

VISION MANDATE:

A system of parks and open spaces that provides a diversity of recreational, social, cultural and environmental experiences will:

- **“Build Community”:** Strengthen the connection that residents have to their neighbourhoods, and provide an identity for the heart of the City;
- **“Build Green”:** A greener urban form will mitigate the impact of urban development, integrate viable ecological zones, provide experiential and educational opportunities, and create a system of greenways that will provide alternatives to the car and encourage recreational use;
- **“Build Economic Vitality”:** Maximize the appeal of the City Centre through the provision of high quality park and open space amenities and environments to attract development and tourism through a variety of unique public events, park experiences, and iconic landscapes;
- **“Build a Legacy”:** Create places and spaces that will position Richmond as an appealing, livable community, a leading centre for sport, wellness, and sustainability, and a host of internationally significant events.

The Parks and Open Space policies presented here are based on Council approved strategies and policies including the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan 2005-2015, 2010 Richmond Trails Strategy, Waterfront Strategy, 2007 Museum and Heritage Strategy, Middle Arm Open Space Master Plan, Outdoor Sports Field Strategy, Urban Forestry Management Plan and DCC Bylaw. Where additional policies are required, PRCS will present additional plans with implementation programs to Council for approval.

2.6 Parks & Open Space

ISSUE:

A healthy, connected system of parks and open space is a key factor in achieving the quality of life and livability of urban areas. Parks and open spaces are long-term investments that produce continually increasing benefits for future generations. The projected increase in the City Centre of the resident population and increasing commercial and industrial activity will result in a need for more parks and open space that are responsive to changing demographics and increasing density.

The amount, distribution, and type of parks and open space needed to sustain livability will shape the City Centre parks and open space system.

Amount

The quantity of parks and open space required is based on the size of the resident population and is expressed as a ratio of acres to population. The use of a park and open space standard provides:

- a clear benchmark for determining the quantity of park and open space required to meet community need;
- a tool for adapting to growth to ensure the timely acquisition and development of park and open spaces;
- enough park and open space to achieve an equitable distribution and a diversity of open space types.

Distribution

The location of City Centre parks and public open spaces is guided first by standards for access and second, by physical geography.

- Standards for access ensure equitably distributed open space and a high quality level of service.
- Physical determinants like the waterfront, ecological features and urban form (e.g. gathering spaces at major civic facilities, a landmark open space at the heart of the CBD) will dictate the location of certain types of parks and open space.

The *base level* of the parks and open space system is comprised of City owned land augmented by publicly accessible open space owned by other government agencies and by private land owners where they make a significant, positive contribution to the system.

OBJECTIVE:

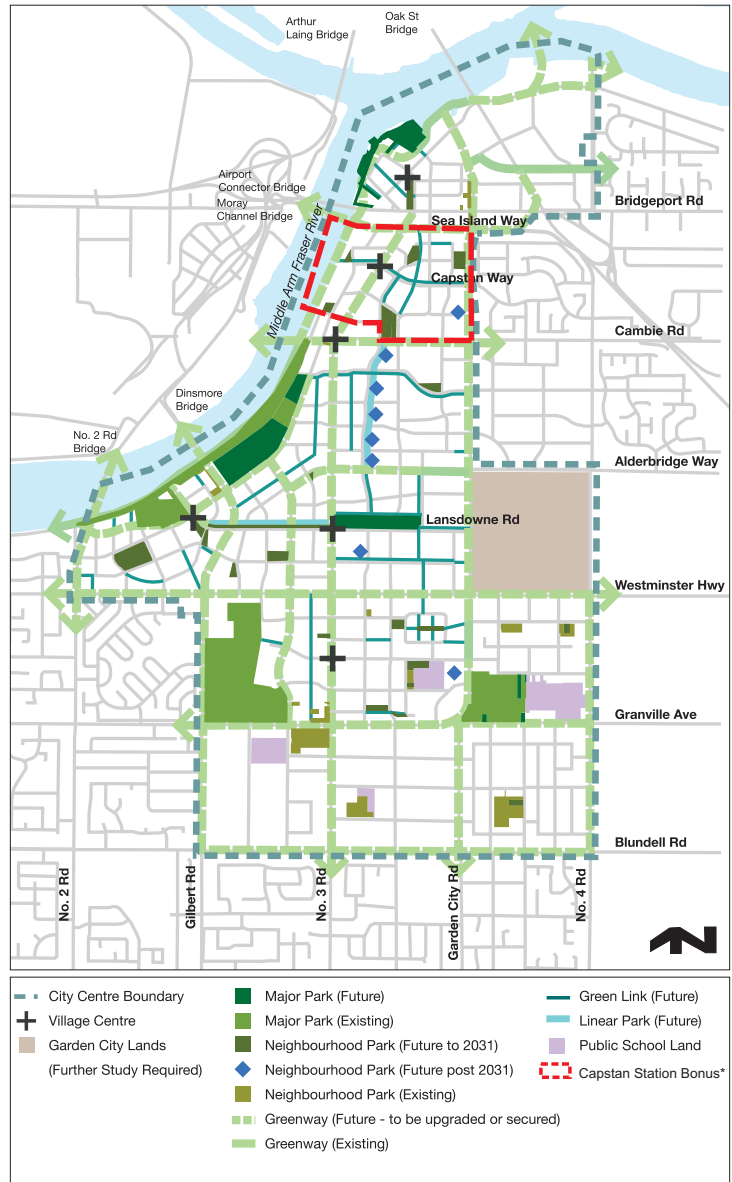
Provide a framework for a **complete parks and open space system** that will:

- provide the quantity of park and open space required to address social, recreational, and cultural needs;
- incorporate a rich diversity of experiences and landscapes that reflect the identity of the community and are rooted in local culture and environment;
- ensure an equitable distribution of parks and open space of each type;
- mitigate the environmental impacts of increasing urbanization and continually support the health of the urban environment;
- respond to the higher densities in the City Centre with a greater diversity of programming in each park and appropriate design and materials.

Strategic Investment for City Acquisition of Open Space

In order to optimize public resources, the strategic approach to the acquisition of City owned parks and open space is to secure investments rapidly. In the period ending in 2031, when the greatest growth and the greatest increase in land values is anticipated, 75% of the total land required to build-out will have been acquired.

Base Level Parks & Open Space Map (2031)



* The Base Level Open Space Standard will be augmented in Capstan Village by publicly accessible areas secured for public park and related uses in respect to the Capstan Station Bonus.

	Year 2006	Year 2031	Build-out
Population	40,000	90,000	120,000
Quantity of Open Space	76.5 ha (189 ac.)	118.4 ha (292.5 ac.)	157.8 ha (390 ac.)
Ratio of Acreage to Population	4.75/1,000	3.25/1,000	3.25/1,000
Quantity of Additional Open Space	0	41.9 ha (103.5 ac.)	39.5 ha (97.5 ac.)

