



**RE: Community Use at Royal Athletic Park (June-August 2021)**

Attention: Nav Sidhu, Jeff Brehaut, Josh Taylor, Jeff Parker-Francis

CC: NPNA Board, Land Use Chair, Land Use Planning Advisor

Date: May 3, 2021

The North Park Neighbourhood Association is eager to build on the successful season of community access at Royal Athletic Park in 2020.

The NPNA would like to host the following programs/events at Royal Athletic Park from June-August 2021. All of the following events and activities will be free to attend. Safety plans will be submitted for approval to the City of Victoria, and all programs will abide by provincial health regulations. The relevant restrictions from the provincial government's website are listed at the end. These restrictions are in place until May 25, 2021. All programs (with the exception of the craft workshops) can be carried out under these restrictions.

You will notice that the programming outlined below takes place on Friday evenings, Saturday, and Sunday. These times are outside of those listed on the last draft of the program calendar Josh Taylor shared with me.

In 2020, we witnessed the popularity of community access during times where programs were being offered by the NPNA and the City's Arts & Culture Department at Royal Athletic Park. During community access when there were no programs, visits to the park were less frequent. There are many reasons that this may have been the case. For example, the fact that RAP has historically been a pay-to-access regional amenity, the limited advertising done to promote community access, the fact that there are no established amenities at RAP, such as a playground, and limited access to shade making use during the hottest parts of the days less attractive.

This year, the NPNA would like to build on the momentum from last year by offering consistent, well advertised programs at RAP on Friday evenings, Saturdays, and Sundays. This allows us to streamline our staff and volunteer capacity while offering free, recreation programs within the neighbourhood for those living nearby.

In addition to the reasons stated above, opening RAP for weekends is supportable for the following reasons:

1. **The 2016 Census demographics in North Park support free, consistent access to Royal Athletic Park.** RAP is included in the green space allotment for the North Park neighbourhood. 2016 Census statistics demonstrate that residents in North Park are more likely to be low income renters in core housing need with limited access to green space and recreation options outside of the North Park neighbourhood. (See end of document for additional demographic information)

2. Results of the NPNA's **October 2020 "Community Values" survey support free, community programming at Royal Athletic Park.**
3. **North Park is green space deficient, even with full access to Royal Athletic Park.** The 2012 Official Community Plan acknowledgement that North Park is green space deficient - even when RAP is included in the calculations - and recommendation that another park be added to the North Park neighbourhood.
  - a. The amount of accessible green space to residents of North Park is 0.71ha/1000 residents, compared to Victoria average of 3.16/1000 residents
  - b. **North Park has 6.47 hectares of municipal parkland. However, about half of that is made up of Royal Athletic Park.**
  - c. If you include Royal Athletic Park there are 1.23 hectares of parkland/1000 residents. Once you remove RAP which is fenced off, and accessible only by paid admission, that decreases to 0.71ha/1000 residents. Compare this to the City average of 3.16ha/1000 residents.
  - d. North Park residents currently have 22% of the greenspace per person as the rest of Victoria. If the RAP was opened to the neighbourhood North Park residents would have 39% of the greenspace per person as the rest of Victoria. Opening the RAP would bring us closer to equality if not equity.
4. **All existing regional facilities in North Park require admission to enter** (Save on Foods Memorial Arena, Crystal Pool, Royal Athletic Park, Curling Club). This does not make sense for the lowest income neighbourhood in the City.
5. **The North Park does not have a community centre where the neighbourhood association can offer free all ages programming, events and services.** Access to RAP would support the NPNA's goal of providing an interim, distributed community centre.
  - a. North Park experiences a concentration of social services, supports and services for those experiencing homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders, and the existing City owned regional facilities in North Park do not provide adequate community benefit.

