

ACTION PLAN FOR PARKSVILLE'S PARKS AND TRAILS



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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PARKS, TRAILS AND OPEN SPACES ACTION PLAN

MASTER PLAN

This master plan is an official document consisting of a report and necessary maps prepared on behalf of the City of Parksville, which sets forth major policies to guide the development of parks with a view to promote health, safety, welfare and convenience for the City. The document is subject to continual review and is responsive to appropriate change. The master plan document is intended to plan for a period of twenty years.

BUDGETING AND INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

Recommendations which fall within minor capital or capital project levels of funding shall go through a budgeting process whereby cost and risk are outlined for Council to consider. Projects brought forward over the life of this plan by outside agencies such as community requests, volunteer groups or charities shall go through a similar process to consider if the request meets current Council, OCP and master planning directives. If directives are met, it shall be determined where the project fits in with schedules and funding before being proposed to Council. Major infrastructure projects often overlap with trail connections or park dedications and upgrades, and opportunities may exist to develop these park projects in partnership with such infrastructure capital projects.

SAFETY AND INCLUSION

All recommended projects shall employ risk management strategies to ensure public safety and to protect the City from liability concerns. Whenever possible, projects shall follow universal design guidelines ensuring accessibility and inclusion for all park users.



ACTION PLAN

The Action Plan provides short, medium and long-term recommendations for Parksville's parks and trails. The recommendations are categorized by park and trail types and are attached to an estimated timeframe and financial cost to the City.

- S** - Short term (5 years) **\$** - Operational Cost (\$1-4,999)
- M** - Medium term (10 years) **\$\$** - Minor Capital Cost (\$5,000-\$14,999)
- L** - Long term (20 years) **\$\$\$** - Major Capital Cost (\$15,000+)
- O** - Ongoing

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Five *Guiding Principles* were developed for the Parks, Trails and Open Spaces Master Plan which reflect the priorities identified through the community engagement program. The *Guiding Principles* are:



Encourage safe and healthy opportunities for all community members



Create a more accessible park network for everyone



Support sustainable infrastructure use and maintenance



Protect and enhance the natural environment



Promote physical and mental well-being for all.



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

SHORT-TERM:

- Initiate a review of parks and trails from a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) lens and make associated changes.
- City park signage should be installed in every park. All signage should include park addresses for emergency vehicles.

MEDIUM-TERM:

- Review each park space from an 8-80 planning perspective (that is, creating spaces that can be enjoyed by all ages) and initiate needed improvements for accessibility and infrastructure.
- Construct an all-weather multi-sports field.

ONGOING:

- Monitor Parks staffing levels to ensure they are increasing along with additional park maintenance responsibilities.
- Use Map 8 “future connector trails” as a guide to improve accessibility and connectivity from:
 - Parksville Community Park to the Englishman River Estuary;
 - Englishman River Estuary to Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park;
 - Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park to Top Bridge;
 - Top Bridge to Springwood Park;
 - Springwood Park to Mark’s Nature Park; and
 - Mark’s Nature Park to Parksville Community Park.

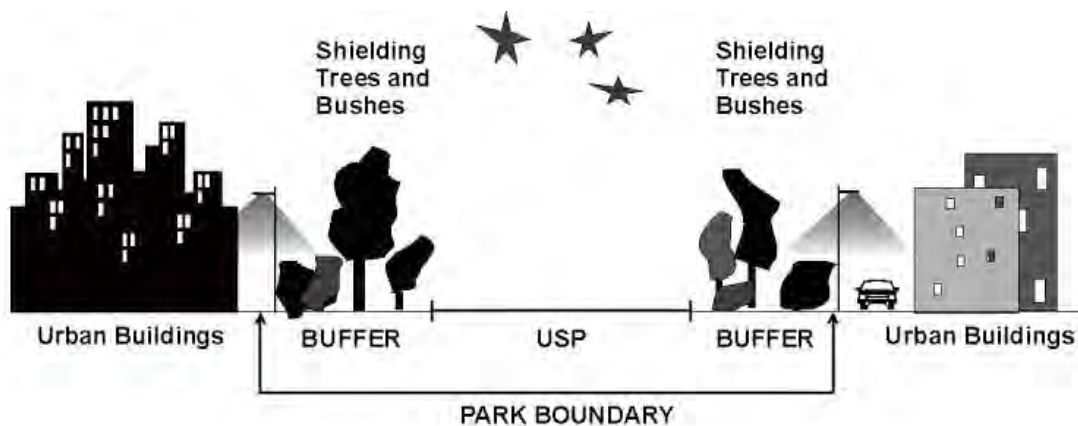


GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PARKS AND TRAILS

Lighting and Safety

- Adding lighting to parks can help people feel safer due to greater visibility of hazards and the illumination of dark areas within the park. Lighting can also promote parks that people would otherwise not know about and give people the ability to use the parks for longer portions during the day. In addition, illumination can add character and uniqueness to a space. However, this needs to be balanced against maintaining a “dark skies” approach to park lighting to limit habitat intrusions, unnecessary brightness that impacts residential uses or lighting that decreases from experiencing the night sky.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
1. Designate a park to act as an urban star park. Ensure that it remains dark for stargazing. Add star signage.	S	\$
2. Initiate a review of parks and trails from a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) lens and make associated changes.	S	\$\$\$
3. Consider designing and constructing lighting in some developed parks to increase safety and extend park usability.	O	\$\$\$



Example of an Urban Star Park. (The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, 2017)

