

Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan

Key Findings Report 2025 | Draft



Executive Summary

The City of Burnaby has prepared a comprehensive Key Findings Report to support the creation of its first Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Plan in over 40 years. This report analyzes 15 distinct service areas that will guide strategic decision-making for the next 25 years.

This evaluation has classified Burnaby's current delivery of PRC services across three tiers:

- **Standard** services ensure basic resident access to parks, recreation and cultural opportunities.
- **Enhanced** services exceed standard provision through advanced supply or comprehensive service levels.
- **Premium** services fulfill specialized regional needs or generate revenue beyond typical municipal mandates.

Most City services operate at a standard level, while some specialized offerings like golf and food, Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby Village Museum and Burnaby Art Gallery are delivered at a scale that is not typical for Canadian municipalities.

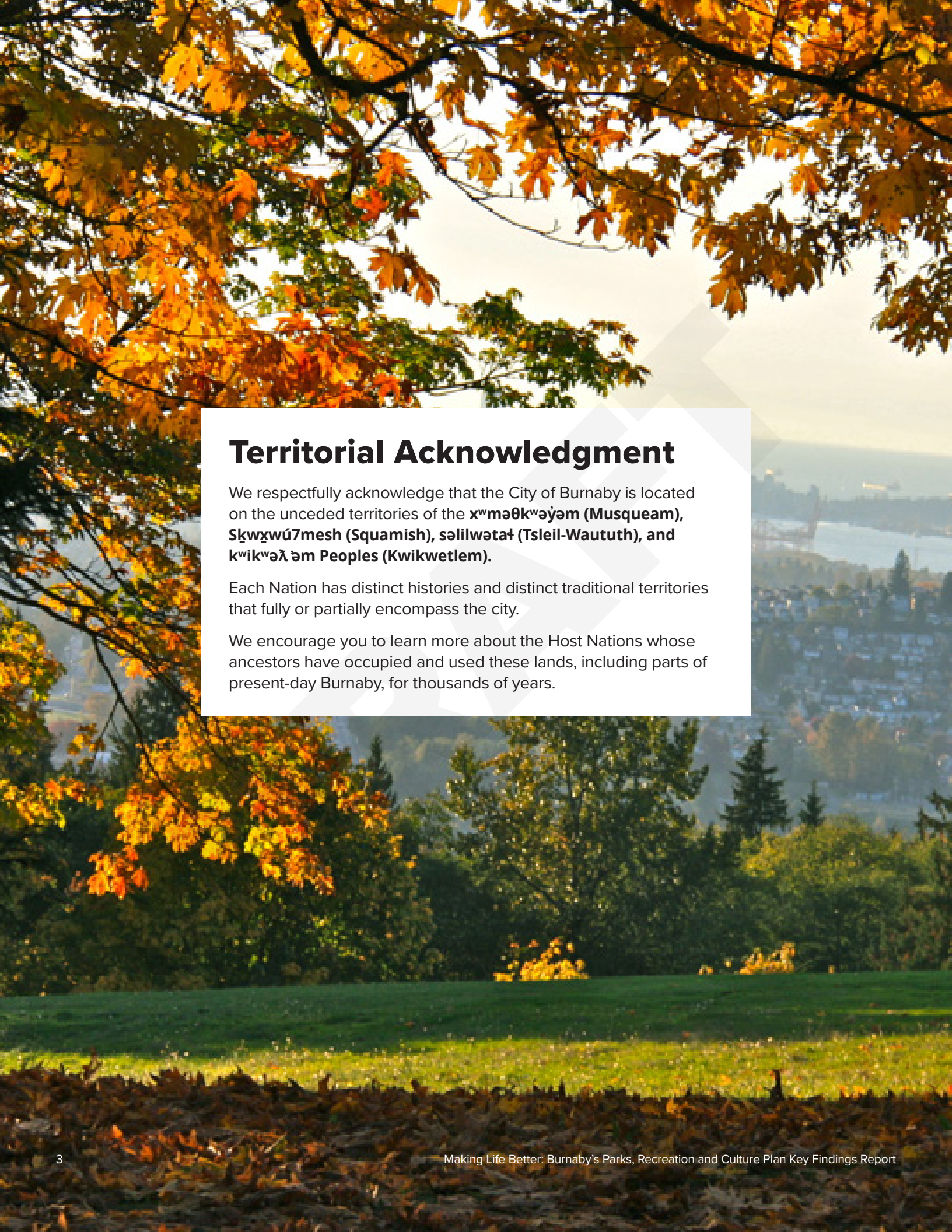
Current service levels provides a strong basis for developing a new strategic framework for Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan. This project has been initiated by the City to plan future services that balance residents' expectations for services with their long-term viability. Strategic planning today will ensure the City of Burnaby secures necessary funding and resources to maintain a vibrant system of services for generations to come.

Key challenges facing PRC services today include:

- Aging and non-purpose-built infrastructure that requires significant capital and operational commitments
- Intensification pressures in town centres where some levels of service are lowest
- Growing demand for existing services that is straining facility conditions and operations

This report identifies opportunities for responding to these and other challenges strategically. Prioritization, enhanced partnerships, technology adoption and climate-resilient practices are examples of improvements that can address resource constraints without necessarily reducing value to the community.

On-going work to develop the Plan will consider approaches that balance today's competing demands with the financial decisions necessary to sustain a diverse system of services. With a long-term vision in mind, the Plan will consider access across the city and how provision can keep pace with growth, development and changing community needs.



Territorial Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge that the City of Burnaby is located on the unceded territories of the **xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam)**, **Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish)**, **səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)**, and **kʷikʷəł̓əm Peoples (Kwikwetlem)**.

Each Nation has distinct histories and distinct traditional territories that fully or partially encompass the city.

We encourage you to learn more about the Host Nations whose ancestors have occupied and used these lands, including parts of present-day Burnaby, for thousands of years.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2		
Territorial Acknowledgment	3		
Introduction	5	Culture	91
Making Life Better	6	Creation, Presentation & Collections	94
Purpose of this Report	7	Festivals & Special Events	101
The Service Areas	8	Film	108
The Service Level Framework	9	Lifelong Learning	115
The Current State Service Levels as of 2025	10	Public Art	122
Emerging Issues & Approaches	11	Conclusion	129
Parks	14	Appendix	131
Developed Parks	18	Benchmarking Methodology	132
Horticulture	25	Glossary	133
Outdoor Recreation & Trails	32		
Outdoor Sports	39		
Urban Forestry & Natural Areas	45		
Recreation	52		
Aquatics	55		
Arenas	62		
Community Spaces	70		
Golf & Food	76		
Physical Activity & Well-being	83		

Introduction

DRAFT

The Key Findings Report is a background document to support Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan.

Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan

The City of Burnaby is developing a comprehensive Parks, Recreation and Culture plan (the Plan) to guide decisions that will shape parks, facilities, amenities and programs over the next 25 years.

Situated in the heart of the Metro Vancouver region on the unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) and kʷikwə́łəm (Kwikwetlem) Peoples, Burnaby stands as British Columbia's third-largest city, home to over 249,000 residents (as of 2021). The city is renowned for its stunning natural surroundings and vibrant cultural diversity, making it a highly desirable place to live, work and play. From bustling community and activity centres to beloved parks, scenic golf courses, ice skating arenas, trails and dog-friendly spaces, Burnaby's recreational infrastructure is vital to the community's quality of life.

The City also cultivates rich experiences through attractions like the Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby Village Museum and Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. Diverse events and programs animate parks and facilities throughout city year round.

The Plan represents a critical milestone in the City's future planning efforts, building off the Official Community Plan (Burnaby 2050), which is currently being developed.

The City's last comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed over 40 years ago. Burnaby's population and communities have changed dramatically during this time. Over the next year, Making Life Better will explore a range of opportunities to guide PRC services towards a more sustainable path that reflects the community's present-day values and priorities.

Purpose

This Key Findings Report presents research, analysis and insights that will inform strategic decisions for the Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan.

These initial findings will be validated and refined through upcoming discussions with City Council, as well as engagement with the public, interested parties and Host Nations.

How to read this document

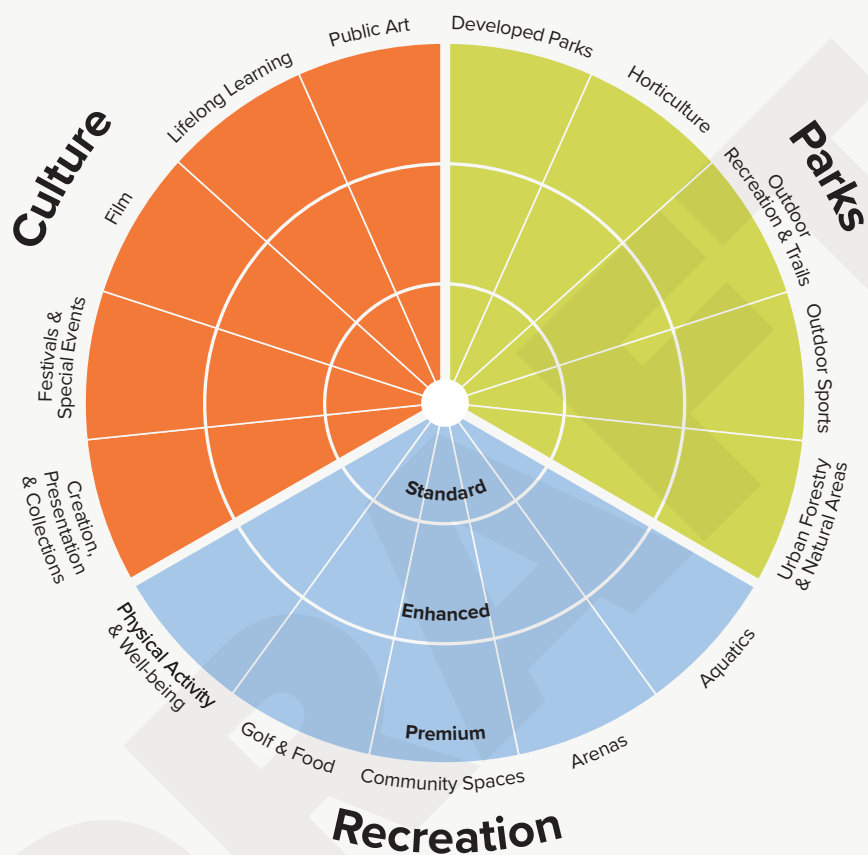
The Key Findings Report organizes Burnaby's Parks, Recreation and Culture (PRC) Department operations into 15 distinct service areas. Within Parks, Recreation or Culture, these areas have been evaluated to identify the following:

1. Service level, which is a high-level measure of the service area relative to Parks, Recreation and Culture's objectives and core expectations for its delivery.
2. Factors that shape operations and delivery, and how a typical resident experience in Burnaby is impacted.
3. Draft strategic direction to explore further during future development of the Plan.

The following considerations have been factored into the assessments for each service area:

- **Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis:** a snapshot of PRC operations based on staff insight.
- **Current operating model:** the municipality's current role in delivery (e.g., direct delivery vs. providing support, for instance).
- **Service area objective and influencing drivers:** the primary objective for delivering services in each area, along with influencing drivers, such as financial considerations. This work is a synthesis of staff insight, policy direction and data insight.
- **Benchmarking:** a comparison of Burnaby's provision per capita and approaches to delivery relative to other municipalities. More information on municipalities included in this analysis can be found in the Appendix.
- **Trends in demand and utilization:** current trends that speak to public demand and usage (or other users). Part of the exercise identifies the extent to which demand is changing (i.e., emerging/evolving) or remaining stable. Commentary is the result of staff insight and data review (e.g., booking data).
- **Quality and access:** facility characteristics, such as the condition, age and location, that limit service reach and capacity to meet the needs of residents throughout the city.

The Service Areas



Parks

- Developed Parks
- Horticulture
- Outdoor Recreation & Trails
- Outdoor Sports
- Urban Forestry & Natural Areas

Recreation

- Aquatics
- Arenas
- Community Spaces
- Golf & Food
- Physical Activity & Well-being

Culture

- Creation, Presentation & Collections
- Festivals & Special Events
- Film
- Lifelong Learning
- Public Art

The Service Level Framework

Three tiers indicate the extent and quality of each service area, based on their alignment with Parks, Recreation and Culture's core mandate and focus areas.



Standard

A service that ensures residents have access to parks, recreational and cultural opportunities. Priority is for low-barrier and introductory exposure for people of all ages, abilities, income levels and backgrounds.

Enhanced

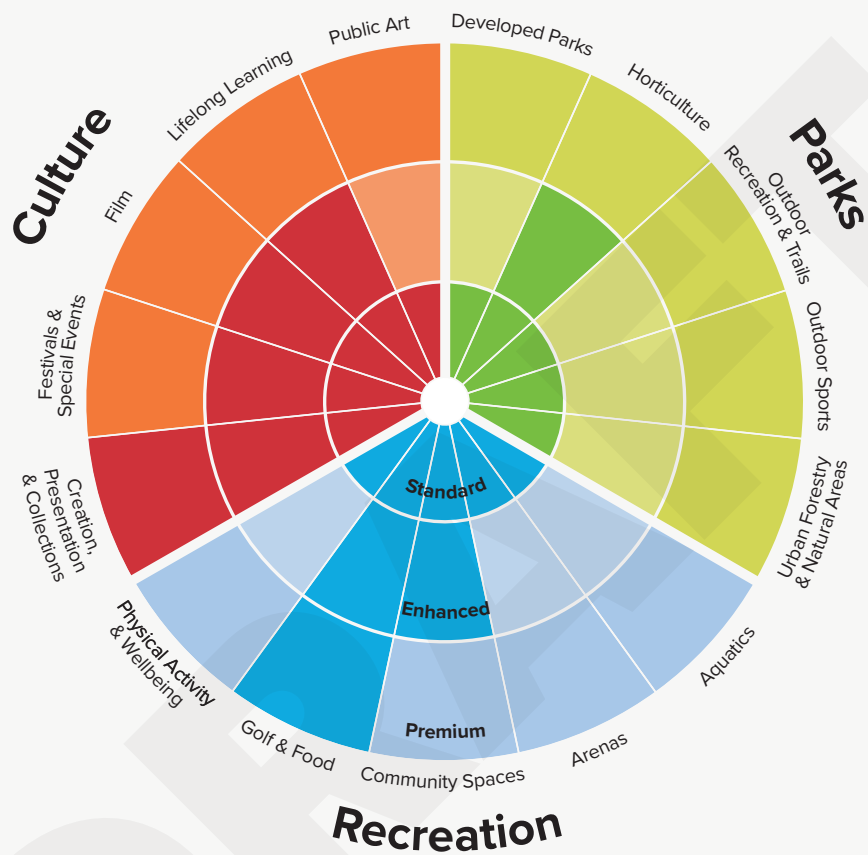
A service that exceeds the standard service aim through elements such as a higher supply or comprehensively higher levels of service (e.g., operational practices or the quality of spaces and programs).

Premium

A service with key drivers beyond the standard or enhanced service mandates. The service is not typical but is offered to fit specialized needs, such as fulfilling a niche offering within the region, or generating revenue for the municipality.

The Current State Service Levels

(as of 2025)



The Key Findings Report evaluates each service area to assign it an appropriate level. The illustration above represents the results of this exercise for all fifteen service areas.

These service level assignments will serve as the bases for decisions about how services within each area might change in the future. Recommendations for service level changes will consider trade-offs, such as impacts to how residents experience or benefit from a service area or capital and operating costs. These decisions and their considerations will be communicated throughout the Plan, threaded into engagement, and ultimately approved by Council.

Emerging Issues and Approaches

While Burnaby is unique, other Canadian municipalities are experiencing similar challenges. Rapid population growth is driving decisions about the management of parks, recreation and cultural spaces. The City of Burnaby can draw from these experiences as it develops its own strategies.

Intensification within built-up areas

Like other urban centres such as, Vancouver, Mississauga and Vaughan, Burnaby will be focused on intensification to accommodate population growth over the coming decades. Upgrading existing spaces and developing new spaces in established communities will be necessary to meet anticipated growth in demand for services.

These investments pose different challenges for municipalities. Existing parks and facilities that are conveniently and well-supported by transportation infrastructure can easily become over-programmed and over-subscribed. Higher than anticipated usage requires more capital and operational spending to maintain amenities.

Developing new parks, recreation and cultural facilities can be challenging in growth areas due to costs and competition for a more limited land supply. PRC spaces outside of growth areas may lower direct development costs. However, increasing usage of these facilities has introduced new demands for supporting amenities and infrastructure (e.g., parking, transit service and trail connections).

Changes to funding

Recent provincial legislation has introduced new rules for setting community infrastructure charges and using this revenue to develop new or upgrade existing facilities. These changes are intended to set more predictable funding. Their implementation has contributed to a temporary funding shortfall. Major capital projects such as the Confederation Community Centre have been impacted as a result. Municipalities in British Columbia are re-evaluating and prioritizing planned capital projects to comply with the legislation.

Clarifying funding responsibilities among taxpayers, the development industry and users will be integral to future planning throughout British Columbia.

Aging, non-purpose-built infrastructure

Aging infrastructure in parks and public facilities pose ongoing service barriers for many residents. Canadian municipalities continue to rely on a large inventory of facilities and amenities that are approaching or are at the end of their life cycle. Capital funding to maintain and operate these spaces is rising, as are large capital expenditures for replacements and renovations.

Recreation and cultural programming is often delivered in non-purpose built facilities and heritage properties. This approach supports multi-purpose use of existing that are unique and promote a civic identity. They also constrain programming and contribute to operational inefficiencies.

Equity

Municipalities are striving for service improvements that address present-day and historical gaps in access and participation among under-served populations. Today, there is greater awareness and evidence of barriers to accessing and benefiting from parks, recreation and cultural services.

Reconciliation

Municipalities are taking steps to strengthen their relationships with Host Nations and Indigenous Peoples to advance reconciliation. Direct and culturally-responsive engagement with Host Nations and Indigenous Peoples within projects is increasingly common. Forging new partnerships and preserving and uplifting Indigenous voices are important steps towards reconciliation.

Harder working, multi-functional spaces

To address intensification amidst resource constraints, municipalities are striving to achieve more service outcomes with their existing supply. Tactical approaches includes upgrades focused on enhancing the capacity of existing spaces or improving the quality of experience they offer to residents.

Maximizing utilization through multi-functionality is another approach (e.g., courts that can be used for multiple sports), as is developing smaller facilities and amenities to suit more compact spaces (e.g., boxed soccer field). Consolidating multiple single-purpose facilities into service destinations that are capable of delivering services more efficiently has also become more common (e.g., competition-capable facilities, cultural districts).

Innovation

Municipalities are exploring new and creative approaches to service responses. From modest experimentation to big strategic shifts in planning, diverse examples of novel programs and processes are emerging where data to support evidence-based methods is lacking. Examples include:

- **Adoption of new technologies:** tools to support operations such as asset planning, enhance the public's registration experience, improve communications with artificial intelligence, Wi-Fi, QR codes and augmented reality in park spaces.
- **New delivery models:** mobile, pop-up programs to scale municipal services. Some municipalities are partnering with private/non-profit providers to program underutilized spaces and scale successful programming.
- **Climate resilience:** practices that achieve climate resilience as a way to better protect the public and mitigate risks associated with climate change, including new green building practices, stormwater/flooding management tools, and adaptive programming to climate-impacted days (e.g., air quality warning or heat warning).

Prioritization and focused delivery

Municipalities are developing prioritization frameworks to guide equitable decisions with limited resources, staffing shortfalls and operating pressures. These frameworks are tailored to local needs and tend to evaluate services and investments using a benefits-based approach, project prioritization methodology, or scenario planning.

Longer term, intended outcomes are key drivers for these frameworks, alongside adaptability and responsiveness to constant shifts in demand and available resources. A well-designed prioritization framework helps decision-makers and the public contextualize decision outcomes, understand ambiguity and tensions, and recognize the rationale for changes to services.

Relationships & capacity-building

Municipalities are leveraging knowledge, expertise and external resources through partnerships with community groups, institutions and other governments to strengthen service delivery. The drive towards these new partnerships can:

- Help the municipality leverage its own limited resources to achieve more outcomes
- Access expertise and knowledge to fill gaps in existing services.

Municipalities taking this approach need to balance the benefits above with potential risks to reduced autonomy in service delivery or precarious models (e.g., that rely more on volunteering).

Parks



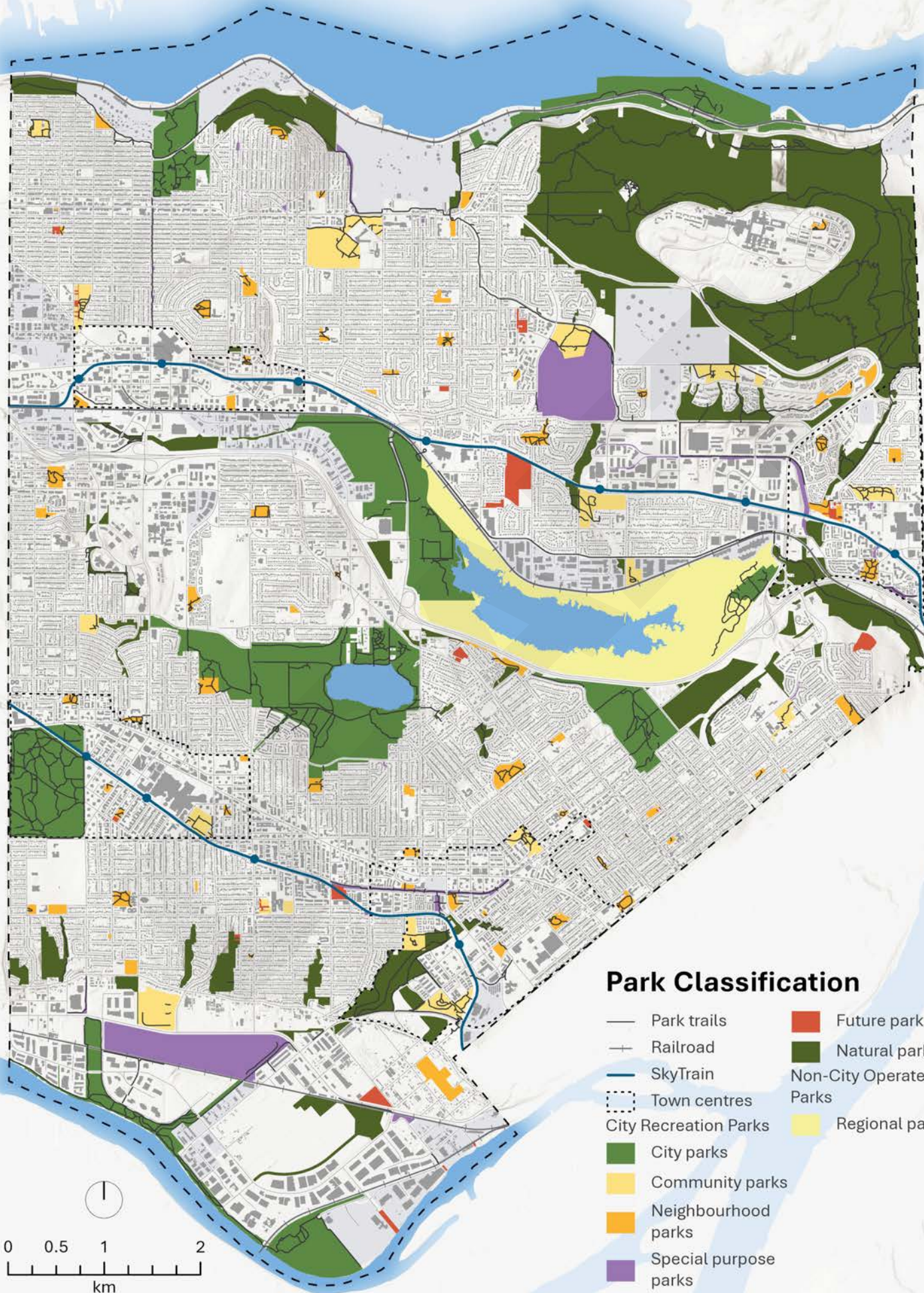
Burnaby's parks network consists of City-owned land that is reserved for public enjoyment of the outdoors as well as supporting ecological preservation.

The City's park system serves residents through a wide range of amenities, from playgrounds to soccer fields to an extensive trail network. Beautification through landscaping and amenities enhance the public's experience in these spaces. A significant portion of Burnaby's park system is made up of natural areas, including streams, tree stands, lakes, rivers and wetlands. These areas are managed to protect sensitive ecosystems and provide limited opportunities for residents to connect with nature.





Disclaimer: to support readability, this map in some instances groups multiple activities of the same type and slightly offsets locations of icons.



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Developed Parks

Parks (city, community and neighbourhood parks), facilities and amenities supporting unprogrammed outdoor experiences.

The service area

Developed parks include developable areas within city, community and neighbourhood parks, and features like playgrounds and dog off-leash areas. These services support a range of activities for residents of all ages and interests. Developed parks and their amenities are central to Burnaby's identity, playing a key role in enhancing the city's livability and sustainability.

- › City parks: larger parks serving as a citywide draw and may include several community facilities and amenities.
- › Community parks: medium-sized parks serving multiple adjacent neighbourhoods and may include a mix of community facilities and amenities.
- › Neighbourhood parks: smaller parks that are intended to serve a neighbourhood within convenient walking distance. They are primarily active or passive recreational space.

City parks, community parks, and neighbourhood parks are part of the Recreation Park classification. Special purpose parks are also within Recreation Parks but are discussed in the Outdoor Recreation & Trails and Golf & Food service areas.

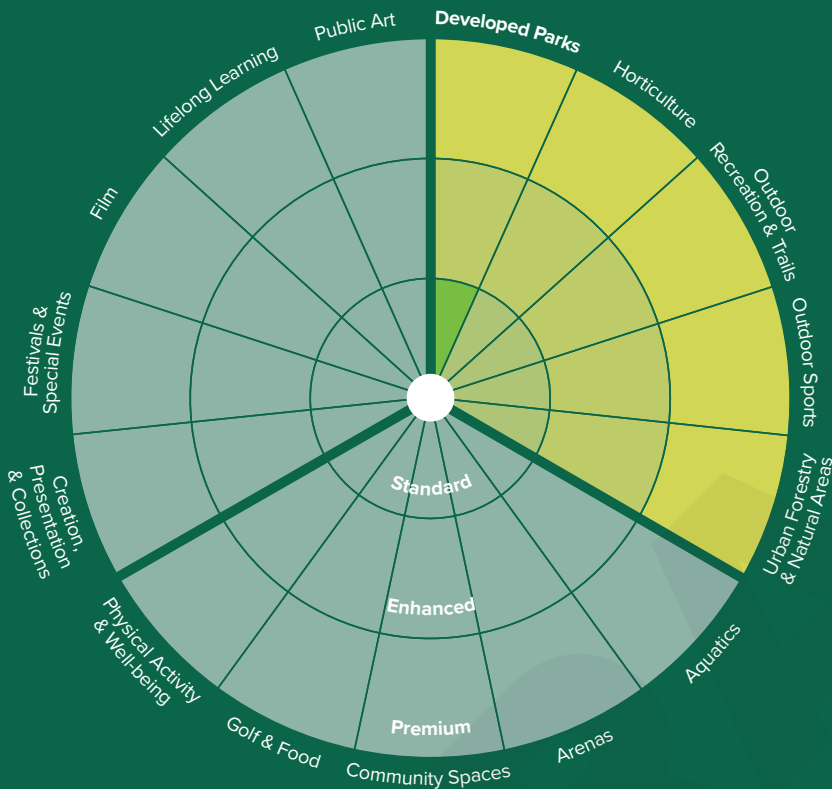


Service level: Standard

Burnaby's developed parks are delivered at a Standard service level. Their overall supply, condition and reach are comparable to benchmark municipalities within and outside the Metro Vancouver region.

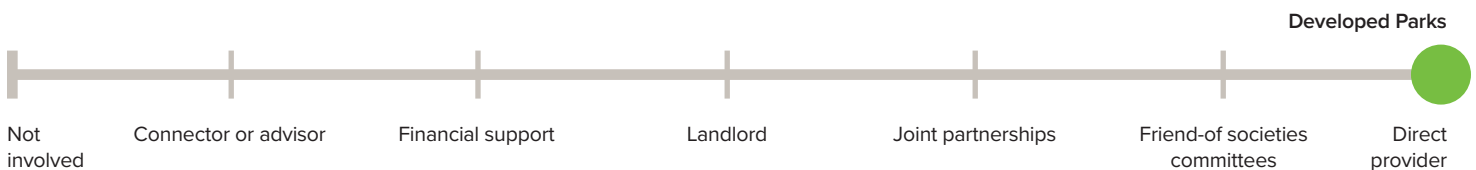
Key findings

- Programmable space in Burnaby's park system is relatively finite, providing few opportunities to add or expand facilities and amenities.
- Neighbourhood parks to support local use are in low supply, particularly in Burnaby's planned growth areas.
- High-demand amenities are concentrated in a just a few city and community parks. Increasing seasonal usage of these locations is wearing on infrastructure and straining park operations.
- A project-driven approach to investment has contributed to inconsistent service outcomes and unsustainable expectations for quality and maintenance standards.



