



March 21, 2022

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners
FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation
SUBJECT: Proposed Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park – Report Back

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board approve the southeast site option, as outlined in this report, for the general location of the proposed Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park, with the exact siting to be determined by the General Manager, Parks and Recreation, subject to an archaeological assessment.
- B. THAT, subject to approval of Recommendation A, the Vancouver Park Board authorize the General Manager to approve a 5-year licence agreement with the Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation to operate the community garden.

REPORT SUMMARY

In 2020, Park Board staff received an Expression of Interest (EOI) for a new community garden in Burrard View Park, called the Vancouver Urban Food Forest (“food forest”). The proposed collective garden would include a permaculture-based area of annual and perennial plants and a food forest of native, fruit-bearing trees and shrubs to be planted and maintained in collaboration with Indigenous community members. The proponents are a group of community-based non-profits from the Hastings-Sunrise neighbourhood who have collaboratively developed the EOI, garden design, associated maintenance plan, and programming.

In March 2021, staff brought a report to the Park Board recommending the approval of the food forest in the southeast part of Burrard View Park. The Board referred the project back to staff “for further consultation and engagement with the proponents, community, and other key stakeholders in order to identify a suitable location for the Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park.” Between March and November 2021, staff conducted further site research and engagement (Phase 2). The overarching Local Food Systems Action Plan Update was approved by the Board in November of 2021.

After reviewing this additional policy direction, feedback, as well as technical feasibility, programmatic considerations and other Park Board policy, staff recommend the Vancouver Urban Food Forest be situated in the southeast location. Given the site’s history, an investigation by the Park Board archaeologist is recommended before detailed site design or deep excavation occurs.

BOARD AUTHORITY, RELATED POLICY & PREVIOUS DECISIONS

As per the [Vancouver Charter](#), the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks in the City of Vancouver, including any structures, programs and activities, fees, and improvements that occur within those parks. Burrard View Park was designated as a permanent public park by City Council in March 1982.

In 2013, City Council passed the [Vancouver Food Strategy](#) that guides the advancement and support of the food system across the city.

In 2015, the Park Board passed the [Urban Agriculture Policy](#) that informs the development and implementation of urban agriculture projects in parks.

In 2020, the Park Board approved the [VanPlay Framework](#), for Vancouver's [Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan](#) that informs the supply, renewal and distribution of food assets in parks.

In March of 2021, the Park Board [referred](#) the [Burrard View Park – Vancouver Urban Food Forest](#) report back to staff.

In November of 2021, the Park Board approved the [Local Food System Action Plan Update](#) that will guide improving the access and equitable delivery of assets and services in parks and facilities including updates to the Urban Agriculture Policy.

BACKGROUND

Site

Burrard View Park (2.77ha) is located in the Hastings-Sunrise neighbourhood, and within the area of the Hastings Community Centre Association. Like the rest of the City of Vancouver, the park is located on the unceded territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. The park was part of the Hastings Townsite, which was established in 1863 and incorporated with the City of Vancouver in 1910. Between 1906 and 1930, three structures were erected in Burrard View Park: a Children's Aid home (that became known as the 'Wall St. Orphanage'), a 'Babies Cottage' (now the home of the privately managed Cottage Hospice), and a Juvenile Detention home, which was demolished in 1976. Foundation walls from that building are still visible on the north side of the park.

The park's current features include a playground (to be replaced), an off-leash dog area, a fieldhouse with community programming, a daycare, and the Cottage Hospice. More detail about Burrard View Park and its context can be found in the [March 2021 Board report](#).

Project Timeline

As outlined in the March 2021 Board report, in spring 2020 a group of community organizations ("the proponents") approached the Park Board about establishing a Vancouver Urban Food Forest ("food forest") in Hastings-Sunrise. Park Board staff and the proponents considered the suitability of three area parks, including Callister and Hastings Parks. The selection criteria included existing park use, park size, available open space, existing plans for park redevelopment, proximity and connection cost of water source for irrigation, proximity to public washrooms, and the ability to serve equity-deserving populations. With these considerations, staff recommended Burrard View Park as the most appropriate site to further consider.

In November 2020, Park Board staff received an EOI from the proponents (Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, Lettuce Harvest, and Refarmers, making up VUFFF, the Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation). Details of the proponents' proposal can be found in the March 2021 Board report. Data from the Local Food System Action Plan Update (LFSAP) validated that the proposal was adjacent to an Equity Initiative Zone (per VanPlay) indicating that there is a high-priority area for increasing food and culture gardens within two blocks of Burrard View Park. Pandora Park Community Garden and Wall St. Community Garden are the two nearest gardens to Burrard View Park where neighbourhood residents could participate in growing local food.

These two gardens are individual plot-based (rather than collective) gardens and have years-long waitlists.