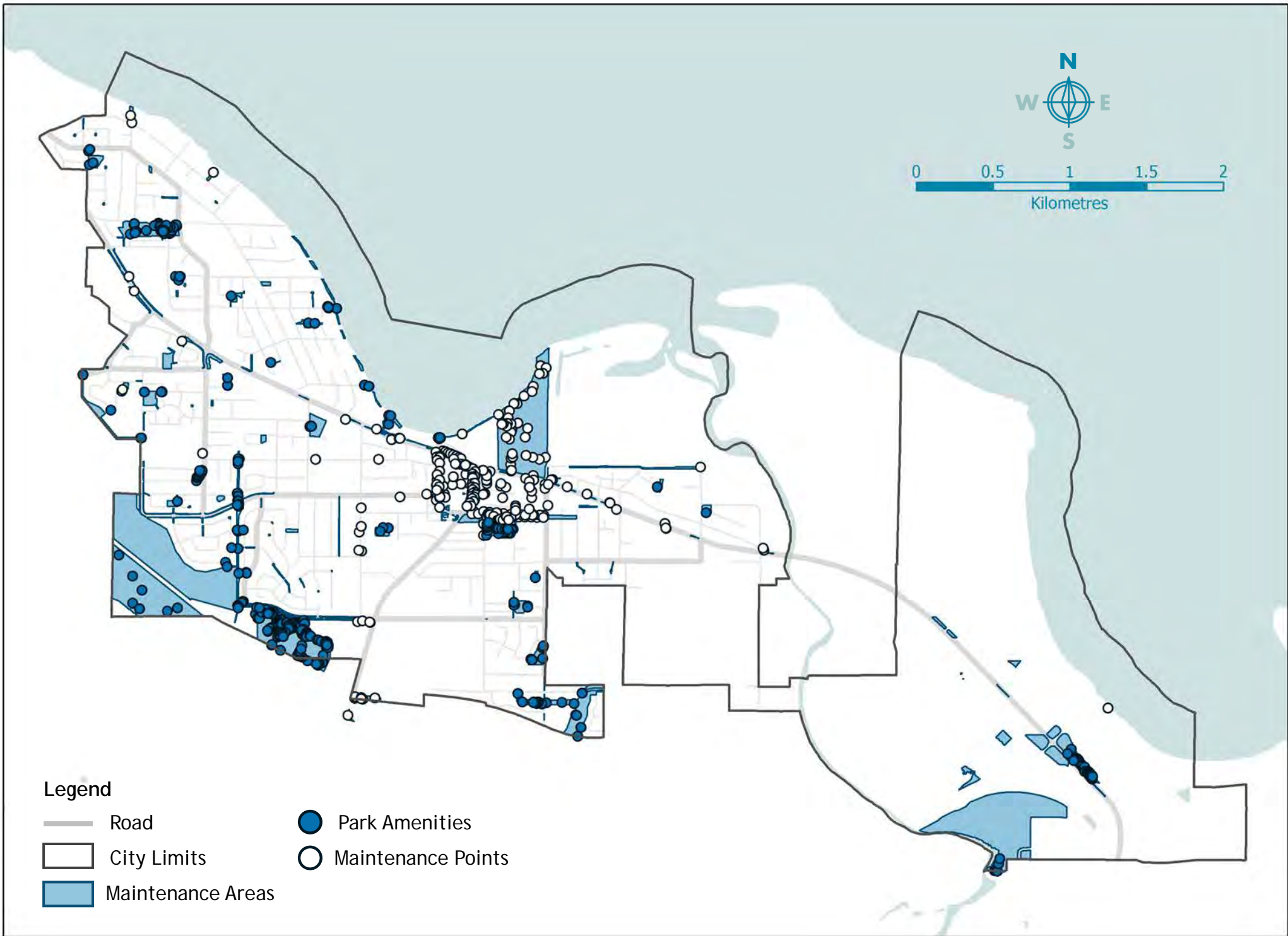


Asset Management

- The City of Parksville has invested extensively in parks and trails assets for the enjoyment of residents and visitors. Managing these assets is important to providing sustainable service delivery and manage risks. A need to replace and provide new parks furnishings was made apparent while undertaking the parks and trails inventory and was noted by participants throughout the engagement process. Furnishings are important amenities needed for people to enjoy parks; these include benches, bike racks, garbage cans, permanent games, picnic tables, water fountains and other fixtures. Map 7 shows the assets maintained by the Parks Department.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
4. Move forward with the OCP recommendation to initiate an up to date tree and vegetation inventory.	S	\$\$
5. Install parks notice boards to advertise new and upcoming events in principal parks.	M	\$\$
6. Add all weather seating for both small and large groups.	M	\$\$\$
7. Install amenities to accompany sport facilities, such as: bleachers, picnic tables, water fountains, washrooms, storage for sport teams, bike racks, concession or hardscaped area for food trucks, parking, etc. Allocate funds to maintain infrastructure.	M	\$\$\$
8. Improve the availability of seating in developed parks.	O	\$\$\$
9. Install amenities to support events, such as: bike racks, concessions, parking, permanent games (i.e. chess boards), picnic tables, water fountains, etc.	O	\$\$\$
10. Express Parksville’s unique character through furnishings by using consistent design accents to achieve a sense of place across Parksville.	O	\$\$
11. Develop a trail surfacing hierarchy and an implementation plan for systematizing trail surfacing across the City.	O	\$\$
12. Monitor Parks Department staffing levels to ensure they increase along with park maintenance responsibilities.	O	\$\$





Map 7: Parks department amenities and maintenance areas. Note: Amenities includes amenities like picnic tables and garbage cans. Maintenance points includes planters and benches, etc. Maintenance areas include areas requiring mowing, weeding, etc.

