

Community Centre Renewal Plan



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Introduction

Towards a Long Range Plan

This report focuses on the capital needs of the Park Board's 22 community centres,¹ as one component of a more ambitious and wide-ranging commitment to longer range capital planning.

Up to now, Park Board Capital Planning has been oriented to the three-year civic Capital Plan cycle. This approach has worked reasonably well as a way to allocate known resources to established capital priorities, to the extent that sufficient funding exists to maintain the Board's capital inventory and to sustain service delivery to a growing city. Ageing infrastructure and population growth pressures have led to deficiencies that cannot be resolved within any three year time span.

As well, the Board needs to assess life cycle commitments to major maintenance and upkeep of each facility against the cost and service outcome of capital redevelopment or replacement.

The Long Range Capital Plan will set in place a process to coordinate the efforts of the Park Board and its partners to rebuild a system of public recreation service in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Method and Objective

The Community Centre Renewal section of the Long Range Capital Plan is based mainly on data compiled from records kept at different locations in the organization, supplemented by discussions with field staff and community association representatives. Consolidation of this information takes a significant step toward understanding the scale of the rebuilding effort ahead of us, articulating capital programming objectives, and assigning a tentative ranking to the urgency of individual projects.

Verification and ongoing updating of the analysis will be done through facility condition assessments and major maintenance projections conducted at the commencement of each 3-year Capital Plan cycle.

¹ Britannia Community Centre has not been included in the analysis as its operating and capital budgets are the responsibility of the Britannia Community Services Society.

Study Context

Consideration of the capital needs of community centres is a first step towards a renewal plan. However, in many instances, community centres are part of larger recreation complexes including pools, rinks or other specialized recreation amenities. In terms of public perception and practical plan implementation, it is not possible to isolate one component of the entire complex. Thus identification of the bottom line costs of renewal and the setting of overall priorities will not be completed until a full analysis of other capital needs can be factored in — particularly those of pools and rinks:

- *Pools:* A staff and consultant team has made recommendations on the configuration of a rebuilt aquatics system which, if implemented, will combine a centralized and decentralized approach to aquatic services in Vancouver.
- *Rinks:* A report received by the Board recommends remedying deficiencies in the condition of existing rinks. Complete upgrading costs have not yet been calculated. The 2010 Olympic bid may provide as-yet undetermined assistance towards realizing some rink renewal objectives.

Long Range Capital Plan development is underway or being contemplated in several other areas where the Park Board has extensive capital obligations:

- *Sports Fields:* Park Board has engaged with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) in a joint review and planning initiative focused on sport fields. The objective of this review is to reconcile the quantity and quality of the city's sports fields (of which Park Board and the VSB are the principal providers) in relation to demands for organized and casual use.
- *Park land acquisition and development:* Ageing infrastructure impacts public open space as much as it does recreation facilities. In addition, there is the special challenge of providing sufficient parks to meet the open space requirements of an increasingly densified city. Current planning initiatives include a park standards review, combined with the development of a long range land acquisition strategy.
- *Unique facilities:* Park Board has in its inventory a number of singular buildings and service facilities. Many of these are ageing structures with impending capital upgrading needs. Order of magnitude costs estimates have been done in some cases; others are in

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process or will be undertaken in future. These buildings and facilities include:

- Stanley Park Seawall -- upgrading and reinforcement;
- Stanley Park electrical system -- replacement
- Stanley Park and Queen Elizabeth Park roadbeds -- resurfacing;
- Jericho Marginal Wharf -- reinforcement (or removal);
- Queen Elizabeth Park reservoir roof replacement and plaza redesign;
- Nat Bailey Stadium;
- Stanley Park Pavilion;
- Malkin Bowl;
- Burrard Marina;
- VanDusen Gardens Buildings;
- Community halls;
- Food services concessions.

The Long Range Capital Plan will factor in assessments of all these capital planning needs, in addition to information on community centre renewal.

Community Centre Renewal

Background

Community Centres emerged on the Vancouver landscape in the immediate post World War II era. The founding vision — shared by an alliance of sports and recreation organizations, grassroots neighbourhood associations, social workers and other professionals — was a network of 20 centres across the city at roughly two mile intervals, such that no resident would have to walk more than a mile to the closest facility (“Norrie Report,” 1945). Park Board took on a leadership role and assumed responsibility for operational funding.

The realization of the vision in terms of capital development occurred in three waves:

- The first centres (1940s -1950s) were financed in the main through money by-laws (i.e., tax increases) approved in local area plebiscites. A precondition for such a plebiscite to be held was the raising of a threshold amount through grassroots fundraising, usually then matched by civic grant.
- City-wide capital plans supplemented by senior government transfers paid for the second wave of community centre construction (1960s - 1970s). This approach filled service delivery gaps in inner city neighbourhoods where, due to a high proportion of absentee landlords, local plebiscites were often not successful.
- The final wave of community centre construction was realized in the course of major residential developments, starting in the late 1970s. These centres were planned amenities for new neighbourhoods and, particularly over the last decade, financing has been derived in whole or in part through charges on development.

