

GOLF SERVICES PLAN

CURRENT STATE OVERVIEW

April 2025





Land Acknowledgement

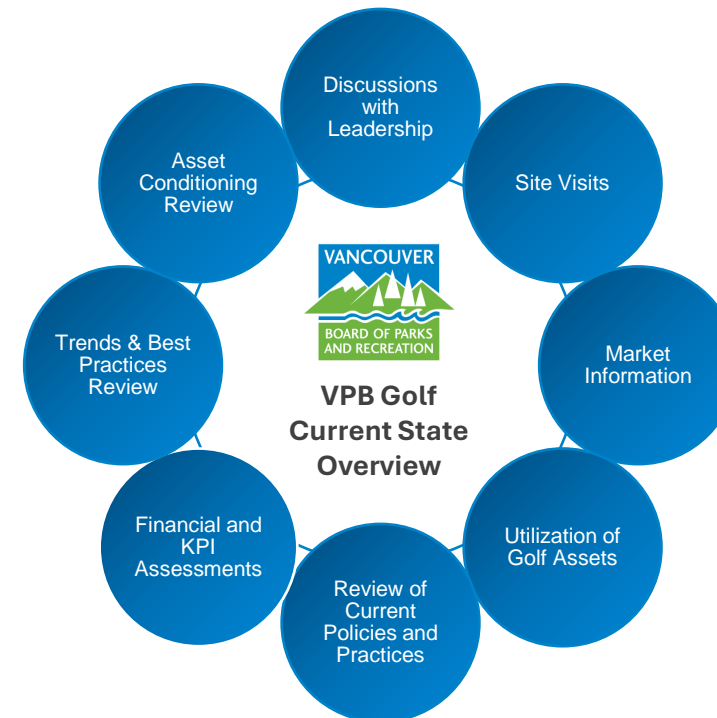
The lands considered in this plan are managed by the Park Board and are the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the Cost Salish peoples: the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam) Indian Band, Skwxwú7mesh Úxwumixw (Squamish Nation), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nation.



Purpose of this overview

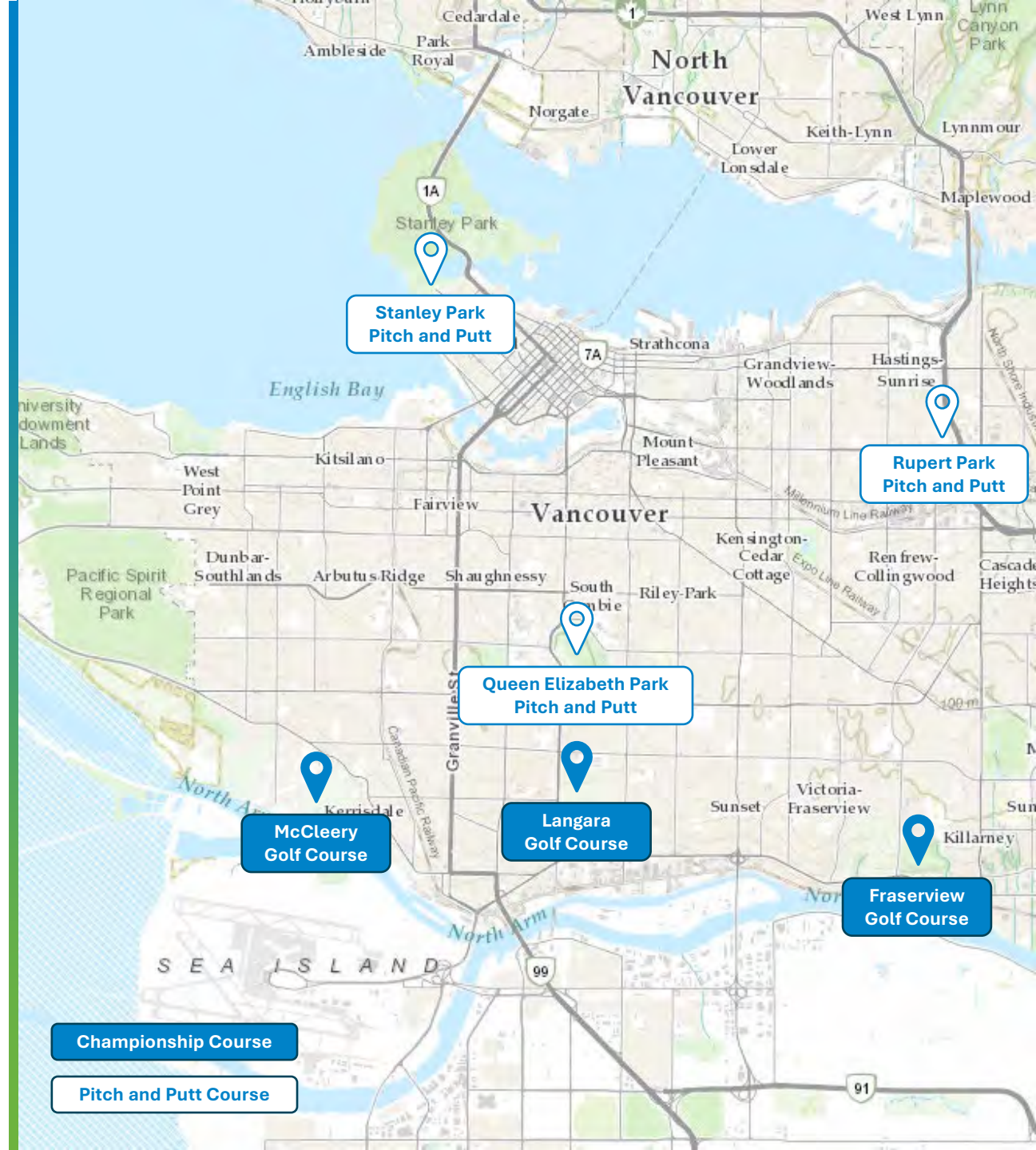
The Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation ("VPB") undertook an exercise to identify and assess the current state of key operating areas of the golf division ("VPB Golf"). This report includes an overview of the current state review findings. This review will serve as one of the foundations for future strategic planning and decision making when shaping the Golf Services Plan.

