



CHAPTER 7: PARKS, OPEN SPACES AND RECREATION

The delivery of Parks and Recreation services in Port Moody aims to provide benefits, either direct or indirect, to all citizens in the community. There is a strong focus in Port Moody on promoting health and wellness and preserving and enhancing the City's parks, open spaces and public facilities.

The City's mission, as outlined in the Parks & Recreation Master Plan (2003), is as follows:

The Parks & Recreation Commission and Community Services Department promote social and physical wellness and enhance the quality of life for all Port Moody residents.

The Plan also outlines a number of goals related to the City's mission. These include:

- **Community Services Foster Growth of Individual Citizens** by encouraging the social, emotional, physical, educational, intellectual and creative growth of each member of the community.
- **Community Services Foster a Sense of Community** by first establishing a broadly shared community identity, and then developing widely held community spirit and pride, finally progressing to the evolution of a distinct community culture.
- **Parks Foster the Protection and Enjoyment of Public Lands** by supporting a wide array of active recreation – such as sports fields and cycling trails – and passive recreation – such as natural forest reserves and flower beds – for the benefit of all residents, present and future.

7.1 TRENDS

As trends arise, they will serve to inform the use of Port Moody's parks and recreational facilities and continue to influence the direction of City policy.

7.2 CONTINUED DEMAND FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

There continues to be strong public interest in the expansion of outdoor recreational opportunities including more walking trails, bicycle paths, parks for both passive and active uses and other outdoor recreational activities.

7.3 CHANGING POPULATION, CHANGING INTERESTS

Since 2001, the number of Port Moody residents aged 65 years and over has grown substantially. Seniors in this age group now make up 9.1% of the City's total population, up from 6.7% in 2001. The baby boom generation (aged 45 – 64) which makes up 28.7% of the City's population will continue to be active and place a high demand on recreation services and more individualized activities.

Youth aged 19 and under make up 25.3% of the population, a decrease of 3.2% since 2001 but still higher than the regional average of 21.8%. Families with children make up over half of all Port Moody households placing continued demand for active recreational spaces and playing fields to meet their needs. Associated with the demands of these diverse populations is the need to ensure that parks and other recreational opportunities are accessible and inclusive.

7.4 CULTURAL ASPECTS OF PARKS AND RECREATION

In keeping with its designation as the "City of the Arts", Port Moody's parks and recreational facilities serve as focal points for many community cultural events. The beautiful natural settings provide inspiration for many creative and artistic pursuits as well as opportunities for people to socialize and interact.

There are a number of outdoor festivals and events that take place in parks, particularly Rocky Point Park. These include the very successful “Arts in the Park” program featuring many local artists and drawing crowds from around the region. The outdoor stage at Rocky Point is a regular venue for performing arts and outdoor concerts, especially during the summer months.

The Arts Centre, the Port Moody Station Museum and Inlet Theatre are other facilities which also play a key role in facilitating the growth and development of the arts and an appreciation of the City’s rich history. Further discussion on these facilities can be found in Chapter 10 – Arts and Culture.

7.5 HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Parks and recreation is increasingly being recognized as a vital element in affecting community health and wellness. Wellness is used broadly to refer to mental and emotional, as well as physical fitness. The City supports initiatives to increase the overall fitness level of every resident of the community, regardless of whether they are sedentary or already fit. This translates to the need to create opportunities at various levels.



The City’s most recent commitment to community health and wellness is evident in the expansion of the Port Moody Recreation Complex. The Recreation Complex provides opportunities for a range of individual and group activities and facilities to support injury prevention and rehabilitation. The Community Services Department is also working in partnership with School District 43 to develop programs to address youth inactivity and obesity.

7.6 CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

Park space in Port Moody currently makes up approximately 18% of the City’s total land area. The preservation of green space and a desire for enhanced linkages between urban open spaces and greenways, trails and bike paths remain of great importance to Port Moody residents.

7.7 PARKS AS PART OF PORT MOODY’S IDENTITY

Port Moody’s unique location and geographic features set it apart from other areas within Metro Vancouver and provide both residents and visitors with many opportunities for a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities. Its spectacular setting and the significant number of parks and natural open spaces have contributed to the image of Port Moody as an oasis in the growing urbanization of the region. Public feedback received during this Official Community Plan update indicates support for preserving green space and considering higher density development in certain areas as a means of achieving this. There is also a desire within the community for enhanced linkages between urban open spaces as well as greenways, trails and bike paths.

