



DECEMBER 2012

Community Report

celebrating
100 years!

100 west vancouver

Dear West Vancouver Resident:

What a year 2012 has been for West Vancouver. Together, we celebrated our centennial and saw major projects take place around our community. This Community Report contains updates on many of the District's projects in 2012 and highlights the priority areas for Council and the District in the two years ahead.

*In 2013, you will see that budgets and District work plans will focus on five priority areas. These are priorities that Council has established after listening to you, the community. **Take a read inside and get ready to engage in what is going to be a very busy and exciting year in West Vancouver.***

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Community, Council and District priorities - five priorities to guide the next two years

"All members of Council are committed to ensuring that our community continues to be a special place to live," says Mayor Michael Smith.

The District provides a variety of high level, quality services to our residents. These include traditional services such as water distribution, storm and sanitary sewers, garbage collection and recycling, roads and sidewalks. We are proud of our municipal Police and Fire Services who strive to keep our citizens safe and protected. Our community recreation facilities, parks, beaches and Memorial Library are first class. The Kay Meek Theatre and our waterfront Arts Facilities are enjoyed by more and more visitors each year.

"We are well served by a dedicated team of staff that is very committed to the residents of this community," says Mayor Smith. "It is a priority of Council to improve how programs and services are delivered. The District is in a strong financial position and Council intends to continuously review how tax dollars are allocated."

Community consultation is a priority and Council members welcome discussion with and feedback from our residents.

Following a number of workshops and planning sessions, Council has identified five priority areas to guide budget decisions and work plans for the next two years of its term. The priority areas are rooted in the Community Strategic Plan and have been updated to reflect past work and achievements.

THE FIVE PRIORITY AREAS ARE:



**PUBLIC SAFETY
BUILDING**



**HOUSING AND
NEIGHBOURHOOD
CHARACTER**



**ENVIRONMENT, PARKS
AND UPPER LANDS**



**AMBLESIDE
ACTIVATION**



**MUNICIPAL SERVICES
AND FINANCES**

For updates on these and other projects, please visit westvancouver.ca regularly.

PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING



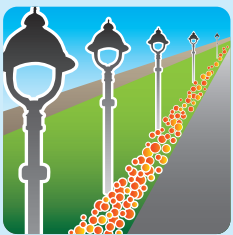
October's earthquake off the northern BC coast was a reminder that municipalities need to be prepared for emergencies. The emergency services provided by our Police and Fire Departments are one of the most important services the District delivers.

During 2013, Council will move ahead with the Public Safety Building project, which is a necessary and significant improvement to our community's public safety infrastructure. The District's current Police Station and main Fire Hall No.1 are not constructed to a post-disaster seismic standard and will likely fail, and possibly collapse, in a major earthquake. This would jeopardize our emergency responders' ability to reach those in need in our community. The new Public Safety Building will co-locate the West Vancouver Police Department and West Vancouver Fire & Rescue in one post-disaster standard facility located on the municipal hall site.

In early 2013, the District will proceed with detailed design for the new Public Safety Building (PSB). An architectural firm, working together with staff, will engage the community in the potential building form options. Following the input received from the community, during 2013, the architectural team will proceed with schematic design, design development and construction drawings for the PSB.

The PSB is a major project and one which will significantly enhance West Vancouver's ability to remain resilient and safe during the everyday and in the event of a possible earthquake or other major disaster. The community is well served by West Vancouver's very own Police and Fire Departments and the PSB will provide a new, efficient and effective facility for our first responders.

AMBLESIDE ACTIVATION



It has taken years to achieve, but the waterfront in Ambleside is now nearly entirely publicly owned. This is something to celebrate! This Council recently acquired two more waterfront lots in 2012, leaving only three lots to complete

the acquisition of the 32 waterfront lots. Since 1975, successive West Vancouver Councils have shown leadership in committing to invest in an accessible public waterfront. Now, West Vancouver is in a position to

realize many of our community-wide ambitions and aspirations for the waterfront, and in Ambleside Village. In 2013, the District of West Vancouver will seek your input on a number of projects.

