



VANCOUVER  
BOARD OF PARKS AND RECREATION

## **PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY**

APPROVED NOVEMBER 2, 2020



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Vancouver Park Board acknowledges that Vancouver is located on the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples. The Park Board aims to provide, preserve, and advocate for parks and recreation to benefit all people, communities and the environment, and this strategy focuses on improving washroom facilities to support this mission.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Around the world, people are calling for action on a fundamental human right – access to washrooms. In large cities with growing populations, the demand for accessible washrooms is increasing with highly visible and negative impacts. Using a washroom is a basic need for everyone every day. So why are cities struggling to provide this most essential service?

In Vancouver, the Park Board is the primary provider of public washrooms, with facilities located within community centres, recreation facilities, and parks throughout the city. Most of these facilities were built decades ago and reflect the standards, social norms, and accessibility measures of those past eras. With an average age of over 60 years old, many washroom structures are nearing the end of their functional life span and are now considered unsustainable with their high potable water and energy use. Challenged by foul conditions, maintenance of these washrooms is an overburden on the capacity of operations. Some washrooms are virtually unusable or have burned down.

Meanwhile, the Park Board's efforts have not been able to match the demand for increased service levels. Vancouver's population has grown significantly over the past 40 years, with neighbourhoods expanding and densifying around a limited supply of city parks. At an average growth rate of 4.0% per year, tourism in Vancouver continues to outpace most cities in North America. Tourism provides a substantial user base to parks, without the tax base to fund them. While Vancouver's population and requirements on public space and parks have increased dramatically, funding to renew and build new washrooms has not kept pace.

To meet changing service needs for washroom access in outdoor spaces, facilities face a number of challenges. Over 40% of Park Board washrooms have entrances that do not meet basic accessibility standards. Most washrooms lack inclusivity in that they do not adequately serve all members of the public. And of course, there are increasing

social pressures. For people experiencing homelessness, there really is nowhere else to 'go'. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role of washrooms in managing a public health crisis, by ensuring access to clean public environments and adequate hand washing.

## WHY HAVE A WASHROOM STRATEGY

Driven by the need for facility renewal, expected population and tourism growth, and changing service needs, the Park Board initiated a planning process to establish a long-term vision for washroom facilities in parks. Transformation of public washrooms is a significant undertaking, requiring time, commitment, and, most of all, capital and operating resources. The Parks Washroom Strategy ("the Strategy") aims to create a system-wide plan to provide safe, clean, and accessible washroom facilities to enhance the park experience for all.

## WHAT GUIDES US & WHAT WE HAVE

Previous Board directions and policies are the foundation of the Strategy, particularly VanPlay: Vancouver's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan. VanPlay set targets for 70-80% of washrooms to be in 'good condition' by 2040. The Washroom Strategy defines 'good condition' by establishing three key criteria: safe, clean, and accessible. Applying these criteria to the 95 facilities across the Parks system has enabled the development of a framework and prioritization towards achieving the vision. An inventory and analysis of existing facilities showed that washrooms are often inaccessible, not inclusive, unsustainable, aging, and face social impacts from homelessness, drug use, cultural differences, and tourism, which all speak further to the need to plan, now.

## WHAT WE HEARD & WHAT WE LEARNED

Successfully providing washroom services across Vancouver will require the continued and combined efforts of multiple departments at both the Park Board and the City of Vancouver. Planning for the delivery of washrooms is also informed by previously gathered public engagement and key stakeholder feedback related to washrooms. Park users have expressed a desire for improvements to park washrooms, change rooms, and showers centred on increased safety, cleanliness, and access. Research into best practices reveals patterns and lessons learned, while also outlining those challenges that are uniquely Vancouver.

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the important role of washrooms in managing a public health crisis by ensuring access to clean public environments and proper hygiene. The Strategy considers directions from health authorities on COVID-19, including the importance of hand washing, minimizing sources of transfer, and recognizing the compounding effect of the overdose crisis on communities most impacted by systemic inequities.

## WHAT WE RECOMMEND

Short and long-term recommendations are provided in Section 6.2. The Strategy builds on prior work completed by the Park Board to implement universal washrooms in community centres. The context of parks is different than staffed community centres, resulting in additional considerations for safety, security, and durability. For parks, the Strategy recommends single-user washrooms with universal options (for all users) to ensure that a safe, clean, and accessible washroom is available to everyone.

Concept illustrations in Section 6.3 show Recommended Washroom Types to meet the challenges of the 21st century. Following through with these recommendations will require increased funding and capital planning. Implementation is informed by

VanPlay's Framework directions: welcoming everyone, delivering services equitably, and weaving the city together.

This Strategy begins with an understanding that washrooms are an essential public service and that everyone is entitled to safe, clean, and accessible washrooms, and lays out a plan for how to deliver facilities in a feasible and comprehensive approach. The call has been heard loud and clear, reverberating through parks, community centres, and into open houses and community forums. Now is the time to answer — with safe, clean, and accessible washrooms, for everybody.



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# 1. WHY HAVE A WASHROOM STRATEGY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.2 PROJECT WORKING GROUP

1.3 SUMMARY OF WORK TO DATE

1.4 RECENT WASHROOM CONSTRUCTION

# 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The landscape of washrooms in Vancouver parks presents great opportunity for enhancing and delivering public services. Washroom issues and upgrade requests are a common source of public input. Many issues have been addressed and several washrooms have been built or renewed. However, without a holistic approach, this work has not sufficiently met needs. The Strategy recommends three criteria to guide how park washrooms are funded, designed, and built:

## 1. Safe

Safety is foundational for having a positive experience of public space. As park washrooms are often the only enclosed (and unsupervised) structures in a public park, entering and using a facility can trigger unsafe feelings. Safety is also relative to privilege and lived experience. For people who use drugs, a washroom can be seen as a safe, discrete place to use, reducing harm to themselves and others. Another washroom user may perceive this as creating an unsafe environment.

## 2. Clean

High use and an increase in range of uses greatly impact maintenance requirements and can put even more strain on an already over-used park washroom system. Keeping up with these pressures to provide clean facilities is a challenge for both washroom designers and the operations staff who service them. The COVID-19 pandemic has only emphasized the importance of washroom hygiene and access to hand washing facilities in maintaining community resilience against infectious outbreak.

## 3. Accessible

Accessibility standards have come a long way since many facilities were built. A consistent standard for accessibility in parks washrooms is required. Providing fully accessible washrooms aligns with increasing efforts to ensure parks activities can be accessed by people of all ages and abilities.

## STRATEGY VISION

To enable the development of safe, clean, and accessible washroom facilities to enhance the park experience for all.

## STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

1. To ensure the highest standard of accessibility
2. To develop a system for renewing and building new facilities
3. To identify under-served areas and prioritize their needs
4. To establish park washroom design recommendations for clean and safe washrooms

## KEY DRIVERS

- **Renewal:** Many of our existing facilities are at or near the end of their life cycle
- **Growth:** New washrooms are needed to address expected population growth
- **Changing Needs:** Service needs have significantly changed with behavioural and demographic trends, increased focus on accessibility, and learnings from the COVID-19 pandemic
- **Direction from VanPlay:** Establish asset targets to address significant need for washrooms in parks and ensure equitable access to facilities by reducing/eliminating barriers

## 1.2 PROJECT WORKING GROUP

Understanding that washrooms in Vancouver's parks involve a wide variety of internal stakeholders, an internal working group was formed to both contribute to and review the washroom strategy at key points throughout its development. The working group included a representative from each of the following departments:

- Commercial Operations
- Park Operations
- Park Development
- Access and Inclusion
- Planning and Research
- Recreation
- New Building Services (Janitorial)
- Engineering (CoV Public Space and Street Use Division)
- REFM (CoV)
- Social Policy (CoV)
- Strategic Initiatives (CoV)
- Vancouver Police Department
- Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services
- City Protective Services

# 1.3 SUMMARY OF WORK TO DATE

## 2009

In 2009, a **staff task force** was organized to address issues around the provision of washrooms in parks. The task force was to respond to:

1. Capital funds being approved for 2009-2011
2. Perceived lack of clear policy framework which could result in inconsistencies in approach to these facilities
3. Interest in rebuilding a fieldhouse or washrooms in Nelson Park

An initial review included:

1. Identifying the lack of washroom access; inventory, distances,-- and volumes
2. Conducting an analysis to identify areas without service
3. Identifying potential redundancies
4. Reviewing issues related to washrooms

Staff presented to the Board on the status of washrooms on May 11, 2009 (The Relieved City). In this update staff suggested that a report back to the Board should include a Long Term Washroom Renewal Plan with recommendations for:

1. Appropriate system-wide levels of services and related infrastructure
2. Sustainable criteria for washroom design, locations and features
3. A longer-term communication strategy (signage, updated web-based information, greater co-ordination for universal access)
4. Review of existing non-public facilities and providing better access to them

A **washroom signage initiative** for improved way-finding to the existing facilities was implemented in 2009.

## 2010

During the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and Paralympics, **public washrooms were made available** throughout the high use areas by the City of Vancouver as temporary units and in new facilities.

## 2011

The **portable toilet program** commenced in 2011 to provide seasonal washroom facilities across the system. This program is on-going.

**NOTE:** Between 2011 and 2017 there was a shift in thinking around washrooms and a focus on inclusion and accessibility in park services.

## 2017

A **fieldhouse update** was provided by staff to the Board in January 2017.

## 2020

The **portable toilet program** is continuing in at least 50 park locations. Additional portable toilets are provided when requested by park users throughout the season. Staff are continuing to review the caretaker and park attendant programs in an effort to reduce break and enters, theft and vandalism.

Staff continue to maintain the park washrooms at different service levels depending on location. A number of high priority washrooms have been upgraded to address the new standards; the table facing outlines the work completed since 2009.

The Park Board approved a **city-wide longterm view of washrooms** as part of VanPlay.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, park washrooms remain open.

# 1.4 RECENT WASHROOM CONSTRUCTION

There are two items in the current 4-year Capital Plan (2019-2022) that allocate funding for washrooms:

- New Washroom & Fieldhouses (\$8.7M)
- Renewal & Upgrades of Washrooms, Fieldhouses & Concessions (\$8.3M)

A number of washrooms have been renewed or built in recent years. The tables below outline new renewals and builds within the last decade.

## WASHROOM RENEWALS

YEAR	LOCATION	NEIGHBOURHOOD
2019	Carnarvon Park	Arbutus Ridge
2019	Clinton Park	Hastings-Sunrise
2019	Falaise Park	Renfrew-Collingwood
2019	Jonathan Rogers Park	Mount Pleasant
2019	Lumberman's Arch (Stanley Park)	West End
2019	Third Beach (Stanley Park)	West End
2018	Memorial South Park	Sunset
2016	Hastings Park	Hastings-Sunrise

## NEW WASHROOMS

YEAR	LOCATION	NEIGHBOURHOOD
2020-	China Creek North	Mount Pleasant
2018	Van Tech	Renfrew-Collingwood
2018	Oak Meadows Park	South Cambie
2018	Trillium Park	Strathcona
2013	Grandview Park	Grandview-Woodlands
2011	Lost Lagoon Public Washroom (Stanley Park)	West End
2010	Slocan Park	Kensington-Cedar Cottage
2010	Oppenheimer Park	Strathcona

### NEW WASHROOMS AT GOLF COURSES

In 2018, new composting washrooms were built at Fraserview and McCleery golf courses.



## **2. WHAT GUIDES US**

2.1 PREVIOUS BOARD DIRECTIONS

2.2 POLICIES AND PLANS

2.3 VANPLAY

## 2.1 PREVIOUS BOARD DIRECTIONS

The Park Board has provided much direction to staff in regard to washrooms throughout the years. Appendix 1 includes all directions since 2015 in regards to washroom services. The following is a list of those directions:

### ***Serving-up a Fresh Concession Strategy***

*2015-11-02 (Motion)*

Direction to explore concession operating models including diverse models and new concepts.

### ***Accessible Parks Strategy - Site Maps***

*2015-12-14 (Motion)*

Partner with City Digital Strategy to map accessible facilities in an online resource.

### ***Increased Accessibility to Public Washrooms***

*2016-11-28 (Motion)*

Assess locations underserved by accessible washrooms, identify servicing constraints, establish design specifications, include washrooms in plans and ensure soap and potentially hot water in all new facilities.

### ***2017 Capital Budget Request for Washroom Renewals***

*2016-12-06 (Motion)*

Funding request to complete 5 washroom renewals in progress.

### ***Review of Real Estate & Facilities Management Provision of Services to Vancouver Park Board***

*2017-10-02 (Motion)*

Review washroom service requests, present findings and recommend management solutions for delivering acceptable level of service.

### ***Equipping Park Board Washrooms with Universally Accessible Changing Stations***

*2018-10-01 (Motion)*

Review all facilities for child changing stations, where necessary improve or replace existing stations if unsafe or unsanitary, and encourage City Council to undertake a similar initiative.

### ***Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services***

*2019-03-11 (Motion)*

Implement a temporary warming station for Oppenheimer Park, work with City staff to provide 24 hour washroom access, explore secure storage options onsite and continue to communicate possible solutions to help solve and humanize homelessness with City staff.

### ***Free Menstrual Products in Park Board Facilities***

*2020-01-20 (Motion)*

Develop policy to make cost free menstrual products available at all Park Board washrooms.



## 2.2 POLICIES AND PLANS

This Strategy was developed to align with existing Park Board and City of Vancouver policy. Following recent direction in VanPlay and Climate Emergency Response (see below for descriptions), staff recognized the role that washrooms have for advancing equity and action on climate change. While planning washroom renewals and new builds, equitable delivery and site specific opportunities for sustainable solutions will be reviewed. Related policies include:

### ***Greenest City Action Plan, 2011***

The Greenest City Action Plan outlines ten goal areas and 15 measurable targets to guide Vancouver toward becoming the greenest city in the world by 2020.

### ***Building a Path to Parks & Recreation for All: Reducing Barriers for Trans & Gender Variant Community Members, 2014***

This report illustrates the findings of Trans and Gender Variant Inclusion Working Group, to assist the Park Board in identifying barriers citizens face in accessing parks and recreation services.

### ***The Renewable City Strategy, 2015***

The Renewable City Strategy sets the direction for Vancouver to achieve its 100% renewable energy goal. It is not intended to be a detailed road map or technology guide, but instead is a foundation for more detailed planning and budgeting.

### ***Trans, Gender Variant and Two-Spirit Inclusion at the City of Vancouver, 2016***

Report of recommendations intended to position the City in a pivotal role to make the changes and accommodations necessary for the inclusion of trans, gender variant, and Two-Spirit residents.

### ***Zero Emissions Buildings Plan, 2016***

This Plan lays out four action strategies to require the majority of new buildings in Vancouver to have no operational greenhouse

gas emissions by 2025 and that all new buildings have no greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

### ***Climate Change Adaptation Plan, 2018***

This is the second iteration of the nationally leading Climate Change Adaptation Strategy that aims to prepare Vancouver for a new normal in terms of climate. Proactively planning for change allows for a greater variety of implementation options to harness windows of opportunity and lower costs.

### ***Women's Equity Strategy, 2018***

This strategy reflects the City of Vancouver's vision for all women to have full access to the resources provided in the city and opportunities to fully participate in the political, economic, cultural, and social life of Vancouver.

### ***Climate Emergency Response, 2019***

Requires the City of Vancouver to demonstrate leadership in reducing embodied carbon emissions in all new construction projects.

### ***VanPlay, 2019***

A new plan developed by the Park Board to guide how we create vibrant parks and recreation over the next 25 years (see Section 2.3 for further information).

### **BC Human Rights Code, 2016**

Amended to include gender identity or expression in protections for a person or class of people to access services and facilities without discrimination based on "race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age of that person or class of persons."

## 2.3 VANPLAY

VanPlay, Vancouver's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan, sets the goals and strategic bold moves for current and future parks and facilities, responding to community, stakeholder, and staff calls for a more connected and equitable parks and recreation system.

These will guide subsequent policies including the Parks Washroom Strategy.



### VANPLAY GOALS RELEVANT TO THE PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY:

- Grow and renew parks, community centres, and other assets to keep pace with population growth and evolving needs
- Prioritize the delivery of resources to where they are needed most
- Focus on core responsibilities of the Park Board, and be a supportive ally to partners
- Create a green network that will connect our parks, waterfront and recreation areas
- Foster a system of parks and recreation spaces that are safe and welcoming to all
- Secure adequate and ongoing funding for the repair, renewal, and replacement of our aging parks and recreation system

### STRATEGIC BOLD MOVES

- **Equity** – creating *Initiative Zones* to assist in prioritizing delivery of parks and recreation resources to historically under-served areas of the city
- **Asset Needs** – articulates needs relating to physical assets and sets targets by which to track progress over time
- **Connectivity** – a vision for a city-wide network of parks and recreation opportunities

SERVICE NEEDS & WASHROOM ASSET TARGETS

VanPlay outlines asset and service needs relating to washrooms and sets the following Asset Targets:

SERVICE NEEDS

EQUITY

- Prioritize renewal using the Initiative Zones and to address urgent safety and accessibility needs, including at least two new or upgraded washroom facilities in the Downtown Eastside by 2024

ASSET NEEDS

- Prioritize upgrades of existing washrooms and adding washrooms at locations with multiple playing fields, destination playgrounds, water recreation access points, community gardens, beaches, and other key destinations where people stay for a few hours

CONNECTIVITY

- Aim to improve access by seeking opportunities along the Citywide Parks and Recreation Network (Strategic Bold Move) and near destination playgrounds, sports fields, water recreation access points, and community gardens

WASHROOM ASSET TARGETS

FOR 2040

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



## **3. WHAT WE HAVE**

3.1 PUBLIC WASHROOMS IN VANCOUVER

3.2 PUBLIC WASHROOMS IN PARKS

3.3 OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

3.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.5 KEY FINDINGS

# 3.1 PUBLIC WASHROOMS IN VANCOUVER

## CURRENT STATE

Current access to public washrooms in Vancouver is provided largely through washrooms in parks, within public buildings, and automated public toilets.



