

Recreation + Community

INTRODUCTION

Vancouverites are known for their healthy lifestyles and embracing attitude towards the outdoors.

Art, dance, music, sport, fitness, hiking, cycling and play are vital activities that enrich life in Vancouver. As such, the City hosts a wide array of leisure sports and recreation programs to meet the needs of residents. The list of services is expansive, from mahjong to lacrosse, birdwatching to curling. Sport and recreation provide positive rewards not only in the physical health of participants but in their sense of social connection, intellectual curiosity, spiritual health and links to nature.

In recent years, the Park Board has undertaken efforts to expand aquatic sports programming, to advance sport for recreation and to strengthen neighbourhood partnerships. Yet, there is still work to be done aligning the goals of local communities and partner organizations with the carrying capacity of Vancouver's parks and community centres.

BACKGROUND

In the early days of the Park Board in the 1880's, programming concentrated largely on leisure activities, such as drives through Stanley Park and bandshell concerts by the beach.

By the early twentieth century, however, trends shifted to active recreation; sports courts and children's playgrounds were built throughout the city. Today, recreation amenities at community centres typically include gymnasium and fitness centres. Specialized facilities may also include swimming pools, hockey rinks and spaces for social services, such as childcare and emergency shelter.

Canadian Sport for Life (CS4L), the True Sport Foundation (TSF) and the City of Vancouver are developing a resource for community recreation programmers to implement strategies and programs that align the True Sport Principles and the CS4L's Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) framework.



Since Vancouver's first official playground was donated by Grace Ceperley in the 1920s, the Park Board has created over 150 outdoor play spaces across the city.



THE POPULATION OVER
65+

IS EXPECTED TO GROW BY 92% BY 2041 AS SUCH, PROGRAMMING IS SHIFTING TO INCLUDE SENIORS OF ALL ABILITIES WITH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS PICKLEBALL, GARDENING, AND OTHER LEISURE ACTIVITIES.



VFSF

(VANCOUVER FIELD SPORTS FEDERATION) IS A UNIQUE GROUP OF DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS FROM 12 AMATEUR FIELD SPORT GROUPS WHO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON NEEDS AND PRIORITIES FOR SPORTS INCLUDING:



BASEBALL

FOOTBALL

CRICKET

FIELD HOCKEY

LACROSSE

RUGBY

SOCCER

SOFTBALL

TOUCH/FLAG FOOTBALL

TRACK/FIELD

ULTIMATE/DISC SPORTS

VOLLEYBALL

OVER
150

OUTDOOR FACILITIES HAVE BEEN CREATED BY THE VANCOUVER PARK BOARD SINCE GRACE CEPERLY DONATED THE FIRST PLAYGROUND IN THE 1920S.



VANCOUVER'S SEASIDE GREENWAY

IS 28KM OF PERFECTION FOR A WALK, CYCLE, ROLLERBLADE, OR JOG.



70%

OF VANCOUVER RESIDENTS ARE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE (COMPARED TO 49% NATIONALLY)



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BACKGROUND CONT.

The 2010 Olympic Games facilities transformed into community centres, including Creekside Community Centre, Trout Lake Community Centre (including ice rink), and Hillcrest Centre (including National Hockey League-sized facility and home to Vancouver Curling Club.)

OBJECTIVES

- To expand the **types of recreation** offered as well as the diversity of participants
- To identify and understand the role secondary providers play in offering residents a **continuum** of social, cultural and **recreational opportunities**
- To explore how the **community is currently recreating** and playing in parks through a summer 2017 study using the System for Observing Play and Recreation in Communities (SOPARC) tool.

CHALLENGES

- **Growing inactivity:** While Vancouver reports higher rates of physical activity than peer cities, the rate of obesity in Vancouver is increasing at twice the rate of the rest of British Columbia. This paired with digital entertainment as a proxy for outdoor recreation is creating a greater risk for obesity.
- **Aging infrastructure and maintenance costs:** Many of the parks and community centres have inadequate facilities for expanding field sports, amateur and elite sports training and sports hosting (e.g., track and field regulation facility, multi-sport complexes.) Maintenance and the carrying capacity of grass and fields parks add costs for sports and multi-sport use.
- **Growing and diverse interests:** Expanding the range of sports and recreation types and participants is necessary to keep up with population trends. This includes providing equitable access to field sports facilities and recreation opportunities.



In 2014, roughly one in four Canadian youths (ages 12-17) self-reported as obese or overweight.

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CHALLENGES CONT.

- **Lack of coordination between providers:** In addition to the facilities and parks managed or co-managed by the Park Board, there are private, nonprofit, and community partners that provide recreation in the city. Coordination is needed between the Park Board, sports organizations and secondary providers to offer a spectrum of programs that meet community needs.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **First Nations:** understand the services and facilities currently available to Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh and seeking opportunities to align with or complement the needs of these communities.
- **Collaboration with partner organizations:** collaborate with the Vancouver Field Sports Federation to draft a Field Sports Strategy, partner with service providers to build or improve sports and recreation facilities like a full-scale track/field facility and use the Vancouver Sports Network (VSN), outlined in the Sport for Life Strategy, to expand sport options citywide.
- **Provincial and national resources:** Coordinate

wellness programming with ActNOWBC, a provincial initiative to promote healthy lifestyles and make use of national tax credits for sports programs.

- **Public engagement:** Through VanPlay, celebrate of ongoing cultural and recreation resources ranging from cycling along the seawall or participating in performing arts, rock climbing and pottery classes at community centres.

RELATED INITIATIVES

- Sport for Life: Vancouver Sport Strategy – 2008
- Community Center Renewal Plan – 2001
- VanSplash Aquatics Strategy – ongoing
- People, Parks and Dogs Strategy – ongoing
- Nonmotorized Boating Strategy – ongoing
- Vancouver Field Sports Federation Capital Plan Submittal – ongoing
- Healthy City Strategy – 2014
- Canadian Sport for Life – 2014



Only 10% of children 9-12 participate in after school sports activities but 50% would like to.