



Image: JSamson - Friendship Park Sign and Playground



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document is an update to Sechelt's *2006 Parks and Open Spaces Master Plan*.

The District of Sechelt initiated the *2018 Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update* to bring together diverse stakeholders and the District and generate a cohesive vision and coordinated approach for future improvements and investments. This plan is a resource to help guide future decision-making for the District's Parks and Open Space system as the community continues to evolve. This Master Plan is an opportunity to revisit and update the values of the District of Sechelt community today, and to explore innovations that will contribute to a healthy, thriving parks and open space system for the future.

A Parks and Open Space Master Plan is a strategic document that is system-wide in scope. It does not undertake detailed planning for each element in the system; rather, it provides recommendations and direction for the parks and open space system as a whole. This plan is designed to assist the District in prioritizing realistic, short-term (5-year) investments in parks and open spaces, as well as steps toward medium and long-term (10- to 25-year and beyond) investments. This is intended to be a living document that will evolve along with community conditions, needs, and opportunities.

PARKS & OPEN SPACES TODAY

The District of Sechelt has made over 90 updates and additions to its parks and open space system since completion of the **2006 Parks & Open Spaces Master Plan**. Major projects have included:

- Trail access and waterfront improvements at Trail Bay;
- Davis Bay Wharf development and waterfront park improvements;
- Addition of several new parks including Sechelt Skateboard Park, Walter Burntick Park, and Ebbitide Park among others;
- Upgrades and opening of multiple beach accesses;
- Trail improvements in parks and connecting between key community destinations;
- Several new or upgraded playgrounds; and
- Addition and enhancement of amenities and landscape within park areas as well as streetscape and other public spaces.

The **Parks & Open Space System Updates Since 2006** in **Section 3.1** of this plan provides additional details about trails classification.

PARKS CLASSIFICATION

A parks classification system was developed in the **2006 Parks & Open Space Master Plan**. The classification system has been refined and updated into the following seven classes to reflect the District's current parks and open space system structure and to respond to land use patterns, community needs, surrounding development, and suitable uses.

- **Community Park:** Community parks are typically large destination spaces that are centrally located to be accessible and benefit the broad community as well as visitors. These parks are commonly identified by their diverse collection of features and facilities. Community parks may also include athletic amenities, complementing the athletic park inventory.
- **Nature Park:** Nature parks are dedicated for community access to nature and can also provide ecological conservation, wildlife habitat protection, watercourse protection, environmental stewardship, management of hazardous areas (e.g., steep slopes), and protection of views. While some natural areas are dedicated as parks, other sensitive areas that have no recreation values are preserved through Development Permit regulations that define protection requirements through covenants or land preservation agreements. These lands are not publicly accessible. Preserving key natural spaces as parks within the District helps to preserve the community's natural character and provided park users with opportunities to experience the unique natural features of the region. Recreational use in nature parks is typically limited to passive enjoyment and pedestrian trails.