The outcome 50 years later closely approximates the founding vision — 23 community centres providing services to every neighbourhood in the city. These centres are all unique in terms of history, appearance, size, and programming priorities. They are distinct as well from the types of recreation facilities found in other urban jurisdictions in two important ways:

First, each of Vancouver’s 23 community centres is jointly operated as a partnership between the Park Board and a neighbourhood-base, non-profit Association. This arrangement enables the Centres to respond knowledgeably to needs and preferences of each neighbourhood, while operating within a supporting framework of city-wide service delivery.

Second, although community centres are primarily associated with leisure and recreation programming, the range of services provided by these facilities is far broader in scope, and includes the following:

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- *Health and Fitness:* Increasingly, community centres are assuming a higher profile in the continuum of health care through prevention-focused, fitness-for-all programming;
- *Community Identity and Interaction:* Vancouver's community centres have always oriented to community-building and neighbourhood advocacy. The centres are places where people keep in touch with their neighbours, share local news and ideas, and help each other in a multitude of ways..
- *Social Services:* Many community centres, particularly in lower-income neighbourhoods, are sites for supplementary social services delivery. These include a range of family support, youthwork (e.g., stay-in-school or return-to-school support), and seniors programs (e.g., networking, independent living support). Such programs may be offered directly by the Park Board-Association partnership or by external agencies given access to centre facilities for these purposes. The Centres provide a neighbourhood base for outreach services and thus greatly enhance their accessibility.
- *Continuing Education and Skills Training:* Community centres are dedicated to life long learning, offering a large number of general interest and skills development courses for all age groups.
- *Cultural Activities:* Community centres provide rehearsal space for amateur musicians and actors and, in some locations, performance and gallery space as well. Artist-in-Residence programs have been integrated into the program mix. As well, most centres have dedicated spaces for pottery, textiles and other handcrafts.
- *Special Events and Celebrations:* Every community centre hosts a variety of small and large scale special events. These include Canada Day parties, seasonal celebrations and cultural festivals.
- *Emergency Reception:* Community centres are designated post-disaster reception centres and, as such, an integral part of the City's plan for dealing with major emergencies.
- *Outreach programming:* In addition to the events and activities that take place within a community centre, many centres also sponsor satellite programs at other locations, or assist other neighbourhood-based agencies and organizations to function effectively.
- *Clubs and Non-profits Meeting Spaces:* Large numbers of voluntary non-profit agencies and clubs in the city cannot afford the over-head costs of maintaining their own premises. The solution in many instances is to arrange space, on a low or no rent basis, to carry out their activities in a community centre.
- *Planning and Consultation Venues:* City departments and, at times, senior governments make use of the community centre network to contact the general public about policy and planning proposals.
- *Family Celebrations:* Community centres are often used for wedding receptions, birthday parties, and similar family events.

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The benefits described above are a measure of how community centres help create and sustain a liveable city.

The Need for Renewal

The public benefit which community centres represent underscores the need for their renewal. A program of long range redevelopment of the centres has emerged as an organizational priority over the past few years, triggered by three converging factors:

1. *Ageing infrastructure:* Vancouver's first generation of community centres are now at or over the half century mark. Several of those which have not been upgraded significantly over the years are due for major rebuilding. Those which have been renovated, in whole or in part, may yet have serious structural or mechanical shortcomings. The system overall is showing its age.

The ageing process affects the physical condition of the centres, but that is only part of the issue. Equally problematic is the fact that centres designed for the programs and operating practices of the 1950s and 1960s do not adequately meet present or future demands for leisure services. They are dated in both appearance and function, with one or more of the following deficits being at issue:

- Inadequate pedestrian, parking and service access;
- Unwelcoming and poorly defined entry ways;
- Constrained reception/lobby areas;
- Inefficient and confusing building layouts -- poor internal and external connections;
- Limited or no visibility from circulation areas of activity spaces;
- Advantage not taken of views and park settings.

2. *Sustainable service delivery:* The public sector is increasingly under pressure to do "more with less" (and may in some circumstances have to provide "less with less"). Thus the efficiency and effectiveness of community centre operations will be subjected to higher standards of accountability. Various kinds of operating inefficiencies are built in to our older facilities, such as the following:

- Duplicate reception areas for adjoining recreation facilities;
- Physical limits to programming options: rooms too small, too narrow, irregularly shaped, with low ceilings and inappropriate floor, wall and ceiling surfaces;
- Limited storage and difficult maintenance access to engineering systems;
- Poor insulation and inefficient mechanical systems;
- Past expansions and renovations have compromised the overall layout and

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systemic functioning re: cleaning, heating, cooling, supervision, etc.

