



Parks Master Plan

2025 - 2055

Growing Together: Shaping the Future of Cambridge Parks



Message from the Mayor

The City's Parks Master Plan is a future-focused framework that will guide how the City designs, develops and cares for parks, green spaces and trails for the next 30 years.

Created following extensive public engagement, the Plan reflects a shared vision for vibrant, inclusive, and accessible spaces that support the health and well-being of the entire community. It also includes realistic financial strategies to help move that vision forward responsibly.

I'm proud to share this plan, which is not a checklist of projects, but rather a strategic roadmap that will support this Council and future Councils in making decisions year over year. It sets priorities and identifies needs that will help inform annual budget requests and long-term planning.

On behalf of myself and City Council, thank you to all the staff and the many community members who contributed their ideas, time and voices to the creation of this document.

We're proud to adopt this Plan as a guide and look forward to working together to build parks that serve the community today and for generations to come.



Mayor Jan Liggett
City of Cambridge



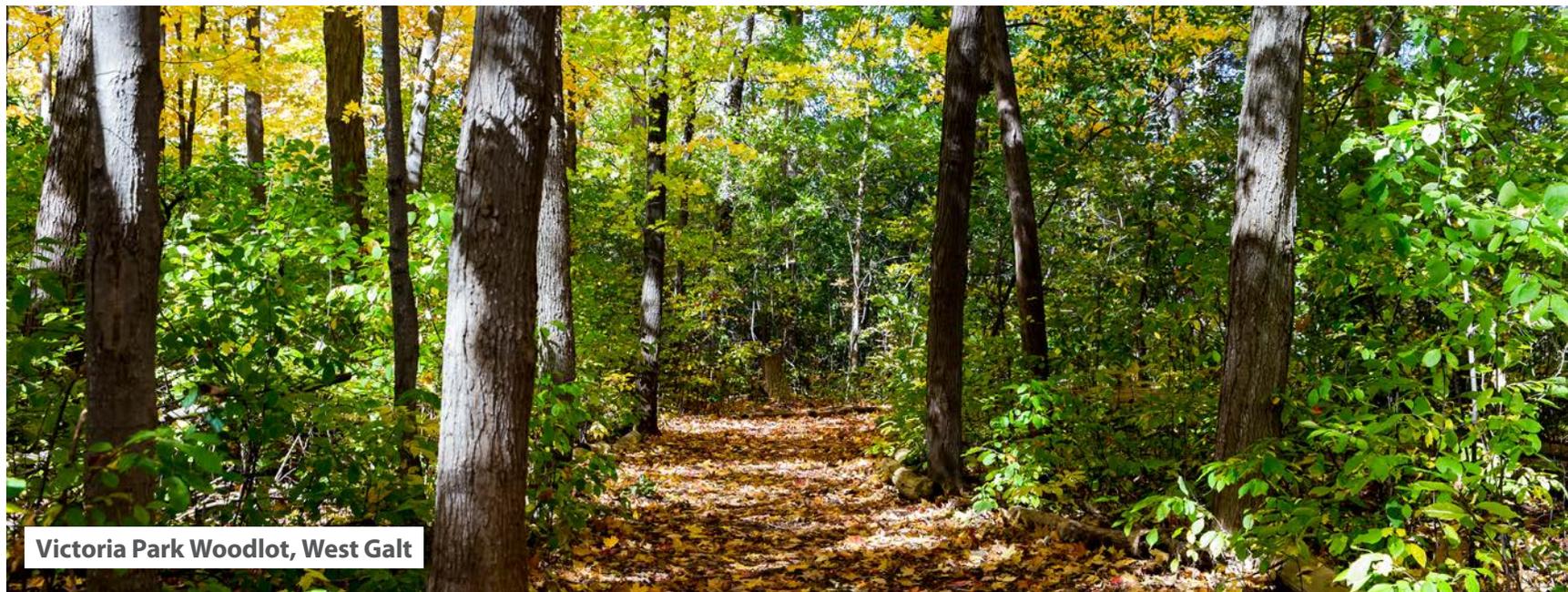
Acknowledgments

Land Acknowledgment

We embrace our shared responsibility with the First Nations people to take care of this Earth and its creatures; we can only do so by walking the path as partners stewarding this land as we have been given the duty together to live in balance and harmony with all living things.

We acknowledge and respect the Anishinaabe, Chonnonton, and Haudenosaunee peoples who came before us and who we live amongst. By honouring this truth of past and present may we come to true reconciliation through listening, reflecting and learning.

The City is committed to raising awareness and taking action around the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and has developed the Parks Master Plan on a foundation of stewardship for the rivers, streams, natural features, amenities and parks within the City of Cambridge.



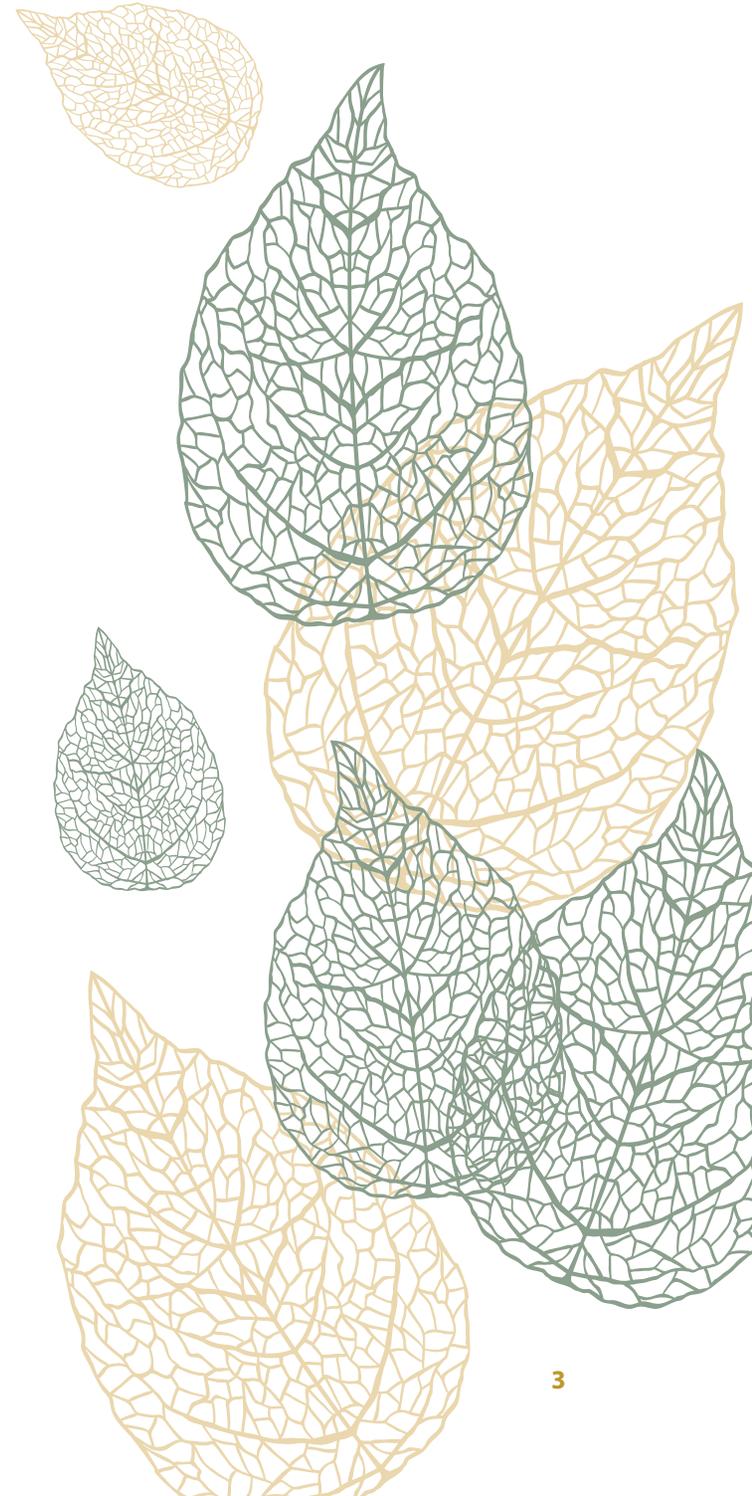
Victoria Park Woodlot, West Galt

Project Participants

We are grateful to the many residents, City staff, sports and community association representatives, Council Advisory Committee members, members of Council, and representatives of government agency partners who helped create this Parks Master Plan and to City of Cambridge Council for their support.



Designed and developed by City of Cambridge Corporate Communications in partnership with Infrastructure Services



Glossary

Basic – A term applied to various park amenities indicating that the amenity has very simple functionality (e.g., a Basic splash pad has static nozzles and is generally smaller than Standard splash pads).

City Park – A park classification. Cambridge Riverside Park that provides a full range of park amenities within Developed park areas including spaces to support events areas serving all residents including those that live within walking distance. The Park will also include Natural Areas and Recreation Lands supporting outdoor sports facilities.

Community Park – A park classification. Larger parks that include a range of park amenities and typically includes seasonal washrooms and splash pads serving all residents as well as those that live within walking distance and may support special events. Parks of this classification may also include Natural Areas and typically also include Recreation Lands supporting outdoor sports facilities.

Developed Park Area – The area within all park classifications that are actively maintained, where grass-cutting (as a minimum) takes place, and which feature typical park amenities (e.g., playgrounds, splash pads, benches, picnic areas, etc.). Excludes mowing strips adjacent to roadways, trails, and walkways. Excludes areas described as ‘Recreation Land’.

Natural Area – The area within all park classifications where environmental features exist (e.g., wetlands, woodlands, waterbodies, rivers, creeks, and vegetation that is not maintained). These are often wildlife corridors that support all forms of insects, birds, mammals, and aquatic life. Park amenities within these areas are limited to low-impact uses, such as woodland trails, signage, and seating in the form of benches or sitting rocks. Includes isolated utility corridors and walkways that may not be connected to larger naturalized spaces. Natural Areas form the basis of the City’s Natural Heritage System.

Natural Heritage System – The Natural Heritage System within Cambridge contains a diversity of natural features and associated ecological functions, in which the Grand River and its tributaries predominate. Other natural features, such as wooded lands, wetlands, remnant prairie and savannah habitat also form part of the Natural Heritage System. The Natural Heritage System and its components are further defined in the City’s Official Plan.

Neighbourhood Park – A park classification. Smaller parks that serve residents within walking distance containing a limited number of park amenities and typically does not provide parking.

Parkland Provision Service Standard – The Developed park area that exists within parks of the following classifications: City, Community, Neighbourhood, Urban Square and POPS; measured in square metres per resident. This is the area of focus of parkland dedication associated with development.

Parkshed – The local park service area where residents live up to an 800m walking distance from parks of the following classifications: City, Community, Neighbourhood, and Urban Square.

Premium – A term applied to various park amenities indicating the highest number of features available to support users of that amenity.

Privately Owned Public Space (POPS) – A park classification. A privately owned and maintained open or landscaped space that is designed to promote public access and use, which may include but is not limited to courtyards, enhanced walkways. The spaces are meant to be open and accessible to the public and may complement, extend, or integrate with public parks.

Recreation Lands – The area within all park classifications where larger organized sports events occur. Includes arenas, pools, sports fields and associated parking, user, and spectator spaces.

Recreational Sports Field – A sports field that has limited features and maintenance. It is a lower service level than Standard.

Standard – A term applied to various park amenities indicating a moderate set of features that support that amenity which is less than what is provided under Premium and more than what is provided under Basic or Recreational.

Urban Square – A park classification. A small park within dense urban areas, typically hardscaped providing seating, and may support small events.

Walking Distance Park Provision Service Standard – Residents living within 800 m walking distance of any park classification (City, Community, Neighbourhood, Urban Square, POPS) that contains public amenities. Residents living further away than this standard are considered underserved by parkland.

Woodland Trail – A trail through naturalized areas with the native soil as the base and is considered low impact to the environment and is differentiated from an informal footpath as it is maintained by the City.



The Grand River at Riverbluffs Park

Table of Contents



Acknowledgments	2
Land Acknowledgment.....	2
Project Participants	3
Glossary	4
Section 1 - Background	13
1.1 Strategic Alignment.....	13
Section 2 - Executive Summary	15
2.1 What is changing?	16
2.2 Parks as a key service to residents.....	17
2.3 Summary of Recommendations and Financial Impacts and Resources.....	18

Section 3 - Consultation as a Foundation to the Parks Master Plan	28
3.1 Public Consultation Engagements	28
3.2 What Residents Like and Value.....	29
3.3 Equity and Belonging	29
3.4 Accessibility and Universal Design	30
3.5 Safety In Parks	30
3.6 Park Amenities	31
3.7 Playgrounds and Play Structures	31
3.8 Paths and Trails	31
3.9 Natural Areas with Trails	31
3.10 Park Maintenance	32
3.11 All-Season Use	33
3.12 Individual Park Public Feedback	33

Table of Contents



Section 4 - People and Parks	34
4.1 Safety in Parks	34
4.2 Neighbourhood Associations	35
4.3 Special Events and Festivals in Parks.....	35
4.4 Families and Leisure	35
4.5 Organized Sports Groups and Clubs.....	35
4.6 Signage and Wayfinding	35
4.7 Connected Natural Corridors	36
Section 5 - City Heritage in Parks	37
5.1 Current Standard	37
5.2 Maintenance of Heritage Elements in Parks	38

Section 6 - Impact of Development and Population Growth	39
6.1 Projected Growth	39
6.2 Greenfield Development	39
6.2.1 Parkland Dedication and Donation	39
6.2.1.1 Process Changes in Parkland Dedication	40
6.2.2 Parkland Development	41
6.3 Redevelopment and Infill Development	41
6.3.1 Strategy to Mitigate Service Level Reductions from Intensification Development	41
6.4 Gentle Intensification	42
6.5 Development Charges Supporting Park Spaces and Amenities	43
6.5.1 Service Enhancement – Additionally DC Funded Amenities	43
6.5.2 Service Enhancement – Recreation Land	45
6.5.3 Community Benefits Charge	45
Section 7 - Municipal Comparators	46

Table of Contents



Section 8 - Levels of Service	47	8.4 Playgrounds	63
8.1 Park Classifications	47	8.4.1 Current Standard.....	63
8.2 Parkland Provision.....	54	8.4.2 Service Enhancement – More Premium Playgrounds.....	63
8.2.1 Park Provision within Walking Distance Service Standard.....	54	8.4.3 Service Enhancement – Increased Playground Maintenance	67
8.2.1.1 Current Standard.....	54	8.4.4 Renewal Cycle Change – Shorter Playground Renewal Period	67
8.2.2 Parkland Provision Service Standard	58	8.5 Public Washrooms	68
8.2.2.1 Current Standard	59	8.5.1 Current Standard.....	68
8.3 Park Amenities	60	8.5.2 Washroom Renewal Needs	69
8.3.1 Current Standard – Range of Amenities in Parks.....	60	8.5.3 Service Enhancement – Additional Washrooms	71
8.3.2 Service Enhancement – Expanded Range of Amenities in Parks.....	60	8.5.4 Service Enhancement – Washroom Vandalism Protection	72
8.3.3 Current Standard – Location of Sports Fields.....	61	8.5.5 Service Enhancement – Improved Washroom Maintenance	72
8.3.4 Service Enhancement – Transition to Outdoor Sports Facility Spaces.....	61		
8.3.5 Current Standard – Operation of Park Facilities by Clubs	62		

Table of Contents



8.6 Splash Pads	73	8.9 Cricket	82
8.6.1 Current Standard.....	73	8.9.1 Current Standard	82
8.6.2 Splash Pad Renewal Needs.....	74	8.9.2 Service Enhancement – Cricket Pitch Additions	83
8.6.3 Service Enhancement – Additional Splash Pads	76	8.10 Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts	84
8.6.4 Service Enhancement – Splash Pad Extended Season	77	8.10.1 Current Standard.....	84
8.7 Soccer	78	8.10.2 Service Enhancement – Tennis and Pickleball Court Additions	84
8.7.1 Current Standard	78	8.10.3 Service Enhancement – Tennis and Pickleball Improvements.....	85
8.7.2 Service Enhancement – Soccer Field Improvements	79	8.11 Basketball Court	85
8.7.3 Service Enhancement – Soccer Field Maintenance Improvements	79	8.11.1 Current Standard	85
8.8 Baseball	80	8.11.2 Service Enhancement – Basketball Court Additions	85
8.8.1 Current Standard.....	80	8.12 Park Paths and Trails	86
8.8.2 Service Enhancement – Baseball Diamond Improvements	81	8.12.1 Current Standard.....	86
8.8.3 Service Enhancement – Baseball Diamond Maintenance Improvements	81		

Table of Contents



8.13 Dog Parks	88	8.16 Benches and Seating.....	96
8.13.1 Current Standard.....	88	8.16.1 Current Standard.....	96
8.13.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Dog Parks.....	88	8.16.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Seating and Shade.....	97
8.13.2.1 Option 1 – Water Street South	89	8.17 Water Bottle Fill Stations	97
8.13.2.2 Option 2 – Conestoga Blvd Utility Corridor	89	8.17.1 Current Standard	97
8.13.2.3 Option 3 – Boxwood Woodlot.....	90	8.17.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Water Bottle Fill Stations	97
8.13.3 Service Enhancement – Neighbourhood Pop-Up Dog Park Pilot	91	8.18 Signage and Wayfinding	98
8.14 Special Events and Festivals in Parks	92	8.18.1 Current Standard.....	98
8.14.1 Current Standard.....	92	8.18.2 Service Enhancement – Improved and Updated Signage and Wayfinding	98
8.14.2 Improved Parking and Electrical Services to Support Events	92	8.19 Food Services.....	99
8.14.3 Development of Standardized Traffic Control Plans to Support Events	93	8.19.1 Current Standard	99
8.14.4 New Outdoor Event Venue	93	8.19.2 Service Enhancement – Increase in Food Services in Parks	99
8.15 Garbage Receptacles and Litter	94	8.20 River Access Points	100
8.15.1 Current Standard.....	94	8.20.1 Current Standard	100
8.15.2 Garbage Service Review	95	8.20.2 Service Enhancements – Increased River Access Points and Improved Signage	101

Table of Contents



- 8.21 Skateboard Parks..... 102**
 - 8.21.1 Current Standard..... 102
 - 8.21.2 Service Enhancements –
Additional Skateboard Parks 102
- 8.22 Vistas and Lookouts 103**
 - 8.22.1 Current Standard 103
- 8.23 Outdoor Seasonal Ice Rinks 104**
 - 8.23.1 Current Standard 104
- 8.24 Outdoor Tracks 105**
 - 8.24.1 Current Standard 105
- 8.25 Other Park Amenities 105**
- 8.26 Park Vegetation Maintenance 108**
 - 8.26.1 Current Standard 108
 - 8.26.2 Service Enhancement –
Natural Area Public Education Program..... 109
 - 8.26.3 Service Enhancement –
Natural Area Inspection and Maintenance Program..... 109

