



# NICOMEKL RIVERFRONT PARK

## HERITAGE PLAN 2020



**SURREY PARKS**  
Connecting through nature + play

Prepared by  
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IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:  
**PFS STUDIO**



## Nicomekl Riverfront Park Heritage Plan

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# I.0

## INTRODUCTION

This heritage report presents the research, findings, cultural analysis and recommendations for conservation and interpretation undertaken to support the design and planning of the Nicomekl Riverfront Park in Surrey, B.C. The intent of this report is to inform the planning and design phase for the park.

The heritage planning profession today recognizes heritage as a "...broad concept that includes the natural as well as the cultural environment. It encompasses landscapes, historic places, sites and built environments, as well as biodiversity, collections, past and continuing cultural practices, knowledge and living experiences." (UN International Council on Monuments and Sites.)

### 1.1 Heritage Study Methodology

The heritage planning process is composed of two principal components:

1. A historical overview that includes an understanding of context and the assessment and documentation of heritage values and resources.
2. Integration of the heritage of the area into the park design through conservation and interpretation.

Historical photographs courtesy of the New Westminster Museum and Archives (NWMA), New Westminster Public Library (NWPL), Surrey Archives (SA), City of Vancouver Archives (CVA) and BC Archives (BCAR).

Historical and described photographs and figures are referenced within individual captions. Illustrative photograph sources are identified in the table in Appendix B, List of Photographs.

### Literature Review and Community Engagement

A range of documentary information was reviewed and evaluated for heritage, industrial heritage, ethnographic and archaeological relevance for the study area. A full list of sources is included in Appendix A. The results of the community engagement process has been integrated into the heritage plan.

### Field Methods

A heritage field study documenting the cultural landscape features of the Nicomekl Riverfront Park was completed. Evaluation and synthesis of these findings supports the overall park project planning, and the heritage conservation and interpretation recommendations.

### 1.2 Nicomekl River and Riverfront Park

The Nicomekl River is part of the Lower Mainland's major river network. It springs from the ground in Langley, British Columbia and travels west through Langley and Surrey Crescent Beach, where it empties into Mud Bay, the northernmost section of Boundary Bay. It has a total length of 34 kilometres, with a drainage area of 149 square kilometres. Tributaries include Chantrell Creek, Elgin Creek, Anderson Creek, Muckle Creek, Pleasantdale Creek, Langley Creek and Newlands Brook.

The Nicomekl River has been important to First Nations for thousands of years. The word Nicomekl comes from the Halq'emeylem language, a Central Salish language of the Pacific

Northwest, meaning “the route to go” or “the pathway.” One distinct First Nation, the Nicomekl (Katzie) people, were devastated by a smallpox epidemic in the 18th century, a widespread outbreak that impacted every First Nation on the south west coast.

Early surveyors’ descriptions of the Nicomekl River note that it was thick with willows and with low banks well wooded with pine, cedar, alder and some other trees, and noted signs of there being numerous beavers at work on the river. The southern upland lies between the valley of the Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers on the north and Semiahmoo Bay and Campbell River Valley on the south. The topography is broad, and gently undulating, rising to a flat-topped ridge. The upland areas were densely forested with Douglas Fir and other conifers, with cedars predominating in the highland swamps found along the crest along with occasional patches of alder, red cedar and other deciduous trees.

The three rivers - Nicomekl, Serpentine and Campbell - meandering through the lowlands were affected by tides for most of their length. Where periodic flooding occurred, from combinations of high runoff and high tides, mainly treeless or lightly wooded areas occurred which are now referred to as Hall’s Prairie, Kensington Prairie, and Langley Prairie.

Historically existing as an intertidal zone, much of the land within the Nicomekl River lowland area today is very close to sea level. The river is controlled by a sea dam located just south of King George Boulevard off Elgin Road, consisting of gates which open when tides are low to allow fresh water to flow to Mud Bay, and preventing brackish water from impacting farmland when tides are high.

The Nicomekl River is an iconic natural feature and one of three significant fish bearing river systems within the City of Surrey. It is intended to be a major recreational blueway for the city, providing a pathway for non-motorized boat use.

A series of properties that extend along the south shore of this River were purchased by the City of Surrey with the intention of flood control management and creating protected riverfront parkland. This area has been identified as a wildlife movement corridor as part of the City’s Green Infrastructure Network and supports both unique natural areas as well as disturbed areas that provide opportunities for ecological restoration and habitat enhancement.<sup>1</sup>

The City of Surrey will develop the southern bank of the Nicomekl River into a new riverfront park spanning a length of three kilometres. The 3-kilometre linear park extends from Elgin Road to 40th Avenue, and includes two large park spaces at 3652 Elgin Road/14391 Crescent Road and 3600 King George Boulevard. The Nicomekl Riverfront Park will create new access to the river, address sea level rise, increase the tree canopy, protect and enhance ecological areas, and balance ecology with park amenities. Included in the park plan will be public art, interpretation, and design elements that express the histories and stories of the area.

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<sup>1</sup> Diamond Head Consulting. Draft Nicomekl Riverfront Environmental Assessment Report, 2018.

# 2.0

## UNDERSTANDING THE HISTORIC PLACE

Understanding a historic place is critical to being able to make values-based decisions for its conservation. This first stage of the planning process is intended to allow decision makers to have a clear understanding of what the place is, what its current context is in terms of physical and planning issues, and how it has evolved over time to become what it is today.

### 2.1 Historical Chronology

Date	Chronological Event	Concurrent events / potential changes / significance
4,000 BP	Archaeological evidence dates an Indigenous presence by the Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Nicomekl (Katzie) in the Nicomekl, Serpentine, Johnson and Mud Bay areas to 4,000 years.	Indigenous understandings of the area's waterways, streams and estuaries are a highly significant part of its history. The word Nicomekl comes from the Halq'emeylem, a Central Salish language of the Pacific Northwest, meaning "the route to go" or "the pathway." <sup>1</sup>
	Before newcomer settlement, much of the Nicomekl River's lowland area was inundated with every high tide. First Nations use the area for shellfish harvesting.	The Semiahmoo people are the survivors of the last flood caused by the melting of the glaciers in the last ice age. Areas around the Nicomekl River, such as Crescent Beach, are used extensively for shellfish and other sustenance from the sea: "when the tide goes out, the table is set." <sup>2</sup>
1780s - 1880s	Smallpox epidemics are the cause of disease-related depopulation within First Nations, killing an estimated two-thirds of the people in the Fraser Valley. <sup>3</sup> Epidemics leave mass graves, deserted villages, traumatized survivors and resulted in societal collapse, while depopulation creates vacuums that draw in surrounding people.	First Nations in the Lower Mainland, including the Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Nicomekl (Katzie) people, are impacted by the epidemic. Some surviving Katzies may have moved out of the Pitt River to settle on the lower Fraser River; people living in Mud Bay were devastated and the Semiahmoo moved northward. <sup>4</sup>
1824	The McMillan Expedition passes the site of Elgin.	The Hudson Bay Company Expedition was sent north in the winter of 1824 to locate a site for a future Fort Langley, using the Nicomekl River as a transportation route.
1873	The fifth system of land survey, Townships in the New Westminster District, is implemented, including in the Municipality of Surrey.	The system divided the land into blocks six miles square, called Townships and subdividing these townships into sections one mile square, placing the quarter section posts on the section lines. This system set up the grid in Surrey that would form the basis for many of its roads.

1 Dictionary of Upriver Halkomelem, Volume I. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/65r158r4>

2 Compressed Chief Harley Chappell Video. City of Surrey.

3 Cole Harris. *The Resettlement of British Columbia* p.30; Jane Watt. *Surrey, A City of Stories* p.18.

4 Harris p. 23.

Date	Chronological Event	Concurrent events / potential changes / significance
1872	William McDougall establishes a small hand-logging operation on the uplands near Elgin.	Marks the beginning of logging and sawmilling operations along the Nicomekl River. For many years, the Nicomekl at Elgin was the site of booming grounds for logging operations along the river.
1873	Fifth system of land survey (cont'd)	The land surveys impart artificial boundaries and new ownership on the land, disrupting land understandings and uses by Katzie, Kwantlen and Semiahmoo First Nations.
1874	The Semiahmoo Trail is constructed, an important trail and wagon road between the Fraser River in the north and the United States border at Blaine, Washington in the south.	The Semiahmoo Trail crosses the Nicomekl River at Elgin, an important connection providing transportation between communities on either side of the border with the United States..
Late 1800s	Farmers in the Nicomekl lowlands begin reclaiming land for agricultural purposes through the construction of dykes and drainage ditches and canals.	The beginning of profound changes to the natural landscape during which edges are hardened, drainage patterns changed and natural vegetation gives way to agricultural crops.
1908	James Hadden purchases property in Elgin, in Surrey, and moves his family there shortly after.	The first Hadden house is constructed. James Hadden operates a machine shop and builds boats for use on the river. The J. Hadden & Son sawmill, the first in Surrey, is operated on the Elgin property.
1910	The Surrey Dyking District is formed under the Drainage, Ditch, and Dike Act with a mandate to construct sea dams on both the Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers. <sup>5</sup>	The commencement of a coordinated system of diking and drainage control throughout South Surrey. Previously, dykes and ditches had mostly been constructed as individual efforts.
1911	A resolution is passed by Surrey Council to close the Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers to navigation in order to construct dams for land reclamation.  The concrete sea dam is constructed at Elgin, replacing an unsuccessful early wooden dam constructed near the mouth of the Nicomekl River. <sup>6</sup>	The move irrevocably changes the ecology of the river resulting in impacts such as the alteration of natural cycle of flow, transformation of biological and physical characteristics of river channels and floodplains, and fragmentation of the rivers' continuity.  Dam construction brings the era of steam boats and log booms on these two rivers to an end.
1917	Billy Hadden launches the vessel <i>Port Elgin</i> .	The vessel represents the early economy on the river, carrying freight, hauling logs and providing fishing services along the Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers.
1935	A major recorded flood event occurs on the Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers.	The record rainfall, combined with melting of heavy snowpack occurs on frozen ground which resisted infiltration and produced extremely high volumes of runoff.  Failures of dykes protecting agricultural land are common during such major flood events.
1940s	After the original house is destroyed by fire, the current Billy Hadden house is constructed on Elgin Road.	The Hadden house remains a significant historical resource within the Nicomekl Riverfront Park.

5 <https://www.surreyhistory.ca/sdd.html>

6 Jane Watt. *Surrey, A City of Stories* p.134.

Date	Chronological Event	Concurrent events / potential changes / significance
1950s	Mechanical drag line dredging along the Nicomekl River to build up dykes and remove silt becomes a regular occurrence.	Further changes to the natural landscape and the river ecosystems occur.
1951	In December high tides up the Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers combine with gale force winds to flood 490 hectares of farmland with 1.5 metres of salt water.	Despite the presence of sea dams, seawater continues to inundate the lowland area. Repairs cost up to \$20,000, with the salt residue affecting farm production for several years.
1960s	River pollution causes the closure of thriving oyster farming businesses.	Significant for the ongoing degradation of the Nicomekl and associated rivers, particularly considering the long-standing use of the area for shellfish harvesting by First Nations.
1968	A recorded major flood event occurs on the Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers.	Continuing evidence of the power of the weather and sea.
1979	Another major recorded flood event occurs.	Continuing evidence of the power of the weather and sea.
Late 1970s	A bailey bridge, a type of portable, pre-fabricated, truss bridge, is installed over the Nicomekl River at King George Highway.	Installed as a temporary bridge in the late 1970s, the Nicomekl River Bridge continues to serve traffic on a very busy corridor, augmenting a two-lane wooden bridge over the Nicomekl River.
1989-1991	The Nicomekl Enhancement Society is formed.	The mandate of the society is to raise and release salmon, improve habitat, and increase public awareness and involvement in the protection of the Nicomekl River.
1994	The City of Surrey initiates the development of a Strategic Plan for Lowlands Flood Control.	The strategic plan is launched in response to complaints about the increased frequency and duration of flooding due to logging and development activity.
1997	The City embarks on a program to address lowland flooding, implementing the Full Dyke strategy and planning, designing, and constructing dykes, pump stations, and conveyance improvements in the agricultural lowlands of the Serpentine and Nicomekl rivers.	Since implementing the Lowland Flood Control Strategic Plan in 1997, flooding in the Nicomekl and Serpentine floodplain has been significantly reduced.
2007	UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.	Protects collective rights that may not be addressed in other human rights charters that emphasize individual rights, and it also safeguards the individual rights of Indigenous people.
2018	Plans are underway for the development of the Nicomekl Riverfront Park.	The three-kilometer linear park extends from Elgin Road to 40th Ave and includes two large park spaces located at 3652 Elgin Road/14391 Crescent Road and 3600 King George Boulevard.
2019	B.C. commits to being first province in Canada to put UNDRIP into legislation.	“We need to address reconciliation in British Columbia, not just for social justice... but for economic equality for all citizens, Indigenous and non-Indigenous.” <sup>7</sup> Premier John Horgan.

## 2.2 Historical Context

Historical contexts outline key ideas for describing historical forces or processes which have contributed to the history and evolution of a place. A historical context is a structure that uses subjects or topics to help conceptualize past events, connect the past to the present, and to place sites, people and events into their historical environment.

Historical contexts have a number of interconnected uses in the management of heritage. They are considered to be a tool for both a comprehensive contextual overview of heritage resources and for the comparative analysis of the relative significance of individual resources. Historical contexts also provide a framework for the development of themes and strategies for an interpretive plan.

**Major umbrella heritage subject areas that together define the historical context of the Nicomekl River, its communities and cultural landscape features include:**

- 1. Waterway environment**
- 2. Populating place**
- 3. Land and water-based economy**
- 4. Engineering on the river**
- 5. Movement networks**
- 6. Riverfront community**



## Waterway environment

The natural environment of the Nicomekl River has historical significance through its, use and understanding, first by First Nations and later by newcomer settlers to the area, and for its aesthetic and visual qualities.

Indigenous understandings of the area's waterways, streams and estuaries through their ancient and extensive history in the area are important to the site's heritage value. As told by Chief Harley Chappell of the Semiahmoo peoples, the Semiahmoo are the survivors of floods created by the melting of the glaciers in the last ice age. In the origin story, elders saw the flood coming and carved two giant dugout canoes, placing children in one and supplies in the other. As the floodwaters rose, other communities perished. When floodwaters receded, the canoes landed just north of San Juan Islands and their passengers began life again, forging a connection between the Semiahmoo and the Lummi people. "Work must continue to protect mother earth who provides everything for us."