3. *Population growth demands:* Vancouver has grown dramatically over the past fifteen years and this trend is expected to continue. City planning for growth is currently predicated on a growth target, set in the GVRD Liveable Region Strategy and subsequently endorsed by Council, of another 100,000 residents over the period 1996 - 2021. This growth implies a need to increase service capacity, either by enlarging existing centres or by building new facilities.

About half of total population growth has already been addressed in the context of major projects around the downtown core, mainly through the construction of the Roundhouse and Coal Harbour community centres. For this purpose, service needs were calculated at 2.29 square feet per capita, based on a benchmarking of total facility space (in community centres, rinks and pools) to city population at the time the major projects were initiated.

The remaining half of growth demand has been met to some extent and should continue to be accommodated by increases to the capacity of existing centres, rather than through the construction of new facilities, except given a scenario where a new and unserved residential neighbourhood is created with a population greater than 20,000.

This ratio of one community centre for every 20,000 population (1:20,000) represents an average level of service achieved in Vancouver up to the mid 1980s. Since then, the city's population has increased significantly, but so too has the average size of community centres. With the full population growth planned for, the new level of service will be in the order of 1:27,500.

Renewal Principles

Planning for renewal opens up a range of questions as to the kind of system of community centres we wish to achieve, beyond remedying the list of deficiencies identified above. The following set of principles is proposed to guide the renewal process:

Community centres will remain neighbourhood scaled operations. Greater efficiencies could be realized through a transition to fewer but larger recreation facilities, but this plan does not propose such a consolidation for the following reasons:

- Many of the programs and services of community centres are oriented to neighbourhood needs and priorities;

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- Residents express strong support when surveyed (e.g., Marktrend, 1998) for the idea of community centres as centres of community;
- The decentralized model supports the CityPlan Vision of neighbourhoods where people work and recreate close to where they live;
- Significant investment has already been made in renewal projects.

Where feasible, community centres will be co-located with other services. The order of priority as to the nature of these services will be:

- *Park Board recreation and support facilities;*
- *Services of other City departments and boards;*
- *public non-profit;*
- *public-private partnerships.*

Co-location of community centres with complementary facilities is proposed as a means to achieve efficiencies of scale while maintaining a commitment to neighbourhood based service delivery. Such an approach is consistent with what is in place in our larger recreation complexes, and in those centres attached to public schools or combined with other civic amenities (e.g., Thunderbird, Strathcona, West End). The renewal process should further explore opportunities for co-location, within carefully defined policy limits, with the public non-profit and private sectors.

Community Centre activity spaces will be designed to support intensive use and high quality programming and to have the flexibility to meet new program demands: Some degree of specialized design is required by the nature of the programming, for example:

- full-sized gymnasias with adequate ceiling heights;
- childcare spaces which meet regulatory standards;
- craft rooms with appropriate lighting, plumbing fixtures, electrical supply, and ventilation.

In addition, every centre should have a number of multi-purpose rooms — spaces which can be adapted to suit a wide range of current and future uses. Key considerations are human comfort (light, heating, ventilation, appearance), physical layout (size, shape, openness) and durability (floor, walls, ceiling, mechanical systems & controls).

Community centres will be designed in consultation with the end users, including programming and maintenance staff, and Association partners.

Community centres will be built to an adequate level of seismic resistance, consistent with their designation as emergency reception centres. Life-safety building code upgrades will be done in the course of each major renewal project and shall take priority over programming enhancement

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or expansion objectives.

Community centres will be accessible and welcoming environments: Community centres are public spaces, intended for sharing by all members of the community. An objective of renewal will be to eliminate barriers to participation affecting persons of differing abilities. Building design will also emphasize visibility of program activity (achieved, for example, with glazing in doors and walls, and with temporary screening used to whenever privacy or control of light levels is needed). Lobbies and public lounge areas will be large and comfortable, to facilitate interaction between users and to support the centres' functioning as neighbourhood gathering places.

Community centres premises will be safe and secure: Reception counters will be directly connected to the public entrance(s), clearly identifiable, and have clear lines of sight across public circulation areas. Blind spots in the building layout will be reduced to the maximum extent possible. The openness and visibility of program areas will enhance effective supervision by staff.

Community centres will be constructed on principles of sustainability: The design and construction of facilities will make use of "green building" technologies and processes to ensure responsible use of building materials, reduced use of water and discharge of sewage, and high standards of energy efficiency. Materials and equipment will be chosen to minimize the life cycle cost of the building.

