

December 17, 2021

MEMO TO: Park Board Commissioners

FROM : Donnie Rosa - General Manager, Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: On Water Strategy Implementation Update – Board Briefing Memo

Dear Commissioners,

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the implementation of On Water (2019), Vancouver's Non-motorized Watercraft Recreation Strategy, and to inform you about the results of the pilot project that operated this summer for designated non-powered watercraft launch and recovery (returning watercraft to shore) access at four of Vancouver's beaches.

Background

In June of 2019, the Board approved the On Water Strategy to support non-motorized watercraft recreation in line with the Park Board's mission to provide, preserve and advocate for parks and recreation to benefit all people, communities and the environment. Non-motorized watercraft is defined as on-water recreation activities involving small watercraft powered by people and other natural elements. There is a wide range in types of non-motorized watercraft activities popular in Vancouver, including canoeing, kite surfing, kayaking, kite surfing, outrigging, paddle boarding, rowing, wind surfing and small craft sailing.

The strategy provides recommendations for non-motorized watercraft services and guidance for planning related to existing facilities and future non-powered watercraft facilities for the waters of False Creek, Spanish Banks, English Bay and the Burrard inlet near Coal Harbour. They focus on five key directions to bring Vancouver closer to its vision for high-quality, accessible, non-motorized watercraft recreation, which are to:

- 1. Expand opportunities and participation;
- Increase physical access to the water;
- 3. Improve safety;
- 4. Protect and enhance the environment:
- 5. Foster opportunities to socialize and build community.

Non-motorized Watercraft Launch and Recovery Access Pilot Project

Staff initiated this pilot project in response to On Water Action 4.2: "Consider providing designated launch areas at beaches and parks managed by the Park Board". It was initially planned to run in 2020, but was delayed due to COVID-19. This year, the pilot ran from June 1 to September 6 to align with the Park Board's 16-week outdoor aquatic season.

Staff selected four pilot locations to trial the designated launch areas:

- Kitsilano Beach
- Spanish Banks
- Sunset Beach
- Locarno Beach



Components of the pilot project included:

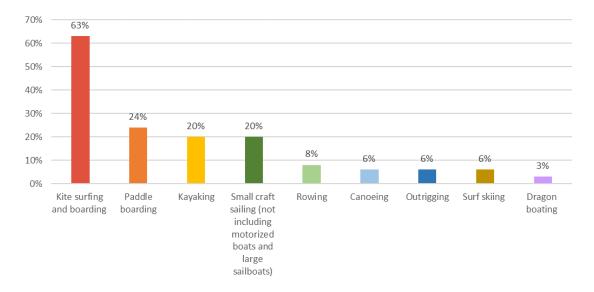
- New lifeguard responsibilities and guidance for beach users;
- Designated launch and recovery access areas (11:30am to 8:30pm, June-Sep), with black and white quartered beach flags compliant with the International Life Saving Federation's standard for flags;
- Installed temporary beach signs, updated the website, and used social media to inform and educate users and the public about the pilot and locations.

Pilot Engagement & Survey Results Summary

An online survey was conducted from October 4 - 24, 2021. The survey was advertised through social media, flyers at beaches, parks, and community centres, as well as direct emails to stakeholders and members of the public who signed-up to receive project updates. In total, 317 responses were received.

Key findings of the pilot project survey include:

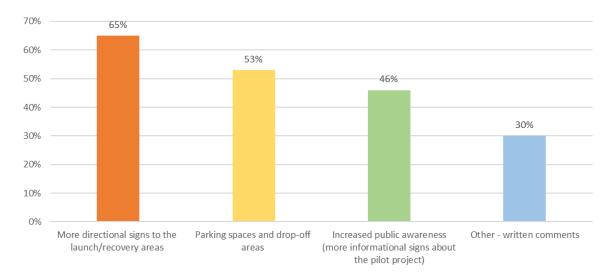
a) Most Favoured Activities: The top activities that respondents said they value most about participating in water activities are noted in the chart below (note that respondents could select more than one activity so the totals don't add to 100%):



