

Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan

Background Document

September 2009



Parkgate Seniors Wellness Park



Deep Cove Park

table of contents

8 Chapter 1 – Planning Context

	Executive Summary
9	Why are we developing a Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan?
9	Parks & Open Space Background Reports
11	Regional Context
	North Shore Sector Recreational Greenway Plan
12	District of North Vancouver Communities - Parks and Open Spaces in Local Area Plans
14	District of North Vancouver Demographics Snap Shot and Profile
15	Park Zoning

17 Chapter 2 - Parks Trends and Issues

	Public Surveys and Trend Analysis
	Tracking District of North Vancouver Trends and Needs
18	Issues and Trends in the District of North Vancouver
19	Usage
20	Satisfaction with Park Services
21	Satisfaction with Specific Park Attributes
22	Satisfaction with Special Events
	Community Involvement
23	Parks Funding Priorities
24	Vision - Usage of Active versus Passive Parks
25	Futures Conference (2004)
26	District of North Vancouver Recreation Commission Recreation Needs Assessment Report
	Public Inclusiveness in Decision Making and Planning
27	Provincial Trends in Parks and Recreation – BC Recreation and Park Association

table of contents

29 Chapter 3 – Parks and Open Space Standards

30	Parks and Open Space Inventory Organization
31	Map - District Parks & Open Space
32	Current Provision and Overall Park Supply
	District Parks
33	Community and Neighbourhood Parks
34	Greenbelts and Natural Parkland Area Open Space
	Growth of Parkland Supply and Inventory since 1991
35	District of North Vancouver Alpine Areas
	Development Cost Charges and Parkland Acquisition
36	District's Relationship with Regional, Provincial, and Private Land Managers
	District's Relationship with School District # 44

38 Chapter 4 – Park Inventory and Infrastructure

	Capital and Operating Program
39	District Sports Fields and Sports Field Needs Assessment Report
40	Soccer
41	2008/2009 Windsor Secondary School Feasibility Study for Artificial Turf Field
	Baseball Fields
42	Football, Rugby, Field Lacrosse and Cricket
43	Track and Field
	Ultimate and Other Sports
	Sports Courts and Lacrosse Boxes
44	School Sports
	Playgrounds
45	Seniors' Fitness Parks
	Tennis Courts
46	Picnic Shelters and Special Event Facilities

table of contents

Chapter 4 – Park Outdoor Recreation Inventory and Infrastructure cont'd

47	Water Parks
	Youth Parks – Skateboard and Bike Parks
48	Trails, Greenbelts and Greenways
49	North Shore Spirit Trail
50	Public Art in Parks
51	Public Waterfront Access
	Buildings and Structures in Parks
52	Urban Beautification, Horticulture and Streetscapes
53	Integrated Pest Management – Pesticide Ban
	Water Conservation
54	The Nursery
	Street Tree Master Plan
56	Communication, Signage and Way finding
57	Other Emerging Outdoor Recreation Activities in the District of North Vancouver
	Flying Clubs
	Water Based Recreation Opportunities
	Eco-Tourism and Outdoor Educational Training
	Paintball/ Rope Courses/ Tree Canopy
	Commercial Operators in Parks
58	Building Unauthorized Play Structures
	Lawn Bowling
	Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens
59	Park Accessibility Review
60	Planning and Design – Park Planning and Development Projects
61	Inter - Jurisdictional Relationships with Land Agencies
63	Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Co-Management Agreement

table of contents

65	Chapter 5 – Natural Parkland Area Management
66	Forest Eco-Inventory and Forest Management Program (draft report 2009)
67	Tree Preservation and Hazard Program
69	Invasive Species Program
70	Pesticide Control
	Maplewood Conservation Area
71	Alpine Recreational Strategic Study & Fromme Mountain Classification Study
73	Chapter 6 – Park Management and Operations
73	Dog Management in Parks
75	Park Special Events
76	Filming in Parks
	Volunteerism in Parks
77	Ranger Program
78	Unique District of North Vancouver Park Amenities
	Maplewood Farm
79	Tourism and Partnerships
	Educational/Community Role
80	Visitation Trend
81	2008 Maplewood Farm Business Plan
82	Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre
	Visitation Trend
83	Centre Staff
	Cost Recovery
	Issues & Goals
	Building Improvements
	Tourism

table of contents

Chapter 6 – Park Management and Operations cont'd

84	Lynn Canyon Park 1993 to 2008
	The Lynn Canyon Cafe
	Our Community Partners
85	Displays & Literature
	Education Programs



Chapter 1

Planning Context



Planning Context

Executive Summary

The District of North Vancouver is made up of 16,000 hectares of land with a population of approximately 82,500. Of those 16,000 hectares, approximately 2,224 hectares is District managed parkland. The District of North Vancouver is in the process of reviewing its Official Community Plan (OCP) with a view to having a new OCP completed for Council approval in late 2010. The District's Official Community Plan provides the long range vision for the District, and includes the role that parks and open space play in contributing to a livable, sustainable community. The Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan will be guided by and contribute to parks and environment related aspects of the OCP. The Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan will also bring the long range vision into focus by reviewing and updating the 1991 draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan, incorporating many recommendations from the District's Local Area Plans, conducted between 1991 and 2008, and introducing new initiatives to address issues and opportunities in parks. In addition, there are a number of other recently completed park planning documents that will serve to provide strategic direction to the parks plan, including the Sports field Assessment Report and Park Building Assessment Report, amongst others. The Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan will be a parks umbrella document that will provide direction for the development and renewal of the District's parks and open spaces for the next 10 years. The first step towards creating the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan is the 'Background Document', which reviews the status of the parks since 1991 and documents key initiatives and relevant studies that have been undertaken and will inform the development of the 2010 Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan.



Why are we developing a Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan?

The final plan will be a strategic document that will address the following key goals:

- Provide a vision and direction for the District Parks
- Identify public park and outdoor recreational needs, trends and gaps
- Integrate park planning projects & initiatives into a centralized umbrella document
- Provide analysis of existing park inventory
- Identify opportunities and deficiencies in the present parks systems – are the community needs being met?
- Identify new facilities, parks and open spaces with associated policies addressing short and long term community needs.
- Provide information on park planning and development projects achieved since 1991, when the previous Parks and Recreation Master Plan process was undertaken
- Identify future capital projects, priorities and a ten year financial framework
- Identify operational pressure points and service levels
- Identify projects with a strong environmental direction to establish a park sustainability framework

Parks & Open Space Background Reports

Within the past 20 years, a number of parks and recreation planning studies have been undertaken in the District of North Vancouver, including Parks Master plans in 1984 and 1991.

In 1984, the District of North Vancouver prepared their first Parks and Recreation Master Plan which focussed on an examination of existing and potential parks and recreational resources, the adequacy of these resources, and potential additional resources required to ensure that an equitable parks system offers the widest

possible range of opportunities for the demographics. A five year capital plan was developed, with a focus on the development of new parks, particularly in the Seymour Area where the District was expanding and developing new neighbourhoods.

Again, in 1991, a Parks and Recreation Master Plan process was undertaken, in partnership with the District and City of North Vancouver and the North Vancouver Recreation Commission. The draft report contained policy direction and identified many capital projects which have been initiated, adopted or completed. Examples include the construction of Parkgate Park, Inter River Park, an increased emphasis upon trails, and the integration of stronger environmental planning into all park projects. Since 1991, the Official Community Plan and the Local Area Plans have also provided policy and direction to parks at a more local neighbourhood level, addressing park deficiencies, park renovation and trail projects. These Local Area Plans include Upper Capilano, Lower Capilano, North Lonsdale-Delbrook, Lynn Valley, Lower Lynn, Lynnmour/Inter-River, Maplewood, Seymour, and Alpine areas. The Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan report will draw all the key recommendations into one central document to better understand the overall impact and snapshot of the Parks and Open Space in 2009.

Since the 1991 completion of the draft Parks & Recreation Master Plan, a number of park specific strategic plans have been completed, which will help to inform the direction of the 2009 Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan policies and recommendations. Key documents include the Alpine Recreational Strategic Study (2005), the Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study (2008), and the Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen Management Plan (2005) to name a few. In addition, other facility reports have been undertaken such as the Park Building Condition Assessment (2007), and the draft DNV Sports Field Needs Assessment (2009) to provide long term direction and financial planning.

Since the 1991 draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan, one of the key focus areas integrated into park planning and management is the protection and preservation of the environment and green zones. This objective has influenced how parks conducts business, with the need to establish best management practices for sports fields and horticulture, park planning and development standards, creek and forest preservation initiatives, as well as arboricultural and trail management practices.

A review of the 1991 draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan shows that many of the recommendations have been fulfilled. This is especially true in making progress in the areas of waterfront access and design, trails, formal play, youth and skateboard parks, and sports field development. New recreational trends have emerged since the 1991 plan, which include a growth in mountain biking and bike parks, dog walking, and outdoor adventure sports.

The planning process which led up to the development of the District's draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 1991 identified deficiencies in the existing park system, current park user demands for additional services and facilities, and future park opportunities. A number of the sites rezoned to parkland through the Parkland Identification Report (1993) were intended to help to meet the parkland deficiencies.

In 2004, the first step to initiate the Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan process was undertaken with the initiation of a North Vancouver wide stakeholder survey, in partnership with the City of North Vancouver and the North Vancouver Recreation Commission. This involved a Parks and Recreation Futures Conference in March 2004, which focused on identifying trends and issues through discussions with stakeholders. This was followed by a consultant public telephone survey to determine how people use parks and to gather input on spending priorities for parks and recreation facilities.



A District resident enjoying the flora



Plenty of pathways

Regional Context

The District of North Vancouver is a member of Metro Vancouver, which was officially created in 1967 through provincial legislation, and is a partnership of 22 municipalities, one electoral area and one treaty First Nation, stretching from Bowen Island to Langley, and from the North Shore to the US border. At present, Lynn Headwaters Park, Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve (LSCR) and Capilano Regional Park are Metro Vancouver parks and watersheds in the District of North Vancouver

Metro Vancouver provides regional services to its member municipalities, with responsibilities for regional planning and regional parks and greenways. Metro Vancouver Parks and Planning groups are currently involved in a number of projects that have influenced the District, such as:

- Livable Region Strategic Plan – Green Zone Strategy (currently under review by Metro Vancouver)
- Regional Bicycle Policy
- North Shore Sector Recreational Greenway Plan
- Parks and Outdoors Recreation System (PORS)

Over the past several years, municipal parks staff have interacted on a number of park and greenway initiatives with Metro Vancouver and BC Parks that strengthen recreational opportunities at international, regional and local levels, and support the goals to meet regional growth strategies, as they apply to parks and recreation.

Most recently, in 2009, Metro Vancouver has developed a new draft Regional Growth Strategy which articulates some goals and principles related to natural areas, many of which will be considered as the Parks and Open Space Strategic Plan evolves.

North Shore Sector Recreational Greenway Plan (2000)

In 1996 the GVRD adopted the Green Zone strategy as part of

the Livable Region Strategic Plan. This plan identified the region's Green Zone to include watersheds, hazard lands, ecologically important areas, major parks, agricultural and renewable resources; all identified as areas for no urbanization. It also proposed a system of environmental and recreation corridors to connect Green Zones sites. Sub-regional greenway plans were developed, of which the North Shore Sector Regional Greenway Plan is one. The report identified 14 regionally significant greenways and additional loops and connectors across the North Shore from West Vancouver to Deep Cove, including West Vancouver, City of North Vancouver, the District, Metro Vancouver and BC Parks. Of those, 14 greenways, 7 will impact the District of North Vancouver including:

- Mosquito Creek Trail
- Baden Powell Trail
- Seymour River Greenway
- Sea to Sky Trail
- Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen
- Mt. Seymour
- Bridle Trail

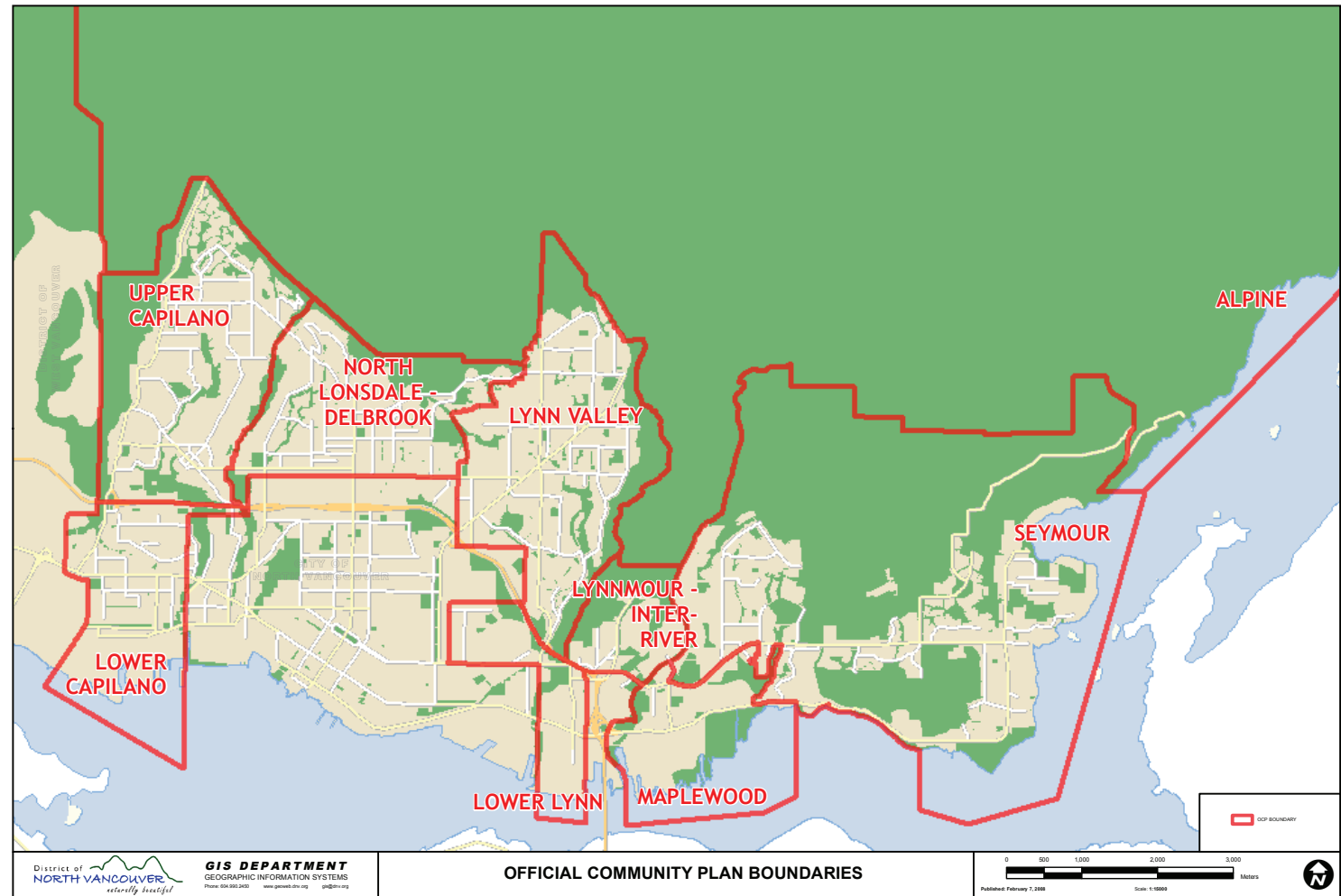


Maplewood conservation area in winter

District of North Vancouver Communities – Parks and Open Spaces in Local Area Plans

The District of North Vancouver is divided into 9 geographical communities that include Upper Capilano, Lower Capilano, North Lonsdale/Delbrook, Lynn Valley, Lower Lynn, Lynnmour/Inter-River, Maplewood, Seymour and the Alpine Area. Through the Planning Department, and in partnership with the residents, Local Area Plans had been prepared which included community level objectives, and broad social, economic, park and environmental policies. Many of the Local Area Plans are now dated, and the OCP review will provide direction regarding the future of the Local Area Plans.

The Local Area Plans contain sections that outline specific goals, policies and implementation strategies for Parks and Open Spaces, and provide guidance, direction and priorities to the Parks Department. Many of the recommendations from these Local Area Plans are incorporated into the Parks Department's annual work plans, for consideration, and also form part of the Parks and Open Space Recreation Master Plan.



Did you know?

The total area of oceans, rivers, and lakes within the District boundary is 1,520 hectares.



Did you know?

One of the best and most beloved trails in North Vancouver is the Baden Powell Trail.

District of North Vancouver Demographics Snap Shot and Profile

The demographic characteristics of a community can help predict recreational interests and participation. Factors such as age, income, employment, education and ethnicity affect recreation participation patterns and activities. In addition, the community's growth rate helps to determine the need for additional facilities and services. This section explores the demographics of the District of North Vancouver.

The population of the District of North Vancouver is approximately 82,500. Over the past ten years, the District of North Vancouver has been one of the slowest, growing municipalities in the Metro Vancouver region. Between 2001-2006, the population growth was .31%, the smallest on the North Shore, with the average percent change for the Metro Vancouver region being approximately 6.2%. During that time, the District population grew from 82,310 to 82,562 which translates to a net increase of approximately 50 people per year.

The District has a high number of baby boomers - people between 40-55 years in age, and a high number of people between 10 – 20 years. There is a relatively small number of young adults in their 20's and 30's in the District, particularly in comparison with the rest of the region. Comparing a snapshot of the District population in 2006 to 1976 indicates that the District has an "aging population". This "aging population" trend may result in consequences that include closure of schools and daycares aimed for youth, additional pressure on social services and facilities aimed for senior population, and developing service infrastructure that supports the needs of the aging group.

The District of North Vancouver has high housing prices, creating a challenge in housing affordability, with a high number of single family residences, limited multi-family housing, and few rental units. This results in limiting the ability of young adults and families to purchase their first home in the District which may contribute to the low population of residents in the 20-40 age bracket.

The median income for households within the District increased from \$70,228 in 2000 to \$77,032 in 2005, compared with \$44,231 for Metro Vancouver.

North Vancouver is a multi-cultural community, where up to 50% of the population is identified with a British or Canadian ancestry, and 22% identified as a visible minority. Nearly one-quarter of the visible minority populations are Canadian born (2nd generation). The most prevalent languages spoken at home are English, Farsi, Korean and Cantonese.

Population growth in other areas of the Metro Vancouver region, including the neighbouring City of North Vancouver, has increased the use of district parks and demand for facilities such as trails, playing fields, tennis courts and lacrosse boxes.

85% of residents use the vehicle as their primary method of transportation, with only about 10% using public transit, and less than 5% walking or biking for personal and work trips. The transportation sector is a large contributor of greenhouse gas emissions, providing 43% of the District's total greenhouse gas emissions. This may have implications in the development and need for a system of well designed and safe trails that link key community nodes and neighbourhoods.