Mission Point Park, Community Park, Davis Bay



Friendship Park, Community Park, Sechelt Village



Hackatt Park, Community Park, Sechelt Village



Sechelt Heritage Forest, Nature Park, Sandy Hook



Sechelt Marsh, Nature Park, Sechelt Village

- **Athletic Park:** The primary function of an athletic park is to provide outdoor recreational facilities that serve the community's needs for active recreation and organized outdoor sport. The size of athletic parks varies depending on function, but these spaces tend to be large. Ideally, an athletic park with fields is four or more hectares in size, depending on availability of lands and the type and number of athletic fields needed. As a reference, Kinnikinnick fields are 3.36 ha in size, and Hackett Park fields are 1.11 ha in size. To facilitate tournament style play for soccer, softball, or baseball, a minimum of three fields plus ancillary uses (e.g., fieldhouse, washrooms, eating, concession, etc.) is desirable. Athletic parks are often complementary to community parks, or adjacent natural park space, sometimes incorporating community-based facilities alongside field uses.
- **Linear Park:** The main functions of linear parks are off-road linkages for pedestrians and cyclists. Linear parks can also provide greenways that protect ecological corridors such as watercourses. Linear parks can play a role in creating recreational or practical links to key destinations including natural features, parks, schools, commercial centres, and recreational areas. Often these linkages may occur alongside natural resources such as streams, waterfront, or wildlife habitat corridors. Linear parks do not include transportation rights-of-way (ROWS), sidewalks, or shoulders along developed roads; however a role of linear parks is to complete connections between transportation corridors.
- **Urban Park:** Urban parks are located in central and urban community areas. They provide visual features that add character to core areas. They are distinct from community parks in their compact size and less diverse function.
- **Neighbourhood Park:** Neighbourhood parks form the visual, physical, and social focus for a neighbourhood. These parks respond to the local outdoor recreation needs of neighbourhood residents. These spaces are especially important in neighbourhoods where residents have less private open space (e.g., denser development areas, multi-family residential areas).
- **Beach Access:** Beach accesses provide public access to Georgia Strait and the Sechelt Inlet for swimming, sunbathing, picnicking, boat launching, walking, and passive recreation. In addition to municipal parks, the District owns several waterfront access road ends, many of which are now developed as beach accesses that form an important part of the District's parks and open space system. Some remain undeveloped due to challenges (e.g., steep grades, poor access).

The **Existing Parks & Open Space Network** in **Section 3.2** of this plan provides additional details about trails classification.



Kinnikinnick Park, Athletic Park, West Porpoise Bay



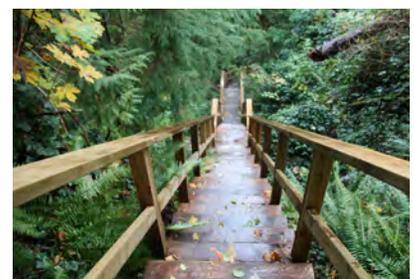
Snickett Park, Linear Park, Sechelt Village



Acacia (Cenotaph) Park, Urban Park, Sechelt Village



Walter Burntick Park, Neighbourhood Park, West Sechelt



Beach Access Staircase

TRAILS CLASSIFICATION

The **2006 Parks & Open Space Master Plan** identified four trail types or classifications. The proposed updated classification system includes the following four refined trail types or classifications:

- **Major Multi-Use Trail:** Wide, with a smooth surface, high use, gentle to flat grades, and a broad range of users and accessibility.
- **Community Pathway:** Moderate width, range of surfacing materials (paving to granular), moderate grades, and a moderate range of users.
- **Nature Trail (Rural):** Narrow width, natural surface, lower levels of use, navigate a wide range of grades, and a limited range of users.
- **On-Road Routes (sidewalk, wide shoulder, cycle lane):** Range of surfacing, level of use, grades, and users depending on location and circumstance.

The **Trails System** in **Section 3.3** of this plan provides additional details about trails classification.

FUTURE OF SECHELT'S PARKS & OPEN SPACES

Stakeholder and public engagement was undertaken during the development of the Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update to:

- Review the recommendations identified in the 2006 Plan and to confirm if remaining items remain priorities for moving forward;
- Request further feedback on ideas circulating within the community;
- Gather new ideas and an understanding of community vision and goals;
- Determine priorities and funding input; and
- Provide opportunity for community review and comment on proposed Master Plan directions.

The public input process generated many ideas for the parks and open space system for the District of Sechelt. Analysis of the input received guided the development of the plan vision, goals, recommendations, and priorities. Key themes included:

- Overall general satisfaction with the provision of parks and open spaces;
- Limited feedback on organized sports use of fields or courts;
- General preference for maintenance and amenity upgrades in existing parks over significant expansion of the network;
- Strong interest in trails to improve linkages throughout the community; and
- Popularity of unstructured uses such as walking, hiking, jogging, and dog-walking.



Major Multi-use Trail



Community Pathway



Nature Trail



On-Road Route

The **Plan Process** in **Section 4** of this plan provides additional details about the process and input received.