- **b) Most Favoured Locations:** The most popular launch and recovery pilot locations respondents used every week:
 - 1. Locarno Beach (31%)
 - 2. Spanish Banks (22%)
 - 3. Kitsilano Beach (19%)
 - 4. Sunset Beach (9%)
- c) Increased Use: Most of the respondents (70%) indicated that the On Water pilot project increased access to water recreation, 26% of respondents said it remained the same (no impact), and 4% of them thought this pilot project decreased access.



d) Thoughts on Improvements: Respondents' suggestions for future improvement on the On Water pilot project (note that respondents could select more than one activity so the totals don't add to 100%):



- 30% of respondents that provided 'other' comments most commonly were concerning lifeguard education about the pilot. Other suggestions concerned kiteboarding launch and land areas and the On Water pilot signage are not visible on site.

The full survey results are attached as Appendix A.

These results will help guide the way for further discussion with On Water user groups and staff this winter/spring to confirm how we can successfully modify next summer's pilot to better meet the needs of all On Water users.

Next Steps

Staff plan to report back to the Board on the potential next steps for updating and modifying the designated non-motorized watercraft launch and recovery access pilot project for next summer by the spring of 2022. Staff will also continue to communicate and collaborate cross-departmentally to implement the On Water Strategy actions and initiatives.

Regards,

Donnie Rosa (they/she)

General Manager - Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation

/ns/ed/clc

Copy to: PB Senior Leadership Team

Planning, Policy & Environment

PB Communications

Introduction

The On Water non-motorized watercraft launch and recovery access areas pilot launched June 1 to encourage and manage the safe use of non-motorized watercraft in Vancouver's waters. Lifeguards supervised four swimming beaches at Kitsilano, Locarno, Spanish Banks and Sunset to support non-motorized watercraft users in safely launching and using their equipment between 11:30 am and 8:30 pm.

A web-based survey was conducted from October 4th to October 24th, 2021, the survey was administered through the On Water project's Vancouver.ca page. In total, 317 responses received, with 163 participants completing the survey and 154 participants partially completing it.

The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions, and took six minutes to complete on average. The questionnaire was comprised by largely multiple choice questions, and a number of open-ended questions asking for additional comments, or 'other' responses.

Question 1: Did you participate in the pilot this summer (June 1 – September 6, 2021)?

For respondents (n=307), the results of participating in the pilot this summer were similar. 152 respondents said "Yes" (49.5%), and 155 said "No" (50.5%).

1. Did you participate in the pilot this summer (June 1 – September 6, 2021)?

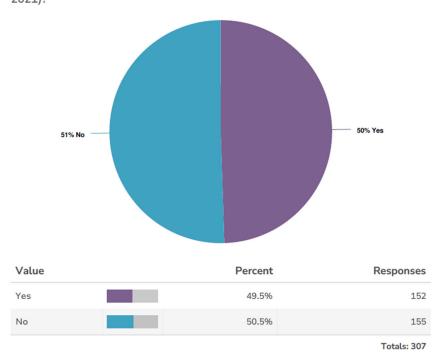


Figure 1 Participate in the Pilot this summer (June 1 – September 6, 2021)

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

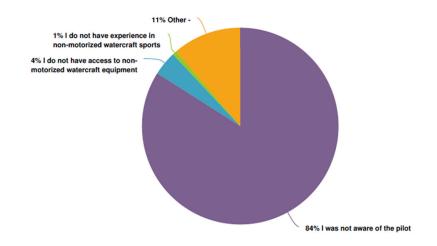
Question 2: Why didn't you participate in the pilot?

The most common reasons (n=151) for not participating in the pilot were:

• I was not aware of the pilot (84.1%)

Few selected, do not have access to non-motorized watercraft equipment (4.0%), and do not have experience in non-motorized watercraft's sports (0.7%).

2. Why didn't you participate in the pilot?



Value	Percent	Responses
I was not aware of the pilot	84.1%	127
I do not have access to non-motorized watercraft equipment	4.0%	6
I do not have experience in non-motorized watercraft sports	0.7%	1
Other -	11.3%	17

Totals: 151

Figure 2: Reasons why didn't participate in the pilot

When asked why respondents didn't participate in the pilot this summer, 11.3% gave 'other' reasons, writing these in the comment box for this question in Table 1.