The current operating model

The City provides developed parks directly, acquiring and developing the land, facilities and amenities.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Skilled workforce and leadership ensure projects and services are delivered in alignment with departmental objectives
- Advanced use of GIS and business analytics (i.e., SAP)
- Community engagement and trust
- Strategic alignment (e.g., innovation, safety)

Weaknesses

- Staffing gaps and slow hiring process
- Aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance
- Outdated asset data systems as well as formal classifications and standards to guide decisions
- Communications and process gaps
- An underdeveloped neighbourhood park system

Opportunities

- Integration of GIS into asset planning
- Proactive measures around asset management and addressing existing issues
- Training and development
- Sustainability and community partnerships

Tensions & Threats

- Constrained budget and rising maintenance costs
- Damages and greater operational needs to address extreme weather
- Increased park demand
- Compliance and regulatory risks must be mitigated at all times through regular maintenance and oversight

Service area objective

The primary objective for this service area is to provide community amenities that can be enjoyed by residents of all ages and abilities. There are fewer opportunities for cost recovery for these services. Most developed parks have a local orientation, serving a walkable catchment within neighbourhoods. City parks and some community parks with specialized facilities (e.g., Burnaby Lake Sports Complex) draw more visitors from across the city and Metro Vancouver region.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Staff ensure that park assets are maintained, repaired, or replaced as required.** The current service standard is to maintain assets in “fair” condition or better. The need to repair assets that degrade to “poor” or worse condition can tie up considerable amounts of capital.
- The City has received approval for policies and frameworks to implement a **benefits-based and sustainable approach to service provision**. Investing in parks, for instance, increases the budget for replacing various playground types and provides a prioritization framework to guide decisions that improve services as a whole.
- **New capital funding for developed parks** is now primarily provided through Development Cost Charges and Amenity Cost Charges. This funding source is common for park development in British Columbia.
- The delivery of this service area **supports the Official Community Plan (draft) Objective 1.4** to provide quality parks and open spaces through parks, protection, planning and programming.

How Burnaby compares

By total area, Burnaby's developed parks provision is in line with comparable municipalities (see appendix). A significant share of Burnaby's recreation parkland qualifies as natural area or sensitive ecosystem with limited development potential. For example, the meadows at Deer Lake Park and the treed areas at Central Park provide indirect benefits to the community but cannot be programmed. Burnaby's provision of select amenities differs from comparable municipalities. The city has relatively fewer dog off-leash areas and more spray parks/wading pools than benchmark municipalities.

Developed parks (city, community and neighbourhood parks)

For every 1,000 residents, there are 3.5 ha of developed park. City parks make up 74% of this provision.



Leading vs. lagging

Burnaby varies in its relative provision of facilities in developed parks. With new land acquisition opportunities, the City will likely need to consider proactive strategies which leverage multi-functionality and compactness.

Dog off-leash areas

For every 100,000 residents there are 4.4 off-leash dog areas



Why does this matter?

A considerable share of developed park space is located in just a few City-level parks. This concentration means there is a relatively smaller supply of these amenities in neighbourhood parks to serve everyday needs.

A smaller amount of programmable space within developed parks poses challenges for the City to provide new and expanded amenities with minimum size requirements in the future.

Spray parks and wading pools

For every 10,000 residents there are 7.63 spray parks and wading pools.



Condition

The condition of assets related to developed parks varies by classification.

The number of assets in “fair” highlights current maintenance demands and points to future obligations required to avoid future “poor” ratings and asset losses.

City parks also have to accommodate high usage (e.g., through events). This means greater wear and tear on amenities that are more likely to only be in a “fair” condition.

Trends in demand

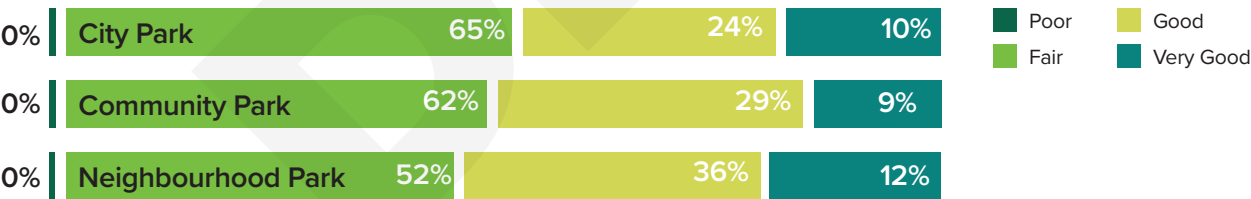
In 2019, Parks staff began addressing the City’s replacement backlog for playground infrastructure mostly in neighbourhood parks. More recently, rapid growth in attendance at City-led festivals and events has highlighted the need to address aging infrastructure and service gaps in city parks.

Staff identified developed parks as having emerging demand. Potential factors include increased usage from the COVID-19 pandemic, land use intensification, and growing interest in specific facilities (e.g., dog off-leash areas).

Available data suggests other key emerging trends like:

- Attendance at City-led festivals has increased by more than 400% since 2019.
- Service requests have increased 4% in 2023 and 3% in 2024 with most usage and condition requests pertaining to parks in the northwest and southwest.
- 75% of playgrounds have medium to high usage rate as noted by Parks staff.

Condition



Access

Most residents have a developed park within 400 m (83%), which is often used as a rough distance for what is within convenient walking/rolling access. This does not include regional parks and special purpose parks. It also does not include natural parks as these are often associated with a geological feature (e.g., ravine) and are not intended to deliver on the same programming relevant to developed parks.

Recreation park supply per 1000 people

Citywide, there is 3.5 ha of developed park supply per 1,000 people, which exceeds the benchmarking comparison. However, this rate is much lower in town centres where population growth is concentrated.

- Brentwood Town Centre: 0.18 ha
- Edmonds Town Centre: 1.06 ha
- Lougheed Town Centre: 1.34 ha
- Metrotown Town Centre: 2.85 ha

There is also a lower supply of neighbourhood parks in the northwest quadrant. There are only 13 parks (15.6ha) compared to an average of 17.5 parks (32 ha) in other quadrants.

The lower provisions within walking distances, particularly in areas intensifying over the coming decades, is a challenge for the service area.

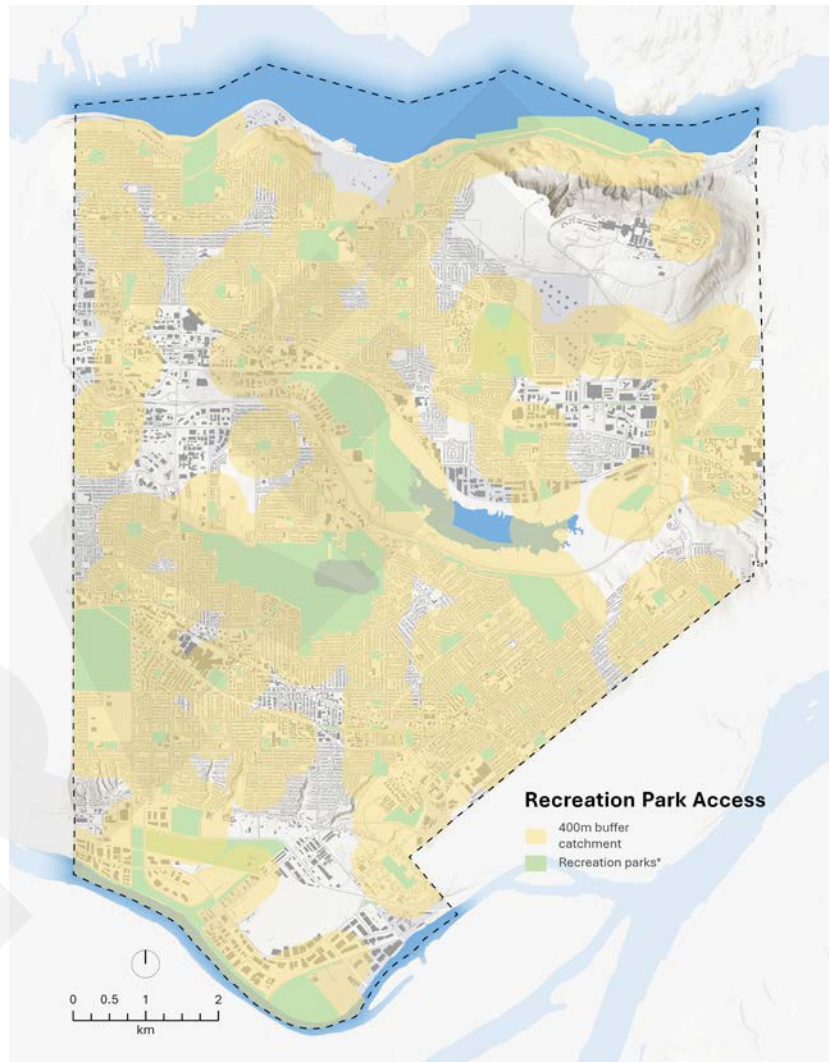


Figure 1. Access to recreation parks

The map shows the amount of land within 400 m of recreation parks in yellow. 83% of Burnaby residents live within this buffer area. Note: the buffer does not account for barriers such as train tracks or busy intersections. A more detailed catchment analysis would more precisely demonstrate park accessibility in the future.

*Special purpose parks not included in this map as their access requirements and expectations differ from typical recreation parks

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- The typical resident can walk to a recreation park from their home. These parks meet a variety of needs and provide access to playgrounds, picnic tables, dog off-leash areas, passive green space, spray pads and wading pools.
- On the other hand, there is a relative lack of per-capita provision near Burnaby's growing Town Centres. Community and neighbourhood parks are a small part of the park network. These spaces will be challenged to meet all the expectations residents have expressed for their local parks in the future (e.g., dog off-leash areas, skate parks).
- Based on service requests, a typical resident may desire more from the assets within these parks, such as better condition or a higher typology (e.g., a preference for a destination playground rather than a limited playground such as a swing set and slide).

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

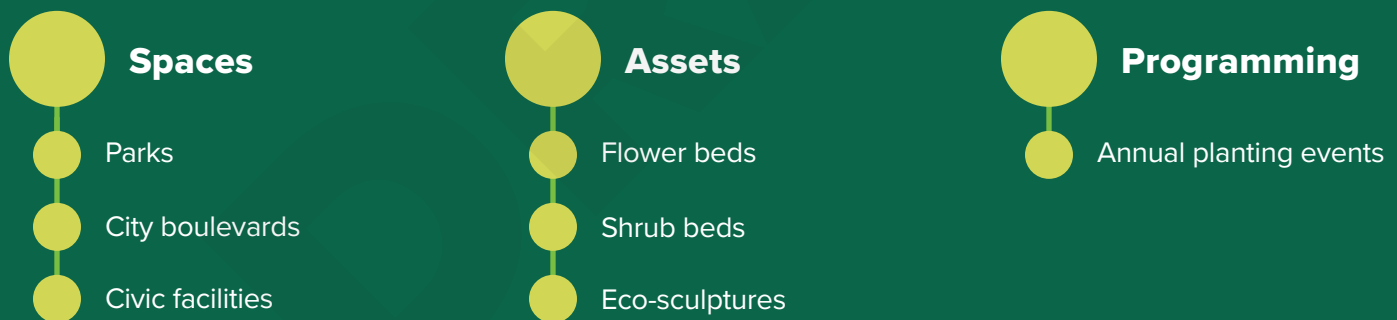
- Build further details around the revised park typology standards that would support planning (programming options by city, community and neighbourhood park and design guidance such as frontage or setback standards).
- Set provision targets for each facility within parks. The exercise should also consider the condition and type of facility. For example, the City should evaluate consolidating playgrounds into high-quality destination locations rather than a larger number of limited playgrounds.
- Deliver new or upgraded neighbourhood parks to increase access and serve local communities.
- Increase the park supply within or adjacent to town centres where much of the growth is and will be occurring.
- Evaluate and further improve open spaces delivered on private land through maintenance agreements to ensure their ongoing quality and public access.

Horticulture

Shrub and flower beds, along with their infrastructure, located in parks, recreation and culture sites.

The service area

Horticulture includes shrub beds and flower beds throughout Burnaby. City services include planting, pruning, fertilizing and maintaining these features on a year-round basis. This service area supports vibrant public spaces and community well-being by helping beautify the city’s public spaces.

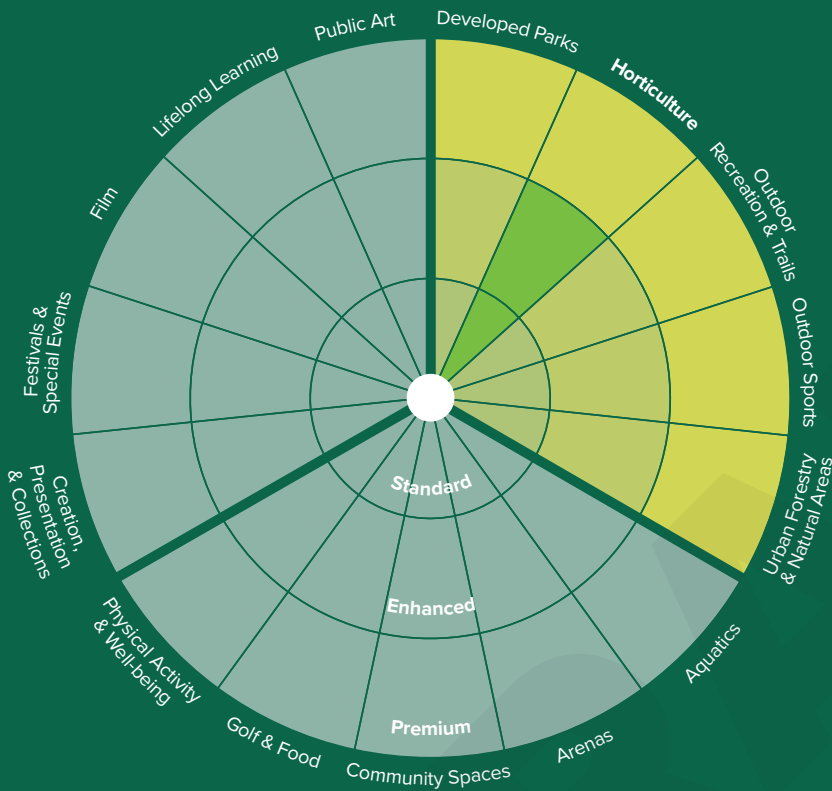


Service level: Enhanced

While the types of horticultural practices are generally in line with a standard municipal offering, Eco-sculptures should be considered an enhanced offering. At the discontinuation of this program, Horticulture could be considered as a standard service level.

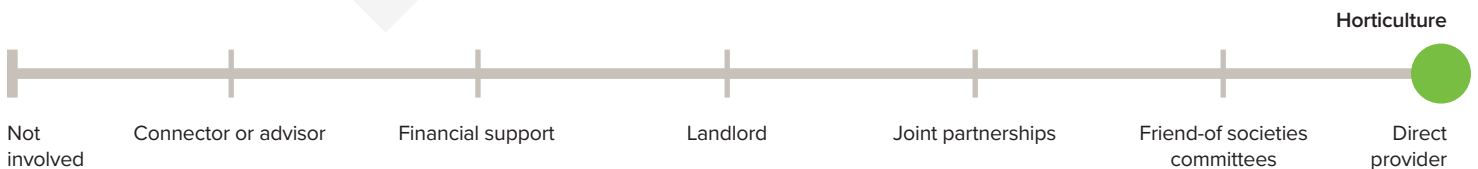
Key findings

- Horticulture is an enhancing feature in recreation Parks, particularly in city parks.
- The City is currently reviewing this service area for efficiencies to ensure sustainability of this service area into the future.



The current operating model

The City manages and funds horticultural services directly.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Skilled workforce and leadership ensure projects and services are delivered in alignment with departmental objectives
- Advanced technology integration using established software systems for asset tracking and maintenance
- Consistent positive feedback from residents
- Clear alignment with Burnaby's strategic priorities and goals

Weaknesses

- Staffing shortages due to dependency on seasonal staff
- Inconsistent data collection, storage and maintenance practices and procedures
- Internal coordination misalignment and lack of consistent communication practices

Opportunities

- Integration of GIS into asset planning
- Proactive asset management to reduce maintenance costs and extend asset life
- In-house apprenticeship programs to address staffing shortages
- Expanding sustainable park features
- Strengthening collaborations with local organizations
- Landscaping for food and traditional medicine

Threats

- Budget constraints increase the difficulty of meeting resident's needs
- Climate change impacts may require additional operating and capital improvements
- Increased wear and tear and space constraints
- Compliance and regulatory risks must be mitigated at all times through regular maintenance and oversight

Service area objective

Horticulture supports placemaking, enhancing local and tourism experiences in public spaces and supporting biodiversity goals. As such the service area finds alignment with the following documents:

Influencing drivers include:

- **Official Community Plan:** The horticultural program enhances the quality of parks aligning with Objective 1.4 in the draft Official Community Plan.

- **Financials:** Proactive capital investment into climate mitigating and adaptive practices aim to reduce costs in the future.
- **Reach:** staff indicated that horticulture leans toward a more regional focus, given how the features are generally distributed at high use and higher visibility locations as opposed to local neighbourhood parks.

How Burnaby compares

The City of Burnaby's management of horticultural features is generally in line with comparable municipalities. All municipalities reviewed play a direct role in the planning, designing and ongoing maintenance of flower and shrub planting beds, as well as in the growing adoption of green stormwater infrastructure (also known as low-impact development) to manage runoff in parks, streets and private property.

Where some municipalities are unique is in the offering of horticultural specialty destination parks such as the VanDusen Botanical Garden in Vancouver and Beacon Hill Park in Victoria. Although smaller in scale, Burnaby has some floral features such as Century Gardens and Centennial Rose Garden. Not all comparable municipalities offer these distinct spaces and there is variation in how these spaces are managed.

What is unique in Burnaby is the Eco-sculptures program. Some municipalities such as Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and North Vancouver have one-off installations through local artists, but no ongoing program was identified that is in line with Burnaby.

Why does this matter?

A large portion of this service area is typical of other municipalities. Eco-sculptures are a significant enough portion of this offering to consider the service area as enhanced.

Flower beds

All selected [Metro Vancouver](#) & [outside Metro](#) comparable municipalities **directly manage** flower beds within portions of their park system.

Shrub beds

All selected [Metro Vancouver](#) & [outside Metro](#) comparable municipalities **directly manage** shrub beds within portions of their park system.

Green stormwater infrastructure

All selected [Metro Vancouver](#) & [outside Metro](#) comparable municipalities **directly manage** green stormwater infrastructure.

Eco-sculpture program

No other selected [Metro Vancouver](#) & [outside Metro](#) comparable municipalities **operate a comparable program in scale**. Only identified elsewhere as one-off projects or events.

Trends in demand

Staff have indicated that trends are relatively stable regarding horticulture in the sense that there is less demand for new and enhanced features beyond the existing assets.

On the other hand, there are trends that may impact demand for this service in the future.

- **Green stormwater management:** Municipalities have been incorporating more green stormwater management features which often require their own maintenance practices. Examples include rain gardens and bio-retention facilities.
- **Expectations from residents and businesses:** Some municipalities are responding to increased requests from residents and businesses to add more enhanced elements such as annual and perennial plantings as well as hanging planters around facilities or main streets.
- **Naturalization:** Many municipalities are focusing on naturalization, native plantings and drought-tolerant plantings to either be more climate resilient or lower operational costs.



Access

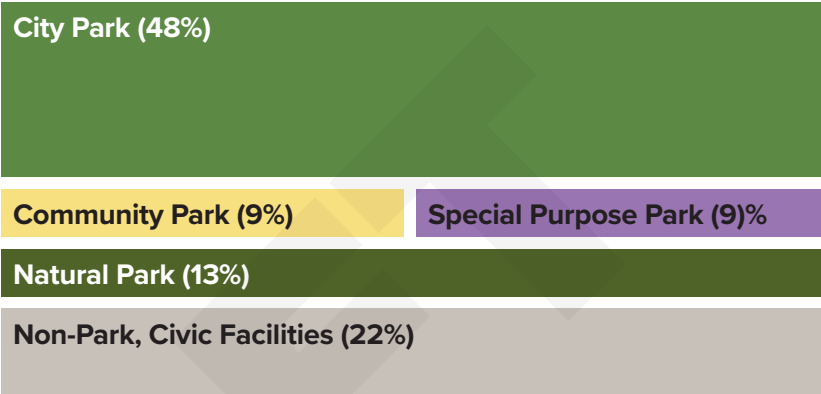
Overall, horticulture is broadly accessible. Geographically, there are beds and sculptures spread across the city. The features also tend to be in highly visible locations that are tied to the trail or sidewalk network.

The features are publicly accessible and without a user fee. In this sense, there is no financial barrier to accessing the service area. City parks have the highest presence of horticultural elements within the park system. City parks typically have a higher draw and a larger collection of facilities to serve visitors. It is a standard approach for municipalities to distribute more planting beds or specialized landscapes within these types of parks.

On the other hand, the lack of horticulture features within neighbourhood and community parks also reaffirms that the developed parks service area has a standard offering rather than enhanced or premium.

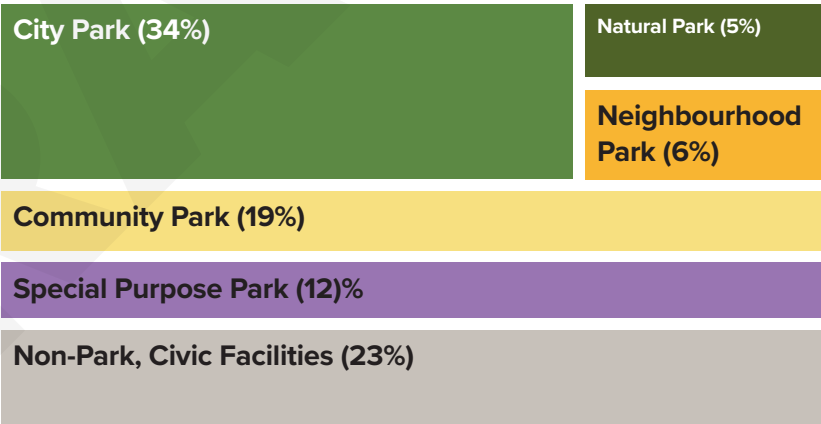
The graph on the right shows the distribution of horticultural features by park class.

Eco-sculptures

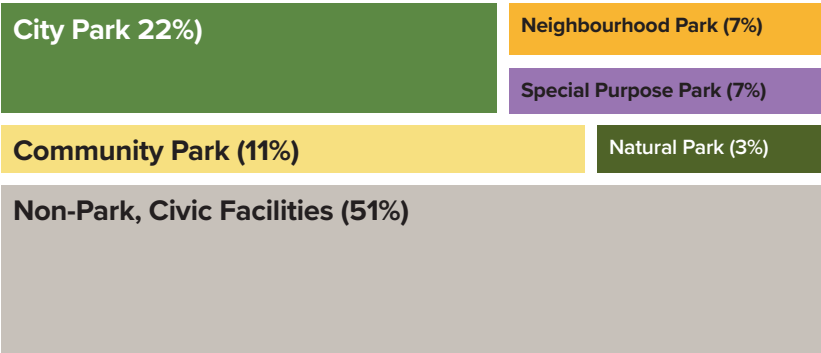


Neighbourhood Park (0%)

Flower beds



Shrub beds



Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- The horticultural program adds visually appealing landscaping features in the city. These features are publicly accessible providing low barrier access. On the other hand, the features are more densely located in city parks and special purpose parks rather than spread throughout neighbourhood-oriented spaces.
- These features enhance a resident's or other visitor's quality of experience in parks. Increasing provision levels could positively impact resident and visitor satisfaction rates, biodiversity and create distinct identities across the park system.
- Engagement may reveal the extent of importance for this service area among the public.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or future work.

- Determine the future of existing Eco-sculpture assets.
- Set planting objectives through park classifications around biodiversity, climate resilience and stormwater management. For instance, higher usage and urban parks could be formally designated a higher level of horticultural service.
- Explore partnerships to support the delivery of specialty landscaping in strategic locations such as botanical gardens and hanging baskets.
- Develop an annual re-purposing plan that prioritizes the conversion of underutilized manicured turf or disturbed areas to native planting.

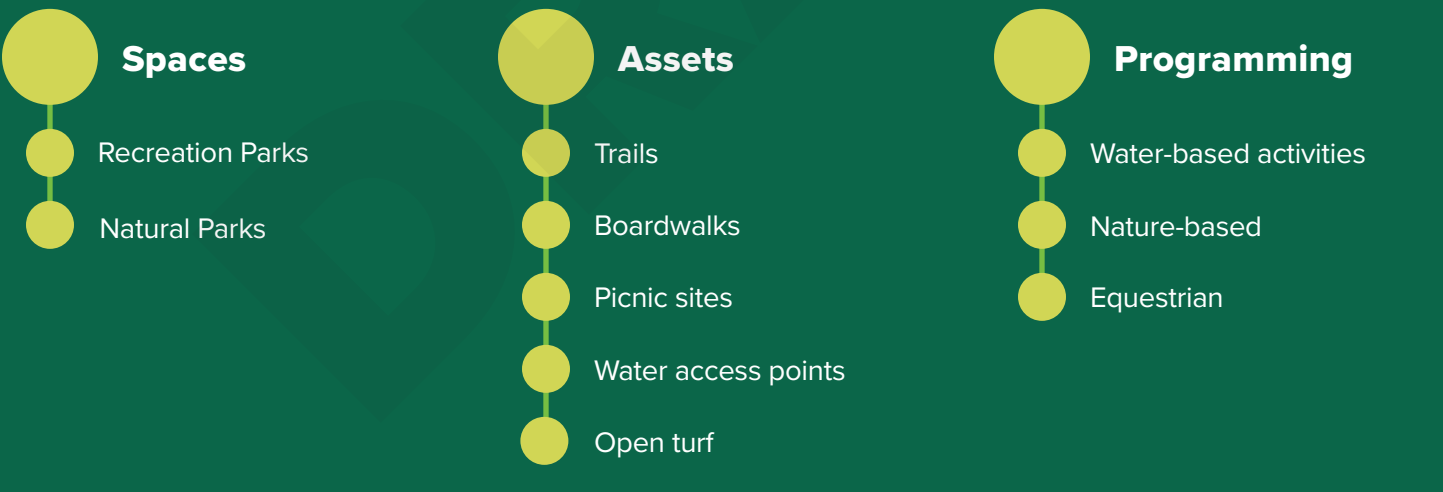
Outdoor Recreation & Trails

Green spaces, infrastructure and programs in Burnaby parks supporting land- and water-based recreational activities.

The service area

The City develops and maintains green spaces, trails, boardwalks, picnic sites and delivers nature-based programs for residents. These services provide access to unprogrammed park spaces that support activities such as hiking, mountain biking, water-based recreation and picnicking. Participation in these activities promotes physical activity, access to nature and social engagement.

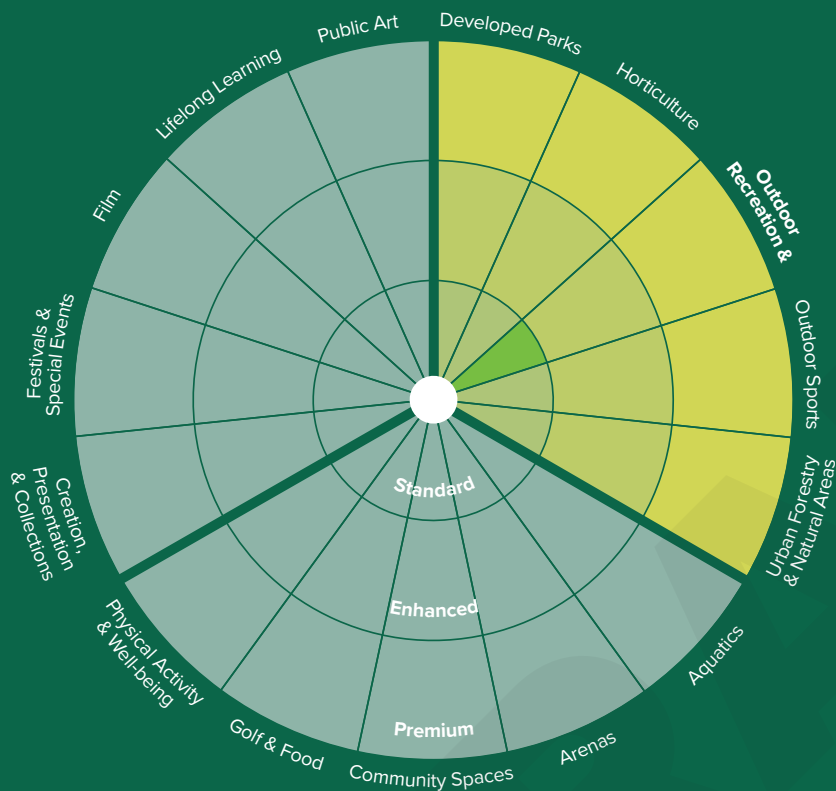
Large areas within Recreation Parks provide residents with respite from the urban environment and direct access to nature. Some natural Parks provide limited access to natural areas. However, development in natural parks is limited to protect sensitive ecosystems.



Service level: Standard

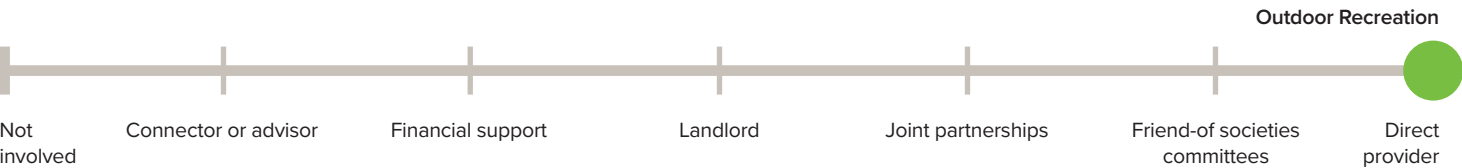
This is a standard service provided by municipalities. Trails, open turf (i.e., unprogrammed spaces) and programmed activities like mountain biking and hiking are provided consistently across benchmark cities.

This service area includes some enhanced services that attract users from outside Burnaby, such as water sport facilities and mountain trails have made Burnaby a destination for sporting events and recreational tourism.



The current operating model

The City develops and maintains the trail network, green space and picnic sites. It delivers a number of nature-based programs directly but relies on partnerships to deliver more specialized programs like horseback riding.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Accessible, beautiful natural areas
- Public support and trust
- Partnerships
- Skilled workforce and effective adoption of technology

Weaknesses

- Growing demand, overcrowding and conflicts among users
- Aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance may impact experience
- Accessibility (access and universal design)
- Staffing shortage and slow hiring process

Opportunities

- Growing interest among public
- Increasing sustainability
- Investing in underutilized spaces
- Technology and proactive asset management

Threats

- Damages and greater operational needs to address extreme weather, inappropriate human activities and invasive species
- Increasing pressure from urban growth
- Constrained budgets/inflation
- Unsanctioned trails
- Safety concerns

Service area objective

Outdoor Recreation & Trails contribute to quality of life, strengthen community identity and support the City of Burnaby's commitment to sustainability.

