New Westminster



Appendix A

What We Heard



Parks and Recreation Plan Update

People, Parks and Play: Connections for All

What we heard report

September 2024

Prepared by Happy Cities for the City of New Westminster

Happy Cities

NEW WESTMINSTER

URBAN SYSTEMS

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People, parks, and play!

Parks and Recreation Plan Update
What we heard summary
Engagement round 1, September 2024



Project overview

The City of New Westminster is updating its Parks and Recreation Plan! The renewed Plan named *People, Parks and Play: Connections for All*, highlighting the essential role that parks and recreation play in building connected, healthy, resilient communities. To guide development of the Plan, the City conducted a comprehensive engagement process from April to June 2024. The plan will guide future priorities and investments in parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs for the next 10 years, while also describing a future vision to 2050.

Timeline

Spring 2024
Engagement round 1

Fall 2024
Draft recommendations

Spring 2024/25
Engagement round 2

Summer 2025
Anticipated completion of final Plan

Promotion and outreach:

Web page

Survey promoted to 4,075 Be Heard New West subscribers

Press release

Press release circulated local media and featured in six *New West Record* articles

Email

Project promotion included in weekly Citypage e-newsletter to 1,700 subscribers

Interactive signage

Signage installed in key community locations with QR codes

E-receipts

and staff email signatures - included the link to the project Be Heard page

Social media

10 social media posts, receiving 29,333 impressions

What we did

Indigenous engagement

26 Engagement Invites
2 Soup & Bannock sessions
10 participants

Youth drop-ins

6 locations
376 participants

Engagement activities

Pop-ups

8 pop-ups
1,237 participants

Workshops

5 sessions
27 individuals and organizations

Survey

612 respondents

Learnings summary - Indigenous engagement

Indigenous engagement consisted of two Soup and Bannock sessions, with 10 participants. Invites were sent to 26 Indigenous organizations and representatives, as well as six local First Nations. Invitations were also extended to the 95 registered users on Be Heard New West who self-identify as Indigenous.

Themes and opportunities

Cultural representation and inclusion

Including greater awareness raising and education around First Nations, as well as spaces for Indigenous practices and ceremonies.

Accessibility, engagement, and education

Including outreach with Indigenous Peoples, and financial support for Indigenous people to participate in parks and recreation activities.

Collaboration and support

Including greater focus on traditional ecological knowledge, and involving Indigenous people in planning, decision making, and program delivery.

Five ideas from participants to advance reconciliation

1. Create opportunities for Indigenous people to steward a food forest area
2. Create Indigenous medicine spaces
3. Local parks as storytelling place to serve the Indigenous population
4. Offer free passes to Indigenous students to access park and recreation services.
5. Collaborate with schools on offering a local Nation language program.

People, parks, and play!

Parks and Recreation Plan Update
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Learnings summary - youth drop-ins

What youth like

- Parks and recreation facilities (including sports fields, skateparks, play areas, natural spaces and the təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre)
- Community and social spaces
- Activities and programs

What youth dislike

- Parks and recreation facilities (lack of youth-specific facilities, overcrowding)
- Maintenance and cleanliness

What to add in the future...

- Courts and fields
- Play features
- Enhanced social spaces, indoors and outdoors
- Youth programming and events



Learnings summary - workshops

The project team hosted five workshops, inviting interested groups and organizations to take part in facilitated discussions. A total of 147 individuals participated.

Strengths

- Parks and natural spaces
- təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre
- High-quality facilities
- Diverse sports uses and recreation amenities
- Inclusivity
- Staff responsiveness and willingness to collaborate

Challenges

- Lack of all-weather spaces
- Competing uses and high demand for courts and fields
- Drug use and homelessness
- Equity in outreach and programming
- Affordability

Vision: Top five priorities

1. Welcome people of all cultures, ages, and abilities
2. Offer affordable and accessible options
3. Provide multi-use and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces
4. Keep up with population growth and community demand
5. Increase number and diversity of programs



People, parks, and play!

Parks and Recreation Plan Update
What we heard summary
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Learnings summary - pop-ups

Outdoor parks and recreation

What people like: People shared general satisfaction with outdoor parks and recreation. Additional "likes" include:

- Walkability, access and accessibility of Quayside waterfront
- Family- and child-friendly spaces
- Tree and green spaces
- Sports and outdoor amenities

What people dislike:

- Limited walkability on trail networks
- Outdated playgrounds and recreation equipment
- Cleanliness and safety
- Lack of year-round outdoor spaces
- Lack of accessible, inclusive spaces

Indoor recreation

What people like: People shared general satisfaction with indoor recreation. Additional "likes" include:

- təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre
- Diverse programming
- Youth programming
- Century House

What people dislike:

- Not enough dedicated courts for sports (e.g. pickleball, tennis, badminton, basketball, and soccer)
- Recreation program registration
- High program costs
- Limited youth and children's activities
- Limited seniors facilities

POP-UP PHOTOS







Barriers to parks and recreation

Information (e.g. not knowing about programs or events)

Physical barriers (e.g. facilities are inaccessible for all ages and abilities)

Technology (e.g. limited offline registration options)

Geography (e.g. living too far away from facilities)

Ideas for the future

Expanded programming

Recreation facility improvements

Cultural and educational opportunities

Accessibility and maintenance

People, parks, and play!

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Learnings summary - survey

Outdoor parks and recreation

90% Run, jog, or walk on park trails or paths

90% Visit parks to eat, sit, play, or otherwise

70% Attend outdoor festivals or special events

Indoor recreation

60% Do swimming lessons and/or drop-in

46% Do fitness programs and/or drop-in

30% Do skating lessons and/or drop-in

Respondents are most **satisfied** with...

- Major parks (68%)
- Garden displays and maintenance (68%)
- Hanging basket displays and programs (63%)

Respondents are most **dissatisfied** with...

- Public washrooms and change rooms in parks (32%)
- Concessions (25%)
- Safe places to bike or wheel off roads (20%)

Respondents are most **satisfied** with...

- Swimming drop-in (31%)
- Fitness programs (28%)
- Skating drop-in (27%)

Respondents are most **dissatisfied** with...

- Swimming lessons (26%)
- Swimming drop-in (16%)
- Fitness programs (15%)

Barriers to accessing parks and recreation:

- Public washroom access (30%)
- Parking access (26%)
- Not enough waste receptacles (26%)



- Timing of programs is inconvenient (23%)
- Not enough time available to participate (21%)
- Insufficient vehicle parking nearby (19%)



Learnings summary - survey

Administration services

Participants shared their satisfaction and dissatisfaction on six areas:

Satisfied	Response	Dissatisfied
53%	Customer service	**5%**
44%	Communications	**13%**
35%	Fees and charges	**13%**
32%	Registration processes	**22%**
23%	Booking processes	**9%**
20%	Financial assistance program and participation support services	**6%**

Top five ideas and desires for the future

1. New, varied, or updated sports facilities
2. Green spaces and non-sports park space
3. Community and gathering spaces
4. All-weather and covered facilities
5. Accessibility



1. Sports programs and facilities
2. Swimming facilities and programs
3. Fitness classes and programs
4. Recreation and community centres
5. Accessible schedules and programs

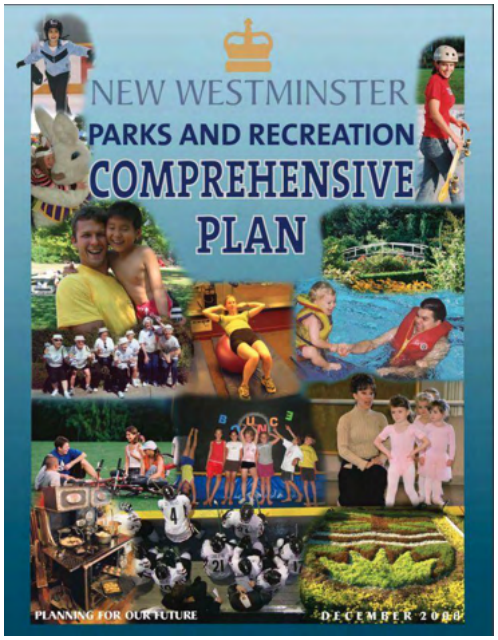


1. Introduction

The City of New Westminster values parks and recreation as essential for individual and community well-being. These spaces and programs help people stay active, connected, and support broader goals like climate resilience, reconciliation, equity, and inclusion. While New Westminster offers many parks, natural areas, and facilities, the City faces challenges due to limited land and a growing population. To overcome this, the City is committed to finding innovative solutions to expand and improve parks and recreation services.

1.1. Project context and overview

Since its adoption in 2008, the New Westminster Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan has shaped the work of the City in delivering parks and recreation services in a manner that is consistent with the City's priorities and meets the community's level of service needs. Given the considerable changes and growth in New Westminster since 2008, it is now time to update the plan.



The New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan Update, which is named *People, Parks and Play: Connections for All* (the Plan), highlights the essential role that parks and recreation play in building connected, healthy, resilient communities. It will provide both an aspirational outlook (to 2050) and a ten-year implementation strategy (to 2035) that:

- Identifies new and evolving areas of focus;
- Incorporates strategic priorities; and
- Provides recommendations for innovative ways to identify and address gaps in service.

The Plan will set the course for how parks and recreation offerings will contribute to New Westminster's growing and changing community, ensuring everyone experiences the benefits of connecting and contributing—with friends, neighbours, or the natural environment. It will also guide the services provided by the Parks & Recreation Department, and identify who is being served, how the services are provided, and the relative priority of those services to ensure alignment with the City's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (DEIAR); Truth and Reconciliation; and Climate Action objectives.

1.2 Project Principles

The City of New Westminster parks and recreation amenities, facilities, programs, and services aim to be accessible, inclusive, safe, and welcoming to all. The following principles guided the community engagement activities for the development of *People, Parks and Play: Connections for All:*

- **Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism:** How can parks and recreation be more welcoming to people of diverse backgrounds and experiences? (e.g., income, gender, culture, race, age, ability, body type, etc.)
- **Truth towards reconciliation:** How can New Westminster better integrate local First Nations values, culture, stories, and art in parks and recreation? How can parks and recreation better uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples?
- **Community belonging, connecting, and wellbeing:** How can parks and recreation create opportunities for people to connect, build relationships, and participate in their community? What types of spaces and programs do people enjoy most?
- **Climate resilience:** In what ways does climate change impact our daily lives in New Westminster? How can parks and recreation address climate change and help us reduce our carbon footprints?
- **Local economy:** What role do parks and recreation play in supporting a vibrant economy and local businesses? How can parks and recreation draw more residents and visitors to New Westminster?
- **Service adequacy and standards:** How can parks and recreation respond to community needs as New Westminster grows? Are parks and recreation places, spaces and services currently meeting the needs and expectations of the community?

1.3 Engagement Goals

The City of New Westminster sought input from residents from April 24 to June 5, 2024. Engagement efforts focused on:

- **Assessing demand:** Identifying key community needs related to programs and services, identifying trends and demands among the community's growing and diversifying population, and identifying where demand is declining for certain programs and services.
- **Equity:** Gathering input from vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved populations to inform the Plan and determine service level outcomes that consider community needs relative to available funding.
- **Inclusivity:** Asking for input from a range of interest groups and key interest holders, as well as considerable input from the general public, with a focus on reaching a diversity of demographics.
- **Highlight:** Show the best of parks and recreation offerings in New Westminster by hosting engagement events at compelling locations and offering fun, interesting, and meaningful engagement opportunities.

Engagement activities were also designed to showcase the highlights of parks and recreation places, spaces, and services in New Westminster by offering fun and compelling engagement activities and opportunities at numerous City parks and recreation facilities.

2. What we did

The project team applied a multi-layered approach to gather input to shape People, Parks and Play: Connections for All. Engagement efforts included various activities and opportunities to reach and hear from community members, Indigenous communities and First Nations, and organizations with an interest in the outcomes of the Plan.

2.1. Engagement Strategy

Happy Cities and Urban Systems worked with City of New Westminster Parks and Recreation staff to create two phases of community engagement based on International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) standards, which consisted of Inform, Consult and Involve. Through a series of both physical and digital engagement the plan showcased the best of parks and recreation within New Westminster by offering fun and compelling engagement opportunities. The key objectives of the community engagement included identifying key community needs and a list of key interest groups and holders for valuable input. This included Indigenous organizations, seniors, youth, and representatives of vulnerable and seldom-heard communities, and local sports and recreation groups.

2.2 Promotion



Project web page

A central project page was developed on Be Heard New West which provided information on the project as well as a link to the online survey.



Press release

A press release was circulated to local media—including the New Westminster Record and the New West Anchor—through the City of New Westminster's communication channels.



Social media

Graphic and text information about opportunities to participate in engagement were shared through the City's Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram. Ten social media posts by the City between April 24 and May 17 generated 29,333 impressions.



Email

Emails were sent through Citypage (email newsletter) and to Be Heard subscribers. Representatives of identified interest groups were contacted directly by email.



Interactive signage

Happy Cities designed and installed posters at key parks and recreation facilities in New Westminster, including the Public Library, and City Hall. QR codes on signage enabled passersby to quickly access the project website.



E-receipts + emails

During the engagement period, an additional message informing people of the project was included on all City of New Westminster Parks & Recreation e-receipts, as well as in the email signatures of staff.

2.3 Indigenous Engagement

The City undertook outreach with six local First Nations and Indigenous people living in New Westminster. This included direct email invitations to identified Indigenous people living in New Westminster as well as outreach to Indigenous-serving organisations—detailing the engagement opportunities and encouraging organisations to share these invitations with their membership. Invitations also noted that participants would receive honoraria in the form of $50 and a free family recreation pass for any activity for each participant

The team hosted two Soup & Bannock Sessions, they were held at:

- **Douglas College, Indigenous Gathering Space** - Monday, June 10, from 12:30 to 2:00 pm
- **Douglas College, Indigenous Gathering Space** - Wednesday, June 12, from 6:00 to 7:30 pm

During these sessions, participants were offered a meal of soup and bannock. Through one-to-one and small group conversations, as well as space to write and share ideas, participants were invited to provide input on cultural representation and inclusion; collaboration and support; and accessibility and education.

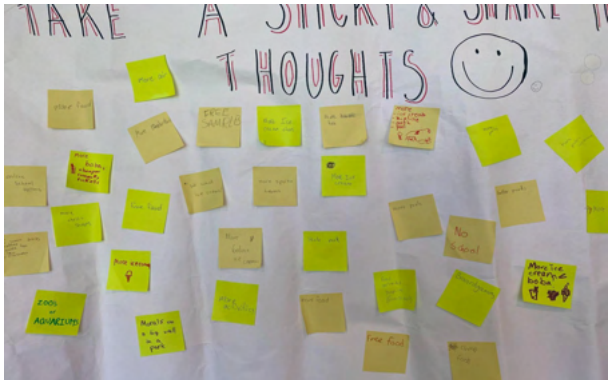
A total of 10 Indigenous participants took part in the sessions. For future engagement with Indigenous Peoples, planning activities where the team goes out to speak with people, rather than asking them to come to an engagement event, could strengthen participation.

2.4 Youth drop-ins

City staff conducted drop-in engagement activities with youth aged 11-18 over four days between May 24 and May 29 at six New Westminster locations:

- Fraser River Middle School
- Glenbrook Middle School
- Queensborough Middle School
- New West Youth Centre,
- Queensborough Community Centre,
- təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre

A total of 376 youth participated in sessions that focused on questions looking at what youth like and dislike about parks and recreation in New Westminster; ideas to improve parks and recreation for youth; and any spaces or programs youth had seen elsewhere and would like to see in New Westminster.





2.5 Workshops

The project team hosted five workshops, inviting interested organizations to take part in facilitated discussions on New Westminster's parks and recreation distribution, design, programming, administrative services, enforcement, and more.

Participants included 27 interest groups, residents and business representatives. During the sessions, participants were asked to give input on strengths and challenges, as well as visions, and ideas for the City's parks and recreation spaces, amenities, and services.

The workshops included:

- **Outdoor Sports External Advisory Group Workshop** (online) - Monday, May 6, 2024, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
- **Social, Cultural, and Service External Advisory Group Workshop** (online) - Tuesday, May 7, 2024, from 1:00 - 2:30 p.m.
- **Indoor Sports External Advisory Group Workshop** (online) - Tuesday, May 7, 2024, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
- **Business Associations and Community Organizations External Advisory Group Workshop** (online) - Thursday, May 16, 2024, from 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
- **Public Open Workshop** (online) - Wednesday, May 22, 2024, from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

2.6 Pop-ups

Eight pop-up engagement events were held at key parks and recreation sites across New Westminster to meet people where they are. A total of 1,237 participants were engaged. The events were promoted on social media, local media, and with interactive signage.

To draw passersby in, and to gain input from residents and visitors who may not take the time to complete an online survey, the pop-ups were planned to maximize appeal and spark interest. They included colourful signage, engagement activities, free refreshments, and family-friendly games. One pop-up event took the form of a major placemaking initiative. Dubbed the "Fun & Games Fest," the pop-up was held at Moody Park on Saturday, May 4, 2024, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. The pop-up attracted participants to join into over ten games and other engaging activities, and to enjoy free refreshments.



Other pop-ups were held at:

- **River Market Boardwalk**: Saturday, April 27, from 1:00pm to 4:00pm
- **təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre**: Monday, April 29, from 3:00 to 7:00pm, during soft opening of the Community Centre on April 22.
- **Ryall Park and Queensborough Community Centre**: Thursday, May 9, 2024, from 2:00pm to 5:00pm
- **Sapperton Plaza**: Saturday, May 11, 2024, from 12:00pm to 3:00pm
- **Simcoe Park**: Wednesday, May 15, 2024, from 2:00pm to 5:00pm
- **Century House**: Wednesday, June 5, 2024, from 10:00am to 1:00pm
- **New West Farmers Market**: Thursday, June 6, 2024 1:00pm to 4:00pm





2.7 Survey

Urban Systems and Happy Cities prepared a public-facing survey that was hosted on Be Heard New West. Paper copies were also available on request. The survey asked participants to share their experiences, thoughts, and priorities on the City of New Westminster's parks and recreation programs. The survey was open from April 22 until June 10, 2024 and engaged 612 respondents.

Participants were asked to note their participation and satisfaction with New Westminster's outdoor and indoor parks and recreation opportunities and services. Survey respondents were also asked about their accessibility and barriers in relation to the City's parks and recreation offerings, and what they would like to see in the future. Further, the survey asked participants to rate their level of satisfaction with the departments administrative services.

Demographic data was collected through Be Heard New West, equipping the project team with the disaggregated data needed to understand who we heard from, the priorities of different communities within New Westminster, and to identify who might be missing in the conversation.

The survey timeframe overlapped with the opening of the təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre in April. For two years prior the city was without indoor pool and aquatic services. During this time aquatic offerings were only provided seasonally at the City's two outdoor pools.

3 | Learnings Summary

A wide range of people in New Westminster gave input on the City's current parks and recreation spaces and programs. The following section outlines what we heard through the various engagement activities, including Indigenous engagement, youth drop-in sessions, workshops, pop-ups, and the survey.



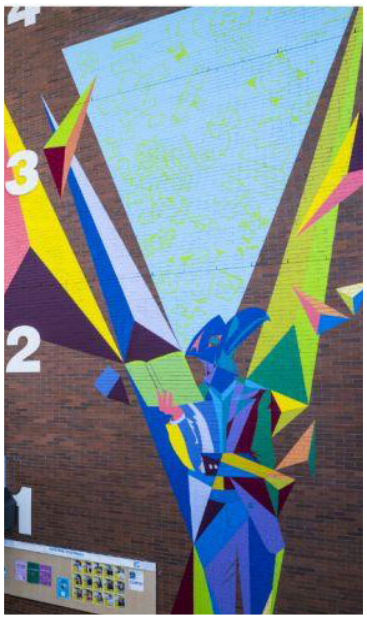
3.1 Indigenous engagement findings

Indigenous participants at these sessions discussed and identified the following top themes and opportunities for the City to enhance parks and recreation:

- Cultural representation, inclusion and education
- Accessibility and engagement
- Collaboration and support

Input on each of these areas is detailed below:

3.1.1 Cultural representation, inclusion and education



Provide Nation-specific information and resources:

- Participants were positive towards the naming of the təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre and encouraged the City to continue supporting Indigenous language in naming, signage, and written text.
- Participants encouraged the City to offer Nation-specific information, support, and resources to community members, emphasizing the distinctions between First Nations and ensuring that the diversity of dialects within Indigenous communities is represented and respected in parks and recreation.

Create spaces to represent Indigenous stories and offer cultural programming:

- Participants highlighted the need for creating spaces and opportunities to better represent Elders, cultural practitioners, and young people. They emphasized that Indigenous people need to feel safe while engaging in ceremonies and cultural practices.

- Participants encouraged the City to consider establishing an Indigenous makerspace, potentially at Queen's Park, with a focus on providing equipment, programming, and artist opportunities. Programming could include classes that teach skills like sewing for regalia, carving, painting, and beading, especially for youth.
- Participants expressed a desire for Indigenous families to have a dedicated place in the neighbourhood for community to connect with each other, particularly for storytelling.
- Participants shared experiences of people not understanding and disrespecting their cultural practices. They proposed the City add signage about Indigenous ceremonies and practices.

Understand urban Indigenous history and relationships to the land:

- Participants encouraged the City to develop a deeper understanding of the urban Indigenous history in New Westminster, including the acknowledgment of historical traumas and the current challenges faced by urban Indigenous communities.
- Participants suggested enhancing access to the river and creating spaces for connection with the water.

Provide more education and space for ceremonies and practices

- Participants expressed a desire for access to mixed and diverse spaces for healing, including sweat lodges and spaces with water, sun, and art.
- Participants encouraged the City to incorporate traditional ways of managing food systems.

Incorporate Indigenous cultures and histories into the design of parks and recreation facilities:

- Indigenous participants emphasized that the City needs to review the colonial naming and logos across the city, such as the City's crown logo and the names of the City of New Westminster, Queen's Park, Douglas College, and more.
- Participants suggested the City create opportunities for public art and storytelling. For example, the City could work with local Indigenous communities to install totem poles representing all 33 nations who have a traditional connection to the land on which New Westminster is located and provide information about each totem pole.
- In recognition of the land, participants encouraged the City to use local stone and wood materials in new designs.
- Participants proposed that the City allocate space to grow indigenous plants and have signage with information about local flora and fauna.

Idea: First Nation leader previously submitted a proposal to use the park at 20th Street and 7th Avenue as a storytelling place to serve the Indigenous population.

Idea: Create Indigenous medicine spaces. As one participant noted, "spaces can be small, they don't have to be big to be meaningful."

Idea: There was a 400 person Qayqayt village near the Glenbrooke Ravine. It included a sweat lodge. This sacred space needs more privacy, safety, and teachings from lodge keepers.

Idea: Create opportunities for Indigenous people to steward a food forest area or consider food systems that were used by Local First Nations (e.g. at former Queen's Park Farm).

3.1.2 Accessibility and engagement

Reduce barriers to accessing parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services for self-identified Indigenous people:

- Participants encouraged the City to create space for self-identified urban Indigenous people to feel welcome and part of the community. Participants recommend that the City not require proof of Indigenous identity, as obtaining paperwork is a barrier.
- Participants suggested that the City offer reduced fees to recreation facilities, programs, and services for self-identified Indigenous people (regardless of Nation).

Support and accessibility:

- Participants noted that online registration is difficult for people who are not technologically savvy or require in-person help.
- They encouraged the City to hire more Indigenous program leaders for programming activities. They noted current financial support for accessing parks and recreation facilities and programs is focused on students, and recommended expanding this support to include seniors.

Engage with Indigenous youth:

- In addition to support for Elders, participants encouraged the City to provide greater support to Indigenous youth. They noted that not all Indigenous students in New Westminster are residents of the City, but many still use parks and recreation spaces.
- Participants proposed that the City offer programs with Indigenous coaches and mentors for children and youth.
- They suggested that the City could better engage the School District to support the Indigenous population.
- Participants suggested the City create safe and social spaces for Indigenous youth through food. This includes creating environments where Indigenous youth can gather, share, and feel supported, such as at community kitchens or youth centres where traditional foods are prepared and shared.

Support greater Indigenous representation and participation in planning:

- Several participants expressed concerns that these engagement sessions felt uncomfortable because of the lack of “Indigenous faces” present.

Idea: Access to free drop-ins for Elders at designated times.

Idea: Provide education for adults who have been stripped of their Indigenous knowledge and offer opportunities to reconnect adults with their cultural heritage.

Idea: Offer free passes to Indigenous students to access park and recreation services.

Idea: Collaborate with schools on offering a local Nation language program.

Idea: For future engagement, meet Indigenous people in community, rather than inviting them to pre-planned sessions.

3.1.3 Collaboration and support

Provide positions for Indigenous personnel:

- Participants encouraged the City to provide training and include skilled people who are Indigenous in Parks and Recreation programming, ensuring that knowledgeable and skilled Indigenous individuals are involved in planning, decision-making processes, and program delivery.

Incorporate traditional ecological knowledge and education into outdoor spaces:

- Participants encouraged the City to consult with local Nations on the ecological roles of native species in the area.
- They suggested Parks and Recreation staff create signage in parks regarding the traditional uses of and relationship with flora and fauna, in addition to English descriptions.

Strengthen collaborations and relationships:

- Participants encouraged the City to build friendships with existing Indigenous organizations to foster connections and collaborative opportunities.
- They proposed that the City collaborate with Indigenous representatives in spaces that are lacking representation of Indigenous cultures and histories. They emphasized the need to work directly with Indigenous leaders to enhance cultural representation in public spaces.
- Participants recommended that the City meet priorities around Indigenous collaboration through City-led policy and funding opportunities. They noted that Indigenous initiatives are often facilitated by Indigenous organizations, but these groups also want the City to host and lead these efforts.



Establish an Indigenous Advisory Committee to advocate for urban Indigenous people. For example, the City of Vancouver has relationships with Host Nations with a focus on urban Indigenous needs and perspectives. The City of New Westminster should have a similar committee or volunteer positions.

3.2 Youth drop-ins

During the youth drop-in sessions, youth between the ages of 11 and 18 were asked to share what they like and dislike about parks and recreation spaces and programs in New Westminster, and what they would like to see in the future.

3.2.1 What youth like

Parks and recreation facilities:

Youth expressed a strong appreciation for the variety of recreational facilities available in New Westminster. They highlighted several amenities, including:

- **Sports facilities:** Ball diamonds, soccer fields, and skateparks.
- **Play areas:** Playgrounds, indoor pools, slides, monkey bars, and climbing structures were noted as key attractions.
- **Natural spaces:** Treed areas and grass fields were valued for their natural beauty and space to relax.
- **New additions:** The new təməseẇtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre was particularly well-received, with many youth expressing excitement and enjoyment about the facility.

Community and social spaces:

- **Social interaction:** Youth shared that they value the social aspects of parks, mentioning the friendliness of people, the sense of community, and the opportunity to meet friends and classmates at places like Moody Park.
- **Community atmosphere:** The parks are seen as a hub for community, making them an important part of youth social life.

Activities and programs:

- **Variety of activities:** Youth expressed appreciation for the variety of activities, such as playing video games, hanging out with friends, and enjoying different recreational options, including sports, arts, DJing and more.
- **General enjoyment:** Many youth shared that they found everything about parks fun, with a particular fondness for the təməseẇtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre.



3.2.2 What youth dislike

Parks and recreation facilities:

- **Lack of specific facilities:** A common concern was the shortage of facilities for specific sports or recreational activities. Youth mentioned basketball and volleyball bike parks and skateparks in particular.
- **Play areas for older kids:** Some participants expressed that there are enough activities or spaces designed for older youth.
- **Amenities:** Dirty washrooms and insufficient water access.
- **Design issues:** Some respondents felt that certain playgrounds were "too futuristic," and that more traditional or varied play equipment might be more appealing to youth.
- **Overcrowding:** Several participants mentioned that parks often felt overcrowded, making it difficult to enjoy the facilities.

Maintenance concerns:

- **Cleanliness and safety:** Youth expressed concerns about the cleanliness and safety of parks, particularly regarding dog waste, trash, and the presence of individuals using drugs. These factors were seen as detracting from the overall park experience.
- **Maintenance issues:** Parks not being cleaned after rain and nearby construction were noted as issues that reduced the quality of the recreational spaces.





3.2.3 What to add in the future

Parks and recreation facilities:

- **More courts and fields:** More recreational facilities, such as volleyball and basketball courts, was the top request for future improvements from youth engagement.
- **More play features**: Youth participants expressed the need for more play structures such as slides and swings, including ziplines and waterparks.
- **Broader range of activities:** Youth participants also suggested adding badminton courts, hockey facilities, and more comprehensive play areas for all age groups.
- **Improved amenities:** Youth participants expressed the need for better amenities in parks, such as more picnic tables, water fountains, and consistently clean washrooms.
- **Improved infrastructure:** Youth participants suggested enhancements such as better bike lanes to parks and recreation facilities and spaces, more washrooms, and garbage cans.

