



APPENDIX A:  
NICOMEKL (nəqəməqəl')  
RIVER DISTRICT  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN



A photograph of a wooden bridge with a metal railing, leading into a dense forest. The bridge is made of dark wood and has a metal railing with vertical slats. The path on the bridge is paved with dark bricks. The forest is lush with green trees and foliage. In the background, a small white building is visible through the trees.

***The City of Langley is located within the traditional and unceded territories of the Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui and Semiahmoo First Nations.***



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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<b>01. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
GEOGRAPHIC & HISTORICAL CONTEXT	4
POLICY CONTEXT	5
PLAN PROCESS	6
THREE FOUNDATIONAL NARRATIVES	7
<b>02. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA</b>	<b>8</b>
EXISTING CONDITIONS & PLAN RESPONSES	9
<b>03. VISION</b>	<b>12</b>
THE LIVING RIVER	12
THE FOUR ROOMS	12
<b>04. NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES &amp; BIG MOVES</b>	<b>14</b>
NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES	14
THREE BIG MOVES ACROSS THE PLAN	15
<b>05. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICIES</b>	<b>16</b>
A WALKABLE & ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD	17
A COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOOD	20
AN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD	22
A HERITAGE CONSCIOUS NEIGHBOURHOOD	24
A PLAYFUL AND SAFE NEIGHBOURHOOD	26
<b>06. LAND USE POLICIES: FOUR ROOMS</b>	<b>28</b>
GENERAL POLICIES	29
GARDEN WILD ROOM	30
SUN ROOM	32
LIVING ROOM	33
FRONT PORCH	35
<b>07. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>08. PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES</b>	<b>38</b>

# 01. INTRODUCTION

## GEOGRAPHIC & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

### WHERE IS THE NICOMEKL RIVER DISTRICT NEIGHBOURHOOD?

The Nicomekl River spans 34 km through the lower mainland, passing through 3 jurisdictions (the Township of Langley, Langley City, and the City of Surrey) before emptying into Boundary Bay.

The river flows through the centre of Langley City – truly constituting its green heart. It moves from the east of Langley City, surfacing from a culvert under the intersection of Fraser Highway and 208 Street into a string of beautiful and green parkland traveling westward through to the City of Surrey.

The Nicomekl River's history is as rich as the lands through which it flows. In fact, the word *nəqəməqəl* (or the anglicized "Nicomekl") comes from the *hənqəminəm* language meaning "always flooding", signaling the powerful and dynamic nature of this small but mighty watercourse. The four main Indigenous groups who occupied the land now known as Langley City are the Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui, and Semiahmoo peoples.

As an important natural asset with significant ecological habitat for salmon and other fish species and a convenient transportation route from the coast inland to the Fraser River, the Nicomekl River was central to Indigenous life, and later to European settlers. With its flooding banks, the soils around the Nicomekl River were quickly identified as productive arable lands on which agricultural crops could thrive.

As Langley City grew from a rural trading outpost into a municipality in its own right, and development began expanding on both banks of the river, the uses and character of its floodplain changed as well. Within an urban context, the Nicomekl River in Langley City now serves as the green and blue "lungs" of the community. It's a place to escape the fast-paced and buzzing activity of the city, to find peace and quiet, and to enjoy nature.

Homes now line the edge of the floodplain, in the form of apartment blocks, townhouses, and single detached dwellings. Trails weave through the park space, providing access to the natural setting and encouraging residents to walk or bike through the neighbourhood.

As Langley City continues to accommodate future residents and strives to build more complete communities, the Nicomekl River finds itself in a unique setting: on the edge of a high growth downtown urban environment to the north, and a low density single detached residential neighbourhood to the south. The next evolution of this strategic area and the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide a seam and unite the north and south sides of the City, shape new growth in a way that provides a broader range of 'missing middle' housing options, and create an attractive neighbourhood that is anchored by the increasingly rich ecological features of the Nicomekl River floodplain.



## POLICY CONTEXT

### WHAT IS A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a planning document created to guide land use change, development, and public space improvements within a specific area in Langley City.

### WHAT IS THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN?

The City of Langley's OCP is a more general land use and policy document that outlines long-term goals for the City as a whole. It directs the development of, and is achieved through the implementation of Neighbourhood Plans, the Zoning Bylaw, and other master plans and strategic documents.

The Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan has been attached to the City of Langley's Official Community Plan (OCP) as an Appendix. Its contents are aligned with, and build on, the OCP's. The Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan outlines policies and development permit area guidelines specific to this Neighbourhood.





## PLAN PROCESS

### COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT



#### **PHASE 1 | Explore Options** (Mar – Aug 2019)

- Project Launch
- Background Research
- Design Charrette
- Open House

#### **PHASE 2 | Develop Policy Direction** (Sep 2019-Mar 2020)

- Preferred Concept
- Draft Vision & Principles
- Future Conditions
- Open House
- Working Sessions

#### **PHASE 3 | Finalize the Plan** (Mar 2020-Feb 2021)

- Draft Neighbourhood Plan
- Open House
- Council Consideration



## THREE FOUNDATIONAL NARRATIVES

Three foundational narratives for the plan have been prepared, emerging from the design charrette and the complexity and sensitivity inherent in the weaving of urban and natural conditions that are both so important within the neighbourhood:

### WE BELONG TO THIS PLACE

Planning and design for the Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan recognizes and celebrates the people and their place within the river corridor: from Indigenous traditional uses to the portage route of early settlers; from agricultural cultivation of the floodplain to a multi-purpose recreational destination within a rapidly growing and interconnected region. **We have shaped and have been shaped by the River.**

### NET GAINS TO THE TRIPLE BOTTOM LINE

**Environmental health** | by enhancing habitat quality through the containment and management of invasive species, restoration of native riparian vegetation, and the creation of new off-channel habitat. *All* improvements in the neighbourhood plan area should reflect a sensitivity to and interpretation of the “living river”.

**Social cohesion** | by creating places to gather together and unite the City’s northern and southern neighbourhoods.

**Economic development** | by establishing the Nicomekl River District as a unique and beloved regional destination.

### SAFETY FIRST

Two major concerns were raised by the community in relation to safety, the first environmental, the second social:

**Flooding** | As noted previously, “Nicomekl” is həŋqəmiŋəŋ for “always flooding” – and to this day it continues to do so seasonally. The Neighbourhood Plan’s policies acknowledge and accept this while reducing risk of flood damage to people, property, and future development. Even with existing flood control measures, the Nicomekl River floods regularly due to rain events. The large floodplain surrounding the watercourse is generally able to support 1:10 year flood events. However, east of 203 Street, a 1:200 year flood event extends well into existing developed urban areas. Controlling the Nicomekl River’s floods is a complex, regional challenge that cannot be addressed solely within Langley City. At a regional scale, the creation of new retention ponds, wetlands, and river channels may also have an impact.

**Personal Safety** | Parts of the Nicomekl River floodplain have been noted by residents as feeling unsafe. Trails may be overgrown with vegetation and dimly lit or completely dark once the sun sets. Some individuals without a home often find shelter near the Nicomekl River where it is quiet and covered but living in an active floodplain presents significant safety risks. While these challenges may be partly addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan, through policies that emphasize better design, maintenance, and lighting, the challenge of homelessness is systemic and requires significant contributions from senior levels of government. Ultimately, this Neighbourhood Plan aspires to create places that feel safe and accommodate a diversity of residents both in the neighbourhoods surrounding the floodplain and for passive recreational uses within the river corridor.

## 02. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA



The Nicomekl Neighbourhood is located within a 10 minute walk of Downtown Langley. It is bordered by detached homes, townhomes and apartment buildings to the north, and by single detached homes and townhomes to the south – transitioning a higher density urban edge to the north to a lower density southern urban edge.

The Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan area extends from 196 Street in the west to 208 Street in the east. The northern and southern edges vary but include destinations such as Linwood and Douglas Parks in the north and Sendall Botanical Gardens, H.D. Stafford School, and Langley City Park in the south.



## EXISTING CONDITIONS & PLAN RESPONSES

### LANDSCAPE & TERRAIN

The City of Langley's Nicomekl floodplain grade changes within the park by 5m in elevation resulting in varied elevations with the edge of urban development (e.g. 200 and 203 Street crossings). This also means the floodplain is susceptible to flooding in the winter months.

The Plan embraces opportunities offered by the floodplain: reinforcing existing natural and man-made thresholds (e.g. bridges and 'landscape rooms') and enhancing elevational relationships and experiences (e.g. exploring potential for an elevated all-season path, viewing platforms that offer outlook and enhancing the experiences of crossing, viewing and 'touching the river').

### PARK PROGRAM

At the core of the neighbourhood is Nicomekl Floodplain Park, the jewel of the City of Langley. Today it offers a range of passive recreation opportunities, including walking, jogging and cycling along its trail network.

The Plan widens the Park's accessibility, recreational offering, and offers interpretation and educational programming, while calling for a more detailed Parks Master Plan to integrate and translate the plan's policies into a comprehensive design.





## URBAN EDGE

The Nicomekl Park ranges from 150m-500m in north-south width (see Environmental Conditions). To date, both sides of the river have been developed in a way that largely ignores the presence and value of the river. On the northern banks of the river lies a dynamic mix of townhomes and low-rise apartments with a few clusters of single detached homes, all within walking distance of Downtown Langley.

The southern banks consist mostly of single detached homes and some townhouse complexes within an aging neighbourhood that hasn't experienced the same redevelopment activity as the northern banks. The lack of north-south connections within the City of Langley along with the sheer width of the Nicomekl's river corridor divides the community, not just from a transportation perspective but also through the lens of other infrastructure services like water and sewer.

The Plan unites north and south banks by increasing and bolstering connections, creating a finer-grained density transition across to the south side of the River and fronting development on the park in a manner that respects and enhances the existing floodplain.

## STORMWATER INFRASTRUCTURE

The City's drainage system includes a network of pipes and overland systems that discharge to the Nicomekl River and its tributaries in several locations. Recognizing the impact of urban stormwater in natural systems, protecting and improving environmental aquatic ecosystem conditions is a City-wide, and regional effort. The City of Langley does commit to specific actions, however, in its Integrated Stormwater Management Plan.

Flooding in lowland areas of the Nicomekl basin is an on-going challenge. Concerns were also identified for watershed health, and adjacent communities downstream of this ISMP.

The Plan supports flood control measures such as guidelines on flood-adapted landscape design and furnishings.





## ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Prior to European settlement, the Fraser Lowland areas were a highly diverse and productive ecosystem dominated by lowland plant communities of mostly shrubs and grasses with meandering watercourses, wetlands and bogs.

The dynamics of these ecosystems changed over time as flood control measures were implemented for farming and urban settlement. Currently, the Nicomekl River runs through a wide floodplain area that provides high value habitat for wildlife. Urban development extends down to the edge of the floodplain and the tributaries that feed into the Nicomekl are generally constrained, most originating from redirected stormwater.

