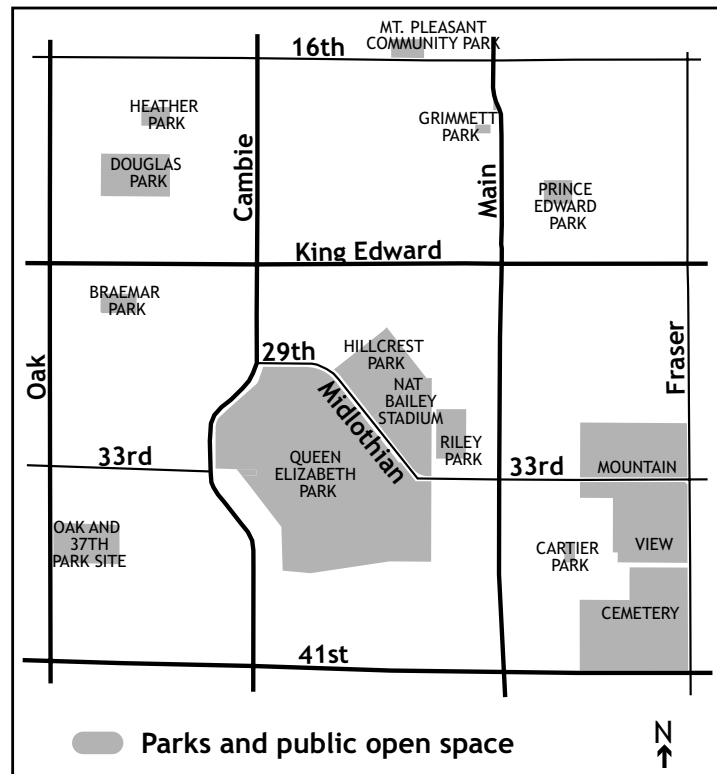




PARKS, STREETS, LANES, & PUBLIC PLACES

Vision participants felt that well maintained public parks and open spaces, mature trees, and landscaped street boulevards and medians are an important part of the overall character of Riley Park/South Cambie (RPSC). The Vision Directions in this section deals with parks and public open space, school grounds, streets, lanes, and views.

Parks and Public Open Space



32 Parks & Public Places, Streets, Lanes, and Views

Parks are very important for recreation, beauty, and refreshment. RPSC is fortunate to have a variety of park spaces, including Queen Elizabeth Park, a city serving park that has a variety of elements (e.g. a pitch and putt golf course, gardens, and the Bloedel Floral Conservatory), Nat Bailey Stadium, Cambie Heritage Boulevard, Mountain View Cemetery, a naturalized park area at Oak and 37th, and more conventional play grounds and play fields. In total, RPSC has 6 parks (not including Queen Elizabeth Park due to its city serving nature) totaling 31 hectares (76.5 acres). In 2001, RPSC had 0.9 hectares (2.0 acres) of 'neighbourhood park' for every 1,000 residents. This ratio is below the city average due to Queen Elizabeth Park not being included in the 'neighbourhood park' definition. School grounds totaling 18 hectares (44 acres) are also important public spaces.

Streets and lanes typically take up about 30% of a community's land area, and make an important contribution to the image of an area. The Park 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.

In 1989, the City began to protect selected public views that development threatened to block. The protected views are mainly from within the downtown or from Central Broadway and False Creek area looking north toward the mountains. In addition, limited public views north are protected from Queen Elizabeth, John Hendry, and Clark Parks.

Other Directions related to PARKS, STREETS, LANES AND PUBLIC PLACES are found in the TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION, NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES, and LARGE SITES sections.

32.1 Develop More Usable Parks and School Grounds

Approved

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

Percent Agree 87%/91%

People's Ideas...

