

Regional Parks and Greenways Plan

greenspaces
natural places



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. SUSTAINABILITY

2. GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Protect and enhance regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage features

Strategy #1: Secure and enhance regionally significant landscapes and critical habitats.

Strategy #2: Manage conservation lands and habitats to protect their biodiversity, environmental and cultural integrity.

Goal 2: Provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship

Strategy #1: Secure lands and provide and expand recreation facilities for outdoor experiences.

Strategy #2: Manage, operate and maintain affordable and safe facilities for outdoor experiences.

Strategy #3: Coordinate planning and delivery of outdoor recreation programs.

Strategy #4: Work with community, ethnic and social organizations to expand recreation and wellness opportunities.

Strategy #5: Provide education programs to foster environmental stewardship, personal safety and social responsibility.

Goal 3: Support economic development and quality of life in the region

Strategy #1: Partner with businesses and organizations to provide enhanced services for visitors.

Strategy #2: Improve health, wellness and the social well being of residents and reduce those costs through programming, recreation opportunities and partnerships.

Strategy #3: Maintain and operate parks and greenways to a standard that enhances real values, attracts employees and employers and makes the region more competitive.

Strategy #4: Encourage philanthropy

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF STRATEGIC POSITIONING ACTIONS

4. PLAN REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

5. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

6. APPENDICES

6.1. Map and Overview of the Parks and Greenways System in 2004

Regional Parks and Greenways Plan

1. SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability encompasses economic prosperity, community well-being and environmental integrity for today's and future generations. It is the core vision for the GVRD. The Sustainable Region Initiative identifies the need for a series of management plans to address delivery of services according to the principles of sustainability. The plans set strategic directions and formalize policies and actions for regional mandates that provide for the health and economic benefit of the region, and that take a long-term view to ensure that resources used today are still available for future generations.

Sustainability and Parks

The Regional Parks and Greenways Plan (RPGP) provides direction and priorities for parks and greenways programs and services in the region over the next decade and beyond. The strategic directions and priorities of the RPGP will be the foundation for preparing a detailed Parks, Greenways and Open Space Systems Plan that will guide land acquisitions, programs and services, capital development, community partnerships and volunteer initiatives among other areas. The RPGP contributes to the Green Zone by protecting biodiversity, providing outdoor recreation opportunities, and offering education programs that foster environmental stewardship through community development. The plan also assists in achieving storm-water and floodplain management objectives where parks and greenways function as recharge, filtration and natural drainage areas.

The RPGP supports the regional economy by providing recreation facilities and opportunities that attract visitors and by reducing health costs through active living and wellness programs. The plan contributes to the livability of the region by managing and promoting the natural assets of parks and greenways to enhance the quality of life, which in turn results in increased residential land values and marketability.

The regional parks function is complemented by municipal and provincial parks. Municipal parks provide facilities and opportunities that support sports, leisure and cultural programs and services, while provincial parks provide camping facilities and extensive wilderness areas for backcountry summer and winter recreation.

Special bookable facilities and open-areas are available for a variety of family, corporate and community groups. Partnerships with specialized non-profit interest groups have added unique features such as wildlife care centers, hatcheries, rowing and equestrian facilities. Currently less than 5 % of parklands are actively developed for public use and amenities, with over 95% of the land base being managed for conservation.

Securing sufficient parks, conservation areas and greenways to respond to urban growth and development will require cooperative approaches with municipalities, provincial agencies, private land owners and community organizations.

Limited provincial funding and day-use fees for outdoor recreation services have placed additional pressure on GVRD to expand outdoor recreation opportunities in the Lower Mainland. There is a growing awareness and understanding of the important role parks and greenways play in providing people an opportunity for contact with nature, physical fitness and wellness. Parks and greenways are a means to realize these benefits and reduce social and health care problems and costs.

Regional growth will require improved coordination with municipalities related to planning, land acquisition and facility development to provide outdoor recreation opportunities. Trail opportunities and access to foreshore areas are viewed as high priorities.