A key part of Ambleside activation will be redevelopment of the 1300-block of Marine Drive; see page 6 of this report for more information on that.

You will have many chances to provide feedback and input as the District builds on nearly 30 years of successful land acquisition and management on the Ambleside waterfront.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD CHARACTER



West Vancouver is often called a community of neighbourhoods, where neighbours are friends and each neighbourhood offers a distinctive feeling. The 2008 Community Dialogue on Neighbourhood Character and

Housing was a year-long community engagement exercise on neighbourhood character and housing options. Building on this important community work will be a focus in 2013 as Council and the District seek to advance many of the working group's past recommendations as well as new ideas on housing and neighbourhood character. They include:

- Continuing to implement the recommendations from the report of the Community Dialogue on Neighbourhood Character and Housing Working Group.
- Exploring the feasibility of coach houses as an appropriate housing type in West Vancouver.
- Continuing to address neighbourhood character on all development permits and Development Variance permits.
- Ensuring that all District projects consider neighbourhood character in their design.

A big part of West Vancouver's centennial celebrations recognized the evolution of West Vancouver into a vibrant community that has retained its neighbourhood feel. Housing and Neighbourhood character projects for 2013 will seek to balance our historic charm and character with the need for new housing options for our changing community.

MUNICIPAL SERVICES AND FINANCES



At press time, the District's 2013 budget provided for no increase to effective property tax rates in 2013; District services and programs will be delivered at the same level as 2012 despite increased operating and labour costs and a projected

decline in construction-related permit revenues. The 2013 budget submission included requests for certain one-time initiatives, which will be funded from the anticipated 2012 surplus.

Every effort has been made to control expenditures and to explore non-traditional revenue sources so that municipal services can be delivered at the highest level without overburdening taxpayers. Given that there is no significant commercial or industrial base for taxation within our community, finding non-traditional revenue sources is a challenge.

In 2013, the District will conduct its Community Survey to seek public input on which services they most value. This information will inform an internal core services review to evaluate which services the District should provide, at what levels and if the current service delivery is effective, efficient and necessary.

In 2013, additional reviews of municipal services and finances will include:

- Advancing the Squamish Nation Servicing Agreement.
- Collaborating with the District of North Vancouver and City of North Vancouver to advocate for municipal interest with Metro Vancouver, particularly in regard to the Lions Gate Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- Implementing the Strategic Transportation and Cycling Implementation Plans.
- Completing the Roads Asset Management Plan.
- Developing a Parks and Community Services specific capital asset inventory and replacement schedule.
- Reviewing the Community Amenity Contribution Policy.

By working collaboratively, both internally and with our neighbours, the District will work to secure financially, socially and environmentally equitable policies and agreements so that West Vancouver residents continue to receive quality services in a financially responsible manner.

ENVIRONMENT, PARKS AND UPPER LANDS



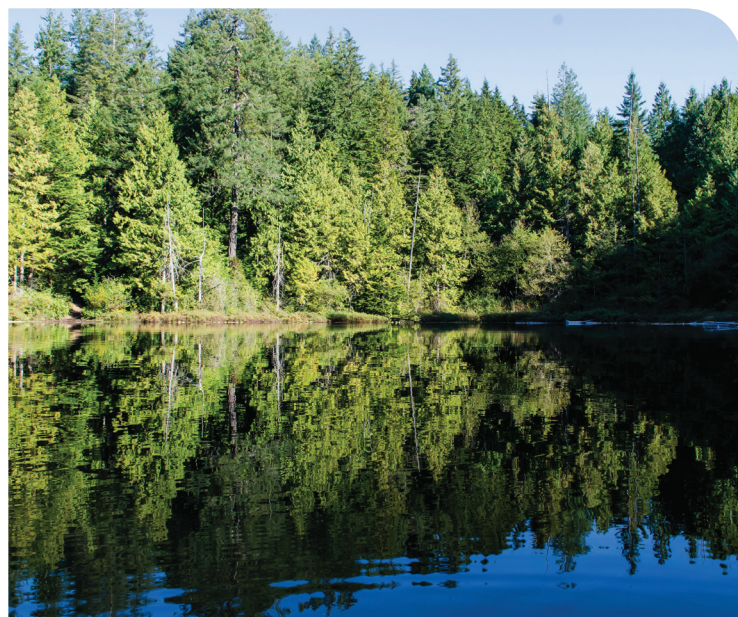
Green and natural spaces are among West Vancouver's defining features. From the popular destination parks along the waterfront to mountainside trails, West Vancouver's natural capital is a treasured and well-loved feature