7.8 URBAN FOREST MANAGEMENT

Urban forestry includes not only city streets, but also city parks and recreation areas as well as suburban areas. Much of Port Moody’s parkland includes stream ravines and forested areas necessitating the management of those forests to ensure their long term health and viability as part of a comprehensive urban forest management plan. The need for such a plan is identified in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and highlighted through the considerable urban forestry work undertaken in 2007 as a result of severe windstorms of 2006/2007.

Urban forest management strives to create a thriving and sustainable mix of tree species and ages resulting in a healthy ecosystem that is valued and cared for by the City and its residents as an essential environmental, economic and community asset. An urban forest management plan provides direction for the maintenance and improvement of an urban forest and makes recommendations to enhance and improve this valuable resource now and in the future. Such a plan would also include a re-forestation program and the monitoring and removal of hazardous trees.



The potential of urban forests for carbon sequestration and mitigating the effects of climate change further emphasizes the need to ensure the long term viability of Port Moody's local forests.

7.9 INCREASED USE OF SHORELINE PARK AND OTHER ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS

With the significant population increase in Inlet Centre, there is concern that some of the more environmentally sensitive public areas may be at risk due to overuse. The trails in Shoreline Park and Bert Flinn Park are well used and valued amenities in the community that require regular monitoring and maintenance to ensure visitors are safe and environmental values are protected.

The City will follow the management objectives and policies identified in the Environmentally Sensitive Areas Strategy for city projects within these areas.

7.10 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS AND THE CONTINUED IMPORTANCE OF A COMPLETE COMMUNITY

As part of the City's sustainability planning, there is a need to ensure that residents have access to a range of recreational opportunities within Port Moody. Proximity to local recreational opportunities helps to reduce reliance on the automobile to access recreation locations elsewhere and the use of fossil fuels.

7.11 DIVERSITY OF PARKS

The Parks and Recreation Master Plan identifies five types of parks in Port Moody and makes recommendations for enhancing these areas to meet the needs of the community. The Plan also includes a set of public open space standards for each type of park. In general, the existing supply of parks meets or exceeds these standards with the exception of neighbourhood parks.

City Parks are large urban parks with a variety of active recreational facilities that serve the entire population of the City. They also provide passive recreational areas, often with special natural features. The Shoreline Park system which includes Town Centre Park, Rocky Point Park, Inlet Park and Old Orchard Park is an example of this type of open space.

Community Parks, approximately 4 to 8 hectares (10 to 20 acres) in size, offer active and passive open space to several neighbourhoods, and a wide range of facilities and services. Westhill and Old Orchard Parks are examples of this type of open space.

Neighbourhood Parks are local parks of approximately 1 to 2 hectares (3 to 5 acres) that provide playing fields, children's playgrounds, and passive recreation within walking distance of about 0.8 kilometre (half a mile) of residential neighbourhoods. They are also desirably located adjacent to elementary schools. The City is generally well served in most areas with neighbourhood parks except in Moody Centre and the April Road/Barber Street sub-division. Seaview Park is an example of this type of park.

Mini-Parks or Parkettes are small parks, offering children's playground equipment and passive seating areas within residential areas. In some cases, these mini-parks are dedicated to the City during subdivision development. Other mini-parks are created within multiple family developments, and ownership and maintenance remains in the private sector. Within Inlet Centre, the Suterbrook and Klahanie developments have included mini-parks connected by greenway trail systems.

Natural Open Space consists of areas that remain undeveloped by virtue of natural features such as watercourses, ravines, steep slopes, unstable soil conditions, or unique characteristics. Recreational use of natural open space is usually limited to passive enjoyment and informal pedestrian routes. Depending on the size, location and characteristics of the natural open space, it may be used by residents of one neighbourhood or the entire city. The Chines area and Bert Flinn Park are examples of this type of open space. Although Port Moody has a significant amount of natural open space, it is important that the City remain alert to opportunities to protect undeveloped land that has unique features, particularly those identified as environmentally sensitive areas.

In addition to these five categories of parks, Port Moody also encompasses a portion of Belcarra Regional Park (maintained by Metro Vancouver) and maintains a number of horticultural displays in public areas throughout the City.

7.12 RECREATION FACILITIES IN EACH NEIGHBOURHOOD

Port Moody has a wide array of indoor and outdoor civic facilities that serve the needs of its residents. Some serve the entire community while others have a greater neighbourhood focus. The Parks and Recreation Master Plan provides an overview of these facilities and includes comments on anticipated improvements in order to better serve the needs of the community.