## Propose program schedule

<p><b>Fridays, 4:30-7:30pm, June-August</b></p>	<p><b>4:30 -7:30pm: Disc Golf</b> Neil Yonson has offered to be involved again this year. We propose setting up disc golf on Friday night and leaving it up until the end of the day on Sunday.</p> <p><b>6:00-7:30pm: Soccer Skills (ages 7-13)</b> in collaboration with the Masjid Al-Iman Mosque</p> <p><b>5:00-7:00: "Picnic in the park"</b></p>
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	Bring a picnic, set up a blanket in the park. In collaboration with Silver Threads Society. If and when allowed, we would add a pop up performance to accompany the picnic event.
Saturdays, 12:00-8:00pm, June-August	<p><b>12:00-8:00pm: Disc Golf</b></p> <p><b>“Fitness in the Park”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Women &amp; girls fitness class</b> In collaboration with the Masjid Al-Iman Mosque</li> <li>• <b>Senior’s Stretch and Strength</b> In collaboration with Silver Threads Society</li> <li>• <b>Senior’s Picnic Presentation</b> In collaboration with Silver Threads Society</li> </ul>
Sundays, 12:00-8:00ppm June-August	<p><b>12:00-8:00pm: Disc Golf</b></p> <p><b>“Art in the Park”</b> Rotating craft workshops (for example, olla making, painting, embroidery, rug hooking workshop, up-cycle craft workshop). All craft workshops will be delivered in accordance with public health direction.</p> <p><b>Food &amp; Farmers Markets, 9:30am-2:30pm</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunday, May 16, 2021</li> <li>• Sunday, June 20, 2021</li> <li>• Sunday, July 18, 2021</li> <li>• Sunday, August 15, 2021</li> </ul>

Additional information based on above rationale:

## 1. North Park Demographics: Based on the 2016 Long Form Census (25% Sample)

([source: City of Victoria Open Data portal](#))

	North Park	Hillside-Quadra	Fairfield
- core housing need			
- subsidized housing			
- Percentage of renters			

% of tenant households spending 30% or more of its income on shelter costs	51.6	44.9	42.4
% of tenant households in subsidized housing	31	15.2	7.9
% of renter households	79%	59%	57%
% of tenants in a building that has five or more storeys	21%	2.7%	8.4%
<b>- lone-parent households</b>			
Median after-tax income of lone-parent economic families in 2015 (\$)	\$30,288	\$39,406	\$51,671
Total - Lone-parent census families in private households - 25% sample data	205	395	360
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- household income</li> <li>- low income cut offs</li> <li>- low income measures.</li> </ul>			
Median after-tax income of households in 2015 (\$)	\$30,220	\$46,292	\$47,195
Median after-tax income of economic families in 2015 (\$)	\$48,928	\$62,322	\$76,469
<p>"The low-income cut off "LICO" threshold was last set in 1992, based on a survey that year to determine the average share of household income needed to cover essentials. Since then, this income threshold has been increased each year in line with overall prices, using the Consumer Price Index (CPI) measure of inflation. A common criticism of the LICO measure is that the costs considered exclude many essentials (for example, energy, communications, and transportation costs are omitted). But as the measure is not about who cannot afford these essentials, but who would have to spend a disproportionate amount of their income on those items, this does not necessarily distort the overall picture of poverty it presents." (source: <a href="#">Maytree</a>)</p>			
<b>Prevalence of low income based on the Low-income cut-offs, after tax (LICO-AT) (%)</b>	<b>25.5</b>	<b>17.5</b>	<b>9.9</b>
0 to 17 years (%)	27.3	20	6.4
0 to 5 years (%)	16.7	17.8	8.3
18 to 64 years (%)	26.7	18.6	12.7
65 years and over (%)	18.4	5.1	3.7
<p>"The low income measure (LIM) is the most overtly relative measure of poverty. In theory, it is a measure of inequality, not between the bottom and the top but between the bottom and the middle. With LIM, the concept of poverty is having substantially less than what is typical in society (either typical today using the variable LIM or, with the fixed LIM, what was typical in the recent past)." (source: <a href="#">Maytree</a>)</p>			
<b>Prevalence of low income based on the</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>15.4</b>

Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%)			
0 to 17 years (%)	51.5	34.4	12.7
0 to 5 years (%)	33.3	36.1	14.6
18 to 64 years (%)	30	22.7	16.5
65 years and over (%)	50.9	14.6	13.6
<b>- Unemployment rate</b>			
Unemployment rate	8.1	6.4	5.4
<b>- visible minority</b>			
<b>- Immigrants</b>			
	3485	7550	11835
	700	1735	1050
Total visible minority population	(20%)	(23%)	(9%)

