

**Van
Play**

Imagine
parks+recreation

VANCOUVER'S PARKS AND RECREATION: STRATEGIC BOLD MOVES

PROPOSED REPORT 3 - SEPTEMBER 2019

Park Board Special Meeting: October 9, 2019



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Stuart Mackinnon, Chair

Tricia Barker

John Coupar

Dave Demers

Camil Dumont

Gwen Giesbrecht

John Irwin

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Senior Leadership Team

Malcolm Bromley, General Manager

Shauna Wilton, Deputy General Manager

Steve Jackson, Director Finance

Donnie Rosa and Daisy Chin, Director Recreation

Howard Normann, Director Parks

Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Staff Project Team

Dave Hutch, Director of Park Planning and Development

Doug Shearer, Manager of Policy, Planning and Environment

Katherine Howard, Project Manager

Consultant Team

Design Workshop: Kurt Culbertson, Amanda Jeter, Cali Pfaff, Hadley Peterson, Chris Perkes, Sarah Horn, Nino Pero

Modus Planning, Design & Engagement: Vince Verlaan, Krystie Babalos, Ignatius But,

Lees + Associates: Erik Lees & Megan Turnock

HCMA Architecture + Design: Darryl Condon & Melissa Higgs

Urban Design 4 Health: Lawrence Frank & Erik Fox

Rand Corporation: Dr. Deborah Cohen & Terry Marsh

ETM Associates: Tim Marshall, Desiree Liu, Theresa Hyslop

University of Victoria: Val Schaefer

Applied Ecological Services: Steven Apfelbaum

Urban Food Strategies: Janine de la Salle

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LETTER FROM THE PARK BOARD

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SHOTS
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PHOTOS
HERE**

ADD SIGNATURES

Visitors at Bloedel Conservatory I
Park Board

ORIENTATION

WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

Vancouver's stunning, world-class parks are the culmination of more than a century of committed effort by the Vancouver Park Board. From our world-renowned seawalls to our lush destination gardens to our citywide network of vibrant neighbourhood parks and recreation, it is a legacy we're proud of.

What's next for parks and recreation in Vancouver? How do we respond to the challenges we are currently facing and thrive into the future?

To answer these questions the Park Board set out to create a new "Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan," and we have called the journey "VanPlay." This is the first citywide review of parks and recreation services we've done since 1992. In 2017, we commenced a robust data collection and analysis process, research on international best practices and consultation with the public, Park Board staff, partners, stakeholders and experts.

The result of this work is presented in four parts:

- **Vancouver's Parks And Recreation: Inventory & Analysis** – a compendium to the current state of the City's parks and recreation system (2018)
- **Vancouver's Parks And Recreation: 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years** – a set of aspirational statements to set the course for parks and recreation into the future (2018)
- **Vancouver's Parks and Recreation: Strategic Bold Moves** – outlining bold strategies to deliver on the vision for the future over the next 25 years - **this document** (2019)
- **Vancouver's Parks and Recreation: The Playbook** – the plan for implementation and operationalization of these bold moves (2019)



VANCOUVER'S PARKS & RECREATION: STRATEGIC BOLD MOVES

This report aims to create a powerful legacy vision through three Strategic Bold Moves that offer a flexible toolbox approach to allow for innovation and growth. A toolbox approach to strategic planning is useful, not prescriptive, so it allows for innovation, problem-solving and inevitable uncertainties. It is focused on flexible, compelling "bold moves" that can be used in combination or stand-alone, as the situation requires. The three bold moves and respective tools are:

- **Bold Move 1: Equity**
 - Supporting Tool: Initiative Zones
- **Bold Move 2: Asset Needs**
 - Supporting Tool: Asset Targets
- **Bold Move 3: Connectivity**
 - Supporting Tool: Citywide Parks and Recreation Network

THE VANCOUVER BOARD OF PARKS & RECREATION

The Vancouver Park Board is the only elected body of its kind in Canada. Formed in 1888 as a committee to manage the new Stanley Park, its history is as old as the city's itself. It has exclusive possession, jurisdiction and control over 230+ public parks in Vancouver and a large public recreation system of community centres, pools, rinks, fitness centres, golf courses, street trees, marinas, playing fields and more.

The Vancouver Park Board's mission is to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation services to benefit all people, communities and the environment. The elected nature of the Park Board, and the strength and focus of its mandate, have resulted in urban parks and recreation that today hold an enviable and esteemed position worldwide.

The City of Vancouver, including the Vancouver Park Board, is regulated under the Vancouver Charter, a provincial statute. The Charter contains the rules that govern how the city operates, what bylaws City Council can create, and how budgets are set. The seven members of the Park Board (Commissioners) are nominated and elected at the same time and in the same manner as City Councilors.

The elected Park Board is supported by a dedicated team of over 1000 staff who oversee everything from lifeguarding at our beaches, tending to colourful gardens, managing the lush urban forest, fostering vibrant events, to crafting welcoming parks, facilities and services and much, much more.

VANCOUVER PARK BOARD STRATEGIC VISION:

*To be the leader in parks
and recreation by connecting
people to green space, active
living and community.*



VISION + OBJECTIVES

VANPLAY VISION

Vancouver's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan will provide a road map to maximize access to high-quality parks and recreation experiences that connect people with each other and with nature.

OBJECTIVES

- To provide a 25-year outlook on the future of Vancouver's park and recreation system, capturing the threats and opportunities that shape or hinder its potential.
- To develop an implementation strategy that will work within the City of Vancouver's 10-year Capital Strategic Outlook.
- To explore citywide service-level delivery for parks and recreation with recognition of the urban core and growth areas.
- To foster a comprehensive policy framework that optimizes opportunities for positive health, well-being and social inclusion through a connected, diverse and equitable parks and recreation system.
- To guide the development and renewal of parks and the development, renewal and replacement of recreation facilities.



Clockwise, from top:

VanDusen Bird Look Out | Park Board

False Creek Kayakers | Park Board

Autumn in Stanley Park, 1870 | City of Vancouver Archives (CoV Archives)



PROJECT TEAM

A cross-departmental team of Park Board and City of Vancouver staff oversaw the project, with Park Board Commissioners providing leadership and guidance throughout the process. Design Workshop, a global urban planning and landscape architecture firm, led a consultant team of international experts and thought leaders including Vancouver-based firms, Modus Planning and Engagement and LEES+Associates. An External Advisory Group—composed of community stakeholders, key parks and recreation partners

and service providers—provided local insights to the team. A broad range of community members had opportunities for input throughout the planning process, including residents, visitors, non-profit organizations, businesses, user groups and non-users and the general public. The Park Board developed a strong relationship with Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations rights holders. This ongoing work has informed this report and will continue to shape the outcomes of implementation.

PLAN STRUCTURE

This plan offers a dynamic toolbox approach to planning.

REPORT 1: Inventory and Analysis

- Get to know the system
- Shine light on challenges and opportunities

Vancouver's Parks and Recreation *Report 3: Strategic Bold Moves* is part of a suite of reports that identify a 25-year vision and goals for a more connected and equitable future for parks and recreation in Vancouver.

This plan is centered around three "bold moves," which support a powerful vision that will be considered a legacy for generations to come, in a future where parks and recreation will better serve every Vancouverite.

The process to create this suite of four documents—VanPlay—was a two-year-long conversation with residents, staff, partners, stakeholders and experts. These "bold moves" are the result of those conversations.

REPORT 2: 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years

- Define visions and aspirations
- Highlight areas of focus

REPORT 3: Strategic Bold Moves

- Achieve our goals and vision while addressing challenges and opportunities

Move 1: EQUITY | Tool: INITIATIVE ZONES

This Bold Move pursues a more equitable distribution of parks and recreation opportunities by introducing a geographic priority setting tool – Initiative Zones.

Move 2: ASSET NEEDS | Tool: ASSET TARGETS

This Bold Move articulates needs relating to physical assets and sets targets by which to track progress over time.

Move 3: CONNECTIVITY | Tool: CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION NETWORK

This Bold Move presents a vision for a network of parks, green spaces and recreation areas, interwoven into everyday life, that connects us to nature, to each other and to ourselves.

REPORT 4: The Playbook, Implementation Plan

- Outline the plan for implementation and operationalization of the Goals and Bold Moves

PROCESS

PROCESS

This master plan, a suite of documents, is the result of a multi-year engagement and content development process divided into the following phases:

PHASE 1 – SATISFACTION, BIG IDEAS + PRIORITY SETTING — Focused on engaging the community in a conversation about the future of parks and recreation; gathering big ideas and accessing key constraints; and setting priorities through public outreach, stakeholder engagement and technical analysis.

PHASE 2 — CHALLENGES + OPPORTUNITIES — Assessed key challenges and opportunities for each vision element through analysis and expert consultation; included a public lecture series, Smart City Talks, with subject matter experts; and convened a Community Dialogue and Community Centre Association Workshops to delve into issues facing service providers, partners and community members.

PHASE 3 — GOALS FOR THE FUTURE, ROLES + RESPONSIBILITIES — Convened Park Board staff and stakeholders for goal setting, engaged community members in vital conversations, called for stakeholders to explore subjects of interests called "Deep Dives," and partnered with the Society for Children and Youth to explore the parks from the perspective of elementary school students through the Urban Explorers project.

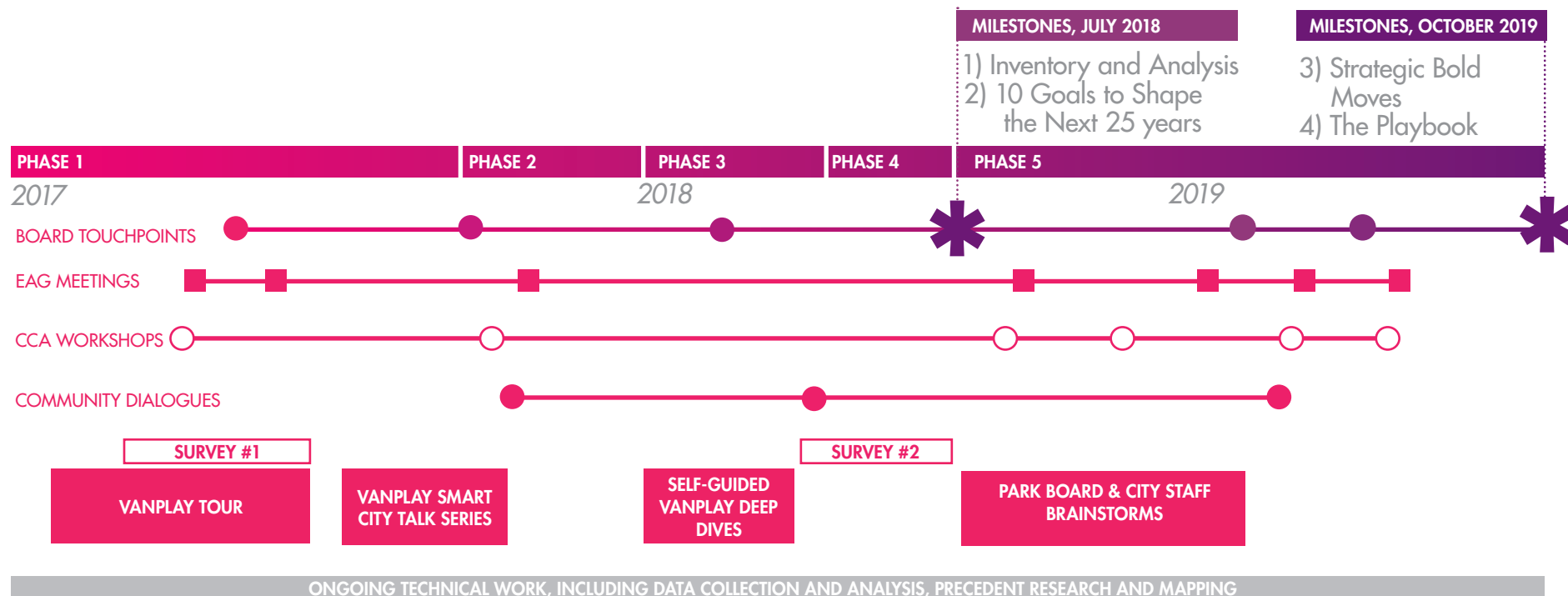
PHASE 4 — TESTING THE GOALS — Check-ins after a year of consultation with the public, partners, staff and stakeholders to shape 10 goal statements to inspire the future of Vancouver's parks and recreation.

PHASE 5 — ASSET TARGETS, BOLD MOVES + OPERATIONALISATION OF BIG IDEAS — Hosted a series of workshops with specific stakeholder groups to define metrics for success, write targets for park and recreation asset provision and guide the implementation plan.



PROCESS TIMELINE

PHASES + ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES



CCA = COMMUNITY CENTRE ASSOCIATIONS
EAG = EXTERNAL ADVISORY GROUP



VANPLAY: FROM PLAN TO PLAY

These are just some of the channels used throughout the VanPlay process. This infographic shows an engagement participation snapshot from throughout the entire three-year VanPlay process.

engagement participation snapshot

30K+

CONVERSATIONS STARTED

150+

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE & EXTERNAL
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDEES



455

PARTICIPANTS COMPLETED
64 DEEP DIVE WORKBOOKS

600+

ATTENDEES AT THE VANPLAY SMARTCITY TALK SERIES



1,100+

PEOPLE REACHED VIA
E-NEWSLETTER

Just saw the VanTour!

OMG ❤️ VANPLAY.

Delivered

me too!!!

4K+

VANPLAY TOUR
CONVERSATIONS

10K
9K
8K
7K
6K
5K
4K
3K
2K
1K
0

3,600+

COMPLETED ONLINE SURVEYS



20K+

VIEWS AND CLICKS



270+

ORGANIZATIONS ENGAGED



18,000+

PEOPLE IN PARKS DURING STUDIES

ENGAGEMENT FINDINGS

PHASE 5

The fifth and final phase of VanPlay engagement was designed to seek staff, stakeholder and public feedback on the proposed Strategic Bold Moves and seek suggestions on how best to implement them. Public and staff engagement in this phase built off previous engagement efforts that affirmed the 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years to grow and transform parks and recreation. Input was gathered through four engagement channels: a VanPlay Community Dialogue, fifteen Park Board Staff Brainstorm Sessions, two External Advisory Committee Meetings and one Community Centre Association Meeting.

KEY FINDINGS

The need for **collaborative partnerships** emerged as a strong theme throughout discussions in all four engagement channels. Staff, External Advisory committee members, Community Centre Association members and members of the general public expressed that the Parks Board would not be able to effectively achieve its goals without strategic partnerships.

From participants' perspectives, the Vancouver Parks Board can:

- Partner with a wide range of stakeholders, including non-profits, service providers and health agencies, to help shape programs and services to better reduce barriers to recreation;
- Work with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Watuth people to co-develop new models of planning and managing land and resources;
-


- Work with residents to monitor and evaluate the performance of ecosystems and green infrastructure through citizen science; and
- Partner with schools and community centres to support stewardship of wild spaces, provide education programs to children and youth, and share the management and use of facilities and amenities.

A **systematic and transparent approach to decision-making** was another cross-cutting theme. As Vancouver's population is growing and diversifying, so are its residents' park and recreation needs. Participants from the four engagement channels recognized that a transparent and evidence-based process is needed to help prioritize investment options in the face of divergent, and at times competing, community needs and priorities.

Suggestions for methods and tools to support this approach to decision-making included the use of **Initiative Zones** and its associated tools, metrics and indicators to pursue a more equitable distribution of resources. There was broad support for the use of Initiative Zones to guide effective decision-making on park and recreation investments.

The need for robust metrics and indicators to track progress was apparent across all Strategic Bold Moves. Areas where metrics and indicators would be relevant include tracking bird biodiversity and tree canopy coverage, recording the performance of green infrastructure, collecting data on the quality of services, and identifying populations experiencing barriers to recreation, among others.





INTRODUCTION

STRATEGIC BOLD MOVES

BACKGROUND 4

- Core Values
- Bold Move Tools for Equity + Welcome

HOW TO USE THE TOOLS 8

- How All the Documents Fit Together
- Balancing Needs + Resources
- Prioritisation Process
- Three Strategic Bold Moves Overview

BACKGROUND

CORE VALUES

The parks and recreation system provides important services which protect the livability of the city, including restoration of natural areas, health benefits from physical activity and play, and connection to nature and community for mental health benefits.

What does welcoming parks and equitable access to parks mean? The Environmental Justice Framework for Parks states that "all people and communities, regardless of their sociodemographic background **are entitled to equal distribution of environmental amenities and no group shall be disproportionately affected by environmental hazards** [e.g., pollution, impacts of climate change]."¹ Adding to this discussion, Edward W. Soja writes: "[Spatial justice] involves the fair and **equitable distribution in space of socially valued resources and the opportunities to use them**."² Understanding the spatial distribution of privilege, choice, environmental hazards and socially-valued resources is key to providing parks equitably.

¹ Wen, Ming. Spatial Disparities in the Distribution of Parks and Green Spaces in the United States. Active Living Research Conference, 2012.

² Soja, Edward W. Seeking Spatial Justice. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

BOLD MOVE TOOLS FOR EQUITY + WELCOME

Engagement and analysis from Report 1: Inventory and Analysis and Report 2: 10 Goals for the Next 25 Years highlight how critical issues of access, welcome and equity are to Vancouverites and provide a suite of interesting challenges we're facing in providing world-class parks and recreation. Report 1 lays out a framework for investigating the qualities of equity and welcome in Vancouver's parks and recreation system. From this framework the 10 Goals, Strategic Bold Moves and Playbook emerged.

This report presents a toolbox approach that builds a framework for equity and welcome. How do these three bold moves work together?

- **Bold Move 1: Equity**
 - Supporting Tool: **Initiative Zones** show us where we should look first.
- **Bold Move 2: Asset Needs**
 - Supporting Tool: **Asset Targets** consider how many and of what needs to be addressed.
- **Bold Move 3: Connectivity**
 - Supporting Tool: **Citywide Parks and Recreation Network** provides a vision for daily access to parks and recreation opportunities.

In combination they support better strategic decision making. Knowing that, these bold moves and tools can direct capital planning, work planning, development and funding.

BOLD MOVES:

1) EQUITY



SUPPORTING TOOLS:

1) INITIATIVE ZONES

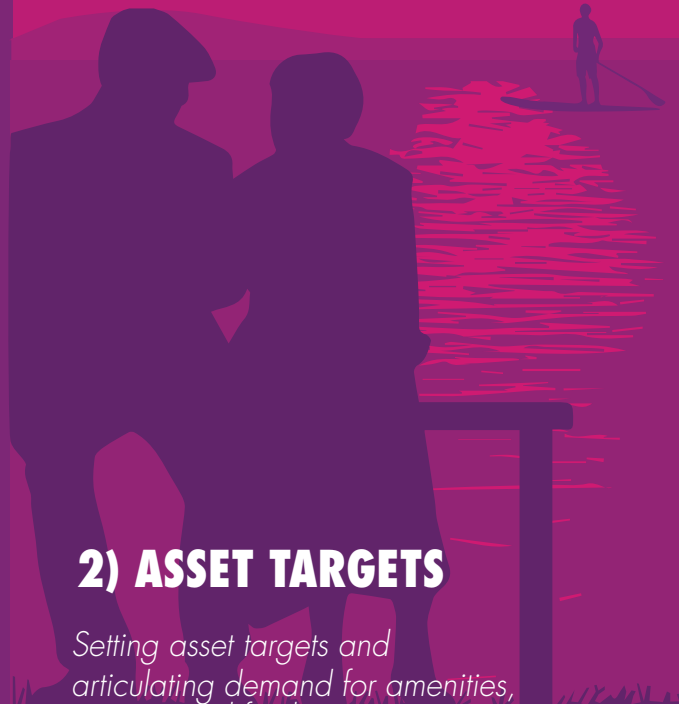
Starting great conversations to address historical inequities

2) ASSET NEEDS

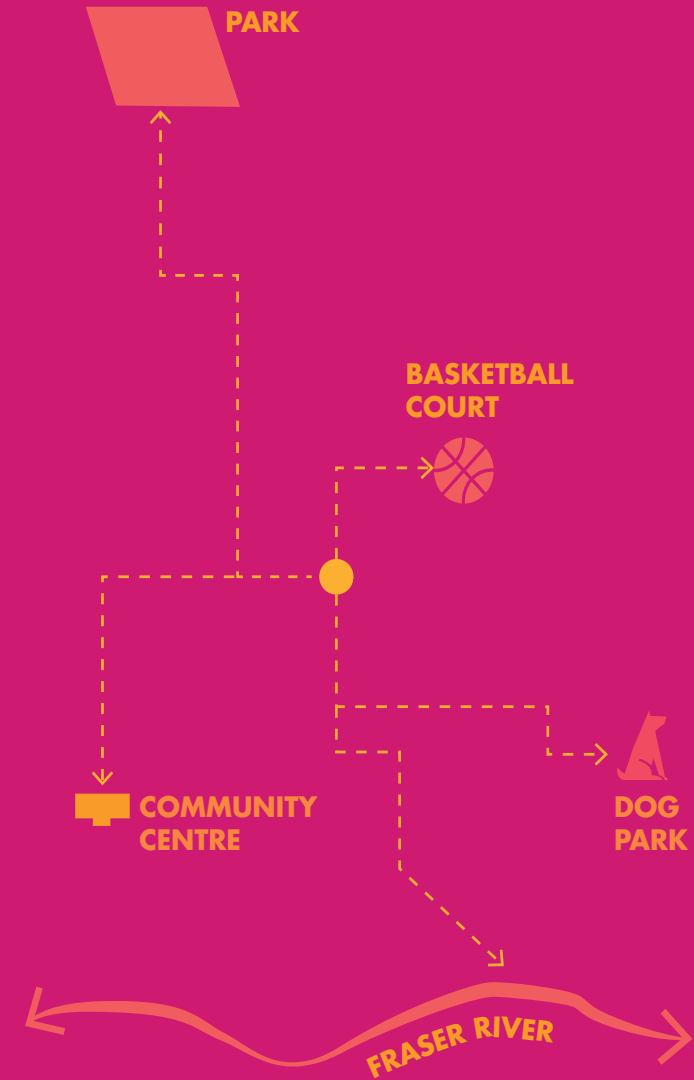


2) ASSET TARGETS

Setting asset targets and articulating demand for amenities, spaces, and facilities



3) CONNECTIVITY



3) CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION NETWORK

Weaving the city together with parks and recreation

INITIATIVE ZONES

STARTING GREAT CONVERSATIONS TO ADDRESS HISTORICAL INEQUITIES

PROBLEM:

How can we start to address the inequities in the way resources have been delivered in the past? Where should we look first?

COMMUNITY VOICE:

"Equity, Inclusion & Access" – was one of the top three priority areas identified by the community in Phase 1.

BEST PRACTICE:

Cities like San Francisco and New York have found that equity based decision-making frameworks help create transparency and help to increase funding for priority areas.

HOW TO USE:

The Initiative Zones map uses three indicators to highlight areas to be prioritised for delivery of projects, programs and resources. Over time, by focusing investment in these historically under-served areas, provision of parks and recreation will become more equitable.

ASSET TARGETS

ARTICULATING NEEDS FOR AMENITIES AND FACILITIES

PROBLEM:

Vancouver has limited resources to fund and maintain parks and recreation infrastructure and needs to set realistic provision goals. How many, of what should we consider?

COMMUNITY VOICE:

Stakeholders and partners asked that the master plan reflect where there are current, known service gaps in recreation assets.

BEST PRACTICE:

Benchmark asset targets provide a way to measure change over time, prioritise investments and recognise changing needs.

HOW TO USE:

Asset targets support capital and management planning by identifying asset and service needs, providing a tool to track progress over time, and providing clarity and consistency in decision-making. These metrics do not determine projects for specific locations but are used in conjunction with other planning tools such as asset management systems, neighbourhood plans, other city-wide strategies, and more detailed plans for specific amenities, parks, and community centres.

CITYWIDE PARKS AND RECREATION NETWORK

WEAVING THE CITY TOGETHER WITH PARKS AND RECREATION

PROBLEM:

Parks and community centres are part of everyday life for many, but others face barriers of access, integration and availability. How do we connect it all together while addressing those barriers?

COMMUNITY VOICE:

"Access to Nature" – was the most common big idea for the future. Vancouverites are proud of the sea wall and would like to have this kind of connected experience available throughout the city.

BEST PRACTICE:

Good connectivity supports strong ecological and hydrological systems. Planning for continuous waterfronts supports accommodation of sea level rise and secures access to the water for future generations.

HOW TO USE:

Connectivity will take the form of local, individual projects and build towards a citywide network. This city-wide vision supports collaboration with the City, improving access to parks and recreation while achieving many other goals simultaneously.

Above: Description of the Bold Move Tools

HOW TO USE THE TOOLS?

BALANCING NEEDS + RESOURCES

No city has the resources to provide for all the recreation and parks infrastructure needs of its residents, especially in the context of a growing population. In order to provide parks and recreation amenities fairly, a transparent and rigorous prioritization process is necessary. Based on community desires, research of best practices across the world, and a robust inventory of Vancouver's assets, the planning team developed Reports 3 and 4 to help aid in the provision of capital improvement resources and the resources of time and money to renew and maintain the current system.

PRIORITISATION PROCESS

The Strategic Bold Moves in this report are crucial steps in the prioritization process when determining work plan actions for programming, research, development, maintenance and renewal and planning the provision of capital improvement resources.



HOW TO USE THE TOOLS?

HOW ALL THE DOCUMENTS FIT TOGETHER

Bold Moves are a set of strategic tools that will help achieve the 25-year vision goals from Report 2.

Some goals, like Goal 1: Grow and Renew Parks, are broad and each Bold Move will address it from a different angle. Other goals, like Goal 3: Prioritise the Delivery of Resources, are specifically aligned with a Bold Move (in this case, Equity and its Initiative Zones tool). Ultimately, the Bold Moves and their supporting prioritisation tools will help target and guide funding, development and work to achieve the vision for Vancouver that was crafted with the 10 Goals.

REPORT 1: INVENTORY & ANALYSIS

JULY 23, 2018

REPORT 2: 10 GOALS TO SHAPE THE NEXT 25 YEARS

JULY 23, 2018

REPORT 3: STRATEGIC BOLD MOVES

EQUITY

TOOL: INITIATIVE ZONES

ASSET NEEDS

TOOL: ASSET TARGETS

CONNECTIVITY

TOOL: CITYWIDE PARKS + RECREATION NETWORK

REPORT 4: THE PLAYBOOK

POLICY

COMMUNICATION

DATA + MAPPING

24 Approaches for Action

Groundwork



Parks



Recreation



Facilities



Nature







WHAT'S INCLUDED IN INITIATIVE ZONES?

This chapter considers equity challenges faced within Vancouver's park and recreation system and presents a geographic priority setting tool to identify historically underserved areas.

These areas, called Initiative Zones, are one component of a larger social infrastructure effort to address systemic barriers and justly provide Park Board services on the journey to equity.

MOVE 1: EQUITY

TOOL: INITIATIVE ZONES

BACKGROUND

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- Overview
- Tools for Change
- The Journey to Equity
- What We Are Doing Now
- What We Heard

APPROACH

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- Why Initiative Zones?
- Initiative Zones as a Tool
- How to Use this Tool
- Initiative Zones Mapping

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- Demand for Low-Barrier Recreation
- Park Provision
- Urban Forest Canopy
- Equity Analysis Factors
- Equity Analysis Factor Example: Overlay of Growth Areas

NOTES ON EQUITY

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- Spectrum of Privilege and Oppression
- Intersectionality + What it Means to You
- British Columbia First Nations Perspective on Health and Wellness

NEXT STEPS

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BACKGROUND

OVERVIEW

Examining parks and recreation through an equity lens reveals the inherent privilege in access to and enjoyment of parks and recreation held by some populations and opens up opportunities to provide the same support and welcome to populations without this privilege.

Due to patterns of development and investment over the history of Vancouver, the distribution of trees, parks, lot sizes, land use, transit and other infrastructure is expectedly uneven. These patterns of investment have been tightly tied to class, race, gender and other systems of power. Consequently, conditions of social and environmental injustice persist. This complex city is a product of its upbringing.

Emerging challenges to city living and park planning—such as rapid redevelopment and unaffordability—and the legacies of histories and systems of social inequity continue to reinforce barriers and reproduce unevenness and inequality. Providing equitable access to urban parks and recreation is an urgent priority.

The uneven distribution of opportunities presents a complex challenge. With limited resources we must prioritize effort and investment where it will make the biggest difference to the community and target where we have service gaps. How might the Park Board make better decisions for a more just and equitable parks and recreation system? Initiative Zones are one tool to help locate where we can focus our attention and apply our efforts more effectively and transparently on a daily basis.

Providing equitable access to parks and recreation is not exclusively spatial or physical; programming and access programs are critical to the discussion of equity. The goal in identifying underserved areas of the city is not to connote deficit or imply victimhood in these communities but rather to recognize where the parks and recreation system is not meeting needs, and where the history of investment has resulted in an uneven distribution of resources and opportunities.



Striving for equity means addressing the fact that some parts of the city enjoy more privilege than others.

WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY IN CREATING A CITY FOR ALL

In 2015, the Healthy City Strategy set a city vision of “A Healthy City for All: a city where together we are creating and continually improving the conditions that enable all of us to enjoy the highest level of health and well-being possible.”

Health is much more than our genetics or the lifestyle choices that impact physical health. Our health and well-being is dynamically influenced by the conditions of the physical and social environments in which we live and the broader set of structures shaping daily life.