of our community.

Council recognizes the need to develop policies and guidelines which will renew our community's commitment to our natural capital, and which will clearly direct future projects and activities in our parks and in the Upper Lands.

In 2013, a number of major projects under this priority area will be initiated, advanced or completed. These include, but are not limited to:

- Establishing the Upper Lands Working Group and beginning a comprehensive Upper Lands Study.
- Extending the Spirit Trail from Seaview Walk to Horseshoe Bay.
- Implementing the Shoreline Protection Plan.
- Hiring an Environmental Sustainability Manager and developing a cross-department work plan.
- Developing communications and public engagement plans to increase awareness of projects and public consultation processes.
- Implementing priority recommendations from the Parks Master Plan.



Accolades piling up for District of West Vancouver's budget process

The District of West Vancouver has received high-level industry acclaim for its 2012 budget. A panel of independent reviewers from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) gave the District its Distinguished Budget Presentation Award in November.

In an award letter received by the District, the GFOA wrote: "This award is the highest form of recognition in governmental budgeting. Its attainment represents a significant achievement by your organization."

The GFOA presents the award to a government unit which publishes a budget document demonstrating excellence in meeting their criteria "...as a policy document, as an operations guide, as a financial plan, and as a communications device."

"It's gratifying to have District staff's work acknowledged by industry peers in this manner," says Mayor Michael Smith. "The award validates our staff's efforts to ensure West Vancouver residents receive important financial information in the most professional and effective way."

In October, the District of West Vancouver was a co-winner of the award for the "Most Fiscally Responsible" municipality in Metro Vancouver for 2012, according to the Commercial Real Estate Development Association (NAIOP) Vancouver Chapter. NAIOP presented the District with the award for keeping cost increases in line with, or below, the average rate of inflation for the region.

"This award recognizes the hard work of Council and staff to contain and control costs in the municipality," says Mayor Smith. "We are striving to curb the trend of rising inflation outpacing income and we are very pleased that our hard work has not gone unnoticed."

In winning the NAIOP award, the District was recognized for tabling no change to the property tax rate in 2012 and for limiting cost increases to below the average rate of inflation since the survey's inception in the year 2000.

NAIOP represents commercial real estate developers, owners and investors of office, industrial, retail and mixed-use properties.

Appeal Board ruling puts BC Ferries costs onto District taxpayers

To the shock of Council and District staff, in October BC's Property Assessment Appeal Board ruled in favour of BC Ferries in its appeal of the assessed value of two properties at the Horseshoe Bay Ferry Terminal, resulting in significantly reduced tax revenues for the District of West Vancouver in 2013.

In its ruling, the Appeal Board reduced the previous 2012 assessed values for the two terminal properties, which had been valued at \$41.4 million and \$6.3 million respectively, to \$3.5 million and \$10.00 respectively. The decision is retroactive to 2010, 2011 and 2012 and will require the District to repay property tax revenues collected for those years.

