

Distance will  
hold us together



# COVID-19 Pandemic Parks & Recreation Response

Park Board Regular Meeting  
Monday, May 11, 2020

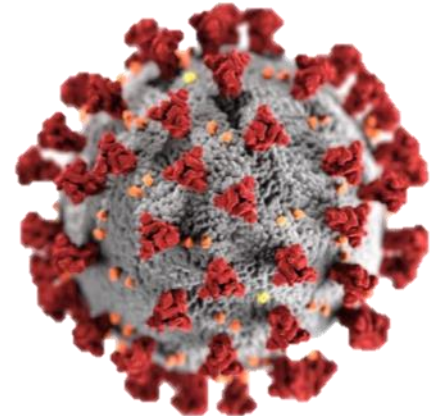


# Purpose of Presentation

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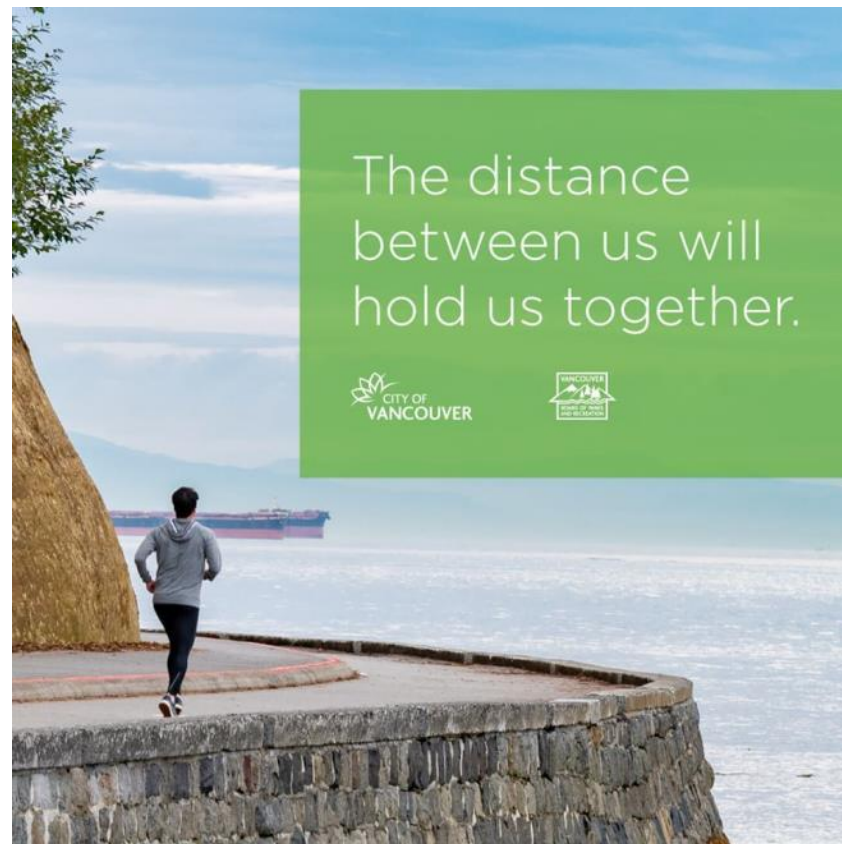
The purpose of this presentation is to:

- provide an update on the COVID-19 pandemic impacts to Parks & Recreation;
- outline the operational measures implemented in response (to date);
- review the preliminary impact to 2020 budget; and
- to provide a roadmap for reopening & recovery.



# Outline

- Background
- Service Impacts
- Communications & Engagement
- 2020 Budget Impacts
- Reopening & Recovery Strategy
- Q&A and Discussion



# Background



# Background

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Dec 31/19 - Novel coronavirus detected in China reported to World Health Organization (WHO);

Jan 30/20 - WHO declared coronavirus outbreak a Public Health Emergency of International Concern;

Feb 11/20 - WHO announced COVID-19 as name for the new coronavirus disease;

Mar 09/20 - City of Vancouver activated Emergency Operations Centre (EOC);

Mar 11/20 - WHO characterized COVID-19 as a pandemic due to alarming levels of spread and severity;

**Mar 17/20 - Province of BC declared Public Health State of Emergency;**

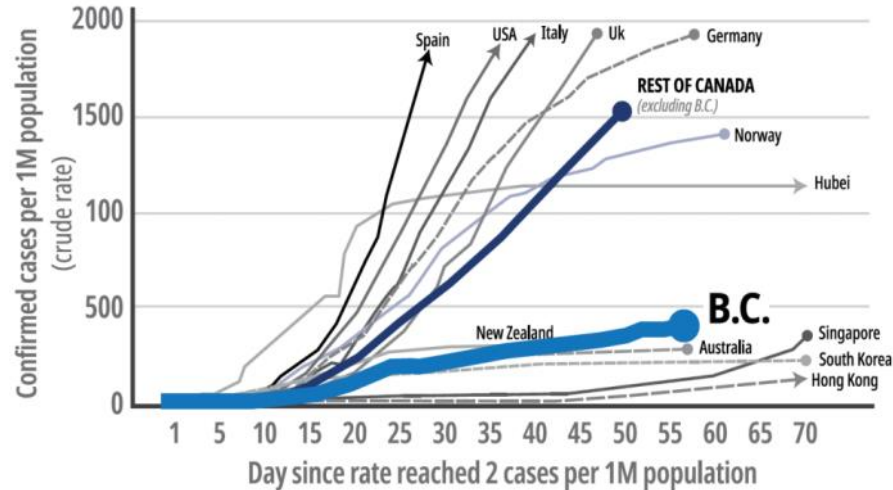
Mar 19/20 - CoV passes State of Emergency By-Law 12661



- **BC Provincial orders** impacting Park Board operations include:
  - gatherings in excess of 50 people are prohibited (expires May 30);
  - restaurants restricted to take-out services only (no dine-in service);
  - Parks & Open Spaces and Marinas classified as essential services;
  - Board meetings can be held electronically; are not required to allow members of the public to attend in person.

