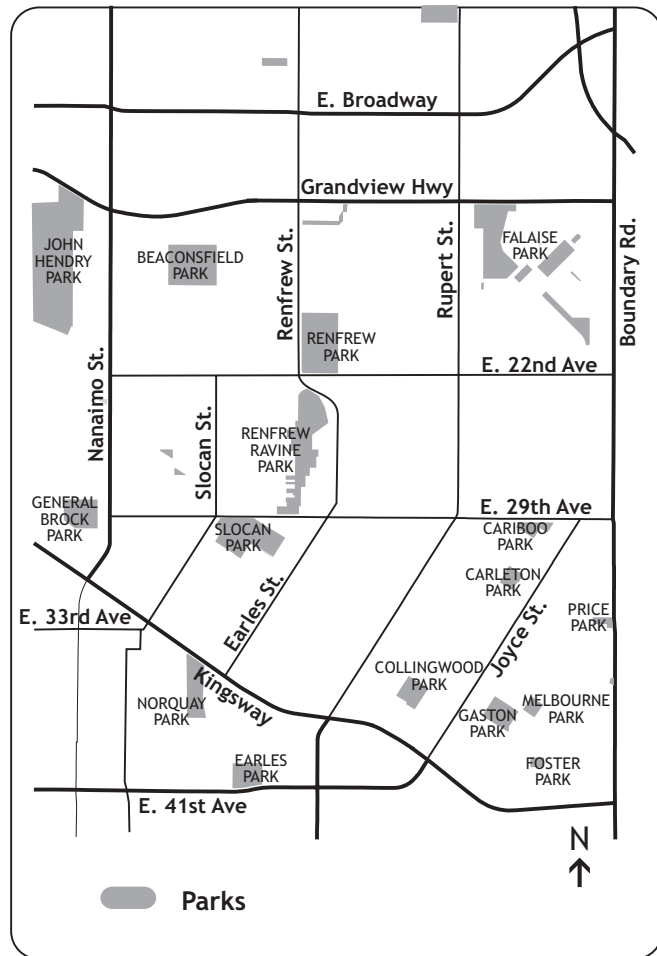




# Improving Parks, Streets, Lanes, and Public Places

Vision participants noted that parks, trees, green areas bordering streets, the gardens and landscaping around homes, and the design of public buildings all contribute to the overall character of Renfrew-Collingwood. The Vision Directions in this section deal with parks, school grounds, streets, lanes, views, and public buildings.





Still Creek in Renfrew Park

## 23 Parks, Streets, Lanes, and Views

### Parks

The Vision recognizes that parks are very important for recreation, beauty, and refreshment. Renfrew-Collingwood is fortunate to have a variety of park spaces, including naturalized areas, woodlands, creeks, and more conventional play grounds and play fields. Overall, Renfrew-Collingwood has 14 parks with a total area of 36 hectares (89 acres). Renfrew-Collingwood has .8 hectares of park per thousand residents, which is lower than the City standard of 1.1 hectares per thousand. School grounds, with a total area of 46 hectares (114 acres), are also important public spaces.

### Streets

Streets and lanes typically make up about 30% of a community's land area, and make an important contribution to the image of an area. The Parks Board provides and maintains street trees, and has a program to plant them in all suitable locations. The City also has a 'Green Streets' program which encourages residents to landscape traffic circles and corner bulges that are installed for traffic calming.

### Public Views

In 1989, the City began to protect selected public views which development threatened to block. The protected views are mainly from within the downtown looking outward, or from the Central Broadway and False Creek area looking over the downtown. Except for limited views from Queen Elizabeth and John Hendry Parks, public views are not protected elsewhere in the city.

### 23.1 More Usable Parks and School Grounds

#### **Approved**

Park design, appearance, and activities should be more varied in order to serve a more diverse population. School grounds should be attractive, usable community spaces.

**Percent agree 85%/88%**

#### People's Ideas...

- provide more benches, covered rest areas, picnic tables, and decorated entrance areas
- include more natural features such as gardens, plants, flowers, trees, and the daylighting of streams
- establish separate walking routes, bikeways, and rollerblade paths
- include more facilities such as tennis courts, skateboard parks, basketball courts, and water parks; play structures for all ages, including swings, boulders, and water parks; add more programmed activities in parks
- incorporate multicultural themes into the design of park facilities and structures

### 23.2 More Park Space in Poorly-served Areas

#### **Approved**

There should be more parks and other public open spaces in poorly-served areas of Renfrew-Collingwood.

**Percent agree 77%/79%**

#### People's Ideas...

- create mini-parks on street right of ways
- create street-end parks

### 23.3 Restoration and Preservation of Renfrew Ravine

#### **Approved**

Renfrew Ravine should be enhanced and restored. Specifically, the water quality should be improved and the natural areas surrounding the Ravine should be preserved and maintained.

**Percent agree 80%/76%**

People's Ideas...

- provide more natural landscaping and habitat areas
- stabilize ravine walls; better maintenance of bushes, trees, and plants
- include historical and interpretive signs; provide walking paths and trails; add more lighting
- encourage stewardship and community involvement activities such as 'clean-up' days, and beautification and art projects

### 23.4 More Park Space along Still Creek

#### **Approved**

Additional park space should be created along restored and daylighted areas of Still Creek.

**Percent agree 72%/74%**

People's Ideas...