- Section 9 - Park Service Level Change Management..... 110**
 - 9.1 Vegetation Maintenance 110**
 - 9.1.1 Current Standard 110
 - 9.1.2 Public Process for Significant Changes
to Park Vegetation 110
 - 9.2 Addition of an Amenity Request by
Public or Councillor 111**
- Section 10 - Governance Through Policies, Plans,
By-Laws and Guides 114**
 - 10.1 Plans 114
 - 10.2 By-laws..... 114
 - 10.3 Policies 114
 - 10.4 Other Strategic Plans..... 114
 - 10.5 Other Guidelines, and Regulations..... 114

Table of Contents



Section 11 - External Funding and Support Opportunities 115

11.1 Federal and Provincial Support for Parks 115

11.2 Fundraising, Sponsorship, and Donations 115

11.2.1 Naming of Park Spaces and Amenities 116

11.3 User Fees 116

11.4 Community Support 117

11.4.1 Neighbourhood Associations 117

11.4.2 Volunteers..... 117

11.5 Licensing and Leasing..... 118

Section 12 - Supporting Resources..... 119

12.1 Planning 119

12.2 Development Engineering 119

12.3 Operations..... 119

12.4 Legal and Realty Services 120

12.5 Recreation..... 120

12.6 Communications..... 120

12.7 Technology Services..... 120

12.8 Asset Management..... 120

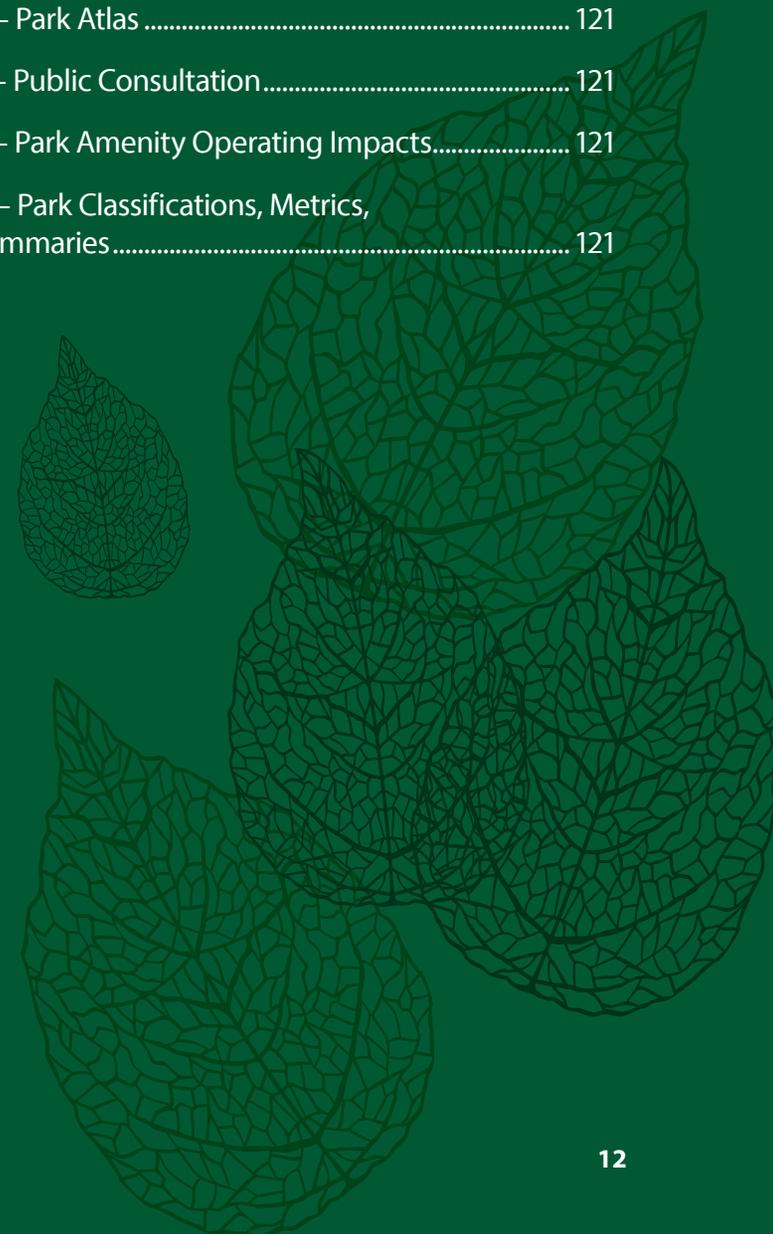
Appendices 121

Appendix A – Park Atlas 121

Appendix B – Public Consultation..... 121

Appendix C – Park Amenity Operating Impacts..... 121

Appendix D – Park Classifications, Metrics, and Asset Summaries..... 121



Section 1 - Background

The City has a population of 156,100¹ residents and has 949 hectares (ha) of parks providing residents with many opportunities to enjoy outdoor spaces through active or passive play and leisure.

The inventory of parks includes 697 ha of Natural Areas containing woodlands, wetlands, and watercourses which form an important part of the City’s Natural Heritage System.

Parks are distributed across the city and are often connected to other public spaces such as schools or conservation areas as depicted in the “Parks, Natural Areas, Trails, Conservation Areas, and Schools” map.

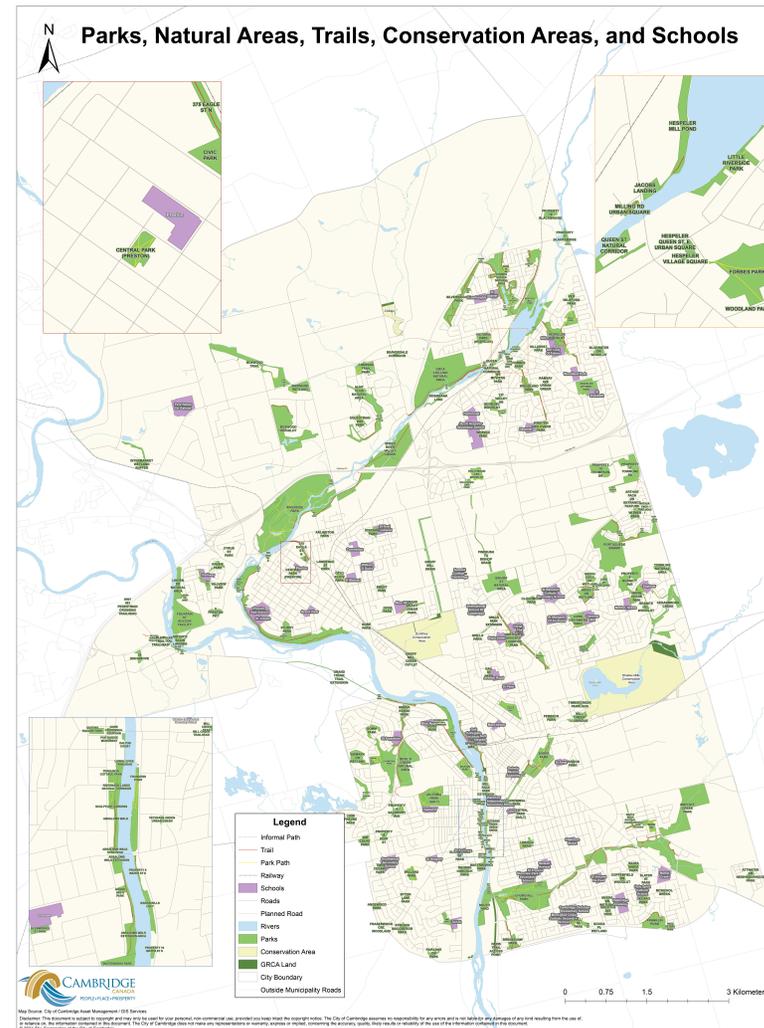
This Parks Master Plan replaces the Master Plan for Parks, Recreation, and Open Space completed in 2002.

1.1 Strategic Alignment

The Parks Master Plan has been developed in alignment with the City’s Strategic Plan (2024-2026) “Cambridge Connected” and incorporates the following aspects:

Public Value

- **Sustainability:** This Plan acknowledges existing park spaces and amenities and assists with sustaining them through capital investment and maintenance recommendations.
- **Collaboration:** This Plan has been developed in consultation with regionally significant partners such as the Grand River Conservation Authority, Local School Boards, and Council Advisory Committees.



[Click here to view Public Space map](#)

¹ Environics 2024

Public Value continued

- **Engagement:** This Plan has incorporated inputs from the public and key stakeholders through an extended public consultation effort.
- **Transparency:** This Plan represents open communication on the current and future service level expectations and demonstrates that public feedback has been incorporated into the decision-making progress.

People

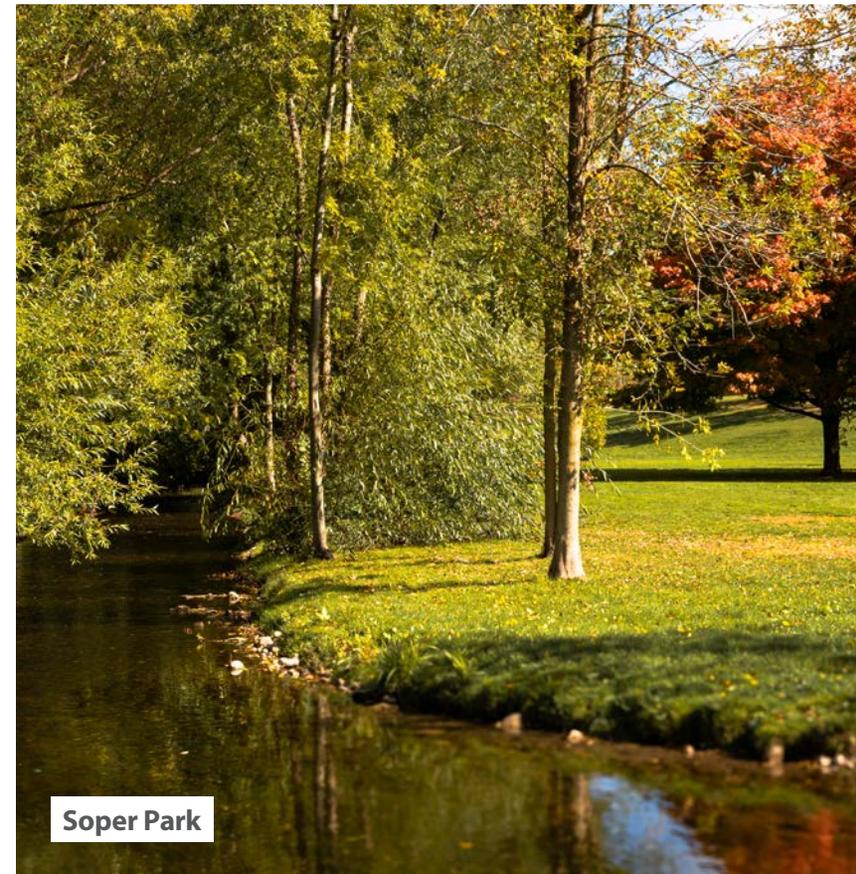
- This Plan acknowledges and supports the objectives of community and individual wellbeing, a sense of belonging by providing safe public spaces and vibrant neighbourhoods through providing park spaces for residents to enjoy outdoor activities and natural spaces. This Plan encompasses recommendations to increase accessibility and a wider range of amenities that support a broader range of activities for all ages and abilities.

Place

- This Plan outlines the importance of the natural environment within the City’s parklands, promotes the development of park spaces for events and tournaments, and meeting the needs of a growing population with a diverse set of interests and needs.

Prosperity

- This Plan includes Urban Square and Urban Green classifications of parks that provide ongoing opportunities to activate and attract visitors as special places in our core areas that support placemaking events and spaces in collaboration with businesses that operate in these areas. Additionally, this Plan includes strategies that support outdoor sports tournaments that add economic spin-off benefits to the community.



Section 2 - Executive Summary

The Parks Master Plan reflects a 30 year vision to protect, enhance, and grow the parks and open space system for residents, user groups, and visitors with the challenge of providing parkland service to an anticipated 47% population increase from 2025-2055.

Recognition of Change

This Plan incorporates strategies and associated recommendations that articulate the park spaces and amenities being provided to the current residents and how that will need to transition to serving higher urban population densities both in existing neighbourhoods and new subdivisions. Strategies include provisions for more amenities in existing park spaces and to consider additional parks in areas that currently have lower parkland provision levels.

This Plan considers a confluence of many changes, including increasing population density and demographic diversification, regulatory changes in the Planning Act and the introduction of Asset Management regulations, along with a higher public interest in parks and natural spaces most recently influenced by the COVID-19 global pandemic.

There are several key themes reflected in this Plan outlined as follows:

Natural Areas

Natural Areas form the basis of the City's Natural Heritage System and are important spaces for the well-being of our community, our environment, and a principal element in discussions with First Nations. As such, naturalized areas and properties have been included in this Plan to recognize the City's obligation to be a steward of these natural spaces for the benefit of this community and all future generations.

Responding to Consultation

Expectations of the community for park spaces and park amenities continue to evolve driven by changing demographics, cultural diversity, higher populations, accessibility standards, and intensification of residents within residential, mixed-use, and urban areas. This Plan is intended to provide, over the long term, a consistent level of service to residents of all ages, abilities, and interests to meet, to the extent possible, those expectations.

Meeting the Challenges with Alternative Approaches

Funding for parkland and amenities is a particular challenge to address the higher expectations of the community and growing population. This Plan promotes community investment in park spaces through development activities as well as opportunities for sponsorships, fundraising, donations, as well as leveraging volunteers to assist in some levels of maintenance.

Accessibility

This Plan provides an opportunity to broaden the definition, corporate culture, and improve responses to accessibility barriers in parks. There are opportunities to design new spaces, and over time, improve legacy spaces to provide better access and inclusiveness not only to physical or mobility needs but also considerations for neurodivergent individuals, cultural diversity, and demographic needs. This Plan will build upon the foundation of legislation and standards such as Cambridge’s Facility Accessibility Design Standard (FADS) to address accessibility through Universal Design and corporate cultural shifts to enable everyone to enjoy Cambridge parks and trails without barriers.

Levels of Service and Asset Management Approach

This Plan has been uniquely developed to incorporate principles of asset management to ensure that recommendations related to service levels are being supported through public engagement. Levels of Service (LOS) information in this report is intended to support the regulatory reporting requirements associated with the City’s Asset Management Plan.

This Plan includes metrics and analyses that identify areas of the city that have higher or lower levels of service. This is intended to support the prioritization of improved or additional amenities in efforts to provide equity of services to all residents and to meet the challenges of growth and intensification.

2.1 What is changing?

Population Growth

The City of Cambridge is projected to have a population growth of 47% over the next 30 years from an estimated 156,100 (EnviroNics, 2024) in 2024 to 221,130 in 2054 and over 50% of that growth will be high density development ([Region of Waterloo, May 2024](#) “Year-End 2023 Population and Household Estimates for Waterloo Region” and Region of Waterloo / Dillon Consulting / Watson & Associates [Land Needs Assessment Addendum report](#) pages 268-744, June 2022).

Intensification

Historically, master plans have been focused on growth as a result of greenfield development adjacent to existing developed areas of the city. This scenario was relatively straightforward as new parks and amenities would be planned as part of those developments to serve the new residents. While greenfield development continues to happen, there is a progressive shift towards development through intensification.

Growth through intensification is significantly more complex due to limited options for additional parklands acquisition from high density development sites and constrained spaces for new amenities to serve a higher level of urbanization in previously developed areas and parks.

A number of the recommendations in this Plan reinforce the need for park spaces and amenities to be an integral part of the development process to serve the current and future residents of Cambridge.

Diversity of Residents

Demographic and cultural diversification of the population driven by numerous factors including an aging population, immigration, and the ability to work-from-home, enabling a considerable number of residents to move to Cambridge as a more affordable option to living in larger urban centres. The combined impact of these changes means more people are looking to enjoy time in park spaces. While this is a positive change, it comes with higher expectations with respect to the number and types of amenities, quality of amenities, and the associated level of maintenance and service.

Provincial Regulations

There have been changes in regulatory planning processes and obligations of developers to provide parkland through development by the Ontario Government. The result is that there is less parkland dedication and less cash-in-lieu being provided by developers resulting in less parkland for future residents.

The introduction of Provincial Asset Management Regulations has set requirements to maintain a formal inventory of the assets we currently have (including park spaces and amenities), what levels of service are being provided, future service level targets, and a long-term financial plan to maintain defined levels of service.

2.2 Parks as a key service to residents

Public consultation has reinforced the need to consider park spaces and amenities as a key service. Park spaces provide a place for residents to spend time outdoors alone or with friends and family using the amenities provided and to participate in planned events. Parks, natural areas and trails are an essential component to the health and well-being of all residents.

This Plan defines a hierarchy of parks and park amenities along with service standards that align with new reporting requirements and help define service levels and expectations.

This plan identifies opportunities and capacity building needs to support growth and changing expectations associated with an increasingly diverse population.



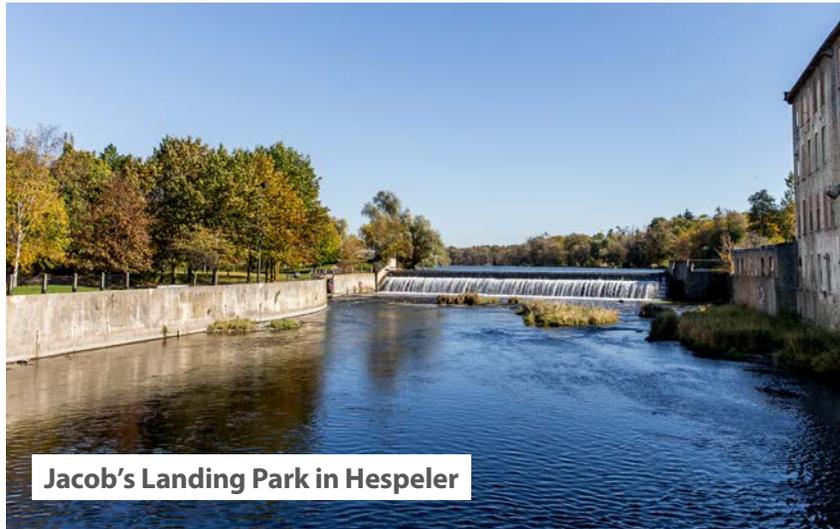
Playground at Fairlake Parkette

2.3 Summary of Recommendations and Financial Impacts and Resources

This Plan has 42 recommendations with suggested implementation timelines ranging from one year to twenty years.

Where possible, costs over and above existing budgets that are associated with recommendations have been estimated and are summarized in the following tables. Other recommendations can either be implemented through existing operating budgets and staff resources, site specific, or are dependent on development activity.

All recommendations that require resources and/or funding will be presented, as-needed, with updated estimates, through future business cases or capital projects submissions as part of the annual budget process. The timeline of actual implementation of recommendations will vary with future budget approvals.