# Background

- Through adherence to health orders and physical distancing measures, BC has made good progress in flattening the curve of infections.



## Total number of cases as of May 11

- Global: Cases 4.15M, Deaths 284K, Recovered 1.43M
- Canada: Cases 69,911, Deaths 4992, Recovered 32,664
- BC: Cases 2330, Deaths 129, Recovered 1,659**

# Service Impacts





# Service Impacts - Overview

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A summary of the internal and external service impacts resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic will be presented across the following Park Board service groups:

- Parks & Open Spaces
- Recreation Services
- Planning & Park Development
- Business Services
- General Manager's Office, Board & Support Services

# Service Impacts - Summary

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In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the following actions have been taken:

- reduction in services to adhere to provincial orders;
- modification of safe work procedures at sites providing essential services;
- transitioned to mobile workforce where possible (work from home);
- facility & parking lot closures;
- road & park access restrictions;
- special event & filming permit cancellations;
- park use monitoring & surveys;
- employee lay-offs, mandatory furlough, & hiring freeze to reduce operating costs;
- participation in the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC);
- enhanced communication across all channels.

## Graphics & Design Shop

- Created nearly 8,500 COVID-19 related signs;
- Servicing all of Parks & Recreation, along with several other CoV groups including:
  - Engineering;
  - Mountain View Cemetery;
  - Real Estate & Facilities Mgmt;
  - Human Resources;
  - Emergency Operations Centre.



# Service Impacts - Parks & Open Spaces

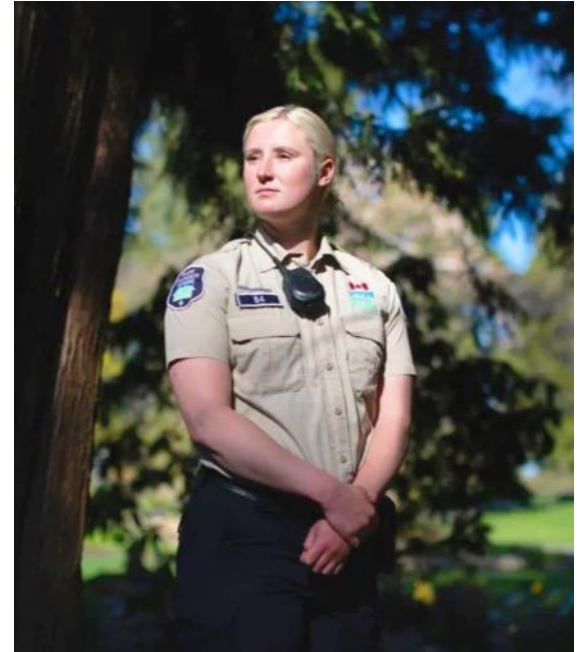
## Park Operations

- Installed 1000 closure signs;
- Closed playgrounds, skate parks, sport courts, outdoor recreation amenities;
- Removed beach logs
- Closed lots & installed 24 double parking lot gates.



## Park Rangers

- Doubled staffing levels from 10 to 20 Rangers per day;
- Monitoring for compliance with public health orders related to gatherings and safe distancing;
- Focusing service on DTES, seawall, beaches, Stanley Park, and downtown parks;
- 11079 warnings for physical distancing; 1880 issued this past weekend





## Park Experience Team (washrooms & janitorial)

- 100+ park washrooms open as essential service; experiencing high volume as the only public washrooms available in many areas;
- Added twice daily surface sanitation cleaning using recommended cleaning solution (QUAT);
- Implemented high season staffing 2 months early (March);
- Provided personal protective equipment (PPE) to all crews and limited to one staff person per vehicle;
- Sourced hand-wash station for Oppenheimer Park.



## Golf Services - Closure

- Closed the Park Board's full-size golf courses (3), clubhouses, and pitch & putts (3) on March 17;
- Courses temporarily opened for community access to additional green space;
- Langara golf clubhouse repurposed to provide food hampers to DTES residents;
  - 15 golf clubhouse staff redeployed;
  - Nearly 15,000 meals prepared per week.



## Stanley Park Road Reallocation Work

- Implemented closure of public vehicle access to Stanley Park on April 8;
  - in collaboration & consultation with Park Planning, Communications, CoV Traffic Management (Engineering), Emergency Services, and park stakeholders;
- Ranger check-points established at key access points, with additional signage developed and installed at entrances and throughout the park.