In March 2021, staff brought the report to the Park Board. Public engagement indicated support for the garden generally, but raised questions about the suitability of the proposed site in the southeast corner of the park, mainly due to concerns raised over existing passive recreational use. The Park Board voted unanimously to refer the report back to staff “for further consultation and engagement with the proponents, community, and other key stakeholders in order to identify a suitable location for the Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park.”



Figure 1: VUFF Project Timeline

During summer 2021, staff collected additional information and confirmed that in addition to the site option originally proposed, an option located northwest of the Cottage Hospice could potentially meet the technical needs of the garden including sunlight, access to water, sufficient site area, and distance to other amenities, such as washrooms and playground (see Figure 2 included in the Discussion section below). In the fall of 2021, staff conducted additional engagement (“Phase 2”) per the Board’s referral, which is summarized later in this report.

Local Food System Action Plan Update

The Park Board Local Food System Action Plan Update (LFSAP) was approved by the Park Board in November 2021. This adds to policy support for food assets and services provision outlined in VanPlay. The proposed food forest in Burrard View Park is in alignment with policy that addresses inequities across the city, including in Hastings-Sunrise, and is designed to include Indigenous voices and practice highlighted as priorities in the LFSAP.

The goals of the LFSAP are to:

1. Centre Indigenous Voices in Food System to Honour the Teaching that “Food is Medicine”;
2. Improve Equity in Park Board Food Assets, Services, and Programs;
3. Strengthen Food Partnerships and Collaboration to Support a Decolonized, Sustainable and Just Food Economy; and
4. Build Long-Term Food System Resiliency, Sustainability, and Increase Biodiversity.

DISCUSSION

Proposed Garden Locations: Technical Considerations

Two diagrammatic site options were proposed as part of the Phase 2 engagement.



Figure 2: Northwest and southeast site options for VUFF (as shown in Nov/Dec 2021 survey)

A variety of practical constraints place limits on where a garden can be situated within a park. These include compatibility with adjacent uses, access to a water source, solar access, and accessibility considerations including slope and washroom access. These features are considered essential, meaning these considerations will influence the success, usage and feasibility of the project depending on which site is chosen for the food forest. The following table details the analysis of the two proposed sites.

Table 1: Proposed Garden Location Analysis (criteria, details and considerations)

Criteria	Northwest (NW) Site Option	Southeast (SE) Site Option	Considerations
Space not occupied by another formal use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - used informally for picnicking and other casual recreation - common to see off-leash dogs here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - area to north used informally for picnicking and other casual use - flat area to west used for self-directed activities, such as informal play and picnicking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - NW: higher likelihood of conflict with off-leash dogs - SE: self-directed park activities in the flat space to the west of the field house would be affected on the eastern edge of the flat space
Sun exposure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - receives adequate sunlight for proposed native and perennial plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - receives adequate sunlight for proposed native and perennial plants 	

Criteria	Northwest (NW) Site Option	Southeast (SE) Site Option	Considerations
Slope and accessibility	- area within proposed site on slope of approximately 6%	- area within proposed site on slope of approximately 9%	- slope varies considerably across park and surrounding area making question of access within and to site complex; appropriate design features can be used within each site to mitigate slope and offer ease of mobility
Proximity to amenities (e.g., washrooms, playground)	- closest public washrooms are in the field house - washrooms also available in community room on lower floor of hospice; open when room is rented by Hastings Community Centre Association - not within view of playground, field house / public washroom	- immediately adjacent to public washrooms; opened daily and cleaned by Park Board staff - within view of playground, field house / public washroom	- close proximity to washrooms allows convenient and quick access for gardeners - having playground and washroom within view allows for access and oversight for children of caregivers while they garden - proximity to commonly used play area and other amenities invites informal use, learning and community building in the food forest
Access to water source	- requires connecting to water main on Penticton Street, in coordination with COV Engineering, in addition to installing a water line within the park	- requires connecting to existing water line within the park at the field house	- both options are possible; - NW option more costly due to need for connection to Engineering's water main outside of the park
Estimated costs to Park Board	- site prep and soil: \$5,000 - water meter: \$5,000 - water line in park: \$10,000 - connection to water main: \$15,000 - Total (+10% contingency) = \$38,5000	- site prep and soil: \$5,000 - water meter: \$5,000 - water line in park: \$10,000 - Total (+10% contingency) = \$22,000	- common practice for water installations has changed since March 2021 report; - water meters now standard on new installations adding ~\$5,000 to estimated cost of both sites

Proposed Garden Locations - Engagement Approach & Methodology

Staff facilitated thorough engagement processes in two phases:

- Phase 1 informed the March 2021 Board report;
- Phase 2, conducted in November and December 2021, informs this report.

The role of engagement is to include the knowledge and experiences of community in the development of meaningful solutions. It represents one form of input, alongside technical and policy considerations.

VanPlay and LFSAP guide staff on how to dedicate resources during project review and development. Such resources include material elements such as park land, but also importantly in this instance, where to focus on public engagement. With these foundational directions of recent policy as a guide, staff put focus on community partnerships, stakeholder and community outreach to Indigenous-led and serving organizations, as well as outreach generally to equity-denied communities who have historically been under-represented in such planning activities.