Jacob's Landing Park in Hespeler

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-1 It is recommended that Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles be incorporated with new park spaces, new amenities, and amenity renewals; and that opportunities to align CPTED principles are incorporated into maintenance programs where possible.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-2 It is recommended that a business case be prepared for submission into a future budget cycle to support regular inspection and maintenance of heritage features in parks.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined following inspections
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined following inspections

R-3 It is recommended that a Parkland Dedication By-law be developed following the adoption of this Plan that will outline the expectations of parkland provision associated with development. And further that, an expanded analysis on growth be conducted to further inform the by-law how to address an anticipated gap in parkland provision needed to support current service levels into the future.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None
Comments: Funded within existing budget allocations

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-4 It is recommended that all Secondary Plans consider the need for Neighbourhood and Community Parks and Recreation Land in alignment with service levels outlined in this Plan.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-5 It is recommended that the sale of surplus undeveloped lands, when deemed appropriate by Council, contribute to the Parkland Reserve Fund to additionally fund purchase of parkland.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None
Comments: Procedural change – no direct costs associated with implementation.

R-6 It is recommended that a capital project be created, funded from development charges (or other suitable sources), to install one or more new amenities in the nearest park for each intensification development site plan or subdivision.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
Comments: Site specific

R-7 That the Development Charges By-law continues to contain a new park amenity funding allocation that represents the need for more amenities supporting new residents via gentle intensification.

Estimated Capital Cost: Project specific
Estimated Operating Impact: Project specific
Comments: Existing process

R-9 It is recommended that the Development Charges Bylaw be updated to recognize Recreation Lands as defined in this Plan; and that a reserve be established for the purchase of future Recreation Land needs.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-11 It is recommended that the level of service for amenities in Neighbourhood Parks should transition, over time, to include at least three amenities, where space exists, to service a broader range of age groups (i.e. amenities for children, youth, adults, and older adults).

Estimated Capital Cost: Site specific
Estimated Operating Impact: Site specific
Comments: Site specific, funded from DCs where new parks are created or where existing parks are impacted by intensification, or funded externally and/or taxes on an application basis.

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-12 It is recommended that the City continue to monitor sports field and park space usage and identify opportunities to improve, decommission, re-purpose, or re-locate sports fields to other suitable locations in the city.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
Comments: Site specific

R-13 It is recommended that the City continue to provide sport courts such as basketball, tennis, and pickleball openly to the public and distributed across the city within Neighbourhood and Community Parks, where space is available, and continue supporting existing leases to non-profit / sports clubs under suitable license agreements.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None
Comments: Current practice

R-14 It is recommended that the City transition to a service standard where all Community Parks include one Premium playground.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$600,000
Estimated Operating Impact: None for this phase
Comments: Phase 1 – two playgrounds in existing capital forecast upgraded to Premium

R-16 It is recommended that a business case be prepared to increase Operations capacity for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of playgrounds.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$83,000
Estimated Operating Impact: \$275,000

R-17 It is recommended that, for asset management and long-range financial planning purposes, playground renewal cycle would be set to 15 years.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-18 It is recommended that a condition and accessibility assessment be undertaken for all park washrooms and undertake replacement and renewals.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$1,525,000
Estimated Operating Impact: None
Comments: Phase 1 – Replace one washroom and renovate four existing washrooms, includes water bottle fill stations

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-24 It is recommended that the operating season of splash pads be expanded to early May and to end of September, weather permitting.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: \$105,000

R-25 It is recommended that additional resources be considered to improve maintenance of Premium Soccer fields.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$64,000
Estimated Operating Impact: \$140,000
Comments: Improves maintenance on 3 soccer fields

R-26 It is recommended that additional resources be considered to increase the maintenance of Premium baseball diamonds.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$64,000
Estimated Operating Impact: \$140,000
Comments: Phase 1 – Improves maintenance on 4 baseball diamonds

R-30 It is recommended that a capital project be considered for the installation of electrical services to support special events in existing parks currently used to support events.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
Comments: Site specific

R-31 It is recommended that a set of standard traffic control plans be established to support special events in Riverside Park, Churchill Park, and Dickson Park.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: Anticipated to be completed internally by staff

R-32 It is recommended that the City consider a capital project to acquire or re-purpose suitable land for the purposes of establishing an outdoor event venue; and that land be developed to support events of this nature.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
Comments: Site specific

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-34 It is recommended that seasonal water bottle fill stations be provided through future park washroom renewal and new park washroom projects.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: Minimal when part of public park washrooms
 Comments: Cost to implement is reflected in washroom replacement renewals

R-35 It is recommended that an inventory and condition assessment of park identification signs, by-law signs, trail head signs, wayfinding signs, and information boards be completed with a follow-up capital project to install missing signage and to replace signage that is in poor condition or require updates to meet current standards.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: Phase 1 – Inventory and Implementation plan to be completed with existing resources

R-37 It is recommended that a program be developed to educate residents about the natural environment in parks and how they can contribute in a positive way to these spaces.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$50,000
 Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-38 It is recommended that significant changes to vegetation maintenance that are requested or needed in a park include a public notice process: and that, it be presented to Council as part of the budget process if capital funding and/or operating impacts are required to support the change.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
 Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
 Comments: Process to be developed by existing resources.
 Cost of change is site specific

R-39 It is recommended that an application process for Park Amenity Additions be developed in alignment with the City’s Sponsorship or Naming Policy; and that applications be limited to parks that have been identified having the highest need.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined

R-40 It is recommended that an application process be developed to request the installation of memorial plaques in accordance with the City’s Naming Policy.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: To be completed by existing resources

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 1 and 3 years

R-41 It is recommended that a list of trails, sports fields, and park amenities suitable for naming be developed and submitted to Council for review and approval as outlined in the City’s Naming Policy.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: To be completed by existing resources

R-42 It is recommended that staff define a park maintenance volunteer program.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: To be completed by existing resources

Estimated costs known for this period
Capital Cost Total: \$2,386,000
Operating Impact Total: \$660,000

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 3 and 5 years

R-10 It is recommended that a Community Benefits Charge be considered, in future, to support the acquisition of land in areas of the city that are below parkland provision service level standards that cannot be resolved through planned development.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
 Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-14 It is recommended that the City transition to a service standard where all Community Parks include one Premium playground.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$600,000
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: Phase 2 – two playgrounds in existing capital forecast upgraded to Premium

R-15 It is recommended that Staff develop, publish and maintain a guide that highlights special need, accessibility, and inclusion features within the City’s Parks to serve as a resource for those with special needs and their caregivers.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: Expect to be completed using existing resources

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 3 and 5 years

R-18 It is recommended that a condition and accessibility assessment be undertaken for all park washrooms and undertake replacement and renewals.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$1,525,000

Estimated Operating Impact: None

Comments: Phase 2 – replace one washroom and renovate four washrooms. Includes water bottle fill stations

R-19 Install three new public washrooms in Community parks.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$1,750,000

Estimated Operating Impact: \$139,000

Comments: Two seasonal and one pilot year-round washroom

R-20 It is recommended that the park public washroom maintenance program be reviewed and options to increase the frequency of inspection and cleaning of park public washrooms be prepared through a business case and presented to Council for consideration through the budget process.

Estimated Capital Cost: None

Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined

Comments: Cost of options to be presented to Council in future business case

R-21 It is recommended that a condition assessment be completed to identify and prioritize renewal of splash pads.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined

Estimated Operating Impact: None

Comments: Assessment to be completed under existing operating budgets. Renewal projects, based on assessment, to be submitted as projects through the budget process.

R-26 It is recommended that additional resources be considered to increase the maintenance of Premium baseball diamonds.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$67,000

Estimated Operating Impact: \$242,000

Comments: Phase 2 – Improves maintenance on seven baseball diamonds

R-28 It is recommended that the scope of the 2025 capital project “A/01059-30 Cambridge Dog Park Design” be revised to consider the three options presented in the Parks Master Plan; and that the 2027 capital project “A/01059-40 Cambridge Dog Park Implementation” be amended to fund one or more of the options within the current estimated budget value.

Estimated Capital Cost: None

Estimated Operating Impact: None

Comments: Within existing budget forecast however, design may be delayed due to increased scope of work

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 3 and 5 years

R-29 It is recommended that a capital project be considered for a neighbourhood pop-up dog park pilot.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$200,000
Estimated Operating Impact: None

R-32 It is recommended that the City consider a capital project to acquire or re-purpose suitable land for the purposes of establishing an outdoor event venue; and that land be developed to support events of this nature.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
Comments: Site specific

R-33 It is recommended that Operations review garbage receptacle placement, usage, and service routes to identify efficiencies and improvements that can be achieved within current operating budgets.

Estimated Capital Cost: None
Estimated Operating Impact: None
Comments: Implementation of 3rd party recycling program in parks anticipated in 2026 as per regulations.

R-35 It is recommended that an inventory and condition assessment of park identification signs, by-law signs, trail head signs, wayfinding signs, and information boards be completed with a follow-up capital project to install missing signage and to replace signage that is in poor condition or require updates to meet current standards.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$3,100,000
Estimated Operating Impact: \$32,000
Comments: Phase 2 – Installation in over 210 parks

Estimated costs known for this period
Capital Cost Total: \$7,242,000
Operating Impact Total: \$412,000



Queens Square

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 5 and 10 years

R-14 It is recommended that the City transition to a service standard where all Community Parks include one Premium playground.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$550,000 for standard renewal project. Additional \$960,000 for upgrades to Premium.

Estimated Operating Impact: None

Comments: Phase 3 – Two additional playground renewal projects upgraded to Premium

R-18 It is recommended that a condition and accessibility assessment be undertaken for all park washrooms and undertake replacement and renewals.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$1,525,000

Estimated Operating Impact: None

Comments: Phase 3 – replace one washroom and renovate four washrooms. Includes water bottle fill stations.

R-22 It is recommended that the splash pad at Riverside Park be upgraded to a Premium splash pad.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$1,200,000

Estimated Operating Impact: \$15,000

R-27 It is recommended that Recreation Lands be acquired or re-purposed to support at least two additional cricket fields.

Estimated Capital Cost: Land costs - to be determined.

\$637,000 to construct a Standard and a Recreational Cricket Field

Estimated Operating Impact: \$69,000 to maintain two new cricket fields

R-36 It is recommended that additional opportunities to provide food services in parks are explored for future consideration.

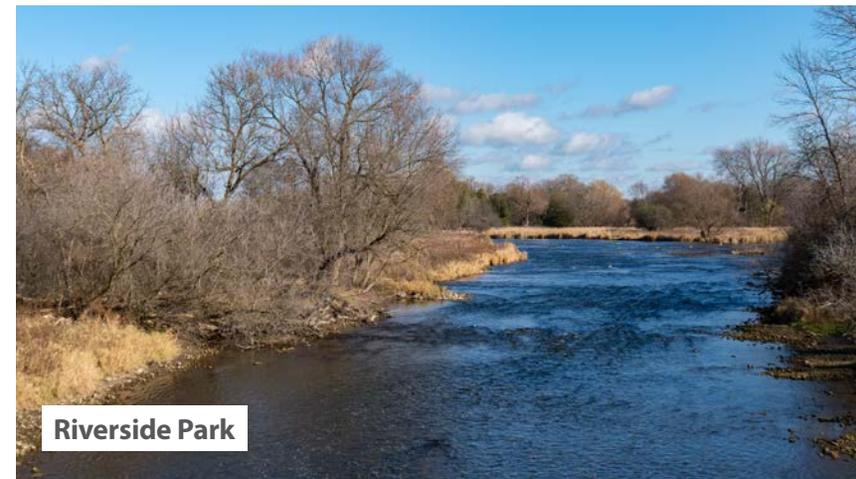
Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined

Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined

Estimated costs known for this period

Capital Cost Total: \$4,908,000

Operating Impact Total: \$84,000



Riverside Park

Recommendations expected to be implemented between 10 and 20 years

R-8 It is recommended that capital project park amenity additions be identified in Riverside Park, and in existing Community Parks, funded from Development Charges, in recognition of a growing population using these shared parks and amenities within them.

Estimated Capital Cost: To be determined
 Estimated Operating Impact: To be determined
 Comments: Site specific. Refer to **Appendix C** for range of estimated capital and operating impacts.

R-14 It is recommended that the City transition to a service standard where all Community Parks include one Premium playground.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$825,000 for standard renewal project. Additional \$1.4 million for upgrades to Premium.
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: Phase 4 – Three additional playground renewal projects upgraded to Premium

R-18 It is recommended that a condition and accessibility assessment be undertaken for all park washrooms and undertake replacement and renewals.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$510,000
 Estimated Operating Impact: None
 Comments: Phase 4 - renovate remaining two washrooms
 Includes water bottle fill stations

R-23 It is recommended that an additional 4 splash pads be considered for Community Parks, where suitable space exists, through the capital budget process.

Estimated Capital Cost: \$3,200,000
 Estimated Operating Impact: \$116,000

Estimated costs known for this period
Capital Cost Total: \$5,935,000
Operating Impact Total: \$116,000

Park specific planned capital projects and future opportunities are available within **Appendix A – Atlas**.

Section 3 - Consultation as a Foundation to the Parks Master Plan

This Plan incorporates a significant public consultation effort to ensure it reflects a broad range of perspectives from park users and those interested in park spaces and the amenities within them.

Public consultation efforts included: public meetings, focus groups, complaints and suggestions received from individual residents and sports and community groups, Mayor’s pop-up consultations, public events booths, surveys and interviews, council workshops, and council budget meetings. First Nations input was received from representatives of the Six Nations of the Grand River.

Collectively, this input provided insights into what people value about parks properties and what improvements and additions are of interest in the City of Cambridge.

Feedback from residents informed Level of Service expectations, definitions, and targets for provision, amenities, maintenance, and the majority of recommendations of this report. The public consultation process requested feedback on city-wide issues and amenities as well as specific park locations.

It is acknowledged that all public input is appreciated and has been received. However, not all comments, ideas, or suggestions can be acted on due to competing interests and opinions, budgetary and resource constraints, as well as physical space constraints. This Plan has made best efforts to incorporate public input into recommendations prioritizing those that have the most common threads across various stakeholders.

A summary of engagements and the most prominent items and themes identified through public consultation are outlined in the following sections.

3.1 Public Consultation Engagements

Public consultation for the Parks Master Plan took place from April 2022 to November 2024. It involved the public through online surveys, a number of direct engagements with people at various events, pop-up meetings in the park with the Mayor and some Councilors, stakeholder meetings with sports groups, youth, older adult residents, special needs groups, Advisory Committees to Council, a Council Workshop, presentations to the Mayor’s Office, and comments and suggestions received directly from residents through Service Cambridge. Collectively, several thousand comments, suggestions, ideas, and feedback from the public were received, reviewed, and considered in the development of this Plan.

A summary and log of public consultations can be found in [Appendix B – Public Consultation](#).

3.4 Accessibility and Universal Design

Considerable feedback was provided through the public engagement process that identified desired improvements in park spaces and amenities with respect to accessibility and to support those with special needs and their caregivers as well as neurodivergent and physical mobility users.

There are a number of regulations and standards in place that continue to evolve and will shape the design of park spaces and amenity requirements as park amenities are renewed and further developed. Specifically, at this time, they are:

- Ontario Building Code (OBC)
- The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA)
- Cambridge Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS)
- CAN/CSA-Z614 Standards for Play Spaces

Through discussions with the Cambridge Accessibility Advisory Committee, and consultation with caregivers of special needs youth, there is a recognized need to provide more accessible options than what exists today as required under legislation and under the recently updated FADS.

There is also recognition that there is a need to provide challenge and play value for all ages and abilities and have consideration for neurodivergent individuals through design that provides environments that reduce sensory overload and provide areas for retreat and incorporate spaces with quiet zones, calming colours and ensuring that clear wayfinding signage is provided.

3.5 Safety In Parks

Public engagement included questions related to safety. Most commonly, the concern of safety was connected to the perception of park users based on the ongoing presence of litter, graffiti, older equipment, evidence of vandalism, drug use, encampments older signage, and a lack of signage and lighting.



3.6 Park Amenities

The City has many amenities within parks spaces; however, there continues to be a desire for more features within the existing parks with a growing number of residents and a corresponding demand for a broader range of activities and a progressively diverse set of interests.

The public feedback is represented in the word cloud image below.



Much of the public feedback for additional amenities is represented through a series of recommendations of this Plan.

3.7 Playgrounds and Play Structures

These are amenities that exist in every Community and Neighbourhood Park that primarily focus on young children. In many cases, individuals with accessibility needs are often driven to Community parks to enjoy playgrounds that provide a higher order of accessibility features as well as the supportive amenities such as parking and washrooms. The majority of respondents indicate satisfaction with existing accessible playgrounds, there is a demand for additional playgrounds with accessible features.

3.8 Paths and Trails

Park paths and trails appeal to all users of the parks and there is a need to provide infrastructure for all ages and abilities and support a diverse range of interests. There is a high level of satisfaction with paved paths that exist within parks.

3.9 Natural Areas with Trails

Public consultation around “Natural Areas with Trails” affirmed the community appreciates these amenities with the majority of respondents providing positive feedback about current service levels and some interest in having more.

3.10 Park Maintenance

A strong common theme from public feedback is that park spaces and amenities need improved maintenance. The public feedback is represented in the word cloud image below representing the top 25 items noted by residents.

