

Oak Bay Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission

Strategic Plan 2019-2023

Submitted for Council Review – 21 February 2019

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Oak Bay Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission (“Commission”) has a broad mandate defined and governed by municipal by-laws and administrative policy. The Commission oversees the single largest component of Oak Bay’s annual budget and its program and facilities portfolio. As such, it needs to ensure that the parks, recreation and culture facilities and programs it is responsible for can respond to changes in Council and community expectations.

As a result, it is timely that the Commission creates a strategic plan to guide its actions over the next four years and enable it to make the choices required to meet expectations. It is intended that the plan be submitted to Council for its review and validation in early 2019.

The purpose of the Commission’s strategic plan is to:

- align the Commission’s responsibilities and actions with its mandated authority and support any recommendations to Council to change its current role and scope
- provide strategic context for all of the Commission’s work – including but not limited to its budget, strategic focus and setting the agenda for its meetings
- support the Commission in being more innovative and proactive in its advice to Council
- set annual priorities on major initiatives that will help guide choices and action

The Plan sets for the Commission’s focus and work:

- a **vision** for Oak Bay as leading the province as a healthy, active living community with vibrant arts and culture that celebrates the stewardship of its natural ecosystem
- a **mission** that defines its purpose as providing excellent and accountable advice to Council that supports and inspires active and stimulating living through healthy lifestyles by providing sustainable, diverse and accessible recreation, arts and culture opportunities
- six **goals** to advance its proposed vision and mission – namely to:
 1. Build a more active, more connected community
 2. Protect and value Oak Bay’s natural ecosystems
 3. Support and improve Oak Bay’s parks, recreation and culture infrastructure and programs

4. Be a regional leader in community arts and culture
 5. Encourage and enhance community engagement in the Commission's work
 6. Create a partnership with First Nations to participate in future decision-making
- ten **priority initiatives** that it proposes to work on to advance these goals - namely:
 1. Develop a plan to rebuild Carnarvon Park
 2. Oversee the implementation of Oak Bay's Urban Forest Strategy
 3. Promote active transportation
 4. Create a master plan to modernize playgrounds
 5. Protect rare and endangered species and ecosystems
 6. Review and update dog-use by-laws and policies aimed at ensuring how to best protect Oak Bay's parks and beaches and share them with a diverse group of stakeholders
 7. Ensure all our facilities (natural or built) are open and accessible
 8. Develop a budget plan and options aimed at ensuring that all of Oak Bay's recreation facilities and programs maximize their cost-recovery potential
 9. Develop an integrated Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture master plan
 10. Enhancing intergenerational opportunities to connect people

A time frame for the completion of the proposed priority initiatives as well as performance measures to track and measure the Plan's progress will be completed following Council's validation of the draft PRCC Strategic Plan in early 2019.

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STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The Oak Bay Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission (“Commission”) has a broad mandate defined and governed by municipal by-laws and administrative policy. The Commission oversees the single largest component of Oak Bay’s annual budget and its program and facilities portfolio. As such, it needs to ensure that the parks, recreation and culture facilities and programs it is responsible for can respond to changes in Council and community expectations. As a result, it is timely that the Commission create a strategic plan to guide its actions and recommendations over the next four years to enable it to make the choices required to meet these expectations.

Among the key purposes of the Commission’s strategic plan are:

- To align the Commission’s responsibilities and actions with its mandated authority and support any recommendations it may make to Council regarding changes that should be considered in its current role and scope
- To provide strategic context for all of the Commission’s work – including but not limited to:
 - aligning its annual budget for parks, recreation and culture programs and facilities with strategic priorities,
 - directing the Commission’s focus at the strategic rather than operational level in its work and,
 - Setting the agenda for the Commission’s meetings
- To help the Commission be more innovative and proactive in its advice to Council with initiatives that are based on strategy, aligned with Council priorities and the Official Community Plan (OCP) and responsive to public input
- To set annual priorities on major initiatives that will help guide choices and action – supported by a framework for measuring its progress and impact

The Commission’s strategic plan is set over a four-year timeframe (2019 to 2023) to help facilitate longer-term planning work. It is expected that it will be reviewed annually and refreshed with new goals and objectives once those initially set are accomplished. The annual review should be conducted in September so it can inform the development of the Commission’s annual budget recommendations for parks, recreation and culture programs and facilities.

VISION

Oak Bay leads the province as a healthy, active living community with vibrant arts and culture that celebrates the stewardship of its natural ecosystem

MISSION

The Commission provides excellent and accountable advice to Council that supports and inspires active and stimulating living through healthy lifestyles by providing sustainable, diverse and accessible recreation, arts and culture opportunities

KEY ROLES

The Commission has a broad mandate defined by municipal by-law and administrative policy. Within this mandate, the most important roles that the Commission exercises are ...