## Stanley Park Road Reallocation Work

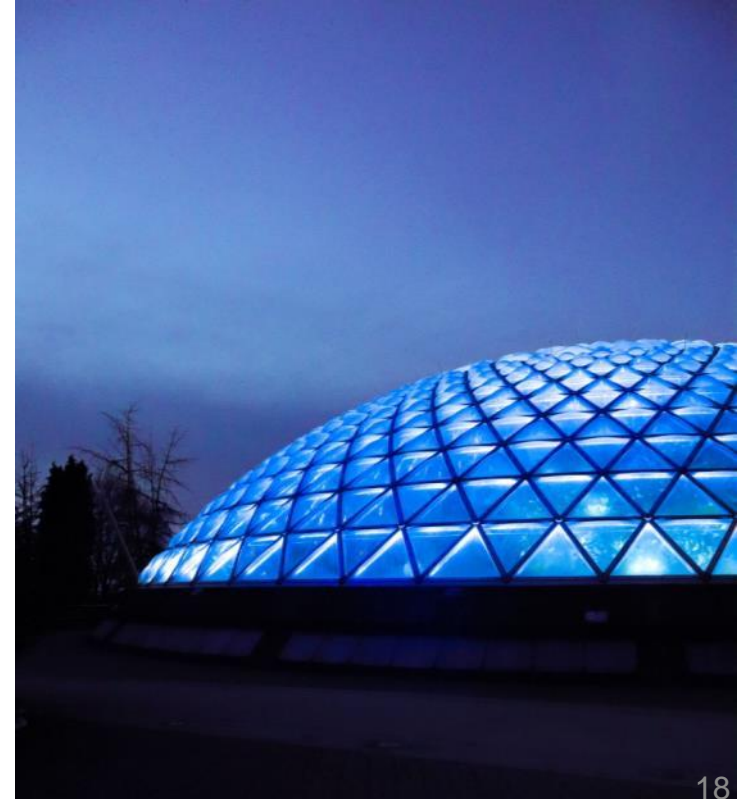
- Cyclists diverted to roadways to create more space on seawall for pedestrian traffic;





## Destination Attractions - Closures

- Bloedel Conservatory, Stanley Park Train & Info Booth, and VanDusen Botanical Gardens closed in March;





## **Community Centres & Field sports**

- all community centres, pools, rinks & fitness centres closed; programs and outdoor field sports permits cancelled (through May 30);
- refunds are still underway, with the majority already processed;
- Coal Harbour & Roundhouse community centres re-activated as Emergency COVID-19 self-isolation sites;
- Ray-Cam currently providing essential childcare services for the community;
- Creekside providing childcare services for essential service workers (via a third party operator);
- Britannia operating a “food store” for the local community & providing outreach for vulnerable populations.

## Park Board Champions

- Pilot program launched to address ongoing concerns around compliance with physical distancing, particularly at popular locations during good weather;
- 75 recreation programmers were re-assigned to educate and promote physical distancing at busy beaches, parks and along the seawall;
- currently working with the EOC Redeployment office to continue staffing this public awareness program



## Community Engagement & Outreach

- Providing community outreach with vulnerable populations (youth, families & seniors) by offering wellness check-ins over the phone;
  - Completed close to 700 senior & 180 youth wellness checks;
- Developing fitness classes & resources to offer online;
- Arts, Culture & Engagement team continuing to work on Fieldhouse Activation Program and with EOC Community Resilience Team to develop creative ways to activate DTES parks and promote physical distancing.

## **Capital Plan Delivery**

- Reviewed impacts to Capital Plan due to engagement restrictions;
- Continuing to advance active planning and park development projects.

## **COVID-19 Specific Planning Tasks**

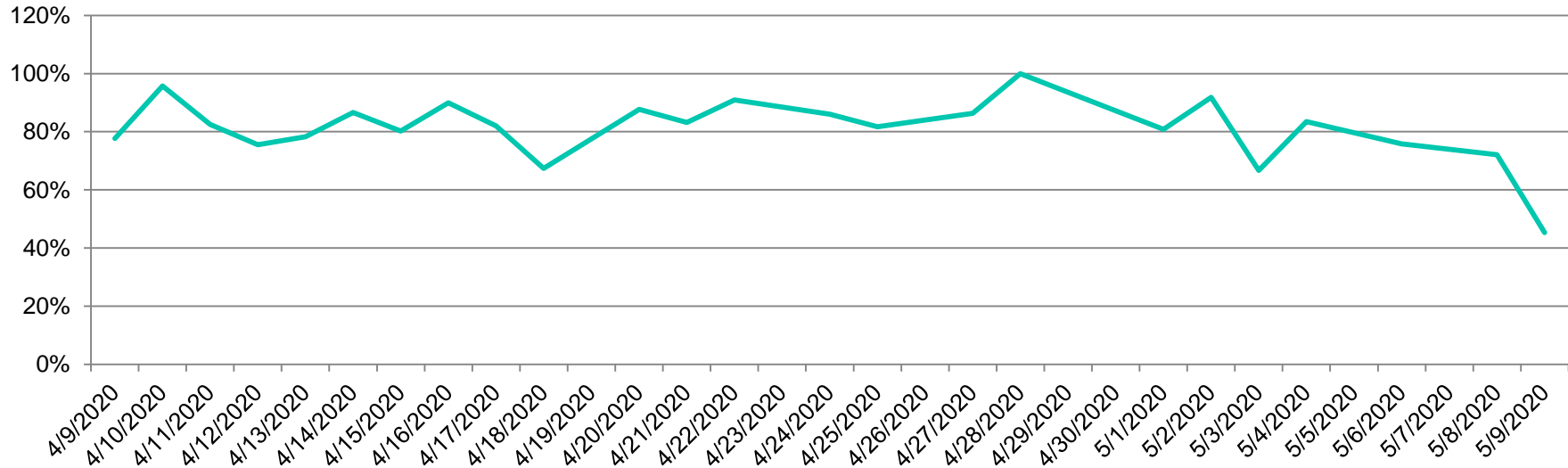
- Collaborated with Park Operations, Communications, and CoV Engineering in planning & implementing Stanley Park Closure to vehicle traffic;
- Developed a Queen Elizabeth Park Traffic Management Plan;
- Undertaking park user surveying in coordination with Recreation & Park Operations around physical distancing and other required measures;
- Supporting Parks & Recreation Re-opening & Recovery Plan.