Trillium Park



Hastings Park



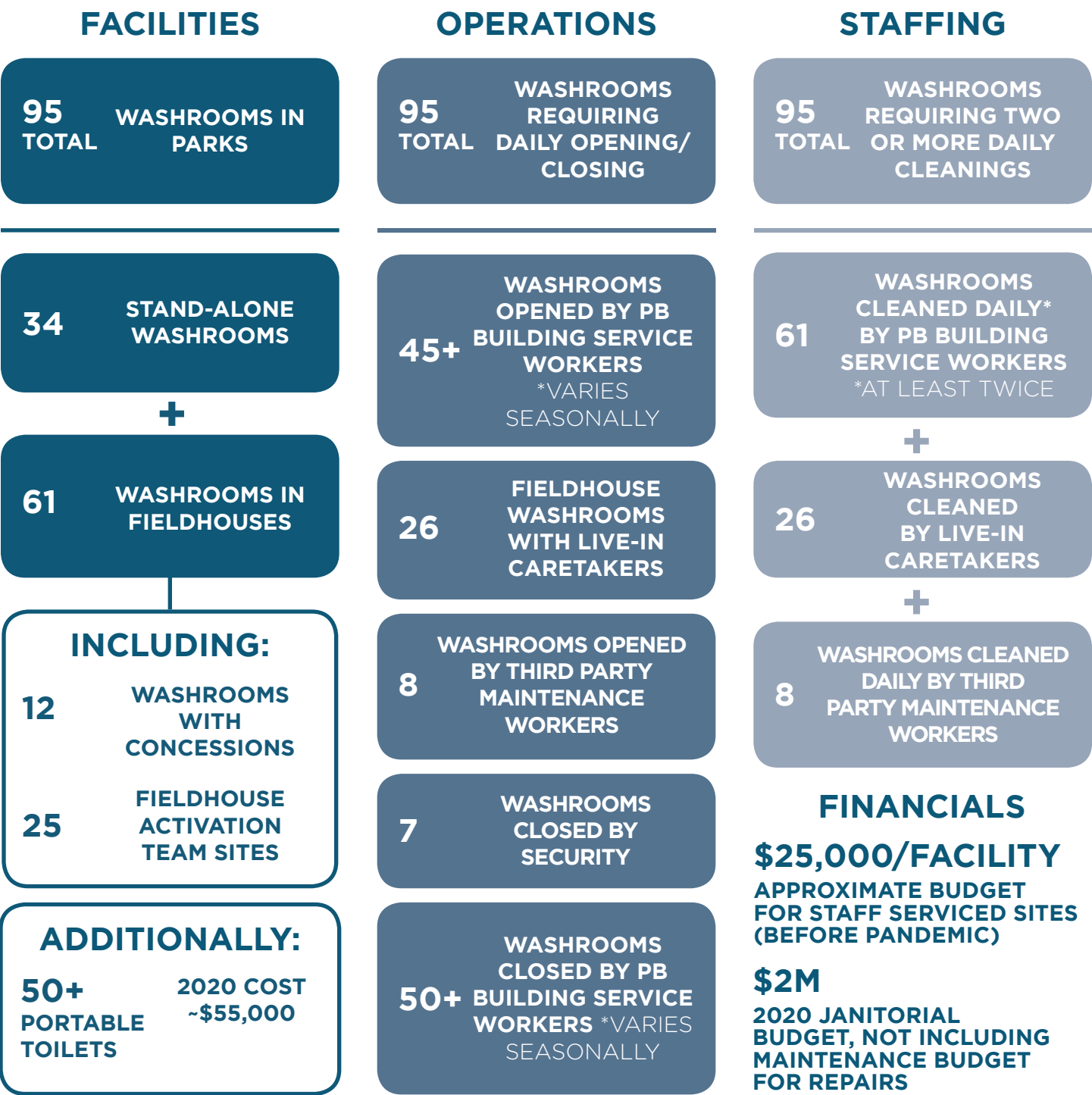
Stanley Park

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

# 3.2 PUBLIC WASHROOMS IN PARKS

## CURRENT STATE

Following is a snapshot of the facilities, operations, staffing, programs, and costs for staff serviced sites at all washrooms in parks owned and operated by the Park Board.





## 3.3 OPERATIONS AND STAFFING

The public nature of park facilities and the ever-present considerations for safety and maintenance present significant demands for operations and staffing.

### LOCKING AND ACCESS

Washroom facilities across the system have varying hours of operation and are currently opened by Park Board Building Service Workers and closed by Rangers or Security. Start-up and shut down duties take time, especially when interrupted.

### HIGH TRAFFIC SITES

Washroom sites with a high degree of traffic have more service interruptions. Three key high traffic sites:

- Oppenheimer Park
- Andy Livingstone Park
- Grandview Park

### OPERATIONS STATISTICS

- There are approximately 95 Park Board sites that require some degree of lock and/or gate opening and lock-ups of facilities
- There are 61 Park Fieldhouses with washrooms. 26 are occupied by live-in caretakers and 25 are Fieldhouse Activation Team sites
- Live-in caretakers are responsible for opening and closing 26 of the fieldhouse sites daily
- Park Board Building Service Workers open/unlock 60 sites in the morning and lock at night. This can vary slightly seasonally
- Third party workers open 8 sites daily

- Security attendants lock-up 7 sites daily
- A relatively accurate per facility cost estimate for staff serviced sites (open/clean/lock daily) would be \$25,000 per site per year, all in

### STAFFING STATISTICS

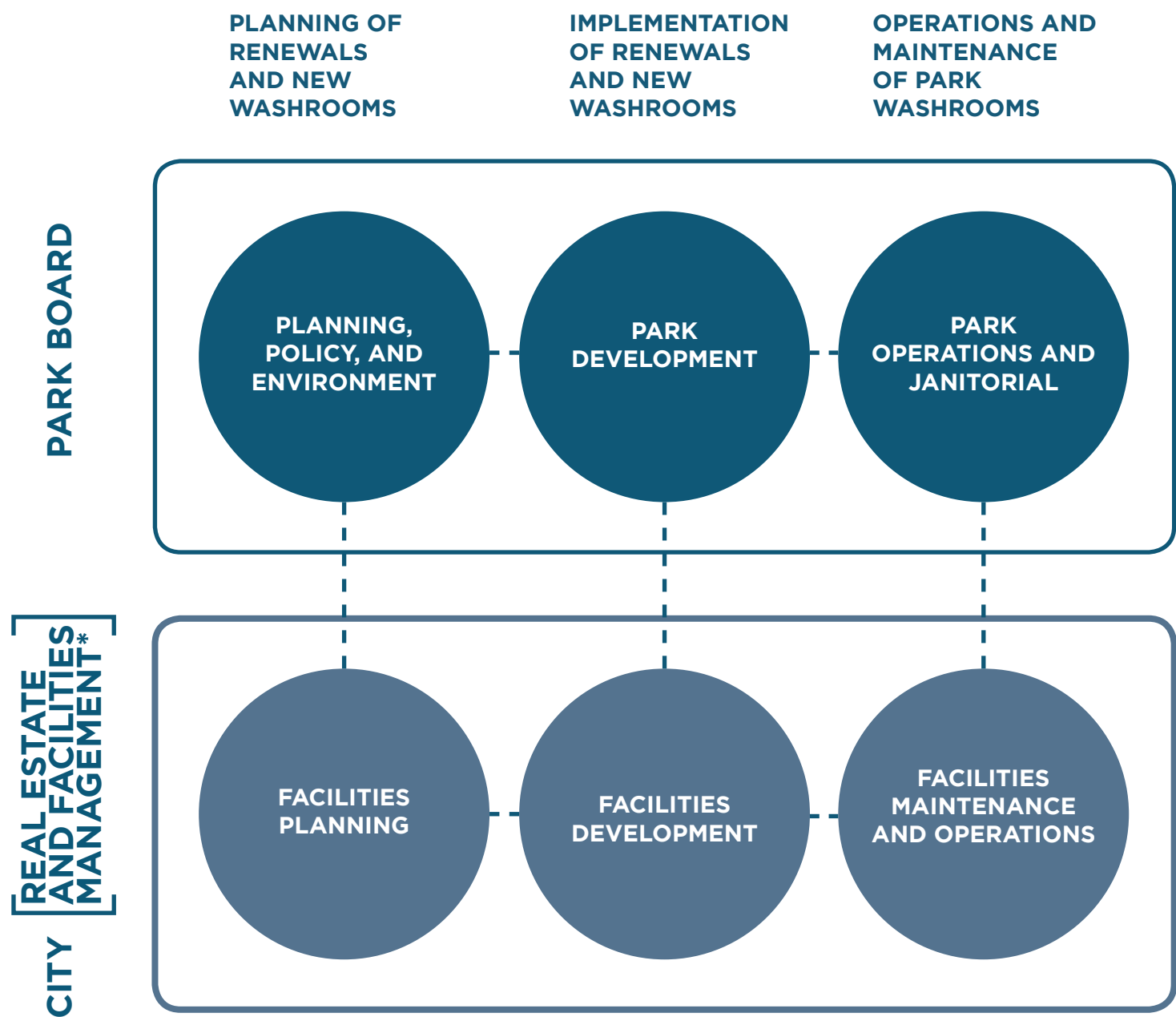
- There are approximately 95 Park Board sites that require cleaning one or more times per day
- Park Board Building Service Workers clean 60 sites at least once daily and cover for live-in caretakers when they are on holiday
- Live-in caretakers are responsible cleaning, unlocking, and locking 26 of the fieldhouse sites daily
- Third party workers clean 8 sites daily
- During the summer, washrooms are cleaned and/or restocked twice or more daily depending on use and special events

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



# 3.4 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following teams are involved in the coordinated planning, building, and maintaining washroom facilities in parks:



\*Depending on location, Engineering and/or Vancouver School Board may have roles and responsibilities.

## 3.5 KEY FINDINGS

Through analysis of past work, current state, and discussions with operations and staff, a number of key findings frame the direction for outreach and engagement.

### LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY

Many facilities do not meet minimum standards of accessibility. Access to washroom buildings can be restricted by location, uneven or steep pathway surfaces, entrance grade differences, stairs, width of entrance or door handle type. Interior spaces can be too small.

### LACK OF INCLUSIVITY

Public washrooms need to serve every member of the public, regardless of gender or gender identity. While strides have been taken within the Park Board system to provide inclusive washrooms in community centres and signage has been added to park facilities, many washrooms remain separated by gender.

### END OF SERVICE LIFE

The majority of washroom facilities in the Park Board system are nearing the end of their service life. These facilities are incredibly hard-working, seeing high-use. Older structures can continue to serve well with continued investment. Prioritizing projects for renovation or replacement can be a complex task.

### LACK OF SUSTAINABILITY

Our system includes some sustainable and innovative technology but there are many washrooms that have high potable water use, such as those with continually running urinal walls. Many park washrooms also contribute to excessively high energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

### INCREASED SOCIAL PRESSURES

Public washrooms are impacted by a variety of increasing social pressures: they provide for the basic needs of people experiencing homelessness, can be seen as a safe place for drug use, reveal cultural differences and language barriers, and must respond to the scale and unique challenges posed by tourist use (e.g. Stanley Park).

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



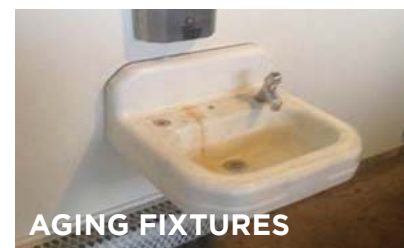
**STEP AT ENTRYWAY**

Strathcona Park



**LACK OF INCLUSIVITY**

Hillcrest Community Centre



**AGING FIXTURES**

Second Beach



**HIGH WATER USE**

Second Beach



**TOURISM**

Stanley Park

## 4. WHAT WE HEARD

4.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

4.2 STAKEHOLDERS

4.3 PREVIOUS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

4.4 UNSOLICITED FEEDBACK



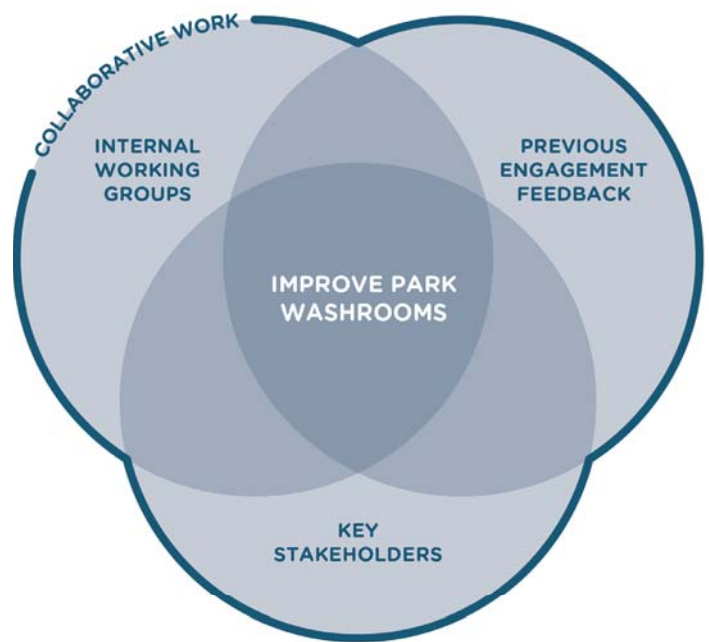
# 4.1 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Park Board and the City have overlapping interests with respect to washrooms, sharing the common goal of improving public washrooms for all. Staff listened to a variety of concerns through this process and compiled the discussions, feedback, and findings to help shape the recommendations of the Parks Washroom Strategy.

Previous public engagement data, collected through VanPlay and other planning and park development projects as well as 3-1-1 feedback, helped outline the main issues with washrooms in parks. It was clear from this data that improving availability and cleanliness of washrooms is a high priority for the public and would help reduce barriers to parks and recreation.

This analysis enabled staff to take a more focused approach to further engagement on washrooms with key stakeholders including committees of Council, and provides a high level summary of the learnings from each group.

In general, our findings helped consolidate this Strategy's vision to provide safe, clean, and accessible washrooms for all, leading to recommendations for siting and design, maintenance and staffing, and fixtures and construction.



## INTERNAL WORKING GROUPS

- PB Beach Experience Team
- Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force
- Universal & Inclusive Design Feasibility Study
- Team UP!
- Fieldhouse Activation Program
- Concession Strategy

Further detail on internal working groups is provided in Appendix 4.

## 4.2 KEY STAKEHOLDERS

### COMMITTEES OF COUNCIL



### WHAT WE HEARD

#### Access

- Add family room/universal washrooms
- Support for gender neutral single-user washrooms
- Evening and night time access important
- Do not rely on electronics to communicate
- Change stall doors should swing outward
- Add coin-free menstrual products with bins
- Be mindful of cultural components
- Clean floors are an accessibility matter
- Not enough public washrooms (e.g. transit)
- Separate change rooms
- More accessible for all people

#### Fixtures

- Step stools for children at least at one sink
- Have warm water to wash hands at tap
- Motion sensors break down, don't work

- Details are important (e.g. grab bars)
- Use larger sharp boxes in all washrooms
- Have waste receptacles in all washrooms stalls
- Lack of adult changing table is a barrier
- Locks on doors should be simple, mechanical, and standardized
- Install power doors
- Use better non-slip flooring material
- Add tap outside washroom to rinse fruit, toys, etc.

#### Safety & Cleanliness

- Ensure adequate lighting for safety
- More staff, more frequent cleaning
- Stalls should accommodate caregiver
- Consider scent free cleaning products
- Address racial harassment in washrooms
- Have ability to spray down washrooms
- Add emergency call button in all washrooms
- Ensure good ventilation

#### Communication

- Standardize signage around inclusivity
- Ensure braille can be reached at hand level
- Have paper copies of maps
- Proposed Task Force should meet with applicable committees of council
- Seniors cannot stand in line for too long, have signage prioritize their needs
- Add signs to communicate not to stand on toilet seats

#### Looking Ahead

- All upcoming playgrounds should build or renew their washrooms
- Washrooms are not just assets, they are a necessity, a basic human need, and a life-preserver - washrooms create access

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS

**VANCOUVER  
COASTAL  
HEALTH (VCH)**

**VANCOUVER  
FIELD SPORTS  
FEDERATION**

**TRANSLINK**

**VANCOUVER  
SCHOOL BOARD**

**TOURISM  
VANCOUVER**

**HEALTHY BUILT  
ENVIRONMENT  
(VCH)**

- Supplies running out in washrooms are a challenge
- Sense of safety has been an issue in parks
- Change rooms are a requirement for sport field users and showers are an amenity
- Where change rooms exist, they should be named home and away instead of men's and women's
- Locks on washrooms/change rooms are important but field users have run into issues with the overlapping open/close procedures of PB crew

### TransLink

- Working on a long-term strategy to focus on providing washrooms for customers
- Priority is high transfer volume locations spread out throughout the network
- Distribute evenly across Lower Mainland
- Key locations have not been determined

### Vancouver School Board

- Opportunity to collaborate where adjacent
- Inclusive washrooms are not consistent
- Improve hand washing and bottle filling

### Tourism Vancouver

- Visitors have difficulty locating washrooms, especially downtown
- International demographic sees value in universal washrooms

### Healthy Built Environment (VCH)

- Use universal washrooms for family care
- Have a change table in all washrooms
- Food hubs require washrooms
- Use sustainable treatments
- Consider harm reduction principles

## WHAT WE HEARD

### Vancouver Coastal Health

- Created a toolkit focused on medical emergency
- Noted park washroom 'hot spots' based on overdose event data
- Floor to ceiling doors with no frosted window, motion detector, lock indicator are a challenge
- Portland Loo example is interesting
- Staff and maintain mobile washrooms in high challenge areas
- Park stewardship is important

### Vancouver Field Sports Federation

- Key code is working for the group; changes every 6 months
- Dedicated rangers at Andy Livingstone who sweep the park daily are effective

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 4.3 PREVIOUS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Through many streams of engagement, staff have heard clear feedback on washrooms, including through the following projects:

### **VANPLAY (2019)**

Phase 1: 17,150 PARTICIPANTS

#### **What are challenges?**

- Resilience and Well-being: key themes included that public sanitation in parks and recreation and conditions related to public health, especially access to drinking water and public washrooms, is a major challenge to health and wellbeing

#### **What do you think are the top three factors for us to consider as plan for the future of Vancouver's parks and recreation?**

- Access to Public Washrooms; types of washrooms (7%)

#### **Are there any challenges or barriers that prevent you from enjoying Vancouver's parks and recreation?**

- Access to Public washrooms and water (16%)

#### **In your opinion, what could we do to improve the quality of Vancouver's parks and recreation?**

- More Washrooms, Cleaner Washrooms (22%)

### **NORTHEAST FALSE CREEK PARKS CONCEPT DESIGN (Ongoing)**

Public has asked for clean, safe, and accessible washrooms.