- To advocate for active living through healthy lifestyles in everything the municipality does
- To advocate for the stewardship of Oak Bay's natural spaces
- To advise Council on suggested parks, recreation and culture program initiatives and capital projects
- To encourage the active engagement of the public in the Commission's work and priority initiatives
- To provide oversight of all parks, recreation and culture programs, facilities and infrastructure operated by Oak Bay – including coordination of leisure services and custody, maintenance and regular refresh of facilities and infrastructure
- To provide oversight of Oak Bay's parks, recreation and culture budget - exercising integrity and due diligence in its management

STRATEGIC THEMES AND DIRECTIONS

- **ACTIVE LIVING**
 - Promote active and inclusive lifestyles through ways that are both inclusive and sustainable
 - Encourage modernization of our current active-living assets and infrastructure and how we do our business
 - Promote more community gatherings i.e. movie nights, Arts Alive walking tours, free drop-in play sessions
- **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
 - Encourage engagement with the public to seek input, celebrate achievements and support transparency in the Commission's work

- Expand and improve community engagement through public information sessions specific to parks, recreation, arts and culture – broadcast events more often
 - Recognize First Nations cultural significance on all print and posters, as it pertains to indigenous culture
- *A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY*
 - Support natural conservation, appreciation and protection

PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

In conducting its work and exercising its mandate, the Commission will ...

- Promote healthy lifestyles - through active living opportunities
- Promote sustainability - protect, steward and conserve natural spaces
- Promote accessibility – increasing opportunities and access to active living programs for all in our community
- Be forward-thinking with an open mind to new ideas and approaches – agile, open and flexible; focussed on problem-solving
- Seek continuous improvement - through innovation and not being afraid to be bold
- Encourage public input - being respectful and inclusive in our interactions with the public
- Be appreciative – recognizing achievements and accomplishments; maintaining a deep and fundamental respect for what we’ve got
- Be accountable and transparent - in our interactions with the public, Council and each other; compliant with Council protocols and practice for information sharing
- Be fiscally responsible – in our oversight of Oak Bay’s parks, recreation and culture budget
- Honour and acknowledge First Nations in our work

GOALS

In order to advance our vision and fulfill our mission, the Commission aims to:

1. ***Build a more active, more connected community*** - by enhancing opportunities for all residents to pursue active, stimulating and healthy lifestyles as well as inter-generational opportunities to connect people together
2. ***Protect and value Oak Bay’s natural ecosystems***
3. ***Support and improve Oak Bay’s parks, recreation and culture infrastructure and programs*** – through innovation and improvements that enable access for all members of our community
4. Be a regional ***leader in community arts and culture***
5. ***Encourage and enhance community engagement in the Commission’s work*** - by promoting the Commission’s work to members of our community and other commissions and agencies of the municipality and being always open and encouraging of public input into our work
6. Create a ***partnership with First Nations*** to participate in future decision-making regarding landmarks, gardens and other areas of relevance

OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

To best advance our goals, the Commission will work actively on the following priority initiatives. (A time frame for the completion of proposed actions will be completed following Council's review and validation of the draft PRCC Strategic Plan.)

| Initiative | Actions |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Develop a plan to rebuild Carnarvon Park | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch community engagement process • Complete project |
| 2. Oversee the implementation of Oak Bay's Urban Forest Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation |
| 3. Promote active transportation - including active transportation enhancements such as bike paths, improved and upgraded trail networks and non-park walking routes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 4. Create a master plan to modernize playgrounds based on design principles that, among other factors, will make our playgrounds more inclusive/accessible; more innovative and imaginative | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft master plan • Public engagement • Final plan to Council |
| 5. Protect rare and endangered species and ecosystems through stewardship of our natural assets and restoration of natural habitats in conservation-oriented parks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement procedures to protect Critical Habitat for Species at Risk in municipal parks consistent with those established in federal recovery strategies • Identify and map the distribution of imperiled ecosystems in municipal parks • Develop and implement procedures to restore imperiled ecosystems in municipal parks to a more natural state |
| 6. Review and update dog-use by-laws and policies aimed at ensuring how to best protect Oak Bay's parks and beaches and share them with a diverse group of stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and draft report on suggested revisions • Public engagement completed • Revised draft report to Commission for endorsement • Commission report to Council for endorsement |

| Initiative | Actions |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7. Ensure all our facilities (natural or built) are open and accessible while not compromising integrity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing |
| 8. Develop a budget plan and options aimed at ensuring that all of Oak Bay’s recreation facilities and programs maximize their cost-recovery potential | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For FY19/20 Commission budget |
| 9. Develop an integrated Parks, Recreation, Arts and Culture master plan to sustain Oak Bay’s leadership in active living | <p><i>Arts and Culture Master Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Arts and Culture Master Plan • Public engagement on draft plan [sponsored by <i>ArtsAlive</i> committee] • Revised draft plan to Commission for endorsement <p><i>Parks and Recreation Master Plan</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Parks and Recreation Master Plan • Public engagement on draft plan • Revised draft plan to Commission for endorsement <p><i>Integrated Plan (combines Arts and Culture Master Plan with Parks and Recreation Master Plan)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft integrated plan to Commission for endorsement by • Commission plan to Council for approval |
| 10. Enhance intergenerational opportunities to connect people together – for example, drop-in play sessions, continuing free skate and swim days, creating an annual municipal “Block Party” | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot turning the existing “<i>Movie in the Park</i>” night program into a late afternoon/evening block party event that speaks to our mission (i.e. promotes activity arts and culture as well as ecosystem stewardship and protection) and ends with the movie |

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

To be determined – once the strategic plan is reviewed and validated by Council. The performance measurement framework will also require guidance from and alignment with forthcoming OCP monitoring framework.