## Parks Physical Distancing Data Collection

- Groups are mostly young adults (70% or more)
- People are obviously attempting to distance when sitting in the park but are not quite sitting 2m apart
- Fields are very well used as passive open space
- Looped trails are incredibly valuable
- Big increase in people using parks for exercise
- We've been able to reduce "pinch-points" from being observed at 41% to 30% - within a week through direct action



## Parks Physical Distancing Data Collection



### Approx. average rate of physical distancing observed

*Average observed physical distancing over the course of observations as been around 80%*

## ■ **Special Events & Filming**

- Special events & filming permits cancelled through May 30, except farmers markets (essential service);
- Event organizers are reviewing feasibility of 2020 events due to current public health directives and expectations over summer months; to date:
  - Major events – 39 cancellations; 6 postponements; 57 events still reviewing/determining next steps;
  - Minor events & other activities (includes community events, weddings, picnics, etc.) – 97% and 89% cancelled in April and May, respectively;
  - Motion Picture Filming – 75% reduction in March; 100% reduction in April & May, respectively.

- **Concessions**

- 13 Concession openings delayed – typically open in April/May for summer season;

- **Marinas**

- Heather and Burrard Civic Marinas remain open to members;

- **Parking**

- All 13 pay parking lots were closed to discourage gatherings and people travelling in groups to destination parks & beaches;

- **Lease Management**

- Work on over 1000+ active agreements being conducted remotely.

# Service Impacts – GMO, Board & Support Services

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## ■ **General Manager's Office**

- Scheduled daily briefing calls with Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to coordinate COVID-19 response;
- SLT members & staff deployed to EOC to provide leadership & support.

## ■ **Park Board Commissioners**

- Commissioners receiving regular staff briefing via teleconference & memo;
- Park Board public meetings resuming electronically, with public participation via teleconference (PB Admin building closed to the public);

## ■ **Administrative & Corporate Services**

- Processed \$3,401,298.99 in refunds from 69,598 transactions
- HR, Payroll, Procurement & other Financial services provided remotely.



# Communications & Awareness



# Communication Campaign - Public Awareness

- Initiated a broad public awareness campaign on physical distancing in parks



# Communication Campaign: Digital and Social Media



**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Apr 17  
Chicken teriyaki bowls: lots of them! Our staff at golf course kitchens are whipping up 2000+ healthy meals each day for vulnerable residents. We're proud to be part of the City's effort to deliver food to the Downtown Eastside during the pandemic. #VanParkBoard



City of Vancouver and Vancouver Parks Golf

4 43 208

**USE OUR PARKS SAFELY**

Use our park but stay apart, maintain 2 metre distance

Visit parks and beaches during less busy times

Stay home if you are feeling sick, especially if you are coughing or experiencing a fever

vanparkboard 6h

**UPDATE**

*Effective immediately we are temporarily closing all of our playgrounds across #Vancouver to help minimize public gatherings and potential risk to the community. Swipe up for up-to-date info on closures #covid19*

**SWIPE UP**

See More

**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Apr 14  
Enjoy our parks, and here's how:

- Stay close to home
- Go solo
- Visit during off-peak times
- Watch your speed
- Maintain your space from others

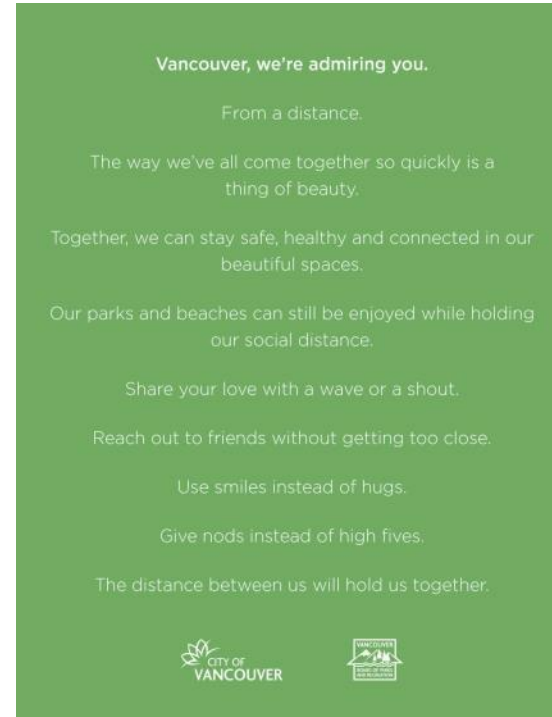
#VanParkBoard #FlattenTheCurve #Vancouver

0:41 20K views

# Communication Campaign: Brand



- Brand campaign executed on social and traditional media with launch of The Distance Between Us Will Hold Us Together creative on March 26





# Communicating With Video: Many Voices, One Message



Created short videos for social media campaign featuring the Canucks, Commissioners, and GM Malcolm Bromley

**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Mar 27  
A friendly reminder from us and the @Canucks:

- Stay stick length apart (6ft) from others
- Visit beaches & parks during off-peak hours
- Take home-ice advantage (#stayhome) if feeling sick

Let's #FlattenTheCurve @1kirkmclean Manny Malhotra, Darcy Rota

A video of Manny Malhotra, a Vancouver Canucks player, wearing a white baseball cap and a blue Under Armour t-shirt, speaking to the camera. The video has 12.9K views and a duration of 0:13 / 0:50.

