

Considered at the July 13, 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting

To: The Parks and Recreation Commission

Subject: Neighbourhood Park Promotion – draft report

Issue: A recognition that the existence of Neighbourhood Parks is often not enough to realize public usage, as referenced in the recommendations of the 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP).

Scope: The Parks and Recreation Commission (PRC) struck a Neighbourhood Park Promotion Sub-Committee (NPPSC) seeking recommendations to activate neighbourhood type park spaces. Park activation represents a way to improve the user-experience for those that live, work, visit and play in a particular neighbourhood.

NPPSC Co-Chairs: Wilhelmina Martin and John Grasty.

Council ex-officio: Councillor Amy Lubik.

Staff Liaison: Robbie Nall.

Committee Coordinator: Esin Gozukara

Goal: The primary goal is to identify and recommend the top under-utilized Neighbourhood Parks in the most densely populated areas of Port Moody. Neighbourhood Parks being in the most densely populated areas, can be seen as priority parks, and subsequently viewed with an eye for immediate activation.

Secondary findings were also expected and will be reported on herein.

Review:

We were provided by Parks and Recreation Dept., with various maps, lists, surveys and reports, e.g., 2015 PRMP, to review. Previous public responses to City surveys and workshops were reviewed, including some with low participation and questionable significance. We did not receive information on the amenities/facilities or inventory of Neighbourhood Park assets.

The resources received were used to help identify where existing neighbourhood park use of residents might be improved for optimal impact. Without detailed population heat-type maps and other more reliable data sources, NPPSC members used the resources available, with our own knowledge, sources, intuition and common sense, to surmise as required.

There are currently 16 parks classified as Neighbourhood. This includes 3 new parks and 1 park (Eagle Park - undeveloped) previously classified as Neighbourhood, now reclassified as Natural, for a net inventory change of +2 to the 2015 PRMP.

For the purpose of this Neighbourhood Park review, we used the same 400m radius (home to station) walkability distance used by Translink. This means that a person living close to the periphery might walk 400m to the park, recreate, and then walk 400m home. These were plotted on oversized City maps.

We were also able to undertake some informal surveying to get some random feedback. These will be presented in the Appendices.

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Recommendations:

1. From our analysis, the following existing Neighbourhood Parks (in no particular order) in the more populated areas will have a likelihood of higher usage from activation:
 1. Ailsa Park
 2. Seaview Park
 3. Greenleaf Park or Sycamore Park
 4. Chip Kerr Park or Kyle Park (Chip Kerr Park 400 m radius also overlaps with Mosaic Park and we're aware parkland is a part of the proposed Buller development, which will overlap)
 5. Cedarwood Park or Chestnut Way Park (formerly Reservoir Park)

The two parks listed in each of 3, 4 & 5 above, overlap in the same 400 m radius so it is recommended that one of the two listed is activated based on an audit, and the potential, optimal uses, and associated costs.

If there is to be short-term future development in any of these areas then it is hoped that the fees collected by the City will routinely be used to address these neighbourhood needs.

There are less populated areas with overlapping (400 m radius) neighbourhood parks that should also be considered if there is a motivation to increase activity in even more Neighbourhood parks:

1. Barber Park or Flavelle Park
2. Foxwood Park or Twin Creeks Park

The Parkland Distribution Analysis on page 64 of the 2015 PRMP, points out that this area "lacks access to adequate Neighbourhood and Community Parks". These four Neighbourhood Parks are in close proximity to April Road (and Bert Flinn Park), but total only 1.5 ha.

We have not made any review or recommendations for either redevelopment at Coronation Park or Woodbridge Development. We are however aware that the Glenayre Drive and Clarke Road triangle to the south should be served by the proposed Neighbourhood Park in the Woodbridge Development.

2. The 2015 Parks and Recreation Master Plan (PRMP) previously prioritized recommendations, including these below. The City needs to establish an action plan and budget (including from the reserve fund set aside to help pay for amenities around the community) for activation of top prioritized Neighbourhood Parks accordingly.