Bylaw 8837
2012/03/12

POLICIES	
2.6.1 Base Level Open Space Standard	
a)	Acquire Land to Achieve the Base Level Open Space Standard The minimum standard of 3.25 ac./1,000 population will be achieved primarily through land acquisition (funded through the DCC Program) and legal agreements to secure long-term public use where appropriate.
b)	Augment the Base Level in the City Centre to Contribute to the City-Wide Open Space Standard The City will augment the base level standard with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other government-owned property and utility rights-of-ways where public access can be secured through legal agreement; • privately owned, publicly accessible areas secured from developers through mutual agreement (e.g., in respect to the Capstan Station Bonus); • co-locating new City-owned parks with School District lands where it is cost effective and practical to do so.
c)	Ensure an Equitable Distribution Parks and open spaces will be equitably distributed to ensure that residential and commercial uses are served by each open space type (with some consideration for industrial areas).
d)	Secure Appropriate Location The location of specific open space types will be determined by the intended purpose, users and service areas, and the compatibility of the program and surrounding neighbourhood characteristics.
e)	Enhance the Provision & Diversity of On-Site Amenity Space Recognize the important role that on-site amenity space plays as part of the City Centre's open space and recreational networks, and take steps to help increase the availability and diversity of that valuable resource.
2.6.2 Ownership & Access for the Base Level	
a)	The Majority of the Land Required to Meet the Standard will be Publicly Owned The City will own approximately 90% of the land designated as public park or greenway, including lands currently owned by the City and planned acquisitions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing parks, greenways, and other public open spaces will remain as the foundation for the parks and open space system. • The enhancement and adaptation of existing open space will be required over time in response to growth. • Where an existing open space is proposed to be removed, replacement with the equivalent quality and quantity will be secured to maintain the standard over time.
b)	Secure Public Access to Land Owned by Other Government Agencies & Utilities Legal agreement for public access and use will be sought where the location of a property or utility corridor or it's attributes present a positive contribution to the open space system.
c)	Secure Public Access on Private Property for Park or Greenway Purposes Seek legal agreement for public access and use on private property where it best supports the open space system. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On property directly adjacent to a park or major greenway at a minimum 10 m (33 ft.) width. • At locations which create neighbourhood links through development to a park at a minimum 10 m (33 ft.) width. • To coordinate open space across development parcels.
2.6.3 Parks and Open Space Characteristics	
a)	Contribute to Neighbourhood Character Parks and open space will help define neighbourhood character by their location, function and landscape type. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate and innovative design, and the use of materials will enhance their character and support varied types and intensities of use. • Support neighbourhood building through designs that encourage social gathering and a sense of place (e.g. gathering places, community gardens).
b)	Ensure a Healthy Environment Ecological amenities (e.g. natural areas, storm water management, urban forest) will be integrated throughout the open space system to preserve existing ecological resources, support biodiversity, and mitigate urban impacts.
c)	Enhance Connectivity Major greenways and neighbourhood green links support the open space system by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creating safe and healthy corridors for pedestrians to move throughout the City Centre; • reducing the demand on the transportation system by offering alternatives to car use; • providing corridors for environmental purposes (e.g. storm water management, linkages between natural areas).
d)	Accommodate a Diversity of Cultural & Recreational Activities The determination of the size and location of parks and open space will include considerations of the types of public use required. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active, formal recreational activities will be located in non-residential areas and major open spaces while informal recreational activities will be accommodated throughout the open space system. • Provide space and facilities for cultural features and activities at a variety of locations and at various scales.
2.6.4 Middle Arm Waterfront	
a)	Create a Destination Waterfront <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire properties to create a destination waterfront park. • Secure public access across private property to create an uninterrupted public waterfront. • Support and increase recreational use of the water. • Encourage enhancement of the Fraser River foreshore. • Provide unimpeded access to the dyke for dyke maintenance and improvements. • Encourage compatible uses and design of waterfront developments to enhance the waterfront experience.

2.6.1 Major Parks

Major parks comprise 40% of the open space system and serve the broadest population, from the immediate neighbourhood to tourists. Major Parks include:

City-Wide Urban Parks

Location: Near the major crossroads of the Central Business District.

Program: Major civic events, public gatherings, informal recreation, support facilities, local storm water management features.

Site Features: Min. 4 ha (10 ac.), 30% urban forest & eco-amenity, plaza, high quality site furnishings, public art, covered performance venue, gathering & social spaces, multi-purpose lawn, informal recreation amenities.

Community Parks

Location: Within 800 m (2,625 ft.) of major villages, co-located with community facility where possible.

Program: A broad range of formal & informal recreational activities, community gathering & festivals, environmental features, local storm water management features.

Site Features: Min. 4 ha (10 ac.), 40% urban forest & eco-amenity, min. 20% non-permeable surface, sport courts, high quality sports fields, playground, community gathering & festival space, community garden, parking.