**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Apr 9  
A message from #VanParkBoard Commissioners: Vancouver, please keep up the good work in physical distancing as we continue to flatten the curve. The distance between us will hold us together! #flattenthecurve

A video featuring Camil Dumont, Park Board Chair, holding a young child. The video has 1.1K views and a duration of 0:11 / 1:06.

A video showing two people on a beach, one operating a camera on a tripod. The video has 1.9K views and a duration of 1:30 / 1:35.

**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Apr 9  
A message from #VanParkBoard Commissioners: Vancouver, please keep up the good work in physical distancing as we continue to flatten the curve. The distance between us will hold us together! #flattenthecurve

A blue graphic with a white heart outline and the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation logo. The text reads: "The Distance Between Us Will Hold Us Together. Let's #flattenthecurve". The video has 1.9K views and a duration of 1:30 / 1:35.

# Communication Campaign: Media Relations



- Leveraged reach of regional and international media to spread the word

**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard

NEWS RELEASE: As of tomorrow, and until further notice, roads in Stanley Park will close to vehicles. Closing the park's roads to motorists will reduce the number of people in the park and allow increased physical distancing for cyclists and pedestrians. [ow.ly/eY7330qw6Kj](https://ow.ly/eY7330qw6Kj)



**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard · Apr 4

Media event TODAY at 1030am in front of Cactus Club at English Bay Beach. [@vanparkGM](https://twitter.com/vanparkGM) to provide an update on new program being piloted to raise public awareness about physical distancing in parks + beaches across the city. Join the live stream on facebook: [facebook.com/parkboard](https://facebook.com/parkboard)




# Communication: Earned Media



- Media pitches and earned media coverage of Park Board response

VANCOUVER | News

## Vancouver golf clubhouses to feed needy

 **Jon Woodward** Reporter, CTV Vancouver  
@CTV\_Jon | [Contact](#)



Stanley Park **seawall closed** to bikes but should runners stay ...

[Globalnews.ca](#) - Apr. 12, 2020

The **Vancouver** Park Board has **closed** the Stanley Park **seawall** to bikes to allow for greater physical distancing and now some are suggesting ...

British Columbia

## Overall adherence to physical distancing has Vancouver parks manager 'pleasantly surprised'



On first day of long weekend, public staying distant — for the most part

Matthew Low - CBC News - Posted: Apr 10, 2020 9:26 PM PT | Last Updated: April 10



Howard Normann, a manager with the Vancouver Park Board, says he was pleasantly surprised with the levels of physical distancing he saw around English Bay on Friday. (Sean Foss/CBC)

News / Local News

## COVID-19: Vancouver park board champions to patrol beaches, parks

Tiffany Crawford  
April 4, 2020 • 2 minute read



Vancouver, BC, MARCH 31, 2020 -- People keep their distance while on Jericho Beach in Vancouver, BC Tuesday, March 31, 2020. Due to the Covid-19 viral outbreak, people are advised to keep their distance from each other. JASON PAYNE / PNG



# Communication: Demonstrating Our Community Support



- Honouring our #healthcareheroes: 7pm Gun Salute, Bloedel Lights Up Blue, and @VanParkGM Balcony Cheers



**bloedelconserv** @BloedelConserv · Mar 27  
Tonight for the #7pmCheer, Bloedel Conservatory, the Burrard Bridge, City Hall & @bcplace will light up in blue, to honour the tireless & invaluable #COVID19 work that health care professionals & front line workers are doing. Join in & make some noise!



**Vancouver Park Board** @ParkBoard

The inaugural 7pm blast of the Nine o'clock Gun happened tonight in support of our #healthcareheroes fighting the COVID-19 virus 🙌❤️ #Vancouver



**malcolm bromley** @vanparkGM · Apr 2  
Thanks to our #HealthCareHeroes #Vancouver loves you all. #Covid7pmCheer @ParkBoard



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# 2020 Budget and Staffing Impacts