"The District of West Vancouver was extremely disappointed with the Property Assessment Appeal Board's ruling, and we are appealing it," says Mayor Michael Smith. "This ridiculous decision puts the cost of fire, police, parks and roads services at the terminals onto the citizens of West Vancouver."

The ruling translates into a loss of approximately \$210,000 in anticipated tax revenue for 2013 and the repayment of approximately \$630,000 in tax revenues collected since 2010, but Mayor Smith says Council and District staff will do everything possible to reduce the impact of this decision on West Vancouver taxpayers. "To suggest that a large parcel of West Vancouver waterfront has no value is absurd," he says. "This is yet another example of costs being downloaded to a municipality, and this decision sets a precedent for assessment reviews for ferry terminals in the entire province. Every city and town in B.C. that has a ferry terminal should be worried about this outrageous decision."

The District is appealing the Appeal Board's ruling and a decision is expected sometime in spring 2013.

The Appeal Board based its determination on the grounds that the properties have no market value because they have no other purpose other than as a ferry terminal and there is no potential for profit under this use.



Application highlights potential of Ambleside waterfront

West Vancouver's expansive waterfront represents some of the most sought-after and desirable tracts of land in Metro Vancouver. The current development on the 1300 block of Marine Drive, which consists primarily of the aging West Vancouver Police Department Headquarters, does not allow this waterfront parcel to rise to its potential. Grosvenor's application to develop the 1300 block with a pair of mid-rises adjoined by a covered galleria aims to enhance the face of this unique piece of land at the gateway to West Vancouver.

The District received Grosvenor's application in October and a report to Council from staff on the application was received in mid-November. Council has reviewed and supports Grosvenor's application and the next step is an extensive process of public consultation.

Grosvenor's application includes an eight storey complex on the west block, a seven storey building on the east block and street-level retail space. Prior to submitting its application, Grosvenor completed a thorough public consultation process to arrive at a design that continues in West Vancouver's strong architectural tradition and contains all of the elements the community has asked for over the past 20 years.

One of the top architectural firms in the world was hired to design the buildings that will become showpieces for West Vancouver. This project is 20 years in the making and the District is excited at the potential to finally redevelop the block.

Visit westvancouver.ca/1300block for more information, including the dates, times and locations of future public hearings.



Major gift sees room at the West Vancouver Community Centre renamed

The West Vancouver Community Centres Society and the District of West Vancouver have received an \$85,000 donation from Robert and Lily Lee to support the ongoing development of programs and services at the Community Centre.

In recognition of the contribution, the Spirit Room has been renamed the Lily Lee Spirit Room, in honour of the donor, who has a deep connection to West Vancouver and the Community Centre.

"The Lee family has lived in our community for decades, they have been active attendees at the Community Centre for events and have used our recreational and health related facilities," says Barbara Brink, Chair of the Society. "Their support of our Community Centre in this manner will allow us to expand programming for the use and benefit of all users of the facility."

Lily Lee has been a long-term user of both the new and the original Community Centre, says Brink, and formed life-long friendships there. She and her family see the new Community Centre as not simply a place to keep fit, but as an important gathering place for chatting with friends and meeting new people.

The District of West Vancouver established the West Vancouver Community Centres Society to allow the residents of West Vancouver and users of the facilities to provide oversight to the Community Centre to ensure the needs of the community are met.

"I would like to express our deepest thanks to the Lee family for their donation to the West Vancouver Community Centres Society," says Michael Smith, Mayor of the District of West Vancouver. "It is exactly this type of generous community engagement that encouraged the District to establish the Society in the first place."



Ambleside Village and Waterfront projects moving ahead with community input

These are exciting times in Ambleside Village. A new food store is opening at 1650 Marine Drive and an application for redeveloping Marine Drive's 1300 Block is under consideration (see previous page), as is an initiative to enhance the community's streetscape (see below). Revitalizing Ambleside Village is one of Council's key priorities and these initiatives are important steps in that process.