VPB completed the review through the consolidation of various activities, which include:



The VPB operates six golf courses throughout various neighbourhoods within the city of Vancouver.

- ▶ VPB Golf has six publicly accessible courses within the boundaries of the City of Vancouver and include:
- ▶ **Three (3) 18-Hole championship courses:**
 - ▶ Fraserview, McCleery, and Langara.
- ▶ **Three (3) 18-Hole pitch and putt courses:**
 - ▶ Stanley Park, Queen Elizabeth Park, and Rupert Park.
- ▶ Aside from one other publicly available course, the VPB courses are the only other golf courses that the public may freely access within the city limits of Vancouver.
- ▶ Stanley Park, Queen Elizabeth Park, and Langara are more accessible by public transit than other VPB golf properties.











The championship course golf assets include three regulation 18-hole golf courses and two driving ranges.

- ▶ **Regulation course:** Any nine-hole course 2,600+ yards in length (min par 33), or 18-hole course 5,200+ yards in length (min par 66); which feature a combination of par 3, par 4 and par 5 holes.
- ▶ These courses offer challenges for players with all skill levels. On average, a golf round takes approximately 4 – 4.5 hours to complete at an 18-hole regulation course.
- ▶ **Driving range:** Facility where golfers can hit golf balls for practice. The facility is accessible to all members of the public, not just the golfers using the course. VPB's driving ranges are located at the Fraserview and McCleery golf courses.
- ▶ Each championship course property also features a clubhouse that provides food and beverage outlet, a dining area and washrooms.

The three pitch and putt course golf assets include three 18-holes par 3 courses.

- ▶ **Pitch & Putt courses:** Short par 3 courses where the holes average less than 100 yards in length.
- ▶ These courses are typically played with only 3 clubs (compared to a full set typically used at the championship courses).
- ▶ These courses offer challenges for all ages and skill levels and take, featuring a low barrier to entry for users.
- ▶ On average, a golf round takes approximately 2 hours to complete at an 18-hole pitch and putt course.



| | VPB | Operator |
|---|---|--|
|  Green Fees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sets the policies and practices. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collects green fees and remits to required portion back to VPB. |
|  Staffing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages VPB employees and contractors related to maintenance of the course, buildings, grounds, and parking lots in addition to golf rangers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employs and manage staff relating to the management of play and pro shop operations. |
|  Pro Shop, Rentals, and Lessons | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receives licence fee from operator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for stocking and maintaining merchandise, providing equipment for rent, and instructors. |
|  Driving Range | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for turf maintenance. Equal revenue share with operator. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for operating the driving range. Equal revenue share with VPB. |
|  Clubhouses (Food/Beverage) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees and executes the entire operation. | |
|  Pitch and Putts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees and executes the entire operation. | |