The most significant recent renovation and expansion to the City's recreation facilities is the Port Moody Recreation Complex. The complex provides a full scope of sports and activity opportunities that contribute to community health and wellness. The facilities also provide training and competitive opportunities for sports at all skill levels.

An update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan is anticipated in 2014 in order to identify and plan for the community's future recreation needs.

7.13 PEDESTRIAN TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS

Port Moody residents place a high priority on the development and maintenance of bikeways, greenways and pathway systems in the city. The City also recognizes the benefit of a comprehensive pedestrian and cycling network to both personal and environmental health as well as to the overall livability of Port Moody.

A detailed discussion of proposed improvements to the pedestrian and cycling networks including rail crossings, is included in the City's Master Transportation Plan and the Master Cycling Plan. In the case of new development, pathway connectors are encouraged in an effort to link neighbourhoods with parkland, school areas and transit nodes. Pedestrian and cyclist facilities are also required as part of new developments.

Maps 6 and 7 show the existing and proposed pedestrian and bicycle routes.

7.14 MARINE RECREATION

Port Moody has been experiencing increasing pressures for marine recreational facilities. The City provides public boat launching facilities at Rocky Point Park and there are demands for increased launching access for other marine recreational and commercial users (kayaks, sailing boats, rowboats). The City will work to promote continued or expanded marina use.



POLICIES

RECREATION

1. The full range of recreational needs of the community will be met through a combination of approaches, including providing parks (for both active and passive recreational uses), public sports facilities, open spaces, trails and bike paths, protected forested and natural areas, and the provision of recreational, cultural and environmental programs.
2. The City will continue to support sustainable initiatives to increase the overall fitness level of every resident of the community.
3. The City will continue to modify and add park amenities as community needs change.
4. Together with School District 43, the City will continue to jointly explore increased community use of school space to ensure that public use of available public buildings is maximized.
5. The City will work to ensure that the use of existing playing fields is maximized and explore a formal policy for field allocations to ensure fairness for all user groups.

PARKS

6. The City will include universal accessibility principles in the construction of new park facilities and look to model leadership in universal accessibility in parks.
7. School sites and neighbourhood parks will generally be located adjacent to each other where joint use is in the best interest of the community.

8. The City will work in partnership with Vancouver Port Authority to designate Tidal Park as a Marine Protected Area.
9. Using the Shoreline Park Master Plan as a guide, the City will undertake improvements in an environmentally sensitive manner along the waterfront of Burrard Inlet from Old Orchard Park to Rocky Point Park where appropriate to protect sensitive habitat and where possible enhance the public's enjoyment of the unique resource of Burrard Inlet and adjoining parks. This includes projects to upgrade existing boardwalks and bridges.
10. The remaining private parcels of land to the north of Murray Street and east of Rocky Point Park shall be considered for the eventual acquisition and integration within Rocky Point Park where feasible.
11. Land will be acquired for a neighbourhood park in Moody Centre and April Road/Barber Street sub-division area where feasible.
12. The City will investigate the feasibility of additional artificial turf playing fields.
13. The City will actively plan for the integration of passive recreational opportunities throughout the urban forest, and whenever possible, will attempt to develop a mix of trail types within, or along the edges of, tree retention areas. A longer-term goal will be to develop a comprehensive trail and walkway network system, which links up parts of the urban forest throughout the City with neighbouring communities.
14. The North Shore escarpment, which has been dedicated as park land, will continue to be protected and preserved because of its value to wildlife, its visual and physical presence on the North Shore as an area of relatively untouched green, and its potential for passive recreational enjoyment by all.