## 2. North Park October 2020 “Community Values” survey:

In October 2020, the NPNA launched a community survey to gauge the values of residents, business owners, and other users of the neighbourhood and how they want to see it develop in the next 5, 10, or 20 years into the future. A total of 258 people, representing 7.2% of the community, took the survey, which was open for approximately a month. The analysis of this survey can be found on our website at: <https://npna.ca/community-values-survey/>

There were several questions relating to green space in North Park, specifically the community's desired use of Royal Athletic Park. For example:

- 57% of respondents feel like there is not enough access to green space.
- Respondents want to see community gardens, natural vegetation, open/flexible green space, shelters for gathering, and Indigenous cultural presence in parks.
- 87% of respondents feel that RAP should be used for activities other than paid admission events.
- There was strong support for all of the answer choices on this question, but free/low-cost programming for children or adults had very strong support
  - 77% - Free or low-cost programming for adults (fitness group dance, etc.)
  - 74% - Free or low-cost programming for children (sports and summer camps, etc.)
  - 59% - Bookings for sports teams or other recreational groups
  - 47% - Free open access to the public
  - 7% - Other (comments included: More live music, outdoor theatre events, arts and cultural outdoor events, less live music (like Rifflandia), off leash dog park, less geared to spectator sports, food trucks with seating, natural landscaping, space for birds)



### 3. Accessible Green Space per 1000 residents

2012 OCP acknowledgement that North Park is green space deficient - even when RAP is included in the calculations - and is recommended for another park. See proposed location of additional park in North Park on the map below (from 2012 OCP). Note, that the proposed location is in the same location where BC Housing will be building a 60 unit supportive housing building in winter 2021.

The amount of accessible green space to residents of North Park is 0.71ha/1000 residents, compared to Victoria average of 3.16/1000 residents

- North Park has 6.47 hectares of municipal parkland. However, about half of that is made up of Royal Athletic Park.
- If you include Royal Athletic Park there are 1.23 hectares of parkland/1000 residents. Once you remove RAP which is fenced off, and accessible only by paid admission, that decreases to 0.71ha/1000 residents.
- Compare this to the City average of 3.16ha/1000 residents.

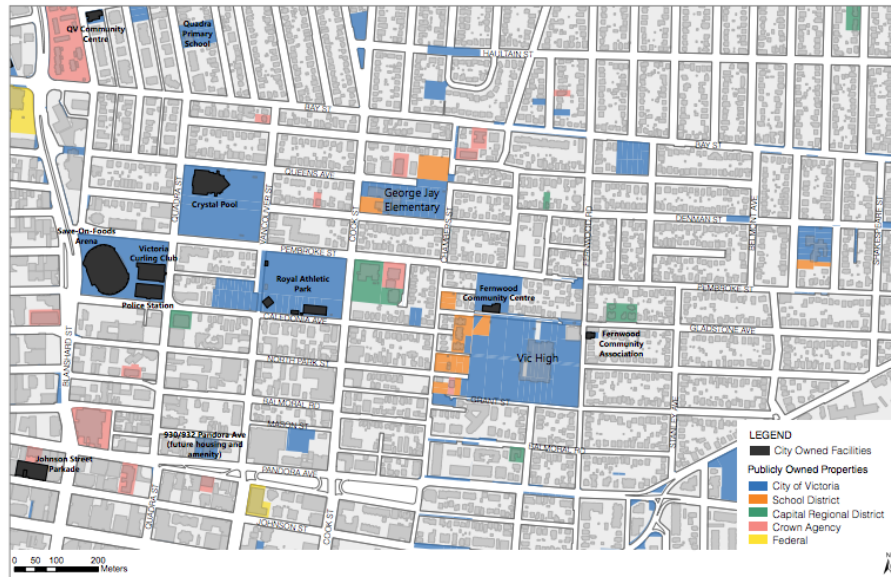
### 4. Inaccessibility of Admission-Only Regional Facilities in North Park

Despite being home to several City owned recreation facilities, none of these facilities are free to enter. Despite making up nearly half of our municipal park space, Royal Athletic Park is accessible only by paid admission.

#### **Cost of admission for a family of four**

- Crystal Pool: \$12.25 (family swim)
- Save on Foods Memorial Arena: \$11.45 (plus skate and helmet rental)
- Royal Athletic Park: \$44: Harbourcats general admission for 2 adults and 2 children
- Royal Athletic Park: \$60 for four weeks of Zumba or Bootcamp classes (1 adult)

## Public Amenities



## 5. Concentration of Services, and no Community Centre

North Park does not have a community centre, and this would support the NPNA in providing an interim, distributed community centre.