1. SUSTAINABILITY (Continued)

GVRD is uniquely positioned to provide outdoor recreation and conservation programs which foster community development and social responsibility.

The key strategic issues to be addressed in the RPGP include:

- Protecting conservation values while accommodating visitor use;
- Providing outdoor recreation opportunities to meet current and future needs;
- Providing education programs to foster stewardship, wellness and sustainable living;
- Expanding opportunities to serve the region's diverse multicultural communities, youth and new Canadians;
- Improving planning, coordination and delivery of outdoor recreation and environmental education programs with other delivery agencies and community partners; and
- Funding replacement and new recreation facility development for residents and visitors.

Links between the RPGP and other Regional Plans

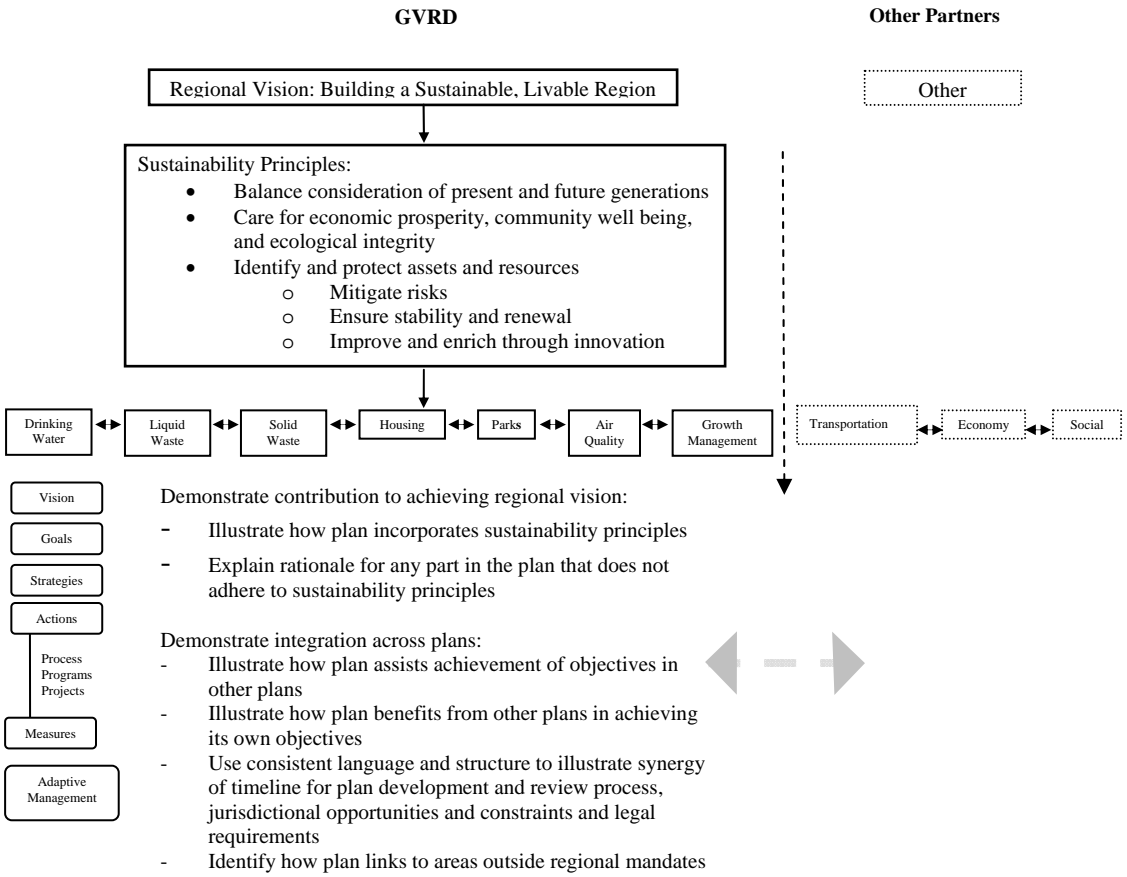
The Sustainable Region Initiative provides the framework for linking the RPGP with other regional plans, especially the Growth Management Plan, which established the Green Zone to protect important watersheds, major parks, farmlands, wildlife habitat and wetlands. Through the RPGP important green spaces identified in the Green Zone will be secured, protected and managed for public use and conservation.