Income, education, working conditions, social supports, community connection, colonization, and access to health services are some ‘social determinants of health’ that influence disparities in health outcomes.¹ An academic study found that people who are exposed to the greenest environments also have the lowest levels of health inequality among low-income households.²

Initiative Zones is a tool the Park Board can use to address health inequities as an outcome of the uneven distribution of services and resources. We all have a role to play in this collective vision for a healthy city for all.

¹ World Health Organization. 2018. "Social Determinants of Health." https://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/

² Mitchell, R and Popham, F. 2008. "Effect of exposure to natural environment on health inequities: an observational population study." *The Lancet* vol 372

KEY TERMS

power

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. defined power as “the ability to achieve a purpose.” People with power have the opportunity to shape their lives and the larger world around them. Power is unequally distributed globally... Some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates.¹

privilege

A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.²

"Privilege exists when one group has something of value that is denied to others simply because of the groups they belong to, rather than because of anything they've done or failed to do." -Peggy McIntosh

oppression

Results from the use of institutional power and privilege where one person or group benefits at the expense of another. Oppression is the use of power and the effects of domination.³

Oppression is reinforced by social norms and institutional power and privilege. Oppression can be institutionalized in society and culture and also manifests in interpersonal interactions and individual beliefs.

¹ Intergroup Resources. Glossary: "Power." <http://www.intergroupresources.com/power/>. 2012.

² "Privilege | Definition of privilege in English by Oxford Dictionaries". <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/privilege>. 2019.

³ Office for Multicultural Affairs. "Diversity and Social Justice: A glossary of working definitions." https://www.uml.edu/docs/Glossary_tcm18-55041.pdf. 2019.

BACKGROUND



*"There is no such thing
as a single-issue struggle
because we don't live
single-issue lives.*

—Audre Lorde

TOOLS FOR CHANGE

Geographic analysis at a city-wide scale is one tool that will allow us to:

- Identify **patterns of uneven service and resource distribution**;
- Inventory **existing amenities**;
- Prioritise **investment**;
- Ask **better questions**; and,
- Catalyze **transformative change**.

**All people and communities in Vancouver,
regardless of their ethnicity, gender, sex, religion, race,
financial status, sexual orientation, abilities or age
deserve the right to access quality parks, recreation and nature,
and the opportunity to partake in social, cultural and recreational activities
to acquire physical and literacy skills, to express and enjoy culture,
and to connect with community.**



BACKGROUND

THE JOURNEY TO EQUITY

To reduce barriers to parks and recreation, the Park Board works alongside community partners who strive to meet the needs of the individual and the neighbourhood.

These partners include Community Centre Associations, internal city partners; other social infrastructure facilities; community groups; and many more service providers.

Community Centre Associations and their partners provide programs that aim to meet the unique needs of their communities. Among many examples:

- Kitsilano Community Centre and volunteers offer a weekly “Shower Program” that is highly successful in treating unhoused neighbours with dignity, demonstrating that there are no restrictions on who deserves respect and comfort.
- Kerrisdale Seniors Centre serves lunch every day, bringing people together to eat an affordable nutritious meal, and to connect with community.
- MoreSports provides affordable sports and physical activity opportunities for children and youth. They take a collaborative approach, which uses sport as a tool for empowering youth as the leaders in creating healthy, connected, and resilient communities.

The Park Board is dedicated to co-creating city building processes and systems that intentionally create and hold space for empowerment and honour the needs of the most excluded, on their terms. In order to carry out this work, it is essential to acknowledge existing injustices, biases, racism, and oppression—and to not only ask who is not at the table, but why aren’t they and how can they be?

Equity is a global challenge that bears responsibility at all levels of government and in our community. Through a systemic view of equity, we aim to support and inform a citywide framework, to develop Park Board policies and to catalyze local action.



Big Draw Marpole | Park Board

BACKGROUND

WHAT WE ARE DOING NOW

The Park Board, City, and key partners— such as Community Centre Associations— work together to reduce barriers to opportunities for safely accessing and enjoying parks and recreation.

Here are a few examples that give a snapshot of current actions working towards an equitable parks and recreation system:

- The Park Board's Leisure Access Program (LAP) supports individuals, families, groups and communities in need by reducing financial barriers to recreation.
- Universal and gender neutral washrooms are now being rolled out to all facilities.
- Swim and fitness programming is available as a safe space for the Transgender, Gender Diverse, and Two-Spirit (TGD2S) communities.

RECONCILIATION

In January of 2016, the Park Board approved 11 recommendations to direct staff in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and their 94 Calls to

Action. The Park Board recognizes the institution's colonial history, and endorsed the reconciliation mission to decolonize the Park Board and set an example in treating reconciliation as a process of decolonization. Reconciliation values of patience, clarity, pragmatism, leadership and learning guide the way we work at the Park Board and how we interact with colleagues, external partners, and the public.

STEWARDSHIP ANNUAL PLAN

The Park Board's upcoming Stewardship Annual Plan aims to create a transparent and equitable process for community groups interested in organizing community programming and ecological enhancement activities in Vancouver parks. Reconciliation, Transparency, Equity, and Sustainability are the four VanPlay principles guiding how the Annual Plan can support park users and community initiatives.

ARTS, CULTURE AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

The City's Arts, Culture and Community Services (ACCS) collaborates with program partners, City departments, and external stakeholders to:

- Enable the provision of affordable housing, childcare spaces, integrated social and wellness services and spaces, and vibrant arts and cultural services and spaces.
- Enable the provision of programs and services to build capacity among the City's most systemically excluded and discriminated residents through direct delivery and through granting to non-profits and community organizations. ACCS is currently developing a city-wide Equity Framework.
- Manage a diverse portfolio of leases with not-for-profit organizations, including housing, childcare, social services, and arts and culture groups.

BACKGROUND

WHAT DOES EQUITY IN PARKS + RECREATION MEAN TO YOU?

We heard many different interpretations of "equity" through the VanPlay Deep Dive Workshops. Some of which can be seen here.

"Spaces that are designed for youth specifically."

RAY-CAM YOUTH PARTICIPANTS

"Anyone, regardless of disability, can go to any recreation guide or centre and learn about/sign-up for inclusive, accessible and affordable sports and recreation."

BC WHEELCHAIR SPORTS

"Respect and dignity for all."

"Working together to meet the needs of those we are supporting."

PARK BOARD ACCESS & INCLUSION STAFF

"Ensure not just physical access but mental and social access are considered as well. Ensure there are no social barriers to inclusion."

VANCOUVER COASTAL HEALTH



BACKGROUND

WHAT WE HEARD

During the VanPlay process, 30,000+ residents and stakeholders voiced their top concern of geographic equity in access to parks, recreation facilities and nature.

- In the 2018 TalkVancouver survey on the 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years, 92% of respondents supported the goal of “prioritizing the delivery of resources where they are needed most.”
- Comments regarding challenges and opportunities cited by staff and stakeholders included concerns with spatial inequity in access to parks and inequity in the quality of parks, particularly in the Downtown Urban Core where there is a large underserved population and overused parks.
- “Equity, Inclusion, and Access” was one of the top three priorities for action identified by the community in Phase 1 of VanPlay engagement. VanPlay tour participants were enthusiastic for the Park Board to address the equitable delivery of facilities across the City.
- Stakeholders and the External Advisory Group shared that while they perceived inequities in resources throughout the City, they were unsure of how the Park Board assigns priority to projects in order to address this.



VanPlay Outreach | Katherine Howard

APPROACH

WHY INITIATIVE ZONES?

The playing field is not level and the barriers are uneven.

While the Park Board and partners work hard to reduce barriers to existing services, the Initiative Zones concept helps us show where resources should go to support this effort. Investments made – whether in capital or operating funds, funding support to partners and community groups, project attention or staffing hours – can maximize impact on traditionally underserved areas of the city while striving to maintain all parks to a high level of care.

While it is easy to assume we know where investments are needed, it is complex to communicate the rationale behind them. This presents a challenge to transparent and logical decision making. Data and mapping tools can alleviate this challenge by exposing patterns, testing hypotheses and revealing a more nuanced portrait of service and community infrastructure distribution, one tinted by inequity.

In 2010, the Greenest City Action Plan set a goal of providing a park or open space within a 5-minute walk for all residents.¹ This goal was a starting point to help guide investment to ensure park space is equally provided throughout.

However, this goal doesn't acknowledge that parts of the city are more densely developed than others. It is also important

that we assess the availability of private open space (such as properties with backyards), consider access to low barrier recreation opportunities, and look overall at delivery of parks and recreation resources through an equity lens.

As the city grows, the public amenities required to meet the needs of new residents are generally provided by developers, by way of contributions, fees, and levies. While there are some exceptions and critiques, this theory of 'growth pays for growth' means that densifying areas receive necessary investment in roads, pipes, parks, and public facilities. This method, generally, does not help to address imbalances in service provision for historically underserved areas, aging infrastructure, or neighbourhoods not experiencing growth.

People with more privilege than others often have more time and resources to advocate for their parks and recreation needs, allowing them greater access to parks and recreation, opportunities for decision-making, and the highest advantage in a system where resources are unevenly distributed.

A simple, powerful, and transparent geographic tool was created to identify resource allocation patterns that take into account density, demand, and quality of parks and recreation provision. Geography is one of several considerations to keep in mind when addressing inequities in access to parks and recreation. This tool acts as a compass to guide where the Park Board will prioritise efforts and investments to lower or remove barriers.

Over time the Park Board has continuously improved its approach to determining where to focus parks and recreation resources, as seen by the timeline on the facing page.

¹ In the Greenest City 2020 Action Plan, the City of Vancouver – in partnership with the Vancouver Park Board – set the goal of providing a green space within a five-minute walk of all residents. This study of the City's park and open space network measured park access with a 400m walk radius. This "as the crow flies" methodology put 92% of the City within the five minute walk range.

APPROACH

1888



FIRST PARK DEDICATION

1888 saw the forceful removal of First Nations villages for the dedication of Stanley Park as Vancouver's first protected open space. Two years later, the Park Board was formed as an autonomous governing body, cementing the City's early dedication to parks (and later recreation).

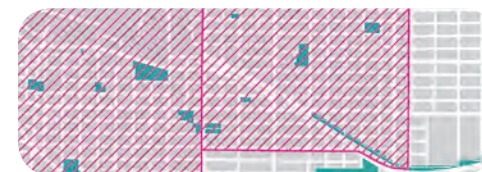
1928



A PARK EVERY SQ. MILE

The 1928 Plan for Vancouver introduced the important metric of a park every square mile, hugely influencing the distribution of the park system today. The plan also introduced a suite of recreation amenities into parks, broadening the role of the Park Board to include recreation.

1992



PARK PROVISION

The 1992 Management Plan was the City's first initiative to address the challenges of accommodating a growing population. The metric of 1.1 hectares of neighbourhood park space per 1,000 residents was introduced to tie park acquisition to growth.

2010



FIVE MINUTE WALK

The Greenest City was a visionary plan that heralded a citywide, interdisciplinary approach to making Vancouver the greenest city in the world. One of the key recommendations was to put all Vancouver residents within a five minute walk of a greenspace.

2014



RECONCILIATION

In 2014, Vancouver became a City of Reconciliation. This seminal moment brought First Nations and the hard work of truth and reconciliation into the forefront of City operations. To support the effort, the Park Board adopted 11 Reconciliation strategies and hired a reconciliation planner with the mission to "decolonize the Vancouver Park Board."

2019



INITIATIVE ZONES

As part of this master plan, the Park Board is committed to advancing equity in Vancouver through parks and recreation. Building off the incredible system Vancouver has today, the Initiative Zones identify areas in need of additional resources, based on low recreational access, urban forest canopy, and park provision.

APPROACH

INITIATIVE ZONES AS A TOOL

The Initiative Zones mapping tool highlights areas in need of resources so that projects, programs and resources can be prioritised.

Over time, by targeting investment and updating this data, provision of parks and recreation will become more equitable.

To understand how we can target historically underserved areas we can:

1. **Identify service gaps** (Initiative Zones)
2. **Address inequity by applying an intersectional lens** as we work to fill these gaps in an inclusive way that meets the needs of the community (see Equity Analysis Factors on page 34)

The following pages introduce the Initiative Zones and describe how they were created.



All Bodies Dance | Park Board

APPROACH

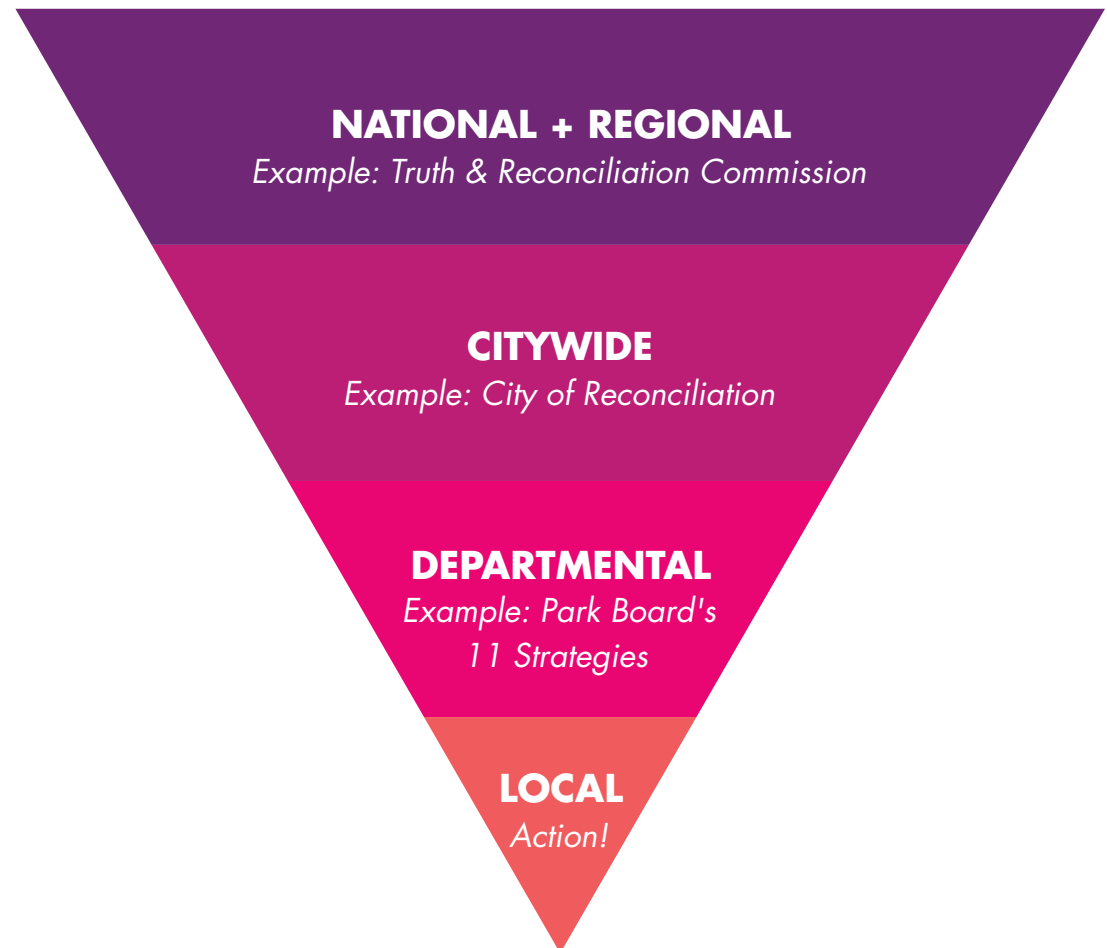
INITIATIVE ZONES AS A TOOL

The intention is to highlight areas in need of resources so that projects, programs and resources can be focused, and alleviate imbalances within the parks and recreation system so that, over time, provision will become more equitable.

The Initiative Zones tool combines a measure of access to parks, recreation and nature in order to create a powerful story that sets the scene for great conversations about where resources may be required.

The map of the Initiative Zones shown in this report is a 1.0 Version. It is a 'living document' that can and should be updated over time as data is updated and improved, and as we integrate what we've learned throughout this journey. Equity is not a static target!

This tool is not intended to answer all questions – it is intended as a prioritization tool, not one to make decisions on its own. It should be used in tandem with the other VanPlay tools and approaches; Park Board Reconciliation Mission, Vision, and Values; City of Vancouver Equity Framework and Poverty Reduction Strategy (underway) and other City initiatives rooted in equity. Meaningful and nuanced engagement with communities, governments and stakeholders should occur in concert with use of this tool.



APPROACH

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

The Initiative Zones is a tool to help determine project prioritization. It is one tool in the toolbox to be used alongside a suite of other tools.

Initiative Zones can be used for a wide range of projects that improve the quality of park and recreation experiences. They are intended as a launch point. Implementation should be further reflected on, reviewed, revised, and agreed upon through collaboration with partners and the community. For example, using Initiative Zones to prioritize investment in washroom upgrades would help to improve the overall quality of park and recreation experiences, although it won't necessarily change the dial of an indicator (Park Service Gaps, Demand for Low-Barrier Recreation, and Urban Forest Canopy).

Conversely, using Initiative Zones to prioritize where to plant street trees would improve tree coverage and directly reduce the 'Tree Coverage Gaps' indicator. As the 'Equity Analysis Factors' builds and data gathering methods improve over time, these overlay factors can further help to address inequities in accessing and enjoying quality park and recreation services.

When using this tool, it is important to be aware of the impacts of park and greening investments in the larger context of land use planning, development, and housing. Without

proper and targeted mitigation strategies, improvements to a neighbourhood's parks and recreation facilities can inadvertently cause displacement. The tool should align with robust policies from the City of Vancouver's Planning, Urban Design & Sustainability departments, Arts, Culture and Community Services, Healthy City Strategy, and Resilient Vancouver to help prevent displacement, reno-victions, gentrification, and further urban stratification.

Removing barriers to inclusion in the parks and recreation system will require sustained and cooperative efforts across the Park Board and City departments, service providers, community organisations, and on an individual and interpersonal level day-to-day. An equity approach to parks and recreation planning recognizes that services must be provided in a way that suits the unique needs of a community. This approach requires us to be empathetic and exhibit humility in our work. Initiative Zones seek to create the conditions for a "level playing field" by addressing these exclusions and forms of inequity in Vancouver's parks and recreation system.

This network of partnerships and key resource and knowledge holders, and holding each other accountable, are at the core of Park Board efforts to mitigate continuing displacement of those who are systematically excluded to neighbourhoods with lower service. Addressing inequity in Vancouver calls for unparalleled collaboration and illuminates the need for innovative solutions.

DATA SUPPORTS GREAT CONVERSATIONS

Data can be a really important tool when used in conversations about equity but there are data gaps that need to be addressed.

Equity-seeking groups are often missing from the data and the data does not elevate their knowledge or voice. As a result, these communities are not meaningfully represented nor is the data culturally reflective of all populations. Data can take the form of numbers or percentages (quantitative data) or it can be descriptive information, such as stories of lived experience (qualitative data).

The Park Board will collaborate with partners, equity-seeking groups, and others on the Equity Analysis Factors (see page 34) so that the community is directly involved in the data gathering process and data interpretation, leading to greater equity. Developing data partnerships to find new ways of measuring equity can spur collaborative and innovative solutions for complex problems.

This approach can de-center the colonial, dominant narrative of data collection that often reinforces systemic oppression. A strengths-based approach to the data-gathering and analysis process, together with other forms of appropriate qualitative and quantitative data, builds a stronger narrative, rather than reducing experiences to numbers and focusing only on deficits. This can help address data gaps and have a transformative impact on personal, organizational, and systemic scales. A strengths-based approach can ensure voices and wisdom of those systemically excluded are heard, represented, and valued in dialogue and decision-making around equity.

Maps are powerful representations that reveal spatial patterns and processes of social and environmental phenomena. However, maps can also selectively exclude or include information and this can lead to use for discriminatory practices. VanPlay includes considerable data and compelling maps to tell stories. How you choose to represent information is very important. It is essential to build maps so they tell a story that does not continue discriminatory practices.

strengths-based approach

A collaborative process between the person supported by services and those supporting them, allowing them to work together to determine an outcome that draws on the person's strengths and assets.

environmental gentrification

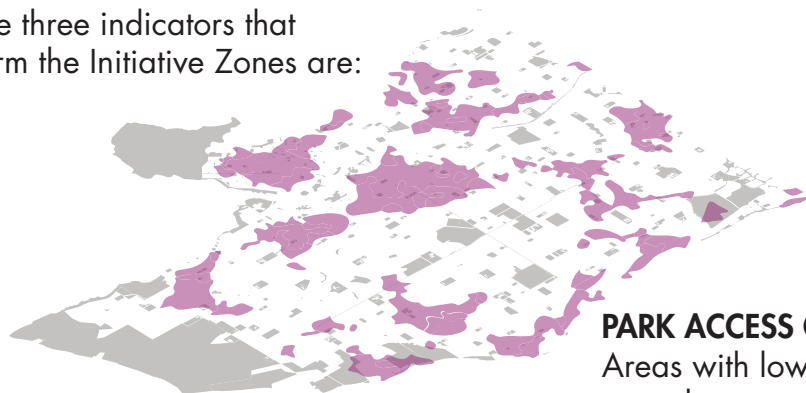
Environmental, ecological, or green gentrification is a process in which cleaning up pollution or providing green amenities increases local property values and attracts wealthier residents to a previously polluted or disenfranchised neighbourhood.¹

¹ Banzhaf, H. Spencer; McCormick, Eleanor (2006). "Moving beyond cleanup: Identifying the crucibles of environmental gentrification." NCEE Working Papers Series.

APPROACH

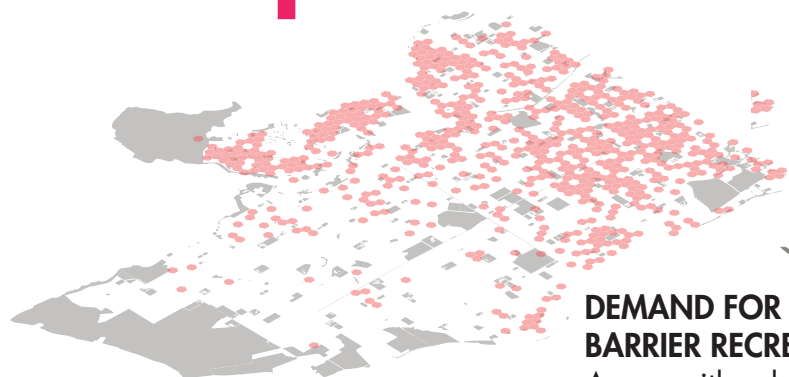
INITIATIVE ZONES MAPPING

The three indicators that form the Initiative Zones are:



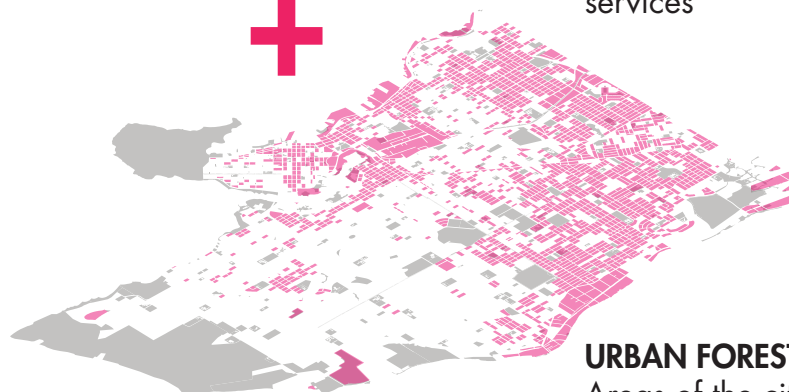
PARK ACCESS GAPS

Areas with low access to park space



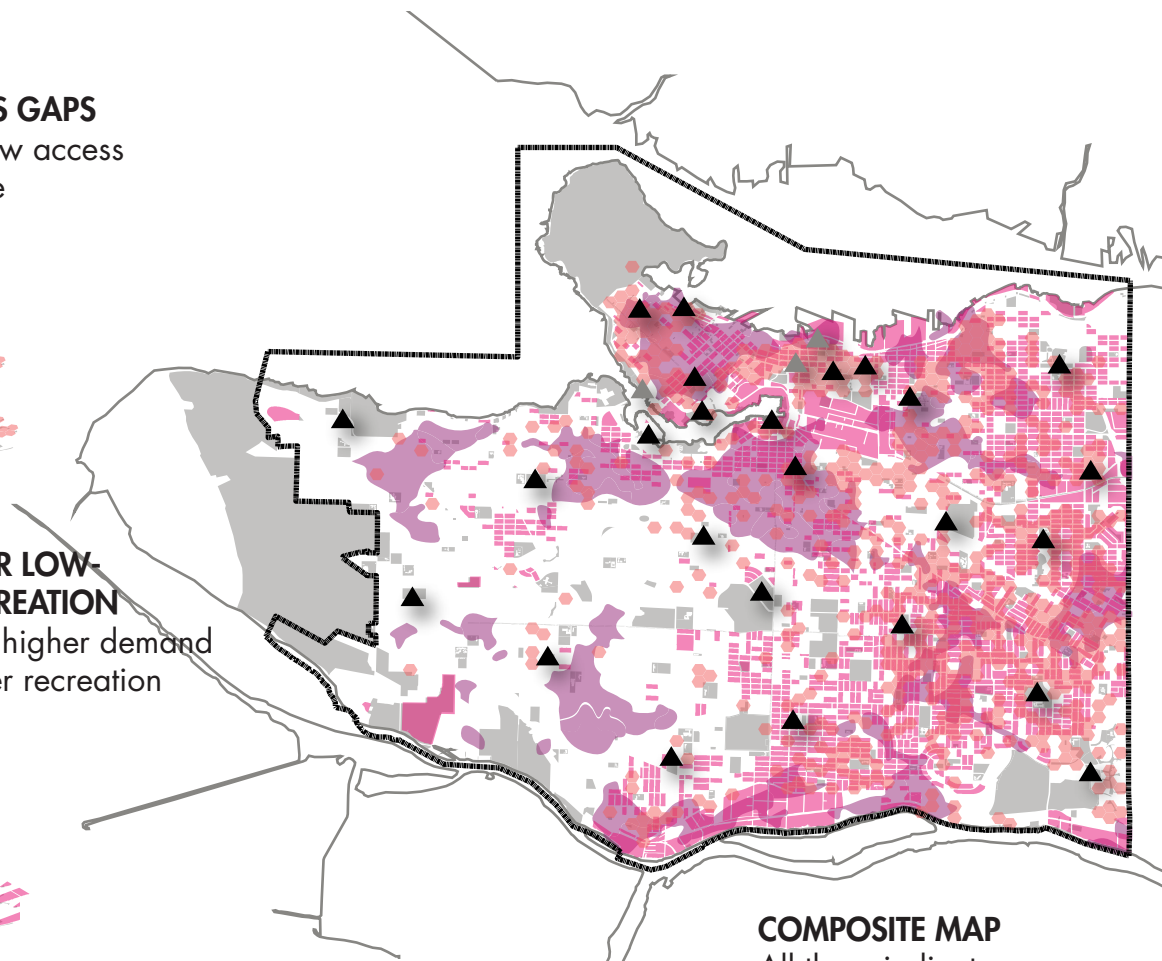
DEMAND FOR LOW-BARRIER RECREATION

Areas with a higher demand for low-barrier recreation services



URBAN FOREST CANOPY GAPS

Areas of the city with a less robust urban forest

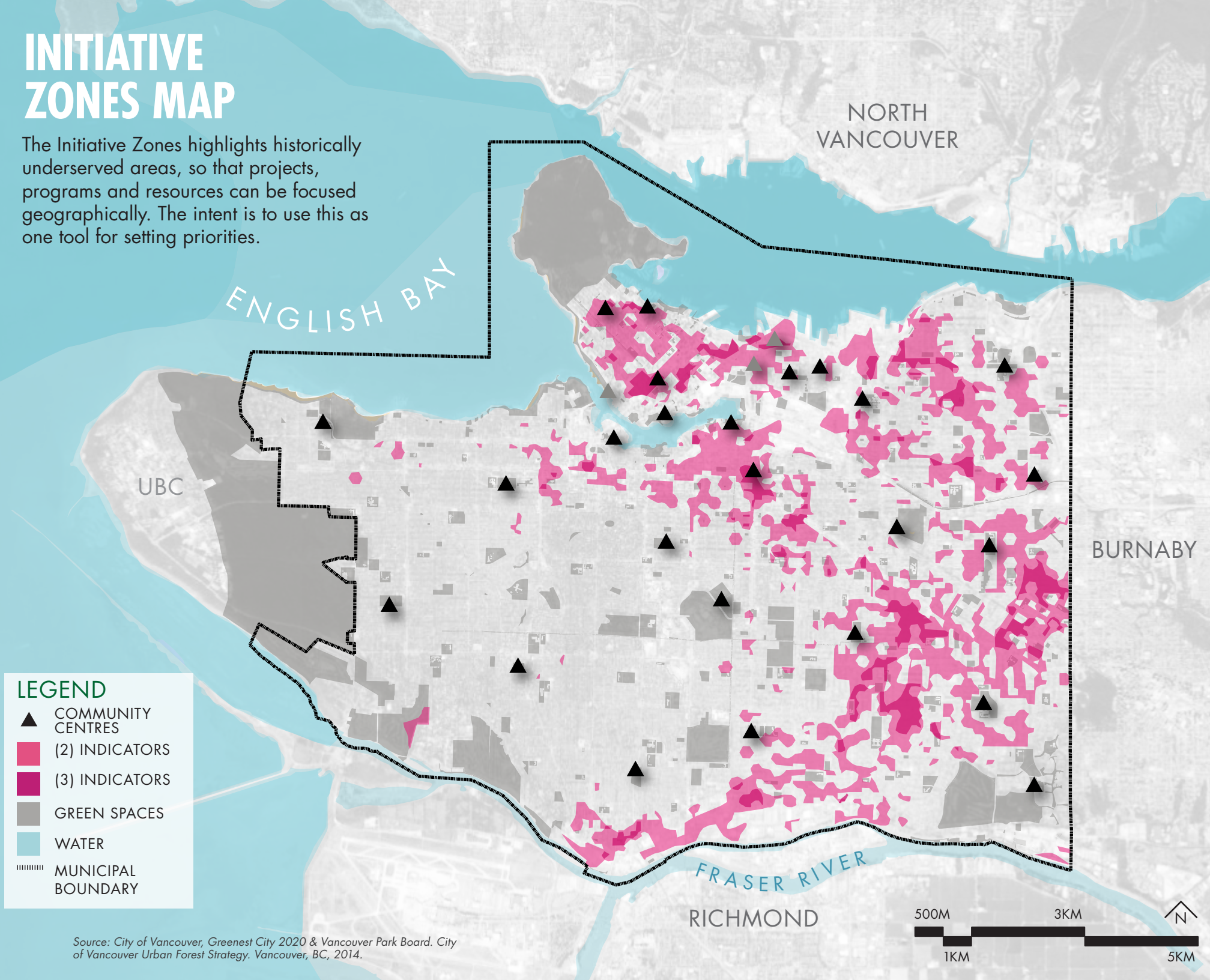


COMPOSITE MAP

All three indicators shown with community centre locations

INITIATIVE ZONES MAP

The Initiative Zones highlights historically underserved areas, so that projects, programs and resources can be focused geographically. The intent is to use this as one tool for setting priorities.