As such, even with flood control measures the Nicomekl still floods regularly. The existing natural areas are generally able to support expected 1 in 10-year flood events. However, the modelled 200-year flood event extends well into the existing developed areas, with the greatest impacts east of 203 St.

There is a high diversity of habitat that exists in the area between 196 and 203 Street – where the floodplain is at its widest. This includes wetlands and still water ponds, patches of forest, shrub and grassland communities. Despite most of the grasses remaining from historic farming practices and large patches of invasive Himalayan Blackberry, the floodplain provides important habitat and protection for the river's integrity. However, there is generally very little canopy cover or shading over the river through this area. East of 203 Street, the riparian community has greater diversity with a greater canopy cover of trees and tall shrubs. Much of the river experiences shading from the south from this vegetation which also provides important leaf and litter input. Nonetheless, there are some large areas dominated by the invasive Himalayan Blackberry.

The Plan seeks to restore and enhance the watercourse and large portions of the Park (e.g. The Garden Wild) closer to its native highly diverse habitat. This will include increasing much-needed canopy cover and shading over the river, establishing trees and tall shrubs along the edges of the river to shade it and provide leaf and litter input, as well as introduction of terrestrial wildlife habitat features such as standing wildlife trees, raptor perches and large woody debris. Invasive species, such as Himalayan Blackberry will be managed and limited in their extent.

Built elements will be integrated that respectfully introduce visitors to witness and learn about the value of these habitats, such as boardwalks and interpretive signage. Where possible, new development will be built to support flood management, increase building setbacks and/or increase building elevations, to limit flood hazards.

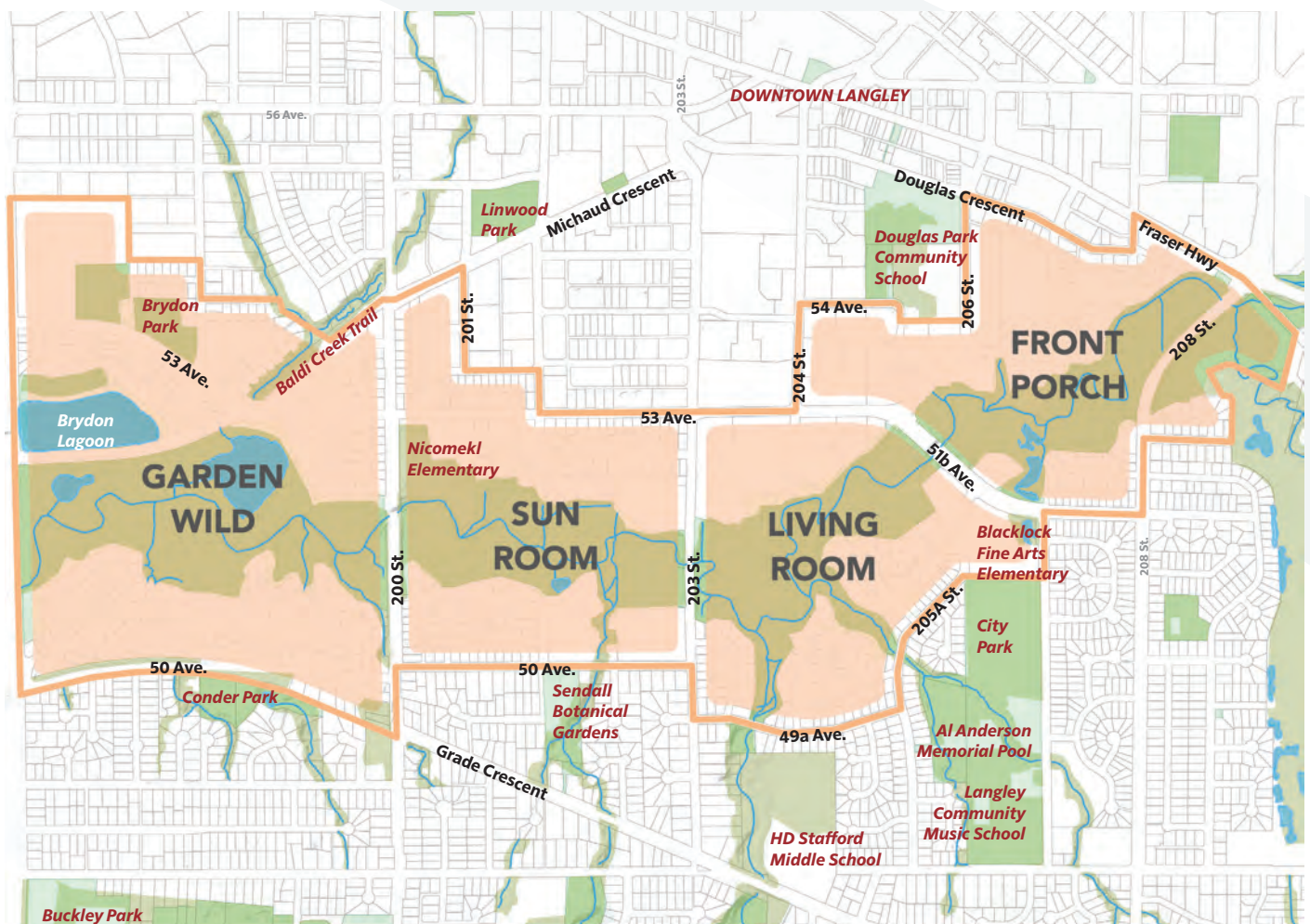
# 03. VISION

## THE LIVING RIVER

*The Nicomekl River District is a complete neighbourhood rich with attractive and diverse experiences and features. Its focal point and the thread that sews the neighbourhood together is the dynamic Nicomekl River. It is visible, accessible, and captivating. Langley residents treasure its increasing ecological, educational, and social value. Visitors journey far and wide to discover the neighbourhood, revel in its natural beauty, and take part in the charming public life that distinguishes this vibrant destination.*

## THE FOUR ROOMS

The Living River is characterized by four rooms that together create a home for all Langley City residents.







## THE FRONT PORCH

The Front Porch is defined by direct entry into the river corridor. It presents a “friendly face” to the outside world, and is a place that draws visitors in. Within the River District, the Front Porch provides a beautiful and welcoming vista into the larger sequence of spaces. The Front Porch includes an intersection redesign (Fraser Highway and 208 Street) to improve pedestrian connectivity and provides access from the Downtown core to the river corridor from Douglas Park.



## THE LIVING ROOM

The Living Room is all about social gathering and discovery. It is where our heritage is put front and centre. It is a place of activity and storytelling that reveals the history of the watercourse and its surrounding landscapes. Here, we gain an appreciation of the Nicomekl and its rich contributions to human life in the Fraser Valley. The Living Room is a destination enlivened by Portage Park, Michaud House, connections to City Park and a new mixed use village development.



## THE SUN ROOM

The Sun Room is a place of quiet reprieve. It’s an inviting place, yet peaceful with public spaces designed to prioritize passive use of the serene outdoors. Here, people share stories, play cards, and relax in a comforting atmosphere. The Sun Room is a transition space, it connects major destinations like Linwood Park to Sendall Gardens, and the Living Room to the Garden Wild.



## THE GARDEN WILD

The Garden Wild is about discovery of natural systems and how they impact us and interact with urban conditions with the intent of preserving this rich ecological area. Here we learn about wildlife, ecosystems, flooding, climate change, and many other important natural functions of the floodplain. The Garden Wild includes a new small scale mixed “village nook” at 50th Avenue and 200th Street.

# 04. NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES & BIG MOVES

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PRINCIPLES



### **WALKABLE & ACCESSIBLE**

People-oriented street designs and inviting pathway connections will make walking a delightful activity and allow people of all abilities to move around safely and comfortably.



### **MIX OF USES**

A mix of uses, including small-scale shops and cafes within the neighbourhood will help create a complete community. A place where individuals and families can get to their daily needs all within a short walking-distance from home.



### **ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE**

Careful stewardship of the Nicomekl River and its floodplain will ensure it stays healthy and full of biodiverse life for generations to come.



### **HERITAGE CONSCIOUS**

Recollecting the past and animating the landscape with the stories and imagery of those who inhabited the area prior to us will help us understand the present and provide context for the future.



### **PLAYFUL & SAFE**

Planning and designing for fun and whimsy across all ages will help bring people together and foster a sense of security and ownership in the community.



## THREE BIG MOVES ACROSS THE PLAN

### ALL SEASON PATH

As a major improvement to the vitality and visibility of the Nicomekl River corridor, an all season path is proposed along most of the northern edge of the floodplain. This path should be constructed above regular flood levels where possible. Elsewhere, if needed the path may weave back into the developed urban area or be constructed as a floatable dock that lowers and rises with water levels.

The path should meet safety and accessibility standards for those requiring mobility aids, be cycle-friendly, and it should have a consistent design palette across the neighbourhood. The path would eventually connect Langley's Downtown at Michaud Crescent and 206 Street to create a beautiful and engaging, walkable "loop" that links Langley's most cherished destinations.

### TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS

There are numerous trailheads across the neighbourhood, each with a unique context requiring a specialized design to create inviting entrances into the natural spaces.

Including elements like wayfinding maps, interpretative signage, benches, lighting, and public art at entrances would help people orient themselves within the system of paths, trails, and amenities. Features such as patios and food trucks will also provide opportunities for gatherings, festival activities and small scale food service. Pruning overgrown foliage would provide more direct sightlines into the floodplain and help with safety and comfort. Finally, adding a small amount of parking stalls, specifically for those with mobility challenges would help make the trail system more inclusive.

### LOOKOUT PLATFORMS

In strategic locations, viewing platforms or 'lookouts' within the Nicomekl River floodplain will provide beautiful vistas of the river landscape, and allow for a sequence of exciting destinations, drawing people along the all season path and trails from one platform to the next. The first lookout is planned for the Garden Wild Room, while platforms for the other three rooms will be considered afterwards on a case by case basis.

These lookouts will have a similar aesthetic helping tie them all together, but each will respond to the unique qualities and characteristics of the room in which it is located. They will also include interpretive signs that speak to the wildlife, ecology, restoration projects, and heritage of the Nicomekl River.