"We are fortunate to be in a position where the community can come together and see tangible progress on the waterfront and in Ambleside Village through meaningful, on-the-ground projects to revitalize Ambleside," says Mayor Michael Smith. "These initiatives are based on years of thoughtful planning and a community-wide aspiration for a vibrant and dynamic waterfront that has something for everyone."

In October, Council directed staff to prepare a plan for public consultation on these and other proposed initiatives:

- Consider converting newly-acquired properties at 1468 and 1472 Argyle Avenue into ocean-front restaurants.
- Consider expanding the successful food services programs to include food carts/trucks.
- Consult with restaurant operators, the Chamber of Commerce and the Ambleside Business Association to allow sidewalk dining.
- Consider community uses for the newly acquired waterfront house at 1528 Argyle Avenue.
- Conduct a Commercial Market Strategy to examine commercial options in Ambleside.
- Develop a business case for a new Arts Centre on the 1600 block of Bellevue Avenue.
- Explore ideas on how to retain the Hollyburn Sailing Club at its current location while considering complementary potential uses in a new facility.
- Consider more closures of Argyle Avenue to vehicle traffic for other opportunities.
- Test a new location for the highly successful farmers' market at 14th Street between Marine Drive and Bellevue Avenue.
- Consider upgrades to the Silk Purse Gallery to create a more usable outdoor space.
- Seek proposals for new food services at concessions in Ambleside Park.
- Secure funding and move forward with building a new playground at John Lawson Park.
- Continue with Spirit Trail construction and connect two existing West Vancouver segments via a pedestrian and cycling bridge over the Capilano River.

The District will encourage members of the public to have their say about these proposals early in 2013. Please monitor westvancouver.ca in the coming weeks and months for opportunities for the public to get involved in the revitalization of Ambleside and its waterfront.

AMBLESIDE STREETScape PROJECT

A well-designed streetscape can achieve several important functions, including improved pedestrian access, enhanced liveability and economic activity, and space for public activities. The District is currently considering improvements to sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, street furniture, bike connections and other open space elements within the Ambleside Village Centre. Any streetscape enhancements would reflect the District's commitment to sustainable development and will be carried out through extensive community consultation, also early in 2013. Go to westvancouver.ca for details.

West Vancouver Fire & Rescue joins E-Comm Wide-Area Radio System

Our community, already one of the safest in Canada, got even safer in 2012 when West Vancouver Fire & Rescue joined the E-Comm Wide-Area Radio System. The department now communicates far more effectively with the City and District of North Vancouver Fire Departments, who also use E-Comm and with whom West Vancouver Fire & Rescue provides shared services on the North Shore.

In addition to improving communication with our North Shore partners, West Vancouver Fire & Rescue now enjoys seamless communications with the 10 other fire agencies in the Lower Mainland already using E-Comm, as well as the 18 regional police departments on the system, the BC Ambulance Service and the Coast Guard.

The department's old VHF radio system was nearing the end of its lifecycle and did not allow West Vancouver fire crews to communicate directly with other emergency services. Other safety issues included inaudible transmissions and a growing number of dead reception zones both in and outside of West Vancouver. The E-Comm radio network provides better coverage, greater clarity and improved reliability through an earthquake-resistant infrastructure. E-Comm radio has been tested throughout West Vancouver, including the dead zones with the old system, with good coverage in all areas.

The new equipment includes 46 portable radios, 10 mobile units and four base stations. All West Vancouver Fire & Rescue staff have been fully trained on the new system and have already experienced the benefits of the technology during a number of major fires that involved multiple agencies. This initiative is a further demonstration of the high priority the District places on protecting life and property in West Vancouver.



Invasive plant species are a threat - Working Group coming soon!

Invasive plants are a major threat to global biodiversity and West Vancouver is not immune. Invasive plants have no natural predators in this part of the world, out-compete native vegetation, spread quickly if left untreated, destroy food sources and take over important habitat for native plants and animals.