Importantly, this principle-led engagement included informing and consulting with residents, park users, and organizations in the immediate area.

For Phase 2 engagement, staff developed a mixed-methods approach that included both online and in-person opportunities to learn about the project and to share ideas with staff. Staff also modified approaches in phase 1 with community input. Table 2 below provides an overview of the Phase 2 engagement activities, with additional details provided in Appendix A (including timelines, descriptions of meetings and conversations, along with survey feedback, results and analysis).

Table 2: Engagement Activities – Phase 2 Overview

Activity	Dates	Overview
Meetings		
Burrardview Community Association	Nov 15/21	Two (2) Park Board staff members met with four (4) Burrardview Community Association executives to discuss the upcoming public engagement process and hear input.
Pop-up Info Session	Nov 20/21	Park Board staff and VUFFF members were onsite to share information about the proposal and the survey opportunity. Approximately 40 people attended.
VUFFF meetings	Various dates	Staff met with VUFFF (4) times during Phase 2
Cottage Hospice	Nov 16/21	Park Board staff met with Manager of Housing and Hospice Services at Cottage Hospice.
Digital Engagement		
Survey	Nov 16/21 - Dec 6/21	Received 377 responses, including paper surveys.
Shape Your City	Nov 16/21 – present	Staff received and responded to seventeen (17) questions posed via Shape Your City webpage, which shared extensive information about the project, including an FAQ section, information about similar projects, a timeline, important links, and follow-up communications by staff to respond to questions gathered at the in-person event.
Emails	Nov 16/21 – Dec 6/21	Staff received sixteen (16) emails about the project during the Phase 2 public input period.
Other Communication Materials		
Onsite Signage	Nov 16/21 – present	Six (6) informational signs were posted around the perimeter of the park to notify and connect residents to the Shape Your City webpage.
Handbills and Posters	Nov 2021	Handbills and posters were distributed at key locations containing high-level information about the project, and including a QR code directing residents to the Shape Your City webpage for more information.
Letters from organizations	Jan 2021 – Feb 2022	Seven (7) letters of support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Mothers Centre Society - Circle of Eagles - Pacific Association of First Nations Women (<i>supports SE site</i>) - Hastings Community Centre Association - Food and Garden Programs - Wall Street Community Garden (<i>supports SE site</i>) - Pandora Park Community Garden - Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House One (1) letter of conditional support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burrardview Community Association (<i>supports NW site, opposes SE site</i>)

Proposed Garden Locations - Engagement Results and Other Inputs

Staff listened to and considered closely the experiences and perspectives of stakeholder and public audiences. Results have shown support for both the southeast and northwest site options, and has therefore not yielded a consensus on a preferred location. While it is difficult to find solutions that meet all desires and needs, staff align recommendations to:

- policy goals;
- prioritization of key stakeholders;
- communicating the technical feasibility; and
- existing conditions and constraints of the site, while finding ways to mitigate impact.

Additionally, when considering engagement outcomes and other inputs, the diagram in Figure 3 below illustrates the hierarchy of how this information factored into final recommendations.

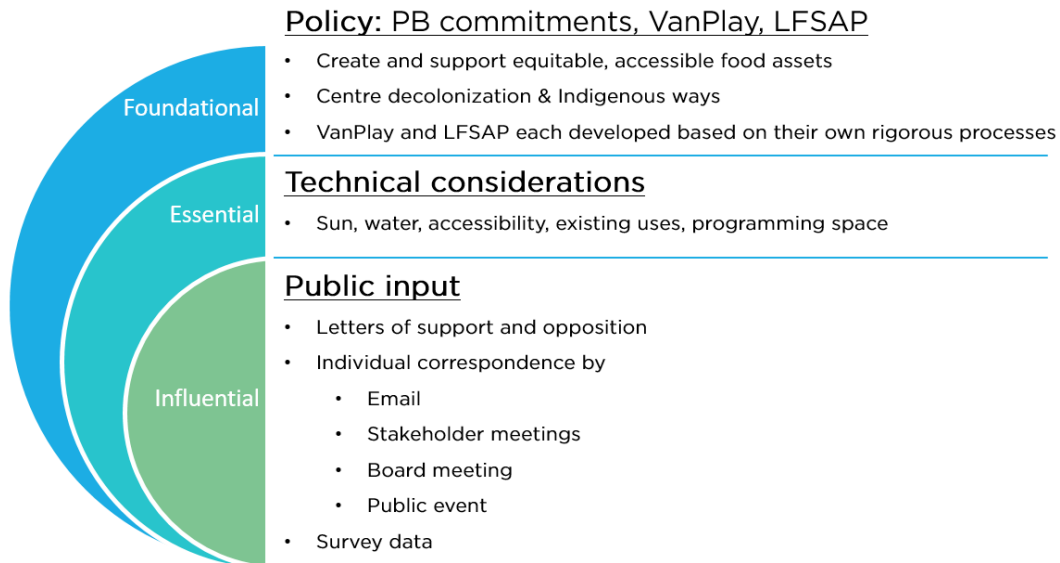


Figure 3: Hierarchy of Inputs Informing VUFF Site Recommendations

Proposed Garden Locations - Recommended Option

Staff have found that the food forest proposal is strongly aligned with recent Park Board commitments to equity, decolonization, and accessible food assets as articulated in both VanPlay and the LFSAP.