#### **Guiding Principles:**

- Design for all ages and abilities, especially with seniors in mind
- Provide robust and durable park elements
- Ensure support for a high level of on-going care, maintenance and operation of the park

### **PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY**

### **VANSPLASH: VANCOUVER'S AQUATICS STRATEGY (2019)**

7,000 INTERACTIONS

- Primary recommendations to improve beach-going experiences
- People surveyed also asked for better maintenance of washroom facilities

### **JOHN HENDRY PARK MASTER PLAN (Ongoing)**

#### **Support for Master Plan Draft Recommendations:**

- 78% of people support rebuilding the South Beach Washroom Building
- 75% of people support expanding washrooms near northeast side of the park for public use

### **ON WATER: VANCOUVER'S NON-MOTORIZED WATERCRAFT STRATEGY (2019)**

- 6% of survey respondents expressed that a lack of amenities such as washrooms were a barrier to their participation in non-motorized sports
- 11% of survey respondents indicated that access to Vancouver's waterways could be improved by upgrading existing facilities including washrooms

### **ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP (Ongoing)**

- Most stewardship work happens on weekends and washrooms need to be open to accommodate this important work
- A key issue for stewards in parks is washroom proximity to natural areas that they work within



## **PEOPLES, PARKS & DOGS STRATEGY (2017)**

- Advisory committee participants reinforced that off-leash areas need to consider the needs of the people who use them, and identified opportunities for improved amenities (e.g. water, lighting, toilet facilities) and accessibility for persons with disabilities)
- Stakeholders indicated that they would like washroom facilities (permanent or well-serviced portable toilets) near dog off-leash areas

## **WEST END WATERFRONT MASTER PLAN (Ongoing)**

- 3% of respondents identified washrooms as an area of interest
- Majority of respondents who singled out washrooms identified a need for improvement

## **TRACK AND FIELD STRATEGY (2019)**

- 51% of respondents prioritized the adding or upgrading of washrooms at track and field training facilities

## **PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY**

# 4.4 UNSOLICITED FEEDBACK

Reports from 311 provide city-wide data on park assets with reference to specific facilities and needs, where citizens share input on washrooms without necessarily being asked through engagement.

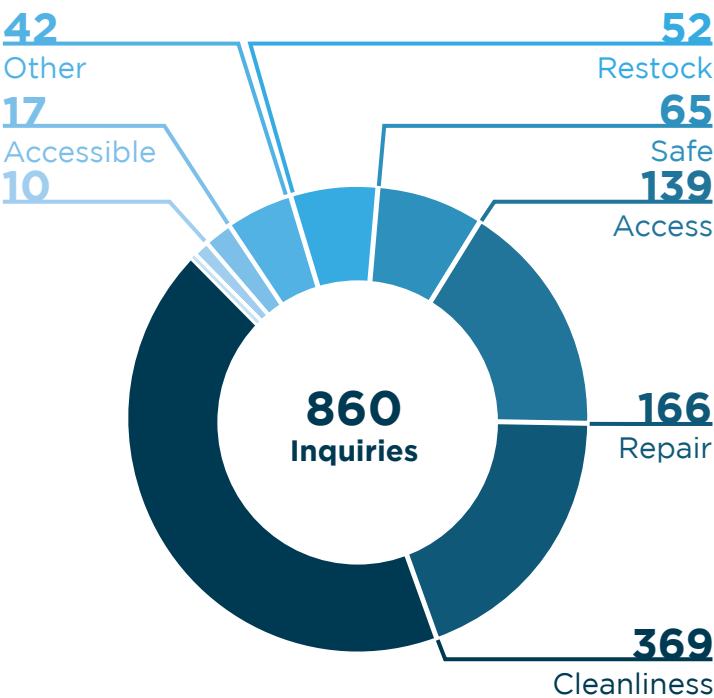
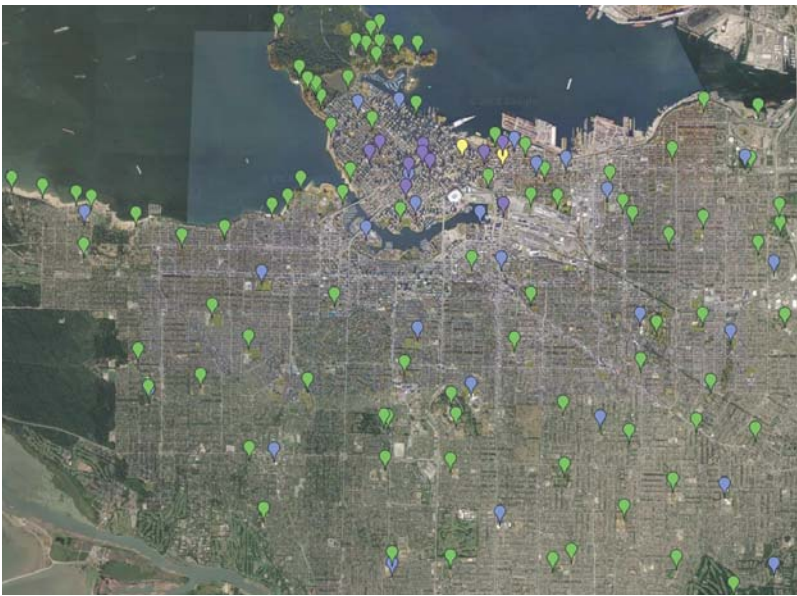
860 inquiries were collected from October 2016 to June 2018 and are broken down into the following categories: cleanliness, repair, access, safe, restock, accessible and other.

Following a news article on universal washrooms, staff received 14 feedback emails from the public describing their safety concerns with non-gendered washrooms and majority of the emails stated that it is “critical that women have washroom space that is not accessible to men,” and that “ women feel unsafe around men.”

## PARKS WITH TEN OR MORE REPORTS

860 inquiries were made for 97 parks. The following 22 of these 97 parks had 10 or more incidents reported:

Jericho Park	10
Kingcrest Park	10
Crab Park	10
Oppenheimer Park	10
Harbour Green Park	10
Woodland Park	10
Tatlow Park	11
Pandora Park	12
Trafalgar Park	13
David Lam Park	14
Queen Elizabeth Park	19
Mount Pleasant Park	19
Empire Fields	20
Slocan Park	23
Sunset/ English Bay	28
Spanish Banks	35
Grandview Park	38
Kits Beach Park	43
John Hendry/ Trout Lake	49
Trillium Field	56
Andy Livingstone Park	57
Stanley Park	111



## **5. WHAT WE LEARNED**

- 5.1 SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES
- 5.2 ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS
- 5.3 INCLUSIVE SINGLE-USER WASHROOMS
- 5.4 SOCIAL FACTORS
- 5.5 COVID-19 PANDEMIC LEARNINGS

# 5.1 SUMMARY OF BEST PRACTICES

The following is a summary of research completed into best practices. Further information is included in Appendix 2.

- **Safety** - Well-lit single-user washrooms with regular cleaning and maintenance increase safety. Semi-open design of the bottom and top of doors and other exterior walls allows users both inside and outside to make safe judgments without compromising privacy. In select cases, multi-stall washrooms can utilize a central shared washing space with multiple entrances and exits to ensure safety. Single-user washrooms options provide for those uncomfortable with this format. This is refined through custom design and engagement, and can benefit from an attendant on site.
- **Inclusivity** - To provide safe, inclusive washrooms for all users, focus on the function of the space rather than the identity of the user.
- **The Harm Reduction Approach** - Harm reduction is used in the context of drug-use in washrooms and ensuring the safety of washroom users and staff at all times. This includes accommodation for first responders such as outward opening doors and locks that can be opened from the outside, fixtures such as safety mirrors and sharps containers, and design to eliminate spaces to conceal or discard items. (Also see Section 5.3).
- **Care for Children** - Change tables should be provided in all single-user and universal washrooms within multi-stall facilities. Additional consideration should be made for child-appropriate heights and resiliency of fixtures, in many cases aligning with contemporary standards for accessibility.
- **Accessibility** - Single-user washrooms and at least one, preferably two stall(s) in a multi-stall washroom facility should be designed for universal access. Follow the highest standards for accessibility and ensure washrooms and signage are easily located and legible to all users. (Also see Section 5.2).
- **Maintenance** - Washroom layout should be designed for ease of maintenance. Surfaces should be of resistant materials that discourage graffiti and allow for pressure washing. Fixtures should have a durable design to withstand heavy use. For fire resistance, select stainless steel for surfaces, replace paper towels with hand dryers, and limit the number of garbage cans inside.
- **Monitoring & Emergency Response** - Besides using durable fixtures and considering harm reduction, attendants can help mitigate impacts at socially sensitive sites. An attendant is a person hired to monitor and supervise a washroom facility to ensure the safety of the washroom user. The attendant acts as the first responder in the event of an emergency and ensures washrooms are well-maintained. In most successful cases, the attendant is a peer or member of the community who has social connections and understanding of the relevant issues. Other important considerations are naloxone training for staff and emergency call buttons.
- **Signage & Way-finding** - Signage should be consistent, with a focus on service, not the user identity. The recommended signage for single-user washrooms is a toilet pictogram, followed by the word *washroom*. Signage should use non-judgmental, non-stigmatizing messaging around drug use or sex work. Way-finding should consider blind or visually impaired users through tactile paving.

## 5.2 ACCESSIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

### REVIEW OF ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

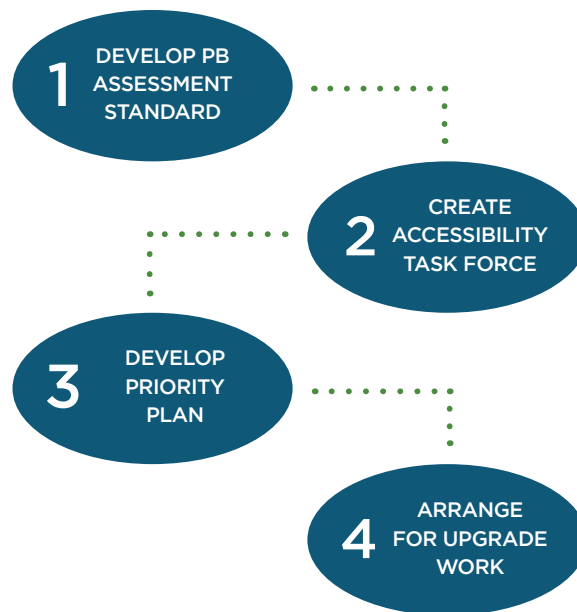
In some provinces in Canada, there is provincial legislation that requires full accessibility for all who need it, such as Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA). Province of British Columbia is just embarking on Accessibility Through Legislation with a recent (Fall 2019) public engagement phase. Park Board staff completed a review of Vancouver Building By-law (VBBL), British Columbia Building Code (BCBC), National Building Code (NBC), Canadian Standards Association (CSA), AODA, and Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification Program recommendations. With the review of the above documents and based on Rick Hansen Foundation, staff recommend CSA B651 Accessible Design for the Built Environment standards be applied to the design of Park Board Washrooms.

### REVIEW OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

There is a need for immediate work to be done to address current challenges. Roughly 40% of park washrooms do not meet the basic accessibility need of having an accessible entrance. Since renewal of some washrooms may be years away in the capital renewal program, a short term accessibility upgrade project was initiated based on a review of park washrooms. Washrooms were assessed for accessibility deficiencies and simple upgrades will be arranged for the short term.

### ACCESSIBILITY TASK FORCE

Staff have completed an accessibility review and are arranging for upgrade work. As part of the implementation of the Washroom Strategy, the renewal priority list and City of Vancouver Public Washroom Design and Technical Guidelines will be updated with the learnings of the Accessibility Task Force.



## 5.3 INCLUSIVE SINGLE-USER WASHROOMS

It is essential that the ability to use a safe, clean, and accessible washroom is extended to everyone. Access to a washroom is a basic human right, as outlined by the BC Human Rights Code. Through our research and engagement, it was determined that single-user washrooms are an effective approach to inclusivity. Single-user washrooms are an established approach for washrooms taken from the Vancouver Building By-Law, and in place in many Community Centres and other facilities. Consider the following benefits of single-user washrooms:

- **Safety** - Increased measures for privacy - to use toilets, change clothes, and attend to individual health needs - contribute to greater safety for everyone. Single-user washrooms accommodate multiple needs within one safely enclosed private area. By privileging safety in the design, single-user washrooms reduce instances of harm, harassment and violence.
- **Inclusivity** - Single-user washrooms accommodate women, trans and gender diverse people, families, and people requiring assistance from a companion or a caregiver of a different gender, and are flexible to be configured as a universal washroom.
- **Efficiency** - Single-user washrooms are more efficient because they eliminate the need for gendered queues. By having a consistent design of single-user washrooms, access is standardized and maintenance is simplified.

### INCLUSIVE POLICY

The Park Board is committed to creating safe spaces for everyone, including trans, gender diverse, and Two-Spirit (TGD2S+) people, and has been leading the way with this work for several years.

In 2014, the Board received the report *Building a Path to Parks & Recreation for All* from the Trans and Gender Variant Working Group, and directed staff to create a Trans and Gender Variant Implementation Steering Committee to assist with the implementation of the actions that were recommended.

A central aim of this work was to expand options in gendered services and physical spaces to foster more safe, respectful, and welcoming parks for all.

In 2019, the Park Board approved *VanPlay*, a new plan to guide how we create vibrant parks and recreation over the next 25 years. Equity, inclusion, and access were top priorities for action identified by the community, leading *VanPlay* to establish equity as one of its three strategic bold moves. This move reiterated the right for all people and communities to have the opportunity to partake in park activities.

### MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS

Staff are exploring ways of providing cost free menstrual products in park washrooms. This strategy recognizes the need to more closely consider people's gender identity and expression and equitably provide services to those that require menstrual products.



## 5.4 SOCIAL FACTORS

### SOCIAL FACTORS

In serving the public need for washroom access in outdoor park spaces, washroom buildings can be impacted by social conditions related to people experiencing homelessness, people who use drugs, cultural differences, and other factors that may affect someone's experience of a park facility. For many people at risk and facing discrimination in larger buildings and institutions, well-designed and maintained single-user park washroom buildings may be the only option for serving their basic needs.

There are two important factors in the experience of an individual in a washroom: the sense of privacy and sense of safety. Providing single-user washrooms and attendants at socially sensitive sites can be a means to balance these concerns.

Working towards safe, clean, and accessible washrooms is an important part of an equitable city, especially considering the overrepresentation of Indigenous people among people experiencing homelessness, despite being on Indigenous land.

### AUTOMATED PUBLIC TOILET (APT)

In 11 locations in the city, APTs have been implemented under the street furniture contract to provide washrooms at socially sensitive sites. These facilities are not recommended for parks due to difficulties that their enclosed, private design creates for recognizing and responding to a medical emergency inside.

### FINDINGS OF THE MAYOR'S EMERGENCY OVERDOSE TASK FORCE

City staff are preparing recommendations to improve emergency response times to overdoses or other emergencies that occur in washrooms and to save lives. Preliminary findings have contributed to the Parks Washroom Strategy in influencing measures that mitigate impacts of the overdose crisis and increase washroom safety through staffing, fixtures, and access.

### SITES OF OVERDOSE EVENTS

Vancouver Coastal Health reviewed overdose event data and noted that the following park washrooms are located in 'hot spots':

- Andy Livingstone Park
- Nelson Park
- Portside (CRAB) Park
- Maclean Park
- McGill Park
- Jonathan Rogers Park

## 5.5 COVID-19 PANDEMIC LEARNINGS

### THE CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, and on March 11, the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic. On March 12, the City began closing some of its facilities and stopped providing a number of its services. On March 19, City of Vancouver declared a State of Emergency.

On March 26, 2020, the province declared that public washrooms and showers are deemed to be essential services. During this time, all Park Board community centres, fitness centres, pools, and ice rinks closed. As part of an urgent response to this pandemic, 34 portable toilets were installed in various locations of the Downtown East Side. Comfort Station washroom trailers monitored by peer attendants were piloted to provide a safe space to access basic services for vulnerable people. All park washrooms remained open to park users and portable toilets were added to meet increased demand. Enhanced COVID cleaning of washrooms has created a new baseline for operation costs. Should this level of enhanced cleaning continue, a higher base-level is required for janitorial services.

