

TO: Park Board Chair and Commissioners

FROM: General Manager – Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Seaside Greenway Proposal at Kitsilano Beach Park - Report

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RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Vancouver Park Board:

- A. Approve the proposed alignment of a new separated cycling path in Kitsilano Beach Park as described in this report;
- B. Direct staff to proceed with the detailed design and implementation of the proposed separated cycling path in the park; and
- C. Support collaboration with the City of Vancouver Engineering Department to coordinate and implement the design for the cycle path where the path occurs within City street right-of-ways.

REPORT SUMMARY

Kitsilano Beach Park is one Vancouver's most iconic parks, beloved by Vancouver residents and visitors alike. It supports a diverse array of land and water-based recreation that draw hundreds of thousands of park visitors annually from across Vancouver and the wider region. People travel to the park in a variety of ways including walking, rolling, cycling, taking transit, driving a vehicle, and some even by watercraft. The park is also an important part of the 28km Seaside Greenway with both pedestrians and cyclists travelling to the park along the greenway, or continuing on to other locations. However, for many years there have been transportation-related conflicts between people walking/rolling, cycling and driving within and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park.

Since 2013, Park Board staff have worked with Engineering on two separate occasions to address these conflicts with limited success. In January 2021 staff commenced a new planning process, in collaboration with Engineering, to find a location for an interim separated cycle path and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park that could improve safety, access and circulation for all park users, until a permanent location for a cycle path can be determined as part of a future renewal plan for Kitsilano Beach Park. This report summarizes the current Seaside Greenway Improvements at Kitsilano Beach Park Project, including the engagement process, and provides a recommendation for a separated cycle path in and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park.

BOARD AUTHORITY, POLICY, PREVIOUS DECISIONS & UPDATES

As per the <u>Vancouver Charter</u>, the Park Board has exclusive jurisdiction and control over all areas designated as permanent and temporary parks in the City of Vancouver, and shall have the custody, care and management of other areas as determined by Council.

The Seaside Greenway at Kitsilano Beach Park Project supports the following Park Board and City policies and initiatives:

- Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020): This project supports a 50% reduction of the City's carbon pollution by 2030 by expanding and improving a sustainable, low carbon transportation network that makes it safer and more convenient for people of all ages and abilities to walk, roll, bike, and take transit across the city.
- <u>VanPlay</u> (2019): VanPlay seeks to establish 'Interconnected Networks' that connect and integrate parks into the daily lives of Vancouverites. "The network will create places to play, exercise, and socialize while ... creating beautiful and direct and intuitive connections for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages and abilities". This project also supports the VanPlay Bold Move to "Provide routes to walk or roll to, and through, parks and recreation places"
- <u>VanSplash</u> (2019): This project supports VanSplash's vision to "deliver a wide range of aquatic experiences for residents and visitors that support Vancouver as a highly-livable, world-class coastal city..." and "...provide access to water for aquatics use in a socially inclusive, low barrier park setting as well as access to nature".
- Greenest City 2020 Action Plan (2015): The project supports the plan's objectives of increasing the number of residents "living within a 5-minute walk of a park, greenway or other green space and the majority of trips to be by foot, bike and public transit by 2020", as well as "building and upgrading parks and greenways"
- <u>Healthy City Strategy</u> (2015): By improving the active and sustainable transportation network in the park, this project supports the strategy's goals of enabling Vancouverites to "enjoy safe, active, and accessible ways of getting around the city".
- Transportation 2040 Plan (2012): This project supports the following initiatives in the plan:
 - W 1.5. Address gaps in the pedestrian network
 - C 1.1. Build cycling routes that feel comfortable for people of all ages and abilities
 - C 1.2. Expand the cycling network to efficiently connect people to destinations

BACKGROUND

Since 1990, when the Seaside Bicycle Route was officially opened, a bicycle path through Kitsilano Beach has been illustrated on city maps. When the Vancouver Greenways Plan was adopted in 1995 the route became known as the Seaside Greenway, a 28km walking, rolling and cycling route connecting the Vancouver Convention Centre with Spanish Banks. Today the majority of the Seaside Greenway is characterized by separate pathways for people walking/rolling and for people riding bicycles. However, some sections are not separated, including within Kitsilano Beach Park where for decades there have been conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists, and between cyclists and vehicles within parking lots and on local roads.