From a technical standpoint (e.g., water and sunlight), the food forest can be successful at either of the site options. From a programming and accessibility standpoint, the garden is more likely to be successful at the southeast site option. For example, a parent or caregiver attending a program at a food forest at the southeast site option can supervise their children at the playground or using the washroom during the program, which would not be possible at the northwest site option. This parent or caregiver may not have childcare options and may not otherwise be able to participate in the program.

The southeast site option offers more opportunity for holistic community connection, collaborative programming, and complementary field house activation. The food forest would increase opportunities for engagement and activity in the southeast area of the park.

Given consideration of all of the above, staff recommend the southeast site option as the general location for the food forest, with the exact siting to be determined after an archaeological site investigation. Staff feel this recommendation balances all of the above with the community engagement inputs to the process.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Climate Emergency Action Plan Implications

This proposal supports Big Move 6 in that a forest naturally sequesters more carbon than mown turf grass. It will also offer more shade and cooling opportunities.

Financial Considerations

The costs to the Park Board for the recommended site option are estimated to be \$22,000, including a 10% contingency. There are sufficient funds in the Park Board Local Food budget to cover these costs. This expense is included in the 2022 Capital Budget.

The VUFF Foundation would cover the following costs:

- professional design services, communications, materials and supplies estimated at \$63,000; and
- operating costs per Park Board Community Garden licence agreements; Park Board has an established process for entering into licence agreements with community gardens, with a standard 5 year renewal schedule if all requirements are met.

CONCLUSION

Per the Board's direction of March 2021, staff have completed a comprehensive second phase of public engagement and analysis of the food forest proposal. Staff recommend the southeast site option as the general location for the food forest with the exact siting to be determined after an archaeological site investigation. Staff feel this recommendation has strong alignment with policy commitments, fulfills essential technical requirements and reflects the results of the extensive public engagement, to the best extent possible given no broad consensus was reached. The proponents are well-positioned in terms of resources and connections in the community to build, maintain, and activate the space.

Subject to Board approval of the recommendations in this report, archaeological site investigation, preparation and construction of the food forest could begin in 2022, with a 5-year licence granted to the Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation to operate this new collective garden amenity.

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Engagement Summary - Burrard View Park Urban Food Forest

Background

In 2020, Park Board staff received an Expression of Interest from the Vancouver Urban Food Forest Foundation (VUFFF) to create a food and culture garden in a park in Hastings-Sunrise.

Staff found the Expression of Interest (EOI) to be strongly aligned with strategic directions established in the VanPlay (2019), as well as the (then-forthcoming, now approved) Local Food System Action Plan (LFSAP) (2021). Further analysis of parks in Hastings-Sunrise determined Burrard View as an appropriate site based on equity needs and technical considerations.

For new food and culture garden proposals larger than 250m², the Park Board's Urban Agriculture policy recommends:

- a 2-week minimum public consultation period that is jointly facilitated by Park Board staff;
- process should include informational notices mailed within a 2-block radius of the project site;
- at least one informational sign on-site; and
- an online platform for people to provide feedback.

Staff followed this guidance for Phase 1 engagement, however, staff and the Board received feedback from some residents who felt that this process was insufficient. The Board referred the report recommendations back to staff for further consultation and engagement with the proponents, community, and other key stakeholders in order to identify a suitable location for the Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park.

Accordingly, throughout the remainder of 2021, staff consulted with VUFFF, the community and key stakeholders, as directed. Throughout the summer, staff reviewed technical details and returned to the public in November with two technically feasible site options: the southeast site similar to the original proposal, and a new site in the northwest of the park near the Cottage Hospice.

Engagement Approach

Phase 1 of engagement on this project took place previous to the March 2021 Board meeting, while Phase 2 of engagement took place after the Board meeting, mostly in November and December of 2021. Phase 1 activities are only briefly discussed in this Summary, as they were described in the [March 2021 Board report](#).

Methods

Generally, staff developed a mixed-method approach that included both online and in-person outreach. This process also had to take into account public health orders and varying levels of comfort with in-person engagement activities related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The proposed project aims include serving urban Indigenous people and equity-denied residents. As such, staff worked to address barriers to equity-deserving and Indigenous people throughout the Phase 2 engagement process by:

- distributing paper surveys, handbills and Shape Your City QR codes to key locations: Urban Native Youth Association, Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre, Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, as well as local libraries and community centres;
- leveraging VUFFF's strong community network for additional survey distribution and Shape Your City promotion; and

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- creating a low-barrier, anonymous survey that did not require pre-registration.