#1 Priority Recommendations from 2015 PRMP

- 4.2.4 In higher density developments, negotiate with developers to provide some on-site *green space*
- 4.2.6 Review City-owned land, streets and lanes for potential use as public open space
- 4.2.12 Explore opportunities to expand existing parks (examples listed: Kyle Park & Chip Kerr Park)
- 4.2.13 Explore opportunities to acquire land for new recreation facilities and for Community and Neighbourhood Parks
- 4.3.3 Design parks with the goal of increasing creativity and interest
- 4.3.16 Improve the diversity, appearance and environmental, and social sustainability of existing and future parks

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4.4.3 Place more emphasis on working with School District #43 on the shared use of amenities such as sports fields

Secondary Recommendations from 2015 PRMP

4.3.5 Conduct planning processes for parks that require a moderate level of improvement

4.3.13 Conduct moderate upgrades to parks - Kyle, Art Wilkinson, Chip Kerr

4.3.14 Conduct minor upgrades to parks - Sycamore, James

4.3.15 Develop new parks acquired in Moody Centre and elsewhere

4.5.2 Work with youth to identify potential park features of interest to them

It is our hope that this Neighbourhood Park Promotion report can be a catalyst for initiating these #1 & #2 priority recommendations from 2015, especially where commonality is evident.

3. Establish Recreation Plans for Activation programming (12 sample ideas below) to promote Neighbourhood Park use:

- Seek local neighbourhood (Community Association) champion and/or volunteers?
- Building youth and seniors connections to local, close to home parks?
- Use community grant program, or give preference to requests, for park initiatives?
- Waive or reduce permit fees?
- Alternative funding and programming (including emergency services) partners?
- Piggy-back on existing initiatives/programs, e.g., Block Parties, invasive species, garbage clean-ups, etc. Arts in the Park?
- Community Gardens or Tree-planting for neighbourhood.
- Pop-up Parks.
- Treasure Hunts.
- Seasonal programs, especially winter, e.g., tobogganing.
- Obstacle or challenge course for family
- Seek any enhancements that cater to local dogs.

4. Audit Neighbourhood Parks for Access, Distribution, Facilities and Condition.

5. Promote existing trails, school fields, and other nearby amenities that adjoin Neighbourhood Parks.

6. The City needs to identify an objective way to measure park coverage serving neighbourhoods.

Secondary findings:

Perhaps the most important of the secondary findings is that the **top underserved areas were also identified**. These Neighbourhoods are:

- Noons Creek; and,
- Heritage Mountain Blvd (south of Turner Drive).

Also, three other **areas without Neighborhood Parks were identified**:

- the area east of Douglas Street up Clarke Road hill to Seaview Drive has no Neighbourhood Park, but it is anticipated that new development planned in the short-term can fill this gap.
- Klahanie Community, although they might have programming for their Common Property through their

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Community Association and Canoe Club.

- Suter Brook: parkland Common Property belonging to the Strata Corporation is unknown.

Another informal finding we thought worth mentioning is that many residents don't know that Port Moody already has over 40 existing City parks available.

Ditto, the number of Public Art pieces (approximately 85), or where they were located. Any future resources and funding budgeted to add more public art should be considered for reallocation towards activating parks.

Also, during the document review, the City uses the term *green spaces* throughout City documents, e.g., OCP, PRMP, surveys, etc., but there is no definition or inventory available. While surveyed residents agree that they might want more *green space*, it isn't well defined anywhere and will mean different things. This needs to be addressed to bring clarity to future surveys and reports.

Conclusion:

Measuring access for residents in terms of maximum distance to a park and certain types of amenities/facilities, is an objective method and most relevant today (see Recommendation 6).

If a distribution audit were performed as recommended in 4, then we believe the parks classified as Neighbourhood, Community and City, offered to Port Moody residents, provide excellent base coverage and adequacy, other than the few underserved areas identified herewith in the secondary findings.

The underserved areas might in fact, be the only areas in the City necessary to be considered for future acquisition and Parkland sufficiency. Based on our findings, it appears that only a minimal amount of additional Parkland is actually required, and this can be easily confirmed with a staff audit.

Appendices (separate attachments):

See Appendix 1 - 8 pages	- Social media feedback
See Appendix 2 - 2 pages	- User Interview, Neighbourhood Parks

Other References:

No Park Left Behind - a need previously identified in the 2015 PRMP was discussed in a "No Park Left Behind" exercise initiated by staff and the PRC in October 9, 2019. Commission members each visited the smallest neighbourhood park closest to their residence and discussed their findings at November 13, 2019 PRC meeting.

4.5 The Manager of Parks requested Commission members' feedback on their visits to the smallest neighbourhood parks and the following was noted:

- Chip Kerr Park appears underutilized and could be updated for use by seniors and children due to proximity to The Legion and The George; consider adding a swing-set to existing play offerings;
- Appleyard Court Playground appears to have low usage and fencing could be extended; and
- Greenleaf Parkette is a pleasant natural area between houses providing good connectivity to trails.

<https://calendar.portmoody.ca/meetings/Detail/2019-11-13-1900-Parks-and-Recreation-Commission/b0cd0e70-5ca8-41ed-b3ee-ab6000c7436b> .

These limited findings reported in the minutes were not considered in this report.