- landscape and plant reclaimed areas
- daylight Still Creek where possible

### 23.5 Safety in and around Parks

#### **Approved**

Safety concerns should be a more important aspect of park use, design, and maintenance. Accessing parks across arterials should be easier and safer.

**Percent agree 89%/89%**

People's Ideas...

- add night lighting; limit bush areas
- provide pedestrian signals to cross arterials
- add resilient surfaces in play areas
- hold community events and provide programming at night to improve safety

### 23.6 Community Involvement in Parks

#### **Approved**

Public involvement in the design and stewardship of parks should be encouraged.

**Percent agree 80%/76%**

People's Ideas...

- encourage park partnerships with schools, community groups, and local volunteers
- encourage community events in parks such as clean-up days, multicultural celebrations, and special 'theme' days; provide programming at night to improve safety
- provide more education about wildlife and plants



Community involvement in parks

### 23.7 Maintenance of Parks

#### **Approved**

Park grounds, structures, and facilities should be better maintained.

**Percent agree 86%/83%**

People's Ideas...

- improve maintenance of fields and bushes; leaves should be swept
- ensure regular upkeep of park amenities such as play structures, wading pools (e.g. Norquay and Slocan Park), shelters, field houses, and washrooms



Clean-up parks for all users



Public art in parks: Duchess Walkway

### 23.8 Dogs in Parks and Public Places

#### **Approved**

Parks should be shared between dog owners and non-dog owners. Off-leash areas and off-leash times should be observed. More should be done to ensure dog owners clean-up after their dogs and keep their pets under control when off-leash.

**Percent agree 68%/68%**

#### People's Ideas...

- provide separate areas for dogs in parks
- provide separate bins for dog waste
- increase public education to encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs; include better signage in parks and public places
- encourage park partner programs such as Pooch Patrol, Park Ambassadors Program, and Park Watch

### 23.9 Public Art in Parks and Public Places

#### **Approved**

There should be more public art in parks and public spaces.

**Percent agree 61%/57%**

#### People's Ideas...

- provide more artist-in-residence programs
- encourage community art projects such as mosaics, statues, murals, graffiti walls, and patterns on sidewalks
- provide fountains and creative public spaces
- create artwork throughout Renfrew and Collingwood including highlighting features of interest in parks (e.g. sculpture along Ridgeway near Q.E. Park; mosaic stream park in Grandview Woodland); heritage plaques to inform us of history of area and buildings; and maps to give destinations for walks

### 23.10 Greening and Beautifying Public Streets

#### **Approved**

Streets should continue to be pleasant green links that connect the neighbourhood and should be enhanced by:

- protecting existing boulevards and street trees, and planting new trees wherever possible
- encouraging residents to extend private gardening into the space between the sidewalk and the curb
- encouraging residents to landscape traffic circles and curb bulges through the 'Green Streets' program
- landscaping all medians
- creating more mini-parks on street right of ways.

**Percent agree 78%/79%**

#### People's Ideas...

- plant more evergreen and seasonal flowering trees, create mosaic sidewalks
- more benches, water fountains, lighting, and artwork to encourage gathering and socializing
- plant more corner bulges to identify neighbourhoods, or act as a gateway feature with signs
- plant more 'green' on SkyTrain pillars, columns, and guideways
- add planter boxes to beautify streets

### 23.11 Greening Lanes

#### **Approved**

Many lanes in Renfrew-Collingwood are unattractive and not environmentally friendly. There should be alternatives to fully paved lanes, to allow for more greenery and more permeability for storm water, and all the alternatives should be offered to homeowners when they vote on lane paving.

**Percent agree 71%/75%**

#### People's Ideas...

- use less asphalt, use gravel or planting
- provide more opportunities for more 'Country Lanes'
- make lanes beautiful, useful and accessible, not utilitarian

### 23.12 Preserve Views

#### **Approved**

Views to the North Shore mountains, downtown Vancouver, and into Renfrew Ravine from public places, like parks and streets, should be protected and viewpoints made more enjoyable.

**Percent agree 84%/87%**

#### People's Ideas...

- provide benches and rest areas
- control building heights
- plant more trees, flowers, and viewing gardens
- preserve views of the North Shore mountains from north/south streets (e.g. Nanaimo and Rupert)



Rupert and 17th scenic view

### 24.1 Existing Public Buildings

#### **Approved**

Existing major public buildings with heritage character should be retained and well maintained, with renovations and additions compatible with the existing building's style.

**Percent agree 75%/75%**

#### People's Ideas...

- existing schools should be kept — they are landmarks and memories
- if Firehall #15 is expanded and rebuilt, it should retain its heritage character

### 24.2 New Public Buildings

#### **Approved**

New public buildings should be well designed in a contemporary style and well maintained.

**Percent agree 81%/78%**

#### People's Ideas...

- Renfrew Library is a wonderful example of modern style
- repair and maintain the water feature at the Renfrew Library



Greening lanes: 'Country Lanes' pilot project



Norquay Elementary School

## 24 Public Buildings

In Renfrew-Collingwood, many existing public buildings, like schools and Firehall #15 (at 22nd and Nootka), are historic landmarks that provide many fond memories for long-term residents. Some recent buildings, like the Renfrew Branch Library, designed in a modern style, are also important landmarks. Vision participants felt public buildings should meet particularly high design and construction standards because they are heavily used and symbolically important. All designs should be welcoming, easy to access, and easy to find your way around in. Residents should also have opportunities to provide input in the development of these public buildings.



Renfrew Branch Library