Community and social spaces:

- **Enhanced social spaces:** Youth expressed a desire for more places to sit, hang out, and engage with the community. Ideas included community garden spaces and a better mall for socializing.

Activities and programs:

- **Youth programming:** There was a call for more youth workers, free entry to youth centres, and the expansion of programs aimed at young people.
- **Youth-focused events:** Youth suggested events including anime conventions, cultural cooking days, and movie nights.
- **Food options:** Youth shared demand for a wider variety of food options at the Youth Centre and drop-ins, with suggestions including poutine, Mexican food, sushi, and a cat café.





3.3 Workshops



Workshop participants were asked to share input on the strengths and challenges of New Westminster's parks and recreation spaces, facilities, and programs, both outdoor and indoor. Participants were also invited to explore their vision for the future of parks and recreation in New Westminster, and ideas to fulfil it.

3.3.1 Current Strengths

Outdoor

- **Parks and natural spaces:** Participants expressed appreciation for the integration of natural areas, greenery, and trees within the city's urban landscape. These assets provide shade and are important for the wellbeing and health of residents.
- **High-quality facilities:** Participants noted that many of the City's outdoor facilities are well-designed and built, including but not limited to Queen's Park Stadium and Mercer Stadium.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** Participants noted that most of the City's parks, fields, and outdoor spaces are generally clean, well-maintained, and feel welcoming and safe.
- **Diverse recreational amenities:** Participants shared that they enjoy the range of outdoor activities that are offered in New Westminster, including spray parks, picnic tables, outdoor pools, dog parks, and even alcohol-permitted zones in certain parks.
- **Diverse sports uses:** Participants acknowledged that multiple user groups can benefit from New Westminster fields, courts, and other sports amenities, for activities such as tennis, pickleball, lacrosse, soccer, and more.
- **Inclusivity and accessibility:** Participants noted that some parks have all-gender washrooms, many of the outdoor recreation spaces are accessible by active transportation networks, and costs are generally low to rent outdoor fields.
- **Displays and attractions:** Participants mentioned the horticultural displays and flower gardens as particularly engaging, as well as cultural elements like the totem pole in Queen's Park.

Indoor

- **Diverse and accessible programming:** Participants expressed appreciation for the wide array of programs offered different for age groups, the provision of non-profit childcare at certain facilities, and the options for low-cost or free programs.
- **New aquatic centre:** Many participants expressed enthusiasm about the new təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre.

- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** Participants noted that most facilities, including older ones, are generally well-maintained and quite clean.
- **Community inclusivity:** Participants mentioned that facilities like Century House, the Youth Centre, and Queensborough Community Centre foster a sense of belonging and offer community gathering spaces.
- **Responsive and collaborative programming:** Participants shared that, in general, the City is responsive to community needs and requests and is willing to collaborate with clubs and organizations to adapt programming.
- **Comfort:** Some participants mentioned the availability of of public Wi-Fi at certain facilities and privacy blinds at the new təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre as features that improve indoor recreation experiences.

3.3.2 Current Challenges

Outdoor

- **All-weather spaces and facilities:** Participants noted that most fields and other outdoor spaces in New Westminster are not fit for all-weather activities as they are grass, rather than turf, and do not provide good options for sports and general recreation during the rainy parts of the year.
- **Competing uses and high demand:** There is limited land left for development in New Westminster, with some community sports organizations noting that there are not enough courts to meet competing demands in their neighbourhoods. There is also a high demand for fields—especially for softball and baseball—and storage space, change rooms, and washrooms are insufficient in certain stadiums and parks.
- **Booking system:** Some participants shared that they have had difficulty booking fields and communicating with City staff for bookings. Some expressed that booking fees are too costly.
- **Maintenance and cleanliness:** Participants highlighted certain areas that could benefit from better maintenance and more frequent cleaning, such as washrooms, outdoor lacrosse boxes, dugouts, and concession buildings.
- **Safety:** Participants shared concerns over drug use and fights in parks.
- **Environmental concerns:** Some participants shared concerns about stormwater management, the health of trees in certain parks (e.g. Sapperton Park), and a perceived decline in the numbers of birds and other wildlife.
- **Events:** Some participants noted that better access to electrical outlets at parks and permits for food catering and food trucks could allow for better outdoor events and user experiences.

Indoor

- **Programming improvements:** Participants noted that additional programming options in terms of cultural and music offerings could be offered, and some participants flagging the need for more investment in programming options for seniors and youth at certain facilities, such as Queensborough Community Centre.

- **Competing uses and high demand:** Participants shared concerns about the lack of dedicated space for regular programs, reflected for example by the challenges in gymnastics, basketball and floor hockey trying to share the Queen's Park Sportsplex. Certain facilities have high demands from competing user groups, leading to challenges in booking and scheduling.
- **Accessibility and affordability:** Participants noted that many non-profit organizations cannot afford to use indoor City facilities. The requirement to provide an address to access programs can also be a barrier.
- **Facility upgrades:** Participants noted that many facilities are aging and require accessibility upgrades, including more accessible washrooms and improvements to accommodate diverse needs.
- **Collaboration with community groups:** Participants shared that a more streamlined process for obtaining permits could allow for community groups to hold more spontaneous and accessible events and programs.



Ideas from the workshops to implement this vision over the next 10 years included:

- **Creative use of spaces:** roads, alleys, rooftops, rivers, parking lots, vacant lots, and privately owned public spaces
- **More and better outdoor facilities:** lit artificial turf fields, multi-use covered sports court, indoor training facility, change facilities, pickleball courts, and amenities for Queensborough
- **More for vulnerable populations:** awareness of crisis response team and ambassador programs, and services for unhoused people
- **More accessible facilities:** free spaces, streamlined registration and booking, child care, youth with senior services, and intergenerational programming
- **More nature experiences:** more trees, harness the natural topography for play, and closer connections with the water
- **Indigenous spaces and recognition:** teaching ways to connect with the land, ceremonial spaces, educational spaces, and language and art
- **Expanded programs:** arts and culture, revitalize grades 5-6 "get active" program, and graduated youth volunteer program
- **Easier access and activation in parks:** clean, accessible, all-gender washrooms that are open more often, food trucks and buskers, and easier booking for park spaces.

3.3.3 Vision and Ideas

Workshop participants shared their priorities to inform the vision for People, Parks and Play: Connections for All. They then ranked their top priorities. Vision priorities, ranked in order, were:

1. Welcome people of all cultures, ages, and abilities
2. Offer affordable and accessible options
3. Provide multi-use and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces
4. Keep up with population growth and community demand
5. Increase number and diversity of programs
6. Expand year-round outdoor recreation opportunities
7. Distribute facilities and amenities equitably
8. Address multi-crises in parks and recreation
9. Strengthen and broaden partnerships
10. Protect the environment, enhance climate resilience, and connect people with nature







3.4 Pop-ups

Pop-ups were held across key public places in New Westminster, bringing the engagement directly to people where they normally gather. At each pop-up, passersby were invited to write on sticky notes to share what they like and dislike about recreation opportunities.

3.4.1 Pop-up summary

The findings below are a summary of input, organized by engagement prompts.

Engagement board questions

- What do you like about outdoor recreation spaces, facilities, and programs in New Westminster?
- What do you dislike about outdoor recreation spaces, facilities, and programs in New Westminster?
- What do you like about indoor recreation facilities and programs in New Westminster?
- What do you dislike about indoor recreation facilities and programs in New Westminster?
- Have you experienced any barriers or challenges to visiting a park or recreation facility, or using a recreation program or service? If so, what kinds of barriers have you faced?
- What's your biggest wish for parks and recreation in New Westminster?

3.4.2 What residents like about outdoor offerings

The majority of pop-up participants expressed overall satisfaction with outdoor offerings. The following lists highlight common outdoor parks and recreation spaces, amenities, and programs that people said they like, organized by pop-up location.

Walkability and accessibility of waterfront areas: People value waterfront areas and connections for outdoor recreational experience. The accessibility of the Waterfront Esplanade and nearby parks—such as Westminster Pier Park, Quayside Park, and Port Royal Parks—is also a major highlight.

Family- and child-friendly spaces: People shared that at parks such as Tugger Gathering and Play Space, Queen's Park and Moody Park there are many activities for children at outdoor and recreation spaces. There is an appreciation for family-friendly features like spray parks, playgrounds, and picnic areas.

General satisfaction with parks and recreation: Across the pop-up events, people were satisfied overall with the outdoor recreation offerings, with parks like Moody Park and Queen's Park appreciated for their diverse amenities and activities for youth, toddlers, and dog owners.

Trees and green spaces: People noted the importance of trees in parks for shade, aesthetics, and climbing, and appreciated general upkeep and beauty of New Westminster's gardens and green spaces.

Sports and outdoor amenities: People expressed appreciation for sports amenities, such as outdoor pools, fields, and courts for activities like tennis, pickleball, and basketball.

3.4.3 What residents dislike about outdoor offerings

The following lists highlight common outdoor parks and recreation spaces, amenities, and programs that people said they dislike or would like to see improvements in.

Walkability and trail networks: People shared a strong desire for better pedestrian and bike trail connections, especially from the eastside to the waterfront. Safety concerns related to traffic and poorly connected or maintained paths were also raised, with calls for improved trail networks and greenery.



Playgrounds and recreation equipment: There is a demand for more engaging playgrounds, larger play areas, and new equipment for children and youth. The need for outdoor recreational spaces like basketball, volleyball courts, and skate parks was highlighted as well.



Cleanliness and safety: Participants expressed concerns about the cleanliness of parks, including issues with dog waste, litter, and smoking. Safety concerns included drug use, slippery sidewalks, and inadequate lighting in parks. People expressed a desire for better maintenance and more security.

Year-round outdoor spaces: People asked for more all-weather outdoor spaces, including covered areas, turf fields and year-round outdoor pools.

Accessible, inclusive spaces: Accessibility and inclusiveness for people of all abilities were also key concerns, alongside requests for LGBTQ2S+ focused programming and Indigenous art and education in public spaces.



Dog parks: People shared a need for more off-leash dog parks and improved dog-friendly trails. People also noted concerns about dog waste management and the need for cleaner spaces for pets and owners.

3.4.4 What residents like about indoor offerings

The following lists highlight additional common indoor recreation offerings that people said they like, organized by pop-up location.

təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre: Across multiple pop-ups, people expressed excitement about the new facilities, including the gym, pool, daycare, and overall offerings at the aquatic and community centre. This engagement took place during the phased opening of the new facility, from April to June.

General satisfaction with indoor recreation: There was overall satisfaction with indoor parks and recreation services in New Westminster, though feedback on indoor recreation was limited in some pop-ups.

Diverse programming: People expressed appreciation for a variety of programs, such as those offered at Century House and the City's science and pottery classes.

Youth programming: People noted the inclusive nature of youth-focused spaces and programs - including celebrating different cultures, taking a broad view of what counts as arts and culture, and in making youth feel welcome - particularly at the Youth Centre.

Century House: People shared appreciation for Century House as a key community facility offering a range of Seniors services and programs.



3.4.5 What residents dislike about indoor offerings

The following lists highlight additional common indoor recreation offerings that people said they dislike or would like to see improvements in.

Indoor sports facilities: Desire for more dedicated courts for various sports like pickleball, tennis, badminton, basketball, and soccer.

Recreation program registration: Common issues include high costs, limited availability, lack of awareness (and critique of how registration and programming is communicated), and challenging registration processes across multiple locations.

High program costs: Concerns about the affordability of programs.

Youth and children's activities: Lack of sufficient toddler programs and youth drop-in spaces for arts, crafts, and games.

Senior facilities: Requests for expanded senior spaces and facilities, especially at Century House, along with improved evening programs and better accessibility.

3.4.6 Barriers to parks and recreation in New Westminster

Information barriers: Participants frequently mentioned not knowing when registration or events were happening, indicating a need for better communication about programming.

Geographic barriers: Distance to facilities, especially for residents of Queensborough, is a significant challenge in accessing recreational spaces.

Technology barriers: Participants noted that limited offline options for signing up for programs creates barriers for those without access to digital platforms.

Physical barriers: Accessibility upgrades are needed for aging playgrounds and recreation facilities to accommodate users of all ages and abilities.

3.4.7 Planning for the future: What do you want to see in Parks and Recreation in New Westminster?

Recreational facility improvements: Common requests included better basketball courts, more swim lessons, and upgrades to the Moody Park playground. People also shared requests for more swings, climbing opportunities, and accessible playgrounds across parks.

Expanded programming: Participants asked for more teen programs, holiday kids camps, free activities, and pop-up engagement events in the city.

Cultural and educational opportunities: People expressed a desire for more opportunities to learn about Indigenous history and cultural practices in the community.

Facilities and amenities: People requested clean restrooms, sitting areas for seniors, and additional swings, including tire swings and a long slide.

3.4.8 Findings table

There was variation between the pop-ups in what people said they liked and disliked about parks and recreation offerings. In the tables below, the top five responses for each question are detailed.

List of pop-ups and locations:

Pop-up 1: River Market Boardwalk

Pop-up 2: təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre

Pop-up 3: Moody Park

Pop-up 4: Ryall Park and Queensborough Community Centre

Pop-up 5: Sapperton Plaza

Pop-up 6: Simcoe Park

Pop-up 7: Century House

Pop-up 8: New West Farmers Market

3.4.6 What residents like about outdoor offerings

At pop-up 8 the “likes” for indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, facilities and programs were combined as one question.

What residents like about outdoor offerings

	Pop-up 1 River Market	Pop-up 2 təməsewtxʷ	Pop-up 3 Moody Park	Pop-up 4 Queensborough	Pop-up 5 Sapperton	Pop-up 6 Simcoe	Pop-up 7 Century House	Pop-up 8 Farmers Market
1	Walkability of the waterfront	Generally satisfied	Generally satisfied with parks and recreational offerings	Few comments received	Sappertoon Park with covered picnic space, dog park, pool and swings	Community gatherings and events	Generally satisfied	Natural spaces
2	Accessible and stroller-friendly	Family-friendly park features	Family-friendly park features		Parks within walking distance	Local parks	Park trees	Sports amenities
3	Waterfront Parks	Queen's Park & Moody Park	Fields and tennis courts		Queen’s Park	Water fountains	Community gardens	təməsewtxʷ facilities
4	Child-friendly outdoor spaces	Dog Parks	Park trees		Gardens and green spaces	Ping pong tables and basketball spaces		
5	Outdoor pools	Tennis and pickleball courts				Queen’s Park and Moody Park		

3.4.9 What residents dislike about outdoor offerings

At pop-up 8 the “dislikes” for indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, facilities and programs were combined as one question.

What residents dislike about outdoor offerings

	Pop-up 1 River Market	Pop-up 2 təməsewtxʷ	Pop-up 3 Moody Park	Pop-up 4 Queensborough	Pop-up 5 Sapperton	Pop-up 6 Simcoe	Pop-up 7 Century House	Pop-up 8 Farmers Market
1	Walkability and trail networks	Walkability and trail networks	Not enough recreational programs	Lack of soccer fields	Greater walkability	Lack of water features	Lack of petting zoo	Lack of sports amenities
2	Lack of dog parks	More transportati on needed	More Park trees	More park trees	Lack of sports amenities	Lack of sports amenities	More indigenous reconciliation and art	Not enough playground sizes
3	Not enough play equipment	Need for all-weather spaces	Quality of cleanliness	Play equipment	Greater accessibility	Not enough play equipment	Not enough community gardens	Need for cleanliness and safety
4	Quality of safety	Greater accessibility and inclusion	Moody Park playground	Quality of cleanliness	Inclusion and safety	Quality of cleanliness	Display gardens and native species	Reduce cost
5	Need year-round outdoor spaces and programming		Public washrooms and drinking water		Hume Park upgrades	Housing insecurity	Greater walkability	
6	More outdoor programming					Greater safety		

3.4.10 What residents like about indoor offerings

At pop-up 8 the “likes” for indoor and outdoor recreation spaces, facilities and programs were combined as one question.

What residents like about indoor offerings

	Pop-up 1 River Market	Pop-up 2 təməsewtxʷ	Pop-up 3 Moody Park	Pop-up 4 Queensborough	Pop-up 5 Sapperton	Pop-up 6 Simcoe	Pop-up 7 Century House
1	Few comments received	təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre	təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre	Few comments received	təməsewtxʷ facilities	təməsewtxʷ facilities	Century House
2		General satisfaction	Diverse programming		Summer camp offerings	The Youth Centre	təməsewtxʷ facilities
3		Accessibility improvements					

3.4.11 What residents dislike about indoor offerings

What residents dislike about indoor offerings							
	Pop-up 1 River Market	**Pop-up 2** təməsewtxʷ	**Pop-up 3** Moody Park	**Pop-up 4** Queensborough	**Pop-up 5** Sapperton	**Pop-up 6** Simcoe	**Pop-up 7** Century House
1	Few comments received	Lack of indoor sports facilities	Quality of communications	Recreation program registration	Recreation program registration	Few comments received	Lack of evening programming at Century House
2		Recreation program registration	High cost of programming	Lack of children and youth activities			Not enough expanded seniors facilities
3							Quality of Connaught Heights spaces
4							Quality of senior accessibility

3.4.12 Planning for the future: What do you want to see in Parks and Recreation in New Westminster?

At pop-up 7 and 8 this engagement activity, where people wrote their open answers on cards and hung them on a tree, was not conducted due space constraints.

What residents would like to see in the future						
	Pop-up 1 River Market	**Pop-up 2** təməsewtxʷ	**Pop-up 3** Moody Park	**Pop-up 4** Queensborough	**Pop-up 5** Sapperton	**Pop-up 6** Simcoe
1	Few comments received	Indoor and outdoor basketball courts	Free activities	Few comments received	More engagement activities	More swings
2		Swim lessons availability	More kids camps		More climbing opportunities	Moody Park playground upgrades
3		More teen programs	Update Moody Park playground		Accessible playgrounds	
4		Learning Indigenous culture	More swings and tire swings		Clean restrooms	
			A very long slide		Seating for seniors	

3.5 Online Survey

Participants were invited to share input on the following topics for parks and recreation in New Westminster:

1. Participation in outdoor activities
2. Satisfaction with outdoor recreation
3. Accessibility and barriers to outdoor recreation
4. Participation in recreation programs, services, and facilities
5. Satisfaction with recreation programs, services, and facilities
6. Accessibility and barriers to recreation programs, services, and facilities
7. Parks and recreation administration services
8. Future outdoor or indoor parks and recreation improvements

The survey was open April 22 to June 10, 2024 and was shared on the City's Be Heard New West platform. Paper surveys were also available at pop-ups. The complete survey questionnaire is included as Appendix A to this report.



3.5.1 Outdoor Parks and Recreation

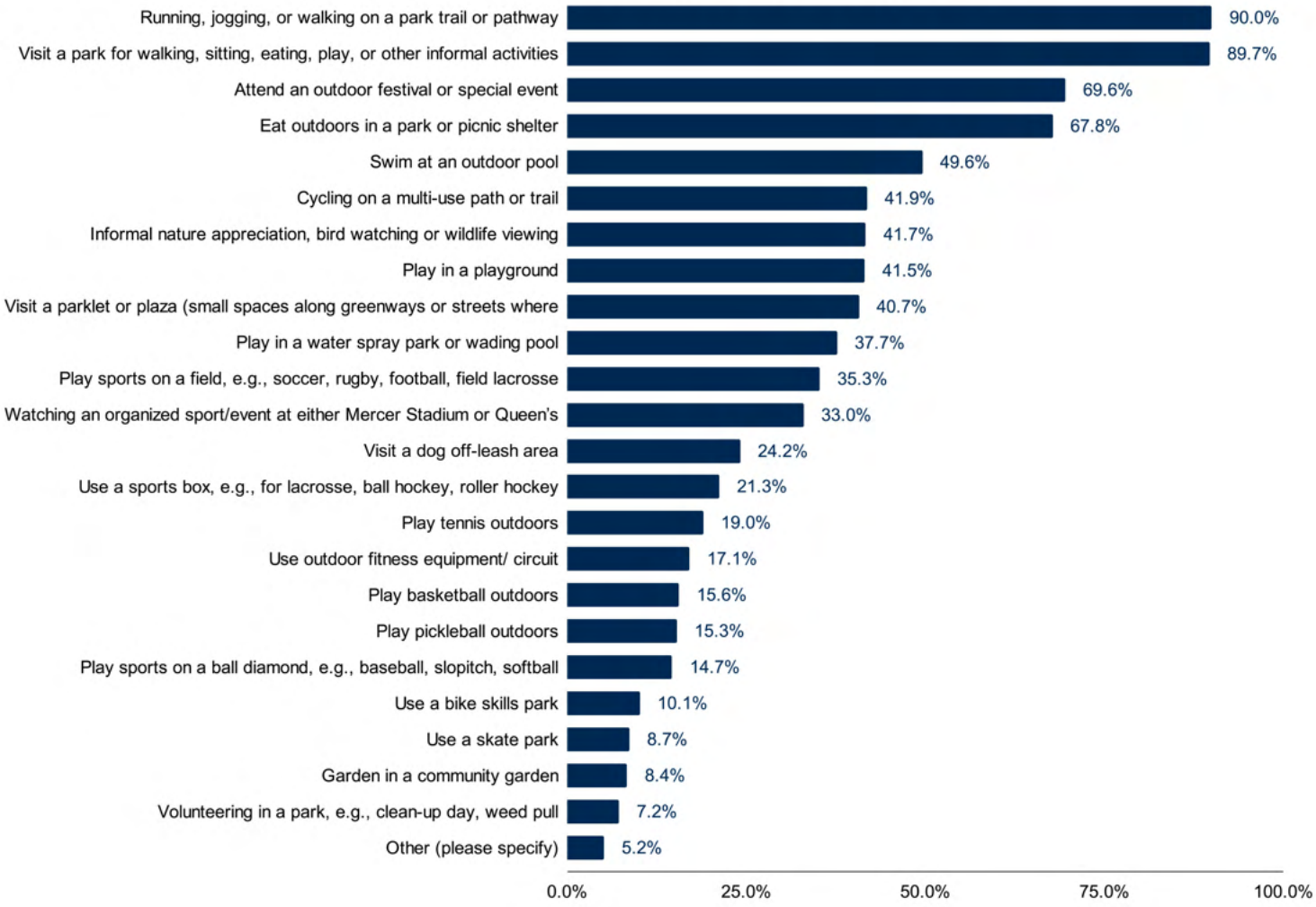
1. Participation in Outdoor Activities

To understand participation in parks and recreation activities, survey respondents were asked to select the activities in City-owned outdoors spaces that they participated in during a typical year. The complete survey can be found in Appendix A.

Top five outdoor activities survey respondents participate in:

1. **Running, jogging, or walking** on park trails or pathways
2. **Visiting parks**
3. Attending **outdoor festivals** or events
4. **Eating outdoors** in parks or picnic shelters
5. **Swimming** at outdoor pools

What are your outdoor activities in a City-owned outdoor space in New Westminster during a typical year, considering all seasons?



2. Satisfaction with outdoor recreation

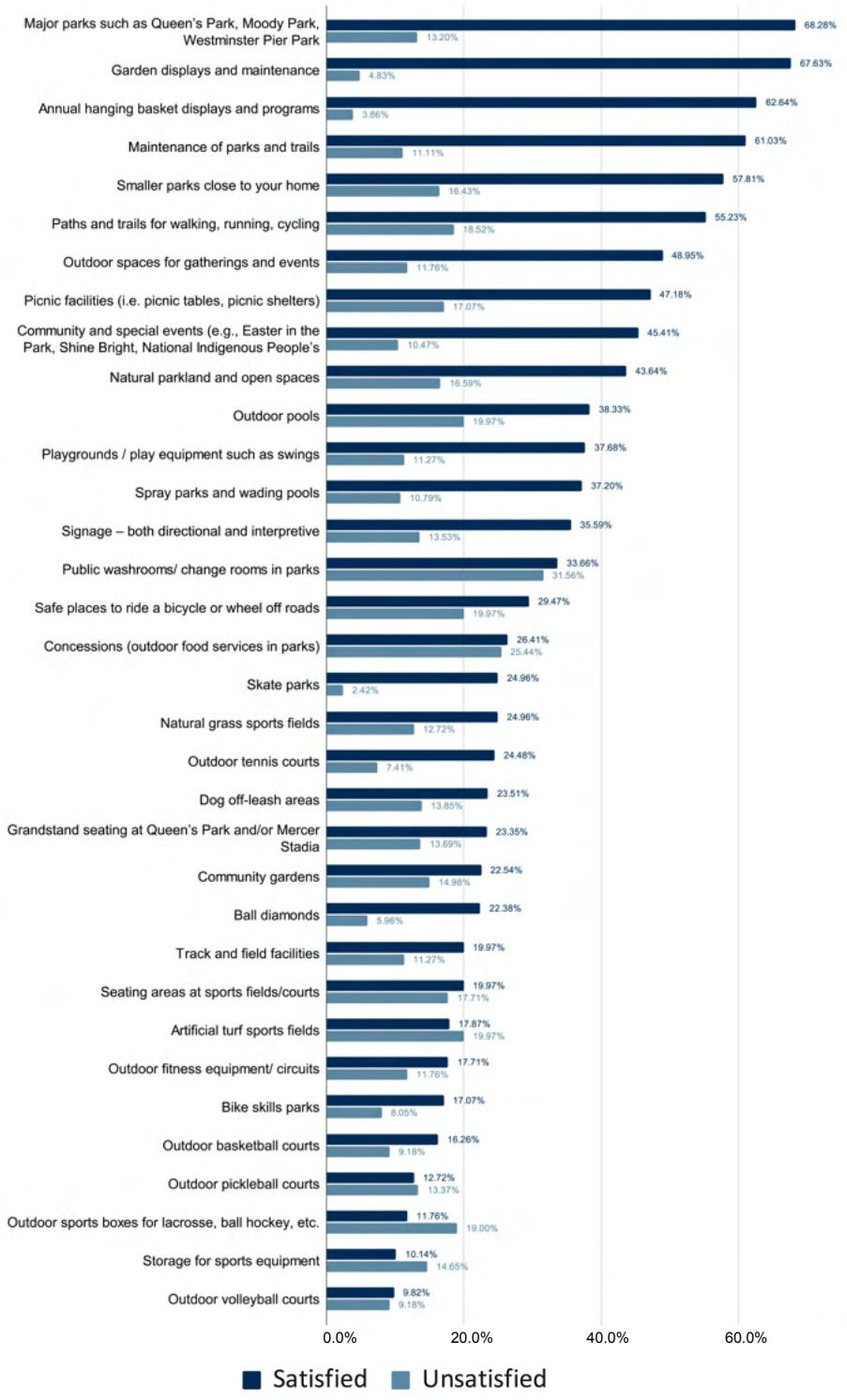
The charts focus on the “satisfied” and “unsatisfied” responses, as opposed to “neutral,” as these indicate areas where the City is doing well or needs to consider improvement.

Survey respondents indicated the greatest satisfaction with the following five outdoor park services, activities, paths, and amenities:

1. Major parks (e.g., Queen’s Park, Moody Park, and Westminster Pier Park)
2. Garden displays and maintenance
3. Annual hanging basket displays and programs
4. Maintenance of parks and trails
5. Smaller parks close to your home

A detailed overview of participant perceptions of these are listed on the right:

What is your level of satisfaction with the quantity and quality of the following park services, activities, paths, and amenities (features in a park) in the City of New Westminster?



Findings by neighbourhood

This section shows what people in certain neighbourhoods liked or disliked more than others. It highlights responses that were at least 15% higher or lower than the overall survey results, labeled as "higher satisfaction" or "higher dissatisfaction." The findings are listed by neighbourhood, and within each neighbourhood are numbered based on the biggest differences from the city average. If a neighbourhood's responses didn't differ by 15% or more, it's not included (higher satisfaction, higher dissatisfaction or both).

