

# Regional Planning Bulletin

December 2019

## Health and Economic Benefits of Walkability and Parks

### Place Types by Walkability

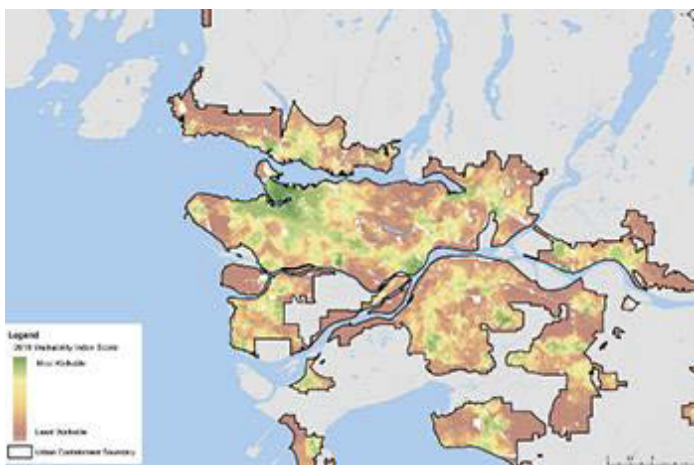


Graphic credit: Stuart Hamre (2019)

Since 2016, Metro Vancouver has been part of a major research project led by Dr. Larry Frank of UBC's Health and Community Design Lab, in partnership with TransLink, Vancouver Coastal Health and the City of Vancouver, with support from the Real Estate Foundation of BC. *The Where Matters: Health and Economic Impacts of Where We Live* study set out to quantify the health and economic benefits of walkable communities and access to parks. The landmark study has been completed, and the results show a clear association between the most walkable communities in Metro Vancouver and lower levels of chronic diseases. See the summary of the findings in the [staff report here](#) and [Policy Brief here](#).



## Walkability Index



A new [Walkability Index](#) has been developed to support the Metro 2040 Performance Monitoring program. The Walkability Index was developed by UBC's Health and Community Design Lab under the direction of Dr. Lawrence Frank, with financial support from TransLink and Metro Vancouver. The Walkability Index will be used to monitor progress towards Metro 2040's Goal 4 – Develop Complete Communities. Maps can be found at the link above and the full dataset is available for municipalities on request.

## Launch of the Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan



Metro Vancouver Housing, the region’s non-profit housing organization, recently published a 10-Year Plan to guide how the organization will provide, preserve, and expand its portfolio of affordable rental housing across the region. To support the plan, Metro Vancouver Housing will invest \$190 million to support a target of adding 1,350 new and redeveloped affordable rental units over the next decade. The 10-Year Plan also emphasizes partnerships with public, private, and non-profit sectors to leverage this investment and support even more affordable housing across the region.

[Metro Vancouver Housing 10-Year Plan](#)

## **Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing**

The *Transit-Oriented Affordable Housing Study* (TOAH) has been honoured by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation with a 2019 Gold Roof Award for Housing Research Excellence. The award was announced at CMHC’s National Housing Innovation Event in Ottawa on December 5th and includes \$10,000 to support Metro Vancouver’s ongoing efforts to communicate the TOAH Study findings out to practitioners and decision makers. [More information about the study.](#)



## **Metro 2050 Underway – We hope to hear from you**

The Regional Planning team is deep into the development process to update the regional growth strategy. The engagement plan includes opportunities for a range of stakeholders to contribute to the update through existing committees, an Intergovernmental Advisory Committee, and various policy-specific forums. We will also work with other governments including First Nations. The broader public will be invited to register for a Metro 2050 Community Dialogue Series in early 2020, an Online Open

House in mid-2020 (webinar format), and an online feedback form. The [feedback form is now live](#) and all residents are encouraged to provide their ideas.

## 2019 Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver



Child care is an essential component of building complete communities. To better support member jurisdictions in their efforts to grow the number of child care spaces in their communities, Regional Planning has compiled the 3rd [Survey of Licensed Child Care Spaces and Policies in Metro Vancouver](#). The updated survey found that Metro Vancouver has on average 18.6 child care spaces per 100 children aged 12 and under, which is up from 18.5 in 2015, and 16 in 2011. It also found that communities are taking a variety of positive actions to support the creation of new child care spaces including developing child care strategies, providing grants, providing local government building space, and identifying child care facilities as a community amenity in the development approvals process. The 2019 survey report contains both valuable data and planning considerations for municipalities and agencies working on child care challenges in their respective communities.

## High-resolution Land Cover Data Available for Download



Metro Vancouver has made the 2014 high-resolution land cover classification data available for download on the [Open Data Catalogue](#). The land cover dataset maps the entire region to broad biophysical classes (e.g. buildings, paved, deciduous tree, coniferous tree) and can be freely used in analysis and display.

## New Report Available On Regional Tree Canopy and Impervious Surfaces

[The Regional Tree Canopy and Impervious Surfaces report](#) contains an analysis of tree canopy cover and impervious surfaces in Metro Vancouver. Measuring tree canopy cover is a relatively simple way to determine the extent of the urban forest and the magnitude of services it provides. Impervious surfaces are typically associated with many of the negative effects of urbanization such as increased temperatures (the 'Urban Heat Island' effect) and flood risk, along with impacts to stream health through disrupted hydrological cycles and poor water quality.

The analysis also looked at the relationship between residential density and tree canopy and imperviousness, and provides information on a new 'Potential Planting Area' dataset which can be used to inform urban forest planning and management.

## Happy Holidays!

The Regional Planning team wants to thank you for your ongoing interest in the work we do and wishes everyone a festive holiday season, and a healthy and happy New Year. 2020 will be another busy year, and we look forward to continuing to shape the future of our beautiful region together.



**SERVICES AND SOLUTIONS FOR A LIVABLE REGION**

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