- **Operations:** Develop and manage outdoor spaces for activities.
- **Increase awareness:** Promote Outdoor Recreation and use of trails as a form of fitness and well-being.

- **Accessibility:** Ensure recreational spaces, trails and lakes are mapped and remain accessible.
- **Financials:** Trail expenditures have been rising steadily since 2019. As usage on trails, water access points and sport assets increases, staff are reporting that deferred parks maintenance has started interfering with day-to-day and seasonal Parks operations. Repairs and unscheduled tasks are becoming more frequent, costly and disruptive to planned work schedules.

How Burnaby compares

Burnaby has a relatively extensive trail network. For every 10,000 residents, there are 5.7 km of maintained trails, which does not include urban pathways outside of parks or bike lanes. This network provides access to Recreation and Natural Parks across the city. Natural areas are related to this evaluation and are covered in Urban Forestry & Natural Areas.

Not all municipalities measure their supply of unprogrammed space within parks. Compared to benchmark municipalities who track this type of park space, Burnaby’s provision is smaller. Green space in Recreation Parks accounts for roughly 17% of their total land area. A review of secondary sources, including a 2023 study measuring unprogrammed areas within parks, suggests that Burnaby’s provision is approximately half of the average reported for selected Canadian municipalities.*

Why does this matter?

Burnaby’s above-average supply of maintained trails provide residents with more opportunities to participate in outdoor recreational activities and choose active modes of transportation.

Burnaby’s relatively lower supply of green space within its Recreation Parks suggests that fewer opportunities for flexible, spontaneous uses of park space are available to residents and visitors (e.g., throwing a ball around or setting out an informal picnic on the grass).

Burnaby Lake and the Rowing Pavilion is an example of a niche asset that distinguishes Burnaby’s Outdoor Recreation & Trails services. This facility is one of only a few that can host provincial and national rowing and boating competitions. Likewise, Burnaby Mountain is a scenic destination that attracts a growing number of visitors to the city.

Trails

For every 10,000 residents there are 5.7 km of maintained trails.



**The study from 2023 found an average of 44% of the park network to be unprogrammed space by comparing Mississauga, Toronto, Burlington, Winnipeg and Kelowna, British Columbia. See Balance of Green Space Report, City of Mississauga, 2023. Not all data from municipalities listed in Appendix A is available, so this measurement was not used as a benchmark for the Key Findings report.*

Age and condition

Service request data from 2024 suggests that usage levels are impacting:

- The condition of green space amenities
- The quality of outdoor recreational experiences

Reports of damage, graffiti and garbage is high in Recreation and Natural Parks that support Outdoor Recreation & Trails services. Service requests to address conflicts between users, outdated signage and damage to ancillary amenities like benches and washrooms lead to unplanned tasks that can be disruptive to Parks' operations.

Trends in demand

Past City of Burnaby studies have assessed outdoor recreational areas, especially those that provide beach and water access, as 'at' or 'above capacity' during peak season. Limited parking at Barnet Marine Park and Deer Lake Park impact the quality of outdoor recreational experiences.

Many locations in Burnaby hold cultural, historical and archaeological significance for Host Nations. This can create opportunities for local governments to work with Host Nations to advance commitments to Truth and Reconciliation.

PRC staff have also been responding to encampment-related requests in Burnaby's parks, particularly in areas close to lakes, rivers and ravines. Mitigating real and perceived safety concerns and supporting peaceful co-existence among all parks users may require investments in design, operations and training for staff over time.



Access

Access to Outdoor Recreation and Trails is available throughout the city. The trail network provides linkages across all four quadrants and to key destinations. Open turf is also relatively spread out across the city's park system.

Although access to picnic sites is more varied, several picnic and open turf areas in City parks can accommodate residents of all ages and abilities. Strategic segments of the trail network have also been paved to improve access.

Unpaved trails through natural areas provide more limited access for residents, visitors and emergency vehicles. Municipalities have needed to focus their limited capital investments on universal design where it is most feasible, finding cost-effective ways to expand access for as many residents as possible.

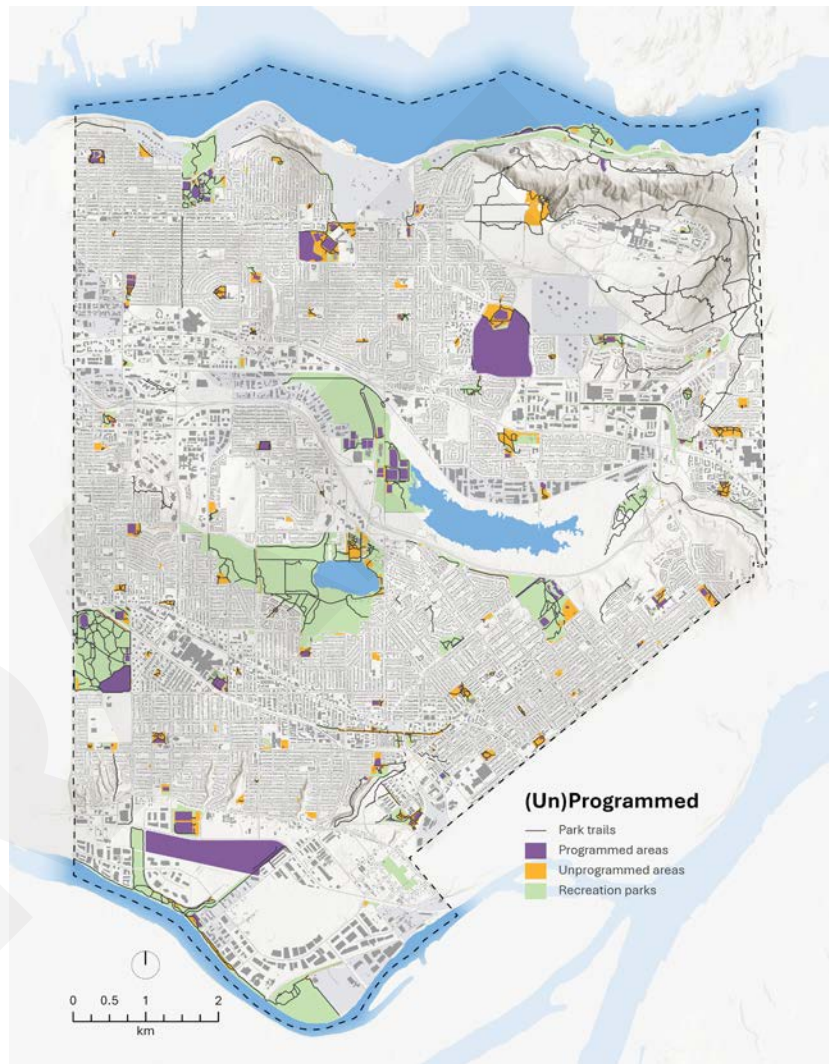


Figure 2. Access to unprogrammed areas

The map shows the size and distribution of unprogrammed and programmed areas throughout Burnaby. Natural areas are not included in the Outdoor Recreation & Trails service area. These areas are often adjacent to open turf and trails that support unprogrammed activities in Burnaby's parks.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- The importance of unprogrammed space is expected to rise as Burnaby grows and becomes more densely populated. Outdoor space and activities extend immediate and long-term benefits to individuals, families and communities. They provide opportunities to spend quality time together. Activities like hiking and biking promote positive physical and mental health for people of all ages.
- Unlike structured programs and facility-based activities, these spaces and the activities they support can be enjoyed at little or no cost to residents.
- Sheltered green spaces, beach and water access provide respite during the summer months and can be critically important to community health and well-being during extreme heat events.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or future PRC planning initiatives.

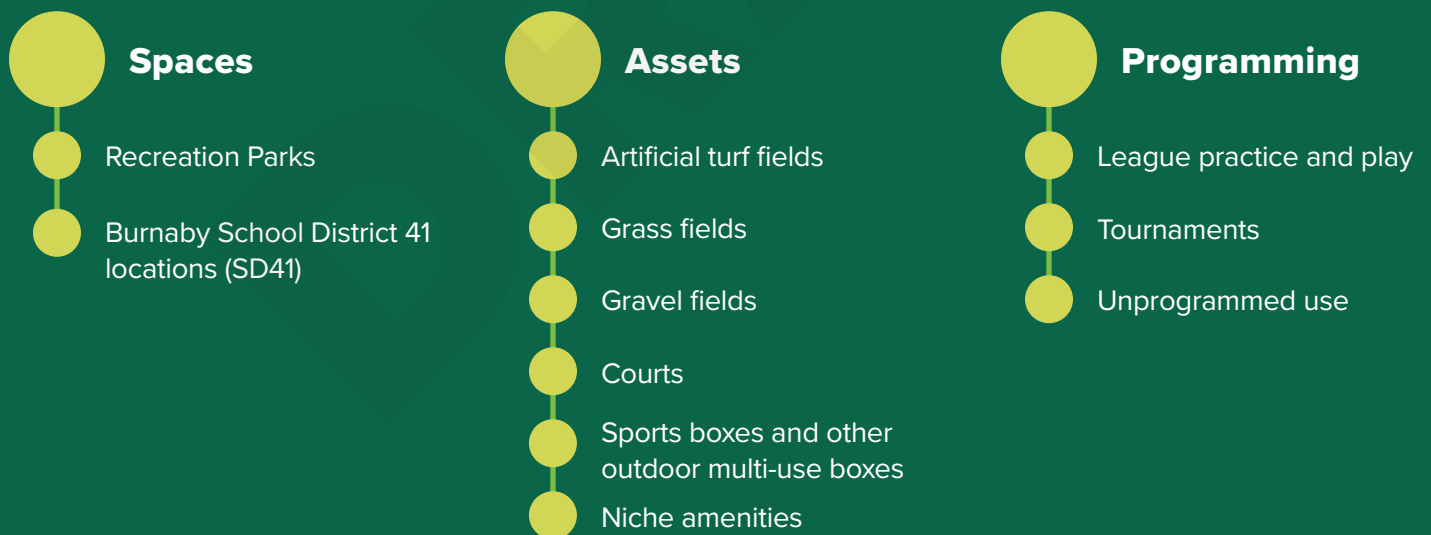
- Although costs to support this service area have been rising, the cost per capita to provide green space and maintain trails is low compared to other park infrastructure like sport courts and fields. These spaces are also more adaptable to evolving interests and needs over time.
- Parks that are culturally significant to Host Nations may be opportunities to grow government-to-government relationships through co-management of these spaces.
- Improved wayfinding and signage in parks can support a number of PRC service goals, advancing reconciliation, promoting peaceful co-existing and safety among users and celebrating Burnaby's local identity.
- Access to water and shade responds to diverse needs within the community: respite from extreme weather, sport and recreational use and traditional/cultural experiences. Policies in the Plan will consider residents' underlying service needs for various amenities, and a range of options for responding to them effectively.

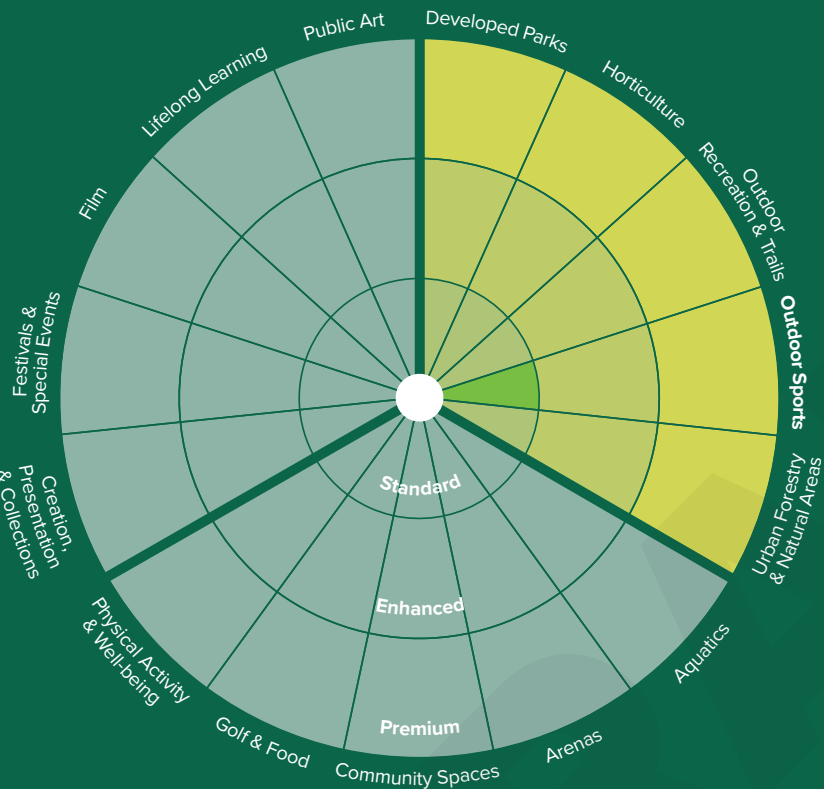
Outdoor Sports

Recreation Parks and facilities within them to support participation in organized sports.

The service area

Outdoor Sports includes sport infrastructure located in Recreation Parks throughout Burnaby. The City manages a range of common sport facilities in these spaces, including sports boxes, artificial turf and grass fields, hard courts, as well as unique offerings like archery. This service offers residents opportunities to enjoy sports at various levels of play and experience a range of health, social and economic benefits.





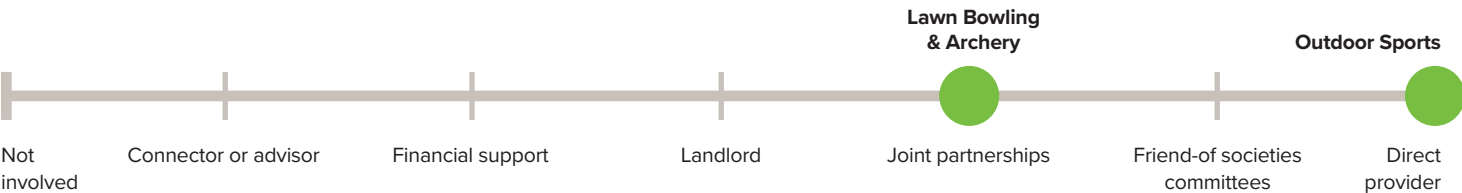
Service level: Standard

Outdoor Sports is a typical service area for municipalities to lead. Burnaby’s level of service appears to be on par with benchmark municipalities.

There are some premium and enhanced facilities in Burnaby’s inventory, including the Riverway Sports Complex and Swangard Stadium. This infrastructure serves high-performance, amateur and professional use. The cost to maintain these assets tends to be higher and increase with age and usage over time.

The current operating model

The City provides spaces and assets to support Outdoor Sports directly. It also rents to sports groups who deliver sport opportunities through their programming. Sharing agreements mediate access to some high-demand infrastructure (e.g., artificial turf built on School District 41 land).



The SWOT

Strengths

- Regional draw and unique sites
- Staff expertise
- Asset management
- Public trust and positive relationships with user groups

Weaknesses

- Demand outstrips supply; shared-use agreements and allotments/leases further limiting access
- Aging infrastructure (e.g., Swangard)
- Staffing gap and outdated technology
- Lack of certain facilities (e.g., cricket, rugby, ultimate Frisbee, volleyball)

Opportunities

- Expansion potential with Swangard and Burnaby Lake Sports Complex West
- Technology advancements
- Sustainability
- Stronger partnerships
- Re-purposing of underutilized gravel fields

Tensions & Threats

- Project delays and decreasing asset quality due to constrained budgets/ rising maintenance costs
- Damages and greater operational needs to address extreme weather
- Urban growth
- Compliance and regulatory risks

Service area objective

The City provides spaces, assets and rentals throughout Burnaby's Parks to support recreational and competitive sport opportunities for residents of all ages and skill levels. These community assets are vital for public health and well-being, offering diverse opportunities for physical activity, skill development, achievement and community engagement in sports.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Asset management:** PRC staff ensure that fields, courts and sports boxes are well-maintained and accessible to residents and sports organizations. The department works in collaboration with local sports clubs, schools and community stakeholders to manage these facilities effectively.
- **Allotment of space:** PRC manages the booking and scheduling of Burnaby's outdoor sports assets, ensuring user groups and residents have access to spaces and infrastructure to support their participation needs.
- **Financials:** Outdoor Sports was a revenue positive service line prior to 2023 but is now trending towards requiring funding support. 2016 and 2021 Asset Management Plans have indicated an infrastructure backlog, as well as underutilized assets. Maintenance of gravel fields is less costly than natural grass. Given that requests for field allotments have been turned away due to lack of suitable infrastructure, underutilization can be interpreted as lost revenue for the City.

How Burnaby compares

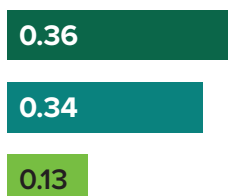
Burnaby's provision of outdoor sport fields (rectangular fields and ball diamonds) is generally in line with comparable municipalities. The number of artificial turf and grass fields is similar to benchmark municipalities, but Burnaby maintains a relatively higher inventory of gravel fields.

Leading vs lagging

Burnaby leads in provision of courts that support pickleball. A large portion of these courts are shared-use courts that support other racquet and hard-court sports like tennis. Burnaby lags behind comparable municipalities in provision of outdoor basketball courts.

Artificial turf fields

For every 10,000 residents there are 0.36 outdoor artificial turf fields.



Ball diamonds

For every 10,000 residents there are 2.4 outdoor ball diamonds.



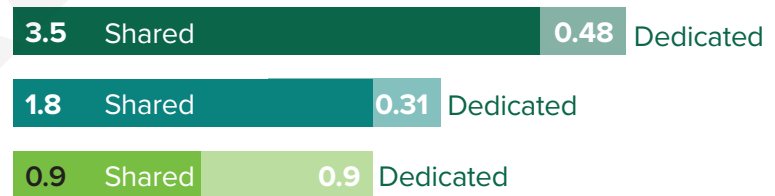
Why does this matter?

The total amount of courts and fields in Burnaby's inventory is comparable to benchmark municipalities. Characteristics of the City's inventory limit its capacity to respond to changing sport usage. Gravel fields typically offer a lower quality of outdoor sport experience. Nearly half of Burnaby's artificial turf fields are located on school land and managed through shared-use agreements with School District 41 that restrict public use during school hours.

Conflicts and issues with accessing sport courts suggest that, although these assets are well-provisioned, the current delivery model may not be aligned with participation needs.

Pickleball courts

For every 10,000 residents there are 3.5 shared and 0.48 dedicated pickleball courts.



Basketball courts

For every 10,000 residents there are 0.9 outdoor basketball courts.



Access

- Generally, sports fields and courts are distributed throughout Burnaby. Artificial turf and competition-capable fields are concentrated in sport complexes located in the western quadrants of the city.
- Although fields are located in all parts of the city, most are allotted to sport user groups in the spring, summer and fall months. Residents need to be registered with one of these groups in order to use these spaces. Gravel fields have more unbooked capacity to support community use. However, these fields tend to be adjacent to booked grass fields and may not appear available to people passing by them.
- Growth in outdoor sports is driven by new interest from historically under-served groups. The City is relying on permit holders with grandfathered rights to ensure programs and infrastructure use is participant-focused in order to respond effectively to new public demand.
- A recent spike in service request data suggests that the City’s scheduling and management of shared pickleball and tennis courts is not meeting participant needs.

Trends in demand

Burnaby’s artificial turf and grass fields are in high demand, particularly from emerging sports. In 2024, 41 applications submitted by sports groups were turned away due to a lack of suitable supply. Requests for tournaments on these assets has also increased.

Demand for pickleball and tennis has grown since the COVID-19 pandemic. Although Burnaby’s per capita provision is high relative to other municipalities, the locations of its courts may be contributing to greater regional demand for their use. Service requests over the last five years also point to user conflicts arising from sharing courts that support both sports.

Quadrant Comparison

Courts	33%	NE	23%	NW	23%	SE	21%	SW
Diamonds	25%	NE	19%	NW	12%	SE	44%	SW
Fields	24%	NE	32%	NW	18%	SE	27%	SW



Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- Opportunities to participate in sports at any level benefits individuals and families. Assets like courts to support spontaneous play ensure that families have low-barrier opportunities to be active and socialize through sports when it's convenient for them. Organized sport offers growth and development opportunities for participants of all ages.
- It is important that Outdoor Sports balances grassroots and organized participation. Renting to user groups generates revenue and leverages community expertise to deliver quality experiences. However, it also limits the City's ability to ensure access and affordability of local programming for residents.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

- The City is renewing its shared-use agreement with School District 41, which could present opportunities to improve access to artificial fields as well as other field types.
- Investing in competition-ready infrastructure—like sports boxes and artificial turf fields—can support event hosting and increase revenue and capital funding opportunities (e.g., legacy funds) for the City.
- A sports field strategy can provide guidance on future investments that expand services and use existing supply more efficiently. For instance, changes to capital allocations for fields to prioritize repurposing may improve utilization of spaces that are currently gravel fields. Updates to allocations could make it easier for the City to consolidate field assets for repurposing for sports like rugby and cricket that require larger play areas.
- Operational changes such as providing real-time information about field availability and enabling short-notice bookings has the potential to improve revenue on underutilized assets.
- An outdoor courts strategy can provide more insights into the use of Burnaby's large court inventory and factors leading to conflicts.

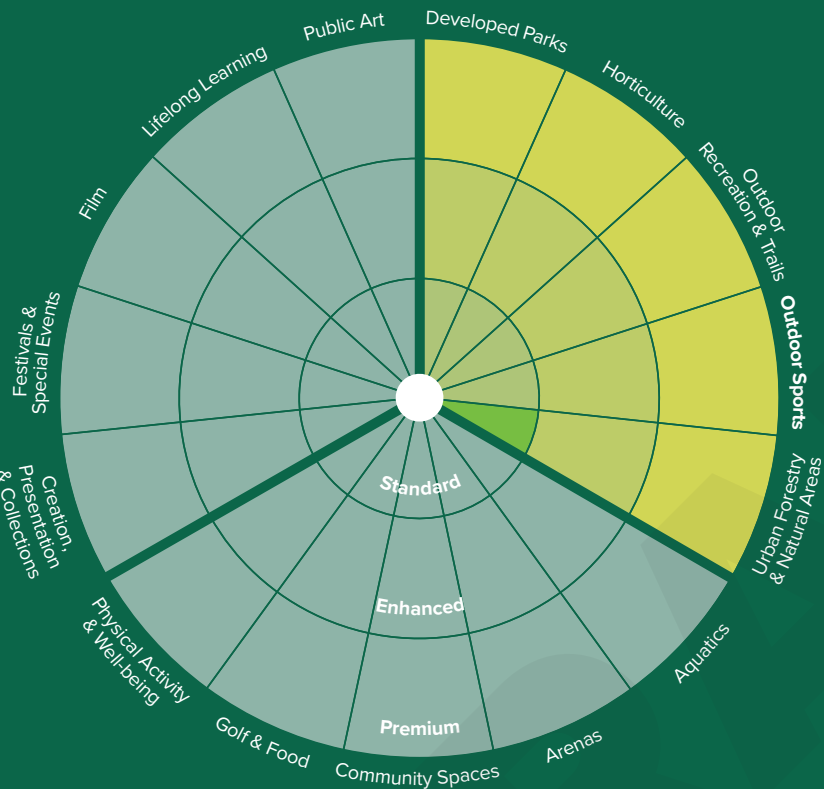
Urban Forestry and Natural Areas

Natural Parks and undeveloped areas within Recreation Parks that support a healthy environment and community.

The service area

The City protects, manages and restores the city's lakes, streams, wetlands, parks, trees, natural areas and wildlife habitats. This service area provides residents with access to nature, including environmental education and stewardship around biodiversity, invasive species, climate resilience and mitigation, while reducing risks in natural hazards.





Service level: Standard

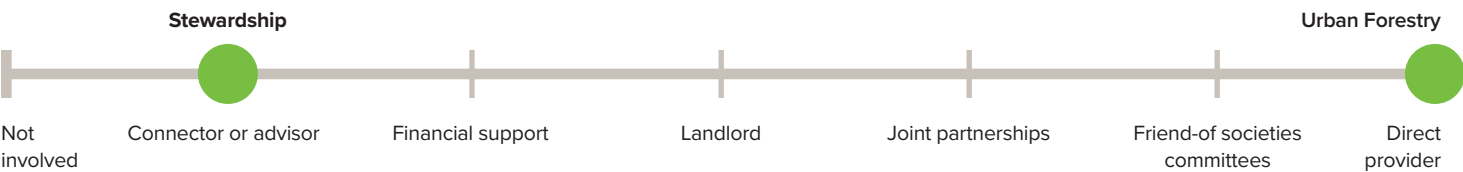
Conserving natural areas and growing a healthy urban forest is a standard responsibility of municipalities. The City of Burnaby has a considerable network of natural areas but the overall approach to the service area aligns with the standard level of service.

Key findings

- Urban Forestry & Natural Areas is in a stronger strategic position stemming from approved plans.
- The service area is under pressure and evolving practices will be key to success.

The current operating model

The City manages natural areas within parks directly. The City also supports some community stewardship opportunities.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Accessible, beautiful natural areas
- Public support and trust
- Partnerships
- Skilled workforce and effective adoption of technology
- Strong environmentally-minded community
- Recently completed Urban Forest Strategy

Weaknesses

- Overcrowding from growing demand as well as user conflicts
- Aging infrastructure and deferred maintenance may impact experience
- Accessibility (access and universal design)
- Staffing shortage and slow hiring process
- Lack of enforcement of regulations and bylaws that protect natural areas

Opportunities

- Growing interest among public
- Increased sustainability
- Investing in underutilized spaces
- Technology and proactive asset management
- Growing public interest in environmental education and stewardship

Threats

- Damages and greater operational needs to address extreme weather, inappropriate human activities and invasive species
- Increasing pressure from urban growth
- Constrained budgets/inflation
- Unsanctioned trails
- Safety concerns
- Expanding adjacent uses negatively impacting wildlife habitat quality

Service area objective

This service area protects, manages and restores many of the city's lakes, streams, wetlands, treed areas and wildlife habitats. This service area provides residents with access to nature while promoting climate change resilience, and reducing natural hazard risks.

A greater priority around local access would align with the Urban Forest Strategy's focus on equitable access across the city.

Influencing drivers include:

- Urban growth responding to an increase in usage, compact development that is more hardscaped and competing priorities for land. There has been a trend of tree loss as a result.

- The City has recently strengthened its strategic position through objectives and policies in the draft Official Community Plan, the Urban Forest Strategy and the Climate Action Framework. The plans also provide key targets for the service area:
 - › Land protected for nature from 22% to 25%
 - › A tree canopy goal of 40% by 2075
 - › Achieve carbon neutrality by 2050
- Burnaby's strategy to increase the tree canopy will require additional capital and operating funding. As the city becomes more densely populated and the city's tree canopy ages, additional operating and maintenance expenditures will be required.

How Burnaby compares

Tree Canopy

Burnaby's tree canopy is currently at 32% of total city land. This distribution is composed of 55% in parks, 11% on streets, 28% on private land and an additional 6% on other City-owned land.

The total coverage is in line with comparable municipalities in Metro Vancouver and higher than selected other municipalities. However, there is a historical trend line indicating a loss of trees in Burnaby, which over time could impact this comparison.

Natural Area

Well over half of City's park system is natural area, this includes Natural Parks and a significant portion of the area within Recreation Parks. Additionally, Burnaby Lake Regional Nature Park, operated by Metro Vancouver, protects over 500 acres of natural area.

This share is considerably larger than the average in the selected Metro Vancouver municipalities.

Tree canopy



Natural parks



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average ■ Selected outside Metro municipal average

Why does this matter?

There are two major takeaways in this comparison:

- Burnaby has a relatively high share of natural area. This suggests natural assets play a large role in how resident's experience the park system.
- The noted trend line of tree loss and the general similarities of how the City manages these spaces supports the assigned service level to be standard rather than enhanced.

Trends in demand

Urban Forestry & Natural Areas has a mix of stable and emerging dynamics. The service area has a core focus on protecting the existing landscape, which is inherently stable. Demand and usage of these areas are high and growing.

The Urban Forest Strategy notes that the downside of this demand can result in unauthorized trail usage, tension with adjacent land uses and increased dumping of garbage. These factors can degrade forest and aquatic ecosystems, disrupt native flora and fauna and enable growth of invasive species. The City is responding to these issues with actions such as the Streamside Development Permit, a range of restoration and stewardship initiatives and managing uses (e.g., Burnaby Mountain Trail Management Plan).



Access

Recently approved plans such as the Urban Forest Strategy provides valuable insight and prioritization around access to natural areas.

High-level insight:

- **Geographic access:** While most Burnaby residents are within walkable proximity of a natural area, there is a significant range in the amount of natural space, and the accessibility of this space for recreational purposes.
- Residents living near Burnaby Mountain Park and Deer Lake Park are in proximity to a high amount of natural area (in hectares), and there are opportunities available to access these spaces in the form of trails. In contrast, residents in neighbourhoods such as Brentwood and Parkcrest-Aubrey have a relatively low amount of natural area access.
- **Physical accessibility:** there are areas where access is intended to be limited. The trail system is inherently unable to fulfill universal design standards, due to terrain and park geography.
- **Cost:** this service area is accessible from a user cost perspective as there is no charge to use the system.