Did you know?

The most prevalent invasive species in the District Parks system is English Ivy? And that you can still buy this in some plant stores in the lower mainland?

Park Zoning

In 2002, the Planning Department in partnership with Parks undertook a review of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space (PRO) Zoning Bylaws, and developed, in consultation with the public, PRO zoning amendments of District lands to create one of four new park zones. These new park zones were created to reflect the multi-faceted role of the parks system, which ranges from highly developed, active recreational parks at the regional, district, community and neighbourhood levels; to unstructured, informal park and open spaces intended to be preserved in their natural state as greenbelts or for environmental protection purposes. These four zones reflect the hierarchy and intent of various park, recreation and wilderness land use designations utilized in various Local Area Plans for the different levels of park, open space and conservation lands, and provide more refined controls over permitted uses and development within parks and open space in urban areas. Each zone included an intent statement, permitted principal and accessory uses, and development regulations for buildings and structures, reflecting the hierarchy of the different types of parkland and open space in the District.

- Special Purpose Park Zone (SP)
- Community Park Zone (CP)
- Neighbourhood Park Zone (NP)
- Natural Parkland Zone (NPL)

The new zones provide guidance and direction on the range of acceptable park developments within parcels of parkland, and through zoning, support protection of valuable ecosystems and conservation lands.

The Natural Parkland zone is a new zone that acknowledges the inherent ecological and natural resource value of many greenbelts across the District. The intent of the Natural Parkland Zone is to provide for the retention and conservation of natural resources and environmentally sensitive areas, including treed areas and watercourses, general open space, and greenbelts. This zone may also provide for environmental, ecological and cultural heritage educational programs. Public access to lands zoned NPL may be restricted or prohibited for public safety and/or environmental purposes. The general uses include provision for habitat management, interpretive facilities and trails.

Examples of Natural Parkland include Hogan's Pools, Lynn Canyon Park and Mosquito Creek Park, with Community Parkland represented by more active parkland, such as Panorama/Deep Cove Park, Kirkstone Park and Myrtle Park





Chapter 2

Parks Trends and Issues



Parks Trends and Issues

The District of North Vancouver has tracked key park and open space trends and issues through a combination of public surveys, workshops, user group discussions, and industry trend analysis reports. Collectively, these reports provide an overview of recreational trends at the provincial and regional level, as well as drilling down to specific park and recreation issues specific to the District of North Vancouver. The results of the survey and trend information will help to inform and guide many of the policy and operational directions in the next 10 years for the parks.

Public Surveys and Trend Analysis

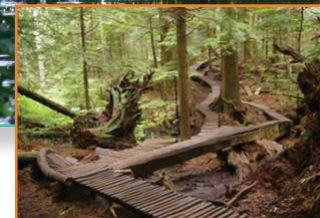
This section addresses the collection of data between 2004-2009 related to parks services and provides information to help identify any gaps or deficiencies in the provision of parks and outdoor recreation opportunities. Most information is collected from the public and stakeholders, through a number of mechanisms which include:

- Futures Conference (March 2004)
- North Shore wide Phone Survey (June 2004)
- Ipsos-Reid Survey (February 2005) - Resident and Stakeholder satisfaction with North Vancouver Parks & Recreation
- BCRPA Trends in Parks and Recreation (2006) and BCRPA Benchmarking
- District of North Vancouver Recreation Commission Recreation Needs Assessment Report (2007)
- District of North Vancouver Biannual Community Surveys

Tracking District of North Vancouver Trends and Needs

In 2004, the first step of the Parks & Open Space Strategic Plan process was undertaken with the initiation of a North Vancouver wide stakeholder survey, in partnership with the City of North

Vancouver and the North Vancouver Recreation Commission. This involved a Parks and Recreation Futures Conference in 2004, which focused on identifying trends and issues through discussions with stakeholders. This was followed by a consultant public telephone survey to determine how people use parks and to gather input on spending priorities for parks and recreation facilities. With the North Shore wide stakeholder consultation as a starting point, the District continued to work on producing background material with the aim to move into a parks and open space strategic plan process in 2009, in conjunction with the District Official Community Plan process.



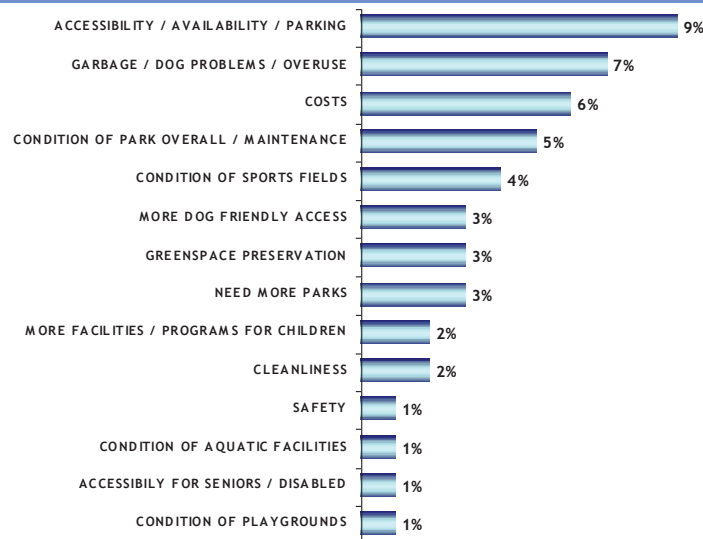
Issues and Trends in the District of North Vancouver

This chapter attempts to capture some of the key issues and trends facing District Parks based upon public consultation and stakeholder input gathered through public surveys, workshops and park user discussions with committees such as the Parks & Natural Environment Advisory Committee (PNEAC), the Sports Council, and the Outdoor Rec Advisory Committee (ORAC), to name a few.

The objectives of the survey were to understand the level and type of usage of parks, the satisfaction levels, identify amenities needed, funding priorities and level of community involvement

Public's Top Concerns

A1. What is your top concern about North Vancouver parks & recreation services?
(base 506 public)

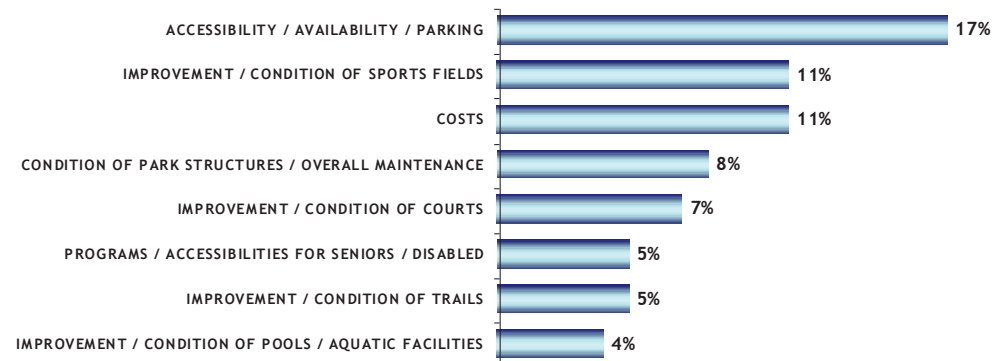


Currently, parking availability at North Vancouver parks and recreation services is the most commonly mentioned top concern followed quite closely by dog-related problems. The condition of parks and sports fields combine to form a meaningful concern, followed by costs of using the facilities.

The stakeholders we contacted share some of the same concerns we hear from the public about parks and recreation services. However, their concerns, especially with respect to parking availability may be more intense. They also are concerned with the overall condition of parks and the costs of services. With this group, accessibility for the disabled also is a concern.

Stakeholder's Top Concerns

A1. What is your top concern about North Vancouver parks & recreation services?
(base 75 stakeholders)



Usage

Walking is the most common use of North Vancouver Parks, with hiking and soccer following quite closely. Other common uses include dog walking, cycling, running, playground use and baseball.

On average, residents use a North Vancouver park 131 times per year (about 2.5 times per week), with the middle age category (35-54 year old) the most active.

Top concerns included, parking availability followed by dog-related conflicts.



Did you know?

The District issues approximately 165 event park permits a year.

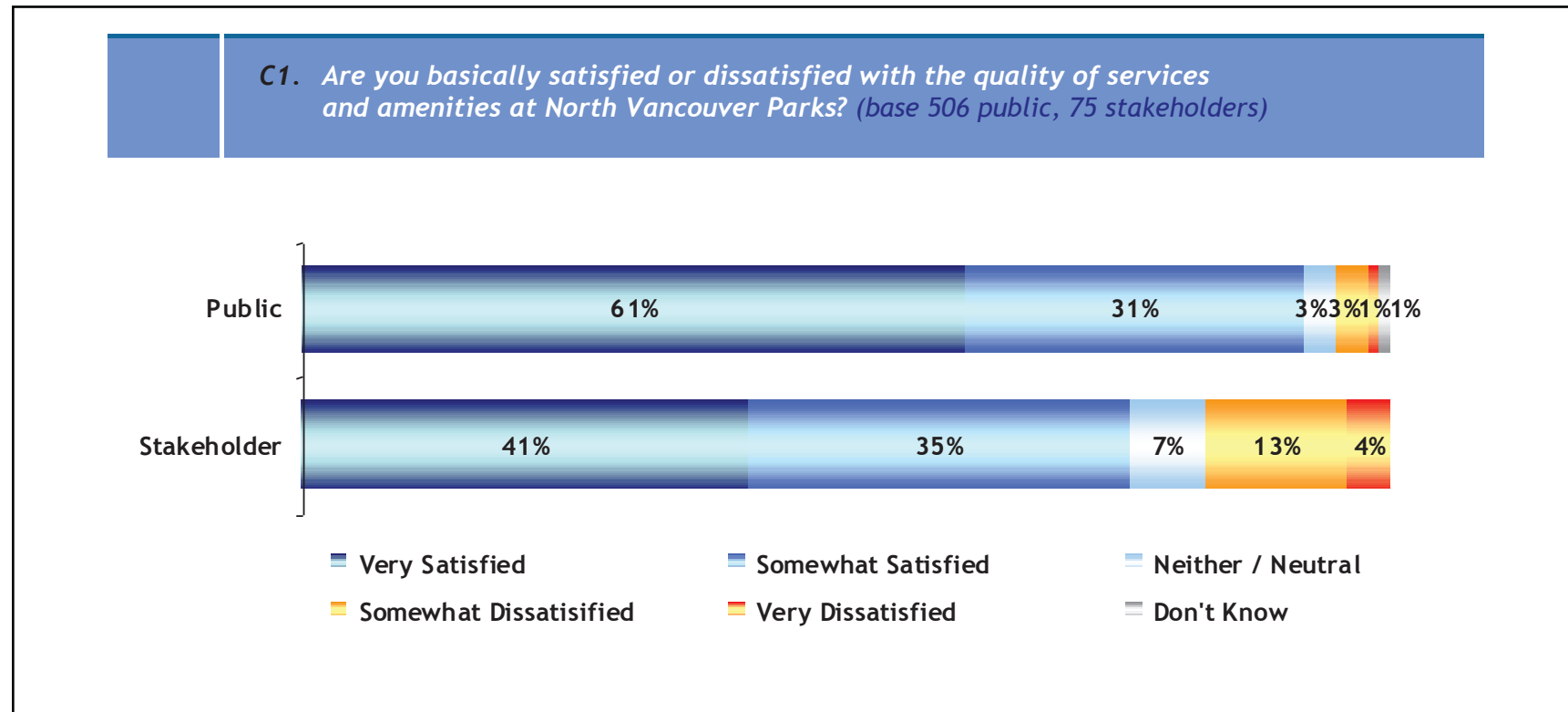


Volunteers do make a difference

Satisfaction with Park Services

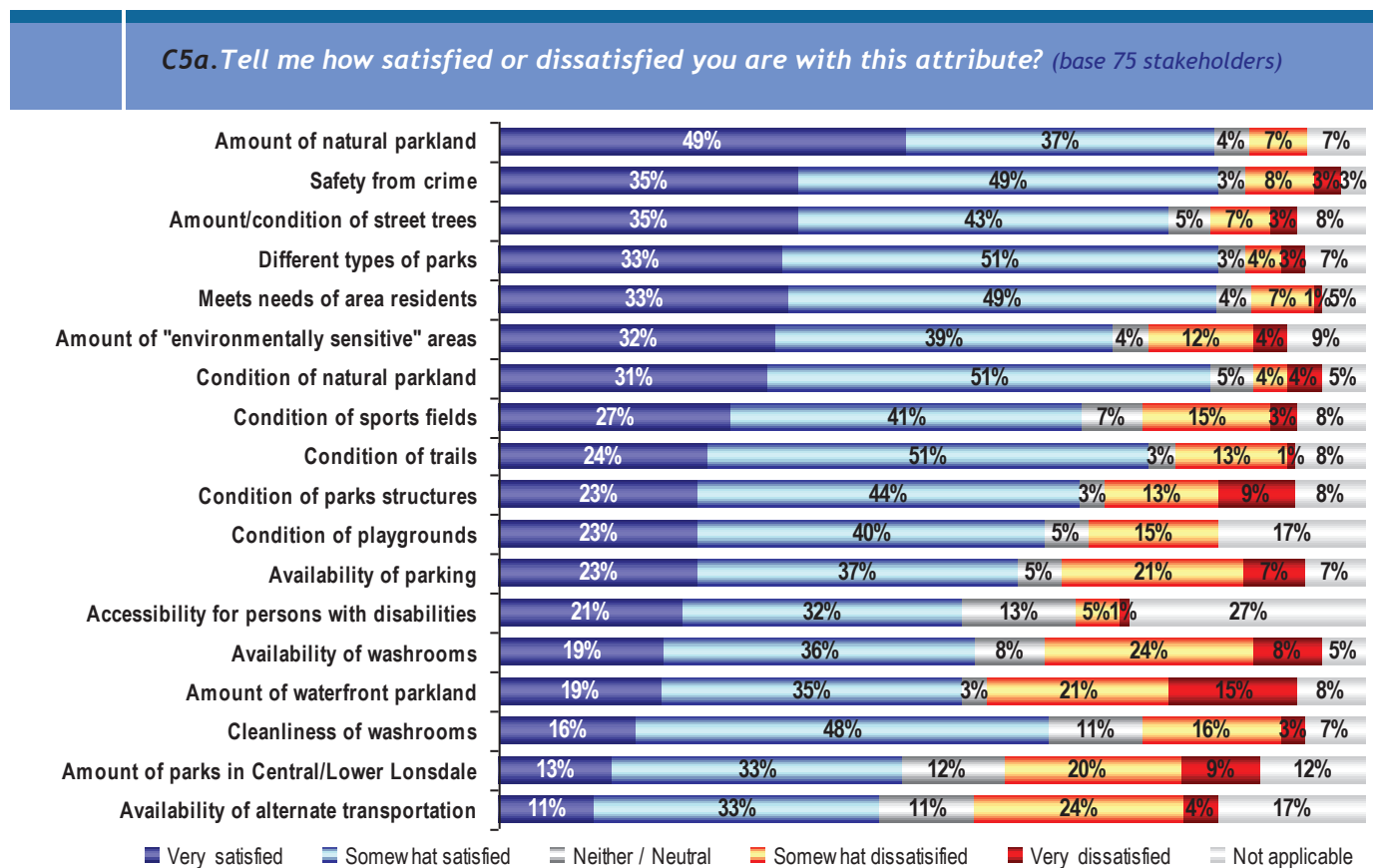
The overwhelming majority of North Vancouver residents are satisfied with the quality of services and amenities at parks. Notably, a majority (61%) is “very satisfied”, with just 4% expressing dissatisfaction. Strong satisfaction is driven by accessibility and inexpensive cost of parks services, followed by the overall quality of parks services, and general cleanliness. Residents are also pleased with the wide range of services available.

The quality of facilities (maintenance) is the most significant driver of less than strong satisfaction. Washroom availability, access issues and dog concerns are also drivers of lower satisfaction levels.



Satisfaction with Specific Park Attributes

At the top of the list, with “very” satisfied ratings from almost half of residents (49%), was the condition of trails. The amount of park space designated as “environmentally sensitive” receives very satisfied ratings from 39% of residents, followed closely by safety from crime, condition of playgrounds and condition of sports fields.



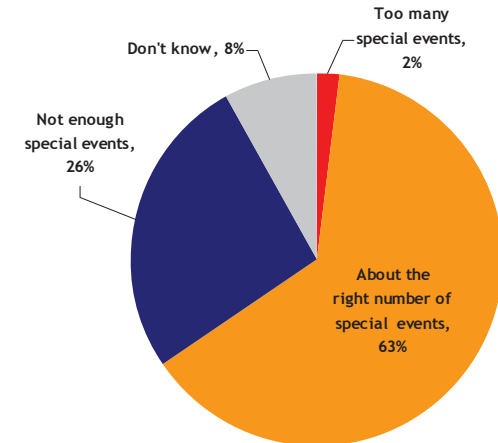
Satisfaction with Special Events

Those who have participated in special events at North Vancouver parks or recreation facilities are generally satisfied with the experience, with 35% of residents being very satisfied. Approximately 58% of residents have participated in one or more special events at a park or recreation facility within the past 2 years. Caribbean Days is the most common special event cited, followed by Canada Day celebrations and the Hose Reel Festival. A majority of North Vancouver residents feel that currently North Vancouver hosts “about the right number” of special events.

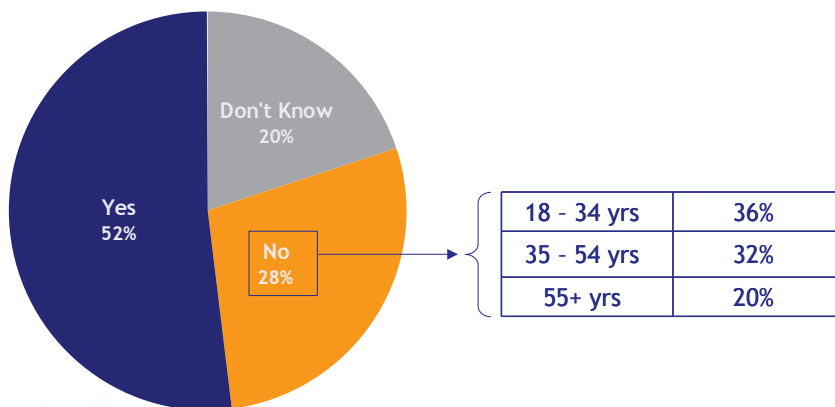
Community Involvement

On average, North Vancouver residents are involved in community volunteer activities 33 times a year, with the average age of volunteers being above the age of 34.

