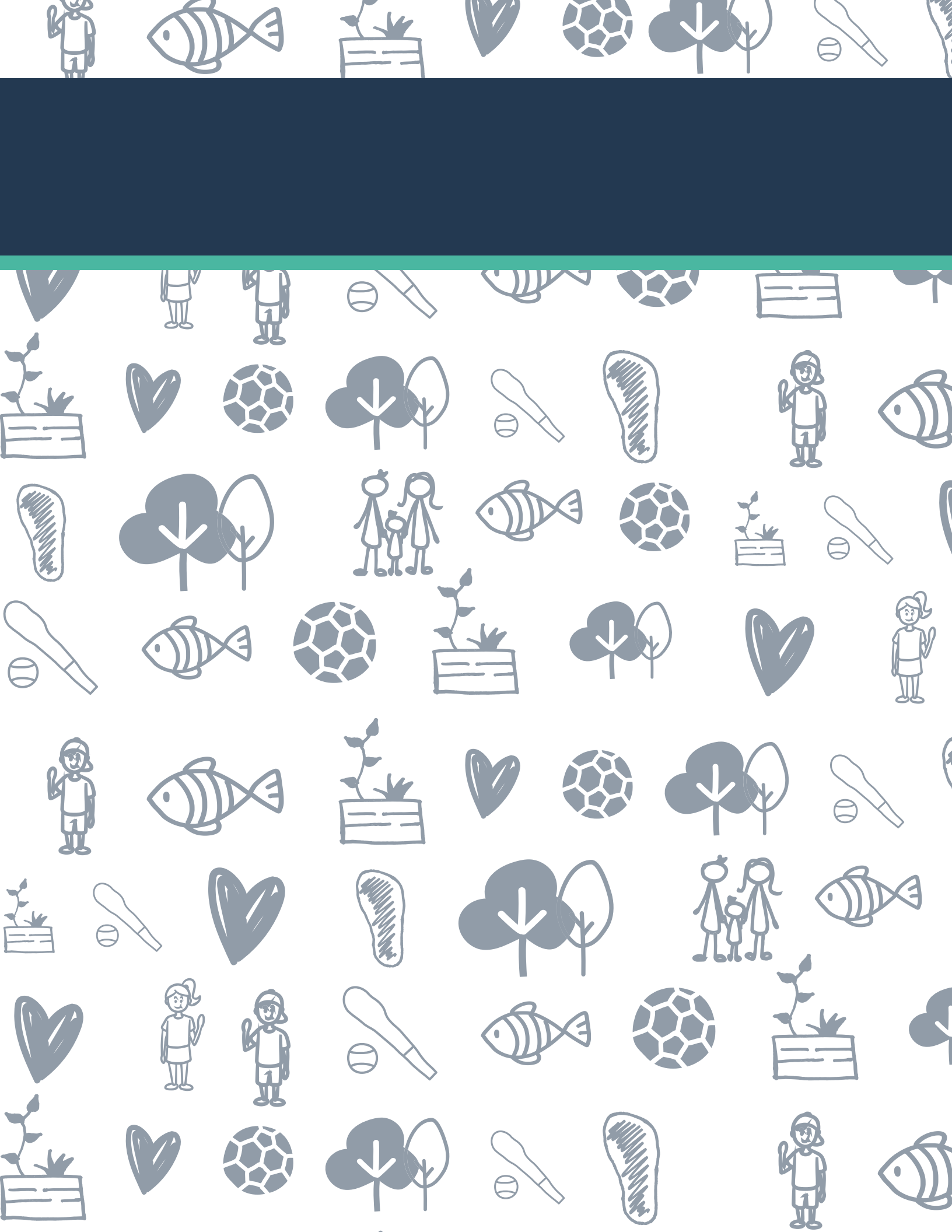


# JOHN HENDRY PARK MASTER PLAN

## Phase 1 Youth Engagement Summary

February 2020





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# WHAT WE DID

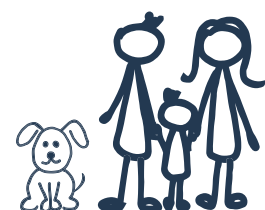
The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (Vancouver Park Board) worked with the Society for Children and Youth of BC to gather input and recommendations from young people for the John Hendry Park Master Plan update. Engagement took place during December 2019 and January 2020.