VISION & GOALS

A vision describes the long-term future for the Parks and Open Space system for the District of Sechelt. It provides a reminder about the spirit and intent for the system, encouraging planning and development to make progress towards this community outlook. A vision is a guide and a touchstone for consideration when making decisions about changes and development.

Vision: *Quality parks and open spaces are a defining feature for the District of Sechelt Community that invite community members and visitors of all abilities to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.*

The parks and open space system provides connectivity throughout the community and facilitates convenient connections to the area's natural features, waterfront assets, and commercial nodes.

The community is highlighted by focal destinations of public space for gathering and showcasing community character and pride as well as providing animated destinations for a diverse audience of locals and visitors.

Goals:

Goals support realization of the vision by providing a framework and specific guidance to future planning and projects. Goals act as a 'checklist' for proposed improvements; if a proposed project meets these goals, it will support the spirit and intent of the vision for the District of Sechelt Parks and Open Space system.



GOAL 1: Focus on Quality

- Improve and build on current amenities (quality over quantity)
- Focus on consolidating resources to strategically improve existing assets
- Ensure that our system is clean, fresh, and cared for
- Make an impression with the level of maintenance that shows pride in our parks and open spaces
- Be strategic in the review and approval of park dedication as part of new development (e.g., not steep slopes or environmentally sensitive areas, but usable and strategic space or consideration for alternate contributions)



GOAL 2: Strengthen Our Connectivity

- Integrate recreation and open spaces with the District's transportation system
- Create a trails and greenways network that is safe, inviting, and encourages people to get out of their vehicles and into their community
- Accommodate a range of active transportation modes within planning and design implementation
- Develop signage systems to improve wayfinding
- Provide convenient physical connections for pedestrians and cyclists within neighbourhoods and between neighbourhoods
- Review transit connections when planning development of new parks and open spaces



GOAL 3: Respect Our Environment & Natural Features

- Recognize and celebrate natural features and scenic qualities within public natural areas
- Consider environment resources and values in all park acquisition and planning
- Encourage stewardship partnerships as part of parks maintenance and operations
- Provide information for learning and education about natural resources within the parks and open space system
- Foster a balanced and responsible approach to recreation to ensure enjoyment of our environment and natural features for generations to come



GOAL 4: Promote Accessibility & Inclusivity

- Incorporate universal design best practices in detailed design and implementation processes
- Provide opportunities for inter-generational recreation within our community
- Support the creation of an age-friendly community through park development and maintenance works
- Seek funding support to improve the accessibility of existing amenities
- Continue to develop a system where "there is something for everyone"



GOAL 5: Encourage a Healthy, Active Community

- Provide a diversity of parks and open spaces to support a range of active interests
- Increase community activity by providing park amenities that are well-distributed
- Provide a system that considers opportunities for activity through all seasons
- Design and maintain spaces where people feel safe and comfortable to recreate day or evening



GOAL 6: Cost Effective & Well Managed

- Ensure that there is the appropriate funding allocated for sustainable maintenance of proposed capital improvements
- Pursue innovative opportunities to fund and develop parks and open space resources
- Seek opportunities for parks to contribute to Sechelt's economic development through events and tourism

RECOMMENDATIONS

The outcome of this process is a set of **32 recommendations** that support the implementation of the ideas, vision, and priorities generated. These recommendations are provided for staff, Council, partners, and the community to consider within the context of ongoing community planning and budgeting. It will be important that an adaptive approach is taken when implementing these recommendations, so that when opportunities or changes arise, Council and staff are able to make informed decisions to support the vision for Sechelt’s future parks and open space.

The recommendations are organized into three categories:

- 1. Community-Wide Projects:** Capital projects to improve or develop parks and open space assets that will benefit the larger Sechelt community, including major trail connections and community park upgrades.
- 2. Neighbourhood-Specific Projects:** Key capital projects targeted for Sechelt’s different neighbourhoods.
- 3. Operational Recommendations:** Ideas for policy, planning initiatives, management strategies, and information distribution that apply to the entire parks and open space system.

The following list provides an overview of the recommendations contained in the plan. For detailed information on a recommendation, refer to the page identified in this plan.