Individual park-specific public feedback is presented in **Appendix A – Park Atlas.**



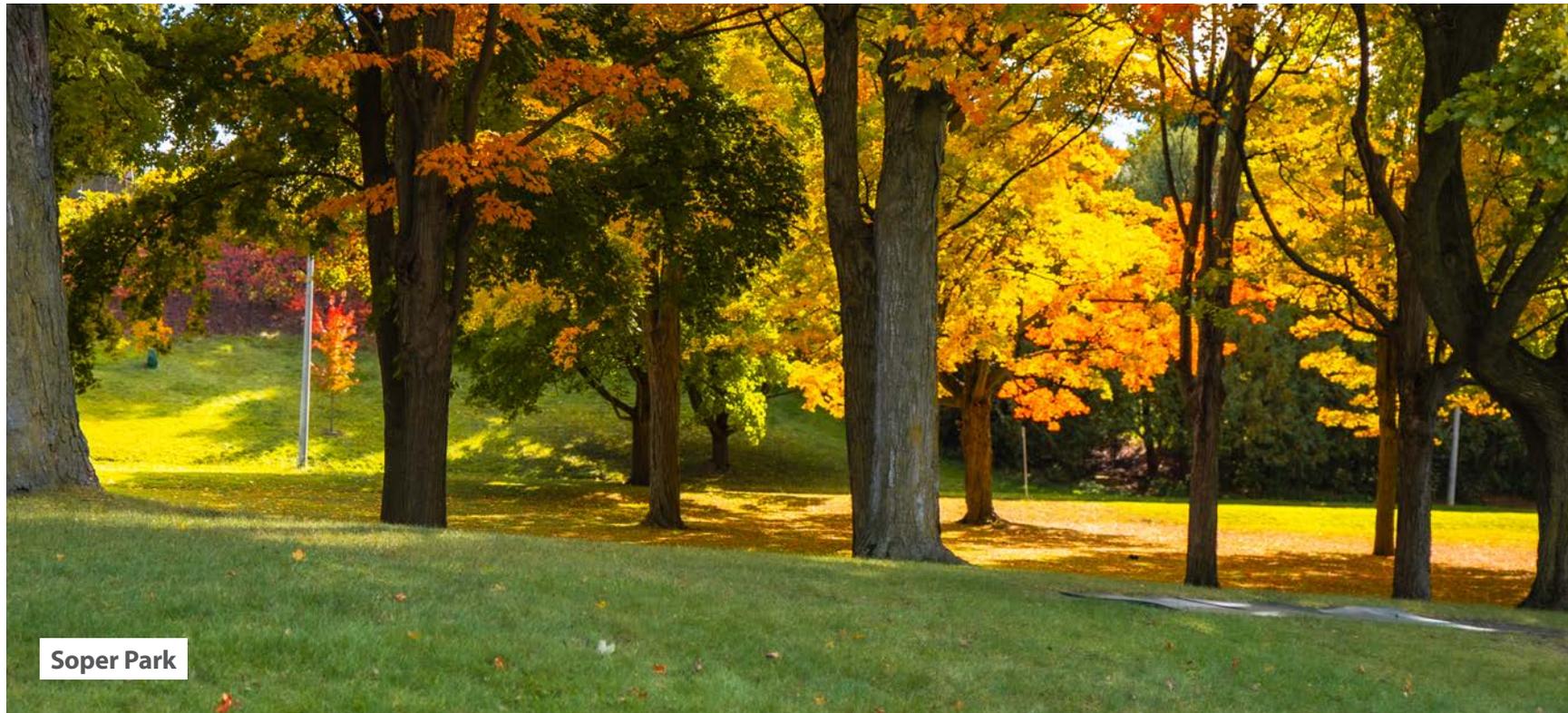
City of Cambridge worker maintaining the gardens in a park

3.11 All-Season Use

Public consultation comments noted that parks are utilized in the winter for a variety of activities and also suggested several new potential activities (such as “skating trails”). There were suggestions that washrooms be provided for park users (washrooms are currently closed for the winter as they are designed for 3 season use). It was also noted that it was becoming increasingly difficult for volunteers to maintain community rinks given weather variability. Accessibility constraints were also noted in terms of path clearance within parks.

3.12 Individual Park Public Feedback

Additional insights from the wide range of public consultation are reflected in [Appendix A – Park Atlas](#) that contain specific comments about individual parks.



Section 4 - People and Parks

Activation of park spaces is achieved passively by providing clean, inviting spaces with amenities providing things for people to do (e.g., benches, pathways, playgrounds, courts, etc.). Additionally, spaces will see higher utilization through promotion by means of signage, wayfinding, and organized programs and events by sports groups, Neighbourhood Associations, or other like-minded individuals and groups.

Other forms of activation including the establishment and support of community groups that have interests in improving the spaces within parks and include examples such as volunteer litter clean-up programs, tree planting programs, pollinator and community gardens.

4.1 Safety in Parks

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) uses elements of built and natural environment design to prevent crime and manage public spaces for safety. The way a public space is designed deters offender decisions that precede criminal acts, builds a sense of community among visitors, and reduces fear of crime associated with a place. CPTED strategies include controlling access (e.g., gates, signs), natural surveillance (e.g., from neighbouring properties, across open spaces or down trails), maintenance (e.g. prompt responses to vandalism or graffiti, landscape and furnishings upkeep) and can also include Universal Design and other principles that reinforce a person's sense of place, territoriality within a park, and positive experiences in a place through design elements such as path lighting, vegetation control along a trail, or the way a seating area or shade structure is oriented and furnished.

Public consultation on issues of safety highlighted several parks of concern but it was also noted that residents:

- Generally feel safe in parks and trails;
- have not had more than 1-2 negative safety experiences in parks;
- appreciate natural areas;
- are concerned about drug use and encampments;
- would like more rapid responses to instances of graffiti, broken glass, and vandalism;
- would like increased lighting along paths and in parks; and,
- believe enforcement of by-laws should be increased (e.g., for littering, off-leash dogs, other negative behaviour in parks).

R-1 It is recommended that Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles be incorporated with new park spaces, new amenities, and amenity renewals; and that opportunities to align CPTED principles are incorporated into maintenance programs where possible.

4.2 Neighbourhood Associations

Neighbourhood Associations offer many programs and events for youth and adults at their home park locations. There remain opportunities to continue supporting spaces and amenities that can be leveraged by Neighbourhood Associations to further activate park spaces.

Additional information regarding Neighbourhood Associations can be found in [section 11.4](#) of this Plan.

4.3 Special Events and Festivals in Parks

Over 70 events take place in parks annually that celebrate art, music, food, significant dates, culture and draw both Cambridge residents and visitors. Events are hosted by private promoters, private entities in partnership with the City, or are City-driven events. Special events in parks often attract a large number of participants and is an important means to activate park spaces and enable residents to gather and celebrate the things that Cambridge has to offer. There is an increased demand for special events within our park spaces. This number continues to increase annually.

Additional information on Special Events and Festivals in Parks can be found in [section 8.14](#) of this Plan.

4.4 Families and Leisure

Parks provide a space for families to spend time outdoors in a variety of ways making use of the amenities that exist such as picnic areas, pathways, playgrounds, pickleball, tennis, and basketball courts, fitness stations, splash pads, and open spaces. Many residents frequent the park closest to where they live and access the park by walking to the park.

4.5 Organized Sports Groups and Clubs

Many of the park spaces are also used by sports organizations for practice, games, and tournaments. Some parks are outfitted with amenities that directly support this form of use including parking, washrooms, canteens, and places for spectators. Some sports fields and courts used by clubs exist in parks that are shared spaces with other park users.

4.6 Signage and Wayfinding

Location identification, awareness of expectations, information, and navigation to points of interest are important elements of parks that are conveyed primarily by physical signage at entrances and within parks areas. A complete set of signage can contribute to a more enjoyable experience for people in the park as well as overall safety.

Public feedback and staff observation have identified a need to update aged signage and address gaps in park signage.

Additional information on signage and wayfinding can be found in [section 8.18](#) of this Plan.

4.7 Connected Natural Corridors

“Trails are the new parks” became reality during the pandemic where socially-distanced walking became a predominant recreational activity. Natural Corridors is a park classification that recognizes and balances environmental stewardship and access to rivers through trail use. Public consultation around “Natural Areas with Trails” affirmed the community appreciates these spaces and having access to them. Natural spaces are increasingly being recognized as places for people to go to appreciate nature in a relaxed setting and have a positive effect on mental well-being.

Natural Area buffers may support paved multi-use trails that provide off-road active transportation links for residents to travel to various destinations and are reflected in the [Bike Your City Cycling Master Plan \(2020\)](#).

In other cases, these areas may support lower class, lower environmental impact trails such as stone-dust trails or very low impact Woodland trails having hard-packed soil surfaces.

Additional information on signage and wayfinding can be found in [section 8.18](#) and [8.12](#) of this Plan.



Section 5 - City Heritage in Parks

The City of Cambridge has a rich history that has contributed to the park spaces residents and visitors enjoy today. Some of the most recognized park spaces have been as a result of donations from past prominent citizens. These parks have evolved to meet current needs but are historically significant, connecting the past to the present.

5.1 Current Standard

Much of this history is captured within the City Archives and, in some cases, acknowledged within parks on information signs, donation plaques, and memorial plaques.

The City has formally recognized several of its parks through formal heritage protections. Several of the City's parks are considered to be part of identified or potential cultural heritage landscapes; areas where the influence of humans on the natural landscape has resulted in a place with distinctive character and cultural importance. These historically significant landscapes are valued for the contribution that they make to our understanding of the history of a place. Parks that are listed, designated, or contain designated features include:

Dickson Park, Riverside Park, Forbes Park, Soper Park, Centennial Park (Galt), Victoria Park (Galt), Moyer's Blair Landing, Jacob's Landing, Duncan Ferguson Homestead, Queen's Square, St. Andrew's Park, and the Galt Sculpture Gardens.

Several parks in Hespeler are located within the area being recommended for a heritage conservation district which is anticipated to be presented to Council in the Spring of 2025.

A few examples where features of historical interest are as follows:

- **Riverside Park** - Veterans memorial entrance feature installed in 1922.
- **Riverside Park** - Memorial recognizing the Leisure Lodge, an immensely popular venue, which opened in 1948 and was destroyed by fire in 1980.
- **Sturdy Park** - Named after Lida Bell Pearson Sturdy, a prominent lawyer/politician who is also in the Cambridge Hall of Fame.
- **Forbes Park** - George D. Forbes (Former Mayor of Hespeler and Industrialist) donated land for use as a park in 1915.
- **Dickson Park** - William Dickson Jr. (son of the co-founder of Galt) donated land for use as a park in 1871.
- **Victoria Park (Galt)** - Eugene Langdon Wilks (responsible for Langdon Hall being built) donated land for the purpose of it being a publicly accessible park in 1901.

Cambridge values its heritage and those who have contributed to a rich and vibrant city and are reflected in many of the City's signature parks.



Wading Pool at Forbes Park, c. 1950

5.2 Maintenance of Heritage Elements in Parks

There is a need to establish a pro-active inspection and maintenance program of heritage features in parks to preserve the city’s rich heritage.

R-2 It is recommended that a business case be prepared for submission into a future budget cycle to support regular inspection and maintenance of heritage features in parks.

Future consideration would be for a program to further enhance knowledge of the City’s heritage through the development of information boards installed in park spaces supported by online information resources.

Financial Impact of Increased Awareness of Heritage Elements in Parks

There is no financial impact associated with an effort to update and verify the inventory of these features and is expected to be done within current staff capacity and operating budgets with support of Asset Management.

Additional financial impacts will be identified once the inventory has been verified to identify how many monuments exist of what type, and the required inspection, maintenance, and repair.



Grandstand at Dickson Park

Section 6 - Impact of Development and Population Growth

6.1 Projected Growth

Table 7 - Projected Population Growth

The City of Cambridge is projected to have a population growth of 47% over the next 30 years from an estimated 156,100 (EnviroNics, 2024) in 2024 to 221,130 in 2054 and over 50% of that growth will be high density development².

The current population of 156,100 is provided by EnviroNics (2024) and used throughout this report.

6.2 Greenfield Development

Growth occurs typically through a Plan of Subdivision planning process on lands that have not been previously developed.

6.2.1 Parkland Dedication and Donation

Through the Planning Act and other local by-laws, policies, and standards, parkland is provided (referred to as “parkland dedication”) to the City by a developer in a state of being fenced, graded with suitable drainage and soils suitable for park turf and tree plantings, and ready for park amenities to be installed.

Additional natural areas that cannot be developed are negotiated through the planning process and are donated to the City for long term stewardship. These lands are exclusive of parkland dedication that supports park spaces that can be regularly maintained with a range of park amenities.

Some development may also occur as a condominium configuration and follows a Site Plan planning process that may stand alone or be part of a Plan of Subdivision.

Through this process, the developer and the City may choose a combination of land or cash-in-lieu of land. On a case-by-case basis, this needs to be carefully reviewed to ensure that new residents are provided with a park of sufficient size, and within walking distance levels of service, to support the expected range of amenities that meet or exceed service level expectations.

² Region of Waterloo, May 2024 [“Year-End 2023 Population and Household Estimates for Waterloo Region”](#)

Region of Waterloo / Dillon Consulting / Watson & Associates [Land Needs Assessment Addendum report](#) pages 268-744, June 2022

Where a Secondary Plan exists, park sizes and natural lands and their approximate locations should be defined within the Secondary Plan based on the expected number of new residents.

Where a Secondary Plan has not been established, parkland requirements are identified on a case-by-case basis within the expectations set out in the City’s Official Plan, this Parks Master Plan, and a parkland dedication by-law to be developed following the adoption of this Plan.

Neighbourhood Park - Residents living within the standard walking distance (800 m) of a Neighbourhood Park currently have a service level of 6.5 sq m. per person and should be maintained going forward through greenfield development.

Community Park - Community Parks offering a wider range of amenities are available to all residents as “drive-to” parks. The current service level is 3.2 sq m. per person and should be maintained going forward through greenfield development over and above the Neighbourhood Park parkland provision.

Recreation Land - Residents also have 4.4 sq m. per person of Recreation lands that exist within a range of parks across the City that support outdoor sports facilities such as baseball, soccer, and cricket. Recreation land provision should be maintained going forward through greenfield development and/or land acquisition.

6.2.1.1 Process Changes in Parkland Dedication

The Planning Act provisions for parkland and cash-in-lieu have recently been amended, resulting in half or less than half of the parkland previously provided through the development process.

To maintain current parkland provisions, there is a need to rely on City parkland dedication reserves as well as a need to explore alternative revenue sources to purchase additional land adjacent to or in close proximity to new development to address any shortfall in land being provided by the developer to sustain current park provision service levels.

- R-3** It is recommended that a parkland dedication By-law be developed following the adoption of this Plan that will outline the expectations of parkland provision associated with development. And further that, an expanded analysis on growth be conducted to further inform the by-law how to address an anticipated gap in parkland provision needed to support current service levels into the future
- R-4** It is recommended that all Secondary Plans include Neighbourhood and Community Parks and Recreation land in alignment with service levels outlined in this Plan.
- R-5** It is recommended that the sale of surplus undeveloped lands, when deemed appropriate by Council, contribute to the Parkland Cash In Lieu Reserve Fund to additionally fund purchase of parkland where insufficient land is being provided through parkland dedication.

Financial Impact of Proposed Process Changes in Parkland Dedication

Through the work done as part of developing the current service levels, it has been identified that as the city grows, maintaining the current parkland service levels will be a challenge based on the current provisions under the Parkland Provisions under the Planning Act.

6.2.2 Parkland Development

New parks that are received through parkland dedication, as outlined in the Engineering Design Guidelines, are conveyed to the City after being graded with appropriate drainage supports, suitable topsoil, and park grass.

Funding to construct the park for the new residents is provided through development charges as part of the Development Charges By-law that is updated every ten years, as per the Development Charges Act, 1997, or sooner, as required.

6.3 Redevelopment and Infill Development

Properties that are acquired by a developer may go through a site plan or subdivision plan process resulting in an increase in the number of residents living in an area that has been previously developed.

In many cases, additional land for parks is limited and cash-in-lieu is provided to be placed into the City's Cash-in-lieu Reserve to enable the City to purchase land elsewhere at another time.

As a result, new residents will need to make use of existing parks resulting in a lower service level to new residents and a reduction in levels of service to existing residents who share the park and amenities with an increased number of users of their local park.

6.3.1 Strategy to Mitigate Service Level Reductions from Intensification Development

Efforts should be made to acquire additional parkland near the development or as an expansion to the nearest existing park, where feasible, to mitigate the service level reduction as a result of intensification development.

Where additional land is not feasible to be acquired, the reduction in parkland service levels may be mitigated through the provision of other land, spaces, and amenities. Additional amenities in the park within walking distance to serve new residents should also be provided to maintain park amenity service levels for existing and new residents.

R-6 It is recommended that a capital project be created, funded from development charges (or other suitable sources), to install one or more new amenities in the nearest park for each intensification development site plan or subdivision.

Financial Impact of Proposed Strategy to Mitigate Service Level Reductions

Funding for land acquisitions is expected to come from the Cash-in-lieu of Parkland Reserve Fund. Timing of cash-in-lieu contributions from developers and when land acquisition opportunities arise create a challenge as contribution values may differ from realty values at the time of need to acquire.

Capital funding for additional amenities are expected to be provided from development charges or other appropriate sources, however, there will be an operating impact to support the new amenities, and will be identified as part of the capital budget process for each project.

6.4 Gentle Intensification

Residential properties, through building permits, are now, through Provincial regulations, able to provide up to three dwelling units. This has, and will continue, to enable more people to occupy a residential property that had historically been developed to support only one family.

Redevelopment of residential properties with up to 10 units are supported directly through building permits. This has provided more rental units and an increased population on properties that had historically been developed to support only one family.

The market value of real estate has seen significant increases over the past decade and has created affordability challenges for many. This has limited the ability for residents to purchase or rent housing for growing families. This has led to a higher proportion of multi-generational families living in the same household.

The global COVID-19 pandemic has also had an impact from three perspectives:

- Technology is enabling more people to work from home. Those individuals are spending more time in their neighbourhood vs commuting to a workplace. Those working at home are also spending more time in local parks during the day during breaks or with the extra time not spent commuting.
- A migration of families into Cambridge from cities that have a higher cost of living (and typically higher level of services for parks). The higher expectation of park spaces and amenities is commonly expressed by residents that have relocated to Cambridge from other municipalities.

- A higher interest in older adults remaining in their homes and aging-in-place. This has increased the usage of local parks by older adults and the need to transition to more age-friendly park spaces.

These factors are driving an increased demand for park spaces and a broader range of amenities within them. Recommendations associated with this perspective are reflected in the equity section of this Plan. One additional recommendation that specifically addresses this type of intensification is as follows:

- R-7** That the Development Charges By-law continues to contain a new park amenity funding allocation that represents the need for more amenities supporting new residents via gentle intensification.



6.5 Development Charges Supporting Park Spaces and Amenities

Development charges support the development of parkland, as well as the installation of park amenities to support new residents.

The funding level is set through the Development Charges Background Study, the Local Service Policy and Development Charges By-law and is intended to maintain current service levels to existing residents and provide the same service level to new residents.

In this process, service levels are based on the current replacement value of the inventory of park amenities and are explicitly identified within a Development Charges By-law. The Development Charges By-law is supported by capital projects identified in the 10-year capital forecast for planned development.



Splash Pad at Bismark Park

6.5.1 Service Enhancement – Additionally DC Funded Amenities

Historically, the 10-year capital forecast has included projects to install amenities in new parks created through greenfield development applications, where parkland dedication has been achieved.

Three gaps in this process have been identified:

1. Development applications where parkland dedication was not received (i.e., no park created, only cash-in-lieu of parkland was collected) did not result in capital projects to provide new park amenities to new residents in existing parks nearest to where they live. Capital projects needed to support new residents.
2. Intensification development is commonly not able to provide parkland dedication (i.e., no park created, only cash-in-lieu) to support new residents. Capital projects needed to support new residents with new park amenities were not identified in the 10-year capital forecast.

3. The City and Community Parks provide a broader range of park amenities beyond what is normally able to be provided within the nearest Neighbourhood Park. Historically, capital projects to add park amenities into the City and Community Parks to serve new residents have not been regularly identified, and if so, have not been attributed to serving a growing population or a particular nearby intensification development. As a result, the amenities in these spaces that serve the broader population were being shared by a growing number of residents resulting in a gradual reduction of service levels to all residents.

Recommendation **R-6** as described in **section 6.3** of this Plan recognizes the need to fund additional amenities for new residents in greenfield and intensification development to maintain service levels.

