

Our City, Our Voices.

reimagine
NANAIMO

HOW WE GET OUTSIDE

Nature and green space are on our doorstep. Stretching along the waterfront and framed by a forested backdrop, all Nanaimo residents are minutes from quality outdoor experiences. As people continue to seek ways to connect with nature and live active lives, these spaces increase in demand. With hundreds of hectares of new parkland added in the past 15 years, protecting green space in perpetuity is at the heart of a livable and green Nanaimo.



People are coming for the experience

With 180+ km of trails and nature at our fingertips, Nanaimo is gaining a reputation for outdoor adventure. New residents and visitors coming to play support our economy.



We're collaborating to invest wisely

Collaborations between the City, Snuneymuxw First Nation, School District, Vancouver Island University, service organizations, and more support wise investments in projects that benefit many.



We have set and met ambitious targets

Over 1,000 hectares of parks and open space are protected in Nanaimo and park and trail improvements continue. Strategic targets continue to grow our green spaces alongside our population.



We're adding new experiences

Working with the community we're adding unique new outdoor experiences like the Steve Smith Bike Park and supporting urban farming at the Five Acre Farm in Harewood.



Volunteer contributions are significant

Nanaimo's Partners in Parks Program, in operation since 1982, brings the ideas and efforts of volunteers together to develop and improve our parks and open spaces.

The recently completed Maffeo Sutton accessible playground with art by local artist Noel Brown was made possible through a partnership between the City, Nanaimo Child Development Centre, Children's Health Foundation of Vancouver Island, Tire Stewardship BC, and others.



PARK GROWTH



For over 30 years, Nanaimo volunteers have supported projects like neighbourhood playground development, invasive plant removal, community garden creation, public art, tree planting, education, events, and stewardship.



OUR PARKS TODAY

We have achieved much in our parks system over the past 15 years. The total area of parks in Nanaimo is relatively high for our current population of 99,000 at 11.6 ha / 1,000 residents. Some districts, like Hospital / Departure Bay and South Nanaimo, have less dedicated parkland than others. Acquisition often occurs alongside urban development as new lands are dedicated as development moves forward.

While providing recreation opportunities for residents is a core objective for our parks, these spaces are also secured and managed for environmental values. In the future, parks and open spaces will have an increasingly important role in managing risks like flood and wildfire, supporting active transportation, and contributing to a green future for our City.