The lowlands of Nicomekl Riverfront Park are located on lands that did not originally exist but were once an arm of the sea. The lowland is formed from both glacial and alluvial deposits laid down more than 10,000 years ago as a delta at the mouth of a much larger postglacial Fraser River. At that time, Richmond and parts of Surrey did not exist and Point Roberts was an island.

Crescent Beach was used extensively by First Nations for shellfish collecting. Shell middens are evidence of this, with one 12-foot deep midden having accumulated discarded shells for over 4,000 years. As the saying goes, "When the tide goes out, the table is set."<sup>2</sup>

The Nicomekl River is a Class A, fish-bearing watercourse, about 35 kilometres in length, which originates in Langley and flows west to drain into Mud Bay. The river hosts extensive Coho salmon migrations and is habitat for a number of other fish species.



Fig. 1. Formation of the Fraser Delta.  
Drawing based on John Clague/Bob Turner  
from: Vancouver: City on the Edge, 2003.

### GRASS AND GRASSLIKE PLANTS

<b>sg sw s</b>	Salt marsh: saltgrass(sg), saltwort(sw), sedge(s).
<b>br s ct</b>	Tidal marsh: bulrush(br), sedge(s), cattails(ct).
<b>ct</b>	Freshwater marsh: cattails(ct).
<b>g</b>	Prairie*: grass(g).
<b>g Whh ca</b>	Prairie grass with shrubs: grass(g), Willow(W), hardhack(hh), crabapple(ca).

### WOODLAND

<b>M</b>	Maple bottom*: Broadleaf Maple(M), vine maple, ferns, (Cedar).
<b>A</b>	Alder bottom*: Alder(A), Willow, ferns, (Cedar), [Hemlock], (Spruce).
<b>Cw</b>	Mixed woodland: Cottonwood(Cw), Alder, Willow, crabapple.
<b>AB Ch</b>	Mixed deciduous regeneration forest: Alder(A), Birch(B), Cherry(Ch), Willow, [Cottonwood], crabapple, ferns with Cedar, Hemlock, Douglas fir regeneration.

### CONIFEROUS FOREST

<b>CPH</b>	Mixed coniferous forest on organics: Cedar(C), Pine(P), Hemlock(H), Spruce, [ Labrador tea], [cranberry], moss.
<b>CA sk</b>	Cedar swamp*: Cedar(C), Alder(A), Willow, hardhack, skunk cabbage(ak).
<b>CH</b>	Mixed wet: Cedar(C), Hemlock(H), Spruce, Alder, [Cottonwood], Willow, Yew, [crabapple], ferns.
<b>SW</b>	Spruce: Spruce(S), Willow(W), Alder, crabapple, vine maple, briers.
<b>SC</b>	Spruce: Spruce(S), Cedar(C), [Hemlock], Broadleaf Maple, [Alder], [Cottonwood].
<b>CHD</b>	Mixed coniferous: Cedar(C), Hemlock(H), Douglas fir(D), Alder, Willow, vine maple.
<b>CM</b>	Slope: Cedar(C), Broadleaf Maple (M), Hemlock, [Douglas fir], Alder, vine maple, ferns.
<b>DFC</b>	Mixed coniferous: Douglas fir(D), Grand fir(F), Cedar(C), [Hemlock], [Pine], [Spruce], Alder, Dogwood, vine maple, briers.
<b>D</b>	Douglas fir: Douglas fir(D), [Cedar], salal, oregon grape, [hawthorn].

Fig. 2. Legend

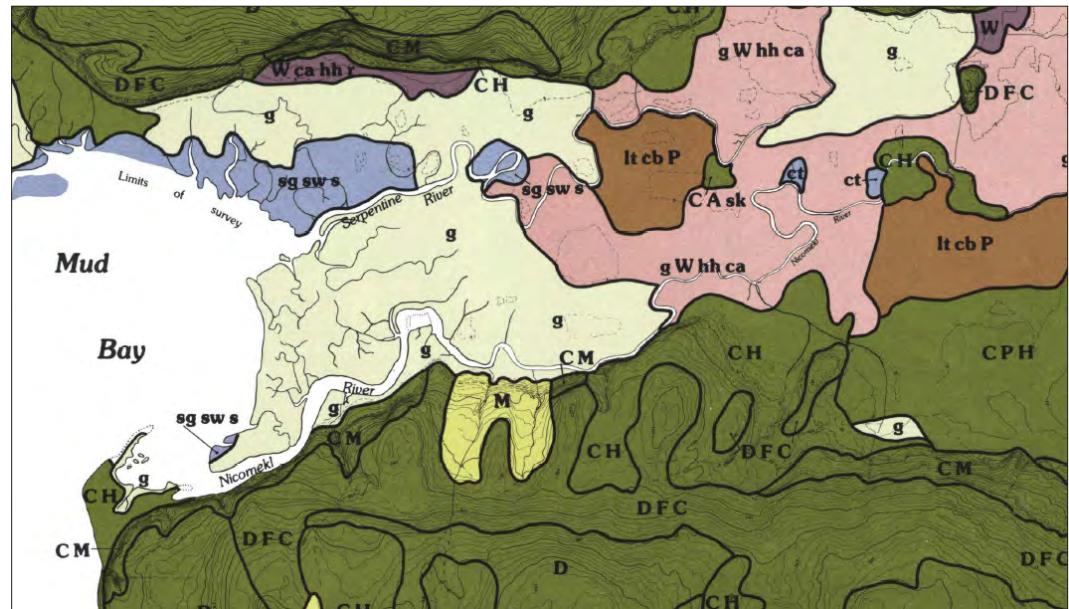


Fig. 2. Historical vegetation along the Nicomekl River from: North, Dunn and Taversham, Vegetation of the Southwestern Fraser Lowland 1858-1880.

1 Compressed Chief Harley Chappell Video. City of Surrey.  
2 ibid.

The river has valuable streamside forest habitats, along with characteristics of human disturbances. There are also small structures, such as wooden stairways and a small residential dock is located on the eastern shore with evidence of fish net line and floats.

Historical vegetation in the area included primarily grassland and coniferous forest with an area of native maple. This information was derived and mapped from the notebooks of land surveyors working at the time of newcomer settlement who were tasked with surveying legal boundary lines, marking the corners of subdivisions at to pre-emption or sale. They usually noted soil conditions, vegetation, presence of water and other information. Today, invasive species on the site include Reed canary grass, Himalayan blackberry, and Japanese knotweed.<sup>3</sup>

Nicomekl Riverfront Park provides a wide range of habitat for wildlife, from dense shrub and grass communities to forests of varying ages, floodplains, open water features, and wetlands. The steep banks, wet floodplains, and the river have kept humans away from these areas, thereby increasing their value for wildlife. The Mud Bay intertidal zones form part of the Pacific Flyway, which is a bird migration route along the west coast between wintering areas and nesting habitat. The mud flats of Boundary Bay are critical areas where large migrating flocks stop, rest, and feed to ensure they have enough energy for the rest of their migration.<sup>4</sup> A Coho salmon hatchery operated on the Ramsell property, a site within the park, where salmon fry were reared in ponds and released into Elgin Creek.

Today, few of the natural plant communities of the Nicomekl valley floodplain remain, their displacement the consequence of the forestry and agriculture activities that commenced in the 1850s. Farmers settling on the floodplain immediately recognized the necessity of dyking the land against flooding and draining it for cultivation. The remaining bogs and marshes were not considered useful for agriculture and were generally left unchanged.

The Nicomekl River's waterway environment has had a significant history of river flooding. Prior to newcomer settlement and changes to the landscape, much of the Nicomekl River lowland was flooded at every high tide. There were extensive floods in January 1935, which produced the heaviest 5-day precipitation amount ever recorded in the Lower Mainland, the result of high tides and dams blocked by river ice. Severe floods were documented in 1968 and 1979, with lesser flood occurrences during and after that time. On some occasions, water from the ocean - Boundary Bay - has overtopped or breached sea dykes and dams and inundated farmland.<sup>5</sup>



<sup>3</sup> Diamond Head Consulting. Draft Nicomekl Riverfront Environmental Assessment Report, 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Environment Canada. *Floodplain Mapping Program, Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers*, 1993.



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Fig. 3. Nicomekl dyke break 1969 from:  
Surrey Archives SA1992.036.15492.



Fig. 4. Nicomekl River in 1968 from: Surrey Archives SA1992.036.13263



Fig. 5. Nicomekl River flood in 2003 from: Northwest Hydraulic Consultants/City of Surrey Serpentine,  
*Nicomekl & Campbell Rivers - Climate Change Floodplain Review*, 2012.

## Populating place

The area around the future Nicomekl Riverfront Park lies within the traditional territory of the Kwantlen, Semiahmoo, Musqueam and Katzie First Nations. First Nations reserves were established in B.C. in the 1860s under Governor James Douglas. The size of these reserves was significantly reduced in subsequent years, under pressure from newcomer settlement and the policies of Chief Commissioner of Lands and Works, Joseph Trutch.

The Crescent Beach site at the mouth of the Nicomekl was used by First Nations as a seasonal processing camp and permanent settlement for over 4,000 years. It illustrates the importance of the area around Nicomekl River as a settlement area and food source for salmon, clams, crabs and oysters.

First Nations populations were highly impacted by newcomer exploration and settlement. The Snoquomish people were almost entirely eradicated by warfare and disease, with some joining the Semiahmoo people. The imaginary line at the 49th parallel between Canada and the U.S. created the international border in 1846, sometimes physically dividing First Nations. Current place names provided a link to those south of the border, a reminder of how historic places are connected.

June of 1873 saw the beginning of the provincial survey of townships in the New Westminister District. The system was comprised of Township blocks six miles square and divided into sections one mile square and set up the grid of agricultural field patterns and which would later guide the location and construction of roadways in the area.

Nicomekl Riverfront Park is located generally between the pioneer communities of Elgin and Kensington Prairie. Elgin was one of the early centres to develop as a settlement focus in Surrey with Mud Bay its associated agricultural area. Three factors were responsible for Elgin's development: local logging operations; its importance as a stage stop along the Semiahmoo Road; and the establishment of a customs' entry port. Located at the junction of the Nicomekl River and the Semiahmoo Wagon Road, Elgin became a centre for logging operations as early as 1872.

Early landowners in the Nicomekl River area included Caleb and William Pike, two of Surrey's earliest settlers who homesteaded in the 1870s on property on the east side of the Semiahmoo Road that straddled both sides of the Nicomekl River. Another early homesteader, John Stevenson, purchased the Pike property in 1877.

Other early landowners included:

William C McDougall - SE of NE Section 28 Township 1, 20 acres, Timber Lot 17

William C McDougall - Lot 165, 165 acres

John Stevenson - NE of SE Section 28 Township 1, 20 acres, Timber Lot 16

Alexander McDougall - Lot 244, 120 acres

Alexander McDougall - NE Section 27 Township 1, 152 acres

Constructed around 1940, the Craftsman-style Billy Hadden House is a designated heritage site for its value as a connection to the early development of the Elgin neighbourhood of Surrey.



Fig. 6. Elgin Hall on Crescent Road from: City of Surrey Heritage Sites in South Surrey.



Fig. 7. Billy Hadden House on Elgin Road from: City of Surrey Heritage Sites in South Surrey.

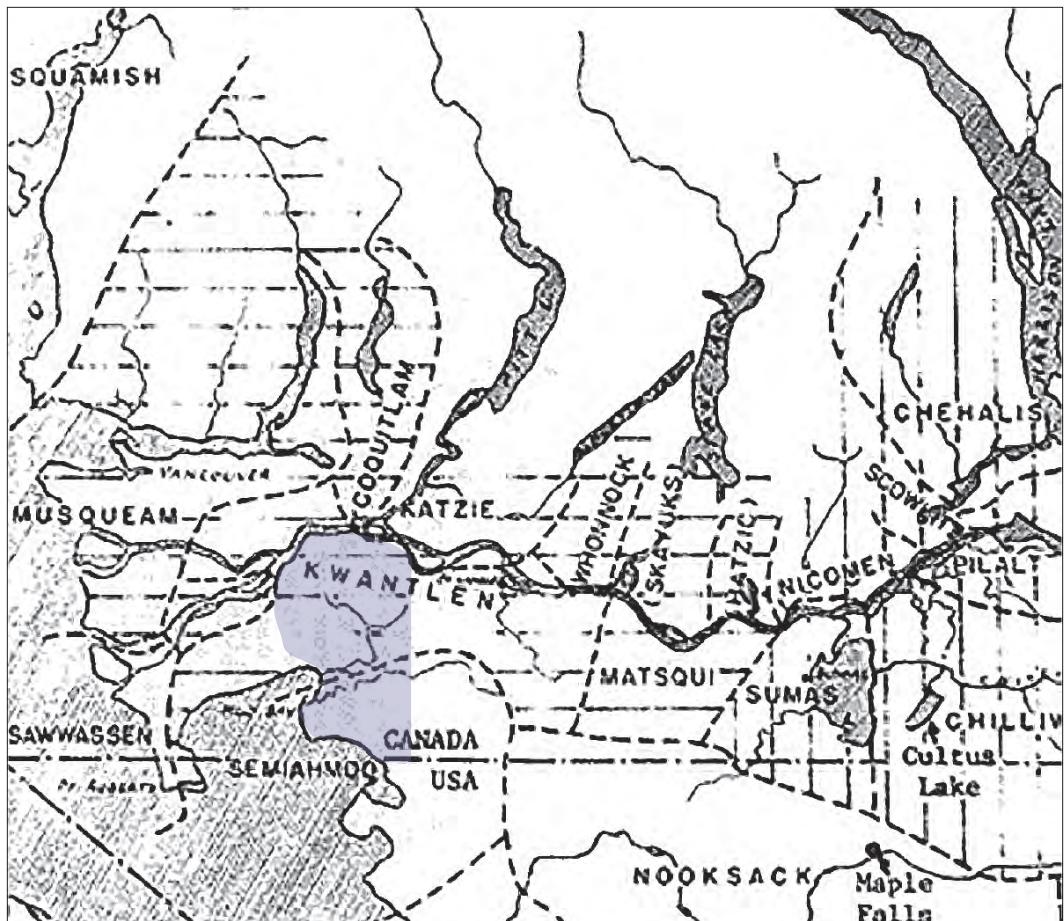


Fig. 8. Wilson Duff map from 1952 showing traditional territory of Kwantlen, Semiahmoo and Katzie First Nations from: Anthropology in British Columbia Memoir No. I.

