

Kitsilano Beach Park Access and Seaside Greenway Improvement Project

Temporary Safety Improvements

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1.0 General Project Questions

1.1 What is the project?

- The Seaside Greenway in and adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park is one of the most popular sections of the City's walking, rolling, and cycling network. It is also one of the only sections of the 24km-long Seaside Greenway connecting the Vancouver Convention Centre to Spanish Banks that does not provide separate paths for cycling and walking/rolling.
- This project will establish a separated bike path that connects Balsam Street to Ogden Avenue across the park and improve entryways into the park.
- The project is being led by the Park Board. City Engineering staff will be providing their active transportation design and construction expertise, including looking at possible reallocation of street space.

1.2 What are the project goals?

- Specific goals include:
 - Making walking, rolling, and biking safer, more comfortable, and more convenient.
 - Making the paths accessible for users of all ages and abilities, including children, families, the elderly and those who use mobility aids.
 - Increasing capacity to accommodate a growing number of users.
 - Not compromising the many uses that already occur in the park.

1.3 What city policies support this project?

- This project aligns with the Park Board's [VanPlay initiative](#) which looks to "Weave the City Together", "Welcome Everyone" and "Deliver Services Equitably".
- By allowing the separated pedestrian and bike paths of the Seaside Greenway to connect across Kitsilano Beach Park, addressing known points of conflict in the park, and involving the public and stakeholders in the design decision-making process, this project delivers improved amenities that provide a safer, more accessible park experience.
- In 2020, Vancouver City Council approved the [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#), which seeks to expand and improve the City's sustainable transportation network so that more people across the city will be connected with major destinations in safe and space-efficient ways. The focus is on making it safer and more convenient for people of all ages and abilities to walk, roll, bike, and take transit. This project improves the City's sustainable, low carbon transportation network.
- The project is broadly supported by [Transportation 2040](#), the City's transportation plan approved by Council in October 2012. It includes specific directions to make walking and cycling safe, convenient, and comfortable for all ages and abilities. Improvements to older parts of the seawall are identified as a specific priority.

1.4 What is the Park Board and City Council direction for this project?

- In October 2013, the Park Board approved a preliminary alignment for a separated cycling path and capital funding for Seaside Greenway improvements in Kitsilano Beach Park. However, implementation of the path was put on hold due to concerns raised by the public about impacts on Kitsilano Beach Park.

- Staff presented a few alignment options for a separated cycling path to the Board in March 2018 (see the [2018 Report](#)).
- The Board directed staff to undertake further analysis and design work, and conduct more public engagement, and then report back with more detailed information (a summary of the feedback can be found in the [October 2019 Board Briefing Memo](#)).
- Staff worked to develop more detailed design information and provided an update to the Board in March 2020 (see the [March 2020 Board Briefing Memo](#)), but with staff turnover and the onset of the pandemic, Park Board priorities changed.
- A [February 2021 Board Briefing Memo](#) provided an update on the project, including temporary safety improvements and upcoming public engagement.
- In mid-May, staff implemented temporary safety improvements, which included a separated cycling path in the south parking lot near Cornwall Avenue and a diagonal path near Balsam Street. These changes, detailed in a memo (see the [May 2021 Board Briefing Memo](#)), were made to address the short-term safety concerns while work is underway to identify a route for a separated cycling path.
- On July 19, 2021, the [Park Board General Manager's report](#) and [presentation](#) outlined three rounds of public engagement that will help determine the preferred cycle path route.
- On April 11, 2022, the [Park Board approved](#) the proposed separated cycle path at Kitsilano Beach Park presented by staff.

2.0 Temporary Safety Improvements Questions

2.1 What are the temporary safety improvements?

- There are two parts to the improvements:
 - A temporary separated cycling path was installed through the Kitsilano Beach Park south parking lot near Cornwall Avenue in spring 2021, and
 - A temporary crushed aggregate path was installed along the existing diagonal dirt pathway at the southwest corner of the park near Balsam Street.
- These temporary modifications are expected to be in place until Q1 2024 and are intended to improve safety for all park users until a fully separated cycling path between Balsam Street and Ogden Avenue is implemented as identified through public engagement.