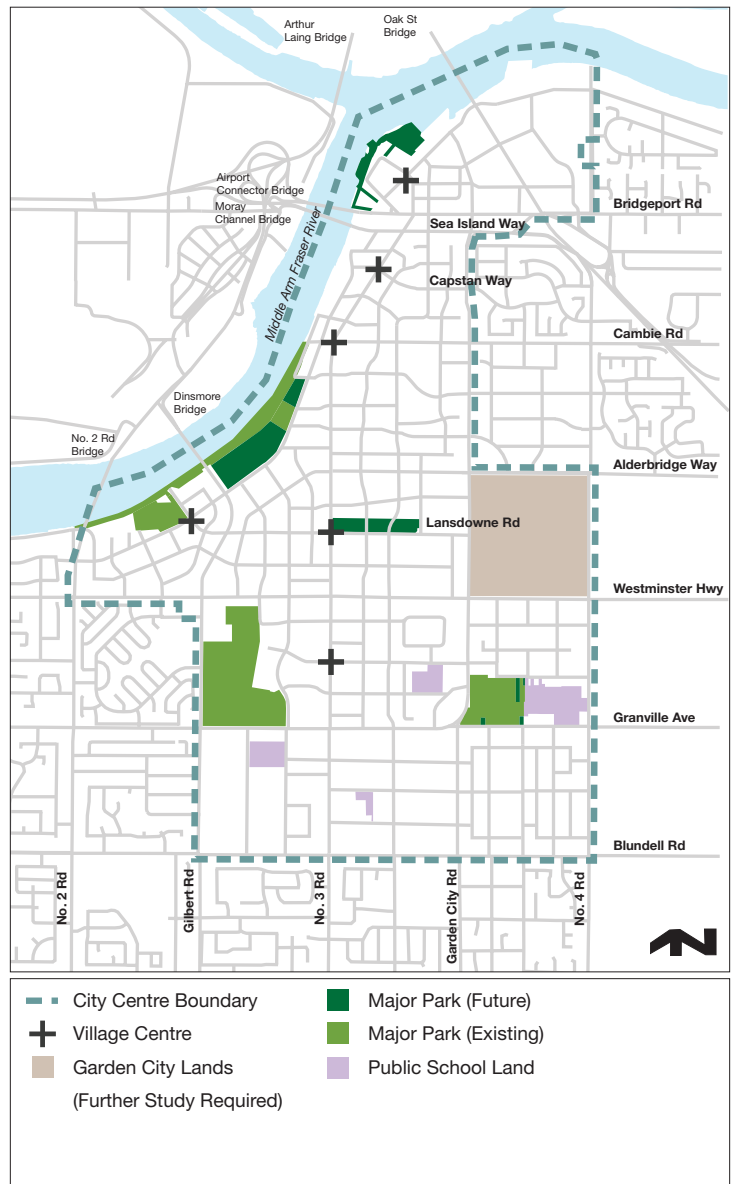
Natural Areas

Location: Where existing natural resources occur or developed in relation to existing & future resources.

Program: Habitat zones, interpretive & education programs.

Site Features: Optimum min. 8 ha (20 ac.) of riparian & upland habitat but includes smaller patches of min. 0.8 ha (2 ac.) where connection to larger system exists. Includes trails, seating, boardwalks, interpretive signage.

Major Parks Map



Additional Study

Urban Forest Strategy Update – to explore new technologies and approaches to trees in urban environments.

Urban Ecology Study – to determine the most effective measures for promoting and sustaining healthy environments within medium to high density urban areas.

2.6.1 Neighbourhood Parks

Neighbourhood parks comprise 40% of the open space system and primarily serve the local needs of the immediate residential or commercial neighbourhood. Parks will determine the types which include:

Residential Village Parks

Location: To serve residents within a 400 m (1,312 ft.) radius without crossing arterial roads or major streets.

Program: Social gatherings, informal recreation, environmental features &/or local storm water management features.

Site Features: 0.6 to 3.2 ha (1.5 ac. to 8 ac.), 40% urban forest &/or eco-amenity, 50% frontage on streets, south exposure with access to sunlight, outdoor fitness amenities, sport courts, playgrounds, community gardens, seating/gathering area.

Commercial Village Parks

Location: To serve businesses within a 400 m (1,312 ft.) radius without crossing arterial roads or major streets.

Program: Daytime & evening gathering, social & cultural programming, informal recreation, urban character.

Site Features: 0.2 to 1.6 ha (0.5 ac. to 4 ac.), 30% urban forest, 50% frontage on streets, south exposure with access to sunlight, hard surface and seating areas, sport courts, soft landscape areas.