Downtown

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Picnic facilities
2. Smaller parks close to home
3. Spray parks and wading pools

Massey Victory Heights

Higher satisfaction:

1. Natural grass sports fields
2. Playgrounds / play equipment such as swings
3. Outdoor pools
4. Community and special events
5. Outdoor spaces for gatherings and events
6. Spray parks and wading pools
7. Smaller parks close to your home

Queen's Park

Higher satisfaction:

1. Smaller parks close to your home
2. Outdoor pools
3. Dog off-leash areas
4. Major parks, such as Queen's Park, Moody Park, Westminster Pier Park, Hume Park or Ryall Park
5. Skate parks

Glenbrooke North

Higher satisfaction:

1. Picnic facilities (e.g., picnic tables, picnic shelters)

Queensborough

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Annual hanging basket displays and programs
2. Outdoor pools
3. Major parks such as Queen's Park, Moody Park, Westminster Pier Park, Hume Park or Ryall Park
4. Paths and trails for walking, running, cycling
5. Signage – both directional and interpretive
6. Maintenance of parks and trails
7. Concessions (outdoor food services in parks)
8. Artificial turf sports fields

West End

Higher satisfaction:

1. Spray parks and wading pools
2. Outdoor pools

Victoria Hill Ginger Drive

Higher satisfaction:

1. Safe places to ride a bicycle or wheel off roads
2. Natural parkland and open spaces
3. Skate parks

Moody Park

Higher satisfaction:

1. Outdoor sports boxes for lacrosse, ball hockey, etc.

2. Outdoor tennis courts
3. Outdoor pickleball courts

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Natural parkland and open spaces
2. Picnic facilities
3. Spray parks and wading pools

Quayside

Higher satisfaction:

1. Annual hanging basket displays and programs

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Outdoor tennis courts
2. Ball diamonds

Satisfaction by select population groups

This section highlights what people who identified as a person of colour, part of a racialized group, LGBTQ2S+, or having a disability (or a household member with a disability) were 15% more or less satisfied with compared to all respondents.

Respondents who identify as a person of colour and/or part of a racialized group

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Outdoor pools
2. Track and field facilities
3. Spray parks and wading pools

Respondents who identify as LGBTQ2S+:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Community and special events (e.g., Easter in the Park, Shine Bright, National Indigenous People's Day)

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Public washrooms/ change rooms in parks
2. Community gardens
3. Concessions (outdoor food services in parks)
4. Dog off-leash areas

Respondents who have a disability or have a household member who does

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Concessions (outdoor food services in parks)
2. Picnic facilities (i.e. picnic tables, picnic shelters)

Open-ended responses

In the survey, all respondents were also given the option to elaborate on why they feel satisfied or dissatisfied with outdoor park services, activities, paths, and amenities. To be included, responses needed to be mentioned in at least one percent of the open answers. They are grouped under the following themes.

Maintenance and repairs:

- Condition of facilities such as stands, seating, trails, and playing surfaces
- Quality maintained and walking and biking paths
- Better maintenance, repairs, upgrades across parks and sports venues, with specific parks such as Ryall Park mentioned
- Quality of stands, poor field conditions, unsafe seating, inadequate and unsheltered spectator facilities, and unusable lacrosse boxes
- Improvements in noise management and cleanliness

Accessibility, equity, mobility, and safety:

- Improved accessibility features for people with disabilities, including better trails, paths, sidewalks, and facilities
- Bike lane safety, maintenance of biking trails, and the need for more garbage cans along bike routes
- Quality of mixed-use pathways and signage to ensure safety for both pedestrians and cyclists
- Enhancements like better parking facilities, improved signage, and operational hours
- Lack of accessible washrooms, seating, sports fields, trails, and viewing areas at sports venues, particularly for individuals with mobility challenges
- Safety related to park cleanliness, removal of trash, and management of undesirable behaviour
- Disparities in park amenities across different neighbourhoods, especially facilities and spaces in Queensborough
- Not enough seating

Recreation and sports facilities:

- More park spaces and sports fields, especially artificial turf fields, to meet the needs of the growing population
- Better facilities for youth sports
- Dedicated pickleball courts and improvements in existing facilities like tennis courts
- Additional recreational options such as swimming pools, community gardens, and adventure playgrounds

Community engagement and communication:

- Not enough community events and more transparent event scheduling
- Increased engagement in decision-making processes regarding park improvements and programming
- Better promotion of existing amenities and better communication regarding park and facility updates

Environmental concerns and aesthetic improvements:

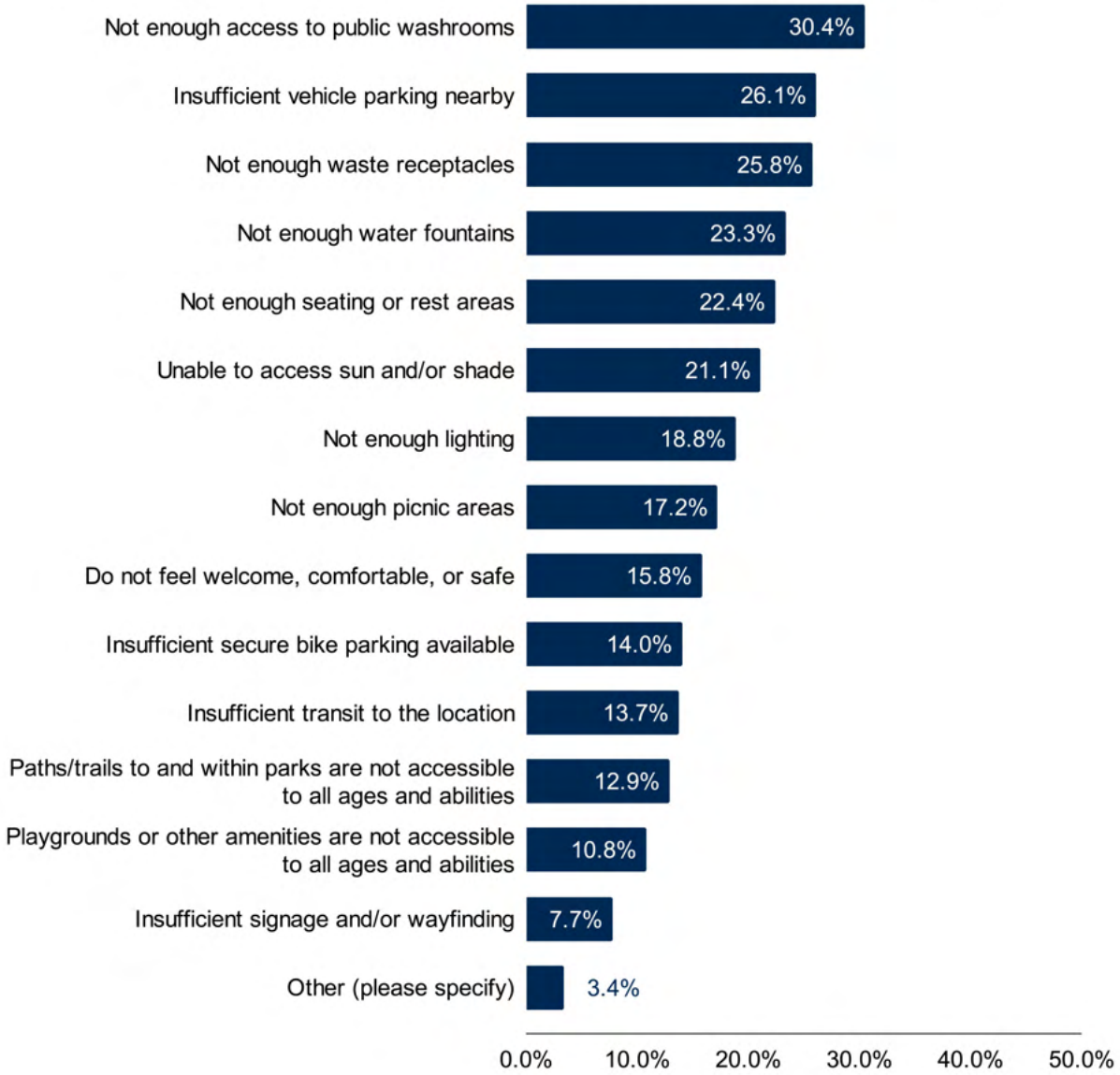
- Not enough native plant restoration, more trees, and reducing artificial turf
- Enhance overall park aesthetics and functionality, including more shaded areas and better picnic facilities

3. Outdoor recreation accessibility and barriers

The survey asked respondents about accessibility and barriers related to outdoor recreation in New Westminster. The most frequent responses were:

1. Public washroom access
2. Parking access
3. Waste receptacle equipment
4. Water fountain access
5. Seating or rest area access

Have you experienced any barriers to accessing a park, trail, or park amenity in New Westminster?



Open-ended responses

Survey respondents also had the option to share additional input in open-ended answers. The following themes and feedback emerged:

Safety concerns and social

- Safety due to drug use, litter, loitering, and insufficient lighting in parks, specifically mentioning areas like Pier Park, Hyack Square, and Moody Park
- Impact of people experiencing homelessness on park usability, comfort, and safety
- Greater policing and interventions to address safety issues, emphasizing the need for increased patrols and surveillance in problematic areas

Accessibility challenges

- Lack of amenities such as seating, washrooms, and drinking water in parks
- Accessibility challenges for seniors, individuals with disabilities, and families with young children, including issues with pathways and wheelchair accessibility
- Insufficient parking near parks and sports venues, impacting ease of access for visitors
- Quality of pathways, uneven and inadequate wheelchair accessibility, affecting mobility within parks
- More inclusive park design and more playgrounds with features catering to diverse community needs
- Better community integration through improved park access and facilities

Transportation and connectivity

- Challenges accessing parks via public transit, particularly in areas like Queensborough and Uptown
- Unsafe or poorly connected biking paths, hindering accessibility to parks
- Traffic congestion making it difficult to access certain park areas by car, affecting overall accessibility
- Challenges related to transportation accessibility, including bike lanes, pedestrian signals, and the need for more EV charging stations

Amenities and facilities maintenance

- Quality and maintenance of park facilities, including broken water fountains, inadequate lighting, and litter
- Improved amenities, such as seating, covered areas, and updated playground equipment in parks
- Need for more accessible and well-maintained public washrooms in parks, with calls for extended hours of operation to accommodate peak times

Environmental concerns

- Lack of shade in parks, especially playgrounds, during hot weather, impacting visitor comfort
- More green spaces and flat picnic areas suitable for various activities
- Littering and inadequate garbage management in parks, impacting cleanliness and community enjoyment

Recreation and park equipment

- More diverse playground equipment, especially catering to children with physical disabilities
- Requests for improved facilities such as covered seating areas, better lighting for evening sports, and more accessible soccer fields
- Desires for more picnic tables, water fountains, and bike racks across parks to enhance visitor experience

3.5.2 Indoor recreation

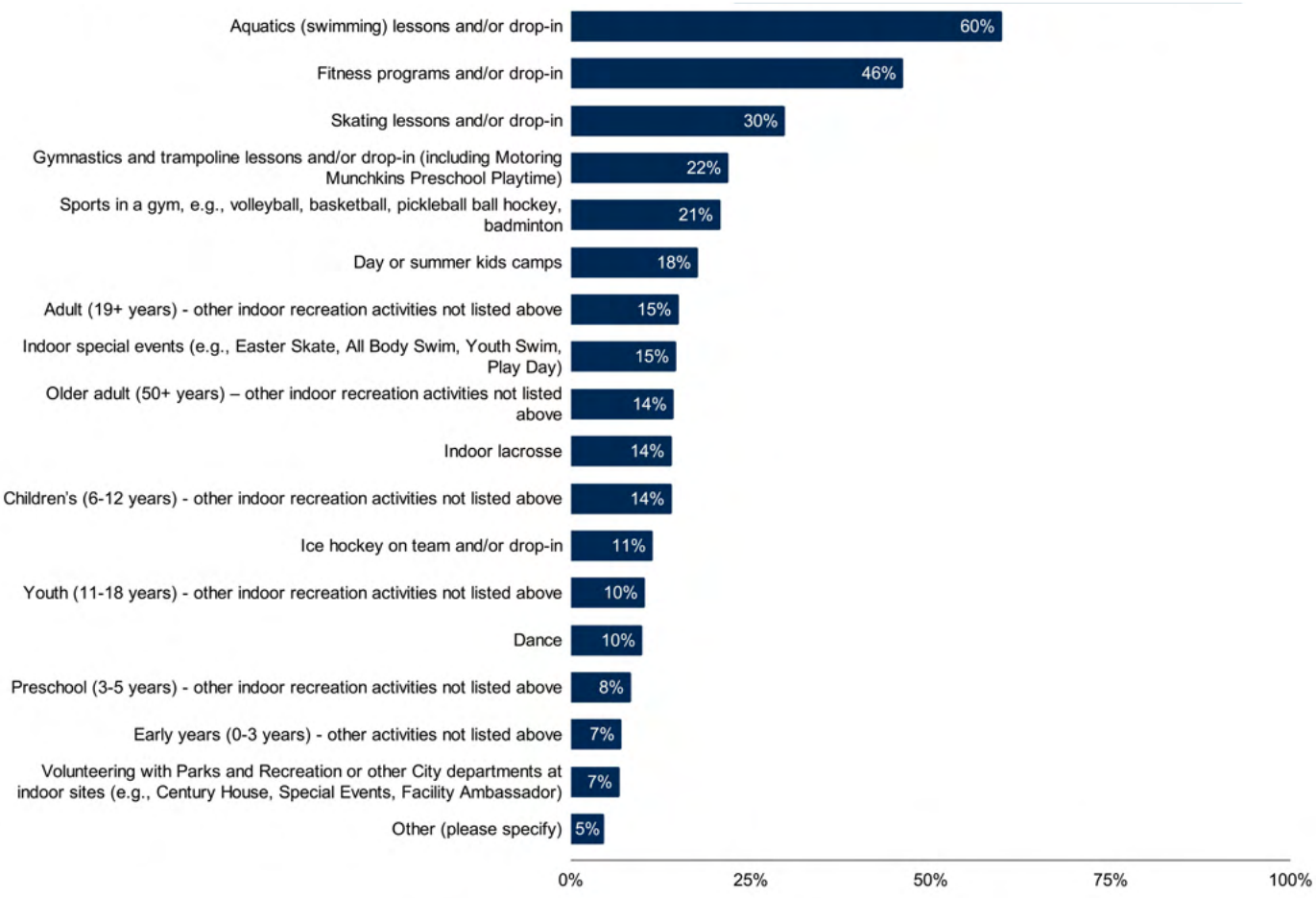
4. Participation in indoor recreation

Survey respondents were asked to share how they use the City's indoor recreation programs, services, and facilities.

The top five programs that survey respondents participate in in New Westminster are:

1. Aquatics (swimming) lessons and/or drop-in sessions
2. Fitness programs and/or drop-in sessions
3. Skating lessons and/or drop-in sessions
4. Gymnastics and trampoline lessons and/or drop-in sessions
5. Gym sports

What are your indoor recreation activities in New Westminster during a typical year, in public (City-owned) facilities/spaces?



5. Satisfaction with indoor recreation

The charts focus on the “satisfied” and “unsatisfied” responses as areas where the City is doing well or needs to consider improvement.

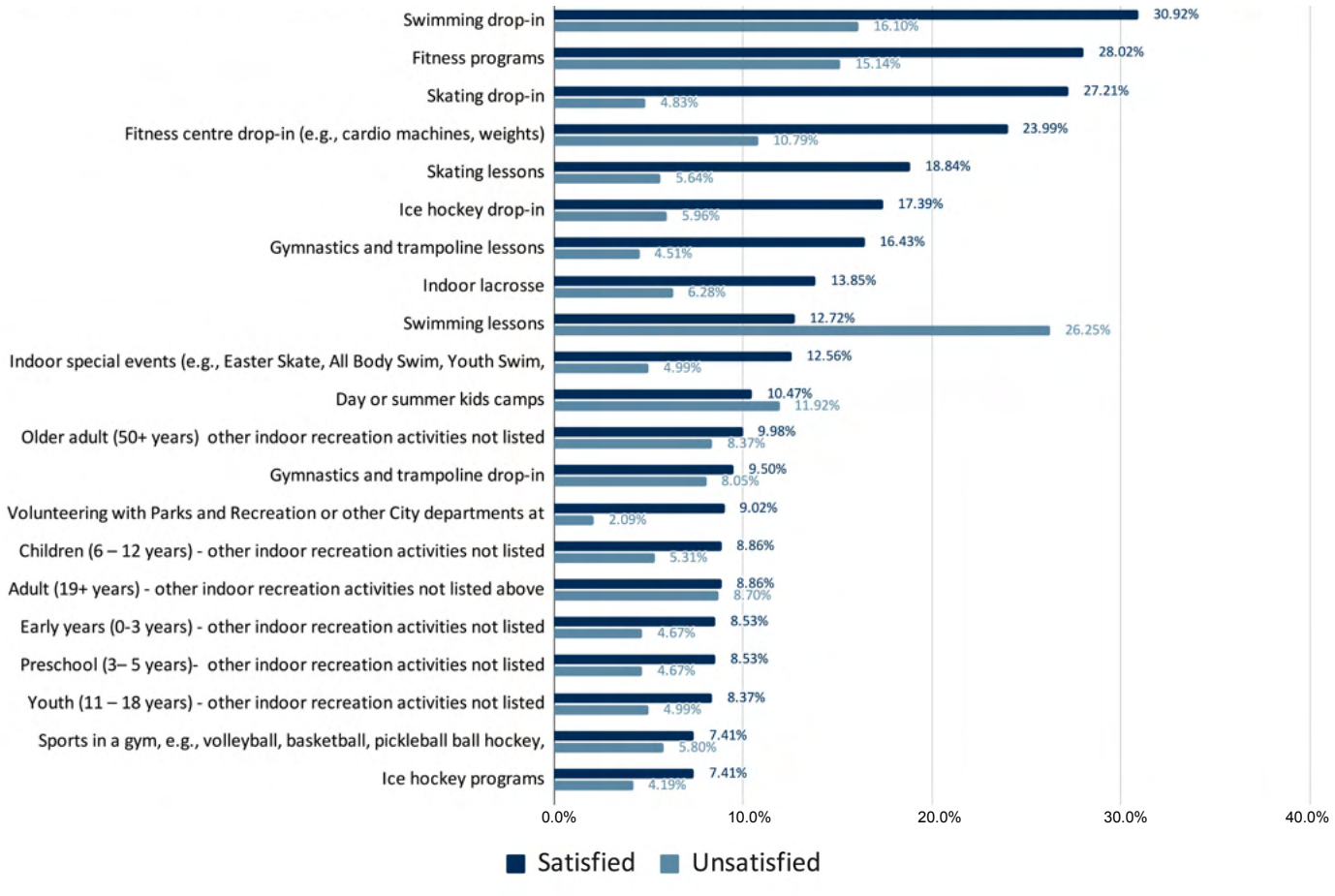
Survey respondents indicated the greatest satisfaction with the following five recreation programs, services, and facilities:

1. Swimming drop-in
2. Fitness programs
3. Skating drop-in
4. Fitness centre drop-in
5. Skating lessons

Survey respondents indicated the greatest dissatisfaction with the following five recreation programs, services, and facilities:

1. Swimming lessons
2. Swimming drop-in
3. Fitness programs
4. Day or summer kids camps
5. Fitness centre drop-in (e.g., cardio machines, weights)

What is your level of satisfaction with the quantity and quality of the following programs, services, and facilities offered by the City of New Westminster?



Of indoor offerings, people were most dissatisfied with swimming lessons. Given high participation in aquatic activities among survey respondents, this dissatisfaction may be due to the reduced availability of aquatic offerings during the survey period (when the Canada Games Pool was closed and before the təməsewtxʷ facility opened). Fitness programs were also operating in ad hoc facilities during this time.

Satisfaction by age

This section shows what people in different age groups liked or disliked more than others. It focuses on responses that were at least 15% higher or lower than the overall survey results. The findings by age group are ranked based on the biggest differences. If an age group's responses didn't differ by 15% or more, they're not included.

The age groups are:

- 15 to 34 years of age
- 35 to 44 years of age
- 45 to 54 years of
- 65 or older

35 to 44 years of age:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline lessons
2. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in
3. Day or summer kids camps

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Swimming lesson

45 to 54 years of age:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Skating drop-in
2. Ice hockey programs

55 to 64 years of age:

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Older adult (50+ years) other indoor recreation activities not listed above
2. Sports in a gym, e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton

65 years of age and older:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Older adult (50+ years) indoor recreation activities not listed above

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Older adult (50+ years) indoor recreation activities not listed above

Satisfaction by neighbourhood

This section shows what people in a neighbourhood liked or disliked more than others. It highlights responses that were at least 15% higher or lower than the city average. The findings by neighbourhood are ranked by how much they differed, and neighbourhoods with less than a 15% difference aren't included.

Downtown

Higher satisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in

Sapperton

Higher satisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in

Massey Victory Heights

Higher satisfaction:

1. Swimming drop-in
2. Day or summer kids camps
3. Skating drop-in
4. Skating lessons
5. Ice hockey programs
6. Indoor special events (e.g., Easter Skate, All Body Swim, Youth Swim, Play Day)
7. Youth (11 – 18 years) - other indoor recreation activities not listed above

8. Sports in a gym, e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Indoor lacrosse

Queen's Park:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Day or summer kids camps
2. Ice hockey programs
3. Skating lessons
4. Gymnastics and trampoline lessons
5. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in

Glenbrooke North:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in
2. Skating lessons

High dissatisfaction:

1. Swimming lessons
2. Indoor lacrosse
3. Sports in a gym (e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton)

Brow of the Hill:

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Adult (19+ years)
2. Early years (0-3 years)

Queensborough:

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Swimming drop-in
2. Swimming lessons

West End:

Higher satisfaction

1. Fitness centre drop-in (e.g., cardio machines, weights)
2. Youth (11 – 18 years) - other indoor recreation activities not listed above

Victoria Hill Ginger Drive:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Skating drop-in
2. Sports in a gym (e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton)
3. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Sports in a gym (e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton)

Moody Park:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Older adult (50+ years) other indoor recreation activities not listed above
2. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in
3. Volunteering with Parks and Recreation or other City departments at indoor facilities

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Children (6 – 12 years) - other indoor recreation activities not listed above

Satisfaction by select population groups

The following section identifies any features that respondents who identified as a person of colour and/or part of a racialized group, LGBTQ2S+, and/or having a disability or a member of their household having one reported being more or less satisfied with on average compared to all respondents.

Respondents who identify as persons of colour and/or are part of a racialized group:

Higher satisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Gymnastics and trampoline drop-in
2. Indoor special events (e.g., Easter Skate, All Body Swim, Youth Swim, Play Day)
3. Sports in a gym, e.g., volleyball, basketball, pickleball ball hockey, badminton

Respondents who have a disability or have someone in their household with a disability:

Higher dissatisfaction:

1. Older adult (50+ years) other indoor recreation activities not listed above
2. Skating lessons

Open-ended responses

In the survey, all respondents were also given the option to elaborate on why they feel satisfied or dissatisfied with indoor park services, activities, paths, and amenities. They are grouped under the following themes:

Facilities improvements and upgrades:

- Additional ice hockey rinks, indoor pools, ball hockey/lacrosse facilities, and all-weather tracks to accommodate growing demand
- The modernization of fitness equipment and facilities to enhance user experience and safety
- Quality of infrastructure, such as facilities and transportation access to recreation centres
- Upgrades to existing facilities, such as Century House

Program variety and quality

- Expanded and improved programs across all age groups, including camps, classes, and activities that are high-quality and accessible
- Securing spots for certain programming and lessons, especially swimming lessons, due to competitive registration processes
- Better scheduling and communication regarding pool closures and program availability
- Improve the quality, availability, and age appropriateness of indoor recreation programs for children, adults, and seniors

Accessibility and equity

- Better accessibility of indoor recreation facilities, particularly related to transportation and proximity to public transit
- More inclusive programming and facilities catering to diverse age groups and abilities
- More facilities and programs that support intergenerational activities and foster community bonding

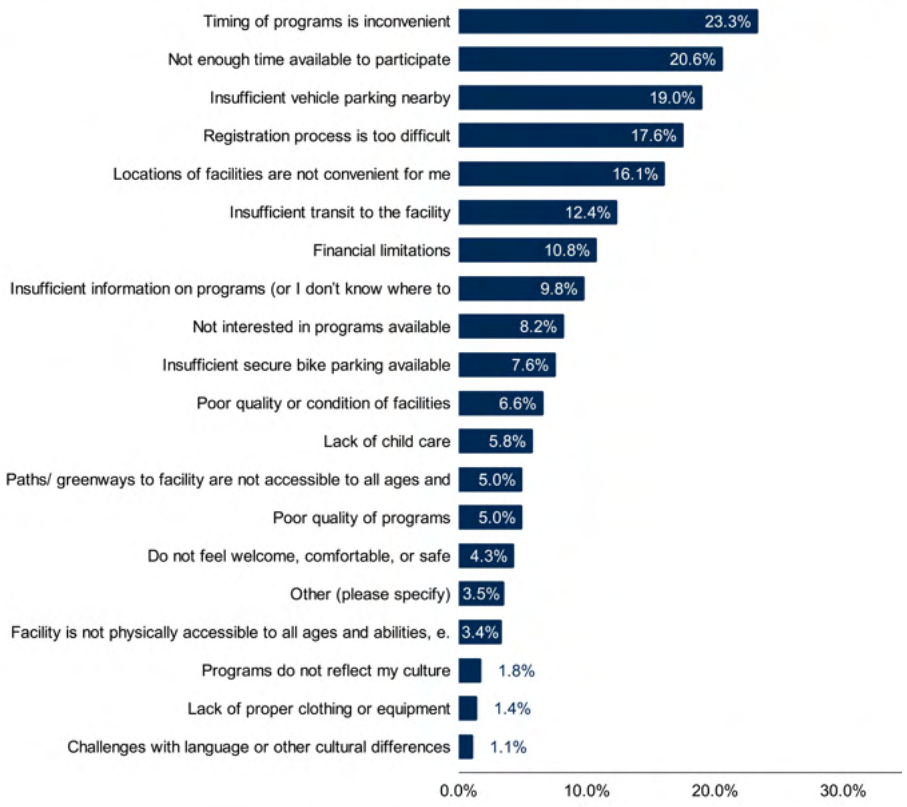
- Challenges with affordability of drop-in programs, which are perceived as expensive and not feasible for those on limited budgets
- Accessibility issues related to inconvenient scheduling of activities and inadequate public transportation
- Quality of administrative processes, including usability of surveys, registration systems, and communication strategies
- Better quality of COVID-19 safety protocols in indoor spaces and desire for clear protocols and measures to ensure safety for all patrons, particularly seniors and vulnerable populations

6. Indoor recreation accessibility and barriers

Survey respondents reported various barriers to accessing indoor recreation in New Westminster. The five most commonly reported barriers were:

1. Timing of programs is inconvenient
2. Not enough time available to participate
3. Insufficient vehicle parking nearby (noting that only 50% of parking at təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre during the survey period)
4. Registration process is too difficult
5. Location of facilities are not convenient

Have you experienced any barriers to participating in a program or drop-in at an indoor recreation facility in New Westminster?



Open-ended responses

Survey respondents were invited to share additional input on barriers to indoor recreational activities and spaces in open-ended responses. This input is grouped into the following themes.