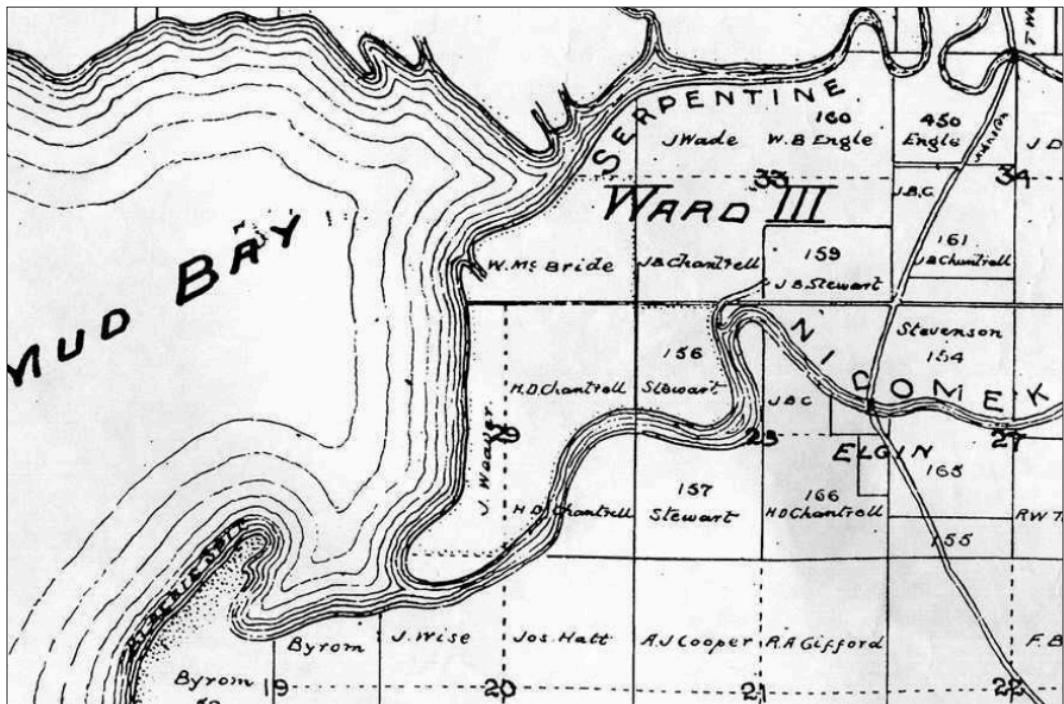


Fig. 9. 1897 pioneer settlement and pre-emption around the Nicomekl River area from: Crescent Beach Heritage Study.

## Land and water-based economy

The Nicomekl River has long been an economic driver in the early economy of South Surrey. Industry began in Elgin during the latter part of the 1800s when the McDougalls established a logging camp in the area, towing logs to New Westminster to be sold to the Royal City Planing Mills - this venture was Surrey's first commercial-scale logging operation.

Just after the turn of the century Elgin's first sawmill was established by the Hadden Family. It operated just east of the present river control gates, in the vicinity of the heritage Billy Hadden home. The Elgin Mill operated from 1906 to 1917 when it burned down, forcing its closure. These activities were in the vicinity of the Elgin Hotel, making Elgin a growing population centre in South Surrey.

In the 1880s the Royal City Planing Mills built a logging ditch which ran from the Surrey uplands to the east down to the Nicomekl river, just west of the Coast Meridian Road. The logging ditch had been dug by Chinese labourers brought in by the RCPM. Originally a small creek, the ditch was deepened and enlarged, into which the waters of neighbouring creeks were diverted. On the upland, a series of gates were constructed to control the water, with harvested logs brought to the ditch over skid roads by teams of horses.

Prior to 1911, when the Surrey Dyking Commission constructed sea dams and floodgates on the rivers, sloops and steamboats would ply their way upstream at high tide, transporting supplies in to the farmers and then heading back to New Westminster, Victoria or Vancouver with cargoes of lumber and vegetables.

The rich arable floodplain land around the river is an important agricultural resource. Hay, oats and potatoes were some of the crops that were grown locally and transported via the Nicomekl River.



Fig. 10. Logging at Elgin 1894 from: Surrey Archives 1992.036.4106.



Fig. 11, Potato farm at Kensington Prairie from: Surrey Archives 1992.036.4106.

## Engineering on the river

From the earliest land use and settlement in the area, the Nicomekl River has been manipulated and engineered for settlement and economic purposes. This theme explores the ways in which infrastructure has influenced the history and character of the river.

The practice of harvesting salmon on rivers in traditional territories has allowed for local First Nations to monitor the status of local salmon populations, and develop sophisticated harvesting techniques. Indigenous fishing methods included dip nets, reef nets - a method of purse seining used within reefs - and the construction and use of fish weirs on relatively shallow, slow-moving tributaries to channel fish into traps, or towards fishers with other harvesting equipment.<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1800s, farmers in the area began reclaiming the land for agricultural purposes through the installation of dykes and drainage ditches and canals.

In 1910, the Surrey Dyking District was formed under the Drainage, Ditch, and Dike Act with a mandate to construct sea dams on both the Serpentine and Nicomekl Rivers. Dyking of the Nicomekl River originally started in the 1920s, but it wasn't until the late 1950s and the acquisition of a drag line that mechanized dredging along both rivers became a regular project. Dredging was completed to build up the dykes, and remove silt.

An early wooden sea dam was constructed near the mouth of the Nicomekl River but ultimately failed. The second sea dam at Elgin Road, constructed of concrete in 1911, consisted of gates, which open when tides are low to allow fresh water to flow to Mud Bay. When tides are high, the gates prevent brackish water from migrating up the river into farmland. Much of the land within the river lowland areas remains very close to sea level, a legacy of its history as an intertidal zone. With the construction of the dam, economic activity on the river changed, as vessels could no longer travel upriver with cargo, and log booms from forestry operations could not be floated to the ocean.



Fig. 12. Construction of the 1911 Nicomekl River dam from: Surrey Archives SA1992.036.5914.



Fig. 13. Floodgate on the Nicomekl River 1960, from: Surrey Archives SA1992.036.5914.



Fig. 14. Example of a fish weir, 1900 from: BCAR G-06604.



Fig. 15. Sea dam on the Nicomekl River 1960 from: Surrey Archives SM.1407d.

<sup>1</sup> Aboriginal Fisheries in British Columbia. [https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/aboriginal\\_fisheries\\_in\\_british\\_columbia/](https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/aboriginal_fisheries_in_british_columbia/)

## Movement networks

The Nicomekl River and its environs create a movement network for people, wildlife and fish. Mammals such as coyote, black tailed deer, rodents, hares, and shrews roam the forests, Coho and other fish species traverse the waterway and the area is part of the Pacific Flyway, a bird migration route along the west coast between wintering areas and local nesting habitat.

The Campbell, Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers were the inland canoe routes used for trading and communication by First Nations. Coastal waterways connected local First Nations to surrounding communities.

In 1824, James McMillan of the Hudson's Bay Company and a group of men travelled by sea north from Fort Vancouver in Washington State, travelling up the Nicomekl River, portaging to the Salmon River and reaching the Fraser River. Accompanied by First Nations, their goal was to establish a fur trading fort on the Fraser River, today's Fort Langley..

The Nicomekl was more navigable than other nearby rivers and became an important transport corridor for Surrey pioneers. Prior to the construction of the Semiahmoo Road in 1873-74 and Crescent Road in 1884, the Nicomekl and Serpentine Rivers were the primary means of transportation in the Port Elgin and Mud Bay areas. By the early 1880s, the Serpentine, Nicomekl and Little Campbell Rivers had become vital transportation routes for settlers, many of whom preempted land along the riverbanks. Sternwheelers that navigated the Nicomekl River included the S.S. Stella, Staffa I and II, the Port Elgin, the Matsqui, the Bell and the Granier.

Originating as a pioneer trail and then a wagon road connecting the Fraser River in the north and the United States border at Blaine, Washington in the south, the Semiahmoo Trail was an early and important transportation route through Surrey utilized by pioneers travelling and settling in Surrey in the late 19th century. Today, the trail crosses the Nicomekl Riverfront along Elgin Road.

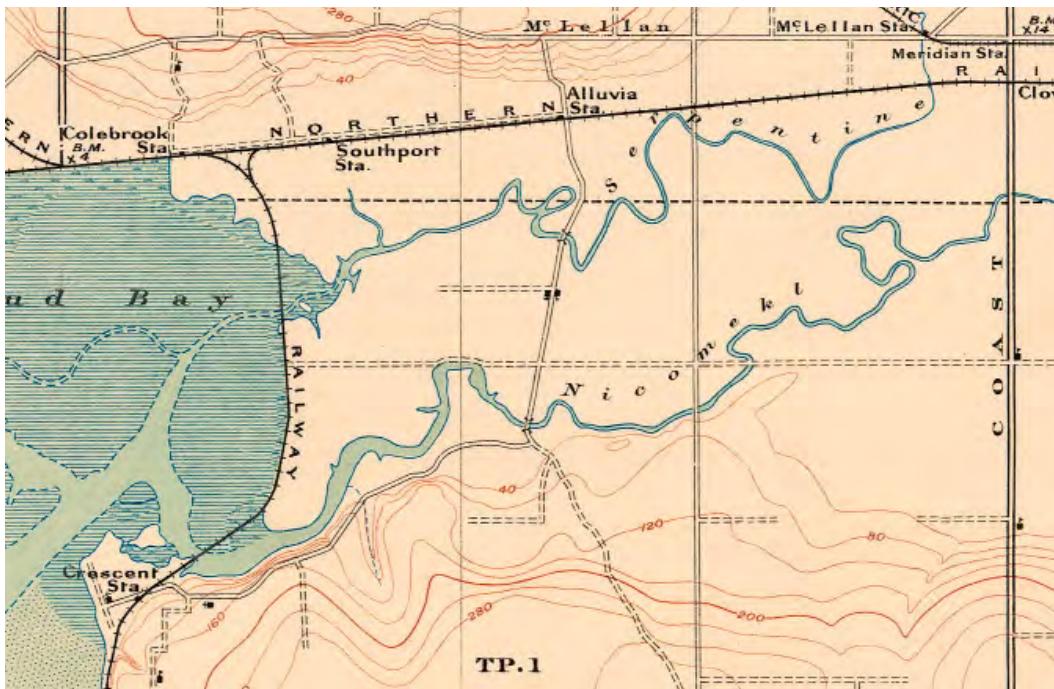


Fig. 16. 1923 map showing the Great Northern Railway route and stations and early roads, Canada  
Department of Mines from: CVA AM1594 Map 504.



Fig. 17. Crescent Road. (Denise Cook Design)



Fig. 18. Replacement of the bailey bridge, 1964 from: Surrey Archives SA 1992.036.2282.



Fig. 19. Bridge over the Nicomekl River at the Semiahmoo Trail with the Customs House in the background, 1880 from: Surrey Archives SA 203.01

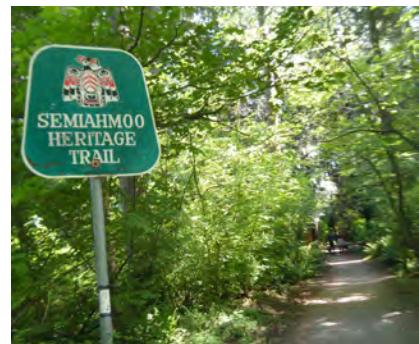


Fig. 20. Semiahmoo Heritage Trail marker. (Denise Cook Design)



Fig. 21. Repairing the bailey bridge at King George Boulevard from: Peace Arch News Oct. 5, 2017.



Fig. 22. Johnston Road (152nd Street) before construction of the current overpass, 1968 from: Surrey Archives SA1992.036.11198



Fig. 23. Semiahmoo Trail provincial stop of interest sign. (Denise Cook Design)

A customs office was located at the junction of the Semiahmoo Road and the Nicomekl River from 1880 to 1895 to monitor road traffic over the bridge and the Semiahmoo Trail, and to monitor river traffic up and down the Nicomekl River.

Other well-travelled routes included 152nd Street, known as Johnston Road after James Johnston and his two sons who homesteaded land along 152nd Street in 1866. This road ran north-south through the Johnston Settlement. 40th Avenue was known as the Mud Bay Road and ran west of the Semiahmoo Wagon Road leading to Mud Bay.

In 1884, Crescent Road was built following the south bank of the Nicomekl River to provide access to Blackie's Spit, later known as Crescent Beach. This road serviced fishermen and hunters travelling to and from the area.

Other significant circulation or transportation routes associated with South Surrey and the park study area include the Great Northern Railway, Westminster and Yale Road, the BC Electric Railway and the Semiahmoo route to Ladner, in Delta.

The bailey bridge over the Nicomekl River at King George Highway has been operational since the late 1970s, according to the provincial Ministry of Transportation. Increasing traffic during this decade led to the construction of the bailey bridge alongside an original two-lane wooden bridge, allowing for two northbound and one southbound lanes.

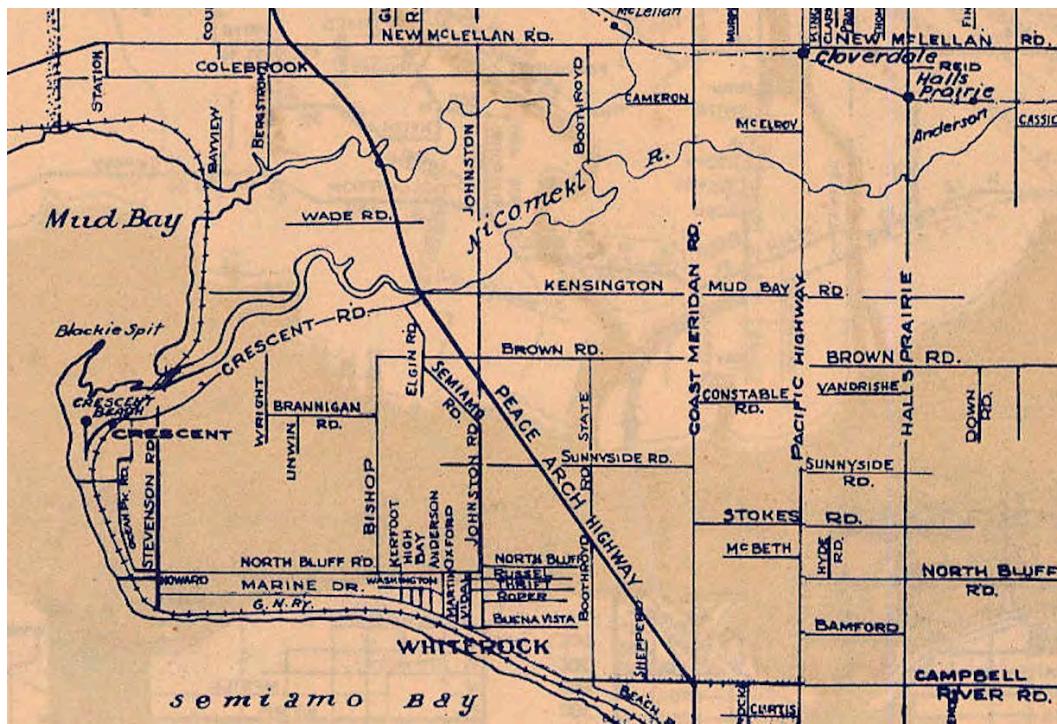


Fig. 24. Roads near the park site in 1952. Map of the Fraser Valley, Dominion Map and Blueprint Co. from: CVA AM738-F1 MAP 892 LEG1248.6.