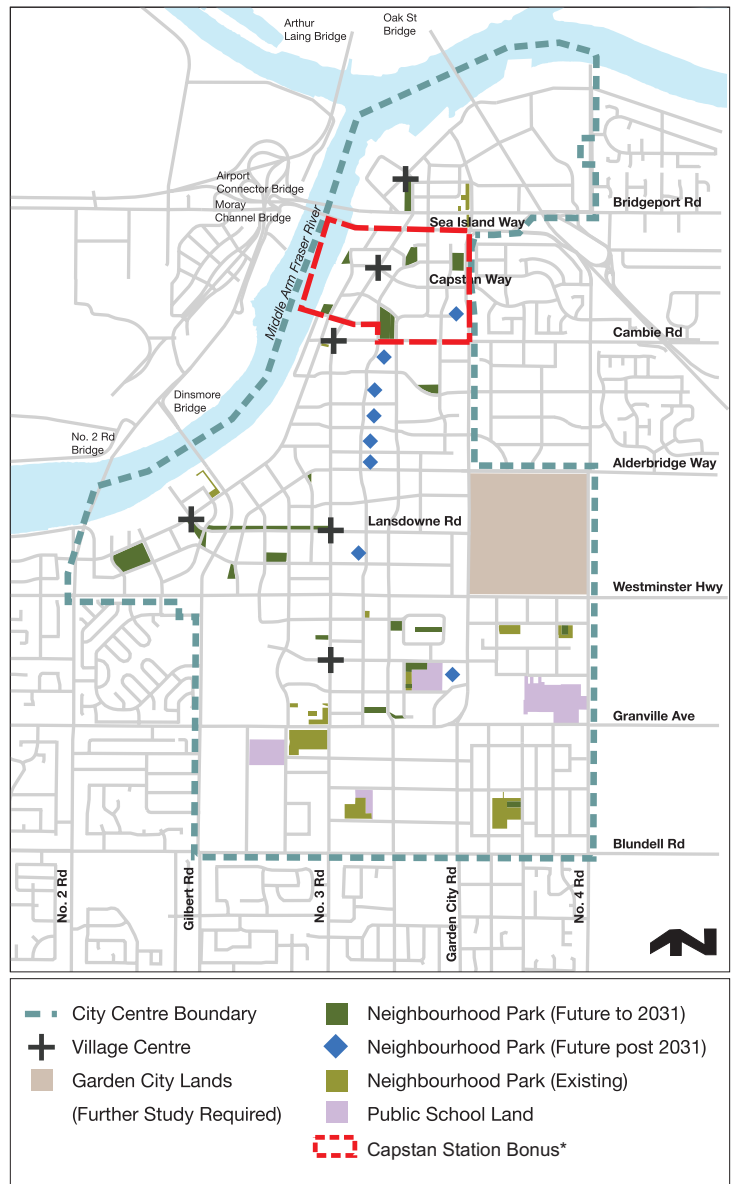
Urban Plazas

Location: At prominent cross-roads within a village.

Program: Daytime & evening gathering, social & cultural programming, urban character.

Site Features: Less than 0.2 ha (0.5 ac.), 50% frontage on streets, south exposure with access to sunlight, hard surface and seating areas, soft landscape features.

Neighbourhood Parks Map Bylaw 8837 2012/03/12



* The Base Level Open Space Standard will be augmented in Capstan Village by publicly accessible areas secured for public park and related uses in respect to the Capstan Station Bonus.

Additional Study

Urban Agriculture Strategy – to better understand effective ways of integrating urban agriculture within public open spaces and on private property.

2.6.1(b) Plazas & Squares

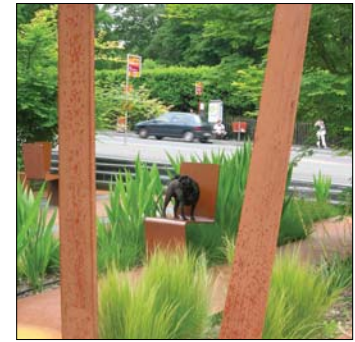
In addition to the base level of open space, plazas and squares on private property will contribute to a high quality public realm. Developers will be encouraged to provide plazas and squares to augment the base level of open space and further enhance the quality of the urban environment with:

- public open space of 0.15 ha (0.4 ac.) and smaller that will contribute to the social life of neighbourhoods through strong relationships to the street and amenities to encourage public gathering;
- flexible, programmable space that is not limited to use as building entry and with complementary building functions adjacent (e.g., food services, retail conveniences such as newsstands);
- high quality materials and design that provide a range of gathering and seating options from sitting edges to benches to movable tables and chairs, landscape features, pedestrian scale lighting, and attractions such as water features or public art.

These open spaces will be incorporated into developments without affecting density or limiting development potential. Public access may be secured through statutory right-of-way where mutually agreed upon. The terms of public access and operation will be negotiated at the time of redevelopment.



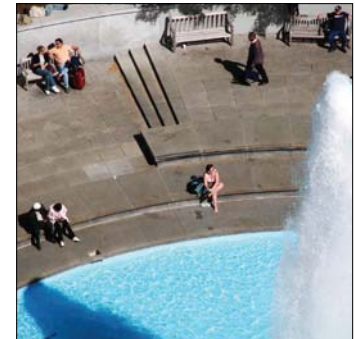
Gathering and seating.



Landscape features.



Neighbourhood attractions - public.



Neighbourhood attractions - water features.



Gathering and seating.



Landscape features.