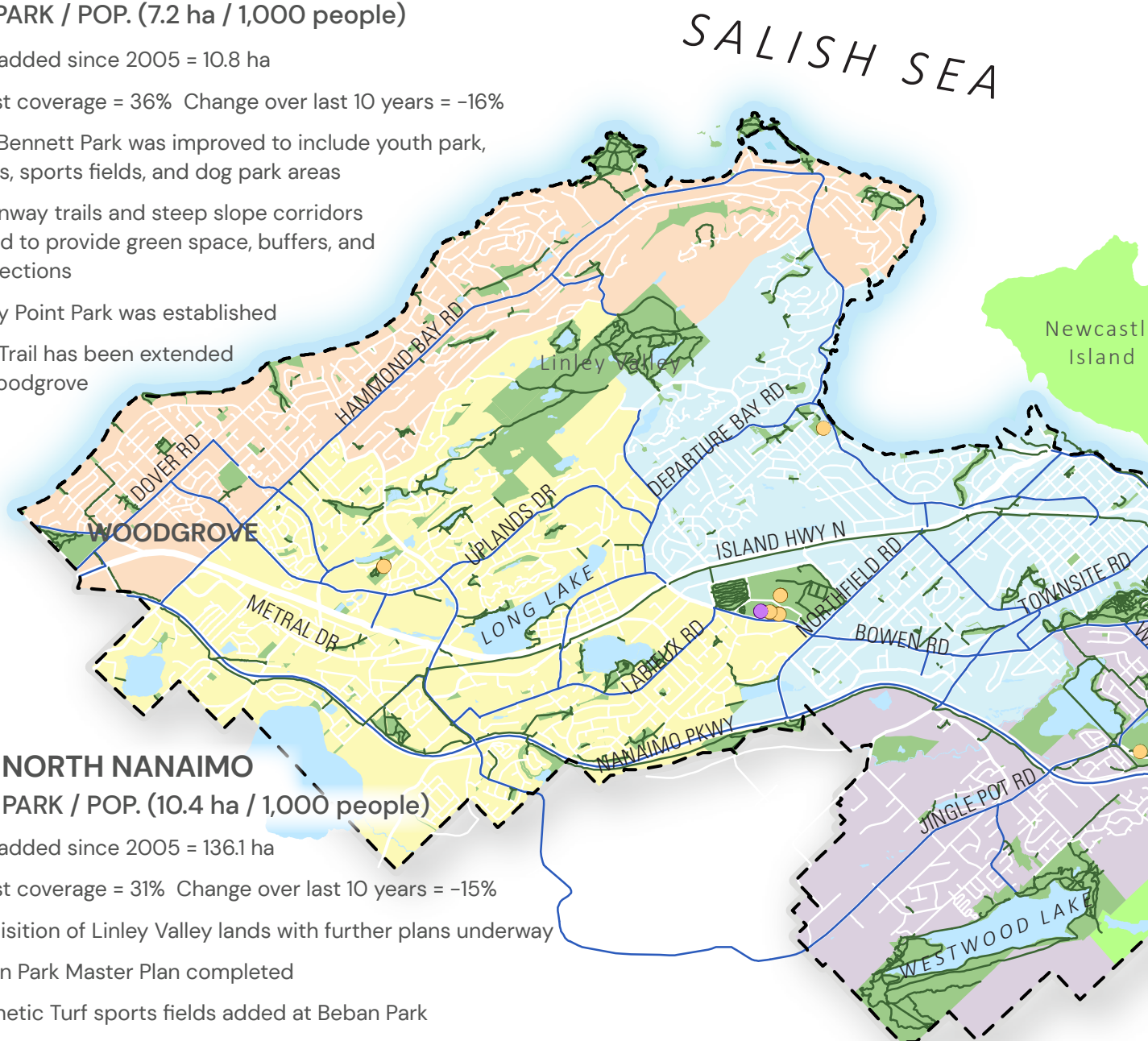
DOVER / HAMMOND BAY PARK / POP. (7.2 ha / 1,000 people)

- ▶ Park added since 2005 = 10.8 ha
- ▶ Forest coverage = 36% Change over last 10 years = -16%
- ▶ May Bennett Park was improved to include youth park, tennis, sports fields, and dog park areas
- ▶ Greenway trails and steep slope corridors added to provide green space, buffers, and connections
- ▶ Rocky Point Park was established
- ▶ E&N Trail has been extended to Woodgrove



NORTH NANAIMO PARK / POP. (10.4 ha / 1,000 people)

- ▶ Park added since 2005 = 136.1 ha
- ▶ Forest coverage = 31% Change over last 10 years = -15%
- ▶ Acquisition of Linley Valley lands with further plans underway
- ▶ Beban Park Master Plan completed
- ▶ Synthetic Turf sports fields added at Beban Park
- ▶ McGirr Field House constructed
- ▶ Lakes management improved





HOSPITAL / DEPARTURE BAY

PARK / POP. (4.2 ha / 1,000 people)

