

NEWS RELEASE

Distributed July 25, 2025

Outdoor Play Day to celebrate inclusion and accessibility at Westwood Lake Park

Come out Tuesday, July 29, for the grand opening of Westwood Lake Park and experience its new, accessible features

Summary

On Tuesday, July 29, the City of Nanaimo and the Child Development Centre will be hosting a grand opening event that highlights the park and outdoor inclusion for children and youth with disabilities.

Outdoor Play Day will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.:

- 10 a.m. - 11 a.m. - opening ceremony
- 11 a.m. and on - tours of the new Westwood Lake Park facilities and amenities begin
- 11:30 a.m. - kayak and trail rider tryouts begin (please pre-register by contacting Jack at 250-667-4951 or emailing jack@nanaimocdc.com)
- Food trucks will be there at the event!
- Following the event, there will be a lakeside performance by From the Earth, live from 4 to 5:30 p.m.

The Westwood Lake Park Amenity Improvements Project began with public consultation back in 2021. Phase One of the improvement project, completed in 2023, redesigned access to the park and introduced a green-focused parking lot featuring natural stormwater management features and improved pedestrian flow.

Phase Two, which began in September 2024 and is now reaching completion, includes the expansion of the beachfront, as well as a wide range of new amenities including the accessible washroom and change room facilities, new seating and picnic areas, accessible decking, an upgraded boat launch, and new shade trees.

Additional upgrades include:

- Accessible wayfinding signage with braille and audio features
- Improvements to trails leading to the water
- An accessible beach ramp and beach mat
- Native plantings and perching boulders
- Food truck spaces and public art
- Enhanced pedestrian and bike connections
- A new playground at second beach
- New bike wash and repair station

The budget for the redevelopment of Westwood Lake Park includes \$3.6 million for beach enhancements and universal washrooms, \$99,000 budget for the new playground and \$150,000 budget to re-purpose the original washrooms to a lifeguard and first aid / storage space. \$1.18 million has been provided by the Growing Communities Fund.

The City thanks park users for their patience during construction and encourages the community to explore and enjoy the revitalized space.

Strategic Link: The new Westwood Lake Beach improvements supports the City's commitment to accessibility, wellness and recreation and delivers upon some key actions from City Plan.

Key Points

- On Tuesday, July 29, (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.) the City of Nanaimo and the Child Development Centre will be hosting a grand opening event that highlights the park and outdoor inclusion for children and youth with disabilities.
- Phase Two work at Westwood Lake is now complete and the park is fully open for the public's enjoyment.
- Improvements to the park include a new beachfront, parking lot, facilities and more. The redesign brings improvements to accessibility and comfort, as well as a renewed connection to the environment.

Quotes

"Westwood Lake Park is easily one of Nanaimo's favourite parks, and the revitalization at First Beach and beyond has turned the park into an oasis like no other in our city. Come out for a splash in the water, a nature walk, a family picnic, or a chance to read at a resort-like beachside. It's accessible and designed for everyone's enjoyment – we'll see you there!"

Leonard Krog
Mayor
City of Nanaimo

Quick Facts

- Lifeguards are on duty daily at Westwood Lake from 12 to 5:30 p.m. until Monday, September 1 (including BC Day & Labour Day; weather permitting)

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Contact:

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View the online edition for more information -

<https://www.nanaimo.ca/NewsReleases/NR250725OutdoorPlayDayToCelebrateInclusionAndAccessibilityAtWestwoodLakePark>