Development of joint utility-greenway projects provide a unique opportunity for GVRD to integrate objectives and action plans in the RPGP with the Drinking Water and Liquid Waste Management Plans. Existing upgrades and future utility expansions will be planned to provide value added public benefits for recreation, while also providing habitat enhancement for biodiversity. This will result in costs savings to both the utility and parks functions in the areas of land acquisition, development and management.

The RPGP identifies important links to local and provincial parks and open space plans, where GVRD will partner with municipalities, provincial agencies and community groups to advance outdoor recreation services and environmental stewardship

The Sustainable Region Initiative framework establishes links between the regional vision, sustainability principles and the execution of specific plans (See chart on page 5). It also links regionally mandated plans and other initiatives that are executed by our partners.

1. SUSTAINABILITY (Continued)



Vision for a Sustainable Future

Social, environmental, and economic sustainability is a fundamental objective of all aspects of GVRD activity, from the corporate level through to the service delivery mandates, and from the various management plans to partnerships with external agencies for actions beyond the GVRD mandates. The RPGP will contribute to a healthy, sustainable region providing outdoor recreation facilities and opportunities for residents and visitors while protecting important regional landscapes and biodiversity.

Goals for the RPGP

The vision has guided the establishment of the primary goals of the RPGP:

- Goal 1: Protect and enhance regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage features;**
- Goal 2: Provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship; and**
- Goal 3: Support economic development and quality of life in the region.**

2. GOALS, STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

Goal 1: Protect regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage features

Goal #1 - Strategy #1: Secure and enhance regionally significant landscapes and critical habitats.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> in acquiring significant landscapes and features.</p> <p><i>Coordinate</i> the identification of threatened habitats.</p> <p><i>Partner</i> on securing conservation lands.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Secure critical and sensitive habitats and environmental corridors.2. Establish a Lower Mainland Conservation Land Forum to foster land stewardship.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1 a. Lands and/or inter-tidal areas will be added to the following parks:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Glen Valley, Kanaka Creek, Derby Reach;• Belcarra, Pacific Spirit, Minnekhada, Boundary Bay;• Surrey Bend, Widgeon Marsh, Colony Farm; and• Burns Bog, Codd Wetland, Blaney Bog, Iona Beach.1 b. GVRD, in partnership with other levels of government and conservation organizations, will seek to secure threatened habitats including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fraser and Pitt River riparian zones and islands;• Marine foreshore, inter-tidal areas and uplands;• Wetlands and key upland forest sites;• Grasslands, old field habitat areas; and• Utility corridors with biodiversity values.1 c. GVRD will secure and protect sensitive habitats along wildlife and utility-greenway corridors with a priority on urban growth areas.2. GVRD will work with the Province and other interest groups to establish a Conservation Land Forum to foster land stewardship through new land protection tools like partnered acquisitions, conservation covenants, easements, eco-gifting and other charitable donations. <p>Collaborative funding, acquisition and land management will ensure effective resources, expertise and integrated program efforts across the region.</p>
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Goal #1 - Strategy #2: Manage conservation lands and habitats to protect their biodiversity, environmental and cultural integrity.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> in protecting and managing species at risk, biodiversity, and cultural values in regional parks and greenways.</p> <p><i>Partner</i> to develop and implement regional biodiversity management strategies.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish a Parks and Greenways Advisory Panel. 2. Complete and adopt management plans for each park and greenway. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GVRD will establish a Regional Parks and Greenways Advisory Panel (PGAP)* to provide advice on conservation and recreation management policies and strategies to guide the overall parks and greenways system. This may involve expanding the Parks Forum to include other conservation, agricultural, stewardship and recreation organizations, technical institutes, scientists and members at large. 2. To ensure the ecological integrity of land secured for conservation, GVRD will complete and adopt management plans for outstanding parks, to define the role, policies, land use zones and best management practices to protect biodiversity and species at risk, manage vegetation and address recreation activities. Parks for early action include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burns Bog • Blaney Bog • Codd Wetlands • Widgeon Marsh • Surrey Bend
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* Action also applies to Goal 2 and 3, where the Advisory Panel and management planning will include recommendations on conservation and recreation management, and economic development initiatives.