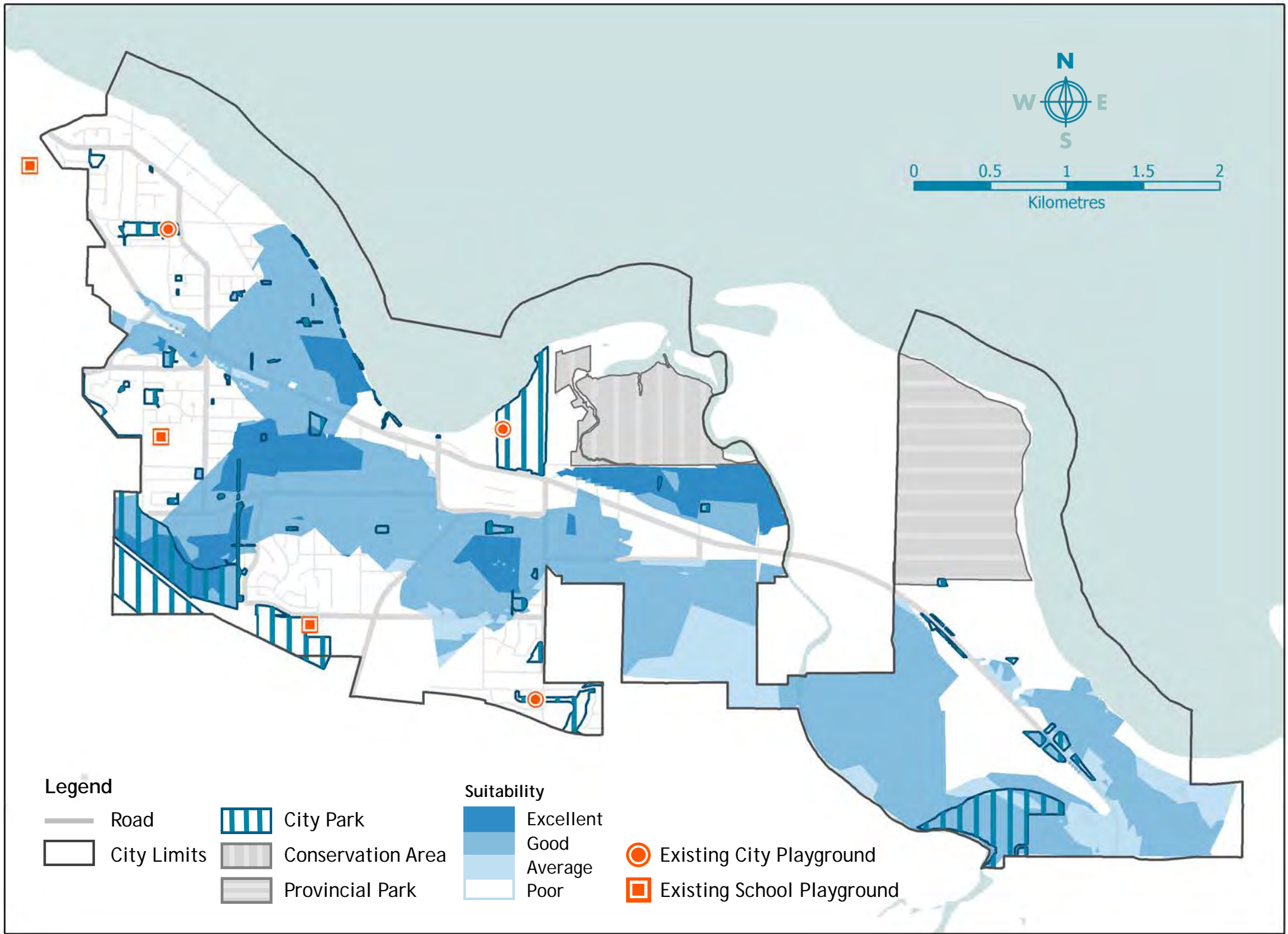
Youth Oriented Amenities

- Although Parksville’s residents are demographically older than the provincial average, it remains important to recognize the needs of younger individuals and to provide a range of spaces appealing to all. Adding amenities such as playgrounds, built in table tennis, giant lawn games, climbing structures, basketball courts, skateboard parks, picnic areas and covered seating may attract more families to the parks and neighbourhoods. Fences can also be a child-friendly addition to parks to add protection from the road for children.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
13. Use Map 8 to identify the parks best suited for accommodating child friendly amenities.	S	\$
14. Create a full natural playground in one or more appropriate parks.	M	\$\$\$
15. Work with residents in identified locations to develop pocket parks for play equipment and playgrounds.	O	\$\$\$



Image of a Natural Playground.