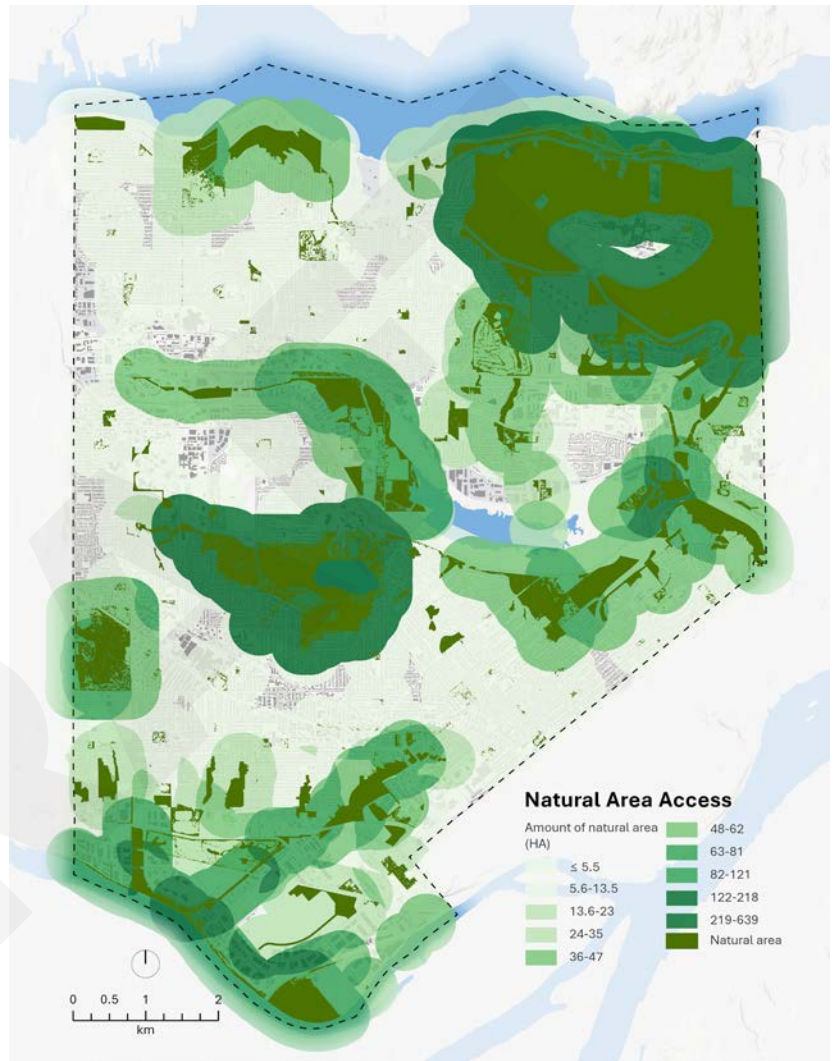


Figure 3. Map of proximity to natural areas

This map shows the distribution of natural areas (Natural Parks, top of bank areas, and tree canopy within recreation parks) in Burnaby. Residents in the northeast and central Burnaby have access to a relatively large amount of natural area. Natural areas, and particularly Natural Parks are typically located organically, based on existing geological or environmental features in the landscape.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- The typical resident benefits from the relatively large size of Burnaby's natural areas. The Urban Forest Strategy will help to respond to geographic gaps, particularly for residents who live away from either Natural Parks such as Burnaby Mountain or other parks with major natural areas such as Burnaby Lake Regional Park.
- There is a demonstrated pressure on these areas stemming from climate change and invasive species, competing land uses and increased usage demand. Considerable degradation or loss of these areas would be at risk of undermining a typical resident's access to nature.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

- Develop a biodiversity assessment and inventory.
- Implement a more proactive asset management for natural areas and assets.
- Develop a trails strategy to deal with unauthorized use.
- Update the Burnaby Tree Bylaw.
- Evaluate how well private properties maintain trees and other natural assets, particularly within statutory rights-of-way and where public access is permitted.

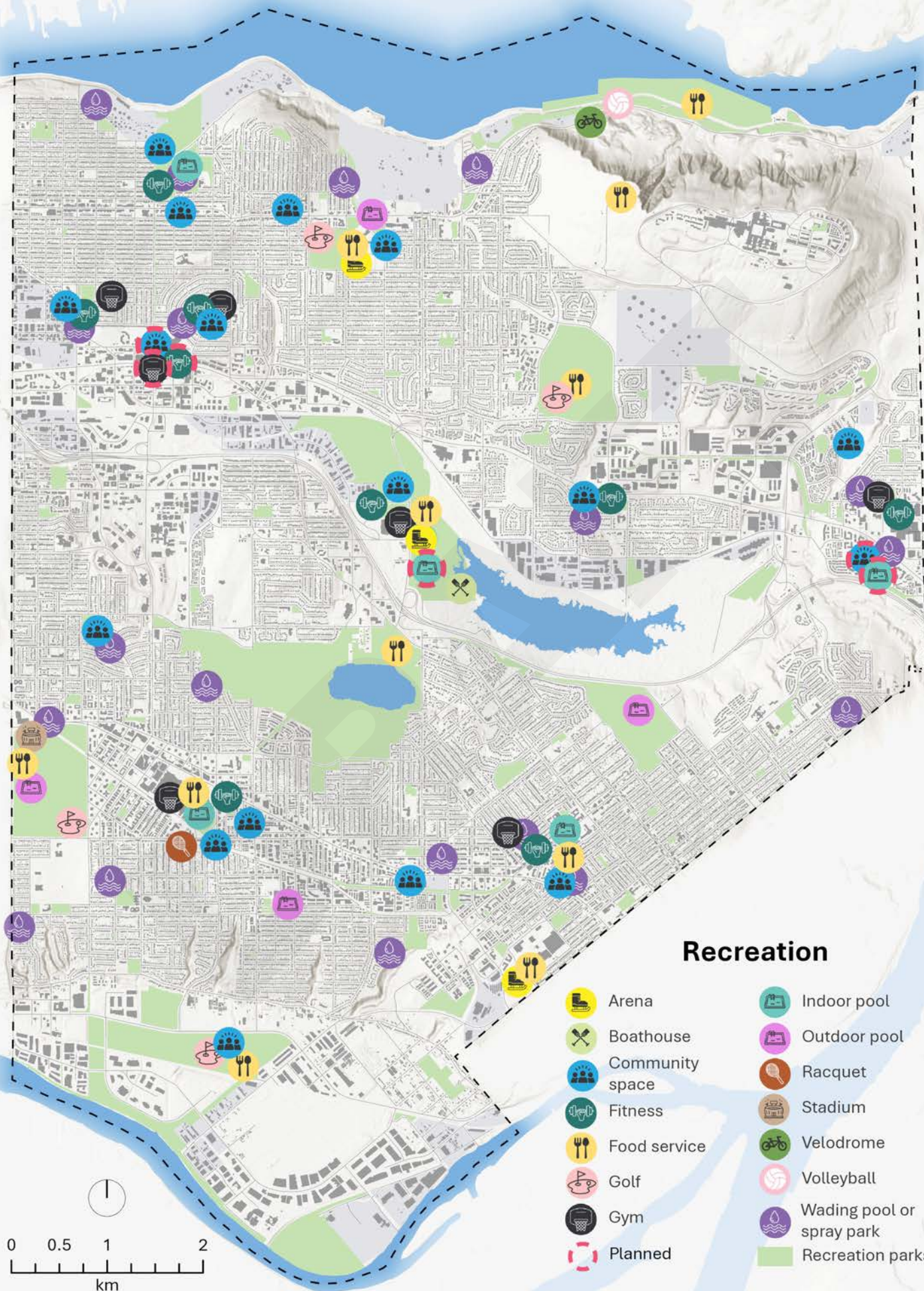
Recreation



Burnaby's recreation network provides an array of indoor facilities as well as a range of food services and golf courses.

Recreation services deliver aquatics, arenas with ice surfaces that convert to dry floor space seasonally and community spaces serving seniors, youth and families across all quadrants. The system offers extensive physical activity opportunities through weight rooms, gymnasiums, fitness studios and specialized spaces supported by partnerships with schools to expand access. Additionally, the network includes premium services like two full-length golf courses and award-winning food services. Together, these facilities and programming enhance quality of life for residents of all ages and abilities.





Disclaimer: to support readability, this map in some instances groups multiple activities of the same type and slightly offsets locations of icons.

Aquatics

Indoor and outdoor facilities and programs to support a range of water-based activities.

The service area

The City develops, maintains and operates aquatics facilities, and manages most learn-to-swim and lifesaving programs available to the community. Indoor facilities provide year-round opportunities for Burnaby residents to participate in leisure, fitness, learn-to-swim programs and competitive aquatic sports.

These spaces are supplemented by outdoor facilities, which add seasonal capacity to the City’s aquatics services. Outdoor lap pools support local swim clubs and, along with wading pools and spray parks, provide respite from the heat during the summer months.

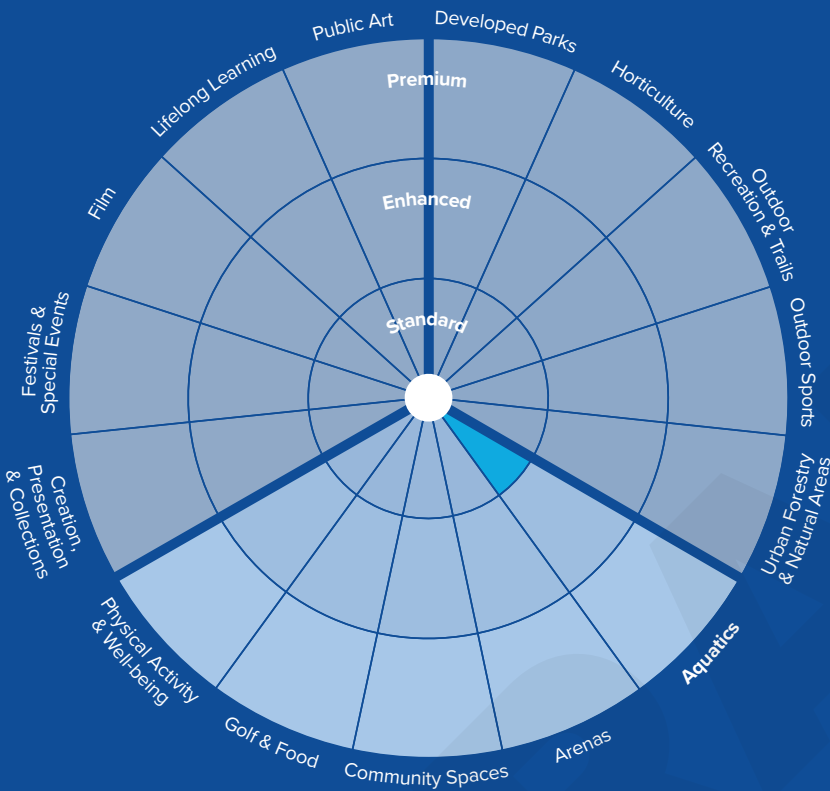


Service level: Standard

Overall, Burnaby's provision of indoor and outdoor pools and splash parks is consistent with the averages for Metro Vancouver and select other benchmark municipalities. The capacity these facilities provide falls slightly under the City's swims per capita targets. Provision of amenities that support specific or specialized aquatics activities is more varied (e.g., high-performance competition pools).

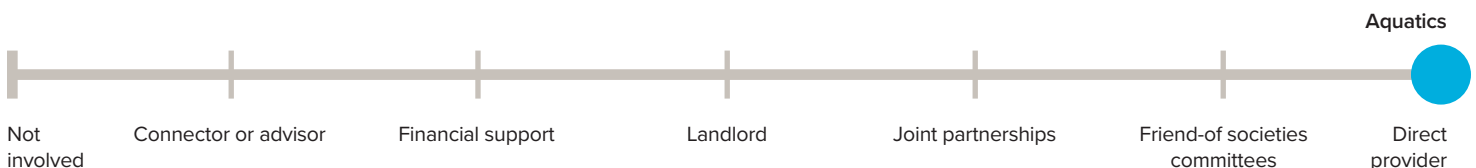
Per capita, Burnaby's inventory of outdoor flatwater and wading pools is high compared to most benchmark municipalities. The capacity provided by these seasonal locations is limited.

Large investments to develop and upgrade aging facilities are common for Canadian cities. The addition of two future multi-purpose facilities will elevate Burnaby's Aquatics to an enhanced service level. In 2028, Burnaby will have five indoor facilities that increase its capacity and support a wider range of in-demand aquatic activities.



The current operating model

The City owns the land, operates the facilities and delivers most skill-based programming directly. The City's Aquatics services supports specialized programs, training and competition opportunities indirectly through allotments to local and regional groups and organizations.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Hiring process is quickly increasing number of employees
- Programs and facilities in high demand
- Staff expertise, within a high quality and desirable workplace
- Great relationship with governing bodies

Weaknesses

- Unmet demand from the community
- Significant staffing needs to operate new facilities
- Technical environment requiring specialized skills

Opportunities

- New pools being built
- Technological improvements such as scheduling software and building management
- Communications and marketing to increase awareness
- Staff retention and development
- Using data to monitor trends and usage

Threats

- Labour market challenges and knowledge transfer
- Pay rates have been stable for lifeguards
- Aging facilities
- Staffing needs (supervisors; cost of living)

Service area objective

Aquatics services promote water safety, health and well-being and community connection for Burnaby residents. The City supports a range of aquatics activities both directly and through partnerships: operating indoor and outdoor facilities, delivering many skills and training programs directly, and providing space for community groups and organizations to deliver their own specialized programs. Allotments to local and regional swim clubs provide training and competition opportunities throughout the year.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Aquatics services create the most entry-level employment opportunities** in the recreation sector. The City supports staff development through training and certification, ensuring a skilled workforce to deliver public recreation Burnaby residents long term. Their current team of 400+ staff is expected to reach more than 800 by 2028.
- **Financials:** Generally, revenue for existing Aquatics services has been consistent over the last few years. Operating costs have risen over this same period of time, a trend that is expected to continue as facilities age. The City has committed over \$524 million to develop new indoor facilities and add to the service area's operating costs beginning in 2028. A need for capital investments to maintain existing facilities has been identified as well, including \$10 million to keep outdoor pools operational.

How Burnaby compares

Burnaby Lake Recreation Centre and Cameron Community Centre and Library, Burnaby's service capacity will add to its inventory of leisure pools and address gaps in flat water amenities that support competition. Staff estimate a 66% increase in capacity, which will elevate Burnaby's per capita provision above the averages for Metro Vancouver and select other benchmark municipalities.

Burnaby's existing aquatics supply provides more outdoor pools, wading pools and spray parks per capita than comparable municipalities.

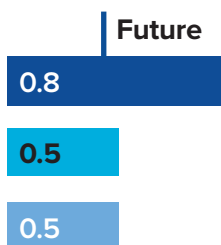
Indoor leisure pools

For every 100,000 Burnaby residents there are 1.6 indoor leisure pools.



50 m pools

For every 100,000 Burnaby residents, there are 0.8 50m pools.



Why does this matter?

Burnaby's provision currently relies more on outdoor pools than other municipalities. As seasonal and aging facilities, these assets are at a higher risk of imminent failure, are less efficient to operate and, without significant capital investments, have limited ability to adapt to Burnaby's growing population.

Outdoor pools

For every 100,000 Burnaby residents there are 1.6 outdoor pools.



Wading pools and splash pads (outdoor)

For every 100,000 Burnaby residents, there are 7.6 outdoor wading pools or splash pads.



Trends in demand

Access

Aquatics services are concentrated in Burnaby's southeast and southwest quadrants. The northwest quadrant has benefited from recent investments in indoor facilities and spray parks.

Future facilities have been located improve access for residents in the northeast quadrant and balance the distribution of aquatics experiences.

Design limitations in Burnaby's aging facilities pose physical barriers for many local residents. Accommodations at outdoor pools are especially limited but include parking, water wheel chairs and lifts. Most of these locations lack universal washrooms and change rooms.

Quadrant comparison

- One indoor facility providing 3,504 sq m in the NW and one future facility
- One outdoor facility providing 400 sq m in the NE and one future facility
- Three facilities providing 2,727 sq m in the SW
- Two facilities providing 8,382 sq m in the SE

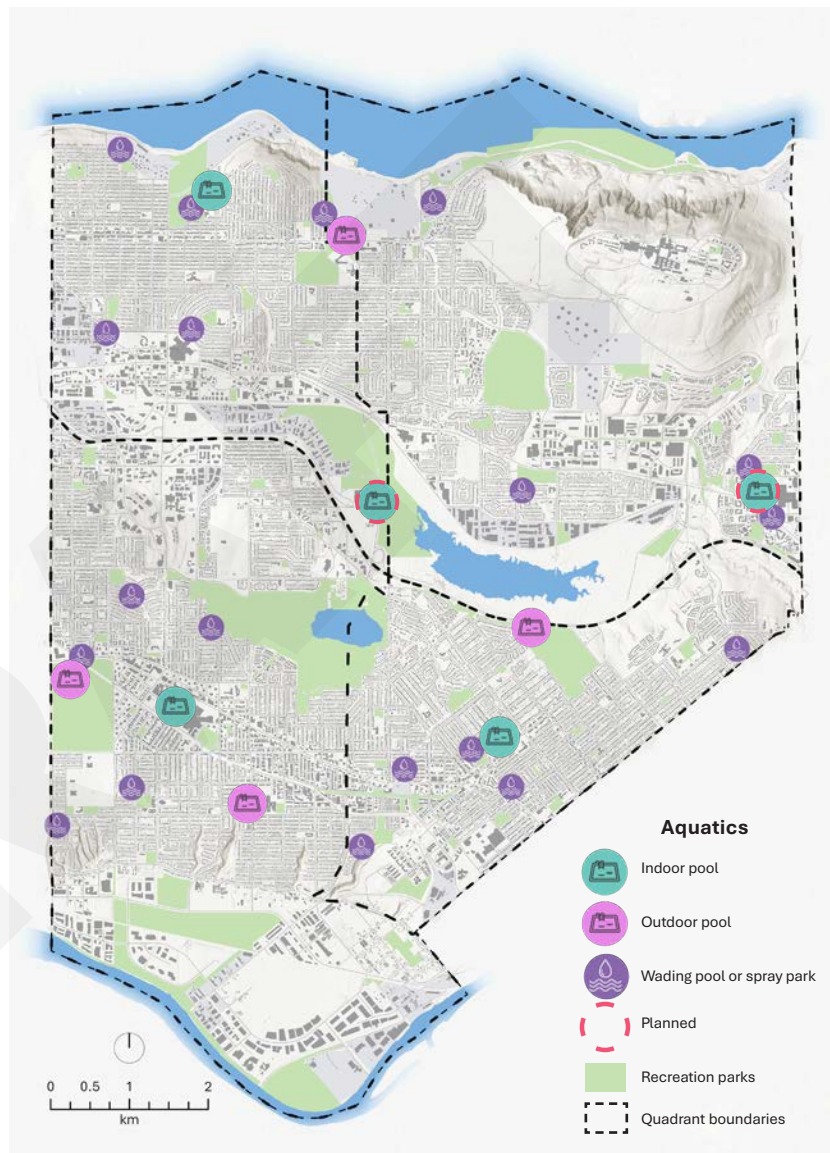


Figure 4. Distribution of indoor and outdoor aquatics services by quadrant

The map shows the locations of present and planned aquatics facilities.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- Family participation in aquatics activities has been a driver of increasing demand, particularly for leisure pools with warmer water than lap pools.
- Families are attending drop-in sessions more often and all together. Supporting amenities like family/universal change rooms can enhance their recreational experiences.

Opportunities

There are several directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or future project work.

- Advance recruitment and training for future Parks, Recreation and Culture leaders through Aquatics.
 - A number of Parks, Recreation and Culture departments have reported struggling with staffing issues in recent years. This service area has historically been an attractive entry-level employment opportunity for youth. Operating budgets that consider how to retain and develop these employees could support Burnaby's long-term service planning.
- Conduct a review of needs and opportunities for adapted and therapeutic aquatics services and programs.
- Develop a retrofitting plan to ensure all aquatics facilities eventually align to modern standards (e.g., universal change rooms).
- Improve operational efficiency and achieve progress on greenhouse gas reduction targets and water conservation through lifecycle improvements and conversions of outdoor and wading pools.
- Invest strategically to enhance existing wading pool and spray parks with supporting amenities (e.g., shade structures, seating).

Arenas

Arena services in the City of Burnaby provides ice and dry floor space to accommodate a range of activities from learning to skate to competitive ball hockey.

The service area

The City manages Burnaby's ice sheets, dry floor spaces and supporting amenities, as well as skating lessons. These spaces and programs support indoor activities such as hockey, ringette and figure skating. Staff work closely with sport user groups to deliver a wider range of programs, events and tournaments. These services aim to strike a balance between training, competition and public recreational experiences, thereby ensuring year-round opportunities for residents to stay active and connect socially.

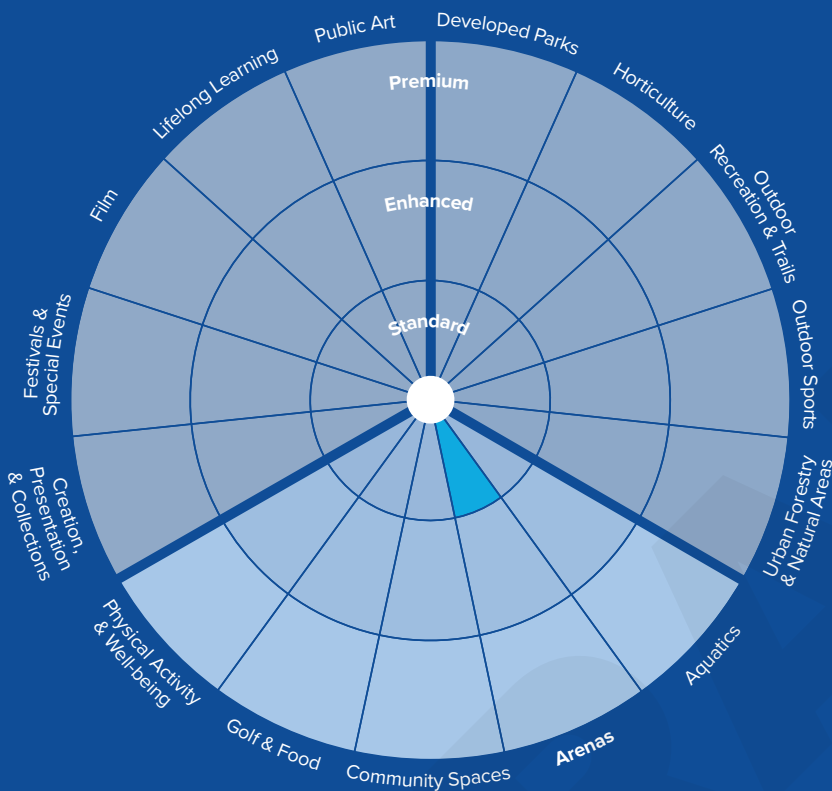


Service level: Standard

Arenas are a typical service for municipalities, though some municipalities utilize partnerships to reduce costs for operations, program design and delivery.

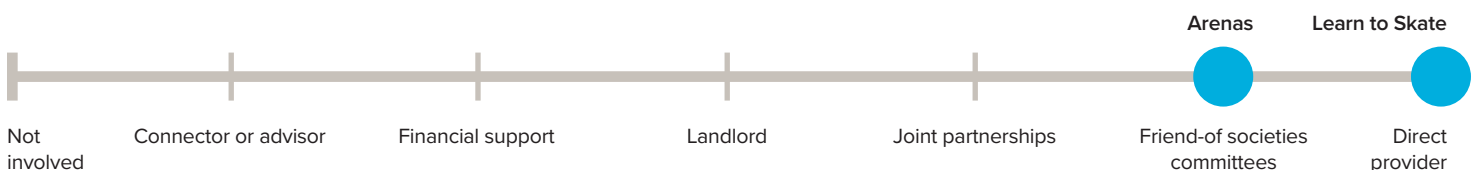
Arenas should be considered a standard service, given their common role and emphasis on community access.

- The service level is challenged by achieving year-round utilization, even with growing demand for dry-floor space.
- An enhanced offering could lean into specialized flooring for dry-floor spaces or more year-round ice availabilities.



The current operating model

The City owns the land, operates the facilities and provides the programming through direct service delivery.



The SWOT

Strengths

- High demand for facilities (from existing to new groups, as well as programs and event proposals)
- Above standard operations systems
- Good quality spaces
- Well placed in the community: central and close to schools

Weaknesses

- Staff challenges with limited availability, lack of training and high turnover
- Reduced fiscal sustainability due to increased subsidies
- More hours and more space needed
- Storage limitations

Opportunities

- Strategies to retain and develop staff
- Technology (mobile check-ins, on-line registration, etc.)
- Using the benefits-based model to guide allocation decisions (e.g., private benefits and user costs vs. public benefits and taxpayer costs)
- Expanding dry floor opportunities and year-round ice

Threats

- Staffing turnover/capacity
- Lack of volunteers in associations
- Changing demographics
- Cost of operations and of maintaining floor and ice surfaces

Service area objective

Arenas (and dry floor space at sports boxes) are key facilities to enable a range of ice and dry surface activities. The primary driver is offering community-oriented space, which is evident through the bulk of bookings coming from local organizations. This approach aligns with the following direction:

Influencing drivers include:

- 2024-2026 PRC Strategic Plan: recreation “balances community interests and needs, serves the public good through amenities/services and facilities and works towards meaningful, accessible experiences that foster individual and community well-being.”

- Facility Allocations Policy: prioritizing City of Burnaby programs and services followed by groups with 60% or greater of local residents.
- Financials: as an influencing driver, staff noted that the cost is not much greater to offer year-round ice compared to offering dry floor space, as staffing is required in both scenarios.

How Burnaby compares

Burnaby’s arenas offer year-round sport opportunities through ice and dry floor spaces. Burnaby is in line with municipal comparisons when focusing on municipally-run rinks. Burnaby leads in its supply of ice sheets that are privately operated, such as Scotia Barn Arena.

When including dry floors within sports boxes, Burnaby exceeds the comparable municipal average.

Why does this matter?

Benchmarking suggests that Burnaby is relatively well-provisioned, particularly when including private operators (e.g., Scotia Barn Arena and Burnaby Winter Club). This mixed provision of public and private facilities may also help offer a higher range of offerings, with City arenas such as Rosemary Brown Recreation Centre catering to more community-oriented uses and Scotia Barn fulfilling more regionally based demand around advanced leagues and athletic development.

Municipally-run ice sheets

For every 100,000, the City has 2 ice sheets. This includes the expansion at Burnaby Lake Recreation Complex.



Privately-run ice sheets

For every 100,000 residents, there are 3.2 ice sheets that are privately-run in Burnaby.



Quality

Arenas in Burnaby serve spontaneous drop-in, programming, recreational leagues and tournament hosting capabilities. For the latter, Rosemary Brown Recreation Centre, Scotia Barn, Bill Copeland Sports Centre and the future Burnaby Lake Recreation Complex are ideal given their seating capacity.

Age and condition

All arenas are currently rated fair to good, or higher. The City’s inventory is in a relatively strong position for operating into the future.

Quality



Age



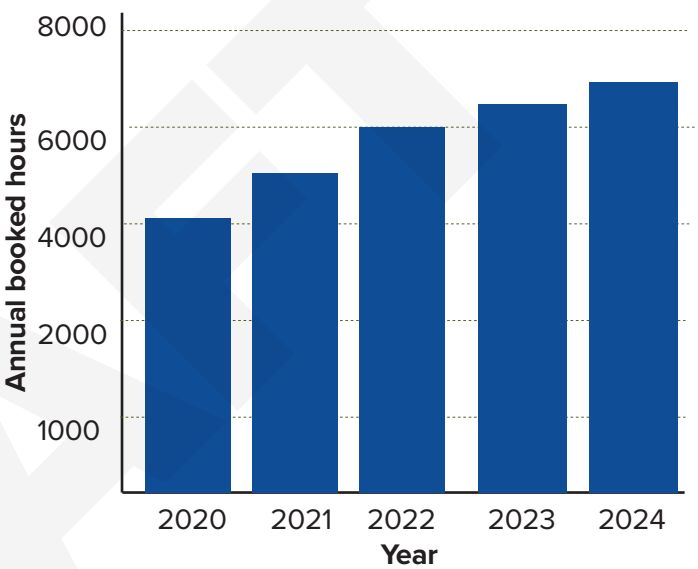
Trends in demand & utilization

Use of arenas is increasing since COVID-19, both for ice and dry floor space. This is in line with shifting participation trends. For instance, minor hockey registration in BC has seen a surge since COVID.

Usage for dry space is still considerably lower than ice sheet use, so arenas are generally quieter in summer months. However, dry space use is increasing year over year to accommodate sports such as ball hockey and lacrosse.

Private facilities generally serve a different target market (adult-oriented, geared towards tournament sites, higher price) but they do fill gaps for municipal service provision. Staff noted that adult leagues will utilize ice space at Burnaby facilities even at off hours (very early mornings or late evenings) because of cost savings, but rely on the rinks at Scotia Barn for booking tournaments

Annual combined ice and dry floor booked hours in City-operated arenas



Access

Based on the municipal comparison, the City is well-provisioned. A comparison of quadrants looks at how this provision is distributed. Overall, it reveals a large supply in the northwest and no supply in the northeast, including around the Lougheed Town Centre.

The provision numbers below includes Scotia Barn and Burnaby Winter Club.

- Northwest: 1.64 sheets per 10,000 residents
- Northeast: 0 sheets per 10,000 residents
- Southwest: 0.12 sheets per 10,000 residents
- Southeast: 0.33 sheets per 10,000 residents

This uneven geographic distribution is not as impactful for the following reasons:

- There is a concentration of arenas near the centre of the city, thereby serving multiple quadrants.
- Arenas are not generally intended to be walk-to facilities. Generally residents have access to an arena within a 5 km distance, which should be considered reasonable unless upcoming public engagement identifies this as a barrier.
- Additional dry floor space is provided through the City's sports boxes, though none are currently located in the northeast.

As such, access and supply are not preliminarily flagged as an issue, at least in the short to medium term.

