

3.2.4 Public Access and Open Space

Public Access and Open Space (Refer to **Schedule A2 – Public Access & Open Space Plan**) is established through site-planning and design with particular attention to existing landform and landscape character, desired Village program, and opportunities for environmental conservation and enhancement.

Open spaces within the Plan area shall include managed public access to neighbourhood focal points, plazas and small gathering areas throughout the Plan area, as well as opportunities for shoreline rehabilitation and enhancement, retention of significant landscape character, particularly with respect to the second growth Douglas fir/arbutus that defines the forested ridge.

Open spaces will be linked by dedicated pedestrian pathways, which in turn connect Schooner Cove to the greater local and regional system of public parks and trails. **Schedule A2 – Public Access and Open Space Plan** details the general location and intended neighbourhood connectivity provided by the landowner as a community amenity.

Description

Public Access and Open Space areas within the Plan area shall allow for a range of passive activities while supporting non-vehicular neighbourhood circulation.

Privately owned/managed (strata) open space areas accessible to the public comprise approximately 8% or 1.03 hectares¹ of the neighbourhood plan area. Within this area, the Plan identifies more than 2 kilometres of publicly accessible sidewalks and pathways.

Rationale

At Schooner Cove, open space planning and design focuses on an inviting and pedestrian-oriented public realm in support of the marine-focused Village experience – defined by a public waterfront and boardwalk with views to the marina and Strait of Georgia – as well as retention and enhancement of landscape character and marine enhancement opportunities, (refer to **Figure 5 Pedestrian Circulation Concept**).

A Public Waterfront Boardwalk

A key feature of the Schooner Cove Village, the public waterfront boardwalk links the marina and waterfront village to the larger network of public access open space and inland pathways.

Waterfront Commons

Designed to enhance the existing community green at Schooner Cove, the “Waterfront Green” is the central social gathering space for the Schooner Cove Village, framed by the waterfront programs of the Marine Services Building and restaurant/pub building.

Breakwater Pier and Pavilion

Allows for a walk over the water with views back to Schooner Cove Village through the improvement of the breakwater to accommodate a public access pathway and simple pavilion structure, with the opportunity for smaller seating areas along the length of the breakwater.

Dolphin Drive Greenway

¹ Note: All land use areas and percentages are approximate, intended for planning purposes only. All designated areas and boundaries are subject to refinement through more detailed site design and engineering at the time of rezoning and subdivision.

A landscaped transition area along the southern edge of the Schooner Cove Neighbourhood Plan area, the Dolphin Drive greenway improves pedestrian access to the Village, creates greater physical separation between existing residential areas and the Plan area and establishes a more informal landscape edge to which the building program of the Village and neighbourhood must respond.

Neighbourhood Focal Points

Each residential district within the Plan area – including the mixed-use Village, the Commons and the Waterfront and Ridge – are organized around feature open space to serve as gathering areas and recreational program for residents.

Ridgetop Forest Reserve

Retention of the forested ridge within the Plan area will further contribute to the public access open space network. Pathways through the forest will provide connections between the Landing, the Commons and the Waterfront residential areas. The forested ridgetop also helps create significant landscape edges and transitions between residential areas while assisting to visually screen development within the Plan area from existing neighbourhoods. The realignment of Outrigger Road provides a more direct connection to Dolphin Drive and maintains a emergency vehicle/pedestrian pathway Connection through the Ridgetop Forest Reserve.

Policies

- a. An interconnected system of public access and open space for community gathering and pedestrian movement shall be provided.
- b. Pedestrian linkages between open spaces, buildings, adjacent residential areas, and the larger park and trail system linking adjacent land shall be provided.
- c. Development of a waterfront and breakwater boardwalk will be integrated into the local publically-accessible open space network to promote local connection to the water.
- d. Where feasible, design public access for universal access, located close to the water's edge, according to the recommendations of qualified professionals and approvals of relevant Federal and Provincial agencies.
- e. The Plan supports structural shoreline modifications and/or setback relaxation in support of public access open space, pathway design (with particular consideration for the waterfront boardwalk and breakwater pavilion) including seating areas and other program elements ancillary to the village commercial operations.
- f. Destination points within the Public-access Open Space and Pathway Network as areas for sitting, picnicking and informal viewpoints shall be provided.
- g. The landowner will work with the RDN to create interpretive signage which celebrates the natural and cultural heritage of the Schooner Cove waterfront and lands as shown on **Schedule A2 – Public Access & Open Space Plan**.
- h. Public access shall be secured as a condition of zoning.
- i. Area(s) for one or more Community Gardens shall be provided in the Strata Open Space as shown on **Schedule A2 – Public Access & Open Space Plan**.