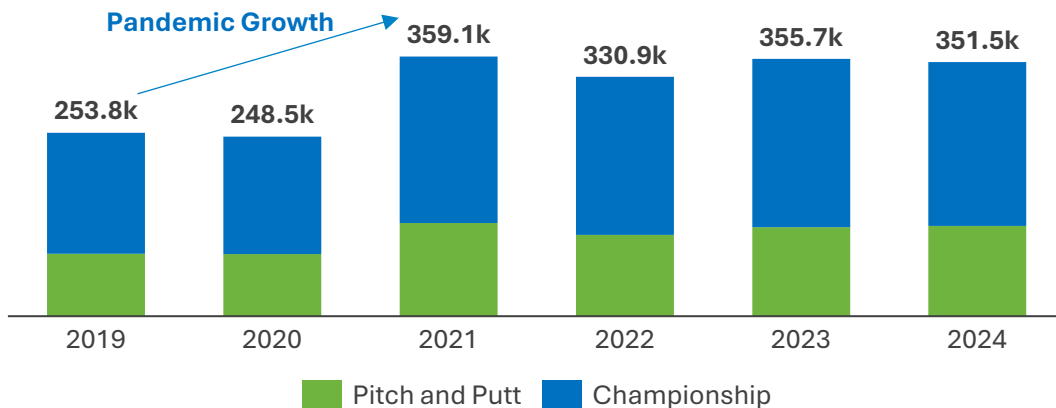
The golf portfolio operates under a hybrid approach between the VPB and a third-party operator.

- ▶ VPB Golf operates under a City-concessionaire hybrid model for its golf operations, effectively outsourcing several customer-facing golf elements of operations at its championship courses.
- ▶ The VPB sets the strategy for and oversees all aspects of the operations and are directly responsible for the operations of golf course maintenance, clubhouses (including food and beverage operations, and pitch and putts.
- ▶ Daily golf operations at the championship courses are carried out by a single third-party operator, responsible for operating the pro shop, driving ranges, in addition to some other golf-related operational aspects.

Golf is extensively utilized within the VPB system, with the three championship courses operating near capacity.

- ▶ Total golf rounds played at all VPB courses increased by over 40% in 2021 as a result of the COVID-driven boom.
- ▶ Both championship courses and pitch and putt courses continue to attract high volumes of players, maintaining an increased level of golf rounds since 2021.

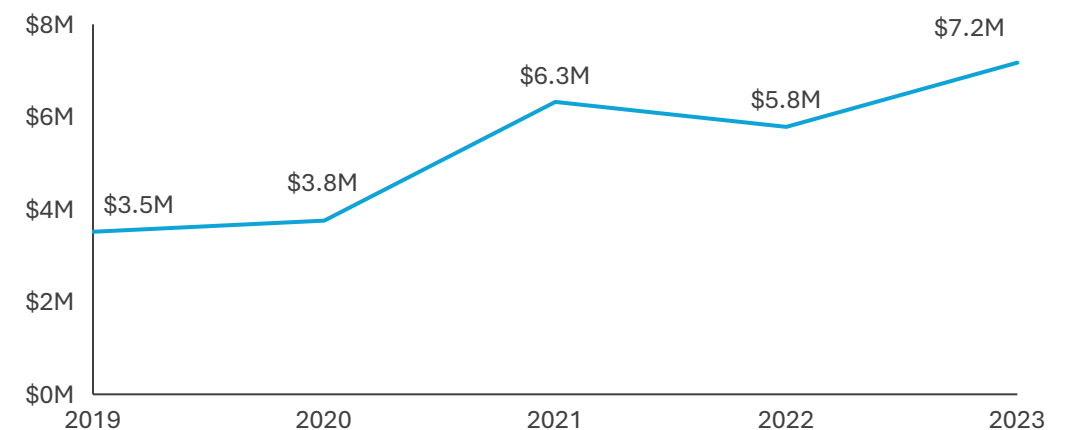
VPB Golf Total Rounds Played 2019 - 2024



Golf operations contributes meaningfully to the overall Park Board budget.

- ▶ VPB Golf is a crucial component of VPB's financial framework, contributing more than \$7M on a net basis to support the broader VPB budget annually.
- ▶ Since the COVID-driven golf boom and sustained growth in rounds played, Golf's contribution has increased significantly from the \$3.5M annual contribution realized prior to 2019.

VPB Golf Net Contribution 2019 - 2023



Securing the future of VPB Golf as a world-class municipal golf portfolio requires investment in infrastructure to ensure continued success.

- ▶ Despite the operating strength of the system, some of VPB Golf's critical infrastructure is aging and approaching the end of its estimated operational lifespan.
- ▶ The irrigation systems at its championship facilities will require replacement in the coming years, in addition to other critical projects related to drainage, driving ranges, tree management, and clubhouse maintenance.
- ▶ Upgrading key elements of the golf infrastructure within the next five to ten years is essential for the continued viability of the courses and will also promote more efficient water usage.





Current revenue management practices make it challenging to optimize revenue in a highly seasonal golf market.