Accessibility and equity challenges

- Quality of access to facilities due to traffic congestion during rush hour, as well as infrequent transit to facilities from Downtown
- Lack of parking availability near community centres, especially impacting areas like Queensborough
- Providing subsidy programs to support low-income residents and individuals receiving disability pensions

Program availability and registration challenges

- High demand and limited spots in programs, particularly for swimming lessons and fitness classes
- More inclusive programming catering to diverse age groups and schedules, including seniors and working adults
- Quality of registration process, including programs filling up quickly and issues with fairness
- Lack of program offerings during evenings, weekends, and after work hours

Communication and user experience

- Better online registration systems, including navigation difficulties and lengthy processes. Clearer communication about program details, schedules, and facility updates through accessible formats
- Improved transparency and better feedback mechanisms in decision-making processes

Maintenance and cleanliness issues

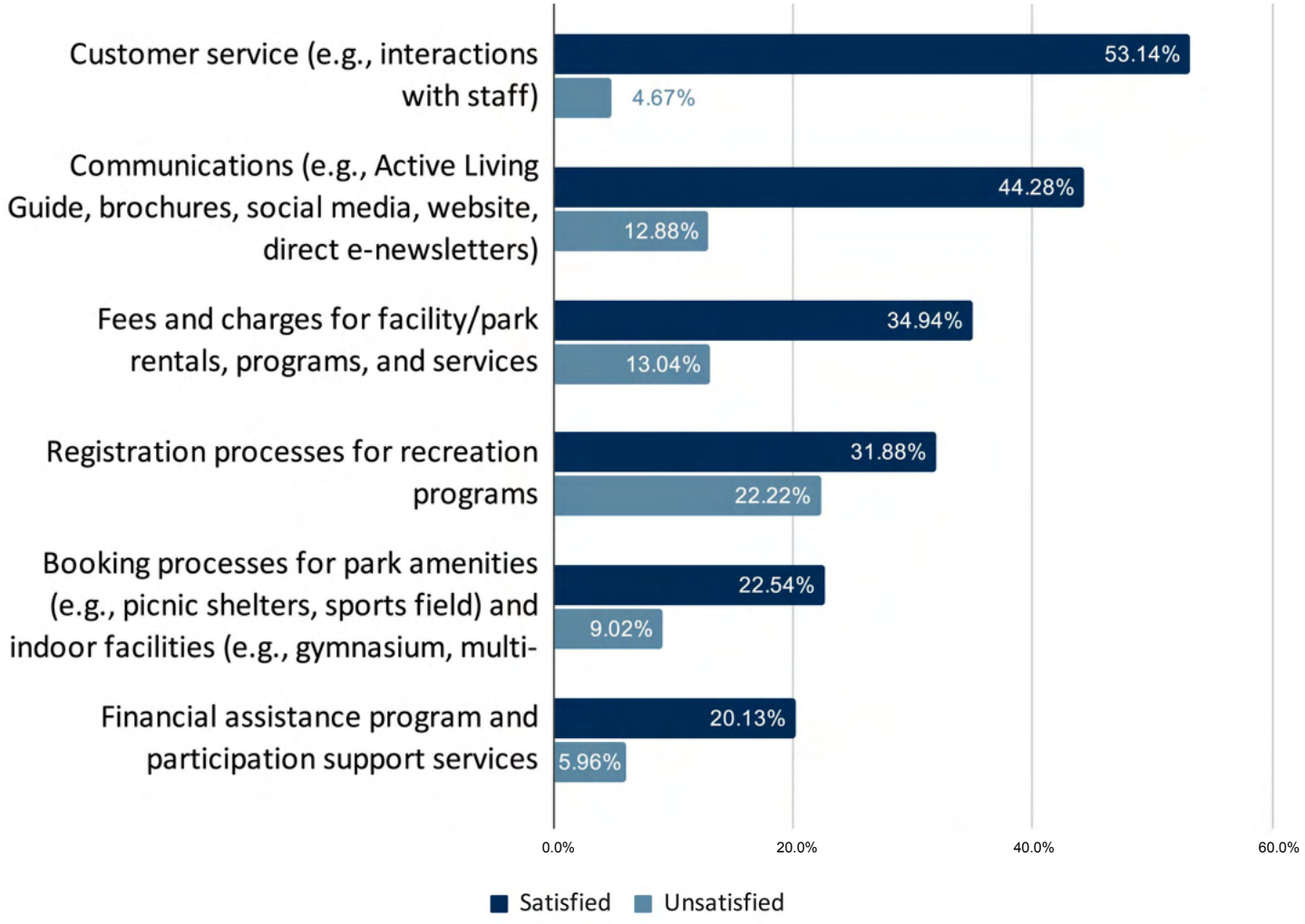
- Issues with infrastructure maintenance, cleanliness, and safety hazards, such as raised sidewalks
- Improving signage and facility maintenance
- Enhancements in customer service and communication to improve overall service quality

3.5.3 Administration services

7. Satisfaction with administration services

Survey respondents were asked about their satisfaction with the administration services provided by the City of New Westminster's Parks and Recreation Services. The majority of survey respondents (53%) indicated that they are satisfied with customer service provided by administrative staff and volunteers. Around one third each are satisfied with fees and charges (35%) and registration processes (32%). A smaller proportion of respondents reported satisfaction with booking processes (23%) and the financial assistance program and participation support services (20%).

What is your level of satisfaction with the following aspects of administering park and recreation services?



Open-ended responses

Survey respondents were invited to elaborate on satisfaction with administrative services in open-ended responses. The input has been grouped into the following themes.

Customer service

- Positive feedback on frontline staff interactions, but issues with overall customer service consistency
- Positive feedback on staff friendliness and support
- Improved training on systems, programs, and customer service policies

Communications

- Clearer communication about program details, schedules, and facility updates
- Improvements in website design and functionality to enhance user experience

Fees and charges for facility/park rentals, programs, and services

- Fees for programs, drop-ins, and annual passes are noted to be higher in New Westminster than in neighbouring municipalities
- Booking fees for picnic shelters are perceived as too expensive

Registration processes for recreation programs

- Better registration process, due to high demand and limited spaces
- Programs and summer lessons sell out quickly, leaving many families unable to participate
- Quality of online registration system glitches, crashes, and inability to register for multiple programs at once
- Better communications, earlier release of summer camp information to improve access

Booking processes for park amenities

- Quality of online booking system's usability and navigation challenges

Financial assistance program and participation support services

- More affordable pricing options, especially for low-income families, newcomers, and seniors

3.5.4 Planning for the future

In open-ended answers, survey respondents shared their desires for future indoor and outdoor recreation programs, services, events or facilities over the next 10 years. Participants were also asked to identify specific locations, when applicable.

8. Outdoor recreation and park improvements, services or facilities

People shared the following ideas for improving and adding outdoor programs, services, events, and facilities (listed by how often they were mentioned):

- **New, varied, or updated sports facilities:** facilities for lacrosse, pickleball, track and field, basketball, baseball, tennis, volleyball, and fitness stations at parks.
- **Green spaces and non-sports park space:** More open green spaces for flexible use, natural areas with shade, and playground improvements.

- **Community and gathering spaces:** More spaces to gather, with opportunities for picnics, food vendors, arts and entertainment, and community gardens.
- **All-weather and covered facilities:** Covered outdoor facilities, open spaces, and gathering spaces that offer weather protection.
- **Accessibility:** Parks should be accessible and inclusive, with public washrooms and lighting.
- **Turf fields:** Expanded and improved fields, including more artificial turf.
- **Connectivity:** More walking paths and trails, transit, and free parking to improve access to recreation (and in particular to Sapperton).
- **Pools:** More and improved outdoor pool facilities.
- **Bike infrastructure:** Improved cycling safety and bike racks. One response mentioned a bike skills park.
- **Dog facilities:** More and improved dog-friendly and off-leash spaces.
- **Maintenance and upgrades:** Outdoor facilities require maintenance, upgrades, and expansion to meet community needs.
- **Smoke and drug free spaces:** Need for smoke- and drug-free outdoor spaces that support for safety and comfort.

8. Indoor recreation programs, services, events, or facilities

Respondents shared the following desires for future improvements and additions to indoor programs, services, events, and facilities (listed in order of prevalence):

- **Sports programs and facilities:** Facilities for pickleball, lacrosse, gymnastics, squash, and generally more indoor sports spaces for adult recreation.
- **Swimming facilities and programs:** More aquatic facilities, lessons, and programs, particularly in Queensborough where there is no pool.
- **Fitness classes and programs:** More fitness classes, senior programs, yoga, and pilates.
- **Recreation and community centres:** More and improved community centres (specifically downtown and at Sapperton), as well as another arena.
- **Accessible schedules and programs:** Low-barrier and low-cost improvements to schedules and programs, including drop-in, weekend, evening, low-cost, and inclusive fitness opportunities.
- **Ice and hockey facilities:** Additional ice time and surfaces, hockey facilities, and skating lessons.
- **Cultural programs and gathering spaces:** Access to shared spaces (rentals, makerspace, and general gathering spaces) as well as arts and culture programs.
- **Youth and toddler programs:** More family-friendly and age-specific programming, including for youth, toddlers, and babies.
- **Maintenance and upgrades:** Indoor facilities require maintenance, upgrades, and expansion to meet community needs.

4. Who we heard from

We heard from a diverse range of New Westminster residents on the City's current parks and recreation spaces and programs through the online survey, workshops, soup and bannock sessions, youth drop-ins, and pop-ups.

4.1 Outreach highlights

The Be Heard New West project page saw 3,719 visits, leading to 154 new registrations on the platform. During the engagement period, the City of New Westminster's Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram accounts put out posts that led to nearly 30,000 impressions. The public survey was completed by 612 respondents. In-person engagement at the eight pop-up open houses saw the engagement team share the project with over 1232 people. The seven workshop sessions had 66 people in attendance, while the two Soup and Bannock engagement sessions for Indigenous persons had 10 people in attendance.

4.2 Indigenous Engagement

The team hosted two Soup and Bannock Sessions at the Douglas College, Indigenous Gathering Space. A total of 10 Indigenous participants took part in the sessions.

4.3 Youth drop-ins

City staff conducted drop-in engagement activities at six New Westminster Youth drop-in locations. A total of 376 participants between the ages of 11 and 18 were engaged at the following venues:

- New West Youth Centre - 146 participants
- Fraser River Middle School - 83 participants
- Glenbrooke Middle School - 34 participants
- Queensborough Middle School - 50 participants
- Queensborough Community Centre - 10 participants
- təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre - 53 participants

4.4 Workshops

Seven workshops took place as part of Round 1 engagement for this project. Six took place digitally, while the seventh took place in-person. Each session had a specific theme or audience:

- Outdoor Sports Group Workshop (online) - 9 participants
- Social, Cultural, and Service External Advisory Group Workshop (online) - 3 participants
- Indoor Sports External Workshop (online) - 3 participants.
- Business Associations and Community Organizations Group Workshop (online) - 5 participants
- Public Open Workshop (online) - 7 participants

4.5 Pop-ups

Pop-up open houses were conducted at or beside major parks and recreation sites across New Westminster. The eight pop-up locations were selected to support equitable and inclusive participation throughout the city by choosing well-trafficked locations.

At the pop-ups, free healthy snacks and water were offered - a small contribution to addressing food insecurity - and games were offered to attract families. The pop-ups saw a high participation rate among families and people with diverse backgrounds. The pop-ups were intended to meet people in the places where they already spend time, raising awareness about the project and providing opportunities for a wide range of people to give input.

922 participants

6 outdoor pop-ups

315 participants

2 indoor pop-ups

Total engaged
1,237 attendees



Location: **Riverwalk Boardwalk**
Number of pop-up participants: **53**
Date and time: Saturday, April 27, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
Weather: **Cool and raining**



Location: **təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre**
Number of pop-up participants: **268**
Date and time: Monday, April 29, 3:00-7:00 p.m, during the opening of the Community Centre
Weather: **Indoors**



Location: **Moody Park**
Number of pop-up participants: **218**
Date and time: Saturday, May 4, 2024, 11:00 a.m-4:00 p.m.
Weather: **Warm and lightly overcast**



Location: **Ryall Park & Queensborough Community Centre**
Number of pop-up participants: **153**
Date and time: Thursday, May 9, 2024, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Weather: **Warm and sunny**



Location: **Sapperton Plaza**
Number of pop-up participants: **141**
Date and time: Saturday, May 11, 2024, 12:00-3:00 p.m.
Weather: **Warm and sunny**



Location: **Simcoe Park & Fraser Middle School**
Number of pop-up participants: **252**
Date and time: Wednesday, May 15, 2024, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Weather: **Warm and sunny**



Location: **Century House**
Number of pop-up participants: **47**
Date and time: Wednesday, June 5, 2024, 10:00 a.m-1:00 p.m.
Weather: **Indoors**



Location: **New West Farmers Market** (Tipperary Park)
Number of pop-up participants: **105**
Date and time: Thursday, June 6, 2024 1:00- 4:00 p.m.
Weather: **Warm and sunny.**

4.6 Online Survey demographics

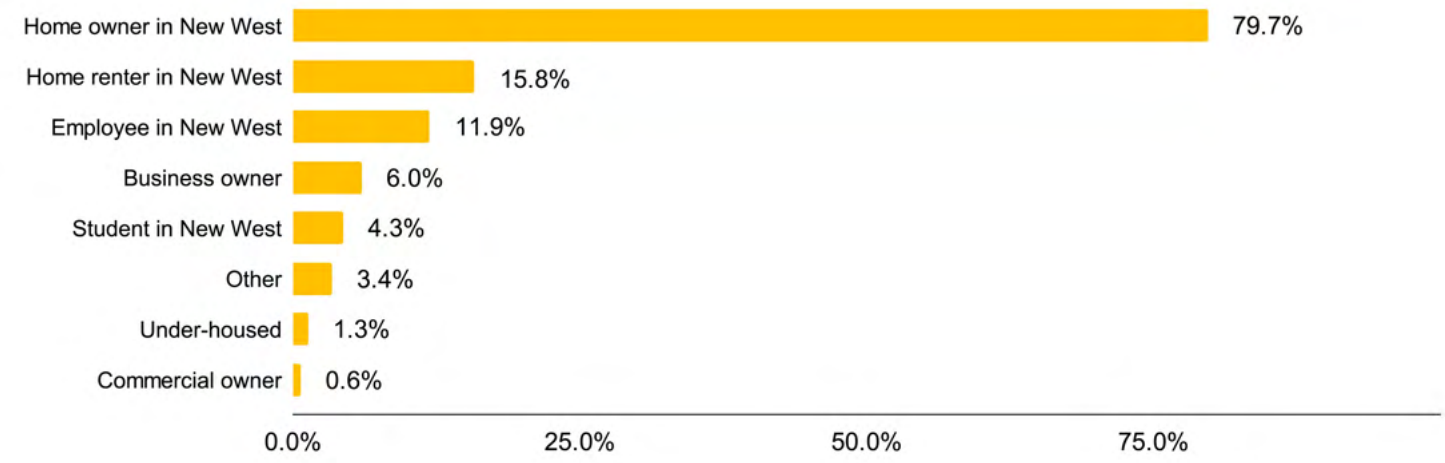
The public survey was completed by 612 respondents. Most respondents indicated that they own a home in New Westminster, have children in their household, are between 35 to 54 years of age, and either live in Downtown, Glenbrooke North, or Queensborough.

Connections to New Westminster

The majority of survey respondents indicated that they are residents of New Westminster, with 80% of being home owners and 16% renters. In contrast, according to 2021 Canadian Census data, 55% of households in New Westminster live in a home they or a member of their family own, while 45% live in a rented home.

About 12% of survey respondents indicated that they work in New Westminster, and around 6% are business or commercial owners in the city. The survey reached a small percentage of students and people that are under-housed or unhoused.

Connections to New Westminster

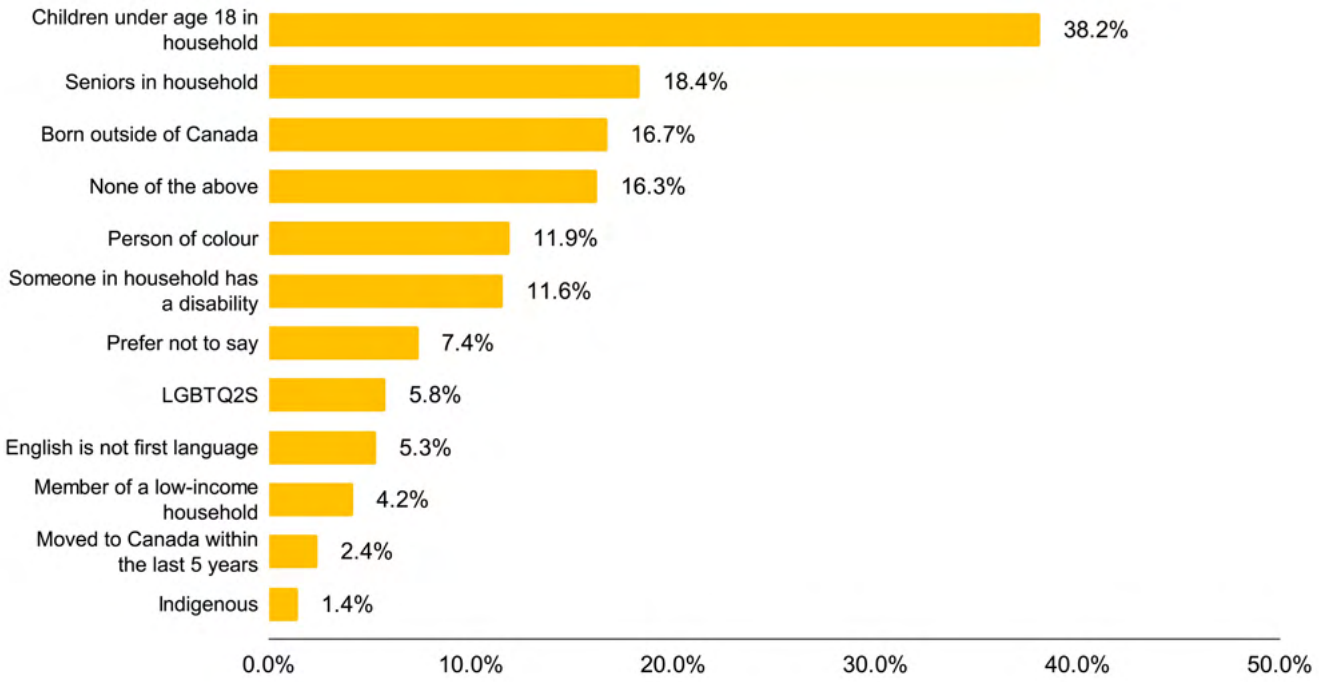


Identity

The survey asked additional questions about respondents' households and demographics. Nearly four in 10 indicated they have children in their households (38%), while close to two in 10 have seniors in their households (18%). Those in households that have a person with a disability account for about 12% of the total respondents.

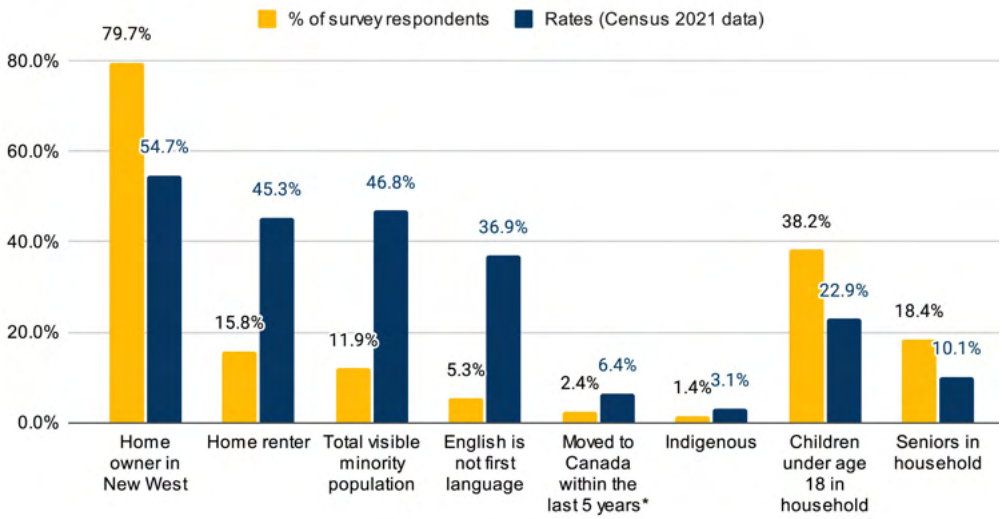
A portion of respondents identified as being born outside of Canada (17%). About 12% of respondents identified as a person of colour, and 5% indicated that English is not their first language. Only 1% of survey respondents self-identified as Indigenous, while a small but notable minority of respondents identified themselves as LGBTQ2S+ (6%).

Self-reported demographic information from survey participants



Census 2021 rates and survey respondent percentages

Where the data was available, the demographics of survey respondents was compared with 2021 Canadian Census data. The comparison is detailed in the chart right.



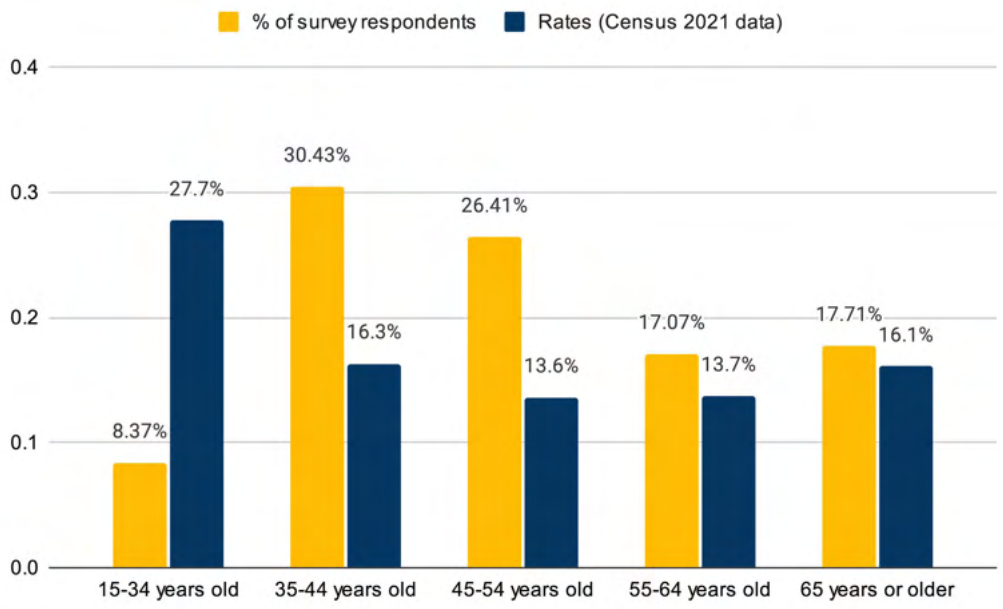
Age range

In terms of age, over half of the survey respondents (56%) reported that they are between 35 and 54 years old. About a third (35%) indicated that they are older than 55, while only about 8% are under 34.

A small number of survey respondents identified their age as between 15 and 24 years of age, as well as those 75 years or older. For analysis purposes, the responses of those between 15 and 24 years of age were combined with the 25 to 34 age group. The responses of those who reported being 75 years or older were combined with those who reported being 65 or older.

Census 2021 rates and survey respondent percentages

Where the data was available, the demographics of survey respondents was compared with 2021 Canadian Census data. The comparison is detailed in the chart right.

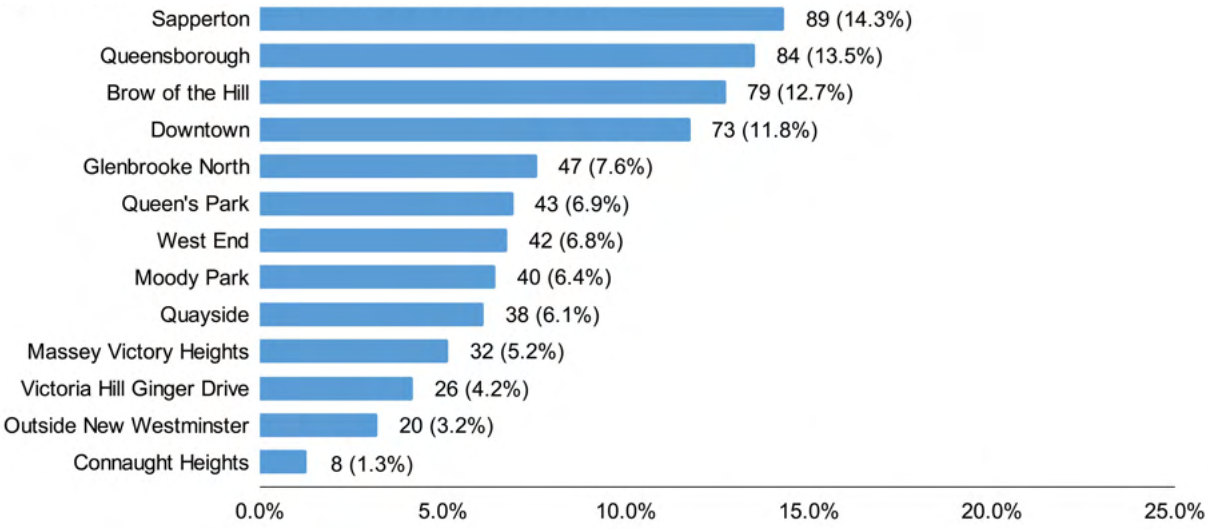


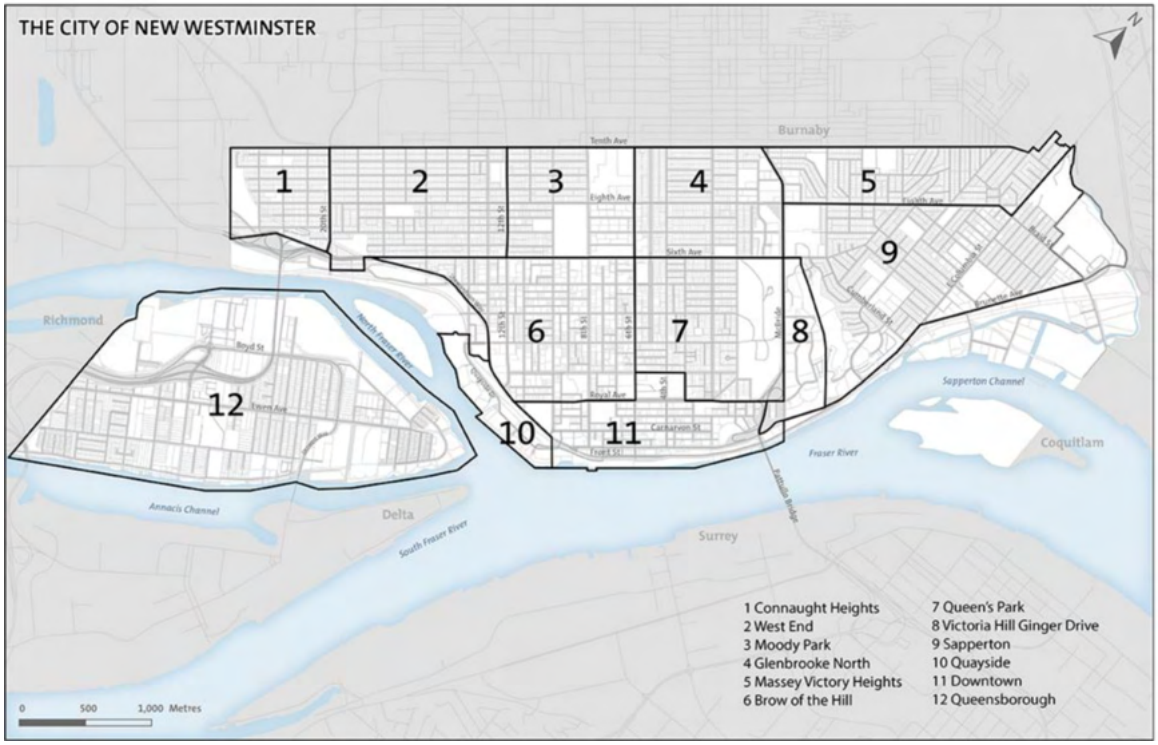
Neighbourhood

Sapperton and Queensborough had the highest response rates, each representing 14% of all survey respondents. Brow of the Hill and Downtown also had significant representation among survey respondents.

Neighbourhoods including Queen's Park, Massey Victory Heights, the West End, Moody Park, Quayside, and Victoria Hill Ginger Drive had lower representation, with these neighbourhoods accounting for 4% to 7% of survey respondents each. Connaught Heights had the fewest respondents, with just eight respondents (1%). Another 3% of respondents reported home addresses outside of New Westminster.

Survey respondents by neighbourhood





Happy Cities

NEW WESTMINSTER

URBAN SYSTEMS



Parks and Recreation Plan Update

People, Parks, and Play: Connections for All

What we heard report

Round 2

April 2025

Prepared by Happy Cities for the City of New Westminster

Happy Cities

NEW WESTMINSTER

URBAN SYSTEMS

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People, parks, and play!

Parks and Recreation Plan Update
What we heard summary
Engagement round 2, March 2025



Project overview

The City of New Westminster is updating its Parks and Recreation Plan! The renewed Plan is named *People, Parks, and Play: Connections for All*, highlighting the essential role that parks and recreation play in building connected, healthy, resilient communities. To guide development of the Plan, the City conducted two comprehensive engagement phases. Round 1 was held in Spring of 2024 and round 2 in Spring of 2025. Round 2 builds on findings from round 1. The primary objective of round 2 engagement is to communicate the initial findings from round 1 engagement and further refine the community's direction for the Parks and Recreation Plan. In each round of engagement, the City prioritizes gathering input from vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved groups.

Timeline

Spring 2024
Engagement round 1

Fall 2024
Draft recommendations

Spring 2025
Engagement round 2

Summer 2025
Anticipated completion of final plan

What we did

Survey
190 respondents

Engagement activities

Pop-ups
7 pop-ups
655 participants

Promotion and outreach:

Email

Emails were sent through Citypage (email newsletter) and to Be Heard subscribers. Representatives of identified interest groups were contacted directly by email.

Interactive signage

Happy Cities designed and installed posters at key parks and recreation facilities in New Westminster. QR codes on signage enabled passersby to quickly access the project website.

Social media

Graphic and text information about opportunities to participate in engagement were shared through the City's Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram accounts.

Project web page

A central project page was developed on Be Heard New West, which provided information on the project as well as a link to the online survey.

People, parks, and play!

