



October 9, 2025

MEMO TO : Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Director, Planning and Park Development

SUBJECT : **City-Wide Official Development Plan – Parks & Recreation Components - Board Briefing Memo**

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to introduce the draft city-wide Vancouver Official Development Plan (ODP), highlight parks and recreation components and note upcoming public engagement.

Context

In 2024 the City initiated Vancouver's first City-wide Official Development Plan By-law, a new Provincial requirement and key to implementing the Vancouver Plan (2022). Council approved the [scope and terms of reference](#) in June 2024. The ODP will serve as a statutory land use plan adopted by by-law. All new area plans and rezoning policies, as well as rezonings, will need to be consistent with it. It is being led by the City's Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability (PDS) Department, in consultation with staff groups across the organization, including Park Board. The Province requires that the ODP be in place by June 2026.

Conversion of Vancouver Plan and Key Legislated Requirements

The ODP carries forward a significant amount of Vancouver Plan content, supplemented to meet Provincial legislative requirements. The Vision, foundational principles, and big ideas are retained. New or renamed chapters meet amended Vancouver Charter requirements and Council-approved policy updates since 2022 (e.g. UNDRIP Strategy and Action Plan).

New content includes Generalized Land Use (GLU) designations which will convey development potential across the city at a parcel-based scale, reflecting existing area plans, policies, and underlying zoning in some cases. The ODP is also required to include a series of statements and map designations, including:

- Residential development to meet the 20-year anticipated housing needs;
- Commercial, industrial, institutional, agricultural, recreational, public utility land uses;
- Restrictions for hazardous conditions or environmentally sensitive areas (ESAs);
- Location and phasing of major road, sewer and water systems; and
- Location and type of existing and proposed public facilities: schools, parks and waste treatment and disposal sites.

Community Centres and Recreation Facilities

Community Centres and recreation facilities were included in the Vancouver Plan's Community Infrastructure Chapter. The chapter remains largely unchanged in the draft ODP, other than some new mapping of existing facilities and representation in the GLU.

Expanded “Parks and Public Space” Chapter

The Vancouver Plan did not include parks focused content; instead, VanPlay was positioned as complementary to Vancouver Plan’s land use vision. To meet legislative requirements, the ODP expands the Vancouver Plan’s former ‘Public Space’ chapter into a dedicated ‘Parks and Public Space’ chapter. It includes:

- a map of existing parks and open spaces;
- a map of future parks - identified or secured through Council-approved policy statements, area specific ODPs, rezonings, and publicly released park acquisitions, and
- concise policy on park planning, design and programming, emphasizing an appropriate balance between active recreation, passive spaces, and natural systems.

Parks are also referenced in other ODP chapters, within the glossary, and in the GLU designations.

Ecology, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs), and Urban Forest Canopy

The draft ODP refines Vancouver Plan’s Ecological Network with clearer ecological corridors and updated policy as follows:

- Several ecological corridors are shown adjacent to or in parks;
- Corridor alignments are conceptual/subject to refinement in the future;
- Design and implementation determined on a site-by-site basis to align with park/other service provision needs, approved policies, funding availability, and current/future programming; and
- Incorporates the City’s 30% tree canopy coverage target (per the Urban Forest Strategy) and supports the regional canopy target.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) have also been included in the Ecological Network Vision map, and shown in numerous shoreline parks (e.g., English Bay/Burrard Inlet beaches and seawall segments; Fraser River foreshore) and several large/destination and ravine parks. The protection, enhancement and management of natural areas within parks is part of the Park Board’s mandate, including through VanPlay, and the Biodiversity Strategy.

Park Board staff will continue to work closely with City staff to consider if and how ESA designation may affect the way some parks are designed, programmed, permitted and maintained.



Next Steps

City-led public engagement from October 8 to October 29, 2025 will outline “what’s new” in the ODP relative to Vancouver Plan and gather feedback to inform the final ODP. A project page at shapeyourcity.ca/ODP will host the draft ODP and a Talk Vancouver survey will launch along with open house events across the city.

City staff are aiming to bring the ODP to Council for decision in early 2026.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tiina Mack".

Tiina Mack

Director, Park Planning and Development - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team
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