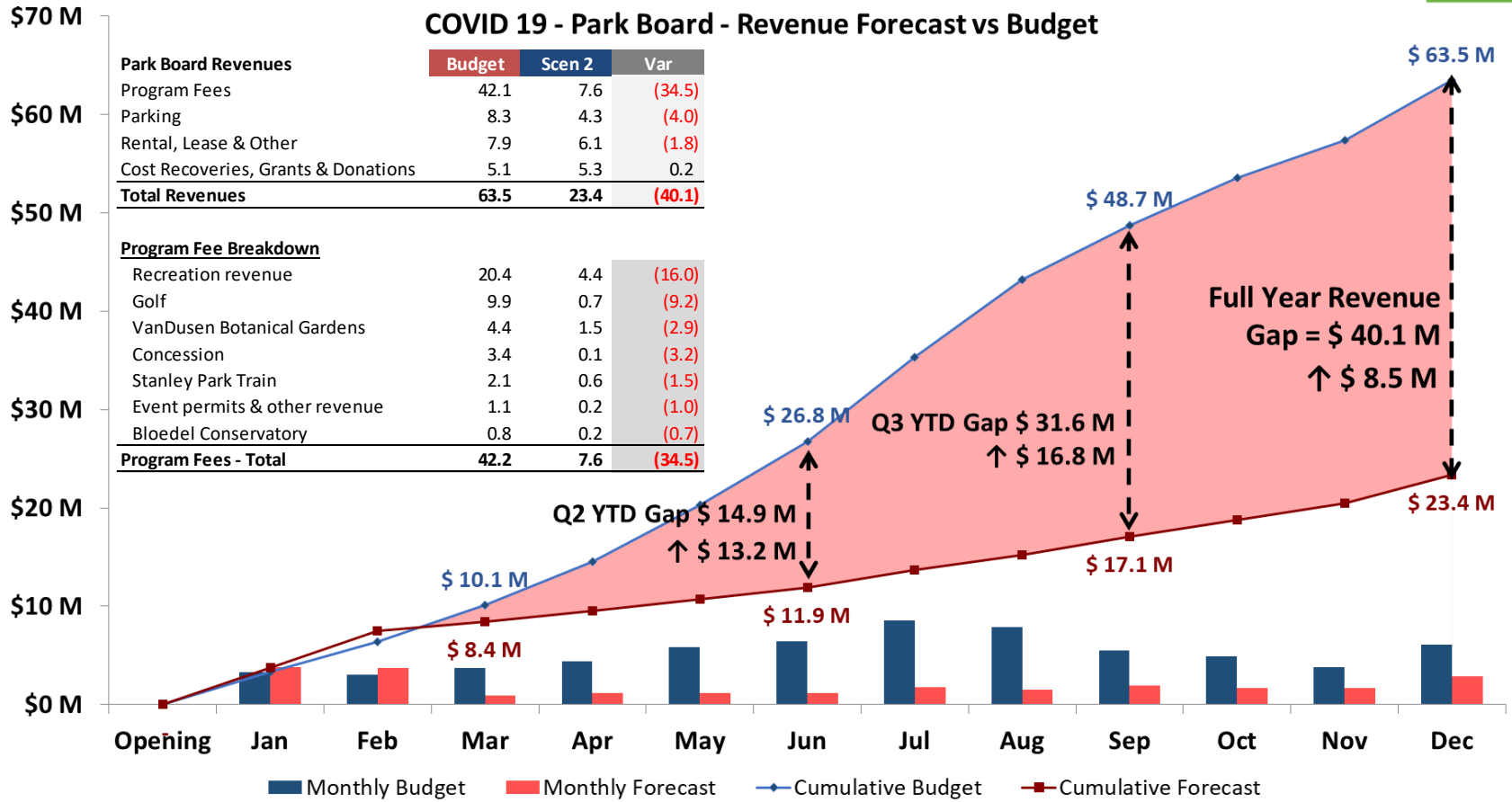
# Operating Budget Impact – CoV

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- In order to assess the financial impact of Covid-19 on COV budget several financial scenarios were developed
- On April 14, 2020, Council received a report detailing 3 different financial scenarios – from these Scenarios it was agreed to use Scenario 2 for purposes of planning mitigation strategies
- Scenario 2 assumptions included:
  - \$152M revenue reduction (Park Board \$40M - \$36M Program Fees & Rentals, \$4M Parking)
  - Physical distancing restrictions are lifted end of August and there is a six week recovery period
  - \$111M shortfall predicted after mitigation strategies are applied (includes \$11M of provincial funding support for DTES)

# Parks and Recreation – Operating Budget Impact



# Parks & Recreation – Staffing Impacts

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- The operating budget shortfall projected in 2020 has had the following impacts to Park Board staffing:
  - Over 850 temporary layoffs of union employees
    - Employees are guaranteed 6 weeks of pay protection
  - 10% salary reduction and furlough program for all exempt staff (until at least Dec 2020)
- A redeployment office has been created to re-assign staff to essential services:
  - Clubhouse staff (~15) - 1,500 food hampers/week @ Langara for City and community organizations who support homeless and non market housing residents
  - Recreation Programmers (~40) - Park Champion program to support physical distancing
- Hiring freeze continues





# Reopening & Recovery Strategy



## Guiding Principles



**Health &  
Wellness**



**Equity**



**Transparency**



**Safety**



**Financial  
Sustainability**



**Operational  
Feasibility**

- Park Board's principles of decolonization ask for an approach that is:  
Transparent, equitable and centred on community health and wellness.
- Responding to COVID-19, requires a focus on:  
Safety for staff and the public, financial sustainability and operational feasibility

## BC's Four-Stage Restart Plan

**PHASE 1: TODAY**  
ESSENTIAL SERVICES  
PARKS  
GOLF

**PHASE 2: MID-MAY**  
RECREATION/SPORTS  
BEACHES

ENHANCED PROTOCOLS

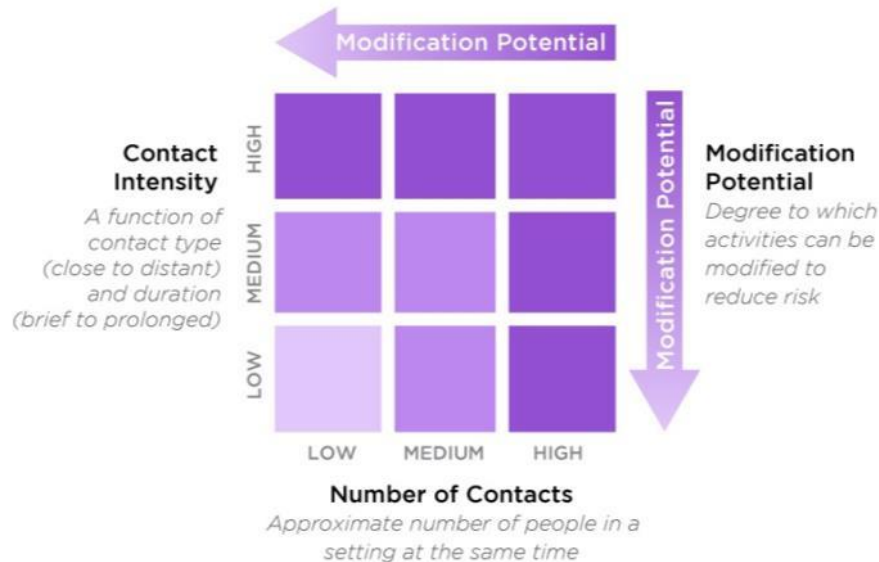
**PHASE 3: JUNE - SEPT.**  
RECREATION CENTRES  
GATHERINGS (<50)