Source: City of Vancouver, Greenest City 2020 & Vancouver Park Board. City of Vancouver Urban Forest Strategy. Vancouver, BC, 2014.

ANALYSIS

DEMAND FOR LOW-BARRIER RECREATION

Spread throughout Vancouver's diverse neighbourhoods, 24 community centres provide social, cultural and recreational facilities and programs for people of all ages and abilities to play, exercise, learn, and connect with others. Each of Vancouver's community centres serves as the hub of its respective neighbourhood, linking residents together with resources to encourage positive health outcomes through healthy lifestyles, social connectedness, and the ability to contribute to community.

Defining and mapping access to recreation is difficult. It is not just about physical proximity, space available in square feet, or even the quality of that space. Access and perceptions of access are impacted by factors, such as the affordability of commercial operators and private clubs, whether you have a car, if you have private recreation space at home, if you see people like you, how welcome you feel... and so much more.

Through the Leisure Access Program (LAP), Vancouver residents facing financial barriers are provided free or reduced cost access to Park Board programs and services offered at its pools, rinks, participating fitness centres and community centres. Leisure Access Program (LAP) registration highlights areas of our system with a high demand for recreation services with reduced barriers. This works well because, by registering for LAP, participants express a wish to access recreation facilities but are otherwise experiencing barriers. Registration in LAP is supported and encouraged by recreation staff in community centres and external social service providers. By directing resources to where these important relationships take place, we are helping them thrive. As the Park Board enhances, supports, and grows the LAP to best respond to the needs of the community, this metric will help us continue to provide this valuable work with targeted resources, such as more staff and training.

Delivering resources to areas of the city with high demand for low barrier recreation will assist the Park Board in delivering a more equitable distribution of recreation facilities and assets over time.

WHY LOW-BARRIER RECREATION MATTERS

Taking part in recreational activities can greatly improve physical and mental health, improve concentration and learning, strengthen communities, promote social bonds, and encourage healthier lifestyles.

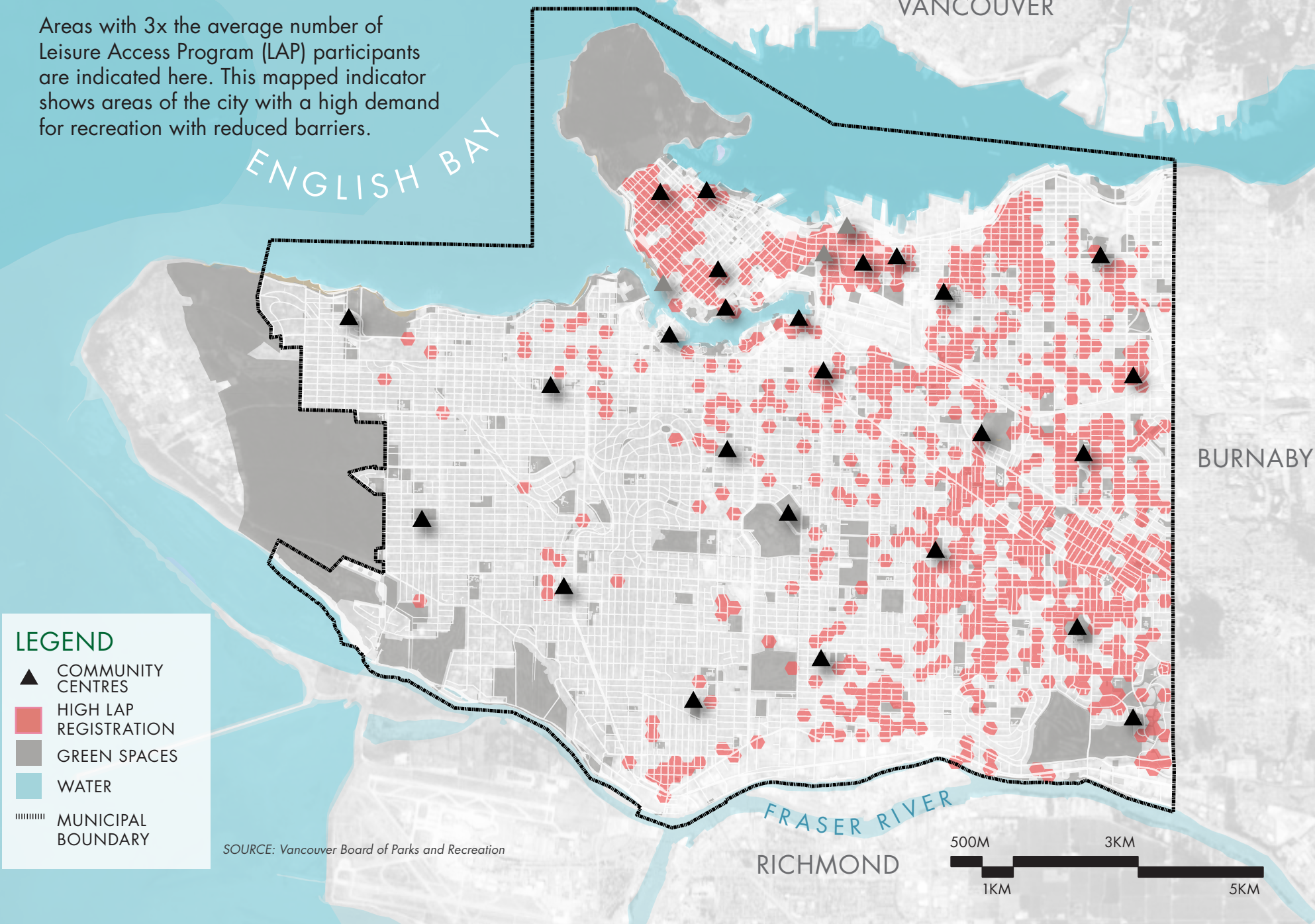
Barriers to participating in recreation can take many forms – feelings of discomfort or unwelcome, prohibitive costs, lack of transportation options, and/or a lack of information about recreation resources and programs reaching low-income families or individuals. The Park Board is in the service of providing access to recreation for all – we are committed to reducing barriers and making recreation affordable, welcoming, and available to as many people as possible.

Vancouver's parks and recreation are meant to serve all populations. However, people systemically excluded should be prioritized, not only to reconcile historic injustices but because public services are often the only ones available to them—private recreation facilities are even more financially out-of-reach.

The Park Board has the ability to influence some of the barriers to accessing and participating in recreation services. The Park Board's Access & Inclusion team is working towards lowering barriers for participation in the Leisure Access Program and is expanding the scope of services that the program includes.

DEMAND FOR LOW-BARRIER RECREATION

Areas with 3x the average number of Leisure Access Program (LAP) participants are indicated here. This mapped indicator shows areas of the city with a high demand for recreation with reduced barriers.



ANALYSIS

PARK PROVISION

Vancouver is home to hundreds of parks, green spaces, public gardens, and plazas. The park system offers a wide variety of experiences and natural areas, from temperate rainforests to urban beaches. With the city increasing in density and the population gaining more than 400 new residents each month, the preservation of public land and strategic investment in the park system are key priorities. While Vancouver has more park space today than it did 25 years ago, the amount of park space per person (or what we call 'park provision') has declined by almost a third.¹

How do we measure access to parks? It is a matter of balancing distance, quantity and quality to determine how well the city's population is connected to the park system. The "Park Service Gaps" indicator considers distance to parks and the density of population within a 10-minute walk of each park.² This map is created from an output of the Park Provision Study (2016, 2018).

¹ Park Provision Study, Vancouver Park Board.

² Ten minutes was chosen because when combined with density, it showed a more comprehensive picture of access to and demand on park space.

WHY PARK SERVICE GAPS MATTER

Whether you're 8 or 80, parks give people a place to socialize, exercise, relax and build community. They offer a wide range of environmental, economic, and social benefits on a variety of scales (individual, neighbourhood, city, earth, etc.) and over different points of time.

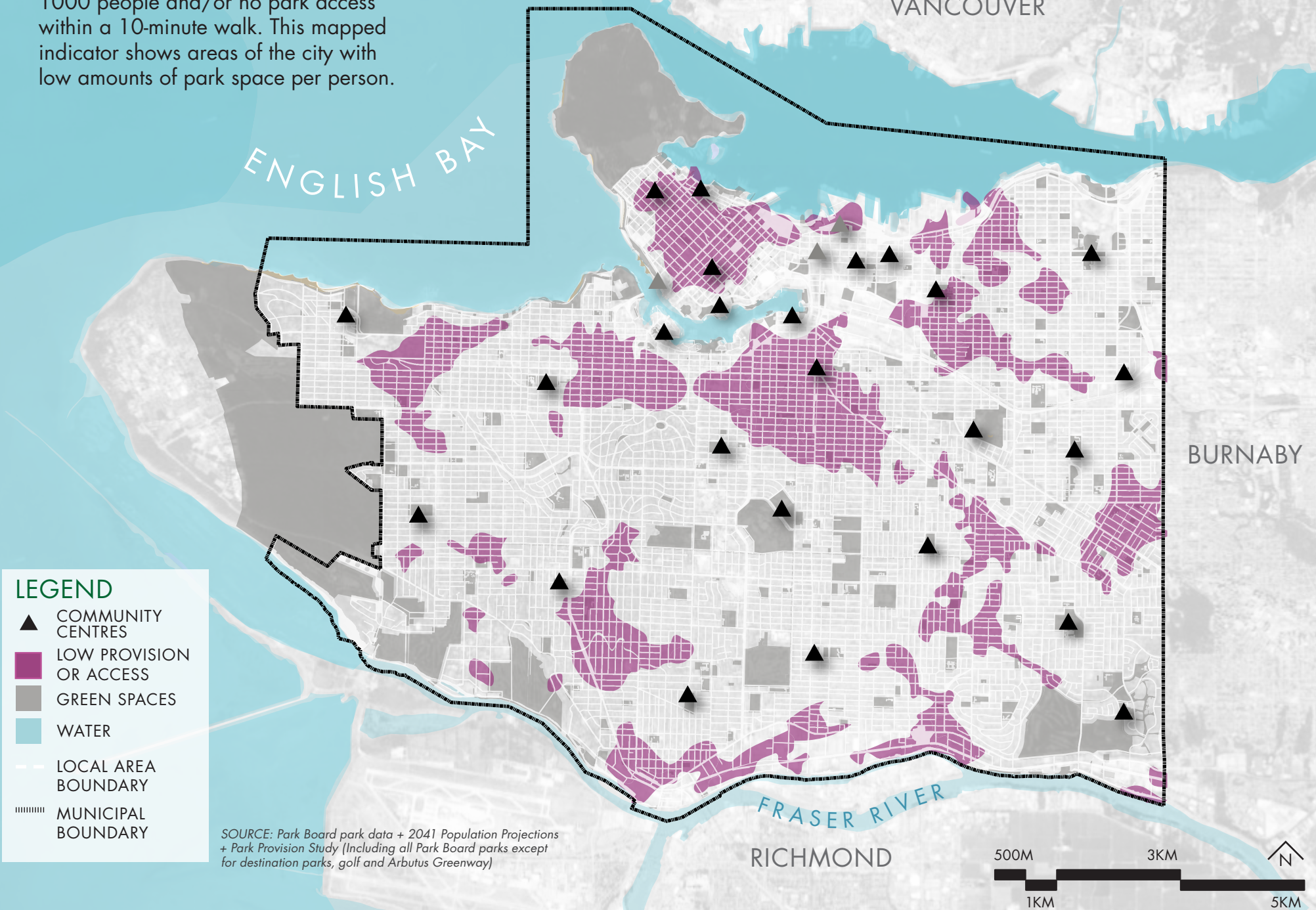
In a 2015 study, people living more than 1 kilometer away from a green space were shown to have nearly 50 percent higher odds of experiencing stress than those living fewer than 300 meters from a green space. Results correlated the frequency of visits to green spaces with lowered rates of stress.¹ Parks are places where people get to know their neighbours. By engaging with each other across difference and providing opportunities for interaction, creative exchanges and shared activities can improve social cohesion and social capital.

Careful planning and meaningful engagement is necessary to ensure that people living in areas with park service gaps receive the accompanying benefits of equitable access and are not displaced inadvertently through environmental gentrification. Groups and individuals can experience the same park in different ways. Listening to voices from the margins while taking time to nurture relationships is an example of genuine community participation in park planning and design. It is crucial to understanding how parks are experienced, what is needed to reduce barriers to safe access to parks, and how the park is or isn't meeting needs. For example, safety goes beyond physical hazards in a park. Feeling safe can also mean feeling respect and welcome to express one's culture or walking in a park without fear of discrimination.

¹ Making the Case for Designing Active Cities, Active Living Research (Stigsdotter, 2010), 2015.

PARK ACCESS GAPS

Areas with less than .55 park ha / 1000 people and/or no park access within a 10-minute walk. This mapped indicator shows areas of the city with low amounts of park space per person.



ANALYSIS

URBAN FOREST CANOPY

According to the 2016 Vital Signs report by the Vancouver Foundation, “natural beauty” is the number one reason people give for choosing to live in BC. Vancouver's mild coastal climate supports a magnificent urban forest is a mix of everything from native towering cedar, fir and hemlock trees to annually blossoming cherry trees. Measuring forest canopy is an indicator metric for a city-dweller's access to nature and a high-quality living environment. Vancouver's canopy cover is provided by vegetation in public parks, on public rights-of-ways, and on private land.

The ‘Urban Forest Coverage Gaps’ indicator considers the quality of the urban environment, and how the lack of accessibility to private green open space may result in feeling as though you have less access to nature and recreation space.

The Park Board's Urban Forest Strategy (2016) used LiDAR¹ data to map the distribution of canopy cover in the city. This mapping demonstrated how uneven urban forest cover is across Vancouver's neighbourhoods. For example, the industrial zones along the Burrard Inlet, False Creek Flats, Fraser River, and major thoroughfares like Nanaimo St., are largely devoid of trees. Areas like the Downtown Eastside and False Creek Flats have very low canopy cover (less than 5%) and are difficult to plant due to the urban form, streetscape design, and lack of green open space. The Urban Forest Strategy (2014) set a target to increase the urban forest canopy to 22% by 2050 (currently 18%).

¹ LiDAR, which stands for Light Detection and Ranging, is a remote sensing method that uses light in the form of a pulsed laser to measure ranges (variable distances) to the Earth. LiDAR points are collected from aircraft using a sensor that sends down laser pulses. Canopy cover is extracted from LiDAR data and can measure tree height, stem diameter, canopy width and volume.

WHY URBAN FOREST COVERAGE GAPS MATTER

If you have a leafy backyard you are less reliant on your local park as a space to sit outside in the sunshine. If your street is lined with mature trees and colourful gardens, you are likely to see and hear birds and insects.

Trees in an urban environment provide a wide range of benefits that:

- Improve human health and well-being
- Support wildlife and plant diversity
- Add beauty to the city's built form
- Reduce air pollution
- Conserve water and reduce soil erosion
- Mitigate urban heat island effect
- Increase resilience to climate change impacts
- Reduce noise pollution

Increasing tree canopy in the city's hottest areas is one way to reduce susceptibility to heat stress. Urban areas with little vegetation and lower tree coverage, as well as high percentages of impermeable hard surfaces (e.g., concrete, asphalt) create an urban heat island, a developed area with higher temperatures than nearby rural areas.¹ Land surface temperatures coupled with other social factors contribute to vulnerability to extreme heat. These factors can include social isolation, mental health, homelessness, substance addiction, physical disability, and developmental disability. Many residents of the Downtown Eastside have little access to proper shade, indoor cooling, and find it difficult to avoid the summer heat. Increasing tree canopy in the Downtown Eastside and other heat island hotspots is one way to reduce vulnerability to heat-related illnesses and mortality in these locations.

¹ United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). "Heat Island Effect." <https://www.epa.gov/heat-islands>. 2019.

URBAN FOREST CANOPY GAPS

Areas with less than 5% canopy coverage. This mapped indicator shows areas of the city with less street trees, park trees and green private open space.

ENGLISH BAY

NORTH
VANCOUVER

UBC

BURNABY

LEGEND

- ▲ COMMUNITY CENTRES
- <5% COVERAGE
- GREEN SPACES
- WATER
- ▬ MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

SOURCE: City of Vancouver, Greenest City 2020 & Vancouver Park Board. City of Vancouver Urban Forest Strategy. Vancouver, BC, 2014 and 2018 (updated).

FRASER RIVER

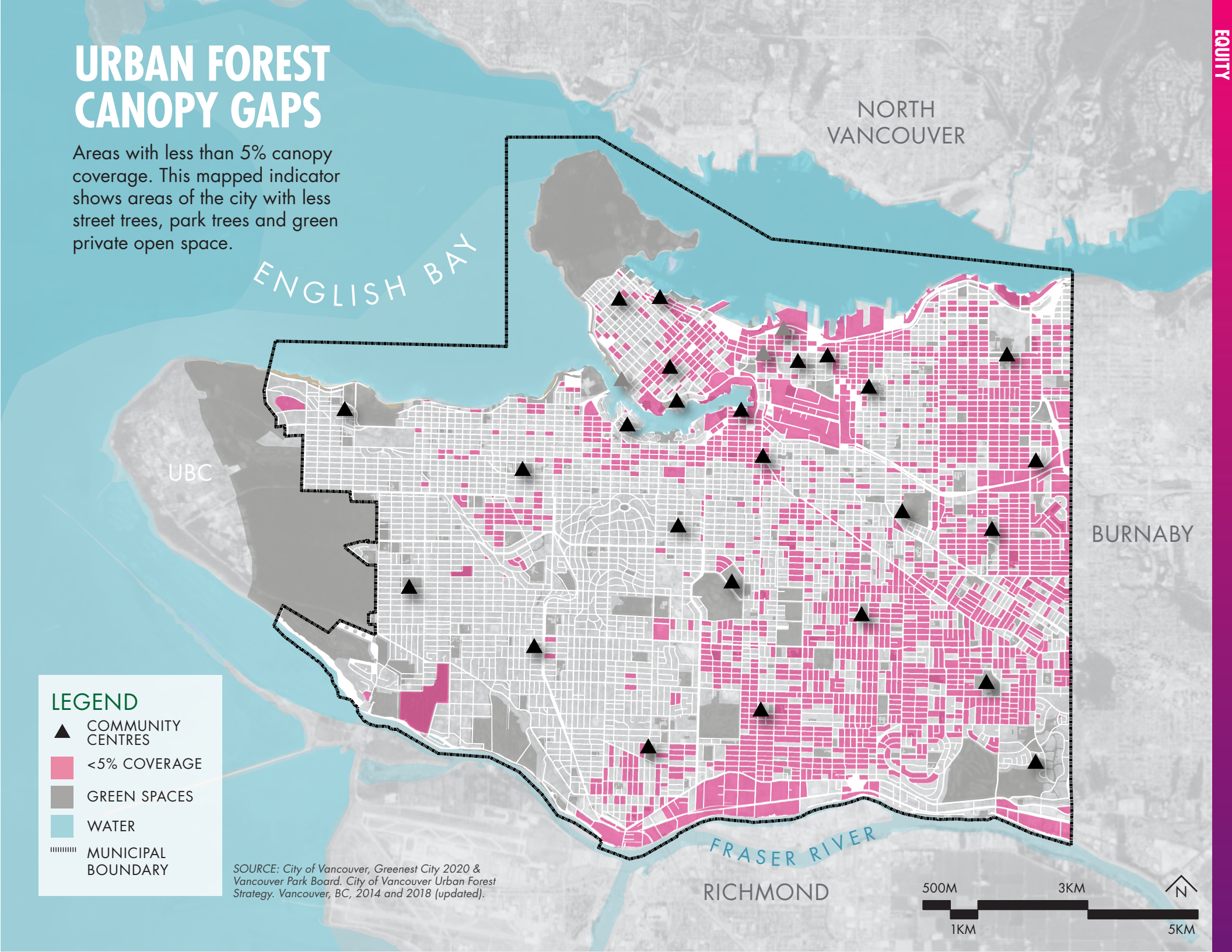
RICHMOND

500M

3KM

1KM

5KM



ANALYSIS

EQUITY ANALYSIS FACTORS

There are many, many factors that contribute to “equity” and “need” and each are unique to individuals, communities, and places.

The current state of parks and recreation service distribution across the city is neither equal nor equitable and it is important to keep having conversations and taking action, and co-creating equity while we fill these gaps.

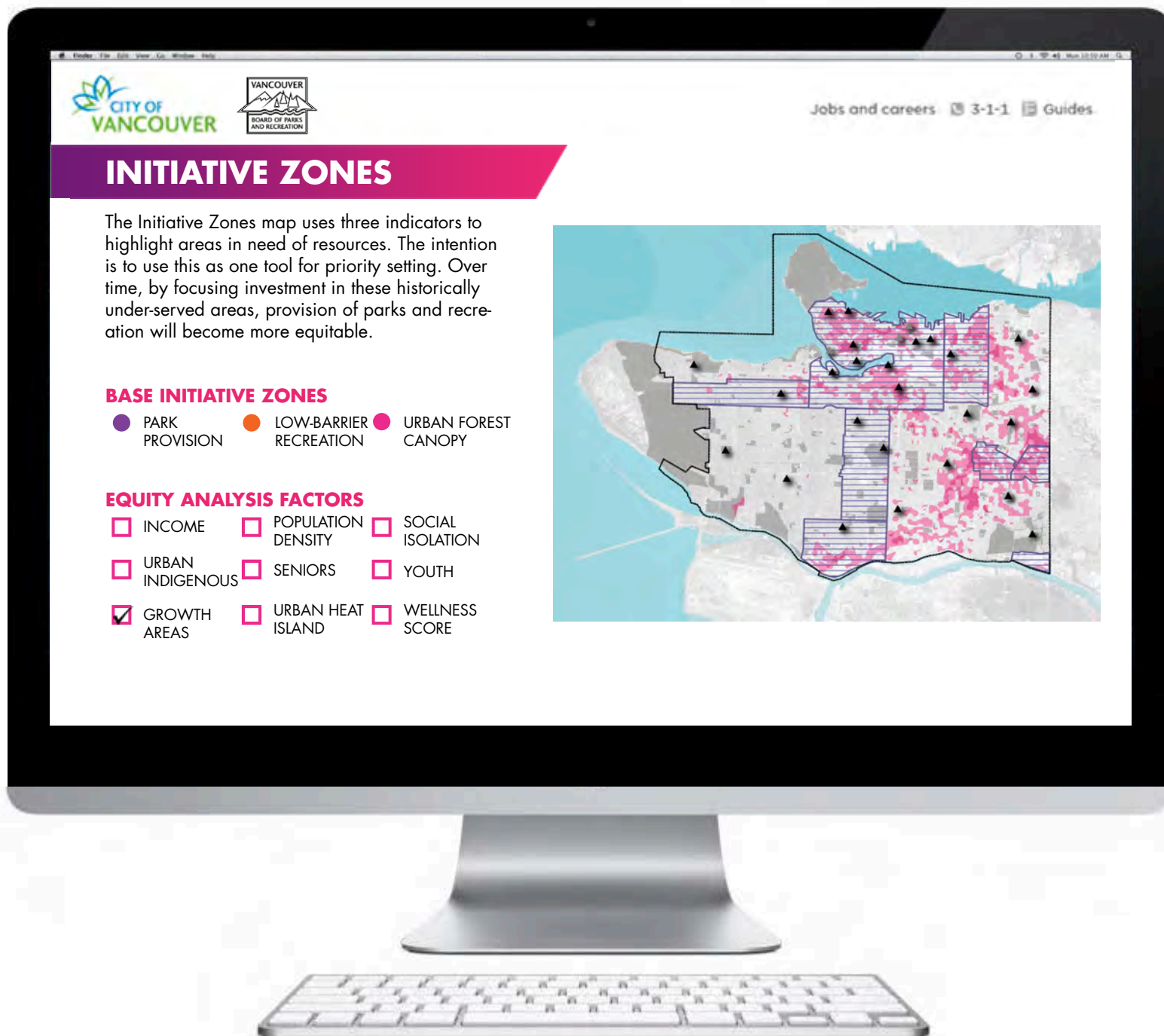
By including relevant disaggregated data layers (data that is broken down by categories) in the Initiative Zones policy, we are more likely to spot where the needs and gaps in services are. We can measure progress, and then appropriately respond in a more-informed way. It is important to see this data as a snapshot, a benchmark at a single point in time to identify where we need to go in order to change these numbers and patterns. Community input and collaboration will help inform what the Equity Analysis Factors should consider and will identify relevant ways the Park Board can apply this tool.

Equity Analysis Factors can be added over time and may include spatial patterns to facilitate better decision-making, deeper listening and asking better questions during community engagement, capital planning, and proposal reviews. Equity Analysis Factors are malleable and responsive to emerging needs and opportunities so the Park Board can reflect and refine its approach to advance equity in the overall parks and recreation system.

The set of factors that could be added over time include but are not limited to:

- Access indicators (e.g. car ownership, languages spoken at home, wealth, people with disabilities)
- Equity-seeking groups (those facing barriers to equal access due to being treated differently)
- Number of hours of free programming (at community centres and in parks)
- Indicators to help us reduce disaster risk and foster disaster resilience
- Survey data (e.g. annual satisfaction surveys, the “My Health, My Community” survey, or findings from the Vancouver Foundation’s Connect & Engage surveys)¹
- Location of capital investments made by the Park Board in the past
- Indigenous community health indicators (informed by an Indigenous perspective, and unique to the community of Indigenous peoples they are measuring)
- Sociodemographic patterns (e.g. children, youth, older adults, and seniors)

¹ The “My Health, My Community” survey reports physical activity levels among other statistics. The Vancouver Foundation’s Connect & Engage survey shows that some groups—including young adults and people in low-income households—experience social isolation and barriers to civic and social participation more acutely.



Long term vision for a web-based, interactive map which allows staff and the community to overlay various "equity analysis factors" on top of the Initiative Zones.

ANALYSIS

EQUITY ANALYSIS FACTOR EXAMPLE: OVERLAY OF GROWTH AREAS

Many aspects of equity cannot be measured, represented on a map, or tracked geographically. However, there are some indicators that help to explore patterns, and help us ask better questions.

For example, new developments and growth areas receive funding and attention through the City's development process. As such, we really need to address areas of the city that don't receive amenities and services through these public benefit strategies and investment from growth.