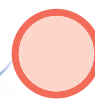
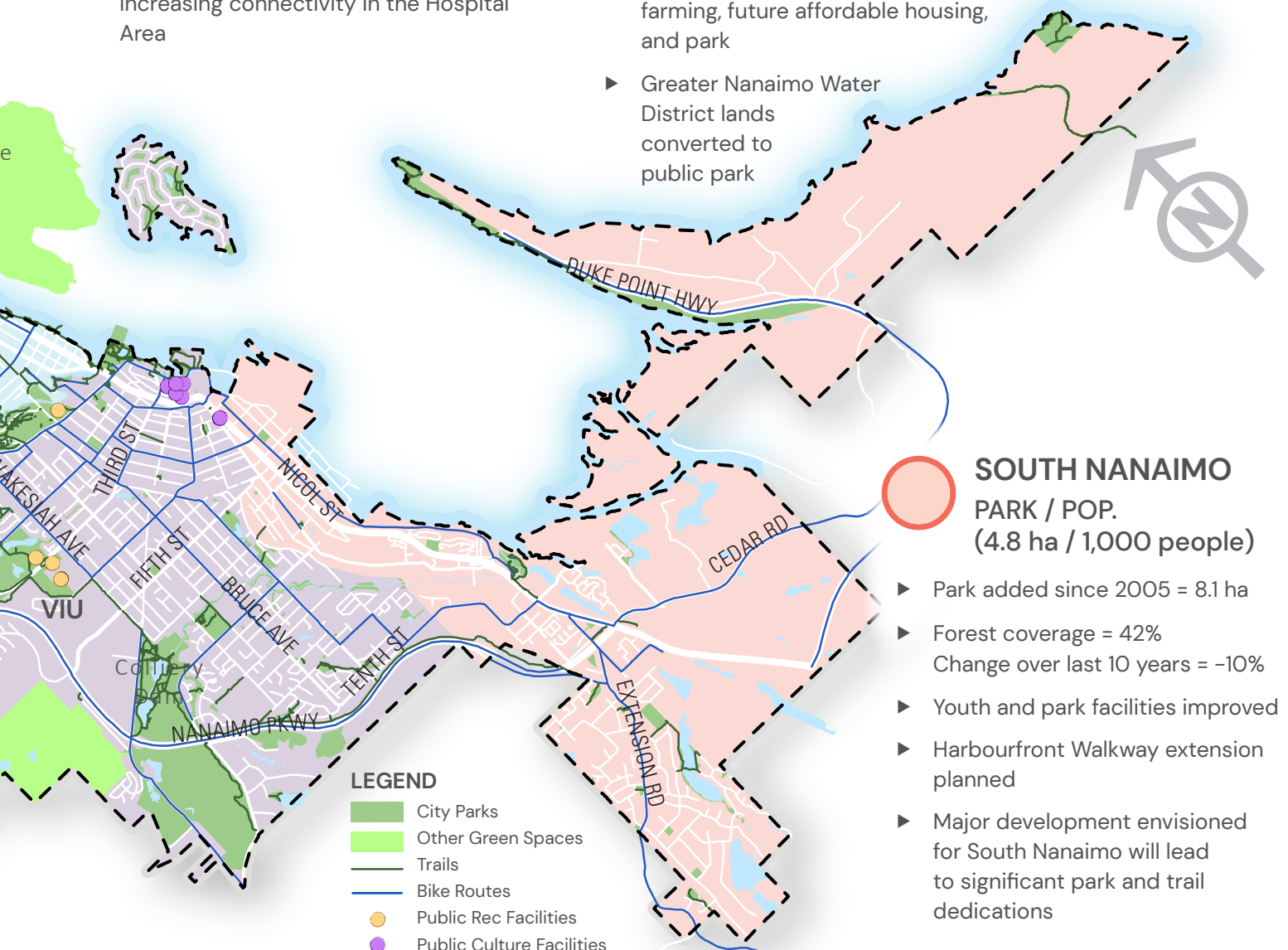
- ▶ Park added since 2005 = 10.8 ha
- ▶ Forest coverage = 22%
Change over last 10 years = -8%
- ▶ Departure Bay parking and trail improvements, creek habitat restoration, and addition of First Nations art
- ▶ Planning underway for Harbourfront Walkway from Departure Bay to BC Ferries, beach recreation, and habitat improvements
- ▶ E&N and Westwood Lake trail use is increasing
- ▶ Street and cycling improvements increasing connectivity in the Hospital Area



DOWNTOWN / UNIVERSITY

PARK / POP. (38.9 ha / 1,000 people)