# 05. NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICIES

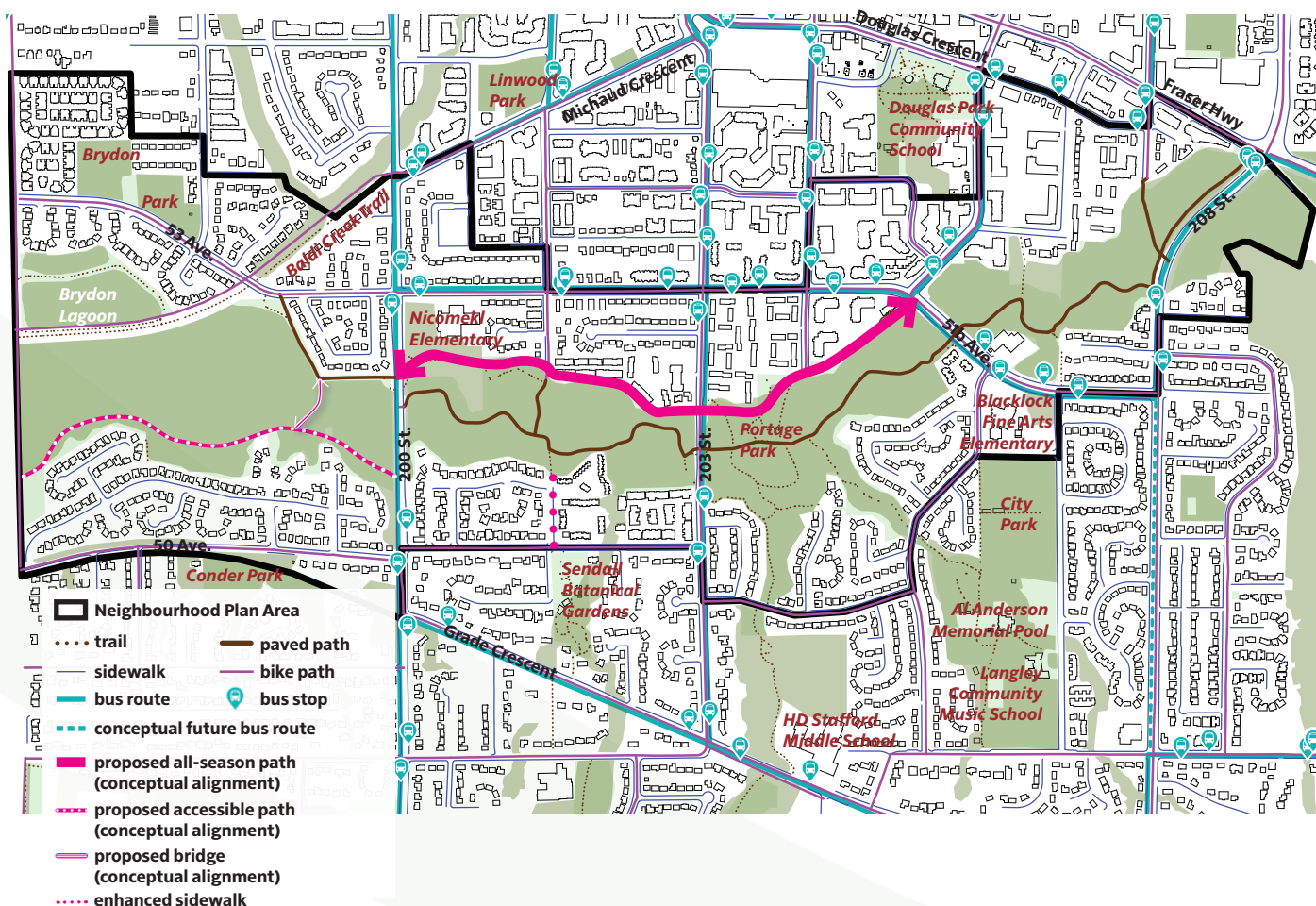
The following pages present neighbourhood policies, organized by the neighbourhood design principles, that aspire to guide future development and park planning towards achieving the Nicomekl River District's vision.







# A WALKABLE & ACCESSIBLE NEIGHBOURHOOD



## 1.1. ALL SEASONS PATH

Conduct a study to determine the all-seasons path's alignment, tying into a "Langley City Loop", with specific attention to:

- the alignment following elevations above regular flood levels,
- where this is not possible, consideration for places where the path may weave back into the developed urban area and explore flood-adaptive construction techniques, such as a floating dock that lowers and rises with water levels, and
- different options related to private development, public rights-of-way, and public park.

Design the all-seasons path to follow safety and accessibility standards for those requiring mobility aids. The path should be cycle-friendly and include lighting in key locations. It should have a consistent design and wayfinding palette as part of the "Langley City Loop". Initial phases of the all-seasons path may include segments being constructed between major street corridors, such as 200 Street, 203 Street and 53 Avenue.

## 1.2. NEW PATH

In accordance with the results of further work that will include environmental assessment, engineering review, public engagement, and external agency consultation to determine specific alignment and detailed design, develop a new path along the southern edge of the floodplain within the Garden Wild Room between 200 Street and Hi Knoll Park in Surrey. Keep it slightly elevated from the grasses, wetlands, and other ecological features to minimize its impact on wildlife habitat and align and design the new path to respect the privacy of the adjacent residential area.

## 1.3. SAFE INTERSECTIONS

Reduce the number of conflict points along trails and paths between pedestrians and vehicles and shorten crossing distances at crosswalks and major intersections to make walking throughout the neighbourhood safer and more accessible.

Upgrade the Fraser Highway at 208 Street intersection as a safe and inviting gateway into the neighbourhood and an essential regional trail connection from the Derek Doubleday Arboretum and beyond.

## 1.4. PERMEABLE BLOCKS

Create new pedestrian pathways through existing residential blocks as they redevelop to provide access to major streets, transit, the floodplain, and neighbourhood destinations.

## 1.5. ACCESSIBLE PATHS

All major paths in the Nicomekl floodplain should be made universally accessible. Where accessible pathways are not possible, this should be clearly indicated on wayfinding signage.

## 1.6. PATH HIERARCHY

Create a clear hierarchy within the trail network by user, including shared vs. dedicated space for pedestrians, cyclists, etc. Clearly indicate this on wayfinding signage.

## 1.7. PEDESTRIAN LOOPS

Identify 5km, 10km, 25km, and 60km pedestrian loops and trails that connect the park to neighbourhood, city, and regional destinations, and transit stops. Install regular wayfinding markers for users to track their progress.

## 1.8. NORTH-SOUTH CONNECTIONS

Establish two new north-south connections:

- A pedestrian and cycling bridge crossing in the Garden Wild room that connects the Rotary Floodplain Trail to a new path (see policy #1.2 of this section) on the southern edge of the floodplain between 200 Street and Hi Knoll Park in Surrey.
- An enhanced sidewalk connecting Sendall Gardens to the trail system in the Sun Room portion of the floodplain.





## 1.9. PROVIDE SEATING

Accommodate seating and resting areas at approximately 200m intervals along accessible paths in the park.

## 1.10. IMPROVE TRAILHEADS

Improve trailheads at all road endings and major road crossings at:

- Road endings: 196 St, 201a St 204 St, 53a Ave, 207 St, and 208 St.
- Major Road Crossings: 200 St, 203 St, 51b Ave, and 208 St.

Improve trailheads by:

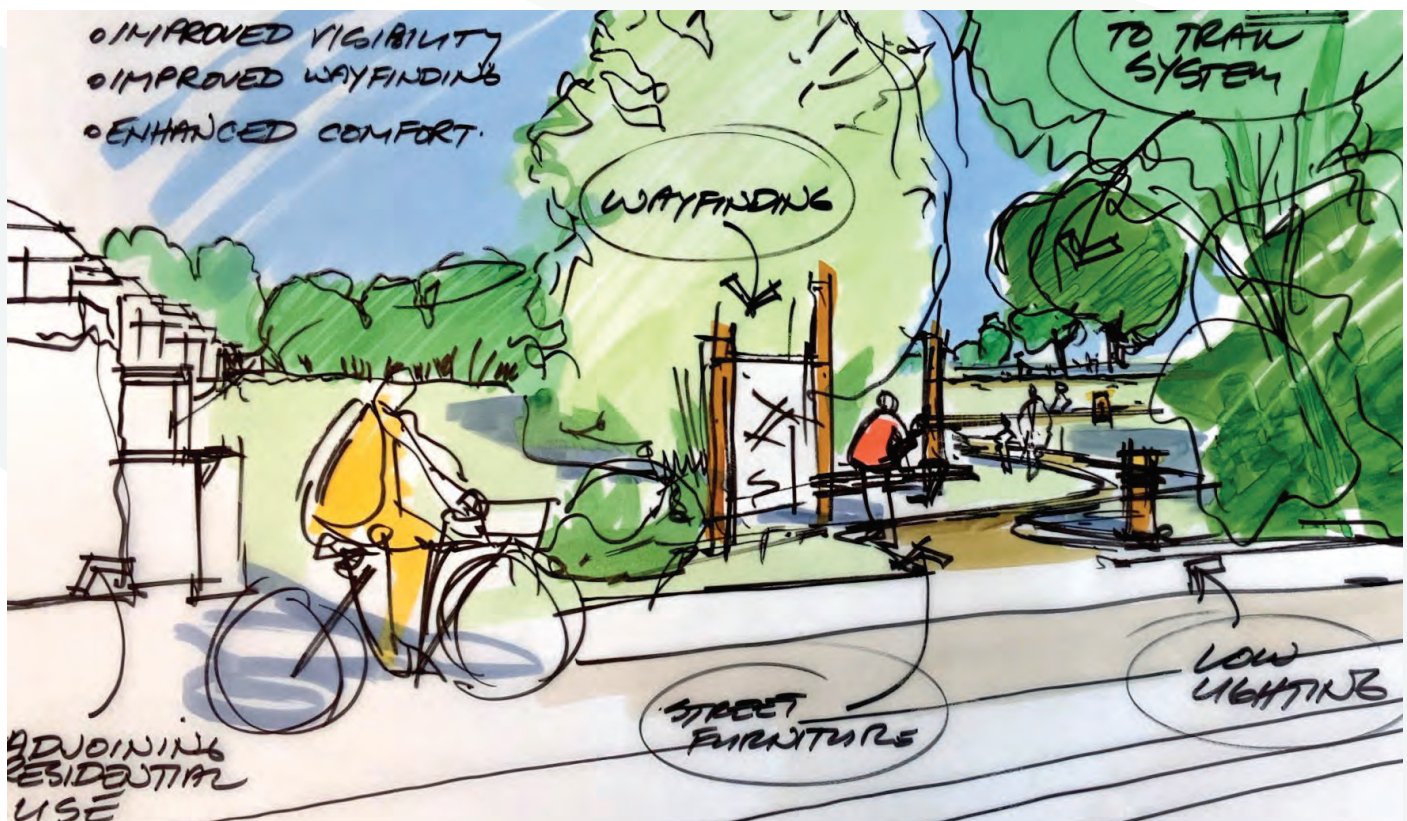
- Improving visibility into the park at trailheads through redesign and maintenance, such as pruning overgrown foliage;
- Distinguishing them as entrances into the park through inclusion of elements such as wayfinding maps, interpretative signage, gazebos, benches, lighting, bicycle parking and public art, and
- Locating minimal public parking (1-3 stalls) reserved for people with mobility challenges at trailheads where possible to improve accessibility.

## 1.11. WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Design and install wayfinding signage that provides clear direction and distances to neighbourhood and City destinations. Locate wayfinding signage at all trailheads, destinations, and Park pathway intersections.