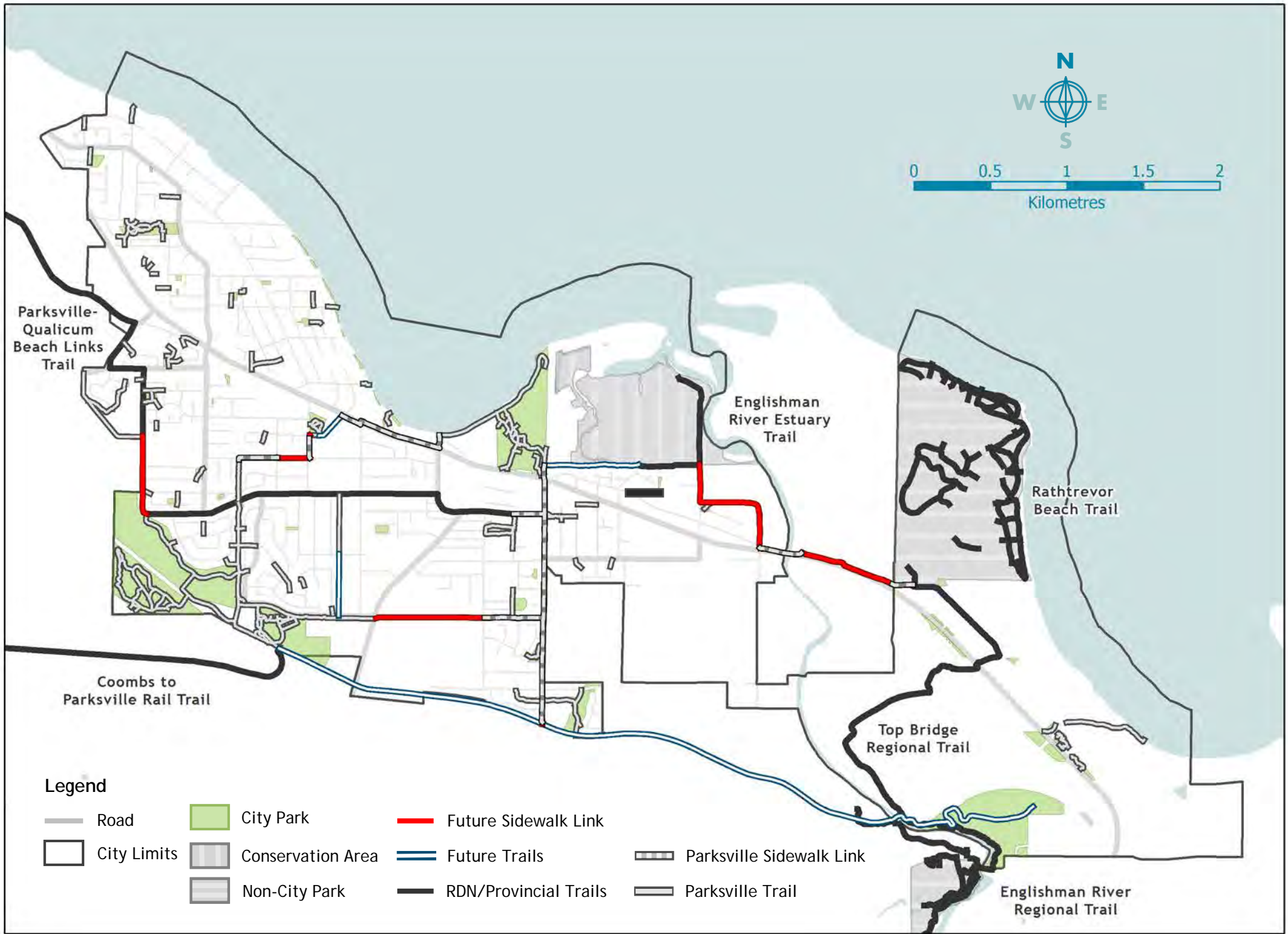
Map 8: Recommended playground areas.