<p>3. Restore and enhance critical habitats and cultural features in regional parks and greenways.</p> <p>4. Open discussions with the Province to explore a role for GVRD in managing Wildlife Management Areas adjacent to GVRD parklands.</p> <p>5. Implement integrated policies and strategies to manage health, user conflicts and environmental issues.</p>	<p>3 a. Potential parks and greenways habitat improvements being defined in the Regional Biodiversity Strategy will be implemented. GVRD will support, engage, and train park associations, volunteers and community organizations to assist in habitat restoration and enhancements. Priority will be placed on endangered fish, threatened mammals and birds and managing invasive species which compromise the habitat of native species.</p> <p>3b. GVRD will work with community groups, First Nations and municipalities to protect, restore, maintain and designate cultural sites and features, historic buildings and heritage landscapes in regional parks. This will involve managing some lands for agriculture to retain historic rural landscapes and old field habitat.</p> <p>4. A number of regional parks are adjacent to provincial Wildlife Management Areas (WMA). GVRD will explore what role it could play and options for coordinated management. Parks with adjacent WMAs include Colony Farm, Boundary Bay, Grant Narrows, Iona Beach and Minnekhada and the Pitt River Greenway.</p> <p>5. GVRD will collaborate and partner with municipalities, health authorities, academic institutions, provincial and federal regulatory and health ministries on regional initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing West Nile Virus and wildfire interface issues; • Reducing recreation conflicts related to dogs, bikes and trail users; • Controlling forest diseases and pests; • Conducting environmental research on climate change; and • Partnering with the agricultural sector to protect habitat values on farm lands.
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Goal 2: Provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship

Goal #2 - Strategy # 1: Secure lands and provide and expand recreation facilities for outdoor experiences.

GVRD Role

Lead in acquiring regional lands for outdoor recreation.

Lead in delivering basic recreation facilities, programs and service on GVRD lands.

Coordinate planning and rationalize delivery of outdoor recreation opportunities and facilities in the region.

Partner to expand facilities and programs on GVRD lands and sites owned by other agencies.

Actions:

The GVRD will:

1. Provide and expand recreation amenities and opportunities in existing parks, park reserves and greenways.
2. Acquire new park sites to expand recreation opportunities to meet regional growth and recreation demand.

1a. New lands will be assembled adjacent to parks to expand recreation opportunities in response to recreation demand and regional growth. GVRD will place priority on:

- Sites adjacent to park development areas to take advantage of existing infrastructure and operations.
- New parks and greenways in areas of significant growth; and
- Waterfront areas with foreshore parks and greenways potential.

1b. To address growing recreation demands GVRD will:

- Complete and expand facilities at Boundary Bay, Iona Beach, Pacific Spirit, Burnaby Lake, Belcarra, Tynehead, Aldergrove Lake, Colony Farm, Crippen, Deas Island, Capilano River, Minnekhada, Campbell Valley, Glen Valley, Derby Reach, Kanaka Creek, Lynn Headwaters and Matsqui Trail;
- Create new access and day-use facilities on reserve lands at Surrey Bend, Widgeon Marsh, Thwaytes Landing and Brae Island based on management plans;
- Develop and expand regional greenways including the Brunette-Fraser, Delta South Surrey, Pitt River, Seymour, BC Parkway, South Fraser, Coquitlam River and other emerging corridors; and
- Provide and enhance access for wildlife viewing opportunities in appropriate parks and greenways.