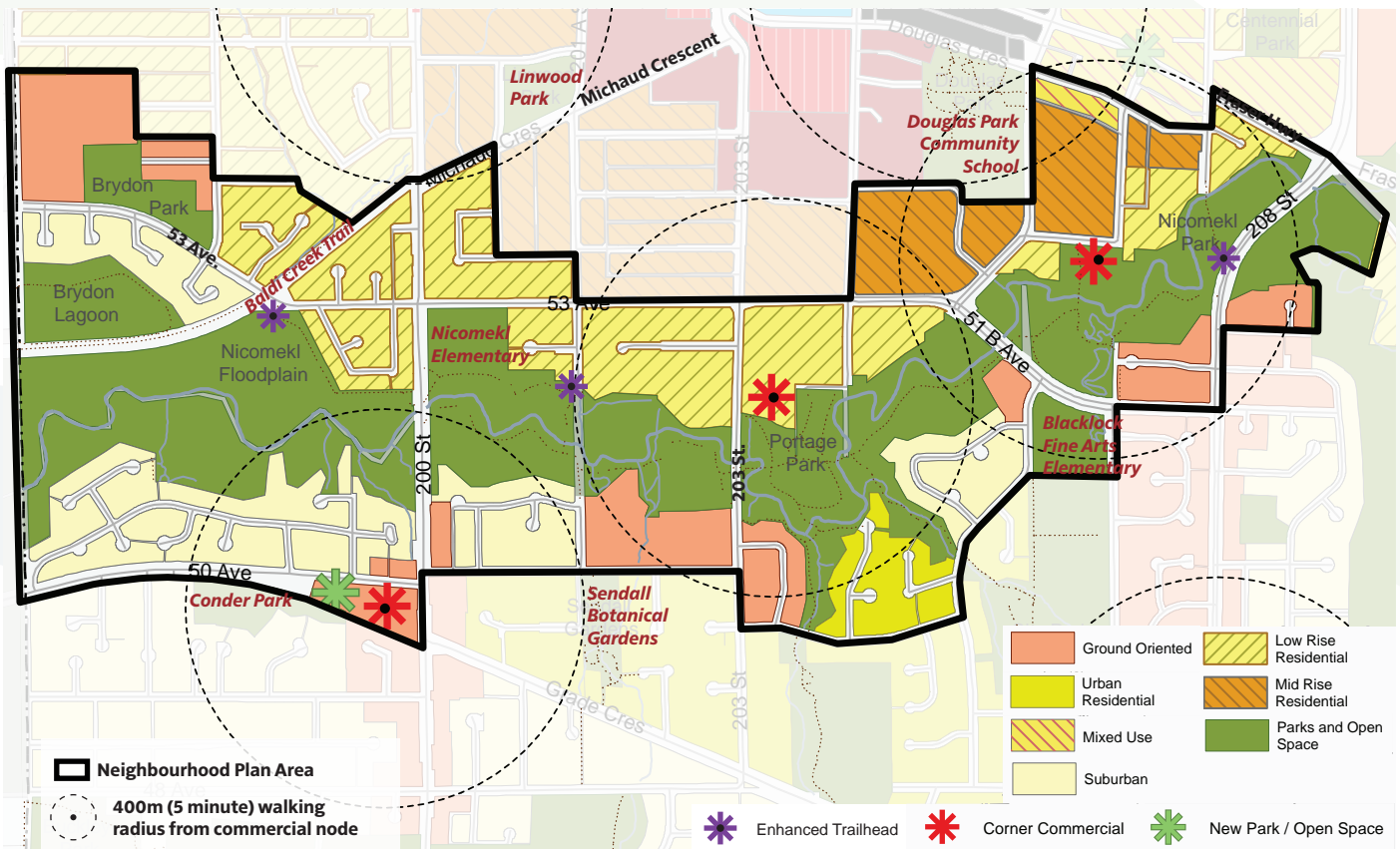
## 1.12. MAINTENANCE & EMERGENCY VEHICLE ACCESS

In strategic locations throughout the floodplain, improve existing and create new trail connections that provide easy access to the floodplain by maintenance and emergency (ie. Fire Rescue) vehicles.





## A COMPLETE NEIGHBOURHOOD



### 2.1. DIVERSE MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING TYPES

A diverse range of missing middle housing types will be considered for the neighbourhood plan area in alignment with the OCP's land use plan which includes:

- Rental and condo apartment units
- Townhomes and rowhomes
- Plex housing (duplex, triplex, fourplex)
- Single detached housing with secondary suites (basement suite and/or garden suite)

### 2.2. NEIGHBOURHOOD VILLAGE NODES

Establish small neighbourhood commercial nodes:

- A mixed use village at 203 St and Portage Park
- A mixed use corner development at 200 St & 50 Ave
- A commercial food and beverage use at 53A Ave & 207 St

### 2.3. ENHANCED TRAILHEADS

Establish enhanced trailheads on city-owned lands that may act as unique and flexible public gathering spaces with infrastructure for food trucks, picnic tables, small vendors, performances, and/or small events. These may be located at 53 Ave and the Baldi Creek Trail; 201a Ave; and, 208 St (as shown on the map above).



## 2.4. DIVERSITY OF OPEN SPACES & PROGRAMS

Establish new public and semi-public spaces complementing the City's diversity of active and passive programming through the Park Masterplan process and Development Permitting process.

## 2.5. DENSITY BONUSING & AMENITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Utilize a density bonusing and community amenity contribution policy for rezoning applications to help fund for Nicomekl Floodplain enhancement projects, such as:

- All season path
- Lookout platforms
- North-south pedestrian bridge in the Garden Wild room
- Other major trail enhancements

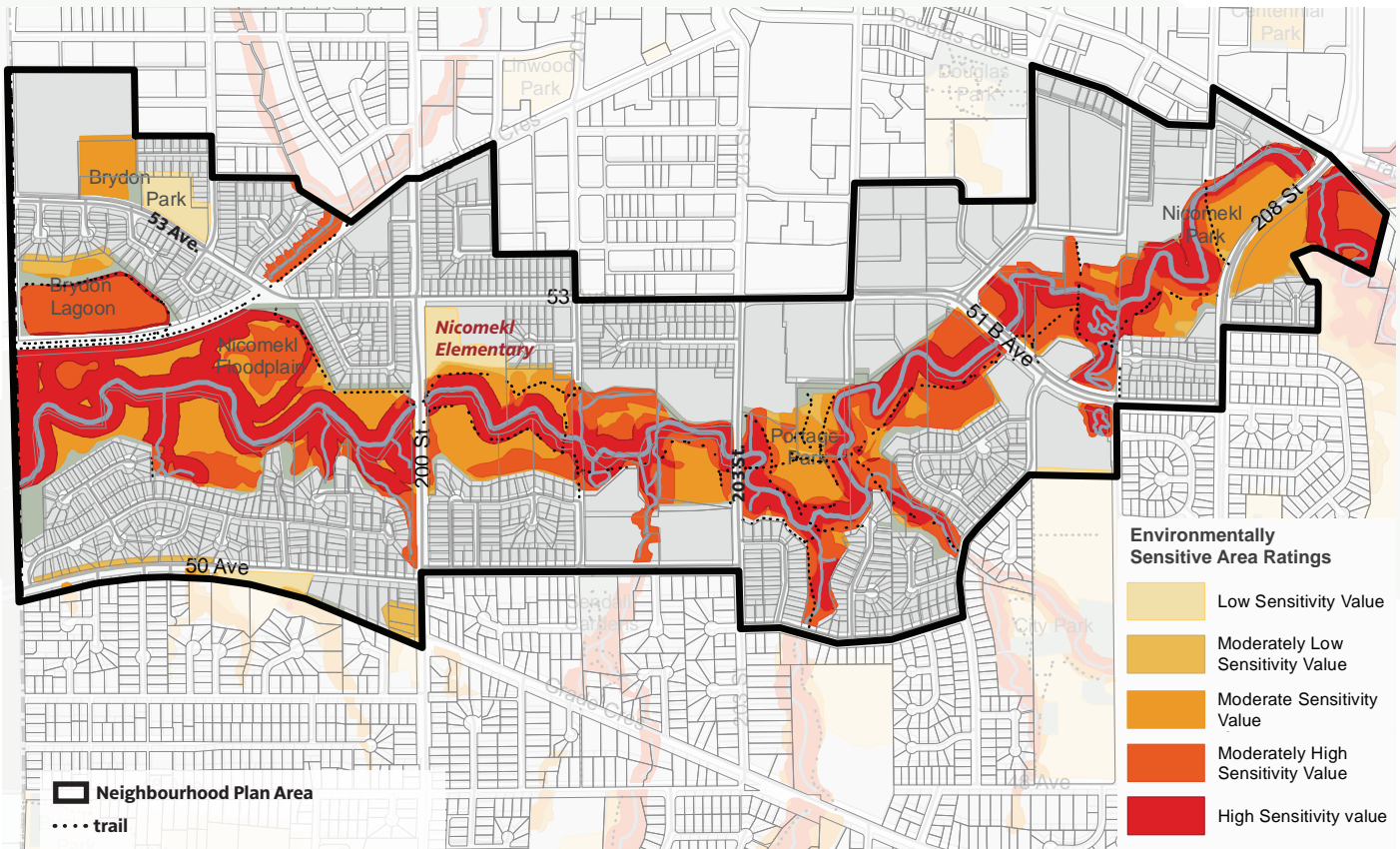
## 2.6. HOME OFFICE AND ARTISAN STUDIOS

Explore opportunity for small-scale home-based businesses and artisan studios south of the Nicomekl through expansion of allowable uses.





## AN ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE NEIGHBOURHOOD



### 3.1. NICOMEKL PARK IMPROVEMENTS

As a part of updating the City's Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, identify and implement the key Nicomekl floodplain improvements, such as:

- All season path alignment and design,
- Restoration strategy outlining priority locations for habitat restoration; and
- Comprehensive wayfinding and interpretation strategy that integrates art and sculpture.

### 3.2. SOFT ENGINEERING STRATEGIES

Design within understood natural systems rather than trying to control through hard engineering approaches. Examples include:

- utilizing permeable paving and surfaces;
- daylighting water courses;
- implementing natural flood control and mitigation measures; and
- limiting 'hard edges' along floodplain boundaries.

### 3.3. ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

Plant trees, shrubs, and other tall plants in strategic locations to shade the Nicomekl watercourse and protect fish habitat from direct sunlight and heat. Prioritize restoration west of 203 Street, where the primary vegetation are remnants of old agricultural practices.



### **3.4. CONTAIN AND MANAGE INVASIVE SPECIES**

Contain and manage the spread of invasive species in the floodplain, including Himalayan Blackberry bushes.

### **3.5. OFF CHANNEL HABITAT**

Support and create new pockets of off channel habitat, where space permits and won't negatively impact nearby properties or trail networks.

### **3.6. INTEGRATED APPROACH TO RESTORATION**

Where possible, combine river enhancements & recreational programming with new development and neighbourhood interventions.

### **3.7. NATURAL SCIENCE & WILDLIFE INTERPRETATION**

Identify places where the sensitive integration of wildlife viewing and interpretation can be established, with elements such as wildlife blinds – especially within the Garden Wild room. Include information regarding flood process, geomorphology, riparian habitat and river ecology, restoration efforts, wildlife and vegetation.

