

Resilience + Wellbeing

INTRODUCTION

In planning for the future, the Park Board is committed to making Vancouver parks and recreation more resilient to emerging issues such as social justice, social isolation and natural disasters.

As such, the Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation is developing Vancouver's Playbook, a new master plan to guide the delivery of vibrant parks and recreation for the next 25 years. This important work contributes to the community's resilience (or the capacity to respond to challenges) and potential for well-being, health and happiness.

Beyond community wellbeing, resilience also speaks to the sustained health of our environment, our social ties and our sense of community. Addressing these challenges includes working to provide added support to those with fewer means and access to services.

BACKGROUND

Vancouver is a growing, culturally diverse city with a thriving economy, consistently voted one of the most livable cities in the world. But is it livable for all?

First Nations, Inuit and Metis people have lived here since time immemorial. The city is within the unceded traditional territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations. Many Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people from other communities have also come here, adding their experiences to the cultural tapestry.

Today's Vancouver is a city with high rates of poverty and many people are struggling to live, work and play. Income is a strong determinant of health and well-being. Those of us with less money are more likely to suffer from chronic conditions, to live with disabilities, to require the use of health services and to suffer from mental distress. Social inequality impacts our housing choices, food security, access to education and employment, working conditions, transportation choices, parks and recreation activities, and social inclusion. Inequitable distribution of opportunity can result in differing levels of well-being and quality of life.



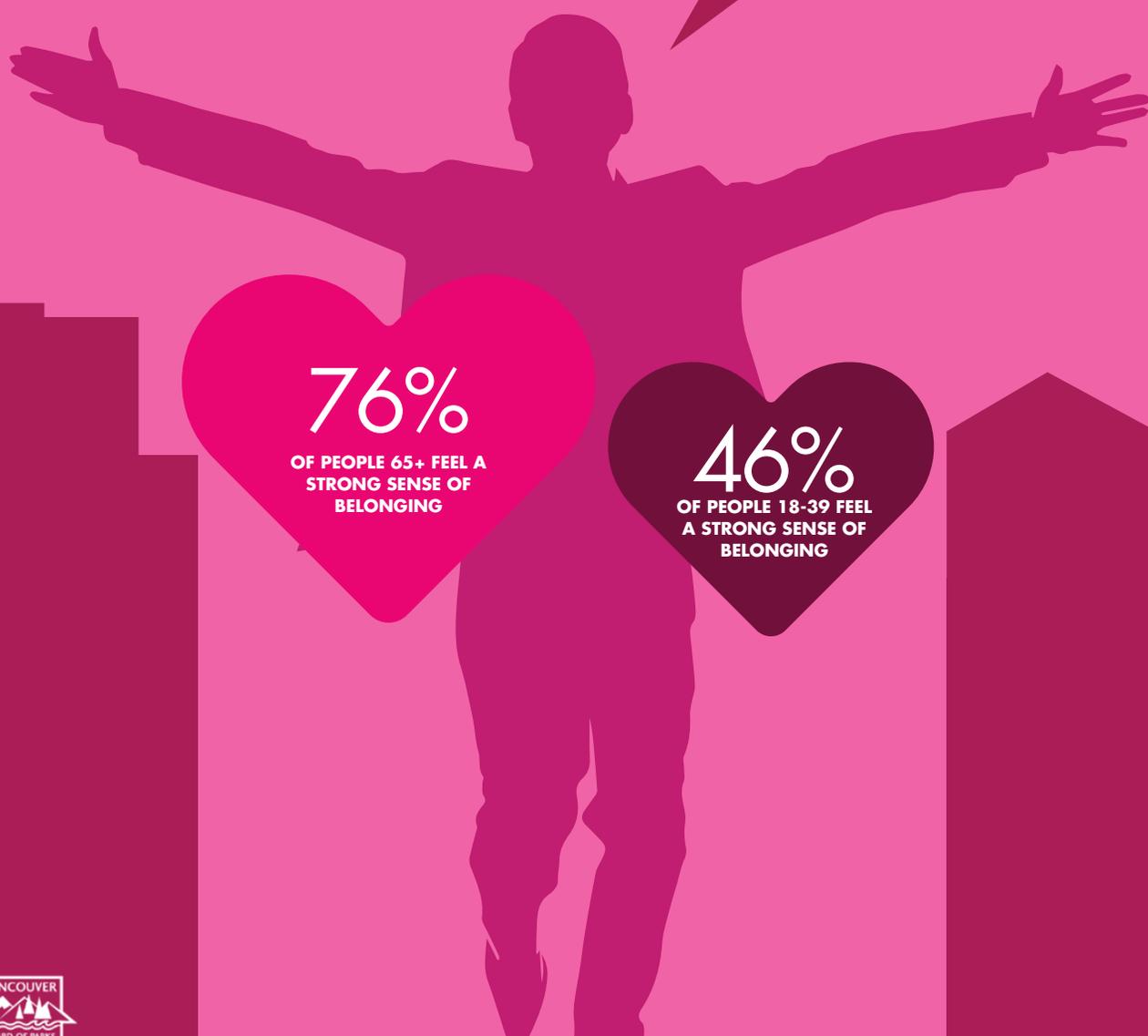
The city is home to over 630,000 residents representing diverse backgrounds and cultures.