Community centre renewal will accommodate the anticipated population growth for the city: The new centres (Roundhouse and Coal Harbour) and additions to other centres represent about one half to two-thirds of the additional community centre space required to serve the projected increased demand. Further increases to community centre capacity should be achieved through a combination of the following strategies:

- Employing facility management and scheduling technologies to maximize use of existing program spaces;
- Reconfiguring buildings within their existing footprints to create more flexible and attractive program spaces; and lastly
- Adding floorspace to some centres .

Renewal Priority Setting

This section deals with the extent of renewal required at each community centre and, in a preliminary way, the order in which the work should be done. The question of how quickly the work can and should be done is discussed below under “Renewal Implementation.”

The critical factors examined are facility condition and cost avoidance.

Facility Condition

The principal quantitative data sources with respect to facility condition are the following:

- *Building Condition Assessments:* These are records of 200 facilities, including all community centres, for which the Park Board has maintenance responsibility. The Condition Assessments assign a good/fair/poor scoring to 35 building components, in four broad categories: Exterior, Interior, Site Services, Functions. The Assessments provide an invaluable synopsis of overall building health, but must be used with discretion since the 35 elements rated are not weighted. The Assessments were last conducted in 1999 in preparation for the 2000 - 2002 Capital Plan, and the next round of assessments is scheduled to begin in January 2002.
- *10 Year Major Maintenance Survey:* This document identifies scheduled and anticipated maintenance over the next decade which exceeds the limits of what can be addressed through the Park Board operating budget. Facility-related items include HVAC systems upgrades, interior and exterior painting, roof replacements and the like. While the Survey does not list all deficiencies which would be remedied by a major facility upgrade, it is a very useful indicator of where timely capital investment could deliver a cost saving.
- *Building By-Law Audits and Seismic Studies:* In 1997, the Park Board commissioned Gage Babcock and Associates to conduct a thorough assessment of building code deficiencies and associated remediation costs for a set of facilities, the age and condition of which was a concern. The City commissioned Sandwell Engineering Inc. in 2001 to prepare a seismic assessment study of all community centres. The principal code issues are life safety (e.g., seismic resistance, fire warning, exiting and suppression systems) and building accessibility. Since the cost of retrofitting to meet current codes invariably exceed the costs of code compliance in a new building, it makes good sense to integrate code upgrading with facility renewal projects.

Supplementing the above data sources, information from field staff has also given invaluable insights into what works and what doesn't work from facility operating and programming perspectives. Key considerations in these areas are as follows:

- *Programmability:* How well does the building design support or constrain program quality and variety? How difficult or easy is the facility to supervise and control?
- *Operating functionality:* Does the facility layout facilitate custodial care and maintenance? Are critical mechanical systems reasonably accessible for maintenance purposes?

It should be noted here that condition deficits are not all of equivalent urgency. Health and life safety issues, for example, may take precedence over program and operational functioning in the overall rating of facilities.

Cost Avoidance

While the condition of a given facility helps determine the scale of intervention required, the urgency of the work is also informed by how costly it is to operate and maintain. For this reason, key facility operating costs areas have been assessed, including energy consumption (fuel and hydro), water consumption and non-scheduled maintenance visits. Where these cost elements — computed on a per square foot basis — exceed established norms, a case is established for timely renovation or replacement of the facility.

Summary Tables: Explanatory Notes

The tables on the following three pages summarize the overall renewal program for community centres, including projects completed or funded to date and — more critically — those remaining to be done. Projects in this latter category are grouped first as ‘major scale’ (i.e., over \$2,000,000) or ‘intermediate scale’ (i.e., \$100,000 to \$2,000,000) initiatives.²

N.B. The cost estimates on the tables shown in relation to future projects are for planning purposes only. They indicate the resource requirements to complete the overall renewal program. The figures associated with each facility must not be interpreted as a commitment of funds. Individual project budgets may turn out to be considerably higher or lower in each case, based on the outcomes of feasibility studies, engineering assessments and architectural programming yet to be undertaken.

The major scale and intermediate scale projects to be done are also sorted as high, medium or low priority, as an indication of relative urgency. However, the precise order in which projects will be addressed, and in particular the projects for inclusion in the next and subsequent Capital Plan cycle, have not been identified. A determination of project sequence will be based on the following:

- Integration of the Community Centre Renewal plan with the conclusions of the Aquatic Services Review and Ice Rink review;
- The availability, extent and nature of funding (see next section on funding sources);
- Project readiness, including community support for the project and arrangements in place to suspend or continue service provision over a construction period.

Both the sequence and pace of renewal may also be modified, especially over the long term, by new information on facility condition, unanticipated funding windfalls or cutbacks, and service demand trends.

² Individual “small” scale projects (i.e., under \$100,000) that are not a component of a larger undertaking can emerge and be addressed on an ongoing basis, and thus are not factored into the long range renewal plan.