## Participants

A total of 107 students from grades 4-12 participated in the John Hendry Park Master Plan's child and youth engagement. 78 students were from elementary grades 4-6 (referred to as children in this document), and 29 from secondary grades 8-12 (referred to as youth in this document).



- One grade four class from Lord Selkirk Elementary School (n=27)
- One grade five class from École Laura Secord, French immersion (n=27)
- One grade 4/5/6 class from Tyee Elementary School, Montessori program (n=24, 8 students in each grade).
- One Youth Council group from the Trout Lake Community Centre, grades 8-12 (n=29).



# METHODS OF ENGAGEMENT

Two elementary classes participated in three consecutive engagement sessions, the second of which was an all-day site-tour and workshop at John Hendry (Trout Lake) Park. The third received resource for engagement and participated independently. All three elementary groups built abstract design models to represent their ideas and recommendations, and shared these with park planners in a 90 minute final session. The Trout Lake Youth Council group participated in a 2-hour workshop. The four main engagement activities for child and youth groups were the following:

- Interactive Survey
- Site-tour
- Vision-board 'collages'
- Park design models



Groups also received introductory presentations about the master planning process and took part in sharing circles, where students were asked to share their favourite part of John Hendry Park.

**Table 1. *Child and Youth Engagement Activities.***

School/Grade	Interactive Survey	Site Tour	Vision Board Collages	Park Design Models
Lord Selkirk Grade 4	✓	✓	✓	✓
Laura Secord Grade 5	(✓) partial	✓	✓	✓
Tyee Grade 4/5/6				✓
Youth Council Grades 8-12	✓		✓	

## Site Tour

The Selkirk and Secord groups' second session was a park planner led site visit. This site tour was designed as an orienteering scavenger hunt. Students received maps, were split into six groups, and each group was designated one of 6 topics (and locations) where they had to find 'clues' or 'treasures.' These 'treasures' were essentially prompts to elicit questions and answers, or a discussion of topics of concern identified by park planners. The six locations were the following:

- South Beach & Playground
- Community Garden & Farmers Market
- Sports Fields - East
- Dog Off-Leash Area (North Beach)
- Sport Fields (West)
- Trails (entire park)

## Vision-Board Collages

The Lord Selkirk, Laura Secord and Youth Council groups participated in a Vision Board collage-making workshop at the Trout Lake Community Center. For this session small groups of app. 4-6 students received large aerial colour print-out maps of the park and were asked to add collage elements, such as drawings, magazine cut-outs and written notes to present their ideas of what the park can look like.

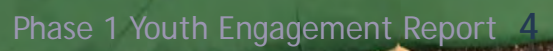
## Park Design Models

All three elementary groups spent one (or more) sessions on creating 3-dimensional abstract design models of the park. Students used recycled paper, plastic, and other recycled and craft materials and were asked to focus on one of the following six themes (which significantly overlapped with their field trip themes):

- South Beach & Playground
- Community Garden & Farmers Market
- Sports Fields
- Dog Off-Leash Area (North Beach)
- Trails (entire park)
- Nature & Biodiversity









# WHAT WE HEARD

## PARK USE

Within the three groups surveyed (Lord Selkirk, Laura Secord and Youth Council group) elementary and secondary school-aged youth are both frequent users of the park, with the majority (89%) visiting Trout Lake park at least a few times per month, half of the groups visiting a few time per week, and a couple of students (4%) visiting almost every day. There was no difference in frequency of use between the older and younger groups. A follow-up discussion revealed that a large portion of visits for youth are for indoor structured activities at the community centre, while elementary-aged students spend more time outside, participating in both organized sports and unstructured play.

*"Kids need a chance to get out in nature."*

When asked about the favourite part of the park both youth and children reported nature and wildlife as the most important aspect of the park, and also agreed that the lake itself and dogs are very important (see Table 2). Other aspects listed by the youth group included the atmosphere, the 'positivity' and sense of inclusivity. The younger groups reported more specific play and playground related aspects, including climbing the big trees, the spider-web rope climber (at the Community Center playground) and the tire-swings (at the South Beach playground).