你好
Konusta!
¡Hola!
Bonjour.

47%

OF RESIDENTS SPEAK A
FIRST LANGUAGE OTHER
THAN ENGLISH.

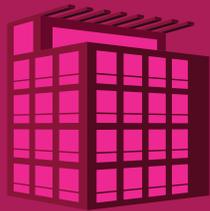


76%

OF PEOPLE 65+ FEEL A
STRONG SENSE OF
BELONGING

46%

OF PEOPLE 18-39 FEEL
A STRONG SENSE OF
BELONGING



NEAR

0

RENTAL VACANCY



1,458

NEW RESIDENTIAL
CONSTRUCTION
PROJECTS UNDERWAY

Van Play

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BACKGROUND CONT.

The way we obtain our incomes also has the potential to influence our health and need for parks and recreation. Many of us spend a lot of time at work, but not all workplaces are healthy. Factors such as employment security, physical conditions, work pace and stress, working hours, work safety, opportunities for self-expression and individual development, social relations and work-life balance all have a role to play in our overall wellbeing.

Vancouver's parks and recreation facilities are the places people can go to build resilience for many of these challenges and pressures. The Park Board has 24 community centres jointly operated with community centre associations. Most facilities provide recreation and cultural services but some also deliver community-building, health and well-being services to those most vulnerable. Programs include low-cost or free healthy meal programs and warming shelters for the homeless. Community centres also act as natural disaster hubs where citizens can gather following an earthquake or other natural disaster to find safety and to share information and resources. Community gardens support local food security and community-building, while the Leisure Access Program (LAP) provides low-income residents with access to basic recreation programs at Park Board facilities at a reduced cost.

OBJECTIVES

- To acknowledge **vulnerable populations**, historic disparities and demographic groups with inequitable distribution of resources
- To consult the diverse spectrum of Vancouver's population to identify **barriers to access** and different cultural perspectives
- To discover ways the parks and recreation system can **support resilience** and wellbeing as a collaborative endeavor among the City's ongoing social infrastructure initiatives
- To explore the role of **arts and culture** as community assets and important factors in personal and communal health and wellbeing.



Vancouver's parks and recreation facilities are the places people can go to build resilience.



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CHALLENGES

- **Increased unaffordability:** When measured against Canadian peer cities, Vancouver had the lowest median incomes, highest housing costs, highest per-capita consumer debt and highest poverty rate.
- **Aging population:** There is expected to be a 92% rise in people over the age of 65 by 2041. In addition, young families are struggling and moving out of Vancouver. The city is second only to San Francisco for the lowest proportion of people under 18 living within city limits.
- **Income distribution:** There is a growing economic divide in Vancouver with the top ten percent of earners bringing in thirty-four percent of the income. With the median personal income reported at \$29,000 in 2013, much of the population is struggling to meet their basic needs.
- **Growing need for social services:** the values upon which we've based our facilities and services are no longer fully meeting the needs of a diverse population.
- **Environmental pressures:** Climate change is predicted to impact the built and natural environment of Vancouver but it will also impact its residents. Low-income communities are disproportionately affected by environmental hazards, such as pollution, contamination, noise and congestion.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **City of Reconciliation:** In 2016, the Park Board was the first municipal government body in Canada to endorse 11 ambitious strategies in its programs and facilities to advance the calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Park Board continues to work with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh First Nations and urban Aboriginal communities to improve access to services and overcome barriers, and also to ensure their perspectives are considered during decision making.
- **Lessons from peer cities:** Benchmark against cities like San Francisco and workshop their ideas, such as including mobile programming, scholarship programs, limiting barriers to low income, single parent or ESL communities by allowing all children to participate regardless of whether waivers are signed, parents participate or fees are paid. Support tactics to curb the growing cost of living.
- **Measure change:** Establish user satisfaction metrics, use peer-reviewed and statistically valid data and engage the community in a conversation on vulnerability to establish and measure change over time.



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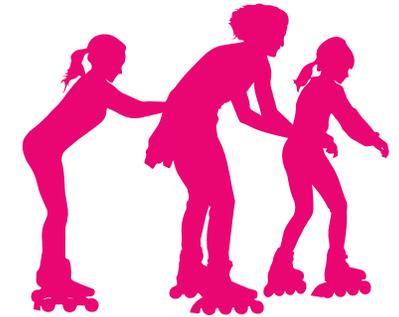
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OPPORTUNITIES CONT.

- **Engage the community:** Speak to the community and recreation staff to highlight what the Park Board could do to eliminate barriers to access and foster programs and spaces that are welcoming to all. Continue to support and expand youth programming like More Sports and the Leisure Access Program to ensure that we improve access to those that need it.

RELATED INITIATIVES

- City of Reconciliation Framework – 2014
- Park Board 11 Reconciliation Strategies – 2016
- Sport for Life: Vancouver Sport Strategy – 2008
- Healthy City Strategy – 2014
- High-Density Housing for Families with Children Guidelines – 1992
- Housing and Homelessness Strategy – 2011
- Social Infrastructure Plan – ongoing
- Cultural Facilities Key Gap Update – 2008
- Disaster Support Hub Initiative – ongoing
- Greenest City 2020 Action Plan – 2011
- Renewable City Strategy – 2016
- Climate Change Adaptation Strategy – 2011



*Email the team
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with any
questions.*