ENHANCED PROTOCOLS +  
TRANSMISSION RATE  
REMAINS LOW

**PHASE 4: TBD**  
LARGE GATHERINGS (50+)

WIDE VACCINATION /  
"COMMUNITY" IMMUNITY /  
BROAD SUCCESSFUL  
TREATMENTS

## Risk-based Decision-making

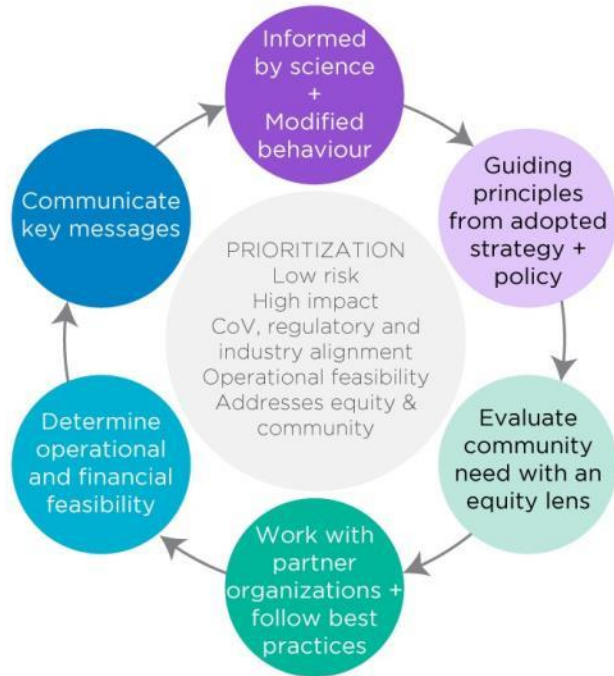


- Following the Provincial guidance for Risk-based Decision-making
- Develop physical and behavioural modifications to reduce risk



# Reopening & Recovery Framework (DRAFT)

## Reopening Process



- Plan for reopening based on science, feedback on behaviour and opportunity for modifications
- Consider community need, equity and transparency as decisions are made and shared
- Work closely with the City, partners, stakeholders and industry organizations
- Ensure operational and financial feasibility are reflected in plans.



Phased Opening considers reopening protocols:

## Reopening Protocols



Communicate  
with the public



Practice  
physical distancing



No large  
gatherings



Protect and support  
employee and customer  
health and safety



Ensure equitable access  
to services for  
vulnerable populations

1. Outdoor facilities with limited participants and no or limited shared equipment and low financial and operational barriers.
2. Outdoor spaces with typically more contact or sharing of equipment, or those with financial or operational challenges.
3. Indoor spaces with potential to follow health measures.
4. Indoor facilities/spaces requiring extended lead time to comply with health orders.

## Golf Services - Reopened

- Implemented modified operating and play protocols to ensure safe physical distancing; reopened Fraserview/McCleery May 1 (Langara May 15):
  - Online bookings only; reduced tee times; onsite contactless pay;
  - Golf Shop access limited to 2 patrons at a time;
  - Food and beverage services remain closed;
  - Single rider cart policy; all carts sanitized in a designated area between use;
  - Frequent touch points removed & cup fillers added so flag sticks are not touched;
  - Physical distancing standing circles painted on the cart paths at every tee box area.

# Reopening & Recovery - Parks & Open Spaces

## Golf Services - Reopened



## **Golf Services – Reopening**

- Fully booked all week at Fraserview & McCleery;
- Fully booked through opening week-end at Langara;
- Roughly 90% of rounds were secured through advance-booking rules; fee charged per golfer to book outside 5 day booking window;
- Revenues generated during opening weekend at Fraserview & McCleery approximated \$64,300; roughly \$52,100 related to green fees, \$12,200 from advanced booking fees;
- Advanced bookings have been made to secure roughly 50% of all available tee times

## Golf Services – Reopening Observations

- Positive feedback from staff and patrons with respect to measures and the impact on maintaining social distancing;
- No line-ups were noted, and all patrons were very polite and understanding of the changes;
- No reports of non-compliance with social distancing requirements;
- Many did note that they felt spacing between tee times was very cautious, and that spacing could be reduced without effecting the ability to social distance;





## Destination Attractions – VanDusen Reopened

- VanDusen Botanical Garden reopened on Friday, May 1 with new safety protocols including:
  - online ticket reservations; limited capacity by controlling entry times offered;
  - contactless scanning & entry;
  - enhanced washroom cleaning & new handwashing stations near portable washrooms in the garden;
  - new signage, one-way routes & ground markers; and
  - only one household at a time in the maze.