Additionally, there is a need to recognize the City park (Riverside Park) and Community Parks provide service to all residents of the city. As the population grows, the spaces and amenities in these parks that serve all residents of Cambridge also experience higher levels of usage and upgrades and additions in park amenities are needed to support this growth.

R-8 It is recommended that capital project park amenity additions be identified in Riverside Park, and in existing Community Parks, funded from Development Charges, in recognition of a growing population using these shared parks and amenities within them.

Financial Impact of additional DC Funded Amenities

An increased level of funding will be achieved that aligns with the principle of “growth supporting growth”. Additional capital investment funding will be achieved through DCs and will have a corresponding ‘growth’ impact on the operating budgets for consideration by Council as part of the annual budget process.



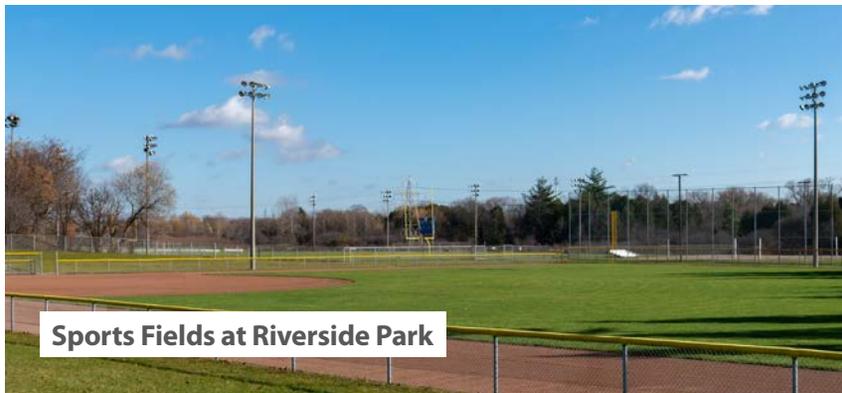
Skate Park at Bismark Park

6.5.2 Service Enhancement – Recreation Land

Historically, the City has considered sports fields to be a park amenity which requires a relatively large amount of space in comparison to other public park amenities such as playgrounds, courts, trails, etc. Sports fields are predominately used by organized sports groups that do not reside in the neighborhood. The past practice of installing sports fields in Neighborhood Parks has resulted in limited space for public park amenities and has unintentionally lowered the park provision level of service to residents living within walking distance of the park.

To achieve the service level targets required to accommodate anticipated growth in the City, alternative revenue tools should be utilized. This includes use of Development Charges to the extent allowable under the Development Charges Act and implementing Community Benefit Charges on high-density developments.

R-9 It is recommended that the Development Charges Bylaw be updated to recognize Recreation lands as defined in this Plan; and that a reserve be established for the purchase of future Recreation land needs.



Sports Fields at Riverside Park

Financial Impact of Funded Recreation Land

This Plan identifies the need for additional cricket fields to meet the anticipated demand of a growing and diverse population with an interest in cricket.

Land to accommodate new cricket fields as outlined in **R-27** should be identified as a need and incorporated into future Development Charges By-law updates as Recreation land needs. Further review of sports field usage and demand as outlined in **section 8.3.3** and reflected in recommendation **R-12** will, in future, identify land needs to accommodate re-location of sports fields as well as new ones that cannot currently be accommodated on existing lands the City owns. Once identified, the land acquisition needs can be placed in the capital forecast and included as Recreation land needs with the next update of the Development Charges By-law to provide funding.

In addition, the Recreation Master Plan that is anticipated to be undertaken in 2026 will identify indoor recreation needs and associated lands that will be able to be funded from using recreation land DC charges.

6.5.3 Community Benefits Charge

The development process includes an option to define a Community Benefits Charge that can fund capital investment in municipal services not otherwise supported through Development Charges.

R-10 It is recommended that a Community Benefits Charge be considered, in future, to support the acquisition of land in areas of the city that are below parkland provision service level standards that cannot be resolved through planned development.

Section 7 - Municipal Comparators

Recommendations of this Plan have been developed using insight from public consultation as well as a review of service level metrics and information from other municipalities and forums.

Where available, information from these sources has been used as a comparison to existing Cambridge service levels. This comparison has been used to assist in crafting recommendations that are reasonably in-line with what is being provided by other municipalities in Ontario.

The following municipalities have recently published park plans and have been referenced as comparators through the development of Cambridge's Parks Master Plan.

- City of Kitchener – Places & Spaces - City of Kitchener Parks Strategy (2023)
- City of Waterloo – Parkland Strategy (2022)
- City of Burlington – Appendix A: Parks Provisioning Master Plan (2023)

Yardstick Benchmarking for Parks and Facilities

Additionally, the City of Cambridge participates in the BC Recreation and Parks Association Yardstick Benchmarking for Parks and Facilities³ initiative with the support of the Asset Management Division. Information has proven to be valuable as a general reference through the development of service level options and recommendations.

Metrics provided through this cannot always be taken at face value, as with many benchmarking efforts, as the context and definition in which the information is gathered is not always consistent between municipalities. Nevertheless, it has been a valuable reference and is expected to continue being used to support future master plan updates and asset management efforts into the future.

Note that metrics and comparators remain a challenge as measures and metrics are not consistent across organizations and industries. This report contains limited direct reference to municipal comparators.

³ <https://www.bcrpa.bc.ca/everything-else/yardstick-benchmarking-for-parks-and-facilities/>

Section 8 - Levels of Service

This Plan has considered levels of service in support of the regulatory requirements of Asset Management reporting and in support of a future Parkland Dedication By-law, updates to the Development Charges By-law, updates to other planning documents, current and future maintenance programs, and projects currently identified in capital budget forecasts and as input to future capital project considerations as outlined in the Governance section of this report.

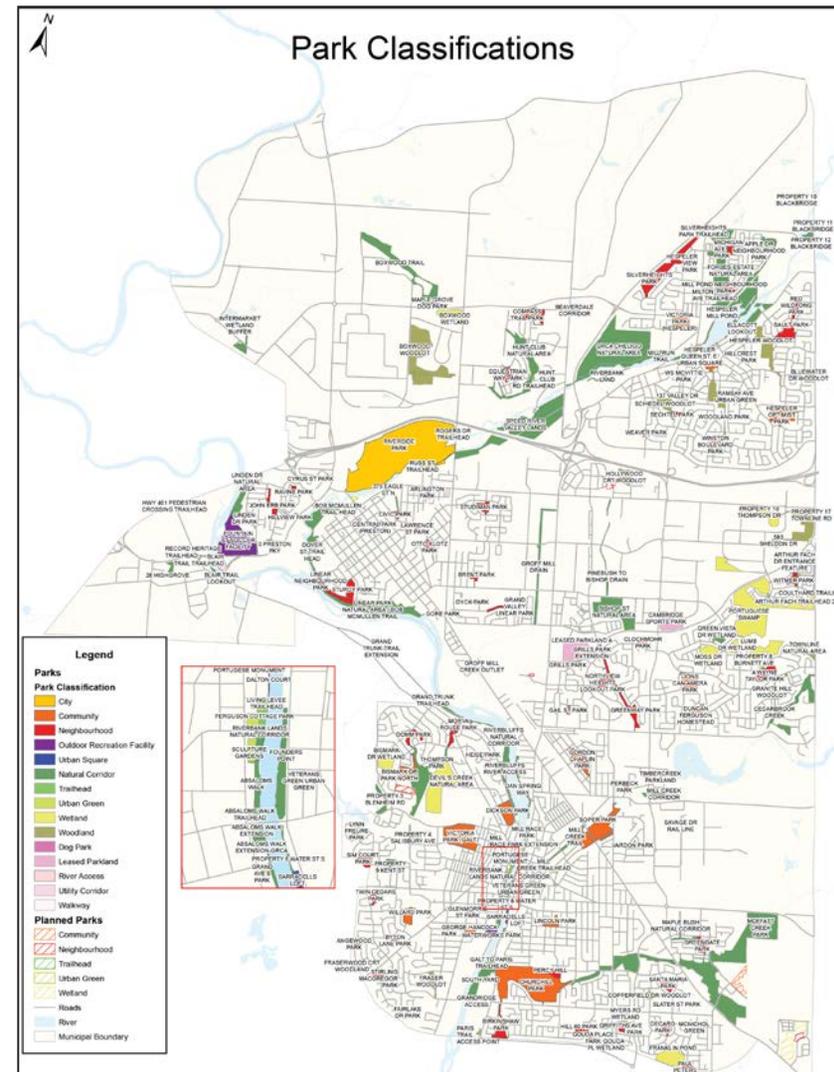
Service levels are referenced throughout this document and were informed by the public consultation process. Service levels are expressed and articulated in many ways from many perspectives. All equally important but can be difficult to express in a consistent manner.

This document provides a framework for park service level measures and recommendations for future targets.

The framework provides service level measures by provision (how much of it is available to residents) and by classification representing the level of functionality the space or amenity provides.

8.1 Park Classifications

Park classifications are intended to generally describe and categorize types of park spaces, their levels of service, intended uses, amenities, and management. Classifications also assist in measuring and reporting on levels of service that guide amenity renewals. The sixteen types of park classifications are presented in the Park Classification Map.



[Click here to view Park Classifications map](#)

Each park may include one or more of three different types of land utilization:

- **Natural Area** – areas within parks that include water or naturalized vegetation areas with limited maintenance. There is 697 ha of Natural Area within parks.
- **Developed Area** – areas within parks where grass and other vegetation is regularly cut and where most park amenities are located (e.g., playgrounds, tennis courts, fitness stations, park pathways, picnic areas, etc.) that are typically used by individuals or small groups. There is 183 ha of Developed Area within parks.
- **Recreation Land** – areas within parks that support indoor or outdoor sports facilities that are focused on hosting organized team sports (e.g., soccer, baseball, cricket fields, parking areas, indoor arenas, pools, etc.). There is 68 ha of Recreation within parks.

The classifications also support the process of assessing requests for additional amenities as a means to provide a fair and equitable distribution of amenities to residents and avoid conflicts between residents and park users.

List of Park Classifications

City – Riverside Park

The designated City park of Cambridge serving all residents including residents living within walking distance

Amenities and Service Levels: Primarily a “drive-to” location with a full range of park amenities providing the widest range of activities for residents including special events. Additional Recreation Lands support outdoor sports facilities for organized sports.

Number of Parks: 1

Total Area (ha): 99

Total Natural Area (ha): 62

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 21

Total Recreation Land (ha): 16

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: 1.3 sq m. per person

⁴Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100) sq m. per person

Community Park

Larger parks ranging from 2 ha to 30 ha that serve the needs of several neighbourhoods, residents living within walking distance as well as the entire city.

Amenities and Service Levels: Considered a “drive-to” location with a range of park amenities and support of special events. Additional Recreation Lands support outdoor and indoor sports facilities for organized sports.

Number of Parks: 14

Total Area (ha): 113

Total Natural Area (ha): 40

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 50

Total Recreation Land (ha): 24

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: 3.2⁷ sq m. per person

Neighbourhood Park

Smaller parks typically less than 2 ha that serve residents living within walking distance.

Minimum size needed to provide the range of amenities expected is one hectare.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically, includes a broad range of park amenities. Some spaces may support fitness area bookings and special events for area residents and can be supported with available on-street parking in the area.

Typically, do not include amenities that draw residents from other areas of the city that would require parking spaces. Examples include: splash pads, skate parks, bookable picnic shelters, washroom, sports fields.

Number of Parks: 59

Total Area (ha): 116

Total Natural Area (ha): 43

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 65

Total Recreation Land (ha): 8

Avg Park Provision Level of Service: 6.5⁵ sq m. per person

⁴ Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100) sq m. per person

⁵ Population of 99,672 live within 800 m walking distance of a Neighbourhood park.

Level of Service is calculated for Neighbourhood Parks by dividing total Developed park area by the number of residents within 800 m walking distance (i.e. 65.31 ha / 96,200 residents = 6.79 sq m. / person)

⁷ The population served by Community Parks is the entire city (156,100 residents) as these are primarily “drive-to” parks which results in a provision LoS of 3.2; however, it should be remembered that Community Parks also act as the “Local Neighbourhood Park” within 800 m walking distances for 31,217 residents who live close by to these parks

Urban Square

Small (< 0.5 ha) parks in urbanized areas and are primarily hard-scaped features offering limited vegetation that serve the needs of residents living within walking distance and visitors to local businesses.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typical amenities include one or more smaller amenities servicing the needs of residents within walking distance as well as visitors to the area. Examples of amenities include: hard-scaped surfaces, raised flower/shrub planters, seating, year-round garbage receptacles, shade structure.

Commonly these spaces are suitable for small scale events such as small music or cultural events / farmers' markets, wedding photography through an event permit or a booking.

Number of Parks: 10

Total Area (ha): 2

Total Natural Area (ha): 1

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 1

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: 1.96 sq m. per person

Private Owned Public Spaces (POPS)

POPS and strata parks are small (<0.5 ha) urban spaces on privately-owned lands and maintained by the private owner but open to the public for regular use.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically, similar amenities that found in urban squares plus specific features of interest to the property owner.

⁴ Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100) sq m. per person

⁵ Population of 99,672 live within 800 m walking distance of a Neighbourhood park

⁶ Population 7,349 live within 800 m walking distance of an Urban Square

Urban Green

Urban Greens are small vegetated spaces (<0.5 ha) within an otherwise hardscaped and urbanized setting.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically limited to one or more of the following: grassed area, gardens, walking paths, small shade structure, trees, seating, art installations, entrance features, seasonal or all-year garbage receptacles. May also provide a vista or a view of feature areas of the city.

With exceptions, these parks are typically too small to support parking, washrooms, events.

Number of Parks: 17

Total Area (ha): 3

Total Natural Area (ha): 1

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 2

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Leased Parkland

Parkland has been leased to a private or non-profit entity.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically supporting the needs of team sports, clubs, and individuals performing at a recreational or competition level and provides on-site parking, washrooms, and other amenities.

Number of Parks: 3

Total Area (ha): 17

Total Natural Area (ha): 3

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 2

Total Recreation Land (ha): 12

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Outdoor Recreation Facility

These are bookable and/or limited access, Premium and Standard outdoor recreation facilities focused on serving the needs of organized sports groups.

Amenities and Service Levels: Amenities in these locations are limited to what is needed to support the sports user groups and are not generally open for public use. A substantial portion of the operating costs are funded from user fees through bookings.

Number of Parks: 2

Total Area (ha): 24

Total Natural Area (ha): 11

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 7

Total Recreation Land (ha): 6

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

⁴Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100) sq m. per person

Dog Park

A dog park is a property largely dedicated to off-leash exercise and socialization of dogs.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically Includes parking, portable washroom, one or more fenced areas for dogs, garbage receptacles, and may include walking paths and seating.

Number of Parks: 1

Total Area (ha): 1

Total Natural Area (ha): 0

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 1

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

⁴ Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100)
sq m. per person

⁸ Note that river access features such as canoe launches and portage points also exist within parks of other classifications

River Access

A purpose-built park to provide access to the river for public use.

Amenities and Service Levels: Available amenities may include one or more of the following: a ramp into the water to launch small watercraft, canoe portage points, safe access for fishing, seating, seasonal portable washroom, and parking.⁸

Number of Parks: 5

Total Area (ha): 5

Total Natural Area (ha): 2

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 3

Total Recreation Land (ha): 1

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Trailhead

Small, typically less than 0.5 ha in size. These are spaces providing an access point to sections of trail throughout the city.

Amenities and Service Levels: Typically limited to functions related to use of trails such as: bike fix stations, seating, gates, wayfinding bollards, seasonal or all-year garbage receptacles

Where space is available, some level of parking may be provided as well as portable washrooms.

Number of Parks: 25

Total Area (ha): 4

Total Natural Area (ha): 2

Total Developed Park Area (ha): 2

Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Natural Corridor

Natural Areas situated next to rivers or creeks, other linear properties, and often contain trails.

Amenities and Service Levels: Amenities are related to the passive appreciation of naturalized areas (e.g. benches, interpretive signs, boardwalks, seasonal garbage receptacles, trails).

Number of Parks: 47
 Total Area (ha): 378
 Total Natural Area (ha): 355
 Total Developed Park Area (ha): 23
 Total Recreation Land (ha): 1
 Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Woodland

Woodlands are forested areas with significant canopy coverage.

Amenities and Service Levels: Amenities may or may not be present on Woodland properties but if they are, they may comprise formal trails, woodland trails, and unmaintained footpaths.

Number of Parks: 15
 Total Area (ha): 75
 Total Natural Area (ha): 72
 Total Developed Park Area (ha): 3
 Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

Wetland

Wetlands are properties primarily consisting of wetlands (i.e., bogs, marshes, swamps).

Amenities and Service Levels: Amenities may or may not be present on Wetland properties but if they are, they may include formal trails, woodland trails, and unmaintained footpaths.

Number of Parks: 11
 Total Area (ha): 107
 Total Natural Area (ha): 104
 Total Developed Park Area (ha): 4
 Avg Park Provision Level of Service⁴: N/A

A complete listing of parks by classification and other information can be found in [Appendix D - Park Listing, Metrics, and Asset Summaries](#)

⁴Developed Park Area / 2024 population (156,100) sq m. per person

8.2 Parkland Provision

Parkland provision reflects a measure of how much parkland residents have and is a reflection of the capital investments made by the City, developers, and the community for parkland and the amenities within them.

8.2.1 Park Provision within Walking Distance Service Standard

Public consultation identified that parks being “close to home” was the second most appreciated aspects of Cambridge parks (after playgrounds). From this perspective, this report has completed an analysis that identifies how far residents need to walk to their nearest park.