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Summary Table One: Projects Completed or Funded — 1996 to present

Status	Centre	Renewal Program addressed	Expenditure/ Funding
Complete	Coal Harbour	New 23,000 ft ² facility opened in 2000	\$5,500,000
	Kensington	Addition of 6,566 ft ² opened in 2000	1,400,000
	Kerrisdale	General renovations and upgrading of existing program space completed in 1999	1,050,000
	Killarney	Community Centre replacement with floor area increase of 8,500 ft ² competed in 1999	5,850,000
	Kitsilano	General renovations, code upgrading and addition of 5,400 ft ² , opened in 2000.	2,300,000
	Ray-Cam	2 nd floor addition of 3,440 ft ²	1,400,000
	Roundhouse	New 45,000 ft ² facility opened in 1997	8,000,000
	Thunderbird	2 nd floor addition of 5,700 ft ²	1,000,000
Funded	Champlain	5,800 ft ² expansion to add multi-purpose space & childcare	1,200,000
	False Creek	Renovation of existing structures to add mini gymnasium, expanded fitness centre and office space	810,000
	Kerrisdale	Lobby/ reception area consolidation and expansion	360,000
	Mt. Pleasant	Rebuild at new location	4,750,000
	Ray-Cam	Alterations to main floor program spaces	280,000
	Renfrew Park	Code Upgrading, including seismic work and addition of elevator	1,045,000
TOTAL: 12 Community Centres			\$34,945,000

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Summary Table Two: Large scale renewal projects (over \$2,000,000)

Priority	Centre	Renewal Objectives	Order of Magnitude Cost
High	Riley Park	Community Centre rebuild/expansion at same time as Pool Redevelopment and possible rink upgrade	\$7,000,000 (Centre only)
	Sunset	Community Centre rebuild with possible relocation to improve access and visibility. Upgrade condition, program and operational functioning.	7,000,000
	Trout Lake	Community Centre renovations and possible expansion. Seismic and other code upgrading to centre and rink. Resolve internal/external linkages and improve program and operational functioning.	3,000,000 (including rink seismic upgrade)
Medium	Hastings	Major renovations on existing site or possibly rebuild at new location in relation to Hastings Park amenities. Major seismic and other upgrading and resolution of poor internal connections, improved integration with park setting.	5,000,000
	Marpole-Oakridge	Major renovations to improve program & operating function and maintenance access to engineering systems. Medium priority seismic and other upgrading	3,000,000
	West Point Grey	Community Centre rebuild with consolidation of existing buildings closer to clientele base and coinciding with the development of Federal and/or Provincial Jericho lands.	5,000,000
TOTALS3 high priority Centres			\$17,000,000
3 medium priority Centres			\$13,000,000
			\$30,000,000

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Summary Table Three: Intermediate scale renewal projects (\$100,000 to \$2,000,000)

Priority	Centre	Renewal Objectives	Order of Magnitude Cost
High	Dunbar	Renovation of Old Wing in connection with high priority code upgrading and Major Maintenance upgrades.	\$2,000,000
	Kerrisdale	Rebuild gymnasium to seismic standard.	\$1,500,000
	Strathcona	Seismic, other code and condition upgrading. Cost-share with VSB? Further evaluation of program function and expansion needs.	\$2,000,000 (condition & code only)
Medium	Douglas Park	Program space improvements and modest expansion, where feasible. Combine with Major Maintenance (electrical service upgrade, replacement of boiler & HVAC controls; interior painting) and some code upgrading.	\$1,500,000
	West End	Program area improvements and mechanical systems upgrade. Medium priority seismic work. Rink upgrading cost not included, but as rink is integral component of Centre, renewal should encompass whole complex.	\$2,000,000
Low	Kensington (phase 2)	Improvements to program space and definition of entry & reception point; some code upgrades.	\$1,000,000
	Kitsilano (phase 2)	Improve Centre-Rink Connection with further Code upgrading and Major Maintenance [possibly combine with Rink upgrading].	\$1,000,000
	Renfrew (phase 2)	Program improvements and fitness area upgrade; Consolidate office & reception functions.	\$1,000,000
TOTALS3 high priority Centres 5 medium and low priority Centres			\$5,500,000 \$6,500,000 \$12,000,000

Renewal Implementation

The three tables in the preceding section convey the magnitude of the community centre renewal challenge:

- About \$35 million has been invested to date,
- Another \$42 million is required to complete the job.

In other words, the Park Board and its association partners are approaching the halfway mark of a \$77 million renewal program (not including, at this stage, the needs of pools and rinks).

The completion of the renewal program, at the pace in which renewal has occurred to date, will require a coordinated pursuit of all funding opportunities to accomplish. This section examines a range of resources which might be brought to bear to complete the renewal agenda within a reasonable time span.