E5a. Throughout the year, parks in North Vancouver host special events, such as Under the Volcano & Caribbean Days. Do you personally feel that there are too many special events in North Vancouver, about the right number, or not enough? (base 506 public)



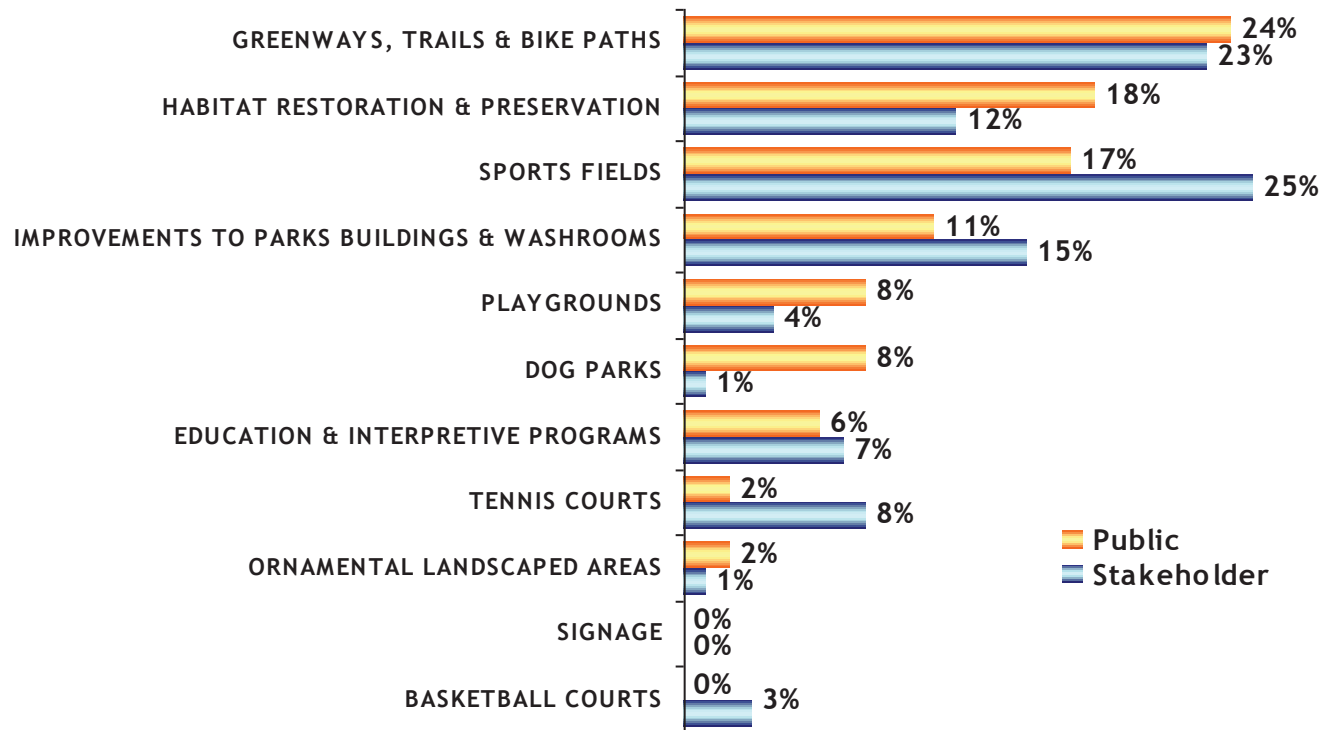
E2. Thinking about your involvement in local planning, do you feel you have enough opportunity for involvement in parks and recreation? (base 506 public)



Parks Funding Priorities

North Vancouver residents place the highest priority on maintaining greenways, trails and bike paths. Habitat restoration and preservation and sports fields follow quite closely. Improvements to parks buildings and washrooms are, according to the survey results, a less significant priority, although we know from statistical analysis that washroom availability and cleanliness are an important factor in overall satisfaction and therefore, dissatisfaction. Among field stakeholders, sports fields are the most important priority, along with greenways, trails and bike paths.

F2a. I am going to read you a list of different parks funding areas. In your opinion, which one is the single most important funding priority for North Vancouver parks?
(base 506 public, 75 stakeholders)



Vision - Usage of Active versus Passive Parks

North Vancouver residents estimate they spend about 60% of their park time at passive parks and 40% at active parks.

“Active Parks are outdoor spaces that have a specific use, such as soccer or tennis where users may enjoy sporting events or other organized activities”.

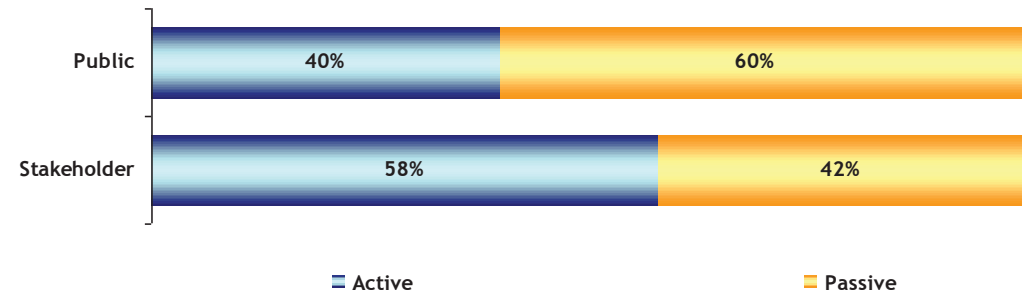
“Passive Parks include open spaces and forests where users can kick a ball, bike, hike or other non organized activities”.

A growing trend is a Sports User Fee for sports groups who contribute through fees to operating costs and capital improvements for fields and related infrastructure. Sports groups also raise funds for capital projects.

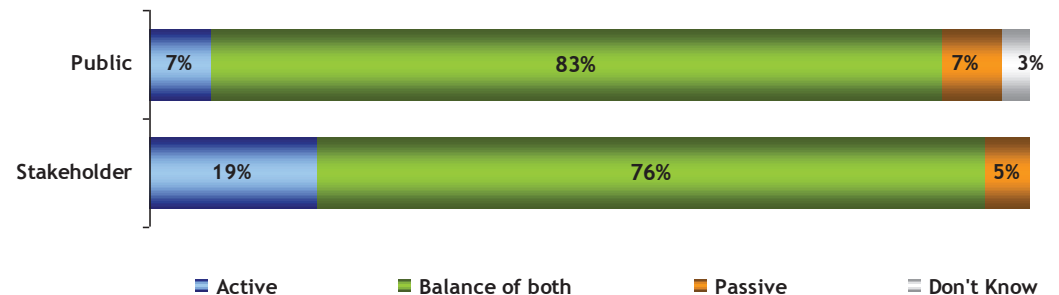


Panorama Park playground

B5. How would you say you divide your time between active and passive parks?
(base 506 public, 75 stakeholders)



B6. Would you prefer local government focus existing resources to active parks, passive parks, or a balance of both? (base 506 public, 75 stakeholders)



Futures Conference (2004)

The Futures Conference, held in March 2004, involved a diverse group of residents, stakeholders and advisory committees involved in parks and recreation on the north shore. Results of the conference identified 16 trends, which were to be explored as part of the master plan process for parks:

1. Safety and security in the public realm
2. Dog issues in parks
3. Youth inactivity and obesity on the rise
4. Declining public resources / tax \$\$
5. More people with disabilities
6. Smaller families with fewer kids
7. Increasing conflicts between user groups
8. More interest in health/health lifestyle
9. Sustainability and overuse of resources and natural environment
10. Aging infrastructure of facilities
11. Increasing costs and reduced access
12. Increased emphasis on vehicles
13. Increased popularity of trails
14. Increased expectation (quality) of parks and recreation facilities and services
15. Obesity
16. Increased frustration and anger



Did you know?

District of North Vancouver Parks has roughly 100 named parks in its inventory.

District of North Vancouver Recreation Commission Recreation Needs Assessment Report

In 2007, the North Vancouver Recreation Commission initiated a study to identify through public discussion and analysis, recreational demands and needs, and to prioritize the needs based upon social values and technical criteria. While the focus of the study was largely indoor facilities, outdoor recreational demands emerged as the top 5 priorities from a list of 34 identified demands and needs:

- Increased recreational use of the North Shore mountains
- Greater use of urban trails and connectors
- More outdoor sports tournaments
- More and better outdoor sports field experiences
- More track and field training and competitions

Public Inclusiveness in Decision Making and Planning

Public inclusiveness in decision making and park planning has been a key component of any park planning process and as a result of a high demand by stakeholders and the public.

Public committees form an effective mechanism to encourage public input into a wide range of park policy, capital, planning and operational topics. Council appoints a Parks and Natural Environment Advisory Committee, comprised of up to 11 residents of the District of North Vancouver. The purpose of the Parks and Natural Environment Advisory Committee (PNEAC) is to provide an informed community perspective on parks and environmental issues and to foster, promote, enhance and support parks and environmental concerns within the municipal government and the community.

In addition, monthly feedback to parks on specific topics that relate to sports, outdoor recreation, trails and environmental issues is received through the Community Sports Advisory Committee (CSAC) and the Outdoor Recreation Advisory Committee (ORAC). To widen the circle, Park staff also attend meetings with Pacific

Streamkeepers Foundation, the Evergreen Foundation, the Greater Vancouver Invasive Plant Council, the North Shore Bear Network, and other environmentally focused groups, as required. The trend to gather public feedback on a regular basis helps Parks to be more responsive to issues, and to build a closer relationship with neighbourhoods and communities.



DNV Park flower beds in full bloom



Cates Park Playground

Provincial Trends in Parks and Recreation – BC Recreation and Parks Association

In 2006, the BC Recreation and Parks Association developed a Strategic Plan for the Parks and Recreation Sector in B.C. Integral to that plan was the identification and discussion of key demographic, behavioural, environmental, and infrastructure trends and their implications to how parks and recreation might conduct their business. The analysis of trends and their impacts need to be carefully considered in the strategic planning processes, in identifying strategies and priority setting. The chart (at right) highlights some of the key trends and implications for park management:



Public park openings bring out the community

Did you know?

Parkgate Seniors Wellness Park, built and opened in 2009, is the only seniors outdoor facility on the North Shore.

Demographic Trends Aging population (Baby Boom – 40-59) Increasing diversity in ethno cultures Growing gap between have and have- nots Continuing population growth in BC	Implications for Parks Population growth places increased pressure on demand for services Shift to less strenuous physical activities Elementary school closures may result in loss of access to facilities Accessibility and affordability for young families and seniors Cultural diversity needs to be reflected in programs, policies, and services Ethno –cultural groups place a premium on large gatherings and cultural groups. Provision for large group areas, picnic shelters and washrooms
Behavioural Trends Toward informal & individual activities Shift to activities that are experiential, offer challenge and learning Volunteerism drop –off Health and wellness for all ages Youth Inactivity Flex time Growing Leisure Activities (walking, cycling, gardening, ecotourism, environment & cultural learning) Partnering with planning, engineering, police etc.	Informal, self scheduled & casual participation Development of greenways, trails and bikeways for personal & enviro health More experiential programs such as outdoor adventure programs, cultural learning, special events such as races and cultural festivals Volunteer recruitment programs Personal growth and learning - ecotourism interest; life style skills Economic development and tourism Community garden, outdoor markets & environmental stewardship programs Facilities to support youth and senior participation Partnering with groups to manage resources more effectively (i.e. local groups, regional and provincial)
Infrastructure Trends Aging infrastructure and deterioration of BC recreation and parks facilities Shift from stand alone to multi-use facilities Expanded facility roles with more partnering in facilities between parks and recreation, community services	Analysis of aging facilities to provide a repair/retrofit program (buildings) Life cycle management plans LEED principles applied to buildings to reduce operational costs – solar panels etc Partnering with Canada/BC Infrastructure Programs for financial support Partner with other sectors providing rec opportunities (schools, rec centre etc.)



Chapter 3

Parks and Open Space Standards



Parks and Open Space Standards

The District of North Vancouver parks and open space system has been divided into categories based on the various functions of each type of park and open space. The chart on the next page defines the parks and open space categories, along with the current standards of supply. Standards are guides rather than being definitive, and should be applied with flexibility to ensure that the full range of park types is represented.



Deep Cove

Did you know?

Maplewood Farm, officially opened to the public in 1975, and is the last remnant of farmland on the North Shore, first owned in the early 1900's by Mr. Akiyo Kogo.



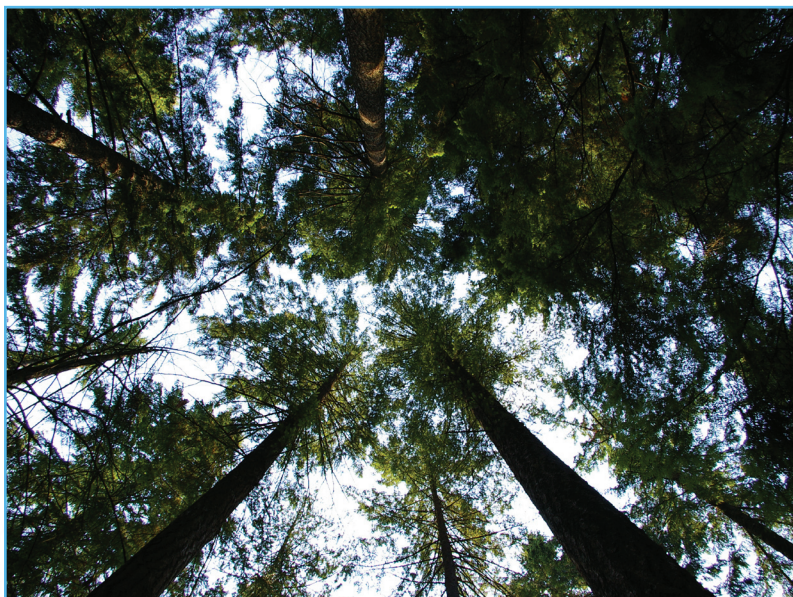
Maplewood Farm



Cates Park / Whey-Ah-Wichen

Parks and Open Space Inventory Organization

The inventory is divided up into the following categories:



Category	Function
District Parkland (size varies)	Park areas with specialized features and facilities that serve the entire District. A park that, depending on size and character addresses one or more of the following recreational needs including large sportsfield complexes, ecologically sensitive areas or unique open spaces, trails, etc.
Community Parkland (recommended minimum 8 hectares; varies in size)	Serve a number of neighbourhoods. Parks tend to be larger-scale with more organized recreational opportunities such as competitive sports (baseball, soccer, tennis, skateboarding, etc.) May also include local watercourses, natural areas, trails or sites of local heritage significance.
Neighbourhood Parkland (Recommended minimum 8 hectares; varies in size)	A localized park providing limited active and passive recreational opportunities and intended to serve primarily the residents within safe walking distance (10 minutes). Could include playgrounds, sports fields, tennis courts, trails, waterfront access and sports courts. May also contain local watercourses, greenbelts, trails and significant natural areas.
Greenbelts and Natural Parkland (size varies)	Greenway areas in natural state primarily set aside to separate various urban uses, protect environmentally sensitive land, habitats and wildlife (steep ravines, creeks, wetlands etc.), and to provide a visual and/ecosystem link between District parks and open space lands. May serve as trail linkages to open space corridors and greenways.
ROWs, Road Allowances, Easements, Medians, Laneways (no standard)	Serve the public with interconnecting trails and linkages, and provide opportunities for ornamental and street tree planting, and seating nodes.
Schools (no standard)	Outdoor recreation facilities serve some of the organized sport needs and neighbourhood use of playgrounds



Current Provision and Overall Park Supply

The overall supply of parks and open space in the District of North Vancouver by category is illustrated in the table below:

The table (at right) does not include the open space provided by the regional and provincial parks, nor school properties on the North Shore.

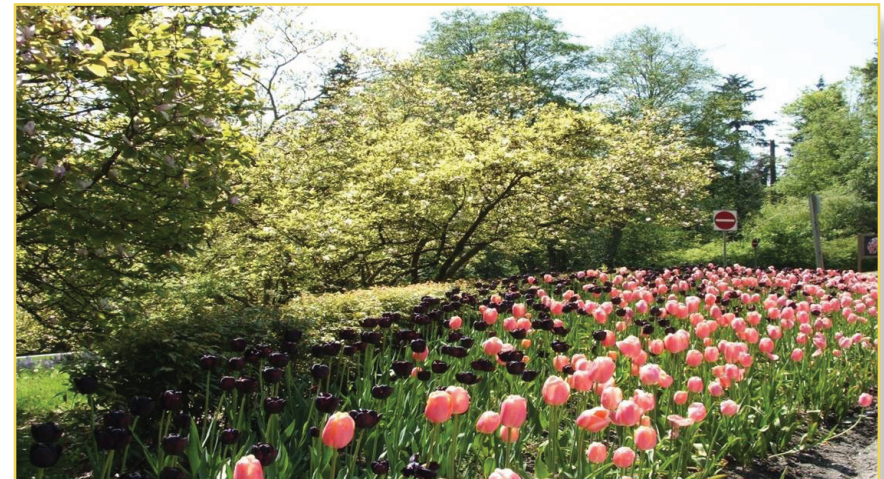
District Parks

The table demonstrates that the current ratio of 5.3 ha/1000 residents is commendable, it is equally important to consider the location of parks and open space throughout the District.

Park Type	Park Standard	Existing Land Area
District Park	2 ha /1000 pop 0.5 to 20 ha +	440.33 ha (5.3 ha /1000 pop)
Community Park	1 ha /1000 pop Min. 8.0 ha	187.53 ha (2.3 ha /1000 pop)
Neighbourhood Park (includes mini parks)	1 ha /1000 pop Min 2.0 ha	116.97 ha (1.4 ha /1000 pop)
Greenbelts & Natural Parkland (includes Fromme and alpine areas)	No standard/size varies	2223.39 ha (26.7 ha /1000 pop)
Total		2968.22 ha (36.0 ha /1000 pop)



Beachcoming, sun-bathing, and sailing...



The District of North Vancouver is well served with District level parkland, which includes the 250 hectare Lynn Canyon Park, a destination park for local, regional, and international users. In addition, Inter River Park, an athletic sports field complex, and Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen, a unique cultural park, operate as district-level parks. Most recently, the Alpine Areas, such as Fromme Mountain, with its hiking and mountain biking trails, attract users at a district wide level.

Community and Neighbourhood Parks

Community and neighbourhood parks are analyzed together since they serve similar needs, but at different levels. There are currently 187.53 hectares of community parks and 116.97 hectares of neighbourhood parks in the District. There are also public schools that function in varying degrees as neighbourhood and community parks. In general, the District is adequately provided for with Community and District parks. However, in some areas, Neighbourhood Park may be short, particularly in the four growth areas projected as Lower Capilano/Marine Drive, Lynn Valley Central Area, Lower Lynn - Seylynn Village, and Maplewood Village.