### **3.8. BUILDING MATERIALS**

Use building and landscape materials that are compatible with riparian areas.

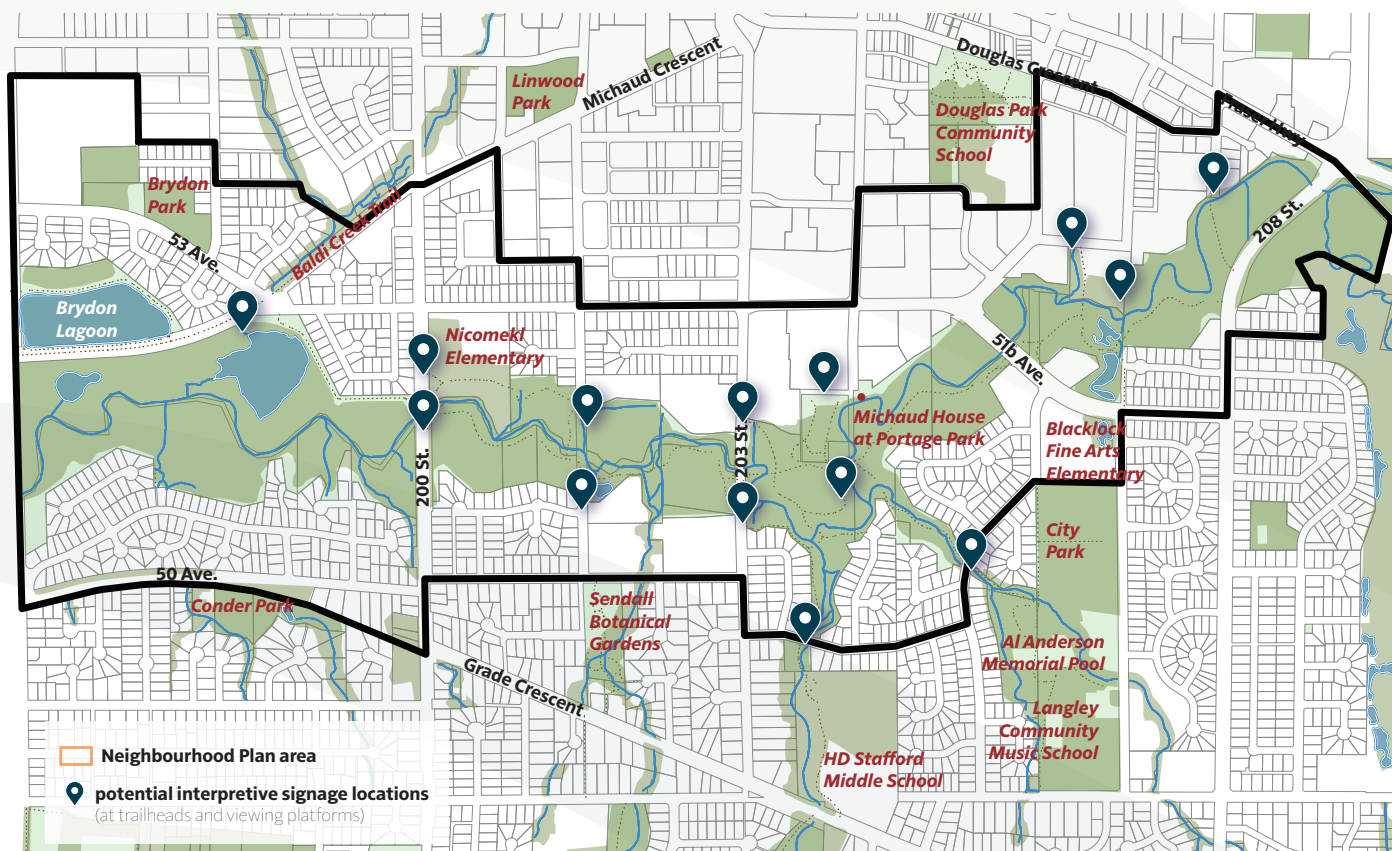
### **3.9. PARTNERSHIPS AND STRATEGIES**

Implement watershed-scale planning in partnership with Surrey, the Township of Langley and the Kwantlen First Nation to advance cross-jurisdictional environmental strategies.





## A HERITAGE CONSCIOUS NEIGHBOURHOOD



### 4.1. MICHAUD HOUSE

Work with the Langley Heritage Society and the Langley Arts Council to establish Michaud House as the first of a set of cultural pavilions oriented around Portage Park. Integrate the mixed use village development at 203 Street and Portage Park into a cohesive design that celebrates and emphasizes Michaud House's presence with increased sightlines, pedestrian connections, and landscaping. Animate the grounds with events that celebrate local culture, heritage, and the arts.

### 4.2. CULTURAL PAVILIONS

Establish several other cultural pavilions within the Living Room that help tell the story of the Nicomekl River and Langley City's history, each from a unique cultural perspective. These will resemble small interpretation kiosks that are sheltered from weather events. The Michaud house captures the French-Canadian experience, others could detail the history of Indigenous Peoples, European settlers, and recent immigrant communities.



### 4.3. PARTNERSHIPS

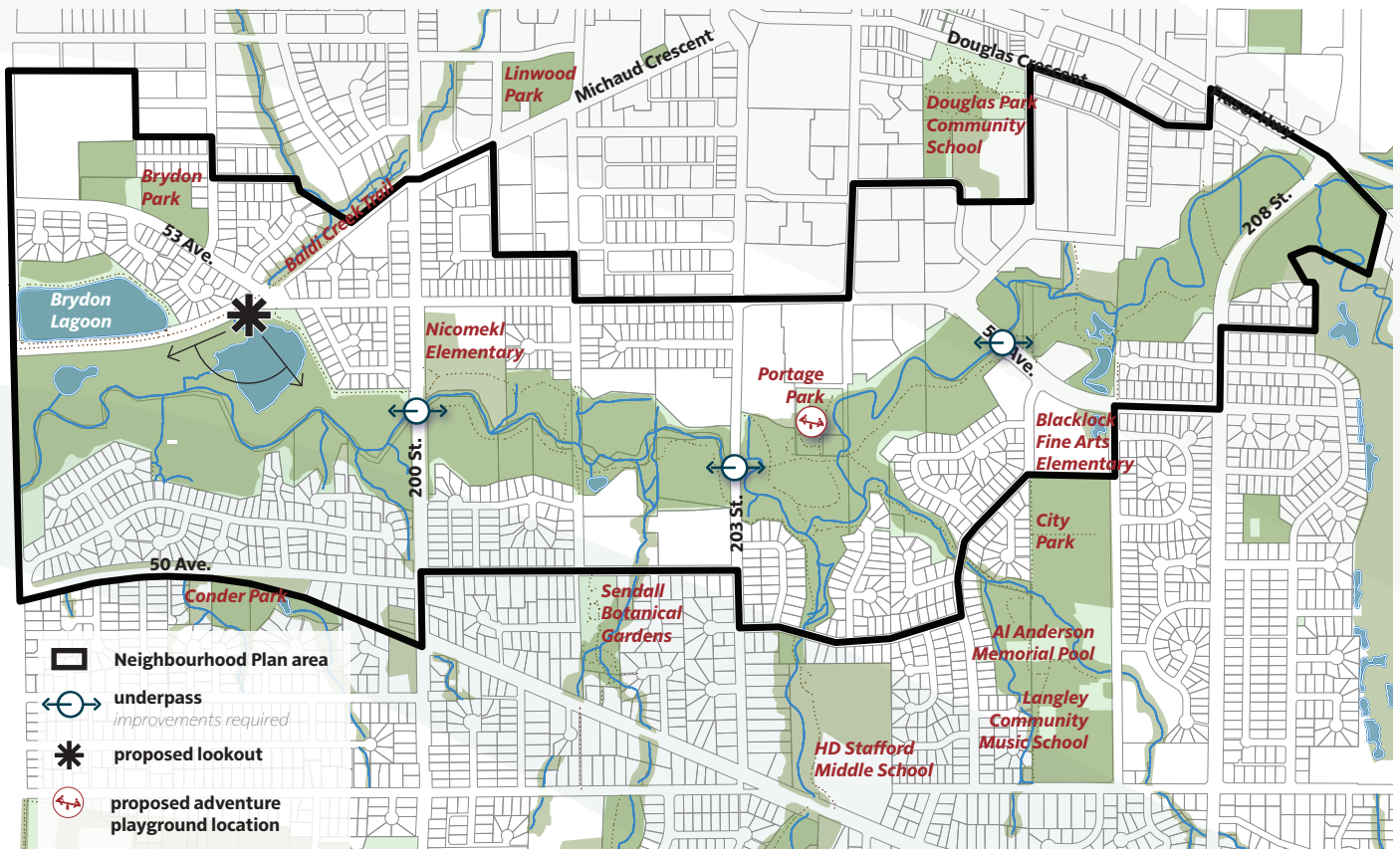
Partner with Kwantlen First Nation, Kwantlen Polytechnic University, the Langley Heritage Society, the Langley Arts Council, environmental groups, and others to recognize the natural and historical significance of the Nicomekl River, through an interpretive strategy that includes interpretive signage and art, public open space features, a storytelling program and elaboration of historical uses of the Nicomekl River and its surroundings.



source: [langleyheritage.ca/michaud-house/](http://langleyheritage.ca/michaud-house/)



## A PLAYFUL AND SAFE NEIGHBOURHOOD



### 5.1. CREATE LOOKOUTS

Investigate the placement of viewing platforms or 'lookouts' in the Nicomekl Floodplain, starting with a viewing platform in the Garden Wild room. Viewing platforms should provide higher prospects and views of the floodplain and wildlife areas, and be designed to minimize privacy impacts to nearby residential areas. Each platform should respond to the unique vision and character of the room in which it finds itself and will be designed with minimal impacts to the floodplain. Common design traits such as wood materials should link them together. Explore the potential of a community-advised architectural competition to spur creative design solutions, and gain community involvement and excitement around the development of the platforms. The platforms can also play an important role in a future interpretive strategy.





## **5.2. PLAYGROUNDS**

Encourage playgrounds as outdoor amenity spaces for new multi-family development to keep the neighbourhood family friendly. Incorporate an adventure playground near Portage Park that includes interactive and natural materials with structures that facilitate play and adventure with physically challenging elements. Establish a network of playgrounds within 15min walks of each other throughout the neighbourhood.

## **5.3. USE TECHNOLOGY TO ENHANCE USER EXPERIENCES**

Use emerging technologies to create a link between interpretive features and online digital passports and maps that visitors can use to visit more interpretive features and destinations in the Nicomekl Floodplain and learn more about the topics they value. This activity could become an immersive learning experience for students across Langley City and the region.

## **5.4. PUBLIC ART**

Incorporate public art at trailheads and in key locations throughout the floodplain where installations will not interfere with habitat or be negatively impacted by flooding. Consider interactive art that prompts a sense of curiosity and can be played with. Provide opportunities for a diverse collection of artwork, such as First Nations artwork, that tells the history and people's relationship with the River.