### ACCESS TO HAND WASHING

One of the first and main directions from health authorities was the importance of frequent hand washing. As businesses closed to ensure physical distancing guidelines were respected, outdoor spaces emerged as safe and desirable places to move around in for people otherwise staying at home. Parks, with the benefit of natural features and walking paths, quickly became among the most visited features of the city. Parks with washrooms enhanced the safety of visitors by enabling hand washing protocol through access to sinks and soap, and were one of the few public places to provide this service.

### LEARNINGS

1. The importance of access to hand washing is a key learning in this context. The addition of exterior hand washing stations could provide cleaning facilities for people who may not need or want to enter a washroom, ensuring safer and easier access to hand washing for a larger number of park users. These fixtures could be coupled with bottle filling stations for further health benefit, providing access to potable water and increasing water security.
2. The importance of minimizing sources of transmission within a washroom is another learning. To reduce surface touching, measures include doors kept open, sensors, or a timed button for exiting. To reduce airborne transmission of particles from 'toilet plumes' caused by flushing, measures include ensuring that toilets have a lid, toilets that need their lid closed to flush, signage communicating the need to close a lid before flushing, and increased building ventilation. Single-user washrooms, designed for one person or one person and a caregiver, further reduce instances of potential transmission between people or a person coming into contact with airborne particles caused by a toilet plume.
3. With the city now facing both the overdose crisis and COVID-19 pandemic, it is critically important to support people experiencing homelessness, sex workers, people who use drugs and other vulnerable communities who rely on public washrooms for basic needs with clean, safe, and accessible services. A pandemic disproportionately impacts vulnerable communities, necessitating greater measures to protect those communities, and by extension, everyone else.

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



## **6. WHAT WE RECOMMEND**

6.1 SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

6.3 RECOMMENDED WASHROOM TYPES

6.4 PRIORITIZATION

6.5 IMPLEMENTATION

# 6.1 SERVICE PLANNING AND DELIVERY

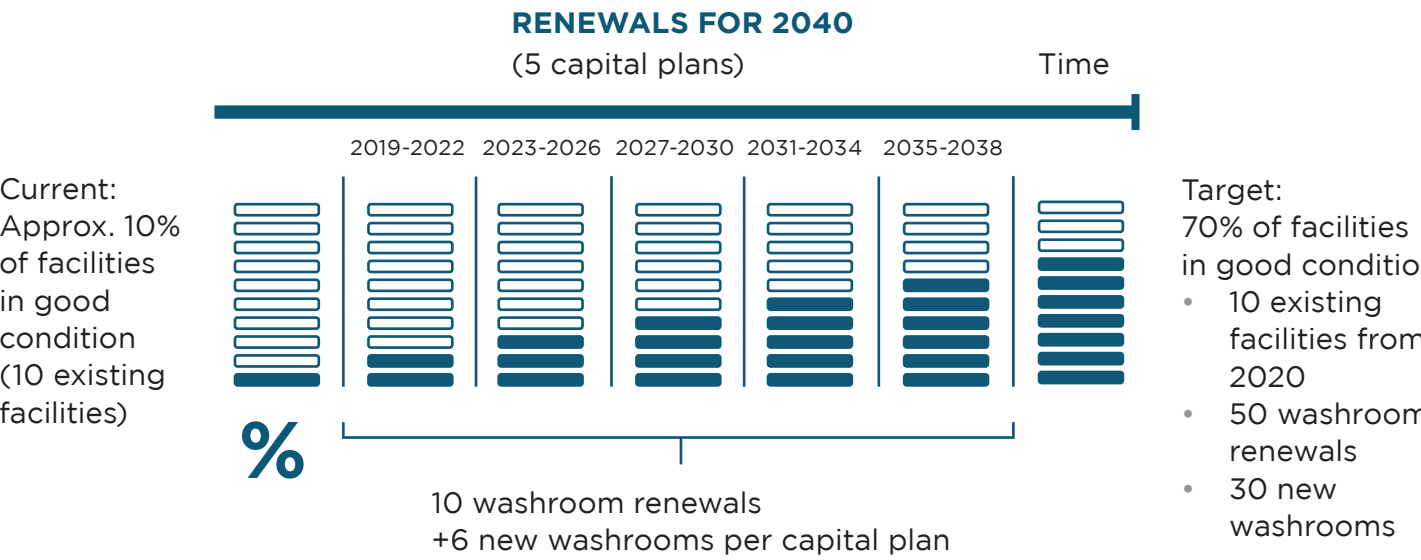
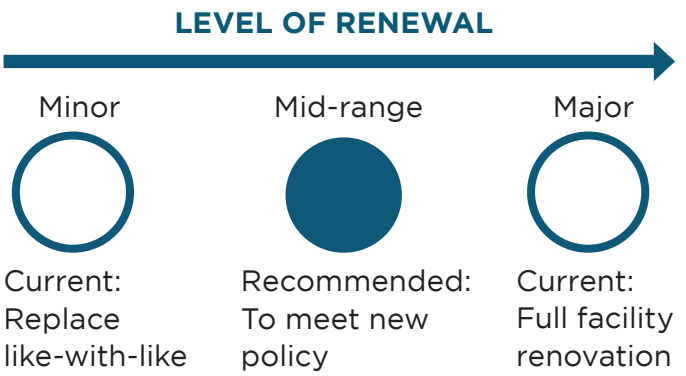
VanPlay sets an asset target for 70-80% of washrooms in good condition or better by 2040 and asks for facilities near destinations and significant amenities along the Primary Network. Benchmark asset targets provide a way to measure change over time, prioritize investments, and recognize changing needs.

Although many washrooms may not be considered in good condition or better, simple upgrades, maintenance, and increased staffing can assist in maintaining or increasing the condition of these facilities without the need for renewal. However, it is apparent that the existing system will require additional attention in future capital planning as washrooms age.

Current renewal work in washrooms is either based on a minor replacement of like-to-like fixtures (typically Operating funds), or major renewal requiring funds from Capital Plans. Work categorized as mid-range renewal is not easily addressed. There needs to be an annual allotment for mid-range washroom upgrades in Capital Plans to facilities anticipating comprehensive renovation work in the longer term, particularly when it comes to accessibility upgrades.

Building new washrooms to meet growing demand is an important consideration for park renewals. Typically, the overall budget for new washrooms has been roughly equal to the budget for washroom renewals. However, new washrooms have a greater individual cost, resulting in fewer new buildings than renewals. As new washrooms are added to the park system, the percentage of washrooms in good condition increases.

Finally, new washrooms and washroom renewals at revenue generating facilities (excluding major buildings) must be considered. Some examples of these locations include VanDusen Botanical Garden and golf courses.



## GOOD CONDITION DEFINITION

VanPlay sets a target of 70-80% of washrooms in good condition or better by 2040. This Strategy defines 'good condition' as a set of criteria to be met under safe, clean and accessible:

### → SAFE

- Clear sightlines from both inside and outside the building
- Washroom building sited in visible location
- Welcoming to all users, with harm reduction measures

- Minimal or no security reports
- Minimal or no vandalism

#### **Socially Sensitive Sites**

The experience of washrooms in good condition is affected both by building design and age as well as social factors that change the perceived safety of the facilities. A washroom that is 'good' in the morning may be perceived as less safe later in the day if it is located in a socially sensitive site. Elevating the experience of washrooms in good conditions requires not just renewals of facilities but changes to services and staffing.

### → CLEAN

- Provides fresh and clean experience
- Easy to clean and maintain
- Building new or renewed
- Minimal or no shut-down time required
- All equipment operational

### → ACCESSIBLE

- Highest accessibility standard for new washrooms
- Proper access to the building for existing washrooms
- Proper accessibility within existing washroom buildings
- Fixtures at accessible heights and locations
- Way-finding and signage legible to all users



## 6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

**Washrooms are a basic public service and a right that everyone is entitled to.**

**It is important to recognize that successfully providing washroom services across Vancouver will require the continued efforts of both the Park Board and the City.**

**Exploring opportunities for the City to improve access to washrooms in plazas, new development sites, and other public spaces outside of parks will complement the network of washrooms in the parks system.**

## **6.1.1 SHORT TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. ACCESSIBILITY (SHORT TERM)**

- 1.1 Advance the work of Park Board Accessibility Task Force to arrange for simple upgrade work, aiming to replace with an accessible product when repairing damaged fixtures.
- 1.2 Identify park washrooms with major accessibility issues based on the findings of the Park Board Accessibility Task Force to feed in priority list for renewals.
- 1.3 Follow CSA (Canadian Standards Association) B651 - Accessible Design For The Built Environment standards to assess need for accessibility improvements.
- 1.4 Update VanMaps with accurate and detailed information, ensure other online mapping tools have up to date location information, and hard copy maps are made available.

### **2. INCREASE STAFF**

- 2.1 Increase staff on mobile washroom crews that respond to seasonality and use patterns.
- 2.2 Increase attendants at busy facilities, where their presence increases safety and cleanliness.
- 2.3 Investigate the use of remote locking and unlocking with motion sensors and call button to allow staff to focus on other priorities.

### **3. EQUITABLE ACTIONS**

- 3.1 Provide cost free menstrual products in park washrooms
- 3.2 Work with community members with lived experience to create stewardship models for safety and openness.
- 3.3 Focus on service and not identity of the users.

### **4. STAND-ALONE WASHROOMS**

- 4.1 Investigate and pilot the feasibility of a stand-alone washroom (e.g. Portland Loo or alternative) in a suitable location as a potential long-term model.
- 4.2 Consider washroom trailers that provide more durable, clean, and accessible solutions for high volume areas with construction restrictions.
- 4.3 Allocate funding to temporary portable washroom program for seasonal high-use parks while piloting other options to phase out temporary portable washroom program.

### **5. COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

- 5.1 Increase signage to provide hours of opening information, direct the public to nearby washrooms at libraries and community centres, provide harm reduction information and develop signage for destination locations with high traffic and tourism.
- 5.2 Inform park users of upcoming washroom construction when washrooms are not functional.
- 5.3 Communicate to the public the ways in which their input is being incorporated into providing safer, cleaner, and more accessible washrooms for all.

## **6.1.2 LONG TERM RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **1. ACCESSIBILITY (LONG TERM)**

- 1.1 Adopt a new standard based on CSA B651 and reference the City of Vancouver's Public Washroom Design and Technical Guidelines for all renewals and new builds.
- 1.2 Provide an adult change table at each destination park washroom and where identified as needed;
- 1.3 Provide a child changing station, except where adult changing stations can be used for both purposes.

### **2. BUILDING RENEWAL**

- 2.1 Implement findings on fixtures from Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force Washroom Strategy.
- 2.2 Provide a standardized approach to new washroom building design (as outlined in Section 6.3), which reflects the five VanPlay park classifications, including guidelines for size to suit location.
- 2.3 Standardize approach to fixtures, signage, way-finding, and colour palette for consistency in accessibility, safety, durability, and appearance while allowing for individual treatments.
- 2.4 Implement energy and potable water improvements in the renovation of existing washrooms. In particular, when replacing fixtures specify ultra low-flow for toilet, sink faucets, and urinals (or waterless).

### **3. INCLUSIVE WASHROOMS**

- 3.1 Design all washroom facilities to provide stall options for inclusivity of people with disabilities, families and caregivers, and trans and gender diverse people.
- 3.2 Balance safety and privacy through exploration of semi-open designs.
- 3.3 Develop communication material to outline policies about access for all.

### **4. PRIORITY LIST**

- 4.1 Continue to use a prioritization method (i.e. Scoring Criteria) for renewal and build of new washrooms in order to provide washrooms where most needed.
- 4.2 Revisit the priority list annually to ensure information is current.
- 4.3 Incorporate the findings of the internal Accessibility Task Force annually and offer input.

### **5. LOOKING AHEAD**

- 5.1 Review City of Vancouver Public Washroom Design and Technical Guidelines annually and improve collaboration with City departments to build a larger network of public washrooms.
- 5.2 Review tour bus impacts on destination park washrooms including engagement with business operators.
- 5.3 Recommend construction of approximately 6 new washrooms and 10 renovations per capital plan, and increase operating and upgrade budget to maintain washrooms.

## 6.3 RECOMMENDED WASHROOM TYPES

The recommended washroom types correspond to the park classifications outlined by VanPlay. They are further categorized as small, medium, and large descriptors.

### PARK CLASSIFICATION

- **Urban Plaza** (< 0.4 ha) - Small in size with limited landscape cover and select amenities (three or less). Urban Plazas are located in areas with high day-time population and constitute <1% of the park system. Suitable washroom types are generally **Stand-Alone - Custom** and **Small - Custom**.



Examples include:

- Pioneer Place
- Yaletown Park

Washroom considerations include:

- High-use
- Harm reduction

- **Local** (< 2.5 ha) - Small in size with select amenities, mostly passive (four or less). Local parks primarily serve the immediate neighbourhood surrounding them and constitute ~ 2% of the park system. Suitable washroom types are generally **Small - Standard**.



Examples include:

- Ash Park
- Foster Park

Washroom considerations include:

- Playground use
- Siting in small park

- **Neighbourhood** (< 10 ha) - Medium in size with some amenities (three to seven). Neighbourhood parks primarily serve the immediate neighbourhood surrounding them and constitute 31% of the park system. Suitable washroom types are generally **Medium - Standard**.



Examples include:

- Maple Grove Park
- Aberdeen Park

Washroom considerations include:

- Community gardens
- Playground use

- **Community** (< 20 ha) - Medium to large in size with many amenities (seven or more). Community parks serve populations from across the city. Suitable washroom types are generally **Medium - Standard** and **Medium - Custom**.



Examples include:

- John Hendry Park
- English Bay Beach Park

Washroom considerations include:

- Sports facilities
- Picnic areas

- **Destination** (> 20 ha) - Large in size with many amenities including event hosting. Destination parks serve tourists and populations from across Vancouver and the region. Suitable washroom types are generally **Large - Standard** and **Large - Custom**.



Examples include:

- Stanley Park
- Queen Elizabeth Park

Washroom considerations include:

- Tourist use
- Accommodating families and children

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



## RECOMMENDED WASHROOM TYPES

The recommended washroom types are intended to guide facility upgrades and renewals. This high-level architectural toolkit is supported by technical information provided in the Real Estate and Facilities Management *Public Washroom Design and Technical Guidelines*.

The recommended washroom types provide a range of solutions based on three descriptors: park classification, size of washroom facility, and selection of a standard or custom approach:

- **Standard** - For most parks and beaches, a standard washroom type is recommended. These range from local serving parks to spaces in large, destination oriented parks. Standard Washroom Types are characterized by a simple, cost-effective, and quickly implemented approach.
- **Custom** - Some parks in the urban core of Vancouver or in landmark places have high volumes of users and/or unique conditions. Custom Washroom Types are envisioned to have a higher standard of architectural design for these sites.

## SITE SPECIFIC CONSIDERATIONS

Below are factors that are considered in the siting of a facility within a park:

- **Proximity to Servicing** - New washroom buildings will need to be connected to utilities, and the site for a new building should account for where existing utilities are located.
- **Accessibility** - A new washroom must be sited so that accessible pathways can easily connect to the building and include way-finding for all users.

- **Visibility** - Coordinate siting of washroom to be in clear connection with park amenities such as playgrounds, sports fields, and spaces of gathering, and ensure building is open and unobstructed from all sides for safe access.
- **Archaeological Sites** - The area we now call Vancouver has been home to Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples since time in memorial. Vancouver's heritage includes archaeological sites - the physical evidence of how and where people lived in the past. The scientific, cultural, and historical study of the physical remains of past human activity is essential to understanding and appreciating cultural development in B.C., and the BC Provincial Government recognizes the importance of archaeological sites through the Heritage Conservation Act. Archaeological sites on both public and private land are protected under the Heritage Conservation Act. Any proposed ground alteration, whether for renovations or new construction will be subject to archaeological assessment under permits issued by the Provincial Archaeology Branch and affected First Nations. Recommendations resulting from the archaeological assessment will provide direction for the project.
- **Cultural Context** - Park infrastructure should be sited to support the visibility of Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations on their lands and can benefit Indigenous programming of spaces, especially around food washing and preparation, and gathering. The local Nations and urban Indigenous peoples should be provided opportunity to be involved where relevant.

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 1A STAND-ALONE STANDARD



Simple, replicable, and durable solution with a variety of add-on features to respond to particulars of site.