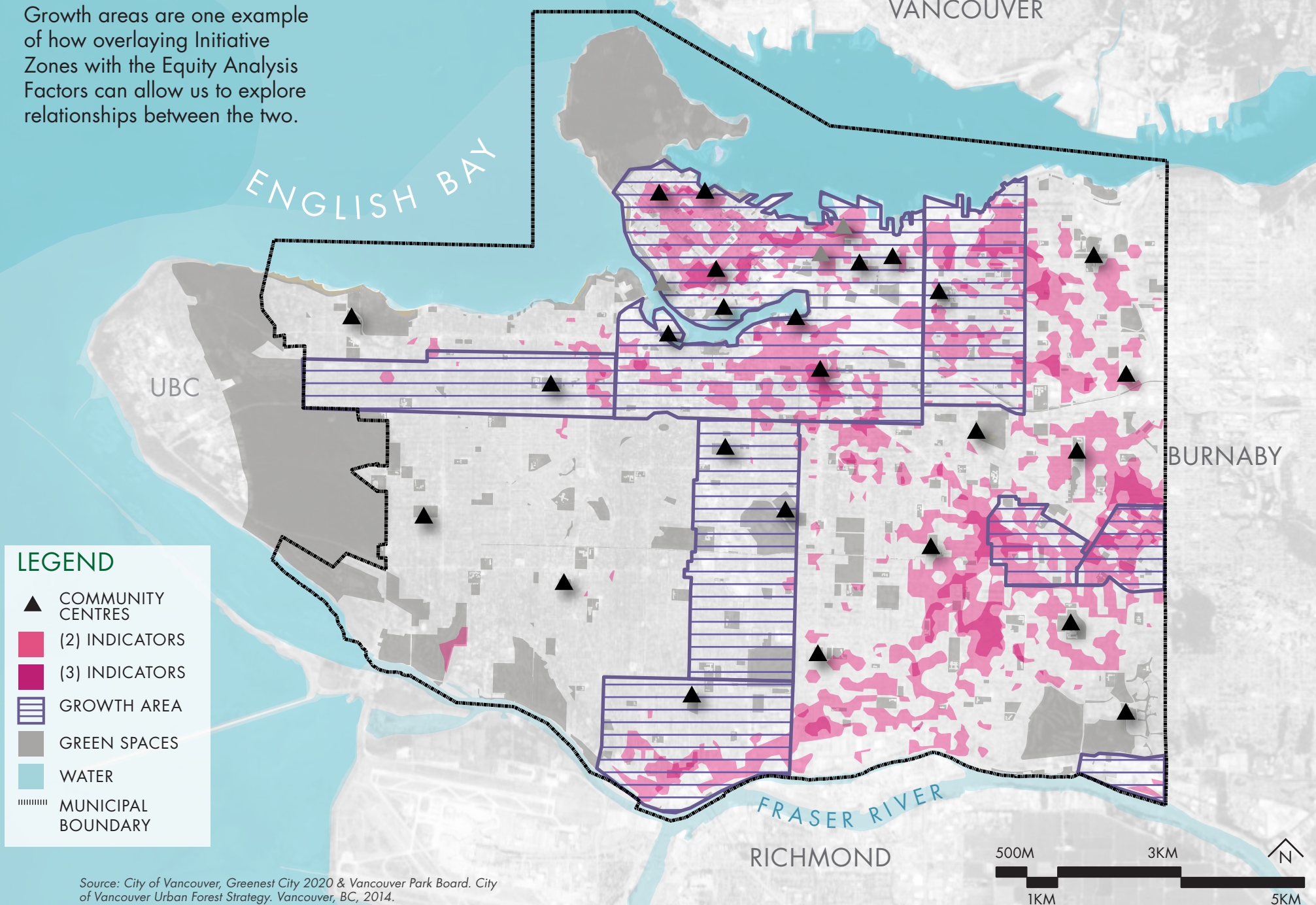
Adding on a Growth Areas layer to the base layers can be useful during the capital planning process to demonstrate where the areas of need are, both within and outside of designated Growth Areas, and where investment should be allocated. Tying this to how the tool might be used in a more granular and complex way is taking an equity approach to the decision-making process for prioritized investment, such as co-sensing of barriers and needs to safely access parks and recreation with equity-seeking groups.



Dance Class | Park Board

INITIATIVE ZONES WITH GROWTH AREAS

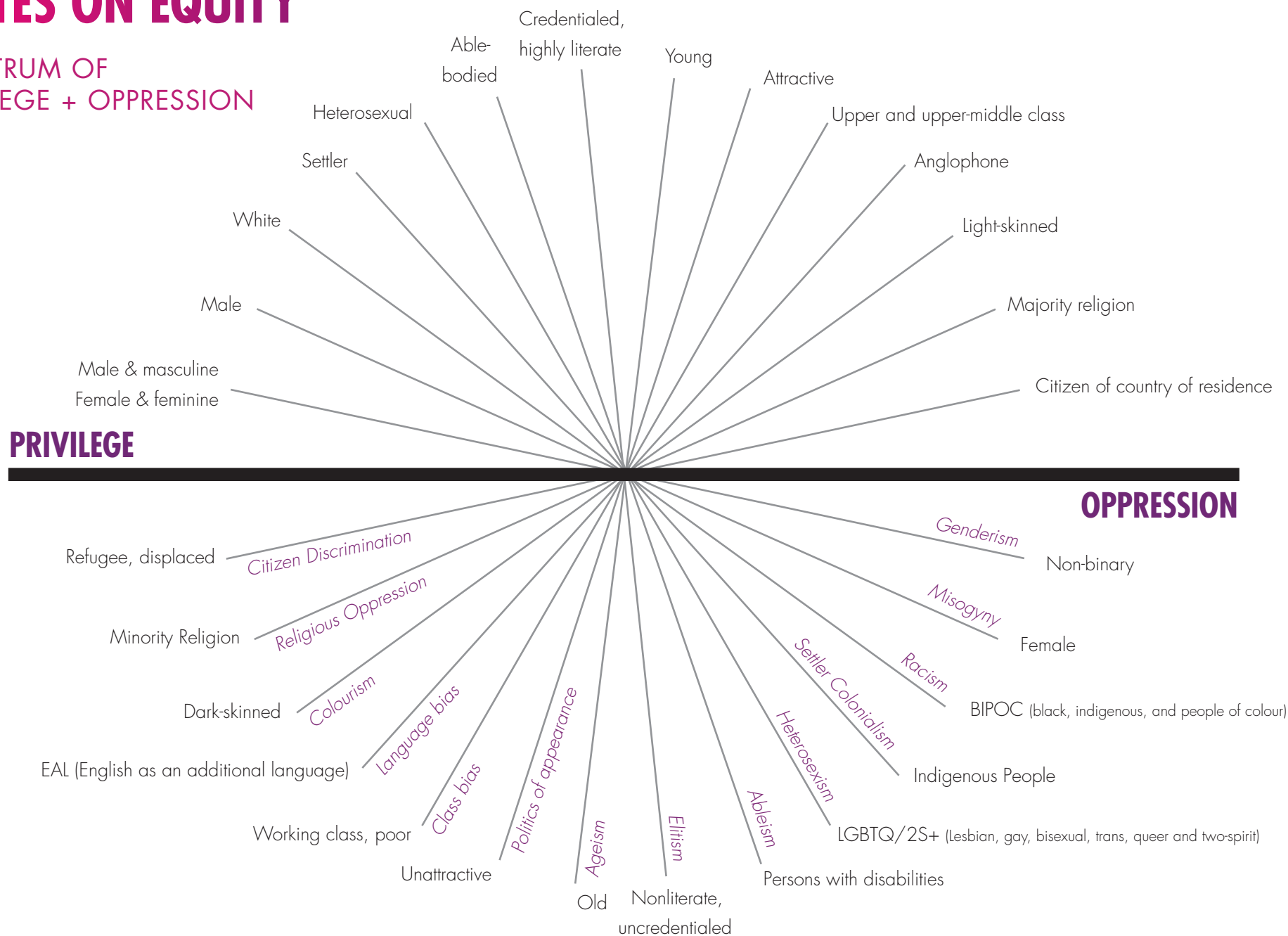
Growth areas are one example of how overlaying Initiative Zones with the Equity Analysis Factors can allow us to explore relationships between the two.



Source: City of Vancouver, Greenest City 2020 & Vancouver Park Board. City of Vancouver Urban Forest Strategy. Vancouver, BC, 2014.

NOTES ON EQUITY

SPECTRUM OF PRIVILEGE + OPPRESSION



NOTE: The terms of discrimination based on systems of oppression, as well as the diverse identities represented in this diagram, are not exhaustive. The diagram on this page is adapted from the 'Power Flower' and 'Intersecting Axes of Privilege, Domination, and Oppression.' Taylor and Yusuf are illustrative characters and could be experiencing privileges or oppression not mentioned in the narrative.

NOTES ON EQUITY

INTERSECTIONALITY + WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU

To create inclusive cities that meet the needs of the community, we need to understand how people experience the city individually.

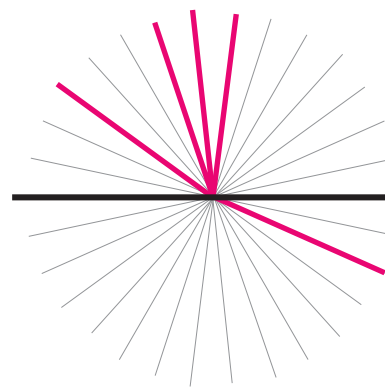
Think about how your experience of the city may differ from that of others. Each of us has a multitude of identities—our gender, class, race, sexuality and so much more—that affect our lives in a myriad of ways. With all these identities attached to us at once, the ways in which we interact and experience the city are unique.

Intersectionality provides a nuanced lens to understand each person's experience by taking into account the overlap of multiple identities (eg. class, gender, ethnicity, Indigeneity, wealth, education, sexual orientation, etc.)¹ Forms of oppression and privilege assigned to these identities intersect and influence one another and impact the way we move through the world.

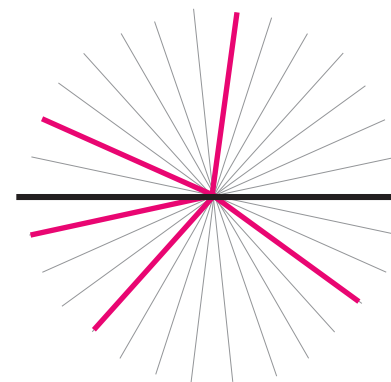
Rather than seeing identities, privileges, and oppressions in a vacuum, intersectionality allows for a more holistic understanding of identity, its relationship to power, and how it influences people's experiences navigating city services. It provides us with a lens that encourages nuanced conversations around inequity in accessing Park Board services and exposes the interwoven prejudices people face day-to-day. Different forms of oppression can interact, overlap, and be compounded. Intersectionality helps to ensure that different needs and challenges of people accessing Park Board resources aren't overlooked. Recognizing and confronting privilege and applying an intersectional lens helps us to understand how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege, and how we can move beyond single stories to respond to the needs of diverse communities and groups.

Think about Taylor and Yusuf. They each experience different forms of oppression and privilege as they participate in Park Board facilities and services. Taylor is a 14-year-old white female who attends high-school, has an afterschool job, takes pottery classes, and plays on a competitive soccer team. Yusuf is a 58-year-old male Syrian refugee, holds a PhD, and his son attends childcare at a neighbourhood community centre. Taylor's needs and challenges are different than Yusuf's. **It is important to recognize and take these differences into account to understand the converged complexity of privilege and oppression Taylor and Yusuf experience when accessing Park Board services.**

*Taylor's Spectrum of
Privilege + Oppression*



*Yusuf's Spectrum of
Privilege + Oppression*



intersectionality

The interconnected nature of social categorizations, such as race, class, and gender, is regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. (Oxford Dictionary)

¹ Intersectionality is a dynamic theory developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw as a way to help explain the layers of oppression experienced by African-American women.

NOTES ON EQUITY

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH & WELLNESS

Equity is a complex, personal and cultural concept. While the Initiative Zones tool starts to identify patterns, addressing historical injustices and building strong communities requires a deep and multifaceted approach, such as incorporating the First Nations perspective.

The **Centre Circle** represents individual human beings. Wellness starts with individuals taking responsibility for our own health and wellness (whether we are First Nations or not).

The **Second Circle** illustrates the importance of Mental, Emotional, Spiritual and Physical facets of a healthy, well, and balanced life. It is critically important that there is balance between these aspects of wellness and that they are all nurtured together to create a holistic view of well-being in which all four areas are strong and healthy.

The **Third Circle** represents the overarching values that support and uphold wellness: Respect, Wisdom, Responsibility and Relationships.

The **Fourth Circle** depicts the people that surround us and the places from which we come: Nations, Family, Community and Land are all critical components of our healthy experience as human beings.

The **Fifth Circle** depicts the Social, Cultural, Economic and Environmental determinants of our health and well-being.

The people who make up the **Outer Circle** are holding hands to demonstrate togetherness, respect and relationships, which in the words of a respected BC elder can be stated as "one heart, one mind."



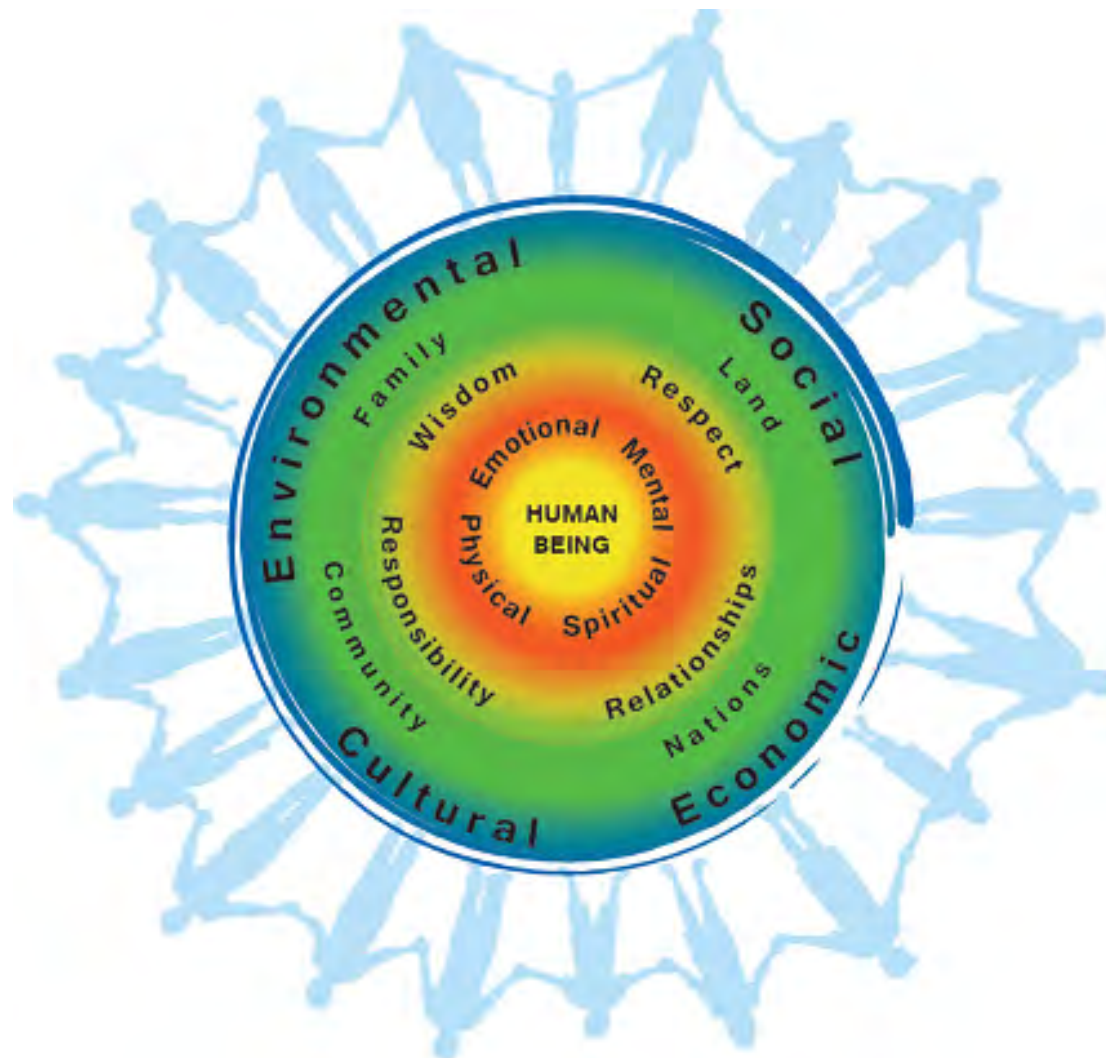
Dancer at Winter Solstice I Park Board

NOTES ON EQUITY

BRITISH COLUMBIA FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH & WELLNESS

This model is a snapshot of a fluid concept of wellness that visually expresses the vision of healthy, self-determining, and vibrant BC First Nations Children, Families, and Communities.

The model was developed from the wisdom, teachings, and culture of BC First Nations. It aims to create shared understanding of a holistic vision of wellness, and serve as a starting point for discussion by First Nations communities on what they conceptualize as a vision of wellness for themselves and the First Nations Health Authority (FNHA).



NEXT STEPS

RECOMMENDATIONS

This first take on Initiative Zones highlights areas of the city which have been historically underserved in provision of parks and recreation opportunities.

The road to equity will be a long journey that requires hard work, the ability to embrace complexity, innovative thinking to shift the status-quo, accountability, collaboration, and co-creation. There will be many bumps along the way but we are ready, and we are excited to get started.

Used as a tool to identify where we need to work, Initiative Zones will help to advance equitable distribution of services and resources by considering diverse needs and focusing on communities where redistribution will have the most impact.

Reflecting on the vision and findings outlined here, *Report 4: The Playbook: Implementation Plan* will provide implementation steps that aim to support this Bold Move.

In summary, supporting actions to achieve greater equity for parks and recreation include the following programs, policies and partnerships.

Programs

- Develop tools and resources to facilitate **ongoing data interpretation** by equity seeking groups, and communities experiencing the identified “need” to ensure that assumptions are correct, stories are helpful and not discriminatory, and that useful actions to solve problems are identified through the work.
- Review and refresh the Park Board approach to **community engagement** to facilitate conversations which make use of the tools outlined in this Bold Move.
- Advocate for enabling additional **geographic flexibility** in the delivery of **developer contributions** (Development Cost Levy funds and community amenity contributions) to address the high need areas of the City, to provide ongoing operational funding to support new amenities and to support planning and strategy for increased efficiency and innovation.

Policies

- Integrate the Initiative Zones and the approach described in this Report into **day-to-day operations** within the Park Board by updating policy, guidelines and templates where appropriate (for example, report structures, prioritization matrices, application guidelines).
- Advocate for continued work to enhance our understanding of city-wide equity and development of **policy tools** as a part of the upcoming City Wide Plan and other future city-wide planning strategies.

Partnerships

- Create an internal Park Board and City **interdepartmental working group** to coordinate creation of an appropriate web-based, interactive site for the Initiative Zones, Equity Analysis Factors and other data and mapping efforts such as an integration with VanMap for staff and public use.
- Collaborate with the wider **Equity Framework project**, led by Arts, Culture and Community Services and reflect the outcomes of this work in future revisions of the Initiative Zones, and any supporting programs and policies.
- Develop **additional Equity Analysis Factors** via data partnerships with the City (especially Arts, Culture and Community Services), and partners such as community serving groups, Vancouver Coastal Health, Vancouver Foundation, Community Centre Associations, Metro Vancouver, and Vancouver School Board (as described on page 42).
- Continue to take a **community development and stewardship approach** to interfacing with community groups and individuals supporting safe and welcoming parks and recreation. Build from learnings of the multidisciplinary Team UP (Urban Parks), which are working to improve service in areas of the city under pressure.



Drawing to Save the Birds at Roundhouse | Park Board



MOVE 2: ASSET NEEDS

TOOL: ASSET TARGETS

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN ASSET NEEDS?

This chapter articulates needs relating to Park Board spaces, facilities, and amenities. It describes management, development and renewal needs and sets targets to support capital and area planning and measure progress over time.

Asset Needs identify areas of greatest need for physical parks and recreation assets, provide a tool to track progress over time, and foster clarity and consistency in decision-making. Asset Needs evaluate the current state of parks and recreation as well as set an aspirational standard for the future.

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BACKGROUND

ASSET AND SERVICE NEEDS

The Park Board is in the business of delivering parks and recreation services, both the provision of infrastructure (the initial acquisition of land, followed by a cycle of construction, maintenance, and renewal), and their ongoing programming and operation.

This chapter articulates needs relating to Park Board spaces, facilities, and amenities. It describes management, development and renewal needs and sets targets to measure progress over time.

WHAT ARE ASSET TARGETS?

Assets are just one part of service provision. Asset targets evaluate the current state as well as set an aspirational standard for the future. Each asset target utilises qualitative and quantitative measures, such as number of amenities, distribution of amenities, access or public satisfaction, depending on the type of amenity or service.

The targets take a citywide perspective, and look broadly across different amenities and facilities to catalyse further detailed studies. Specific targets were determined through thorough consideration of trends, benchmarking against other cities, population projections, and service needs identified by the community, partners and staff.

WHAT ASSETS ARE INCLUDED?

The asset targets described in this chapter consider the quantity, quality, capacity, and distribution of parks, natural areas, outdoor recreation amenities, and facilities in the City of Vancouver, managed in some respect by the Park Board.

It is important to recognise the regional context of the Lower Mainland and the other service providers and partner organizations who contribute to the suite of services available to Vancouverites. There are public and private providers for nearly every type of amenity described, the importance of which was explored in *VanPlay Report 1 – Inventory and Analysis*.

While parks and recreation assets managed by the Park Board are the primary focus of this chapter, acknowledgement of other service providers and opportunities for partnerships are highlighted throughout.



ASSET TARGETS



QUANTITY



the number of amenities citywide or in a given neighbourhood and the number needed into the future

QUALITY



the condition of a space or amenity and how well it fulfills community needs

CAPACITY



the ability to meet community needs, accommodate a growing population and adapt to changing demands

DISTRIBUTION



the spread/distribution of amenities across the city and within a specific community

PUBLIC DEMAND



the quality of response to community requests and needs through changes to amenities and programs



BACKGROUND

METHODOLOGY

With significant pressures on the parks and recreation system, the Park Board needs a strategic approach to ensure demand continues to be met in Vancouver. The City has limited resources to fund and maintain infrastructure and needs to set realistic provision goals. In some cases, the same number of amenities may have to 'work harder,' i.e., the same asset serves more people.

HOW ARE THEY USED?

The outlined service and asset needs, and subsequent asset targets support:

- The capital planning process by identifying new assets required and renewal needs for existing amenities.
- Community and/or area planning process by acting as a starting point for a recreational needs assessment.
- Measuring progression and improvement over time by stating current service provision and challenges.
- Clear and consistent decision-making by providing a citywide context for service provision.
- Ongoing strategic planning by identifying need for deeper analysis or investigation of innovative management and operation initiatives.
- Comparison and benchmarking across other municipalities and nationally.

These targets give us a tool to track demand citywide but do not determine projects for specific locations. The targets are to be used in conjunction with public engagement and other planning tools, such as asset management systems, neighbourhood plans, other citywide strategies, as well as with more detailed plans for specific amenities, parks, and community centres.

Community involvement in planning at the local level will further inform the outcome at specific locations and wisdom of those systemically excluded are heard, represented, and valued in dialogue and decision-making around equity.

HOW DID WE CREATE THE ASSET TARGETS?

The asset targets and recommendations were determined through thorough consideration of trends, benchmarking against other cities, population projections, and service needs identified by the community, partners and staff.

As the population is anticipated to grow by nearly 150,000 people over the next 25 years, it is challenging to make assumptions around the needs and demands of that future population. Unpredictable trends, new sports and entirely new ways to use our leisure time may emerge over the next 10 years.

The asset targets—both current and future—use population-based ratios primarily because of the ability to compare service levels across numerous different amenities and facilities. Population-based estimates help highlight where the most significant gaps in amenities will be in the future and are best used in conjunction with other analyses, such as use data, participation rates, and demand indicators from public and stakeholder feedback.

Future planning studies and strategies will include more detailed needs assessments, which may result in additional asset targets being added. The Park Board will engage the public and stakeholders as an integral part of this important work.

This document sets out 20 asset targets with placeholders for three more, which are pending studies in progress. Additional asset targets will be added over time.

VANCOUVER RESIDENT POPULATION

Asset targets track the quantity of a given amenity, usually per 1,000 residents. Different measurements are included here due to unique characteristics of each asset. The population numbers used in this analysis are:

2016 631,487 residents

2041 776,500 residents

CURRENT PROVISION		
Asset	2019 Inventory	2019 Citywide Provision (1 per XXXX people, unless otherwise noted)*
Action Sports		
Skate Parks	9	70,165
Bike Parks	2	315,750
Parkour Areas	2	315,750
Aquatics	9 indoor pools, 11 swimming beaches, 5 outdoor pools and 1 lake	10,888
Ball Diamonds	119	5,307
Community Centres	24 centres, 710,000 sq.ft.	1.2 sq.ft. (or 1 centre per 26,000 people)
Court Sports		
Ball Hockey	15	42,099
Basketball	42	15,035
Volleyball	65	9,715
Lacrosse Box	2	0
Padel Court	0	0
Pickleball	9	70,165
Roller Hockey	4	157,872
Tennis	165	3,827
Field Sports		
Playing Fields	164	3,898
Fitness		
Fitness Centres	25	84 sq.ft. of net programmable fitness area
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	11	57,400
Golf	3 18-Hole Championship Courses, 3 Pitch and Putt Courses	1 course per 210,496 people
Horticulture	102.02 hectares	6,190
Indoor Dry-Floor Sports	0	0
Natural Areas	482 hectares	1,310
Parks	1,262 ha total parkland/670 ha neighbourhood parkland	1.06 ha neighbourhood parkland
Play Areas	166	3,800, or 1 per 450 children aged 0-14
Rinks	8 ice rinks at 8 locations, one rink at Britannia, and 2 curling rinks	78,936
Spray Parks	15	21,000
Trails and Paths	TBD	TBD
Washrooms	94	33,236
Community Gardens	25 on Park Board lands	25,259
Wading Pools	15	21,000

NOTES:

**This inventory does not indicate capacity or demand. It indicates supply per Vancouver resident only, for comparison purposes. Some amenities, such as washrooms in destination parks are subject to demand from visitors to the park. This is not captured here.*

Fitness Centres:

Inventory consists of 15 Park Board-managed and 10 CCA managed. In terms of provision, the net programmable fitness area does not include control, admin. or trainer offices, change rooms, washrooms, lobby or storage space.

Horticulture

Sourced from Turf + Horticulture Booklet, 2016.

Parkour Areas:

One of those mentioned in inventory is to be located under the Cambie Street Bridge, currently in the design and planning phase.

Playing Fields:

Inventory consists of 143 turf grass fields, 14 synthetic at 11 locations on School and Park Board lands, and 7 all-weather gravel fields.

ASSET TARGET SNAPSHOT

Asset	Supply	Renewal Timeline	Distribution	Page # (in this document)
Action Sports				
Skate Parks	▲	■	●	72
Aquatics	■	■	■	54
Ball Diamonds	▲	■	●	55
Community Centres	▲	■	●	58
Court Sports				
Ball Hockey	▲	■	●	56
Basketball	▲	■	●	56
Volleyball	▲	■	●	57
Lacrosse Box	■	■	■	57
Padel Court	■	■	■	57
Pickleball	▲	■	●	57
Roller Hockey	▲	■	●	64
Tennis	▲	■	●	57
Field Sports				
Field Sports	▲	■	●	60
Fitness				
Fitness Centres	▲	■	●	61
Golf	■	■	■	62
Horticulture	■	■	■	63
Indoor Dry-Floor Sports	▲	■	●	64
Local Food	▲	■	●	65
Natural Areas	▲	■	●	66
Parks	▲	■	●	68
Play Areas	▲	■	●	70
Rinks	▲	■	●	71
Spray Parks	▲	■	●	73
Trails & Paths	▲	■	●	74
Washrooms	▲	■	●	75

KEY

- ▲ MAINTAIN SUPPLY ■ MAINTAIN RENEWAL ● MAINTAIN DISTRIBUTION
- ▲ INCREASE SUPPLY ■ INCREASE RENEWAL ● INCREASE DISTRIBUTION
- AWAITING STRATEGY COMPLETION

"Maintain supply" recommends meeting the needs of the growing population by increasing capacity of the existing facilities or amenities.

"Increase supply" recommends adding more facilities or amenities where demand cannot be met with the existing supply.

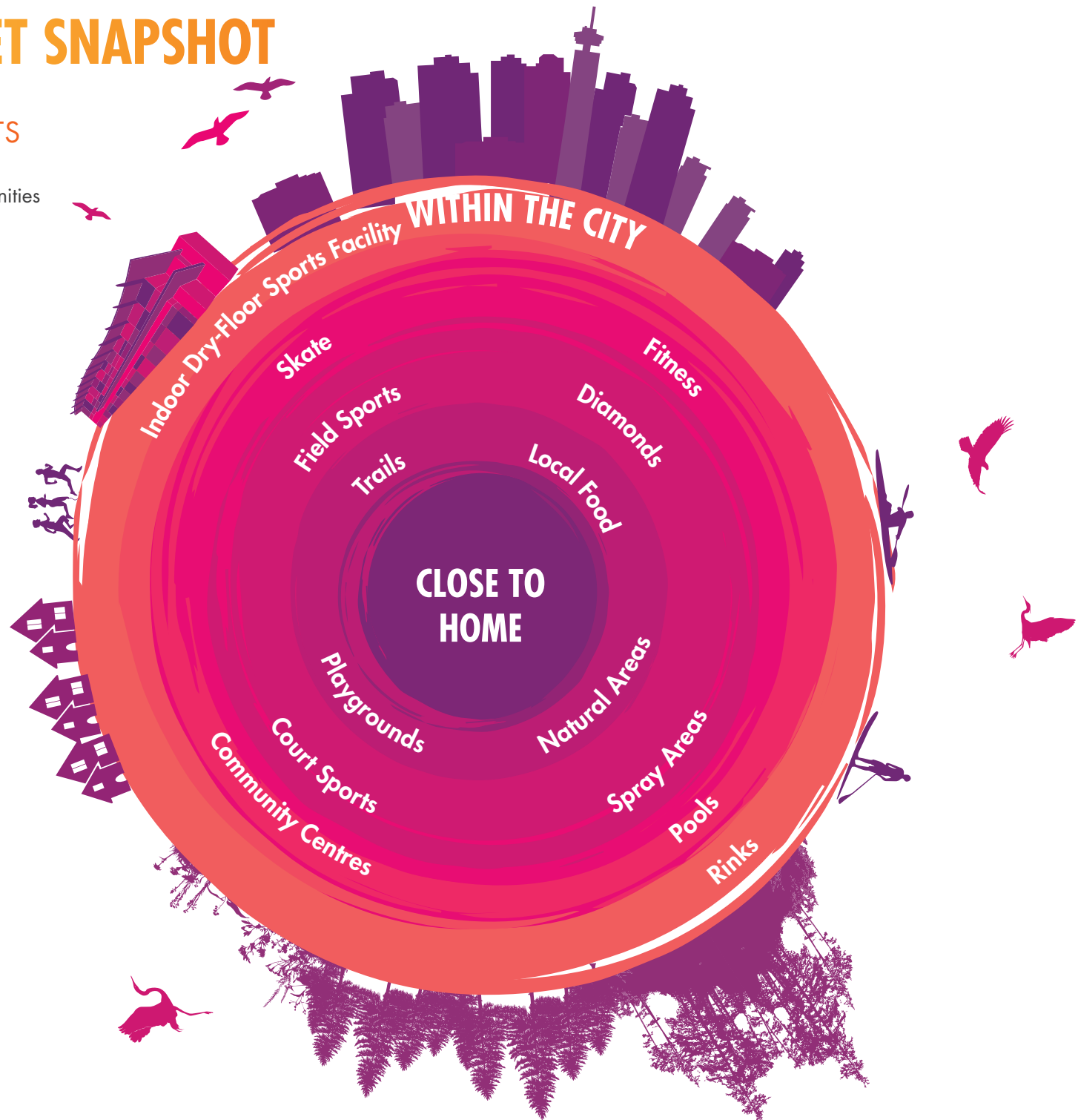


Mount Pleasant Park Skate Park | Park Board

ASSET TARGET SNAPSHOT

DISTANCE TO ASSETS

This diagram depicts the relative location and distribution of amenities throughout the city.