Apart from these strategies taken to reach equity-denied residents, staff also communicated the same opportunities for engagement to the general public in the following ways:

- onsite park signage (6) directing people to the Shape Your City page and survey (see Figure 1);
- email notifications shared with registered speakers from the March 2021 board meeting and with any other individual who communicated with staff about the project by email;
- promoting Burrard View Park engagement opportunities on the main Shape Your City landing page; and
- promoting engagement through Park Board social media.



Figure 1: Example of the 6 Onsite Park Phase 2 Engagement Signs

During Phase 1 engagement, staff distributed notices via Canada Post mail to residences within 2 blocks of Burrard View Park, as was required by the Urban Agriculture Policy. However, staff heard the criticism that this was not a reliable means of reaching residents, as many individuals said that they did not receive the mailed notices. In recognition of this shortcoming, during Phase 2 staff took different approaches to notify the public, and did not send mailed notices.

Policy alignment

Staff have considered whether the proposed Vancouver Urban Food Forest would align with how the Park Board dedicates resources. These include material resources such as park land, but also staff time spent on public engagement and technical review. Especially relevant to this project are VanPlay and the updated Local Food System Action Plan approved in 2021 (LFSAP).

In developing a public engagement framework for the project, staff have aligned their approach with the principles in the LFSAP, namely:

1. Centre Indigenous Voices in Food System to Honour the Teaching that “Food is Medicine”
2. Improve Equity in Park Board Food Assets, Services, and Programs.

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3. Strengthen Food Partnerships and Collaboration to Support a Decolonized, Sustainable and Just Food Economy.
4. Build Long-Term Food System Resiliency, Sustainability, and Increase Biodiversity.

As such, staff have focused on partnerships, and stakeholder and community outreach to Indigenous-led and serving organizations in the community, as well as outreach generally to equity-denied communities who have historically been underrepresented in such planning activities. Importantly, this principle-led engagement included informing and consulting with residents, park users and organizations in the immediate area.

Goals of engagement

The role of engagement is to include the knowledge and experiences of community in the development of meaningful solutions. It represents one form of input alongside technical and policy considerations, as outlined throughout this summary.

Phase 2 engagement goals were to:

- Help identify a suitable location for the Vancouver Urban Food Forest in Burrard View Park (per the Board’s referral).
- Share the technically feasible site options with the community.
- Communicate the implications and opportunities of each site option.
- Examine the trade-offs of each site option from a technical, policy, resident and park user perspective.
- Understand the diverse needs and varied positions of equity-denied and Indigenous residents in relation to this project.
- Understand broader community values about Burrard View Park and how each site option might impact both overall park use, and the success of the food forest.

Park Board staff received public and stakeholder input on this project in a variety of ways. The table below presents a summary overview of engagement activities undertaken during Phase 2 of engagement.

Table 1: Engagement Activities – Phase 2 Overview

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Meetings		
Burrardview Community Association	Nov 15/21	Two (2) Park Board staff members met with four (4) Burrardview Community Association executives to discuss the upcoming public engagement process and hear input.
Pop-up Info Session	Nov 20/21	Park Board staff and VUFFF members were onsite to share information about the proposal and the survey opportunity. Approximately 40 people attended.
VUFFF meetings	Various dates	Staff met with VUFFF (4) times during Phase 2
Cottage Hospice	Nov 16/21	Park Board staff met with Manager of Housing and Hospice Services at Cottage Hospice.

Engagement Summary - Burrard View Park Urban Food Forest

Activity	Dates	Overview
Digital Engagement		
Survey	Nov 16/21 - Dec 6/21	Received 377 responses, including paper surveys.
Shape Your City	Nov 16/21 – present	Staff received and responded to seventeen (17) questions posed via Shape Your City webpage, which shared extensive information about the project, including an FAQ section, information about similar projects, a timeline, important links, and follow-up communications by staff to respond to questions gathered at the in-person event.
Emails	Nov 16/21 – Dec 6/21	Staff received sixteen (16) emails about the project during the Phase 2 public input period.
Other Communication Materials		
Onsite Signage	Nov 16/21 – present	Six (6) informational signs were posted around the perimeter of the park to notify and connect residents to the Shape Your City webpage.
Handbills and Posters	Nov 2021	Handbills and posters were distributed at key locations containing high-level information about the project, and including a QR code directing residents to the Shape Your City webpage for more information.
Letters from organizations	Jan 2021 – Feb 2022	Seven (7) letters of support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Aboriginal Mothers Centre Society - Circle of Eagles - Pacific Association of First Nations Women (<i>supports SE site</i>) - Hastings Community Centre Association - Food and Garden Programs - Wall Street Community Garden (<i>supports SE site</i>) - Pandora Park Community Garden - Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House One (1) letter of conditional support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Burrardview Community Association (<i>supports NW site, opposes SE site</i>)



Figure 2: Pop-up Event Sign Phase 2 Engagement; shared context about the goals of engagement.