- 1 single-user washroom
- 30-50 sq. ft
- Not widely used in Vancouver
- Potentially sited at socially sensitive sites, golf courses, beaches

### VanPlay Park Classifications

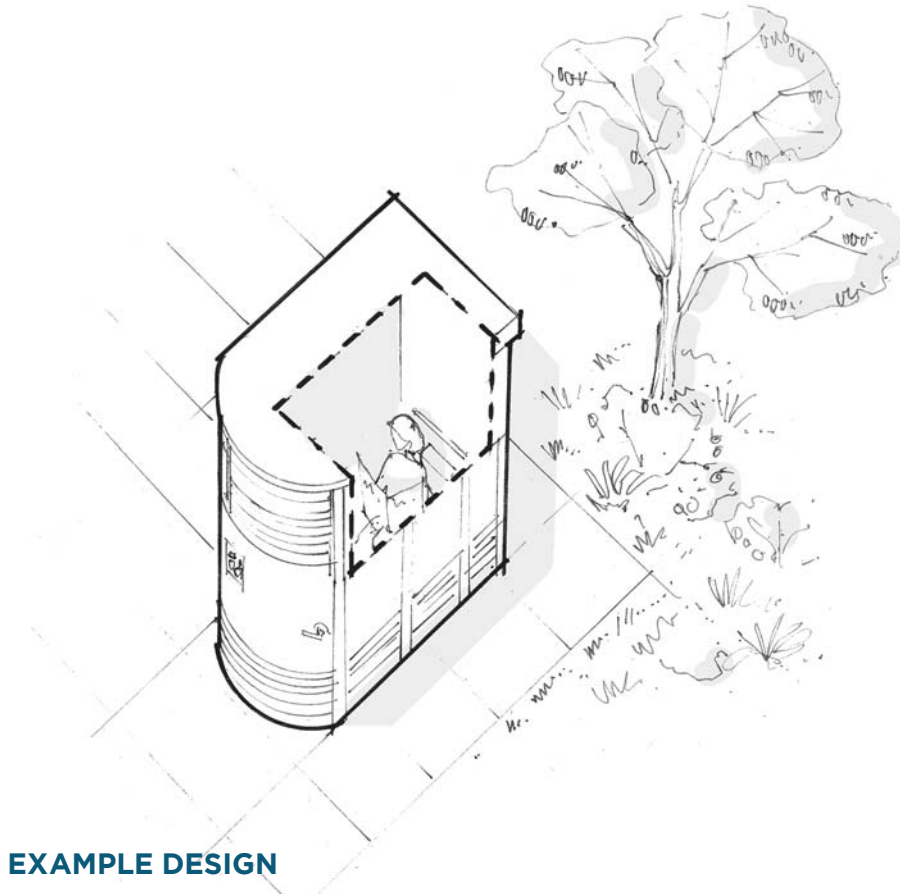
**Scale:** All Park Classifications

**Use:** Low - High

**Context:** Urban, Trails, Golf Courses

### Key Elements

- Semi-Temporary or Permanent
- Semi-open design
- Pre-manufactured



### EXAMPLE DESIGN

### PRECEDENTS



Portland Loo



Victoria, Australia



National Park, US



BC Parks

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 1B STAND-ALONE CUSTOM



Custom solution to basic toilet need with additional features and unique design. Semi-open design and additional exterior hand washing and bottle filling station.

- 1 single-user washroom
- 40-60 sq. ft
- Not currently used in Vancouver
- Potentially sited along trails, beaches, urban plazas, and parks requiring resilient approaches

### VanPlay Park Classifications

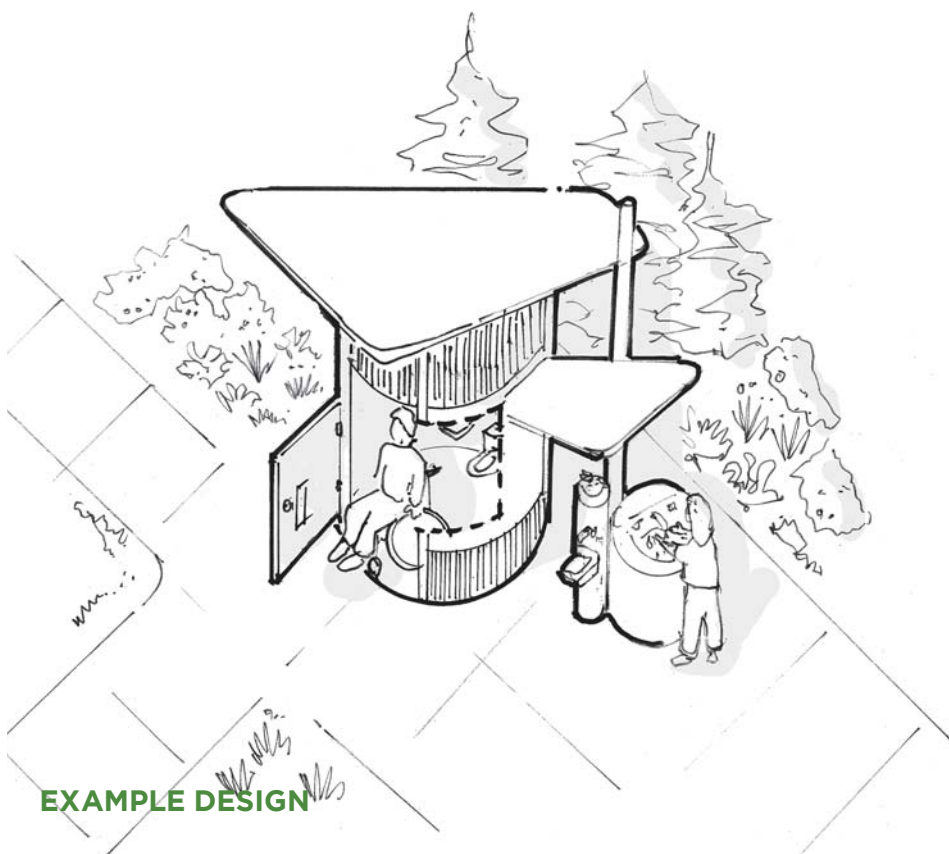
**Scale:** All Park Classifications

**Use:** Med - High

**Context:** Urban, Seawall, Beach

### Key Elements

- Standard features, plus:
- Exterior washing and bottle filling station
- Unique design



## PRECEDENTS



Gdansk, Poland



Surrey



Victoria



Metro Vancouver

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

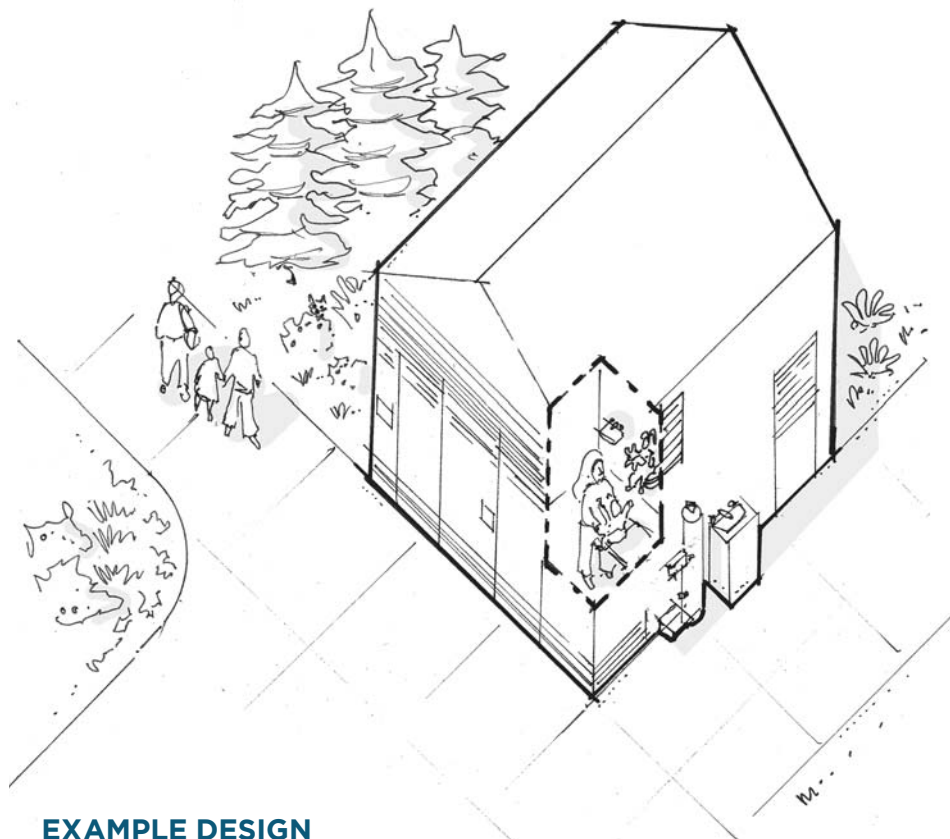


## 2A SMALL STANDARD



Small washroom facility with 2-3 universal single-user washrooms safely accessible from the outside. Design should facilitate easy cleaning, and include basic amenities such as change tables and an additional exterior washing station.

- 2-3 single-user washrooms
- 200-400 sq. ft
- As found in Robson Park
- Potentially sited in Tisdall Park, Mount Pleasant Park, Beaver Lake



EXAMPLE DESIGN

### VanPlay Park Classifications

**Scale:** Local, Neighbourhood

**Use:** Low-Med

**Context:** Playgrounds, Nature

### Key Elements

- 2-3 universal single-user washrooms
- Semi-open design on doors and walls

## PRECEDENTS



Coquitlam



Saltspring Island



Toronto

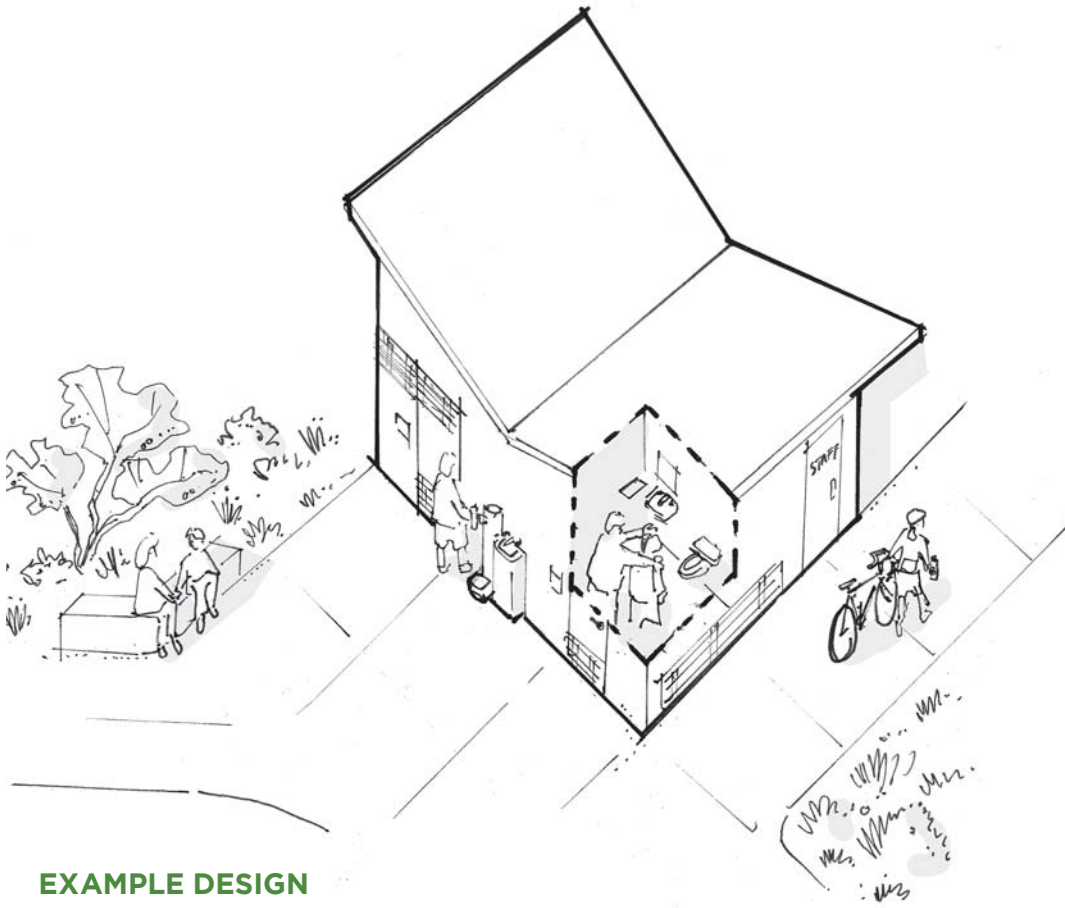
## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 2B SMALL CUSTOM



Small, highly durable washroom facility with 2-3 universal single-user washrooms. Extra design considerations for exterior waiting and washing spaces and attendant or special programming spaces.

- 2-3 single-user washrooms
- 300-500 sq. ft
- As found in Oppenheimer Park
- Potentially sited in Creekside Park, 6th and Fir Park



### VanPlay Park Classifications

**Scale:** Local,  
Neighbourhood

**Use:** Low-Med

**Context:** Urban,  
Beach

### Key Elements

- Standard features, plus:
- Additional program space
- Consideration of special site design features

### EXAMPLE DESIGN

## PRECEDENTS



Hiroshima, Japan



London, UK



Van Tech Sports Field



Auckland, New Zealand

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

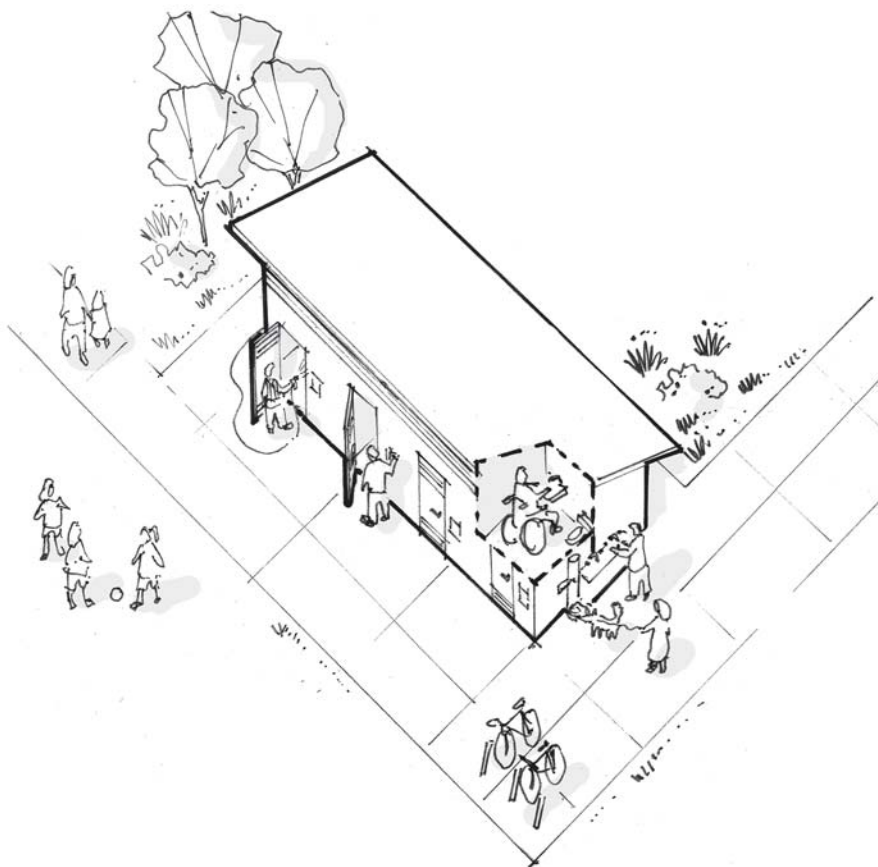


## 3A MEDIUM STANDARD



Mid-size, medium-use facility with 4-7 single-user washrooms, including universal washrooms. Potential to add seating, change rooms, lockers, and/or outdoor showers where context allows.

- 4-7 single-user washrooms
- 400-1000 sq. ft
- As found at Third Beach
- Potentially sited in Jonathan Rogers Park, Spanish Banks Picnic Area, Charleson Park



### VanPlay Park Classifications

**Scale:**  
Neighbourhood,  
Community

**Use:** Med - High

**Context:** Sports  
Fields, Open Space

### Key Elements

- 4-7 single-user washrooms
- Possibility for change room, outdoor shower, lockers for beach and sports field locations

### EXAMPLE DESIGN

### PRECEDENTS



Grandview Park



Delta



Burnaby

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 3B MEDIUM CUSTOM



Mid-size, medium-use facility with 4-7 single-user washrooms including universal washroom(s) and potential to group with concession or program space. Additional consideration for sustainable solutions, storage, and having an area for a peer attendant.