Parks and Recreation Plan Update
What we heard summary
Engagement round 2, March 2025



Learnings summary -

Average level of agreement across all draft strategic directions

Pop-ups	
86%	Agree
11%	Somewhat agree
1%	Neutral

Survey	
78%	Agree
16%	Somewhat agree
3%	Neutral

Open comments: Key themes

Pop-ups

- **Facility & program improvements** (e.g. expand adult-oriented rec options)
- **Accessibility & connectivity** (e.g. by improving transit, bike routes)
- **Equity & inclusion** (e.g. reducing financial barriers)
- **Sustainability** (e.g. expanding community gardens)

Online survey

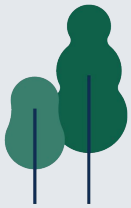
- **Accessibility & connectivity** (e.g. ensure comfortable navigation through spaces)
- **Investing in parks and recreation options** (e.g. improve and maintain)
- **Equitable connectivity** (e.g. improving connections to parks and recreation)
- **Cultural programming** (e.g. diverse cultural programming)

Top three draft strategic directions across pop-ups and survey:



80%

Strategic Direction 8:
Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system



78%

Strategic Direction 1:
Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces



73%

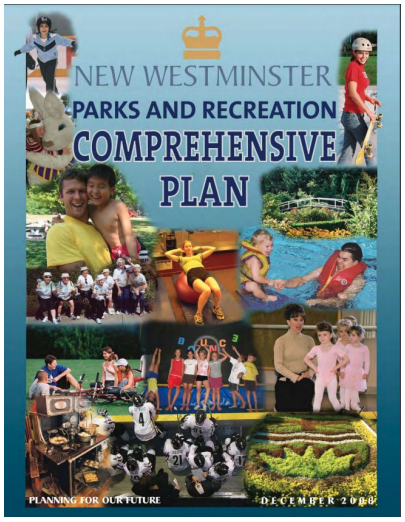
Strategic Direction 7:
Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

1. Introduction

The City of New Westminster values parks and recreation as essential for individual and community well-being. These spaces and programs help people stay active, connected, and support broader goals like climate resilience, reconciliation, equity, and inclusion. While New Westminster offers many parks, natural areas, and facilities, the City faces challenges due to limited land and a growing population. To overcome this, the City is committed to finding innovative solutions to expand and improve parks and recreation services.

1.1. Project context and overview

Since its adoption in 2008, the New Westminster Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan has shaped the work of the City in delivering parks and recreation services in a manner that is consistent with the City's priorities and meets the community's level of service needs. Given the considerable changes and growth in New Westminster since 2008, it is now time to update the plan.



Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan December 2008

The New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan Update, which is named *People, Parks, and Play: Connections for All* (the Plan), highlights the essential role that parks and recreation play in building connected, healthy, resilient communities. It will provide both an aspirational outlook (to 2050) and a 10-year implementation strategy (to 2035) that:

- Identifies new and evolving areas of focus
- Incorporates strategic priorities
- Provides recommendations for innovative ways to identify and address gaps in service

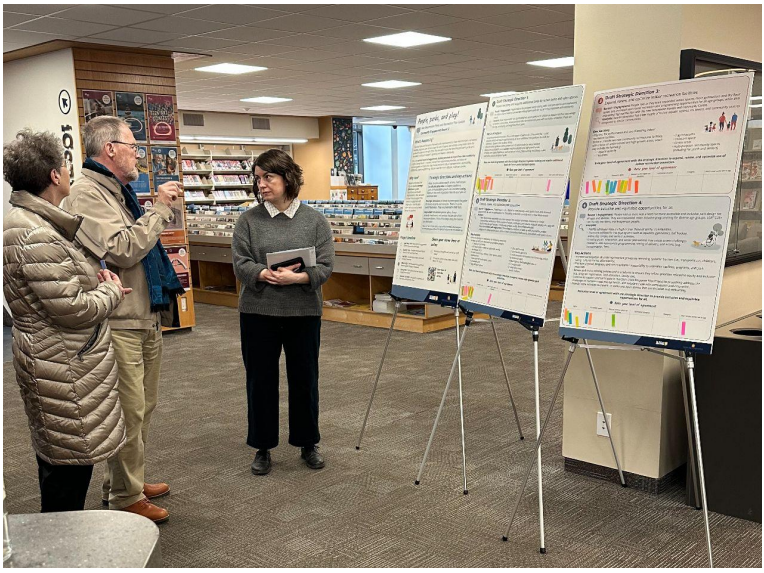
The Plan will set the course for how parks and recreation offerings will contribute to New Westminster's growing and changing community, ensuring everyone experiences the benefits of connecting and contributing—with friends, neighbours, and the natural environment. It will also guide the services provided by the Parks & Recreation Department, and identify who is being served, how the services are provided, and the relative priority of those services to ensure alignment with the City's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism (DEIAR); Truth and Reconciliation; and Climate Action objectives.



1.2. Project principles

The City of New Westminster aims to provide parks and recreation amenities, facilities, programs, and services that are accessible, inclusive, safe, and welcoming to all. The following principles guided the community engagement activities for the development of *People, Parks, and Play:*

- **Diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-racism:** How can parks and recreation be more welcoming to people of diverse backgrounds and experiences? (e.g. income, gender, culture, race, age, ability, body type, etc.)
- **Truth towards reconciliation:** How can New Westminster better integrate local First Nations values, culture, stories, and art in parks and recreation? How can parks and recreation better uphold the rights of Indigenous Peoples?
- **Community belonging, connecting, and wellbeing:** How can parks and recreation create opportunities for people to connect, build relationships, and participate in their community? What types of spaces and programs do people enjoy most?
- **Climate resilience:** In what ways does climate change impact our daily lives in New Westminster? How can parks and recreation address climate change and help us reduce our carbon footprints?
- **Local economy:** What role do parks and recreation play in supporting a vibrant economy and local businesses? How can parks and recreation draw more residents and visitors to New Westminster?
- **Service adequacy and standards:** How can parks and recreation respond to community needs as New Westminster grows? Are parks and recreation places, spaces, and services currently meeting the needs and expectations of the community?





1.3. Engagement goals

The City of New Westminster sought input from the community from Feb. 21 to March 17, 2025 Engagement efforts focused on gathering input for the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Parks, People and Playupdate. This second phase of engagement built upon the findings from round 1, further refining the community's vision and priorities for parks and recreation services. The engagement process was designed to be interactive and inclusive while fostering meaningful participation. A key focus of this phase was to ensure broad, balanced, and equitable involvement, particularly from vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved groups.

Key objectives of round 2 engagement included:

- **Awareness**: Share key findings from round 1 and increasing public and stakeholder awareness of the Parks and Recreation Plan update.
- **Refining draft strategic directions**: Validate and further refine the community's high-level direction for parks and recreation planning.
- **Equity**: Actively engage vulnerable, marginalized, and underserved populations to ensure their perspectives help shape service levels and funding priorities.
- **Inclusivity**: Encourage diverse participation by reaching out to a broad range of interest groups, key interest holders, and the general public, with a focus on reflecting the city's diverse demographics.

Through this collaborative engagement, *People, Parks, and Play* will be shaped by a broad spectrum of community input while ensuring the plan is responsive to the evolving needs of residents.





2. What we did

During round 1 engagement, participants were asked to share their experiences, thoughts, and priorities on the City of New Westminster's parks and recreation spaces, programs, and services. Based on key findings from background analysis and round 1 engagement, the project team drafted 11 draft strategic directions for *People, Parks, and Play*, each addressing a key aspect of parks and recreation planning.

Round 2 engagement expanded on insights from the first round of engagement—asking community members to provide input on and rate their level of agreement with the draft **draft strategic directions**—to ensure that the plan is informed by diverse community members and reflects the needs and aspirations of all residents. The project team offered a broad range of engagement activities to reach and hear from the community, including digital and in-person opportunities to provide input.



11 draft strategic directions

Draft strategic direction 1: Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces

Draft strategic direction 2: Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities

Draft strategic direction 3: Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities

Draft strategic direction 4: Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

Draft strategic direction 5: Advance truth and reconciliation

Draft strategic direction 6: Build resilience and adapt to climate change

Draft strategic direction 7: Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

Draft strategic direction 8: Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system

Draft strategic direction 9: Improve and expand core services

Draft strategic direction 10: Collaborate and formalize partnerships

Draft strategic direction 11: Plan for financial sustainability

2. What we did

The project team collaborated to create an accessible and clear overview of the steps leading to the second round of engagement, as well as the specific feedback needed to finalize the plan. The input collected will help refine the recommendations, priorities, and overall vision for parks and recreation in New Westminster. This community feedback will be balanced with technical analysis and research to ensure the final plan is responsive to resident needs and adaptable to future challenges, including population growth and funding considerations.

In all engagement activities, the draft strategic directions were presented as follows:

Findings, from both round 1 engagement and analysis conducted by Urban Systems.

Draft strategic directions, which are broad long-term goals shaping the future of parks and recreation.

Key actions, which outline specific projects, policies, and investments needed to achieve these goals.



Example engagement board illustrating content provided for each strategic direction (engagement findings, analysis and key actions)

2.1. Engagement strategy

Happy Cities and Urban Systems collaborated with City of New Westminster Parks and Recreation staff to develop a community engagement strategy grounded in the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) framework, focusing on the “Inform” and “Consult” levels of engagement. The Round 2 engagement strategy builds on the success of the first phase, aiming to confirm the project’s direction and further refine the draft strategies through inclusive and meaningful community feedback.

The strategy combined in-person and digital engagement methods to showcase the best of New Westminster’s parks and recreation system while offering accessible and engaging ways for residents to participate. Particular focus was placed on hearing from older adults, youth, renters, newcomers, and members of vulnerable and seldom-heard communities. Engagement activities included a short, focused survey, visually engaging materials, and a series of pop-up events held across diverse neighbourhoods to increase geographic and demographic reach.

2.2. Promotion

Targeted outreach through email and interest holder networks was complemented by a multi-platform communications approach, including social media, local media, posters, and flyers—especially to better reach seniors and those not active online. This approach ensured broad public awareness of the Parks and Recreation Plan update and created opportunities for residents to shape the vision, priorities, and recommendations, while balancing community input with technical research. The engagement strategy was supported by a coordinated project timeline and regular team meetings to keep the process on track and responsive to community needs.



Project web page

A central project page was developed on Be Heard New West, which provided information on the project as well as a link to the online survey.



Social media

Graphic and text information about opportunities to participate in engagement were shared through the City’s Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram.



Email

Emails were sent through Citypage (email newsletter) and to Be Heard subscribers. Representatives of identified interest groups were contacted directly by email.



Interactive signage

Happy Cities designed and installed posters at recreation facilities in New Westminster. QR codes enabled passersby to quickly access the project website.

2.3. Pop-ups

Pop-up engagement events were strategically held in key public spaces across New Westminster, bringing the conversation directly to where people naturally gather. Fun engagement activities, light refreshments, and family-friendly games helped create a welcoming atmosphere. The engagement sessions were promoted through social media, local media, and interactive signage. To maximize participation and ensure accessibility, the project team distributed flyers with QR codes linking to the survey, allowing residents and visitors to provide feedback at their convenience. In total, seven pop-ups collected feedback. Four dedicated pop-up events were conducted for the Parks and Recreation Plan Update (Round 2), while three additional engagement sessions were held in conjunction with the City's OCP open houses.

Dedicated round 2 engagement sessions, **396 participants:**

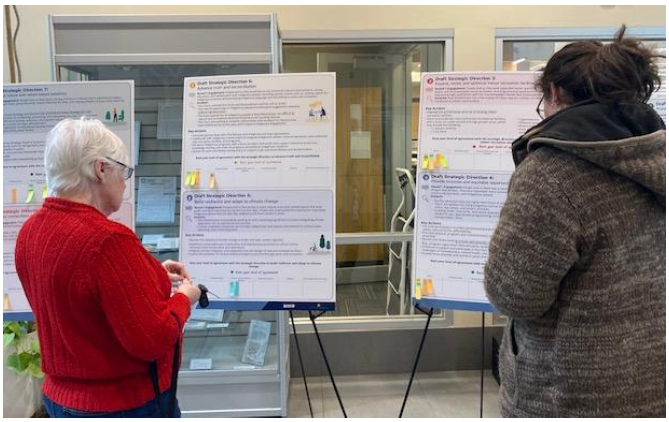
1. **Library Main Branch:** Thursday, Feb. 27, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
2. **River Market:** Saturday, March 1, from 1 to 4 p.m.
3. **Queensborough Community Centre:** Monday, March 3, from 3 to 6 p.m.
4. **təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre:** Saturday, March 8, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

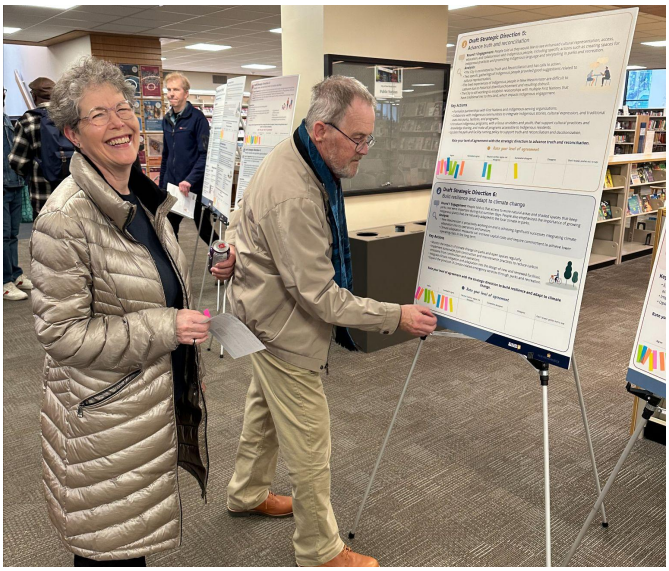
OCP open house sessions, **259 participants:**

5. **Sapperton Pensioners Community Hall,** Saturday, March 1, from 1 to 4 p.m.
6. **Century House:** Wednesday, March 5, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.
7. **Qayqayt School Gym:** Saturday, March 8, from 1 to 4 p.m.

2.4. Survey

The project team prepared a public-facing survey that was hosted on Be Heard New West. The survey was accompanied by background information, including the What We Heard Report from round 1. The survey was open from Feb. 21 to March 17, 2025 and engaged **190 respondents**. Paper copies were also available on request. The survey asked participants to rate their level of agreement with each draft strategic direction, including agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, disagree, or dont know/prefer not to say. There was one open-answer question for participants to provide feedback on what might be missing from these draft strategic directions.



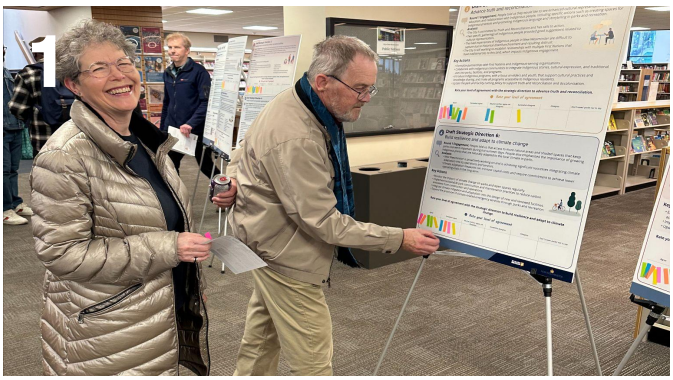


3. Learnings summary

A wide range of people in New Westminster provided input on the draft strategic directions and key actions. The following section outlines what we heard through each engagement activity, including pop-ups and the online survey.

3.1 Pop-ups

A total of **655 participants** took part in pop-up engagement sessions at various locations across New Westminster. Participants were invited to share their thoughts on the draft strategic directions for the future of New Westminster's Parks and Recreation. This page highlights the four dedicated pop-up sessions held for round 2 engagement for *People, Parks, and Play* which had a total of **396 participants** however, findings in this section include results from all seven pop-up sessions (listed on the previous page).



Location: **Library Main Branch**
Number of pop-up participants: **55**
Date and time: Thursday, Feb. 27, 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Weather: **Indoors**



Location: **River Market**
Number of pop-up participants: **177**
Date and time: Saturday, March 1, from 1 to 4 p.m.
Weather: **Sunny and warm**



Location: **Queensborough Community Centre**
Number of pop-up participants: **48**
Date and time: Monday, March 3, from 3 to 6 p.m.
Weather: **Indoors**

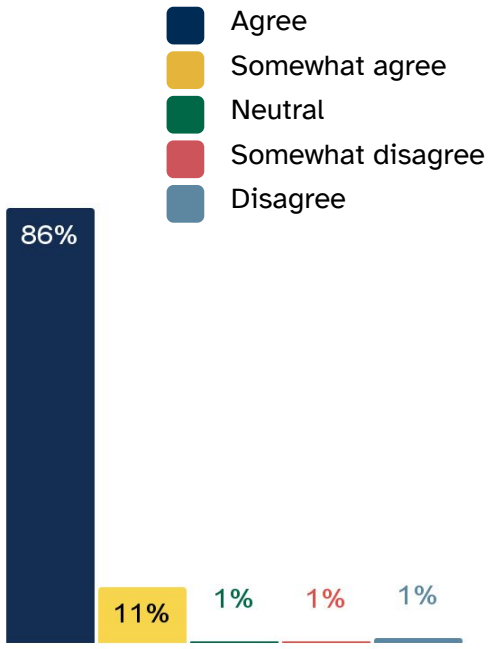


Location: **təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre**
Number of pop-up participants: **116**
Date and time: Thursday, May 9, 2024, 2:00-5:00 p.m.
Weather: **Indoors**

Draft strategic direction 1

Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces

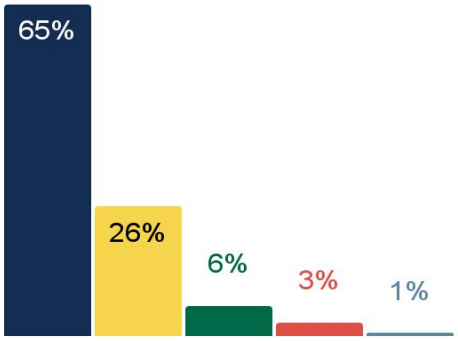
Protecting and acquiring land for parks and open spaces received overwhelming support, with 86% selecting “agree” and 11% selecting “somewhat agree,” demonstrating a strong community prioritization for preserving natural areas for future use.



Draft strategic direction 2

Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities

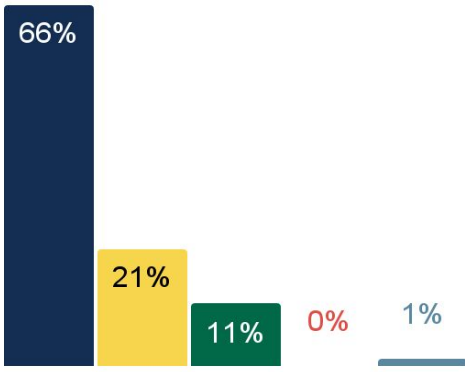
Expanding and optimizing park amenities showed broad support, with 65% selecting “agree” and 26% selecting “somewhat agree,” reflecting public interest in improved outdoor recreational spaces.

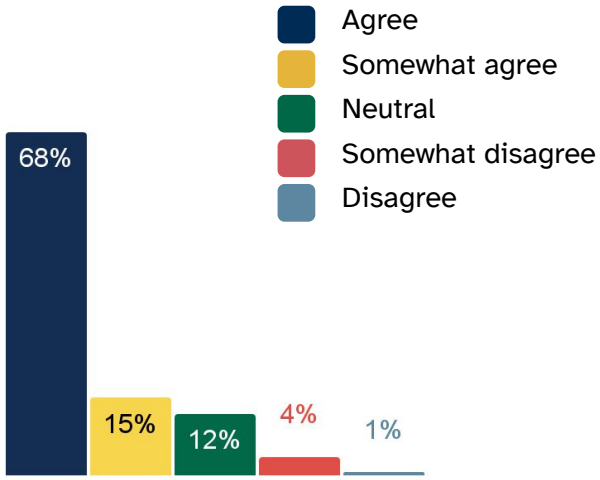


Draft strategic direction 3

Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities

Indoor recreation facilities also garnered positive reception, with 66% selecting “agree” and 21% selecting “somewhat agree,” indicating high demand for investment in indoor facilities.

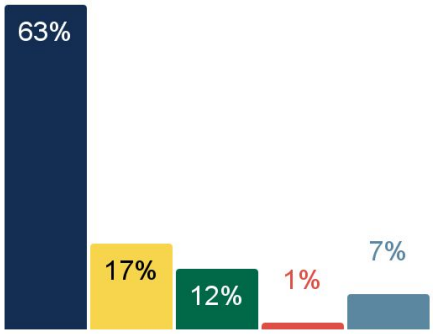




Draft strategic direction 4

Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

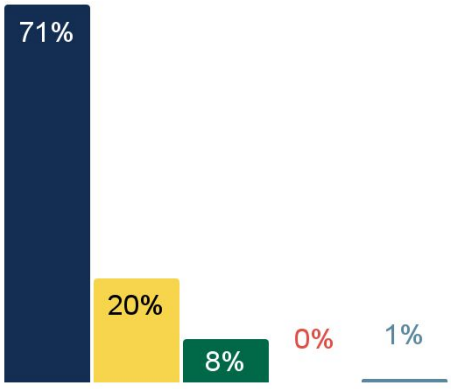
Providing inclusive and equitable opportunities received strong support, with 66% of respondents selecting “agree” and an additional 15% selecting “somewhat agree.” This indicates broad recognition of the need to ensure accessibility and representation across parks and recreation services. However, 12% of respondents remained neutral, suggesting some uncertainty or a lack of familiarity with specific equity-focused initiatives.



Draft strategic direction 5

Advance truth and reconciliation

Advancing truth and reconciliation had strong agreement, with 62% selecting “agree” and 16% selecting “somewhat agree.” However, another 12% indicated they felt neutral and 7% selected “disagree”—the highest proportion of any strategic direction. This may suggest an opportunity for further education and engagement around reconciliation in parks and recreation.



Draft strategic direction 6

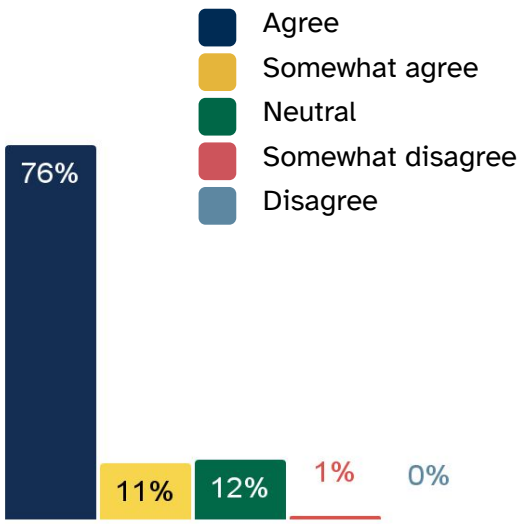
Build resilience and adapt to climate change

Building resilience to climate change received strong support, with 71% of respondents selecting “agree” and an additional 20% selecting “somewhat agree.” This indicates widespread recognition of the need for proactive climate adaptation measures within parks and recreation systems. However, 8% of respondents selected “neutral,” suggesting that some may be uncertain about specific strategies.

Draft strategic direction 7

Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

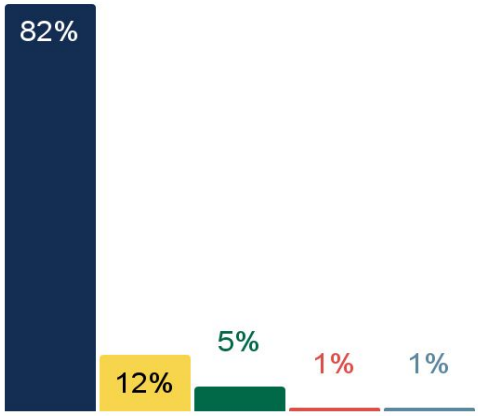
Nature-based solutions received broad support, with 76% of respondents selecting “agree” and 10% “somewhat agree,” indicating strong alignment with the vision of embedding nature into parks and public spaces. However, the relatively higher neutrality at 12% suggests some uncertainty, the data reveals both enthusiasm for green infrastructure and an opportunity for further education around its benefits and applications.



Draft strategic direction 8

Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system

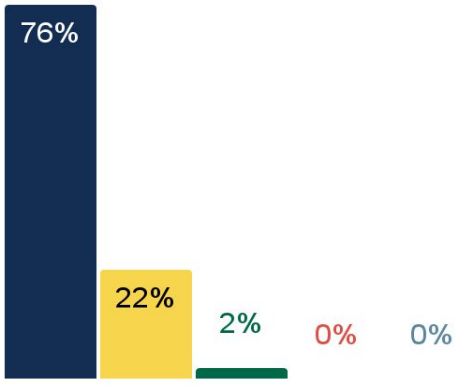
This direction resonated strongly with the public, achieving the second-highest agreement overall—81% of respondents selected “agree,” while 11% “somewhat agree.” The very low neutrality and minimal disagreement suggest near-universal support, making this a clear priority area for implementation with broad community backing.

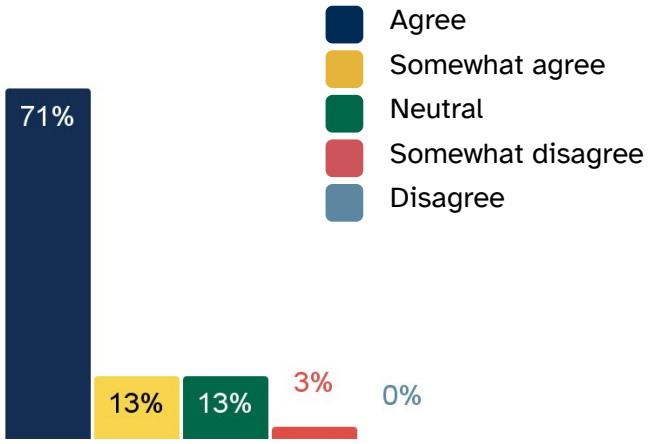


Draft strategic direction 9

Improve and expand core services

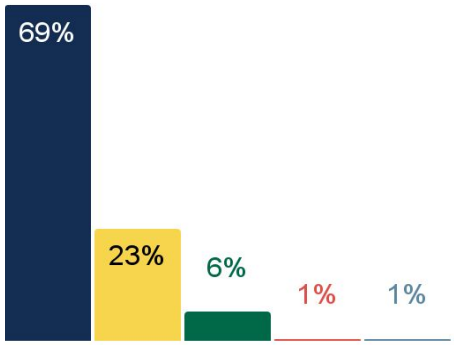
Support for improving and expanding core services was strong and consistent, with 76% of respondents selecting “agree” and 22% “somewhat agree.” The absence of significant neutrality or disagreement indicates a shared understanding of the value of core services and a public mandate to invest in service quality, accessibility, and capacity across the system.





Draft strategic direction 10
Collaborate and formalize partnerships

Collaboration and formalized partnerships received strong support, with 69% of respondents selecting “agree” and an additional 13% “somewhat agree.” However, neutrality is relatively high at 13%, which could indicate uncertainty about how partnerships would be structured or concerns about balancing public and private interests.

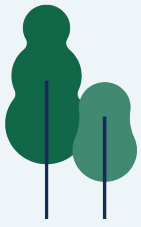


Draft strategic direction 11
Plan for financial sustainability

Financial sustainability is a key concern for many respondents, with 62% selecting “agree” and an additional 21% “somewhat agree.” However, a notable 6% selected neutral, suggesting that some respondents may lack clarity on the financial strategies being proposed.

Top three draft strategic directions

The top three are based on the percentage of respondents who selected “agree” for each.



86%

Agreed with strategic direction 1:
Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces



81%

Agreed with strategic direction 8:
Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system



76%

Agreed with strategic direction 9:
Improve and expand core services

3.2. Pop-ups: Open answer themes



Through the community **pop-up sessions**, participants shared valuable insights on what they felt was missing from the draft strategic directions and key actions for parks, recreation, and community spaces. Below are the key themes that emerged from written and verbal feedback:

Facility and program improvements

Participants shared support for balancing investments in new facilities with maintaining and improving existing parks, playgrounds, and community centres. People frequently mentioned the need to expand adult-oriented recreation options, in addition to family- and child-friendly amenities. Participants also stressed the importance of upgrading and protecting existing arts and culture spaces rather than solely building new recreation facilities. Additionally, improving spectator and audience areas at outdoor sports fields and courts was identified as a priority.

Equity and inclusion

Community members noted the importance of engaging with diverse cultural groups including the Métis Association. Many highlighted the need to prioritize affordability and reduce financial barriers so that programs and facilities remain accessible to all. There was also a strong call for an equitable distribution of parks, facilities, and services across neighbourhoods, rather than concentrating them in central areas.

Accessibility and connectivity

Participants recommended improving accessibility through the use of more visual elements and simpler language in communications. They also emphasized the need to enhance connectivity by improving transit, bike routes, and pedestrian infrastructure linking parks and recreation sites. Participants expressed support for collaborating with the school district to leverage school spaces for community use outside of school hours.