## **5.5. SIGHTLINES & OVERLOOK**

Design new trailheads, trails, and adjacent development to enhance sightlines and overlook of public spaces as a measure of safety and shared ownership.

## **5.6. MAINTENANCE**

Manage landscape and vegetation growth to promote visibility and safety within park spaces.

## **5.7. COMMUNITY-BASED SAFETY**

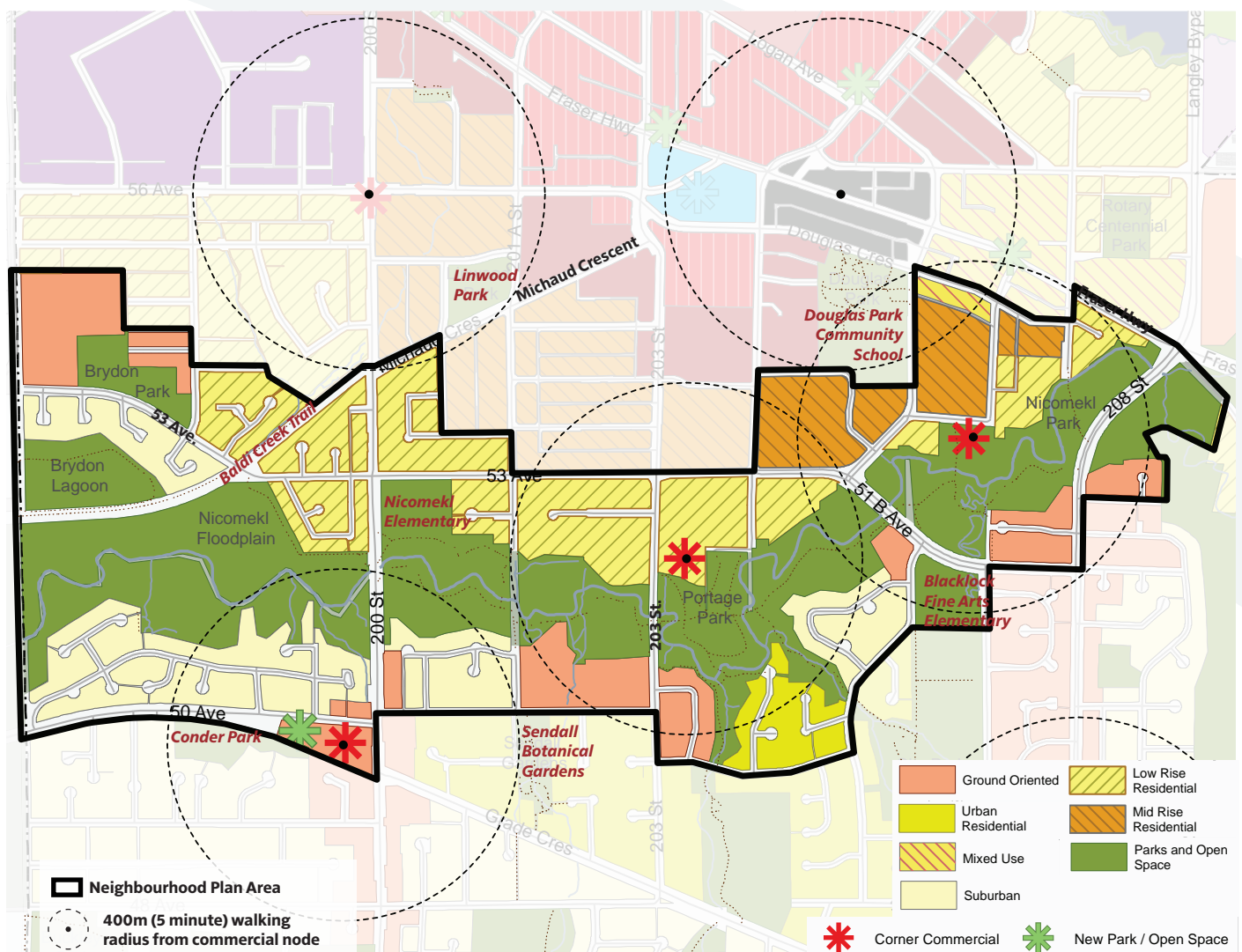
Explore the creation of a diverse group of volunteer park ambassadors responsible for regularly walking the trail systems, providing information and wayfinding to visitors, and reporting on maintenance issues or unwelcome behaviours.

## 06. LAND USE POLICIES: FOUR ROOMS

Each parcel in Langley City is assigned a land use designation as shown and described in the Official Community Plan. This Neighbourhood Plan does not contemplate different land uses than what is presented in the OCP, but adds and refines some of the land use policy based on locational criteria.

In this part of the Neighbourhood Plan, additional land use direction is provided, first as a general overview across the neighbourhood, and then within each of the Nicomekl River District's rooms.

The map below displays the OCP's land use designations within the Nicomekl River District Neighbourhood Plan's boundaries.





## GENERAL POLICIES

### 6.1. MID RISE RESIDENTIAL

6 to 12 storey apartments.

### 6.2. LOW RISE RESIDENTIAL

4 to 6 storey apartments with Ground Oriented heights of a maximum of 3 storeys adjacent to the Nicomekl River floodplain, unless otherwise specified.

### 6.3. GROUND ORIENTED

Townhomes/rowhomes along major streets and du- tri- quad- plexes, townhouses in single loaded/local street scenarios.

- In cases where Ground Oriented properties front local streets with no lanes, encourage sensitive and attractive Ground Oriented development designs that minimize at the appearance of garage entries and the number of garage entries and driveways directly accessing the lower order street.

### 6.4. URBAN RESIDENTIAL

Defined as per the OCP.

### 6.5. SUBURBAN

Defined as per the OCP.

### 6.6. CORNER COMMERCIAL

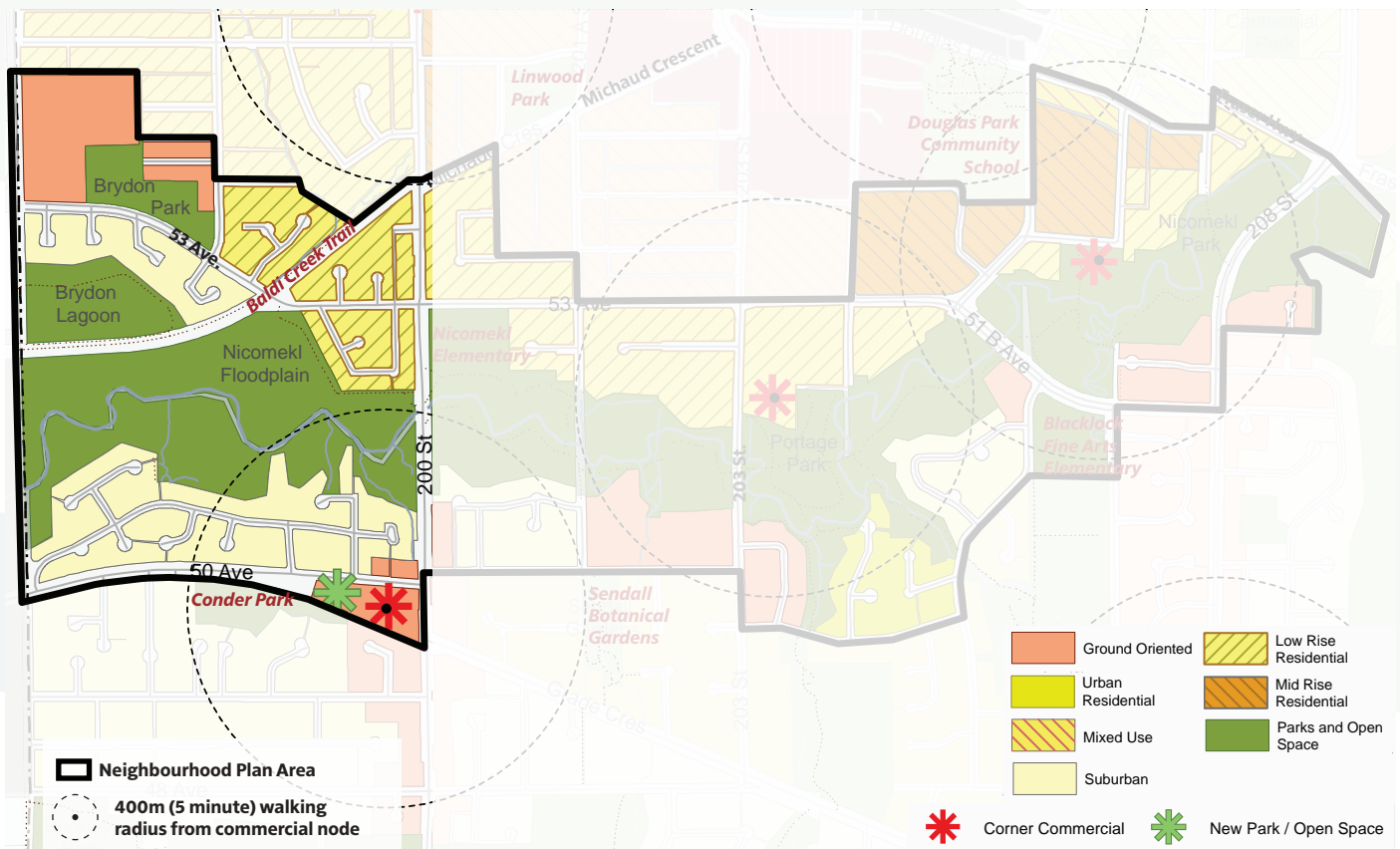
Defined as per the OCP.

### 6.7. PARKS & OPEN SPACE

Defined as per the OCP.

### 6.8. PROPERTY ASSEMBLY

Require property assembly and master-planning in strategic Neighbourhood Plan areas, and strongly encourage property assembly elsewhere to create viable redevelopment parcels, usable public open space, and practical and safe accesses between properties and streets, and to prevent orphaned, undevelopable, properties and sites. Property assemblies can include portions of road segments and cul de sacs that are deemed unnecessary, and include surplus City lands.



## GARDEN WILD ROOM

### 6.9. GROUND ORIENTED USES

Require ground-oriented uses along:

- 53 Avenue between Baldi Creek Trail and 198 Street; and,
- 198 Street between 53 Avenue and 54 Avenue, transitioning to low rise apartments (4 to 6 storeys) near/at 54 Avenue.

### 6.10. FOUR STOREY MAXIMUM

Four storey maximum building height at Baldi Creek Trail and 53 Avenue.

### 6.11. PEDESTRIAN & VEHICLE ACCESS

Create a new vehicular and pedestrian access between 53A Avenue and 54 Avenue through future redevelopment.

### 6.12. BALDI CREEK TRAIL & BALDI CREEK

Engage and enhance Baldi Creek Trail and Baldi Creek frontage as redevelopment occurs, including where possible trail connections to adjacent Low Rise Residential areas.