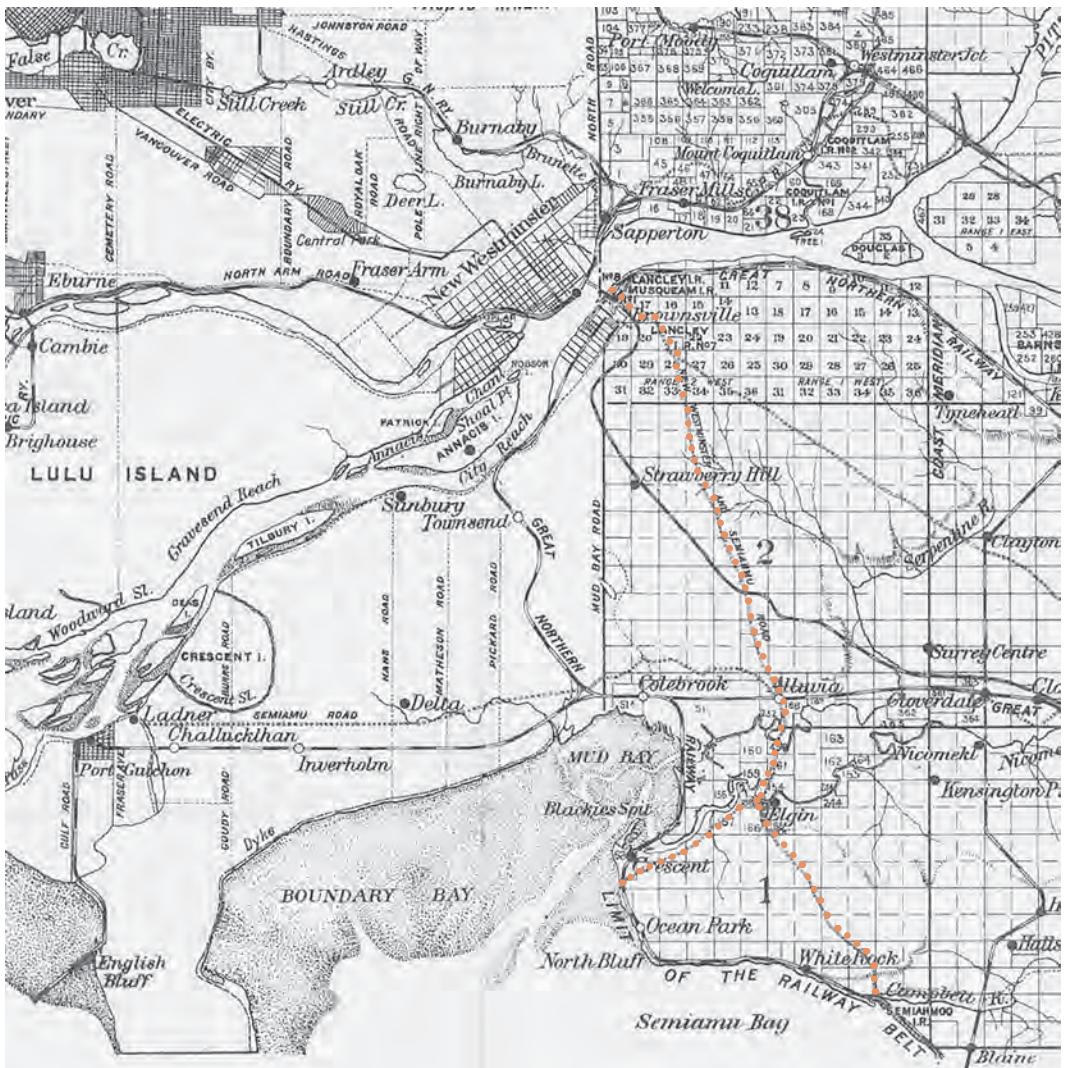


Fig. 25. Route of the Semiahmoo Wagon Road (1873) and Crescent Road (1884) on a 1913 map. The map also shows the New Westminster and Yale Road, Great Northern Railway and the BC Electric Railway. British Columbia Port Moody Sheet, West of Seventh, East and West of Coast Meridians, Surveyor General's Office, Ottawa from: CVA AM1594-: MAP 77.



Fig. 26. Bailey bridge. (Denise Cook Design)

## Riverfront community

The Nicomekl River, the park and its environment connects the local community, provides aesthetic and visual qualities, and plays a role in recreation, leisure and community activities.

The Semiahmoo First Nation sustains strong community ties to the Nicomekl River and surrounding area, with Musqueam, Katzie, Kwantlen, and QayQayt people also maintaining a connection to the place. The Nicomekl River and associated local place names are culturally significant for First Nations. Activities and rituals such as cultural camps, oral traditions, drumming, the telling of creation stories, and the belief in sacred territory and life forces bring young people and elders from historically connected communities closer to the spirit of place found in the Nicomekl River area.

For newcomers, the Nicomekl River provided a different sense of community. Recreational fishing has always been a part of the Nicomekl River. Species found today in the river include Coho Salmon, Chinook Salmon, Chum Salmon, Pink Salmon, Rainbow Trout, Steelhead, Sunfish, Northern Pikeminnow, Sculpin Three Spined Stickleback, Bass, Carp, Brown Bullhead, Western Brook Lamprey. The river's watershed has been affected by urbanization, development and agriculture, such that it was identified as an endangered watershed in the lower Fraser Valley in 1992 and while conditions have improved, there is currently some concern in the fishing community about the quality of the water and lack of fish.

The Riverside Golf Centre, a par 3, 9-hole golf course on a 16-acre parcel of land operated from 1966 until 2016, now being transformed into an ecologically diverse area of Nicomekl Riverfront Park. The river is the location of community events such as the Nicomekl Rowing Club Head of the River race in which rowers begin a 5.7-kilometre course at a dock near the Nicomekl River dam and traverse the winding river route to the Crescent Beach pier.



Fig. 30. Nicomekl rowing regatta from: Peace Arch News.



Fig. 27. Fishing on the Nicomekl River 1966 from Surrey Archives 1992.036.6060.



Fig. 28. Fishing off the Nicomekl River dam, 1966 from: Surrey Archives 1992.036.6052.



Fig. 29. Boat Escape on the Nicomekl River c.1960 from: Surrey Archives WH.4305.

## 2.3 Cultural Landscape Features

Identifying the cultural landscape features that define the character of the Nicomekl Riverfront Park area assists with the development of conservation strategies. The landscape features are based on categories in the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, which provides guidance for their conservation.

### Evidence of land use

- First Nations use of and care for the land
- Fish hatchery and history of fishery enhancement
- Cultivated agricultural fields and the ALR
- Dyke and drainage ditches
- Remains of Riverside golf course
- Use of the river for fishing, boating and other recreation

### Land patterns

- Route of Nicomekl river through the landscape
- Evidence of township survey pattern
- Agricultural fields lining the river

### Spatial organization

- Arrangement of farms along roadways that follow the survey grid
- Fields, houses and outbuildings of individual farms

### Visual relationships

- Significant views from the riverbank to the river
- Views to the north shore mountains
- Views to agricultural lands
- Views from bridges at King George Boulevard, Elgin Road and 152nd Street

### Circulation

- Historical trails, pathways and roadways
- River as a travel route
- Paths or routes along the river and dyke

### Ecological features

- Nicomekl River and its ecosystem
- Forested ecosystems
- Wetlands

### Vegetation

- Vegetation along the river
- Forested areas of the park sites
- Shelterbelts in agricultural fields
- Hedgerows and fencerows
- Planted agricultural crops, hayfields and fallow fields
- Remaining vegetation at golf course
- Historical trees and stumps

### Landforms

- Flat topography of the river valley rising to the uplands

### Cultural landscape

A geographical area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people.

### Cultural landscape features

Features of a cultural landscape, used in a system of classification, that describe the tangible and intangible elements of a historically significant landscape and which individually and collectively embody landscape character and assist in understanding heritage value.

## Water features

- Nicomekl River
- Elgin Creek and other tributary creeks and streams
- Wetland areas
- Drainage ditches
- Constructed water features at eastern park site

## Built features

- Bridge crossings at King George Highway, Highway 99 and 152nd Street
- Billy Hadden house historic site
- Small-scale features such as fences, wooden stairs, signs and mailboxes

## Intangible heritage

- Traditional knowledge
- Place names
- Community events
- Stories and rituals



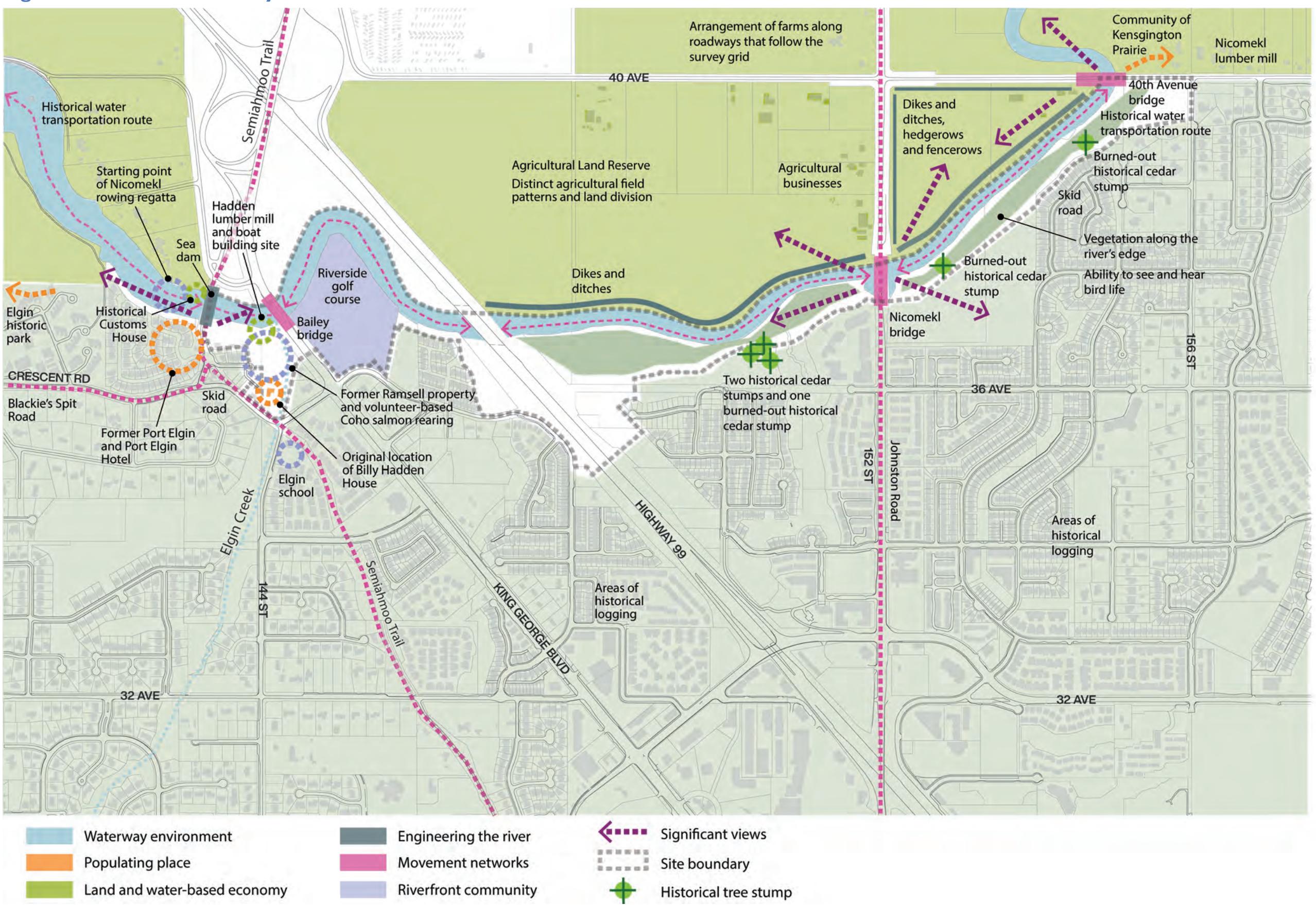
Fig. 31. Remaining ponds from the previous Coho salmon hatchery on the Ramsell property. (Denise Cook Design)

**Fig. 32. Cultural Landscape Features**

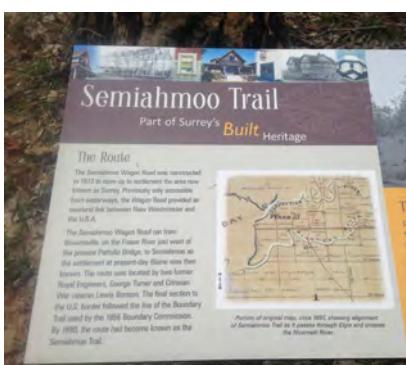
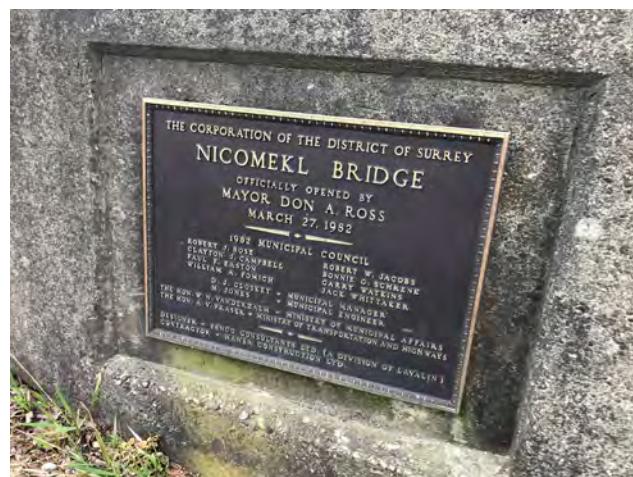


Nicomekl River  
Dyke along edge of river  
Use of the river for fishing, boating  
and other recreation

**Fig. 33. Historical Site Analysis**



## Photographs of Cultural Landscape Features





# 3.0

## Identifying Heritage Value

### 3.1 Summary of Heritage Values

Community heritage values have been synthesized from the results of the survey and comments by the public at the open house. Comments ranged along a spectrum, some of which contradicted each other and expressed different values. A recognition of these multi-valent values on the site is important in creating effective conservation recommendations.