- offer games in park landscaping (e.g. checker board), design and build more creative play toys for kids, and provide exercise equipment in parks (e.g. like Burnaby Central Park)
- provide a covered area for Tai Chi, weddings, and weather protection from the rain
- provide guides and maps for visitors
- build elevated planting beds with viewing benches in convenient locations and also build community gardens at waist level
- plant native plant areas and more wild areas in parks for education and enjoyment
- make school grounds more park-like with more trees and grassy areas and a school ground gardening programs should be developed
- add lighting to playing fields so that people can play at night



Play area: Douglas Park



Brock Elementary: usable community space

Mountain View Cemetery



Mountain View Cemetery was established by the City in 1886. By 1986 the cemetery had expanded to 43 hectares (106 acres) located between 31st and 43rd, west of Fraser. Mountain View has a number of structures on the Vancouver Heritage Register including the Vancouver Crematorium (5505 Fraser), two grave markers, and a war memorial. The cemetery contains the remains of over 145,000 Vancouverites.

In 1986, City Council stopped the sale of burial space. By 1995, cremation had become increasingly popular. In 1996, Council instructed staff to develop a Master Plan for reopening Mountain View as a self-supporting business.

The Mountain View Cemetery Master Plan is a long-term project that divides the cemetery into 12 'neighbourhoods' to be developed in phases spanning at least 25 years. The Plan has three main components: memorialization and interment options, landscaping and infrastructure improvements, and redevelopment of the buildings. Plan development included extensive public consultation with stakeholders and neighbours of the cemetery.

Implementation of Phase 1 was approved by City Council in 2004. In Phase 1 several existing buildings will be replaced by the Customer Service Building, the Operations Centre, and the Celebration Room. Phase 1 also includes infrastructure, landscape, and memorialization improvements. To guide long-term redevelopment, City Council rezoned the site to a comprehensive development (or CD-1) zone.

Mountain View Cemetery is an important public open space in RPSC. As it becomes an active business operation there will be neighbourhood impacts to be addressed. Also, further enhancement of Mountain View Cemetery as a public open space should respond to both area residents and visitors.

32.2 Involve the Public in the Implementation of the Mountain View Cemetery Master Plan

Approved

There should be significant public involvement in the implementation of the Master Plan and in the ongoing operations of Mountain View Cemetery.

Percent Agree 72%/73%

People's Ideas...

- conduct public consultation about the location of buildings and service yards to reduce impacts on residents
- redevelopment should address neighbours' concerns about noise from cemetery operations

32.3 Enhance Mountain View Cemetery

Approved

Mountain View Cemetery should be further enhanced as a public place during redevelopment.

Percent Agree 68%/70%

People's Ideas...

- encourage planting memorials instead of markers
- encourage park-like elements in the cemetery and perhaps include the old stream as an element
- revamp the area around the WW1 memorial, perhaps build a walkway to it with lighting similar to that in Victory Park
- encourage historical preservation by having walking tours of the cemetery and restoration of grave markers
- establish tree identification tours
- encourage community involvement in the space while being sensitive to memorial park use

32.4 Improve Safety In and Around Parks

Approved

Safety in and around parks should be improved. Park use, design, and maintenance should take safety further into account. Safety improvements (e.g. lighting) should be sensitive to adjacent neighbours.

Percent Agree 84%/90%

People's Ideas...

- provide more lighting at night in parks
- design parks and school grounds to discourage 'hanging out'
- provide and encourage more after hours activities in parks, especially in Queen Elizabeth Park and school grounds, to increase security
- provide some type of security presence, uniformed security or on-site care takers

32.5 Improve Maintenance of Parks

Approved

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

Percent Agree 76%/81%

People's Ideas...

- make improvements to the bike trails on the park site at 37th and Oak, which are not maintained and cause safety concerns
- address weedy, unsightly, and uneven playing field in Grimmatt Park

32.6 Control Dogs in Parks and Public Places

Approved

Parks and public open spaces should be shared between dog owners and non-dog owners. On-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 77%/82%

People's Ideas...

- enforce the no dog off-leash regulations in Mountain View Cemetery
- provide plastic bags for dog owners to clean up after their pets in parks and in Mountain View Cemetery
- include an off-leash dog park in the Riley/Hillcrest Masterplan, perhaps build enclosed areas for dogs to play in
- need more enforcement of on-leash area in parks and better defined off-leash areas with more signage
- start dog waste management initiative in Queen Elizabeth Park (e.g. special containers, waste system)

32.7 Greening and Beautifying Public Streets

Approved

Streets should continue to be pleasant green links that connect the neighbourhood 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
- beautifying with benches and public art
- landscaping all medians.