There are a number of invasive plant species in the District and the two that have received the most attention are Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed. These plants spread quickly, are difficult to control and, in the case of Hogweed, can be significant risks to human health. With Knotweed, the only proven method of control is the labour-intensive direct stem injection of the herbicide glyphosate. Other invasive plants of concern in the community include broom, lamium and ivy.

Currently, there is no formal District policy addressing invasive plants; however, the District is appointing an Invasive Plant Species Working Group to guide the development of and public consultation for an Invasive Plant Species Strategy for the next five years. The Working Group will also explore the challenges and options to control invasive plant species in the District.

To find out more about invasive species in the community, including how to get involved with the Working Group, check westvancouver.ca/invasiveplants.





New artificial surfaces for Ambleside Park sports fields

The artificial turf fields at Ambleside Park are important facilities for West Vancouver sports enthusiasts of all ages. In 2011, incorporating input from the fields' user groups, the District released its Sport Field Master Plan and recommended replacing the fields' turf that had become hard and worn out after eight years of constant use.

Construction on the \$700,000 turf replacement project began in mid-July 2012 and was complete by early September. The costs were covered by rental fees that user groups paid over the years to access the fields. One of the advantages of the artificial turf fields, which are booked solid from September through June, is that they can still be used in conditions when a grass field would be shut down—for example, in the wet conditions that usually occur during the winter months.

The specifications for the artificial turf field replacements were developed in close collaboration with soccer and field hockey user groups. Players are very happy with the soccer-preferred turf on Field "D" and the multi-use turf on Field "E" that can accommodate both soccer and field hockey. The fields are designed to reduce impact on players' joints and lessen the chance for injuries.

The Ambleside artificial turf fields' state-of-the-art playing surfaces will enhance the experience for West Vancouver sport field users now and for many years to come.

Exciting new upgrades to the weight room at the Aquatic Centre

The recent upgrades to the weight room at the West Vancouver Aquatic Centre enhanced the look, feel, safety features and user experience for weight room patrons. Respondents to the 2011 Weight Room Survey asked for less congestion, more open space for training, exercising and stretching, and for cleaner washroom facilities. The District took steps to implement the survey requests to better align the weight room with the wishes of the community.

The largest portion of the \$54,000 weight room upgrade replaced the old service desk that sat in the middle of the weight room floor. The old desk did not meet the professional standards of the overall facility, detracted from customer service and took up valuable space that could have been used for workout equipment. A new desk and location created better traffic flow efficiencies, more personalized customer service experiences and opened up floor space to accommodate four workout machines and one TRX suspension training system. In total, the service desk upgrade amounted to \$26,900.

In addition, the weight room was completely repainted and the bathroom remodelled, both of which had not been upgraded since 2003. The bathrooms received \$7,850 in upgrades, including fresh paint, new splash tiles around the sinks and new countertops.

The weight room enhancements are excellent examples of the District working with the community to improve the quality of services offered to West Vancouver's diverse user groups.



Gentle densification maintains neighbourhood character

West Vancouver is a community of neighbourhoods. From Ambleside to Horseshoe Bay, the waterfront to the Upper Lands, our neighbourhoods are some of the most desirable in the Lower Mainland. As our region grows, neighbourhoods across Metro Vancouver must adapt to changing housing needs and in our case, we must also balance the desire to maintain our neighbourhood character with the diverse housing requirements of our changing population—a reality that forms a cornerstone of the District's Official Community Plan.



Throughout 2007–2008, the District conducted its Community Dialogue on Neighbourhood Character and Housing where we learned from residents that more diverse housing options are needed for older residents wishing to downsize and 'age in place', younger families and young adults trying to become established, lower income residents, people requiring accessible and adaptable housing and people requiring assistance and support to remain in the community.

Several Metro Vancouver municipalities have introduced coach houses in an effort to diversify housing options in new and existing neighbourhoods. As part of the District's current housing initiatives, we will be studying the lessons learned in these communities and will be engaging residents in an in-depth discussion on the potential role of coach houses in West Vancouver.