The following heritage values have been summarized from community engagement and feedback

#### **Heritage values**

Natural history values were found to be paramount on the site. This included understanding the ecology, the river, wildlife, such as deer and owl populations, geological history, forests, meadows and wetlands, and old growth trees. Value was found in the ability to enjoy nature without intrusion. Natural history values may also assist in understanding and mitigating the lack of stewardship of the site's once-plentiful natural resources.

Many respondents identified First Nations history as very significant, including their use of the land and Indigenous plants. There was interest in the way in which newcomer activities impacted Indigenous lifeways. Generally, however, a consensus that First Nations and settler history were both important aspects of the site, along with an understanding of the post-contact uses and evolution of the site.

Opportunities within the park plan for First Nation historical elements and opportunities to host First Nations events at the park to serve aboriginal tourism were significant identified cultural heritage values. There is historic importance in quality clean water in the river, in fishing and shellfish and other sea product harvesting, and First Nations use of the river as an important trading and transportation route.

Historical values included the history of river uses in the 19th and 20th centuries, what the area was like prior to dyking, early families and settlement, early agricultural uses and family farms, original bridges, resource extraction such as fishing and logging and small businesses and corner stores.

Recreational values centred on the ability to experience nature in the park, keeping it rural, and without too much development. There was interest in the opportunities presented through the golf course site becoming a park. Value was found in the creation of local connector routes to access the park, with improved neighborhood bicycle and pedestrian paths to and within the park and the opportunity to connect communities via trail and park space.

The use of the traditional name for the river and other traditional First Nations place names was important, along with the identification of local family place names. There was general support for incorporating heritage interpretation/features in the park and overall people seemed very interested in learning more about where they live.

# 4.0

## Integrating Heritage into Nicomekl Riverfront Park

### 4.1 A Vision for Heritage in Nicomekl Riverfront Park

- Heritage in Nicomekl Riverfront Park will be seen through the overarching lens of the river, its environs, its history of deposition and change, its human use and manipulation and its importance as a ecological and cultural waterway.
- Heritage conservation will take an integrated approach, responding and adapting to the park's ecology, landscape design and public art approaches.
- Heritage conservation in Nicomekl Riverfront Park will address changes due to climate modification by engaging with traditional and indigenous communities and their ecological and cultural knowledge to better understand historical trends, how they are changing, and long-term human interactions with those trends.
- Interpretation will be inclusive, comprehensive but subtle, incorporating First Nations history through partnerships with the City of Surrey, including post-contact settler and industrial history, and natural and ecological education and programming. Traditional First Nations' names will be incorporated throughout the park.
- The park will accommodate and present intangible heritage values through Indigenous and non-Indigenous events, celebrations and rituals. Heritage will be incorporated in the park planning through the protection and enhancement of fish bearing creeks, the river and wildlife habitat.
- Heritage conservation will celebrate the unique historical, ecological, cultural landscape, topographic and intangible qualities and stories of each park zone while connecting them into a linked heritage and interpretive experience.
- Multiple histories, values and viewpoints will be presented throughout the site, through didactic interpretation, material and formal design, and public art, including aspects such as geological time, Indigenous culture, newcomer settlement and current agricultural and recreational land uses.
- Interpretive programming will create engaging learning opportunities for all ages and abilities.

### 4.2 Potential Impacts on Heritage Values

#### Climate change and heritage conservation

Cultural landscapes and heritage structures within Nicomekl Riverfront Park can be at risk from climate change, including variations of precipitation, temperature, increased probability of fire. Resources in shoreline areas may be at risk from sea level rise associated with climate change. New literature on the subject is appearing on a regular basis.

As the impacts of sea-level rise increase for coastal communities, so too will the toll on the built heritage that has come to distinguish them. Fluctuations and drastic shifts in temperature, rainfall, mean global sea-level, and the frequency and severity of storms will have adverse impacts on the natural and built landscapes that define coastal cultures.

- Develop guidance to relate current heritage conservation standards and guidelines and programs to climate change adaptation.

- Using the shoreline sensitivity model found in *BC Parks Shoreline Sensitivity to Sea Level Rise Model: User Guide*, evaluate the shoreline areas of the park that are likely to be impacted by climate change and sea level rise.
- Develop strategies for cultural resources that acknowledge climate change effects including recording, regular inspection, protection, moving resources and other potential mitigation measures.
- Incorporate knowledge, traditions, practices, and ethnographic accounts/ethnohistory with connections to the local environment into adaptation plans and practices.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Infrastructure development**

Ongoing development of infrastructure, particularly upgrading of roads and bridges, may have an impact on the cultural landscape of Nicomekl Riverfront Park. Identified impacts can be mitigated through heritage conservation measures.

### **4.3 Conservation of Heritage Resources**

The heritage resources present within the park are primarily related to the site's cultural landscape, with the exception of the Billy Hadden House and the sea dam. The following conservation recommendations are based on the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada*, and *Building Resilience: Practical Guidelines for the Sustainable Rehabilitation of Buildings in Canada*. These existing national standards and guidelines are built upon international charters and policies that represent best practice in the field of heritage conservation.

As with most complex historical sites, heritage conservation and management in the Nicomekl Riverfront Park will likely require a combination of conservation approaches at different levels and scales. Ongoing research into the site ecology, geology, buildings, cultural landscape, archaeology, ethnology and First Nations values and uses will continue to reveal new aspects of the history of the place. Perceptions of value and significance can vary among generations, groups, institutions and individuals.



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#### 4.3.1 Cultural landscape features

Cultural landscapes are defined as any geographical area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people.

The Nicomekl Riverfront Park site has important cultural landscape features and relationships between its elements that reflect its past and ongoing use, first by First Nations, and later as an evolved site that includes the historical and contemporary utilization of the river, traces of the natural environment, a history of settlement, agriculture and movement systems.



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Guidelines for cultural landscape features	
Heritage feature	Recommendation
Cultural landscape and riverscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When considering new uses for buildings, structures or landscapes, ensure uses compatible with the heritage site and that have minimal impact on heritage buildings and fabric.</li> <li>Balance heritage conservation interventions with the protection of Nicomekl Riverfront Park's sense of place, allowing visitors to discover its stories from its history as an important natural, cultural and economic resource.</li> </ul>
Evidence of traditional practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With Indigenous partners, investigate the existence of an early fishing weir near 152nd street and plan for its conservation and interpretation.</li> <li>Identify any other evidence of traditional Indigenous practices.</li> </ul>
Evidence of land use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document and interpret Indigenous land use patterns.</li> <li>Integrate and/or design new representative fish rearing ponds at the Ramsell property.</li> <li>Engage with agricultural stakeholders to retain the context of active agricultural land uses.</li> <li>Where possible, retain open ditches as evidence of past agricultural uses, early technology and for ecological purposes.</li> </ul>
Land patterns and spatial organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document and interpret the route of the Nicomekl River and its impact on changing land patterns.</li> <li>Draw attention to the pattern of township survey and agricultural fields, the arrangement of farms along roadways that follow the survey and the fields, houses and outbuildings of individual farms.</li> </ul>
Visual relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify significant viewscapes throughout the site - significant views from the riverbank to the river; views to the north shore mountains, views to agricultural lands and views from bridges at King George Boulevard, Elgin Road and 152nd Street - including foreground, middle ground and background and specific landmarks.</li> <li>Plan for the retention and enhancement of key views.</li> <li>If re-establishing views begin with a minimal intervention approach and balance the value of the viewscape with ecological conservation and the site's sense of place.</li> </ul>

Guidelines for cultural landscape features	
Heritage feature	Recommendation
Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document the characteristics of circulation systems, such as location, alignment, surface treatment, edge, grade, materials, infrastructure and condition.</li> <li>Interpret the use of the Nicomekl River and other nearby streams and rivers as travel routes.</li> <li>Identify the linkages and relationships between new trail development in the park with historical trail routes.</li> <li>Repair and maintain existing historical trails or routes that fall within the purview of the park design, such as Elgin Road, the Semiahmoo Trail and others.</li> <li>Document past trail or road routes that may be impacted by new infrastructure development.</li> </ul>
Vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain existing identified historical trees and stumps.</li> <li>Retain and rejuvenate existing vegetation patterns, such as agricultural shelterbelts, hedgerows, fencerows, meadows and fallow fields.</li> <li>Introducing new vegetation, such as park planting, orchard or agricultural plants when required by a new use, to ensure that the heritage value of the cultural landscape is preserved.</li> <li>Explore native plant material for its ethnobotanical value and establish new ethnobotanical material where required by a new use.</li> </ul>
Landforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document existing landforms, such as the flat topography of the river valley rising to the uplands, and how they contribute to the heritage value of the cultural landscape.</li> <li>Retain existing or reflect existing landforms in the park design.</li> </ul>
Built features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct documentation of the bailey bridge prior to its demolition to make way for the new sea dam. Proposed methods include photography, measured drawings and potentially laser scanning.</li> </ul>
Small-scale elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retain stone walls and fences that are sound.</li> <li>Repair rather than replace existing fences and stone walls that have deteriorated using appropriate materials.</li> </ul>
Intangible heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document and as possible integrate into current planning and interpretation intangibles such as place names, community events, stories and rituals, use of the river for fishing, boating and other recreation.</li> <li>Interpret ephemeral or seasonal features such as hay bales in fields, planting and harvesting schedules, tides and water flow, environmental cycles and others.</li> <li>Work with First Nations to document traditional knowledge.</li> <li>Consider the installation of a First Nation cedar hat pavilion or similar.</li> </ul>



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#### 4.3.2 Sea dam

The existing sea dam is a large-scale, early engineering structure that represents the past post-contact use and manipulation of the river to facilitate settlement and agriculture. It is also a reminder of the landscape transformation and environmental impacts of these past uses and the exploitation of South Surrey's natural resources.

The arched structure and masonry materials of the sea dam are create an iconic presence in the river, significant as a distinct construction that was built and fabricated for systematic control of the river, opening when the tide is out, and closing when the tide is in. Its physical and visual presence provides a record of the work, its purpose, operation and evolution, the engineering innovation and design it embodies, and its impact on the environment, all of which are potential topics for interpretation.

Guidelines for sea dam	
Heritage feature	Recommendation
Context of the sea dam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain the overall context of the sea dam in its original location as a reminder of the past manipulation of the Nicomekl River and its economic, ecological and social impacts.</li> <li>• Balance heritage conservation interventions with the protection</li> </ul>
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider the retention of all or part of the sea dam, based on its value as an early technological and engineering structure and its materials.</li> <li>• Consider retaining the roadway on top of the sea dam as a pedestrian and bicycle connection.</li> <li>• Stabilize the structure, remove or replace damaged structural fabric and adapt the sea dam for retention as a visual artifact.</li> <li>• Ensure the structure safe for use by the public by adding new features such as railings to meet health, safety or security requirements while conserving the structure and minimizing impact on its heritage value.</li> <li>• Interpret the spatial arrangement and working of the sea dam as an early engineering structure.</li> </ul>
Visual relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain the visual relationship to the sea dam from the river banks and from the river itself.</li> </ul>
Circulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Retain, adapt and enhance original paths and access to the structure.</li> </ul>
Intangible heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present the ways in which the sea dam and other aspects of containing or diverting the river has impacted the river itself and its environs.</li> <li>• Document and explain the operation and maintenance of the sea dam in sufficient detail to fully understand its design and operational characteristics.</li> </ul>

#### 4.3.3 Billy Hadden House

The Billy Hadden House is associated with the historical use of the river for transporting logs and as the location of a sawmill, and for its connection to the early development of the Elgin neighbourhood of Surrey. Built about 1940 to replace an original house built in 1906 by James Hadden which was destroyed by fire, the house is important for construction using quality materials produced in local sawmills and the influence of the Craftsman style throughout the early development of the Elgin neighbourhood of Surrey.

The house is proposed to be relocated as a mitigation measure to the threat of sea level rise and adaptively re-used as the headquarters for an artist-in-residence.

Consult the detailed heritage conservation plan prepared for the Hadden House in 2014.



Fig. 34. Billy Hadden House from: City of Surrey Heritage Sites in South Surrey.



Fig. 35. Proposed relocation of the Hadden House from: City of Surrey.



Examples of ways in which building interiors can combine interpretation with hands-on and interactive activities, as well as providing space for artist-in-residence and other programs.

## 4.4 Interpretation

Interpretation is an essential tool for heritage conservation. Heritage conservation, and by association interpretation, is not just about the past, it is developing strategies to show how the past can inform the future.

The ICOMOS *Enchanted Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites* states that “interpretation in the 21st century denotes the totality of activity, reflection, research, and creativity stimulated by a cultural heritage site.” By making cultural landscapes “places and sources of learning and reflection about the past” the charter suggests they become “valuable resources for sustainable community development and intercultural and inter-generational dialogue.“

The language of landscape is a powerful tool and heritage conservation has an important role in the conservation of the tangible history and cultural memory that landscapes represent. It can curate and conserve buildings and landscapes but it can also be an opportunity to teach landscape literacy to the community whose histories are embodied in them.



### 4.4.1 Key principles for meaningful interpretation

#### Access and understanding

Interpretation and presentation programmes should facilitate physical and intellectual access by the public to cultural heritage sites. Intellectual and physical access, highlighting the role of interpretation can play in offering a direct connection between the heritage resource and the personal experiences and challenges of the contemporary community.

#### Information Sources

Informational content conveyed at cultural heritage sites must be based on evidence gathered through accepted scientific and scholarly methods as well as from living cultural traditions.

#### Context and Setting

The interpretation of cultural heritage sites should relate to their wider social, cultural, historical, and environmental contexts in both an intellectual and a physical sense.

#### Authenticity

The design of a heritage interpretation programme should respect the traditional social functions of the site and the cultural practices and dignity of local residents and associated communities.

#### Sustainability

The interpretation planning for a cultural heritage site should be rational and sensitive to its natural and cultural environment, with social, financial, and environmental sustainability among



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its central goals. Any potentially disruptive effects of interpretive technologies, facilities, and costs on the physical stability of the cultural heritage site should be avoided.

#### **Inclusiveness**

The interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage sites should be the result of meaningful collaboration between heritage professionals, host and associated communities, and other stakeholders.