Table 2. *Children and Youth's Top Five Favourite Things in Trout Lake Park*

	Children	Youth
1	Nature & Wildlife, especially TREES!	Nature & Wildlife, especially TREES & DUCKS!
2	PLAYGROUNDS – tire swing!	DOGS
3	The LAKE and beach	PEOPLE – Community, Friends, Park Staff
4	DOGS	Organized ACTIVITIES – especially sports
5	The VIEW	The LAKE



## TRANSPORTATION

### Getting to the park

82% children, and about 93% of Youth use active modes of transportation to get to Trout Lake park, with walking being the most common way to get there, and public transit the second most common. About 10% of both groups are driven to the park.

80% of children, and about 90% of youth vote for active transportation methods to get to park.

What would make it easier to get to the park?

- closer bus or Sky-train stop;
- improved cycling infrastructure,
- improved bike lanes and trails,
- better wheelchair accessibility to and within the park, and
- more crosswalks to safely access the Community Centre.



John Hendry Park Masterplan





## Getting around the park

### Wayfinding

- A map kiosk would significantly improve wayfinding and is necessary in the park (65% of students agree).

### Trails

#### Priorities for improvement:

- Boardwalks (new and re-furbished old ones)
- Improved trails (any trail surface (gravel, paved, woodchip, and even plastic permeable) would be an improvement over many of the current muddy dirt-trails and would help prevent people walking on paved bike-paths)
- Wooden bridge crossing the lake.

Other recommendations to make trails more functional, interesting and fun for not only younger, but all park users were to add:

- Play-trails: Jungle-gym and/or outdoor gym elements along trails, bridges, instruments (e.g. weather proof percussion), rock-hopping steps, free library.
- Interactive education trails: Signage to teach about endangered and native BC plant and animal species; educational nature scavenger hunt to spot local species; local habitat and park history education.
- More picnic tables, benches, picnic/rain shelters and drinking fountains around when walking around the lake.
- Flowers/pollinator 'rainbow' gardens, bamboo tunnels, and hedge mazes planted alongside the trails.
- More trail lighting, especially on the eastern side of the lake, was a common theme in the youth vision boards for the park.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## NATURE – BIODIVERSITY – WATER

Nature and wildlife are extremely high priorities for children and youth in Vancouver. It is not surprising that this aspect of Trout Lake Park was reported as highest priority for this current subgroup of young people.

### Trees

Love of the trees and asking for more trees was a dominant theme within the broader nature-biodiversity-water category for all groups. The elementary aged children specifically highlighted how climbing or just playing under the giant sequoia and cedar trees is a major play and nature-connection opportunity. Some children asked for more diverse climbing trees in the park.

### Water

- Clean lake water was another dominant theme for all four groups. This was also top priority when asked “If you could change one thing in the park, what would it be?”
- Restoration (or daylighting) of the original creeks feeding into and draining from the lake.
- Greater opportunities to interact with the water

### Biodiversity & wildlife habitat:

- Daylighted or restored creeks and waterways to benefit local biodiversity (frogs, fish including the potential return of spawning salmon).
- Create a creek in the South to be incorporated into a water-nature play area.
- Have the lake provide habitat for other animals





## SOUTH BEACH

### Playground

Support for a new playground in the south:

100% of elementary aged children

70% youth

*"We need a huge tree-house or fort because lots of kids live in apartments and they don't have a yard to build a tree-fort."*

### Major themes for the South Beach

playground upgrade:

- Play for all ages: make play-areas more fun for older kids - include elements of adventure/risky play such as higher climbing, faster and longer zip-lines, tunnel-slides and trampolines.
- Nature-play: Treehouses connected by ropes (esp. spider-web rope climbers) and bridges (rope and wooden), as well as climbing logs were a major theme.
- Water-play: many students included spray-park elements and/or a more natural creek play area in their models and list of recommendations. A large number of students wanted to see more play-opportunities in the (clean and swimmable) lake, such as a zipline to cross, slides off the docks and a wibit.
- Inclusivity: wheelchair accessibility was also a concern.
- Loose-parts play: access to 'loose' toys such as balls, racquets, or John Hendry bean bags.

### Type of playground (based on visual preference survey)

#### *Nature-adventure*

### Beach & Amenities

#### *What would improve the South Beach area?*

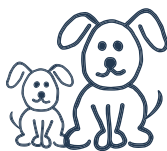
- adding chairs and benches to the beach
- ensuring the lake-water, the washrooms and the change rooms are clean
- Upgrade/new washroom/concession building
- Open concession year-round
- New picnic shelter and more colorful picnic tables
- Fire pit



## DOG OFF-LEASH AREA

For young people a favourite aspect of John Hendry (Trout Lake) park are dogs – whether or not children and youth themselves are pet-owners. However, there was no overall consensus on the dog off-leash area’s boundaries despite the agreement that off-leash dogs are a significant concern in the on-leash areas, bike trails, and sports fields.