2a. GVRD will work with municipalities, public agencies and boating and paddling fraternity, businesses and community groups to:

- Expand recreation opportunities along regional greenways and in regional parks;
- Improve public access, motorized and non-motorized boating opportunities to the Pitt and Fraser Rivers and provide sites for foreshore recreation;
- Work with Trails BC and the Outdoor Recreation Council to coordinate trail issues and management strategies (e.g. mountain biking, motorized sports); and
- Develop partnerships to increase access to water-related activities, training, education and public safety and awareness programs on boating.

Goal #2 - Strategy # 2: Manage, operate and maintain affordable and safe facilities for outdoor experiences.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> in operating and maintaining its parks and greenways facilities, infrastructure and services.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a systems-wide preventative maintenance and facility replacement program. 2. Optimize public safety and protect built and natural resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To ensure the long-term viability of parks facilities and infrastructure, GVRD will provide appropriate funding for preventative asset maintenance and capital replacement with priorities on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built structures; • Water and sewer utilities; • Trails, access and circulation roads; • Engineered resource protection works; • Use of green technology where appropriate; and • Educational and interpretive displays and signage. 2. GVRD will manage parklands and facilities through a decentralized field operations model and a core complement of knowledgeable and well trained staff, which is supplemented by contractors and non-profit organizations. <p>GVRD will encourage a satisfying and healthy workplace. Focus will be on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing parks services close to communities; • Applying best industry practices; • Expanding bylaw education and enforcement to increase compliance; • Applying crime prevention through environmental design principles to improve public safety in parks; • Managing natural hazards to ensure a safe environment for visitors; and • Working with municipalities to resolve traffic and other visitor management issues that impact their communities.
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<p>3. Implement a regional greenways system.</p>	<p>3. GVRD will collaborate with municipalities and provincial agencies to expand linear recreation opportunities and connect regional, provincial and local parks by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing a core trail network to provide east-west and north-south greenway connections across the region; • Partnering with GVS&DD, GVWD, TransLink, municipalities and community partners to acquire public access, build and manage integrated greenways, transit and water crossing connections; • Partnering with Port Authorities, Fraser Basin Council and municipalities to implement a “Blueways” strategy to expand water based recreation, protect shoreline habitats and manage the region’s waterways; and • Working with the Land Commission and farming community to provide and manage access and greenway connections in farming areas.
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Goal #2 - Strategy # 4: Work with community, ethnic and social organizations to expand recreation and wellness opportunities.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> in operating community development and partnership programs.</p> <p><i>Engage</i> community organizations and others institutions to provide expanded community facilities, services and programs.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <p>1. Collaborate with service agencies and community organizations to expand recreation opportunities and services.</p>	<p>1. GVRD will expand multi-cultural opportunities, special need facilities and education programs for youth and new Canadians such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing multi-language publications and website information where demand warrants; • Supporting ethnic community activities and related special events; • Working cooperatively with service organizations, schools and rehabilitation centres like the Elks, Canadian National Institute for the Blind and G. F. Strong to develop special facilities for the disabled, disadvantaged and other target groups; • Lifelong learning programs like Elderhostel and College; and • Integrating multi-cultural needs into education and partnership initiatives.
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<p>2. Implement standards to ensure facilities, products and services are more accessible.</p> <p>3. Integrate multi-cultural needs into public education and partnership initiatives.</p>	<p>2. To improve physical accessibility to parks, GVRD will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing design and construction standards to improve trails and access to buildings; • Increase accessibility through the use of more ramps, boardwalks and the removal of barriers; and • Work with service organizations to improve wheel chair accessibility to trails, day use facilities and waterfront areas. <p>3. GVRD will facilitate the following education programs through partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime prevention and personal security; and • Activities for new Canadians and ethnic groups.
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Goal #2 – Strategy # 5: Provide education programs to foster environmental stewardship, health and wellness, personal safety and social responsibility.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> and partner in providing interpretation and education programs.</p> <p><i>Promote</i> an environmental ethic and sustainable living.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <p>1. Develop education, special events and partnership programs to emphasize sustainability and appropriate recreation use in parks.</p>	<p>1. To respond to the changing demographic and cultural needs of the region, GVRD will expand education programs and special events to increase citizen awareness of regional biodiversity, nature appreciation, wellness and sustainable living through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train-the-trainer programs on sustainable lifestyles; • Community sustainability challenges and lecture series; • Development of a regional sustainability network; and • “Sustainability in Action” projects in parks.
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Goal 3: Support economic development and quality of life in the region.