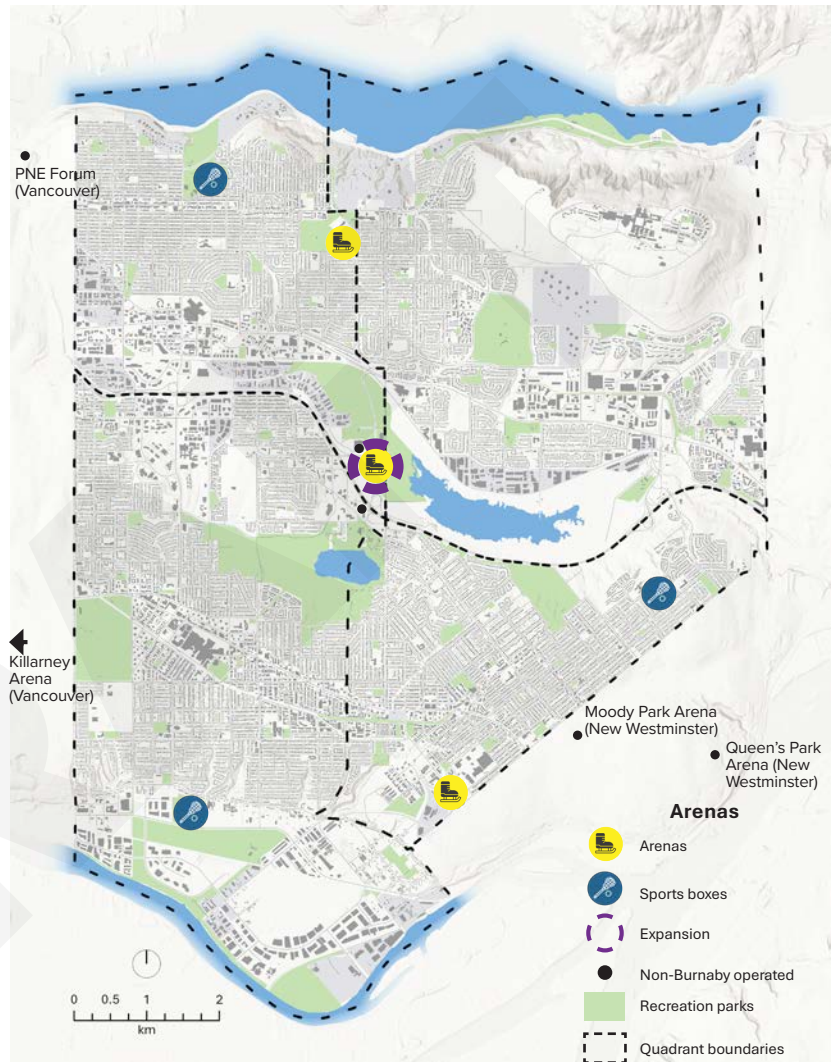


Figure 5. Map of arenas

This map highlights the distribution of arenas within Burnaby- there are large, centralized facilities, as well as two arenas which serve the north and south of the city.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- At the current service level, the typical resident has access to an arena that serves a range of activities (from sledge hockey to lacrosse), within 5 km. The future arena to be added within the Burnaby Lake Recreation Complex increases the capacity of the service area for programming, time-slots for leagues and tournaments.
- Additional review of utilization and engagement could verify if capacity and access are concerns among the public.

Opportunities

There are opportunities to promote arenas as community-oriented, multi-functional spaces. The following opportunities should be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

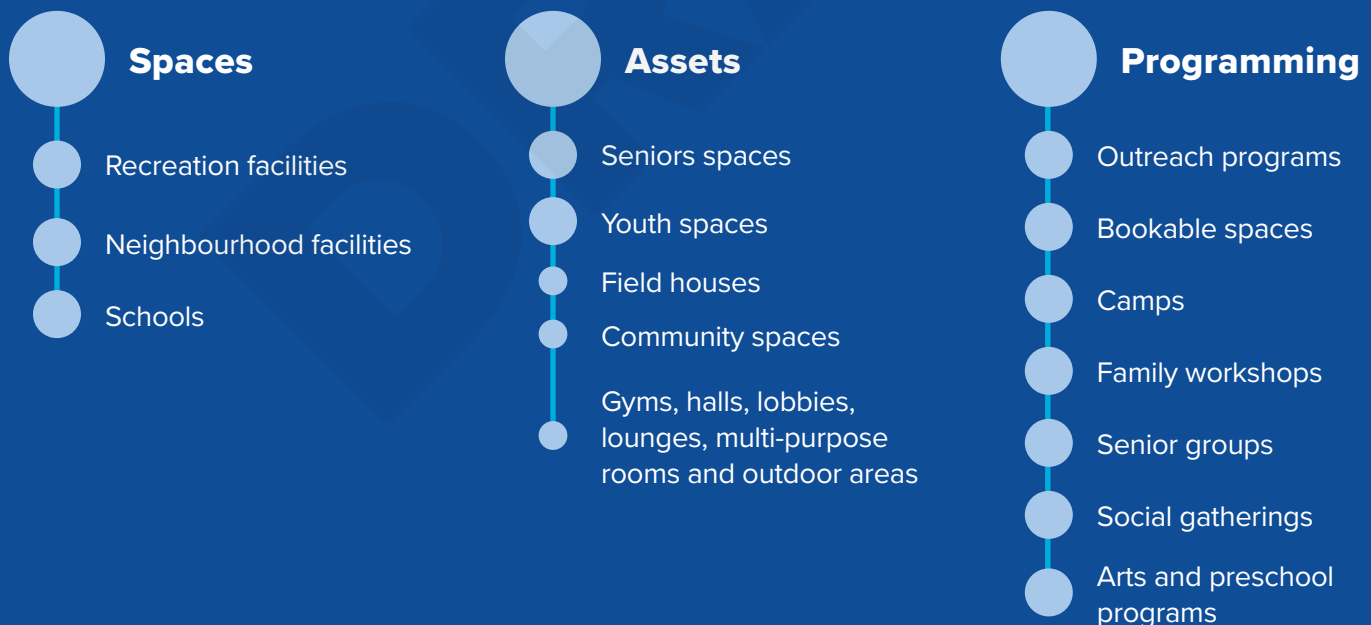
- Review allocations to ensure time slots accommodate emerging and adapted sports.
- Develop a programming strategy for arenas that activate community spaces. The strategy should also consider best locations to advance year-round ice and build on the growing utilization of dry floor space.

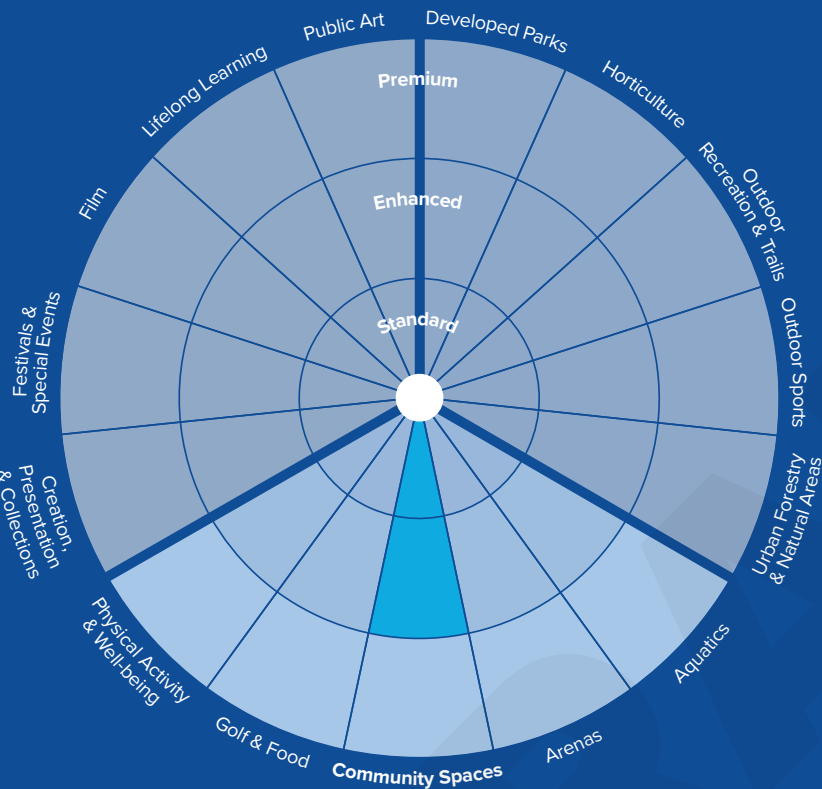
Community Spaces

Indoor and outdoor spaces to support City- and community-delivered programs, activities, events and social gatherings.

The service area

The City manages a range of spaces within recreational facilities and outdoor areas located on parks and recreation land. Staff also design and deliver a range of community programs that activate these spaces for residents. Community spaces support both informal use and organized activities for residents and non-residents alike. These spaces offer residents opportunities to foster connections and engage in health and well-being activities through recreation, programming, events and gatherings.





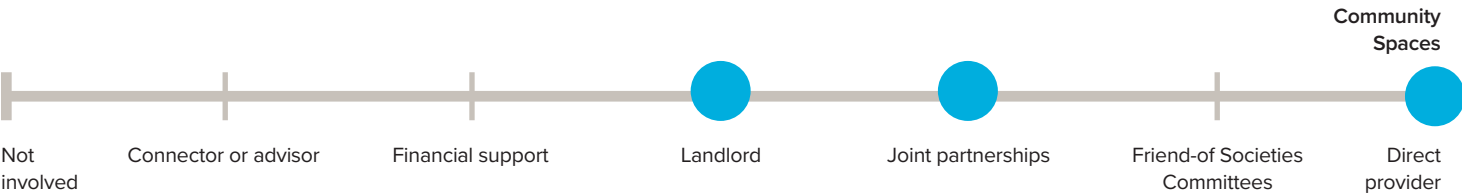
Service level: Enhanced

Community Spaces are delivered at an enhanced level. In addition to providing spaces, the City delivers a large share of the community-oriented programs offered in its parks and recreation facilities.

Community space, programs and rentals are common municipal services. Burnaby’s level of service is on par with benchmark municipalities but higher than comparable cities in the Metro Vancouver region.

The current operating model

The City owns and operates community spaces and provides access through direct programming and allotments to community organizations or individuals.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Low barrier services
- Flexible offerings (programmed, drop-in)
- Well-maintained spaces
- Leveraging resources with schools and community assets
- Strong historical relationships with School District 41

Weaknesses

- Lack of autonomy in some spaces
- Expensive to maintain
- Challenge to meet everyone's needs
- Underutilization and lack of awareness
- Currently no shared-use agreement in place with School District for community spaces

Opportunities

- Increasing awareness
- Revenue potential
- Reclaim and repurpose underutilized spaces
- Increasing collaboration and engagement with community and partners

Threats

- Constrained budgets
- Duplication with other organizations
- Staffing shortages
- Social issues
- No shared-use agreement means operations rely on history and past practice. As people retire, information is lost

Service area objective

This service area provides safe and inclusive environments to support residents of all ages, abilities, backgrounds and financial means to engage in civic life in Burnaby. These services help reduce isolation, particularly for seniors, newcomers and marginalized groups. This ensures public gathering space is available throughout the city as urban density increases.

Influencing drivers include:

- These spaces and their programming provide opportunities for residents to learn, grow and connect socially. A range of seasonal, after-school, registered and drop-in programs provide affordable and enriching experiences for residents of all ages and abilities.

How Burnaby compares

Burnaby offers a range of space types for community members to gather and connect. On a per capita basis, Burnaby offers more community spaces and dedicated seniors' spaces than the average for benchmark municipalities in the Metro Vancouver region. The City's provision is more closely aligned with the average for select municipalities outside Metro Vancouver. Other community spaces such as halls and multi-purpose rooms are generally available at approximately equivalent rates in Burnaby and comparable municipalities.

For every 100,000 residents there are 1.6 dedicated youth spaces in Burnaby. While other municipalities all typically provide youth programs, only 2 of the 8 comparable municipalities of study offered dedicated youth centres. Burnaby has four spaces dedicated to youth services.

Seniors spaces

For every 100,000 residents there are 1.6 senior community spaces.



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average ■ Selected outside Metro municipal average

Why does this matter?

Burnaby manages and operates many community spaces directly, providing distinct services for youth and seniors through dedicated facilities. Comparable municipalities provide affordable lease opportunities to third-party and non-profit community organizations to meet the needs of specific audiences. This approach leverages external resources to design and deliver services, and enables complementary offerings to co-locate in public facilities.

Condition

The condition of community spaces varies. Thirty-eight percent of facilities include some element of poor conditions. One facility is rated as critical.

Age

Facilities that provide community spaces range in age, most being less than 25 years old.

Condition



Age



Trends in demand

Community interest in planning and hosting social and cultural gatherings in parks and facilities continues to increase. Similarly, demand for purpose-built facilities like arenas and sports fields that provide supplementary space and amenities that support community gatherings is also on the rise.

The southeast quadrant has less community space and relies heavily on Edmonds Community Centre. Access for residents in northeast and northwest communities has been disrupted in the short-term while facility’s in these quadrants undergo renovation/redevelopment.

Access

Each quadrant provides programmable community space composed of multi-purpose rooms and dedicated senior and youth spaces. Christine Sinclair Community Centre’s central location provides access to for residents throughout the city.

Quadrant provisioning

- Northwest: 3 facilities with 5,914 sq m
- Northeast: 1 facility with 5,262 sq m
- Southwest: 2 facilities with 5,243 sq m
- Southeast: 2 facilities with 3,596 sq m
- Citywide: 1 facility with 3,838 sq m



Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- The current service level means that the typical resident should have access to community spaces and programming within the quadrant they live. This could be a dedicated space for youth within the family, supporting their transition into adulthood. Or, it could mean a dedicated space for the grandparents to connect with neighbours.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or through future planning initiatives.

- Continue to explore creative opportunities to share space and programming through shared-use agreements with schools. Topics to explore could include higher utilization of school spaces during summer, and lowering or waiving of fees for City use.
- Consider opportunities to support the implementation of Burnaby's forthcoming Social Infrastructure Strategy and leverage insights from Social Planning to inform future directions for this service area.
- Continue to build on success of co-location by identifying new opportunities to support an ecosystem of community groups, non-profit groups and spaces that focus on resident and community well-being.
- Develop a programming strategy to build on existing outreach services for newcomers.
- Undertake needs assessment that focuses on community spaces and considers opportunities to address existing gaps through renovation and repurposing of spaces (e.g., storage or increasing in usable programmable space). Engagement with user groups should be integrated into the assessment.

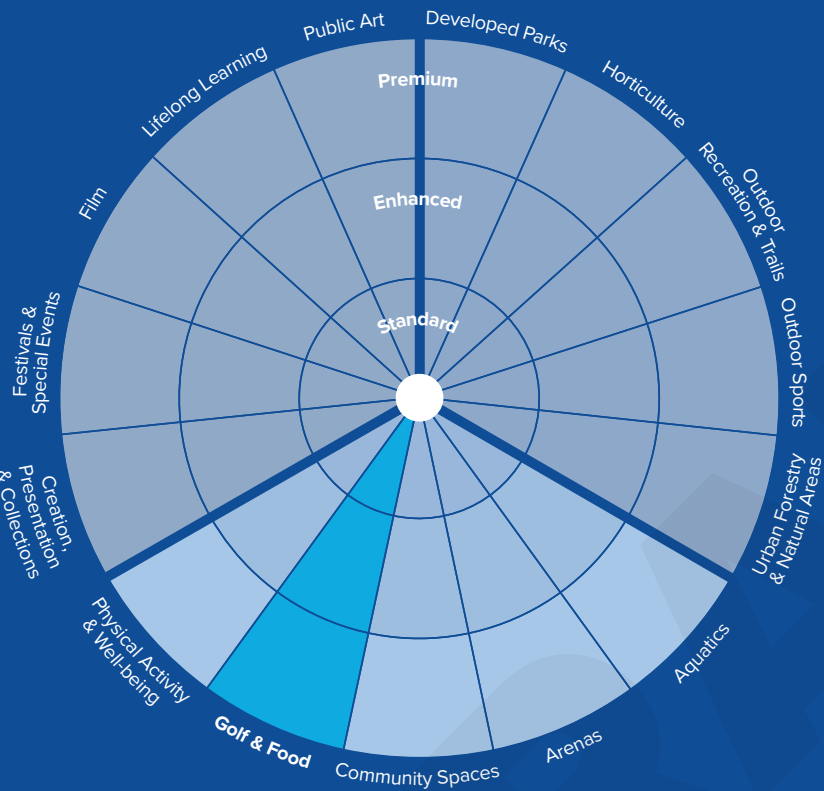
Golf & Food

Golf courses, pitch and putt courses and sports development programs, as well as full-service restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, concessions and banquet spaces.

The service area

The City manages golf courses, facilities, restaurants and programs across multiple locations to enhance the community's parks and recreation experiences. Golf services support player development, league play, charitable events and skill development programs. Food services make a wide range of dining experiences available in Burnaby's public spaces, from award-winning restaurants to senior support services. These distinct offerings support healthy lifestyles and provide spaces where people can enjoy the outdoors and connect with the community.





Service level: Premium

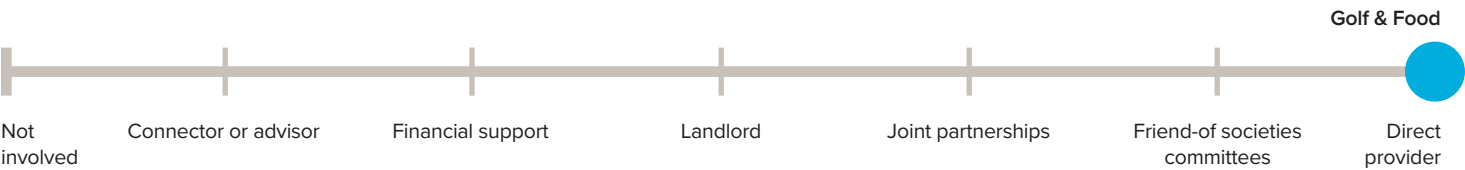
The quality of golf courses and the quality and type of food service offering is unique compared to other municipalities.

Key findings

- Golf & Food services operates strictly on a fee for service model.
- Pitch and putt demand has been trending down, however numbers this year are better the previous years to date.
- Food Burnaby serves over 400,000 guests each year.

The current operating model

The City owns the golf courses and food services buildings. They undertake the operating and programming directly.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Strong financial performance
- Experienced workforce
- Diverse golf offerings; flexibility in programming
- Environmental sustainability practices employed such as water conservation
- Provides seniors food support services
- Cost of golf and food services is lower than comparable private services

Weaknesses

- Slower off-season use
- Lack of public awareness of food services offered
- Aging infrastructure and increasing maintenance costs
- Services are cost prohibitive relative to low and no-cost recreational offerings
- Competition with private industry for food services
- Lack of transit access to services

Opportunities

- Expanded programming such as disc golf, mini golf and food support programs
- Increased marketing to attract new users to the food services
- Advanced technology to reduce climate footprint and operating costs
- Defining the service as a revenue generator or as self funded (break even)

Threats

- Climate change and invasive species management
- Rising maintenance and operational costs
- Residents have greater recreational options available to them at a fraction of the cost and time commitment
- Food cost increases for food services

Service area objective

Golf and food services generates revenue for the City and provides recreational services not currently provided in Burnaby.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Outreach:** Food services also offers social programs to benefit the community, such as providing food services for seniors and emergency response shelters and providing grocery delivery to seniors.

- **Diversity:** Extend the reach of golf and food services to promote the use of facilities to a broader demographic.
- **Financials:** Golf and food services are primarily funded through user-fees.

How Burnaby compares

The golf and restaurant offerings by the City of Burnaby are unique. Select Metro Vancouver municipalities and select municipalities outside Metro Vancouver offer public municipally-run golf courses, but is supplemented by private providers.

Select comparable municipalities do not directly provide full-service restaurants or cafes, while others do. Concession stands are typical within most comparable municipal arenas, but may be run by third-party providers. Another unique-to-Burnaby offering is branded products such as coffee beans and beer.

Golf and pitch and putt courses

For every 100,000 residents there are 1.6 golf and pitch and putt courses.



Disc golf

For every 100,000 residents there is 0.80 disc golf courses. Not all courses are 18 holes.



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average ■ Selected outside Metro municipal average

Why does this matter?

Burnaby offers a higher number of direct City-provided golf courses that exceed the general standard provided by comparable municipality courses. Rising maintenance and operating costs and competition from private golf courses in the region, present a challenge in maintaining the standard of services and programming.

Food services provides a high quality experience to residents and visitors at a reduced rate unmatched by other municipalities.

Food services

Directly or indirectly managed food kiosks and concessions

- All selected Metro Vancouver and outside Metro comparable municipalities.

Directly or indirectly managed restaurant and banquet facilities

- A range of facilities is offered in Metro Vancouver and outside Metro comparable municipalities. Most golf courses offer dining and rental of their facilities.

A comparable service of brewing and coffee roasting

- Unique to Burnaby are specialty services such as brewing its own beer and roasting its own coffee beans.

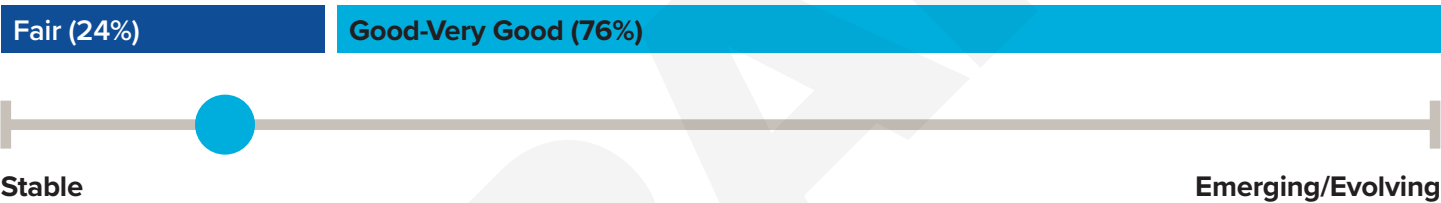
Condition

The average age of golf facilities is 38 years old. The majority of golf facilities, at 76%, are in good to very good condition with the remaining 24% in fair condition.

Trends in demand

Golf & Food services are generally remaining stable, with the exception of pitch and putt decreasing in demand. Indoor golf simulators—the fastest growing portion of the golf market—and other golf facilities, such as disc golf and pitch and putt, provide alternatives to traditional golf. In addition, the opportunity to create multi-use facilities is a growing trend in parks and recreation in order to create flexible spaces that can adapt to changing sporting and recreation trends.

Condition



Access

Burnaby's Golf & Food services are spread throughout the city and primarily accessible by vehicle. Food services within recreation facilities and arenas are more accessible by transit, but they're used primarily by visitors who are attending those venues for other services. Since there are relatively few locations, residents who don't live in close proximity will have to travel farther for these services.

Golf and food services are generally less accessible than other recreation activities due to higher participation costs and locations that are typically only accessible by car. However, municipal golf services are more affordable than comparable private courses in Metro Vancouver, and there are no private golf courses located in Burnaby.

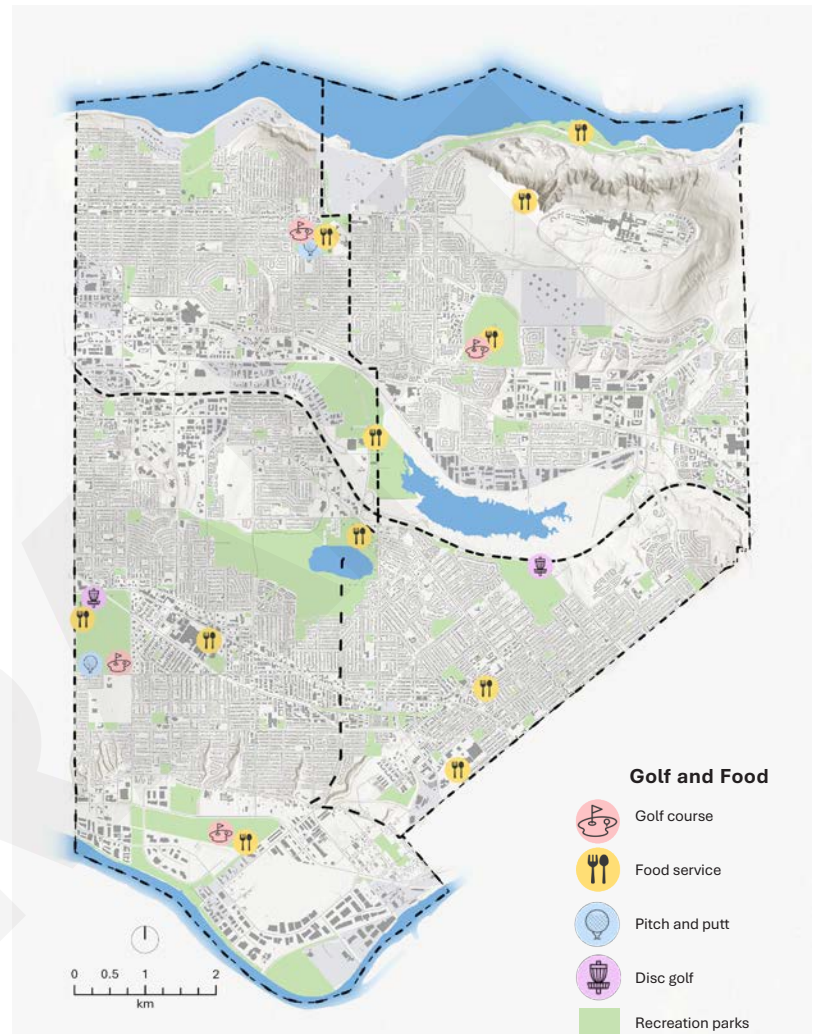


Figure 6. Golf and food services map

This map illustrates the distribution in the city of golf courses, pitch and putt, disc golf locations and food services.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- Golf offers another form of recreation for residents to enjoy and participate in within the city, with no alternative options provided through the private market.
- Some of the food services and grocery deliveries directly benefit seniors within the community who may be less mobile.
- Golf is an activity that can be enjoyed by a wider range of ages and is accessible year round in Burnaby.
- Food prices allow more people to experience fine dining and other food services as prices are kept relatively low compared to similar private services.

Opportunities

Several preliminary directions can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

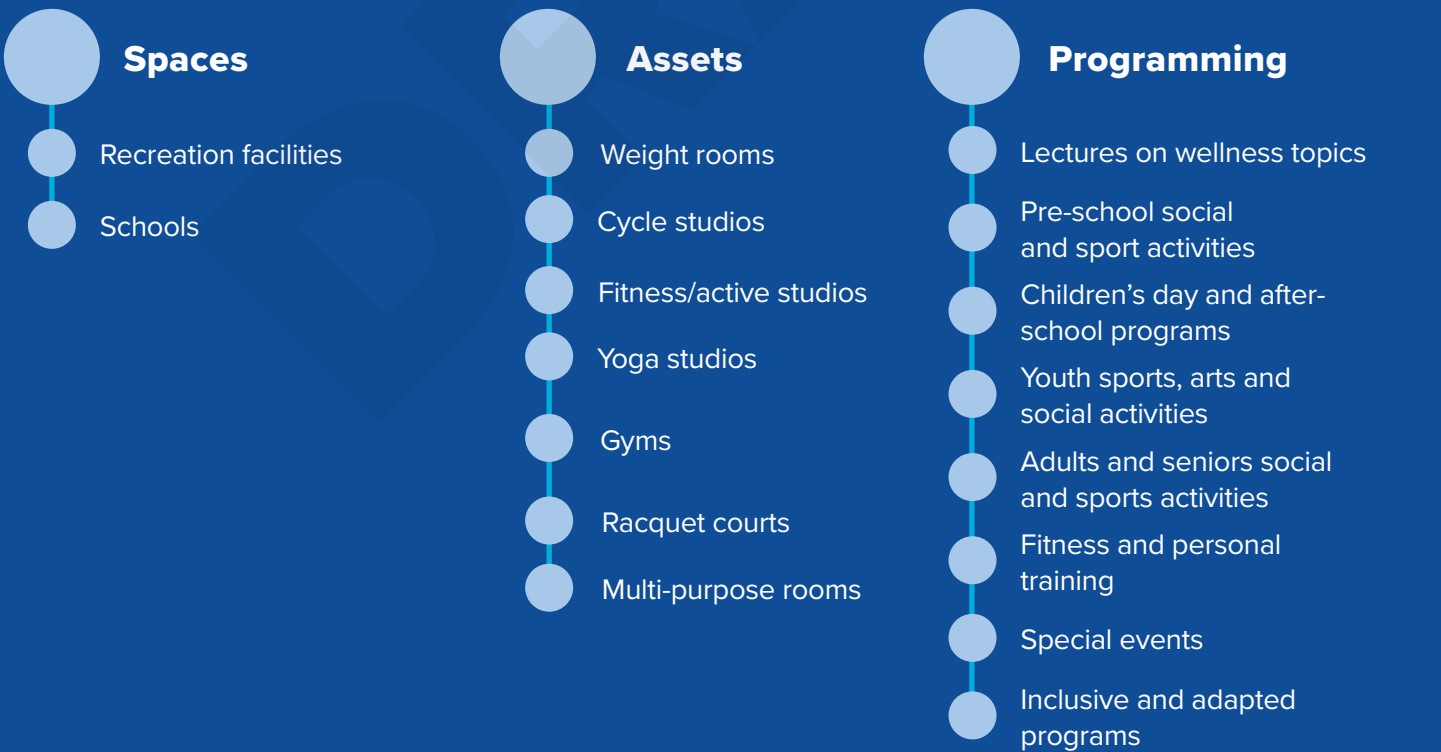
- Expand other programming options such as disc golf, mini golf and indoor golf simulators.
- Expand food service offerings to provide additional food services for people in need.
- Develop additional operational and financial information (e.g., the number of rounds played across the different facilities, revenue from the different facilities and programs) to assess usage and the financial sustainability and performance.
- Continuously improve the environmental sustainability of golf and food services such as improved water use efficiency, incorporating more trees and pollinator gardens into facilities and transitioning to alternative technology vehicles.

Physical Activity & Well-being

Recreation facilities and their fitness and sports amenities provide opportunities for indoor physical activity.