Table 1: Other responses about why didn't participate in the On Water pilot.

Category	Count
Launch From Jericho	4

I launch my OC1 out of Jericho Paddling Club

I launch non-motorized watercraft at Jericho Sailing Centre

APPENDIX A

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

Total responses (number of comments)	17
The pilot area did not address the majority of rowing and paddling needs in Vancouver	
I no longer have a boat	
boat in Port Moody	
Just moved to Vancouver	
I own a motorized watercraft	
I paddle out of Kits Yacht Club so did not need to use these launch areas.	
I just recently took up kiteboarding and was not involved until now.	
Other Reasons	7
I moved out of the area but plan on using in the future	
I was away	
live out of the area	
Was not in Vancouver much of this summer.	
Outside Vancouver	4
I launch from the Burrard Docks on Chestnut Street and from Granville Island	
I launch from Burrard Mat	
Launch From Burrard	2
I have access at Jericho Sailing Center	
(paddle boarding)	

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

Question 3: What is your connection to the On Water pilot areas (Kitsilano,

Locarno, Spanish Banks, and/or Sunset beaches)? (Select all that apply)

The three common reasons that valued the most of connection to the On Water pilot areas were:

- I visit the swimming beaches for recreation (50.5%)
- I participated in the On Water pilot at Kitsilano, Locarno, Spanish Banks, and/or Sunset Beaches (44.4%)
- I live in the area (38.0%)

Some respondents said they were living elsewhere in the City of Vancouver (18.2%), and some come from outside of the City of Vancouver (17.5%). Others said they shopped in the area (12.8%), worked in the area (10.8%), or operated a business in the area (3.4%).

3. What is your connection to the On Water pilot areas (Kitsilano, Locarno, Spanish Banks, and/or Sunset beaches)? (select all that apply) 60 50 30 20 10 I participated in the On Water pilot at I visit the swimming beaches for I come from outside of the City of I operate a business I live elsewhere in the City of Other in the area Kitsilano, Locarno, recreation Spanish Banks

Figure 3: Connection to the On Water pilot areas

Value	Percent	Responses
I participated in the On Water pilot at Kitsilano, Locarno, Spanish Banks, and/or Sunset Beaches	44.4%	132
I visit the swimming beaches for recreation	50.5%	150
I live in the area	38.0%	113
I operate a business in the area	3.4%	10
I work in the area	10.8%	32
I shop in the area	12.8%	38
I live elsewhere in the City of Vancouver	18.2%	54
I come from outside of the City of Vancouver	17.5%	52
Other -	12.8%	38

Figure 4: Connection to the On Water pilot areas

There were 'other' responses to this question chosen by 36 participants. The comments were analyzed, and the reasons were included in Table 2.

Table 2: Other Comments about connection to the On Water pilot areas

Category	Count
Access at Jericho Beach	
I access the water near the Jericho Sailing Centre	1
Jericho Sailing Centre member	3
Sail out of Jericho Sailing Centre	4
I kayak out of Jericho Sailing Centre and stop at those beaches for lunch or breaks.	1
I paddle frequently in English bay from JSCA	1
I sail at Jericho beach	3
I store my kayak at Jericho	1
I'm a member of the Viking Sailing Club at Jericho and I own a kayak	1
Launched sailboat and SUP from Jericho	1

Sailing from JSCA, paddle boarding from RVYC Jericho	1
Access at English bay	
I am an outrigger paddler who frequently paddles in English Bay	1
Access at Locarno Beach	
I belong to a local rowing club (Locarno)	1
I sail out of Locarno	2
Access at Kitsilano	
I kayak in Kitsilano	1
Access at other beaches	
I land my kayak at various beaches	1
I paddle an outrigger in the area	1
I paddle outside the swimming areas of the pilot projects	1
north van	1
paddle 4+ times per week in English Bay & False Creek	1
West Vancouver	1
Sailing at on Water pilot areas	
I have a rowing dinghy at JSC and row in English Bay, usually to Kits Point	1
I paddle my own canoe and paddleboard in area.	1
I sail in the area (paddle boarding)	3
Other responses	
I am from new Zealand	1
I was on the Committee	1
Sailor	1
Total responses (number of comments)	36