An existing guideline is that community parks should be located within 1 km (20 minute walk) of every resident and for neighbourhood parks within 0.5 km (10 minute walk). A special analysis of the neighbourhood and community parks illustrates that there are a few areas where these guidelines are challenged, in particular pockets of upper Capilano, and upper Lynn Valley.

As densification and growth develops in specific neighbourhoods, additional park land and open space opportunities will be reviewed in the context of:

- Lower Capilano/Marine Drive
- Lynn Valley Central Area
- Lower Lynn - Seylynn Village
- Maplewood Village



A bench in a nice setting...Maplewood Farm



A playground for all ages



Viewlynn Spray Park



Mountain View Park Trail

The Planning Department will be developing more detailed plans for these areas, where park and recreation needs will be incorporated.

Given the high cost of acquiring privately owned properties in the District, the feasibility of achieving the current park standards through purchase of fee simple lots within developed infill areas may not be a realistic goal. A modified park standard for infill areas in the four growth centres still permits the opportunity for parkland acquisition based upon an acquisition criteria list (refer to the section on DCC and Parkland Acquisition).

Greenbelts and Natural Parkland Area Open Space

There are currently 2223.39 hectares of greenbelts and natural parkland areas in the District. These areas typically include natural features, creeks, forested areas, storm detention, and sensitive riparian areas. The park use of this type of open space is restricted to trail access. Many of these areas form linear greenway corridors to protect wildlife habitat. While there is no formal standard, this type of open space is important as a complement to traditional parkland. These areas provide relief from more urban areas, and provide opportunities for conservation, natural history education and projects for naturalist groups, such as the Stream keepers to monitor. There is a strong interest in protecting the natural parkland open space to protect resource values and to connect parks into corridors that provide links for trail recreation, as well as for fish and wildlife.

Growth of Parkland Supply and Inventory since 1991

Between 1993 and 1999, through the initiation of a number of planning initiatives, such as the Parkland Identification Report, significant new parkland areas were added to the inventory for the Parks Department to manage. The Parkland Identification Report was initiated in 1993, with the goal to research and inventory District parcels of land which, although not zoned as park, operated as parkland, or had inherent ecological and greenway value. As a result of this process, 16 District of North Vancouver parcels of land

were dedicated or rezoned to parkland, including significant parcels of lands such as Mountain Forest/Cove Forest in Seymour. At the time the community was seeking protection of natural areas from further development.

In total, approximately 34 hectares of parkland were added through the Parkland Identification Report process, and include such sites as Hogan Pools, Lower Mackay Marsh, Mackay Creek Marsh Park, West Murdo Frazer Park, Malaspina Park, St. Alban's Park, Keith-Lynn Park, Cutter Island, Cove Cliff Park, Canyon Creek Park, Seycove Park, Burns Park, and Mountain View Park. In addition, Mountain/Cove Forest Park was added to the inventory. These sites were selected and rezoned as parkland due to a combination of their uniqueness, ecological significance, location, community value, regional importance, usability, and their link to the community values.

In addition, several large new community parks were brought into the inventory and developed, including Parkgate Community Park, Inter River Park, McCartney Park, Garibaldi Park and Indian River Park.

In addition to large new community parks, a series of smaller pocket parks were integrated into the Parks system, including Lynn Valley/27th Park, Lynn Valley Horse Trough Park, and Lowry Lane Park.

District of North Vancouver Alpine Areas

Over the past ten years, the Parks Department has assumed increasing management responsibilities for the many trails, forests and operational issues emerging from the Alpine areas, defined as those lands north of the residential areas from Capilano to Deep Cove. Prior to 1991, the Parks Department was not actively managing these DNV parkland areas, with the exception of some historical trails such as the Baden Powell Trail, Powerline Trail and

several others in the lower Fromme Mountain area. While some of this land has multiple ownerships with Metro Vancouver, BC Parks, Grouse Mountain Resort and CMHC, the Parks Department has witnessed an increase in recreational use of these lands, which has opened up a number of associated operational and management issues such as parking, unauthorized trail construction, mountain biking conflicts, trail maintenance, wild life protection, public safety, and forest management. In 2005, the Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study was initiated to identify and provide recommendations to begin to address these issues in the long term.

Development Cost Charges (DCC) and Parkland Acquisition

The first ever District-wide DCC bylaw was introduced in 1998 and revisions to the bylaw are anticipated for 2009, to reflect the anticipated growth projections, and the criteria used to assess infrastructure needs due to growth. DCCs are charges that are levied on new development to finance the cost of upgrading or providing infrastructure services needed to support growth. A component of the DCC addresses parkland development and



We have the best Parks staff anywhere...

acquisition of new parkland. The four areas anticipated for growth in the District, which will be confirmed through the OCP process, include Lower Capilano/Marine Drive, Lynn Valley Central Area, Seylynn Village and Maplewood Village. When reviewing potential parkland acquisition needs in the four growth areas, the following criteria will be applied to guide acquisition and development of parks.

- **Neighbourhood/Community growth areas** – purchase properties within identified DNV growth areas where population density is increasing.
- **Proximity to Existing Parks and Open Spaces**- give priority to properties adjacent to existing public parks, schools and open spaces where the properties would provide added recreational value to the existing parkland.
- **Connectivity and Linear Trail Access** – give priority to properties that improve connectivity and linkages for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Neighbourhood Park Potential** – give priority to properties that would provide ideal options for ‘active” neighbourhood recreational needs such as playgrounds.
- **Ecosystem Integrity** – give priority to properties that may be important in terms of preserving the integrity of an ecosystem.
- **Property Cost and Availability** – with finite financial resources, give priority to properties with costs that are reasonable, fair and affordable.

District's Relationship with Regional, Provincial, and Private Land Managers

It is important to note that a great deal of open space in the District is also provided through other jurisdictions that include Metro

Vancouver watershed and parkland (Capilano, Lynn Headwaters and LSCR) , as well as BC Parks (Mt. Seymour Park, Indian Arm Park), CMHC, and some private sector recreational lands such as Grouse Mountain Resorts. These properties are outside the jurisdiction of the District of North Vancouver Parks.

District's Relationship with School District # 44

The District has maintained a co-operative relationship with the School District, participating in a number of joint agreements to encourage co-operative planning and development of fields, playgrounds and other facilities. Good examples of this co-operative spirit include the development of the track & field at Handsworth School, the playground grant program, and the current Windsor School Artificial Field project under consideration in 2009.

School outdoor facilities such as sports fields and playgrounds have maintenance challenges and at times, significant upgrades to facilities are undertaken by joint funding between the District and the School District.



Did you know?

Harbourview Park, along the Burrard Inlet, features a viewing tower suspended over 8 metres above sea level.



Chapter 4

Park Inventory and Infrastructure



Park Inventory and Infrastructure

Many new parks and park facilities have been brought on stream since the 1991 draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and efforts have been made to maintain the level of consistency of service across the system. However, some of the infrastructure in older parks has become outdated and requires restoration and renovation. Residents and visitors evaluate a municipality based upon the level of maintenance, and with an aging park infrastructure, an evaluation of the existing parks inventory was seen as an important part of the parks and open space plan. Public surveys indicate that the public felt that parks maintenance, including litter control and recycling, was important. The parks inventory includes all buildings, sports fields, lighting, irrigation, underground infrastructure, paved surfaces, playgrounds, landscaped areas, play courts, spray pools, and natural parkland areas.

Capital and Operating Program

The Parks capital and operating projects originate from a wide variety of sources, including input from the community, briefs from special interest groups, Local Area Plans, park planning studies, and staff evaluation of resident needs. Between the years of 1991-2005, there was an increase in new park development projects. However, it is anticipated that the next ten years may bring more of a focus upon restoration and renovation of existing parks and facilities.

In 2008, the District undertook a comprehensive Capital Asset Management Program, with the goal of developing a 10 year life cycle maintenance plan. A review of the infrastructure suggests that park buildings and washrooms are a priority to address, along with bleachers, bike racks, picnic shelters, signage and other features.

Designing new parks and retrofitting older parks can create new opportunities for local residents. More and more 'informal' activities are being requested for neighbourhood parks, including seniors'



Norgate Park



There is always something to maintain or build

wellness parks, basketball hoops, landscape seating nodes, chess tables, and multi-use sports courts.

District Sports Field Needs Assessment Report

The District currently has 39 fields to serve primarily soccer, football, baseball, rugby, cricket and field hockey users. The predominant use and highest growth sport for sports fields in the District is organized soccer, with baseball participation remaining fairly steady. For soccer, the breakdown includes 29 grass fields, 8 all weather fields with lighting, and 1 artificial turf field. For baseball, the breakdown is 33 grass diamonds and 5 all weather diamonds.

In 1991, the draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan identified a shortage of grass fields to support organized sports league play. The report identified limited potential for the development of new open space, and suggested that improved maintenance standards and drainage would contribute to enhanced availability. In the 1991 report it was determined that there was a projected field deficit of five grass fields in the District, and seven in the City of North Vancouver (CNV).

There is often competition amongst soccer, football, cricket and field hockey for the same fields as all use the same size of the field. Soccer remains the predominant use of sports fields, with a growth in girl's and women's programs, and pressure to extend the soccer season into the summer months.

In 2008, District Parks initiated a Sports Field Needs Assessment Report (currently in draft form), a detailed report which included a review of the existing field inventory, analysis of demographic and user data trends, and a field capacity-demand analysis. The purpose of the project was to provide a blueprint for the future in terms of new field requirements, tournament facilities, and restoration and maintenance strategies to improve playability. With a limited land base to develop new fields in the District, more effective ways to upgrade and utilize existing fields need to be determined. Recommendations for expanded or upgraded sports fields will

emerge from the final Sportsfield Needs Assessment Report.

Preliminary draft recommendations may include:

- Install a minimum of two to three additional artificial field in DNV (to complement William Griffin ATF field)
- Undertake a site and agronomic analysis to determine priorities for individual field renovation as the basis for a 10 year capital renovation plan
- Investigate the potential to develop second tier 'casual use' field areas
- Provide more lit fields in strategic locations
- Undertake a review of current field allocation and scheduling procedures for DNV, CNV and School District #44 fields
- Review feasibility for joint funding strategies between DNV, School District #44, CNV and user groups



Inter River Park fields

Soccer

Since 1991, the soccer community, which has the largest number of participants for a field sport in the Lower Mainland, has been a driving force behind the demands for additional and improved sports fields.

The essential features of change in the soccer community are the shifts in approach at the youth level, and the increased participation at the adult level, and an interest in an extended play season into summer soccer. As youth numbers plateau, there has been increasing interest in and a move toward a “European” approach to soccer. This highlights a more intense approach and includes a longer season, and a general predisposition against gravel field use. A corollary to the increased emphasis on player skill development is the role of the commercial soccer camp, run as a profit enterprise. Such camps are operated during the summer and require dedicated field space.

The impact of increased adult participation has also had an impact upon field supply. It has become a challenge to schedule alternative regulation-size fields for adult games during inclement weather. Another impact of adult participation is an increase in demand for quality field access during the regular season, and during the summer. This trend increases competition with other sports that traditionally play during the off-season for soccer.

Since the deficit of soccer fields was quantified in the draft 1991 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, the District has added 12 new field facilities, between 1991-2007, to better meet the needs for soccer, baseball, and field hockey.



Inventory of new Sports fields added (1991 – 2008)	
Inter River Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 tournament sized grass soccer fields (to a total of 8 soccer fields) • 2 hardball diamonds
Parkgate Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 grass soccer field • 2 baseball diamonds (1 hardball)
William Griffin Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 lit artificial field (estimated equivalent of 4 grass fields)
Handsworth School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 football/soccer and track, in partnership with School District
Total New Fields (1991-2008) added	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soccer - 8 new fields (equivalent of 11 fields if 1 ATF is equivalent to 4) • Baseball - 4 new fields



Inter River Park



Windsor Secondary School Feasibility Study for Artificial Turf Field (2008/2009)

There is a feasibility study underway to determine the potential addition of a lit artificial field (estimated equivalent of 4 grass fields) for Windsor Secondary School in Seymour. In 2008/2009, the District Parks Department, with School District #44, undertook a feasibility study to review the conversion of one grass field at Windsor Secondary School to an artificial turf field with a track to serve soccer, football, field hockey, and track events. Construction for this field could begin as early as 2010, assuming the formulation of a joint use agreement with support from the School district and the District of North Vancouver, public support, and funding.

Baseball Fields

This sport includes baseball, slo-pitch and softball leagues. Participation rates in baseball have been fairly consistent over the past years, and participation rates are not anticipated to increase in the near future.

In the 1991 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, based upon existing data and trend analysis, it was estimated that DNV was deficient by 9 baseball diamonds. Between 1991 – 2006, 4 new ball fields were constructed at Inter River Park and Parkgate Park. The Parkgate #1 hardball diamond integrated 8 banks of lights to support expanded play for night baseball games.

While the District did not construct 9 new baseball diamonds to meet the 1991 recommendation, the combination of new inventory and upgraded diamonds, night lighting, dugouts with roofs, batting cages for practise, and improved backstops at several existing fields appears to meet the current needs, based upon 2008 information and trends. With limited land base to develop new fields in the District, more effective ways to upgrade and utilize existing fields needed to be examined.



William Griffin Park



Parkgate Park



Parkgate Park



Inter River Park - North Shore model airplane club Friday group fly

In addition to new field inventory, significant renovations to specific baseball diamonds have resulted in increased playability to fields that were otherwise not booked or scheduled. Many of these improvements were a direct request of consultation with the Sports Council and sport user groups. These improvements specifically improved playability and bookings to baseball fields that included:

- **Seylynn Park** - 1 field renovations including a junior diamond.
- **Norgate Park** - 2 field renovation and new improved backstop.
- **Eldon Park** - 2 infield renovations and 2 new improved backstops and new batting cage.
- **Myrtle Park** - 1 new batting cage at Myrtle Park and a pitching bullpen.
- **Kirkstone Park** - 1 field renovation and infield renovation with new improved backstop, and new batting cage
- **Kilmer Park** - 3 new improved backstops, new grass field drainage system, and T-ball portable at AW field.
- **Delbrook Park** - 1 T ball portable backstop.
- **Inter River Park** - 1 field renovation and 2 new improved backstops at Fields 2 & 3, new improved backstop at Field 1.
- **Cleveland Park** - 1 new improved backstop at upper field.

Football, Rugby, Field Lacrosse and Cricket

These sports have been grouped together as they currently share relatively small numbers and have variable seasons and/or field requirements. Football has had a relatively stable participation rate for a number of years. The primary football field in the District is at Norgate Park. Rugby is played at Klahanie Park in West Vancouver and the William Lucas Centre grass field in the City of North Vancouver. Field lacrosse numbers are currently small and unlikely to expand radically. Cricket is played at Hugo Ray Park in West Vancouver and at Norgate Park. Participation rates remain fairly stable. The facility at Norgate Park has provided challenges due to its proximity to the residential area, and the impact of balls

being hit out of the playing field. Alternate venues are under consideration, including Inter River Fields 7 and 8, providing that additional infrastructure such as a fieldhouse is included.

Track and Field

Currently, track and field inventory includes facilities at Handsworth School in the District, and at Sutherland School in the City of North Vancouver. The number of track and field participants is small, and there is no indication that the participation rates will increase. That being said, there is interest in finding a site for an 8 lane track capable of supporting major sanctioned events and competitive tournaments.

Ultimate and Other Sports

Ultimate is a rapidly growing sport across the Lower Mainland. The timing of the season (spring/summer) is impacting the availability of fields, in part due to the increasing demands of adult soccer. The field size requirements of the sport suggest that it might be scheduled on some of the smaller fields, or accommodated across larger fields by shifting the location of goal posts.

Sports Courts and Lacrosse Boxes

Hard surfaced sports courts in parks have grown in popularity during the past ten years. They are generally hard courts surrounded by fencing, with space for hockey goal nets and basketball hoops. The District currently has sports courts at Kirkstone Park and Garibaldi Park. In addition, there are three lacrosse boxes at Myrtle Park, William Griffin Park and Inter River Park, which are scheduled through the Recreation Commission for lacrosse. These lacrosse boxes are also used for ball hockey and other 'casual' ball sports.

Currently, the North Vancouver minor lacrosse teams use the boxes for youth and practise games. They have approximately 350 registered players. From March to June, they book the dry



Inter River Park BMX track



Kirkstone Park basketball and sport court



Cates Park LET'S PLAY playground - Tsleil Waututh mini longhouse



Cates Park playground in action

floor areas in North and West Vancouver for games, and use the outdoor facilities for practises. From mid-March to late September, Inter River Park and Myrtle Park are booked in the evening slot for individual adult ball hockey teams. In addition, weekends are sometimes booked for children's birthday parties. The breakdown ratio between lacrosse and ball hockey use is approximately 65% for minor lacrosse and 35% for ball hockey and casual use.

School Sports

Many of the school programs in soccer, field hockey, field lacrosse, ultimate and mountain biking are expanding, placing more pressure on District sports fields and trails. In some cases, the school fields are overused by the high school sports program. Without a regular maintenance program, these fields are in poorer condition, and can result in schools requesting use of District fields.

Playgrounds

There are over 50 playgrounds equally distributed across the District, in community and neighbourhood parks. These playgrounds are important in providing informal spaces for tots and young children to play, explore, and socialize, and for parents to meet each other and develop community connections. The play areas vary from small tot lots in pocket parks to larger, more complex playgrounds in larger, District wide parks such as Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen.

Since the early 1990's, there have been significant upgrades to the playgrounds within the District in order to meet the Canadian Safety Association (CSA) playground safety guidelines. Through the Parks capital plan, over half of the existing playgrounds have been upgraded with new equipment, focusing on two key age groups; the 1-5 years old group and the 6 – 12 year old group. Although no one playground is dedicated for special needs children, most of the playgrounds provide equipment that is accessible for children with physical challenges.

Between the mid 1990's and 2005, a School Playground grant program emerged which enabled the schools in School District #44 to partner with the District of North Vancouver on the upgrade of many of their school playgrounds. This indirectly benefitted the District, where school playgrounds could be jointly used by neighbourhood children after school hours, helping to address any deficiencies for neighbourhoods that may not be well served by park playgrounds.

Recommendations may include: Upgrading and replacing out of date equipment and making playgrounds accessible for children of all abilities.

Seniors' Fitness Parks

Demographic analysis indicates that the District is currently an 'aging population', with a growing population over 55 years of age. In 2009, the BC government, through the ACT NOW Senior Fitness Program, provided \$100,000 towards the installation of outdoor fitness equipment to be installed at Parkgate Park. As this trend continues, parks may need to incorporate other facilities that might include soft surface walking tracks, outdoor table tennis, chess tables and small covered picnic structures.