Funding of Renewal Projects

Past experience demonstrates that funds for community centre capital projects come from a multitude of sources. The process of renewal should therefore continue to explore a broad range of resourcing possibilities, with the Long Range Renewal Plan used as a consistent reference document:

- *Capital Plan*: A voter-approved spending program which allocates capital spending over a three-year term. Council sets the overall spending envelope, based upon a calculation of the City's debt-carrying capacity. Park Board allocations have typically been in the \$25-30 million range, divided between park and facility projects. Under the "Facility" heading, Community Centre spending has been roughly equivalent to one large scale and one to two intermediate projects per cycle. Clearly, Capital Plan funds alone will not be sufficient to achieve the full renewal objectives.
- *Development Cost Levies (DCLs) and Community Amenity Contributions (CACs)*: Two related capital funding tools whereby the City partly recovers the cost of servicing population growth demands from the development activity which generates the growth. Legal provisions relating to DCLs are defined in the Vancouver Charter, and their application is much more restrictive. Community centre construction is not currently eligible for DCL funding, although new childcare amenities provided in community centre expansions might in some circumstances be allowable. CAC funds may be applied to whatever growth-related project that City Council determines is appropriate. However, in all cases, it is essential to apply this funding to expansion rather than upgrading projects.

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- *Senior Government Transfers:* Over the years there have been numerous senior government capital funding programs (for example, the Federal Provincial Infrastructure Program) targeting the municipal and non-profit sectors. Each comes with a specific set of funding criteria, which may encompass community centre renewal in whole or in part. For example, the current Federal-Provincial Infrastructure Program is a promising source of facility upgrading money where matching funds are in place.
- *Individual, Foundation and Corporate Donations:* The budget for most major community centre upgrades and/or expansions occurring over the past few years has been significantly augmented by fundraising efforts of Community Association partners. Ongoing enhancement of this capacity will advance the overall renewal process.
- *Internal Financing:* Some elements of community centre renewal could be financed by city loans to be repaid by future operating cost savings or potential new revenues. A rigorous business case must be made to prove that such repayment will occur for this option to be implemented.
- *Partnerships and Co-location:* As noted elsewhere in this report, economies of scale could be realized by combining community centre services with other public or private sector facilities. Further policy development is needed to ensure that the partnership scenarios do not entail conflicts with the Mission and Values of the Park Board and its partner Associations.

Renewal Plan ‘Renewal’

The Long Range Capital Plan is intended to guide the renewal process and not close off the possibility of future augmentation of program objectives and shifting of priorities. Indeed, regular re-assessment will be necessary to keep the plan on track. Any of the following events or circumstances may be the occasion for modification of the plan and, in some cases, should trigger an in-depth review:

- *Capital Plan cycle commencement:* For the duration of the Long Range Plan, and optimally at the start of each three year Capital Plan cycle, renewal priorities should be regularly reviewed to ascertain that the ranking of projects remains justifiable in terms of current information.
- *“Financing Growth” Report Back:* A civic inter-departmental planning team is currently preparing a policy plan to deal with the impact of a growing residential and working population in Vancouver. This initiative is scheduled to report back to Council in 2002. The report will identify areas where population growth is likely to occur, and also mechanisms for funding recreation and park amenities to meet increased demand.
- *New funding opportunities:* New funding opportunities and granting programs are always emerging. Some flexibility has to be built in to the renewal program to make effective use of matching grants and unexpected funding windfalls which, by their nature, are hard to predict.
- *Major developments and land-use changes:* Significant residential development in an area may lead to new demand levels to be addressed and have consequences for both the scale and the urgency of a local renewal project.

APPENDIX A: High Priority Projects Detail

Riley Park Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — high priority

Riley Park was constructed in the mid 1960s as an extension of Percy Norman Pool, and subsequently updated in the early 1980s. The whole Riley complex (which also includes an ice rink) is strategically located, along with a number of citywide serving recreation amenities, in the geographical centre of Vancouver.

The community centre portion of the complex is in reasonably good condition. However, it has a number of serious deficits which need to be addressed:

- The community centre is small and very limited in its amount and quality of programming spaces.
- In particular, the Riley gymnasium is well below regulation size.
- Connections between the centre and pool are awkward and require duplication of reception and supervisory controls.

The seismic risk of the existing structure is rated low, but the cost to upgrade to current standard (estimated at \$1,317,000) is high.

The Riley site is somewhat constrained in terms of possible expansion or even reconfiguration of the complex. However, two consultant studies have been completed (Hughes, 1996; Urban Forum, 2000) which confirm the feasibility of the overall undertaking.

Apart from the deficits identified above, two other factors support the designation of Riley as a high priority for renewal:

- Percy Norman is rated in the poorest condition of any indoor pool in the city, and any option for pool upgrading would profoundly impact the centre layout and functioning
- The relocation of Mount Pleasant Community Centre further to the north would likely increase service demands on Riley, which has little or no reserve capacity to address these demands.