Question 4: How did you participate? (Select all that apply)

The four activities that respondents said they value most about participating in water activities are:

- Kite surfing and boarding (62.7%)
- Paddleboarding (23.7%)
- Kayaking (19.5%)
- Small craft sailing (not including motorized boats and large sailboats) (19.5%)

Also of value to respondents were rowing (7.6%), Canoeing (5.9%), Outrigging (5.9%), Surf skiing (5.9%), and dragon boating (2.5%).

4. How did you participate? (Select all that apply)

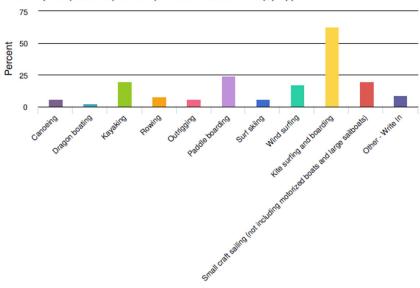


Figure 5: Participation in On Water activities

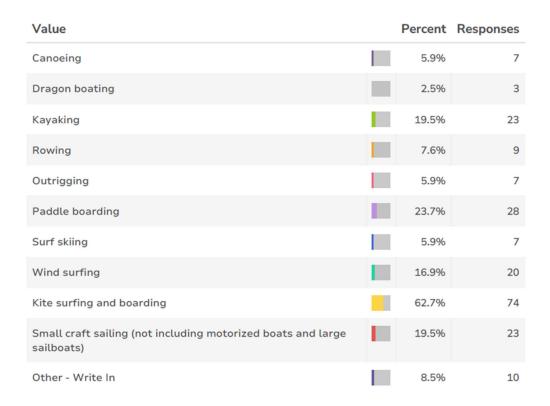


Figure 6: Participation in On Water pilot water recreations valued in percentage

Furthermore, there were 8.5% of respondents reported 'other' to indicate other water activities. The comments are summarized in Table 3. The most popular comment was Wind surfing.

Table 3: Other comments about the participation in the On Water pilot water recreations

Category	Count
Entertaining	1
Wind Foiling	1
Wind boarding	1
Wind surfing	3
Swimming	1
Go light	1
Total responses (number of comments)	8

Question 5: How often did you launch and recover from the access locations?

In this question, 105 respondents reported their frequency of using the access locations. 25 respondents said they used once a month (25.5%) at Kitsilano Beach, 32 respondents used about once a week (30.5%) at Locarno Beach, 32 respondents used many times a month (30.5%) at Spanish Banks, and 14 respondents used once a month (15.1%) at Sunset Beach.

5. How often did you launch and recover from the access locations?

	Many times a day	Once a day	About once a week	Many times a month	Once a month	Never	Responses
Kitsilano Count Row %	4 4.1%	2 2.0%	18 18.4%	20 20.4%	25 25.5%	29 29.6%	98
Locarno Count Row %	2 1.9%	4 3.8%	32 30.5%	26 24.8%	28 26.7%	13 12.4%	105
Spanish Banks Count Row %	1	2 1.9%	23 22.1%	32 30.8%	27 26.0%	19 18.3%	104
Sunset Count Row %	1 1.1%	2 2.2%	8 8.6%	8 8.6%	14 15.1%	60 64.5%	93
2-3 times per week Count Row %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1
Alma to UBC Count Row %	0	0 0.0%	0	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1
Ambelside park Count Row %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	1
English Bay Beach & Second Beach Count Row %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1 100.0%	1
English bay Count Row %	0	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1
Granville Island & Vanier Park public dock Count Row %	0 0.0%	1 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	1

	Many times a day	Once a day	About once a week	Many times a month	Once a month	Never	Responses
Jericho Count Row %	0	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Jericho Sailing Centre Count Row %	0	0 0.0%	2 100.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	2
Totals Total Responses							105

Figure 7: The frequency of respondents reported on accessing locations (includes Kitsilano, Locarno, Spanish Banks, and Sunset Beaches)

Question 6: Please rank when you most frequently used the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a WEEKDAY (please rank from most to least)

When asked respondents what periods were most frequently used the pilot access points on a weekday, most respondents said they were accessing from noon to 3:00 p.m. The time from 3:00 p.m. to 6 p.m. was ranked second, accessing points before noon was ranked third, and the least respondents accessed the points after 6:00 p.m.