2.2 Why did you construct a temporary bike path?

- To address short term safety concerns while planning for a longer-term solution.
- Because of the high numbers of people biking through the park, keeping people who are walking/rolling and people who are cycling separated improves the experience of all park users.
- The changes in the parking lot reduce conflicts between people on bicycles and people driving.
- The changes to the dirt path near Balsam Street:
 - Prevent it from becoming muddy and slippery in wet conditions and further damaging the ground surface,
 - Create better transitions between the pathways at this corner of the park, reducing the tripping hazards,
 - Divert people riding bicycles away from the busy Balsam/Cornwall intersection, and
 - Make bike movement and crossing points clearer and more predictable in this part of the park.

2.3 Why didn't you consult the public about the temporary bike path / safety improvements?

- The current Seaside Greenway cycle path goes through the south parking lot of Kitsilano Beach Park. Because of the known conflicts between people riding bicycles and people driving in the parking lot, our priority was to make safety improvements as quickly as possible.
- Staff consulted with the City's Persons with Disabilities Advisory Committee and Transportation Advisory Committees on the safety improvements to the parking lot.
- Many people walking, rolling, and on bicycles were already using the diagonal dirt path near Balsam Street already; making temporary improvements to this path made it safer to use and prevented further degradation of the ground.
- [Parks conducted public engagement](#) on several alignment options for a fully separated cycling path between Balsam Street and Ogden Avenue.

2.4 Is there any impact to motor vehicle travel?

- There are no changes to the roads adjacent to Kitsilano Beach Park. Changes were made to the south parking lot that prohibited people driving to the park from turning off Arbutus Street into the north bay of the south parking lot. The south parking lot's remaining two access points were not impacted and remain as they previously were.

2.5 Is there any impact to car parking?

- To accommodate the short-term pathway improvements, parking was removed from the north side of the south parking lot, adjacent to the tennis courts. Furthermore, the north bay of the south parking lot was turned into an exit only. Access into the parking lot continues to occur in the middle and south bays of the south parking lot. No changes were made for the park's north parking lot.

2.6 Were any trees cut down? Was any green space impacted?

- No trees were cut down for the temporary safety improvements.
- In order to create a temporary separated cycling path, four existing accessible parking stalls were relocated and a temporary asphalt path was constructed that connects these stalls to the park's main pathways. Approximately 100m² of grass was removed to accommodate this new temporary asphalt path

2.7 Why didn't you put a fence up near Balsam Street to protect the grass and prevent people from walking/rolling/cycling on the grass (like there was a few years ago)?

- We were concerned that if we put fencing up, people would find another way around it to create a new dirt path. (See 2.2 for reasoning behind gravel path.)

3.0 Fully separated cycling path between Balsam Street and Ogden Avenue: Engagement, Design, and Construction

3.1 When did the public engagement happen?

- Public engagement on a fully-separated cycling path connecting Balsam Street to Ogden Avenue has concluded. Engagement results can be found by [clicking here](#).

3.2 Did this go back to the Board for a decision?

- On April 11, 2022, the [Park Board approved](#) the proposed separated cycle path at Kitsilano Beach Park presented by staff.

3.3 When do you expect to begin construction?

- Temporary safety improvements are expected to be in place until Q1 2024 when construction is targeted to begin on the fully separated cycling path between Balsam Street and Ogden Avenue.

3.4 What about access to my home or business?

- Access to neighbouring homes or businesses will be maintained during construction.

3.5 What about the future of Kitsilano Beach Park?

- Kitsilano Beach Park is much loved and is a regional destination park and beach. The park has not been the focus of any comprehensive master planning or significant renewal for decades. The most recent improvements were localized around and included: the Boathouse (then Watermark) Restaurant (2005), and the accessible playground (2010). Much has changed since these last improvements; beach areas and other park facilities and amenities are in need of renewal, and the significant amount of park use warrants a fulsome review and plan.
- [VanSplash Aquatic Strategy](#) provides direction on the renewal of the significant number of aquatic elements in the park (pool, spray-park and beach).
- It is anticipated that a new Master Plan for Kitsilano Beach Park will be developed during the 2023-2026 Capital Plan, pending the outcomes of Board decisions made through the capital planning process. The Master Plan will include an assessment of the park's current condition as well as provide direction for future park improvements, in association with a comprehensive public engagement process.