Park staff worked with Engineering, on two previous occasions, to address the gaps in the Seaside Greenway's separated walking and cycling infrastructure in and around Kitsilano Beach. In 2013 City Council approved the Point Grey – Cornwall Active Transportation Corridor and requested that the Park Board proceed with upgrading the Seaside Greenway in Kitsilano Beach and Hadden Parks as a priority project. In October 2013 the Park Board approved the Phase 1 Seaside Greenway improvements in Kitsilano Beach and Hadden Parks. However,

implementation of the separated cycle path was suspended due to community concerns regarding loss of greenspace in the two parks.

In 2018, the Board received a <u>report</u> summarizing work that had occurred on the project since 2013, and provided a recommendation for a separated cycle path (Appendix A). The Board referred the report back to staff to provide more detailed information on the proposed concept, undertake more analysis of the potential impacts on the park and financial impacts, explore opportunities to reconfigure Arbutus St to accommodate part of the path, and conduct more consultation with the public and stakeholders on alignment possibilities.

In March 2020, a <u>memo</u> provided the Board with an update on the Seaside Greenway through Kitsilano Beach Park and described an engagement process that would commence in spring 2020 and help determine "a preferred alignment that meets the overall goals of the broader community, as well as key stakeholders such a HUB Cycling, Kits Point Residents Association (KPRA) and the Boathouse Restaurant." However, the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020 put the project on hold until the implications of the pandemic were better understood.

DISCUSSION

The current Seaside Greenway Improvements at Kitsilano Beach Park Project began in January 2021 with Park Board staff reviewing previous work on the project and studying the significant increase in people using parks and cycling in the city due to the pandemic. Staff then developed a planning process that included collaborating with City of Vancouver Engineering. The process, identified short term and immediate safety improvements in the park and along Arbutus Street, as well as a public engagement process comprised of three rounds of engagement that focused on identifying a location for an interim separated cycle path. In February 2021, the Board received a briefing memo that outlined the temporary safety improvements and provided a preliminary engagement schedule for the project. An email dated March 17, 2021 provided an update on the project timeline.

The assumption is that the interim path will remain in place until a permanent location for a separated cycle path could be found as part of a future Kitsilano Beach Park Renewal Plan (subject to future capital funding). The Kitsilano Beach Park Renewal Plan would undertake take a comprehensive review of the growing demands on the overall park, consider renewal of park assets and infrastructure, respond to outcomes related to the Broadway Subway and Broadway Plan, and the nearby Senákw development and, consider coastal adaption in light of sea level rise and changing climate.

Immediate Safety Improvements

In May 2021, staff implemented temporary safety improvements, including a separated cycling path in the park's south parking lot, and a new diagonal path in the park near Balsam Street. These changes, detailed in a May 4, 2021 briefing memo, were made to respond to the 50% increase in cycling along the Seaside Greenway between 2019 and 2020, and address short-term safety concerns while work began towards identifying a route for a separated cycling path. In August 2021, Engineering installed concrete barriers and reconfigured vehicle circulation along Arbutus Street, between the park's south parking lot and McNicoll Avenue, to provide a protected two-way cycle path that connects with the safety improvements made within the park.

Engagement Process

The Seaside Greenway Improvements at Kitsilano Beach Park Project used three rounds of engagement to ensure a thorough and collaborative process. During the first round the public and

stakeholders were asked how they use and travel to the park, and what values were most important when considering the location of a separated cycle path in the park. Engagement round two asked the public and stakeholders to evaluate different options for locating the cycle path using the values identified during the first round of engagement. The final round of engagement sought feedback on a proposed separated cycle path that incorporated input received during previous engagement sessions, along with safety, comfort, and operational considerations.

xwməθkwəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations have been notified of the project and invited to participate in the engagement process in whatever way they would like. However, the pandemic has limited each Nation's capacity to participate in several projects, including this one. Consequently, there has been limited engagement with the Nations. Fortunately, the changes proposed by this project are confined to areas that are expected to have minimal archaeological impact. Nevertheless 'Chance Find' procedures will be used during construction related activities. Staff anticipate a deeper collaboration with rights holder will occur during the future Kitsilano Beach Park Renewal Plan when more significant investigations and discussions will take place.

The following is a more detailed chronology of the activities that have occurred since the first round of engagement took place in August 2021.