6. Please rank when you most frequently used the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a WEEKDAY (please rank from most to least):

Item	Overall Rank	Rank Distribu	tion Score	No. of Rankings
Noon to 3:00 pm	1		270	86
3:00 pm to 6:00 pm	2		247	87
Before noon	3		224	80
After 6:00 pm	4		149	71
		Lowest Hig Rank Ran	hest ık	

Figure 8: Frequency of using the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a weekday

Question 7: Please rank when you most frequently used the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a WEEKEND (please rank from most to least)

When asked respondents what time were most frequently used the pilot access points on the weekend, most respondents said they were accessing from noon to 3:00 p.m., which similar to weekday, the time before noon was ranked at second, the time from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. was ranked at third. The least respondents access the points after 6:00 p.m.

7. Please rank when you most frequently used the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a WEEKEND (please rank from most to least):

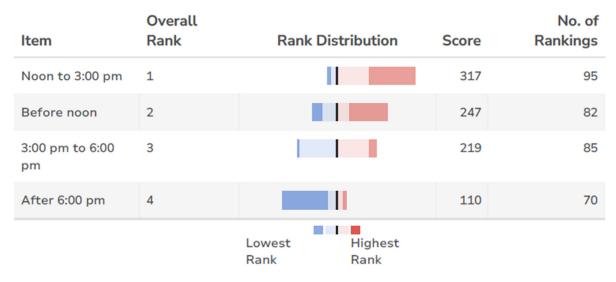
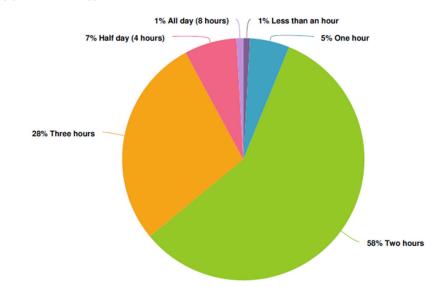


Figure 9: Frequency of using the pilot access points to launch and/or recover watercraft on a weekend

Question 8: On average, how much time did you spend on the water each visit (approximately)?

Of the 114 respondents, 57.9% said they were spending approximately two hours on the water, 28.1% were spending three hours on the water, and 5.3% of them were spending one hour.

8. On average, how much time did you spend on the water each visit (approximately)?



Value	Percent	Responses
Less than an hour	0.9%	1
One hour	5.3%	6
Two hours	57.9%	66
Three hours	28.1%	32
Half day (4 hours)	7.0%	8
All day (8 hours)	0.9%	1

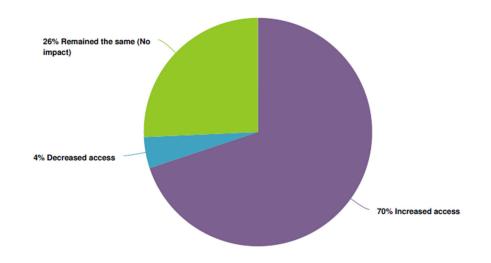
Totals: 114

Figure 10: How much time respondents spent on the water each visit

Question 9: How has this pilot project impacted your access to water recreation?

In this question (n=113), most of the respondents (69.9%) valued that the On Water pilot project increased access to water recreation, 25.7% of respondents said it remained the same (no impact), and 4.4% of them thought it was the same this pilot project decreased access.

