



UNIVERSITY
NEIGHBOURHOODS
ASSOCIATION

June 22, 2022

Sent by email only to: Michael.White@ubc.ca

Michael White
Associate Vice-President,
Campus + Community Planning
2210 West Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4

Re: Outdoor recreation in the Wesbrook Neighbourhood

Dear Michael,

The Wesbrook neighbourhood plan, originally adopted in 2005, envisioned an extensive network of parks, greenways, and outdoor recreational facilities to serve an anticipated population of around 12,000 people. With the exception of tennis courts, UBC Properties Trust has built the recreational facilities that were originally outlined in the neighbourhood plan. This recreational network provides excellent playgrounds for younger children; green walking opportunities for all ages; and playing fields for organized sports. But there are few local outdoor recreation opportunities for youth who age out of playgrounds and for the growing number of university students who live in Wesbrook.

The UNA has no formal role in planning and developing neighbourhoods. At the same time, the UNA Board noted the lack of informal outdoor recreation opportunities for youth in Wesbrook, and had a unique opportunity to request Metro Vancouver Community Works Funding for possible facilities. Rather than tennis courts, which would primarily serve other demographics than youth, the UNA proposed a basketball court. (The high usage of the basketball court across from the Hawthorn neighbourhood indicates the enduring popularity of basketball among youth in our area.)

Given the constraints of the neighbourhood plan and the development priorities of UBC Properties Trust, the only space deemed available for a basketball court was in the “future school site” adjacent to the soccer field. As you’re aware, many residents living near the proposed court expressed concerns about noise - opposition that led the UBC Development Permit Board to pause the project and ultimately, the UNA Board to withdraw the proposal.

But the lack of outdoor facilities for youth remains. Given UBC’s formal responsibility for neighbourhood development, the UNA calls on you to fulfill the promises of the Wesbrook Neighbourhood Plan by building at least one additional outdoor facility to meet the recreational needs of youth. And we hope that plans for future neighbourhoods will include a full range of outdoor recreational opportunities that serve residents of all ages and abilities.

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The UNA looks forward to engaging with UBC and UBC Properties Trust on behalf of residents' recreational needs as planning for Wesbrook and other neighbourhoods proceeds.

Thank you for your ongoing cooperation with the UNA in building and operating exceptional neighbourhoods at UBC.

Sincerely,



Richard Watson
Chair
University Neighbourhoods Association

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