Engagement Summary - Burrard View Park Urban Food Forest

What we heard

The following section provides an overview of the key themes that emerged, primarily through Phase 2 of public engagement.

Qualitative input

Meetings

(Phase 2) Burrardview Community Association (BCA): On November 15, 2021 Park Board Planning staff met with the four (4) members of the BCA to hear their concerns. Staff shared details and the timeline for the engagement and, in response, BCA members asked for an advance copy of the engagement materials so they could inform their association members and neighbours how to respond to the survey. Staff offered that all members of the public, including the BCA, would receive the materials the following day, November 16.

(Phase 2) Proponents: Staff met with the proponents four (4) times between fall 2021 and January 2022. As VUFFF is a potential partner in developing the project, staff used these meetings to confirm matters related to the feasibility of the garden and to ensure technical requirements aligned with efforts to centre the needs of Indigenous community members.

(Phase 2) Cottage Hospice: Staff met with the Manager of Housing and Hospice Services to discuss how either the SE or NW location of the project might affect the quality of an individual's stay at the hospice.

Letters

Across both phases of engagement, the Park Board received twelve (12) letters from community organizations.

In Phase 2 of engagement, staff received seven (7) letters of support for this project from organizations that serve equity-denied, low-income and/or Indigenous people:

- Aboriginal Mothers Centre Society (*partnered with VUFFF*);
- Circle of Eagles;
- Pacific Association of First Nations Women;
- Hastings Community Centre – Food and Garden Programs (*partnered with VUFFF*);
- Wall Street Community Garden;
- Pandora Park Community Garden; and
- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House.

Of these supportive letters, two organizations specifically expressed a desire to see the project proceed at the southeast location (Pacific Association of First Nations Women, and Wall Street Community Garden).

In general, the letters of support remarked about the proponent's (VUFFF's) goals of community building, Indigenous land and food sovereignty, equity, and intergenerational and intercultural knowledge sharing.

Letters of support from organizations serving the Urban Indigenous community (Aboriginal Mothers Centre Society, Circle of Eagles, Pacific Association of First Nations Women) offered the

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opinion that the proposed garden would provide opportunities to connect with land and community.

Letters from Hastings Community Centre Food & Garden Programs, Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House, and Wall Street Community Garden offered the opinion that the proposal is well-aligned with the LFSAP and echoed the need for equitable food assets in the community. Pandora Park and Wall Street Community Gardens shared from their experience with significant wait times for individual plots, and offered the opinion that there is value in adding accessible, communal food assets to the area.

Additionally, during Phase 2, staff received one letter of conditional support for the northwest site option from the Burrardview Community Association (BCA). The letter indicated the BCA's support for the northwest site option, strong opposition to the southeast site option, and registered displeasure with the public engagement process.

The BCA is primarily concerned about potential loss of flat un-programmed space in the southeast site option that is valued by the community for informal play and socializing. The BCA attached a list of questions to this letter, many of which staff answered via the digital engagement site. Staff prioritized questions that were most relevant to the project, and those that did not violate the privacy of partners or other residents.

Three (3) letters of support received during Phase 1 of engagement from:

- Kiwassa Neighbourhood House (*partnered with the proponents*);
- Hives for Humanity; and
- Hastings Community Association.

One letter of opposition was received during Phase 1 from:

- Burrardview Community Association

Emails

(Phase 2) Nineteen emails were received about this project to pbgreen@vancouver.ca. Of these, three emails were submitted between April and May 2021, prior to the start of the November 2021 public engagement.

Through November and December, staff received 16 emails containing comments and/or questions regarding this project:

- One (1) email, received from the Burrardview Community Association, has been recorded as a "Letter" and described in the corresponding section of this report.
- Ten emails were expressing complaints about the survey design or the public engagement process in general.
- Twelve (12) emails were critical about the experience of completing the survey.

Staff communicated with every resident who submitted an email to ensure that information was clarified, and to acknowledge their feedback and concerns.

Shape Your City interactions

The Shape Your City webpage featured several tools ("widgets") for people to learn about and engage with the project.

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These included:

- A project timeline.
- A detailed Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) page that was updated with questions heard by email and at the in-person event on November 20.
- An “Ask A Question” section where people can submit questions for public or private response.
- An “Inspiration Board” with images and descriptions of projects in other Vancouver parks that have elements in common with the proposal.
- An “Important Links” section that connects people to VUFFF’s webpage, the Local Food System Action Plan, the March 2021 Board Report for the project, and other resources.
- Information about the two locations under consideration, and the process for identifying suitable sites.
- Information about the engagement process including direction from Phase 1 and the goals of Phase 2.
- The survey widget.
- Newsfeed posts for project updates.