Additional Study

A Green Roofs Enhancement Study – to develop clearer objectives for what contribution these could make to the open space system and their full range of uses.

Plazas and Squares, and Green Links Programming and Design Guidelines – to provide a better understanding for the City and developers of the role of these public places and costs.

2.6.1(e) Enhancing On-Site Amenity Space

Richmond’s OCP encourages the provision of on-site amenity space for the shared use of residents.

These spaces enhance livability and make an important contribution towards the city’s open space and recreation networks, especially in dense areas where they provide for:

- respite from urban life;
- children’s play, passive/active recreation, and socializing in a secure setting – within walking distance of home;
- room for parties and other activities that cannot be easily accommodated in multiple-family dwellings or their private outdoor spaces;
- in the case of mid- and high-rise areas, attractive views of landscaped lower-level roofs.

Challenge/Opportunity

In the past, small projects and those with large townhouse units sometimes found their indoor amenity spaces underutilized; and, developers argued that landscaping the roofs of parking podiums and providing special amenities, such as indoor pools, added cost and were not valued by the market.

More recently, however, with decreasing unit sizes, increasing densities and housing costs, and an aging demographic, residents’ demands are changing and developers are responding with:

- larger amenity spaces;
- more diverse amenities for residents – and their pets;
- more innovative, adaptable amenities (e.g., garden plots).

Proposed Strategy

Residential Outdoor Amenity Space

- Increase the provision of landscaped outdoor amenity space and the ability of residents to make use of it for garden plots and related activities by encouraging the provision of an additional 10% (minimum) of net development site area for this use, the purpose of which is to provide for some combination of trees, plants, shrubs, and urban agriculture, together with appropriate access, storage, water, and other services necessary for its use.

Current Guideline (Minimum Area)	Proposed Guideline (Minimum Area)
6 m ² (65 ft ²) per dwelling	As existing, PLUS 10% of net development site area*

* Roughly equivalent to 25-40 ha (62-99 ac.), calculated based on City Centre-wide residential and mixed-use net development site area.



Residential Indoor Amenity Space

- Encourage the creation of special recreation facilities (e.g., indoor pools, gymnasiums) in residential developments by increasing indoor amenity space in larger projects.

No. of Dwellings	Current Guideline (Minimum)	Proposed Guideline (Minimum)
Less than 40	70 m ² (754 ft ²)	No change.
40 - 199	100 m ² (1,076 ft ²)	No change.
200 or more		2 m ² (21.5 ft ²) per unit

Affordable Amenity Space

- Enhance the affordability of the maintenance and operation of indoor and outdoor residential amenity spaces by allowing residents to make these spaces available to non-resident users (e.g., public swims, swimming lessons, yoga classes), provided that the affected spaces are still able to meet the needs of residents (e.g., scheduling non-resident use at non-peak hours, securing preferential access to non-resident activities for residents).

2.6.3(c) Pedestrian Linkages

The 2010 Richmond Trail Strategy provides the vision to guide continued development of the greenway system in City Centre. The intent is to “provide a variety of exciting opportunities for walking, rolling and cycling that will link people to each other, to their community, and to Richmond’s unique natural and cultural heritage”.

Greenways

Location: Along major streets and important recreational corridors.

Program: Link multiple destinations (e.g. between major open spaces and other significant destinations) and connect natural areas.

Site Features: Min. 10 m (33 ft.) wide, separate pedestrian and cycling paths, rest areas with street furnishings, public art, signage & wayfinding, integrated with wetlands & storm water features, hedgerows, significant tree planting.

Linear Parks

Location: Along key streets to create significant recreational and environmental corridors linking the waterfront to the heart of the downtown.

Program: Combined neighbourhood park and greenway functions to encourage movement through the neighbourhood (walking, jogging) and incorporating social and physical activity nodes.

Site Features: 30 to 40 m (100 to 131 ft.) wide, high quality landscape, broad pedestrian promenade, playgrounds, sports courts, water features, significant tree planting and multi-layered planting, site furnishings, public art.