Engagement Round 1: August 2021

As outlined in the General Manager's <u>report</u> and <u>presentation</u> on July 19, 2021, the first round of engagement took place between August 10 - 30, 2021, and asked people how they use and travel to the park, and what values were most important to them when considering locating a separated cycle path in Kitsilano Beach Park. Engagement opportunities included an online survey, two onsite engagement pop-ups, and direct stakeholder emails. 1,228 people representing a broad cross-section of Vancouver residents completed the survey. Survey respondents were asked to identify their top 3 values from a list that included greenspace, connections, directness, parking, and other. Safety (including accessibility) and comfort were considered to be essential in design of a separated cycle path and therefore were not included in the list of possible values.

The top three values were:

- Greenspace;
- Connections; and
- Directness.

People also identified challenges they experience when using existing park pathways. These included:

- Conflicts between cyclists and other pathway users;
- Concerns about people cycling too fast speeds and not ceding space to people walking and rolling; and
- Congestion in busy areas and competing demands for space.

Respondents were then asked to provide recommendations regarding adding a separated cycling path connecting across the park:

- Provide separate paths for cycling, and for walking/rolling;

- Add clearer and/or more signage to ensure all path users understand where different modes of travel are allowed and not allowed; and
- Locate the path either on the road, outside of the park, or around the perimeter of the park.

A Board <u>briefing memo</u> on October 29, 2021 provided a summary of the first round of public engagement and an overview of the upcoming second round of engagement. The full <u>What We Heard</u> report for Round 1 can be viewed on the Shape Your City project site.

Engagement Round 2: November 2021

The second round of engagement was held November 1 - 28, 2021, and focused on seven options for cycle path routes within and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park (Figure 1). The park was divided into four zones that reflected distinct areas of the park. The cycle path options occurred within Zones 1, 2 and 3 (Table 1). None were proposed in Zone 4, the northern part of Kitsilano Beach Park (between McNicoll and Ogden Avenues) due to archaeological sensitivities. This area requires further archaeological assessment, as well as an analysis of neighbourhood transportation impacts resulting from the nearby Senákw development, both of which exceed the current project's timeline.

People were asked to use the values identified during engagement round one and evaluate each of the seven cycle path options. Engagement included an online survey, internal and external stakeholder meetings, on-site consultations, an email campaign, and a postcard mail out to Kitsilano residents and businesses. 740 people competed the survey, with submissions from across Vancouver, and a strong representation from the Kitsilano neighbourhood. Fifteen stakeholders attended the two external stakeholder meetings and 30+ people submitted emails to the project inbox and the Shape Your City page.



Figure 1: Location of pathway alignment options

Zone 1: Balsam to Yew	Option A	 New walking/rolling path added in the park to the north of the existing multi-use path Existing multi-use path converted to cycle path
	Option B	 New sidewalk added to north side of Cornwall Ave Existing multi-use path converted to cycle path
Zone 2: Yew to Creelman	Option C	- Cycle path added to south and east sides of parking lot
	Option D	Cycle path added north along Yew St entry, and to west and north sides of parking lot
	Option E	- Cycle path added north along Yew St entry, and to west and north sides of tennis court
Zone 3: Creelman to McNicoll	Option F	- Cycle path added in the park to the west of Arbutus St
	Option G	- West side of Arbutus St converted to protected cycle path
Zone 4	N/A	No options proposed due to archaeological considerations

Table 1: Description of pathway alignment options

Table 2 provides a summary of how well respondents felt the pathway options reflected the primary and secondary values identified during the first round of engagement. In Zone 1 both Option A and B equally responded to the values, however Option B was more effective in protecting greenspace by avoiding the popular gathering area between Yew and Vine Streets.

		PRIMARY VALUES			SECONDARY VALUES	
ZONES	OPTIONS	Protecting Greenspace	Connections	Directness	Parking	Impact
Zone 1	A New walking/rolling path In Park					
Balsam Street to Yew Street	B Walking /Rolling Path beside Cornwall					
Zone 2	Southeast Corner of the Park					
ew Street to Arbutus Street & Creelman Ave	Through Parking Lot				7	
	West and North of Tennis Court					
Zone 3	f In-Park Path					
outus Street fromCreelman Ave to McNicoll Ave	⊙ On-Street Path					

In addition to these values, staff used additional criteria to assess each option to help determine the location for the proposed cycle path. These criteria included:

- Safety number of modes crossing each other, separation, sightlines, operational safety
- Comfort for walking/rolling, for cycling
- Feasibility costs, "future proofing", street right of way impacts, operational needs
- Impact how does it impact neighbourhood parking, neighbourhood traffic, special events
- Accessibility seeks to maintain clarity of access for all

 Table 2: Analyzing pathway options using round 1 values

In Zone 2 both Options C and E positively reflected values, albeit different values. Option C was considered to be more direct for people travelling along the greenway whereas Option E was more direct for people travelling to the beach and restaurant. Option C was considered to have a lower impact on greenspace even though it would require the removal of more greenspace than

Option E. This likely reflects the view some people have that greenspace to the south and east of the parking lot is of lower value than near the beach. Option D protect greenspace but didn't respond well toother values. In Zone 3, Option G was considered to more clearly reflect the values than Option F, including protecting greenspace in the park.