Most of these widgets are learning resources, with the exception of the survey and the Ask A Question widget, which provided opportunities for feedback and interaction.

Staff responded publicly to three (3) questions posed on the Ask A Question widget, and responded privately to fourteen (14) questions. Staff opted to respond to questions publicly if they were frequently asked or if the answer might be of interest to other readers.

Conversely, staff chose to respond privately to:

- Duplicate questions (i.e., questions that had already been publicly answered).
- Questions including or asking about personal information.
- Highly detailed submissions that asked multiple or complex questions.
- Residents who used the widget to express opinions rather than questions, to avoid biasing new visitors to the page.

Staff responded to every submission that was received through this widget.

In-park pop-up event

(Phase 2) On November 20, 2021, staff hosted a pop-up information session in Burrard View Park. Three (3) Park Board staff members and the proponents were on-site to answer questions about the project and promote the public consultation opportunities available on Shape Your City.

Approximately 40 people attended the event throughout the day. Staff suggested that attendees share their feedback in-writing by responding to the survey and/or by emailing pbgreen@vancouver.ca. Staff and VUFFF members had constructive and insightful conversations with many community members, and kept track of frequently asked questions

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during the event. After the event, staff posted a newsfeed update to the Shape Your City page with answers to common questions heard at the event.



Figure 3: Staff and VUFFF members speaking with residents at the Phase 2 (Nov 20) pop-up.

Phase 2 Survey responses

Representativeness

Staff compared the demographics of survey respondents to the demographics of the wider Hastings-Sunrise community to understand how representative the sample was. Staff found that there was reasonable representation from disabled residents, women, home-owners, and Indigenous residents. Renters, younger residents, people without children, genders other than women, and visible minorities, especially Asian residents were distinctly underrepresented, when compared with the population data available about the area. There was representation above the demographic profile of white/European-descent respondents, and modest over-representation of households with children.

Current park use

Overall, survey respondents report using different sections of Burrard-View Park in a variety of ways. The most common response was that respondents use the southeast section of the park for picnics, socializing, relaxing or playing. Many residents also use the area surrounding the daycare and playground for playing and socializing. The smallest share of respondents say they use hospice grounds.

Site preferences

The survey was designed to learn more about respondents values regarding the park and understand which trade-offs might be considered acceptable. It focused on opportunities and characteristics for each site option relevant to the potential success of the garden. It did so through a series of scenarios which presented respondents with 9 possible outcomes, related to either the northwest or southeast site option. This section of the survey was meant to communicate the foreseeable benefits and consequences associated with either site, and to ask

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respondents which trade-offs or outcomes seemed most appealing to them. As shown in Figure 4 below, for most of the 9 scenarios, the 50% of respondents' line falls within the "grey zone" meaning that there is a relatively balanced proportion of respondents preferring outcomes that suggest the northwest site option and outcomes that suggest the southeast site option.