The service area

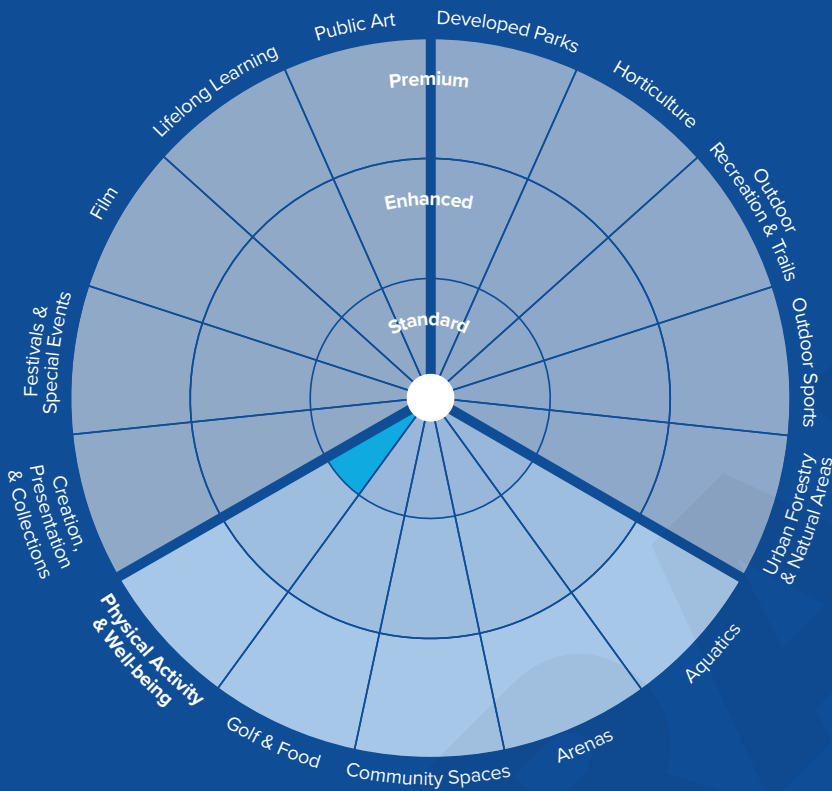
Physical Activity & Well-Being includes gyms, multi-purpose spaces and programming located throughout Burnaby's indoor facilities. These services support residents to participate in sport and physical activity year-round. Opportunities to participate in sports can prevent disease, relieve stress, improve focus and generally enhance emotional well-being.



Service level: Standard

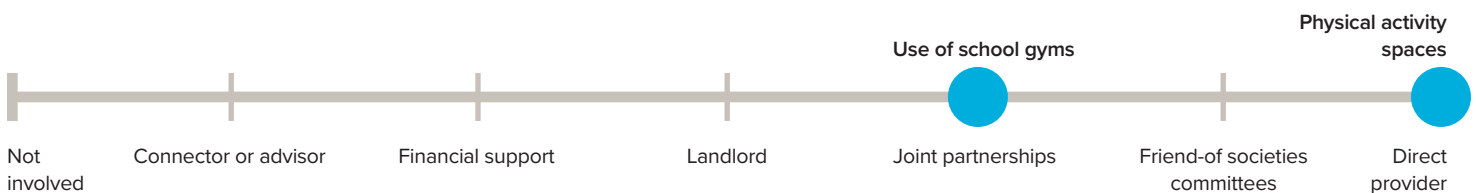
The spaces and types of program offerings are at a standard level, in line with other municipalities. However, within this service area, there are smaller components such as dedicated yoga and spin studios that are not typical.

- These spaces have strong demand.
- The access and quality of experience differs across the City ranging from smaller, older facilities to larger, new facilities.



The current operating model

The City owns and manages the facilities for these spaces. The City also partners with schools to use their spaces.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Knowledgeable staff with high standards
- Reduction of barriers (FAIR Play and inclusivity)
- High quality equipment
- Variety of offerings

Weaknesses

- Aging facilities
- Needs to keep up with growing demand
- Hiring process is lengthy and lack of consistency in training
- Marketing is not reaching new individuals

Opportunities

- Communications to extend awareness
- Increase focus to seniors/older adults and newcomers
- Offer new services based on emerging interests

Threats

- Tight budgets
- Shifts in demand

Service area objective

This service area is generally a locally-oriented offering in line with the PRC Strategic Plan's direction for Recreation "to make connections and to impact residents' social, emotional, mental and physical health in tangible and intangible ways".

Influencing drivers include:

- The Interim Facility Allocation Policy prioritizes City of Burnaby programs, followed by groups comprising at least 60% Burnaby residents. Gymnasium booking data supports this approach, as the bulk of bookings appear to be made by local users.

- Based on the Northwest Quadrant Recreation Needs Assessment and the Northeast Quadrant Community Space Needs Assessment, the City has established provision targets for community space as 1 sq. ft. per capita.
- The facility inventory that supports this service area is composed of smaller, older facilities along with larger, newer facilities located in or near town centres.
- Financials: Significant capital investment has been made to add additional facilities. Existing aging facilities and spaces will require capital investment to keep pace with resident programming needs.

How Burnaby compares

Burnaby offers a range of indoor physical recreation opportunities, ranging from indoor gyms, fitness spaces and well-being programs. Burnaby is unique in offering dedicated spaces for specialized activities, such as yoga and spin classes. Comparable municipalities within and outside Metro Vancouver generally do not maintain dedicated spaces for these activities, but do provide comparable programming in flexible-use spaces.

Why does this matter?

The comparison supports the service level elevation as a standard offering. The overall type and supply of these spaces is in line with other municipalities, with the exception of dedicated studio spaces.

Weight rooms

For every 100,000 residents there are 1.6 weight rooms.



Gymnasiums

For every 100,000 residents there are 1.6 gymnasiums.



Age and condition

The condition of buildings for Physical Activity & Well-being vary between poor to fair and good. Half the facilities are rated as Poor to Fair, and these are largely from older buildings such as Willingdon Community

Centre. Buildings serving Physical Activity & Well-being range in age over the last 60 years. Including planned facilities, half of all facilities will be less than 15 years old.

Condition



Age



Trends in demand

Physical Activity and Well-being takes place in various types of spaces from gymnasiums to specialized studios. While gymnasiums do not provide a complete picture, they offer a useful example for identifying overall trends. Booking data from 2020 and 2024 show steadily increasing hours following the years where COVID would have restricted use. It’s reasonable to conclude, therefore, that demand and use are still growing. Staff indicated this service area is driven by emerging demands.

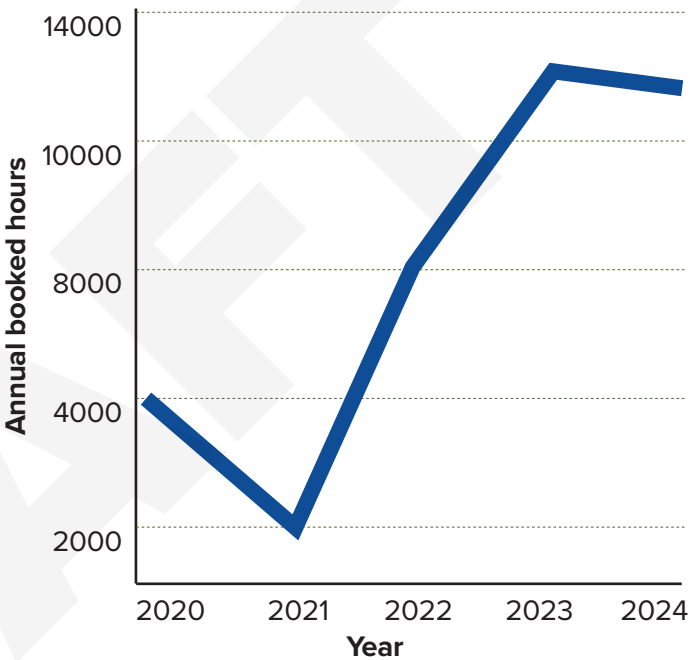
Some of these demands include:

- Increased usage from emerging sports, such as indoor pickleball
- Growing participation from newcomers to Burnaby
- Increasing demand for unstructured, informal opportunities

There are also other trends occurring nationally, such as:

- Growing demand in certain gymnasium-based activities, including badminton and table tennis
- Continued demand for fitness classes and individualized workouts
- Growing demand for certain specialized classes, such as kick-boxing
- Growing demand for physical and mental well-being, mindfulness and mental health through activities such as pilates and yoga

Annual booked hours in City-operated gymnasiums



Access

There is City-managed programmable space enabling Physical Activity and Well-Being in each quadrant within Burnaby.

There is variation in the amount of space provision.

- Northwest: 0.19 sq m per capita
- Northeast: 0.12 sq m per capita
- Southwest: 0.06 sq m per capita
- Southeast: 0.05 sq m per capita

The provision metrics include spaces beyond physical activity and well-being such as lounges.

The southeast and southwest have a relatively smaller share of space, and therefore uneven access may be relevant to residents in those quadrants.

Access in the southwest also relies on a relatively older facility, Bonsor Recreation Complex. The other quadrants have access to newer facilities.

Engagement during the PRC Plan can be used to better understand resident interest in access and whether size or age of facility impacts participation.

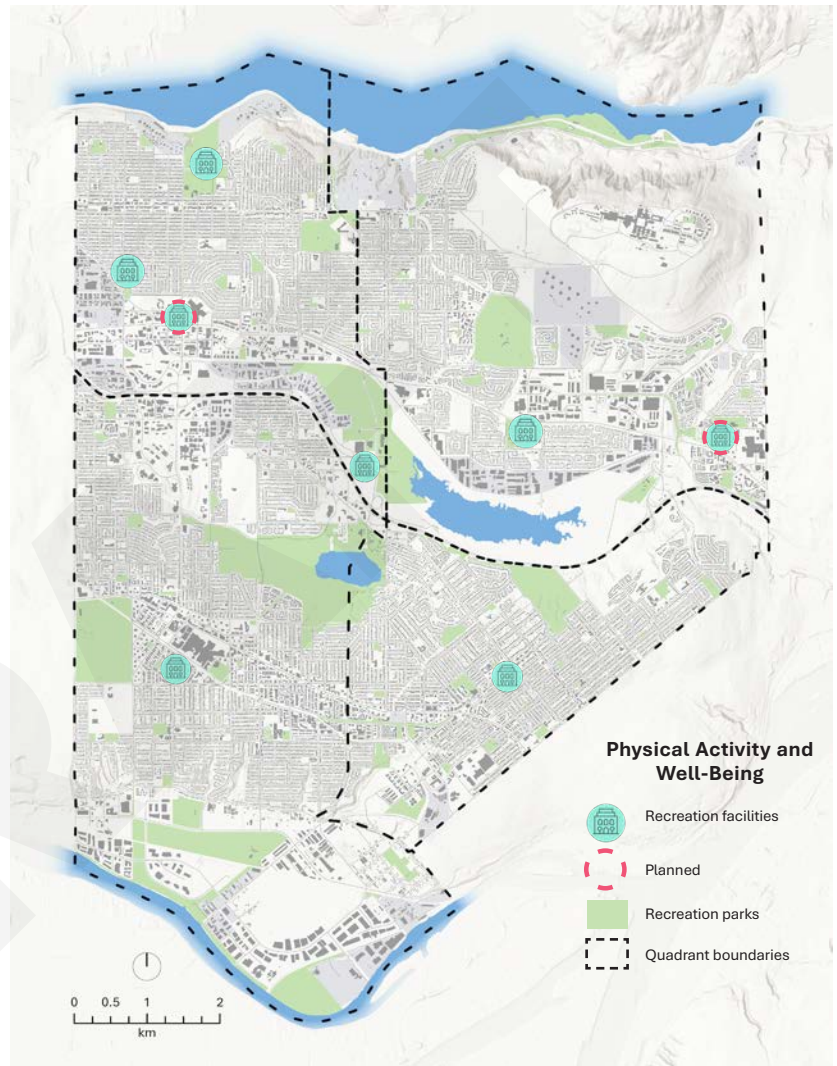


Figure 7. Map of major locations for indoor physical activity and well-being

The map highlights major facilities which provide physical activity and well-being opportunities within in each quadrant. There are also additional spaces such as school sites that supplement programmable space for this service area.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

The current level of provision for this service area means that the typical resident is within 5 km of a space to support physical activity and well-being. Families moving into the town centres will generally have access to modern facilities in the future.

- There is a variety of spaces citywide to serve a range of interests. For instance, Burnaby offers community-oriented activities such as Active Adventures at Willingdon Community Centre and spin classes in a dedicated studio in Christine Sinclair Community Centre.
- Residents living in some areas of the city will rely more on smaller, older facilities such as Willingdon Community Centre. The smaller community-oriented facilities may be fulfilling a key demand for residents, but programming are also challenged through older designs and conditions of spaces.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

- Continue to build on new participation from newcomers through additional marketing and relationship building with communities.
- Develop a programming strategy that:
 - › Considers how to shift over-booked classes to other available locations, such as schools or underutilized City-operated spaces
 - › Increase focus on seniors and adults
 - › Coordinates programming across the network through dialogue with other Metro Vancouver municipalities and external organizations.
- Identify innovative opportunities to increase utilization of indoor school spaces, building on the successful initiatives already underway between the City and School District 41.
- A key move for this service area should be balancing financial considerations, differing preferences between smaller and larger facilities and ensuring residents broadly have similar baseline access.
- Explore opportunities to build on existing partnerships (e.g., schools) and develop new ones to support service delivery (post-secondary institutions).

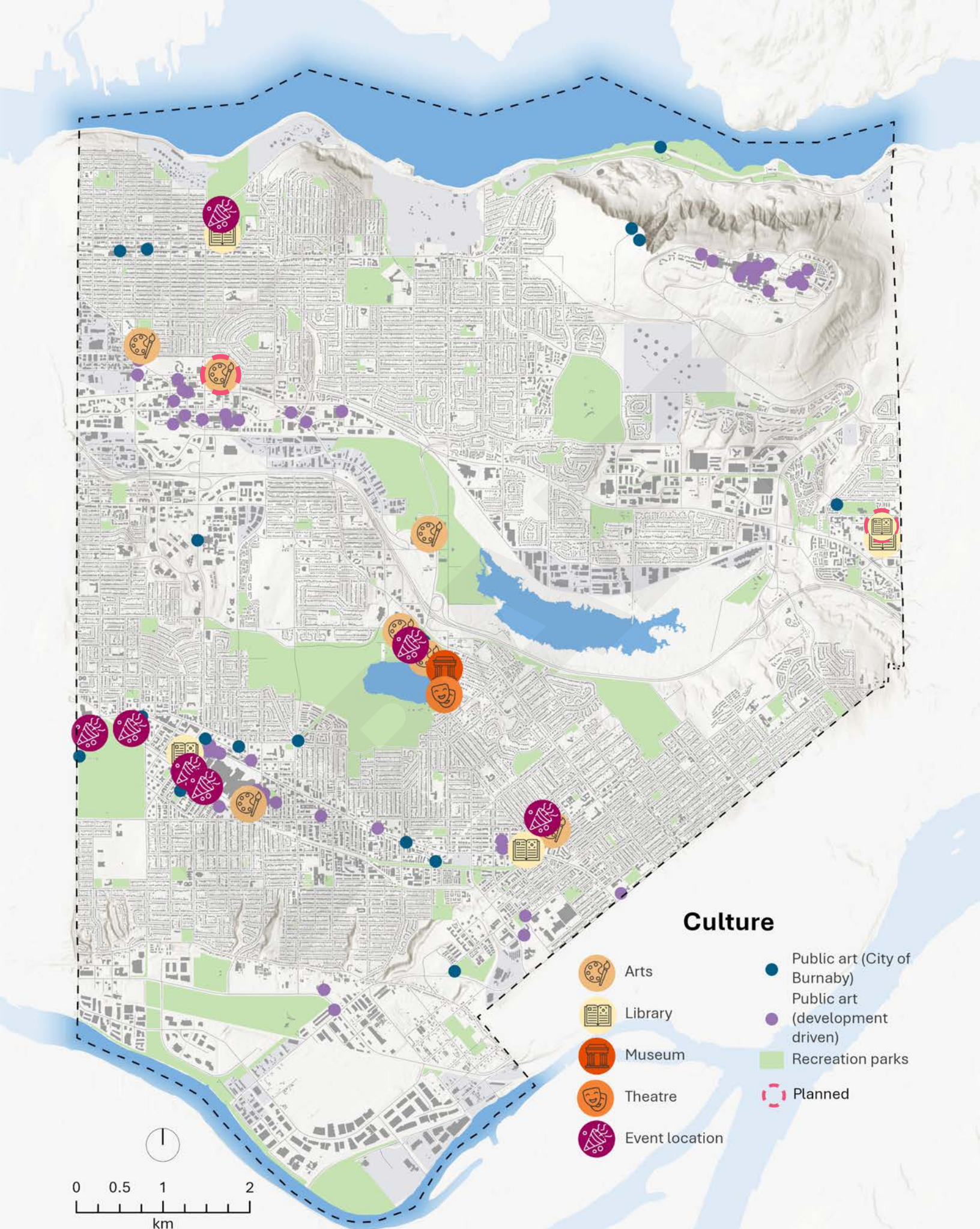
Culture



Burnaby's culture spaces house significant civic collections and deliver world-class exhibitions, live performances and specialized programming.

The City directly produces festivals and special events throughout the year, offering accessible cultural programming that celebrates diversity and animates public spaces, while also facilitating film production that supports the local creative economy. The system is further enhanced by comprehensive lifelong learning opportunities from introductory classes to professional residencies, along with public art installations and interpretive programming that enrich the urban landscape and foster civic identity across the community.





Disclaimer: to support readability, this map in some instances groups multiple activities of the same type and slightly offsets locations of icons.

Creation, Presentation & Collections

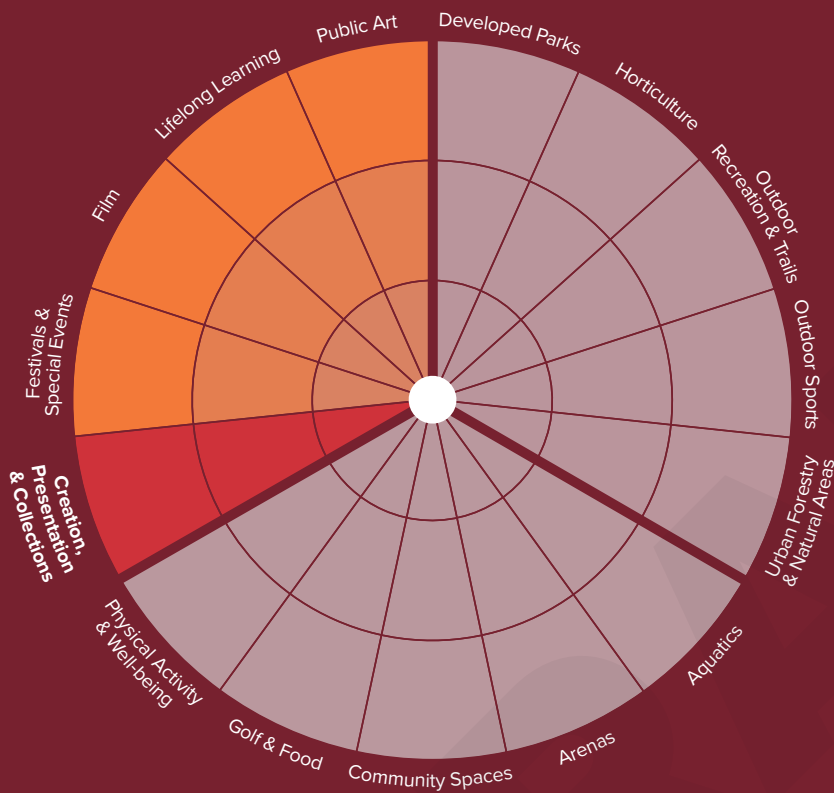
Describes the core operations of the Burnaby Village Museum, Burnaby Art Gallery and Shadbolt Centre for the Arts which provide access to world class and locally relevant arts, creation, cultural heritage performance, and presentations.

The service area

Creation, Presentation & Collections help tell the story of Burnaby's past, present and future.

- **Creation:** Programming in the facilities that make up Burnaby's cultural precinct draw families, artists, other residents and visitors who are seeking accessible art and performance, entertainment and other enrichment opportunities.
- **Presentation:** Welcoming local, national and international artists and arts organizations into residencies, co-presentation and other collaborations results in vibrant new works for the benefit of Burnaby residents and the city's cultural fabric.
- **Collections:** The collections of the museum and gallery represent both Burnaby's rich past and cultural aspirations for the future, and are cared for and programmed in a manner that supports broad community engagement, learning and shared experiences.





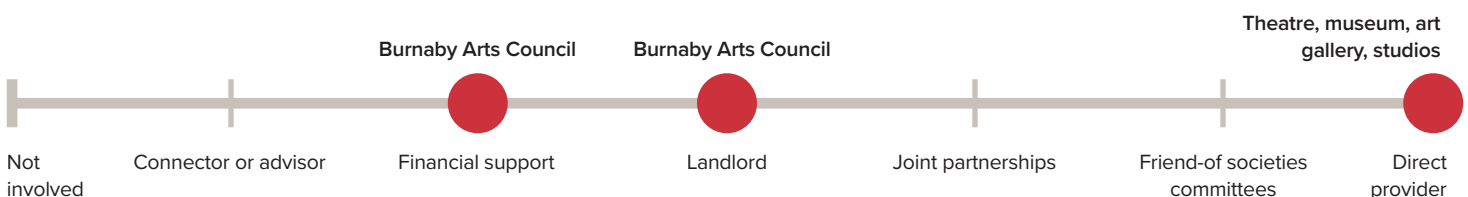
Service level: Premium

This service area combines programming, specialized cultural infrastructure and sector-leading contributions. Burnaby Art Gallery has one of the largest civic permanent art collections in British Columbia, an element that contributes to the premium service level assignment. Creation, Presentation & Collections deliver high-calibre experiences through direct support of professional artists, artist residencies, live performance, exhibition programs and immersive historical interpretation. It also presents experiences beyond typical municipal cultural services.

This combination of professional standards, leadership and regional significance makes it a specialized, non-standard service offering, as it serves niche and city-building objectives not typically found in core municipal services. The level of service is challenged by aging facilities and limited space for storage, exhibitions and programs. Cultural venues have outgrown their capacity to house collections and host growing public demand. Storage constraints limit the ability to preserve, rotate and showcase the full breadth of the City's collections.

The current operating model

The City owns and manages the theatre, gallery, museum and studios directly. This work also includes programming such as determining shows, exhibits and other related initiatives. The City also supports key organizations, like the Burnaby Art Council, to provide opportunities for more diverse programming and new audiences.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Immersive, heritage-rich spaces
- Strong demand
- High-calibre collections
- Highly qualified professional staff and consultants
- Online collection accessibility
- Unique sites
- Focus on low- and no-cost programming enhances access

Weaknesses

- Non-purpose-built facilities
- Aging infrastructure
- Limited exhibit, storage and community allotment space
- Heritage buildings pose challenges for access and flexibility of programming
- Underused digital platforms

Opportunities

- Amenity crossovers at Deer Lake Cultural District
- Community and internal partnerships
- Collection visibility
- Technology for asset tracking, interpretation and access
- Meaningful Host Nations engagement
- Strategic inclusion in civic planning
- Expansion of arts and culture amenities to serve a growing community

Threats

- Site wear and tear
- Constrained budgets
- Climate vulnerability
- Transit inaccessibility; reliance on outdated third-party systems

Service area objective

To enable the creation and presentation of new and diverse works and immersive historical experiences. And, to steward collections that reflect the identity, values and histories of Burnaby's communities.

Influencing drivers include:

- Population Growth and Density: Increased demand for arts access and creative outlets, especially in growth areas like Town Centres.
- Heritage Infrastructure: Aging buildings limit programming and expansion capabilities.
- Artist Development Pipelines: Deer Lake artist residencies and programming at Shadbolt Centre for the Arts support career development to ensure Burnaby continues to benefit from a strong local cultural sector.
- Civic Identity and Cultural Expression: Growing expectations that civic spaces reflect diverse community narratives.

- Lack of Dedicated Facilities: Heavy reliance on multi-purpose or adapted spaces restricts performance and exhibition quality.
- Community Engagement: Strong work needed to engage community in cultural representation.
- Financials: As a percentage of revenue, the Burnaby Village Museum is the most costly facility to operate, followed by the Burnaby Art Gallery and then the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. Operating and maintaining local museums can be challenging for municipalities, particularly because they often rely on tourism. Adding to the challenge, the Burnaby Village Museum is free, which is unusual compared to similar destination attractions. Programming that draws Burnaby residents to the museum may be key to supporting its long-term sustainability.

How Burnaby compares

Municipalities across Canada play a range of roles in public art, from facilitators and regulators to curators and commissioners. Cities like Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Victoria and Hamilton have adopted comprehensive public art plans that integrate public art into civic planning, placemaking and Reconciliation frameworks. These approaches emphasize equity, storytelling and site-specific engagement. In contrast, municipalities such as Burnaby, Kelowna, Coquitlam and Vaughan primarily operate on a project-by-project basis, with varying levels of policy support and emerging or absent public art plans guiding decisions and investments.

Why supply isn't insightful for this service area

A comparison of the number of facilities does not show a significant variation in supply. As an example, municipalities in the selected comparison generally had a similar number of performing arts theatres per

capita. As such, a more meaningful evaluation lens is the difference in the degree to which municipalities are involved in direct facility operation, as described above.

Why does this matter?

This variation highlights an opportunity for Burnaby to build a cohesive public art plan to guide decisions in this service area and develop tools that support more equitable, place-based and community-reflective public art planning.

Performing arts theatres as a selected sample

The City of Burnaby plays a role in 2 theatres (one undergoing renovation). For every 100,000 residents there are 0.8 theatres.



Trends in demand

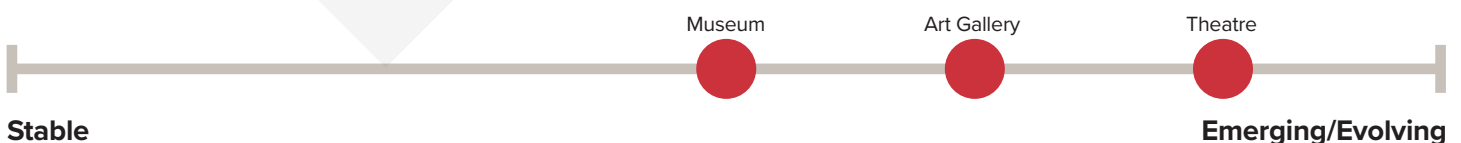
The Creation, Presentation & Collections service area, comprising the Burnaby Art Gallery, the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts and Burnaby Village Museum, is showing a strong emerging and evolving demand, although the rate and type of evolution vary across the three components:

- **Theatres:** Burnaby's theatres are experiencing increasing demand. The Shadbolt Centre for the Arts operates at or near capacity across its various disciplines. New infrastructure, like the forthcoming 365-seat theatre signals planning to meet growing demand. Expanded community partnerships and the attraction of regional, national and international artists all point to increasing participation and pressure on facilities.
- **Burnaby Art Gallery:** The Art Gallery faces increasing expectations both from audiences and artists. It has outgrown its current space and is unable to achieve Class A status due to heritage building limitations, restricting its ability to attract major donations. The inability to achieve Class A status means the gallery is ineligible for certain grants and funding opportunities, including tax benefits for donors. The gallery's collection size and attendance have increased, while access (e.g., lack of elevator) and infrastructure issues have remained static, limiting the ability to meet future demand.
- **Burnaby Village Museum:** The Museum continues to serve as a key regional attraction, with over 70,000 artifacts and immersive community programming. Visitor volumes are increasing, with noticeable spikes during events such as Festive Village and during unique Indigenous programming, which is in high demand due to growing interest in Indigenous knowledge, teachings, and ways of knowing. The museum has had record attendance over the last few months and increases in general attendance since the pandemic. Still, because of its seasonal nature and space limitations, its evolution is more gradual.

Attendance out of COVID (based on admissions)

Burnaby Art Gallery:
11,683 (2022) to 12,649 (2024)

Burnaby Village Museum:
181,198 (2022) to 227,600 in (2024)



Access & condition

Burnaby’s Creation, Presentation & Collections service area is grounded in high-calibre production and presentation, supported by professional staff and a robust infrastructure of studios, exhibition spaces and performance spaces. However, many public facing programs are delivered in facilities that are aging and not purpose built, resulting in physical accessibility barriers, such as a lack of elevators, limited drop-in access and insufficient storage and exhibition space. These factors impact public access and constrain the potential for broader community engagement.

Budget cycles and infrastructure limitations further limit the ability to plan long term or present large-scale multimedia exhibitions. However, free entrance to the Burnaby Village Museum supports inclusive public access.

In addition to the Deer Lake Park facilities, the City of Burnaby is focusing on diversifying and bringing more

experiences to the community (for example, through community centres). This supports increased access for Burnaby residents to Creation, Presentation & Collection opportunities.

The condition of the main buildings within the Deer Lake Cultural District vary from “poor to fair” to “good.” Burnaby Art Gallery, for instance has a condition rating of “poor to fair”. Burnaby Village Museum is made up of a collection of facilities that range from “Poor to fair” to “good.”

The buildings within the Cultural District are predominantly heritage buildings that have been updated over time to accommodate uses. For example, Mathers House is a heritage building (from 1912) and is currently used for arts programming.

Condition



Heritage vs non-heritage



Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- People can access exhibitions and performances close to home.
- Cultural spaces provide opportunities for community members to engage with art, history and performance.
- The people of Burnaby may see their own stories or identities reflected in collections and programming.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan or identified as future work.

- Develop a long-range Cultural Infrastructure Strategy to prioritize purpose-built facilities and upgrades that support artistic and historical excellence, climate resilience and expanded collections access.
- Expand community-driven presentation opportunities by reallocating space and resources to enable small- and mid-scale cultural groups to exhibit and perform.
- Formalize partnerships with post-secondary institutions (e.g., Simon Fraser University, Emily Carr University of Art + Design) for artist residencies, exhibitions and cultural programming to strengthen Burnaby's professional arts and heritage ecosystem.
- Establish a Cultural Collections Engagement Plan that includes the translation of interpretive content, improved accessibility (digitally and physically) and rotating off-site displays.
- Invest in conservation, staff skills and database usage to ensure the long-term care and future-proofing of collections.
- Increase Indigenous and equity-denied community representation.
- Develop a Cultural Strategy that aligns staff resourcing with the ambitions established during the process, including the potential to formalize curatorial and administrative roles to enhance artist support and ensure continuity across cultural programs.