- ▶ Park added since 2005 = 369.2 ha
- ▶ Forest coverage = 43% Change over last 10 years = -6%
- ▶ Cultural, performance, and festival facilities downtown
- ▶ Interim waterfront walk constructed at Port Drive, with plans for extension and waterfront amenities
- ▶ Snuneymuxw and City collaborating on waterfront improvements and Saysutshun (Newcastle Island)
- ▶ Major recreation facilities, trails and environmental improvements completed at NDSS, Rotary Bowl, and Third St.
- ▶ Georgia Ave Greenway completed
- ▶ Colliery Dam spillway and trails integrated into existing park
- ▶ 5-acre farm on Park Avenue secured for urban farming, future affordable housing, and park
- ▶ Greater Nanaimo Water District lands converted to public park



SOUTH NANAIMO

PARK / POP.
(4.8 ha / 1,000 people)

- ▶ Park added since 2005 = 8.1 ha
- ▶ Forest coverage = 42%
Change over last 10 years = -10%
- ▶ Youth and park facilities improved
- ▶ Harbourfront Walkway extension planned
- ▶ Major development envisioned for South Nanaimo will lead to significant park and trail dedications

WHAT DO OUR PLANS SAY NOW?

- ▶ Provide high quality outdoor recreation throughout Nanaimo for both residents and tourists.
- ▶ Increase public waterfront access, including a connected waterfront route from Departure Bay to the Nanaimo River Estuary.
- ▶ Develop a comprehensive trails system and make neighbourhoods cycle and pedestrian-friendly.
- ▶ Work with residents, developers, government agencies, and community organizations in providing, developing, and maintaining parks.
- ▶ Support protection of environmentally and culturally significant areas by acquiring parks and open space.
- ▶ Integrate environment, greenways, street trees, parks, and transportation.
- ▶ Balance provision of “active” and “passive” parks in all parts of the City.
- ▶ Aim for 20% of the land area of Urban Nodes to be in the form of parks, trails, plazas, and other publicly accessible open space.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Nanaimo’s parks and open spaces support tourism and economic growth and attract new residents.
- ▶ In addition to municipal parks, Nanaimo also has convenient access to unique cultural, environmental, and outdoor experiences on Saysutshun (Newcastle Island), managed cooperatively with the Snuneymuxw First Nation and BC Parks, as well as numerous nearby regional and provincial parks.
- ▶ The 2005 [Parks, Recreation, and Culture Master Plan](#) has been a guide to securing park spaces for 15 years and much progress has been made. This process is updating it for our future.
- ▶ The [Trails](#) and [Waterfront Walkway](#) Implementation Plans have supported phased extension of our trails networks.
- ▶ Our [Complete Street Guidelines](#) are linking on-street cycle and walking routes for a more cohesive network.
- ▶ Parks are opportunities for collaboration with governments, agencies, and individuals.



Our parks play a critical role in how we come together as a community. These are the spaces where we meet, socialize, and celebrate together.

CHALLENGES

- ▶ A growing population and new residents are increasing use of parks and green spaces.
- ▶ Maintaining and operating parkland requires ongoing investment and an understanding of accepted levels of maintenance.
- ▶ Aging, diversity of cultural backgrounds, and varied income levels increase the need for parks to be accessible and inclusive of all Nanaimo residents to enjoy in ways that work for them.
- ▶ Parks need to adapt to climate change impacts such as sea level rise / flooding, drought, wildfire, heavier rainfall and increased need for habitat and watershed protection and restoration.
- ▶ The COVID-19 pandemic is affecting our ability to access our parks and enjoy activities like sports and socialization. Learnings could lead to changes in future park planning.

Nanaimo’s waterfront is a focal point for parks with key additions over the past 15 years and plans to create a linked route from Departure Bay to the Nanaimo River Estuary.



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HOW WE RECREATE

Recreation and leisure foster a sense of community pride and support growth of individuals to reach their full potential. Having access to recreation facilities and programs increases quality of life, improves personal health, and builds strong families and healthy communities. Nanaimo's recreation services deliver ways to be active, be social, and be involved.