The order of magnitude cost estimate for renewal and expansion is \$7,000,000, not including a full replacement or rebuild of the Pool and Rink.

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Sunset Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — high priority

Opened in 1950, Sunset is one of the City's oldest Centres and has received limited capital investment over the years. There has been modest renovations on the main floor to create a small fitness centre and some improvements to interior finishes and lighting, as well as mechanical systems upgrades.

The overall facility layout, from both a supervisory and programming perspective, is poor. The programming spaces, many of which are in the basement under the gymnasium, are inflexible and uninviting. Lobby and circulation space is extremely constrained. The Centre is two blocks removed from the nearest main street and lacks visibility.

Sunset is also rated as a high priority for seismic upgrading and other code upgrading. It is one of three multi-level centres remaining without elevators.

Sunset is designated as a priority for renewal on a scale comparable to a complete facility replacement. This could be achieved by rebuilding on the current site. However, the option of relocating the facility to improve access and visibility should be given consideration through a feasibility study.

Order of magnitude cost estimate for renewal is \$7,000,000, including costs of demolition of the current facility.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Trout Lake Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — high priority

Trout Lake Centre and Rink are built along a single axis on the west side of John Hendry Park in East Vancouver. Although the complex as a whole appears large, the actual community centre space is relatively limited. However, the gymnasium is of good size and there is a good mix of multipurpose rooms to support a range of programming.

The Centre is in a desirable park setting, which provides a broad range of recreation and leisure opportunities to supplement the centre programming. Public transit and other social and commercial services are somewhat distant.

There are a number of problems with the existing layout of the community centre, and its internal and external linkages:

- The centre has programming on three levels, each having direct access outside at different grades. Thus its reception, supervision and control functions are seriously impaired.
- Connections between the three levels are indirect, and the building has no elevator.
- The circulation space, particularly on the top and lower levels, is hard to navigate and has several blind corners and dead ends.
- The centre has no lobby space to speak of, and very limited lounge space throughout.
- Visual and physical access to the park from the centre is much less than it could be; the facility does not take full advantage of its setting.

In terms of building condition, the main deficits to be addressed are building code related, including the need for an elevator. The entire complex was assessed in 2001 and rated at high seismic risk, but with relatively modest cost estimated for remediation.

Order of magnitude renewal costs are estimated at \$3,000,000 including seismic upgrade of the rink (but no other rink improvements).

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Dunbar Community Centre

Intermediate scale renewal project — high priority

Dating from the late 1950s, Dunbar is one of Vancouver's 'first generation' community centres. It was upgraded and expanded in the mid 1980s and has had smaller scale updating since then. The floor area and number of program spaces are extensive and funding for future expansion will likely be contingent on development activity in the area.

The area of concern in terms of future upgrading is the centre's old wing, which remains essentially 'as built.' This area is high priority for seismic and other code upgrading. Some major maintenance should be undertaken at the same time.

Dunbar is designated as a high priority, secondary project at an order of magnitude cost of \$2,000,000.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Kerrisdale Community Centre

Intermediate scale renewal project — high priority

Kerrisdale is an older centre (opened in 1954) which includes a pool, a Senior's wing and a library. The centre received an extensive addition in the mid 1980s, but was not upgraded until very recently. The renovations which have been completed and those currently funded address many of the condition and programming deficits inherent in the old building.

The principal work remaining to be done is a seismic rebuild of the centre gymnasium, at a rough cost estimate of \$1,500,000.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Strathcona Community Centre

Intermediate scale renewal project — high priority

Strathcona Community Centre is in the same building complex as Strathcona Elementary School, with which it shares a gymnasium. A public library branch is also located in the complex, which is owned and maintained by the Vancouver School Board (VSB). The community centre is relatively small, but the school grounds offer limited potential for expansion.

The centre's reception area and several of its program spaces are on a lower level, with limited natural light and poor visibility from the street. Other program spaces are on the upper level, where there is independent access to and from the outside. The overall layout is awkward from reception and supervisory perspectives.

High priority renewal objectives are seismic, other code and condition upgrades on the order of \$2,000,000. This work should be coordinated with VSB capital planning for the whole complex. Renewal objectives in terms of program function and possible expansion require further evaluation.

APPENDIX B: Medium Priority Projects Detail

Hastings Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — medium priority

Hastings was built in three phases, with the oldest part of the complex dating to the mid 1930s, and subsequent additions in 1956 and 1966. Major renovations in the mid 1980s helped to integrate these latter phases and added further program space.

This history of piecemeal development has resulted in compromised mechanical systems and, even after the 1980s improvements, poor internal circulation. Some parts of the complex, for example, cannot be reached inside from the main reception desk. Building supervision and control are further challenged by the overall rambling layout.