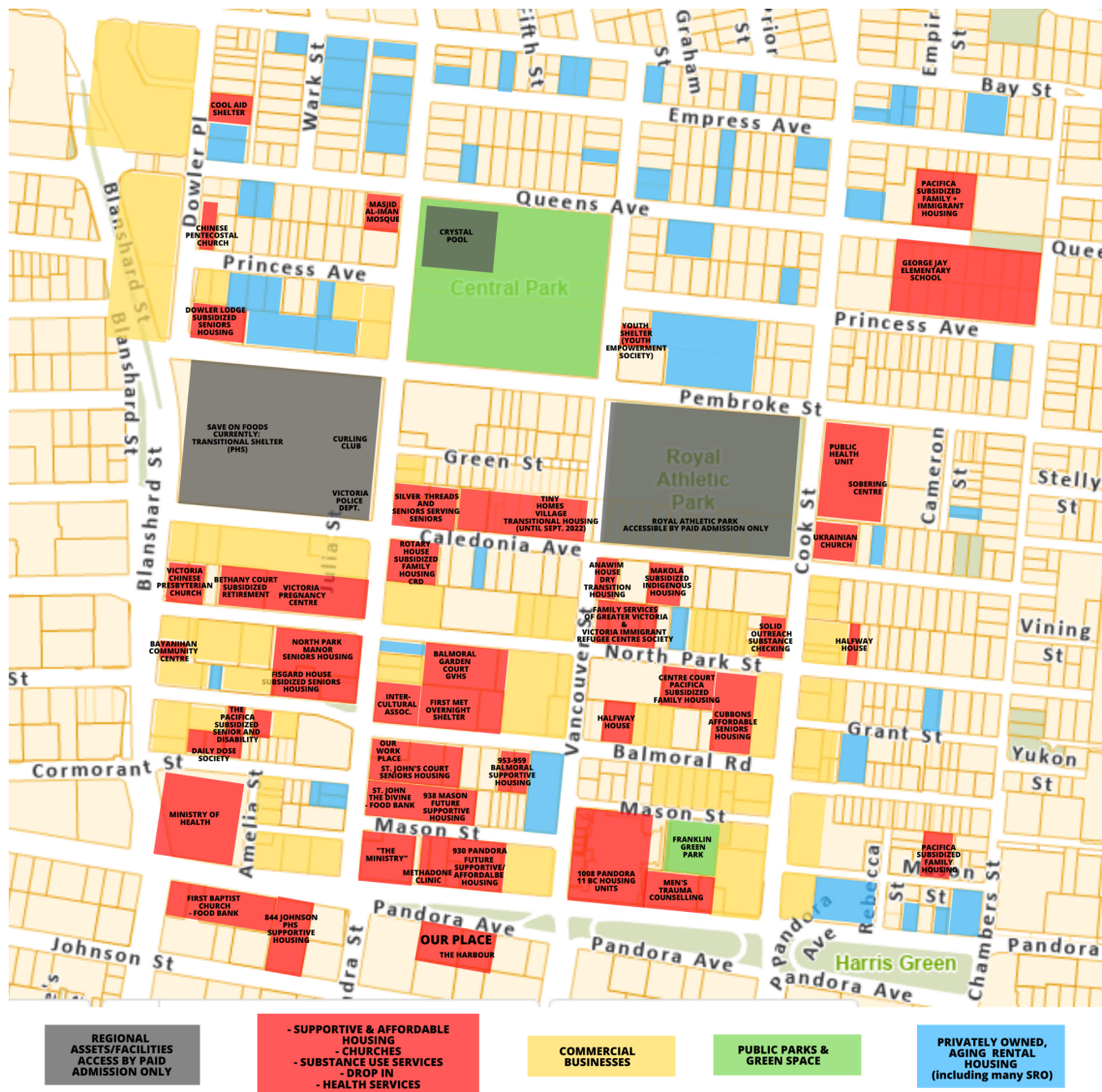
North Park experiences a concentration of social services, supports and services for those experiencing homelessness, mental health, and substance use disorders, and the existing City owned regional facilities in North Park do not provide adequate community benefit.

(see map, next page)



# north park

EDGY TO THE CORE



Thank you,

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