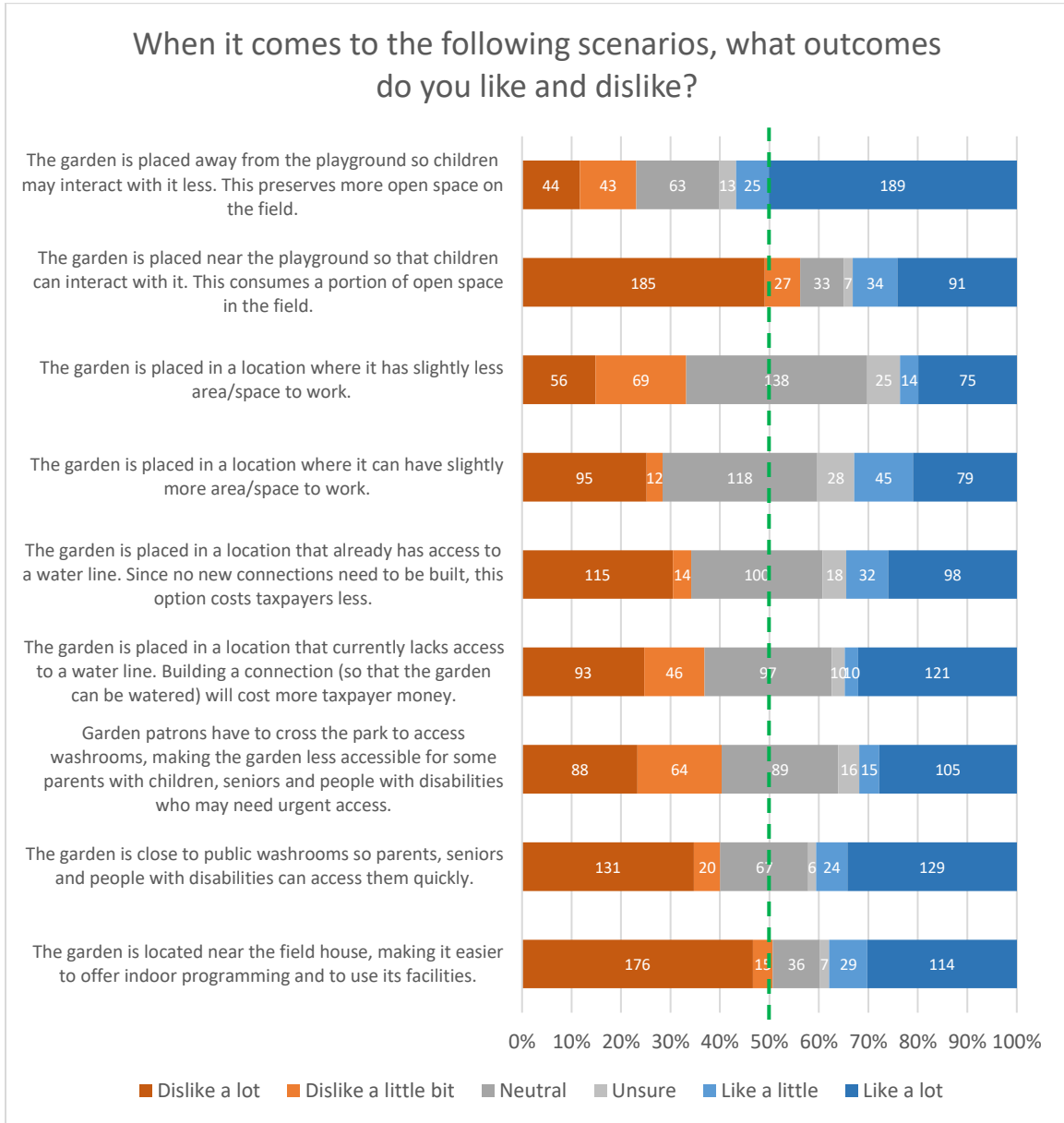


Figure 4: Phase 2 Survey – Opportunities & Trade-off Scenario Responses.

Another set of questions prompted respondents to consider how their experience in the park might be affected if either site included a community garden. The responses to these questions suggest a slight preference for the northwest site option, but an overall balanced public opinion with no strong majority preference for either site option.

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Respondents had opportunities to input custom text responses, which they typically used to explain their reasoning for the questions above. These responses were highly variable and little new information emerged from them. Overall, respondents tended to agree that the southeast section of the park is a cherished community amenity, but disagreed about whether the addition of a garden to that site would detract or add to the site's value.

Feedback received about survey design

Throughout the public engagement period, staff received feedback from residents concerned that the design of the survey was skewed in favour of the southeast site. Staff have acknowledged and responded to these concerns.

It should be noted that the survey does not offer a randomized or a representative sample; in other words, community members were free to ignore or opt-in to the survey as they wished. It is a self-selecting democratic tool that offers one way to encourage participation in civic engagement. As with most public engagement surveys, this means that we may have heard from residents who were already interested and engaged with this topic, and from residents who had the disposable time and interest to invest in an optional survey. But particularly during the public health emergency, it provided an opportunity for people to have their say.

The scenario questions make reference to the implications of each trade-off in terms of how the two spaces could be used, by whom, and what amenities are nearby. There are real differences between the sites, each with different implications for the garden. Staff have tried to represent these differences, like the proximity to washrooms and importance of the multi-use area, clearly in the survey and to ask respondents how important each consideration is to them.

For example, a drawback to the NW site is that there are additional expenses associated with connecting it to a water line outside of the park. However, several community members shared that they felt the added expense of connecting water to the NW site would be an acceptable trade-off considering the benefits of preserving the SE site. The survey was designed to elicit this sort of feedback.

Staff realize that this presentation was interpreted by some as a statement of support for one site over the other. This was not the case, and there were text fields throughout the survey that allowed survey participants to offer open commentary on their perspectives. These text-based responses have been considered and weighed alongside other forms of public input.

Engagement challenges

Throughout the public engagement process, a small group of people opposed to the project attempted to influence public participation. Democratic and public processes can elicit strong emotions; however at times, the behaviour of some participants went beyond advocacy and included promoting inaccurate information and disrespectful communications.

These actions included:

- Letters, emails, website communications and in-park signage that:
 - instructed residents to indicate preference for NW site in survey responses;
 - disputed Park Board communications regarding technical analyses of the sites, such as water connections or slope.

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- Postering over PB signs with a QR code to an alternative, unofficial survey.
- Disrespectful communications with staff and VUFFF members at the pop-up event, including raised voices and insults.

Staff noted there were instances of multiple survey responses from identical devices and internet service provider (ISP) addresses. Because their impact on the survey findings was minor, and because respondent identity cannot be definitively confirmed, staff opted not to flag these responses.

Conclusion

Staff listened to and considered closely the experiences and perspectives of stakeholder and public audiences. Results have shown support for both the southeast and northwest site options, and has therefore not yielded a consensus on a preferred location