ASSET TARGET SNAPSHOT

SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES

The 2040 Asset Targets, recommendations and supply, maintenance and distribution projections were determined by examining current inventory, use and demand trends, asset condition, and feedback from stakeholders and the community.

The aspirational asset target recommendations in this section do not account for the limitations of park land or funding. For amenities that require a lot of space (e.g. running tracks) or are expensive to build and maintain (e.g. aquatics), creative solutions will be needed beyond just “adding more.” The limitations of park land and funding also make it necessary to set priorities, find partners and make trade-offs that will result in a balanced park and recreation system that is welcoming and inclusive for all.

There are many ways to increase provision of assets throughout the city:

- **BUILD NEW:**
 - As **development** occurs, there is an opportunity to increase the supply of parks and recreation spaces, amenities, and facilities through Development Cost Levies (DCL) and Community Amenity Contributions (CAC). The asset target standards will guide need assessments for parkland and amenities, reflecting gaps in the existing supply and identifying needs based on the anticipated population.
 - The Park Board plans for new facilities and amenities as part of **park renewal projects**. These projects assess existing parks to identify service gaps and to target areas and amenities for renewal.
 - Through **capital planning**, the Park Board allocates funds for additional amenities and improvements to the parks and recreation system, including acquisition of park land.
- **THROUGH RENEWAL:** There is a need to increase renewal rates for several Park Board assets (e.g. play spaces, community centres.) Renewal allows existing parks to ‘work harder’ by balancing increased use with necessary funding. Increasing the rate of renewal addresses the wear and tear that results from intensive use in growing neighbourhoods.
- **BUILD RESILIENCE:** The Park Board aims to build resilient amenities that can hold up to the realities of climate change and seismic hazards while also tolerating a higher capacity for use (e.g. artificial turf fields). Increased durability can help keep pace with intensive uses, sea level rise, more severe weather, and earthquakes.
- **REPURPOSE:** Community needs grow and change. Repurposing existing amenities and spaces allows us to re-envision our park system and to respond to shifting trends and needs (e.g. a growing demand for pickleball). Outside of on-going park land acquisitions, the Vancouver Park Board is managing a system that is largely built-out so re-purposing allows us to proactively respond to changing needs. Moving forward, this may mean conversion of existing spaces and amenities to accommodate new uses as well as increasing the functionality of existing parks and facilities.
- **THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS:** Partnerships will be increasingly important in meeting community needs and user group needs. In some cases, public or private sector partners are better positioned to meet local needs. In other cases, the Park Board can achieve more by collaborating on capital projects or ongoing operational efforts as well as through donations and cost sharing with user groups and associations. Mutually beneficial partnerships can also result in unique opportunities that expand access to parks and recreation.



Stanley Park Trail
Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

AQUATICS

The Aquatics Asset Target is pending the outcomes of VanSplash, Vancouver's Aquatic Strategy.

The 2017 Draft Vancouver Aquatic Strategy (VanSplash) follows the mandate of the 2001 Aquatic Services Review in taking a long-term, citywide approach to planning for the future of aquatics in Vancouver.

Consistent with extensive public feedback, VanSplash expands the definition of aquatic services to include not only indoor and outdoor pools, but also beaches, wading pools and spray parks, and proposes an innovative approach for aquatic service delivery.

In addition to considering quantitative metrics for success, VanSplash also includes the broader measures of improving well-being, enhancing social inclusion, creating a wider range of experiences and providing for flexible facility design, in anticipation of a growing, changing, and aging population.

This strategy is anticipated to be complete by the end of 2019.



Divers at Indoor Pool | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

BALL DIAMONDS

The supply and distribution of ball diamonds across the city is good. However, there is a short-term need to renew the inventory to improve the quality and capacity of existing ball diamonds.

Recommendations

- Further analysis is required to determine demand, latent demand, caliber, suitability for types of play, competition level, distribution, condition, maintenance and the ratio of softball pitches to regulation-sized diamonds required to inform future asset needs as part of the Ball Diamonds Strategy.
- Collect additional data on the quality and playability of all diamonds in the city, including the turf field.
- Partner with the Vancouver School Board to improve access to school fields.
- Match the sizes and designs of existing fields to demand and accommodate multi-functional fields where possible during renewals.

Service Needs

- Continue to work with the Vancouver Field Sports Federation and user groups to determine needs.
- Review allocation of Ball Diamonds within the overall field allocation policy.
- Define "good condition," in collaboration with user groups and recreation and operations staff to support meeting the 2040 asset target with a service focus.

2040 Asset Targets

- Improve overall quality of existing ball diamonds to achieve 70-80% of ball diamonds in good condition.
- Increase the hours of play by +25%.



Rich Saunders Field | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

COURT SPORTS

There is a need to improve the quality of tennis courts and basketball courts and to increase the number of volleyball, pickleball, and multisport courts.

The current outdoor court inventory is heavily weighted toward tennis, basketball, and beach volleyball. Many Vancouver School Board sites also include basketball courts or hoops. Indoor gymnasiums at community centres provide space for volleyball, basketball, and pickleball year-round. There are no indoor or covered tennis facilities in the city, although there are indoor courts at UBC and adjacent municipalities. The demand for other court sports, such as ball hockey, roller hockey, bike polo, box lacrosse, and padel has not yet been assessed.

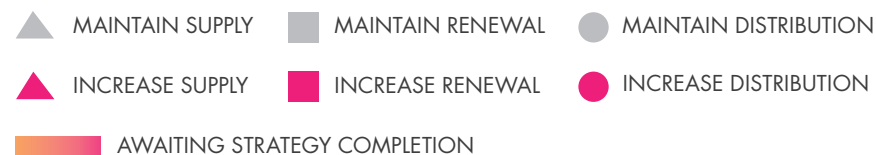
Asset Needs

- Increase the supply of pickleball and other sport courts through renewals or building new multi-sport courts.
- Plan for groups of courts to enable groups and clubs to play and host events/tournaments.
- Partner with the Vancouver School Board to improve access to school courts.
- Collect data to support assessment of demand for courts of various types and use (casual, tournament, lessons etc.).
- Describe optimum service levels (court sports typologies, location, associated infrastructure, locations, design, maintenance and renewal timelines and standards (i.e. define “good condition”) in collaboration with user groups, recreation and operations staff as part of the Court Sport Strategy.

Service Needs

- Create an Outdoor Sport Court Management Plan to consider use, access, booking and demand management systems.

Asset	Supply	Renewal Timeline	Distribution
Ball Hockey	▲	■	●
Basketball	▲	■	●
Volleyball	▲	■	●
Lacrosse Box	■	■	■
Padel Court	■	■	■
Pickleball	▲	■	●
Roller Hockey	▲	■	●
Tennis	▲	■	●



2040 Asset Targets

- Improve existing tennis court quality to achieve 70-80% in good condition.
- Add lines and equipment to accommodate pickleball at 4 new locations. [Add 2 pickleball court locations per capital plan.]

ASSET TARGETS

Tennis

While supply is good, the quality of tennis courts needs improvement. Approximately 60% have been characterised as in poor condition. Consideration should be given to either resurfacing the tennis courts or converting them to help improve the balance of different types of courts provided. Groups of courts are desired, and there is significant demand for covered or indoor tennis courts in the city to enable year-round play (Indoor Tennis Feasibility Study, 2011).

Volleyball

Volleyball is a growing sport for both indoor and beach volleyball formats. Outdoor courts in Vancouver are currently concentrated at beaches, taking advantage of natural sand. There could be opportunities to provide and support casual use of sand, grass, or hard surface outdoor courts elsewhere across the city, particularly in areas that do not have access to natural sand beaches. However, with little data available, the demand for more outdoor volleyball courts should be assessed through discussions with user groups and at the neighbourhood level through public engagement during the park renewal process.

Pickleball

Pickleball is a growing sport that needs additional court space. Approximately four pickleball courts can fit within the footprint of one tennis court. Pickleball is a social game, often with groups playing together concurrently, so groups of courts are preferred.

Basketball

Given the lack of data available on casual use of outdoor basketball courts, it is difficult to set provision standard goals. Further complicating the supply question is the fact that basketball is also commonly available at schools and in community centre gymnasiums. Demand should be assessed through discussions at the neighbourhood level through public engagement during the park and community centre renewal processes. There is potential to develop more multi-sport courts.

Other Court Sports

The supply and the demand for other court sports, such as ball hockey, roller hockey, bike polo, box lacrosse and padel has not yet been assessed; however, through community engagement strong demand for additional outdoor hard surfaces for roller derby and ball hockey was received. The recommended approach is to assess need through public engagement at the neighbourhood level and through public and stakeholder engagement during the park renewal process. The Park Board should continue to seek opportunities to improve the variety, quality, and multifunctionality of sport courts.



ASSET TARGETS

COMMUNITY CENTRES

A Community Centre Renewal Plan is needed to identify priorities and timelines for renewal.

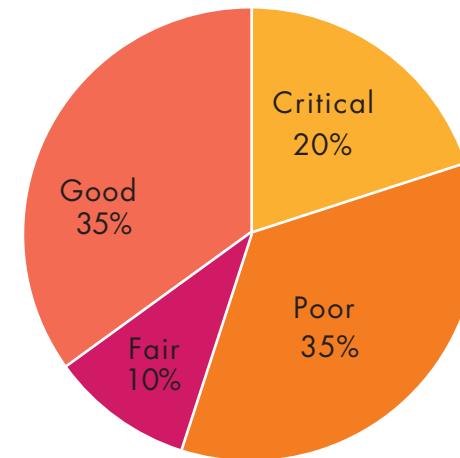
Community centres offer the opportunity to learn new skills, build a social network, be physically active, exercise your creativity and engage your brain. They are currently jointly operated by the Park Board and Community Centre Associations, creating a dynamic and robust service delivery system that is strongly tied to local communities and volunteers.

Approximately 60% of the total floor areas of recreation facilities in Vancouver where built in the post war period (50s, 60s, 70s) and as such, much needs to be renewed over the next two decades. Centres designed for the programs and operating practices of the 1950s and 1960s do not adequately meet present or future demands for leisure services. They are dated in both appearance and function, with one or more of the following deficits being an issue in older centres:

- Inadequate pedestrian, parking and service access;
- Unwelcoming and poorly defined entry ways;
- Constrained reception/lobby areas;
- Inefficient building layouts, inadequate storage, and inappropriate floor, wall and ceiling surfaces;
- Limited or no visibility from circulation areas of activity spaces and poor internal and external connections;
- Advantage not taken of views and park settings; and,
- Need for universal accessibility, wayfinding standards.

As existing community centres are renewed they will need to be expanded, particularly in growth areas, and new facilities will likely be needed to accommodate an expanding range of desired uses, such as more arts and culture. Industry trends indicate a programming preference for multifunctional spaces in centres.

Community Centre Facility Condition



*Source: Community Centre Facility Condition Assessment data Vancouver Parks and Recreation Report 1: Inventory and Analysis.

The target is to renew or substantially improve an average of two existing community centres per capital plan resulting in at least 70% of facilities being in "good" or "fair" condition (currently 45%).

Community Centres are very well utilized, where space is not currently being used efficiently it is likely a building functionality issue. To accommodate a growing population, approximately 140,000 sq.ft. of community centre space is required by 2040 to maintain the current citywide service level of 1.2 sq.ft./capita.

A strong partnership with Community Centre Associations, bolstered by the signing of Joint Operating Agreements (2018), will bring a focus on improving equity, inclusion, and access to community centres across Vancouver.

Asset Needs

- Update the Community Centre Renewal Plan (2001), in collaboration with the Community Centre Associations. Priority for renewal to consider:
 - Facility Condition Indices;
 - A 10-year major maintenance schedule;
 - Seismic resilience and the critical role community centres play in emergency response (6 centres are designated Emergency Centres and/or Disaster Hubs); and,
 - Qualitative data from staff and CCAs on the programmability and operational functionality of facilities for renewal.
- Co-locate facilities with parks, recreation amenities, libraries, schools, childcare/preschool spaces, cafes, and health services where possible.
- Improve the indoor/outdoor connections between community centres and adjacent parks, recreation amenities and public spaces.
- Increase the diversity of programs and activities that can be accommodated by providing a balance of arts, culture, sports, fitness, multipurpose, community spaces, youth priority, senior priority, casual use and social spaces. This can be accommodated during new builds, renewals, or through expansion or re-purposing of existing spaces.
- Establish facility designs based on local and citywide needs, and balance all the different possibilities through a needs assessment process.

- Provide a balance of local and community scale facilities in combination with city-scale facilities to reach an optimum balance of place, character, access and operational efficiency.
- Continue to seek community centre provision through in-kind community amenity contributions for redevelopment, rezoning and other planning proposals as required.

Service Needs

- Improve data acquisition and sharing, including: facility/amenity utilization, program participation, quality of experience, barriers to participation, youth/seniors utilization, and integration of truth and reconciliation.
- Advocate for increased maintenance budgets to better meet needs, particularly in Initiative Zones (defined in Equity chapter) and growth areas, to account for increased intensity of use.

2040 Asset Targets

- Maintain the current citywide average of 1.2 sq.ft. of community centre space per person (excluding rinks and pools). *This does not determine the size of new centres. Size of individual community centres when they are renewed is determined on a case-by-case basis using a catchment study and needs assessment.*
- Improve resident level of satisfaction with community centre facilities. *2017 VanPlay survey reported 75% satisfaction, however a citywide comprehensive survey is required to establish baseline.*
- Renew an average of two existing community centres per capital plan (50-year life cycle) resulting in at least 70% of facilities being in "good" or "fair" condition (currently 45%).

ASSET TARGETS

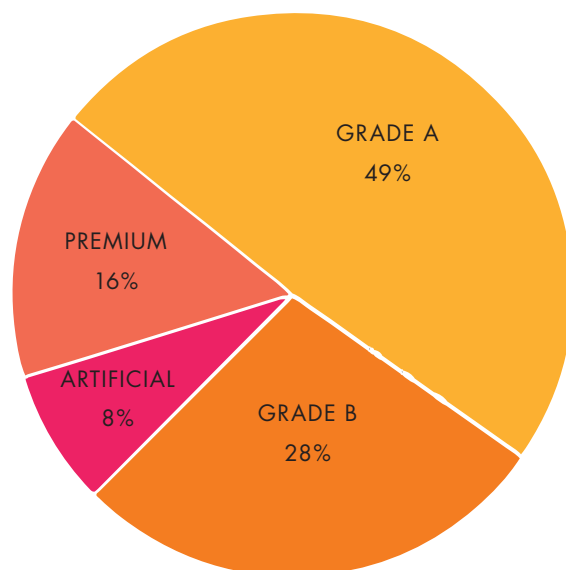
FIELD SPORTS

While the number and distribution of fields is good, there is a need to improve quality to accommodate increasing demand, especially for tournament hosting.

The Vancouver Field Sports Federation has identified a lack of supply of grouped fields for event/tournament hosting, or "sports hubs."

Improving the quality of and capacity of fields will help accommodate more intensive use. Investment in drainage and irrigation, and ensuring the size and quality of the fields matches the type and intensity of use can result in more fields of a higher grade throughout the year. Industry standards indicate that a lit synthetic turf field can accommodate up to 105 hours of use per week (including approximately 48 prime time hours on weekends and evenings). A turf grass field can accommodate 12 -14 hours of play per week and requires seasonal closures for field recovery.

TURF COMPOSITION



*Source: Turf and Horticulture Booklet and Study – this grade relates to turf and soil rating, not sport facility classification.



Asset Needs

- Undertake a comprehensive review of all fields to determine condition and category (as defined by playability and hosting ability) and to engage the public in considering asset targets, sustainability goals, and recommendations around synthetic turf playing fields (Field Sports Strategy).
- Continue to work with the Vancouver Field Sports Federation and user groups to determine needs, improve equitable access, and improve efficient use of field space.
 - Known priorities include:
 - Two new co-located synthetic turf fields for field hockey use; and
 - Fields to accommodate additional football and rugby.
 - Consider conversion of existing all weather gravel fields to turf or artificial turf. Those with existing lights should be prioritised and considered for synthetic turf to maximise playable hours.
 - Continue to seek opportunities to create sort hubs of two of more co-located fields.
 - Continue to partner with the Vancouver School Board to improve access to school fields.

Service Needs

- Create a Field Allocation Policy to facilitate equitable access to fields and support sport development.

2040 Asset Targets

- Increase the available hours of play by 25%.
- Increase the number of Grade A* or higher, turf fields by 15%.

ASSET TARGETS

FITNESS CENTRES + OUTDOOR EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

Fitness centres, associated spaces, and services are in high demand and should be welcoming, accessible, and barrier-free for everyone.

Fitness centres are in very high demand and either at capacity or exceed capacity. The trend is for increasing sizes of weight rooms and cardio machine areas, as well as more flexible spaces for stretching, body weight exercises, fitness programs, and associated services, such as personal training and physiotherapy.

10 of the total 25 fitness centres in community centres are managed by Community Centre Associations. Community centre fitness centres will need to ensure they differentiate themselves from other providers in the City and continue to provide a low-barrier option that meets the needs of diverse ages and abilities and acts as a gateway to fitness. Demand for outdoor fitness equipment is also increasing, especially by older adults and casual users who want low-cost, easily accessible options to diversify their exercise routines.

Service and Asset Needs

- Consider outdoor fitness equipment during park renewals with the following considerations:
 - Locate in close proximity to path and trail loops and active transportation networks.
 - Locate adjacent to a sports field, ball diamond, track and field facility or community centre to facilitate programming and frequent use by the community.
- Partner with Community Centre Associations to ensure all fitness centres and outdoor equipment are accessible, inclusive, low barrier, and programmable for diverse populations (all ages, vulnerable and underserved).
- Set a minimum size of 8,000 s.f. for all new, renewed or retrofitted fitness centres.

2040 Asset Targets

- Increase the citywide average size of fitness centres to 4,000 s.f. (currently 2,124 s.f.)
- Add one new outdoor fitness location per capital plan.



Hillcrest Fitness Centre | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

GOLF

The Asset Target for golf is pending the results of the Park Board Golf Course Strategy, which will incorporate a review and analysis of Park Board's golf courses, pitch-and-putts, driving ranges, and local and regional service provision.

The scope of the study will include:

- An understanding of local and regional context;
- An inventory and analysis of existing conditions, use and demand;
- Guiding principles to target outcomes, such as affordability of recreation, access for all and environmental restoration; and
- An exploration of opportunities to expand diverse programming on golf courses (i.e., demand for golf versus other potential park land uses).



Golf Lessons at Stanley Park | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

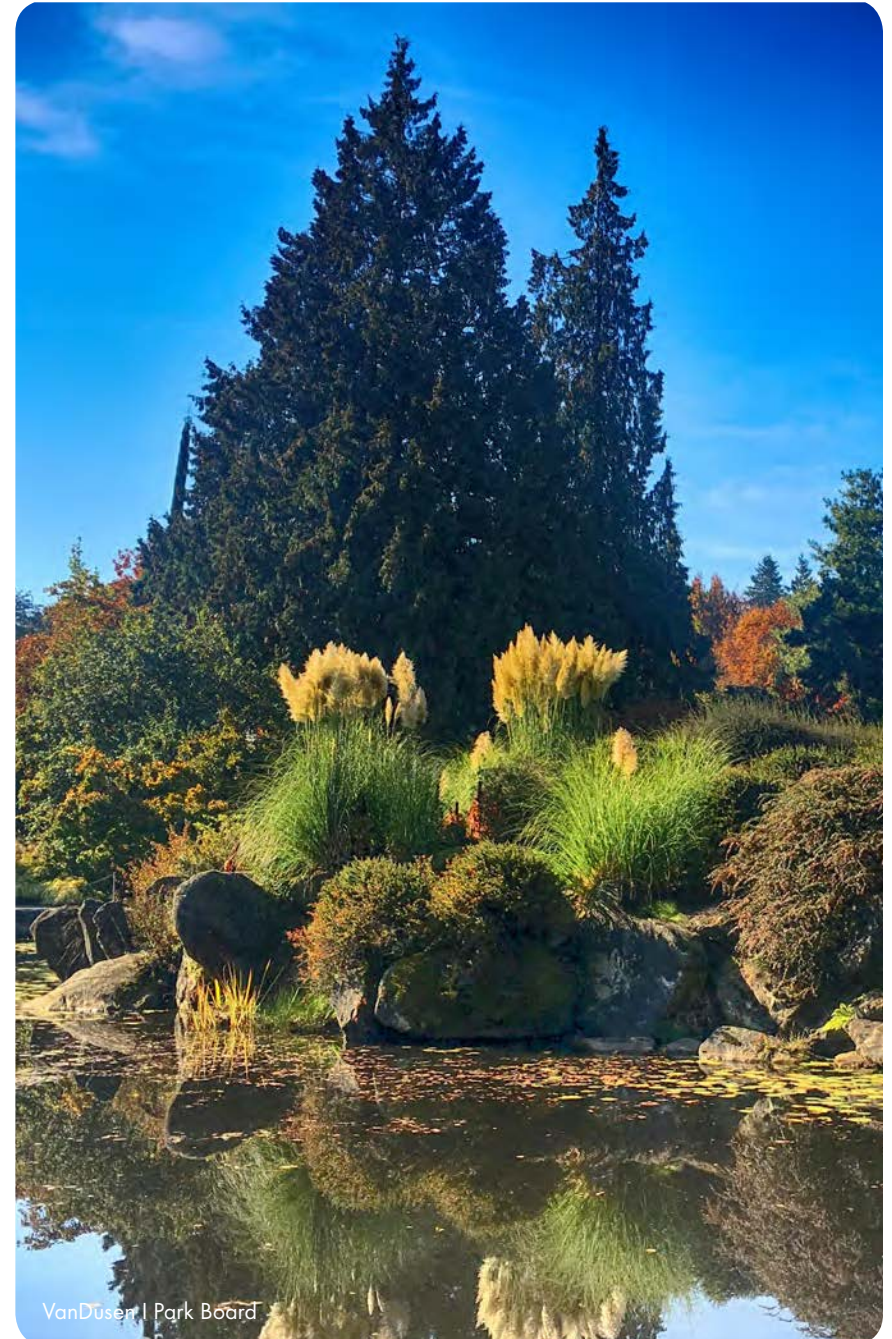
HORTICULTURE

The asset target for horticulture is pending the results of further study exploring the city's extensive ornamental horticulture assets, seasonal displays and destination gardens, such as VanDusen Botanical Garden, the Quarry Garden at Queen Elizabeth Park and the Rose Garden in Stanley Park.

The Park Board's horticultural assets span a vast spectrum from spectacular seasonal displays to naturally managed, ecological horticulture beds.

A comprehensive citywide analysis of horticulture is underway with a view to describe a vision, approach and supporting operational policy. The analysis will consider approved strategic direction, such as the Biodiversity Strategy (2016), Bird Strategy (2015), Water Conservation Action Plan (2017), Green Operations Plan (2013) and the Urban Forest Strategy (2014, 2018).

Further site-specific detail will be provided via the Stanley Park Comprehensive Plan, VanDusen Botanical Garden and Bloedel Conservatory Strategic Plan and the Queen Elizabeth Park Master Plan.



VanDusen | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

INDOOR DRY-FLOOR SPORTS



Providing indoor and weather protected space for sports to grow and thrive year-round is a priority.

There are currently no year-round indoor dry-floor facilities for tennis, walking, lacrosse, ball hockey, roller hockey or roller derby. Ice rinks currently convert to dry-floor facilities for only a short period of the year to provide space for lacrosse, roller hockey, and roller derby. The Indoor Tennis Feasibility study (2011) indicated that there is considerable latent demand for indoor tennis courts.

Service and Asset Needs

- Conduct a needs assessment and feasibility study for indoor multi-sport facilities. Needs assessment should consider indoor tennis, lacrosse, ball hockey, roller derby, roller hockey, squash and racketball. The feasibility study should consider a model for delivery (stand alone and distinct from the existing community centre model or potential for incorporation into a community centre).
- Consider potential locations for indoor dry floor facilities as part of a community centre build or other opportunity.
- Explore opportunities to cover existing outdoor assets in parks to enhance year-round use.
- Seek partnerships and agreements for community use of non-city/Park Board spaces for indoor sport uses throughout the year.

2040 Asset Targets

- Provide at least one indoor multi-sport facility.



Roller Derby at Robson Square Rink | Dani Boynton (via Rolla Skate Club)

ASSET TARGETS

LOCAL FOOD

There is a need for more access to food and a wider variety of affordable food options at or near parks and community centres. Shared gardens and kitchens are “third spaces” for the community to socialise and relax.

Improving food opportunities will include strategies, such as accommodating food trucks, improving existing concession stands in parks, and increasing affordable food options at community centres. Access to opportunities to grow food is also important. Parks will continue to be potential locations for community gardens alongside street rights-of-ways and other City-owned land. The Urban Agriculture Policy sets the criteria for people wanting to apply to start a community garden.

Asset Needs

- Consider adding appropriate food nodes (i.e., gardens, local markets, mobile food vendors or concessions, community kitchens) along the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network (*Strategic Bold Move Tool*) and in locations with community centres, multiple playing fields, destination playgrounds, beaches and other key destinations where people stay for a few hours and engage in food learning and programming.
- Increase inclusive local food projects and access to healthy, culturally diverse, local, and sustainable food in parks and at community centres.
- Improve infrastructure to support farmers markets.

Service Needs

- Implement recommendations from the Park Board Concession Strategy: A Fresh Approach (2018).
- Update Park Board’s Local Food Action Plan (2013).
- Enhance resiliency by incorporating post-disaster food planning at community centres.

2040 Asset Targets

- All new community gardens on Park Board-managed land have at least 50% of total area dedicated to collective food growing.
- Complete at least one project per year that supports sharing and gathering to cook or eat food in parks.



Davie Street Community Garden | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

NATURAL AREAS



Increasing the diversity of landscapes in parks – including pollinator meadows and wetlands – will better support local biodiversity and offer more diverse experiences in nature.

There are opportunities to expand habitat, restore ecosystems, and improve access to nature throughout the city. There is strong public interest in having more wild spaces in the parks system and in improving stewardship of natural areas. In addition to making big strides in the ecological health of the city, environmental stewardship offers opportunities to recreate through volunteerism and builds social capital through care of natural areas by residents in leisure time.

This work reflects and is supported by robust strategy; Biodiversity Strategy (2016), Urban Forest Strategy (2014, 2018), Bird Strategy (2015), Water Conservation Action Plan (2017), Environmental Education and Stewardship Action Plan (2014). The following needs are intended to support implementation of this work.

Asset Needs

- Increase the proportion of naturalised areas in the parks system and expand the variety of ecosystems in all park typologies to improve biodiversity, increase connectivity, and increase access to nature throughout the city, with a focus on Initiative Zones (see Equity Chapter).
- Provide enhanced ecological connectivity for birds, pollinators, insects and urban wildlife between natural areas through wildlife corridors and flyways.
- Map the various landscape types and opportunities to access nature with the goal of providing access to a naturally-managed area of at least 0.4 ha (1 acre) within a 10-minute walk of all residents.

NOTES:

The Biodiversity Strategy set an asset target to restore or enhance 25 ha of natural area by 2020, which has now been met. "Natural areas" include marine/shoreline, wetlands, riparian, forested areas and intertidal zones, natural managed areas in parks and street ROW.

- Inventory and map the existing naturally managed areas to identify opportunities to increase wild spaces in parks. Integrate these findings into the upcoming horticultural standards study.
- Create an Invasive Species Policy to establish an integrated approach to managing established and emerging invasive species in parks.
- Establish principles for the integration of green infrastructure in parks where it brings overall benefits to the park and park users, but avoids loss of usable parkland to infrastructure.

Service Needs

- Support reconciliation through learning and incorporating First Nations ways of knowing and co-management of lands.
- Increase the opportunity for community stewardship of existing natural areas.
- Preserve and balance public access to beaches and waterfronts, while increasing environmental protection through environmental stewardship and education.

2040 Asset Targets

- Restore or enhance 5 ha of natural area each capital plan (1-3 ha per year).
- Add at least 5 projects for bird and pollinator habitat each year.
- Grow environmental stewardship (volunteers and advocates) by 25%.