### 6.13. 200 STREET & 50 AVENUE

Permit Ground Oriented development along the north side of 50 Avenue, between 199A Street and 200 Street.



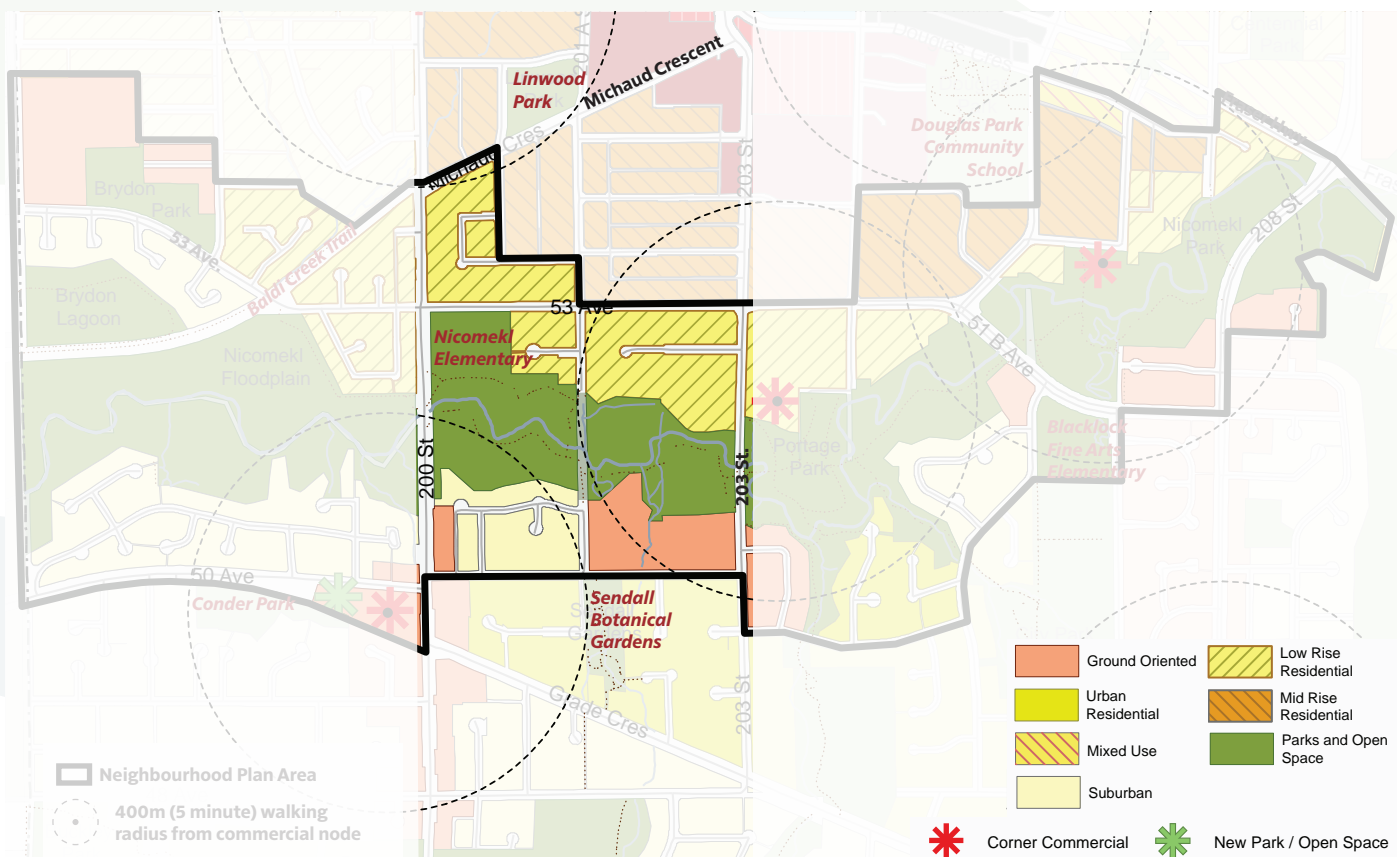
## 6.14. CONDER PARK NEIGHBOURHOOD CONVENIENCE CORNER

### VISION

A neighbourhood “convenience corner” with limited, small-scale commercial uses, townhomes, and an attractive, pedestrian-friendly design that connects to Conder Park, improves walkability and provides convenient services to the surrounding areas.

- 6.15.1 Permit a limited amount of neighbourhood-scale retail stores/ commercial uses oriented towards 200 Street, potentially including a cafe/bakery, convenience retail/food service unit, small scale office and/or restaurant/pub. Child care uses are strongly encouraged with appropriate site design and vehicle access. Drive-thru and gas station uses are prohibited;
- 6.15.2 Vehicular Access from 50 Avenue is preferred;
- 6.15.3 Require assembly of properties to create a viable mixed-use redevelopment parcel fronting 200 Street approximately 0.5 hectares in size, and to create similar residential redevelopment parcels further west along 50 Avenue towards Conder Park;
- 6.15.4 Retention of mature trees should be prioritized as part of strengthening the open space and pedestrian connection between Conder Park and the intersection of 50 Avenue and 200 St;
- 6.15.5 Seek opportunities to enhance and expand Conder Park as part of a comprehensive master plan;
- 6.15.6 Pedestrian realm designs should include wayfinding signage to strengthen pedestrian connections to the Nicomekl River trail network;
- 6.15.7 Require new development to enhance the pedestrian environment along the 50 Avenue and 200 Street frontages through a balance of street-fronting, active retail ground floors, ground-oriented residential units, tree retention and greenway enhancements, as well as wide sidewalks and generous boulevards with new street trees;
- 6.15.8 Residential development should prioritize ground oriented forms (e.g. townhomes with “front doors”) and/or small live/work and/or modest mixed-use configurations (e.g. residence above retail unit); and,
- 6.15.9 Building heights are limited to 3 storeys consisting of ground floor retail and 2 storey townhouse above near/along the 200th Street frontage, and 3 storey townhouses elsewhere.





## SUN ROOM

### 6.15. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Create pedestrian accessways between:

- 53A Avenue and 53 Avenue;
- 200 Street and 200A Street;
- 52 Avenue and 53 Avenue;
- 52 Avenue and the Nicomekl River floodplain;
- 52 Avenue (between 201A & 203 Street);
- 52 Avenue and the Nicomekl Elementary School site; and,
- 50 Avenue and the Nicomekl River floodplain.

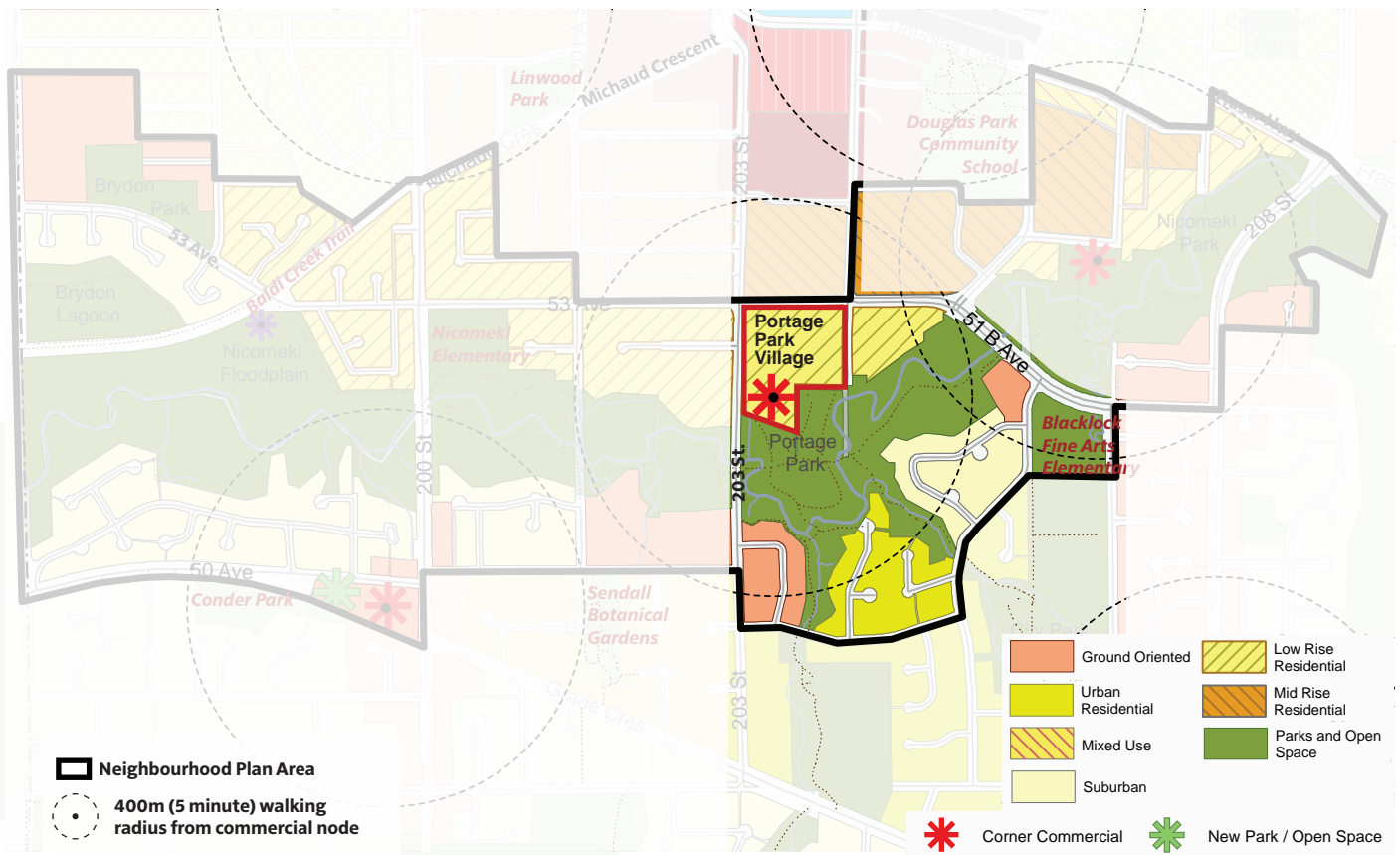
### 6.16. CROSSWALK

Provide a crosswalk at 52 Avenue and 201a Street.

### 6.17. GROUND ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Permit Ground Oriented development along the east side of 200th Street, between 50A and 50 Avenue.





## LIVING ROOM

### 6.18. GROUND ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

Permit Ground Oriented development in the area bounded by 203rd Street, 49A Avenue and Nicomekl River floodplain/Pleasantdale Creek.