We have 5 major rec centres

These spaces provide activities for all ages and interests and include the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre, Nanaimo Ice Centre, Bowen Park Complex, Beban Park Complex, and Oliver Woods Community Centre.



The Oliver Woods Community Centre, added in 2008, provides space for indoor sports and activities along with connected park space.



Our programs are for all ages, interests, abilities

We offer a variety of programming for all ages, interests, and abilities in the areas of sports, arts, crafts, special interest, cooking, dance, fitness, yoga, first aid, swimming, skating, wellness, outdoors, and more.



We're making recreation accessible

Programs like youth drop-ins, our LEAP program, Active Pass, and Leaders in Training, are encouraging youth and families to get involved and stay involved in recreation.



Community partnerships are essential

The City partners with organizations like Island Health, the School District, Nanaimo Foodshare, Vancouver Island University, local clubs, and businesses to deliver varied and affordable recreation throughout the community.

Nanaimo hosts Concerts in the Park to showcase local talent.



Events bring our community together

Celebration is part of who we are. The City hosts events like Canada Day and supports and sponsors celebrations like the Marine, Dragon Boat, and Maple Sugar Festivals.



Nanaimo's programs are designed to cultivate an early interest in recreation and activity and to continue building this through lifetimes.

WHAT DO OUR PLANS SAY NOW?

- ▶ Distribute recreational opportunities widely and equitably throughout all areas of the City.
- ▶ Work with partners to integrate recreation services.
- ▶ Provide inclusive opportunities for all Nanaimo residents to enjoy leisure time through a range of programs, courses, activities, and special events.
- ▶ Coordinate provision of educational and recreation programs so that a full range of opportunities are reasonably available at all stages of a person's life.
- ▶ Use leisure services to foster a sense of community identity, spirit, and pride.
- ▶ Use leisure services to foster growth of individuals to reach their full potential.
- ▶ Encourage sport and cultural tourism.
- ▶ Increase festivals and special events in the City.
- ▶ Provide a wide range of youth services and recreation opportunities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ [Te'Tuxwtun](#), a partnership between the City of Nanaimo, Snuneymuxw First Nation, Nanaimo Ladysmith Public Schools, and BC Housing, has recently been created to develop integrated affordable housing, parks and culture, education, childcare, and health services into one area.
- ▶ There is an increasing recognition in the public that recreation and active living are essential to personal health and community well-being.
- ▶ Community leisure facilities are playing a greater role in tourism and economic development including sport tourism, festivals, and events.
- ▶ The City has realized many of the 2005 [Parks, Recreation, & Culture Plan](#) facilities recommendations including the Nanaimo Ice Centre, Oliver Road Community Centre, and Beban Park facility upgrades.

Nanaimo's Leaders in Training and Quest Leadership Training programs provide leadership training to teens through a variety of workshops and volunteer experiences with Parks, Recreation, and Culture programs.



Our programs bring together instructors and students to provide a broad range of program offerings that allow people to share knowledge and explore new experiences.

CHALLENGES

- ▶ Population growth and community expectations put pressure to deliver more recreation facilities and programs.
- ▶ Recreation facilities are major community investments and new capital projects require years of advance planning.
- ▶ Maintaining an appropriate level of investment to support recreation programs and investments can be difficult when weighed with other community needs.
- ▶ Trends towards increased individual and drop-in activities, rather than scheduled groups, are changing facility needs.
- ▶ Parts of the community are distant from recreation facilities, making it more challenging for these residents to access programs and services.
- ▶ The COVID-19 pandemic has challenged how we deliver recreation services leading to ongoing adaptation.

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS? SHARE AT: getinvolvednanaimo.ca



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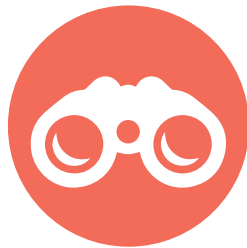
HOW WE CONNECT

Culture connects us and defines us. It is about our history, our values, and beliefs and evolves over time. Our culture is what makes our city unique, distinctive, and vibrant. Culture is why people love where they live. Our City recognizes the importance of the role played by creativity, innovation, arts and culture, in creating a healthy community.