Accessibility and Connectivity

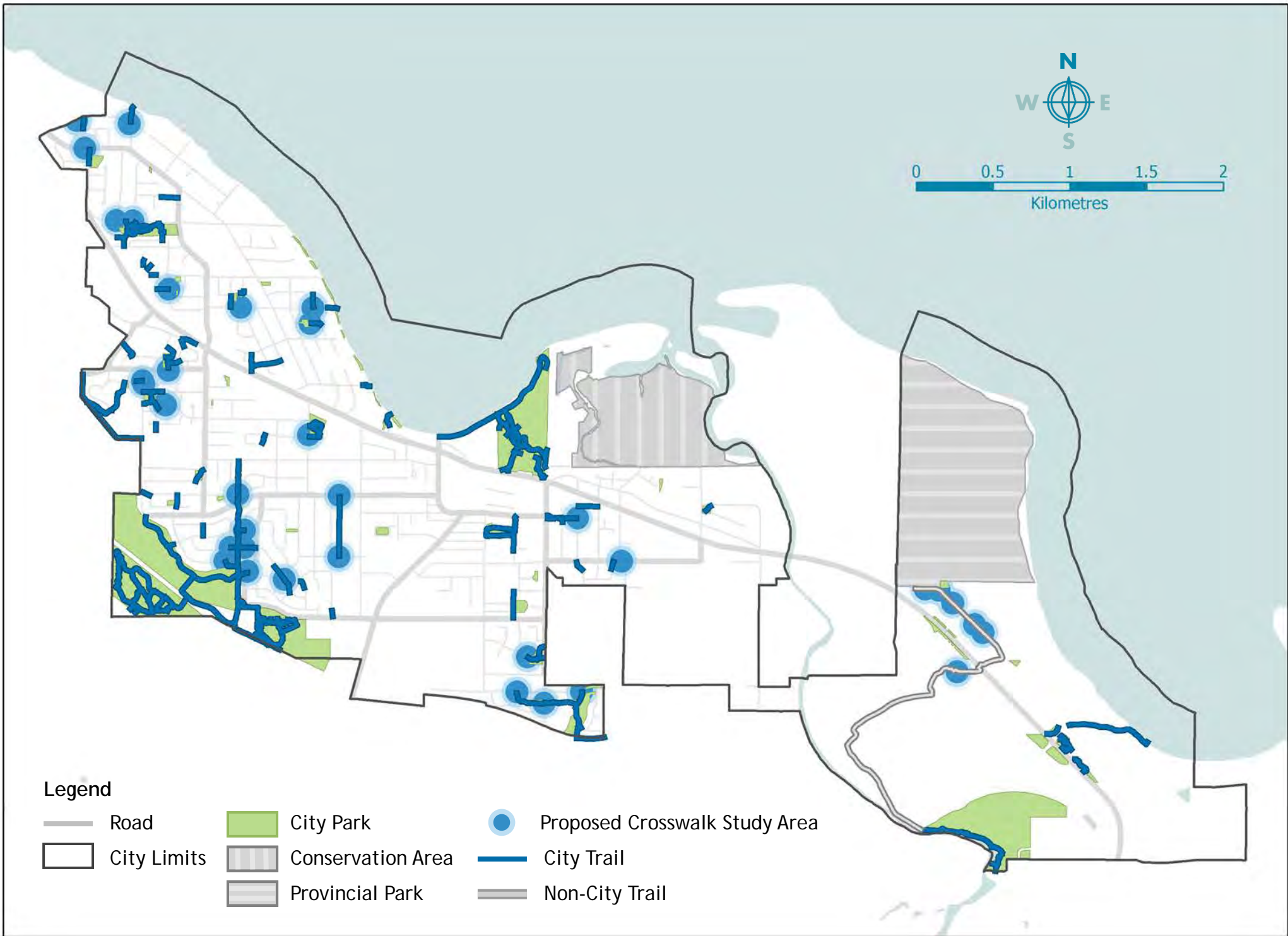
- Accessible parks and trails, especially those that are relatively flat in elevation and accessible for all, promote healthy forms of travel such as walking, running, biking and scootering. Accessible trails offer community members an easy and safe way to travel while enjoying the natural environment. Improved accessibility includes the promotion of active transportation, which can be fostered through connectivity, trails and small amenities such as water fountains, wayfinding and bike racks. Section 5.1 of Parksville’s OCP states that all parks “shall be accessible to persons with limited mobility and persons using wheelchairs, scooters and other mobility assistance devices.” In addition, Section 7.2.4 of the Transportation Master Plan lists requirements for accessible design.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
16. Develop staging areas at key connection points along trail access points, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parksville to Coombs Trail entrance at Springwood Park; and b. The proposed trail heads between Top Bridge and Springwood Park. 	M	\$\$
17. Review each park space from an 8-80 planning perspective (that is, creating spaces that can be enjoyed by all ages) and initiate needed improvements for accessibility and infrastructure.	M	\$\$\$
18. Install benches at intervals based on park usage within parks and along trails to enhance accessibility.	M	\$\$\$
19. Use Map 9 “Future connector trails” as a guide to improve accessibility and connectivity. Make a looped trail by improving connectivity from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parksville Community Park to the Englishman River Estuary; b. Englishman River Estuary to Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park; c. Rath Trevor Beach Provincial Park to Top Bridge; d. Top Bridge to Springwood; e. Springwood to Mark’s Nature Park; and f. Mark’s Nature Park to the Parksville Community Park. 	O	\$\$\$
20. Review Map 10 proposed cross walk areas with the intent to determine site suitability for detailed engineer design: curb and sidewalk replacements, accessible ramp alterations, warning beacons and zebras depending on location.	O	\$\$\$
21. Implement recommendations from the Transportation Master Plan regarding pedestrian and alternative transportation linkages and routes. Include sidewalk connections between trails as part of trail network.	O	
22. Section 5.2.3, Objective (5) of the OCP states, “Public access to the waterfront and linkages from neighbourhoods to the downtown core will be enhanced.” In keeping with this objective, improve beach accesses.	O	\$\$\$





Map 9: Future connector trails.



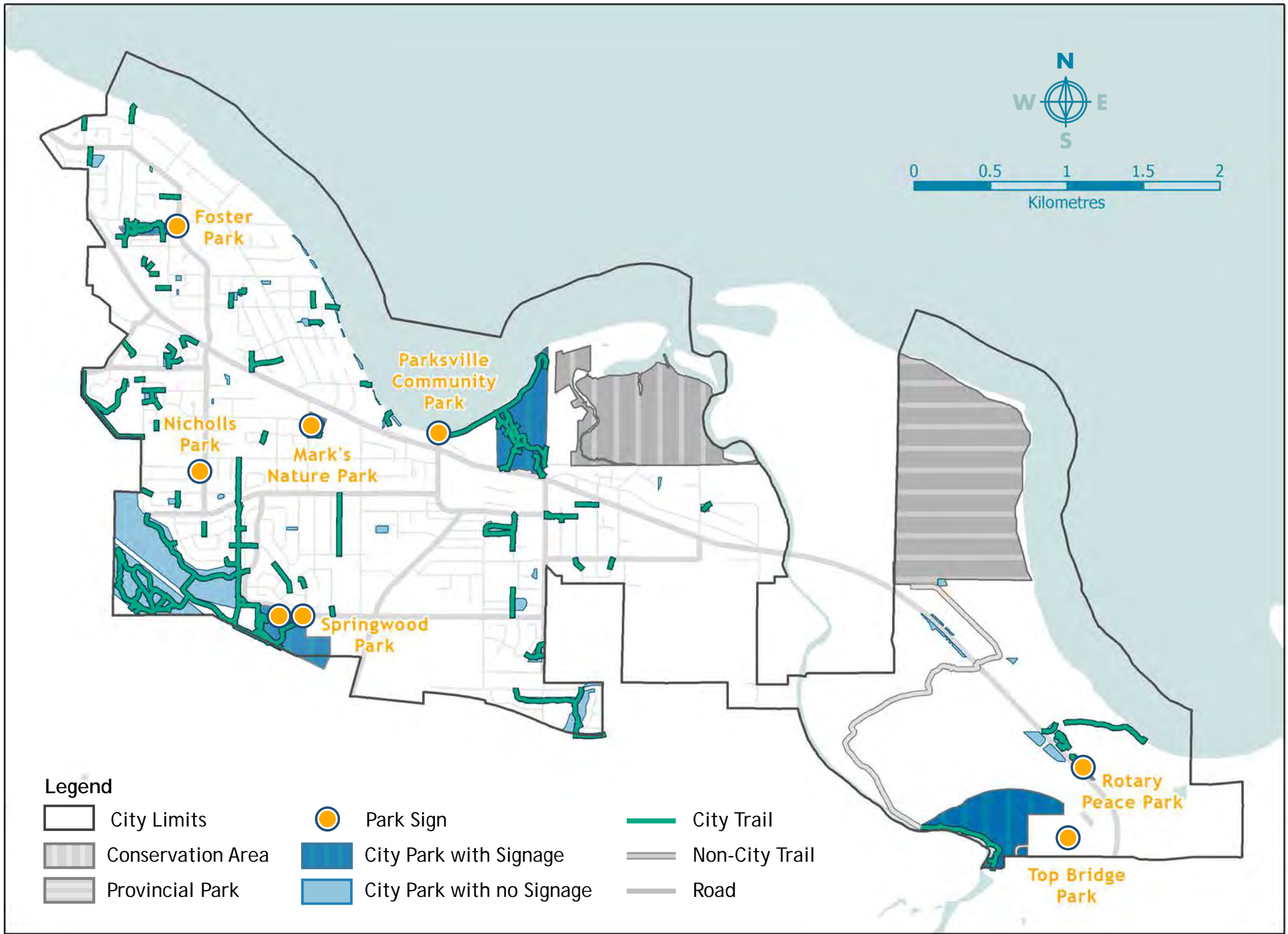
Map 10: Proposed crosswalk study areas.