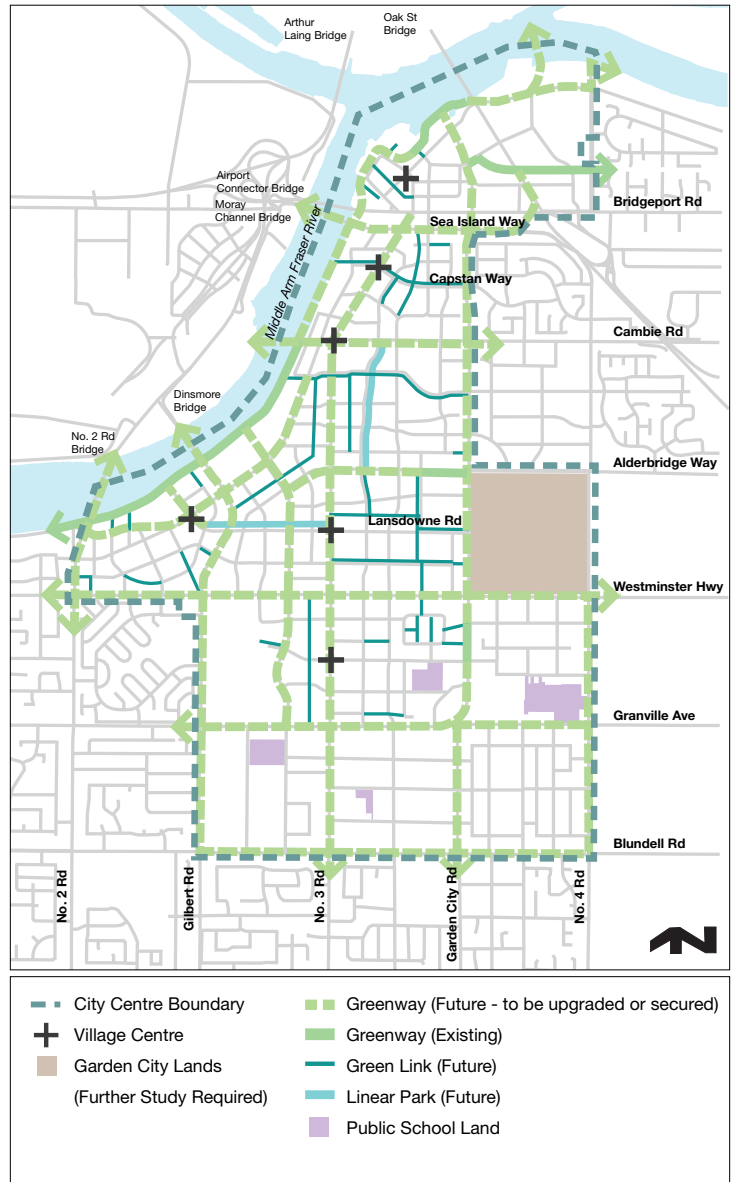
Green Links

Location: Along lanes and mews, through or between developments.

Program: Provide connections within neighbourhoods to support a walkable urban environment, and to support ecological areas.

Site Features: Min. 6 m (20 ft.) to 20 m (65 ft.) wide, broad sidewalks with special paving at nodes and intersections, rest areas with street furniture, street trees and multi-layered planting, pedestrian scale street lighting, wayfinding, community art.

Pedestrian Linkages Map



Additional Study

Storm Water Management Strategy – to develop methods to better address stormwater and permeability in parks, greenways and streets.

2.6.4(a) Waterfront

The approved Middle Arm Open Space Master Plan Concept envisions the City Centre waterfront as a premier urban waterfront intimately connected to Richmond's downtown with signature parks, open spaces and opportunities for the public to experience the Fraser River.

Middle Arm Waterfront Park

Location: Middle Arm Waterfront.

Program: Water-based recreation, cultural events, formal & informal recreation, environmental features, heritage interpretation.

Site Features: 15 ha (37 ac.), 40% urban forest and eco-amenity, max. 20% non-permeable surface, non-motorized boating facilities, floats, boardwalk, piers, trail network, plaza, multi-purpose lawn, major playground, concession & rental facilities, parking.

Middle Arm Greenway

Location: On the existing Middle Arm dyke from the No. 2 Road Bridge west of the Richmond Olympic Oval to the River Rock Casino in the Bridgeport area.

Program: An accessible, multi-use pedestrian promenade and cycling and recreational route.

Site Features: Hard surface promenade, access points at convenient locations, lighting, seating, plazas, piers, boardwalks, public art, play features.

Duck Island

Location: North of the Moray Channel in the Bridgeport area.

Program: Natural foreshore and upland environments, environmental interpretation, potential passenger ferry.

Site Features: Trails, boardwalks, tidal marsh, upland forest and meadow, ferry dock.



Bird's eye perspective sketch.