Culture is important to our economy

In 2012, economic modeling showed that the combined indirect and induced impacts of arts and culture on Nanaimo's economy was equivalent to \$94 million, including generation of 880 jobs.¹ This continues to grow.



Art is visible in our community

Each year, Nanaimo's new permanent artworks, temporary art program, and street banners create dynamic and beautiful spaces, spark conversation, share stories, and enrich our public spaces.



Partnerships create opportunity

Our culture and heritage spaces are co-managed by non-profits with passion and expertise. These include The Port Theatre, Nanaimo Museum, Nanaimo Art Gallery, and others who create meaningful experiences to make, perform, exhibit, learn, engage, and be entertained.



We're recognized for our culture

In 2008 Nanaimo was named a Cultural Capital of Canada. Our arts organizations and leaders attract investment and accolades provincially and nationally. We've got top talent!



We encourage cultural excellence

Each year the City presents Culture & Heritage Awards. Local musicians, dancers, artists, architects, Indigenous language champions, and authors are among award recipients.



The City is amplifying Snuneymuxw stories through art: Joel and William Good created houseposts at Departure Bay (St'il'ep). James Johnny Jr. and Jim Johnny Sr. created a new work called *The Raven* at the South Fork Water Treatment plant (shown right). Snuneymuxw artist Noel Brown created designs for the new Inclusive Playground at Maffeo Sutton Park.

Nanaimo welcomes musicians and performers of all types to share, explore, and grow their talents.



Reference:

¹ Nanaimo Arts & Culture Economic Impact Study, 2013

WHAT DO OUR PLANS SAY NOW?

- ▶ Apply a cultural lens to community planning and decision-making and include cultural development in overall City planning and as part of revitalization strategies.
- ▶ Invest in arts and culture to strengthen the City's economy, improving quality of life, and enhancing community identity and pride.
- ▶ Make arts and culture accessible, inclusive, and reflective of our diversity.
- ▶ Preserve and interpret our heritage.
- ▶ Encourage creativity and innovation to attract skilled creative professionals to Nanaimo.
- ▶ Encourage inclusive community participation in arts and culture.
- ▶ Market Nanaimo as a desirable place to visit for unique cultural experiences.
- ▶ Foster community collaboration and partnerships to build capacity and create new opportunities.

OPPORTUNITIES

- ▶ Culture programs support reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities by deepening understanding of land, histories, and futures.
- ▶ Nanaimo's Cultural Asset Priority Plan outlines priorities for spaces, including:
 - » Extension of the Harbourfront Walkway from Departure Bay to Nanaimo River Estuary, animated with heritage and public art.
 - » Further activation of Diana Krall Plaza.
 - » A purpose-built, outdoor performance space.
 - » Nanaimo Art Gallery's plan for creation and exhibition space and multi-use community arts space.
 - » Small performance and rehearsal spaces.
- ▶ Evolve our offerings like public art and our poet laureate program so that they have greater impact.

20+ non-profits receive operating grants each year and the City funds many of the creative projects and events that connect us.

Snuneymuxw Youth Dancers at The Port Theatre during a City event.



Celebration is at the heart of a community. Events, festivals, live music, theatre, dance, and art bring us together. Because of COVID-19, some of these activities have been on hold, but we are well positioned to reimagine and recover.

CHALLENGES

- ▶ Maintaining an appropriate level of investment to support arts and cultural facilities and programs.
- ▶ Raising awareness about the strong link between arts and culture and a sustainable economy.
- ▶ Building the capacity and resiliency of organizations and creative professionals so they can adapt in an uncertain future.
- ▶ Affordability of cultural experiences for people of all ages and incomes.
- ▶ Retention of young, talented creative professionals.
- ▶ Lack of visual appeal around some City gateways, corridors, and streetscapes.
- ▶ Ensuring that our cultural programs and services truly reflect and embrace diversity in all its forms.