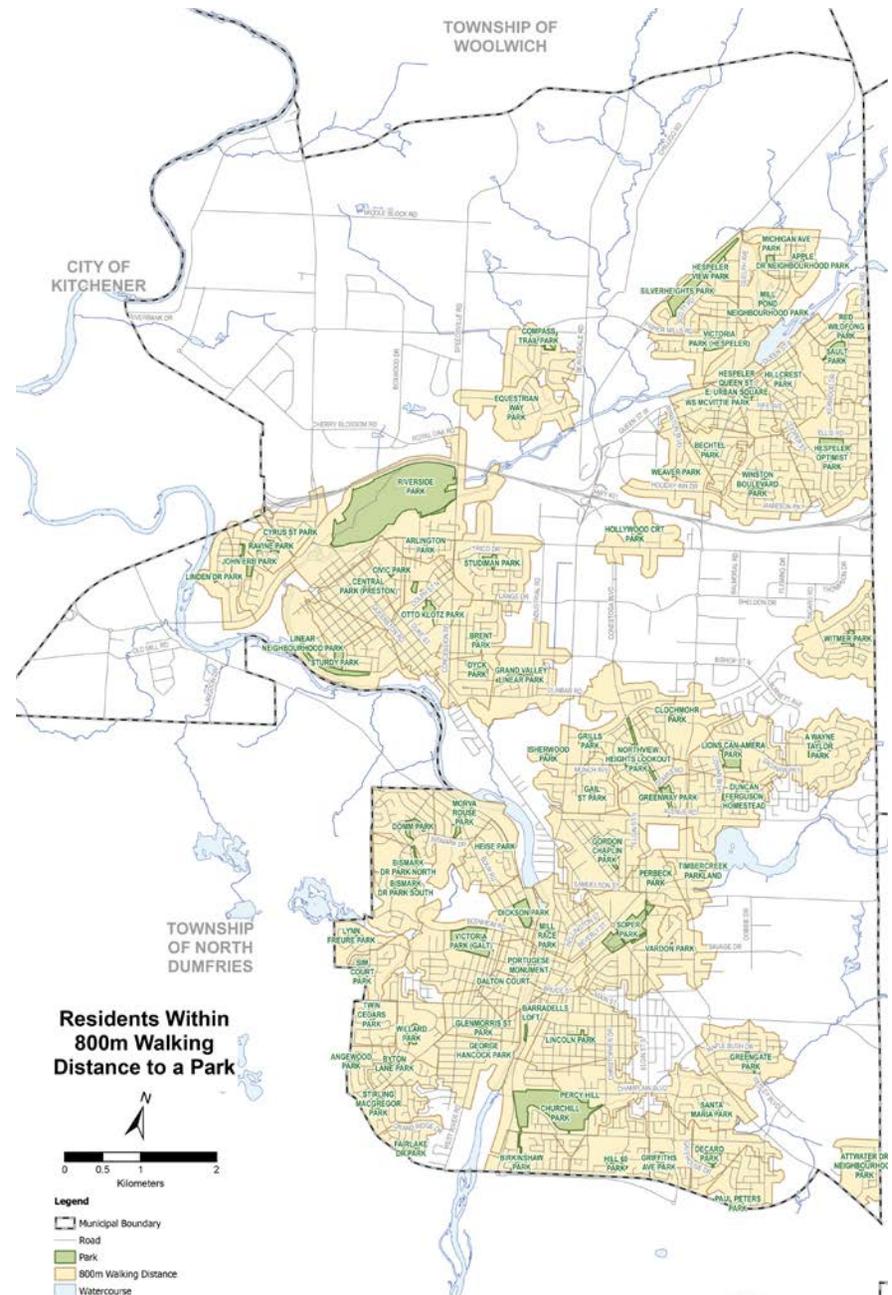
8.2.1.1 Current Standard

This Plan is establishing 800 m as a service level standard based on an industry scan of other municipalities in Ontario.

Currently, 90% of all residents in Cambridge live within 800 m of their nearest park. Qualifying parks include: City, Community, Neighbourhood, Urban Square, and POPS classifications.

Residents that meet this walking distance standard have, on average, 6.5 sq m. of Neighbourhood Park available to them.

[Click here to view Residents Within 800 m Walking Distance to a Park map](#)



There are two categories of residents that do not currently meet this level of service:

- **Residents in low density estate neighbourhoods.** Residents in this scenario typically have large yards and exist in more rural settings. These areas are not considered a priority at this time; however, should new development occur in these areas, parkland should be considered as part of the planning process.
- **Residents in high to medium density neighbourhoods.** Areas of the city that meet these criteria are considered more of a priority. Recommendations in this report are intended, over time, to address the service level shortfalls in these areas.

No change in service level is being proposed at this time, however, the following locations identify the top five areas of the city where residents do not have a park within the walking distance service standard. Service level improvements may be improved in these locations, over time, through intensification development, parkland acquisition opportunities, or further collaboration with property owners in the area including School Boards.

Table 6: Areas of the city with lower parkland provision service levels of higher priority to resolve in future.

Elgin Street South

Number of residents within the area: 3,689

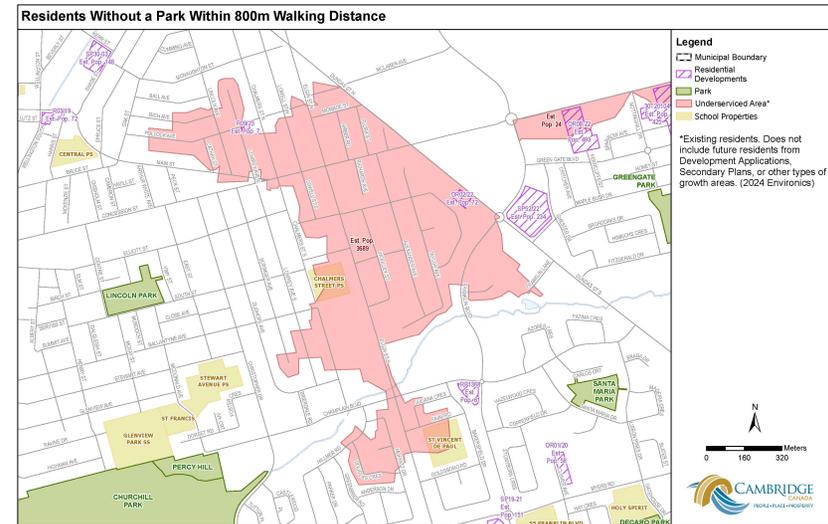
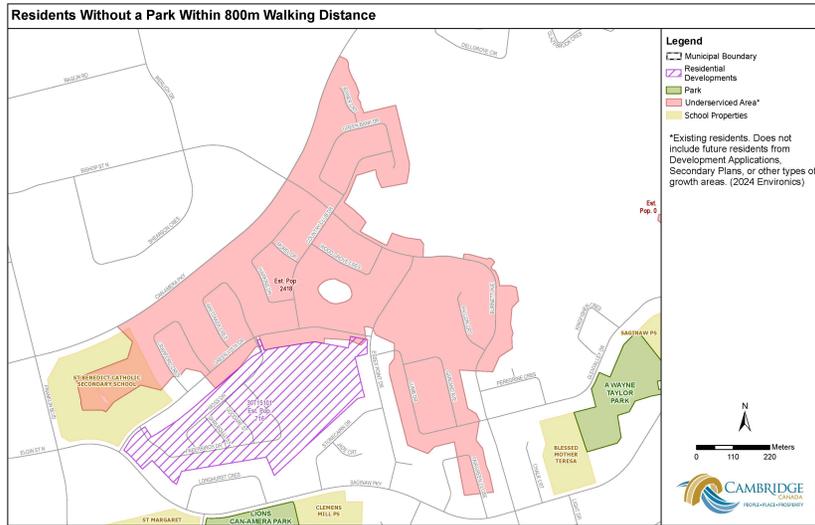


Table 6: Areas of the city with lower parkland provision service levels of higher priority to resolve in future.

Green Vista Drive

Number of residents within the area: 2,418



Coronation Boulevard / Dundas Street North

Number of residents within the area: 1,173

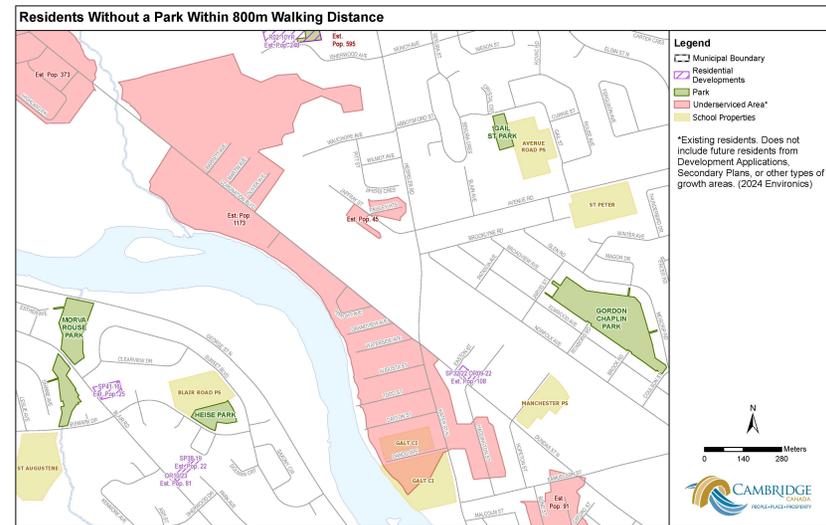
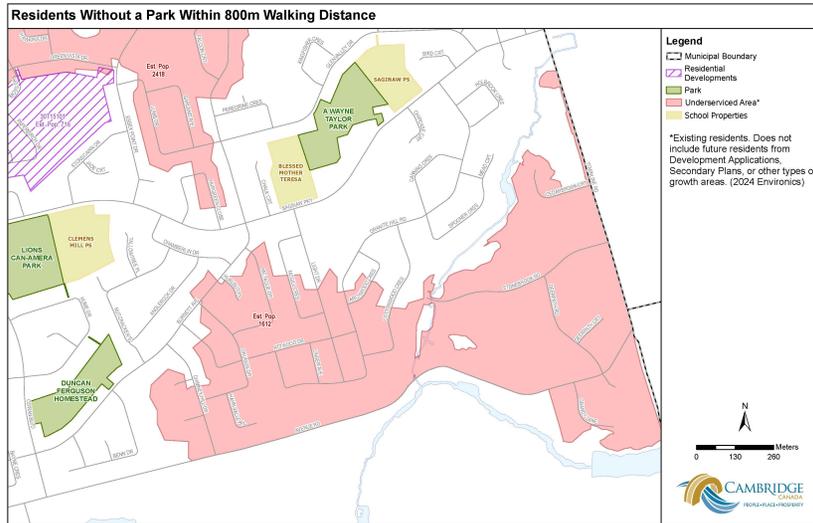


Table 6: Areas of the city with lower parkland provision service levels of higher priority to resolve in future.

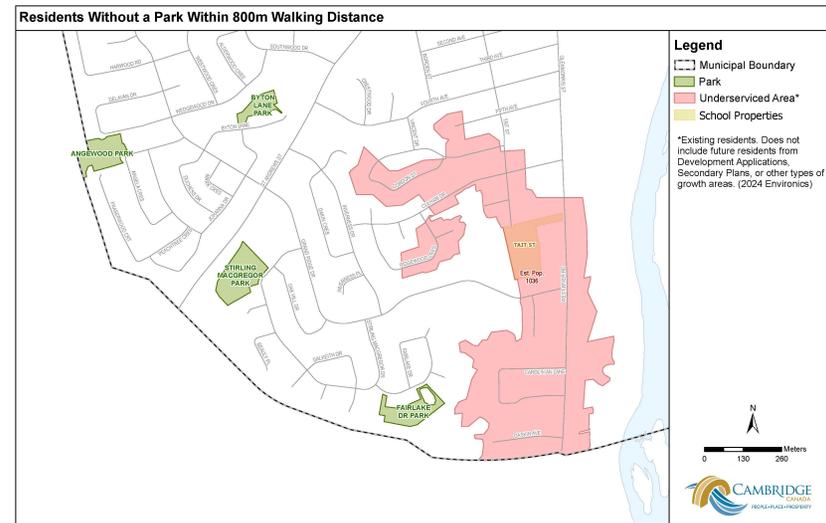
Attwood Drive

Number of residents within the area: 1,612



West River Road

Number of residents within the area: 1,036



8.2.2 Parkland Provision Service Standard

This service level identifies how much parkland is available to residents.

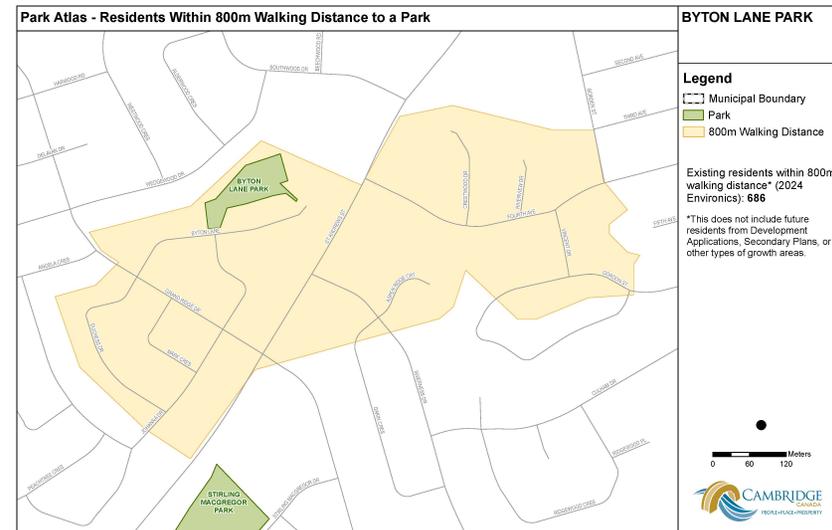
How much park space is available to each resident is a generally accepted industry measure. This is commonly expressed as square meters of Developed park area (park areas where vegetation is maintained or contains park amenities⁹) per person.

To further support the parkland provision metrics, this Plan has developed “parksheds” that represent areas around each existing park where residents reside within an 800 m walking distance to their nearest park. For this purpose, only parks of the following classifications are considered: City, Community, Neighbourhood, and Urban Squares.

The parkshed polygons have been used as the means to measure the number of residents served by each existing park based on the most recent Environics population information available.

This measure provides an understanding of the park provision service level that is being met around each park and provides a benchmark in comparison to other parks of the same classification and the overall average across the city. This measure is intended to assist in the prioritization of additional land acquisitions or additional park amenity requests to balance the needs of residents who live in areas that are experiencing relatively lower service levels.

⁹Excluding the area supporting outdoor recreation facilities such as soccer fields, baseball diamonds, cricket fields, etc. and buildings as well as any natural areas. Developed, Recreation, and Natural parkland comprise the three different types of lands and only the Developed is used for the parkland provision metric and expressed as sq m./person of Developed parkland.



Appendix A – Atlas provides a visual representation of each park and the parkshed areas around each along with a measure of the number of residents in comparison to city averages for parks of the same classification.

8.2.2.1 Current Standard

Parkland service standards currently being provided to residents are defined below:

Neighbourhood Parks

Developed park area available to residents within a Neighbourhood Park within 800 m walking distance exclusive of Natural Areas and Recreation Land.

Population Served: 99,672
Area (ha): 65.26
Provision (sq m. per resident): 6.5

Community Parks

Shared Developed parkland for all residents in the City exclusive of Natural Areas and Recreation Land.

Population Served: 156,100
Area (ha): 49.65
Provision (sq m. per resident): 3.2

Recreation Land

Areas within all park classifications dedicated to outdoor or indoor sports amenities for all residents (includes sports fields, recreation buildings, parking lots but not courts)

Population Served: 156,100
Area (ha): 68.35
Provision (sq m. per resident): 4.4

City Park (Riverside Park)

Developed area of the City park for all residents – exclusive of Natural Areas and Recreation Land.

Population Served: 156,100
Area (ha): 20.68
Provision (sq m. per resident): 1.3

Natural Areas

Areas within all park classifications that do not contain formal amenities and support the natural environment for the benefit of all residents.

Population Served: 156,100
Area (ha): 697.07
Provision (sq m. per resident): 44.7

Cambridge residents have a current parkland provision of 11.0 sq m. per person that is made up of three components: Neighbourhood Park: 6.5, Community Park: 3.2, City Park: 1.3

Additionally, Cambridge residents have a current Recreation Land provision of 4.4 sq m. per person and 44.7 sq m. per person of Natural Areas.

No changes to park provision service standards are being recommended. Ideally, current service levels should be maintained to the extent reasonably possible through the creation of new Neighbourhood and Community Parks through the planning process.

8.3 Park Amenities

Amenities are provided to residents that provide passive or active things for residents to do in these spaces. Examples include benches, walking paths, playgrounds, tennis courts for individuals or small groups to utilize as well as larger amenities that support organized sports groups such as soccer fields, baseball diamonds, cricket pitches, and event spaces.

Park Amenity Provision

How many park amenities are provided to residents is typically expressed in the number of amenities per 1,000 residents.

Park Amenity Service Standard

In some cases, a service standard is also applied to amenities which further qualifies the level of functionality the amenity provides to users.

Premium: The highest quality amenity and supporting features. Amenities of this service level are most commonly installed in City or Community Parks where residents will drive to and may be a destination for residents and from across the city as well as from other communities.

Standard: A medium quality amenity and supporting features with a high level of maintenance.

Recreation: A moderate quality amenity with limited supporting features and generally a lower level of maintenance.

Basic: A simple amenity that provides baseline functionality with no supporting features and generally having a low level of maintenance.

¹⁰ [The WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework - Age-Friendly World](#)

8.3.1 Current Standard – Range of Amenities in Parks

It is currently common for Neighbourhood Parks to provide a pathway and a playground which is focused on providing activities for children. This reflects historical expectations of the residents of Cambridge with moderate low density.

8.3.2 Service Enhancement – Expanded Range of Amenities in Parks

Public consultation has identified a strong interest to have more park amenities to additionally provide activities for youth, adults, and be aligned with the WHO Age-friendly Cities Framework – Age Friendly World¹⁰ and meet the City’s Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS).

The most common amenities requested to meet this objective include: additional pathways with seating and shade, basketball/pickleball courts, fitness stations. A range of other options should be considered where suitable space exists. Refer to [Appendix A – Park Atlas](#) for specific park opportunities.

R-11 It is recommended that the level of service for amenities in Neighbourhood Parks should transition, over time, to include at least three amenities, where space exists, to service a broader range of age groups (i.e. amenities for children, youth, adults, and older adults).

Financial Impacts of Expanded Range of Amenities in Parks

This transition has started with the design and construction of the newest parks in Cambridge (i.e. Hollywood Drive Park and Bismark Park). A transition to this new standard will take considerable time and funding that cannot be estimated at this time as the opportunity to achieve this standard is site specific. It is suggested that this transition be gradual and be considered, where feasible, as part of capital renewal projects and be additionally funded through growth, where applicable, and through community fundraising efforts as outlined in the **Impact of Growth** and **External Funding Opportunities** sections of this report.

8.3.3 Current Standard – Location of Sports Fields

Sports fields commonly exist in Neighbourhood and Community Parks with the intent of serving the needs of organized sports groups as well as providing open spaces for area residents supporting informal and unorganized forms of play.

8.3.4 Service Enhancement – Transition to Outdoor Sports Facility Spaces

Public consultation has identified that users of different interests in the park exist at the same time and, at times, having a negative impact on their enjoyment of these spaces. The most common conflict is sports fields that are used by organized sports groups where open space and/or parking is limited, or in close proximity to other park amenities and/or residential properties. This is most often in Neighbourhood Parks, but, also is occurring in smaller Community Parks where residents in the area are looking to walk paths through or adjacent to sports fields when teams are practicing or playing games.

This Plan recognizes that land for larger sports fields supporting organized sports should be considered as Recreation Land use independent of parkland use to distinguish between users of different interests. While both of these uses can co-exist in a park where space permits, this isn't always the case when parks are of limited size.

As the city is expected to see considerable intensification, the existing conflicts are likely to continue and may extend into other parks where sports fields currently exist.

Additionally, there has been (and always be) shifting interests in different organized sports resulting in periods of time when there are cycles of lower and higher interest in specific sports. At this time, there is lower demand for baseball, a moderate demand for soccer, and growing demand for cricket relative to the inventory of sports fields that exist within Cambridge's parks.