Sustainability and environmental considerations

Many community members raised concerns about the environmental impacts of artificial turf fields compared to natural grass. They also expressed interest in community-led initiatives such as “adopt a tree” programs in parks to foster environmental stewardship. Other suggestions included expanding community gardens, urban agriculture, and food security initiatives throughout the city.

Innovative and community-centred approaches

Community members encouraged exploring innovative approaches, such as converting streets into car-free parks and adding more public washrooms. Strengthening partnerships with a broad range of community groups and users, such as Indigenous groups could help maximize shared use of spaces was also seen as a valuable way to enhance community benefits.

3.3. Online survey

Overview

As noted in section 2.4, the survey asked participants to review and provide feedback on the 11 draft strategic directions, each addressing a key aspect of parks and recreation planning. For each draft strategic direction, respondents were presented with background information, including insights from previous engagement, analysis of current conditions, and a selection of proposed key actions. Participants were then asked to rate their level of agreement with each draft strategic direction from agree, somewhat agree, neutral, somewhat disagree, disagree or dont know/prefer not to say. The survey also included one open-ended question at the end of the survey to allow participants to share their thoughts in more detail.

To encourage participation, respondents had the opportunity to enter a draw to win one of 30 ActivePass 10 Visit passes, which can be used at City of New Westminster recreation facilities. The survey was designed to be accessible, with translation options available for multiple languages and additional support provided upon request. A total of 190 respondents completed the survey.

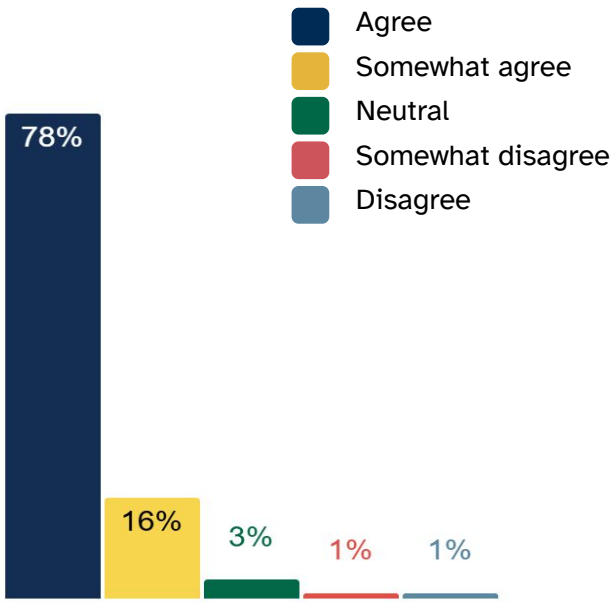




Draft strategic direction 1

Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces

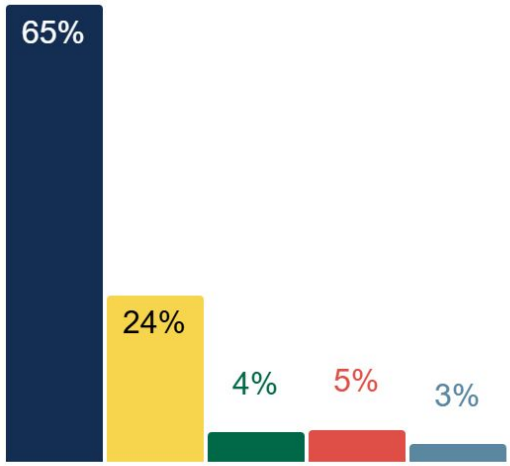
Most respondents 78% agreed with protecting and expanding parks and open spaces, with an additional 16% selecting “somewhat agree.” In the open-ended question, participants shared comments about the importance of preserving green spaces amid urban growth and emphasized proactive land acquisition to maintain community access to nature.



Draft strategic direction 2

Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities

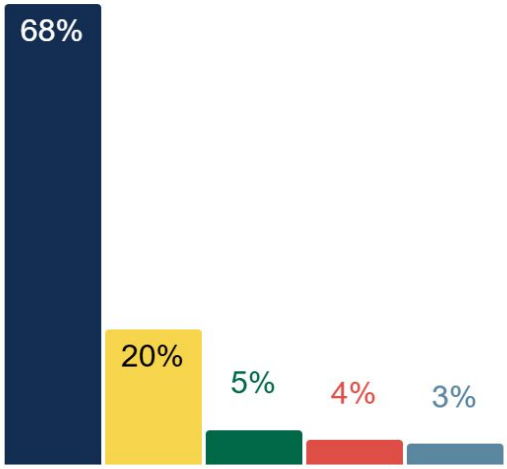
The majority of respondents 65% indicated they agree with improving park amenities, while 24% selected “somewhat agree.” Common themes in the open-ended question included the need for upgraded playgrounds, washrooms, seating, and lighting. Some also noted that existing amenities require better maintenance and accessibility improvements.

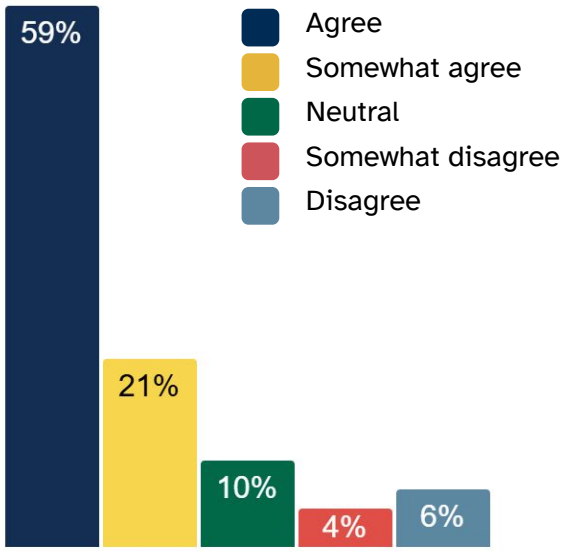


Draft strategic direction 3

Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities

The majority of respondents 68% agreed with improving indoor recreation facilities, with another 20% selecting “somewhat agree.” Open-ended comments noted a need for updated fitness centres, pools, and multi-purpose spaces, citing aging infrastructure and growing community demand.

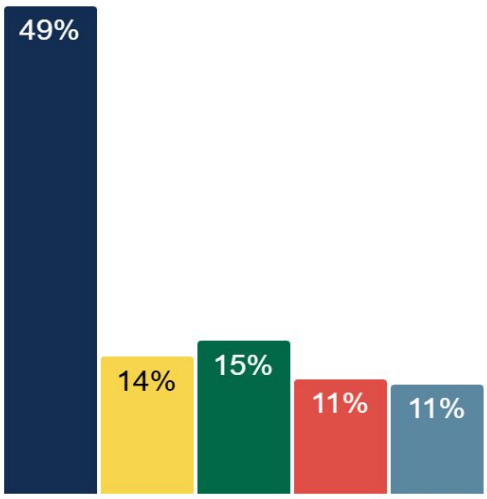




Draft strategic direction 4

Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

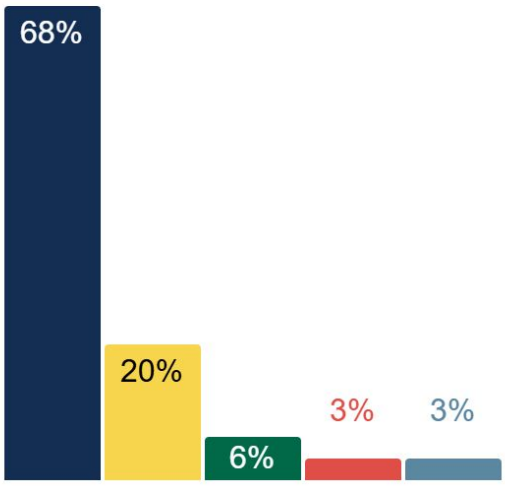
A majority of respondents 59% support providing inclusive and equitable opportunities for all, with an additional 21% somewhat agreeing. The 10% neutrality suggests that some respondents may be uncertain about how inclusion and equity will be implemented in practice.



Draft strategic direction 5

Advance truth and reconciliation

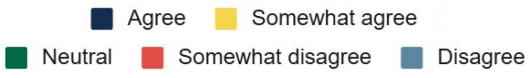
Around half of respondents 49% agreed with advancing truth and reconciliation and 14% selected “somewhat agree.” Another 15% selected “neutral,” 11% selected “somewhat disagree,” and 11% selected “disagree.”



Draft strategic direction 6

Build resilience and adapt to climate change

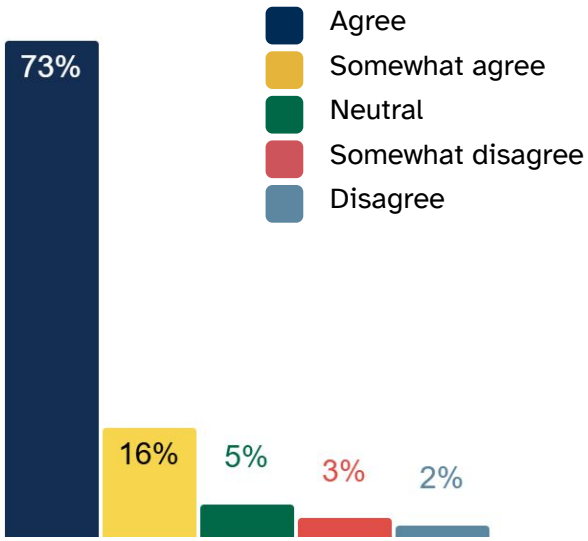
Over two thirds 68% of respondents agreed with building resilience and adapting to climate change, and another 20% selected “somewhat agree.” A smaller proportion 6% selected “neutral,” with only a small fraction opposed.



Draft strategic direction 7

Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

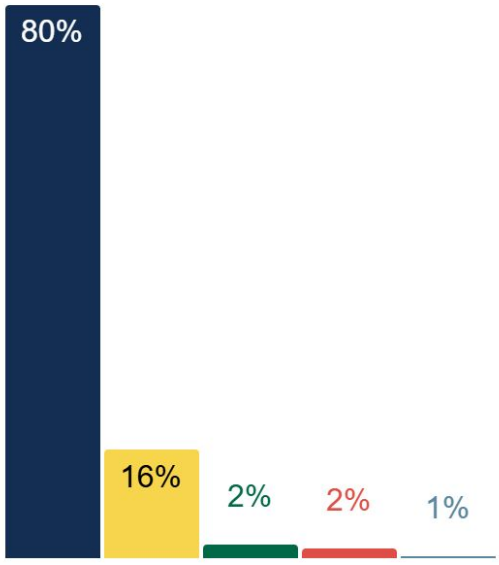
The majority 73% of respondents agreed with integrating nature and nature-based solutions, with another 16% selecting “somewhat agree.” Only 5% selected “neutral” and an smaller proportion disagreed.



Draft strategic direction 8

Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system

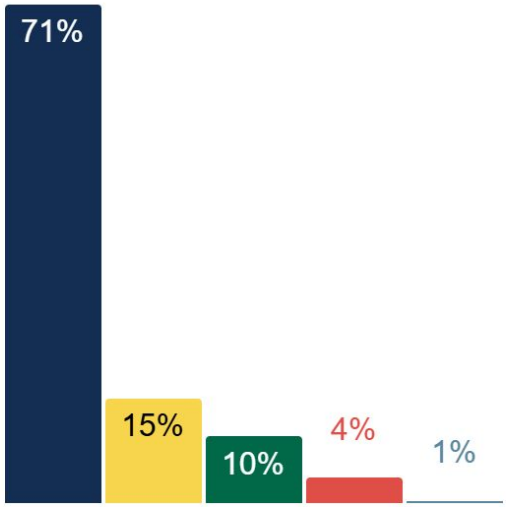
The majority 80% of respondents agreed with enhancing connections within the parks and recreation system, with an additional 16% selecting “somewhat agree.” In the open-ended question, many noted the need for better walkability, cycling infrastructure, and transit access to parks, ensuring equitable and seamless connectivity across the city.

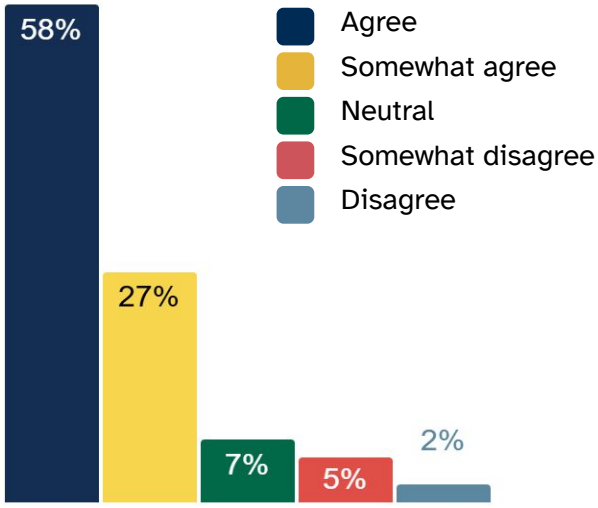


Draft strategic direction 9

Improve and expand core services

Nearly three quarters 71% of respondents agreed with improving and expanding core services, with another 15% selecting “somewhat agree.” Another 10% selected “neutral.”

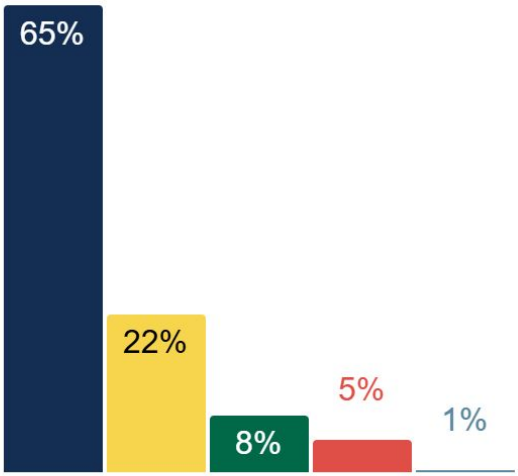




Draft strategic direction 10

Collaborate and formalize partnerships

Over half 58% agreed with collaborating and formalizing partnerships, while 27% selected “somewhat agree.” Another 7% selected “neutral,” a slightly higher proportion than for most other strategic directions.



Draft strategic direction 11

Plan for financial sustainability

Nearly two thirds 65% of respondents agreed with planning for financial sustainability, with another 22% selecting “somewhat agree.” Another 8% selected “neutral.”

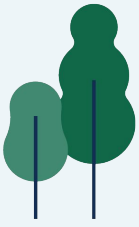
Top three draft strategic directions

The top three are based on the percentage of respondents who selected “agree” for each.



80%

Agreed with strategic direction 8:
Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system



78%

Agreed with strategic direction 1:
Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces



73%

Agreed with strategic direction 7:
Integrate nature and nature-based solutions



3.4. Survey: Open answer themes

Through the public **survey**, participants shared valuable insights on what they felt was missing from the draft strategic directions and key actions for parks, recreation, and community spaces. Below are the key themes that emerged from the 115 open-ended optional comments from the survey:

Accessibility and inclusivity

Respondents stressed the importance of making parks and recreation spaces fully accessible to individuals with hearing, visual, and mobility impairments. They highlighted the need for more accessible playgrounds, seating, washrooms, and wayfinding to ensure that all community members can comfortably navigate and enjoy public spaces.

Investing in existing parks and expanding recreation options

Many participants expressed a preference for improving and maintaining current parks and facilities before creating new ones. They called for better upkeep and the addition of more amenities in existing spaces. There was also strong support for expanding indoor recreation opportunities, particularly for year-round activities such as pickleball, table tennis, and fitness classes.

Sustainable and resilient communities

Many respondents asked for climate-resilient park designs that incorporate natural elements, effective stormwater management, and reduced use of artificial turf. Feedback from participants requsted more community gardens and urban agriculture initiatives to promote local food security beyond centralized locations.

Equitable access and connectivity

Comments asked the City to improve transit connections to parks and recreation facilities, particularly in growing neighbourhoods like Queensborough. Respondents also encouraged better coordination with the school district to make school facilities available for community use outside of school hours. Some mentioned potential to explore public-private partnerships to fund recreation initiatives. However, participants emphasized the need to maintain affordability and ensure that all residents, regardless of income, can access parks and recreation services.

Community engagement and cultural programming

Participants highlighted the importance of clear and transparent communication regarding parks and recreation plans, timelines, and opportunities for public input. Many also expressed a desire for more cultural programming and events that celebrate the diversity of New Westminster, ensuring that community spaces reflect and serve all residents.

People, Parks, and Play!

New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan

Community Survey Round 2

Updated: February 12, 2025

Thanks for your interest in completing this survey. It should take between 5 and 10 minutes depending on how much you wish to write. Please help us by completing this survey by **March 17, 2025.**

Based on Round 1 engagement and analysis, the City has drafted **strategic directions** to guide future investments and improvements in parks and recreation across New Westminster. This second round of engagement will help confirm that the plan aligns with community needs before it is finalized.

By responding to the survey, you can enter a draw to win one of 30 ActivePass 10 Visit passes to use at City of New Westminster recreation facilities!

Prefer to complete the survey in a different language? Click the Select Language button at the top right of the page, and choose your language. The survey, page content, and all other feedback tools will be translated. We are also happy to offer additional support to complete the survey. Please contact us at engage@newwestcity.ca with requests.

Strategic Directions and Key Actions

The new Parks and Recreation Plan will guide improvements to New Westminster's recreation facilities, programs, and services over the next 10 years, and outlines a long-term vision for parks and recreation through 2050. While the plan outlines specific actions, it will remain flexible and adaptable to changing conditions, particularly population growth and associated funding.

Two levels of guidance from the draft plan are presented in this survey:

- **Strategic Directions** are broad long-term goals that guide the future for parks and recreation. Think of it as the overall destination. They are presented in draft form.
- **Key Actions** are detailed policies, plans, design projects, investments, and services that are part of the recommendations. Think of it as steps along the route to our destination. The survey presents a selection of draft key actions as examples of how we plan to achieve the draft strategic directions. These are not the only actions that will be included in the final plan, but they give you an idea of the types of initiatives we are considering.

The survey below outlines 11 draft strategic directions and examples of sample key actions, and asks for your feedback before these are finalized for the plan. Each direction includes information about the major findings from Round 1 engagement and policy and data analysis.

Strategic Direction 1: Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces

Round 1 Engagement
People told us they enjoyed using existing parks and open spaces and emphasized the importance of making sure we have enough park space for our growing population and community needs.

Analysis

- New Westminster has significantly less active parkland in relation to population than the average of similar communities. Active parkland refers to maintained parks with recreation amenities; these are the city, community, and neighbourhood parks.

Key Actions

- Acquire parkland to maintain the current supply of parkland (1.0 hectares (ha) / 1,000 people), which will require approximately 25 ha of additional new parkland by 2035 (for reference, Queen's Park is about 30 ha).
- Provide active parkland within a maximum 10 minute walk for every resident.
- Focus new parkland in park-deficient neighbourhoods and high-growth areas.
- Provide new types of parkland such as natural areas, green walking and biking routes, and urban plazas and pocket parks.

(Reminder: These are example draft actions and not intended as a full list.)

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 2: Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities

Round 1 Engagement
People expressed a desire for new and improved sports fields and renewed playgrounds, as well as appreciation for the quality parks that currently exist in New Westminster.

Analysis

- New Westminster **currently** has a low supply of the outdoor amenities compared to similar communities: artificial turf fields, pickleball courts, multi-use sports courts, skate/all wheel parks, dog off-leash areas, disc golf courses, community gardens, tracks, beach/field volleyball.
- New Westminster **will need more** of the following amenities to keep up with population growth: playgrounds, spray/splash parks, picnic shelters, tennis/pickleball courts, basketball/multi-sports courts.

Key Actions

- Strive to develop or redevelop the following amenities to keep up with past and future population growth:
    - 2 artificial turf fields
    - 6-8 multi-sport courts (for pickleball, tennis, basketball, etc.)
    - 6 fieldhouses (e.g., storage, team space, public washrooms)
    - 1 new covered multi-sports court
    - 1 all-wheel park
    - 2 dog off-leash areas
    - 1 disc golf course
    - 3 community gardens
    - 1 multi-purpose recreation track (non-regulation for informal uses)
    - 4 beach/grass field volleyball courts
    - 5-7 playgrounds
    - 2 water play areas
    - 3 picnic shelters

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to expand, renew and optimize park amenities.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 3: Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities

Round 1 Engagement

People told us they want expanded senior spaces, more gymnasium and dry floor space, and increased year-round recreation and programming opportunities for all age groups, while also expressing high satisfaction with the new təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre.

Analysis

- New Westminster has a low supply of indoor aquatic centres, ice sheets, and community centres compared to similar communities.

Key Actions

- Improve the performance and use of existing indoor recreation facilities.
- Strive to provide two new community recreational facilities, with a focus on under-served and high-growth areas, which may include the following:
    - 1 aquatic amenity
    - 1 ice sheet
    - 2 gymnasiums
    - childcare space
    - fitness areas
    - multi-purpose community spaces (including for youth and seniors)

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to expand, renew, and maximize use of indoor recreation amenities.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 4: Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

Round 1 Engagement

People told us there was a need for more accessible and inclusive park design for all ages and abilities. They also requested more inclusive programming for diverse age groups, LGBTQ2S+ community members, and Indigenous people.

Analysis

- Facility admission fees are higher than those of similar communities.
- There are waitlists for many programs such as aquatics, gymnastics, ball hockey, arena, day camps, and seniors' activities.
- Growing youth, newcomer, and senior populations may create access challenges related to user-appropriate programming, timing of delivery, and access (e.g. transportation, fees).

Key Actions

- Increase participation of underrepresented groups by removing systemic barriers (i.e., transportation, childcare, safety, cultural norms, affordability).
- Prioritize physical, program, and communication accessibility to recreation facilities, programs, and park amenities

- Review and revise existing policies and procedures to ensure they reflect priorities related to equity and inclusion (e.g., program registration, field allocation, facility use).
- Continue to support and participate in the City's Crisis Response Pilot Project to proactively address the challenges of homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse with compassion and innovation.
- Provide more activities and events in parks and open spaces that are inclusive and welcoming.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 5: Advance truth and reconciliation

Round 1 Engagement
People told us they would like to see enhanced cultural representation, access, education, and collaboration with Indigenous people, including specific actions such as creating spaces for Indigenous practices and promoting Indigenous language and storytelling in parks and recreation.

Analysis
- The City is committed to Truth and Reconciliation and has calls to action.
- Two specific gatherings of Indigenous people provided good suggestions related to cultural representation.
- The lived experiences of Indigenous people in New Westminster are difficult to capture due to historical disenfranchisement and resulting distrust.
- The City is still working to establish relationships with multiple First Nations that have traditional ties to this land, which impacts Indigenous engagement.

Key Actions
- Formalize partnerships with First Nations and Indigenous-serving organizations.
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to integrate Indigenous stories, cultural expression, and traditional uses into parks, facilities, and programs.
- Introduce Indigenous programs, with a focus on elders and youth, that support cultural practices and knowledge sharing, and make all programs accessible to Indigenous residents.

- Update the park and facility naming policy to support truth and reconciliation and decolonization.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to advance truth and reconciliation.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 6: Build resilience and adapt to climate change

Round 1 Engagement
People told us that access to more natural areas and shaded spaces that keep parks cool were important during hot summer days. People also emphasized the importance of growing indigenous plants that are naturally adapted to the local climate in parks.

Analysis

- New Westminster is proactively working on and is achieving significant successes integrating climate adaptation into its operations and services.
- Climate adaptation measures can increase capital costs and require commitment to achieve lower operating costs in the long term.

Key Actions

- Monitor the impacts of climate change on parks and open spaces regularly.
- Implement sustainable park construction and maintenance practices to reduce carbon emissions from construction and operations.
- Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation into the design of new and renewed facilities.
- Expand the provision of climate-related emergency services through parks and recreation.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to build resilience and adapt to climate change.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 7: Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

Round 1 Engagement
People told us they have a strong interest in making nature experiences better, planting more trees, using the land's natural features for play, and helping people connect more with the rivers.

Analysis

- The Urban Forest Strategy and Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy provide excellent direction on protecting, enhancing, and expanding the city's natural assets.
- It is very difficult to protect, enhance, and expand natural areas and the urban forest in the context of major development.
- Provincial legislation on densifying housing further challenges the retention and enhancement of the urban forest.

Key Actions

- Use the Biodiversity Strategy target of acquiring 10% of the city's land base for natural parkland.
- Incorporate features such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable surfaces, shade trees, and stormwater management systems in parks.
- Identify, uncover, and connect freshwater features and historic streams to increase their visibility and help manage stormwater.
- Expand collaboration with stewardship groups and environmental education programs.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to integrate nature and nature-based solutions.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 8: Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system

Round 1 Engagement
People told us that trails were a well-used parks and recreation resource, and strongly supported enhanced pedestrian and bike trail connections, particularly along the riverfront.

Analysis

- The City's parks, trails, and greenways are well used and support access to natural areas, active transportation, and social spaces.
- Connectivity is lacking, especially to and along the waterfront.

Key Actions

- Expand and enhance the network of greenways, trails, and paths, including improved access to the riverfront.
- Improve transit and active transportation connectivity between facilities and amenities.
- Update and take steps to advance the vision for a fully connected riverfront.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 9: Improve and expand core services

Round 1 Engagement

People expressed a desire for more recreation programs, expanded spaces, and extended service hours to meet evolving needs, while also highlighting dissatisfaction with certain administrative services such as registration processes.

Analysis

- There are many popular recreation programs available in the city for diverse activities and age groups, and participation is increasing.
- Demand exceeds supply for some recreation programs.
- The City's Facility Allocation Policy and Procedures, which outline how space is assigned and which groups receive priority for bookings, does not address the needs of existing and new users in an equitable way.
- There are opportunities to improve the efficiency of operations and maintenance.

Key Actions

- Expand and diversify programs in recreation, health/wellness, and culture, for all participants, in response to evolving needs and trends.
- Optimize space utilization in facilities, with adjustments to facility hours, space usage, and capacity based on data analysis.

- Increase outdoor program opportunities, including nature-based programming.
- Improve parks and recreation administrative services to reduce technological barriers to marketing, communication, registration, and bookings.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to improve and expand core services.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 10: Collaborate and formalize partnerships

Round 1 Engagement
People emphasized the importance of strengthening existing and creating new partnerships, including with Indigenous-serving organizations.

Analysis
- The City has many partnerships with other organizations to work collaboratively on facility and service delivery (i.e. Century House Association, New West Arts Council, Purpose Society and Family Place).
- As the population grows and diversifies, stronger partnerships will be key to meeting the community's needs.

Key Actions
- Work with other City departments to integrate parks and recreation into broader city initiatives, including community events and activations.
- Expand access to spaces and programs through public-private partnerships and with other organizations such as public and private schools and institutions.
- Establish agreements with private developers, organizations, businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to allow public use of underutilized spaces or vacant lands.
- Facilitate public art in recreation facilities, parks and open spaces through the Public Art Strategy.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to collaborate and formalize partnerships.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Strategic Direction 11: Plan for financial sustainability

Round 1 Engagement

We didn't ask directly for community input on financial sustainability for the People, Parks and Play Plan, but we consistently hear that community members want the City to use tax dollars responsibly.

Analysis

- It is challenging for the City to source capital funds for construction of parks and recreation facilities and amenities.
- As the parks and recreation system has expanded, operations staff and funding have not kept pace.

Key Actions

- Secure ongoing funding for parks and recreation through various financing growth tools (e.g. development cost charges and amenity cost charges) to acquire and construct growth-related parks, spaces, facilities, and amenities.
- Establish a reserve fund for renewal of parks and recreation amenities and spaces.
- Leverage the City's tools for financing growth through new development to deliver new parks, amenities, and facilities to help address high-need areas of the city.
- Explore funding opportunities through public and private partnerships.
- Seek grant funding opportunities.
- Adjust operating budgets commensurate with population growth and when additional lands are acquired, and new facilities and amenities are constructed.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to plan for financial sustainability.

5 (Agree)	4 (Somewhat agree)	3 Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	2 (Somewhat disagree)	1 (Disagree)	Don't know/ prefer not to say
⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜	⬜

Comments

This second round of engagement is the final touch point with the community before the strategic directions, actions, and plan are finalized and brought forward to Council for decision-making. We would like to be sure that the directions and actions outlined in this survey capture your hopes and priorities for the future of parks and recreation in New Westminster.

12. Please provide any comments on the strategic directions and key actions, and/or let us know about anything you feel is missing.

_____

_____

Thank you very much for participating in this survey!

Check back at the Be Heard website for further updates on the plan.

People, parks, and play!

New Westminster Parks and Recreation Plan Update

Community Engagement Round 2



What's happening?