Goal #3 – Strategy # 1: Partner with businesses and organizations to provide enhanced services for visitors.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Lead</i> in offering partnered or private sector operated enhanced park services.</p> <p><i>Facilitate</i> tourism operations in appropriate areas.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrate tourism strategies into facility and program planning, development and operations. 2. Investigate opportunities for development of integrated recreation and tourism strategies to support the 2010 Olympics. 3. Encourage corporate and non-profit sponsorship of acquiring lands and the provision of enhanced services. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure tourism can coexist with parks and greenways goals by developing and adopting policies. In that context GVRD will support tourism by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing standards, best management practices and guidelines to direct tourism operators to appropriate sites on GVRD lands with a focus on eco-tourism activities; • Implementing a new signage and marketing strategy for regional parks and greenways; • Developing and implementing strategies to promote special values and features to attract visitors; • Expanding market-based permit fees for business activities; and • Providing enhanced services provided through business agreements. 2. To create a lasting Olympic legacy, GVRD will work with municipalities and businesses to coordinate development and integration of recreation and tourism strategies in the region. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grouse Grind, Lower Seymour Conservation Reserve, Capilano River and Lynn Headwaters Regional Parks; • Provision of RV Camping for the traveling public; and • Exploring the potential to create habitat enhancements in regional parks to offset the impact of Olympic venues. 3. GVRD will work with the Pacific Parklands Foundation to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek corporate sponsorship and donations of land and funding for the development of enhanced services; and • Explore business partnerships with non-profit organizations to provide basic and enhanced services.
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Goal #3 – Strategy # 3: Maintain and operate parks and greenways to a standard that enhances real estate values, attract employees and employees and make the region more competitive.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Manage</i> and <i>promote</i> natural assets of regional parks and greenways to enhance the livability of the region.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement customer service standards for facilities maintenance, public programs and the provision of services. 2. Integrate regional parks and greenways programs, services and developments to support the Live-Work-Play Policy of municipalities. 3. Work with municipalities, the business community and public agencies to promote the greenspace benefits of the region. 4. Partner with businesses to provide services that attract visitors, create employment and increase public choice and opportunities. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1a. To ensure quality services are delivered in regional parks and greenways, GVRD will implement appropriate standards to maintain and replace infrastructure, buildings, and other public structures. 1b. GVRD will plan and deliver quality education services that appeal to the region’s diversity of residents and visitors. 1c. GVRD will engage communities by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities to provide value added stewardship, social and outdoor activities. 2. To advance the Live-Work-Play Policy , GVRD will examine how regional park sites and greenways can provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services that respond to the cultural and social needs of residents; • Improved access and greenway connections that support transportation choices like cycling and walking; • Open space and recreation opportunities for employees and residents in town centres; and • Expand commuter cycling trails through collaboration on regional greenways and municipal cycling strategies. 3. GVRD will provide information and develop materials to assist businesses, economic development and chamber of commerce offices in promoting the natural values of regional parks and greenways as attractions for tourism, recruitment and business relocations. 4. In appropriate locations, GVRD will partner to provide basic park facilities together with enhanced services for residents and visitors through agreements that leverage public funds with private investments, non-profit and philanthropic contributions.
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Goal #3 – Strategy # 4: Encourage philanthropy.