Tennis Courts

The District of North Vancouver Parks currently has 43 outdoor tennis courts accessible to the public, with most courts evenly distributed throughout the communities and neighbourhoods. The amount of tennis played on the courts varies significantly, and is influenced by weather, solar exposure, court conditions and surface types. The park courts cater primarily to the casual recreational player, although the North Vancouver Recreation Commission does book exclusive times for tennis clubs or tennis lessons at Murdo Fraser Park, Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen, Myrtle Park, and Delbrook Rec Centre. There tends to be more play on the tennis courts which are clustered together, such as Murdo Fraser Park which has an active senior's tennis group. All courts have the majority of court times open on a first come, first serve basis. Indoor tennis is largely



Parkgate Seniors Park opening ceremony - June 9, 2009



Delbrook Park tennis courts

managed through the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, with the indoor bubble located at Grant Connell Tennis Centre, and the private Capilano Tennis Club.

The North Vancouver Tennis Society conducted a tennis court assessment for the District in 1999, which identified maintenance and renovation recommendations. Although the District of North Vancouver has a reasonable number of courts, many of the older courts require significant renovations, and there have been requests to consider potential lighting for some courts. The renovations range from full surface replacement and fencing, to minor surface upgrades that would include color coating and fence repairs.

Some tennis courts have been renovated to function as multi-use sports courts that accommodate roller hockey, basketball and lacrosse. Based on existing trends, there would appear to be adequate provision for outdoor tennis within each neighbourhood. Inter River Park was identified as a park that may support the addition of 2 tennis courts, to compensate for the courts removed due to excessive settlement at this converted landfill site, and to meet demand from the Lynnmour/InterRiver community.

Picnic Shelters and Special Event Facilities

The District currently provides 5 picnic shelters located at Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen, Princess Park, Lynn Canyon Park, Deep Cove Park and Panorama Park. During summer months, these picnic shelters are booked by park permit for a wide range of private and public events, ranging from church and business picnics to family and community events.

All the picnic shelters are available for bookings by permit, and fees are charged. Based upon 2008 booking statistics, with over 100 permits issued between May and September, there is a growing demand for picnic shelters and park bookings for weddings and other special events. Especially popular are the picnic shelters at Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen, Panorama Park and Princess Park. All of the shelters have access to running water and washrooms



A young Nadal in the making?



Panorama Park picnic shelter



New Eldon Spray Park



World famous Seylynn Skatepark ('the snake run')

nearby. In the near future, the picnic shelters will require significant maintenance and restoration to maintain their attractiveness to the public. A few more shelters in key parks would be worth considering.

Water Parks

The District has 4 water parks, constructed in the mid 1990's at Eldon Park, Viewlynn Park, Kilmer Park and Myrtle Park. These small, but popular water parks are in need of renovating to meet new water park standards for play. In 2008, Eldon Park spray pool had a complete renovation with new water play components and design elements. Subject to funding, the next restoration will be Viewlynn, followed by Myrtle and Kilmer. Instead of creating one large District level water spray pool, the approach was to create smaller, neighbourhood level spray parks distributed across the District. There have been requests to consider including a water park at Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen, Inter River Park, Parkgate Park, McCarthy Creek Park, and the Norgate area.

Youth Parks – Skateboard and Bike Parks

The District has 3 skateboard parks distributed across the District at William Griffin Park, Kirkstone Park and Seylynn Park.

In 2008, a new bike park was opened at Inter River Park with a BMX track, dirt jumps and mountain biking structures for training and racing events. The Inter River Bike Skills Park was created as an authorized location for bike clubs and the NSMBA to construct and design their features, within specific guidelines that would ensure risk management concerns were addressed. Myrtle Park also offers an informal area which has been accessed by youth groups, such as Dirt Club. In the past few years, the District has seen an increase in unauthorized bike areas being constructed in sensitive greenbelt areas, and continues to work with bike groups and residents to communicate that unauthorized bike areas are not permitted.

Trails, Greenbelts and Greenways

Most recreational surveys conducted within the last ten years consistently rate trails as the most needed or desired recreation opportunity for the public. The District is well represented by a wide range and type of trails, ranging from rustic, natural trails (Baden Powell Trail) to more urban, hard-surfaced and lit trails (Indian River Neighbourhood Trails). Many of the linear trail networks are defined along major watercourse corridors, in a north-south direction, including Mosquito Creek, Lynn Creek and Seymour Creek. Trails are increasingly used for recreational, commuter and transportation purposes.

Over the past 10 years, significant efforts have focussed on planning and developing a comprehensive trail system in the District of North Vancouver. Through neighbourhood planning, trails form an integral role to ensure that linkages between residential areas and key community nodes (schools, recreation centres and shopping areas) are provided. In addition, trails such as the Trans Canada Trail and the Seymour Greenway Trail provide regional linkages. Trails are generally multi-purpose, accommodating pedestrians, hikers and cyclists, with specialty trails more suited for mountain biking in the mountain areas. With two equestrian centres in the District of North Vancouver, there are also some trails that are accessed by equestrians, particularly in the Inter River Park area.



Trails/pathways for biking...



standing/studying...



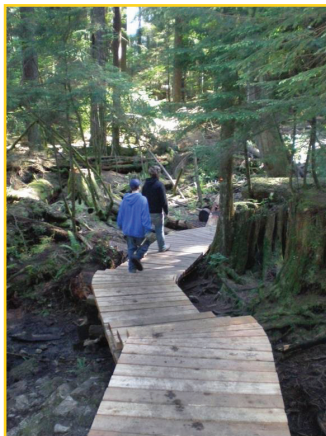
or running/walking...

Recommendations for trails may include:

- Update the existing DNV Major Community Trails & Routes Document (2002)
- Implement the Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study recommendations for trails, staging areas, signage and best management practices (2008)
- Implement recommendations from the Baden Powell Trail Guidelines
- Implement Trail Best Management Practices in the maintenance and construction of trails
- Implement, in partnership with the DNV Transportation Department, the North Shore Spirit Trail Route Planning Report recommendations (2009)
- Continue to partner, where feasible, with the City of North Vancouver, Metro Vancouver, Grouse Mountain Resorts, BC Parks to complete and manage important trail linkages.
- Implement the recommendations from the Seymour Greenway Trail Plan, a partnership with Metro Vancouver
- Implement trail recommendations from the District Local Area Plans, that identify neighbourhood trail linkages
- Separate the ecological, human and dog uses in the natural parkland areas, where feasible, to protect the natural areas from deterioration and overuse.
- Implement directional and regulatory signage, trail maps, way finding, code of conduct and interpretive signage
- Update trail communication through the development of park trail pamphlets, available on the DNV Parks web site
- Implement waterfront access trails, using the waterfront road allowances, where feasible and practical

North Shore Spirit Trail

In 2007, the three North Shore municipalities, the North Shore Spirit of BC Committee, and other organizations were successful in securing Local Motion funding from the provincial government for the North Shore Spirit Trail, a 2010 Legacies Now project. Since that time, the Squamish First



Roche Point Trail...lots to look at.



Nation has also joined the Spirit Trail team, partnering on the implementation of the project. The North Shore Spirit Trail is envisioned as a 35 km long, accessible, low-lying, waterfront-oriented greenway that will link Horseshoe Bay and Deep Cove. The trail will function as both a recreation and transportation amenity for walkers, cyclists, in-line skaters and people with wheeled mobility aides. It will provide an important east-west connection, and improve connections between neighbourhoods, parks, trails, businesses, recreation services and transportation hubs. The District completed a Route Planning Report in 2009, in consultation with residents; and is currently working on the design of the Western Section of the Spirit Trail.

Public Art in Parks

In 2000, the District of North Vancouver Council adopted a Public Art Policy designed to integrate public art into streets, parks, open spaces and development projects in the community. The program is administered through the North Vancouver Office of Culture Affairs. Since its inception, the program has added a new dimension to park development projects, integrating art into several new capital park projects such as:

- Lynn Canyon Park Cafe - the dragonfly glass art “Dance of the Odanata” by Robert Keillor
- Inter River Park - chain link art integrated into the sports field back stops “Flow Forms” by Karen Kazmer

Other art in the park projects include:

- Pioneer Park - Walter Mackay Draycott
- William Griffin Park Signage - carved cedar log stylized “heron” by Eric Neighbour
- Capilano/Ridgewood Fountain - “Crab fountain” by Greg Norris
- William Griffin Park - “Eventually” by Adam Kuby
- Seymour Heritage Park - “Eventually” by Adam Kuby
- Lynn Canyon Park - “Eventually” by Adam Kuby
- Lynn Canyon Park - Gate Panels by Phillip and Kirsty Robbins



Tsleil-Waututh Nation - Cates playground artwork



Dollarton waterfront access



Tsleil-Waututh Nation artists



William Griffin Park sign

Public Waterfront Access

In 1998, a Waterfront Task Force Report identified a number of public waterfront access opportunities, which included the development of a waterfront street end access program. Over the past decade, approximately 15 waterfront street end access points have been opened, primarily in the residential Seymour neighbourhoods. They include waterfront access along Panorama Drive, Beachview Drive, Dollarton Highway, and other neighbourhood streets. The newest waterfront park, Lowry Lane Park, was opened in 2007 to provide further neighbourhood access. In addition, waterfront access opportunities have been capitalized upon at Cates Park/Whalley-Wichien and Panorama/Deep Cove Park, with improved wharf and recreational access. Through the process of subdivision and redevelopment, the District will continue to seek public waterfront access opportunities where feasible, as they become available.

Buildings and Structures in Parks

The District of North Vancouver is currently responsible for 37 park field houses, change rooms, washrooms and other miscellaneous buildings, located at parks throughout the District from Capilano to Deep Cove. The majority of the buildings are over 35 years old, and many require significant upgrades in order to meet current building code, and health and safety standards. In 2007, a Building Condition Assessment Report was undertaken for all park buildings, to evaluate the interior, exterior, electrical, mechanical, and building code compliance. The review of each structure resulted in specific recommendations with cost estimates to upgrade and meet codes and, in some cases, to replace buildings. The buildings collectively have a range of concerns with respect to non-compliance with current building codes, seismic stability, mechanical system deficiencies, vandalism and graffiti, and the lack of 'green building technology'. Many facilities are still functional but their remaining useful life is limited, and many will require upgrades in the next 2-5 years. Some of the newer buildings in good shape include the Lynn Canyon Cafe, Maplewood Farm, and McCartney Park Fieldhouse, with older structures such as Delbrook Fieldhouse, Norgate Fieldhouse and Kirkstone Washroom recommended for full replacement. New washrooms are recommended to be added to the inventory at Sowden Park and William Griffin Park.

Recommendations may include:

Implement recommendations from Parks Building Condition Assessment Report (2008)



DNV Trail bridge...

Did you know?

The District has 31 soccer fields and 35 ball diamonds.

The audit indicates that the Parks Department will need to develop a strategy and funding goals to ensure the longevity of the buildings. The audit showed a final cost estimate of \$1,600,000 (2007 costs) to repair and upgrade the buildings to a reasonable standard. Over a ten year period, the Parks Department could use an annual influx of approximately \$160,000 to address the maintenance deficiencies. The Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Management Plan recommended the construction of an additional building to the parks inventory, with a new feasthouse to be constructed in partnership with the Tseil Waututh Nation.

For more details, refer to the WE Cotterall Associates Consulting Inc report, Building Assessment Service for DNV Parks Department Buildings.

Urban Beautification, Horticulture and Streetscapes

Over the past 15 years, Parks operations has assumed many new areas of maintenance responsibility. An emerging vision for open space planning has integrated neighbourhoods, streets and plazas as part of the contiguous urban fabric. Maintenance is no longer restricted to 'stand alone parks', and has expanded to encompass a variety of streetscapes, median plantings, mini parks, community building landscapes, ornamental street plantings, public art, village beautification gateways, natural plantings, and greenway trails, to name a few. The maintenance issues have become increasingly multi-faceted, requiring a variety of approaches depending upon the design, location, and service levels. With water regulations coming into effect, plant selection to meet changing climates has become important.

Stormwater management practices that integrate design, landscaping and storm water into an effective union have opened the door to the creation of such features as 'rain gardens', and bio swales.

Did you know?

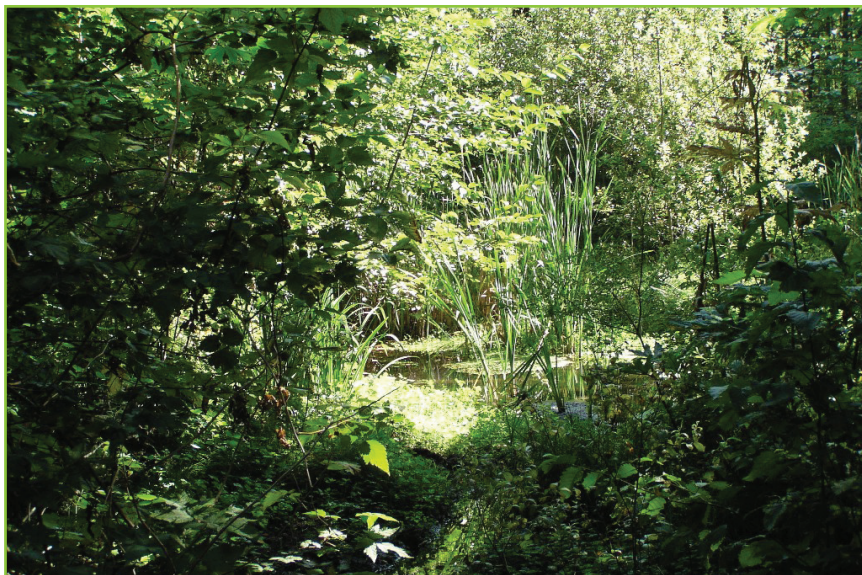
DNV Parks Horticulture division looks after over 70,000 square metres of landscaped areas!



District hall flowerbeds



A typical Parks planting bed: a rich variety of colour, texture and plant types



No pesticides means more nature



Water, water, everywhere, but keep a drop to drink...

Examples of new public open space sites that Parks operations have assumed include the Lynn Valley Horse Trough Park, the Edgemont Village Medians and Four Corners, the Deep Cove Village Fountain Plaza, trails and landscapes in the Braemar and Indian River Neighbourhood, Dollarton Highway medians and trails, and the Lillooet Road streetscape and trail. These sites provide important public connectivity and a 'sense of place'. However, with limited operational budgets that do not match the increased inventory, the parks operations are required to accomplish more maintenance within a static budget. In addition, new hard surfaced, lit 'urban trails' have been constructed as part of new subdivision areas including the Indian River neighbourhood, the Northlands Golf course, the Braemar Neighbourhood and the Garibaldi Neighbourhood.

Integrated Pest Management – Pesticide Ban

A ban on the cosmetic use of pesticides in the District has triggered the challenge to control weeds in alternative ways. Such methods include the use of cultural and biological controls such as introducing predator or beneficial bugs as a form of pesticide (i.e. ladybugs, lacewings, parasitic wasps, nematodes, etc.). Landscaped areas have been amended with leaf mulch which greatly improves soil conditions to allow for healthy plant growth, help suppress weeds and retain moisture. In addition, open soil areas have been planted with appropriate plant material, often drought tolerant, in order to minimize areas for weeds to take hold.

Water Conservation

Over the last 5 years the horticulturalists have introduced the following methods of addressing water conservation in the District:

- Several *Drought Tolerant Gardens* have been created, including gardens at Greenbriar & Sunset, Hampshire cul-de-sac, Sunnyhurst, Maplewood Corners, Deep Cove Corners and Edgemont Four Corners. Plants in these gardens can withstand extended periods of time without water, and are ideal for areas with no irrigation.

- *Rain Gardens* have been created at the Keith Road Triangles and on Skyline Drive. Rain gardens aid in storm water management by capturing storm water which would otherwise empty into street catch basins, filtering toxins and providing water for plant growth.
- Conversion of old irrigation systems in landscaped areas to *modern, water efficient systems*, and linking irrigation systems to the District Park's 'Central Irrigation System', which regulates watering and is far more efficient, thereby conserving water.
- The addition of *recycled leaf mulch and woodchips* has also improved soil moisture retention which in turn conserves water.

The Nursery

A horticultural nursery site was upgraded at Inter River Park in 2005 to establish a place to propagate and grow plants, divide plant material, compost and store soil, and provide a holding area for trees and plants for upcoming planting projects. Plugs and bare root plants have been purchased at low prices, and are then grown at the nursery until ready for planting. This process can provide a significant cost savings compared to buying one gallon pots at nurseries.

Street Tree Master Plan

Street trees form a significant part of the urban forest resource, provide a sense of community identity, contribute to environmental sustainability by reducing air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions, help to manage impacts from climate change, and reduce storm water runoff in urban areas. In 1993, the District first undertook a Street Tree Master Plan process to develop a framework for the provision, design, planting, funding and maintenance of the street tree resource of the District of North Vancouver. With the support of a Street Tree Plan Advisory Committee, the report provided guidance on street tree prototypes, design guidelines, street tree types, maintenance and other topics. The report resulted in the District receiving a grant through Street Tree Canada in the mid 1990's to support the planting of new street trees across the District and most currently, funding support through Tree Canada Foundation and BC Hydro. In 2007, the Street Tree Master Plan was updated, along with the completion of a digital District Street Tree Inventory. These two plans summarize a wealth of information included in the inventory data, as well as identifying some key recommendations:



Cates Park 2006 storm damage

- tree replacement needs based on existing tree condition and the cost for tree replacement
- new tree planting opportunities and the cost of new tree planting
- pest management issues and the cost of pest management
- development of pruning and maintenance cycles
- cost for maintenance of existing trees
- tree/infrastructure conflicts such as sidewalk and power line issues
- GIS based tree inventory which provides spatial awareness, a mapping component, and increases information transfer and availability to multiple departments and the public.
- GIS based database will also be the platform for tree canopy analysis and the calculation of widespread environmental benefits provided by trees.

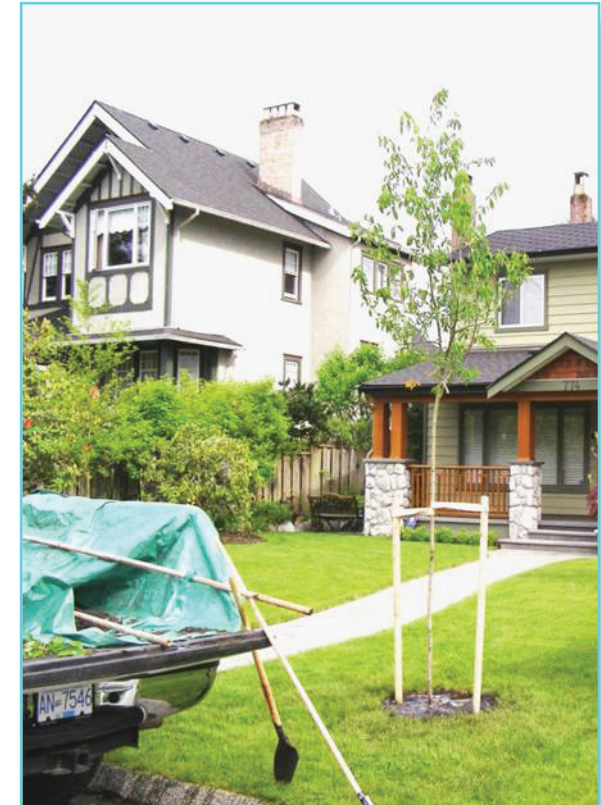
The completion of the Street Tree Inventory and Street Tree Master Plan provide a 5-10 year framework for capital and maintenance programs. The Street Tree Inventory provides an estimated value of the trees and an estimate of tree maintenance costs to protect the investment the District has made in this resource. There are 3,100 street trees in the most recent update (January 2008) of the District's street tree inventory. The current (January 2008) estimated value based on the Trunk Area Formula of these trees, is approximately \$7,000,000. This method is commonly used by arborists to appraise the value of individual trees and assigns a value by incorporating tree condition, size and location.