Signage and Promotion

- Naming and wayfinding for parks and trails is an important aspect for the use of these amenities. When parks and access points are difficult to locate, it can decrease the use and potential enjoyment of these resources. It was also noted some parks have more than one name (or no name) which can create confusion or make spaces difficult to reference. Adding signs depicting the names of parks and identifying parks as public spaces will also help community members know the parks and trails available to them. Map 11 shows parks and trails which do not currently have signage.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
23. Before installing signage, facilitate neighbourhood engagement to establish names for new parks or for spaces with more than one (or no) names.	S	\$
24. Implement current design guidelines for Parksville’s parks and trails signage.	S	\$
25. Develop parks and trails maps and information available for downloading on the City of Parksville website.	S	\$
26. Work with Administration and Bylaw to create no-smoking initiatives to reduce or eliminate smoking in parks.	S	\$
27. Install City park signage in every park to identify them as public spaces. All signage should include park addresses for emergency vehicles.	S	\$\$\$
28. Install trail maps at trail heads and wayfinding signage throughout the City trail network.	M	\$\$
29. Provide detailed information on accessibility and equipment in parks on the website.	O	\$





Map 11: Parks and trails lacking signage.

Environmental Conservation, Enhancement and Education

- Results from the public engagement process indicate that the residents care about the natural beauty in and around their city and want to preserve and enjoy it as much as possible. With the addition of educational components in Parksville’s green spaces, protection and conservation of those natural elements could be enhanced. Educational signage and programming can help people see the beauty of nature and become more connected to the natural environment.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
30. Partner with community groups interested in environmental education to develop interpretive signage.	O	\$
31. Educate the public and maintain high community standards on the interface between humans and wildlife. Include information to educate people on what pro-environmental behaviour involves and the benefits of ecosystem services.	O	\$\$
32. Use native species when rehabilitating disturbed areas, riparian or waterfront areas (eg. beach strips).	O	\$
33. Prioritize sustainable and ecological integrity in landscaping and vegetation management. Integrate native species into landscapes wherever feasible.	O	\$
34. Continue working with the Coastal Invasive Species Committee to manage invasive species within City boundaries.	O	\$\$

Partnerships, Community Engagement and Governance

- Parks represent community resources with opportunities for joint partnerships for high quality cooperation and governance. The City of Parksville can extend resources and build community capacity by engaging in partnerships.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
35. Create an amenity list of features and structures that could be constructed in individual parks and trails. Open the opportunity for public donations and grant funding.	S	\$
36. Develop a “partners in parks” program to give residents greater opportunity to engage in parks development and management.	M	\$
37. Support and promote the formation of neighbourhood associations through advertising and organization of initial meetings.	M	\$