## Destination Attractions – VanDusen Reopened

- Re-opening went very smoothly; no lineups of more than 4-5 households at a time;
- 600+ members on opening weekend (100% of member capacity); 900+ paid visitors (90% of visitor capacity); typical May weekend = 2,000-3,000 visitors;
- 6,500+ visitor tickets & 8,000+ member reservations booked to date;
- positive response from onsite visitors and via social media;
- Staff continue to monitor and manage capacity based on the entry line-up and flow through the Visitor Centre and garden;



## **Tennis & Pickleball Outdoor Courts – Reopened as of May 10th**

- New guidelines include:
  - Keep 2 metres apart at all times
  - Limit play to singles, or doubles play with partners from the same household
  - Queue outside the courts and maintain 2 metres distance when courts are in use
  - Do not share racquets or other equipment (for pickleball, bring your own net)
  - Clearly mark your ball and refrain from picking up others' tennis or pickleballs
  - Casual game play only: no lessons or league play allowed
  - Remain courteous and limit play time to 30 mins when others are waiting
  - Please leave the courts immediately after play is finished

## Stanley Park Road Reallocation Working Group

- Continue to see high level of use;
- Well integrated with closure of Beach Ave;
- Staff evaluating future options for Park Drive as well as West end waterfront Master plan;



# Reopening & Recovery – Planning & Park Development



## Stanley Park Road Reallocation Working Group

168,000+

TOTAL CYCLISTS THROUGH  
STANLEY PARK (SINCE ROAD  
REALLOCATION)

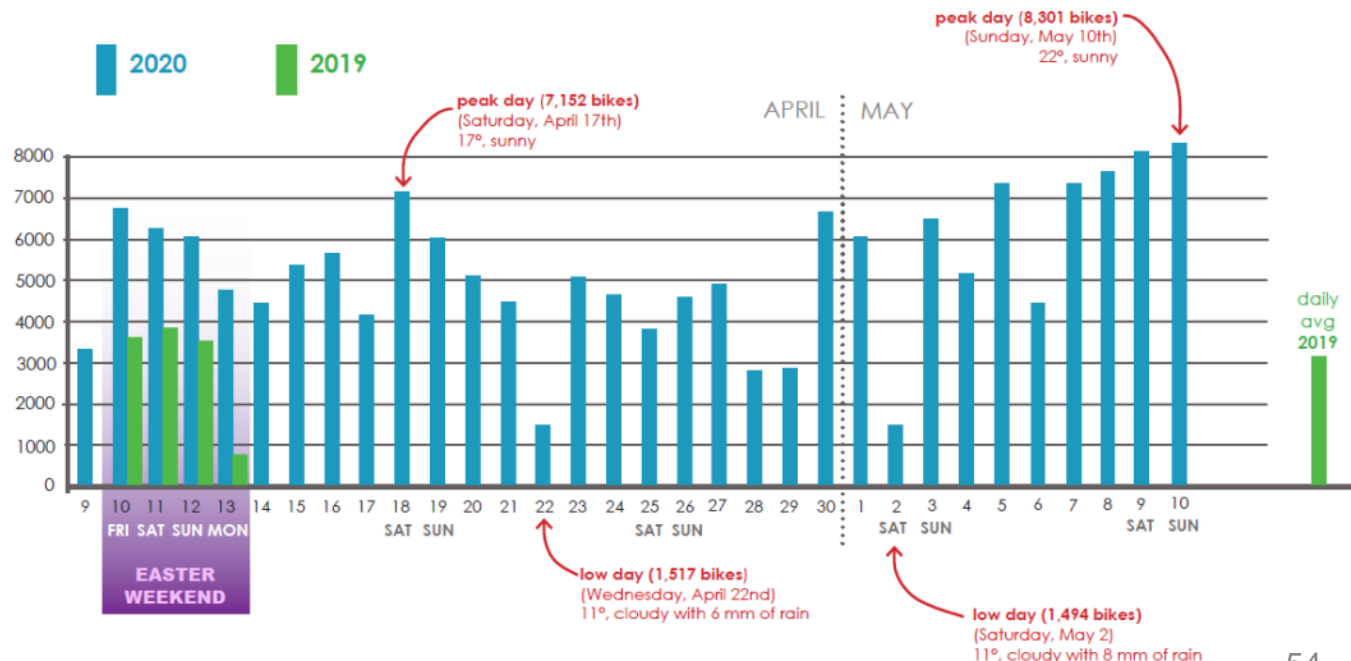
5,318

DAILY AVERAGE OF BIKES DURING  
ROAD CLOSURES (April 9 - May 10th)  
compared to

3,000

DAILY AVERAGE OF BIKES in 2019

CYCLISTS IN STANLEY PARK  
PER DAY SINCE ROAD REALLOCATION  
April 9th to May 10th, 2020



## **Parking**

- Currently assessing plans and timing to re-open parking lots.

## **Concessions**

- Kitsilano Beach Concession at Boathouse Restaurant opened on a trial basis on April 23; monitoring for viability;
- Currently assessing feasibility of re-opening concessions at select locations with modified operation protocols to ensure safe physical distancing & food handling can be maintained.



# Reopening & Recovery – Next Steps



- Continue to develop Park Board re-opening and recovery plans
  - Prioritize services to be re-opened
  - Consult with key stakeholders
- Address the operating funding gap through exploring opportunities to restart revenue generating businesses, and scaling back spend to essential spending only;
- Assess impacts to Capital budget and Capital plan;
- Assess impacts to Service Plan;
- Regular Board updates

Change is hard  
but you've done  
a tremendous job,  
Vancouver!





# Q&A