- 4-7 single-user washrooms
- 500-1000 sq. ft
- As found in Grandview Park
- Potentially sited in Oppenheimer Park, Smithe and Richards Park, Andy Livingstone Park

### VanPlay Park Classifications

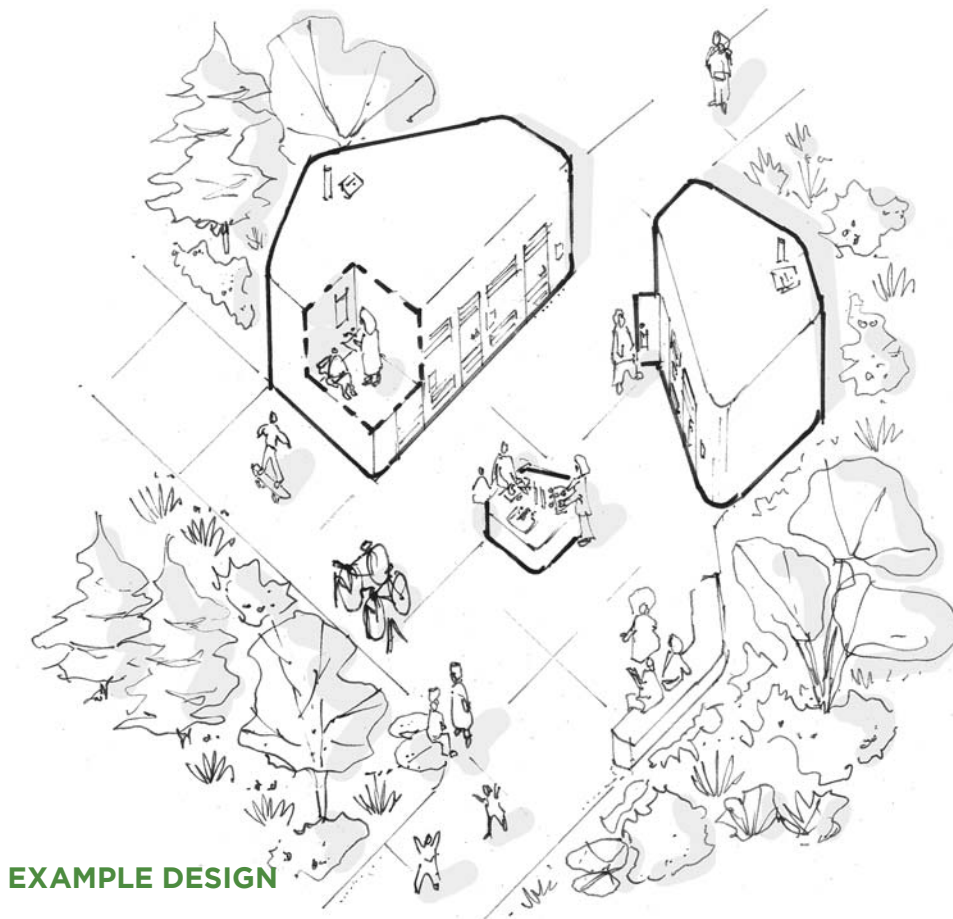
**Scale:**  
Neighbourhood,  
Community

**Use:** Med - High

**Context:** Urban,  
Beach, Outdoor Pool

### Key Elements

- Standard features, plus:
- Contextual design
- Special program and peer attendant services



EXAMPLE DESIGN

## PRECEDENTS



Santa Monica, USA



Winnipeg



West Vancouver

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

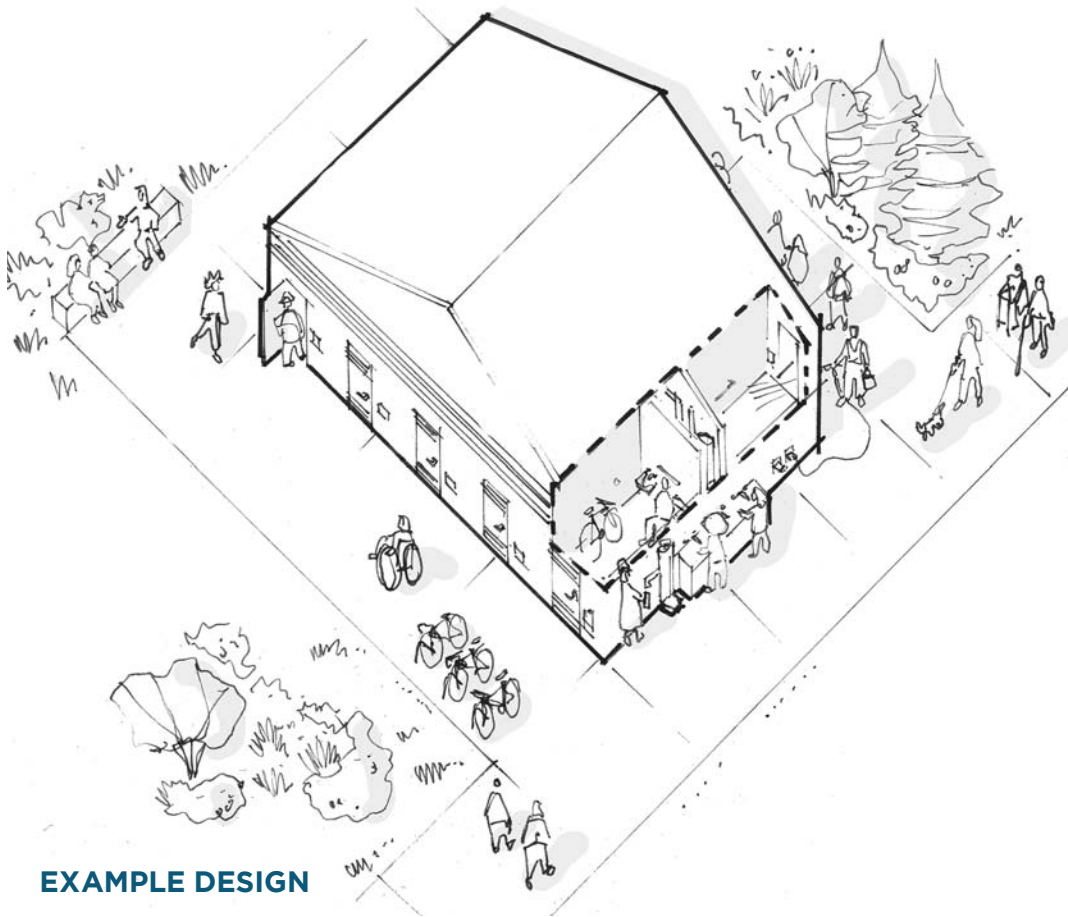


## 4A LARGE STANDARD



Large, high-use facility with numerous single-user and universal washrooms. Additional room for change rooms, lockers, showers, and integration with special park programming such as sports fields.

- 8+ single-user washrooms
- 1000+ sq. ft
- As found at Second Beach
- Potentially sited at large and highly used sports field or park sites.



### VanPlay Park Classifications

**Scale:** Community, Destination

**Use:** High

**Context:** Sports Fields, Beach

### Key Elements

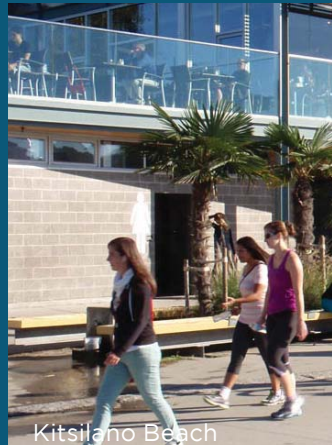
- 8+ single-user washrooms
- Possibility to integrate with other park program to include showers, change room, etc.

EXAMPLE DESIGN

## PRECEDENTS



Trillium Park



Kitsilano Beach



Second Beach

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

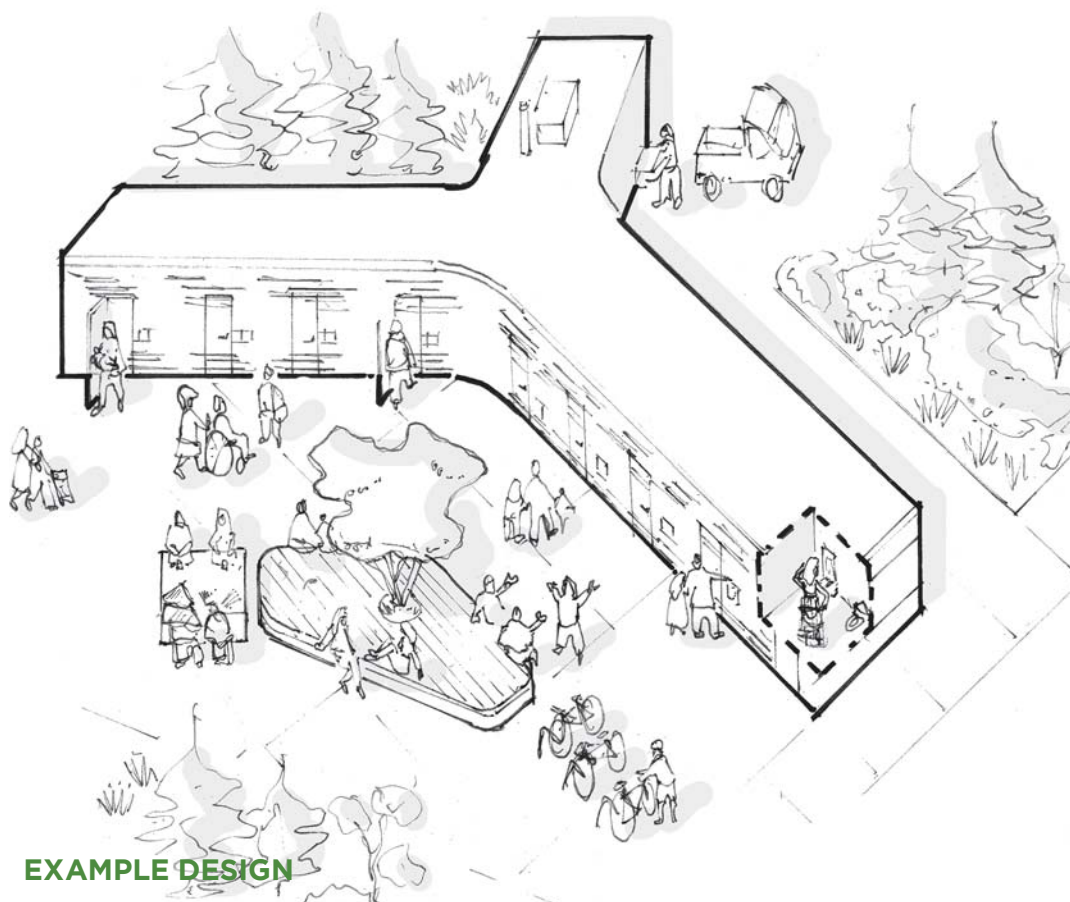


## 4B LARGE CUSTOM



Large, high-use facility with numerous single-user and universal washrooms. Accommodation for program, storage, and/or peer attendant staffing. Augments destination parks including plazas, pools, and event spaces. Potential to explore a multi-stall washroom design.

- 8+ single-user washrooms or multi-stall design
- 1000+ sq. ft
- As found in Trillium Park
- Potentially sited at large and highly used urban park sites requiring resilient approaches.



### VanPlay Park Classifications

**Scale:** Community, Destination

**Use:** High

**Context:** Urban, Beach, Outdoor Pool

### Key Elements

- Standard features, plus:
- Landmark design
- Special program and peer attendant services

### EXAMPLE DESIGN

### PRECEDENTS



Sydney, Australia



Edmonton



Tsawwassen

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## 6.4 PRIORITIZATION

Park washrooms are delivered through different processes:

- New washrooms are designed and built when new parks are developed
- New washrooms are built in already established parks
- Some park washroom facilities are a candidate for a renewal process, and financial investments in them is the most financially viable option
- Opportunities are sought to incorporate park washrooms into facilities such as community centres or child care centres to be accessed from the outside

Of the 95 existing washrooms and fieldhouses in parks, the majority are in need of renovation and upgrades, posing challenges for delivery.

Scoring criteria were developed to prioritize washroom projects, including:

- Information on facilities deemed difficult and unsafe to maintain
- Facilities that were not built to current barrier-free standards
- Current conditions, design, and locations where the building has created a safety concern for the public
- Work by others at the Park Board and the City
- Previous assessments
- Washroom information received through 311 reports, and stakeholder and public engagement

Three categories were also considered for prioritizing washrooms in new parks based on VanPlay's "Bold Moves":

- Equity
- Asset Needs
- Connectivity

Appendix 1 lists renewals and new washroom builds for the currently identified capital plan and 10-year capital outlook based on these criteria. This priority list will be annually updated with new information.

## 6.5 IMPLEMENTATION

The first steps for implementing the Strategy are the following:

- Pilot Portland Loos at three sites: Crab, Columbia and Coopers' Parks
- Scope washroom renewals, including one at Van Tech, and new washrooms, such as at Tisdall Park
- Provide cost free menstrual products at all park washrooms
- Investigate new technology for lock and unlock mechanisms
- Develop accessibility priority plan and arrange for upgrade work



# APPENDIX 1

## PRIORITY LISTS

# PRIORITY LISTS

FH : Fieldhouse | C : Community Park | D : Destination Park | N : Neighbourhood Park | SA: Stand-Alone | S : Small | M : Medium | L : Large

## RECOMMENDED WASHROOM RENEWALS

	Park Name	Total Score	Park Classification	Washroom Type
2019-2022	1 Collingwood Park	7	N	S/M
	2 Second Beach	6	D	L
	3 Spanish Banks West	5	D	M
	4 Locarno	4	D	M
	5 System Wide Accessibility	*	-	-

\*Small improvements across the park system to improve accessibility.

2023-2026	6 Oppenheimer Park	6	N	M
	7 MacLean Park	6	L	S
	8 Strathcona Park	6	C	M
	9 Queen Elizabeth Park Fieldhouse	5	D	L
	10 John Hendry Park	5	D	M/L

## RECOMMENDED NEW WASHROOMS

	Park Name	Total Score	Park Classification	Washroom Type
2019-2022	1 Crab Park	9	C	SA
	2 Coopers' Park	6	C	M
	3 Columbia Park	6	N	S
	4 Riverfront Park - East Side	4	N	M
	5 Van Tech	*	N	S/M

\*An auxiliary building with washrooms is committed to be built at Van Tech through the Track and Field Strategy (2019).

2023-2026	6 Tisdall Park	6	N	S
	7 Stanley Park - seawall below Prospect Point	4	D	SA/S
	8 Mount Pleasant Park	4	L	S
	9 Creekside Park	4	D	M

### Note:

Lists for 2023-2026 capital plan subject to funding and approval, including coordination with other active projects and processes.

### 10-Year Capital Plan

Pending the accessibility audit and available funding, this list will be developed using the methodology used in the scoring criteria.

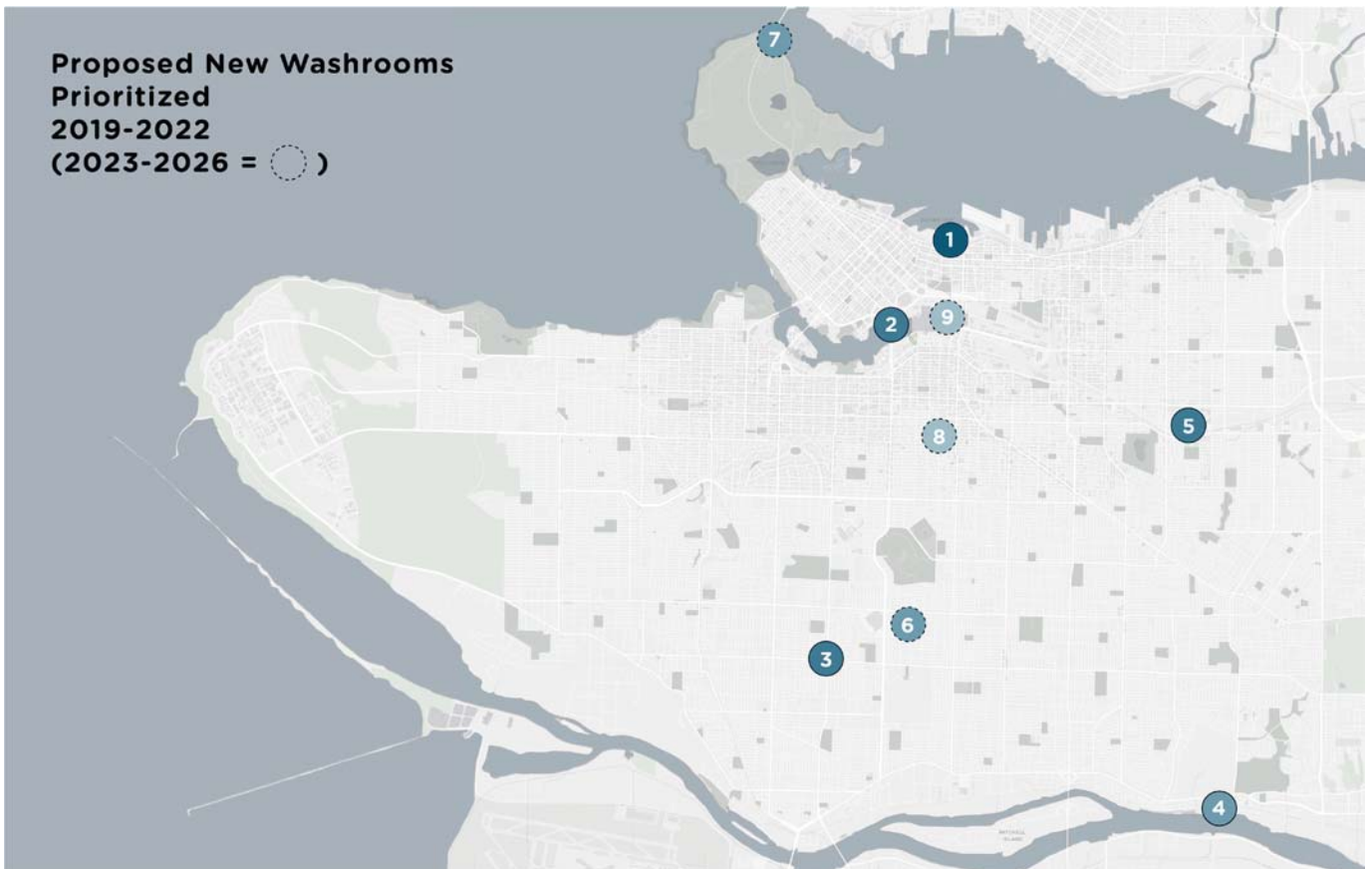
## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

**Existing Washroom  
Renewals Prioritized  
2019-2022  
(2023-2026 = )**

**5** System Wide  
Accessibility



**Proposed New Washrooms  
Prioritized  
2019-2022  
(2023-2026 = )**





# PRIORITY LIST CRITERIA

- Operations Identified
- Accessibility Upgrade
- PB & City Initiatives
- Previous Washroom Assessment
- Public Request or Portable Toilet
- High Use Washrooms
- Equity Initiative Zones (VanPlay Bold Move)
- Network (VanPlay Bold Move)
- Asset Targets\* (VanPlay Bold Move)
- Partnership Opportunities
- Stakeholder Input

\*Applies only to new builds located on the network and not within 10 minutes walk of another public facility

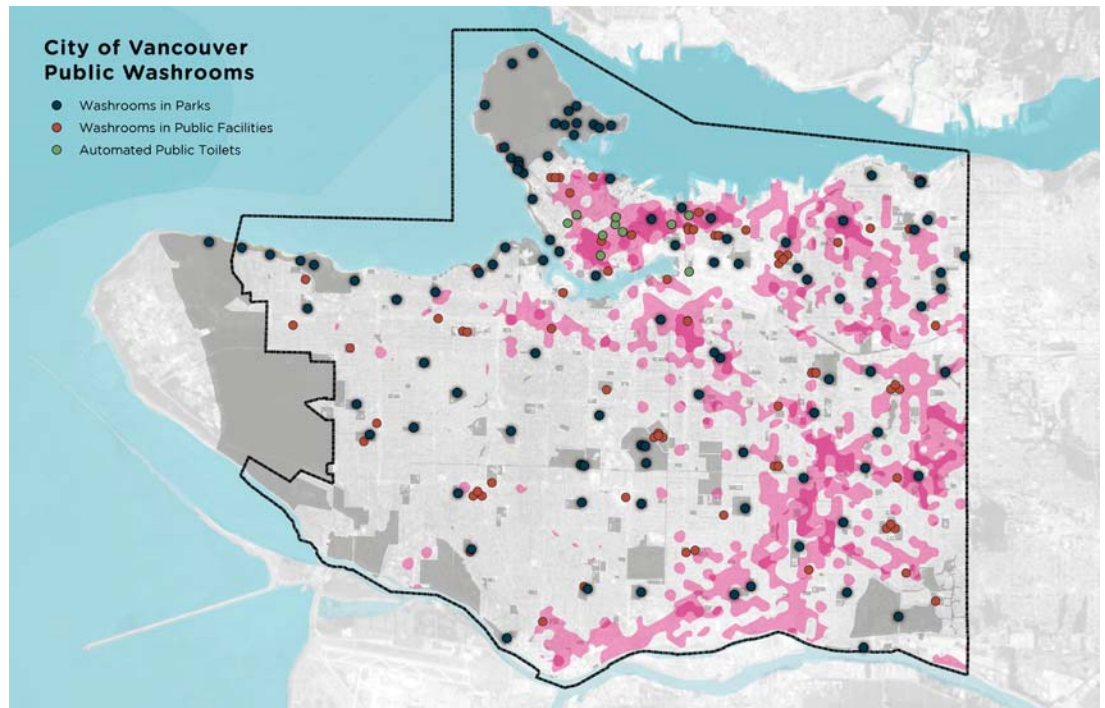
Further detail on prioritization is provided in Section 6.4.