Festivals & Special Events

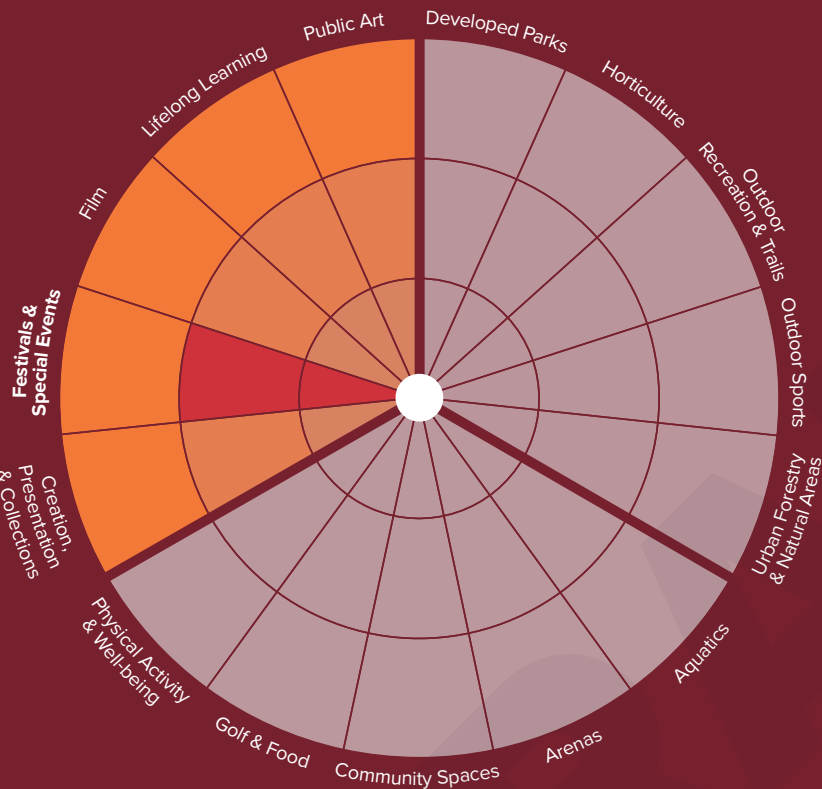
Events that bring people together to share culture and celebrate.

The service area

Festivals & Special Events introduce residents and visitors to diverse cultural expressions, often serving as their first engagement with the arts. This area includes City-produced signature events, community partnerships and civic celebrations, providing multi-generational, no-cost and accessible programming across Burnaby. Events foster cultural literacy, community pride and offer pathways for emerging artists to grow their careers.

The City plans, coordinates and produces a range of civic events, while also supporting community-led initiatives through advice, permitting and logistical assistance. In addition to festival and event organizing, the City maintains and upgrades event infrastructure, by undertaking site improvements, providing servicing and adding amenities.





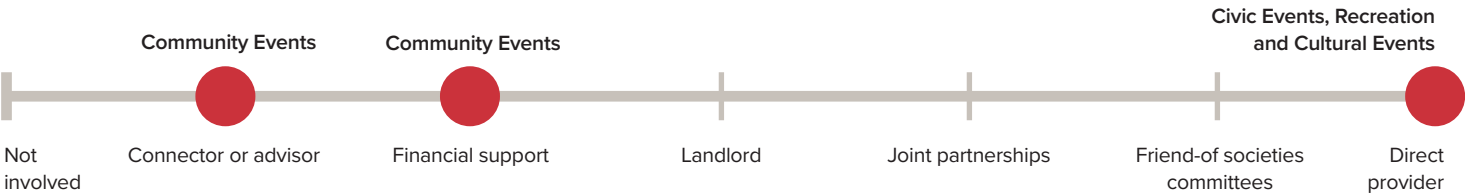
Service level: Enhanced

While not fully specialized like a premium service, this service area surpasses standard municipal offerings in its scope, consistency, and ability to foster cultural engagement across diverse audiences—particularly through City-led production of high-profile, free, and multi-generational events. The service area also integrates Indigenous cultural expression in the majority of its programming and has shown remarkable audience growth. The level of service is challenged by infrastructure constraints, seasonal concentration and uneven distribution across the city.

- Event sites are operating at or near capacity, with limited permanent infrastructure beyond Deer Lake Park to support large-scale delivery.
- Most events are clustered in summer months and in the southwest quadrant, leaving other areas and seasons underserved.

The current operating model

The City directly organizes and delivers special events. It also supports external groups to deliver community festivals and special events.



The SWOT

Strengths

- No-cost, accessible events
- High safety standards
- Consistent branding
- Major increase in attendance (+460% since 2019)
- Indigenous cultural expressions in most civic events

Weaknesses

- Uneven geographic distribution
- Event infrastructure gaps (e.g., power, washrooms, permanent stages)
- High turnover of auxiliary staff
- Limited event oversight capacity

Opportunities

- Community-based delivery model expansion (i.e. pop-up style event such as Parkway Alive)
- Improved event infrastructure and accessibility standards
- Fairground-scale facilities
- Host Nation advisory roles

Threats

- Sites nearing capacity without matching infrastructure
- Public dissatisfaction due to accessibility issues (no accessibility guidelines or policy in place)

Service area objectives

To make public life vibrant, create opportunities for expression and foster cultural literacy through accessible, safe and high-quality festivals and events that celebrate Burnaby's diversity.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Rapid Growth in Attendance:** Strained infrastructure and staffing capacity.
- **Equity and Geographic Distribution:** Disproportionate concentration of events in Burnaby's southwest; limited access elsewhere.
- **Community and Cultural Integration:** Events are often the first exposure to culture for residents; opportunities to deepen participation and belonging.
- **Lack of Infrastructure:** Absence of a fairground or purpose-built event sites limits scalability and accessibility.
- **Policy Frameworks:** Need for better alignment with proposed Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Strategy and Framework, Accessibility Guidelines and Special Events Policy and Community Safety and Well-being Plan
- **Financials:** City staff are sometimes directed by Council to deliver additional special events with limited or no additional staffing or financial resources. This creates financial implications for other divisions in Parks, Recreation and Culture.

How Burnaby compares

A comparison of civic-run events can be difficult due to differences between municipalities and how each defines “city/civic-run” and/or “signature” events. While the raw number of civic events provides a high-level comparison, the more meaningful story is about the different event roles municipalities play. Some focus solely on permitting and bylaw compliance, while others take an active role in marketing, sponsoring, enhancing or even producing major events.

Why does this matter?

It is important to note that many cities are implementing or exploring the potential of third-party (community group or private partner) major event organization and operation (in full or in part). Additionally, some municipalities have recently completed, or are in the process of, developing strategies to guide future planning, delivery and evaluation of festivals and events (e.g., Coquitlam and Richmond). This is often driven by rising event costs and increasing workload/overtime pressure on unionized staff to deliver multiple events, making it costly for municipalities to staff large events like Canada Day celebrations.

Burnaby stands out as a city that maintains a robust schedule of City-produced/City-staff-run civic events, providing a wider range of programming and experiences compared to municipalities that run on a facilitation or partnership model.

Major Civic Festivals

Burnaby hosts 9 major civic festivals operated by the City.



Per capita, this means for every 10,000 people, there are 0.36 civic festivals.



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average

Trends in demand

Demand for Burnaby’s Festivals & Special Events service area has surged in recent years, reflecting a community-wide appetite for cultural engagement, celebration and inclusion. The service area supports multi-generational, multi-cultural engagement while also fostering pathways for emerging artists. This heightened demand has placed pressure on staff capacity, event infrastructure and venue limitations.

Notably, existing event spaces are not purpose-built, require significant rented infrastructure, and are unevenly distributed across Burnaby’s quadrants, with the majority of signature events concentrated in the southwest. There is no dedicated fairground, covered arena or large-scale civic festival ground, and amenities such as power, water, or transit access are limited at key sites like Central Park and Deer Lake Park. Despite these limitations, the public’s increasing enthusiasm, along with opportunities to partner with Host Nations and expand community-led event delivery, suggests an evolving service landscape.

Staff identified the service area as transitioning from stable to emerging/evolving. While it benefits from strong brand awareness, growing attendance and community relevance, the service is under considerable stress due to rapid growth in demand, inequitable geographic distribution, infrastructure deficits and public safety concerns, as well as evolving community feedback. There is limited staff capacity to continue to respond to demand and other challenges, including public safety concerns.

Attendance at civic-produced festivals and events has grown over 460% since 2019, underscoring the vital role these offerings play in community life.



Access

Burnaby's Festivals & Special Events are a key access point for residents to experience culture, often in free, outdoor and highly accessible formats. However, the quality and accessibility of event infrastructure varies widely across the city. Burnaby currently lacks a purpose-built fairground or festival space, meaning event delivery is often dependent on temporary, rented infrastructure. While some event spaces like Civic Square and the Deer Lake Park Festival Lawn offer amenities such as electrical hookups and proximity to transit, others lack lighting, accessible washrooms, water stations and Wi-Fi.

As illustrated on the map, events (both civic-led and community-led) are largely concentrated in Deer Lake Park, Central Park, Burnaby Lake, Kensington Park and Confederation Park. In the southeast, Edmonds Park hosts a smaller concentration of community-led events; in the northeast, there are a few scattered community events in public spaces but there are no civic-led events or larger event spaces. An uneven distribution of events across Burnaby's quadrants is evident, particularly the underrepresentation in the southeast and northeast, highlighting a need for more equitable access.

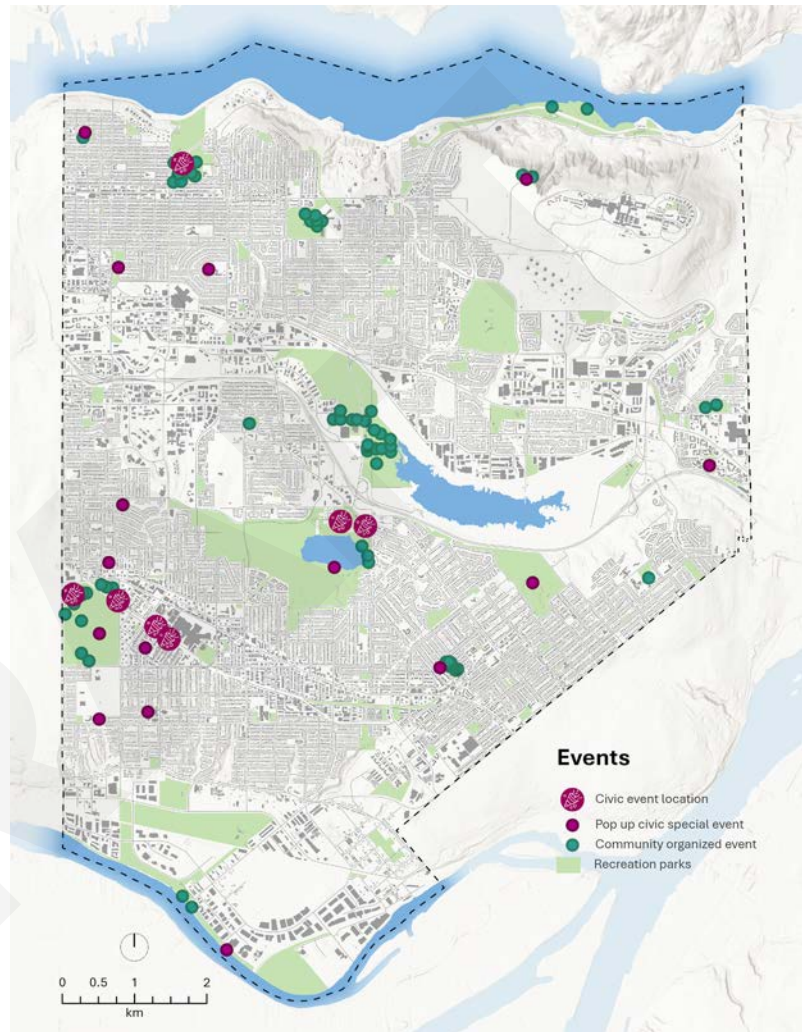


Figure 8. Special events locations map

This map highlights the distribution of civic-owned outdoor event spaces in Burnaby.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- People benefit from free, multi-generational festivals and events connecting neighbours, celebrating cultural traditions and providing new experiences.
- Events like Festive Village, Burnaby Pride and Symphony in the Park often introduce people to artistic and cultural expressions — such as opera or Indigenous storytelling.
- Events help foster a sense of belonging and improve accessibility to arts and culture for people and families who may not otherwise seek out these experiences.
- Events add another venue where Burnaby residents — both individuals and families can gather, spend time and celebrate together.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

- Advance the creation of a fairground or purpose-built festival site in alignment with municipal master plans to address capacity, accessibility and infrastructure limitations.
- Develop a Citywide Event Site Strategy to prioritize upgrades to existing sites, identify staffing and volunteer needs and better distribute events across all quadrants—reducing over-reliance on southwest Burnaby and exploring potential event nodes in Royal Oak, Brentwood, and Edmonds.
- Implement a Community Event Support Framework, including micro grants, mentorship and equipment loans, to support cultural producers and newcomer-led festivals.
- Expand the Parkway Alive model as a flexible placemaking initiative that activates underused areas seasonally with cultural content, food and performance.
- Strengthen metrics and evaluation tools—including audience mapping, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion indicators and tourism impact tracking—to guide future investments.

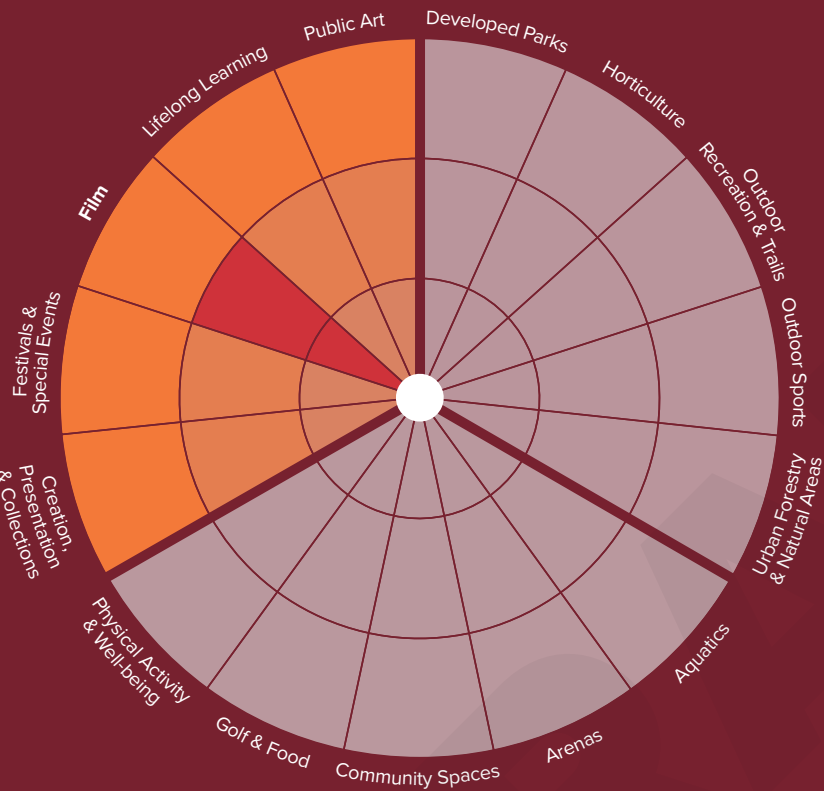
Film

Oversight of filming in parks and public spaces to limit its impact on the community and natural environment.

The service area

Film includes permitting and support for the temporary use of public land to produce films. These services promote Burnaby's film industry and public spaces to a broad audience, generate revenue for the City, and mitigate the disruptions filming has on residents' daily lives. As a concierge to the film industry working in Burnaby, the City plays a key role in balancing economic opportunity with stewardship of the city's public spaces and natural assets.





Service level: Enhanced

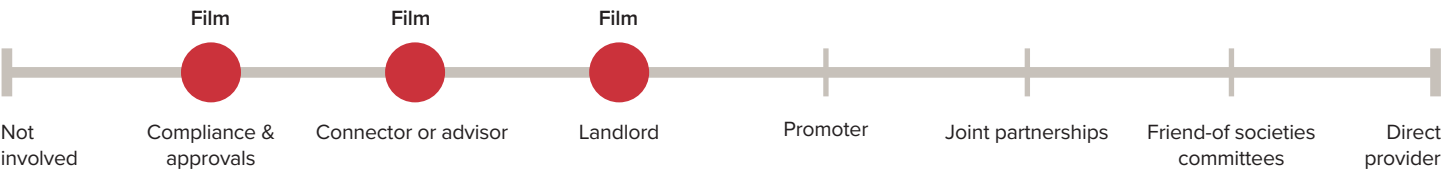
The Film service area provides highly specialized and responsive production support in Burnaby’s parks, balancing industry needs with municipal stewardship. The clear permitting procedures, site monitoring protocols and strong interdepartmental collaboration elevate this service beyond a basic regulatory function.

The level of service is challenged by limited staff capacity and infrastructure to support increasing demand.

- A single liaison manages all filming in parks, creating challenges during periods of high activity.
- Lack of dedicated infrastructure means filming relies on temporary setups and close coordination to avoid disruption.

The current operating model

The City is involved in films within Burnaby in compliance, connecting and advising production companies and promoting the local film industry.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Strong procedures
- Protocols in place to prevent environmental damage
- Skilled liaison
- Cross-department collaboration
- Burnaby's reputation in the creative industries

Weaknesses

- Single liaison model limits scalability
- High seasonal workload fluctuation
- Environmental compliance requires ongoing training

Opportunities

- Green filming
- Digital tools (GIS/mobile apps)
- Public awareness and support

Threats

- Damage to natural areas
- Public access disruption and community pushback
- Municipal competition
- Disruptions from trade/policy disputes with the United States

Service area objectives

To support economic development, preserve public access, maintain ecological integrity and enhance Burnaby's identity by responsibly supporting Burnaby's parks and public spaces as premier film locations.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Environmental compliance:** Strong emphasis on compliance with ecological and operational best practices during filming.
- **Single point of contact:** The Film Liaison model enables responsiveness but lacks redundancy or scalability during peak seasons.
- **Industry demand:** Continued growth in the Lower Mainland film sector drives competition amongst municipalities.
- **Public perception:** Managing disruptions to park users and maintaining resident support is critical.
- **Technological advancement:** GIS integration and mobile apps for monitoring offer opportunities to streamline permitting and enforcement.
- **Financials:** Film expenditures have exceeded revenues in the last four out of five years.

How Burnaby compares

Film permitting information reflects a rich cultural and economic opportunity for Burnaby. While permitting information is not readily available for most municipalities, data from select municipalities within and beyond Metro Vancouver suggests that Burnaby may be below the average number of permitted film days.

Why does this matter?

The results of the evaluation are surprising given the Burnaby’s hub for filming. Most filming in Burnaby is done in large studios as two-thirds of the studios in the Metro Vancouver are located in Burnaby. The industry also includes pro-shops, staging and event supplies, among other services. These numbers may be further validated through discussions with staff at other municipalities.

A future exercise will also evaluate the roles that other municipalities have in film beyond permitting, such as concierge services, promotion of the local industry, connecting organizations and other supporting tools.

Annual permitted film days

In 2024, there were 247 permitted filming days in Burnaby.



Per capita film days

For every 10,000 residents, there was 9.9 filming days in Burnaby in 2024.



Trends in demand

Film in Burnaby is currently trending toward emerging and evolving demand. Overall film permit numbers declined from 66 in 2022 to 36 in 2023. The industry is slumping due to global economic uncertainty and artificial intelligence. However, there continues to be interest in Burnaby, supported by Burnaby's diverse natural landscapes, urban backdrops, an increasingly film-friendly municipal environment and ongoing work with students.

Staff indicated that Burnaby is being actively promoted as a filming destination through tourism partnerships and industry outreach, and new technologies like drones are reshaping the scope and nature of film requests. The service area is constrained by limited staff capacity, high seasonal workload fluctuation and the need to manage environmental and public-use impacts.

These pressures are prompting discussions around expanded resources, policies and facilities to keep up with demand, particularly in the wake of growing requests for flexible, rapid-response support. The evolving situation with respect to tariffs on film produced outside the United States may also have impacts on the Film service area.

British Columbia is the 3rd largest film and TV production centre in North America

2/3 of Metro Vancouver's studio space is located in Burnaby



Access

The Film service area is facilitated by the Burnaby Parks Film Liaison, whose work ensures that filming in Burnaby's parks is compliant with municipal policies and protects public assets. While film production does not involve permanent cultural infrastructure, access is impacted by the reliance on a single liaison and seasonal workload pressures.

The attached filming locations map illustrates the geographic spread and frequency of filming activity throughout Burnaby's parks. While this visual highlights the city's appeal and versatility as a filming destination, it also underscores the challenges in managing equitable access. Many popular filming sites overlap with high-demand public parks, leading to temporary closures and disruptions that can impact community access, especially when filming coincides with peak park usage. Without clear communication or visible signage, these interruptions can cause frustration among residents who rely on these spaces for daily recreation.

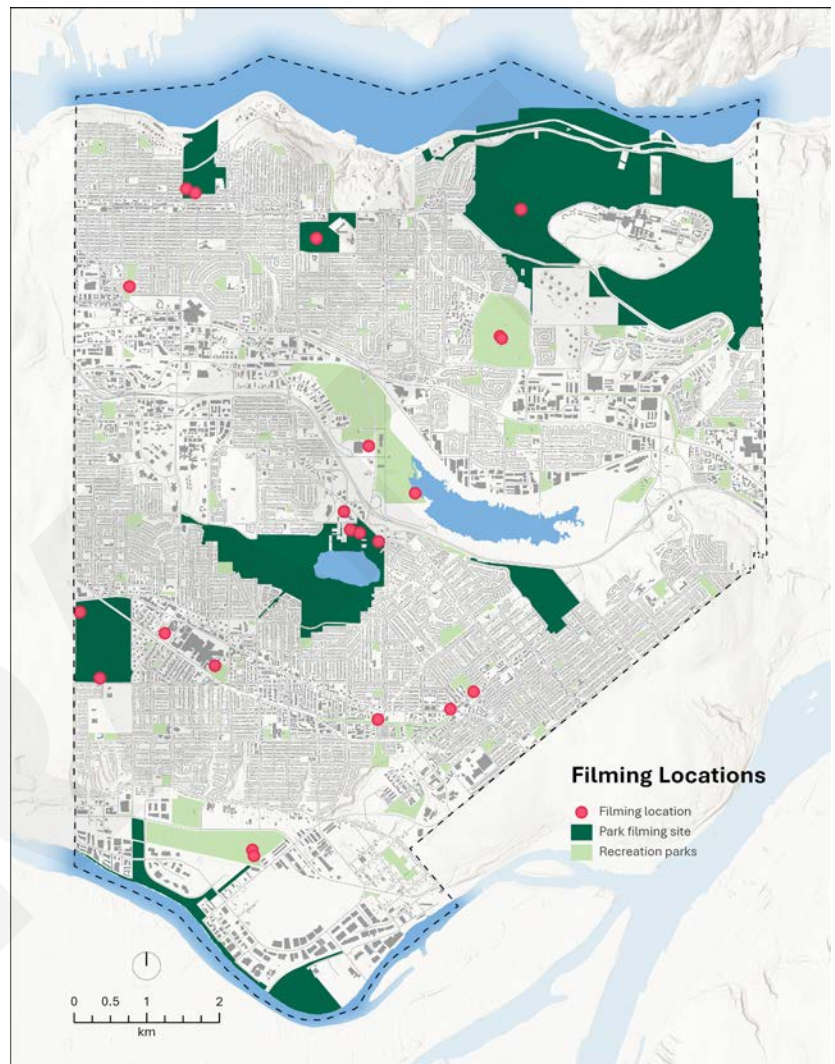


Figure 9. Film locations map

This map shows filming locations, based on the Burnaby Film Office Film Kit. The top five film locations are Central Park, Swangard Stadium, Deer Lake/Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby Mountain and Burnaby Village Museum.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- Locals may enjoy seeing local parks featured in movies and shows, fostering pride and curiosity.
- The film industry provides jobs.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

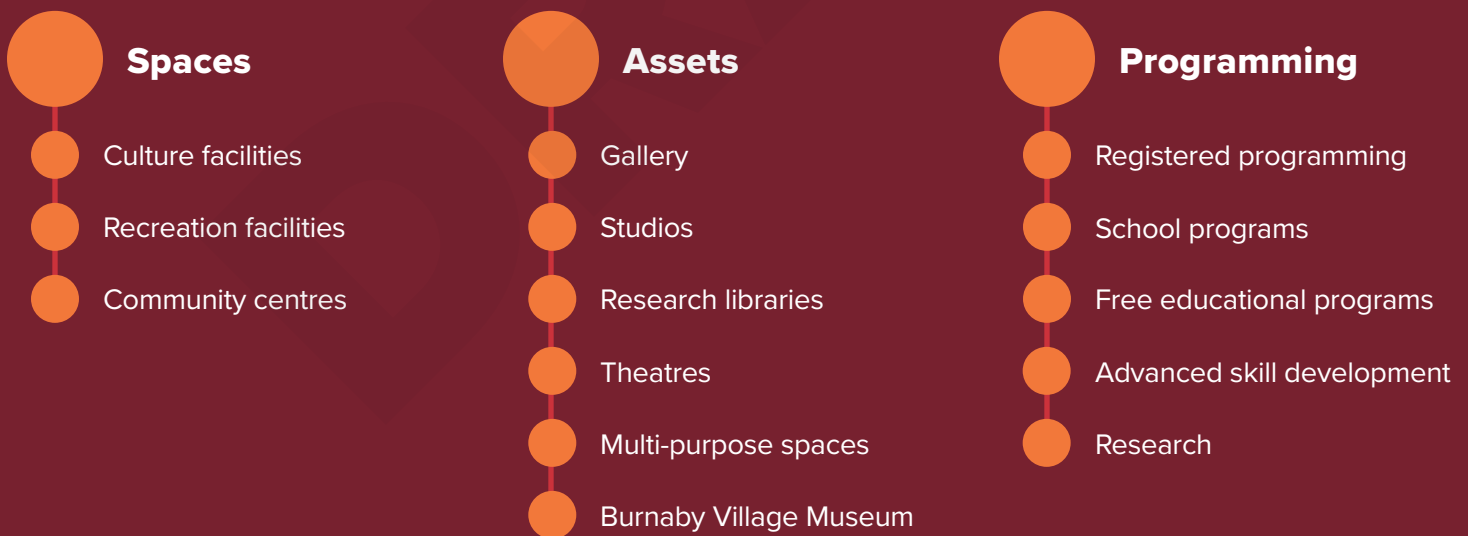
- Expand Burnaby's Film Liaison capacity and develop a Parks Filming Strategy that includes seasonal staffing and cross-training to manage high demand and reduce bottlenecks.
- Launch a Green Filming Pilot Program to position Burnaby as a leader in sustainable production practices in urban park settings.
- Introduce Community Benefit Agreements for Film Productions, ensuring investment in parks infrastructure and artist support as part of high-grossing productions.
- Enhance digital permitting and GIS-enabled monitoring tools for efficient and transparent coordination across departments and external interested parties.
- Develop community education tools that explain the economic and cultural value of filming to reduce resident friction and build pride in Burnaby's film identity.
- Explore filming infrastructure—such as power access, Wi-Fi and signage—in high-demand and underused parks to support production needs and unlock new locations citywide.
- Explore full cost recovery for Film.
- Update the City of Burnaby Drone Use bylaw in parks and public spaces.

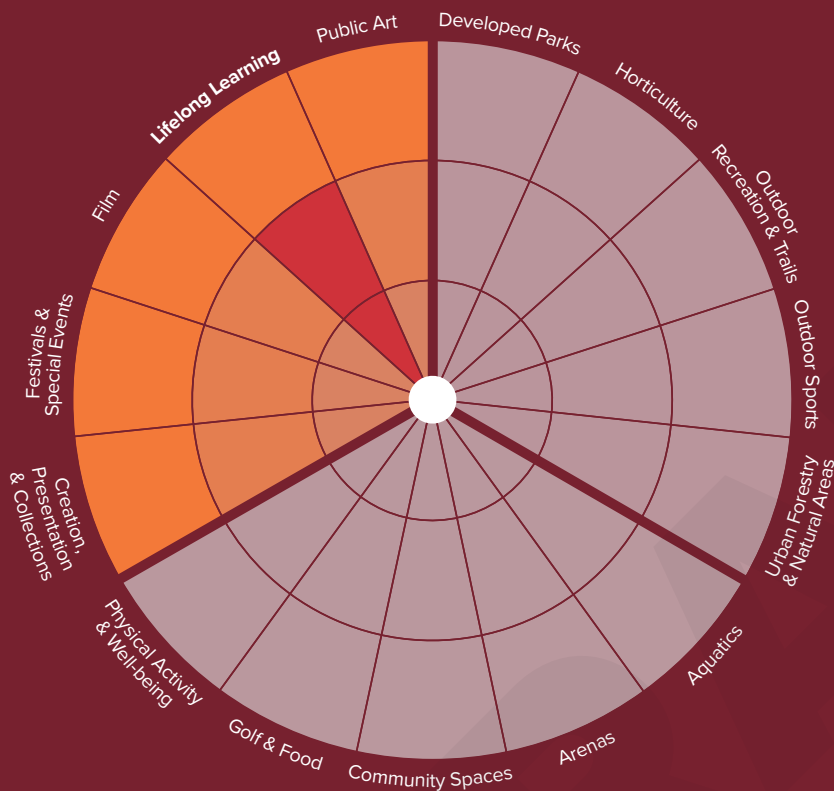
Lifelong Learning

Arts, culture and heritage programs that help people learn, create and connect.

The service area

Lifelong Learning includes cultural and artistic development programs, outreach, residencies and research. A range of educational programs and initiatives are delivered in City facilities like Burnaby Art Gallery and Burnaby Village Museum, and other school and community spaces throughout the city. These services provide access to hands-on and tangible learning opportunities, from early exposure to professional practice, and connections between participants to artists, performers and knowledge keepers.