Recommendations may include:

Implement the key recommendations from the Street Tree Master Plan and Street Tree Inventory

Implement the Street Tree Planting Guidelines found in the Marine Drive Design Guidelines, Lynn Valley Design Guidelines, and Maplewood Industrial Park Design Guidelines.

Calculation of the environmental benefits of the existing urban forest canopy using GIS datasets.



Did you know?

The largest waterfront park in the District at 22.3 hectares is Cates Park/ Whey-ah-Wichen, jointly managed with the Tsleil Waututh Nation.



Communication, Signage and Way finding

With more users accessing parks, pressure points have emerged between park users such as dog walkers, mountain bikers, and informal users of sports fields. As the population grows, new demands on parks and open space will increase, and 'messaging' becomes important to guide and inform the public. In 2007, the Parks Department developed an official "Signage Manual" to provide design standards to improve and revitalize signage and way finding systems. The Parks department has also explored the use of humorous and friendly signage (see above), rather than negative regulatory signage.

In addition to signs, the Parks Department in 2008, revised, updated and published a new version of the "Parks of North Vancouver" pamphlet, in partnership with the City of North Vancouver.

The Parks Department has also established a Parks Website on www.dnv.org which provides a wide range of park and recreational information geared to the public on topics such as park locations, amenities, arboriculture, sports fields, volunteerism, park permit process, trails, signs, horticulture and carpentry projects. This has helped to reduce the number of phone inquiries as the public have an alternative information source.

Other Emerging Outdoor Recreation Activities in the District of North Vancouver

Over the past ten years, the Parks Department has witnessed emerging trends that will continue to impact parks operations and planning, and will require policies and procedures to manage. Many of these trends are unique to the District, while others reflect the regional recreational trends identified in the research. The demand for programming parks can result in over saturation, sometimes impacting the casual use of parks.

Emerging trends include the following:

Flying Clubs

The North Shore Radio Control Flying Club, with a membership in the range of 30-40 members, has been using Inter River Park prior to conversion of the site from a landfill to a park in the mid 1990's. As a specialized use, the club books fields through the North Vancouver Recreation Commission for their flying zone, during time slots not booked for soccer and baseball.

Water Based Recreation Opportunities

Over the past ten years, water based recreation such as boating, kayaking, canoeing, scuba diving and fishing have increased in popularity, and use at the ramps, boat launch and wharf at Deep Cove Park, Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen and Strathcona Park has increased. The Deep Cove Canoe and Kayak Club has seen a marked increase in sea kayaking, rowing and canoeing. Due to increased popularity, a second seasonal kayak rental operation was opened in 2007 at Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen. Most recently, Parks has assumed responsibility for the wharf at Gallant Street, which was previously managed by the federal government. Boating up Indian Arm to Granite Falls is a popular route which has opened up the need to maintain existing public wharves up Indian Arm. In addition to water based activities, there is a growing interest in sand based volleyball.

Eco Tourism and Outdoor Educational Training

Over the past ten years, eco tourism has become a popular business opportunity on the North Shore, attracting programs for recreationalists and tourists attracted to mountain biking, hiking, interpretive guided trips, orienteering courses, boating and trail running. The North Vancouver Recreation Commission and schools also provide recreation programs to encourage outdoor uses of the parks and trails. In addition, large scale commercial and non profit eco races and bike races are growing in popularity.

Paintball/ Rope Courses/ Tree Canopy Programs

District Parks has been approached by private businesses to consider incorporating specialized forms of outdoor recreation into the parks including areas for paintball, rope courses and tree canopies. In many cases, environmental and public safety concerns, and the exclusivity of a private amenity within a public park, make these types of proposals challenging for the public sector.

Commercial Operators in Parks (concessions, outdoor fitness lessons, boot camps and other businesses)

District Parks does have a tradition of permitting some access to private operators in parks, but largely for food concessions at Lynn Canyon Park and Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen, and at Deep Cove Park with the Deep Cove Canoe and Kayak Club. In these cases, the District owns the facility and tenders to the private sector for their services. More recently, with an increasing interest in healthy living, health and fitness businesses use parks to run their boot camp programs. Future considerations include potential impact on park users, professional standards, public risk, insurance and WCB compliance.

Did you know?

Hiking and walking is rated as the #1 activity in DNV Parks!

Building Unauthorized Play Structures

With increased interest in mountain biking and building structures, many greenbelts in the District have been used as sites to build unauthorized trails, structures and forts to support mountain biking, paintball and other uses. As land managers, these activities raise public safety, liability and environmental concerns.

Lawn Bowling

With an aging population, an interest in providing lawn bowling sites has been raised, although the City of North Vancouver currently provides lawn bowling at the North Vancouver Lawn Bowling Club.

Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens

An interest in community gardens is emerging as one form of urban agriculture, which can be understood as the practice of producing, processing and distributing food in or around a city. Community gardens are increasingly viewed as valuable amenities that promote social, environmental and economic sustainability, civic engagement and community development

In July 2009 District Council approved a policy framework for community gardens including Operational Guidelines for Community Gardens on District-owned lands and Voluntary Urban Agriculture Design Guidelines for District-owned or privately-owned lands. Council also approved a one-time grant process consisting of two funding streams to enable and facilitate community gardens and urban agriculture projects in the District of North Vancouver. Responsibilities of a successful applicant would include the administration, construction, on-going management and upkeep of the garden; as well as the provision of programming which enhances community development, environmental enrichment or accessibility.



Community gardens...



Unauthorized trail jumps/steps



Gardens of all types...

Park Accessibility Review

In 2009, The North Shore Disability Resource Centre was successful in receiving a Measuring Up Grant from 2010 Legacies Now to engage a consultant to prepare a Park Accessibility Review for the District and City of North Vancouver. Ten District Parks were reviewed, in order to provide feedback to parks staff on specific areas and features at the park sites that could be altered to provide enhanced accessibility for all users. Park users include a wide variety of people with different needs and abilities. The access reviews are intended to provide feedback on maximizing opportunities for most park visitors. The analysis took into account the needs of people with physical disabilities (who may use mobility devices including wheelchairs, crutches, canes, walkers and scooters), people with visual impairments, parents and caregivers using strollers, families, adults, children and seniors. With an aging population, more and more people are living with mobility restrictions; yet continue to enjoy outdoor recreation in local parks.



Paths accessible to strollers...



DNV Parks is working on improving such barriers throughout its system.



Accessible child swings - Cates Park

Recommendations may include:

- Implement the directions and recommendations from the Park Accessibility Review Report

Planning and Design – Park Planning and Development Projects

Public involvement in park planning and park design plays an integral role in creating a healthy and creative parks system. All significant park planning and design projects are submitted to public process through a number of mechanisms that include public open houses, workshops, focus groups, public surveys, information web sites, mail outs, community association presentations, and involvement of Council committees such as the Parks and Natural Environment Advisory Committee (PNEAC). Since 1991, the District Parks has undertaken a number of key park planning studies to provide long term direction for many of our important parks. Over the past 15 years, great strides have been taken in the development of new parks and the restoration and retrofit of existing parks, resulting in improved waterfront access, trail development, natural parkland protection and restoration, building and facility upgrades, sports fields and horticulture areas.

Key park planning studies for community parks, trails, sports fields, buildings and greenbelts have included the following projects, some of which were first identified in the draft 1991 Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and through other park planning processes:

Lynn Canyon Park Management Plan (1994)
 Inter River Park Master Plan (1995)
 McCartney Creek Park and Fieldhouse (1996)
 Baden Powell Trail Management Plan (1996)
 Parkgate Community Park (1996)
 Karen Magnussen Sports court and Tennis Courts (1999/2000)
 Maplewood Farm Reception Building (2001)
 William Griffin Park Artificial Field Study (2001)
 DNV Major Community Trails & Routes Document (2002)
 Lynn Canyon Park Cafe Plan (2003)
 Myrtle Park Building Restoration (2003)
 Mountain View Park Trail Planning (2004)
 Lynn Canyon Park – Central Area Improvement Plan (2004)
 Alpine Recreational Strategic Study (2005)
 Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Management Plan (2005)
 Park Building Condition and Assessment Report (2008)
 Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study (2008)
 Braemar Park Conceptual Design (2009)



Delbrook Park

The number and rate of changes in the community in the past five years has created challenges for the Parks Department in its attempt to fund and move forward on a number of key capital projects on the books:

Lynn Canyon Park – Central Area Improvement Plan (2004)
 Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Management Plan (2005)
 Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study (2008)
 Building Upgrades and Replacement Program

Recommendations may include:

- Support district sustainability goals and continue to incorporate green building elements into park improvement projects, implement innovative storm water management practices and promote energy conservation and low impact development in the design of facilities within parks.
- Be proactive in identifying alternative means of acquiring park land or trail easements.
- Develop park standards for construction and apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environment Design) principles to all park planning and design projects.
- Address demand for open informal grass areas for casual use and play in parks.

Inter - Jurisdictional Relationships with Land Agencies

The mountainside recreational areas in the District are both a local and regional resource, with many trails and recreation areas interconnecting multiple jurisdictions. In an effort to manage the trail recreational issues more effectively, active involvement between neighbouring land managers has evolved through mutually respectful and productive partnerships. Over the past 10 years, the District Parks Department has engaged in a number of inter jurisdictional trail planning projects that include the Baden Powell Trail Management Study, undertaken in 1996 with the District of West Vancouver, Metro Vancouver Parks and Watershed group and BC Parks. The report provided a series of recommendations regarding signage, mapping, trail construction standards, and marketing strategies some of which have been implemented in the District during the past 10 years.

On going discussions between District Parks, LSCR, Metro Vancouver Parks and BC Parks staff continue as specific issues arise relating to signage, trail construction projects, habitat restoration, operational regulations, public messaging, and special event permits.

To better understand the inter jurisdictional recreational issues as they relate to the North Shore mountains, a draft document, North Shore Trail Framework, evolved with the intent to provide direction and recommendations to formalize and expand a collaborative approach to managing recreational mountain areas on the North Shore. The North Shore mountains have become extremely popular for outdoor recreation, due in part to the population growth in the Lower Mainland, increased profile and visits by tourists to the Vancouver area, and the growth of mountain biking and trail use as an outdoor recreation activity. This has created new challenges for recreation land management, resulting in conflicts such as parking and access issues, potential environmental damage, unsanctioned use and construction of trails, and risk management. In some ways, the North Shore agencies

have been challenged to keep up with the growth of recreational use in these mountain areas, and have informally discussed different strategies to manage the issues. The framework builds on the existing informal cooperation and identifies opportunities for cooperative management that include:

- Mapping and signage
- Sharing of ecological mapping and trail mapping
- Development of ecosystem based planning methodology
- Informal staff communication on a regular basis
- Common trail guidelines and best management practices
- Sharing of user surveys
- Co-funding of projects, where applicable
- Recreation planning

In addition, other collaborative trail and outdoor recreation projects undertaken include:

- North Shore Sector Recreational Greenway Plan (Metro Vancouver, CNV, DNV, DWV)
- North Shore Outdoor Recreation Survey, (December 2006 – all agencies)
- Alpine Recreational Strategic Study (2005) and Fromme Mountain Classification Study (2007) processes at DNV
- Mountain Bike Tourism Association trail head survey and presentation to agencies (2007)
- Seymour Greenway Trail (Metro Vancouver, CNV, and DNV)

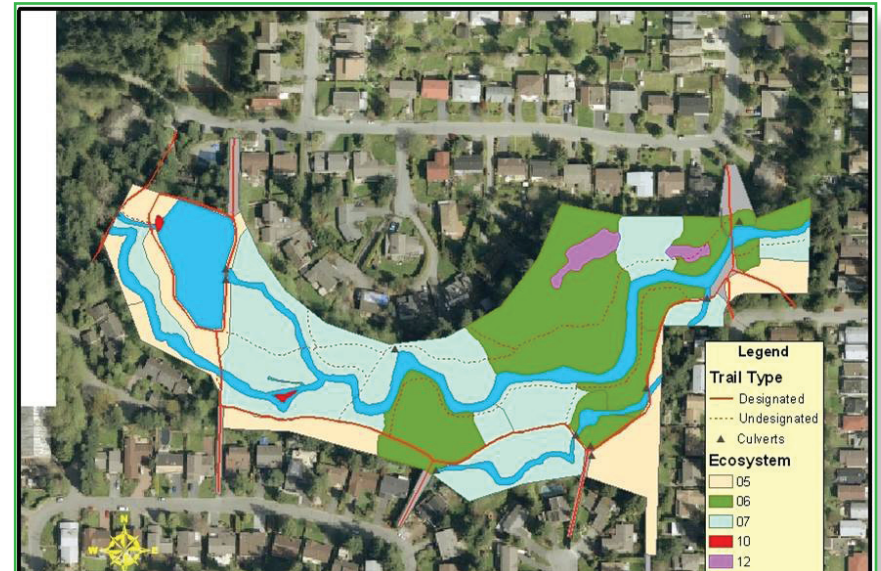


Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Co-Management Agreement

In 2006, the District of North Vancouver and the Tsleil-Waututh Nation worked collaboratively to develop a comprehensive plan for Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen. At 22.3 hectares, this is the largest waterfront park within the District of North Vancouver and a place with high public use values. At the heart of their traditional territory, the park is also a place of great cultural and spiritual significance to the Tsleil-Waututh. A landmark Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Protocol/Cultural Agreement, signed in 2001 between the District of North Vancouver Council and the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, established a set of principles to guide future planning through open and cooperative collaboration. This collaboration resulted in the 2006 creation of the Cates Park/Whey-ah-Wichen Parks Master Plan and Cultural Resources Interpretation Management Plan. This document provides a long term vision and master plan for the park that incorporates cultural, social, environmental, economic, site planning and facility upgrades management for the park. Ecotourism, economic development, special event and education opportunities were among some of the recommendations that emerged from the report, as well as recommendations to introduce new structures such as the feasthouse, and upgrade the boating facilities, trails and signage.



Forest management practices in action



Parkland area management assessment

Did you know?

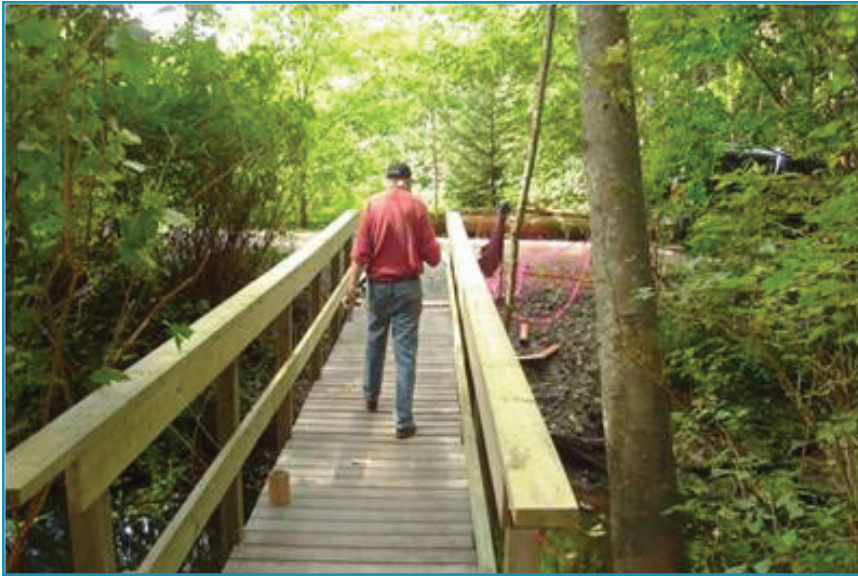
The District's parks system features some of the most ecologically diverse ecosystems in all of the lower mainland!



Chapter 5

Natural Parkland Area Management





Parkland management means constructing new infrastructure



Rehabilitation of the Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge

Natural Parkland Area Management

The District is blessed with some significant and ecologically sensitive natural landscapes. The ocean, rivers, creeks, forests, and mountains form an interconnected ecological system that supports a wide range of habitat for animals and fish. With proactive zoning and land development practices, many of the major creeks and rivers corridors were protected as parkland, and form significant greenbelts and recreational areas throughout the neighbourhoods.

The Parks Department is responsible for managing natural areas within active-oriented parks as well as passive-oriented parks and resource areas. These have management and maintenance needs that are very different from maintenance needs at active-oriented parks. One of the challenges is in planning and regulating habitats and areas of ecological significance. Senior levels of government are responsible for legislation associated with riparian areas, fish-bearing streams and species at risk. The District Parks has inventoried significant ecosystems so that they can be protected for future generations. Since 2008, the Streamside Protection Guidelines have provided stringent regulations to protect the sensitive riparian areas.

The impacts of human use, the introduction of invasive species, and natural disturbances such as wind and disease are slowly degrading the habitat and functions provided by these ecosystems. It is important that the District continue to take a proactive role in understanding and managing these areas. As well as managing the social and environmental benefits of the ecosystems, active management to mitigate risk is required. The District has begun the process of identifying and reducing risks associated with wildfire and slope failure through the Community Wildfire Protection Planning (CWPP) process and the Slope Stability Studies undertaken by Natural Hazards Planning. The hurricane force windstorms of 2006 and 2007 and the damages inflicted on parks and structures across the Lower Mainland brought to the forefront the risk associated with catastrophic windthrow and highlighted urban forest management challenges facing municipalities.