Overall respondents identified the following considerations and recommendations for the pathway alignment:

- Minimize impact on greenspace, particularly within Zones 1 and 3.
- Separate pedestrians and cyclists to allow for safe and comfortable travel.
- Separate cyclists and vehicles to address safety concerns, especially in Zone 2.
- Prioritize access to amenities and beach views, where possible in Zones 1 and 2, so that pathway users can enjoy a pleasant park experience and to enhance connections.

Internal stakeholders also reviewed the alignment options. This review identified an operational conflict related to Options C and D in Zone 2. Engineering requires unrestricted access to an existing sewer pump station located between Arbutus Street and the southeast of corner of the tennis courts (Figure 1). Adding a separated cycle path along this section of Arbutus Street, while providing Engineering staff with direct access to the pump station, free of conflicts with cyclists, would require significant and expensive changes to Arbutus Street, the removal of two EV charging stations, and the loss of numerous 'resident only' parking spaces. Engineering and Park staff concluded such expensive alterations were not reasonable considering this project's goal of locating an 'interim' separated cycle path until a permanent location is determined as part of a future Kitsilano Beach Park Renewal Plan.

The full What We Heard report for round 2 can be viewed on the Shape Your City project site.

Engagement Round 3: February – March, 2022

Using feedback received during round 2, staff developed a separated cycle path that combined Option B (Zone 1), a modified version of Option E (Zone 2), and Option G (Zone 3). This path (Figure 2) was the focus of the third round of public engagement that took place February 14 - March 6, 2022. People were asked to comment on how well the proposed path met their needs. Engagement included one internal and two external stakeholder sessions, and two virtual 'office hours' sessions that were open to the public to ask questions and provide comments. There were 775 survey responses, 8 participants attended virtual drop-in sessions, 8 stakeholders attended two stakeholder meetings and 30+ emails were received.

Proposed Separated Cycle Path

The proposed separated cycle path route (Figure 2) incorporated the engagement findings from Round 1 and 2 as well as additional criteria to assess each option to help determine the location for the proposed cycle path. These criteria included:

- Safety number of modes crossing each other, separation, sightlines, operational safety.
- Comfort for walking/rolling, for cycling.
- Feasibility costs, "future proofing", street right of way impacts, operational needs.
- Impact how impacts neighbourhood parking, neighbourhood traffic, events.
- Accessibility seeks to maintain clarity of access for all.



Figure 2: Proposed location of separated cycle path.

Zone 1: Balsam Street - Yew Street

In Zone 1 (Figure 3) the existing shared path in the park will become the designated cycle path, and a new sidewalk will be added beside Cornwall Ave, between Balsam St and Yew St. A new accessible pathway near the service lane will be added to provide a direct connection from Balsam St into the park. Barriers adjacent to the concession will be removed to improve accessibility in this area.

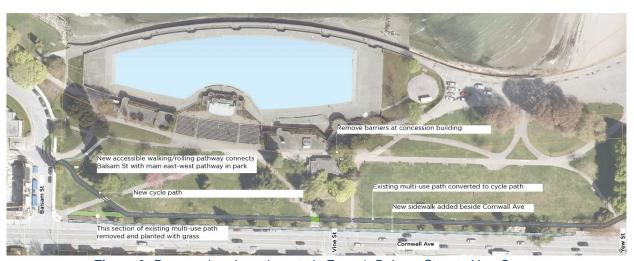


Figure 3: Proposed cycle path route in Zone 1: Balsam Street - Yew Street.

The proposed cycle path route minimizes disruption to the park by avoiding the addition of a new pathway in the park, and preserves the popular, well used greenspace between Vine St and Yew St. A new sidewalk along the north side of Cornwall Ave, between Balsam St and Yew St, maintains a direct connection between these two streets, and improves access for people parking on Cornwall Ave. The new accessible walking/rolling path from Balsam into the park near the service lane improves access into the park.