Other site deficits include poor bus service (there is a eastbound bus stop on Hastings Street near the Centre, but there is no pedestrian crossing and no westbound bus stop on the other side of the street). Parking with reasonable proximity to the front entrance is limited.

Large scale seismic upgrading and major maintenance work will be included in the renewal project.

The building deficiencies might be adequately resolved through major renovations to the existing complex. However, it may prove to be more economical to demolish and rebuild. If the latter option is selected, then relocation should also be considered to create a stronger connection with recreational amenities on Hastings Park. In either scenario, the overall work program will on the scale of complete replacement, estimated at \$5,000,000.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Marpole-Oakridge Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — medium priority

Marpole-Oakridge, built roughly at the same time as Sunset and Kitsilano, is one of the City's oldest community centres. The centre is in a good location on a medium-sized park half way between the apartment zoned area of Marpole and the commercial/high density residential area around Oakridge Mall.

The original building has been expanded and upgraded over the years, including the addition of a fitness centre and racquet courts and the installation of an elevator, new roof and steel cladding.

The principal building deficits are:

- Control/reception points — one for the centre as a whole and one for the fitness & racquet courts — at opposite ends of the building.
- Outmoded and limited program spaces, particularly the auditorium and kitchen.
- Ageing mechanical systems and extremely poor access to systems for maintenance purposes.
- The elevator serves only the main and upper floor, but not the fitness centre area.

Major renovations will enhance program and operating functions and improve maintenance access to engineering systems. Medium priority seismic and other code and mechanical upgrading to be addressed at the same time at an order of magnitude cost of \$3,000,000.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

West Point Grey Community Centre

Major scale renewal project — medium priority

West Point Grey is the most diffuse of all the City's community centres. Its core is the heritage Aberthau House, and the pottery studio and gymnasium/fitness centre immediately adjacent. However, centre programming is also conducted at a number of other sites, including the Jericho Arts Centre (south of the Hostel building), facilities on the upper Jericho Lands and Byng Pool.

Aberthau is a highly attractive building and one eminently suited to a certain range of activities, including meeting and social rentals, film shoots and seminars. Other program activities, including crafts, fitness and children's programs, are not so easily accommodated. The building's heritage status imposes further limitations. As well, Aberthau is not well situated in relation to much of the West Point Grey population.

The various satellite operations more than compensate for the limitation of the main centre. The main drawbacks are that the operation over multiple locations is very inefficient and that tenure at some of these locations (i.e., the provincially-owned facilities on the upper Jericho lands) is not secure.

The long term objective for West Point Grey Community Centre should be to consolidate all or most of the various program sites into one facility at a more strategic location. The opportunity to do so, in terms of land availability and possibly some funding as well, will likely coincide with the development of Federal and/or Provincial Jericho lands. Order of magnitude costs for renewal are estimated at \$5,000,000.

Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

Douglas Park Community Centre

Intermediate scale renewal project — medium priority

Douglas Park is a small centre that is well integrated with its site — a mid-sized park offering a broad range of outdoor recreation facilities. The indoor and outdoor programming complement each other very effectively at this location. Renovation and expansion in the mid 1990s greatly improved the centre's programming capacity and flexibility.

Further changes to size and configuration of program space are constrained by the surrounding park layout. However, further program improvements could be achieved through a renewal project, which should simultaneously deal with some major maintenance and code upgrading, at a total order of magnitude cost of \$1,500,000.

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Community Centre Renewal Plan

November 9, 2001

West End Community Centre

Intermediate scale renewal project — medium priority

West End Community Centre fronts on to a major commercial street in the highest density residential area in the city. It is co-located with a library, secondary school and community policing centre. The centre was expanded in the mid 1980s and extensively renovated in the early 1990s; there is no practical potential for further expansion on site. However; the recent opening of a satellite facility at Coal Harbour has greatly increased the recreation service to this neighbourhood.

Renewal objectives include some program area improvements and mechanical systems upgrading, along with medium priority seismic work to the whole complex, at an order of magnitude total of \$1,500,000.

Note, however, that the West End rink is an integral component, as it is located within the Centre. The rink requirements and associated costs (beyond seismic upgrading) are not factored into the above estimate.

Other Centres

No project details have been provided for the following community centres, where renewal projects have been recently completed or initiated. However, second phase objectives have been noted on the project summary tables for the centres marked with an (*):

- Champlain Heights Community Centre
- Coal Harbour Community Centre
- False Creek Community Centre
- Kensington Community Centre*
- Killarney Community Centre
- Kitsilano Community Centre*
- Mount Pleasant Community Centre
- RayCam Community Centre
- Renfrew Park Community Centre*
- Roundhouse Community Centre
- Thunderbird Neighbourhood Community Centre