ASSET TARGETS

PARKS



Many competing priorities and the high cost of land means that creative solutions are required in order to continue to supply park space to meet the needs of all Vancouverites

The current asset target of “neighbourhood parkland” that was set in 1992, is 1.1 hectares per 1,000 people and has served the city well. Current citywide average provision of neighbourhood parkland (1.06 ha per 1,000) and 99% of people are within a 10-minute walk of a park or green space (80% are within a 5-minute walk). However, distribution is uneven and some neighbourhoods are underserved. For example, Grandview Woodland and Fairview neighbourhood areas have less than 0.6 ha per 1,000 residents.

Recommendations for Capital Planning

As acquisition in high density areas is increasingly difficult, the focus in these areas will need to shift to improving capacity and quality, along with opportunistic acquisitions, partnerships, and innovative solutions to make more space available.

High density areas can thrive through resilient park design, increased frequency of maintenance, operations and renewal rates, placemaking programs, and activation programming in parks.

Parkland Acquisition Priorities:

- Within Initiative Zones (*Strategic Bold Move Tool*);
- Along shorelines and waterfronts to improve access to the water and between existing parks and recreation nodes to create the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network (*Strategic Bold Move Tool*); and
- Other site specific and qualitative factors to improve accessibility, inclusion, and quality, such as regularizing boundaries of parks or expanding protection of environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy, Programs and Strategy Recommendations

- Increase maintenance budgets, particularly in Initiative Zones and growth areas, to account for the increased intensity of use.

- Undertake a Park Use Inventory and Capacity Study, which considers the use of the space for different recreation functions (active sport, passive recreation, access to nature, ornamental horticultural displays, community events, impermeable surfaces, etc.). Once this data is collected, it can be used to inform decision-making to determine the optimum balance for these park uses and guide future park acquisition, planning and design activities.
- Work with Engineering and Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to expand provision of open space in the city through parklets, road closures, privately owned publicly accessible spaces, land under overpasses/bridges, laneway activation, and other opportunities.
- Work with Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to advocate for increased setbacks from waterways to ensure that as lands are redeveloped, we provide sufficient space for infrastructure, environmental restoration, and impacts of sea level rise, in addition to park space for recreation.
- Work with Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability to develop policy to optimize solar access to parks.

Considerations for Community Plans, Area Plans and Public Benefit Strategies

- Aim to provide a balance of access to nature, sport, and recreation space in dedicated park land. The asset target park land provision is 1.1 ha per 1,000 people (calculated as existing population plus the projected population of new residents). The asset target park land provision based on this calculation should be thoughtfully delivered or required via policy as new or expanded park land, using the following general guidelines as a minimum:
 - Aim to provide functional park land or green space within a 5-minute walk of all residents (include park land beyond the boundaries of the study area).

- Consider the asset targets outlined in this chapter to determine current provision within the study area, compared with the citywide asset targets and determine priorities via consultation with the community, stakeholders, Community Centre Associations and Park Board staff. Use this to determine the land area requirements for the provision of these assets.
- Provide sufficient land to ensure the protection of natural areas, water ways, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Provide enough land for ecological and recreational connectivity, as per the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network vision (*Strategic Bold Move Tool*).

Considerations for Rezoning and Redevelopment Sites

- Aim to provide a balance of access to nature, sport, and recreation space in parkland. The quantity required should be based on the target parkland provision* using the proposed number of residential units on the site. Park land should be thoughtfully delivered in a manner consistent with the proposed urban form, defined in collaboration with the City's Planning Department, and in alignment with the following guidelines:
 - Provide adequate dedicated park land for passive recreation or open space purposes;
 - Identify outdoor recreational facilities and amenities (fields, tennis courts, etc.) in a recreation needs assessment;
 - Ensure the protection of natural areas, waterways and environmentally sensitive areas, as well as increasing connectivity, to achieve biodiversity goals;
 - Take a "multiple benefits approach," which considers how lands with the primary purpose of transportation, utilities, water management etc.,

could provide recreational and leisure benefit to the community. For example, land used to manage stormwater using green infrastructure can also provide access to nature for the community.

- Locate and design park spaces to achieve goals as described in *VanPlay Report 2: 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years*;
- Consider parks and recreation amenities within a 10-minute walk of the site for the purposes of ensuring connectivity, appropriate park functions and to determine if the existing population is experiencing a park land deficiency; and
- Encourage innovative design in order to deliver the asset target park land area. For example, publicly accessible roof tops could provide space for recreational amenities, courts, fields and open space.
- For proposals for commercial and industrial development consider the following principles for delivery of parks and recreation space;
 - Adding and enhancing connectivity for water and ecological systems;
 - Providing open space and access to sun for employees, customers and visitors to the development; and
 - Providing the potential of indoor recreational spaces (shared, repurposed or created) for community art and culture production and exhibition, event spaces, skate boarding, roller skating, tennis, etc.
- Develop a policy statement, Park Provision Policy, to guide implementation of the above recommendations that defines "adequate" and "balanced" provision of park land and space for recreation amenities in more detail.

2040 Asset Targets

- A citywide average of 1.1 ha of neighbourhood* parkland per 1000 people.

*Neighbourhood parkland includes all park spaces which are not considered to be "destination" parks.

* The asset target park land provision is 1.1 ha per 1,000 people calculated as existing population plus the projected population of new residents.

ASSET TARGETS



PLAY AREAS

The main priority for play areas is to improve quality and capacity by implementing faster renewal timelines and improving accessibility.

There is an excellent supply of play areas across the city, and most residents are within easy walking distance of one. However, only 50% of play areas are considered in “good condition” and many do not include accessible features. The current rate of renewal is 30-50 years, which has led to maintenance issues.

Although the proportion of children (as a part of the general population) is expected to decline, the total population of children is expected to increase from 75,000 to 100,000 by 2041. There is an increasing demand for a wide variety of play experiences (e.g. nature play, adventure and risky play), integration of play features into trails and commutes (e.g. “play on the way”), more public art, and play opportunities for all ages and abilities.

Asset Needs

- Improve play area renewal timelines to 15-20 years (i.e. 8-11 renewals per year).
- Establish design and performance criteria for play spaces.
- Update the 2015 Citywide Playground Assessment with a new playground strategy by 2020.

Service Needs

- Improve the quality and diversity of play areas, such as nature and adventure play, risky play, and all-ages play features.
- Conduct and report results of pre and post renewal community user surveys to track satisfaction and demand.

2040 Asset Targets

- Provide universally accessible play features at all play areas.
- Provide at least 5 fully universal accessible destination play areas (in diverse geographic areas: NE, SE, SW, NW and Downtown).



Spinner at Andy Livingstone Park | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

RINKS

A citywide ice strategy is needed to outline ways to meet community demands and to inform ice arena renewal planning.

Compared to current best practices and the provision in other communities, there is a deficiency in the provision of ice arenas. Many existing rinks need renewal. In addition to using Park Board facilities, the Agrodome at Hastings Park and three rinks at UBC, ice user groups often travel to public and private ice rinks outside the city to meet their needs. Public and private rinks in adjacent municipalities of Burnaby, Richmond and Delta, all provide ice time to Vancouverites.

Asset Needs

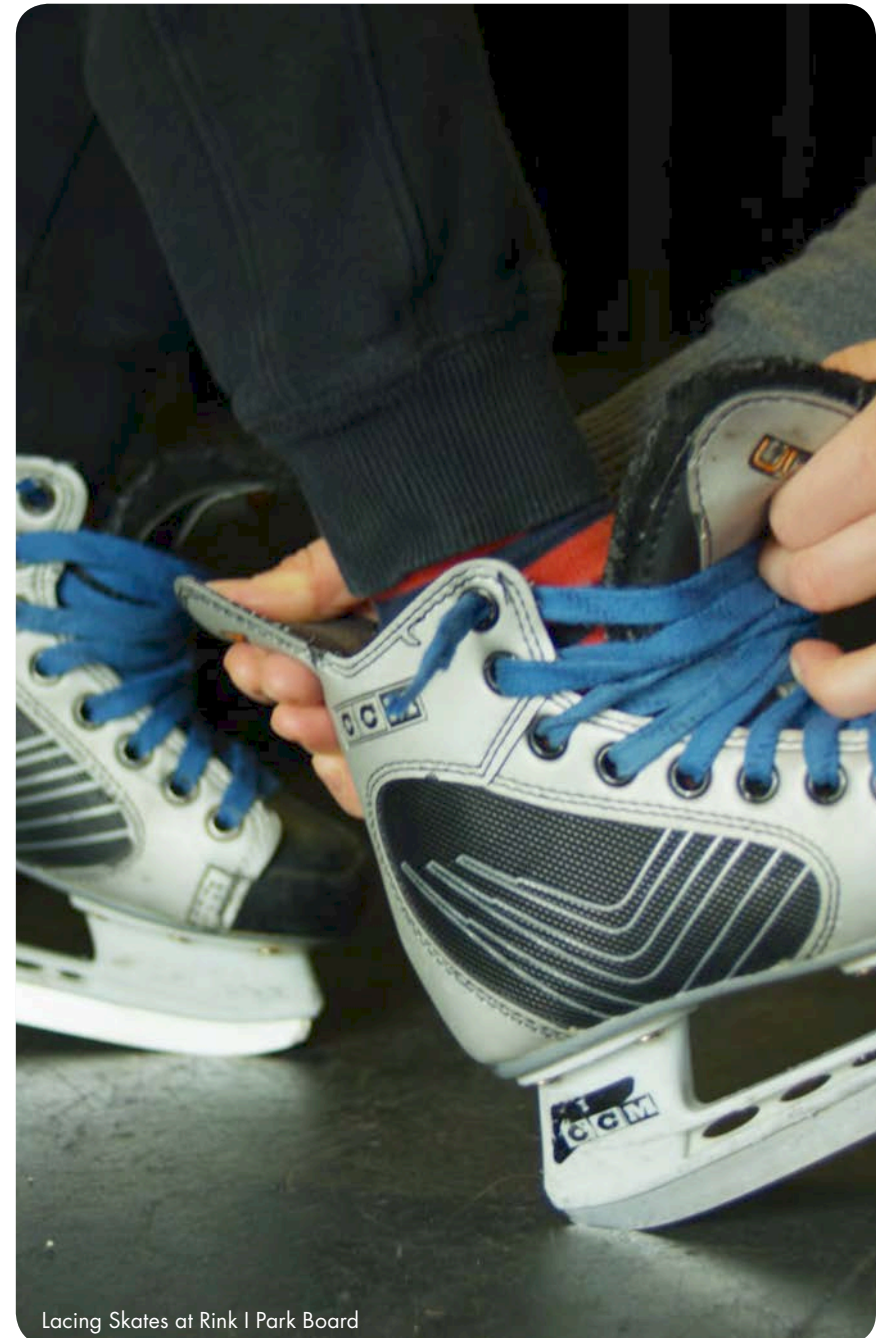
- Increase capacity and function through renewals, increasing seating capacity, building new rinks (especially where locations can accommodate two sheets for twinned arenas, and where the rink can be co-located with pools for energy efficiency), and reviewing scheduling and season length.
- Explore opportunities to increase access to five additional rinks by considering potential locations, partnership opportunities, innovative design and integration into ongoing capital planning and renewal timelines of existing facilities (Ice Strategy).

Service Needs

- Update the Ice Allocation Policy.
- Increased data collection on use of rinks will support undertaking the Ice Strategy. A thorough understanding of utilisation rates, capacity and diversity of users over time will allow for a more comprehensive study.

2040 Asset Targets

- Add access to at least 5 ice sheets.
- Increase available ice time by 25%.



Lacing Skates at Rink | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

SKATE PARKS, BIKE PARKS AND PARKOUR

Skateboarding continues to be popular and use of skate parks has expanded to include other wheeling activities, like BMX, scooters, roller and in-line skating.

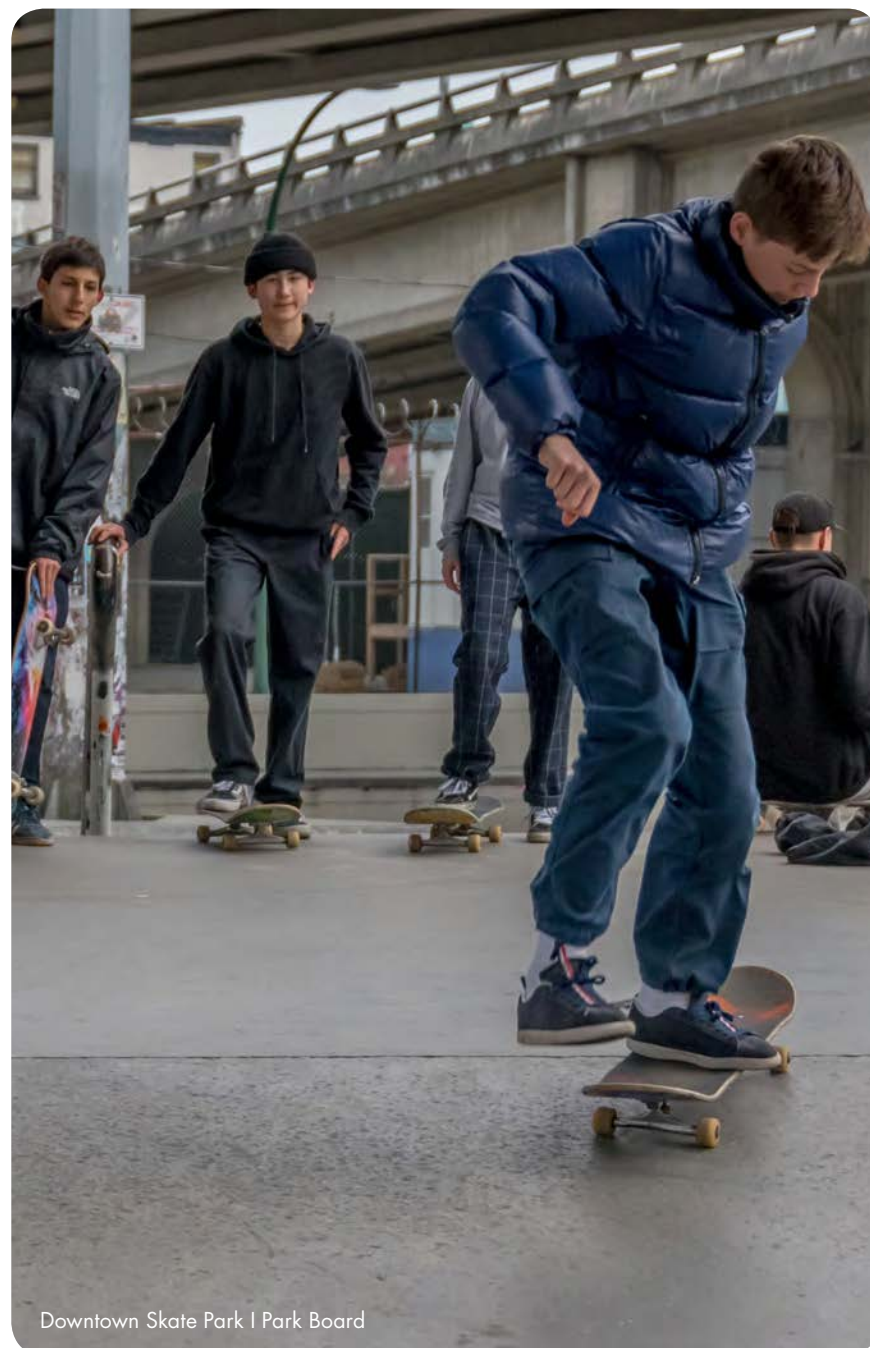
There is a need to increase the quantity of skate parks, as well as to increase the quality and diversity of design by providing a hierarchy of types, sizes, and skill levels. Accommodating other users, such as BMX cyclists and roller/in-line skaters through skate features, parkour areas, and bike skills areas is particularly important for youth.

Service and Asset Needs

- Create a Skate Park Strategy to guide service provision, quality, and diversity of skate features in parks and consider expanding consideration to a broader set of wheeling activities.
- Explore partnership opportunities outside of parks through collaborations with the City, Vancouver School Board, Translink, and other land owners.
- Select location and design of skate parks based on surrounding land uses, proximity to schools, and accessibility by bike and transit.
- Integrate parkour areas into park design and during park renewals where appropriate.

2040 Asset Targets

- Add one additional skate park and two additional skate features (dot or spot) per capital plan.
- Provide at least one year-round (i.e. covered) skate park.
- Add two more parkour areas and two more bike skills tracks.



Downtown Skate Park | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

SPRAY PARKS

There is a need to provide equitable access to new and varied water play experiences in parks and plazas across the city.

A condition assessment in 2011 indicated that the 15 wading pools in the city were all in poor condition and did not conform to health regulations. Wading pools are gradually being phased out in favour of spray parks in Vancouver, as they are in many municipalities across Western Canada. Spray parks provide much higher levels of service, a longer operating season, and provide low-barrier enjoyment for many people.

Our changing climate and water conservation by-laws will require the Park Board to think creatively and prioritise efforts to ensure sustainable provision of these amenities. Integrating creative water features into urban plazas can also offer relief from heat and opportunities for play for all ages.

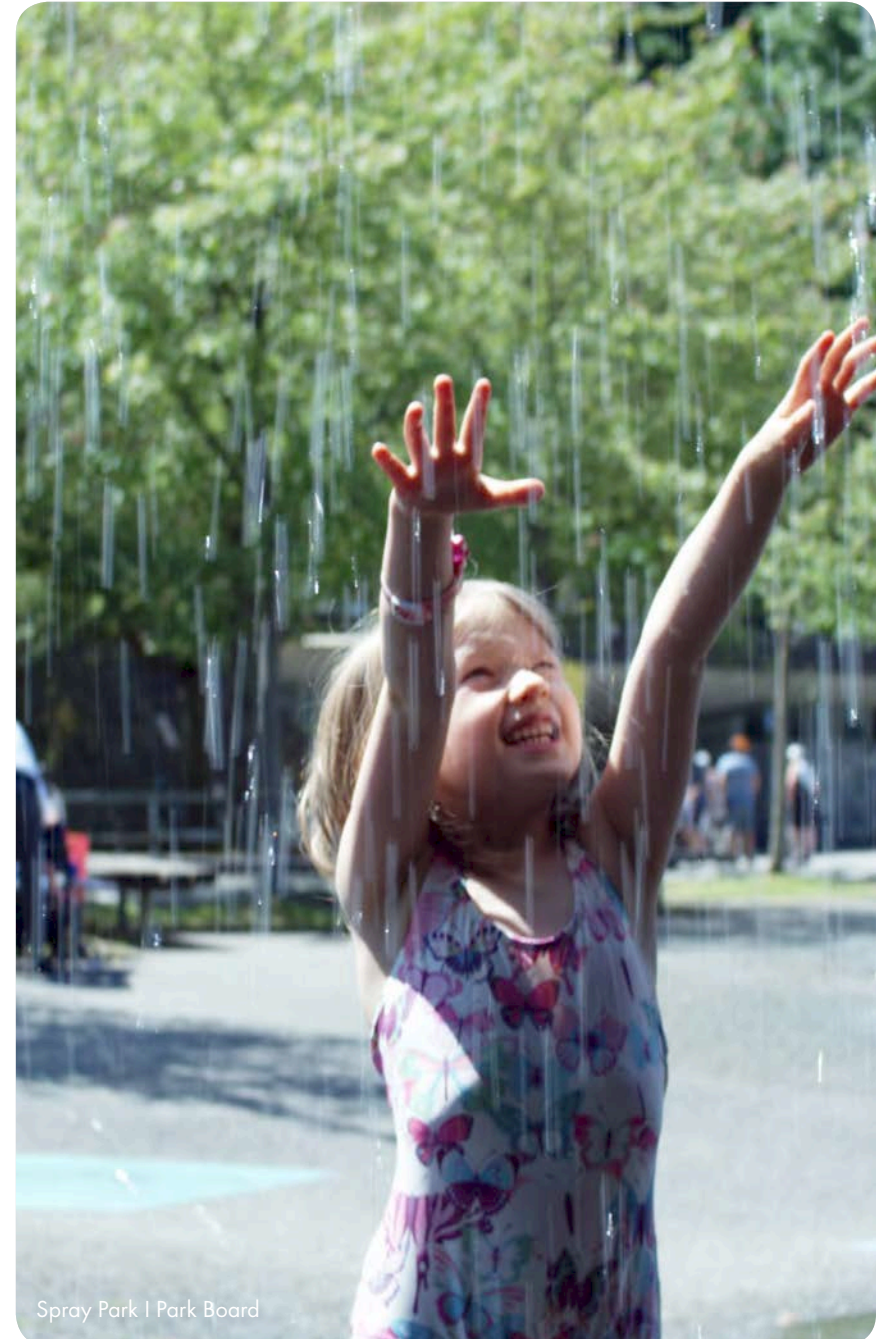
Detailed recommendations for spray parks are pending the outcomes of *VanSplash*, Vancouver's Aquatic Strategy. For example, there is potential for co-location of spray park with indoor and outdoor pools to take advantage of mechanical system synergies.

Service and Asset Needs

- Identify potential park sites for new and renewed spray parks, interactive water features, and cooling stations. Consider locations of existing wading pools, co-location with outdoor pools and locations that require water conservation upgrades. Review these opportunities with the community and through an equity lens (see *Equity Strategic Bold Move*) for distribution and access.
- Consider potential locations for spray features integrated into urban plazas that can serve dual purposes as event spaces, create interaction with public art features, and activate hardscape areas in parks.

2040 Asset Targets

- Add one new or renewed spray park per capital plan.



Spray Park | Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

TRAILS & PATHS



Providing accessible, safe routes for people to walk, roll, run, and cycle within the parks system supports health, wellness and sustainable transportation.

Trails and pathways provide some of the most accessible and affordable opportunities for exercise and relaxation. They are used by all ages and abilities and are made of a range of materials from asphalt to bark mulch. There is a need to improve the inventory of trails and pathways in the park system to meet the diverse needs of users and remove barriers wherever possible.

Service and Asset Needs

- Undertake comprehensive inventory and mapping of all walking, rolling, running, and cycling paths in parks considering their type, quality, accessibility, location, and connectivity.
- Create cohesive linkages between parks and community destinations to encourage more walking, rolling, running, and cycling for recreation, exercise and transit, as per the *Connectivity Strategic Bold Move*.
- Design and construct accessible park pathways and trails that are functional for a wide range of users. Increase support amenities, such as rest areas, wayfinding signage, bike parking, distance markers, and drinking fountains.
- Collaborate with the City's active transportation network and design highly-visible trailheads or access points to ensure smooth transitions.
- The Track and Field Strategy will include recommendations for improvements to the existing inventory of tracks, including recreation, training, and competitive facilities.

2040 Asset Targets

- Every destination, neighbourhood and community park will have a continuous, accessible path for all users (ages and user types, e.g. runners, walkers, cyclists, rollers, scooters, etc.).



English Bay I Park Board

ASSET TARGETS

WASHROOMS

A washroom strategy is currently in progress which outlines service standards (including design, access, and management) and guides renewal and expansion washroom facilities in parks.

Safe, clean and accessible washroom facilities enable and enhance the park experience for all. When washrooms are available at a park, it means that people can come and stay for longer periods of time and enjoy a wider range of activities.

Asset Needs

- Prioritize upgrades of existing washrooms and adding washrooms at locations with multiple playing fields, destination playgrounds, water recreation access points, community gardens, beaches, and other key destinations where people stay for a few hours.
- Prioritise renewal using the Initiative Zones (see Equity chapter) and to address urgent safety and accessibility needs, including at least two new or upgraded washroom facilities in the Downtown Eastside by 2024.
- Aim to improve access by seeking opportunities along the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network (Strategic Bold Move) and near destination playgrounds, sports fields, water recreation access points, and community gardens.

Other Considerations

- Collaborate with City of Vancouver's Real Estate and Facilities Management and Vancouver Coastal Health to continue to revise and update the technical Design Guidelines for Washrooms. Through this process, engage with subject matter experts, equity seeking groups and the community to define optimum service standards (i.e. "good condition") based on indicators of state of repair, demand, access, safety, and satisfaction.



- Collaborate with partners, such as City of Vancouver Engineering, Vancouver School Board, Vancouver Public Library, and Translink to fill known gaps to provision.
- Review and improve the quality and consistency of washroom signage (including way-finding, opening hours and signs indicating universal accessibility and welcome).



Park Washroom Facility | Park Board

2040 Asset Targets

- A washroom facility near every destination playground, sports field, water recreation access point and community gardens, and at intervals along the Primary Network.
- Achieve 70-80% of washrooms in good condition or better.

ASSET TARGETS

ARTS AND CULTURE

This Arts and Culture Asset Target is currently a placeholder, subject to the outcomes of ongoing work to support diverse cultural visibility through arts, culture and storytelling.

A cultural framework is being developed to guide decision making for cultural development, decolonization, expression in parks, prioritisation of intangible cultural heritage and to promote cultural redress.

Asset targets will be developed as a result of this work and in light of the recently released City of Vancouver strategy "Culture|Shift: Blanketing the City in Arts and Culture" and is to be added at a future date.

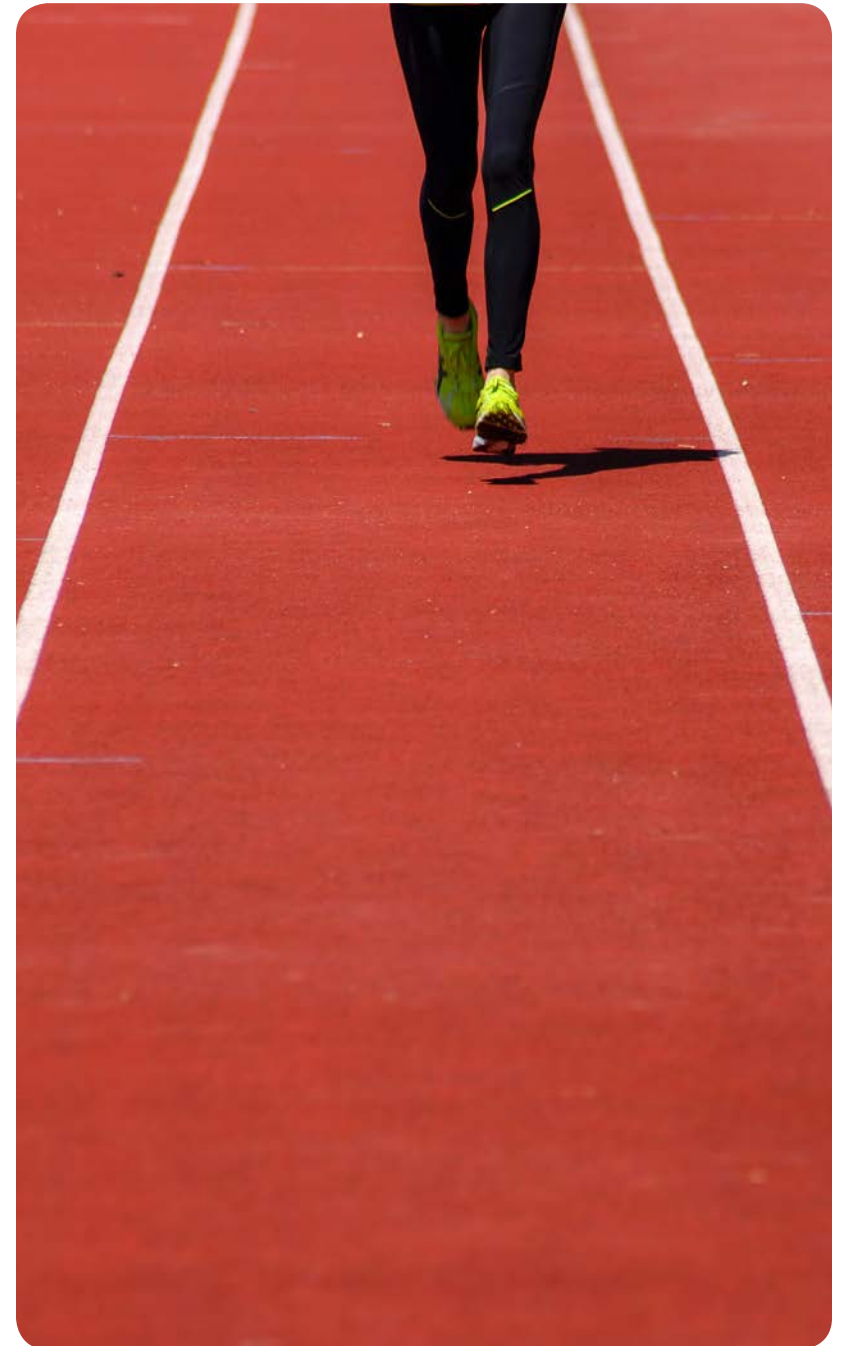


ASSET TARGETS

TRACK AND FIELD

The Track and Field Asset Target is pending the outcomes of the Track and Field Strategy which is currently underway.

The Track and Field Strategy is assessing current conditions, developing a vision, identifying gaps to reaching that vision and developing a 10-year implementation plan that includes the short-term goal of locating a competitive training facility. Currently there are no eight lane rubberized track and field facilities in the city for casual users or competitive athletes to train, and no schools or clubs can fully host events.



NEXT STEPS

RECOMMENDATIONS

Asset Targets provide the performance rigor for the parks and recreation system by setting measurable goals that can be tracked and fine-tuned over time.

The Vancouver Park Board owns and operates a wide variety of open spaces, parks, facilities and amenities. Each of these assets has its own timeline for renewal, strategy for acquisition, and measures of maintenance. This document sets out service asset targets for each asset as well as identifies gaps in the inventory and data-tracking of resources.