The District is beginning to work within Metro Vancouver's Biodiversity Conservation Strategy Partnerships, in existence since 2001. This partnership of government agencies, municipalities and conservation groups evaluates the state of biodiversity through regional mapping and assesses key issues impacting biodiversity conservation in the Metro Vancouver region. In 2008 a report entitled Strategic Directions for Biodiversity Conservation was issued, which outlines a framework to better integrate biodiversity into land use policies, plans and programs. It supports regional collaboration and effective conservation efforts on the ground. Many of the recommended strategic directions clearly indicate a role that the District parks must play in order to maintain, restore and manage biodiversity within our natural ecosystems. Implementing the recommendations is a shared responsibility and includes themes such as:

- Incorporate biodiversity conservation priorities into plans and policies
- Build on Metro Vancouver's Green Zone network, and ensure protection of habitats and corridors by securing lands
- Develop protected area management initiatives to manage, enhance and restore sensitive habitats
- Map, monitor and research biophysical information to help in decision making processes
- Develop stewardship, education and communication to promote better understanding of biodiversity

To begin to address some of the recommendations listed above, the District has initiated several projects including the Forest Eco-Inventory and Forest Management Program.

Forest Eco-Inventory and Forest Management Program (draft report 2009)

In 2008, the District Parks initiated a study called the Forest Ecosystem Classification and Mapping and Forest Management Program with the goal of inventorying all the trees, creeks, invasive species, trails, soils and other natural features. The baseline ecological data can be applied to support planning and management decision-making. A series of management recommendations will emerge from the study, and provide direction and vision for the Parks Department on how to best manage and protect these valuable lands.

Terms of reference include:

- identification and subsequent protection of sensitive ecosystems and species at risk
- mapping areas affected by significant forest pathogens
- mapping of riparian ecosystems
- restoration of modified/degraded ecosystems
- management of invasive species
- mitigation of hazards, in particular wind throw and wildfire

Did you know?

The District manages over 3100 street trees.

Tree Preservation and Hazard Program

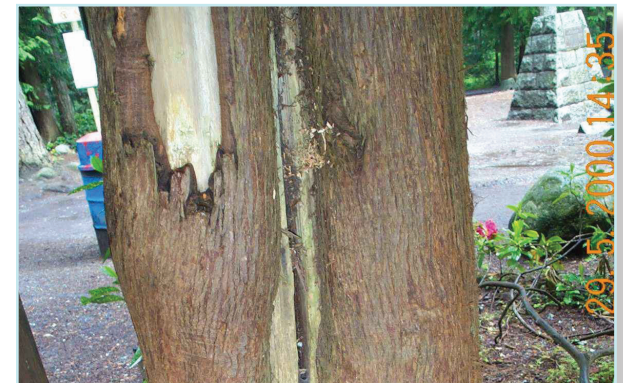
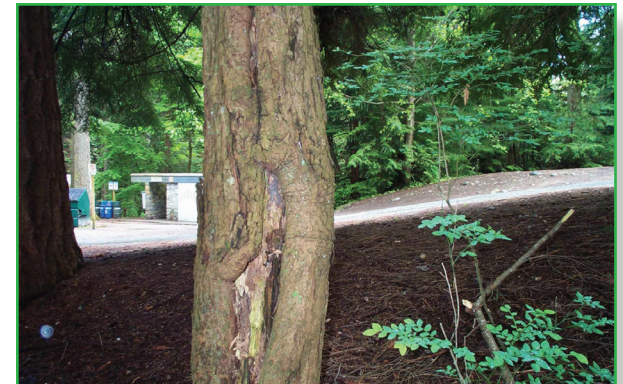
Preservation and enhancement of existing forests, street trees, ecological systems and natural parklands is a priority for the District of North Vancouver. It is the policy “to preserve and enhance its attractive forested character, ecological systems and natural parklands, while recognizing the responsibility to minimize risk to the public and property”. These goals are addressed through a variety of bylaws and policies, primarily the Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw (6515), and the District Tree work policy (13-5280/1) which both regulate and set out guidelines to protect and preserve the natural environment while managing risks associated with trees on public lands.

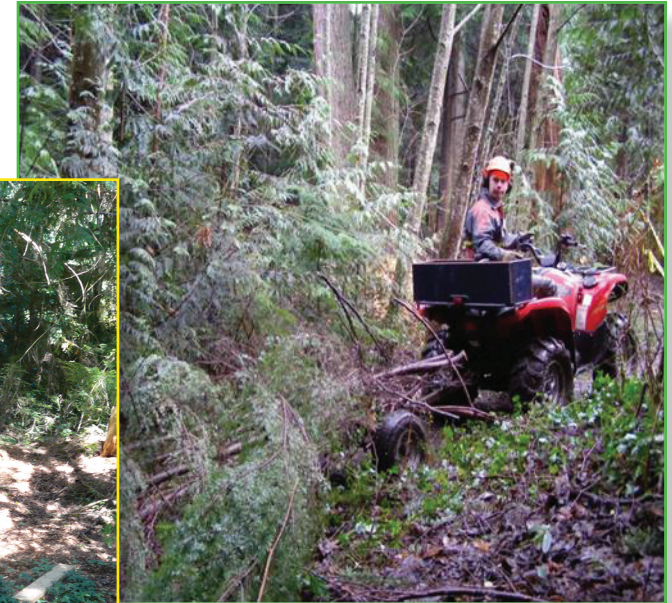
Within the District Tree Work Policy, the Parks Department administers the hazard tree program on public lands, which reviews all hazard trees, and addresses the criteria and conditions which must be met should tree removal or pruning be required in order to maintain public safety on public lands. Up to 1500 requests per year are received and addressed by the Parks Department. More than 7500 trees are now recorded in the GIS database, and these records aid staff in efficiently monitoring managed trees, including those retained as wildlife trees. In addition, specific forest management areas, such as Eldon Park, have been developed, with public consultation. These management guidelines and permitting protocols provide both long term strategies to sustainably manage forest areas which are located on steep escarpments prone to erosion, and also guide a permitting system to allow homeowners to manage trees on their private lands without detriment to adjacent parklands or the highly erodible slopes.

Any work completed on trees must embrace good aboricultural practices, where ISA and Tree Risk Assessment standards are applied and met. Climate change and extreme weather events over the last decade have placed our forest ecosystems under additional stress and resulted in a steady increase in the number of enquiries received requesting tree safety inspections. There is an increased public awareness following media coverage and local experience of the hurricane force windstorms of 2006/2007 when more than 3500 trees were downed across the District and significant damages were sustained to residential structures and associated infrastructure.

The forest ecosystems are in a transitional stage where the large majority of the shorter lived species have reached maturity and are therefore sensing and succumbing to forest health issues and the forces of nature. We therefore recognize the need for an adaptive management regime to mitigate hazards while preserving overall ecosystem integrity.

The long term goals are adapting to develop a framework for ecosystem based forest management, where a multidisciplinary team will identify and prioritize common high risk areas for treatment,





and as a result enable the District to focus its limited resources in a targeted and cost efficient manner, becoming less reactive and more proactive in natural hazard mitigation and prevention activities.

Securing funding for the FireSmart fuel treatment program has further enabled the District to demonstrate that a combined approach to natural hazards reduction, while providing ecosystem restoration benefits, can be achieved at a minimal cost to the District taxpayers.

The introduction of an Arbor Day celebration and Earth Day activities, the formation of park stewardship groups, and forest restoration initiatives have provided significant opportunities to further public education and outreach programs to promote sustainable urban forest management.

Did you know?

The original forest was logged in the 1800's - early 1900's. Many of the trees were over 90 metres high and 11 metres in circumference. You may notice stumps remaining from these high trees.

Invasive Species Program

The District of North Vancouver, like many municipalities in the Lower Mainland, has experienced an increase in invasive species within parkland areas. The District in 2008 began inventorying and mapping the invasive species in parks and greenbelts, using the BC Invasive Alien Plant Inventory (IAPP) criteria and process. In the District, there are specific areas in sensitive greenbelt and riparian areas that are rampant with English Ivy, Japanese Knotweed, Broom, Lamium, Hogweed, Himalayan Blackberry, and Periwinkle to name a few. Unchecked, many of these plants are rapidly growing and spreading, and can displace native plants that wildlife depend upon. Improper dumping of garden debris and grass cuttings in parks and greenways by residents can introduce plants that compromise native plants. In 2005, the District of North Vancouver Parks Department began an annual program to focus on specific park sites, partnering with Stream Keepers, the Evergreen Foundation and other community groups to undertake invasive plant pulls and replant areas with appropriate native species. Parks has recently undertaken specific projects to address this issue, specifically at Lowry Lane Park, Lower Mackay Park, and Cliffridge. The disposal cost once the plants are removed can prove to be prohibitive. Ongoing public education, and work with the BCNTA nursery associations helps to spread the word. Staff also assist by monitoring illegal dumping of grass cuttings in natural parkland areas. In 2006, the Greater Vancouver Invasive Plant Council initiated the production of a public pamphlet entitled “Help Stop the Spread of Invasives” which the District has made available to the public to help provide a list of alternate native plants.

Recommendations may include:

- Public education, workshops, invasive plant pulls, restoration planting, provision of lists of alternative native species, annual funding, inventory of sites, continued participation in the programs and workshops offered through the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia and Metro Vancouver, continuation of annual program, and monitoring of illegal dumping of garden waste and grass clippings in greenbelt parks.



Pesticide Control

In 1999, District Council adopted an Integrated Pest Management policy to regulate the use of pesticides for cosmetic use on trees, shrubs, flowers and other ornamental plants and turf grass on District managed lands, including parkland. This resulted in a Pesticide Education Program which has evolved since 2002. In 2008, Council approved the Pesticide Control Bylaw in order to regulate the use of pesticides for cosmetic use on residential properties.

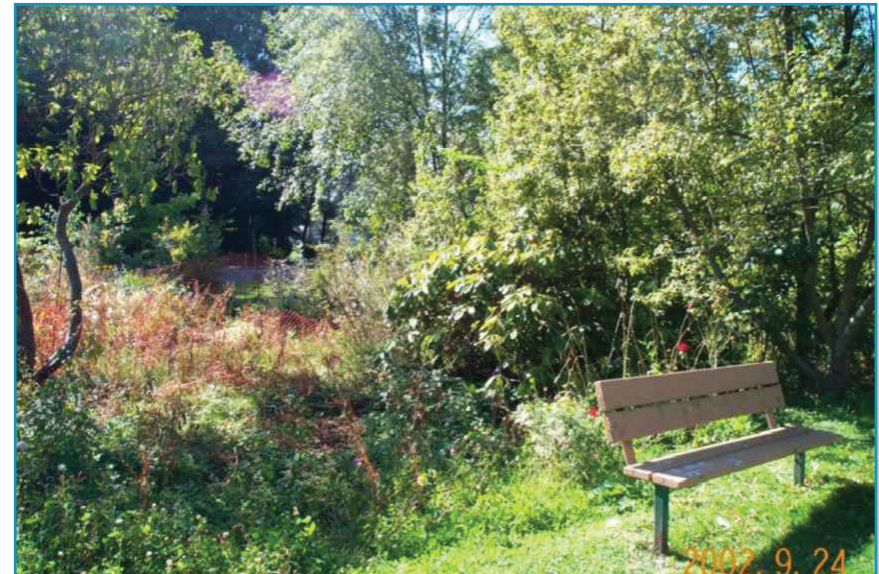
Recommendations may include:

- Develop Best Management Practices program for pest management and turf management

Maplewood Conservation Area

In May 1992 Environment Canada made a presentation to Council on the proposal to build an environmental sciences centre and create a wildlife conservation area on approximately 23 hectares of Vancouver Port Corporation (now Port Metro Vancouver) owned lands subject to the terms and conditions of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Port and Environment Canada. The Pacific Environmental Science Centre opened in November 1994 and is the premier science centre in western Canada providing core laboratory and field operations capability required to sustain the Department's regional programs in ecosystem science, environmental protection, emergency response and environmental quality monitoring.

The Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia (WBT) was founded in 1993 and in 1994 submitted a proposal to manage the Maplewood Conservation Area comprising those environmentally sensitive lands surrounding the science centre, including trails and salt marsh areas. As a wildlife organisation WBT is dedicated to the protection of birds and their habitats, on the principle that all wildlife must benefit. WBT had been active in promoting and improving the Maplewood Conservation Area since 1993. To this end WBT entered into a management agreement with Environment Canada in



Natural areas/public areas - keeping the fine edge



Water course



1999 to manage the 23 hectares of Port Metro Vancouver lands for habitat protection purposes. The completion of the Management Agreement between the District and WBT will formally place 11 hectares of DNV lands under the management of WBT for habitat protection purposes, increasing the Conservation Area to approximately 34 hectares.

Alpine Recreational Strategic Study & Fromme Mountain Classification Study

The North Shore public consistently rate trails as their highest use of all the park facilities offered. The District is blessed with many kilometres of trails, both in the Alpine areas as well as in the more urban, residential areas.

In the late 1990's the District witnessed an increase in interest for recreational access to trails in the upper mountain side area. In particular, the mountain bike stakeholder group became actively involved in lobbying to formalize mountain biking trails in the Fromme Mountain Trail area. In 2004, the Alpine Recreational Strategic Study was undertaken with the public, to develop a common vision on how recreational uses, within an environmentally sustainable framework, could be achieved. The summary of the vision is described below:

"The vision is one of sustainability to respect the natural systems and manage uses of the mountains in ways that do not diminish the ability of future generations to enjoy this wonderful endowment. By adopting an approach that protects the mountain's ecology while providing recreational, social and economic benefits, the north shore will become a model of sustainable recreational management."

At the heart of achieving this vision is a commitment to balance environmental protection with recreational activity. This commitment will be shared by all who are responsible for this asset – individuals using the mountain, governments, private owners, commercial operators, and other agencies. Common, sustainable strategies will emphasize awareness, education, safety, and stewardship. Management approaches will be shaped by a desire to minimize negative impacts on the environment and residential neighbourhoods, while maximizing opportunities for positive outcomes such as habitat enhancement, tourism, partnership, education and other opportunities."

An outcome of the Alpine Recreational Strategic Study was the initiation of a more detailed recreational study, the Fromme Mountain Trail Classification Study. This report, approved by Council in 2008, provided an assessment of the existing trail network, which included an ecological evaluation and a trail sustainability assessment. From there a final recommended trail network was forwarded, strengthened by Best Management Practices and Trail Guidelines, to provide a broad strategy of construction and maintenance methods to minimize the environmental impact of recreational trails and maximize trail sustainability. Also included were mountain bike technical trail guidelines and management guidelines to address the mountain biking interest. The Fromme Mountain Trail Guidelines is the first of such documents, and focuses on the importance of environmental protection, stewardship, partnerships, public education risk management, and adaptive management.

Both documents form a framework and plan to work towards over the next 5-10 years to meet the current and future recreational needs for the mountain areas.



Chapter 6

Park Management and Operations



Park Management and Operations

Dog Management in Parks

One of the emerging issues impacting parks at both a regional and municipal level is how best to address dog management. The popularity of dogs is reflected by the number of annual dog tag licences issued in the District. In 2006, approximately 5,500 dog tags were issued, compared to 6,467 issued in 2008, representing a 17% increase in 3 years.

Currently, dog issues are regulated by the DNV Dog Tax and Regulation Bylaw (1988), which provides guidance and conditions regarding dogs in parks. The bylaw identifies by park:

- Parks where dogs are prohibited (35)
- Parks where dogs are permitted, on leash (61)
- Parks where dogs are permitted off leash, but under control (14)

In 2005, due to an increase in commercial dog walkers using parks, the bylaw was amended to regulate through fees, conditions and locations, specific parks where commercial dog walkers would be permitted. The District currently permits commercial dog walkers in four locations: and sections of the Baden Powell Trail, sections of the BC Hydro right of way, and sections of Lower Lynn Canyon Park and Inter River Park (Dyke Road). This has proven to be a popular amendment to the bylaw, with up to 40 permits issued by 2008 to commercial dog walking companies. At the District of North Vancouver, the number of commercial dog permits issued is capped at 40 permits.

Regulating the dog bylaw for over 100 parks and greenbelts is an enormous challenge and is currently managed through a combined effort by park rangers, bylaw officers and the DNV Animal Welfare Services and Shelter group. Regulation signage is installed in most parks, however voluntary compliance by the public is stressed in order to preserve and protect the park, and to ensure the safety of

Some of the key issues relating to dog management include overuse of park areas at Princess Park, Inter River Park, Lower Lynn Canyon Park, Harbour View Park and Cates Park/Wheyah-Wichen, which has resulted in the deterioration of grass and habitat areas. In addition, there are issues that relate to dog waste management, not picking up after dogs, and using dog restricted areas such as sports fields, playgrounds, picnic areas and beaches to exercise dogs. And, from time to time, conflicts emerge between dog walkers and other park users, where dogs have threatened or harmed another park user. The goal is to provide a variety of opportunities for dog owners, and provide areas where people can go and not have contact with dogs.

In 1999, Metro Vancouver Parks engaged park users and partners to share perspectives and discuss management options for dogs in parks. From their research, Metro Vancouver created Management Planning Principles and an inter-municipal Dog Management Work Group was formed to explore voluntary harmonization of dog management strategies across the municipalities of Metro Vancouver. Through public discussion, and in response to the issues, a number of objectives were developed that included:

- Protect park resources from preventable environment caused by dogs
- Promote responsible dog etiquette
- Ensure both dog walkers and non-dog walkers have a safe and high quality park visit
- Engage park visitors, stakeholders and public in developing solutions which balance dog activities with park conservation goals
- Provide appropriate facilities, supporting all visitors including those with dogs.



Over the past 8 years, the District Parks Department has undertaken several initiatives that will expand in the upcoming years:

- ***Dog Education Program*** – to support the “do’s and don’t’s”, dog pamphlets, maps and signage have been developed to improve messaging to the public. Park rangers and animal welfare officers also support the program by providing some presence in the parks during summer months.
- ***Sustainable Dog Waste Disposal Program*** – to install doggy bags, and develop a sustainable system for disposing of collected dog waste.
- ***Dog Signage Projects*** – to promote responsible dog etiquette and to convey dog regulations with humour, innovative signage has been developed in the Parks Department including the following: “Pick up your kids after school, pick up milk on your way home, pick up after your dog”.
- ***Enforcement of dog bylaw*** – strengthen bylaw enforcement where residents are not following regulations
- ***Creating pilot dogs off - leash areas with parks*** - in Summer 2008, following a public process and Council approval, two dogs off-leash trail areas within Myrtle Park and Cates Park/Whye-ah-Wichen were opened to permit dogs to run off leash, but under control. Regulatory signage and mapping were installed to advise users of the new regulations.
- ***Habitat Protection Fencing*** – to protect sensitive riparian and environmental areas from dog impacts, habitat fencing has been installed at Lower Lynn Canyon Park, sections of Mosquito Creek Trail in William Griffin Park, Myrtle Park and Cates Park/Whye-ah-wichen. Significant improvement to habitat is evident in these fenced and undisturbed areas.
- ***Commercial Dog Walking Permit and Fees Process*** – to more effectively manage and address the evolving commercial dog walking businesses, Council supported the amendment of the dog regulation bylaw to incorporate a fees and permit process for commercial dog walkers, which identifies specific park locations they are permitted to use. The fees from the permits would be allocated to parks to fund garbage pick up, signage and other amenities relating to commercial dog use.