The new Parks and Recreation Plan will guide improvements to New Westminster's recreation facilities, programs, and services over the next 10 years, and outlines a long-term vision for parks and recreation through 2050. This plan will ensure that New Westminster's parks and recreation continue to support a growing and diverse community.

This is the **second round of engagement, building on what we heard from the community** in 2024. During Round 1, residents shared their experiences, priorities, and ideas for improving parks and recreation. Key themes included cultural representation, accessibility, affordability, youth programming, and the need for more inclusive, multi-use spaces.

Why now?

Based on this input, the City has drafted **strategic directions** to guide future investments and improvements. Now, we want to hear from you again! This round of engagement will help confirm that the plan aligns with community needs before it is finalized.



Strategic directions and key actions

While the plan outlines specific actions, it will remain **flexible and adaptable** to changing conditions, particularly population growth and associated funding. There are two levels of guidance from the draft plan are presented here:

Strategic Directions are broad long-term goals that guide the future for parks and recreation. Think of it as the overall destination. They are presented in draft form.

Key Actions are detailed policies, plans, design projects, investments, and services that are part of the recommendations. Think of it as steps along the route to our destination.

These are not the only actions that will be included in the final plan, but they give you an idea of the types of initiatives we are considering.

Project timeline

- **April-May 2024** – First round of engagement (community input on priorities).
- **Summer 2024** – The What We Heard Report shared on Be Heard New West.
- **Fall 2024** – Conduct data analysis and draft Strategic Directions
- **Winter 2025** – Second round of engagement (reviewing draft Strategic Directions)
- **Spring 2025** – Sharing back what we heard in engagement round 2
- **Summer/ Fall 2025** – Anticipated completion of final Parks and Recreation Plan

Share your views here or online

1. Share your thoughts with one of our staff today!
2. Fill out the online survey, open now until March 17, 2025.

Scan here to take the survey



BE HEARD NEW WEST

NEW WESTMINSTER

1 Draft Strategic Direction 1:

Protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces

Round 1 Engagement, People told us they enjoyed using existing parks and open spaces and emphasized the importance of making sure we have enough park space for our growing population and community needs.

Analysis, New Westminster has significantly less active parkland in relation to population than the average of similar communities. Active parkland refers to maintained parks with recreation amenities; these are the city, community, and neighbourhood parks.

Key Draft Actions

- Acquire parkland to maintain the current supply of parkland (1.0 hectares (ha) / 1,000 people), which will require approximately 25 ha of additional new parkland by 2035 (for reference, Queen's Park is about 30 ha).
- Provide active parkland within a maximum 10 minute walk for every resident.
- Focus new parkland in park-deficient neighbourhoods and high-growth areas.
- Provide new types of parkland such as natural areas, green walking and biking routes, and urban plazas and pocket parks.



Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to protect existing and acquire additional lands for future parks and open spaces.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

2 Draft Strategic Direction 2:

Expand, renew, and optimize park amenities

Round 1 Engagement, People expressed a desire for new and improved sports fields and renewed playgrounds, as well as appreciation for the quality parks that currently exist in New Westminster.

Analysis

- New Westminster **currently** has a low supply of the outdoor amenities compared to similar communities: artificial turf fields, pickleball courts, multi-use sports courts, skate/all wheel parks, dog off-leash areas, disc golf courses, community gardens, tracks, beach/field volleyball.
- New Westminster **will need more** of the following amenities to keep up with population growth: playgrounds, spray/splash parks, picnic shelters, tennis/pickleball courts, basketball/multi-sports courts.

Key Actions

- Strive to develop or redevelop the following amenities to keep up with past and future population growth:
  - 2 artificial turf fields
  - 6-8 multi-sport courts (for pickleball, tennis, basketball, etc.)
  - 6 field houses (e.g., storage, team space, public washrooms)
  - 1 new covered multi-sports court
  - 1 all-wheel park
  - 2 dog off-leash areas
  - 1 disc golf course
  - 3 community gardens
  - 1 multi-purpose recreation track (non-regulation for informal uses)
  - 4 beach/grass field volleyball courts
  - 5-7 playgrounds
  - 2 water play areas
  - 3 picnic shelters



Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to expand, renew and optimize park amenities.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

3 Draft Strategic Direction 3:

Expand, renew, and optimize indoor recreation facilities

Round 1 Engagement: People told us they want expanded senior spaces, more gymnasium and dry floor space, and increased year-round recreation and programming opportunities for all age groups, while also expressing high satisfaction with the new təməsewtxʷ Aquatic and Community Centre.

Analysis: New Westminster has a low supply of indoor aquatic centres, ice sheets, and community centres compared to similar communities.



Key Actions

- Improve the performance and use of existing indoor recreation facilities.
- Strive to provide two new community recreational facilities, with a focus on under-served and high-growth areas, which may include the following:
  - 1 aquatic amenity
  - 1 ice sheet
  - 2 gymnasiums
  - childcare space
  - fitness areas
  - multi-purpose community spaces (including for youth and seniors)

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to expand, renew, and optimize use of indoor recreation amenities.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

4 Draft Strategic Direction 4:

Provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all

Round 1 Engagement: People told us there was a need for more accessible and inclusive park design for all ages and abilities. They also requested more inclusive programming for diverse age groups, LGBTQ2S+ community members, and Indigenous people.

Analysis:

- Facility admission fees are higher than those of similar communities.
- There are waitlists for many programs such as aquatics, gymnastics, ball hockey, arena, day camps, and seniors' activities.
- Growing youth, newcomer, and senior populations may create access challenges related to user-appropriate programming, timing of delivery, and access (e.g. transportation, fees).



Key Actions

- Increase participation of underrepresented groups by removing systemic barriers (i.e., transportation, childcare, safety, cultural norms, affordability).
- Prioritize physical, program, and communication accessibility to recreation facilities, programs, and park amenities
- Review and revise existing policies and procedures to ensure they reflect priorities related to equity and inclusion (e.g., program registration, field allocation, facility use).
- Continue to support and participate in the City's Crisis Response Pilot Project to proactively address the challenges of homelessness, mental health, and substance use with compassion and innovation.
- Provide more activities and events in parks and open spaces that are inclusive and welcoming.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to provide inclusive and equitable opportunities for all.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

5 Draft Strategic Direction 5:
Advance truth and reconciliation

Round 1 Engagement: People told us they would like to see enhanced cultural representation, access, education, and collaboration with Indigenous people, including specific actions such as creating spaces for Indigenous practices and promoting Indigenous language and storytelling in parks and recreation.

Analysis:

- The City is committed to Truth and Reconciliation and has calls to action.
- Two specific gatherings of Indigenous people provided good suggestions related to cultural representation.
- The lived experiences of Indigenous people in New Westminster are difficult to capture due to historical disenfranchisement and resulting distrust.
- The City is still working to establish relationships with multiple First Nations that have traditional ties to this land, which impacts Indigenous engagement.



Key Actions

- Formalize partnerships with First Nations and Indigenous-serving organizations.
- Collaborate with Indigenous communities to integrate Indigenous stories, cultural expression, and traditional uses into parks, facilities, and programs.
- Introduce Indigenous programs, with a focus on elders and youth, that support cultural practices and knowledge sharing, and make all programs accessible to Indigenous residents.
- Update the park and facility naming policy to support truth and reconciliation and decolonization.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to advance truth and reconciliation.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

6 Draft Strategic Direction 6:
Build resilience and adapt to climate change

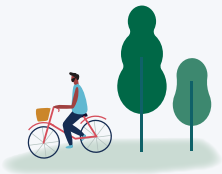
Round 1 Engagement: People told us that access to more natural areas and shaded spaces that keep parks cool were important during hot summer days. People also emphasized the importance of growing indigenous plants that are naturally adapted to the local climate in parks.

Analysis:

- New Westminster is proactively working on and is achieving significant successes integrating climate adaptation into its operations and services.
- Climate adaptation measures can increase capital costs and require commitment to achieve lower operating costs in the long term.

Key Actions

- Monitor the impacts of climate change on parks and open spaces regularly.
- Implement sustainable park construction and maintenance practices to reduce carbon emissions from construction and operations.
- Integrate climate mitigation and adaptation into the design of new and renewed facilities.
- Expand the provision of climate-related emergency services through parks and recreation.



Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to build resilience and adapt to climate change.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

7 Draft Strategic Direction 7:

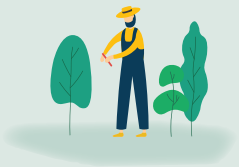
Integrate nature and nature-based solutions

Round 1 Engagement: People told us they have a strong interest in making nature experiences better, planting more trees, using the land's natural features for play, and helping people connect more with the rivers.

Analysis:

The Urban Forest Strategy and Biodiversity and Natural Areas Strategy provide excellent direction on protecting, enhancing, and expanding the city's natural assets.

- It is very difficult to protect, enhance, and expand natural areas and the urban forest in the context of major development.
- Provincial legislation on densifying housing further challenges the retention and enhancement of the urban forest.



Key Actions

- Use the Biodiversity Strategy target of acquiring 10% of the city's land base for natural parkland.
- Incorporate features such as rain gardens, bioswales, permeable surfaces, shade trees, and stormwater management systems in parks.
- Identify, uncover, and connect freshwater features and historic streams to increase their visibility and help manage stormwater.
- Expand collaboration with stewardship groups and environmental education programs.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to integrate nature and nature-based solutions.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

8 Draft Strategic Direction 8:

Strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system

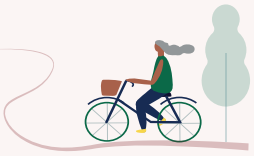
Round 1 Engagement: People told us that trails were a well-used parks and recreation resource, and strongly supported enhanced pedestrian and bike trail connections, particularly along the riverfront.

Analysis:

- The City's parks, trails, and greenways are well used and support access to natural areas, active transportation, and social spaces.
- Connectivity is lacking, especially to and along the waterfront.

Key Actions

- Expand and enhance the network of greenways, trails, and paths, including improved access to the riverfront.
- Improve transit and active transportation connectivity between facilities and amenities.
- Update and take steps to advance the vision for a fully connected riverfront.



Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to strengthen connections to and within the parks and recreation system.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

9 Draft Strategic Direction 9:

Improve and expand core services

Round 1 Engagement: People expressed a desire for more recreation programs, expanded spaces, and extended service hours to meet evolving needs, while also highlighting dissatisfaction with certain administrative services such as registration processes.

Analysis:

- There are many popular recreation programs available in the city for diverse activities and age groups, and participation is increasing.
- Demand exceeds supply for some recreation programs.
- The City's Facility Allocation Policy and Procedures, which outline how space is assigned and which groups receive priority for bookings, does not address the needs of existing and new users in an equitable way.
- There are opportunities to improve the efficiency of operations and maintenance.



Key Actions

- Expand and diversify programs in recreation, health/wellness, and culture, for all participants, in response to evolving needs and trends.
- Optimize space utilization in facilities, with adjustments to facility hours, space usage, and capacity based on data analysis.
- Increase outdoor program opportunities, including nature-based programming.
- Improve parks and recreation administrative services to reduce technological barriers to marketing, communication, registration, and bookings.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to improve and expand core services.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

10 Draft Strategic Direction 10:

Collaborate and formalize partnerships

Round 1 Engagement: People emphasized the importance of strengthening existing and creating new partnerships, including with Indigenous-serving organizations.

Analysis:

- The City has many partnerships with other organizations to work collaboratively on facility and service delivery (i.e. Century House Association, New West Arts Council, Purpose Society and Family Place).
- As the population grows and diversifies, stronger partnerships will be key to meeting the community's needs.



Key Actions

- Work with other City departments to integrate parks and recreation into broader city initiatives, including community events and activations.
- Expand access to spaces and programs through public-private partnerships and with other organizations such as public and private schools and institutions.
- Establish agreements with private developers, organizations, businesses, government agencies, and non-profit organizations to allow public use of underutilized spaces or vacant lands.
- Facilitate public art in recreation facilities, parks and open spaces through the Public Art Strategy.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to collaborate and formalize partnerships.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

Draft Strategic Direction 11:
Plan for financial sustainability

We didn't ask directly for community input on financial sustainability for the People, Parks and Play Plan, but we consistently hear that community members want the City to use tax dollars responsibly.

Analysis:
- It is challenging for the City to source capital funds for construction of parks and recreation facilities and amenities.
- As the parks and recreation system has expanded, operations staff and funding have not kept pace.

Key Actions

- Leverage the City's tools for financing growth through new development to deliver new parks, amenities, and facilities to help address high-need areas of the city.
- Establish a reserve fund for renewal of parks and recreation amenities and spaces.
- Explore funding opportunities through public and private partnerships.
- Seek grant funding opportunities.
- Adjust operating budgets commensurate with population growth and when additional lands are acquired, and new facilities and amenities are constructed.

Rate your level of agreement with the strategic direction to plan for financial sustainability.

Rate your level of agreement

Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral (neither agree nor disagree)	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Don't know/ prefer not to say

Comments....

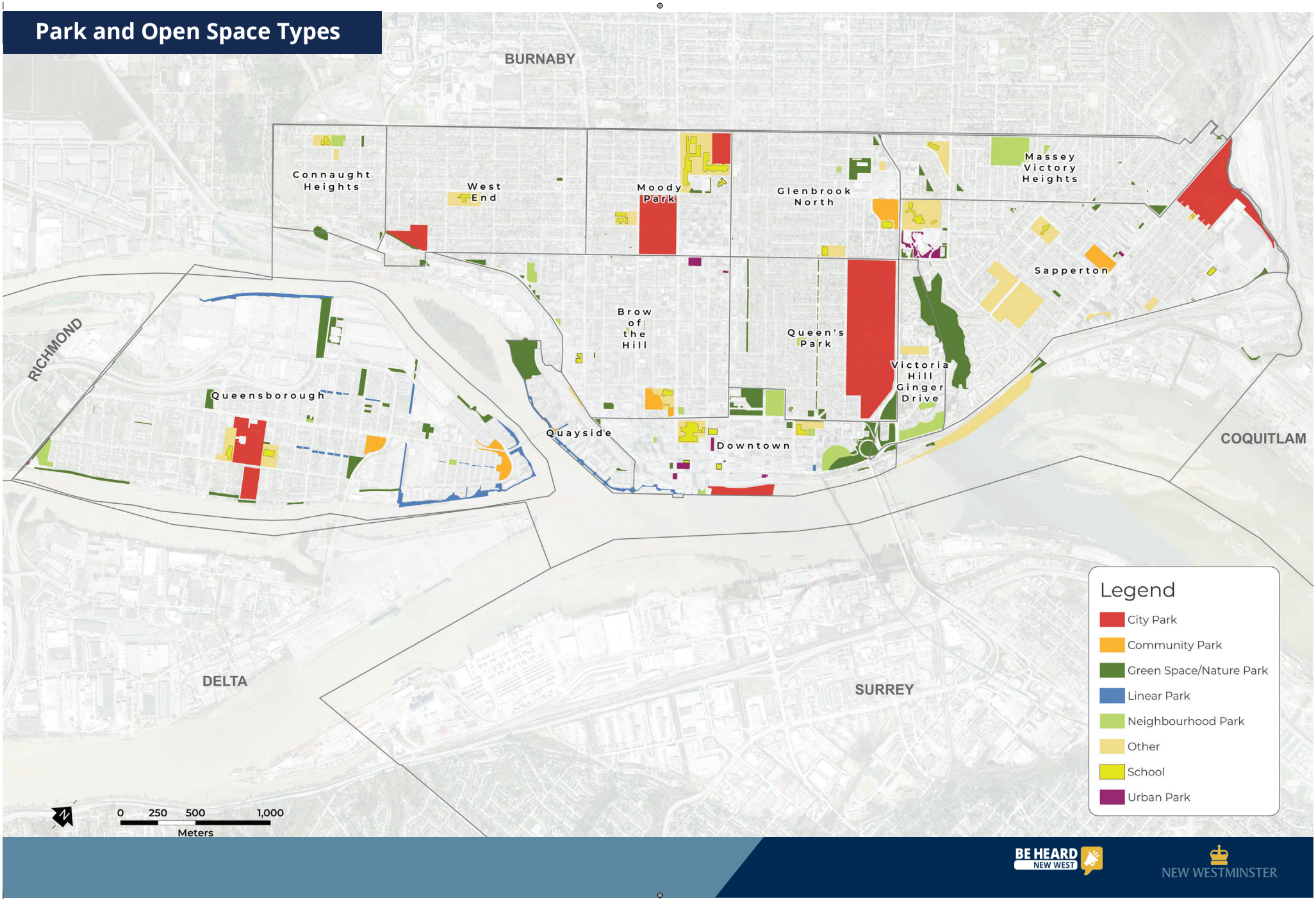
Please provide any comments on the draft strategic Ddirections and key actions, and/or let us know about anything you feel is missing.



Check back at the BeHeard website for further updates on the Plan.

BE HEARD NEW WEST

Park and Open Space Types



Happy Cities

NEW WESTMINSTER

URBAN SYSTEMS

New Westminster



Appendix A3

Workshop Input

Introduction

In spring 2024, interactive workshops were held using Zoom and in person. The purpose of the workshops was to obtain input from City and community interest holders regarding parks and recreation facilities, services, and programs in New Westminster. The workshops began with introductions and a short presentation on the context, content, and planning process of the plan.

The following is a verbatim record of the workshop input.

Soup and Bannock sessions for Indigenous Peoples are listed first. The themes and questions for these workshops were specific to cultural interests.

For other interest holders and City personnel, the themes were strengths, challenges, vision, and ideas.

After a brainstorming exercise, the vision and ideas were synthesized for some groups, and participants used ranked polling to identify their priorities (numbered lists in order of resulting priority). The interest group and City staff/Council workshops are presented in order by date.

The synthesis of input from interest holder and Indigenous Peoples workshops are included in **Appendix A** What We Heard.

Soup and Bannock Workshops with Indigenous Peoples

June 10 and 12, 2024, two sessions (in person at Douglas College Indigenous Gathering Space)

Participants: 10

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions made by Indigenous community members, organizations and representatives during the soup and bannock sessions, including representatives from the Qayqayt First Nation, Spirit of the Children Society, urban Indigenous residents, and Douglas College Elder in Residence, students, and faculty members.

Cultural Representation and Inclusion

How can we incorporate Indigenous culture and history into the design and use parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services in New Westminster?

- Representation of both BC Nations and non-BC Nations
- Make space for Indigenous culture in policy and physical design
- Figure out funding
- Build friendships through SIIA (South Island Indigenous Authority)
- Embrace urban Natives. Urban Indigenous can't access local nations services
- Policy changes to make inclusions better

- Make sure our places are for us and self-disclosing
- Use rooftops and/ or vertical buildings to create space for sports, multi-functional spaces, gardening, and arts and culture
- Collaborate with Indigenous representatives in spaces that are lacking Indigenous culture and history
- Emphasize connectedness/ feelings of connection
- Have people who are skilled and knowledgeable about Indigenous culture and history at facilities and hire contractors to teach courses
- Suggestions for design: Have totem poles of all 33 nations in once place and provide info about each totem pole
- Have a better understanding of urban Indigenous people and histories of their displacement. A suggestion to have a board with questions, such as "what territory are you from?". Urban Indigenous peoples are disrespected and have shared displacement histories

What specific features or elements would make parks and recreation more welcoming and representative for you?

- Create specific and inclusive spaces
- Have supportive services that are reflected in policy and funding opportunities
- Be considerate of representing different groups, such as elders, practitioners, and young people
- Increased access and reduced cost for self identified Indigenous folx regardless of Nation
- Reduced or no cost for all nations
- Have educational and cultural activities that are open to local Indigenous, urban Indigenous, and non-Indigenous people
- Offer free passes to Indigenous students to access park services. Not all students are residents of New Westminster, but they still use parks and recreation spaces
- Create space for self-identifies urban Indigenous people to feel welcome and part of the community
- One participant asked "what does a sense of belonging look and feel like?"
- Signage with Indigenous place name, history placecards of indigenous history
- Provide education about the history of New Westminster at every Parks and Recreation facility
- Naming places in Coast Salish languages
- Speak with all Nations to get different perspectives
- More education and more learning about Indigenous cultures and histories is improving social awareness and acceptance of Indigenous peoples
  - "[I felt] shame around being Indigenous when I was young – I hid it. I had no Indigenous friends. This is changing [with] more education and learning"
- Build a space for healing that is multi-use and multi-cultural
- Stone, wood, and lots of windows that can be completely sealed
- Having more recreation spaces that can be rented out

Are there any additional practices or ceremonies that you would like to see accommodated in our parks?

- Hard to access the river
- More privacy for ceremonies (especially sweat-lodge ceremonies)
- Sweat Lodge Ceremonies
  - Glenbrooke Ravine: there was a village of 400 people and a sweat-lodge on top of the hill. This sacred space need more privacy, safety, and teachings (lodge keepers)
  - Amendments to cultural practice for first-time participants of sweat-lodge ceremonies or people from different Nations should be made to ensure the safety of the ceremony
- Garry Oak trees on Vancouver Island at Camosun College help to rehabilitate the gardens
- Incorporate old ways of managing food systems
- Double-check languages... (illegible note)
- Add signage about ceremonies and practices
  - For example, harvesting cedar is done by host Nation and needs to grant permission to others for harvesting
  - There are experiences of people not understanding and disrespecting these cultural protocols - Indigenous peoples need to feel safe while engaging in ceremonies
- Access to mixed and diverse spaces for healing, including sweat lodges, water, sun, art
- Utilize vertical spaces (ex. Downtown Vancouver across from "Tinsel Town" International Village Mall)
- Indigenous medicine space: spaces can be small, they don't have to be big to be meaningful
- Education for adults who have been stripped of their Indigenous education and knowledge

Accessibility, Engagement and Education

What are the barriers to accessing parks and recreation facilities, programs, and services?

- Reduce barriers for self-identification
- Requiring paperwork to prove status, such as cards or birth certificates
- Requiring proof of Indigenous identification is a barrier. Self-identifying Indigenous people should have the benefits of being Indigenous without these barriers
- Elevators are hard to find in some spaces
- Creating year-round access pass for Indigenous community to utilize services and programs that are low cost or free
- Too much online registration is difficult for people who are not technologically savvy or require in-person help
- Online registration and online information is a barrier for many
- There are no descriptions on totem poles in New West
- Policies in New Westminster that allow for self-identification would relieve barriers, but they should also have a policy for non-Indigenous people incorrectly identifying themselves
- Having access to designated times for free drop-ins for elders. (ex. 7–9am on Mondays)

How can we better engage Indigenous youth in parks and recreation planning?

- The city could better engage the school district to support Indigenous population
- Need better representation of Indigenous communities living in New Westminster
- Make the process of engaging indigenous population more accessible
- Teach children about the history of the place they are from and empower them in places where they are. Bring it back to the history of the place
- Truth and reconciliation education is targeted to non-indigenous population, but there needs to be safer spaces of Indigenous people to participate
- More inclusive engagement and invitations
- Lower costs in school notices all students
- Noting that children will often teach their parents what they know or have learned, which helps educate them about Indigenous culture and history as well
- More education about the land and its complexity - there seems to only be colonial history signage
- Wreck beach signage by the Vancouver Park Board is from a historical perspective

What opportunities are there for educational initiatives within parks and facilities discussing the role of parks and recreation in the process of truth and reconciliation?

- Provide opportunities to learn about local Nations
- Chief Lawabee made a proposal years ago to have the park at 20th and 9th Ave. to be used as a storytelling place to serve the Indigenous population
- Collaborate with schools for education of languages of local Nations
- Community centres in Vancouver had Indigenous support workers to facilitate programs and services
- Education doesn't always have to be for Indigenous people, it can also be for others to be educated
- Be honest about mistakes and lessons learned - there's humility and learning with that
- Park spaces are the best place to do education and talk about the land. Education about the land, on the land
- The claims and mapping may not be as complex as we think. Stories might be difficult to understand
- A Surrey tour in Semiahmoo from the Chief's niece
- Flora and fauna descriptions in latin, english, and Indigenous languages. Also include the indigenous uses and relations to these flora and fauna
  - Alert Bay, BC has flora and fauna descriptions that are inclusive of Indigenous language and culture
- Suggestion for the city to fund and host gatherings and not just the Indigenous peoples and organizations being the ones to initiate, fund, and host gatherings

- Naming of places in the city is very colonial, for example, the naming of Queens Park, New Westminster, and Douglas College
- Honouring children who attended residential schools, or "The Missing Children" by understanding and educating people on how the city was a part of this colonial history. History should not just be colonial history, but also be inclusive the intertwined Indigenous histories

Collaboration and Support

Can you share any successful examples of parks or recreation spaces from other cities that honour Indigenous culture?

- There are so many colonial names in New Westminster, such as Queens Park, Moody Park, Douglas College
- Generational Indigenous history is so far removed in New Westminster. Concerns and issues with the displacement of First Nations people in New Westminster, especially when thinking about Indigenous youth
- The city of Vancouver has Indigenous support workers present at community centers running programs that are funded by organizations other than the city. The city of Vancouver held space for these programs, but did not fund them
- The City of Vancouver has relationships with Host Nations with a focus on Urban Indigenous needs and perspectives. The City of New Westminster should have an Urban Indigenous advisory committee or volunteer positions
- A desire for workshops that teach Indigenous people how to fish
- A desire for weaving workshops with Musqueam Nation
- There is a lack of access to cedar trees as Urban Indigenous people
- A desire for Indigenous children to learn to sew regalia ("spirit of the children")
- A desire for more culturally safe spaces
- A desire for more education about the history of lacrosse, noting the difficulty for Indigenous community to be involved in the sport that is popular in New Westminster
- A positive example of Alert Bay, BC that incorporates Indigenous Knowledge of flora and fauna
- The naming of the new aquatic centre and inclusion of Indigenous public art is a divisive issue ("double-edged sword") because, while the naming and art are inclusive of Indigenous culture, there are complaints about searching the name in google maps without certain characters being available on the keyboard
- A desire for Indigenous families to have a place in the neighbourhood, where Indigenous people live, for storytelling

How can the City better support Indigenous-led initiatives and organizations through parks and recreation programming?

- Have resources for urban Indigenous peoples find their communities
- Institute policy lock (10 years) for policies that are backed by funding, so that they can stabilize, and that enable free and low barriers to recreation, sports, classes etc.
- Hire Indigenous workers
- Find a way to start training, educating, and engaging the people in the community in a way that considers the formal and informal ways of participation and be willing to adapt the current engagement system to meet the needs of people in the community

- Na'tsa'maht Indigenous plant garden
- The city should consider having a dedicated Indigenous advisory committee
- Be clear in invitations about which Indigenous Nations are welcome and give context with land acknowledgements
- Connecting with education and health
  - Authorization of building and having more flora and fauna in public space and private spaces
  - Preservation and rediscovering the plants and encouraging growth and green spaces in the city for cultural and health benefits
- Indigenous youth face "red tape" and experience tough times that not always an FHA matter. Indigenous youth need conversations with counselors or help
- Ask each Nation for their input
- Want more transparency and honesty about the removal of the Cosmic Maypole in Friendship Gardens
- General issues with TACC
- Issues with the city's crown logo
- Programs with Indigenous coaches and mentors for children
- There are no Indigenous food places
- Indigenous initiatives seem to only be facilitated by Indigenous organizations, but Indigenous groups also want the city to host
- Invites need to be explicit for all Indigenous Peoples
- The Indigenous history, education, and relationships between all Indigenous peoples in New Westminster is complicated and political – how can we make it welcoming for all Indigenous people living and working here?

What are your thoughts on incorporating traditional ecological knowledge into that maintenance and development of our urban green spaces?

- Add gardens near 8th Street and 8th Avenue (near Massey Theatre and Moody Park)
- Increase access to the river, watch the river, see the seals, have a backdrop for family events, and have meetings by the river. Want to have the "feeling like you are on the river"
- Have an Indigenous person steward a food forest area or consider food systems that were used by Local First Nations
- The river is a great backdrop for events and that connection to the river is important
- Have Indigenous plants on 8th and 8th garden
- Proposal for Indigenous stewardship of the land at Queens Park Farm

How can we ensure that parks and recreation programs are inclusive and respectful of Indigenous traditions and practices?

- Should have and include skilled people who are Indigenous
- Indigenous support worker for all people including older adults, not just for students in school, which is the case currently
- Be inclusive of down river dialect
- Have Nation specific information, support, and resources. It is important to have distinctions between the Nations as they are not the same in a lot of ways, although they can share similarities
- "Piece of home" provides comfort
- Create safe space for Indigenous youth through bonding and food*
- Have support to access supportive services and amenities
- Have an interactive map showing what Nation people are from
- Have an Indigenous "maker" space, potentially at Queens Park
  - Equipment: have tools that can't necessarily be bought or have personal space for such as for sewing, jewelry, carving, woodworking, plant knowledge
  - Programming: have classes to teach sewing for regalia, carving, painting, beading etc.
  - Example: Musqueam artist Rita Kompst
- Have a better understanding of the Urban Indigenous history in New Westminster, including residential schools, infrastructure, education etc.