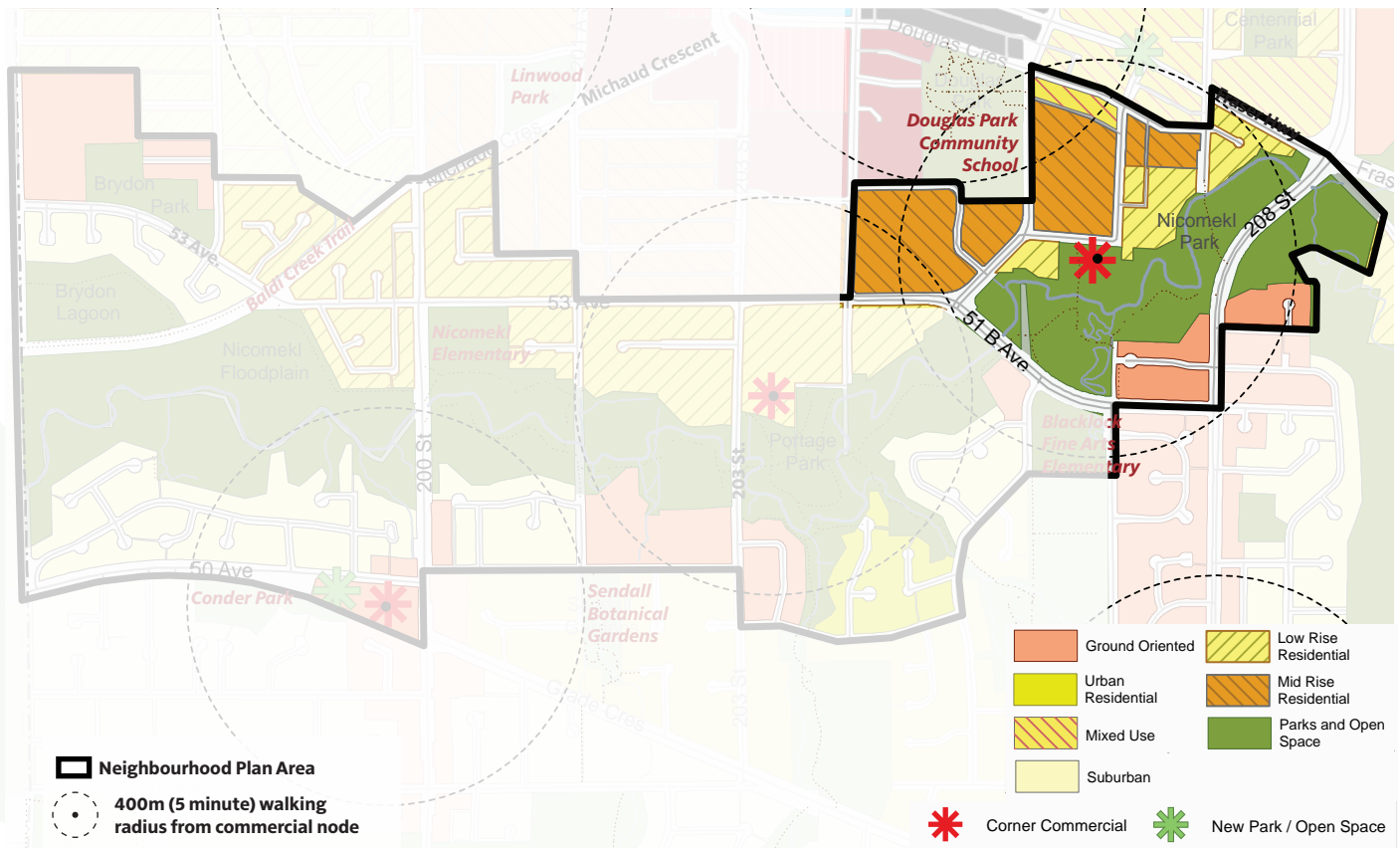
### 6.19. PORTAGE PARK VILLAGE VISION

Transitioning from higher-density residential uses adjacent to Langley's Downtown, this special district will help establish a medium density, mixed-use, neighbourhood centre to complement the existing cultural and recreational amenities at Portage Park.

- 6.22.1 Development will be required to be phased with a comprehensive master plan;
- 6.22.2 Create mixed tenure housing opportunities (e.g. rental and strata condo building phases) as a part of phased redevelopment;
- 6.22.3 Orient small-scale commercial units towards 203 Street and Nicomekl River frontage, preferably located in mixed use buildings with residential uses above;
- 6.22.4 Create a riverfront plaza and park space that connects the Village with Portage Park and integrates with the Nicomekl floodplain, and includes outdoor seating and all-season river viewing opportunities;
- 6.22.5 Extend 51A Avenue to create an east-west connection between 203rd Street and 204th Street / Michaud House;

- 6.22.6 Consider integrating the existing parking lot on the east side of 203 Street and north of the Nicomekl River with new retail uses in the Village;
- 6.22.7 Taper building heights down from 6 storeys adjacent to 53 Avenue to 3 to 4 storeys adjacent to Portage Park and the Nicomekl Floodplain;
- 6.22.8 Consider using density bonusing to create further enhancements to Portage Park, Michaud House and the interface between the Village and the Nicomekl Floodplain (including the All Season Path), in exchange for permitting up to 0.5 FAR additional density and building heights up to 8 storeys along 53 Avenue;
- 6.22.9 Portage Park Residential types should prioritize ground-oriented forms (e.g. townhomes with “front doors”) to activate pedestrian edges;
- 6.22.10 Development should enhance pedestrian facilities (beyond the street ROW) along the 203 St. and 204 St. edges to strengthen connections between Langley’s Downtown and Portage Park;
- 6.22.11 Publicly-accessible mid-block pedestrian connections (greenways) should be accommodated so as to establish an alternative N-S (off-street) pedestrian connection to Portage Park;
- 6.22.12 Open space designs should reflect adaptive flood management techniques for greater resiliency;
- 6.22.13 Pedestrian realm designs should include wayfinding signage to strengthen pedestrian connections to Portage Park and the Nicomekl River trail network;
- 6.22.14 A civic/cultural space is identified as a required amenity for the redevelopment of this special district, with particular consideration for cultural interpretation and toponymy (i.e. study of place names (toponyms), their origins, meanings) with respect to local First Nations and settlement history; and,
- 6.22.15 Open space designs adjacent Portage Park should consider opportunities to enhance the Michaud House cultural amenity with outdoor event space and/or programming. Retail/commercial activity should prioritize neighbourhood scale, pedestrian-oriented uses (e.g. coffee shop, cafe, pub, etc.) in order to minimize parking demand and complement adjacent park uses; special exceptions for a destination park-edge restaurant may be considered.





## FRONT PORCH

### 6.20. DENSITY BONUSING

Utilize density bonusing and community amenity contributions to create enhancements as identified in this Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Culture Master Plan, including the All Seasons Path and streetscape improvements on 206 and 207 Street, and improved pedestrian access to the 208 Street and Fraser Highway intersection (including east along Old Yale Road) that integrate into the Nicomekl River trail network.

### 6.21. PEDESTRIAN ACCESS

Create pedestrian accessways between 206 Street, 207 Street and 208 Street, and between 204 Street and 205 Street.

### 6.22. ENHANCED NEIGHBOURHOOD HUB

In partnership with Langley Community Services, create a long-term, phased redevelopment vision for the Langley Community Services site that includes new community services and meeting space, residential housing options, a community kitchen and café and enhanced amenities that engage the Nicomekl floodplain.

# 07. DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AREA GUIDELINES



## AREA

These guidelines apply to commercial and multi-family residential development on properties within the Nicomekl Neighbourhood Plan boundary.

## PURPOSE

These guidelines are additional objectives to the Form & Character Development Permit Guidelines in the Official Community Plan for commercial and multi-family residential development. The guidelines provide direction for landscapes and buildings to achieve a distinct riparian character and development quality emphasizing a riverside context.

## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

1. Ensure visual continuity between floodplain and development landscaping. No tall cedar hedges that “fortress” parcels that act as a harsh separation or boundary shall be used.
2. Landscape designs shall focus on landscape-based stormwater infrastructure and permeability including use of permeable paving.
3. Stormwater infrastructure is encouraged within building setbacks.
4. Use similar furnishings and colour accents as are used in the public realm to ensure continuity between public and private spaces.



## **BUILDING CHARACTER**

5. Reduce the apparent mass of buildings and increase block permeability by breaking up their frontages. Enrich the public realm by doing so, for instance by establishing breezeways or passages open to the sky that offer glimpses into inner blocks and courtyards in both directions, offering views beyond the 'wall' of buildings for Park passers and views of the Nicomekl and its Park from the courtyard. Make these passages welcoming through intentional use of sightlines, lighting and materials in design.
6. Orientation of buildings adjacent to the floodplain should face the floodplain and should create an active ground floor and attractive, pedestrian-friendly edge.
7. Apply a "riverhouse" architectural vernacular that includes: shallow roof pitches, deep overhangs, exposed structural elements (e.g. wooden beams) and authentic application of native materials such as riverstone, wood and cable railings.
8. Use of robust structural elements is encouraged including: wood piles, steel and wood trusses, large glazed doors and windows, and wood decking and wood siding.
9. Where concrete construction allows, green roofs are encouraged to contribute to overall rainwater control and serve as visual amenities – creating appealing roofscapes when viewed from higher buildings.
10. Roofs in wood frame buildings should be designed to accommodate useable roof areas that look onto the Park and contribute to the outdoor enjoyment and river views of residents.
11. Where possible, development must establish a 30 metre riparian setback off from the edge of Environmentally Sensitive Areas.

## **FIRE SMART CONSTRUCTION**

12. For buildings directly facing grassed and densely vegetated floodplain areas, utilize asphalt roofing, cementitious/non-flammable siding, non-flammable fencing and site design techniques that use low flammability vegetation and create breaks between dense floodplain vegetation and building faces and decks.

## 08. PUBLIC REALM GUIDELINES



### FURNISHINGS

1. Types of furnishings used in the park shall include: benches, signs, weather protection, picnic tables, lighting, public art, and lookout platforms.
2. Ensure lighting is used sparingly in key locations (i.e. trailheads) for safety purposes and do not negatively impact sensitive wildlife habitat (with particular attention to the Garden Wild room).
3. Landscape elements shall be selected that are adaptable to floods, for instance furnishings that are less susceptible to damage or to being moved by flooding / flood waters or elements that hold water and release it slowly.

### TRAILS

4. Make the materiality of the all-season path consistent with the city-wide loop it ties into to act as a common thread throughout the City.
5. Maintain consistency in material treatment / cross section of pathways within the same hierarchical category across the corridor.
6. Boardwalks should serve as the key experiential connection between the landscape rooms and the urban edge.

### WAYFINDING AND SIGNAGE

7. Signal the crossing of roads (e.g. 200 St, 203 St, 51B Ave) into and over the Park for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians through use of paint and elements, e.g. wayfinding/signage, furnishings and painting (safety railings, bike lanes).



## SOFTSCAPES

8. Vegetation shall maintain visibility into park and onto adjacent streets.
9. Softscape selection should primarily consist of native riparian trees, plants, and grasses.
10. Plant new trees and vegetation in manner that reduces wildfire threat during dry periods.
11. Use tree species that align with the Department of Fisheries & Oceans for Pacific Region riparian zones.