There are several amenities and facilities that require further planning work before recommendations and asset targets can be determined, for example:

- VanSplash (Vancouver Aquatics Strategy)
- Golf Course Strategy
- Horticultural Standards

and other future strategies and studies for other categories beyond the scope of this initial work.

In summary, supporting actions to ensure the delivery of high quality parks and recreation assets and amenities for all Vancouverites include the following example programs and policies.

Projects

- Create a **Women in Sport Strategy** to increase participation by women and girls.
- Create an **Age-Friendly Recreation Strategy** to guide expansion of recreation and arts opportunities for older adults and seniors of all abilities and interests.
- Work alongside the Community Centre Associations to refresh the **Community Centre Renewal Plan**.

Policies

- Develop a **Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Policy Manual** to support consistent and transparent decision-making. The Policy Manual will include position statements covering common practices and issues that will guide operations ensuring parks and recreation use and programming support Park Board principles of access, inclusion and welcome. Policy manual will include statements to enhance access to amenities. For example:
 1. A policy and methodology to determine fees and charges applicable for recreation activities, permits, bookings, parking etc. (**Fees and Charges Policy**)
 2. A field allocation Policy that ensures fair use between field users (**Field Allocation Policy**)
 3. An outdoor sport court management plan to consider use, access, booking, and demand management systems (**Outdoor Sport Court Management Plan**)





MOVE 3: CONNECTIVITY

TOOL: CITYWIDE PARKS + RECREATION NETWORK

WHAT'S INCLUDED IN CONNECTIVITY?

The Connectivity strategy centres on a big idea to interconnect parks, public spaces, and recreational nodes across the City through new amenities and routes. This Bold Move— the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network— envisions vibrant, healthy communities and ecologies by encouraging connection and integration. The Network will create places to play, exercise and socialize while providing pathways for the movement of urban wildlife, and rainwater, while creating beautiful and direct and intuitive connections for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities.

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BACKGROUND

100-YEAR VISION

As we imagine parks and recreation over the next hundred years, now is the time for bold ideas that tie together visions from the past with our hopes for the future.

We envision a network of parks, green spaces and recreation areas, interwoven into everyday life, that connects us to nature, to each other and to ourselves. We often describe parks and recreation as a system – and for Vancouverites, it should feel that way.

Imagine a seamless public realm that connects places, such as community centres, trail systems and large parks together, and publicly accessible water front lands which expand access regionally and protects ecosystems. The network will create places to play, exercise and socialise while providing pathways for the movement of urban wildlife, and rainwater, while creating beautiful and direct and intuitive connections for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities.

With the goal of greater connectivity, the Interconnected Network **will bolster Vancouver's human and ecological health at a site, local, citywide and regional scale.**

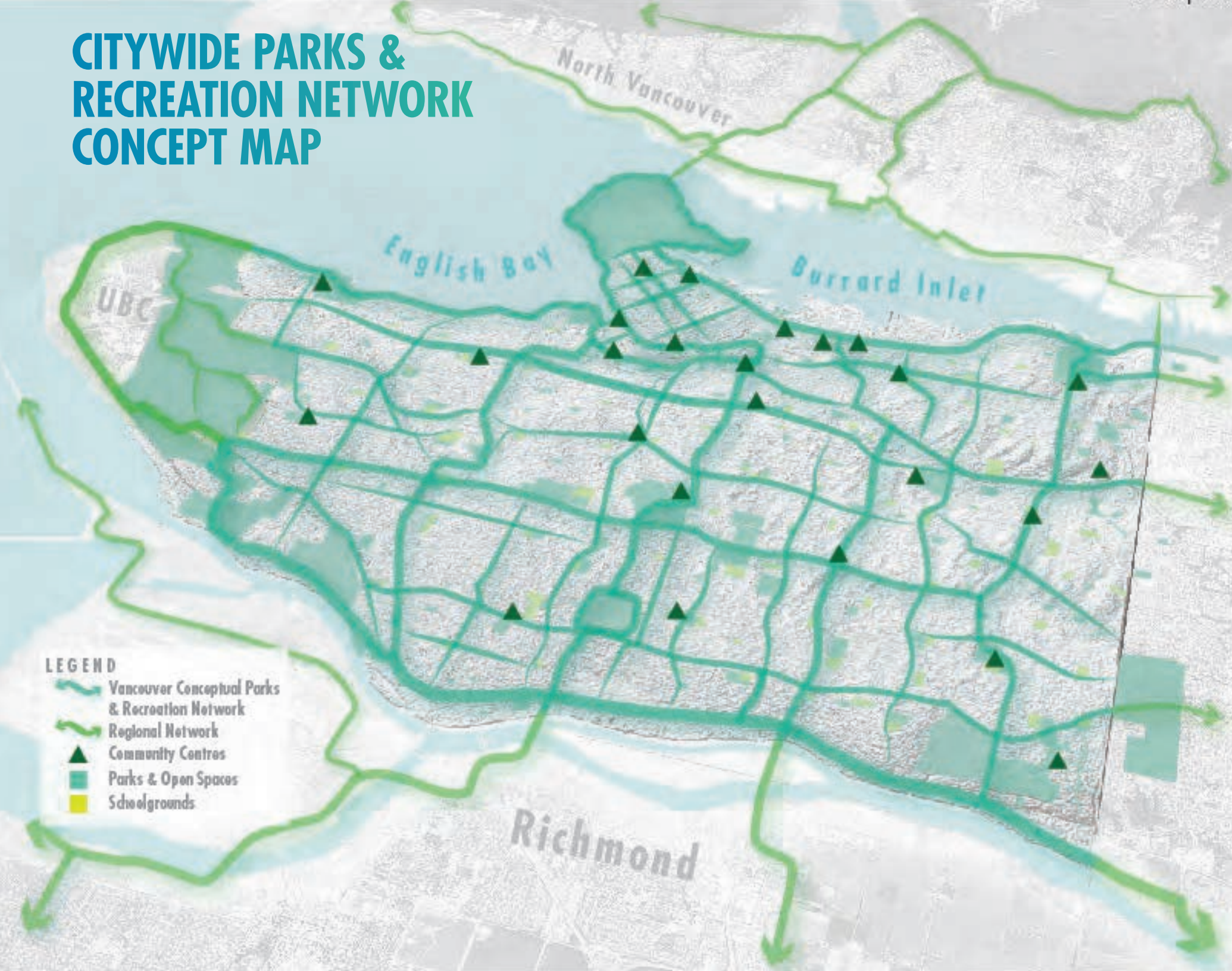
This is a big idea, one that will not be achieved by the Park Board alone but instead is the envisioned outcome of collaboration with Indigenous rights holders, Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh, City of Vancouver colleagues (principally in Engineering, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability), Vancouver School Board, Metro Vancouver senior levels of government, not-for-profits, partners, Community Centre Associations, leaseholders, businesses, BIAs and community groups.

We gratefully acknowledge the system of service providers in which we exist. We are presenting this vision for the purposes of creating and sustaining momentum, and identifying where the Park Board can take responsibility for implementation. All parties are invited to interpret the vision in their own way and work with the Park Board to bring it to life.

The graphic to the right presents a concept of a city-wide parks, recreation and nature network. This map is purely illustrative, meant to inspire ideas, collaboration and problem solving.

Implementation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in collaboration with transit, active transportation, planning and park board staff.

CITYWIDE PARKS & RECREATION NETWORK CONCEPT MAP



BACKGROUND

VISIONARY PLANS & POLICIES

Vancouver has a history of big ideas, including the formation of the Park Board in 1888 to steward the newly designated Stanley Park.

This 405-hectare park is both an extraordinary testament to the foresight of Vancouver's Western settlers and a solemn place of reflection on the forceful removal of First Nations peoples from their ancestral homeland. Today as we work toward truth and reconciliation and plan for the next one hundred years of our parks and recreation system, the successes and failures of past planning inform our way forward.

The 1922 *Plan for the City of Vancouver* was a seminal plan and led to the establishment of one park every square mile approach. Today, we can see the imprint of that plan in the City's well-distributed parks. The plan also introduced the idea of high streets and pleasure drives—linear connections across neighbourhoods designed for getting around easily by car.

At 28km, the Stanley Park Seawall is the world's longest uninterrupted urban waterfront path. Clearly the result of extraordinary foresight, its construction commenced in 1917, creating what is now both an international destination and a daily recreational amenity for Vancouverites.

A groundbreaking Urban Landscape Task Force struck in 1991 set in motion Vancouver's enviable network of greenways for walking and cycling. The resultant 1995 Greenways Plan sought to "expand the opportunities for urban recreation and to enhance the experience of nature and city life" by creating a network for city and neighbourhood greenways for pedestrians and cyclists.

In 2018, the Arbutus Greenway reimagined a historic rail corridor and opened up 9km of walking, cycling and rolling opportunity, instantly connecting the north and south of Vancouver like never before. As the greenway develops in the coming years, it will increasingly enliven Vancouver's inland neighborhoods and serve as a daily recreational and active transportation corridor for all.

By weaving the city together with parks and recreation, we are celebrating and building from this legacy.

KEY TERMS

citywide parks & recreation network

A connected public realm that links places, such as community centres, greenways and trail systems, large parks and publicly accessible waterfronts together, to expand access regionally and protect ecosystems. Achieved through enhancing existing plans and assets, and creating new routes, the network will be the outcome of collaboration across multiple partners and service providers. See Report 4: *The Playbook: Implementation Plan* for more detailed Implementation steps.



Graphic From Harland Batholomew's Plan For The City Of Vancouver, 1922

BACKGROUND

VISIONARY PLANS & POLICIES CONT.

Through the work of the Engineering, Planning, Sustainability, and Urban Design teams and various other partners, the City has made tremendous strides in building multimodal streets, growing our urban forest canopy, and working resiliency into our streetscapes. These tangible improvements to the City's infrastructure show a proactive stance on climate readiness and mitigating our impacts by helping move people out of cars and out onto sidewalks and bikeways. Citywide plans, such as Greenest City Action Plan, RainCity, Transportation 2040, Healthy City, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy and the upcoming comprehensive City Plan, have already forecast a vision for the city, which we stand ready to help execute.

The Park Board will work collaboratively with City departments, neighbourhood organizations and the Community Centre Associations that make those facilities what they are. We are also positioned, through our colonial audit and commitments to reconciliation, to better listen and collaborate with Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil Waututh Nations and Urban Indigenous peoples to affect change. We are honoured to work alongside these partners and see great potential for the network as a synergetic project that builds capacity across the city.

WHAT WE HEARD

There was strong public support for a more “connected” system, and “access to nature” ranked among the top three big ideas for the future of Vancouver.

In the 2018 TalkVancouver VanPlay survey on the 10 Goals to Shape the Next 25 Years, 93% of respondents supported the goal of a “green network” for people and wildlife to access recreation areas, parkland and shoreline throughout the city. Survey participants commented on the need to expand recreation infrastructure (including improved bicycle and pedestrian paths), provide a continuous seawall around the City's waterfront, increase accessible design, and ensure strategic partnerships and collaboration with local First Nations and Urban Indigenous Peoples.

We heard that one of the most common barriers to recreation faced by residents is access, availability and integration, and critical to community centre access is transit.

In his 2017 VanPlay Smart City Talk, ecologist Steven Apfelbaum, encouraged Vancouver to manage it's ecology by considering the wider landscape context.

BACKGROUND

A FIVE-MINUTE WALK TO GREEN

Although Vancouver's much-loved parks are well distributed across neighbourhoods, connecting to, through, and from our green spaces and recreation areas can be a challenge.

The *Greenest City Action Plan* kickstarted Vancouver on a path to be the greenest city in the world. One of the most ambitious goals of the *Greenest City Action Plan* is to have all Vancouverites live within a five-minute walk of a greenspace. Setting this goal is an important acknowledgement of how important it is for all Vancouverites to have green space close to home.

But what does a five-minute walk actually look like? A 400-meter circle around your house is not truly indicative of how far the average person can walk in five minutes. So Park Board set out to investigate this further and better understand how to measure success against this goal of city-wide access to high quality greenspace and recreation.

The 2016 (updated in 2018) *Park Provision Study* developed a new methodology to measure the walkable catchment of parks, which models human travel patterns and creates a realistic, yet functional network for accessibility analysis. The methodology considers delays caused by barriers, such as major roads, time lag on steep slopes, and wait time at intersections. It gives us a much more accurate understanding of how far you really live from a park. This new methodology found that 99% of Vancouver residents are within a 10-minute walk of a green space (parks, schools and other public open spaces) and 73% are within a 5-minute walk of a park.



Cover pages of *Greenest City* (2011)
and *Vancouver Park Provision Study* (2018)

BACKGROUND

WHY WEAVE PARKS & RECREATION?

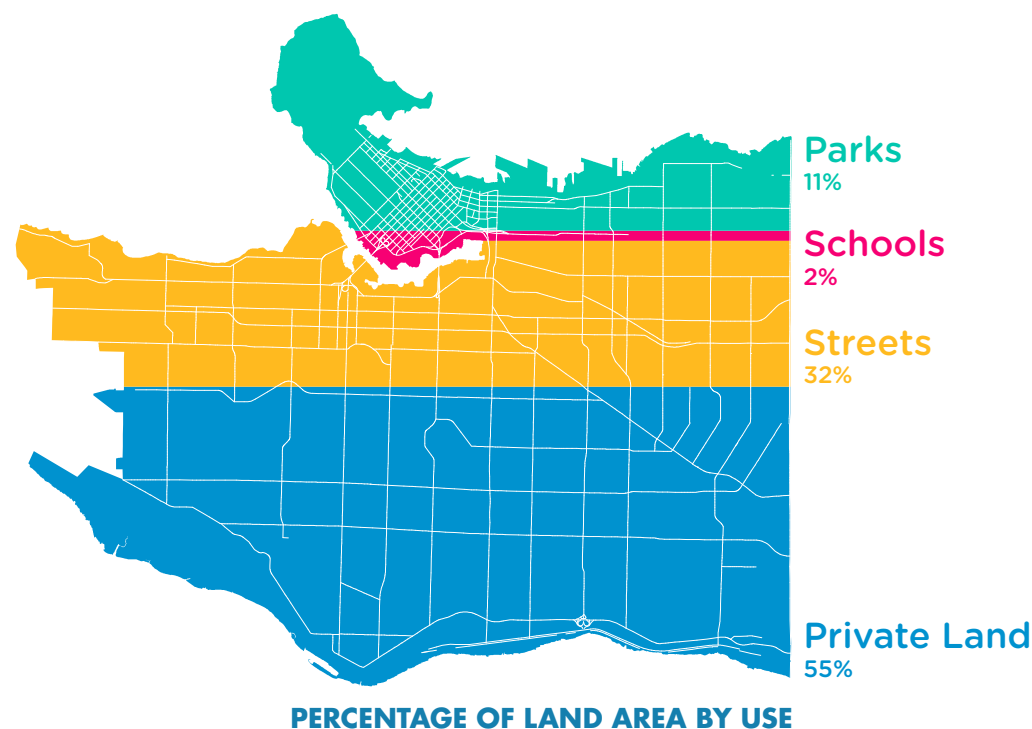
Large parks cannot be everywhere, but we can provide better access to those we have by creating a network of park-like experiences between them.

With space at a premium, competing demands for park space and limited resources, it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure additional land for parks and recreation areas. A city-wide parks and recreation network is ultimately an encapsulation of our everyday lives: a safe walk to school, a training ground, and a place to learn from and to grow. From integrating exercise into our commute to creating citywide wildlife corridors, to connecting the city's core to beautiful shorelines, this vision of connectivity brings nature to our doorsteps and recreation to our weekly routines. Networks can be a catalyst for something bigger; vibrant, active lifestyles, strong communities, and healthy ecosystems. Parks account for 11 % of Vancouver's land (see figure at right). As the population grows, the city's park space will need to accommodate more recreational use or become harder working parks. In addition, there are opportunities for recreation to connect through the network to schools and streetscapes as the city grows and land becomes more precious.

A ratio of population density to park area gives us a sense of how hard parks are working to meet the needs of the community,

which acts as a proxy for quality and demand. Parks can "work harder" in many ways – resilient surfaces, more amenities, additional maintenance, programming and activation. All parks have the potential to thrive in a dense environment. With appropriate and balanced investment, maintenance and mindful park programming and design, parks don't have to be huge to be great.

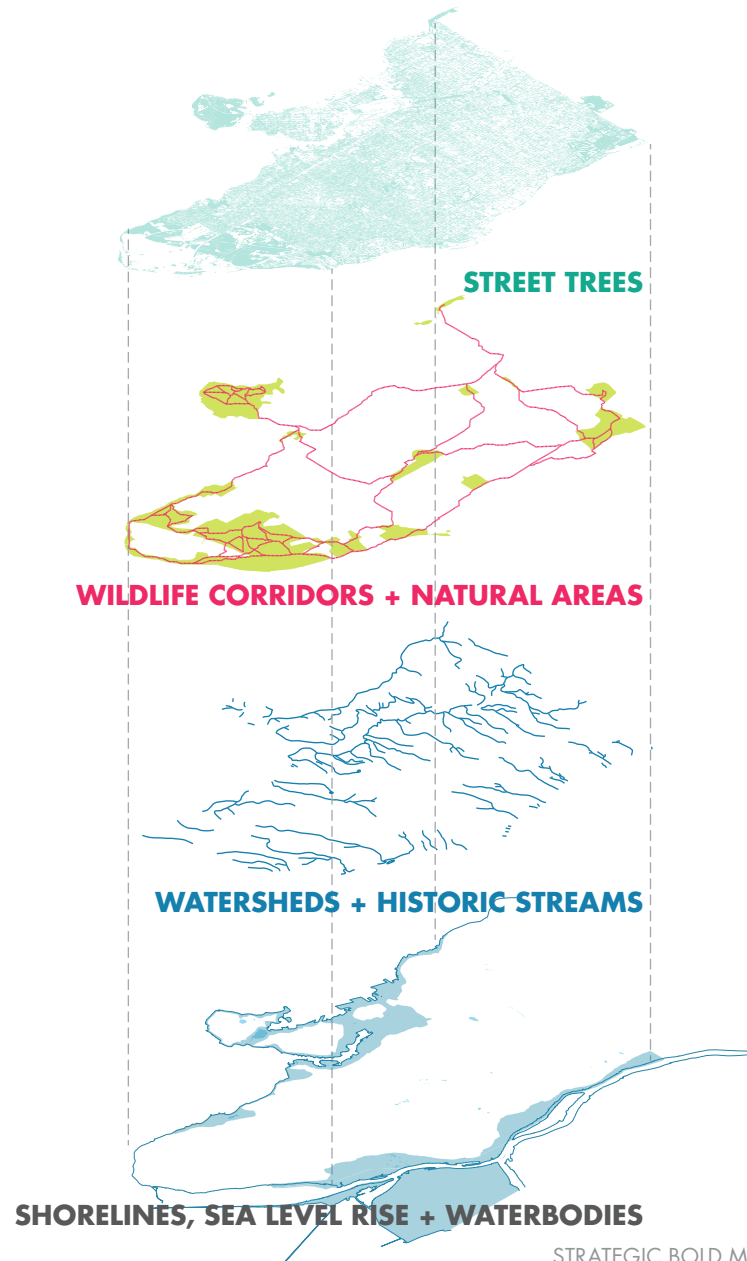
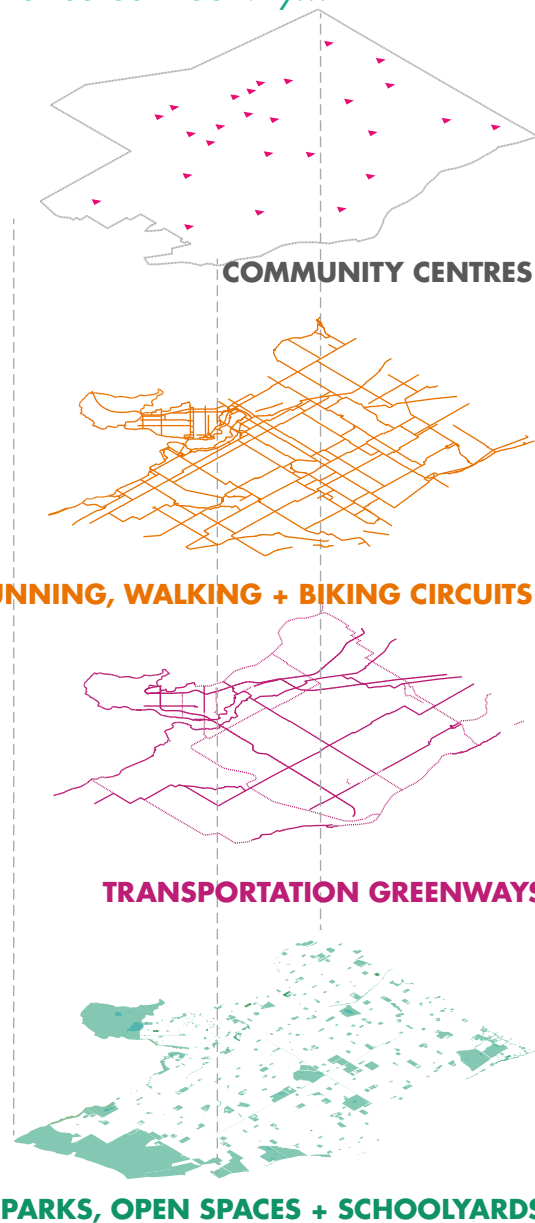
Viewing the city through this lens of connectivity presents an opportunity to revisit the role open space plays in ensuring ecological integrity and quality of life. Like many other parks and open space systems worldwide, Vancouver is challenged by the pressures of population growth, tourism, changing demographics, limited resources, evolving trends in recreation and shifting environmental conditions. This Bold Move will ensure better access to well-connected, high functioning open spaces that support other city planning and respond to diverse needs.



BACKGROUND

LAYERS OF CONNECTIVITY

A sample of components we are layering to create and enhance connectivity...



BACKGROUND

NETWORK COMPONENTS & DESTINATIONS

Paths, bike routes, green corridors, street trees, and your favorite bench on the seawall are all ways to connect the network.

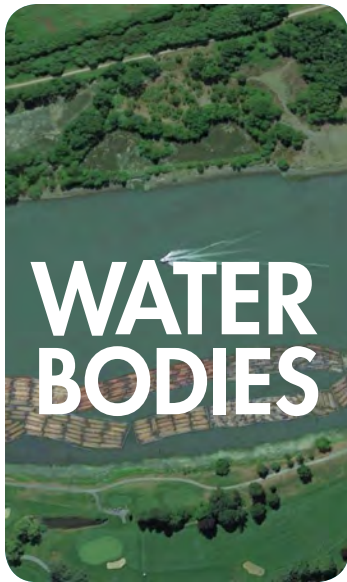
The scope of this work is limited to outdoor open spaces that are publicly owned or publicly accessible, and the primary focus is on planning physical connections and infrastructure, as opposed to programming or other methods of animation.

Community centres, pools, rinks, and parks anchor the network and act as destinations. Recreationally, community centres provide opportunities to increase everyday fitness amenities, such as looped trails, playing fields and play areas. These amenities stand to build community capacity by providing low-barrier recreation, responding to demographic trends and needs of an aging population and drawing the neighbourhood outdoors to create a shared armature for health and wellness.

By tailoring each section of the network to the uniqueness of its neighbourhood, we can demonstrate the power of working together and plan for a variety of character types that integrate neighbours' diverse needs into decision-making. Co-creation and co-location of destinations and byways such as community centres, rinks, pools, courts, parks, open space, main streets, libraries, and trails serve the needs of many in one location and allow for innovative programming, walkable neighbourhoods and meeting people where they are. High-quality design of network components can also address safety concerns through increased activation of open spaces.

What we are connecting...





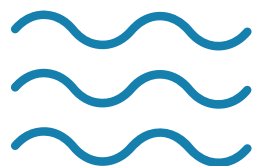
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

This vision is guided by four main principles:

1. *Vibrant, active communities*



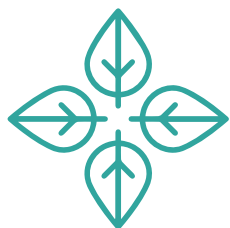
2. *Flow of water*



3. *Sense of place*



4. *Thriving ecosystems*



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VIBRANT, ACTIVE COMMUNITIES

Better connectivity helps create active, healthy, social communities with a high quality of life.

Open spaces promote wellness by supporting active transportation, mental health and wellbeing, and opportunities to learn, celebrate, play and recreate. According to a 2019 study published in the International Journal of Environmental Health Research, spending just 20 minutes in nature or in a park—even if you do not exercise while you are there—is enough to improve wellbeing.

Parks and community centres do not exist in isolation. Stronger connections between them can build a healthier, resilient and more adaptive system. By moving beyond simple standards for the amount of open space, this Bold Move calls for a well-connected set of multifunctional open spaces.

The City's greenway network is envisioned to provide access to safe and green active transportation and recreation paths throughout the city. City Council has set ambitious goals through Transportation 2040, Greenest City Action Plan, the Healthy City Strategy, and the Climate Emergency Response to continue to work towards the goal of a sustainable, healthy city. By enhancing the urban forest, providing connected trails to, and through desirable destinations (parks and community centres), the Park Board contributes to making active transportation more

appealing and reducing trips made by car. Currently 63% of parks and 58% of community centres are fronted by a bikeway or greenway on at least one side.¹ By working together to make these destinations more accessible, and creating a connected system, we can achieve multiple goals.

Opportunities to play, run and connect increase our collective quality of life and ease the journey from home to work and other activities. Connectivity, access to the water, proximity to a park and attractive streets support better health and wellbeing. For example, you are more likely to walk to a school, community centre or workplace if your journey is through a park or along a well-lit, tree-lined street. The UBC Cycling in Cities study found that popular cycling routes were those well away from traffic, and associated noise and air pollution, and provided beautiful scenery (such as a park).

The network connects people by providing places for communities to gather and thrive. From parks and plazas to greenways and community event spaces, the network provides residents and visitors the opportunity to experience a wide range of amenities and activities.



In fact, a 2017 study found that where residents feel that they have access to a large park, the beach, or a beautiful neighbourhood, with high street connectivity, they were increasingly more likely to walk for recreation – 9 minutes per week or 12% more often, for each of those four factors (so, 36 minutes more per week or 48% more frequently if you combine all four).

¹ Vancouver Park Board & Design Workshop Consultants. VanPlay Report 1: Inventory and Analysis, Vancouver, BC 2018



Orcas breaching in English Bay | Park Board

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

FLOW OF WATER

Water is a central character in the story of Vancouver. The health and wellbeing of the city and its residents are closely linked to the water that surrounds us.

People gravitate to water; for relaxation, play, replenishment, and restoration. While we need to manage water from an infrastructure perspective, we must also consider the daily human experience. By honouring the flow of water, unearthing historic streams, improving water quality, creating healthy habitats and urban ecosystems, we can reconnect the system for the benefit of everyone.

91% of Vancouver's original streams have been buried. Encouragingly, stream restoration and ecological management efforts have resulted in salmon returning to some of the city's creeks since 2012. This presents a unique and wonderful connection to nature for Vancouverites and demonstrates the improving health of streams.

The City's Green Infrastructure Team is revolutionizing how Vancouver manages its water resources. By keeping water close to its source, slowing water flows, and encouraging infiltration, we can create a city that acts more like a sponge. From vegetated swales to daylighting streams, these interventions

improve water quality, increase urban greenery and reduce the city's reliance on aging pipe infrastructure. This provides many benefits for parks including keeping them greener for longer through the year and providing places for nature play. Delivering cleaner water to receiving bodies, such as False Creek, will improve our beaches and waterways - good news for birds, fish, and whales and of course, all of us.

Vancouverites value access to the water; however, currently only 46% of the city's shoreline is protected as public land. By prioritizing access to the water, we do not mean to assume that these areas will be managed as typical "parks" but rather, we intend to find opportunities to work together with First Nations rightsholders to further shared values of ecological protection, connecting to the land, and learning. Collaboration is key; by seeking public access to waterfront land, we allow different types of physical space to work together to enhance the experiences of all.

Climate change brings with it the need for new ideas and a commitment to respond to sea level rise, reduce use of potable water, and increase green coverage to keep the city cool and protect against extreme weather events. Actions such as increasing development setbacks along the Fraser River, investigating design innovations that allow us to increase recreational access to waterways, implementing thoughtful green infrastructure projects, and managing the urban forest to be sustainable in a changing climate will set us up for success as the climate changes.

"There is a profound tie to the water that is expressed through the orientation of the coastal villages to the waterfront."

"This physical and spiritual connection is a key Indigenous design principle."

**Indigenous
Engagement
Summary Report,
Northeast False
Creek Park Design,
June 2018**



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SENSE OF PLACE

Vancouver's network of parks and recreation opportunities showcases its unique cultural and ecological character, and celebrates the cultural diversity of our rapidly growing, thriving city.

What makes Vancouver, Vancouver for you? Is it being able to see the North Shore Mountains? Smelling the salty sea air? Cruising around the seawall? Is it seeing the crows fly over East Vancouver? Or seeing a friend and stopping to talk?

The character of Vancouver, beyond its dramatic natural setting, is characterized by its parks and beaches, accented with big trees, lush vegetation and daily encounters with wildlife. The urban forest connects the city's streets, parks and neighbourhoods, creating coherent patterns and comfortable spaces for people to enjoy.

Sense of place is determined by personal experiences, social interactions and identities. In a 2016 North American Association for Environmental Education study, researchers found that people with a heightened sense of place appreciate natural and ecological aspects of cities more.¹ Nurturing a positive sense of place takes collaboration, co-creation, thoughtful design and excellent ongoing cultivation.

