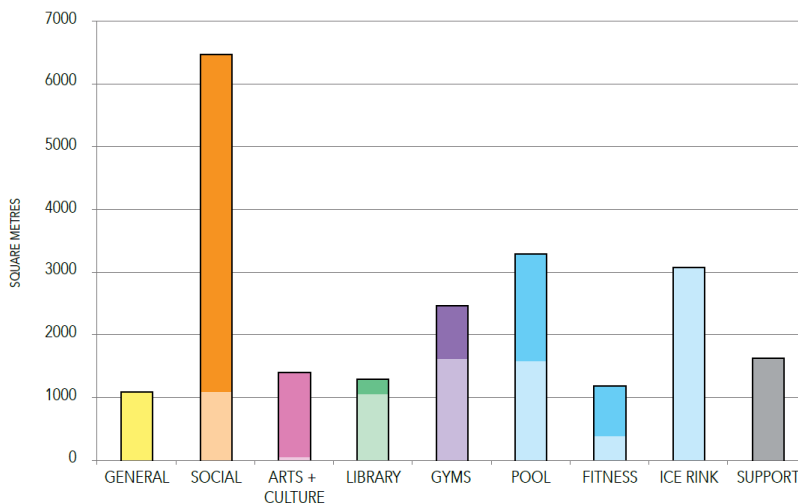


Figure 3 - Comparison of Areas Before and After Renewal

The Master Plan

The Master Plan evolved from a combination of technical requirements, space needs, policies, urban design best practices, and community input from the Visioning and the Concept Options consultations. Throughout the development of the Britannia Renewal Master Plan, Park Board staff have engaged with the team in order to align the Master Planning work and outcomes with Park Board Strategies, policies and best practices. Taking a city-wide lens, Park Board staff have considered Britannia's role in providing facilities and services to the Grandview Woodland community, the north-east quadrant of the city, as well as City-wide.

The Master Plan includes:

- A Vision to inform both the Master Plan and future design work.
- Indoor and outdoor space needs that inform the types and sizes of recreation, social development, arts and culture, and library spaces to meet future needs at Britannia.
- Location of all the spaces and places on the site.
- Phasing of the spaces and places to be developed over the multi-year Britannia Renewal project.
- The Master Plan will be used as the basis for site rezoning and the realization of Britannia's renewal.

Key planning elements include:

- A central Common gathering and event space;
- A greenspace connection or Play Way connecting the site to Grandview Park;
- Extending street rights of way into the site as fully accessible Pedestrian Promenades;
- Framing and maintaining the "grand" views of the city and mountains from key places;
- Locating šx^wq^weləwən ct Carving Centre as a gateway to site;

- Adding significant green space to the site through greenways and intensive native plants and trees;
- Incorporating water play in central gathering space;
- Consolidating social and cultural services to create a sharing and caring place;
- Building community and resilience through a central food hub;
- Locating Childcare on lower roof tops with large outdoor play decks; and
- Including affordable non-market housing above community facilities.

Figure 4 illustrates the general arrangement of buildings and spaces on the site. Dashed lines show the most likely envelope within which non-market housing could be developed and are not intended to represent building form or design. Building numbers align with project phasing order.



Figure 4 – The Master Plan

Key features include:

- Majority of the community facilities located along the Parker Promenade;
- 11% increase in total public realm/green space;
- Easily achievable phasing - Phases 1 (including aquatics, fitness centre and one of the gyms), 2 (including the rink and a rooftop sport park) and 3 do not interrupt operations or impact VSB spaces and allows the majority of the Renewal to be undertaken with the least impact to ongoing programs, pending funding availability;

- Higher buildings are located on the north minimizing shadowing on the site and transitioning to adjacent allowable Industrial Zone height;
- All development above community facilities, including Childcare and housing, is stepped back from the face of community facilities to minimize visual impact;
- Field on top of VSB Shops/Classroom roof provides an accessible sports field for Elementary school and opens clear sight lines from Grandview Park;
- Significant improvement to lanes with active public spaces spilling out;
- Vehicular access concentrated on Venables Lane;
- Pool and Rink adjacent - optimal for energy and operations efficiency;
- Topography utilized to provide level access to a new Sport Park above the Rink;
- Non-market, mid-rise housing above up to three community centre buildings provides much-needed affordable housing, while maximizing access to daylight and key view corridors; and
- Reduction in land allocated to surface parking lots;

The Britannia Centre project will be built in several phases. A phasing plan has been developed which aligns with the timelines and strategic goals of all Project Partners. The plan is designed to limit interruption to services throughout an incremental implementation of the Master Plan. The first building will include the pool, recreation centre, a childcare centre and housing, to be located west of the existing ice rink. Refer to Master Plan Report Section 5.9 for detailed phasing.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Environmental

A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment was performed in 2017, and it was concluded that there is a potential for constituents of concern associated with on and off-site soil, groundwater, and/or vapour contamination at concentrations greater than the applicable CSR land and water use standard. Further investigation is warranted and will be included in next phases of work as appropriate.

The public realm design of Britannia includes a number of sustainable site strategies, including those found in the Park Board's Biodiversity and Urban Forest Strategies. These are focused on provision of ecological habitat, biodiversity and sustainable water management. These strategies include absorbent landscapes, rain gardens, infiltration galleries, and a focus on native plantings or non-native species well adapted to our climate.

As per City Council adoption of the Zero Emissions Building Plan on July 15, 2016, this project will be designed to be Certified to the Passive House standard or alternate zero emission building standard, if viable, and use only low carbon fuel sources. The project include a ground source heat pump system designed to expand as building phases come on line and provide waste heat capturing from the ice rink to heat the pool and other spaces. On site renewable energy generation opportunities will be explored to achieve zero emissions.

SUMMARY

The Britannia Renewal Master Plan helps to deliver on a number of the Park Board's key priorities to better serve the community. The first two phases of implementation are scheduled to include a replacement ice rink, larger fitness centre and multi-purpose recreation spaces, and a new community-plus indoor pool, designed to better serve the community's varied aquatic needs. The Master Plan reflects the Park Board's priorities and best practices including access, equity, and inclusiveness.

The Britannia Renewal Master Plan provides a clear path forward for the redevelopment of the site. City and Park Board staff recommend proceeding immediately on the next phase of Britannia Renewal by continuing to work with the Site Partners and community in developing rezoning options and Phase 1 detailed designs for the site and reporting back to Partner Boards and Council as identified in the Master Plan.

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