COMMUNITY-WIDE PROJECTS

1	Trail Bay to Davis Bay Trail Linkage.....	74
2	Suncoaster Trail Development.....	76
3	Active Transportation Connections	78
4	BC Hydro Right-of-Way Connector	80
5	Conversion of the Boulevard to a Pedestrian Route.....	82
6	Hackett Park Community Gathering Space ...	84
7	Mission Point Park / Brookman Park / Lot 1 Integrated Park Planning & Updates.....	86
8	Chapman Creek Trail Right-of-Way	90
9	Kinnikinnick Park Enhancements.....	92
10	Community Gathering Space for the Eastern Inlet Areas	94
11	Ebbtide (Water Resource Centre) Park Development.....	96
12	Destination Fenced Off-Leash Dog Area.....	98

NEIGHBOURHOOD-SPECIFIC PROJECTS

13	West Sechelt Neighbourhood Project Ideas	102
14	West Porpoise bay Neighbourhood Project Ideas	104
15	Sechelt Village Neighbourhood Project Ideas	106

16	Selma Park / Davis Bay / Wilson Creek Neighbourhood Project Ideas.....	108
17	East Porpoise Bay Neighbourhood Project Ideas	110
18	Sandy Hook Neighbourhood Project Ideas.	112
19	Tillicum Bay Neighbourhood Project Ideas.	114
20	Tuwanek Neighbourhood Project Ideas.....	116

OPERATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

21	Future Park Acquisition & Development	119
22	Information & Communication.....	122
23	Accessibility	123
24	Partnerships	124
25	Volunteers in Parks	125
26	Streetscapes, Public Art & beautification.....	126
27	Furnishings & Amenities	127
28	Signage & Wayfinding	129
29	Sea Level Rise Adaptation.....	131
30	Adaptive Management & Review	132
31	Parks Asset Inventory	133
32	Operations & Maintenance Allocation.....	134

FUNDING

A combination of funding strategies will be required to implement the Parks and Open Space Master Plan. Municipal governments rely largely on property tax to finance parks and the District of Sechelt has numerous budget priorities that must be balanced. Therefore, it will be important for the District to seek innovative ways to supplement municipal funds so that the parks and open space system can be maintained and improved. Strategic funding will require commitment from staff, Council, and the community.

The following strategies provide a range of options for consideration to generate capital for parks projects. Some strategies suit specific conditions but cannot be applied to others. It is expected that the District will determine what combination of Funding Strategies will be used to implement the Master Plan recommendations.

- Parks Taxation
- Parcel Tax (Levy)
- Parks Reserve Fund
- Parks Development Cost Charges (DCCs)
- Parks Decommissioning
- Amenity Contributions
- Coordination with Infrastructure Upgrades
- Senior Government Funding
- Donations & Fundraising
- Community Partnerships
- Private-Public Partnerships (P3s)
- User Fees

The **Funding Strategies** in **Section 7.1** of this plan provide additional details about the above.

IMPLEMENTATION

The **Implementation Summary Tables** in **Section 7.3** of this plan provide categorized overviews of the recommended actions for achieving the vision and goals set out in the District of Sechelt Parks and Open Space Master Plan Update.

The sum of changes envisioned in this plan will require a long-term (+20 year) outlook. Although the cumulative ideas are big picture and long-term, it is important for the District to identify actions that are achievable in the short-term to build from the energy and momentum generated by the planning process and by the works preceding this master plan update.

Timelines for projects or actions are suggested, but should opportunity arise, staff and Council consideration to complete a project sooner than its suggested timeframe is warranted.

The implementation are summarized into the following categories:

- Short-term recommendations to be considered in a 0 to 5-year timeframe.
- Medium-term recommendations to be considered in a 5 to 10-year timeframe.
- Long-term recommendations to be considered in a 10+ year timeframe.
- Development development recommendations that are contingent on private land development and therefore do not have a defined timeframe.
- Operational recommendations that will largely be completed based on staff time and availabilities.