- ▶ Golf in the Pacific Northwest is a market where strong revenue management is paramount as it is a year-round operation with varying weather conditions throughout the year.
- ▶ VPB Golf seeks to align its pricing with market rates while still providing a community benefit, but currently relies on a rigid and complex pricing structure set at the beginning of each season.
- ▶ The 'fixed' nature of the pricing structure affords VPB Golf limited flexibility to adjust pricing throughout the year on an as-needed basis to align green fee pricing with changes in weather and number of other variables that may impact demand.
- ▶ Several competitors in the local market have shifted to a more flexible pricing structure, aligned with the trend of the golf industry.

Opportunities exist to strengthen operational procedures that enhance fairness and equity in accessing the golf courses.

- ▶ The rapid increase in demand since 2021 has made it more challenging for golfers to make bookings and find available tee times.
- ▶ There are opportunities to strengthen controls and make adjustments to current policies relating to advanced booking, cancellation policies, multi-bookings, single bookings, and scheduled club/league play to better align with best practices and reinforce equitable access to the tee at the championship courses.
- ▶ There are also likely opportunities to improve the walk-up and check-in experience at the pitch and putt courses.



VPB Golf provides a variety of programs for seniors and youth to enable affordable access to golf.

- ▶ VPB currently offers a variety of programs and initiatives enabling juniors and seniors to access the golf assets affordably such as green fee discounts for seniors and juniors, and annual junior passes.
- ▶ There may be more opportunities to further enhance the value proposition by expanding programming and services to provide more high-value experiences, fostering inclusivity and promoting broader community participation in golf-related activities and use of the facilities.



The pitch and putt courses and driving range facilities provide beginners with a stepping-stone to learn the game.

- ▶ The collection of VPB Golf assets is unique and appeals to a diverse range of skill levels, allowing a beginner to learn and progress through the game of golf.
- ▶ The pitch and putt and driving range facilities provide an excellent starting point for beginners to learn the basics of golf. They offer a low-pressure environment where new golfers can build confidence and improve their skills before moving on to one of the full-length championship courses.
- ▶ These facilities also offer an affordable and convenient way for golfers of all skill levels to enjoy the game. Their casual atmosphere makes them ideal for practice sessions or social outings with friends and family.





VPB has already launched initiatives to grow the social ambiance and should continue to build on this theme.

- ▶ The VPB has been increasing the social aspect and 'fun factor' at pitch and putt facilities by expanding patios and serving alcohol, as shown in the successful launch of alcohol sales at Stanley Park.
- ▶ The golf market is experiencing significant growth in off-course participation centered around entertainment focused activities – which include driving ranges and pitch and putt style courses.
- ▶ There is potential to continue to capitalize on the trend and enhance offerings at both the driving ranges and pitch and putt facility with new technology, elevated quality of customer touchpoints, and increasing integration with food and beverage services to the overall experience.

The clubhouses currently offer a limited till-to-table food and beverage service; however, opportunities may exist to grow.

- ▶ In the local market, competitor facilities tend to offer more robust food and beverage services complete with full-service dining. It is also common for these facilities to host banquets and events, which may help support the delivery of the full-service model.
- ▶ VPB golf courses currently offer a limited-service table-to-till model centered around operational efficiencies.
- ▶ Elevating food and beverage services and the ambiance of the spaces could benefit golfers and potentially increase the general-public appeal of golf-supporting services.
- ▶ There could also be potential to expand further into the banquets and events business.





Aside from golfers, the courses also serve as a community amenity for local residents.

- ▶ The golf course properties serve as additional gathering and activity space for various additional user groups.
- ▶ Four of the golf course properties offers co-located trails available for public use. The co-location of public trails is not relatively common within the golf industry; however, it is a sought-after feature especially in large urban areas.
- ▶ Members of the public are able use the clubhouse facilities, food and beverage offerings, and benefit from access to nature at these courses.
- ▶ Space is also shared with various species of wildlife that inhabit the areas, and the members of the public who come to watch and explore.

The golf properties are recognized as biodiversity hotspots within the City of Vancouver, and are Audubon certified.

- ▶ Outside of the manicured fairways and greens, the courses feature urban forest canopy, groundwater infiltration / recharge, and wildlife habitat with limited human disturbance.
- ▶ All three championship courses are certified by Audubon International in all six areas of environmental standards.
- ▶ The golf course properties are identified in [Vancouver Plan's](#) ecological vision as Biodiversity Hotspots. There are opportunities to continue building on existing environmental practices at the golf facilities.





Water management practices are currently implemented at the golf courses, which include a focus on continuous improvement.

- ▶ VPB golf courses rely on potable water for irrigation. The dependence on potable water varies by course; for example, Langara operates almost entirely on non-potable groundwater, whereas Fraserview relies primarily on potable water.
- ▶ The water management program and other policies are reviewed annually which are based on a 5-year rolling average.
- ▶ There may be opportunities at the courses to explore the potential of recycling of stormwater and/or additional water conservation methods.