The impact of a new sidewalk along Cornwall will require the removal of 3 to 4 trees, and removing and trimming of some shrubs. An arborist has determined the trees that will be removed are in poor condition and recommended removal. Replacement trees will be planted. In addition, the existing fence will remain to direct people parking cars along Cornwall to park entries at Balsam and Yew and avoid random crossing of the cycle path. New signage will be required in several locations to communicate the changes in circulation patterns.

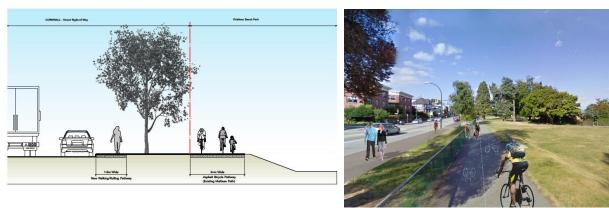


Figure 4: Section and artistic rendering of the proposed cycle path in Zone 1

Zone 2: Yew Street - Creelman Avenue

A separated cycle path (Figure 5) will parallel the Yew St entry and beachside pathways, and will connect with Arbutus St using the existing service lane, north of the tennis courts. The proposed cycle path provides controlled and largely separated access for people riding bicycles to access the beach and restaurant, and for people travelling along the Seaside Greenway. The path location also reflects Engineering's requirement for unencumbered operational access to the pump station beside Arbutus St, free of potential conflicts with cyclists.

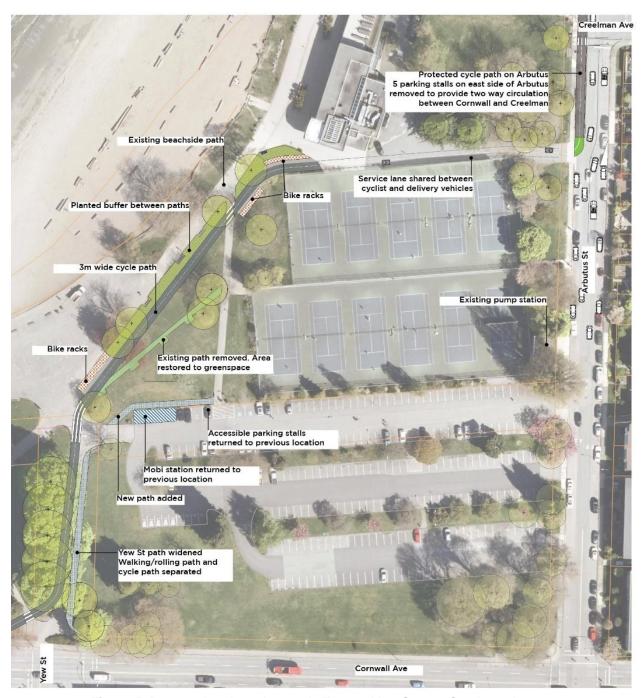


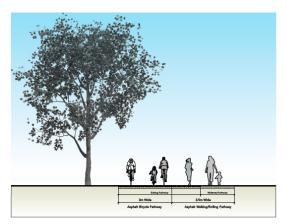
Figure 5: Proposed cycle path route in Zone 2: Yew Street - Creelman Avenue

While the separated path uses the existing service lane, results of data collection during this project show low vehicle volumes using the service lane and that it meet Engineering requirements for a 'AAA' cycle path.

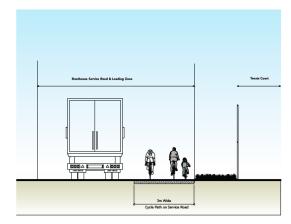
Other benefits of this alignment include:

- Moderate park disturbance that can be quickly removed and lawn restored in the future
- Provides separation for different park users along the busy Yew St path

- Returning the south parking lot to its pre-pandemic condition and restores accessible and general parking spots
- Returns two-way traffic on Arbutus St between Cornwall and Creelman Avenues.