#### **Research, Training, and Evaluation**

Continuing research, training, and evaluation are essential components of the interpretation of a cultural heritage site.

#### **4.4.2 Interpretive objectives**

Interpretation is not directly related to instruction or the conveyance of facts. Rather, its aim is to elicit some kind of change, understanding or revelation in the people who experience an interpretive site and provide meaningful experiences to visitors who may visit the site once or many times.

Cognitive interpretive goals relate to knowing, and are the things that visitors are meant to learn or understand, such as information or skills. Affective goals relate to the emotions individuals experiencing the site should feel, associated with a thing in relation to a person, place or event, while behavioural goals relate to actions or activities a person will be inspired to undertake.

Overall interpretive goals for the Nicomekl Riverfront Park were developed in part through the results of the community engagement. These high-level goals span all the themes described in this section and give a sense of what future interpretation could strive to accomplish. The overall interpretive goals are to:

- Communicate the significance of Nicomekl Riverfront Park to visitors to the area
- Broaden understanding of the Nicomekl Riverfront Park area and include a multitude of perspectives, some of which may have been missing from the public narrative
- Show complex, interwoven histories of people, cultures and places
- Connect Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and communities
- Use interpretation to invite people to interact with each other and with the space
- Reveal the tangible and intangible heritage of the area and allowing the invisible to be made visible
- Connect the stories in Nicomekl Riverfront Park to the larger stories of Surrey and the province

#### **4.4.3 Ways to tell the story: interpretive themes**

The Nicomekl River is an important element in the history of what is now known as South Surrey, through its association with First Nations travel and livelihood, a means of newcomer settlement, its productiveness and use, and as part of the wider Fraser River watershed.

### **THE RIVER: THE WAY THROUGH**

The over-arching theme is **Nicomekl: the way through**, with overlapping meanings including the passage of the Nicomekl River itself, the pathway winding through the park, the passage of time and multiple understandings of history and landscape, including Indigenous reconciliation.

## **Historical context:**

1. Waterway environment
2. Populating place
3. Land and water-based economy
4. Engineering on the river
5. Movement networks
6. Riverfront community



## **The river: The way through**

1. Naming
2. Measuring
3. Logging
4. Engineering
5. Growing
6. Gathering
7. Crossing
8. Living

The Nicomekl River defines the project area and is a starting point for digging into human stories about the place. Physically and culturally, the Nicomekl River has shaped the area and the lives of the people who have spent time in this place. The river and the lands around it are considered a source of life and holds a sacred importance, both of which give meaning to this place.

The connection between the river, land and people is fundamental and long-standing, and connections to the river should be explored when interpretation is being planned, sought out when content is being developed, and highlighted in design of interpretive projects and programming.

### **THEME 1 - NAMING**

Interviews and many of the survey responses included an interest in names associated with the Nicomekl River. This theme engages the visitor with the importance of naming, the meanings and associations related to place names and the association of these names with the land and river.

Naming a place, site or parcel of land conveys ownership and includes stories of land, territory, attachment, family history and settlement. Indigenous place names carry knowledge that has been passed from generation to generation - they are the story maps that connected Indigenous people to place and guided them from place to place.

### **THEME 2 - MEASURING**

This theme is all about understanding Nicomekl Riverfront Park and its history through numbers, quantities, calculations, weights, sizes, survey and other means of newcomer measurement. This could include survey areas, agricultural field sizes and yields, flood measurements, rates of flow through dams and ditches, the size of fish, number of native species and other things.

With knowledge from First Nations, it is intended to carry messages about Indigenous mastery of the land and their ways of understanding measurement, through directions, seasons, technology, heights of land, flood stories, rates of river discharge and flow, distances and oral traditions around these phenomena.

### **THEME 3 - LOGGING**

This theme is representative of the native tree species resource and extraction through logging around the Nicomekl River and its environs, as well as other resource harvesting and processing activities, such as fishing, sawmilling and other pursuits. As well as the contribution of these pursuits to technology and the local and regional economy, the theme encompasses the lives and stories of people engaged in these occupations.

The theme also emphasizes the landscape changes as a result of these activities, and their environmental and social costs, including the alienation of First Nations lands and ecological and climate change, as well as promoting thoughtful ways of raising awareness about sustainability and the mitigation of these historic impacts.

### **THEME 4 - ENGINEERING**

The theme of engineering pervades the history of the Nicomekl River and its region. From Indigenous technologies such as fish weirs to the more invasive infrastructure such

as bridges, dykes, dams and ditches, we experience Nicomekl Riverside Park through its transformation by technology.

The theme also explores the impact of these technological “advances” on the environment, their contribution to climate change, and the potential for less invasive alternatives.

## THEME 5 - GROWING

Through this theme we experience the ways in which humans use the physical environment for cultivation to sustain themselves and produce and share goods and services. The cultivation of native plants, early farms, gardens and orchards, intentional growing of salmon, harvesting, retail, sharing and barter are some of the aspects of this theme.

The Nicomekl River is home to a wide variety of mammals, birds and insects, significant to the ecological and human health of the place. As well as cultivation for human use, this theme encompasses the natural growth, seasonality, life cycle and regeneration on the land.

## THEME 6 - GATHERING

The Nicomekl River and its environs have been a source of foodstuffs, building materials such as wood and a source of constituents for industrial and engineering uses, including rock and gravel. The theme includes such activities as native plant collecting, shellfish gathering and fishing.

The theme gathering also includes the human need for social gathering, found in places such as the Hadden House, past and present, and the historic Elgin Hotel. Ceremonies, rituals, recreation and celebrations are all part of the theme of gathering.

## THEME 7 - CROSSING

Through this theme we experience the ways and means of movement along and across the Nicomekl River and through the lands around it. It encompasses early Indigenous use of the river as a transportation corridor, later explorations, the passage of boats and ships, bridge crossings and trails, as well as the means of transport such as the local building of water vessels.

The theme also encompasses river and land movements associated with nature, such as fish swimming upstream or through a fish ladder, wildlife paths and movements, wind currents and other natural processes of the site.

## THEME 8 - LIVING

This theme encompasses everyday life in Nicomekl Riverside Park through the eyes of the individuals, families and communities who have inhabited, visited, and made their lives there, throughout history. It includes materials and forms of symbols of land inhabitation and possession, such as seasonal camps and farms, as well as cooking and food preservation, craft and art.

The theme acknowledges different world views, lifeways and experiences of living on and near the river, as well as spirituality, traditional knowledge, kinship, family and home. It includes traditional Indigenous perspectives on land that are rooted in the beliefs that people are spiritually connected to the land, water, plants and animals.



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Taking advantage of on-site opportunities to integrate into interpretation.



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Cultural programming and events.



Interpretation embedded into infrastructure, for example, a full-scale frog and depiction of its life-cycle.

#### 4.4.4 Interpretive strategy matrix

Interpretive framework				
Theme/Sub-theme	Interpretive/audience experience objectives and relationships	Key communication and messages	Inspiration, means of expression / media prescription	Site location(s)
<b>Naming</b> The act of naming places important to all First Nations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Habitation of the land for millennia</li> <li>Associated understandings, significance and world view of natural and cultural places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indigenous names for rivers, creeks and other geographical features</li> <li>Names of places such as transformation sites, settlements, cemeteries, berry-picking places, others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign or marker with name and meaning</li> <li>Photographs applied to surfaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate locations throughout site, in consultation with the Semiahmoo, Kwaantlen and Katzie First Nations</li> </ul>
<b>Measuring</b> Tides, height of water and sea level rise Floods Surveying and dividing Goods and vessels passing through the Customs House Number of salmon produced in the hatchery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the role of river in the formation of the land and its changes over time</li> <li>Human manipulation of the land</li> <li>Impact on First Nations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sea level rise will have an impact on how people interact with the coastline</li> <li>Semiahmoo flood story and the impact of later floods</li> <li>Ongoing processes of scouring and deposition</li> <li>The imposition of the survey grid on the natural landscape and on First Nations traditional territory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Means of measuring tidal change and water level</li> <li>Water level markers with explanation</li> <li>Sign or marker to explain cause and effect of sea level rise and strategies for sea level rise in park</li> <li>Mark survey lines on the land</li> <li>Sign or marker to show vegetation differences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed measuring techniques into design of amphitheatre in the Oxbow</li> <li>Bridges and boardwalks</li> <li>Location of customs house</li> </ul>
<b>Logging</b> Removal of resources from First Nations control Economic impacts Skid roads Lumber mills such as the Hadden mill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the extent of tree harvesting in the area and the impact of logging on the environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Nations use of trees and timber</li> <li>The area was part of B.C.'s boom and bust resource economy</li> <li>Removal of resources from First Nations control and management</li> <li>Design and use of lumber mills located on the river</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Log boom with messages floating in the river</li> <li>Identify tree species associated with logging</li> <li>Mark the two locations of skid roads in the park area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hadden Mill</li> <li>Locations of skid roads</li> <li>Appropriate locations along trails</li> </ul>
<b>Engineering</b> First Nations engineering Dykes and ditches Construction techniques of bridges, roads, sea dam and other infrastructure Blacksmithing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the key role of engineering and landscape manipulation throughout the park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore First Nations technologies such as fish weirs etc. developed and used over millennia</li> <li>Impact on environment and river transport from engineering works</li> <li>Extent of engineering systems</li> <li>Design and methodologies of construction of engineering works such as the sea dam, flood boxes etc.</li> <li>Smaller scale newcomer technologies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical re-creation of technologies or construction embedded into the landscape</li> <li>Sign or marker with explanatory diagram</li> <li>Photographs applied to surfaces</li> <li>Use of industrial artifacts eg. retain skeleton of sea dam if it is moved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culturally appropriate locations throughout site</li> <li>Near the sea dam and bridges</li> <li>Hadden House sawmill site</li> </ul>
<b>Growing</b> Agricultural history of the site Salmon in the hatchery Native plants and ecosystems Fauna, birds and insects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand the history of the ALR in BC and Surrey</li> <li>Be introduced to the complex web of natural history in the park and region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Importance of retaining agricultural land for food security</li> <li>Methods of fish and shellfish farming and their impacts</li> <li>Contribution of native plants and healthy ecosystems to well-being of people and planet</li> <li>Historical and present-day identification, migration and life cycles of animal and bird species</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sign or marker overlooking view of ALR to the north</li> <li>Sign or marker at salmon refuge</li> <li>Agricultural artifacts placed on-site</li> <li>Planting and identification of appropriate orchard fruit varieties</li> <li>Agricultural activities</li> <li>Sign, marker, etching or carving integrated into boardwalk or trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lookouts and boardwalk in the Bluff</li> <li>Sign or marker for views to habitat island from platforms and birdwatching tower in the Oxbow</li> <li>Salmon refuges at Hadden Mill</li> <li>New park in the Oxbow</li> <li>Trails in the Ravine, Floodplain and Creek</li> </ul>

Interpretive framework				
Theme/Sub-theme	Interpretive/audience experience objectives and relationships	Key communication and messages	Inspiration, means of expression / media prescription	Site location(s)
<b>Gathering</b> Traditional gathering places Ethnobotany and medicinal plants Plant and shellfish collecting Fishing Hadden House, Elgin Hotel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To explore the ways in which the river and land has been used to provide physical, social and spiritual sustenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Role of gathering and activities in First Nations society and culture</li> <li>Importance of First Nations management of individual plants or plant communities</li> <li>Tradition of commercial and recreational fishing in the park and region</li> <li>Newcomer traditions of settlement and gathering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marked places possibly inspired by awakwas</li> <li>Plant and identify Indigenous medicinal, traditional and food plants such as bullrush, devil's club and others</li> <li>Identify berry picking opportunities and their traditional management</li> <li>Establish new clam gardens</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate locations throughout site</li> <li>Boardwalks, pedestrian-scale bridges, places where there is access to water</li> </ul>
<b>Crossing</b> Use of river and land for transportation by First Nations Boatbuilding Use of the river by vessels Roads, trails and bridges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To show how the Nicomekl River has been used over time as a transportation corridor</li> <li>To expose visitors to the complex narrative about territory and land as it relates to the Nicomekl River</li> <li>To explore early and contemporary trail networks such as the Semiahmoo Trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>First Nations connected with each other by water and land throughout the region</li> <li>The Nicomekl was used extensively for vessels, log transport and recreation</li> <li>Today's road network has evolved from early trails and routes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map showing First Nations transport and communication routes</li> <li>Sign or marker identifying different types of vessels</li> <li>Boatbuilding demonstrations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify appropriate site for map</li> <li>Hadden House and grounds</li> <li>Sites along trails and at bridges</li> </ul>
<b>Living</b> The past and buried history of the site Storytelling Understanding and reconciliation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To allow visitors to understand the complexity and layered history of the park site</li> <li>To present the different lifeways, foodways, culture and other aspect of day-to-day living in the area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site has been inhabited for millennia</li> <li>There are layers of history and stories associated with the site</li> <li>Acknowledge world views and experiences: First Nations, Chinese labourers etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Archaeology and artifacts revealed in park walls and infrastructure</li> <li>Markers and artifacts along trails</li> <li>Site-specific storytelling related to the particular area of the park</li> <li>On-site activities and celebrations in the newly designed park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Places of past use and understanding of the area by First Nations</li> <li>Sites of past community living and engagement, such as the site of Elgin and the Hadden House reach</li> <li>Places of current and planned community uses and gathering</li> </ul>

#### 4.4.5 Interpretive approach and components

##### Community engagement

The input and involvement of visitors, local and associated community groups, and other stakeholders of various ages and educational backgrounds is important to the goal of transforming cultural heritage sites from static monuments into places of learning and reflection about the past. Information elicited includes:

- Integrate Indigenous names for rivers and creeks
- Use and identify traditional plants and create an ethnobotanical walk
- Provide information about stormwater discharge and integrate stormwater management into park design
- Provide opportunities for First Nations to tell their stories
- Interpretive elements should be well managed and focused in gathering spaces in the park.
- Signs and other elements should be discreet, unique and informative
- Not too much interpretation, keep it mostly at key and entry points
- Incorporate First Nations heritage and storytelling

##### Interpretive approach

- Integrated with the park plan and its elements
- Focused, discrete and minimal
- Appropriate materials and artifacts
- Effective, thought-provoking, hands-on and fun
- Authentic and of the place

##### Proposed interpretive components

Five different but integrated components are presented for consideration to effectively build interpretation within Nicomekl Riverfront Park. Used judiciously, some or all of the following could be incorporated into the interpretive programming.