Public consultation with sports groups has also identified a general dissatisfaction with the level of functionality, maintenance, and services for a number of sports fields. Review of these concerns in coordination with booking statistics has identified that organized sports groups have a much higher interest in quality sports fields (Premium and Standard service standard) and very limited interest in lower quality sports fields (Recreational service standard).

There is currently a high demand for cricket pitches and surplus of both baseball and soccer fields.

This presents an opportunity to re-focus capital and operating efforts on higher service standard fields that are demand with potential of re-locating or removing lower used, lower service standard sports fields. Particularly, where conflicts between sports groups and other park users are becoming evident.

Relocating or constructing sports fields in “clusters” such as recently done with the Outdoor Soccer Complex on Fountain Street represents the preferred and ideal conditions for organized sports groups. This strategy enhances the ability for clubs to attract members and support tournaments that bring in visitors from other communities, that, in term, contribute positively to the economic prosperity of the community.

R-12 It is recommended that the City continue to monitor sports field and park space usage and identify opportunities to improve, decommission, re-purpose, or re-locate sports fields to other suitable locations in the city.

Financial Impact of Transition to Outdoor Sports Facility Spaces

There is no immediate financial impact as further monitoring is required before site specific recommendations can be made to consider in future capital project submission related to sports fields.

Funding for Recreation Lands needed to support growth, may, in future, be funded through an updated Development Charges By-law that recognizes the cost of Recreation Land associated with outdoor sports fields independent of parkland dedication.

8.3.5 Current Standard – Operation of Park Facilities by Clubs

Sports courts commonly exist in Neighbourhood and Community Parks with many being available openly to the public with some being licensed to be operated by non-profit sports clubs.

Sports courts that are operated by non-profit sports clubs provide opportunities for the public through memberships to use the space to learn and enjoy the sport at all levels of play.

Public courts do not have booking or reservations available.

No change is being proposed through this Plan.

R-13 It is recommended that the City continue to provide sport courts such as basketball, tennis, and pickleball openly to the public and distributed across the city within Neighbourhood and Community Parks, where space is available, and continue supporting existing leases to non-profit / sports clubs under suitable license agreements.



Basketball courts at Bismark Park

8.4 Playgrounds

8.4.1 Current Standard

The City currently has 67 Playgrounds providing 0.4 playgrounds per 1,000 residents and is on-par with municipal comparators.

Playgrounds and play structures installed follow CAN/CSA Z614-14 Standard for Children’s Playspaces and Equipment as well as Cambridge Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS).

This Plan is defining two service standards for playgrounds as described below:

Premium: Playgrounds having a wide range of play value and challenge for a range of ages and abilities and include rubberized surface.

Standard: Playgrounds providing play value and challenge for a limited range of ages and abilities and include engineered wood fibre surface.

The City currently has 63 Standard playgrounds and 4 Premium playgrounds.



Playground at Riverside Park

Public consultation has identified that playgrounds are one of the most important amenity in parks and that two key themes were evident.

- There is a strong desire for more playgrounds having a higher order accessible features including rubberized surfaces.
- The current condition and maintenance of playgrounds is lower than public expectations.

From these perspectives, proposed service level changes are related to maintenance and quality, but there is not an overall shortage.

8.4.2 Service Enhancement – More Premium Playgrounds

A balanced approach to providing more Premium playgrounds would see existing standard playgrounds in the 14 Community parks be, over time, upgraded to Premium and continue providing Standard playgrounds in Neighbourhood Parks.

R-14 It is recommended that the City transition to a service standard where all Community Parks include one Premium playground.

Additionally, public feedback has identified value in making it known what accessible features are available in both Premium and Standard playgrounds and the location of them.

R-15 It is recommended that Staff develop, publish and maintain a guide that highlights special need, accessibility, and inclusion features within the City’s Parks to serve as a resource for those with special needs and their caregivers.

Financial Impact of More Premium Playgrounds

This service level change is long term change as the City currently has 4 Premium playgrounds that are located in the following parks: Riverside Park (City Park), Churchill Park, Victoria Park (Galt), Victoria Park (Hespeler). Over time, as existing playgrounds are replaced, a transition to having Premium playgrounds in each Community Park can be realized.

A new Standard playground installation, on average, is \$275,000 while a new Premium playground, on average, is in the order of \$755,000 exclusive of any costs associated with connecting pathways, washrooms and parking. Maintenance of Premium and Standard playgrounds differ primarily due to the different surface type, however, the annual operating costs are similar with no appreciable difference.

Seven playgrounds in Community Parks are currently in the 10-year capital forecast for replacement with four of them requiring increased funding to upgrade from Standard to Premium service standard at an estimated total cost of \$1.2 million over the next four year period.



Playground at Victoria Park in Galt

Table 9 - Playgrounds in Community Parks in Capital Forecast for Replacement

Forbes Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 1999
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2026 - \$354,900
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Capital project value increase of \$300,000

Hespeler Optimist Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2013
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2026 - \$219,800
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Capital project value increase of \$300,000

Willard Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2001
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2026 - \$606,000
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Replacement project budget can support Premium

Table 9 - Playgrounds in Community Parks in Capital Forecast for Replacement

Soper Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 1997
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2028 - \$750,000
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Replacement project budget can support Premium

Hancock Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2008
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2029 - \$149,500
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Capital project value increase of \$300,000

Churchill Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2000
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2029 - \$569,900
 Current Service Level: Premium
 Financial Impact: None

Lions Can-Amera Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2010
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: 2029 - \$341,900
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Capital project value increase of \$300,000

Playgrounds in remaining Community parks are listed below and do not currently have a replacement schedule within the 10 year capital forecast. Five of them are Standard playgrounds and would require increased funding as part of the capital budget submission for replacement between 8 and 15 years from now.

Victoria Park (Galt)

Existing Playground Install Year: 2016
 Current Service Level: Premium
 Financial Impact: None

Victoria Park (Hespeler)

Existing Playground Install Year: 2017
 Current Service Level: Premium
 Financial Impact: None

Dickson Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2017
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: New Replacement Capital Project in 2032+ of \$755,000

Duncan Ferguson Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2018
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: New Replacement Capital Project in 2033+ of \$755,000

Lincoln Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2022
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: New Replacement Capital Project in 2037+ of \$755,000

Bismark Park

Existing Playground Install Year: 2024
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: New Replacement Capital Project of one playground in this location upgraded to Premium in 2039+ of \$755,000

Gorden Chaplin Park

Existing Playground Install Year: Replacement in progress of replacement.
 Current Service Level: Standard
 Financial Impact: Consider upgrade to premium on next renewal cycle 2040+ an increased value of \$480,000

Wesley Park (future)

Existing Playground Install Year: Future playground
 Forecasted Playground Replacement: Not in current capital forecast
 Current Service Level: N/A
 Financial Impact: Anticipated to be funded through sponsorship.



Playground at Victoria Park in Hespeler

8.4.3 Service Enhancement – Increased Playground Maintenance

Regular inspections, repairs, and maintenance are of high importance with inspections currently happening consistently on a monthly basis in the summer months, with repairs and maintenance provided on an as-available basis.

Through the winter months, park staff currently have limited capacity for playground support as all staff are assigned winter maintenance routes of sidewalks, paths, trails, and walkways. Maintenance of playgrounds through spring, summer, and fall are impacted by grass cutting schedules.

Operations currently does not have the capacity to consistently inspect and maintain playgrounds which are being used year-round by residents.

R-16 It is recommended that a business case be prepared to increase Operations capacity for the inspection, maintenance, and repair of playgrounds.

Financial Impact of increased Playground Maintenance

A dedicated playground crew would enable a consistent year-round focus on playground inspections and ensure that maintenance and repairs were completed in a timely manner.

An additional crew, equipment, water, and electricity to support this recommendation is estimated to be \$275,000 annual operating impact and a one-time cost of \$83,000.

8.4.4 Renewal Cycle Change – Shorter Playground Renewal Period

Many of the City’s playgrounds have exceeded normal life expectancy with replacements deferred due to capital renewal funding challenges. Aging playgrounds are difficult to maintain and repair as replacement parts are often not available and custom fabrication options are limited. Many of the corrosion protection coatings are worn and there are also limited options for re-coating.

Discussion in the industry has identified that best practices for replacement of playgrounds is 15 years and may be extended on a case-by-case basis based on condition assessments.

R-17 It is recommended that, for asset management and long-range financial planning purposes, playground renewal cycle would be set to 15 years.

Financial Impact of Shorter Playground Renewal Period

A financial impact will be reflected in future Asset Management Reports that provide long range financial need for renewal of the City’s assets.

Capacity to undertake more playground replacement projects under a shorter replacement cycle in terms of project management and design will need to be addressed through the annual budget process if funding becomes available.

8.5.2 Washroom Renewal Needs

The appearance and condition of the majority of public washrooms are reflective of a backlog of condition assessments and renewal. There is a need to address this backlog that will resolve much of the public negative feedback received including the need to comply with current accessibility expectations.

R-18 It is recommended that a condition and accessibility assessment be undertaken for all park washrooms and undertake replacement and renewals.

Financial Impact of Washroom Renewal

A list of existing washrooms that are in need of condition assessment and renewal is shown in the table below. Three washrooms are currently out of service and need full replacement at an estimated cost of \$500,000 each for a total of \$1.5 million. Fourteen washrooms are in need of upgrades at an average estimated cost of \$250,000 each for a total of \$3.5 million. It is suggested that renewals should be individually prioritized and completed over a 15 year period.

Table 12 - Public Washrooms in Need of Assessment and Renewal

Gordon Chaplin Park

Type of Washroom: Washrooms and change rooms within storage building
Comments: Out of service - Portables provided in lieu of washroom

Soper Park – South of Dundas Street

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom
Comments: Out of service - Portables provided in lieu of washroom

Soper Park – North of Dundas Street

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom
Comments: Out of service - Portables provided in lieu of washroom

Churchill Park

Type of Washroom: Part of Maintenance Building – West Side

Churchill Park

Type of Washroom: Part of Maintenance Building – East Side

Dickson Park

Type of Washroom: Part of Maintenance Building including change rooms
Comments: Currently serves ball diamond users and events held in the lower area of the park.

Table 12 - Public Washrooms in Need of Assessment and Renewal

Lincoln Park

Type of Washroom: Washroom part of storage and canteen building

Lincoln Park

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom

Lions Can-Amera Park

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom

Riverside Park – Skateboard Park

Type of Washroom: Washroom and Storage
Comments: Only opened for adjacent picnic shelter bookings

Riverside Park – Grandstand

Type of Washroom: Washroom part of grandstand

Riverside Park – Central Area

Type of Washroom: Washroom near splash pad

Riverbluffs Park

Type of Washroom: Part of canoe and rowing clubs building

Victoria Park (Hespeler)

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom

Waterworks Park

Type of Washroom: Washroom part of storage building

Willard Park

Type of Washroom: Washroom part of workshop building

Victoria Park (Galt)

Type of Washroom: Dedicated Park Washroom

8.5.3 Service Enhancement – Additional Washrooms

The following parks should be considered for installation of washrooms in the future as a lower priority to the renewal of existing washrooms.

Duncan Ferguson Park – A washroom is available within the Fiddlesticks Community Centre during operating hours. However, it is a distance from the playground and splash pad in the lower section of the park. A public washroom building adjacent to the playground and splash pad is considered best practice.

Dickson Park – A public washroom is available as part of the change rooms adjacent to the sports field as well as in the arena during arena operating hours. However, it is a distance from the playground and open space areas in the upper section of the park. Washrooms were available historically in the upper section of the grandstand, however, they are no longer functional. A public washroom building adjacent to the playground to serve the upper section of this park is suggested.

Central Park (Preston) – Although Central Park is considered to be an Urban Green, it is a very active park in a built-up area hosting a number of regular events, has a splash pad, and bandshell. It is a special park that is unique in Cambridge with a higher level of usage than many others of the same size. A seasonal portable washroom is provided in this park, however, a higher order washroom is merited in this particular location with consideration for all-year service.

A public washroom building that has enhanced durability and anti-vandalism features is being considered in a number of municipalities with early adopter pilot programs in progress. This location could be considered a suitable location for a pilot of such a unit.

R-19 It is recommended that seasonal washrooms be considered in Duncan Ferguson Park, Dickson Park, and a pilot all-season washroom in Central Park (Preston).

Financial Impact of Additional Washrooms

Installation of two new park washroom buildings is estimated to cost \$1 million and a pilot all-season vandalism resistant washroom is estimated to be in the range of \$750,000 for consideration in future budgets.

Annual operating costs for each new seasonal washroom is estimated to be \$31,000 and an all-season washroom is estimated to be \$77,000.



Portable Washroom at Duncan Ferguson Park

8.5.4 Service Enhancement – Washroom Vandalism Protection

The condition of washrooms and their cleanliness is commonly an issue of vandalism. Industry solutions are evolving and becoming available which range from more durable fixtures or technology that incorporates occupancy sensors that are able to maintain privacy for users, but, identify when a washroom is not operating within normal parameters and requires a response. In future, these options may become more readily available for consideration.

If implemented, these features may enable a wider range of operating hours for washrooms that are only currently available when adjacent amenities are booked for use and can reduce vandalism induced out-of-service periods.

No specific recommendation is being made at this time, however, industry availability of devices and technology should be monitored and, when feasible, be considered in washroom renovations or new washroom installations in the future.

8.5.5 Service Enhancement – Improved Washroom Maintenance

The current maintenance service level of washrooms and portables provided by Cambridge is typical of most municipalities. Given the public feedback, consideration by Council is suggested to increase the frequency of washroom inspections and cleaning.

Financial Impact of Improved Washroom Maintenance

R-20 It is recommended that the park public washroom maintenance program be reviewed and options to increase the frequency of inspection and cleaning of park public washrooms be prepared through a business case and presented to Council for consideration through the budget process.



Dickson Park

8.6 Splash Pads

8.6.1 Current Standard

Three service level standards have been defined for splash pads.

Premium: multiple overhead features, different areas suitable for different ranges of age groups, shaded seating for users, parking, and access to a washroom.

Standard: one or more overhead features, may include nearby seating, parking, and access to a washroom.

Basic: static spray nozzles activated in a variety of ways, parking, and access to a washroom.

An additional type of splash pad amenity is being proposed that could be installed in park classifications other than Community Parks and which do not require parking and washrooms.

Misting Station: static misting spray device operated by proximity sensors.

The City currently has 4 Standard splash pads and 8 Basic splash pads, however, the Weaver Park Basic splash pad has been decommissioned.

Splash pads are normally activated after the Victoria Day long weekend in May, operated through the summer months, and closed down after the Labour Day long weekend in September.

When feasible, early openings of three splash pads (Victoria Park, Forbes Park, and Churchill Park) are provided for early spring heat waves.

The City, at this time, does not have a Premium splash pad.

The Cambridge provision level of service is 1 per 13,008 residents and is on par with the City of Burlington. The service level for splash pad provision is significantly higher than that of both Kitchener and Waterloo.

From this perspective, Cambridge is already meeting or exceeding the service levels of other municipalities in terms of number of splash pads.

A washroom, ideally with a changeroom, is expected to be provided near each splash pad location as per public health guidelines. However, some locations currently have splash pads and are only serviced with a portable washroom having a reduced service level in those locations.

Public consultation has identified a keen interest in having more splash pads in their local parks and improvement to the existing splash pads currently provided.

An increase in the number of days of hot weather are being regularly experienced in the spring and fall and is driving the desire to have outdoor activities that provide relief from these periods of hot weather.



Splash Pad at Central Park

8.6.2 Splash Pad Renewal Needs

The reliability of the existing splash pads continues to be an issue due to their aging components. Plumbing and controller repairs and upgrades are being scheduled on an as-needed basis when funding is available through the annual operating budgets to continue their operation. Refurbishment or replacement and/or relocation of aging splash pads through capital budgets should be considered.

R-21 It is recommended that a condition assessment be completed to identify and prioritize renewal of splash pads.

R-22 It is recommended that the splash pad at Riverside Park be upgraded to a premium splash pad.

Financial Impact of Splash Pad Renewal

A total estimated cost is not available until condition assessments have been completed.

Renewal of controllers and active plumbing components are estimated to be in the \$25,000 to \$50,000 range for Standard and Basic splash pads and can be an option when those components are readily accessible and the remaining physical components and drainage are still serviceable.

Construction of a new Basic splash pad is estimated to be \$300,000, a Standard splash pad is estimated at \$800,000, and a Premium splash pad is estimated at \$1.2 million. Annual operating costs are estimated to be \$22,000, \$26,000, and \$40,000 respectively. Capital cost to install a misting station is not yet available, but, anticipated to be measurably less than a Basic splash pad.

Misting Stations are newer products becoming available in the industry and are estimated to have lower installation and annual operating costs. Options for misting stations should be explored as future options.

Costs do not include washroom, pathway, and parking upgrades or installations.

Future replacement of the splash pad (2036+) in Riverside Park is suggested to be improved to a Premium service standard as a destination feature at an estimated cost of \$1.2 million and annual operation cost estimated at \$40,000.

Table 10 – City and Community Parks and Splash Pads

Riverside Park

Year Installed: 2000

Service Standard: Standard

Washroom: Yes

Comments: Plumbing and controller refurbishment planned for 2025. Consider future upgrade to a Premium Splash Pad.

Bismark Park

Year Installed: 2024

Service Standard: Basic

Washroom: Yes

Comments: No needs identified at this time

Table 10 – City and Community Parks and Splash Pads

Churchill Park

Year Installed: 2016
Service Standard: Standard
Washroom: Yes

Duncan Ferguson Park

Year Installed: 1985
Service Standard: Basic
Washroom: No – portable unit
Comments: Poor condition. Future upgrade should consider adding a nearby accessible washroom building.

Forbes Park

Year Installed: 2015
Service Standard: Standard
Washroom: Yes

Hespeler Optimist Park

Year Installed: 1998
Service Standard: Basic
Washroom: Yes – inside arena building

Lincoln Park

Year Installed: 1980
Service Standard: Basic
Washroom: Yes

Soper Park

Year Installed: 1995
Service Standard: Standard
Washroom: Washroom out of service – portable unit provided

Victoria Park (Hespeler)

Year Installed: 1998
Service Standard: Basic
Washroom: Yes

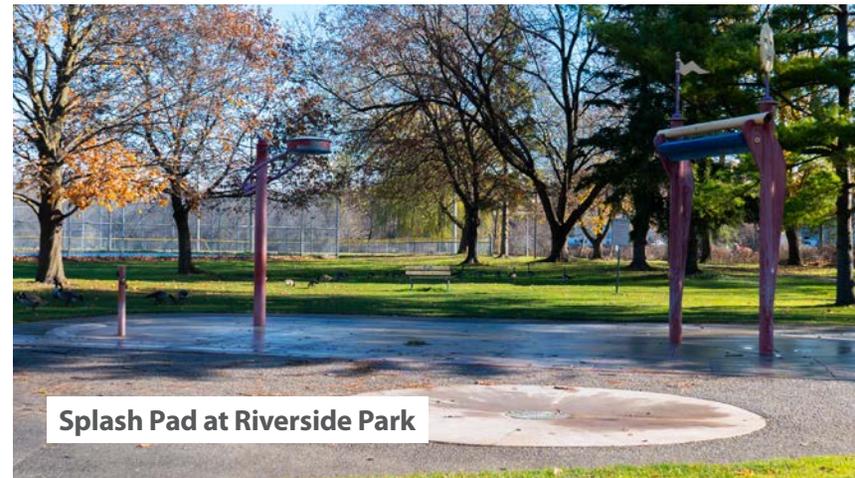


Table 11 – Splash pads in locations other than Community or City park Classifications

Central Park (Preston) - Urban Square

Year Installed: 2010
 Service Standard: Basic
 Washroom: No – portable unit
 Comments: Consider future replacement with misting station.