Other

- Concerns that [this] engagement session felt uncomfortable because of the lack of "Indigenous faces" present

Outdoor Sports

May 6, 2024 at 7:00pm (virtual)

Participant Organizations: 11

- New Westminster Softball
- Fraser Health
- New Westminster Minor Baseball
- New Westminster Soccer Coalition
- New West Pickleball Club
- New West Spartance Track and Field
- Football Club
- Red Fox Healthy Living Society
- New West Youth Football
- New Westminster Amateur Sports Coalition

Respondents to Forms Poll: 9

Strengths (General)

- I feel safe running programs here
- Staff are very helpful, good communication
- Great response from staff

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Queens Park stadium is high quality
- City has high level of maintenance of fields
- Parks are always cleaned and well maintained
- Good maintenance
- Football field at Mercer is CFL size, meets needs

Challenges

- Not enough full-sized fields for softball and baseball
- Softball and baseball dugouts need regular maintenance
- Queens Park dugouts are too small
- Concession building for softball is too small, not maintained
- Lacking indoor or roofed baseball cages
- Not enough all-weather soccer fields with lighting
- Competition for field booking- not enough sports facilities
- Not enough storage space at Mercer
- There are issues with people jumping onto fields
- There are rodents in storage spaces
- Need indoor space for Red Fox programs when weather is bad

Vision

1. Design parks as central hubs for sports with washroom and concession facilities
2. Prioritize year-round use
3. Upgrade existing facilities
4. Provide spaces for public events
5. Integrate multi-use spaces
6. Provide sports training
7. Provide indoor space near outdoor spaces
8. Plan for growth
9. Opportunities for kids

- Indoor off-season facilities
- Four full-size fields

Ideas

1. Provide lit turf fields
2. Add indoor training facility
3. Add a multi-use, covered court
4. Add more lights in fields and facilities
5. Improve ball diamond facilities
6. Recognize kids' achievements

- Cover at least one lacrosse box
- Resurface lacross boxes
- Provide outdoor space for pickleball
- More washroom facilities
- More garbage cans
- Need change rooms at sports fields
- Walkways to sports grounds need to be visible and accessible

Social, Cultural and Service Groups

May 7, 2024 at 1:00pm (virtual)

Participant Organizations: 3

- Queensborough Programs
- Community Action Network

Respondents to Forms Poll: 3

Strengths (General)

- Proud to be in New West
- CIty has been amazing
- Diversity is one of the city's strengths
- City is working on welcome packages
- Subsidy program - registration covered for low income people
- There are opportunities without needing to pay much
- Major growth in family population
- New crisis response team
- New Westminster is Sanctuary City - no immigration status is asked for
- Rising Up Antiracism report

Strengths (Indoor)

- Cart program in the library
- Public WIFI is available at indoor facilities
- Older adults programs at Queensborough and Century House
- Queensborough play drop-in is great
- Privacy blinds available at təməsewtxʷ

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Farmers market
- Amazing facilities - spray park is fantastic
- Appreciate Port Royal Park - well used park, great picnic tables, has alcohol zone, well maintained
- There is a lot of space available for non-profits at Moody Park

Challenges (General)

- Older adults are lonely, not respected
- There is a lack of knowledge on how to access, where things are, and what is available
- There is not enough interest because marketing is not reaching people where they are
- Some newcomers don't understand that they can participate without paying
- How does diversity inform the programs?
- Language barrier with newcomers
- Feeling of being left out for newcomers
- Lots of things about diversity are missing, e.g., Muslim swimming costume, kids from 5 years old need to wear hijab (Burnaby Community Centre has something)

- Not enough engagement with the community in Queensborough to understand what the community needs
- Need to provide systems so that communities can help design the programs
- Kids are underserved in Queensborough because it is hard to access services across the bridge

Challenges (Indoor)

- There could be better programming for older adults at Queensborough Community Centre
- Pricing for non-profits at Queensborough Community Centre could be better
- Child care is not offered in all community centres (not offered at QCC)
- There is no music program

Challenges (Outdoor)

- Washrooms are sometimes closed at Moody Park
- Concerns with dirty washrooms and drug use in them
- There are some safety hazards in the spray park
- People don't know where the parks are
- Fights happen in the parks

Vision

1. Welcome all cultures
2. Create affordable, accessible options for everyone
3. Share information about parks and recreation more widely
4. Provide opportunities for families in all parts of the city (including Queensborough)
5. Make flexible spaces
6. Address multi-crises in parks and recreation
7. Adapt for climate change
8. Support those with housing challenges
9. Support those who are lonely
10. Welcome all age groups

Ideas

1. Promote ambassador programs
2. Provide child care in community centres and public spaces
3. Make older adults drop-in times
4. Create welcoming lobbies in community centres
5. Provide accessible activities in Queensborough
6. Add artificial turf field with lighting at Queensborough
7. Provide clean and accessible washrooms that are open more often
8. Create more awareness of crisis response team
9. Provide free WiFi in parks
10. Enhance urban forestry

- Give vouchers in welcome packages for free swim, fitness, etc.
- More spray parks
- Use lobbies to display local art
- Welcome packages to inform newcomers
- Make survey more available in more languages
- Develop programs with the community
- Provide more picnic shelters by Queensborough Community Centre
- Need an all-weather soccer turf in Queensborough
- Add covered picnic spaces in Moody Park

Indoor Sports

May 7, 2024 at 7:00pm (virtual)

Participant Organizations: 3

- New West Pickleball Club
- Junior Salmonbellies Lacrosse
- Metro Minor Ball Hockey

Respondents to Forms Poll: 3

Strengths (General)

- Young families are coming back in
- Relationship with the City is good
- City staff are helpful, they set up everything
- Happy with service delivery model - they get space allocation

Strengths (Indoor)

- Təməsewtxʷ is a huge strength
- Queen's Park Sportsplex is a great facility, works well for ball hockey
- Tremendous facilities
- Facilities are functional
- Təməsewtxʷ has a generous allocation for pickleball
- Ball hockey has access from April to June

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Great job resurfacing tennis/pickleball courts at Moody Park
- City gives priority to New Westminster residents - they can register one day earlier
- Three lacrosse boxes

Challenges (General)

- Will there be enough recreation space with a bigger population?
- School system facing pressure from population growth and increased user demand for school facilities
- Queensborough residents can go to Richmond more easily than to New West
- Langley and Burnaby have new covered sports boxes – would like something similar here
- Far west end may have the biggest gap in service

Challenges (Indoor)

- Some elementary schools are used for pickleball, middle schools would be better but they are full

Challenges (Outdoor)

- There are not enough change facilities
- The three outdoor lacrosse boxes are in poor condition
- No dedicated pickleball courts – there is conflict in sharing with tennis
- Weather is a problem for outdoor lacrosse
- Hume Park is being considered for pickleball but concerns that houses are close

Vision

1. Keep up with population growth
2. Repair aging outdoor facilities
3. Multi-use facilities
4. Creativity to address needs, e.g. facilities in new developments
5. Integration of indoor and outdoor facilities
6. Support and promote healthy living
7. Input from user groups through to design stage
8. Maintain positive relationships

Ideas

1. Covered multi-sport courts
2. Lit multi-sport courts
3. Upgrade existing sports boxes
4. Dedicated outdoor pickleball courts
5. Provide change facilities
6. Dedicated time for pickeball on courts
7. Provide storage containers at sport fields

Council

May 13, 2024 at 1:00pm (in person)

Participants: 7

Respondents to Forms Poll: 6

Strengths (General)

- New Westminster is centrally located in Lower Mainland: good for tournaments
- Proximity of facilities to each other and community
- Getting the most out of limited spaces
- Moody Park, Mercer Stadium and more: many users at the spaces at the same time
- Clusters of activities like Century House, Youth Centre and Pool: these draw people to the spaces and keeps them active
- Five SkyTrain stations make places easy to get to: low carbon impact and accessible
- Moody Park is always busy
- Moving away from centralized user services
- Good at advancing projects and initiatives while planning is ongoing
- High quality and well-maintained public spaces
- Personal connections between community users, staff and the places where they recreate
- Harness the potential for community partnerships
- Broad view of all the components - urban forestry, public space, biodiversity, etc
- Greenhouse and carpentry spaces
- High quality programming
- Reasonable prices for programs
- Variety of programs offered relative to the population size of New West

Strengths (Indoor)

- Older facilities that are well maintained and continue to be used
- Century House and Youth Centre
- Queensborough Community Centre - Central community space that fosters gathering and connection
- təməsew̓txʷ is (will be!) a huge strength

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Parks are well loved and appreciated
- Neighbourhood parks and playgrounds are awesome community gathering spaces
- Sapperton - feels safe in the parks
- Appreciation for the outdoor upkeep, gardens and trees in New Westminster
- Larger parks and trees for shade and cooling
- Planting trees with consideration for sledding events
- Secret parks like Queens Park
- Supporting multiple user groups - lacrosse, soccer, etc

Challenges (General)

- Population growing faster than recreation infrastructure
- Not getting enough money from older adult govts
- Lots of demands and priorities in city
- Limited spaces - need to be everything for everyone
- High demand for space means kids and others have to wake up very early
- Lack of a sport tourism strategy
- Sapperton to Downtown is lacking waterfront connectivity
- Indigenous ways of knowing / seeing integrated
- Integrate Indigenous learning and place management
- Lack of connection to primary food source
- There is user demand for flexibility
- Not reaching families in apartment buildings
- Large, dense neighbourhoods - more families living in condos and they require recreation + parks
- Ensuring ample opportunities for parks and recreation for people in dense settings
- Expectations gap - understand public perception / reception may be different from Council's expectations
- Fragmented media consumption
- Review the 7 bold steps - how are we doing in terms of transforming roads into places for people?
- Queensborough access – it is hard for them to reach mainland
- Infrastructure deficit (older P&R facilities, etc), need to keep up with demand
- Aging public works yard at Queens Park
- Competition for staff
- Registration process is challenging
- Letting people know what is available, especially for free
- Can people be informed early when programs fill up
- Hard to sign up for high-demand programs (like swimming and ballet)
- Cost of programs – higher than some other cities, too much for some people
- Need to offer courses in different languages – is that happening?
- Managing expectations – what do we offer and how to balance those with what can be paid for?
- Prioritizing neighbourhoods – how to balance needs with financial realities?
- Financial balance – need revenue but want affordability
- Summer programs – they tend to end at 3 or 4, but parents don't finish work until 5
- Hard to maintain facilities and programs, while building new programs
- Certain facilities have lower use times - could they be more intensively used?

Challenges (Indoor)

- Curling times have changed – shorter programs, drop-in, etc.
- Not enough accessible washrooms

Challenges (Outdoor)

- We can't have parks closed for two months (at school facilities)
- Lack of active play areas – need to keep kids active for good health
- Lack of playing fields and turf fields
- No washrooms in Tiperary Park
- People like spray parks but they are challenging during drought
- Spray parks are freshwater (how to manage tension - people need to cool off...but water shortages)
- Lack of lighting at sports fields - this can increase activity/ participation
- Lack of a lacrosse box in Queensborough
- Not enough opportunities to connect with nature, animals
- Limited space for new facilities – no vacant or unused city-owned space
- Weather protection on key spaces? Weather limits options - can't move indoors

Vision

1. Indigenous role integrated / sense of belonging
2. Affordable programs
3. Maximize multi-uses, efficiency
4. Strengthen and broaden partnerships
5. Balance amenities and nature / climate resiliency
6. 15 min walk to facilities
7. Connection to the land
8. Keep it realistic, recognize financial realities
9. Flexibility and diversity in programming for all (including older adults)
10. Sports field access comparable

- Covered spaces: set a target for covered space
- Meet other city goals - green spaces, cool spaces
- Cost of programming: no higher than 50th percentile for comparable municipalities. Relatively affordable – both to reflect demographics, and because it's the right thing to do
- Minimize barriers to organizations as well as individuals
- Incorporate older adults to the greatest extent possible
- Reach or exceed BC fields/1000 (recognizing value of turf)
- Reallocating road space - fulfill this aspect of 7 bold steps
- Creativity - in use of space and how elements are integrated
- Parks & Rec in New Westminster is rooted in belonging in the community
- Balance of programmed use and un-programmed use of park space
- Make parks and recreation equitable
- Increase community-centred services (more local youth/older adults activity)
- Clarity in the plan direction, realistic in what's achievable
- Maximize the potential of spaces, within a realistic context of time & money

Ideas

1. Creative use of space – roads, alleys, rooftops, river, indoors
2. Creative active parks and playgrounds, gardens
3. Land/space acquisition strategy
4. Outdoor covered spaces – lacrosse, hockey, etc.
5. More lit turf fields
6. Youth and older adults services in more locations
7. Intergenerational programming
8. More facilities in Queensborough
9. Streamline registration and booking
10. Sport tourism strategy

- "Secret Parks" for community to discover
- Explore alley / laneway transformations + Sunday street closures
- Making spaces where everyone feels comfortable (including unhoused community)
- Refresh parks and playgrounds as needed
- Harness New Westminster's natural topography for play & discovery
- More opportunities for residents to touch water and interact with the water
- Interim use of vacant/ underused spaces - guidelines, plan, direction
- Hard playing surfaces (3 courts together are the magic number) 4 is even better (hockey size)
- How to bring people together in parks - serve all needs (Langley example)
- Climate resilience in parks and recreation spaces and facilities
- Land-based practices: teaching and sharing ways to connect with land
- More opportunities for community to lead and express themselves
- Ensuring spaces enable Indigenous residents to host cultural celebrations and events
- Additional indoor community spaces in downtown
- All gender washrooms
- More programs - dance, etc
- More school and Council partnerships
- Community-led boulevard beautification and use
- Leave space for the unplanned (ex. Queens Park toboggan hill)
- Linking density (and prov/fed $$) with new parks and recreation amenities
- Additional ways to reflect community priorities - participatory budgeting?

Interdepartmental Staff

May 14, 2024 at 10:00am (in person, no poll conducted)

Participants: 30

Strengths (General)

- High-quality, specialized programs (different from other municipalities to draw people)
- Great costumer service
- Good relationship with non-profits
- Strong continuity across the seasons creates familiarity
- Serve a diverse community
- Great partnerships with community
- Ability to work across depts
- Diversity
- Responsive to community feedback
- Great passionate staff
- Supports our filming division (parking, use of facilities, etc) and revenue generation from that
- Outreach workers are engaging with those unhoused
- Financial subsidy program

Strengths (Indoor)

- Facilities are fairly financial accessible
- Intergenerational facilities - unique and beneficial model
- Adaptable, flexible
- Youth services, swimming, dance are superior
- There are new facilities and old ones that are still great
- There is balance between service-based programs and registered programs
- There are low and no-cost services
- Affordable non-profit child care facilities

Strengths (Outdoor)

- There is something for everyone. Many diverse opportunities
- Equity in recreation space
- The horticulture display really engages the public
- Generally good geographic coverage of outdoor recreation spaces throughout city
- Variety of community-based organizations and events that encourage use of outdoor spaces
- Using streets, greenways, and underutilized spaces for recreation in both temporary and permanent ways
- High-quality, new equipment
- Spaces are generally clean and safe
- Parks are safe
- Good job with engagement and reaching out to as many stakeholders as possible
- Great relationships and collaboration
- City is open to new designs
- Collaborating with other departments to integrate park-like features into interdepartmental projects
- Leadership in tree protection and replacement
- Strong policies for urban forest/biodiversity with implementation plans

- Good data and awareness for urban heat island effect, planting trees in vulnerable areas of our city and expanding opportunities for outdoor cooling
- Integrating natural areas into our active and passive park spaces
- Access to naturalized areas
- Good active transportation connectivity of parks and facilities as designated in ATNP

Challenges (General)

- Infancy stage re DEIAR - inwards and outwards
- Competing uses – not all are compatible
- Providing amenities that are designed to be used (not just accessed) by people with disabilities (playgrounds, dog parks)
- Recreation needs to take on more social services due to community need
- Older systems in government not yet aligned with new systems and ideologies
  - This can deter younger staff and not meet the needs of community the best we could
- Reaching out to newcomers that speak other languages
- Waves of immigration that have changed every 5 years - hard to reflect it / respond on how to include people and reach out to newcomers
- North Africans are latest newcomers
- Sanctuary City – lacking programs to support this - compensation, honouraria
- Need to integrate Indigenous values
- Integrating First Nations cultural values and uses to be better connect people to the land
- First Nations are rights and title holders, not stakeholders
- Not welcoming for Indigenous people - feels colonial
- Multiple overlapping land claims – no consensus from the nations
- Equity
- Growing population of vulnerable individuals due to economy, housing crisis, opioid crisis
- Staff are working beyond their trained abilities
- Increase in mental health concerns in the community
- Social isolation for vulnerable people, particularly older adults
- Growing needs of vulnerable populations, more people struggling
- Supporting staff appropriately through all of the challenges in community they are working through
- Diverse staff that represent the demographics of the community
- Not enough staff to meet needs
- Need experienced staff to work with the growing needs, drugs, homelessness, financial struggles, diversity, inclusion, equity
- Don't have the staff depth at entry level
- Rate of community growth exceeds capacity of facilities
- Keeping up with development and maintaining what we are creating
- Financial challenges – don't have the same tax base as bigger cities
- Universal accessibility challenges
- Need a land acquisition plan

- How will City use new provincial tool – Amenity Cost Charges (ACCs) to collect funding through new development?
- Queensborough is not equally served
- Opportunities to work interdepartmentally - bridges and transportation projects integrated with parks and serving the community
- Have our parks and facilities designed with climate impact and emergency relief in mind

Challenges (Indoor)

- No dedicated space for gymnastics program - not enough offerings
- Not a proportionate amount of cultural programming
- Staff procurement for aquatic facilities - across departments especially on entry-level positions
- Not enough time or staffing to do the necessary relationship building that creates community
- Many aging facilities and amenities
- Need accessibility upgrades
- Financial limits on use: people need an address to access facilities
- Shelters are closed during the day, people are using the recreation facilities
- High and low use of facilities
- Competing and incompatible uses - challenge with limited space
- Pressure on sports fields and indoor facilities - growing interest in sports in the community
- Need for low/no cost meeting space for community groups
- More investment into youth spaces and services

Challenges (Outdoor)

- We are a very urban, small city - competing uses and limited space
- Land is constrained
- Gap in quantitative metrics for levels of service (asset management)
- There are pressures on parks, open spaces and public realm
- How will City acquire future park space with higher density growth, particularly within the new Transit Oriented Areas designated by province?
- No medicinal or cultural plants featured
- Parks on-grade are preferred to parks on slab
- Are our trees appropriate for changing climate conditions?
- Limited availability of weather-protected outdoor facilities
- Equity in distribution and access to parks and open spaces
- More connected and animated riverfront
- Ensuring programming opportunities for squares and plazas to add to active commercial areas
- Need to balance pressures of use and maintaining natural systems
- Need better connected parks, open spaces and better indoor/outdoor relationship in facilities and parks
- Need for improved active transportation access and universal accessibility
- Using transportation projects to improve parks
- Soil conditions can be challenging - heavier excavation requirements

Vision

- Evolving the structure of the parks and recreation department to be better meet the goals of the PLAN
- Decolonize parks and recreation system, policies and procedures
- Work with our neighbours who also have riverfront- Richmond, Coquitlam, Surrey, Burnaby and First Nations towards a shared vision
- Incorporate visions from similar communities
- Understand who we are serving and who is underserved
- Be a community enabler, not just a service provider
- All parts of community feel welcome, included and heard
- All residents view our parks and recreation amenities as spaces for connections, sense of belonging
- Inclusivity on how we deliver - rethink how we conceptualize and deliver projects
- Every resident sees themselves and their interests reflected in the services or spaces
- Opportunities for community belonging
- Collaboration between departments for aligned services and coordinated programming
- Radical change to streets (more space for people, natural assets, amenities)
- Address loneliness, houselessnes, extreme heat, affordability
- Balance of programs across demographics
- Increased partnership with cultural organization
- Consult with Indigenous nations
- Welcoming all people
- Equitable spaces
- Create more public gathering spaces
- Cultural preservation
- More parks/ open spaces in walking distance to every resident/ neighbourhood
- More community stewardship in our natural areas/ parks
- A flexible, nimble and well resourced department that can adapt to community needs as they arise
- Create unique identity for the city
- Cross-departmental collaboration to use all of the facilities
- Community use of schools
- No single-use items
- Parity between green and grey assets
- Parks and recreation staff feel supported, appreciated and enjoy doing their work
- Maximizing spaces that we have
- Inviting spaces, drawing people in
- Continue to expand amenities
- Increasing the amount of critical programming hours - before and after school
- Be adaptable and resilient to climate change
- More emphasis on food security
- Natural spaces of respite within the urban context

Ideas (General)

- Clear actions for how we will implement each of the themes identified in the TOR
- Create an organizational chart for quick reference to working across departments
- Create a plan for the ACC program, including a land acquisition strategy
- Reach out to Laura Chaloner and Will Thomas, our Outreach Support Workers
- Expand services to unhoused people
- Consider First Nations when mapping parks
- Ceremonial space for First Nations
- Creating educational spaces that relate to Indigenous connections to the land
- Parking lots are multi-use where possible: add sport court lines over parking stall lines
- Work interdepartmentally to develop a City Welcome Package that reflects new plan and all services
- Support delivery of affordable child care utilizing City owned parks and recreation facilities
- Invest in staff: training, succession planning, staff consultation, appreciation, etc.
- More dedicated spaces for youth across the city
- One card to access all city services - recreation, library, paid events
- Incorporate design that enhances and promotes social connectedness and inclusion
- Low carbon, climate resilience of natural spaces, people, and structures
- Continuing to work on communication
- Conduct an equity-based planning exercise: document then remedy the impact of inequitable resource distribution; then develop a framework to invest parks and recreation resources towards our vision
- Provide for publicly accessible, privately developed space
- Conduct engagement with KIDS New Westminster Committee

Ideas (Indoor)

- Dedicated space for gymnastics
- Dedicated storage facilities across the city
- More public washrooms throughout the city
- Low carbon primary and back-up power for the spaces, increased air filtration
- Sustainable transportation hubs
- Indigenous spaces and programming, including for the unhoused
- City hall could be used during the weekends
- Bring back the grade 5-6 get active program for kids
- Integration of older adults təməsew̓txʷ. Promote cross demographic programs across facilities
- Graduated volunteer program - youth participation and work in the community
- Use rooftops on private facilities for public services

Ideas (Outdoor)

- More small outdoor spaces such as pocket parks
- Arts and cultural production space within parks
- Connection of the riverfront
- Update DCC Parks Bylaw
- Outdoor field space, picnic shelters, covered sport courts, indoor gyms, meeting rooms, and arenas
- More flexible, multi-use park amenities and facilities
- Integration of parks and public realm
- Continue community grants for programming of plazas to activate commercial areas and support community belonging
- Wayfinding and signage that includes climate information
- Develop a Natural Asset Management Plan

Business Associations and Community Organizations

May 16, 2024 at 10:30am (virtual)

Participant Organizations: 5

- New Westminster Wholeness Coalition
- Arts New West
- Tourism New West
- Massey Theatre
- Connaught Heights Resident Association

Respondents to Forms Poll: 2

Strengths (General)

- Strong sense of community, lots of people know each other

Strengths (Indoor)

- A lot of interest (including from visitors) in təməsewtxʷ
- Programs have a great reputation, well run
- Facilities open for vulnerable populations during crisis
- Affordable programs

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Great changes to Queens Park - washrooms, totem pole, etc
- Reflecting Indigenous culture
- Clean and available washrooms
- Gender neutral washrooms

- Parks are clean and well maintained
- Proactive tree planting
- Parks are very active - well used by many types of people
- Safety in the neighbourhood
- A lot of activity in Moody Park, diverse park and offers a wide range of activities
- Pier park, Quayside, and Queens park are used by visitors
- Beautiful river walk
- Lot of flowers and well maintained places
- Expansion of dog parks and separated areas
- Small but beautiful things can be an attraction - little garden at Ravine Park
- Ravine Park, especially the garden
- Quality of the horticulture team - rose garden
- Bike park in Queens Park (but it's underused)
- Misting stations are great

Challenges (General)

- Partners and community - could be easier to collaborate with the city
- Need of getting permits for every kind of activation - lack of spontaneity

Challenges (Indoor)

- No available land for new facilities
- Challenge of opening emergency services and conflict with recreation programs - problem cancelling programs
- Need free space in facilities including the art spaces - no ticket required
- Communication could be better in terms of bookings, e.g., booking the bandshell
- Staff are not always trained to deal with people that come in for shelter
- Programs are maxed out - not enough capacity
- Everything should not be cost recovery

Challenges (Outdoor)

- Availability of washrooms - time of day and season, especially in Queens Park
- Queens Park is not very accessible for activation
- City needs to recognize that parks are the main way many people connect with the city
- Not many options in parks in bad weather
- Access to food in the park - hard to get a permit to bring in food trucks and other types of food services
- Access to electricity in the parks
- Not enough green space in Connaught Heights
- Misting stations were perceived as "showers"
- Sapperton Park trees are stressed
- New West has very few food trucks, they can be a draw for visitors
- Camping on a bench near Discovery Centre
- Need for weather protection but may create issues with homeless population

Public Open Workshop

May 22, 2024 at 7:00pm (virtual)

Participants: 7

Respondents to Forms Poll: 3

Strengths (General)

- Diverse recreation programing
- Appreciate collaboration with the city in booking to meet all needs
- Range of activities for all ages (including older adults)
- Low cost kids programming is highly valued (arts & sports)

Strengths (Indoor)

- Gymnastics, trampoline
- Collaboration with clubs
- Təməsew̓txʷ new swimming space is appreciated
- Great programming at Century House
- Sportsplex was built for ball hockey

Strengths (Outdoor)

- Outdoor fields are low cost and accessible
- Introduction of more native plants and rain gardens
- Wide range of programming
- Appreciate the dog parklet park on Agnes Greenway

Challenges (Indoor)

- Indoor spaces are not as available as outdoor fields and more costly

Vision

1. Spaces and places for creative activations
2. Collaboration with First Nations
3. Accessibility for older adults and people with mobility challenges
4. Recognize needs and welcoming spaces to create belonging
5. Support for non-profit organizations
6. Easy access to parks recreation and culture opportunities
7. Equitable distribution of facilities and amenities
8. Focus on the environment and horticulture

- Be compassionate while also addressing needs of tourists
- Opportunities for artists to do activations in parks
- Protect and enhance the environment
- Places to do things, start things
- Investment in horticulture, environment and food production

Ideas

1. Shade in parks: trees and shade structures
2. Invite more activations in parks
3. Easier access for activation in parks like food trucks and buskers
4. Free space in facilities open to all
5. Diverse horticulture activities including food gardens, First Nation gardens
6. Spaces for indoor facilities outside of parks
7. Easier booking for park uses

- Need for habitat
- Openness to non-colonial landscapes in parks

- Community centre is too expensive - not accessible to young people and low income
- Queensborough Community Centre hours are limited and not early enough
- West end of New Westminster needs a community centre
- Sportsplex isn't available enough for ball hockey rentals due to gymnastics priority

Challenges (Outdoor)

- Courts by 22nd station could use more maintenance
- Lack of tennis courts in New West
- Need more pickleball availability
- Everything is centered around Queens Park
- Lighting on cycle paths is not ideal, darker than roads
- Some pathways are not continuous; difficult for pedestrians
- The ditches in Queensborough have deep water. Opportunity for bioswales
- Not enough integration with the city's stormwater management plan
- There are a lot of rodents around ditches in Queensborough
- Bird populations have declined
- More awareness about booking procedures for Queensborough
- Need more lacrosse boxes

Vision

1. Collaboration with First Nations
2. Affordability
3. Availability
4. Activities for all cultures and ages
5. Priority of pedestrians
6. Rainwater management
7. Diverse natural and demonstration plantings

- Link the history and the heritage along with the present
- More responsive to community needs and concerns
- Indoor spaces that are more affordable

Ideas

1. Add permeable surfaces with information
2. Community centre in west end as part of 22nd Station redevelopment plan
3. Use large field at Carter Street for a covered lacrosse box and walking track
4. Make water flow visible
5. Add native plants, pollinator fields, demo food forest
6. More covered outdoor meeting spaces
7. Year-long classes for kids
8. More outdoor lighting (sensitive to nature)
9. Partner with schools on biodiversity pilot projects
10. More pickleball

- Volunteering in a non-profit group considering recreation
- Open up the Sportsplex for community group rentals
- Covered baseball dugout at Queen's Park
- Create a Queensborough walking path “ important for South Asian community



New Westminster