# VANPLAY MAPPING ANALYSIS

## EQUITY INITIATIVE ZONES

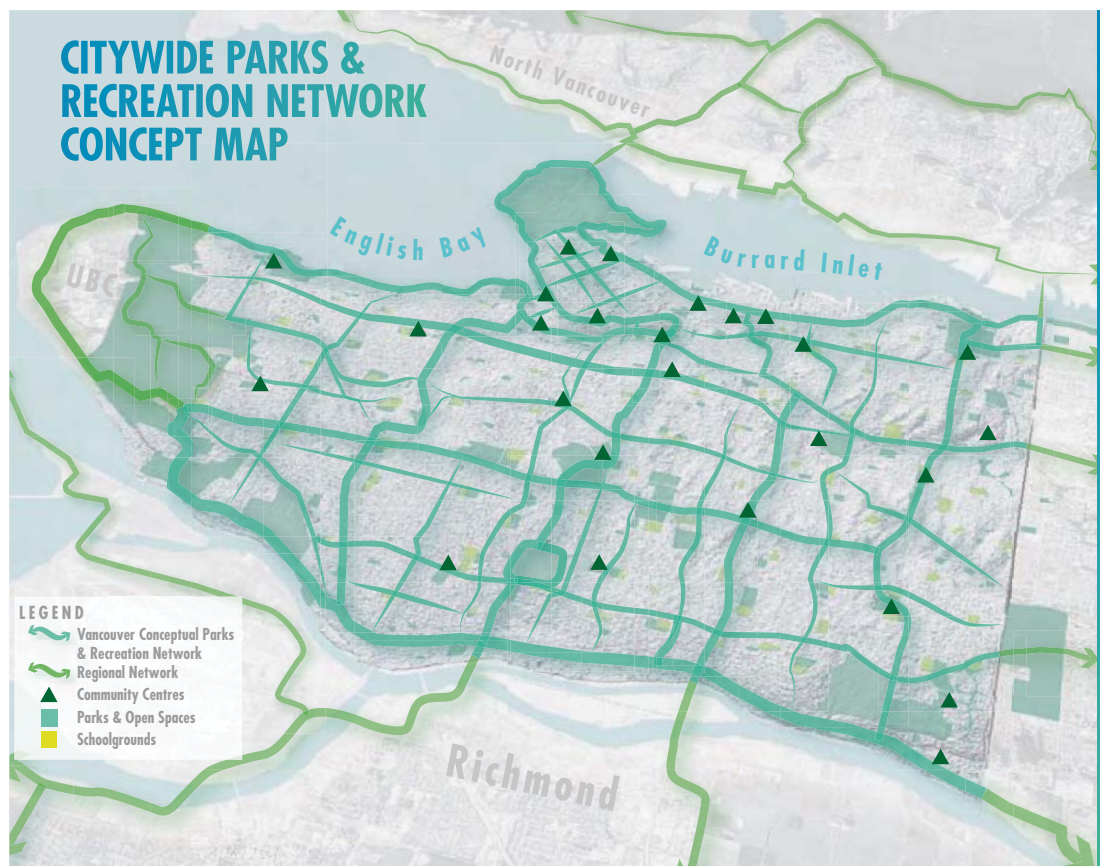
The Initiative Zones map uses three indicators to highlight areas to be prioritized for delivery of projects, programs and resources. Over time, by focusing investment in these historically underserved areas, provision of parks and recreation will become more equitable.



Mapping Analysis - Existing Washroom Infrastructure & Initiative Zones

## CONNECTIVITY

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



Mapping Analysis - Network

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



# **APPENDIX 2**

## BOARD MOTIONS

# BOARD MOTIONS

The Park Board has already provided direction relevant to the washroom strategy through a variety of reports, including but not limited to:

## ***Serving up a Fresh Concession Strategy 2015-11-02***

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to explore other affordable concession operating models and report back to the Board by the end of May 2016; and

B. FURTHER THAT such initiative be broad in scope, giving consideration to: diverse business models; the repurposing of existing locations, possibly with modular facilities that could include new benefits such as movability, inclusion of eco-friendly water dispensaries, washrooms; and the introduction of new locations/concepts.

## ***Accessible Parks Strategy - Site Maps 2015-12-14***

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to partner with the City of Vancouver's Digital Strategy team to create online site maps that clearly illustrate the accessibility of all Vancouver parks and facilities by June 2018.

## ***Increased Accessibility to Public Washrooms 2016-11-28***

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. Report back to the Board with an assessment of locations in the Vancouver parks and recreation system that may be underserved with accessible public washroom facilities, and identify any budgetary or operational constraints to providing sufficient regular servicing of public washrooms in the parks and recreation system;

B. Establish appropriate design specifications for accessible public toilets, in consultation

with groups such as the Seniors Advisory Committee, the Vancouver Field Sports Federation, Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee, TGVI Steering Committee, and other advisory committees as may be relevant; and

C. Include accessible public toilets in needed locations in current and future park planning projects, as well as include provisions for proper maintenance to ensure well-functioning, safe, and accessible facilities; and

D. All new public washrooms maintained by the Park Board will include soap and where possible hot water.

## ***2017 Capital Budget Request for Washroom Renewals 2016-12-06***

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT on behalf of the Board of Parks and Recreation, the Park Board Chair seek from Council an additional \$1.2 million for the 2017 Capital Budget to enable the completion of all 5 washroom renewal projects currently in progress.

## ***Review of Real Estate & Facilities Management Provision of Services to Vancouver Park Board 2017-10-02***

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation direct staff to initiate a review of facility and infrastructure service requests and related data (such as but not limited to 311 cases and public complaints, Community Centre Association and partner complaints and concerns), as may be available prior to and post implementation of the shared services model;

B. THAT staff present an analysis and report to the Board of the findings of the review no later than the end of January 2018, giving due consideration to the upcoming 2018 operational year, and

## **PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY**

C. THAT staff present the Board with recommendations such as returning management of facilities back to the Park Board or implementation of a service level agreement, in order to identify solutions for delivering an acceptable level of service for the Vancouver public and for Park Board partners.

***Equipping Park Board Washrooms with Universally Accessible Changing Stations***  
**2018-10-01**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board direct staff to review all Park Board owned restroom facilities, including all gender and accessible washroom facilities, with the goal that they be equipped with a child changing station.

B. FURTHER THAT staff review the physical safety and sanitation of existing changing facilities and that where necessary such facilities are improved or replaced.

C. FURTHER THAT the Park Board encourage City Council to undertake a similar initiative for all City facilities.

***Oppenheimer Park Warming Shelter & Support Services***  
**2019-03-11**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT Park Board staff work with City staff to temporarily implement a warming station in Oppenheimer Park, or other city-owned land within close proximity, with large heated tents;

B. THAT Park Board staff work with city staff to provide washroom facilities for park patrons including 24 hour access when the temporary warming station is activated;

C. THAT Park Board staff explore options so that campers may securely keep their possessions onsite; and

D. THAT Park Board staff continue to communicate with City staff about other possible solutions to help solve and humanize homelessness.

***Free Menstrual Products at Park Board Facilities***  
**2020-01-20**

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

A. THAT the Vancouver Park Board establish policy, as part of the Washroom Strategy currently being developed, that takes into consideration the basic biological needs of all washroom users to ensure comfort and equity of access to all parks and recreation facilities; and

B. FURTHER THAT this policy recommend cost free menstrual products be made available at all Park Board facilities with washrooms, which may include installing new dispensers or retrofitting existing coin operated dispensers.

**Recent Council Motion**

***2019 - 2022 Capital Plan Recalibration***  
**2020-09-02/16**

B. THAT Council support in principle increased investment in public washrooms, in line with Council's previous recognition of washrooms as a human right, and that Council request staff bring back recommendations for increasing capital and operating investments in universal and accessible public washrooms as part of 2021 budget process;



# **APPENDIX 3**

## RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

# RESEARCH & ANALYSIS

## BEST PRACTICE & OTHER CITIES

Due to the range of uses, best practice case studies were reviewed to provide understanding about methods and design considerations that could apply to Park Board washrooms to better enable them to meet a diversity of park users.

The following themes were identified:

- |                                     |                                  |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>INCLUSION</b>                    | <b>SAFETY</b>                    |
| <b>HARM REDUCTION &amp; DIGNITY</b> | <b>MAINTENANCE</b>               |
| <b>CHILD CARE</b>                   | <b>HIGH DENSITY AND URBAN</b>    |
| <b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>                | <b>SIGNAGE &amp; WAY-FINDING</b> |

Best practice research was used to inform the washroom types and recommendations. All of the precedents that follow provide the background research to help meet the vision statement.

The following principles were determined to provide a framework to guide the review of best practices:

- ➔ **LEVEL OF SERVICE**
  - Washrooms serve all park visitors
- ➔ **SOCIAL EQUITY AND SAFETY**
  - Washrooms are a right
  - Washrooms are safe and secure
  - Washrooms provide access to hygiene
  - Washrooms are sanitary and functional
- ➔ **DESIGN TYPES**
  - Washrooms meet the highest level of universal accessible design
  - Washrooms have a consistent look and feel
  - Washrooms are designed according to park use and activity type
  - Washrooms have clear and accessible signage



## DESIGNING FOR INCLUSIVITY:

*Strategies For Universal Washrooms And Change Rooms In Community + Recreation Facilities*, HCMA, February 2018

### UNIVERSAL WASHROOMS PROMOTE:

- Inclusivity for people with disabilities
- Inclusivity for families
- Inclusivity for trans and gender diverse people
- Increased privacy and safety
- Increased efficiency
- Forward-thinking design

### THIS STUDY RECOMMENDS:

- Striving for inclusivity and access for all
- Using openness through design to enhance safety through activity and passive surveillance
- Creating privacy where most needed to enhance comfort
- Welcoming everyone with signage that emphasizes function and is clear, inclusive, and positive
- Ensuring supportive staff operations and communications

## UNIVERSAL WASHROOMS:

*A Solution Through Signage*, entro, 2016

### PRINCIPLES FOR UNIVERSAL WASHROOMS:

- Keep communication clear and simple

### THIS STUDY RECOMMENDS:

“The recommended signage for universal washrooms is a toilet pictogram, followed by the word washroom”

Individuals have a basic right to choose their gender identity and gender expression

Focus on the service, not the user identity

Signage should be consistent across all locations



## **POLICY FOR INCLUSIVITY**

*Bill C-16 and C-81, National Building Code, Vancouver Building By-Law, and BC Public Health Act*

### **GOVERNMENT OF CANADA LEGISLATION**

Bill C-16 clarifies that it is illegal to discriminate on the basis of gender identity or expression. The bill protects the right of individuals to use a washroom or change room corresponding to their gender identity.

Bill C-81, an act to ensure a barrier-free Canada, or the “Accessible Canada Act,” has the objective of enhancing the full and equal participation of all individuals (especially those living with disabilities) in society, through the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers in areas under federal jurisdiction.

### **NATIONAL BUILDING CODE**

The NBC does not state that men’s and women’s washrooms must be physically separated. Total toilet counts are based on the assumed gender split of users—they are just co-located within a single shared space with no distinction or separation between users.

### **CITY OF VANCOUVER**

The City of Vancouver is one of the few municipalities in Canada to issue its own Code. Of note is the recognition of universal multi-stall washrooms under article 3.7.2.11 of the 2019 Vancouver Building Bylaw, which refers to them as gender neutral washrooms with individual toilet stalls.

### **HEALTH**

The BC Public Health Act establishes the amount of men’s and women’s change room space required for aquatic facilities, and allows for universal change rooms in addition to gender-designated ones.

## **GENDER-INCLUSIVE WASHROOMS IN YOUR WORKPLACE**

Public Service Alliance Of Canada, 2018

### **RATIONALE:**

- Gender-inclusive washrooms benefit everyone.
- Research identified that up to 70% of trans people have experienced negativity when using a public washroom.
- Accessing washrooms is a basic form of human dignity for all people.

### **THIS STUDY RECOMMENDS:**

- Selecting a washroom facility is a personal choice that everyone is entitled to
- Ensure universal washrooms are easily accessible and visible

## ***MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS:***

*Why Period Friendly Toilets Matter*, Menstrual Hygiene Day, Online Resource, 2018

### **BENEFITS OF PERIOD FRIENDLY TOILETS:**

- Increased well-being and reduced stress
- Increased ability to carry on with education, work, and social activities
- Increased safety

### **THIS RESOURCE RECOMMENDS:**

- Period friendly toilets at home, school, work, health centers, and in public spaces
- Privacy (doors and locks)
- Accessible during day and night
- Culturally appropriate waste disposal options for menstrual waste
- Separation and access to menstrual products and hooks, shelves, and mirrors
- Safe and convenient location and accessible for all women and girls, including those with disabilities
- Clean facilities

## WASHROOM DESIGN AND MONITORING:

*In Vancouver Coastal Health Downtown Eastside Facilities: Principles & Recommendations,*  
Vancouver Coastal Health, September 2016

### PRINCIPLES:

- Harm reduction
- Trauma-informed practice
- Client-centred care
- Community engagement

Several challenges regarding safety, inclusion, and flow of users through washrooms have been raised regarding VCH facilities in the DTES. In a neighbourhood with high levels of street involvement and poverty, washrooms fill many functions beyond simply being a place to use the toilet. These multiple and competing uses lead to unique challenges of providing safe and timely washroom access for everyone.

These challenges include:

- Multiple and competing demands for washroom space
- Gendered washrooms and safety
- Drug use and harm reduction
- Washroom monitoring

### THIS STUDY RECOMMENDS:

- **Inclusive space** - Function-based signage, maximum privacy, at least one universal single-user washroom
- **Harm reduction & safety** - Safety mirrors, secure locks with safety mechanism, durable sharps containers fixed to wall, no blue light, large enough washrooms for emergency responders, doors open outward for emergency access, line of sight for monitoring, space between stall door and floor, design to eliminate spaces to conceal or discard items
- **Client flow** - Additional mirrors and counters separate from toilet and sinks, quiet sanctuary spaces separate from washrooms
- **Hygiene** - Sinks with hot and cold water with adequate flow and pressure, liquid soap, paper towels, warm air dryers, smooth and impervious surfaces of industrial quality materials, easy to clean, VCH environmental health officer consultation completed
- **Safe, inclusive spaces** - Create monitoring guidelines that define monitoring practices, guidelines posted in/near washroom, monitoring included in staff/peer worker role description, staff/peer workers trained on various policies

## **PEER EMPLOYMENT**

*EMBERS, Eastside Movement for Business and Economic Renewal Society*, Online 2020

### **MISSION:**

- Creating economic and employment opportunities for people living on low incomes
- Help people facing barriers to work lead productive, fulfilling lives

### **DETAILS:**

- Responds to City of Vancouver's call to revitalize Vancouver's inner city
- Aligns with community leaders, residents, and businesses to build partnerships and re-engage the area with its past economic prominence
- Established as a not-for-profit charity in 2001
- Helps thousands each year by offering economic and employment opportunities through key programs
- Socially responsible staffing agency: temporary job placements are screened, supported, and ready to work
- Provides a supportive environment and a ladder of future opportunities
- Collaborates with other organizations and government to support folks in the community
- Peer Work Program places individuals in employment opportunities within partner organizations and provides one-on-one support and training

## **DESIGN RESOURCE FOR CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

Vancouver Coastal Health, 2017

### **PRINCIPLES:**

- To provide an understanding of space and design requirements that are required by the Child Care Licensing Regulation for the provision of quality child care

### **THESE GUIDELINES RECOMMEND:**

- Providing private washrooms for staff that are centrally located and have shelving for personal effects and toiletries
- Ensuring that there is one at least one toilet and sink suitable for persons with disabilities available in all facilities
- The Child Care Licensing Regulation states that one toilet and wash basin be provided for every 10 children or fewer (all ages)
- Provide closed front toilet seats
- Hand sinks' maximum hot water temperature must not exceed 49°C (120°F)
- Provide mirrors over the hand basins
- Provide back splash at all sinks
- Provide location for child-accessible soap dispensers
- Provide a toilet roll holder adjacent to each toilet at child height
- Provide shelves at adult height for storage of toothbrushes and other supplies (toothbrushes must not touch each other)
- Ensure all washrooms are adequately ventilated
- Provide a minimum lighting level of 50 ft. candles (540 lux) in washrooms

## **NO PLACE TO GO**

Leslie Lowe. Coach House Books, Toronto, 2019.