### Recommendations:



#### *Boundaries*

##### Youth:

- 1/3 preferred the park to remain without a boundary
- 1/3 preferred a soft-boundary such as a natural hedge-fence, rocks or bollards
- 1/3 suggested that a fence (specifically a wooden one) would be the best way to prevent conflict between dogs and other park users.



##### Children

- 2/3 preferred a wooden fence
- 1/3 preferred a soft boundary

#### *Amenities*

Children and youth alike recommended that many dog amenities be added to enhance the dog off-leash area:

- Dog fountains;
- Dog washing areas;
- Litter-bags;
- Play-structures that can work for dogs and children;
- More seating;
- Washroom on the Northern Beach.



# COMMUNITY GARDEN & FARMER'S MARKET

## Community Garden

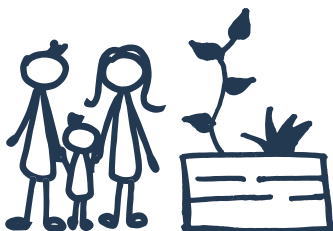
### Location

The majority of elementary school students agreed that the south-eastern corner of the park is a good location for the community garden. There was no consensus however within the youth group, with one-third agreeing to the proposed location, one third disagreeing and one-third remaining undecided.

## Recommendations

Children had many ideas on how the community garden can serve the diverse needs of the neighbouring community:

- Provide many beds for community members who live in apartments to grow food;
- A children's 'commons' garden area be incorporated where planting and playing go hand in hand;
- Pollinator flower beds be part of the garden (if not the entire park);
- An educational garden with native edible plants;
- Scavenger plant-identification games;
- Boundaries made of trees, shrubbery or hedges (perhaps even a hedge-maze);
- Many structures and amenities were recommended, including:
  - Bench-swings
  - Gazebo at the centre
  - Trellises or archways at entrance(s)
  - Toolshed





## Farmer's Market

### Location

Children:

- 33% - Keep the market in its current location.
- 20% - Move it next to the community garden area (South parking lot)

Youth:

- 85% - Move the market near the community centre, with two-thirds of this group suggesting it be placed near Victoria Drive, west of the community centre, and one-third suggesting that the market be on the gravel sports field.

## Recommendations

- More space between vendors to reduce crowding;
- Add a central courtyard with tables or a gazebo/covered structure;
- Add a children's market stall to make and sell crafts, or hold craft workshops to make the market more child-friendly;
- Add more entertainment.





## SPORTS FIELDS

The youth survey asked participants about the types of outdoor sports they most enjoy, allowing them to select multiple options. The most popular selections were:

1. soccer
2. beach volleyball
3. parkour
4. basketball

*"Having a better community inspired me because I want a better world and I want to have fun while doing it!"*

From these results we can see that the existing opportunities for sport in the park (with the exception of skating at the ice-rink) may not be serving our youth especially well, with a strong emphasis on baseball and no beach volleyball opportunities available within the park currently. Adding a sandy beach-volleyball court to the South Beach area was a generally supported idea by both the older and the younger groups.

The most common sports played by younger groups were:

1. soccer (using the North-West grass soccer field)
2. baseball
3. volleyball
4. basketball

Despite baseball being an important sport, many children and youth recommended removing one or two of the baseball diamonds (especially the two on the Western side) and replacing these with other amenities, and/or grass fields.



### All weather gravel field

While there was general consensus that the current gravel field is not appropriate for sports as it is too painful, there was not general agreement on how this field should be altered. About half of young people asked that it be changed into a turf field, with the other half disagreeing, and preferring a real grass field that would also support other uses and wildlife (e.g. picnics, market, plant and insect habitat).

### Community Centre Area

The area immediately surrounding the Community Centre and between the Centre and Victoria Drive was of particular interest and concern to the youth surveyed, as many of them primarily come to the park for Community Centre activities and programs. At present, many see the area between the centre and Victoria Drive as underutilized space. Youth suggestions to improve the aesthetic and functionality of this area included:

- Study pods with accessible Wi-Fi.
- Small public art installations from different cultures.
- Installation of tetherball facilities.