Park Special Events

Parks special events are an important and popular service co-ordinated by the District of North Vancouver Parks Department and the Recreation Commission. To provide a framework for Special Events in Parks, the District developed a policy that outlines guidelines and an administrative process for special events accommodated in parks. This is accomplished through the provision of a consolidated document which guides and directs staff decisions regarding special events, as well as clarifies the rationale behind the decision-making process for event organizers and park stakeholders.

The majority of large public events in the District take place in Panorama Park or Cates Park/ Whey-ah-Wichen, with the exception of Lynn Valley Days at Lynn Valley Park.

Over the last few years, the number of events has stayed fairly constant, due partly to the introduction of the event application deadline of January 31st. This allows for a more planned and organised response to event applications, and provides an easy mechanism to strategically allocate Park space.

Given the full calendar of established events in District Parks, there is currently little room for growth in the number of large events. More events would likely begin to impinge upon casual uses of the Parks (picnics, walks, etc.) as well as impact residential and local business parking.

As new outdoor spaces have opened in both the City and the District (e.g. Burrard Dry Dock Pier, Lynn Valley Village Plaza), attendance has fallen somewhat at Concerts in the Cove; however this remains an extremely popular program. “Live in Lynn Valley,” the new community concert series at Lynn Valley Village Plaza was warmly received and well-attended in 2008, its inaugural year.

Well-established annual community events such as Under the Volcano and the Penguin Plunge continue to draw consistently strong attendance. Attendance at the Tsleil-Waututh Nation Cultural Arts Festival continues to grow each year (est. 200 people in 2006, 500 in 2007 and 800 in 2008).

Current challenges related to community events in parks include: parking; “event fatigue” on the part of surrounding residents; limited electrical access for event organisers; and access to reasonably-priced event equipment rental (tables, chairs, pop-up canopies) for organisers of non-profit events.



In 2008, Parks issued approximately 166 park events permits for picnic shelters, weddings, sporting events, educational events, car shows, walking events, trail races, filming and beer gardens

Filming in Parks

There are more than 100 parks located throughout the District of North Vancouver. Each park is unique and overall there is a wide variety of facilities including playing fields, ball diamonds, golf courses, beaches, community centres, and forested trails. The District works with the film makers to assist with film production in parks. However, conditions of filming are negotiated to minimize the disruption of public use or maintenance of the parks. To address the need for protection of ecosystem integrity, a comprehensive set of environmental conditions have been developed for these filming activities. These include the need for bird nesting and bat roosting surveys, prevention of trampling and degradation of natural vegetation or sensitive ecosystems, and restoration and replanting requirements.

Volunteerism in Parks

Volunteerism continues to be a growing program in the Parks Department, encompassing such activities as trail maintenance, tree planting, invasive plant removal, and stream monitoring. Volunteer groups vary from school and community groups to mountain biking and hiking associations, streamkeepers, business associations, and other user groups. The sports user groups are also active, contributing to sports field maintenance, as well as fundraising to add inventory such as batting cages, scorekeeper boxes and concession areas to parks. A sampling of the kinds of partnerships that are already underway include wildlife habitat management, education programs, park watch, beach and park clean-ups, and community art projects. The Adopt a Park Program and Park Partners have been successful programs in other municipal parks, by helping to address community concerns about park cleanliness and crime prevention and by supporting community celebrations and events. Safety is on everyone's mind these days, and this is one of the issues that ParkPartners could help to address, by creating volunteer park patrols. Over the past 10 years, partnerships between parks staff and the public have increased the number of volunteer projects, and additional staff resources may be required to keep the program healthy and proactive.

Recommendations may include:

- Work to continue to expand and formalize a “ParkPartners Program” and/or “Adopt a Park Program” to create broader volunteer opportunities and support those who want to make ideas, projects and events happen in their neighbourhood parks.



Ranger Program

The District, through recommendations from the Lynn Canyon Park Safety Task Force, initiated a Ranger Program in 1992 with the mandate to provide support at Lynn Canyon Park to minimize accidents and maximize appropriate recreational activities in Lynn Canyon Park. The Park Ranger's role was to provide factual information and discuss the hazards of the canyon with youth in the park, and to empower risk takers to make informed, appropriate and acceptable choices. They provide public education, direction and advice to park visitors. Over the years, the Park Ranger Program has expanded to include other responsibilities. They now patrol additional parks to ensure that park regulations are being followed, and to educate park users on a wide range of issues including dogs in parks, mountain biking, parking in parks, wildlife issues, the North Shore Black Bear Program, and other issues as they arise. With one full time ranger year round, the seasonal rangers provide a valuable presence in our parks during the busy summer month.



DNV wildlife: fearless, acrobatic...and VERY smart



"Mum, I still can't see it...where?!"



"I hope my nest is BIG enough..."

Unique District of North Vancouver Park Amenities

The District has two facilities unique to the Lower Mainland that attract both local and regional visitors. Maplewood Farm and Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre have a strong interactive focus with the public, promoting educational programs on environmental and agricultural traditions, and providing a wide range of opportunities to experience firsthand the environmental, recreation and historical traditions that define the North Shore.

Maplewood Farm

Officially opened to the public in 1974, Maplewood Farm offers a unique facility in the Lower Mainland that attracts both local and regional visitors. Maplewood Farm is the only farm remaining on the North Shore, and was preserved for future generations to enjoy a rural experience, and to learn about animal and farm practices. The five hectare Farm offers a unique field trip opportunity for all sorts of people who love animals and want to learn more about them. Thousands of people from pre-schools, day care centres and elementary Schools have found a trip to Maplewood Farm to be both fun and rewarding. The Farm is also a working farm, complete with the miracle of new life and the potential hazards of large animals and working equipment.

Over the years, the farm has incorporated additional facilities that include a large picnic shelter, a rabbitat/peacock palace, and additions to the livestock barn and goat barn. In 2000, a new Visitor Centre and shop was officially opened, which centralized the operations more formally.

New displays to educate and entertain the public have been successful, as well as the introduction of new programs such as the Farm Passport books and the “Behind the Scenes” program which was introduced in 2007, and engages children and their parents in farmer activities not offered to regular visitors.



Meet the 'locals'...

Tourism and Partnerships

Maplewood Farm works closely with Tourism Vancouver, and is a member of the new North Shore tourism marketing initiative, "Vancouver's North Shore Tourism Association". In 2008, the farm became the official supplier of the farm animals for the Petting Zoo in the Pacific National Exhibition (PNE). Maplewood Farm's web page is linked to multiple web sites which enables a broader outreach program.

Additional tourism partnerships forged include:

- North Vancouver Recreation Commission marketing partnership, "Playcard", which offers in the Farm's case a 10% discount on regular admissions to the farm and Family Membership annual passes
- Tourism Challenge marketing initiative sponsored by Attractions Vancouver Group invites hundreds of tourism industry workers into various industry facilities to sample products and services offered.
- Member of Tourism BC Marketing initiative: ie. HelloBC.com listings as well as subsidiary Vancouver Coast and Mountain marketing group
- Certified Folder, a private company, racks Farm brochures at Vancouver International Airport, international and domestic arrivals and also on major BC Ferry routes
- Disney Family website, on invitation from Disney photos submitted and listing on their family friendly website

Educational/Community Role

- The Farm performs a very unique role in the community, offering a facility where all types of volunteers are able to assist the farmers, learn skills, self reliance and self esteem, and just have fun caring for animals.



A girl...



and the 'Goathill gang' at Maplewood Farm...

The Farm hosts the following People Service organizations:

1. North Shore Community Resources
 2. Community Integrated Services Society
 3. Volunteer Access Program
 4. Community Psychiatric Services
 5. Vancouver Developmental Disabilities Association
- The Farm has had a very long relationship with youth who receive court appointed community service hours. The administration of this program has changed hands many times over the years and is currently operated by the Ministry of Child and Family Development, Youth Section.
 - The North and West Vancouver School Districts have also utilized the farm as a place to have students who may be interested in animal care acquire work experience.
 - In 2008 alone, organizations and individuals performed 1352 volunteer hours for the farm
 - In 2002 the Farm staff organized a painting bee using donated paint from local suppliers. Farm staff volunteers, annual family membership volunteers and others painted seven major buildings, including the livestock and storage barns.

Visitation Trend

Since 1993 the farm has entertained 1.5 million visitors. Attendance has benefitted from an active marketing approach, with fluctuations from year to year depending upon the weather.

1993 – 85,705 visitors

2008 – 89,164 visitors



Look, but DO touch...



Maplewood farm is more than just animals...

2008 Maplewood Farm Business Plan

Throughout all of 2008 the Farm staff and the District Economic Development Manager worked to produce a first ever Business Plan for the Farm. Adopted late in the year, plans are underway to accomplish some of the goals in 2009. Recommendations include:

- Capital investment in building expansion for new washrooms, enlarged retail shop and improved access
- Develop pedal tractor play area
- Develop farmers market and food/vegetable production education
- Package more elaborate birthday party packages



"pull, dear...don't push, its not an elevator..."



Making cream the old fashioned way..."come butter come!"



Sheep shearers can always use a helping hand...

Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre

Since opening in 1971, the Ecology Centre has been a leader in promoting the importance of environmental stewardship and sustainability, both locally and at the regional level. The Ecology Centre is well placed to continue in this role as it participates in the District of North Vancouver's bold vision of becoming one of the most sustainable communities by the year 2020.

The Ecology Centre is a resource centre, interactive museum and education centre located in Lynn Canyon Park. The Centre provides a full slate of curriculum linked environmental education programs for students in grades K through 12. The Centre also provides a wide variety of natural history programs for community groups, preschools and the general public. In addition the centre features more than forty different displays that range from stand alone interactive displays, to individual wall panels, and large permanent landscape dioramas. The displays provide visitors and groups with the opportunity to learn at their own pace about local flora, fauna, eco-systems and global sustainability.

Visitation Trend

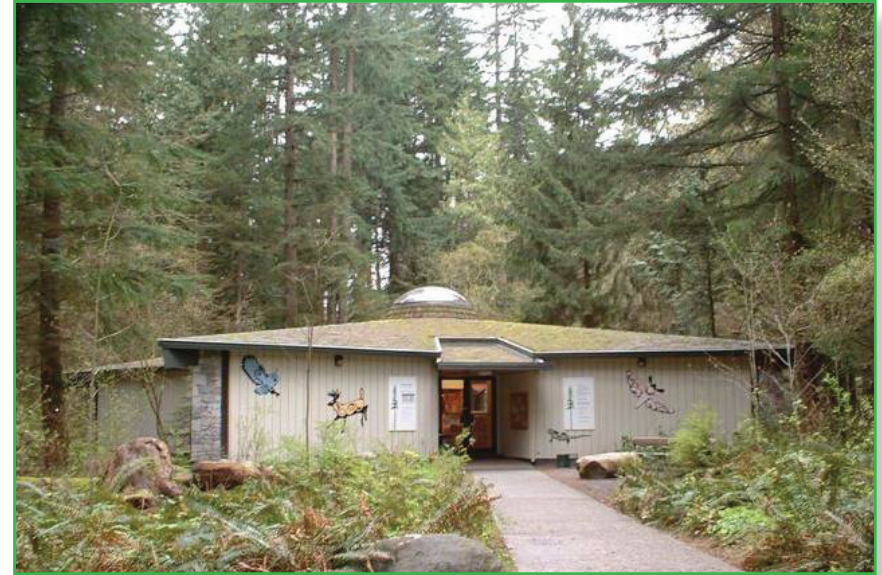
Over the past 15 years, the Centre visitation has increased steadily as illustrated below:

1993 - 78,378 visitors
2008 - 114,454 visitors



Directed Education Programs

1993 - 6,801 participants
(234 programs, 4,901 children, 1,900 adults)
2008 - 13,857 participants
(444 programs, 7,752 children, 3,887 adults)



Our dogwood flower shaped Ecology Centre at Lynn Canyon Park



Ecology Centre offers young visitors a chance to interact and learn about nature



Centre Staff

Staffing numbers at the Centre have remained virtually unchanged since 1993.

Cost Recovery

1993	Gift Shop Sales - \$3,728	Admission Donations - \$3,393	Program Fees – N/A
2008	Gift Shop Sales - \$59,327	Admission Donations - \$16,888	Program Fees – \$19,709

Issues & Goals

Issues which are particularly prominent during peak summer periods include conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, increased demand for parking, and overcrowding. In conjunction with planned parking and roadway upgrades, there is the potential to establish a key information hub for park visitors in the area in the area in front of the Centre, featuring a park information kiosk, a meeting space with planted areas and seating, and a drop-off area for visitors. This would improve accessibility to the Centre, and greatly improve the sight lines from the road to the Ecology Centre, highlighting the need for a “cosmetic face-lift” for the front of the Ecology Centre. This could potentially provide much needed space to accommodate new displays and the Ecology Centre’s expanding gift shop.

Building Improvements

Over the years a number of building improvements have been undertaken to ensure the building is maintained to an acceptable level. The roof membrane on the front building will need replacement in upcoming years.

Tourism

Lynn Canyon Park and the Ecology Centre are a natural draw for tourists looking for easy access to wilderness. Visitors appreciate the natural character of the area. In peak season, the number of visitors and cars often exceeds the carrying capacity of the park, which puts a great deal of stress on the parking areas, the suspension bridge and adjacent trails.

Lynn Canyon Park 1993 to 2008

A great deal of trail and bridge upgrading has occurred over the past 15 years. The installation of stairways and boardwalks has done a great deal to help reduce ongoing erosion. Safety and security in the park has improved drastically with the creation of the ranger program and the installation of entrance gates. The addition of the new washroom, ranger office and cafe in 2003 has provided much needed visitor amenities.

The Lynn Canyon Cafe

In the same way that the Ecology Centre attracts visitors to Lynn Canyon Park, it also brings potential business to the Lynn Canyon Cafe. If run successfully, the Cafe could potentially do the same for the Ecology Centre.

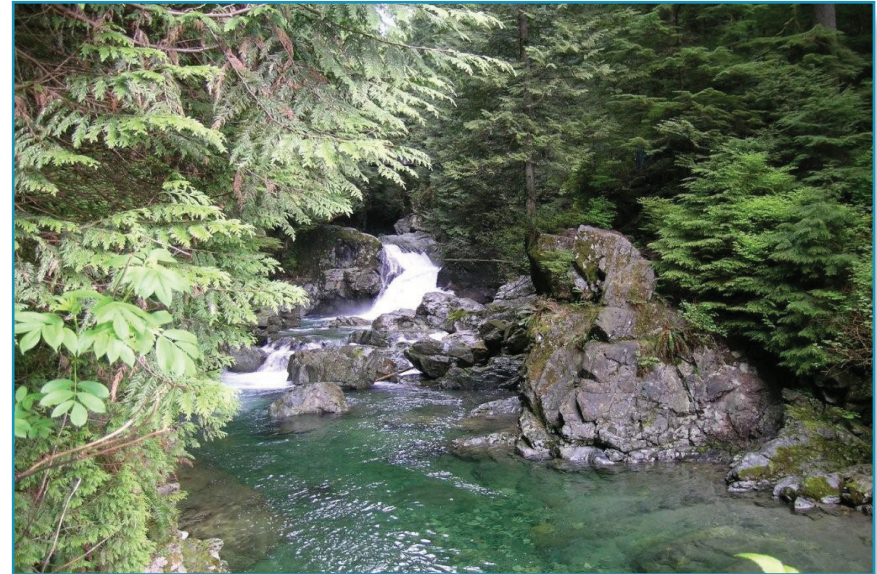
Our Community Partners

The Ecology Centre connects with many partners in the community and provides opportunities for networking as a key resource on the North Shore. The following list provides a sampling of groups that interact with the Ecology Centre:

- Walking the Talk: The BC Network for Sustainability Education
- Lower Mainland Museum Educators
- BC Field Trip Fair (teacher networking)
- Environmental Educators Provincial Specialist's Association
- Streamkeepers Federation
- WILD BC (environmental education)
- Capilano University Communications Department
- Federal Fisheries – Storm Drain Marking Program
- North Shore Recycling
- North Vancouver District Library
- North Vancouver School District's programs for special needs students (volunteers)
- North Vancouver School District's Career and Personal Planning program (volunteers)
- North Shore Employment Services (special needs clients) (volunteers)

Did you know?

Lynn Canyon Park and the suspension bridge officially opened September 12, 1912. The bridge hangs 50 metres above Lynn Creek, and attracts over .5 million visitors each year.



Lynn Canyon pools



Learning is for all ages...

Displays & Literature

The focus of displays and information leaflets is driven largely by the sustainability goals and objectives of District of North Vancouver and its citizens.

Education Programs

The Lynn Canyon Ecology Centre delivers a wide range of environmental education programs for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. The Centre's programs can be broken down into two streams; 'guided programming' led by Centre staff and 'self-guided programming' for those visitors wishing to conduct their own visit of the Ecology Centre and Lynn Canyon Park.

Guided programs are offered throughout the year and serve close to 14,000 people annually. This includes a variety of programs for individuals, families, adults, and a wide range of preschool, school and community groups (over 500) that visit the Centre each year. Programs include:

- Rainforest Biodiversity Study
- Wildlife Week
- Special weekend events
- Birthday parties
- Garden Smart lectures and workshops
- Eco Quest & Eye Spy Activity
- Young Naturalists Club of BC
- Storm Drain Marking Program
- Professional Development for teachers
- Success District Work Experience Program
- High School Work experience
- Volunteering opportunities

Did you know?

The District encompasses over 1057 hectares of urban forest.



Lynn Canyon Suspension Bridge: "You mean its free?!"



The Lynn Canyon cafe/ranger station

Self-guided programming is also available throughout the year, serving close to 100,000 people annually. The Ecology Centre provides many of the visitor services that one expects to find in a nature centre or nature museum. Knowledgeable staff is always available to answer questions about park trails, park safety, local flora and fauna, the local municipality as well as regional interests. Interactive displays, a theatre, information hand-outs and a gift shop round out the visitor experience.

The Centre's program schedule also forms the basis for the Ecology Centre's annual work plan. The work plan is a valuable tool that allows staff to accurately plan, develop and schedule the following:

- Staff teaching schedules
- Program frequency and delivery levels for each age audience
- Program support materials (pre-trip information, brochures, advertising, and teaching aids)
- Program material requirements (craft supplies, and paper, etc)
- Program booking (scheduling, confirmation and billing)
- Program development (content, teaching aids, and support materials)
- Display development and maintenance
- Regular required centre maintenance (housekeeping and minor repairs)
- Regular required grounds maintenance (vegetation control and pathways)
- Production of information hand-outs
- Coordinating visits by guest agencies
- Gift shop operations (ordering stock, pricing stock, retail sales, stocking shelves, and banking)