<p>GVRD Role</p> <p><i>Support</i> fund raising and other philanthropic activities to provide value added public amenities, land donations and other programs.</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>The GVRD will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the Pacific Parklands Foundation to raise funds for regional parks and greenways. 2. Encourage private land donations which expand recreation opportunities and conserve regional biodiversity. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. GVRD will support the Pacific Parklands Foundation established specifically to raise funds for conservation, stewardship and recreation initiatives in regional parks and greenways by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing a donor recognition program; • Identifying habitat enhancement, park improvement and recreation projects needing sponsorship and financial support from citizens, community and service organizations and the private sector; • Supporting and sponsoring special fundraising events in parks; and • Considering donation stations in regional parks. 2. Support for land stewardship is growing with some property owners of natural areas desiring to see their lands retained for public benefits. GVRD will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Eco-Gifting of lands to expand the conservation land base of existing regional parks, greenways and conservation sites; and • Work with private land owners wishing to donate their lands for public recreation, especially near or adjacent to regional park sites.
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3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS

Asset Replacement Costs

Approximately, \$2 Million per year is allocated for replacing the existing parks infrastructure valued at approximately \$80 Million. It is anticipated that additional \$6 million will be required over the next 5-8 years to replace aging buildings, roads, parking lots and other facilities.

Land Acquisition

The Heritage Parkland Acquisition Fund (HPAF) provides funding to secure new parks, greenways and other conservation lands. Opportunities exist to leverage these funds through partnerships, especially for conservation sites with high biodiversity values. The current \$3.77 Million annual appropriation is deemed adequate for now.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF STRATEGIC ACTIONS (Continued)

Basic Facility Program

The Parks Basic Facility Program has had minimal funding over the last four years. In order to respond to existing and projected recreation demands coupled with expected regional growth, a base funding level of \$25 Million will be required within the next decade to develop new public facilities in existing parks and at park reserves.

Completing basic access and providing public amenities will be a first priority at Boundary Bay, Capilano River, Belcarra, Colony Farm, Deas Island, Crippen, Minnehada, Brae Island, Pacific Spirit and Tynehead.

Expanding park opportunities and adding new facilities to respond to recreation demands and regional growth will be the second priority at Burnaby Lake, Campbell Valley, Derby Reach, Glen Valley, Iona Beach, Kanaka Creek, Lynn Headwaters, Matsqui Trail and Pacific Spirit.

Providing basic access and amenities at park reserve lands will be the third priority and will include Surrey Bend, Blaney Bog, Thwaytes Landing and Widgeon Marsh. Regional greenways will complement this effort with emphasis on completing integrated utility-greenway initiatives at the Brunette Fraser, the Delta South Surrey, Seymour and Pitt River Greenways along with others identified in greenway sector plans.

Parks Operating Costs

Parks operating costs tend to increase in response to increasing visitor use, additional maintenance costs, safety, security needs and increased levels of service or new services, facilities and sites. It is projected that the total operating costs will increase by about \$11 million in eight to ten years when all RPGP programs and services are implemented.

Changes in regulatory requirements associated with the Water Act, Occupational Health and Safety and changing environmental laws will continue to have an impact on delivery costs related to labour, materials, utilities, equipment, contractors, safety and security. Other program areas will likely grow more incrementally in support of the field operations.

New facility development along with expansion of visitor services and the partnership program will also have an impact on operating costs, necessitating additional labor and support dollars for a number of programs to leverage returns from partnerships, volunteers and philanthropy.

4. PLAN REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

An initial set of indicators have been identified to monitor and measure performance including:

Goal 1: Protect regional landscapes, biodiversity and heritage features

- Lands owned, leased or managed for habitat protection (GRI – EN6 Indicator*).
- Areas restored or enhanced for habitat (GRI – EN6 Additional Indicator*).
- Heritage structures protected and restored.
- Amount of habitat protected and enhanced for species at risk.

* Global Reporting Indicators

4. PLAN REVIEW AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES (Continued)

Goal 2: Provide outdoor recreation opportunities and education programs, and foster community stewardship

- Annual park visitation to open sites.
- Attendance at education programs.
- Volunteer hours achieved through community partnerships.
- Customer satisfaction ratings.