15. The presently undeveloped City owned areas of the Chines shall remain in their natural forested state for the enjoyment of all Port Moody residents.
16. Public access to the Chines area and ravines shall generally be limited to planned trails with minimal geotechnical impacts, where grades permit. The City will not develop mountain bike trails in the Chines area due to the unsuitability of the terrain.
17. The City will explore the feasibility and pursue opportunities to develop controlled access pedestrian trails within the Chines area.
18. The City will work with School District 43 to explore the possibility of joint use of the playing fields at Glenayre and Pleasantside schools to make them more suitable for summer play.
19. The City will explore options for the future redevelopment of Chip Kerr VC Park to allow for more active recreational use in consultation with Moody Centre residents.
20. The City will explore opportunities for improving transportation choice to parks eg. promoting carpooling, improved transit connections and enhanced pedestrian and biking access to city parks.
21. The City will encourage the creation and integration of green spaces in private developments eg. community gardens and green roofs.
22. The City will consider the development of a policy with respect to urban agriculture to encourage podiums and mid-rise concrete developments to accommodate green roofs for urban agriculture in addition to stormwater management and to provide for on-site composting and rain water collection.
23. City owned land, streets and lanes, which may be surplus to City needs, will be reviewed for use as public open space and the formation of open space corridors.
24. The City will encourage the creation of open spaces (such as urban plazas and other places of interest) in commercial centres with new developments/redevelopment and their integration to form open space corridors.
25. The City will continue to place a high priority on public access to and the preservation of important view corridors to the waterfront.
26. The City will support and expand volunteers in the park programs to further develop community stewardship including support for volunteer tree planting programs.
27. The City will develop park standards to ensure that new park facilities include life cycle cost analyses and meet energy targets.
28. The City will look for opportunities to decrease light pollution in parks and around recreation facilities while ensuring public safety standards are met.
29. As part of the next update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan the City will strive to ensure that the current amount of natural green space in the City is maintained.
30. As part of the next update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan the City will evaluate the need for additional playing fields in relation to anticipated population increase and demand and strive to accommodate any future fields without encroaching onto natural green space.
31. The City will conduct an assessment of park usage in Rocky Point Park, Old Orchard Park, and Shoreline Park, and estimate future usage based on increased population and better access from Skytrain. The City will utilize this information and draft a Parks Plan in order to plan for future parks needs and potential expansion.

PEDESTRIAN TRAILS AND BIKEWAYS

32. Improved public access to the waterfront and the City's forest reserves, such as the Chines and the North Shore escarpment, shall be pursued by protecting road ends where these provide suitable access points.
33. The City will develop an incentive program to encourage the daylighting and enhancement of key drainages including Dallas/Slaughterhouse Creek, Kyle Creek and South Schoolhouse Creek as priorities and their integration as part of a network of N-S greenways as part of the review of redevelopment proposals in Moody Centre.
34. The City will continue to pursue opportunities for a pedestrian and bicycle link in proximity to Queen's Street to ensure the continuity of the Trans-Canada Trail and connect the Shoreline Trail with Moody Centre.
35. The Trans Canada Trail will continue to be a priority route in the City's pedestrian and bicycle route systems.
36. The City will attempt to provide public access to the waterfront as industrial properties redevelop and in other areas where appropriate.
37. The City will continue to work with the local mountain bike community in the planning and development of trails and to minimize impacts of mountain bike use on sensitive habitats within the park system.
38. The City supports the use of abandoned rail corridors for pedestrian/bicycle trails should these corridors become available in the future.



39. The City will work with developers to ensure that trail systems built within new developments meet City construction standards.
40. The potential of segments of Murray Street, Spring Street, Clarke Street and St. Johns Street as future east-west pedestrian linkages and bicycle routes will be explored, including upgrades to sidewalks, street lighting and landscaping.
41. Consideration will be given to the recommendations outlined in the Mountain Biking Task Force Report (June 2008), in particular:
- (a) Priority should be given to upgrades of existing trails before additional trails are added to inventory unless a new connection is identified as a City priority.
 - (b) Neighbourhood development should include a review of existing trail linkages and consider the provision of trail right of ways within planning processes to avoid cutting off trail networks.
 - (c) New trails should be situated outside the Streamside Protection and Enhancement Area (SPEA) as designated in Port Moody's OCP and Zoning Bylaw. It is desirable to

add additional width to the SPEA during development planning where trail development is desirable and then fit the trail to the natural topography.

(d) The City should encourage the Village of Anmore to keep open the road allowance connection to Strong Road as this is the only point of access between Anmore (and surrounding upland areas) and Bert Flinn Park not only for cyclists but for all trail users.

(e) The City should explore any opportunity to establish a trail through the Upland Reserve Area of Neighbourhood 2 and possibly the Urban Reserve.

42. A north shore trail system will continue to be maintained on the north shore.
43. The City will continue to consider alternate tools, as listed in the Master Cycle Plan's toolkit, to supplement cycling infrastructure investments including mechanisms to improve cycling wayfinding, strategically improve cycling related communications, improve and encourage end-of-trip facilities, improve road safety for cyclists, consider narrower vehicle lanes to accommodate cycling infrastructure, and implement monitoring programs.
44. The City will work with Metro Vancouver to identify opportunities to connect municipal walkways, bikeways and greenways to the Regional Recreational Greenway Network where appropriate.