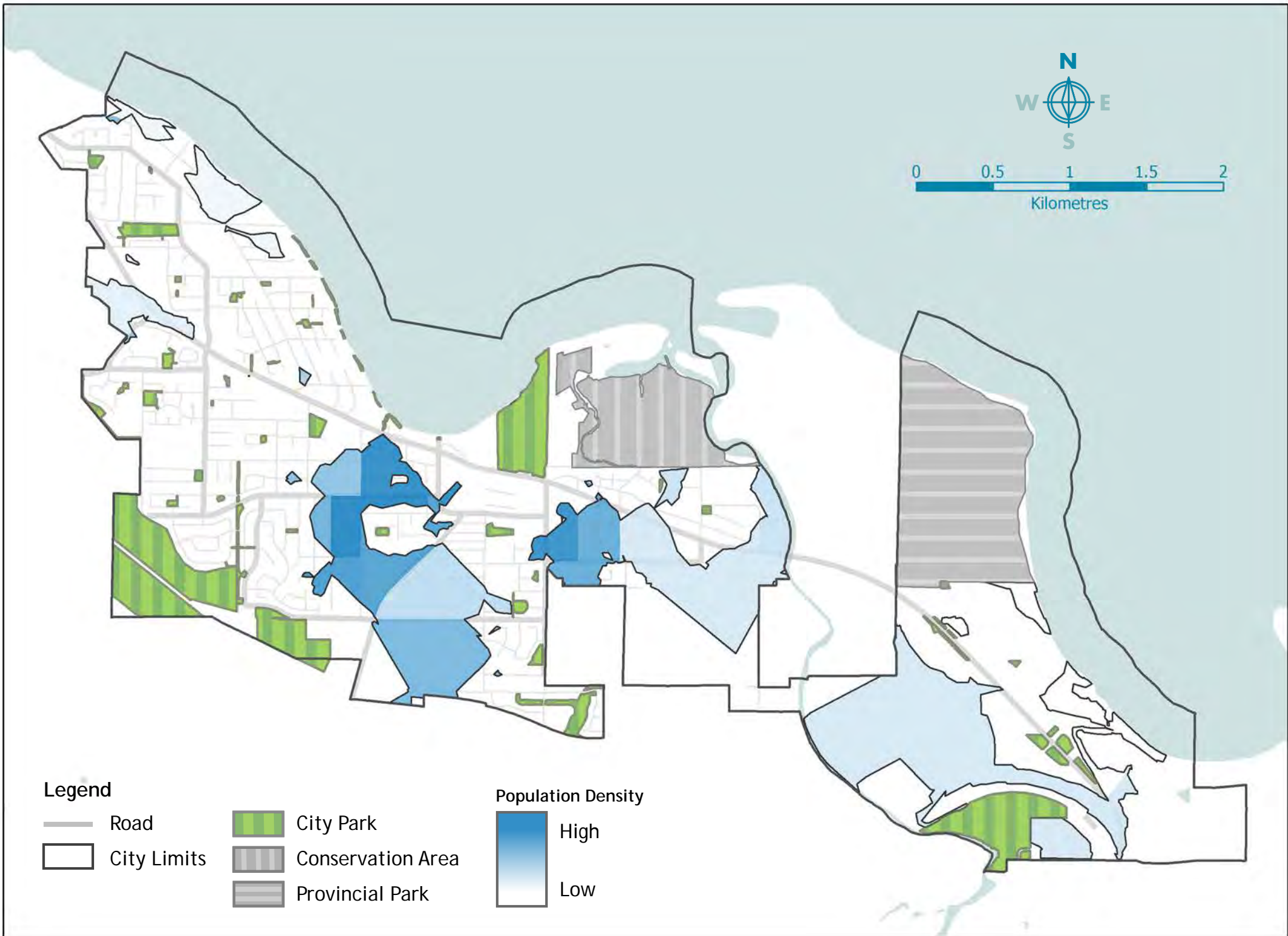
38. Connect with regional groups, such as the Natures Trust of BC, Mid-Vancouver Island Habitat Enhancement Society, Guardians of Mid Island Estuaries Society and Ducks Unlimited Canada, to integrate local and regional conservation and stewardship efforts.	M	\$
39. Create a grant process to support community member passion projects related to the betterment of parks and open spaces.	L	\$\$\$
40. Continue working with the RDN and SD 69 on joint use partnerships for parks, particularly with an eye towards providing additional field and recreation spaces.	O	\$\$
41. Work with BC Parks, and volunteers and partnering organizations of BC Parks, to connect both local provincial parks and existing regional and municipal parks via trail systems; notably, walking and cycling paths from Rath Trevor Provincial Park to Englishman River Falls Provincial Park.	O	\$\$

Acquisitions and Funding

- Parksville’s OCP sets a goal to provide 10 hectares of parkland per 1,000 residents. City policies, such as the Subdivision Bylaw, Development Cost Charges and Parks Cash-In-Lieu create opportunities for expanding and enhancing the parks and trails network.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
42. Work with downtown developers to prioritize the design of the “space between buildings” to create public park spaces.	M	\$\$\$
43. Work towards extending the waterfront walkway through the downtown waterfront policies and parkland acquisitions as outlined in the Official Community Plan.	L	\$\$\$
44. Utilize available funding sources for park acquisitions and improvements, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Taxes; b. Parks and Development Cost Charges; c. Parks Cash-In-Lieu; d. Subdivision Bylaws; and e. Donations. 	O	\$
45. Research the ha/1,000 residents in other communities and compare this to available and future park spaces in Parksville to evaluate if the current ratio should be increased.	O	\$
46. Pursue alternative funding through provincial, federal and non-government grants.	O	\$
47. Pursue parkland acquisitions according to Map 12 depicting areas underserved by parks in Parksville.	O	\$\$\$
48. Implement the Official Community Plan policy for parkland acquisition and dedications.	O	\$\$\$





Map 12: High population density areas underserved by parks.

Fields, Multi-Use Fields, Courts and Storage

- As the population of Parksville grows, there is a higher demand for sports fields, courts and dedicated sport amenities. The development of additional sports fields, courts and storage was identified by multiple user groups as a necessity in the near future and the demand must be met at other principal parks to help decrease the problematic crowding at the Parksville Community Park. Field development may also increase the capacity for Parksville to host future sporting tournaments to bring more people to the City.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
49. Develop a strategy to acquire areas for additional sports fields.	S	\$
50. Investigate options with field partners to construct an all-weather multi-sport field.	M	\$\$\$
51. Investigate options with field partners to construct a running track.	M	\$\$\$
52. Construct multi-use and accessible fields. Needs include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Turf for baseball, football and soccer; b. Baseball fields; c. Football fields; d. Pickleball courts; e. Soccer fields; f. Lacrosse fields; and g. Softball fields. 	O	\$\$\$
53. Use the Subdivision and DCC bylaws to strategically acquire parks lands in designated areas for fields.	O	



Infrastructure and Events

- Data from the engagement process indicates residents are interested in participating in more community events. The people of Parksville enjoy events that bring their community together and showcase ties to arts and culture. Isolation is a risk for many older adults: a community that supports member involvement and hosts accessible and free or low cost events can help mitigate this risk and increase mental health and social equity. If Parksville wishes to host more events, new infrastructure and amenities are needed to accommodate the crowds that are sure to attend.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
54. Expand the range of activities across parks spaces in Parksville.	S	\$\$
55. Increase the capacity of principal parks to host community events by developing additional covered areas that are appropriate in size and scale to each of the parks spaces.	M	\$\$\$
56. Explore the possibility of kinetic or solar energy technology when creating new infrastructure.	O	

Separated Dog Areas

- Separated dog areas, indicated by signage or fences, are ideal for both pet owners and non-pet owners. Separating the spaces gives dog owners a space to let their dogs enjoy the park with freedom, while giving people that prefer not to interact with pets their own spaces. The designated areas should include signage and be accompanied by dog bag dispensers and garbage cans so owners can clean up after their pets.