Percent Agree 85%/90%

People's Ideas...

- provide benches and sculptures along street medians, and add banners and baskets to beautify public streets
- encourage a variety of landscaping along public streets (e.g. public gardens, and curb side plantings done by the community)
- provide seating areas and water fountains along streets, particularly those with hills
- develop more traffic circle community gardens



Greening of boulevards

- promote community projects like ‘blooming boulevards’ to plant native plants
- bulges should have seating areas, public art, and bike racks
- plant big trees along arterial streets

Cambie Heritage Boulevard



Cambie is an important route linking Downtown to Queen Elizabeth Park and the Fraser River. City Council designated the Cambie Street central boulevard between King Edward and Marine Drive as a heritage landscape in 1993. This means City Council must approve any proposed changes to the boulevard. The boulevard’s heritage values include its history, urban design, and landscape features. With its hundreds of shade, ornamental, and coniferous trees (some dating back to the ‘20s and ‘30s), Cambie Heritage Boulevard is one of the City’s finest examples of a living urban forest and heritage landscape.



‘Country Lane’ example

32.8 Preserve the Cambie Heritage Boulevard

Approved

Cambie Heritage Boulevard is a historic and characteristic element of RPSC. It should be preserved as a public place in the community and the existing trees should be kept and maintained, or replaced where needed.

Percent Agree 84%/86%

People’s Ideas...

- ensure no trees are cut down from the boulevard
- preserve the Cambie Heritage Boulevard when the Canada Line goes through
- control landscaping to prevent view blockage on the boulevard

Country Lanes Program

The City has developed an alternative to the traditional asphalt lane. This approach was tested in 2002 and was found to provide residents with a lane that slows traffic, is attractive, and is environmentally responsible.

Country lanes feature two strips of concrete as a driving surface. Around these strips is ‘structural grass’ to support vehicles and prevent rutting and soil compaction. Under this is a gravel and soil mixture that allows drainage and a base for the grass. Environmental benefits include recharging groundwater which reduces peak flows into the ocean and rivers. Increased vegetation in the lane filters storm water, improves air quality, and helps combat the ‘heat island effect’ which can raise temperatures in built-up areas. The ‘country lane’ was approved by City Council in 2004 as an option for the Local Improvement Program.

32.9 Encourage More Greening of Residential Lanes

Approved

Many lanes in RPSC are unattractive and uninviting for pedestrians and cyclists, and are not environmentally friendly. Residents should be encouraged to pursue alternatives to fully paved lanes, to allow for more greenery and more permeability for storm water. Ensure these alternatives are available to homeowners when they vote on lane improvements.

Percent Agree 77%/78%

People’s Ideas...

- encourage green laneways and retrofit for greater rain water permeability in lanes
- encourage ‘positive people activity’ in lanes (e.g. promote pedestrian and bike use)
- clean and maintain lanes
- lower fences to encourage neighbour interaction, better for safety and lane appearance
- encourage backyard/lane gardening and plant trees

Q.E Park

The top of Queen Elizabeth Park is the highest point in the city, at 167m (505 ft) above sea level. From the lookouts, visitors have a 360 degree view of the Vancouver skyline. The Park receives nearly 6 million visitors a year who marvel at its superior standard of garden plantings.

32.10 Preserve Views

Approved

Views to the north shore mountains and downtown Vancouver, from public places like Mountain View Cemetery, and north/south streets should be protected, without the loss of trees. Viewpoints should be made more enjoyable.

Percent Agree 86%/90%

People's Ideas...

- provide benches and rest areas in view areas
- make view across Mountain View Cemetery more accessible, it is underutilized because the area is uninviting
- preserve views of the north shore mountains from north/south streets (e.g. Cambie and Main)
- control landscaping to prevent view blockage



View from Queen Elizabeth Park