9. How has this pilot project impacted your access to water recreation?



Increased access 69.9%	Value	Percent	Responses
	Increased access	69.9%	79
Decreased access 4.4%	Decreased access	4.4%	5
Remained the same (No impact) 25.7%	Remained the same (No impact)	25.7%	29

Totals: 113

Figure 11: Valued On Water pilot project impacts on respondents' access to water recreation

Question 10: Please tell us more about how this pilot project impacted your access to water recreation

There were written comments about the On Water pilot project that impacted respondents' access to water recreation:

10. Please tell us more about how this pilot project impacted your access to water recreation:



Figure 12: How the On Water pilot project impacted respondents' access to water recreation

Also, there were additional write-in comments in response to this question. Many respondents were concerned about kitesurfing because it lacks access points and Life Guards sometimes close the area to kitesurfing due to safety concerns. Other respondents said that the On Water pilots created a safe environment for accessing water recreation.

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

Question 11: There were multiple features of the pilot. Please rate the usefulness of each feature. Black and white checkered flags are used to demarcate either side of the launch/recovery area Signage at each launch location to provide useful safety tips/rules/regulations and location map of launch/recovery area Information available on the On Water webpage (https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/on-water-waterway-recreation-strategy.aspx) Education from lifeguards at the swimming beach locations

There were variations in responses according to the usefulness of multiple features of the pilot. On average, most respondents said that these features are 'Somewhat useful.'

For the Black and white checkered flags, 27% of respondents rated 'Very Useful,' 38.7% rated 'Somewhat useful,' and 9.9% rated 'Not at all useful.' For the Signage at each launch location, 29.5% of respondents ranked 'Very useful,' 40.2% rated 'Somewhat useful,' and 9.8% rated 'Not at all useful.' For the Information available on the On Water webpage, 20.7% of respondents ranked 'Very Useful,' 39.6% rated 'Somewhat useful,' and 8.1% rated 'Not at all useful.' For the Education from lifeguards, 23.6% of respondents ranked 'Very Useful,' 27.3% rated 'Somewhat useful,' and 13.6% rated 'Not at all useful.'

11. There were multiple features of the pilot. Please rate the usefulness of each feature. Black and white checkered flags are used to demarcate either side of the launch/recovery area Signage at each launch location to provide useful safety tips/rules/regulations and location map of launch/recovery area Information available on the On Water webpage (https://vancouver.ca/parks-recreation-culture/on-water-waterway-recreation-strategy.aspx) Education from lifeguards at the swimming beach locations

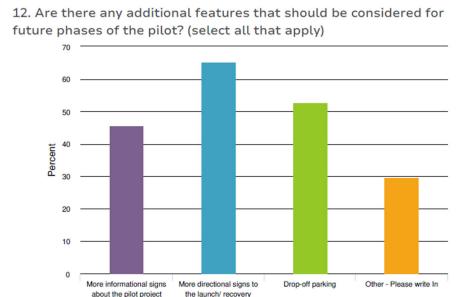
	Not at all useful	Not very useful	Somewhat useful	Very useful	Not sure	Responses
Black and white checkered flags Count Row %	11 9.9%	14 12.6%	43 38.7%	30 27.0%	13 11.7%	111
Signage at each launch location Count Row %	11 9.8%	17 15.2%	45 40.2%	33 29.5%	6 5.4%	112
Information available on the On Water webpage Count Row %	9 8.1%	17 15.3%	44 39.6%	23 20.7%	18 16.2%	111
Education from lifeguards Count Row %	15 13.6%	19 17.3%	30 27.3%	26 23.6%	20 18.2%	110
Totals Total Responses						112

Figure 13: Respondents rated multiple features of the On Water pilot

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

Question 12: Are there any additional features that should be considered for future phases of the pilot? (Select all that apply)

The most common respondents (65.3%) thought the pilot needed more directional signs to the launch/recovery areas in response to this question. Other included 52.5% of respondents considering the pilot needed drop-off parking, and 45.5% thought the pilot needed more informational signs about the pilot project.



about the pilot project Value Percent Responses More informational signs about the pilot project 45.5% 46 More directional signs to the launch/recovery areas 65.3% 66 Drop-off parking 52.5% 53 Other - Please write In 29.7% 30

Figure 14: Response on additional features in future phases of the On Water pilot

Also, there were 29.7% of respondents provided 'other' write-in comments. The most common response was concerning lifeguard education. Other suggestions included improved kiteboarding launch and land area, and that the On Water pilot signage are not visible on site.