Separate cycle and walking/rolling path: Yew St park entry



Separate cycle and walking/rolling path: North side of tennis court

Figure 6: Sections illustrating proposed cycle path in Zone 2





Approximate location of new cycle path between beachside path and tennis courts

New shared cycle path/service lane at Arbutus St

Figure 7: Artistic renderings proposed cycle path in Zone 2

Zone 3: Creelman Avenue - McNicoll Avenue

The proposed cycle path (Figure 8) is on Arbutus St and is similar to the current temporary protected cycle path installed last summer. This preserves greenspace in the park and uses an existing on-street protected cycle path that is working reasonably well. The concrete barriers defining the existing pathway will be replaced with a lower concrete curb, similar to treatments recently installed along Beach Ave in the West End. The cycle path allows Arbutus St to function as a two-way 'courtesy' street between Creelman and McNicoll Ave, similar to many Kitsilano streets, and maintains parking on the east side.



Figure 8: Proposed cycle path route in Zone 3: Creelman Ave – McNicoll Ave



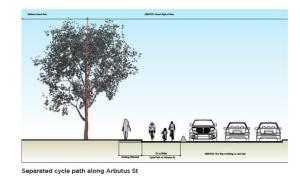


Figure 9: Artistic rendering and section of the protected cycle path on Arbutus St

Engagement Round 3 Results

The outcomes from the last round of public engagement were overwhelmingly positive. Most respondents expressed support for the proposed pathway, with a combined percentage of 83 to 86% across all three zones saying the proposed pathway meets their needs as a park user "very well" or "somewhat well". Table 3 summarizes the feedback received on the strengths of the proposed cycle path route in each zone, as well as the opportunities to consider during the next phase of detail design.

Zone	Strengths	Opportunities
1	 Separates pedestrians and cyclists Avoids disrupting Kitsilano Beach Park 'living room' near Yew St Creates better access and clearer entry points to the park 	 Improve transition from Point Grey Rd into park at Cornwall Avenue and Balsam Street Explore traffic calming to improve pedestrian experience along Cornwall Ave Remove the steel gates beside the concession near the pool to improve accessibility
2	 Separates pedestrians and cyclists in busy areas Provides direct connection to key park features as well as a clear connection for Seaside Greenway users Increases access to bike parking Improves Yew St park entry Restores parking in south parking lot Restores two-way traffic on Arbutus 	 Ensure convenient access to amenities, including beach, sports courts and concession Consider a smoother transition between the service lane and Arbutus Street Study existing pedestrian and cyclist traffic to inform location of pathway crossings Build climate resilience into longer-term planning
3	 Similar to the existing separate cycle path on Arbutus St which works well Avoids disrupting park space near basketball courts and playground 	 Design the concrete barrier that is permeable to allow people walking/rolling and cycling from the neighbourhood to enter and exit the protected cycle path while maintaining separation from vehicles Width of the bike path should strike a balance between accommodating high cyclist volumes and making space for two-way vehicular traffic
Overall	 Improves safety and comfort for all pathway users Reduces conflict in busy park areas Preserves greenspace in the park and distinctive park environment Brings cyclists closer to amenities 	 Apply clear pavement markings, different asphalt colours, and signage to clearly mark space for pedestrians and cyclists Manage parking on-street and in the park's parking lots to ensure residents and park visitors can park conveniently

Table 3: Summary of feedback from Round 3

The full What We Heard report for round 3 can be viewed on the Shape Your City project site.

FINANCIAL / OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The anticipated cost to implement the proposed pathway is as follows:

Total Project Costs	\$ 595,000
Design Costs	\$ 75,000
Total Construction Costs	\$ 520,000
'On-street' Improvements (including contingency)	\$ 210,000
'In park' Improvements (including contingency)	\$ 310,000

Funding is currently available to proceed with implementation.

The proposed pathway will increase the amount of Kitsilano Beach Park dedicated to pathways by 470m2 or 0.4% of the overall park.

NEXT STEPS

Subject to approval by the Park Board, detailed design will commence later in 2022 and construction is expected to begin in early 2023.

CONCLUSION

The interim separated cycle path through and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park proposed in this report will close a long-standing gap in the 28km long Seaside Greenway. The proposed path, developed with significant public input across three rounds of engagement, will also address conflicts between people walking, rolling, cycling, and driving in the park, and improve safety and comfort for all park users. The scope of changes are designed to be of an interim nature, with the expectation that a future Kitsilano Beach Park Renewal Plan will determine the final permanent location of a separated cycle path.

General Manager's Office Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation Vancouver, BC

Prepared by: Kevin Connery – Senior Landscape Architect, Park Development Mandy Yu – Senior Landscape Architect, Park Development



Separated cycle path alignment options: 2018 Staff Report



Proposed separated cycle path: 2018 Staff Report