Check westvancouver.ca for more information and future engagement opportunities.

21st Street rehabilitation leads to enhanced streetscape from Marine Drive to Queens Avenue

21st Street has received plenty of attention over the past couple of years. Throughout 2011 and 2012, different phases of the 21st Street Rehabilitation Project led to significant enhancements between Inglewood and Queens Avenue. This included pedestrian crossings and other traffic calming measures, new sidewalks and curbs, improved parking, rain gardens and other landscaping, new water mains, rehabilitated sanitary sewers and a rehabilitated roadway.

This fall, work focused on 21st Street between Marine Drive and Fulton Avenue, which is of particular significance to patrons of the Seniors' Activity Centre—some of whom have limited mobility and require easy access to and from the Centre and their cars.

The Seniors' Activity Centre parking lot received a new surface, an improved drop-off area and drainage, street lighting and reconfigured parking stalls that increased the number of available spaces by five.

Five additional on-street parking spaces were also added to the east side of 21st Street, as were new gutters and sidewalks. Also on the east side of 21st Street, just south of the intersection with Fulton Avenue, a previously unconnected section received a new sidewalk and street lights up to Esquimalt Avenue. The end result is a well-lit continuous pedestrian walkway from the roundabout at Fulton Avenue all the way to Marine Drive.

The District is committed to improving the quality of life of its residents. The steps taken in the 21st Street Rehabilitation Project make our community safer, more accessible and inclusive for all.



Financial grants available for West Vancouver not-for-profit groups

The District of West Vancouver has funding available for not-for-profit community groups and is now accepting applications for Community Grants until January 31, 2013.

Many important services in West Vancouver are delivered by not-for-profit community organizations, including important social, recreation, youth, and arts and culture programs and activities. The District recognizes the important contribution these groups make to West Vancouver and provides financial support through the Community Grants Program.

Applications are now being accepted for 2013 grants. The District especially encourages organizations that have not done so in the past to apply for funding.

The deadline is January 31, 2013. All applications are reviewed by the Community Grants Committee, which makes recommendations to Council.

There are three categories of grants available:

1. Arts and Culture grants support the development of the cultural sector in West Vancouver by strengthening infrastructure, building capacity of arts organizations and providing support for furthering access and participation in the arts.
2. Social and Community Services grants support organizations working to address issues in the areas of environment, community development, recreation and sports, as well as organizations that work in collaboration with one another to address social issues and bring about positive change for individuals and the community at large.
3. Youth Competition and Leadership grants support and recognize West Vancouver youth participating as ambassadors of West Vancouver in regional, national and international tournaments, competitions, competitive festivals and civic leadership conferences.

Guidelines and application forms are available online at westvancouver.ca/grants.





West Vancouver Memorial Library's infrastructure sustained

West Vancouver Memorial Library is a cornerstone of culture and learning in the community. The library's impressive circulation numbers, high level of customer satisfaction and commitment to literacy make it a leader in community engagement year after year. In recent years, the library has embraced sustainable building practices, making the facility more efficient and reducing its impact on the environment.

In 2012, the 62-year-old library received some much needed updates to the building envelope and mechanical systems. The second phase of the library's Capital Project Retrofit saw the replacement of the window system in the courtyard, the completion of the north-facing exterior on the front of the building and the modernization and consolidation of the library's air and heating systems.

Nearly \$450,000 in funds was allocated for these essential projects. The new double-paned windows allow the library to operate more efficiently by decreasing the amount of energy required to heat and cool the building. Further efficiencies are obtained by eliminating redundancies within the library's old air and heating system—the new consolidated system requires substantially less energy to operate and has helped to further reduce the library's carbon footprint.

These upgrades are vital to the library's long-term sustainability and to its commitment of building today for the benefit of tomorrow.