- Interpretive elements embedded into park design components and built infrastructure, such as walls, benches, railings, fences, paving, open space and planting.
- Markers, insertions into paving and other small gestures that reflect the character of each character zone, creating an interpretive trail of linked small elements to explore and discover.
- Integrated free-standing or integrated signs, sign-like elements or artifacts that both impart information and understanding and become embedded as a subtle part of the park landscape.
- Nodes or installations at key places within the park design, such as artifacts, floating objects, historical photographic installations or integrated structures.
- Interpretive programming and events, such as grafting orchard rootstocks, native and ethnobotanical plant identification, guided walks, dances or theatre, cooking and gathering.

An online component with expanded information, images and explanatory material should be considered for those wishing to access further, more detailed information about the site and its interpretation. This would also assist in keeping the didactic material on the site to a minimum.



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Interpretation can incorporate a variety of media and elements and be found in interesting locations.



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Markers can be subtle and integrated.



#### 4.4.6 Character zones

Heritage conservation and interpretation is proposed in each of the proposed character zones in the park. A summary of each zone follows:

#### THE BLUFF

The Bluff contains heritage values related to the natural environment and is the location of the most prominent views to the agricultural history and current agricultural activity on the opposite side of the river.

Interpretation and conservation in the Bluff may address:

- Understand the history of agriculture and the Agricultural Land Reserve in Surrey.
- Importance of retaining agricultural land for food security.
- Be introduced to the complex web of natural history in the park and region through interpretation at the various proposed outlooks.
- Retain and rejuvenate existing vegetation patterns, such as agricultural shelterbelts, hedgerows, fencerows, meadows and fallow fields.
- Retain historical stumps.

#### THE RAVINE

In addition to its natural heritage features, the Ravine is adjacent to the original Johnstone Road, now 152nd Street and Nicomekl Bridge. It is also the location of two historical cedar stumps and a burned-out historical cedar stump, representation of the area's use for logging.

Interpretation and conservation in the Ravine may address:

- To show how the Nicomekl River has been used over time as a transportation corridor
- Identification of Indigenous medicinal, traditional and food plants such as bullrush, devil's club and others
- Exploration First Nations technologies such as fish weirs etc. developed and used over millennia.
- Explore First Nations technologies such as fish weirs etc. developed and used over millennia.
- Retain and interpret historical stumps.

## THE FLOODPLAIN

The Floodplain represents the historic importance of quality clean water in the river, in fishing and shellfish and other sea product harvesting, and First Nations use of the river as an important trading and transportation route.

Interpretation and conservation in the floodplain may address:

- To show how the Nicomekl River has been used over time as a transportation corridor.
- To expose visitors to the complex narrative about territory and land as it relates to the Nicomekl River.
- Retain historical stumps.

## THE CREEK

Heritage values associated with the Creek centre primarily on the cultural and natural history values of both Anderson Creek and the Nicomekl River itself, as well as the economic values associated with logging in the area.

Interpretation in the Creek may address:

- Indigenous names for rivers, creeks and other geographical features.
- Habitation of the land for millennia.
- Associated understandings, significance and world view of natural and cultural places.
- Impacts of the logging and related infrastructure such as skid roads.

## THE OXBOW

The Oxbow is important for containing the former Riverside Golf Course and the bailey bridge which crosses King George Highway, a former early transportation route.

Interpretation in the Oxbow is proposed to relate to the cultivation of native plants, early farms, gardens and orchards, harvesting, retail, sharing and barter

Interpretation and conservation at the Oxbow may address:

- Explore native plant material for its ethnobotanical value and establish new ethnobotanical material where required by a new use.
- Understand early transportation routes and infrastructure.
- Conduct documentation of the bailey bridge prior to its demolition to make way for the new sea dam

## HADDEN MILL

The Hadden Mill zone is important as the location of the Billy Hadden House which is associated with the historical use of the river for transporting logs and as the location of a sawmill, and for its connection to the early development of the Elgin neighbourhood of Surrey. The Ramsell property is significant for its past use as a salmon-rearing operation.

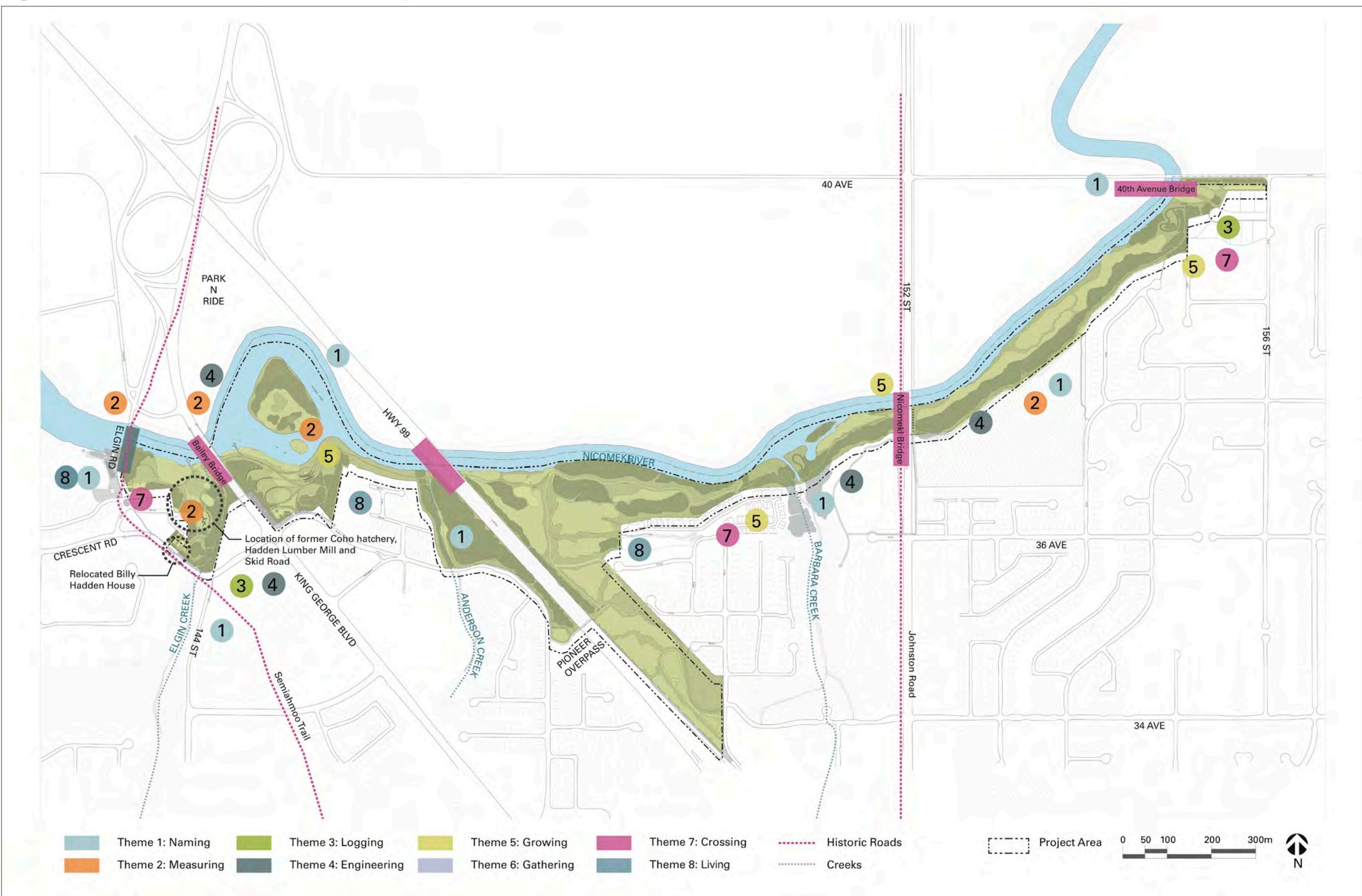
It is also significant for being the location through which the early Semiahmoo Trail passed through, an important early transportation corridor, and as the location of the Sea Dam which represents the ongoing manipulation of the Nicomekl River.

The Hadden house is proposed to be relocated as a mitigation measure to the threat of sea level rise and adaptively re-used as the headquarters for an artist-in-residence.

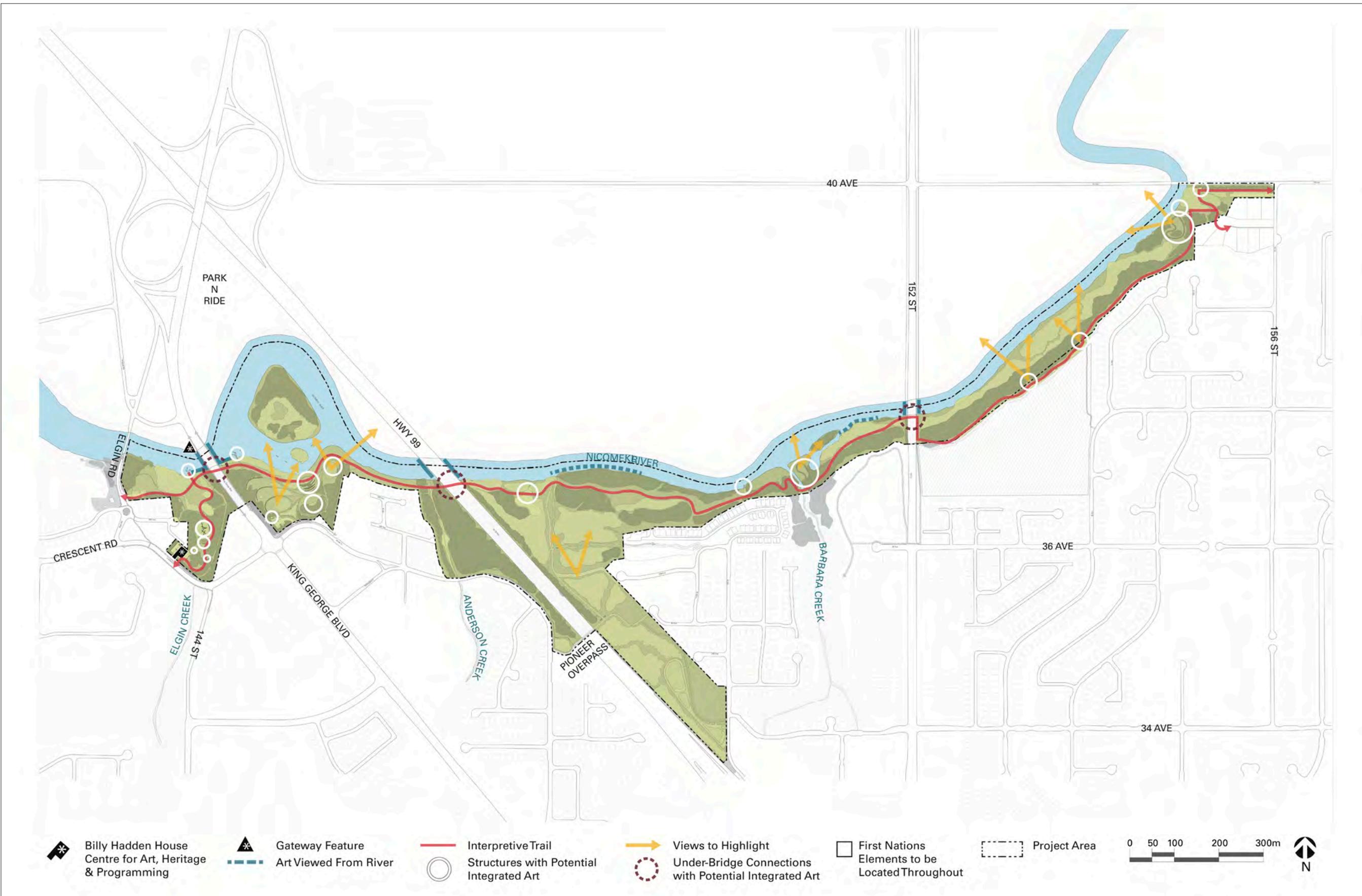
Interpretation and conservation at the Hadden Mill is proposed to:

- Present the different lifeways, foodways, culture and other aspects of day-to-day living in the area.
- Understanding the impacts of climate change and sea level rise through the interpretation and measurement of tides, height of water historic flooding.
- Present the importance of the salmon and other fishery resources in the river.
- Consider the retention of all or part of the sea dam, based on its value as an early technological and engineering structure and its materials.
- Consider retaining the roadway on top of the sea dam as a pedestrian and bicycle connection.
- Interpretation in or near the water at the site of the original Hadden Mill and understand the extent of tree harvesting in the area and the impact of logging on the environment
- Make the connection to Elgin Historic Park.

**Fig. 37. General locations for themed interpretive features**



**Fig. 38. Possible art and heritage locations**



## Interpretive idea images



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# 5.0 Opportunities for Wayfinding

## 5.1 Wayfinding Objectives and Approaches

It is proposed that the wayfinding program be integrated with public art, heritage and Indigenous approaches in the park.

### Approaches

- Subtle fit within the over all park plan
- Use a less-is-more approach
- Use materials integrated into the natural and designed landscape
- Integrate wayfinding with interpretation, using interpretive features as wayfinding devices

The Nicomekl River is the over-arching guiding wayfinding element, around which the wayfinding plan is developed. Using the circulation and trail system found in the park design, wayfinding includes the identification and demarcation of:

- Entrances
- Destinations
- Natural and designed landscape landmarks
- Decision points
- Trailblazers as needed along paths



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Integrating interpretation and wayfinding.

# 6.0

## Appendices

APPENDIX A: REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

APPENDIX B: RESEARCH SOURCES

APPENDIX C: LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

APPENDIX D: HISTORICAL AIRPHOTOS

APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY OF HERITAGE TERMS

# Appendix A: Reference Documents

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

*Nicomekl Riverfront Park Management Plan, 2019*

## COMPANION DOCUMENTS

*Environmental Assessment Report*, Diamond Head Consulting, November 2018

*Nicomekl Riverfront Park Public Art Strategy*, Lynne Werker Architect, January 2020

*Public Consultation Summary Report*, PFS Studio, January 2020

Open House #1 Presentation Boards

Open House #2 Presentation Boards

Public Engagement Verbatims

## RELATED DOCUMENTS

The following City of Surrey documents were prepared separately from this Management Plan but they inform the plan's Park Objectives, Design Initiatives and Management Strategies.