- Subtitled, "How Public Washrooms Fail Our Private Needs"
- Researched and written by a Halifax-based journalist
- Reviews public washrooms in London to San Francisco to Toronto and beyond.
- Identifies the struggles of the public in finding adequate provision
- "Bathroom stories are often the narratives, as a society, we cannot share."
- Public washrooms are a requirement of a "liveable city," but cities often get it wrong, especially for "people who menstruate, are homeless, or have medical conditions."
- Recommends innovations including public pay toilets and public toilets with paid attendants
- Recommends reinventing the public loo such as the example in the city of Portland
- Need to make more public restrooms available and embrace embrace "potty parity" – 2:1 or 3:1 ratios in favour of women.

# **CHILDCARE TECHNICAL GUIDELINES**

*Real Estate & Facilities Management, City of Vancouver, January 2019*

## **PRINCIPLES:**

- Guidelines are meant to be applied to the design and construction or renovation of any childcare secured by the City of Vancouver as a Capital Asset
- Clarify the minimum standard required by the City of Vancouver for materials, finishes, equipment and other items
- A tool for facility cost estimates early in the design process
- A tool for consultants in developing their design and specifications
- A tool to be used at facility occupancy stage to gauge whether these minimum standards have been met

## **THESE GUIDELINES RECOMMEND:**

- Children's washrooms should have vanities, toilet partitions and enclosures, upper cabinets for supplies, upper open shelving for baskets of children's personal needs, change table with sink, movable steps for larger children
- Infant and toddler washrooms require controlled access for children by way of a half-height gate or door
- Mirrors should be provided in adult washrooms and children's washrooms - full-height mirrors or mirrors adjacent to change tables should use shatter-proof acrylic rather than glass
- Resilient (smooth, non-absorbent, non-slip and washable) flooring required
- Toilet partitions are required in washrooms for children ages 3-5, optional in toddler washrooms, and not desirable in an infant washroom
- Paper towel dispensers to accommodate single-fold towels with no saw tooth cutting bar. Provide 2 at child height for 3-5 year washroom, 1 at child height in toddler washroom, 1 in the vicinity of each change table sink, 1 in each adult washroom
- Provide a change table in the adult washroom
- Interior floor drains to be provided in each washroom

# ***A GUIDE TO BETTER PUBLIC TOILET DESIGN & MAINTENANCE:***

*Fourth Edition*, Restroom Association (Singapore), 2018

## **PRINCIPLES:**

- Definition of “A Well Designed Toilet”:
- Clean and dry
- Well ventilated
- Easy to maintain
- Carefully planned layout with maintenance in mind
- Friendly to persons with disabilities and special needs

## **THIS STUDY RECOMMENDS:**

### **INTERIOR**

- Interior lighting should be provided at all times during operational hours when natural lighting is not available
- Size of decorations such as live or artificial trees, plants, flowers, etc., should not create areas of concealment
- Surfaces of walls, vanity tops, toilet cubicle partitions and other surfaces in and around all public toilets should use graffiti resistant materials and graffiti discouraging decoration and coloration schemes
- Durable materials should be used for all fixtures, accessories, and surfaces so to withstand heavy usage, excessive weight, and possible abuse
- All interior water supply and drainage piping connected to fixtures should be concealed to protect against public contact
- When a ledge or foldable shelf is installed in the cubicles for putting personal items, it should not be out of view from the user so as to prevent theft of personal items

### **EXTERIOR**

- Exterior lighting should be provided at all times during operational hours when natural lighting is not available
- Exterior surfaces of public toilets should be covered or constructed of durable materials resistant to graffiti
- During non-operational hours, toilet entrances and windows should be secured by shutters, locks or dead bolts to discourage vandalism



# **COV PUBLIC WASHROOM DESIGN & TECHNICAL GUIDELINES:**

*Real Estate & Facilities Management, City of Vancouver, January 2018*

## **PRINCIPLES:**

- Safety Considerations
- Equity of Access
- Environmental Sustainability
- Siting and Site Access
- Building Design: Size and Configuration
- Durability, Ease and Economy of maintenance

## **A NOTE ABOUT SCOPE:**

The COV Public Washroom Design & Technical Guidelines are intended as a guide for the design of public washrooms. It is primarily aimed at the design of free-standing facilities that are unsupervised, available to the public, and therefore likely to pose security, safety, and maintenance challenges. Some of the design principles will also apply to facilities within buildings and/or where access is fully or partially monitored.

While these Technical Guidelines provide the City and the Park Board with the details needed to design washrooms, the Parks Washroom Strategy aims to create an effective system-wide plan for Park Board washrooms that are located in parks. This planning process seeks to establish a long-term vision for park washroom facilities and does not go into the same type of detail that the Technical Guidelines do.

## OTHER ORGANIZATIONS | PARKS CANADA

*Best Practices for Inclusive Washrooms*, National Outdoor Recreation Conference, May 2018

### PRINCIPLES:

- Inclusive design
- Inclusion rather than segregation
- Safety, security and privacy
- We label things, not people
- Flexibility and adaptability

### DETAILS:

- Need for consistency considering differing views and dated guidance
- Without a washroom that works for them, how can someone feel truly welcome?
- Diverse population means not all washroom needs are the same
- Flexible and inclusive washrooms benefit everyone
- A combination of facilities will offer visitors greater choice and flexibility
- Developing multi-stall gender neutral facilities
- Renovation is an opportunity for improvement, rather than 'like for like'
- Label things not people
- Safe, dignified access to public washrooms is a basic human necessity



Kejimikujik National Park Gender-neutral Washroom Renderings

## OTHER CITIES | PORTLAND, OREGON

*Portland Loo™*, Public Washroom

### PRINCIPLES:

- Durable, replaceable components
- Open grates promote safety while allowing privacy
- Easy to clean

### DETAILS:

- Hours of 'Loos' in Portland vary by unit and location
- 6 downtown 'Loos' generally open 24/7, others throughout the city
- Anti-graffiti exterior
- Exterior hand-washing stations serve pedestrians
- ADA-accessible
- Cleaned at least once daily
- A bicycle or stroller easily fits inside
- Options available for solar power
- Product patented by City of Portland
- Resistant to graffiti and vandalism
- Discourages lingering and crime inside
- Cost effective



Portland Loo Installed

### LOCATIONS IN BC:

- Esquimalt
- Kamloops
- Nanaimo
- Nelson
- Smithers
- Victoria (4)

## OTHER CITIES | SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, USA

*Pit Stop Program*, San Francisco Public Works + Clean City

### PRINCIPLES:

- Program has helped restore basic dignity to people experiencing homelessness

### DETAILS:

- Partnerships between San Francisco Public Works and different non-profits that provide job opportunities for those facing barriers to employment
- Program features full-time attendants who wipe the facilities, give each user a five-minute courtesy knock, and sweep the sidewalks while they're on their shift
- Started as a pilot program with 3 locations in Tenderloin district, expanded to 25 locations in 13 neighbourhoods, plans for 7 more in parks - the Park Stop Program - and a 3 month pilot of 24 hr locations starting in 2019
- Original pilot program so successful that attendants were then assigned to the 25 APTs (automatic public toilets) in the city
- The solar powered washrooms are wheeled out 4 afternoons a week and are accompanied by an attendant
- The pairs of toilets mounted on small trailers are mobile, hauled in Tuesdays through Fridays at 2 pm and hauled out at 9 pm for cleaning
- Baggies for dog waste and a receptacle for used syringes are posted outside, addressing two other urban challenges
- Since the program started, requests for cleaning feces and urine off sidewalks has dropped significantly



SOMA Pit Stop



## OTHER CITIES | DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA, USA

*Washroom Assessment 2014*, City Of Durham, NC

### PRINCIPLES:

- Restrooms are an important facility in a park serving the public
- Restrooms should be located in areas where they are most needed, based on objective and replicable criteria
- Each restroom should reliably offer at least a minimum level of service, including being as safe, clean, and accessible as possible
- Each restroom structure should be designed to be sustainable and durable over a long period of time
- Restroom maintenance should be adequately supported with committed City resources
- Privately owned spaces have resorted to public restrooms that are staffed during the times that they are open - some parks systems have simply closed all their restrooms; that works to end misuse, but the result also punishes park users who simply desire the facilities

### DETAILS:

- Standardize all equipment and practices
- Consider prefab stainless steel units for more urban settings
- Mitigate vandalism by repainting interior and exterior with graffiti-resistant paint
- Replace glass mirrors with stainless steel and existing porcelain toilets, sinks, urinals, towel and soap dispensers, and air dryers with metal with more durable material (stainless steel)
- Remove any remaining copper piping in older restrooms and replace with PVC or flexible piping



Washroom Installation

## OTHER CITIES | HOBART, TASMANIA

*Public Toilet Strategy 2015-2025, City of Hobart*

### PRINCIPLES:

- Convenient distribution of washrooms that match context and need
- Promote access to all people
- Welcoming and safe facilities
- Designed as key civic infrastructure: identifiable, well-managed, and sustainable
- Clear communication and way-finding
- Clean and well maintained with hours to meet demand



### DETAILS

- Ten year plan for public toilets
- Identifies gender neutral, accessible, and naturally ventilated washrooms with open design and door opening to street and visible wash area as trends
- High demand for public washrooms, especially for families, seniors, people experiencing homelessness, and tourists
- Strives for access range of 400m



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- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/san-francisco-solar-powered-toilet-success/>

### *Durham, North Carolina, USA:*

- Going Public: An Assessment of Restroom Facilities in City of Durham Parks, January 2014

### *Hobart, Tasmania:*

- Public Toilet Strategy 2015-2025, January 2016

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



# WASHROOM EXAMPLES

## STANDARD



Stand-Alone



Small



Small



Small



Medium



Medium



Medium



Medium



Medium



Medium



Large

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY



# WASHROOM EXAMPLES

## CUSTOM



Stand-Alone



Stand-Alone



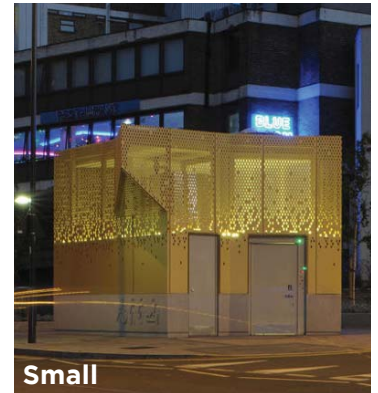
Small



Small



Small



Small



Small



Small



Small



Medium



Large

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## WASHROOM EXAMPLES

### FIXTURES



Stainless steel fixtures



Exterior hand washing stations



Accessible features

### PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

# **APPENDIX 4**

## INTERNAL WORKING GROUPS



# INTERNAL WORKING GROUPS

## BEACH EXPERIENCE TEAM

## MAYOR'S OVERDOSE EMERGENCY TASK FORCE

## UNIVERSAL & INCLUSIVE DESIGN FEASIBILITY STUDY

## PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY

## TEAM UP!

## FIELDHOUSE ACTIVATION PROGRAM

## CONCESSION STRATEGY

## COMMON GOALS: SAFE, CLEAN, ACCESSIBLE

Through engaging with different internal working groups, staff gained an understanding of current work related to washrooms and received focused input, including through the following projects:

### **BEACH EXPERIENCE TEAM (PARK BOARD)** *(Ongoing)*

With an estimated 7.5 million annual visits, Park Board beaches are popular destinations for residents and tourists alike. The Beach Experience Team is a group dedicated to improving the overall experience at Vancouver's beaches and four of its outdoor pools (Kitsilano, Second Beach, New Brighton, and Maple Grove). The team seeks to improve existing site facilities such as changing rooms, washrooms, concessions, and parking in an effort to enhance the overall user experience.

### **MAYOR'S OVERDOSE EMERGENCY TASK FORCE (CITY) (2020)**

The Mayor's Overdose Emergency Task Force includes 31 recommendations for saving lives and reducing deaths from overdose, within actions in the following areas: Indigenous healing and wellness, overdose prevention in SROs, harm reduction, safe supply, treatment and recovery, low-barrier employment, and collective action. These actions include:

- a) reviewing VCH washroom guidelines and developing an implementation strategy for working with non-profit and private operators; and,
- b) assessing the level of risk in public washrooms and recommending any necessary changes.

### **UNIVERSAL AND INCLUSIVE DESIGN FEASIBILITY STUDY (CITY) (Ongoing)**

The project's vision is that City-owned facilities are accessible and welcoming to everyone. A review of existing Accessibility Audits of 30 City-owned facilities is underway to provide a high level Feasibility Study identifying and prioritizing

work required to renovate, upgrade, and remove barriers and to improve accessibility and provide universal and inclusive design.

### **TEAM UP! (PARK BOARD) (Ongoing)**

Team UP! (Urban Parks) is an inter-disciplinary team approach for immediate action needed in key locations, while developing innovative and new ways of working in the urban environment strategically to:

- Increase urban park cleanliness - expedite work orders for urban park improvements and increased aesthetics
- Expand park programming and access by activating spaces through arts, recreation, connection to nature and stewardship
- Develop strategies to animate parks and ultimately improve safety
- Work with community and partners to develop and implement grassroots solutions/programs
- Measure progress, act on best practices, and report out

### **FIELDHOUSE ACTIVATION PROGRAM (PB) (Ongoing)**

The Fieldhouse Activation Program is provide spaces for groups in fieldhouses (without resident care takers) to create activities that engage the community. By re-purposing underused spaces in fieldhouses into community spaces, this program aims to animate the neighbourhoods with place-based activities focused on the themes of art, environment and sport. This re-purposing has resulted in a 'Change of Major Occupancy,' and on-going work has been upgrading 21 fieldhouses to comply with current building code requirements.

### **CONCESSION STRATEGY (PB) (Ongoing)**

There are 14 concession units in the Parks and Recreation system and 13 of them are operated by the Park Board. A business strategy for:

- 12 concessions that operate for the summer season.
- 1 concession that operates year round at Stanley Park

With the exception of the Spanish Banks East concession, and the Third Beach Washroom and Concession, facilities have not seen major upgrades in many years. Some are beginning to show signs of aging and are in need of investment to improve their condition and design.

The top 3 priority concessions for renovations are:

- Kitsilano
- Spanish Bank West
- Second Beach

The top 4 priority washrooms associated with concessions are:

- Stanley Park Information Booth
- Second Beach
- Jericho Beach
- Locarno

## **PARKS WASHROOM STRATEGY**



# **APPENDIX 5**

## GLOSSARY

# GLOSSARY

**Access** - Refers to the opportunity to enter and make use of a washroom. Access can consider factors such as distance, quantity, usability, and design for all people. See also Accessibility.

**Accessibility** - Ensuring that facilities are usable for people with temporary or permanent physical, visual, auditory, or cognitive disabilities as well as those using a mobility device. See also Universal Washroom.

**APT** - Automated Public Toilet, 24-hour washrooms installed by the City in downtown areas that are automatically cleaned and sanitized after each use.

**Asset Target** - Benchmarks that provide a way to measure change over time, prioritize investments and recognize changing needs. Washroom asset targets were established through VanPlay: Vancouver's Parks and Recreation Services Master Plan.

**Good Condition** - The standard for VanPlay's washroom asset target, where a facility is required to meet criteria for safety, cleanliness and accessibility:

**Harm Reduction** - Policies and programs which attempt to reduce the adverse health, social, and economic consequences of mood altering substances to individual drug users and their families and communities, without requiring decrease in drug use. It focuses on reducing potential harms from drug use rather than on the use itself.

**Inclusivity** - Ensuring that there are no physical, psychological, financial, or economic barriers to access or use of a washroom facility: all people can access and are welcome.

**Peer Attendant** - A person hired to monitor, supervise, and maintain a washroom facility at a socially sensitive site that is also a member of the community with social connections and understanding of the relevant issues.

**Portable Washroom** - A deployable temporary washroom that requires pump-out service. Frequently used to address urgent needs or for special events where greater volumes of users than normal are expected.

**Single-user Washroom** - A Single-user washroom accommodates multiple needs within one safely enclosed private area. A single-user washroom becomes universal when it is fully accessible. See also Accessibility and Universal Washroom.

**Socially Sensitive Site** - An area where social factors such as homelessness and drug use may be likely to change the perceived safety of the facilities.

**Stand-alone Washroom** - A single washroom facility with no other building rooms or function, usually deployed to provide basic services where there is a high need. Examples include the Portland Loo successfully used in many cities, and automated public toilets.

**Universal Washroom** - A washroom that is both fully accessible to people with disabilities, that require the use of a mobility device, or are accompanied by a caregiver, as well as inclusive to all gender identities. Universal washrooms require a slightly larger building footprint.



### **Terminology in the Building Code**

The terminology adopted for describing washrooms is taken from the Vancouver Building By-Law (VBBL).

The BC Building Code describes a universal single-user washroom as a universal toilet room and the stall in a gender neutral washroom as a toilet compartment. Rick Hansen Accessibility program describes a single-user washroom as single user restroom and single user accessible facility, and a gender neutral washrooms as unisex/universal washroom and family washrooms. CSA uses the terms accessible washroom and individual washrooms for single-user washrooms. This strategy is focused on the function of the facility and services that it provides.