Goal 3: Support economic development and quality of life in the region.

- Number of jobs created through the regional parks function.
- Number of tourists visiting parks and greenways.
- Amount and distribution of parkland across region and municipalities.
- Cost per visitor compared to similar park agencies.
- Economic impact of parks and greenways on residential values.
- Health care savings.
- Global reporting indicators.

In addition to the above indicators, GVRD is committed to implementing green strategies in developing, operating and managing facilities and resources in regional parks and greenways.

Areas to be targeted include:

- Waste reduction;
- Resource and materials use and reuse;
- Purchasing and procurement;
- Hazardous substance elimination;
- Climate change and energy use;
- Habitat and species protection and enhancement;
- Infrastructure development and preventative maintenance; and
- Life-cycle management of equipment and assets.

GVRD will work with academic institutions, municipalities, community organizations and businesses to develop sustainability indicators and measurable benchmarks for parks and greenways.

These and additional indicators will provide the public and member municipalities with an understanding of how regional parks and greenways supports the long-term sustainability of the GVRD. They will be reported in GVRD's annual Sustainability Report.

5. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Regional growth, demographics and the changing recreation needs of residents and communities will necessitate adaptive and creative approaches to delivering outdoor opportunities, protecting regional biodiversity and supporting economic development to create a sustainable region.

GVRD Parks views adaptive management as a process of using the best science or information available, writing and implementing policies or practices, then monitoring and making changes as needed to achieve

5. ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT (Continued)

the desired outcome. Adaptive management can be exemplified by the research, development and implementation of policies and management practices used by GVRD in controlling the West Nile Virus.

Adaptive Ecological Management

GVRD will use the best science in decision-making regarding management of natural and heritage resources under its stewardship. Where there is reasonable doubt about possible ecological impacts, GVRD will exercise caution in developing facilities and resource management prescriptions to ensure the ecological and historical values in parks and along greenways are not compromised.

Recognizing that climate change will have an impact on the region's ecological system is fundamental to managing the conservation values in parks and along greenways. This will require research and management strategies to accommodate changing species of wildlife and plants. Our view and approach to managing invasive species will need to accommodate the effects of climate change. The use of biological controls to achieve management objectives will be pursued wherever possible and practical.

GVRD will monitor the implementation of the RPGP and undertake a review of the plan every five years with the objective to provide up-dates and revisions where required.

Adaptive and Sustainable Design, Development and Use of Facilities

To ensure wise use of limited capital and operating resources, design and development of public amenities will focus on accommodating multi-use for all ages and abilities, with a view to creating flexibility to modify for other uses in the future. GVRD will continue the parks recycling program for beverage containers and expand it to include other recyclable products where appropriate.

Where appropriate and feasible, GVRD will consider using green technology such as solar and wind power to reduce operating and management costs. Natural ecological systems like bio-filtration ponds will be used where possible to recycle water, and consideration will be given to taking advantage of composting.

Adaptive and Flexible Operations and Program Delivery

GVRD will utilize well trained employees, contractors, volunteers and non-profit partners to develop operate and manage facilities and deliver programs. The provision of enhanced services through public-private partnerships will provide economic opportunities and support tourism. Looking to the private sector to continue providing specialized services like security, environmental monitoring, waste management and other possible services will enable GVRD employees to focus on their core role as stewardship, education and outdoor recreation providers.

Engaging community partners will be important in expanding education programs, stewardship, multi-cultural and other activities to advance environmental and social responsibility. Their role in youth leadership and skill development will be critical to create adults who take personal responsibility to ensure long-term sustainability of the region.

Implementing performance measures and monitoring progress on the above areas will enable GVRD to adjust and adapt its approach to delivering the regional parks and greenways function.

6. APPENDICES

6.1. Map and Overview of the Parks and Greenways System in 2004

GVRD GREENSPACES

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE REGION