The network will reflect key themes and First Nations principles, such as a strong sense of belonging on the land, relationship to the water and orientation to the waterfront, and the importance of gathering spaces and places to heal. Keeping "place" at the centre of design and management of the network is an opportunity for the City to listen and learn from First Nations, whose land management and adaptive practices have allowed them to effectively care for this land since time immemorial. Parks and recreation spaces can be seen as inaccessible because they feel unsafe, unwelcoming, exclusive or otherwise threatening on a variety of scales, which make them ineffective as "places." We will reduce barriers to access at a local, city and regional scale by problem-solving with the community.

Connecting people with open space, nature and each other on a day-to-day basis is dependent on those spaces being easily accessible and integrated into everyday routine. Getting outside everyday connects you to the world and your community. The pace of observing the world while walking or cycling allows you time to see your neighbours, the seasons changing, flowers, birds, bees and trees.

In the case of an emergency or disaster, social and physical connectivity supports resilience. Socially connected communities where people know their neighbours are more than just beneficial to their daily health and wellbeing; connection between people and groups is also one of the most significant predictors of fast and effective disaster recovery. Ensuring the city is easy to navigate with integrated open spaces increases access to community facilities which supports fast and efficient emergency response.

¹ Adams, J., Greenwood, D., Thomashow, M., and Russ, A. "Sense of Place." *The Nature of Cities*. North American Association for Environmental Education. 2016.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

SENSE OF PLACE CONT.

The more you are connected to a place physically, the more you are connected to it mentally. Being in a place you care for and about, contributing to collective art-making, restoring local natural areas, or planting a community garden, contributes to a collective sense of place that can build on existing local neighbourhood character and develop values surrounding green space and ecological aspects of the place.

Strengthening connections between people and shared places is a collaborative process. This is why it is so important that communities are fully involved in the implementation of connectivity in their neighbourhood. We will work together to integrate parks and recreation, in a way that is grounded in place, is conscious of equity, and makes sense for you and your community.



WHAT IS SENSE OF PLACE?

“Different people perceive the same city or neighborhood in different ways. While one person may appreciate ecological and social aspects of a neighborhood, another may experience environmental and racialized injustice.

A place may also conjure contradicting emotions—the warmth of community and home juxtaposed with the stress of dense urban living. Sense of place—the way we perceive places such as streets, communities, cities or ecoregions—influences our wellbeing, how we describe and interact with a place, what we value in a place, our respect for ecosystems and other species, how we perceive the affordances of a place, our desire to build more sustainable and just urban communities, and how we choose to improve cities.

Our sense of place also reflects our historical and experiential knowledge of a place, and helps us imagine its more sustainable future.”

Go here to find more:

naaee.org/eeepro/blog/sense-place



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

THRIVING ECOSYSTEMS

As Vancouver expanded, much of the natural environment was cleared. Focused effort has protected, restored or rebuilt more than 480 hectares of natural area within the city boundaries.

Weaving with parks and recreation provides an essential ecological backbone for the city as it grows and densifies. The urban ecosystem supports biodiversity, climate regulation, food production, risk mitigation, and waste and water management. Hundreds of thousands of trees and the city's natural areas already work hard to improve air quality, reduce urban heat, and allow for the movement of wildlife. Environmentally, new routes can expand urban wildlife corridors and increase Vancouver's capacity for resiliency at a citywide scale in the face of shrinking shorelines and an increase of extreme weather events. Urban ecological networks and street trees provide resiliency to climate change through shade, evaporative cooling and stormwater infiltration services.¹

Robust linkages between large natural areas must be maintained to support a thriving ecosystem. Establishing and maintaining a robust urban forest and network of natural areas is the focus of the Park Board's Biodiversity Strategy (2016) and Urban Forest

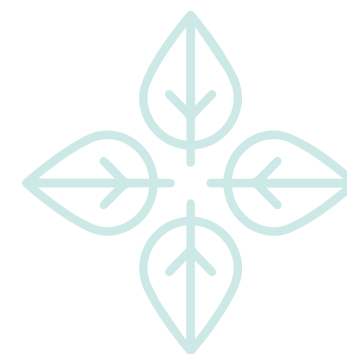
Strategy (2018). The Park Board cares for more than 147,000 street trees, which are a powerful tool for increasing ecological connectivity.

While it is unlikely that a new, large park (like Stanley Park) will be achievable, we can continue to support the city's ecosystems by increasing connectivity between existing large natural areas. This can be achieved by filling gaps in the urban forest by planting trees on public land (streets and parks), encouraging planting on private lands, and continuing to increase "naturally managed" areas in places where it works. Innovation is required in advancing ecological health in the city. For example, there are many competing demands for park space (habitat, sport, events, passive recreation, etc.) and as populations increase, these competing demands are creating pinch points. Many of the available planting spots on streets have been filled, making new planting hard due to poor soils, lack of adequate soil depth and lack of space. The changing climate requires faster rates of replacement, reconsideration of species choice, and management techniques.

Increased ecological connectivity between large areas of habitat will support and enhance the environment by sustaining healthy and resilient ecosystems. For example, "almost 80% of bird families include some insects in their diet."² Many birds feed their fast-growing young a diet of insects, spiders, and other invertebrates. To support a healthy avian population in the city we need to think of insects too. Ecosystem connectivity supports the interconnected web of life.

"Biodiversity in urban landscapes depends on maintaining a network of connected natural areas anchored by larger patches such as Stanley Park, the Fraser River, and Pacific Spirit Regional Park. We call it the "ecological network", which reflects how it functions as a connected system."

Biodiversity Strategy, 2016



¹ WIREs Clim Change 2012, 3:581–596. doi: 10.1002/wcc.195

² Klasing, Kirk C. 1998. Comparative Avian Nutrition. CAB International, NY.

APPROACH

PROJECTS WITH MULTIPLE BENEFITS

The Park Board will take a multiple-benefit approach to create a citywide network of parks and recreation experiences.

Projects which achieve multiple objectives, and perform multiple functions make the most efficient use of public land as a scarce but valuable civic resource. This land use planning approach looks for solutions based on the interactive and interdependent nature of many factors, including how people use the land, development planning, surface and groundwater flows, landforms and slopes, species and habitats, and ecological conservation.

This network will act as a living framework, allowing the city to make the best use of its lands, bringing together key information on the opportunities and challenges the city faces as it grows and develops. For example, a constructed wetland can provide stormwater management, aesthetic, educational, recreational, and habitat functions simultaneously. Where functions overlap, the Park Board, City and community partners must coordinate to determine how best to create, accommodate and complement different uses.

From wetlands to ice rinks, running trails to social gathering spaces, the network concept responds to the needs and identities

of Vancouver's diverse communities, by offering a set of solutions, appropriate for various scales and contexts. While climate change, for example, may necessitate new stretches of seawall in some areas, green infrastructure and adapted playing fields may help address flooding in others.

These components can be localized as neighbourhood projects that will incrementally build toward a citywide network, improving quality of life across Vancouver. The multiple-benefit approach also allows flexibility of scale in implementation to empower city staff to partner on large-scale efforts and residents to advocate for desired components and/or to reflect on the cultural diversity and ecology of their neighbourhood.

START

ACCESS TO NATURE

A place to observe the changing seasons, critters, birds, trees, ferns and flowers

ECOLOGICAL HEALTH

Habitat for plants and animals, which supports biodiversity and wildlife connectivity

BEAUTY

Space for habitat for plants and animals which supports biodiversity and wildlife connectivity

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Gathering spaces facilitate social interaction and community programming.

PLACE ACTIVATION

Casual, pop-up, and/or opportunistic programming, art, activities, performances and events

PUBLIC SAFETY

Traffic calming, buffer zones that provide "eyes on the street"

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

Areas to mitigate heat island effect and climate change and improve air quality

CELEBRATION

Locations suitable for events, community building gatherings, expression of culture

TOURISM

Interesting, beautiful places that celebrate Vancouver as a destination

STEWARDSHIP

Programming and play to promote learning and nature engagement

FREE-FORM PLAY

Programming and play to promote learning and nature engagement

JOY

Playgrounds, interactive public art, colorful landscaping, to create opportunities for fun

EDUCATION

A place to observe the changing seasons and learn about nature

ACTIVE RECREATION

High-quality sports facilities and outdoor recreation spaces to promote healthy living

HERITAGE

Open spaces to highlight the cultural and/or historical value of a site or feature

MOVEMENT FOR RECREATION

Places and pathways for walking, cycling, rolling, and to host outdoor fitness

WATER MGMT

Connected open spaces to absorb and process stormwater and prevent flooding

FOOD PRODUCTION

Production areas to promote food security, community interaction, and skill development

RESILIENCE

Stabilized slopes, floodways and infrastructure

TRANSPORTATION

Well-connected, safe pathways to encourage active transportation and improve mobility

SPIRIT OF PLACE

Expressions of Coast Salish architecture and design, art and use of native species

PASSIVE RECREATION

Places to sit, host a small picnic with friends, enjoy lying in sunshine

MENTAL HEALTH WELLBEING

Open spaces to reduce stress and for therapeutic activities

MULTIPLE BENEFITS BOARD GAME

How many of these benefits can be incorporated into a place, project or program?

FINISH



PUBLIC SPACE SUPERHERO CHOOSE-YOUR-OWN NETWORK GAME

PICK 2! OR MORE!
DESTINATIONS

*What destinations
will we connect?*

COMMUNITY CENTRES

PARKS

DESTINATION GARDENS

MAIN STREETS

NATURAL AREAS

FIELD HOUSES

CULTURAL FACILITIES

WATERBODIES

PICK 1! OR MORE!
CONNECTORS

With what connectors?

REGIONAL TRAILS

WILDLIFE CORRIDORS

GREENWAYS

STREET GREENING

FLYWAYS

RUNNING CIRCUITS

DAYLIT STREAMS

SEAWALLS

PICK 1! OR MORE!
ENHANCERS

*And what enhancers are
there along the way?*

POCKET PARKS

PUBLIC ART

HORTICULTURE

DRINKING FOUNTAINS

RESTROOMS

PLAY AREAS

GREEN ROOFS

SITTING AREAS



*This graphic was developed by the VanPlay External Advisory Group
as a compelling and simple way to illustrate connectivity through parks and recreation.*

APPROACH

NETWORK ENHANCERS

Elements which aid in creating a comfortable, colourful, safe and attractive network...



Green Roofs



Pocket Parks



Pop-Up Parks



Washrooms



Bike Repair Stations



Play Areas



Horticulture



Public Art



Drinking Fountains



Lighting



Wayfinding



Sitting Areas

ANALYSIS

THE CITY & BEYOND

Vancouver exists within a complex landscape of natural, traditional, and political boundaries and jurisdictions.

This landscape provides a backdrop for the network of parks and recreation opportunities to thrive by adding connections between places, partners and neighbours. The main goal of this Bold Move is to create vibrant, healthy communities by encouraging connection and integration of open space at hyperlocal, neighbourhood, community, city and regional levels.

Small-scale actions will help serve the overall vision of connecting the entire landscape. Some examples of actions of how this citywide network will work in small-scale ways to strengthen neighbourhoods include:

- Partnering with Vancouver School Board to improve open access to school lands for recreational activities during out of schools hours;
- Locating and designing community centres and facilities to accommodate easy transitions between indoor and outdoor programming;
- Coordinating with Viva Vancouver and the City's Street Activities team to create parklets, convert street ends to plazas, and activate streets and laneways; and
- Working with the "Safe Routes to Schools" program to continue mapping out and improving routes to schools

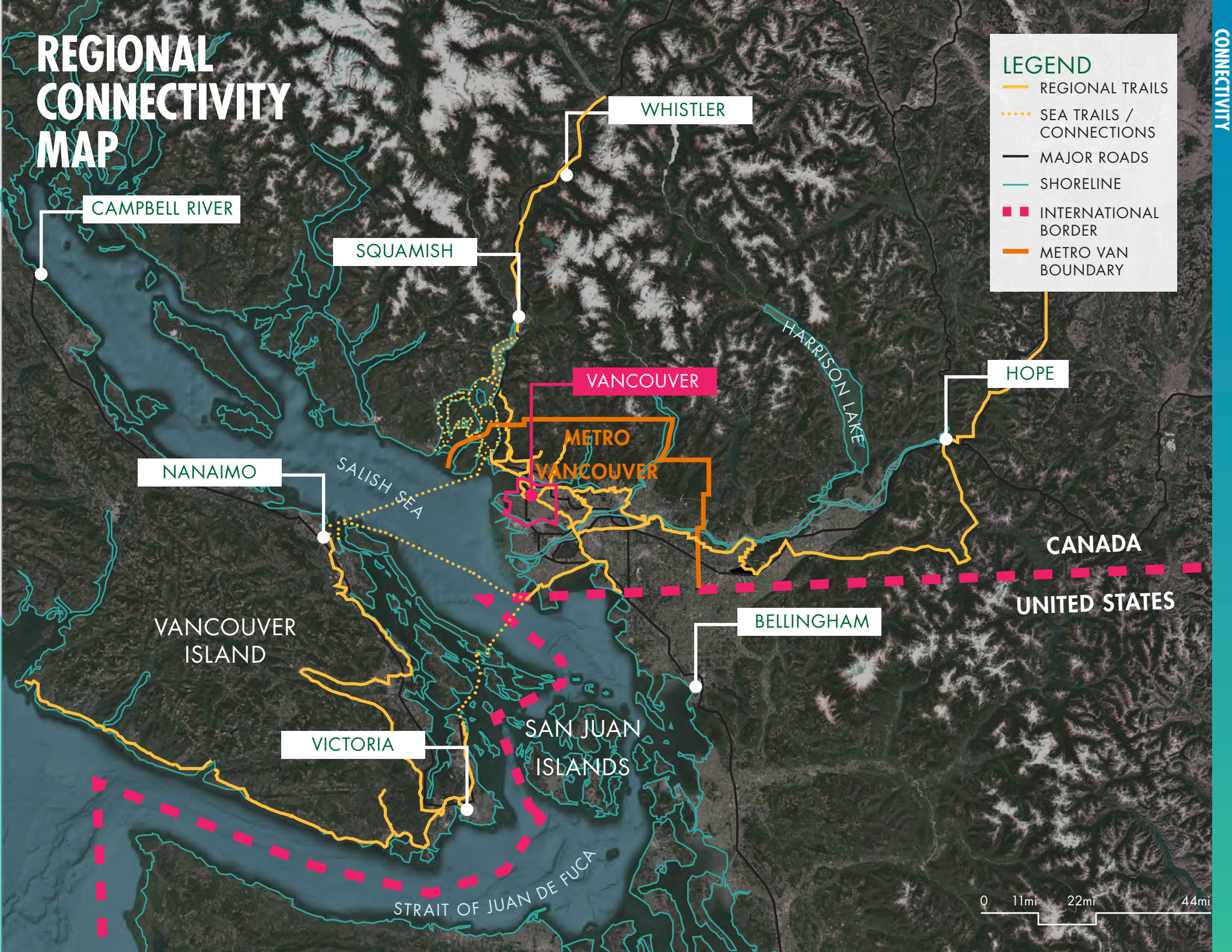
and community centres by building better connections with bike paths; improving neighbourhood traffic calming through curb bulb-outs and raised crosswalks; improving lighting; and adding street trees and way-finding signage.

Metro Vancouver's Regional Parks Department mission statement is "Protecting the region's natural areas and connecting people with them," and as a member of the Council of the MetroVancouver region, we are champions of this endeavour and have crafted this vision to help achieve it.

This Bold Move offers the opportunity to tie into regional parks and recreation connectivity initiatives, including:

- Pacific Spirit Regional Park on the western boundary of the city, managed by Metro Vancouver;
- North Shore trails including Spirit Trail, The Great Trail, Baden Powell Trail, and Grouse Grind with connection via the SeaBus Terminal/Waterfront Station in Downtown Vancouver;
- BC Parkway and Central Valley Greenway routes that connect Westminster Quay waterfront to False Creek via a 19km linear park;
- Richmond's foreshore and Sea Island trails which connect to the Iona Beach jetty; and
- Experience the Fraser (ETF) project proposing 550km+ of trails and blueways (water) routes linking cultural and heritage destinations along the Lower Fraser River Corridor connecting Hope to the Salish Sea.

REGIONAL CONNECTIVITY MAP



ANALYSIS

DAY IN THE LIFE: STILL CREEK

A day along the network of parks and recreation enables old and young Vancouver residents to live inside-out: the network punctuates our day-to-day responsibilities with opportunities for recreation and cultural connection.

The route offers expansive views followed by moments of solitude along a sunlit stream.

YOUNG FAMILY



7:00 am Walk to School through Renfrew Ravine Park



4:30pm Afterschool Art Classes at Renfrew CC



5:00pm Walk the Dog in the Park Off Leash Area Near Renfrew CC



6:00pm Check in on Community Garden at Slocan Park on Way Home

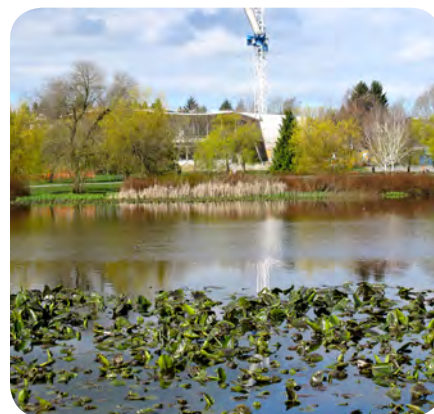
OLDER ADULT



9:30am Morning Skate at Trout Lake Rink



11:15am Vancouver Farmer's Market at John Hendry Park

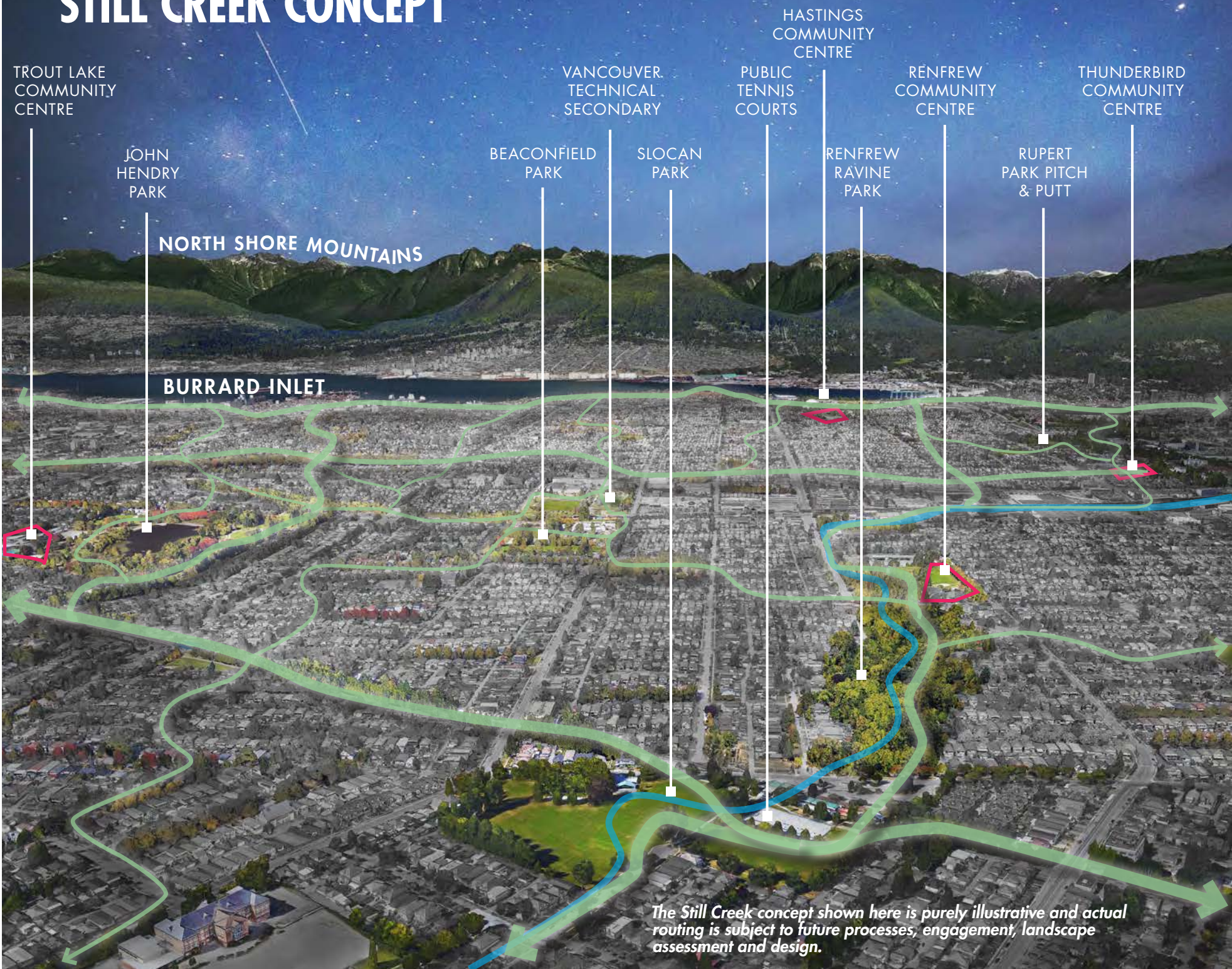


1:05pm Walk Home around the Lake



6:00pm Moon Festival on Still Creek

STILL CREEK CONCEPT



The Still Creek concept shown here is purely illustrative and actual routing is subject to future processes, engagement, landscape assessment and design.

ANALYSIS

DAY IN THE LIFE: LITTLE MOUNTAIN TO BIG RIVER

The environment along the network of parks and recreation enables urban wildlife and rainwater to thrive. By accommodating natural systems into our city's infrastructure, humans reap ecosystem benefits, ranging from reduced

risk of flooding, better storm water quality, opportunities for co-location of new and improved recreation infrastructure and more opportunities to plug into nature for health and wellness benefits.

RAIN DROP



9:42pm Hit the Roof of Bloedel Conservatory



10:15pm Run Downhill between Trees at Queen Elizabeth Park



1:12am Release into the Fraser River Estuary Marshlands



6:37am Lapped up by an urban adapted Coyote

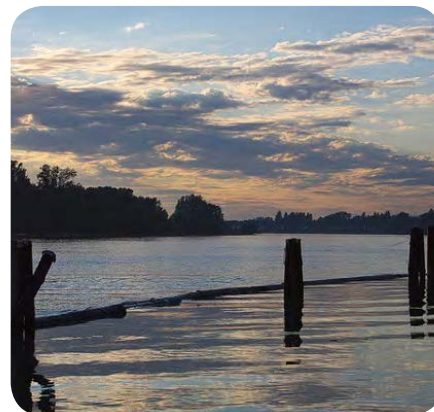
YELLOW-RUMPED WARBLER



6:26am Morning Song in Nest in the Quarry Garden



8:42am Flyover Langara Golf Course

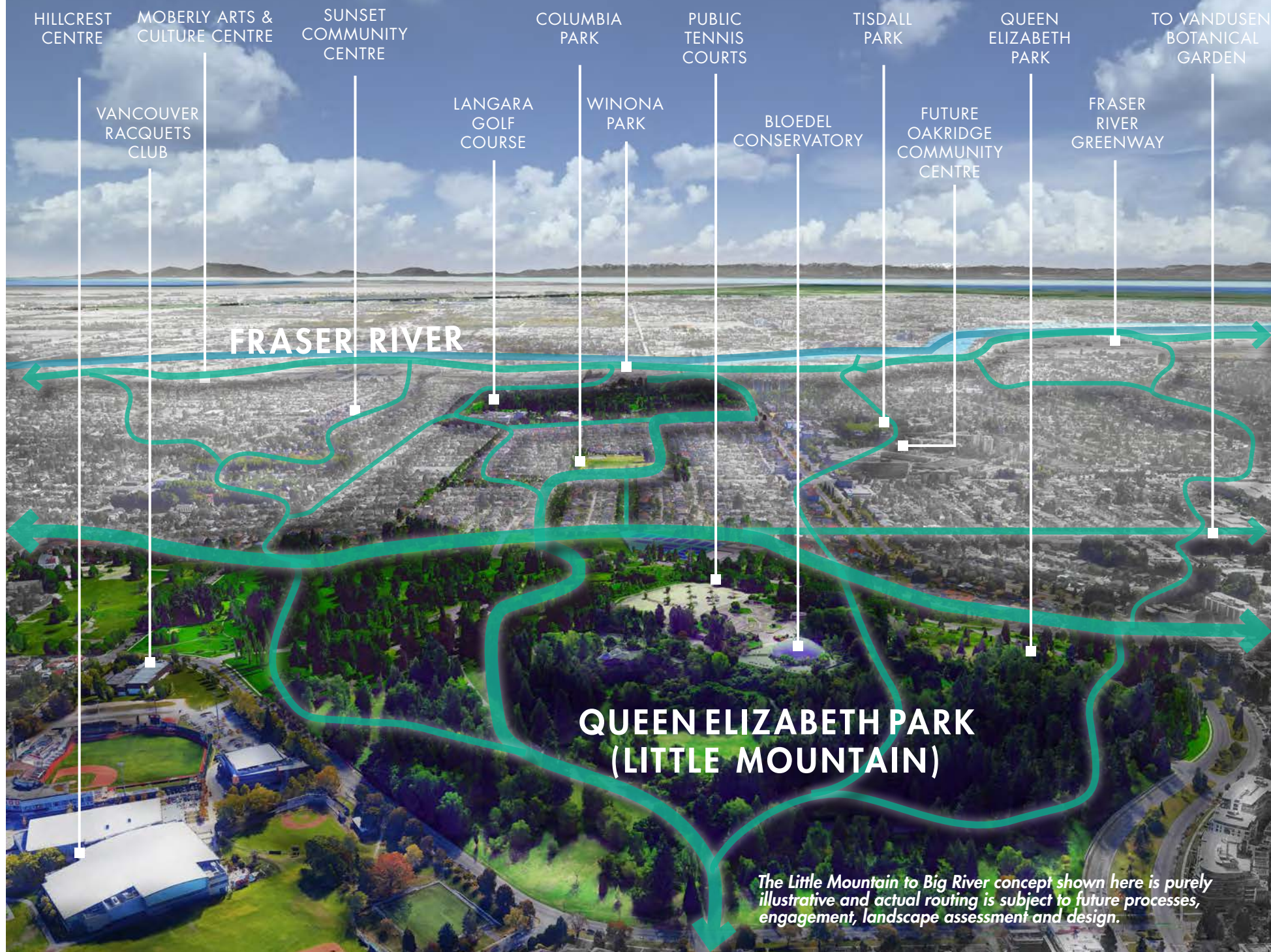


7:12pm Hunt for Insects Along Banks at Fraser River Park



9:02pm Rest on Flight Home at Oakridge Centre Roof Garden

LITTLE MOUNTAIN TO BIG RIVER CONCEPT



NEXT STEPS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Network leverages the vision of connectivity seen in the legacy of past visionaries and embodies an ethos of respect and collaboration with First Nations people who have been stewarding the land for millennia.

The network will require innovation and experimentation to combat the realities of climate change and increasing competition for the use of public land.

Reflecting on the vision and findings outlined here, the implementation steps provided in *Report 4: The Playbook: Implementation Plan* will provide plans, projects and partnerships that aim to support this Bold Move.

PRIORITY ACTION

Enshrine a citywide bold vision for connectivity into everyday thinking by advocating for further development of the concept and vision of the Network as part of the upcoming City Wide Plan and future city-wide planning such as renewing the Greenways Plan.

Supporting actions to achieve greater connectivity for parks and recreation include:

Policies

- Create an internal Park Board and City **interdepartmental working group** to coordinate efforts and identify opportunities for increased connectivity, putting into practice the “multiple-benefit approach” as described in this chapter. This working group should include, at a minimum, the Park Board Park Planning, Park Development, Recreation and Operations groups, as well as the following City departments: Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability.
- During **park and community centre renewals**, upgrade and development projects should make use of thorough community consultation and context-specific details to determine how best to increase connectivity to, within and through the site.
- Develop policy and/or guideline documents to address various connectivity topics, contexts and design considerations. These new documents are to reside in the proposed **Park Board Policy Manual** where appropriate.

Partnerships

- Partner with First Nations, Community Centre Associations, community organizations, and City of Vancouver departments for **shared visioning** and implementation of the citywide network of parks and recreation opportunities.
- Work with City, First Nations and regional partners to find policy, acquisition and design solutions to increase **public access to shorelines** and plan for how that access will adapt as sea levels rise. No decisions regarding the design, ownership or function of shorelines, beaches and subtidal zones should be made without genuine collaboration with Musqueam, Squamish and Tseil-Waututh Nations. These spaces open up new possibilities for reconciliation and cooperation.
- Coordinate with **Transportation Planning** to create walking, biking and rolling opportunities to lower emissions, encourage active lifestyles and more intimate connections as people move from place to place.

Projects

- Create a map for the City's **Geographic Information System** (GIS) which identifies existing connectivity and gaps, design improvements required, and potential partnerships. Development of this map should be iterative to allow for continual improvement over time as more data is collected. Qualitative information should be collected in collaboration with the community, external partners and stakeholders.
- Undertake further study locations for **habitat corridors** based on urban wildlife movement, biodiversity hotspots, watersheds and green infrastructure gaps, as guided by the Rain City Strategy, Biodiversity Strategy (2016) and the Urban Forest Strategy (2019) at a minimum.
- Grow the urban forest and address **street tree deficits**.
- Scope potential for increased activation of parks by identifying **locations for placemaking** and pilot projects in parks and adjacent to community centres.