Question 13: There are five key directions outlined in the On Water strategy to bring Vancouver closer to its vision for high-quality, accessible non-motorized watercraft recreation. In your opinion, how well did the pilot meet these objectives?

APPENDIX A

On Water Pilot Project Full Survey Results

The On Water strategy provides five key directions that contribute to a vision for high-quality, accessible non-motorized watercraft recreation. On average, most respondents (n=159) valued 'Fairly well' to these five key directions.

For the Expanded opportunities and participation, 17.6% of respondents valued 'Very well,' 40.3% valued 'Fairly well,' and 6.9% valued' Not at all.' For the Increased physical access to the water, 27.4% of respondents valued 'Very well,' 31.2% valued 'Fairly well,' and 5.1% valued' Not at all.' For the improved safety, 24.0% of respondents valued 'Very well', 29.2% valued 'Fairly well', and 6.5% valued' Not at all'. For the Protected and enhanced environment, 20.8% of respondents valued 'Very well,' 26.6% valued 'Fairly well,' and 6.5% valued' Not at all.' For the Fostered opportunity to socialize and build community, 25.6% of respondents valued 'Very well,' 26.3% valued 'Fairly well,' and 9.0% valued' Not at all.'

13. There are five key directions outlined in the On Water strategy to bring Vancouver closer to its vision for high-quality, accessible non-motorized watercraft recreation. In your opinion, how well did the pilot meet these objectives?

	Not at all	Not very well	Fairly well	Very well	Not sure	Responses
Expanded opportunities and participation Count Row %	11 6.9%	15 9.4%	64 40.3%	28 17.6%	41 25.8%	159
Increased physical access to the water Count Row %	8 5.1%	20 12.7%	49 31.2%	43 27.4%	37 23.6%	157
Improved safety Count Row %	10 6.5%	10 6.5%	45 29.2%	37 24.0%	52 33.8%	154
Protected and enhanced the environment Count Row %	10 6.5%	10 6.5%	41 26.6%	32 20.8%	61 39.6%	154
Fostered opportunities to socialize and build community Count Row %	14 9.0%	12 7.7%	41 26.3%	40 25.6%	49 31.4%	156
Totals Total Responses						159

Figure 15: Respondents valued five key directions in the On Water strategy

Question 14: What did you like most about the pilot?

There were written comments about respondents' favourite opinions to the On Water pilot:

14. What did you like most about the pilot?



Figure 16: What respondents like most about the On Water pilot

In response to this question, there were additional write-in comments. Many respondents mentioned kiteboarding access location; some were happy with the pilot project locations, some felt kiteboarding access can be difficult. Other opinions included access to water recreation and the pilot signage.

Question 15: What would you like to see improved if the pilot is continued?

There were written comments about respondents' suggestions for future improvement on the On Water pilot project as noted in the Figure 17.

15. What would you like to see improved if the pilot is continued?



Figure 17: What respondents like to see improved if the On Water pilot project is continued

In response to this question, there were additional write-in comments. Many respondents would like to see improvement in kiteboarding access locations.

Other opinions included:

- Parking spaces and drop-off areas.
- Future improvement on the pilot's signage and access.
- Increased public awareness.

Question 16: Do you have any other feedback to share with the Park Board to help evaluate the pilot and inform future recommendations?

There were written comments about respondents' feedback to evaluate the On Water pilot and inform future recommendations.

16. Do you have any other feedback to share with the Park Board to help evaluate the pilot and inform future recommendations?



Figure 18: Respondents' feedback to evaluate the On Water pilot project and inform future recommendations

In response to this question, there were additional write-in comments. Some respondents said that signage and flag need to improve in the future. Some were concerned about kiteboarding access and considered it a safe water recreation environment. Others noted a positive altitude towards the On Water pilot project.