Actions	Timeframe	Cost
57. Designate additional areas in one or two parks as off-leash dog parks.	S	\$\$
58. Put up signage, dog bag dispensers and garbage cans in designated parks.	S	\$\$
59. Designate a trail for off-leash use.	M	\$
60. Use natural materials to build fenced off areas.	M	\$\$\$



PARK SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

PRINCIPAL PARKS

Park	Action	Timeframe	Cost
PCTC	61. Direct people towards PCTC with the addition of wayfinding elements, such as signage and maps.	S	\$\$
	62. Add park amenities such as water fountains and seating to make PCTC a more accessible community park space.	M	\$\$\$
Railway Park	63. Designate Lot 2 District Lot Nanoose District Plan 39137 as an official park.	M	\$
Rotary Peace Park	64. Designate as an official park space.	S	\$
	65. Replace old, residential grade irrigation system.	S	\$\$\$
	66. Replace interpretive signage.	M	\$\$
Springwood Park	67. Install stadium light standards to extend the hours of the park and field use and support additional users. Balance usage with field recovery times. Explore closing fields seasonally to prevent excess wear.	S	\$\$\$
	68. Work with court and field users to determine best locations and size for user fee supported storage spaces.	M	\$\$\$
	69. Increase the capacity of principal parks to host community events by developing additional covered areas.	M	\$\$\$
	70. Work to improve drainage on the baseball diamonds and soccer fields.	O	\$\$\$
	71. Continue working with the RDN to ensure field user groups have a voice in field allocation and improvements. Groups who need additional space include:		
	a. Baseball;		
b. Football;	O	\$\$\$	
c. Pickleball;			
d. Lacrosse;			
e. Soccer; and			
f. Softball.			



Top Bridge	72. Install washrooms. Explore the feasibility of different washroom configurations, such as	S	\$\$\$
	73. Work with and support mountain bikers to establish new trails and improve trails destroyed as a product of the construction of the water treatment plant.	M	\$\$
	74. Rehabilitate areas around water treatment plant and re-establish trails.	M	\$\$\$

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS

Park	Action	Timeframe	Cost
Foster Park	75. Relocate the northern entrance to a location where the sightline is not impeded by the bathroom facility.	S	\$\$
	76. Work with Friends of Foster Park to develop a design to replace the park fence to make it more visually appealing and child friendly.	S	\$\$\$
	77. Increase the capacity of this neighbourhood park to host community events by developing additional covered areas.	S	\$\$\$
Humphrey Park	78. Engage in a community engagement exercise to determine feasibility and support of making Humphrey Park a skateboard park.	M	\$
Nicholls Park	79. Promote the formation of “partners in parks” program.	S	\$
	80. Construct circular seating.	M	\$\$\$
	81. Install a natural playground.	M	\$\$\$
Shelly Creek West	82. Install wayfinding signs to trails.	S	\$\$
	83. Improve trail linkage from the Top Bridge to Springwood trail.	L	\$



Shelly Creek South	84. Limit access to sensitive local fish habitat with natural fencing such as a split rail.	S	\$
	85. Develop a permanent bridge crossing of Shelly Creek friendly to the stream and local fish habitat.	S	\$\$\$
Shelly Road Park	86. Work with the Bard to Broadway Society and the Pioneer Residents Association to resurface and paint the basketball court and install new nets.	M	\$\$
	87. Work with the Bard to Broadway Society and the Pioneer Residents Association to install a natural playground.	M	\$\$\$

POCKET PARKS

Park	Action	Timeframe	Cost
Bridgewater Park	88. Formalize well-used pathways within parks as part of the trail network.	M	\$\$\$
Sylvan Park	89. Formalize desire line with accessible surfacing material.	S	\$\$\$
Wedgewood Park	90. Merge Wedgewood, Aquila and Zengel Way Parks into one park space.	M	\$
Woodland Park	91. Initiate neighbourhood engagement exercise to determine support for play equipment and playgrounds.	O	\$
Young Park	92. Address encroachment of surrounding residents into park space.	S	\$



LINEAR PARKS

Park	Action	Timeframe	Cost
Maple Glen Linear Park	93. Install additional seating along the linear pathway.	M	\$\$
	94. Re-vegetate areas with native flowering species around paths.	M	\$\$
Raffiki Walkway	95. Resurface trail with accessible material as a continuation of Maple Glen Linear Park.	S	\$\$

NATURAL RESOURCE AREAS

Park	Action	Timeframe	Cost
Mark's Nature Park	96. Work with property owners to formalize the 19A connector trail.	O	\$\$\$
Parksville Wetlands	97. Improve wayfinding and connectivity.	S	\$\$
	98. Install interpretive signage.	S	\$\$
	99. Develop additional parking space on Church Road.	S	\$\$\$
Sunset Boulevard Green Space	100. Install signage highlighting the importance of maintaining a healthy riparian ecosystem.	S	\$



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APPENDICES