*All our Relations: Surrey Urban Aboriginal Social Innovation Strategy*, April 2017, <https://www.surrey.ca/community/18417.aspx>

*Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (BCS)*, January 2014, <https://www.surrey.ca/city-services/11565.aspx>

*Blueways Master Plan*, March 2001, <https://www.surrey.ca/culturerecreation/6033.aspx>

*Coastal Flood Adaptation Strategy (CFAS)*, November 2019, <https://www.surrey.ca/city-services/19888.aspx>

*Natural Areas Management Plan (NAMP)*, 2002, <https://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/3443.aspx>

*Parks, Recreation and Culture Strategic Plan*, May 2018, <https://www.surrey.ca/culture-recreation/3096.aspx>

*Sustainability Charter 2.0*, 2016, <https://www.surrey.ca/community/3568.aspx>

## Appendix B: List of Photographs

Page	Image	Title	Source/credit
2	01	Original customs house and bridge over the Nicomekl River, 1880	Surrey Archives SA 203.01
	02	Elgin School students c.1899	BCAR C-07766
9	03	View of the Nicomekl River from the dyke	Denise Cook Design
11	04	View of the Nicomekl River	Denise Cook Design
11	05	Standing water at the former Riverside golf course	Denise Cook Design
25	All images	Cultural landscape features	Denise Cook Design
26	All images	Cultural landscape features	Denise Cook Design
29	06	Blueberry fields	Denise Cook Design
30	07	Informal dock at river edge	Denise Cook Design
30	08	Fenceline and agricultural fields	Denise Cook Design
31	09	Sea to Sky cultural journey sign kiosk	Denise Cook Design
33	10	Wall projection from Woodlawn Stone Barn	SEGD.org
33	11	Interior of the Chinese Bunkhouse, Britannia Heritage Shipyard National Historic Site.	Denise Cook Design
34	12	Gateway portal, Erie Canal Harbour Project	<a href="https://segd.org/content/erie-canal-harbor-project">https://segd.org/content/erie-canal-harbor-project</a>
34	13	Interpretive words on bridge railing, Fundy National Park	form-media.ca
36	14	UBC street signs with Musqueam language	Denise Cook Design
36	15	Base detail from Sea to Sky cultural journey sign kiosk	Denise Cook Design
37	16	Beaver-felled tree	sciencephoto.com
37	17	Cooking salmon, Alert Bay	Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC.
37	18	Bronze frog on fence	<a href="https://geckogroup.com">https://geckogroup.com</a>
40	19	Floating numbers interpretive element, Battery Point Sculpture Trail, Hobart, Tasmania	SEGD.org
40	20	Reclaimed wood interpretive marker, Heine Jones commemorative trail	City of Greater Dandenong
46	21	Reclaimed wood interpretive marker, Heine Jones commemorative trail	City of Greater Dandenong
46	22	Reclaimed wood interpretive marker, Heine Jones commemorative trail	City of Greater Dandenong

46	23	Awakwas at Alert Bay	Denise Cook Design
46	24	Detail of awakwas at Alert Bay	Denise Cook Design
46	25	Cotter Dam Discovery interpretive sign, Canberra	Communita Designs
46	26	Castlewellan Forest Park play equipment	Flights of Fancy Creative Play
46	27	Interpretive sign on wheelbarrow	<a href="https://www.pinterest.ca/wayne_gannaway/pins/">https://www.pinterest.ca/wayne_gannaway/pins/</a>
46	28	Concrete pylon sign a Pulp Paper Trail, Burnie Foreshore, Tasmania	Red Arrow Design
46	29	Gum tree interpretive sign	<a href="http://ecocreative.com.au">ecocreative.com.au</a>
47	30	Brecon Beacons National Park	Fitzpatrick Woolmer Inc.
47	31	Bronze tree bench	<a href="https://www.tursalon.com/about/">https://www.tursalon.com/about/</a>
47	32	Battery Point Sculpture Trail, Hobart, Tasmania	SEGD.org
47	33	Yorke Island Conservancy interpretive markers	Denise Cook Design
47	34	Mount Stirling interpretive/wayfinding marker	<a href="https://segd.org/mount-stirling-alpine-resort-interpretive-trail">https://segd.org/mount-stirling-alpine-resort-interpretive-trail</a>
47	35	Wall graphic, Unframed Ellis Island exhibit	<a href="http://www.jr-art.net/news/unframed-ellis-island?page=38">http://www.jr-art.net/news/unframed-ellis-island?page=38</a>
47	36	Mailbox on 40th Avenue	Denise Cook Design
47	37	Sculpted shell in stone wall	City of Seattle Public Art Program
47	38	Wall graphic, Unframed Ellis Island exhibit	<a href="http://www.jr-art.net/news/unframed-ellis-island?page=38">http://www.jr-art.net/news/unframed-ellis-island?page=38</a>
47	39	Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve, Nature Conservancy Utah	<a href="https://segd.org/content/great-salt-lake-shorelands-preserve">https://segd.org/content/great-salt-lake-shorelands-preserve</a>
47	40	Great Salt Lake Shorelands Preserve, Nature Conservancy Utah	<a href="https://segd.org/content/great-salt-lake-shorelands-preserve">https://segd.org/content/great-salt-lake-shorelands-preserve</a>
		Mount Stirling interpretive/wayfinding marker	<a href="https://segd.org/mount-stirling-alpine-resort-interpretive-trail">https://segd.org/mount-stirling-alpine-resort-interpretive-trail</a>

# Appendix C: Selected Research Sources

- “BC Cities Prepare for Rising Sea Levels.” *Globe and Mail*, May 22, 2018.
- BC Parks. *Shoreline Sensitivity to Sea Level Rise Model and User Guide*. Doug Biffard, Tory Stevens, BC Parks, Anuradha S. Rao, M.Sc., R.PBio.
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## Appendix D: Historical Airphotos

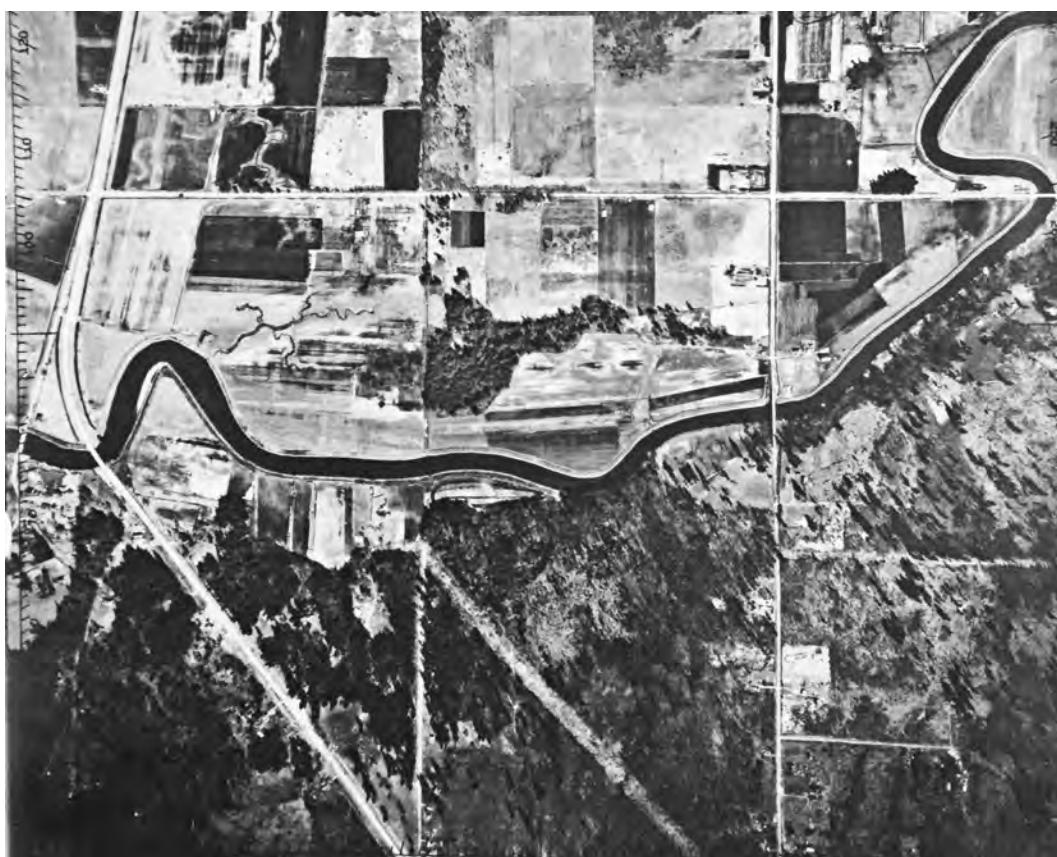
These historical airphotos dated between 1932 and 1949 show the changes to the natural and cultural landscape in the area around Nicomekl Riverfront Park. All photographs are sourced from the UBC Geographic Information Centre.



1932



1940



1949

# Appendix E: Glossary of Heritage Terms

**Accessibility** The degree to which a historic place is easy to access by as many people as possible, including people with disabilities.

**Adaptive re-use** Conversion of a building into a use other than that for which it was designed, such as changing a power plant or warehouse into a gallery space or housing.

**Artifact** An object made by a human being, typically an item of cultural or historical interest.

**Biogeoclimatic Zone** A classification system used by the British Columbia Ministry of Forests for the Canadian province's many different ecosystems.

**Character-defining element (CDE)** The materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses and cultural associations or meanings that contribute to the heritage value of an historic place, which must be retained in order to preserve its heritage value.

**Conservation** All actions, interventions, or processes that are aimed at safeguarding the character-defining elements of a cultural resource so as to retain its heritage value and extend its physical life. This may involve preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, or a combination of these and other actions or processes.

**Consolidation** A treatment used to strengthen deteriorated materials to ensure their structural integrity or stabilizing degraded or weakened areas by introducing or attaching materials capable of holding them together.

**Cultural landscape** Any geographical area that has been modified, influenced, or given special cultural meaning by people.

- Designed cultural landscapes were intentionally created by human beings.
- Organically evolved cultural landscapes developed in response to social, economic, administrative, or religious forces interacting with the natural environment. They fall into two sub-categories:
  - Relict landscapes in which an evolutionary process came to an end. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form.
  - Continuing landscapes in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. They exhibit significant material evidence of their evolution over time.
- Associative cultural landscapes are distinguished by the power of their spiritual, artistic, or cultural associations, rather than their surviving material evidence.

**Demolition** is the systematic and deliberate destruction of a building (or fixture, chattel, and or equipment) or portion thereof. This includes not only removal of sections of buildings such as additions, wings and attached sheds but also integral design and structural components (both interior and exterior), surface finishes such as plaster or paneling, and design treatments such as store fronts, windows, and doors.

**Ecosystem** A biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

**Endangered species** Wildlife species facing imminent extirpation or extinction.

**Fabric** In conservation, fabric means all the physical material of a place that is the product of human activity.

**Habitat** (a) In respect of aquatic species, spawning grounds and nursery, rearing, food supply, migration and any other areas on which aquatic species depend directly or

indirectly in order to carry out their life processes, or areas where aquatic species formerly occurred and have the potential to be reintroduced.

(b) In respect of other wildlife species, the area or type of site where an individual or wildlife species naturally occurs or depends on directly or indirectly in order to carry out its life processes or formerly occurred and has the potential to be reintroduced. (Canada Species at Risk Act)

**Heritage value** The aesthetic, historic, scientific, cultural, social, or spiritual importance or significance for past, present, or future generations. The heritage value of an historic place is embodied in its character-defining materials, forms, location, spatial configurations, uses, and cultural associations or meanings.

**Indigenous** Native to a particular place.

**Inspection** A survey or review of the condition of an historic place and its elements to determine if they are functioning properly; to identify signs of weakness, deterioration or hazardous conditions; and to identify necessary repairs. Inspections should be carried out on a regular basis as part of a maintenance plan.

**Intangible Heritage** The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills, as well as associated tools, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces that communities and groups recognize as part of their history and heritage.

**Integrity** Generally refers to material wholeness, completeness, and unimpaired condition of heritage values. In the case of natural heritage, ecosystem integrity relates to the completeness of an ecosystem in terms of its indigenous species, functions, and processes. An unfragmented and relatively undisturbed ecosystem has the most integrity.

**Interpretation, Interpretive Plan** A mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource, communicating messages and stories about cultural and natural heritage, and providing a wider understanding of our environment. (National Association for Interpretation)

**Intervention** Any action, other than demolition or destruction, that results in a physical change to an element of a historic place.

**Invasive Plant** A plant that is both non-native and able to establish on many sites, grow quickly, and spread to the point of disrupting plant communities or ecosystems.

**Landscape** An expanse of natural or human-made scenery, comprising landforms, land cover, habitats, and natural and human-made features that, taken together, form a composite.

**Maintenance** Routine, cyclical, non-destructive actions necessary to slow the deterioration of an historic place. It entails periodic inspection; routine, cyclical, non-destructive cleaning; minor repair and refinishing operations; replacement of damaged or deteriorated materials that are impractical to save.

**Mitigation** Conservation measures that can be implemented to eliminate or reduce a threat and its effects on a CDE, or to minimize the potential impact of a threat to a CDE. Site mitigation can involve avoiding the CDE through redesigning a proposed development or excavating only a percentage of the site.

**Monitoring** The systematic and regular inspection or measurement of the condition of the materials and elements of a CDE to document behaviour, performance, and rate of deterioration over time.

**Native Wildlife** species endemic (indigenous) or naturalized to a given area.

**Naturalized** A non-native species that does not need human help to reproduce and maintain itself over time in an area where it is not native. Naturalized plants often form the matrix for a novel ecosystem.

**Non-native** A species introduced with human help (intentionally or accidentally) to a new place where it was not previously found.

**Object** a discrete item that has heritage value and can be collected or conserved. See also **Artifact**.

**Scale** The sense of proportion or apparent size of a building or building element as created by the placement and size of the building in its setting.

**Sense of place** The feeling associated with a place, based on a unique identity and other memorable or intangible qualities.

**Site circulation** Movement patterns of pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

**Species at risk** An extirpated, endangered, or threatened species or a species of special concern in Canada. (Canada Species at Risk Act) Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada (2nd edition, 2010 and any successors), Ottawa: Parks Canada.

**Statement of Significance (SOS)** A statement that identifies the description, heritage value, and character-defining elements of an historic place. A Statement of Significance is required in order for a historic place to be listed on the BC Register of Historic Places.

**Stewardship** Linked to the concept of sustainability, stewardship is an ethic that embodies responsible planning and management of cultural and natural resources.

**Streetscape** The visual elements of a street, including the pavement (dimensions, materials), sidewalks, adjoining buildings and open space frontages, street furniture, lighting, trees and plantings that combine to form the street's character.

**Sustainability** A group of objectives (economic, social, and environmental - the 'triple-bottom line') that must be coordinated and addressed to ensure the long term viability of communities and the planet.

**View or viewscape** What can be seen from an observation point to an object(s), particularly a landscape or building.