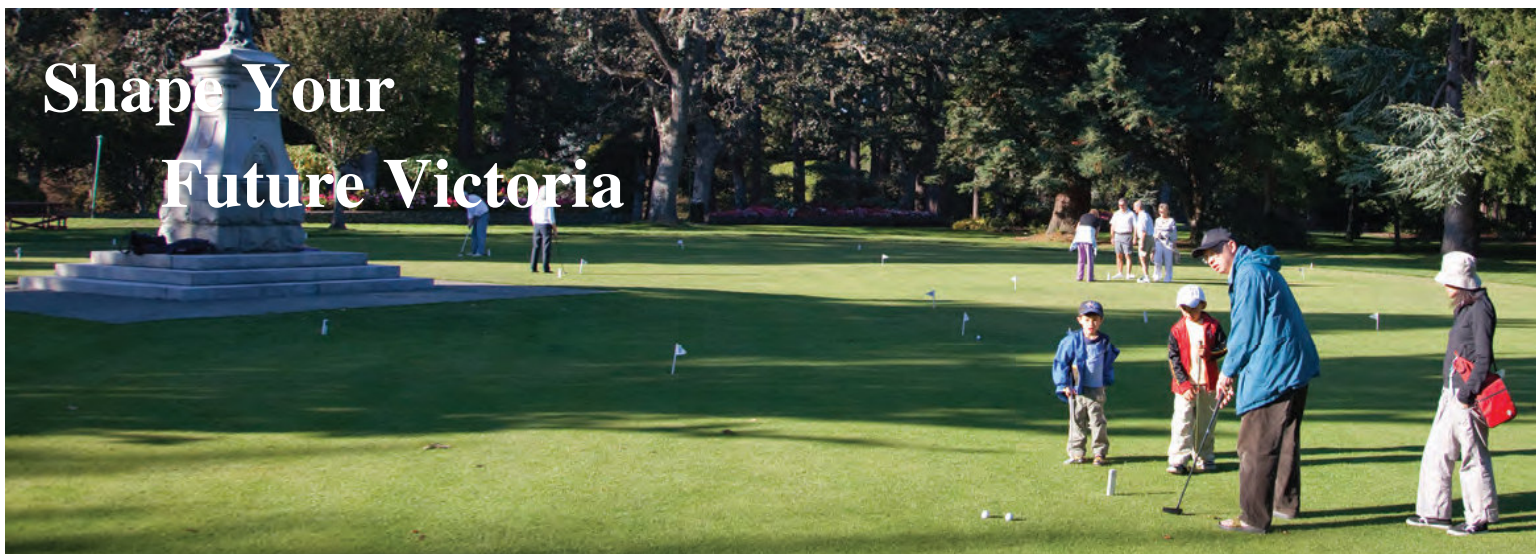


Shape Your Future Victoria



Parks and Recreation

Definition and description

The City of Victoria cares for ornamental gardens, natural ecosystems, public squares, sport and entertainment venues, playgrounds and other open spaces for recreational and cultural enjoyment and preserves and enhances green spaces on public lands.

The City also facilitates recreation and wellness programs and services at Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre, Save-On-Foods Memorial Centre, Royal Athletic Park and Victoria's community and senior's centres.

¹ For a review of benefits of parks in the U.S., see Project for Public Spaces, www.pps.org

Why is this topic important?

Parks and recreation facilities provide multiple services and benefits in sustainable communities. Access to urban parks and recreation has been linked to increased personal health, commercial and residential property values, tourism, community development, and providing ecological habitat.

Opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation support physical activity and healthy lifestyles. Parks provide important habitat¹, and ecological functions such as clean air, the absorption of rainwater and the buffering of wind and noise.

The OCP addresses the location of parks, open space and public facilities such as community centres. The quality, extent and proximity of parks and recreation facilities in a community help to create a unique identity and sense of place. Continued access to these places is a significant aspect of liveability in Victoria.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN

Ideas and Options for the Future

June 25 and 26 - Topic Insert



Public Input on Parks and Recreation

Proposed Goal 1 From Public Input : <i>Connect People to Communities Through Activities and Resources</i>	
Direction: <i>Parks and Facilities</i>	Direction: <i>Recreational Programming</i>
Ideas and Examples	Ideas and Examples
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park dedication for taller buildings. • Preserve existing park spaces into future. • Increased park space. • More pocket parks. • Linear parkways. • More street landscaping “parkways.” • Gardens in boulevards. • Lots of trees and network of greenways. • Greener city with more trees, parks, and local food. • Food, flower gardens on Pandora Green. • Put fruit trees on streets and in parks • More trees. • More native plants and fewer invasive species. • Play spaces for children that are unstructured. • Families need access to basic services without having a car, including parks / recreation programs. • Complete neighbourhoods include a gym. • Fairfield Community Centre needs a gym. • New water-park at Bay Street and Forbes. • Upgrade Crystal Pool. • Accessible recreation centres. • Natural parks and trails, which are accessible to people in wheelchairs (like in Costa Rica). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public spaces are truly public (easy to get permits or no permits required for events in parks). • Parks used as evening social spaces/events. • Open up Beacon Hill Park for cultural events. • City staff should visit the community centres to see what they do for community/recreational programs. • Breakdown silos; open up communication between community centres and the City, other partners, e.g. neighbourhood schools. • City staff should communicate between departments about the needs of the community centres (e.g. renovations over time; needed budget increases as programming expands to meet population growth). • Have parks staff report to community on use of parks and community facilities (like in Toronto). • There is a need for a creative definition of “recreation”. In some of the community centres, “recreation = any kind of physical activity (e.g. to help reduce obesity) not sports. • Support Victoria’s culture of physical activity, and promote it to new Victorians but do not forget that many new residents may have little leisure time – must make opportunities easily accessible.

Related Victoria Sustainability Framework Subthemes and Goals	
Recreation:	<i>Victoria is an active community where everyone enjoys convenient access to community parks, open spaces, facilities, amenities and programs close to where they live.</i>

Existing Policies on Parks and Recreation

Victoria Sustainability Framework (2010)		
Recreation:	<i>Victoria is an active community where everyone enjoys convenient access to community parks, open spaces, facilities, amenities and programs close to where they live.</i>	
Official Community Plan (1995)	Downtown Core Area Plan (draft 2010)	Other Plans / Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and provide park and open spaces that meet the changing recreational needs of citizens. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire and develop additional public parks and open spaces within the Rock Bay District and the Residential Mixed-Use District (which includes Harris Green). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks Master Plan under development to guide management of parks and natural spaces. Greenways Plan promotes recreation opportunities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote tree and flower planting programs, development of mini-parks, squares and open courts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all new public parks and open spaces meet the urban design objectives of Downtown Core Area Plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft Urban Forest Management Plan includes inventory and framework for action for trees on public and private lands.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage planning of recreational and cultural facilities to avoid gaps and duplication of services. 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide recreational services to meet the needs and resources of all residents. 		