Service Level: Enhanced

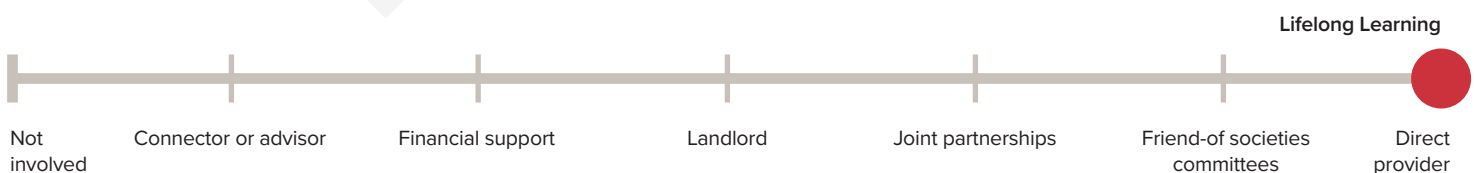
The Lifelong Learning service area delivers a range of quality, accessible and intergenerational learning experiences that extend beyond a standard municipal program. It supports skill development from introductory to professional levels, offers specialized studios and equipment, and hosts internationally recognized artists and instructors. Programs are responsive to community needs, integrate Indigenous knowledge and are delivered through a mix of on-site, off-site and outreach models. The quality, scale and community impact position it clearly within the Enhanced category.

The level of service is challenged by aging infrastructure and limited resources for program expansion.

- Facilities delivering lifelong learning programs are aging and not purpose-built for flexible, contemporary use.
- Constrained staffing and funding limit the ability to scale programs or reach broader audiences.

The current operating model

The City directly delivers classes and skill development opportunities to the public in City-owned spaces.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Range of accessible programs across disciplines and price points
- Professional artist network and partnerships
- International recognition
- Broad geographic reach
- Specialized facilities and outreach tools

Weaknesses

- Aging, non-purpose-built facilities
- Limited access (e.g., elevators, seasonal closures)
- Financial and physical barriers for participants
- Limited non-profit arts education infrastructure and formal School District 41 agreements

Opportunities

- Purpose-built spaces in new community centres
- Greater outreach to underserved and diverse groups
- Growth of access programs and community arts staff
- Place-based learning opportunities

Threats

- Safety and accessibility gaps
- Reactionary political changes
- Competitive educational offerings

Service area objective

To inspire curiosity, creativity and critical engagement through accessible, high-quality, multi-generational arts and heritage learning experiences—connecting residents with artists, knowledge keepers and cultural histories.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Access and equity:** Barriers such as cost, transit and language limit participation for some residents.
- **Purpose-built infrastructure needs:** Aging, heritage or adapted buildings constrain the scope and accessibility of programs.
- **Artist and educator ecosystem:** A broad network of contracted instructors and arts education partners fuels delivery.

- **Well-being and community identity:** Programs support mental health, creativity and sense of belonging across life stages.
- **Cross-sector partnerships:** Reliance on school districts, housing providers and community organizations drives outreach success.
- **Financials:** Dance Arts is the only learning program that has a positive operating budget. Other programming is trending toward becoming less reliant on cost recovery.

How Burnaby compares

While most municipalities offer a baseline of introductory classes focused on movement, dance and basic visual arts skills, they vary in the delivery of specialized art classes. Burnaby stands out in the depth and specialization of its classes. Arts programming is closely integrated with City institutions such as the Burnaby Village Museum, Burnaby Art Gallery and the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, offering highly curated and immersive experiences that go beyond typical recreation centre-based classes to provide a more holistic, City-led experience. From blacksmithing workshops to the media lab to specialized ceramic firings to the Arts Long-Term Dance program, Burnaby leverages its City-run assets to deliver a level of arts and heritage programming that is difficult to compare.

Artist Residencies

Artist residencies (while not comprehensive of the service area) are an example of Burnaby's commitment to advanced artistic development. For every 100,000 residents there are 2.8 artist residencies.



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average ■ Selected outside Metro municipal average

Trends in demand

The Lifelong Learning service area is trending toward emerging and evolving demand. Burnaby's educational offerings, delivered through the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby Art Gallery and Burnaby Village Museum, support multi-generational learning, professional development and community well-being. Programs range from hands-on arts, dance, ceramics and music instruction and heritage interpretation, to advanced skills training, artist residencies and outreach initiatives like BAG on a Bike and Harmony for All.

There is growing interest in Indigenous-led programming, inclusive community engagement, and more culturally relevant education experiences, particularly from equity-deserving groups and youth audiences. Staff note that Burnaby's offerings serve local residents, and attract participants from across the Lower Mainland, demonstrating regional reach. Program waitlists point to increased participation and pressure on facilities.

However, increasing demand is putting pressure on infrastructure. Many facilities are aging, lack accessibility and are not purpose-built for arts education. Additionally, some of the most sought-after programs are limited by seasonal scheduling, space constraints or cost barriers for participants.

Despite these challenges, feedback from staff and the public indicate strong momentum, with community demand for lifelong learning growing rapidly—particularly for inclusive, intergenerational and culturally specific experiences.



Access

Burnaby's Lifelong Learning service area is delivered through a network of specialized yet aging facilities, including the Burnaby Art Gallery, Burnaby Village Museum and the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts. These buildings include heritage properties with accessibility limitations such as lack of internal elevators, out-of-service lifts, limited lighting and inconsistent hours of public access. While programming is robust, diverse and delivered at a range of price points, cost and physical access remain barriers for many residents. Purpose-built cultural education spaces are limited, and multipurpose rooms are often used for specialized programs, reducing their effectiveness. Despite these limitations, the service area reaches broad audiences and has strong potential for growth with planned facility improvements.

The inset map of Burnaby's Lifelong Learning class locations illustrates that while cultural programming is geographically dispersed across the city, access is uneven with large residential areas falling outside of convenient walking distance. This spatial gap compounds existing physical and financial barriers and contributes to geographic inequity in access to arts education.

Despite these limitations, the Lifelong Learning service area continues to reach broad audiences, including regional visitors and community members engaging through outreach and school-based delivery. The map highlights both the existing distribution and the opportunity to strategically expand access.

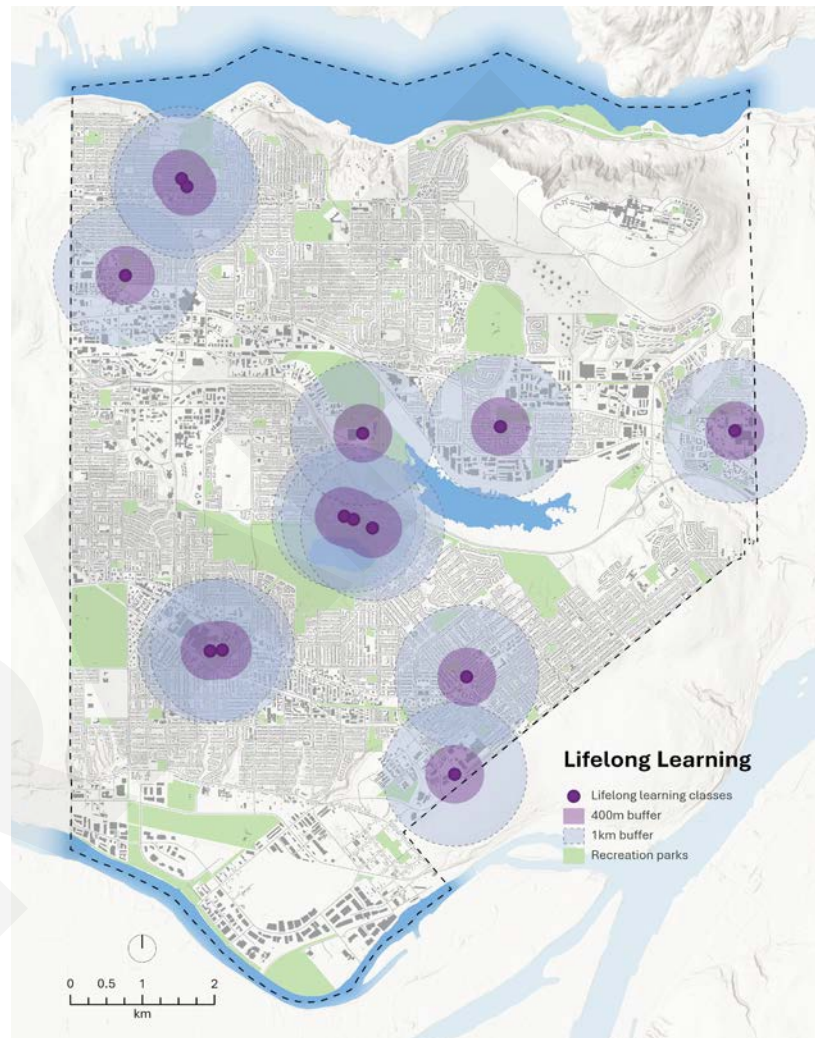


Figure 10. Lifelong learning map

This map highlights locations providing Lifelong Learning classes in the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby Village Museum and Burnaby Art Gallery fall Activity Guides, in addition to the City of Burnaby's Summer and Fall Activity Guides. 400 m and 1 km are not intended to be targets, but used visually to highlight areas of the city where residents are likely traveling farther to access classes.

Investments in purpose-built facilities—especially in under-served areas—and improved transportation, lighting and hours of operation will strengthen the accessibility and impact of the Lifelong Learning service area moving forward.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- People can access affordable, high-quality dance, pottery, heritage, music and digital media programs.
- Programs support creative growth, well-being and learning across generations.
- Over time, people may progress from beginner to advanced levels.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan or identified as future work.

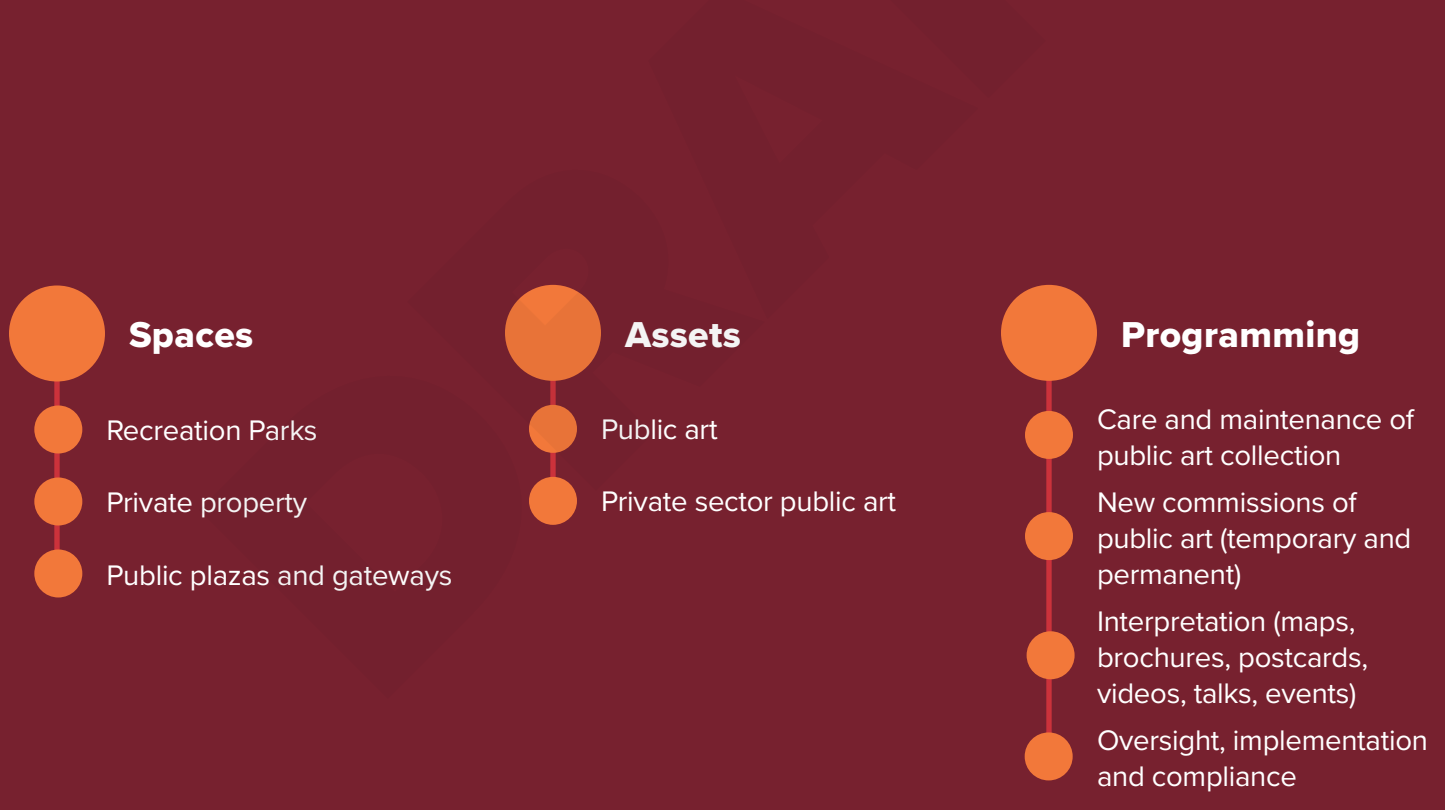
- Prioritize investment in purpose-built cultural education spaces as part of future community centre builds (aligned with Official Community Plan growth areas).
- Expand “Art for All” programs with enhanced access strategies (sliding scale, translated materials, mobile outreach) for underserved populations and schools.
- Establish a Cultural Education Strategy, aligning with School District 41, the University of British Columbia and Simon Fraser University, that formalizes partnerships, co-develops curriculum content and expands artist-educator pipelines.
- Diversify staff and instructors through an intentional recruitment and mentorship approach that reflects Burnaby’s demographics and cultural strengths.
- Create learning hubs that merge recreational, cultural and heritage programming in new and existing civic spaces through partnerships between PRC divisions, City departments, and community partners.
- Retrofit existing studios and classrooms to improve accessibility, flexibility and instructional quality, while addressing urgent storage needs for collections and materials.
- Scale mobile learning initiatives and co-delivered outreach in northeast and southeast Burnaby through partnerships with schools, libraries and recreation centres.
- The benefit of operating an art supply store should be weighed against the costs of subsidizing the store.

Public Art

Commissions, installations and collections supporting place-based cultural expression.

The service area

Public Art includes permanent artworks within the civic collection and more than 100 private sector commissions and temporary installations. These services maintain artworks and engage the community through interpretation and public programming. By working with a range of artists to deliver pieces in Burnaby's public spaces, the City preserves the past, interprets the present and anticipates the future of local art.

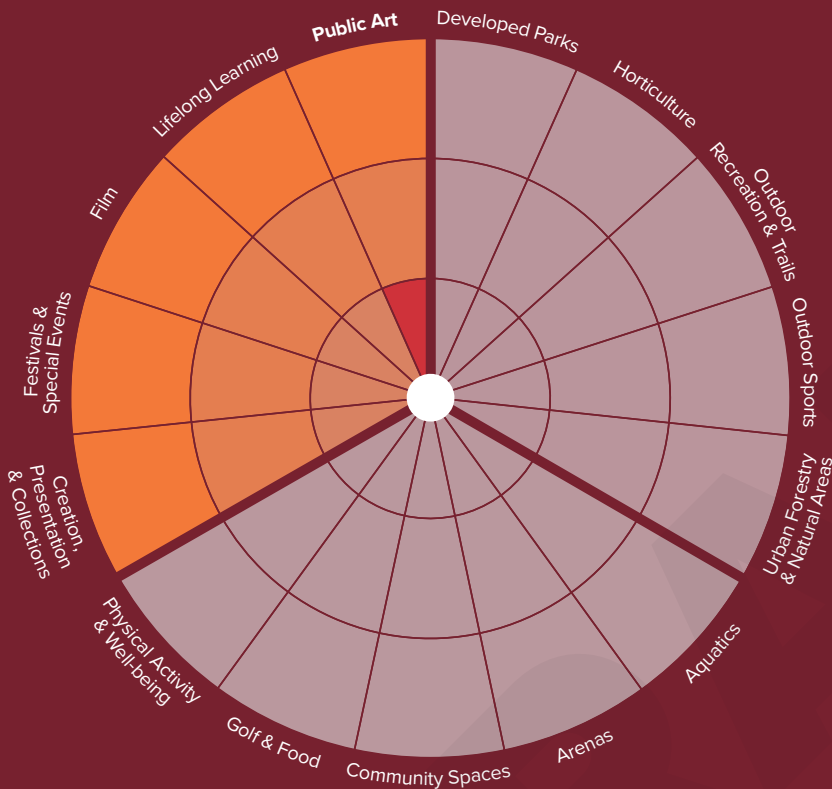


Service level: Standard

The City has a robust Public Art Policy and a thriving Private Sector Public Art program that has leveraged over \$50 million in contributions. However, the public art program remains modest in scale, with one dedicated staff member and limited reach beyond dedicated areas of rapid development. Despite its potential and importance, the current service area reflects a standard service: accessible, foundational and designed to provide baseline cultural benefit to residents, rather than fulfilling a specialized or city-building role.

The level of service is challenged by uneven distribution, aging artworks and a lack of lifecycle planning.

- Public art is concentrated in growth areas, leaving many neighbourhoods underserved.
- Significant pieces are aging without clear renewal or removal protocols.
- The absence of long-term conservation planning limits sustainability.



The current operating model

The City is involved from a regulatory position, a joint-partnership role, oversight role and a providing guidance role.



The SWOT

Strengths

- Robust policy framework
- \$50 million-plus Private Sector Public Art program
- Supported by Burnaby Art Gallery's expertise and infrastructure
- Strong community reflection
- Placemaking potential

Weaknesses

- Uneven geographic distribution
- Underserved non-growth areas
- Aging artworks with unclear lifespans
- Inadequate conservation resources
- Insufficient staff capacity (there is currently one staff member)
- Absence of long-term planning

Opportunities

- Regional collaboration and best-practice sharing
- Leverage local academic programs for talent recruitment
- Expand digital integration and data collection/engagement tools

Threats

- Unsustainable demand levels versus current capacity
- Lack of clarity on maintenance and renewal processes

Service area objective

To enhance public space and civic identity through the commissioning, care and interpretation of artworks that reflect Burnaby's stories, foster belonging and contribute to the urban landscape.

Influencing drivers include:

- **Policy backbone:** Recent adoption of a Public Art Policy and Private Sector toolkit provides clearer direction and funding potential.
- **Growth-centric distribution:** Public art is concentrated in rapidly developing areas; older or underserved neighbourhoods lack installations.
- **Placemaking and community identity:** Public art is increasingly expected to tell community stories and mark civic transformation.
- **Aging inventory:** Maintenance, conservation and renewal of artworks are escalating needs.
- **Limited staffing and capacity:** Only one full-time public art staff member manages a growing and diverse portfolio.

How Burnaby compares

Municipalities across Canada play a range of roles in public art, from facilitators and regulators to curators and commissioners. Cities like Vancouver, Surrey, Richmond, Victoria and Hamilton have adopted citywide curatorial visions that integrate public art into civic planning, placemaking and Reconciliation frameworks. These approaches emphasize equity, storytelling and site-specific engagement. In contrast, municipalities such as Burnaby, Kelowna, Coquitlam and Vaughan primarily operate on a project-by-project basis, with varying levels of policy support and emerging or absent curatorial frameworks.

Why does this matter?

This variation highlights an opportunity for Burnaby to strengthen its curatorial direction and develop tools that support more equitable, place-based and community-reflective public art planning.

Public Art

For every 10,000 Burnaby residents, there are 3.9 public art installations. Burnaby hosts temporary public art installations, a civic public art collection and an active private sector public art program.



■ Burnaby ■ Selected Metro Vancouver average ■ Selected outside Metro municipal average

Trends in demand

The Public Art service area in Burnaby is demonstrating clear momentum toward emerging and evolving demand. Public art is no longer limited to niche or beautification goals; it is now a strategic and community-driven expectation, with increasing complexity and scope.

While the foundational policies, procedures and reserve funding model are relatively new (adopted in 2023), there is already significant interest in integrating public art into civic infrastructure projects, private developments and public space. This service area also has opportunity and responsibility to provide visibility for the varied communities and stories that are found in Burnaby, one of the most ethnically diverse communities in Canada.

Despite these advances, the program is currently staffed by only one full-time coordinator and is limited in its ability to implement citywide public art installations outside of major development zones, limiting equitable geographic distribution.

Engagement and access are evolving as well, interpretive programming, artist talks and temporary installations—such as FLEET in Edmonds Park—are being used to address barriers to interaction, particularly for residents who face physical or cultural access challenges. Digital tools like QR codes and potential heat-mapping of public spaces are also being explored to better understand usage and impact.



Access

Burnaby's Public Art program is supported by a solid policy foundation and a growing collection of civic artworks. However, access and accessibility challenges persist regarding spatial distribution, physical condition and inclusive engagement. Many works in the collection are aging and require conservation attention. Furthermore, no formal accessibility framework or audit exists to assess how people of all abilities experience public art in the city.

This map of public art locations and 1 km buffers visually reinforces these challenges. While some areas—particularly in zones of high-density development—benefit from concentrated installations, large swaths of the city remain underrepresented, including portions of southeast Burnaby and pockets in the northwest. Even within areas showing broad coverage on the map, the overlap is often limited to proximity and does not account for physical accessibility and interpretive supports (e.g., braille, multilingual signage).

This distribution pattern reflects the current model's reliance on development-driven installations, which naturally clusters projects in areas undergoing growth. It also underscores the impact of limited staff capacity and resource constraints, which inhibit proactive maintenance, outreach and planning in non-growth zones.

Yet, public art holds powerful potential to support placemaking, cultural expression and civic pride across Burnaby.

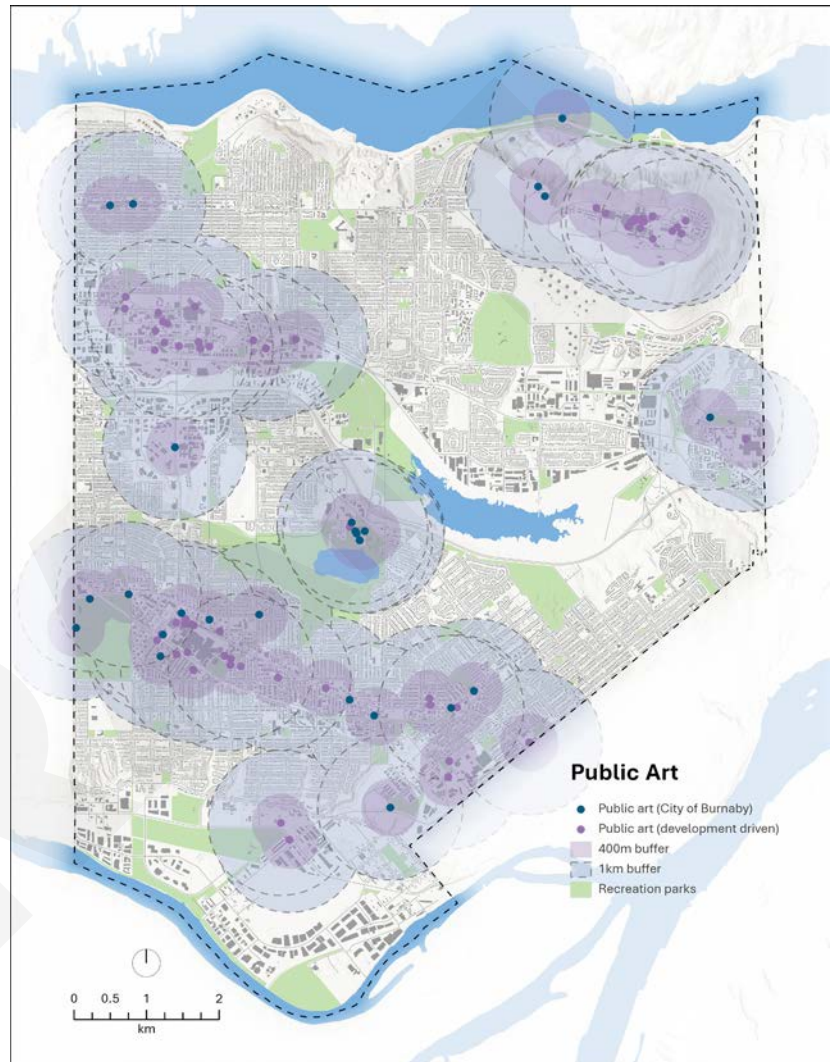


Figure 11. Public Art map

This map highlights the areas of concentration for public art in Burnaby.

With strategic investments in site audits, inclusive design tools and community-based approaches to commissioning, the City can ensure that public art is not only geographically equitable but also broadly accessible and reflective of Burnaby's diverse population. Expanding implementation beyond development areas and embedding universal design principles will be critical to achieving this vision.

Why the current provision matters to a typical resident in Burnaby

- People encounter murals, sculptures and temporary artworks throughout Burnaby's parks and public spaces, adding beauty and meaning to everyday life.
- These artworks reflect diverse voices and local stories, helping the people feel seen and connected to their community.
- Public art also sparks conversation and curiosity, offering chances to engage with the city's changing identity in ways that are accessible and inclusive.

Opportunities

There are several preliminary directions that can be explored further through engagement, the development of the Plan, or identified as future work.

- Establish a Public Art Implementation Framework for non-growth areas to ensure more equitable geographic distribution across Burnaby's four quadrants and, as part of this framework, ensure resourcing needs are considered to support planning, delivery and outreach.
- Create a Public Art Maintenance and Renewal Plan that includes removal protocols, lifespan documentation and prioritized conservation funding.
- Expand the Public Art Reserve and integrate investment targets into Burnaby's capital planning process to align with growth and density.
- Develop a Digital Public Art Strategy (e.g., QR codes, StoryMaps, mobile apps) to enhance interpretation, data collection and community engagement.
- Establish Cultural Roundtables that include artists, residents, Host Nations and Indigenous Peoples living in Burnaby, and community leaders to shape upcoming commissions and guide Reconciliation-informed practices.

Conclusion

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Conclusion

The comprehensive analysis of Burnaby's 15 Parks, Recreation and Culture service areas reveals a municipal system at a critical juncture, positioned between maintaining high-quality service delivery and adapting to emerging challenges that will define the next 25 years.

This context reflects broader trends affecting Canadian municipalities. By making strategic decisions today, Burnaby can draw from other municipal experiences while developing solutions tailored to its unique context and community strengths.

Through thoughtful application of the service level framework and strategic embrace of identified opportunities, Burnaby can continue to provide exceptional parks, recreation and cultural experiences that enhance quality of life for current residents while building a foundation for future generations. Success will ultimately be measured not just in facilities and programs delivered, but in the community connections fostered, the barriers to access removed and the extent to which Burnaby's parks, recreation and cultural system continues to serve as a cornerstone of community life in one of British Columbia's most dynamic and diverse cities.

Moving forward

The next step will be to engage with City Council, Host Nations, the public and interested parties to develop a deeper understanding of the needs, desires and priorities of the parks, recreation and culture network.

The engagement will also be an opportunity to test and delve deeper into topics raised through the Key Findings Report, such as barriers to facilities and expectations around how people would like to experience facilities and programs.

The Making Life Better: Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan will be drafted using the Key Findings Report as a foundation, and based on what is heard through the engagement phase. Once drafted, the City will undertake another round of engagement focused on validating the Plan's direction to ensure overall alignment. The Plan will be presented to Council, and if approved, the City will begin implementing the Plan.

Appendix

Benchmarking Methodology

Eight municipalities were selected for comparison. The municipalities were selected based on the following indicators: proximity to Burnaby, climate, population size, and similarities in built form.

Selected municipalities within Metro Vancouver.

These municipalities have populations close to or above 150,000 residents, which was used as a threshold to compare the more urban centres within Metro Vancouver.

- Surrey: 568,322
- Vancouver: 662,248
- Richmond: 209,937
- Coquitlam: 148,625

Additional selected municipalities within Canada

These municipalities are outside of Metro Vancouver, but share some comparable attributes such as urban development as part of a metropolitan area (Vaughan or Hamilton), climate (Victoria), or in their offerings of abundant recreational offerings (Kelowna).

- Victoria, BC: 96,390
- Kelowna, BC: 153,385
- Vaughan, ON: 338,891
- Hamilton, ON: 597,010

Glossary

Term	Definition
Allotments	The booking and scheduling system for allocating outdoor sports assets and community spaces to user groups and residents, ensuring access to facilities for their participation needs
Asset Management	The systematic approach to managing physical assets throughout their lifecycle, including planning, maintenance, repair, and replacement to ensure optimal condition and service delivery
Benefits-based approach	A prioritization framework that evaluates projects and services based on their intended outcomes and benefits to the community or users. The approach helps to determine who should be responsible for paying for the service.
Cost Recovery	The extent to which a service or program generates revenue through user fees to offset its operating costs, ranging from full cost recovery to subsidized services
Development Charge	A fee charged to developers to help pay for the costs of municipal infrastructure and services required to support new development
Enhanced Service	A service that exceeds standard service provision through elements such as larger supply or comprehensively higher levels of service
Intensification	The development of more housing units or commercial space within existing built-up areas, typically involving higher density development in urban centres.
Multi-functionality	The design and operation of spaces and facilities to serve multiple purposes and activities, maximizing utilization and achieving more with limited supply through strategic upgrades and adaptable infrastructure
Premium Service	A service with key drivers beyond standard or enhanced mandates, typically offered to fulfill specialized regional needs or generate revenue beyond typical municipal provision
Recreation Parks	City-owned parks including City Parks, Community Parks, and Neighbourhood Parks that provide developable areas and recreational amenities for public use
Service Level Framework	A three-tier classification system (Standard, Enhanced, Premium) used to evaluate the extent and quality of municipal services relative to core mandates and typical municipal provision
Standard Service	A service that ensures residents have access to parks, recreational and cultural opportunities with priority for low-cost opportunities and introductory exposure for people of all ages, abilities, income levels and backgrounds
Town Centres	Designated areas in Burnaby (Brentwood, Edmonds, Lougheed, Metrotown) where population growth and density are concentrated
Universal Design	The design of products, environments, and services to be accessible and usable by people of all ages and abilities without the need for specialized adaptations