Northview Heights Park - Neighbourhood Park

Year Installed: 1997
 Service Standard: Basic
 Washroom: No – portable unit
 Comments: Plumbing and controller refurbishment planned for 2025. Consider not replacing in future due to lack of washroom.

Weaver Park - Neighbourhood Park

Year Installed: 1978
 Service Standard: Basic
 Washroom: No
 Comments: Decommissioned in 2024 due to poor condition.

8.6.3 Service Enhancement – Additional Splash Pads

A balanced approach to providing additional splash pads is to consider a service level where each Community Park has a splash pad where a washroom is available and other park classifications generally not having splash pads, except, where washroom facilities are available in close proximity.

One additional splash pad is currently included in the 10 year capital forecast. An additional four splash pads are recommended to transition to this service level over a period of time as a lower priority to renewal of existing splash pads.

R-23 It is recommended that an additional 4 splash pads be considered for Community Parks, where suitable space exists, through the capital budget process.

Lions Can-Amera Park

Comments: Splash pad installation is currently reflected in the capital forecast

Gordon Chaplin Park

Comments: Potential for future splash pad or misting station

Willard Park

Comments: Potential for future splash pad or misting station

Victoria Park (Galt)

Comments: Potential for future splash pad or misting station

Dickson Park

Comments: Potential for future splash pad or misting station ONLY if a nearby washroom building becomes available as per washroom amenity recommendations in this Plan.

Hancock Park

Comments: Pool provides cooling options for residents in this location – splash pad or misting station is not recommended at this time, unless the pool is decommissioned

Financial Impact of Additional Splash pads

A new capital investment estimated to be up to \$3.2 million is needed to install four additional Standard splash pads with an operating impact of \$104,000 annually. Costs can be reduced if Basic or Misting Stations are installed instead of Standard splash pads.

8.6.4 Service Enhancement – Splash Pad Extended Season

As noted through public consultation, there is a strong interest in having splash pads operational earlier and later in the season in alignment with hot weather periods. This can be achieved once the physical condition of controllers and active components have been renewed to improve reliability of these amenities.

R-24 It is recommended that the operating season of splash pads be expanded to early May and to end of September, weather permitting.

Financial Impact of Extended Season

Increased usage through extended operational periods will result in some additional operational expenses for water, electricity, and staffing for earlier season start-up and daily sanitation efforts.

Estimated annual operating expense to operate existing 11 splash pads two additional months per year is estimated to have a cost of \$105,000.



Splash Pad at Churchill Park

8.7 Soccer

Soccer continues to be an affordable and very popular sport for all ages and the City is well positioned to support the demand for organized play.

8.7.1 Current Standard

Three service level classes have been defined for soccer fields and are listed as follows.

Premium: A soccer field having lighting, high quality turf (artificial or natural with irrigation), score board, goal posts with netting, seating for players, and may include seating for spectators. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms. Generally includes parking facilities. Regular turf and lines maintenance is provided along with additional services such as net moves or alternative line painting.

Standard: A soccer field having medium quality turf and generally supported by irrigation. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms and may include some level of seating for players or spectators and goal posts or nets. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided if no washroom exists. May include parking facilities. Line painting and additional services such as net moves, where available, are provided on an as-needed basis.

Recreational: A soccer field having lower quality turf, goal posts, with a lower level of maintenance and generally does not have any supporting features such as parking or washrooms. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided.

The recent installation of the Soccer Complex has significantly improved soccer facilities for users by providing a location with multiple fields and a full range of amenities that support games, practices, tournaments, and is of a level that can provide international competition. This facility has provided five new Premium fields (3 artificial, 2 natural turf) and 2 Standard soccer fields with supporting facilities such as parking, washrooms, changing rooms, coaches rooms, and a meeting space.

The City currently has a total of 28 fields that support soccer with some fields also supporting rugby and football and other field sports. There are 8 Premium (four with artificial turf), 2 Standard, 7 Recreational, and 11 Recreational mini-soccer fields.

A list of all soccer fields is available in [Appendix D](#).

The capital cost of a new Premium artificial turf field is in the order of \$1.9 million, a new premium natural turf field is in the order of \$1 million, a Standard soccer field - \$643,000, a Recreational Field - \$300,000. Estimates are exclusive of the cost of land, parking or washrooms but otherwise include all features as described in the service standards. Annual operating costs are estimated at \$67,000, \$94,000, \$84,000, and \$7,000 respectively.



Fountain Street Soccer Complex

8.7.2 Service Enhancement – Soccer Field Improvements

A review of bookings has identified that there is sufficient capacity to meet the current and anticipated future demand of user groups; however, there is ongoing feedback that the quality of fields (outside those recently constructed at the Soccer Complex) are lower than expected.

There is an ongoing demand for bookings of multiple Premium or Standard soccer fields in the same location to support tournaments. The installation of the Soccer Complex represents the ideal configuration having a single location with multiple high-quality fields and amenities. This model should be considered going forward and opportunities to relocate sports fields together should be considered prior to any sport field upgrade or renewal project submission.

As described in [section 8.3.4](#) of this Plan, opportunities to improve soccer fields should be considered based on utilization.

The City and Waterloo Region District School Board (WRDSB) have an agreement for shared responsibility to maintain the artificial turf football field and track at Jacob Hespeler Secondary School. The facilities associated with this agreement require replacement due to its condition and a revised agreement. A capital project is currently in the 10 year forecast to replace this field.

Financial Impact of Soccer Field Improvements

Financial impact of soccer field improvements and possible relocations are site specific and will be determined at the time of project submission to the capital budget process.

8.7.3 Service Enhancement – Soccer Field Maintenance Improvements

With the addition of the Soccer Complex, an additional resource specializing in turf maintenance was hired. This has provided the capacity and knowledge to maintain the Premium and Standard fields in that location to expected service levels. Additional seasonal staff, equipment, and supplies are needed to apply the same maintenance plan to the remaining existing 3 Premium fields.

R-25 It is recommended that additional resources be considered to improve maintenance of Premium Soccer fields.

Financial Impact of Soccer Field Maintenance Improvements

Additional staffing and funding for supplies are needed to support regular application of fertilizer, overseeding, turf repairs in high worn areas, and periodic top-dressing.

It is estimated that the cost to improve the maintenance of soccer fields is \$140,000 annually with start-up costs for equipment is \$64,000 and be implemented with phase 1 baseball diamond maintenance improvements outlined in [section 8.8.3](#).



8.8 Baseball

Baseball continues to be an affordable and very popular sport for all ages and the City is well positioned to support the demand for organized play. However, demand has been in decline over the past decade and the City currently has more than sufficient baseball diamonds to meet the current and anticipated future demand.

There are two forms of baseball play, hardball, and softball. The game has many similarities, but vary in the type of ball, equipment, and dimensions of the ball diamond and outfield.

8.8.1 Current Standard

Three service level classes have been defined for baseball diamonds and are listed as follows.

Premium: A baseball diamond having lighting, high quality turf (artificial or natural with irrigation), score board, clay in-field and warning strip, fenced, backstop, dugout seating for players, and may include seating for spectators. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms. Generally includes parking facilities. Regular turf and lines maintenance is provided.

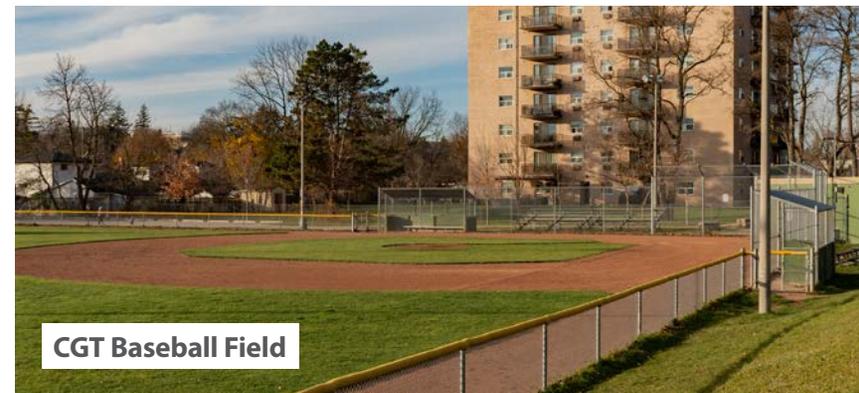
Standard: A baseball diamond having medium quality turf and generally supported by irrigation, clay in-field and warning strip, fenced, backstop, dugout seating for players. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms and may include some level of seating for players or spectators. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided if no washroom exists. May include parking facilities.

Recreational: A baseball diamond field having lower quality turf, backstop, and stone dust infield. A minimal level of maintenance and generally does not have any supporting features such as parking or washrooms. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided.

A list of all baseball diamonds is available in [Appendix D](#). The City currently has a total of 35 baseball diamonds with 11 of them being considered Premium (7 hardball and 4 softball) and the remaining 24 being Recreational (4 hardball and 20 softball). The majority of the Recreational class baseball diamonds have low utilization.

An existing premium ball diamond in Riverside Park is being upgraded to an accessible ball diamond and is included in the current capital forecast.

The capital cost of a new Premium baseball diamond is in the order of \$1 million, a Standard baseball diamond - \$683,000, a Recreational baseball diamond - \$150,000. Estimates are exclusive of the cost of land, parking or washrooms but otherwise include all features as described in the service standards. Annual operating costs are estimated at \$102,000, \$94,000, and \$3,000 respectively.



8.8.2 Service Enhancement – Baseball Diamond Improvements

Through the public consultation process, a number of baseball facilities were identified to be lacking in quality, features, and maintenance. Of particular note, a lack of irrigation of turf, aging fences, backstops, and bases, inoperable score boards, and a lack of sports field lighting.

There remains moderate demand for higher quality ball diamonds with lighting, with lower demand and utilization of Recreational class ball diamonds.

As described in [section 8.3.4](#) of this Plan, opportunities to improve baseball diamonds should be considered based on utilization.

Financial Impact of Baseball Diamond Improvements

Financial impact of baseball diamond improvements and possible relocations are site specific and will need to be determined at the time of project submission to the capital budget process.



Baseball Diamond at Dickson Park

8.8.3 Service Enhancement – Baseball Diamond Maintenance Improvements

With the addition of the Soccer Complex, an additional resource specializing in turf maintenance was hired. This has provided the capacity and knowledge to maintain the fields in that location to be maintained at expected service levels. Additional seasonal staff and funding is needed to apply a corresponding maintenance plan to the 11 Premium baseball diamonds.

R-26 It is recommended that additional resources be considered to increase the maintenance of Premium baseball diamonds.

Financial Impact of Baseball Diamond Maintenance Improvements

Additional staffing and funding for supplies are needed to support regular application of fertilizer, turf repairs in high worn areas, periodic turf top-dressing, infield and warning strip grooming, fence repairs, and other general maintenance in player and spectator areas.

It is suggested that this may be implemented in two stages with the first stage implemented at the same time as soccer field maintenance improvements outlined in [section 8.7.3](#).

Phase 1 – Operating cost is estimated at \$140,000 with a one-time cost of \$64,000 to improve maintenance on four existing premium baseball diamonds in conjunction with improved maintenance of soccer fields.

Phase 2 – Operating cost is estimated at \$242,000 with a one-time cost of \$67,000 to improve maintenance on an additional seven existing premium baseball diamonds.

8.9 Cricket

The sport of cricket is internationally very popular and is gaining interest in Cambridge as we see progressive increase in cultural diversity. It is in high demand and is currently supported with limited facilities.

There are two forms of play; hardball and softball. Each having many similarities, with variations of equipment, and having different dimensions and specifications for the pitch and turf.

8.9.1 Current Standard

Three service level classes have been defined for cricket pitches and are listed as follows.

Premium: A cricket pitch having lighting, high quality outfield turf (artificial or natural with irrigation), score board, hard packed clay pitch with artificial turf surface, fenced, maintained painted or chalk lines, may include shaded seating for participants and spectators. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms. Generally includes parking facilities. Regular turf and lines maintenance is provided.

Standard: A cricket pitch having medium quality outfield turf and generally supported by irrigation, hard-packed clay pitch topped with artificial turf surface, maintained painted or chalk lines. May also be supported with seasonal washrooms and changerooms and may include some level of seating for participants and spectators. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided if no washroom exists. May include parking facilities.

Recreational: A cricket pitch having lower quality outfield turf, with hard-packed clay pitch topped with artificial surface. A minimal level of maintenance and generally does not have any supporting features such as parking or washrooms. Portable seasonal washrooms are generally provided.

The City currently provides two Recreational cricket pitches. Booking information shows the cricket pitches have the highest booking rates of all sports facilities and an ongoing demand beyond availability.

Installation of a new Premium cricket pitch is estimated to cost in the order of \$1 million, a Standard cricket pitch \$643,000, and a Recreational cricket pitch at \$30,000. Annual operating costs are estimated at \$58,000, \$47,000, and \$22,000 respectively. Estimated costs are exclusive of the cost of land, washrooms, and parking.

For a number of years, GRCA provided a cricket pitch to a local cricket club at the Dumfries Conservation Area through an exclusive agreement that has expired and will not be renewed. As a result of the removal of this cricket pitch, the demand for City cricket facilities will far outstrip availability.

As described in [section 8.3.4](#) of this Plan, opportunities to improve cricket pitches should be considered based on utilization.

8.9.2 Service Enhancement – Cricket Pitch Additions

Cambridge has and will continue to experience significant population growth with a corresponding increase in demographic diversity that has a high interest in the sport of cricket. This need has been reflected through the public engagement process and observed regularly with casual cricket play in a wide variety of open park spaces.

To address current demand, the 2026 and 2027 capital budget forecast currently includes the installation of two Premium cricket fields in locations to be determined – Capital Project “A/01584-40 Cricket Field A and A/01584-41 New Cricket Field B”. A Cricket Feasibility Study has also been funded and is currently in progress to assess locations where new cricket fields could be constructed in existing Recreation Lands.

The specific number of hard ball and softball pitches needed has not been determined, however, it is anticipated that additional cricket fields will need to be provided to support the growing population and increasing popularity of this sport.

At minimum, it is estimated that there will be a need for two additional cricket pitches within the next 5-10 years and this should be considered in future budget cycles.

R-27 It is recommended that Recreation Lands be acquired or repurposed to support at least two additional cricket fields.

Public consultation and regular feedback from residents has identified conflicts between users of parks and sports groups on cricket fields that exist within Neighbourhood and Community Parks where parking is limited (or non-existent) and there is limited other open space.

This is consistent with other sports fields such as soccer and to some degree baseball and reflected in recommendation **R-12**.

Financial Impact of Additional Cricket Pitches

Two new Premium cricket pitches are already identified in the 10 year capital forecast to be constructed in 2027 and are expected to be accommodated on existing City-owned lands.

The future additional two cricket pitches (1 Standard and 1 Recreational) would require an additional \$673,000 in capital funding with an annual operating impact of \$69,000. Estimated costs are exclusive of the cost of land, washrooms, and parking and need to be identified in future capital forecasts and Development Charges By-law updates to provide growth funding. Options for use of school lands for potential cricket facilities should be explored.

A Regional Cricket Strategy for Waterloo, Kitchener, and Cambridge is in progress and is expected to provide further guidance and coordination on cricket facility needs across the Region that will be used in the development of future cricket fields.



Cricket Field at Victoria Park

8.10 Outdoor Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Tennis continues to be a popular sport with public courts having a fair level of usage and some being operated by non-profit clubs.

A growing interest in pickleball is well represented in the public consultation process and there is a strong request for more pickleball facilities, in particular, as supporting an active lifestyle for older adult residents.

8.10.1 Current Standard

The City provides 11 outdoor public courts where tennis or pickleball can be played in five parks (Bismark Park, Lawrence Park, Riverside Park, Willard Park, Witmer Park). These are public courts, most of which have lighting that support players into the evening to 11pm in alignment with park operating hours.

Annual operating cost of multi-use courts vary depending on the site and features provided, on average, it is estimated to be \$7,000 annually with an average installation cost of \$310,000.

Additionally, there are 11 outdoor tennis courts that are operated and maintained by local tennis clubs within Forbes Park, Soper Park, and Victoria Park (Galt). These facilities are available to club members.

Public consultation with tennis club representatives has identified an interest in collaboration between local tennis clubs to seek support for a future indoor tennis facility that will support year-round play. This is being referred to the Recreation Master Plan which is anticipated to begin in 2026 and will include a review and recommendation for existing and future indoor sports facilities.

8.10.2 Service Enhancement – Tennis and Pickleball Court Additions

No specific target number of additional courts is being recommended at this time, however, these types of amenities are good options to consider to add to existing parks as intensification development occurs or added to parks that are identified to have a need to address equity as outlined in [section 9.2](#) of this Plan.

Four outdoor Pickleball courts are being added at the Recreation Complex anticipated to be opened in 2026

In support of providing a broader range of activities in existing parks that support youth, adults, and older adults, the addition of tennis and pickleball should be considered into existing parks where space is available as per recommendation [R-11](#).

Financial Impact of Additional Tennis and Pickleball Courts

Additional courts to be considered as growth amenities to existing parks through development charges or through external funding opportunities.



Witmer Park

8.10.3 Service Enhancement – Tennis and Pickleball Improvements

Maintenance and condition of courts has and continues to be a regular concern identified by residents. Recent condition assessments, as part of the City’s Asset Management implementation, have been completed and the 2025 capital budget and current 10 year capital forecast includes a number of tennis and multi-use court renovations that will see an improvement to existing courts that are now at or near the end of serviceable life.

Financial Impact of Tennis and Pickleball Improvements

No impact at this time as renewals are identified in the current 10 year capital forecast.



8.11 Basketball Court

Basketball continues to be a popular sport among youth and young adults. Portable nets in private driveways are a common sight in Cambridge. Basketball amenities in parks are important as they promote physical health and is a way to bring people together for a sense of community and belonging requiring minimal equipment and is accessible to individuals of all skill levels.

8.11.1 Current Standard

The city has 11 basketball courts with 8 full courts located in Brent Park, Churchill Park, Greenway Park, John Erb Park, Lawrence Street Park, Vardon Park, a double-half-court in Bismark Park, and Witmer Park, and a half-court in Santa Maria Park and Timber Creek Park.

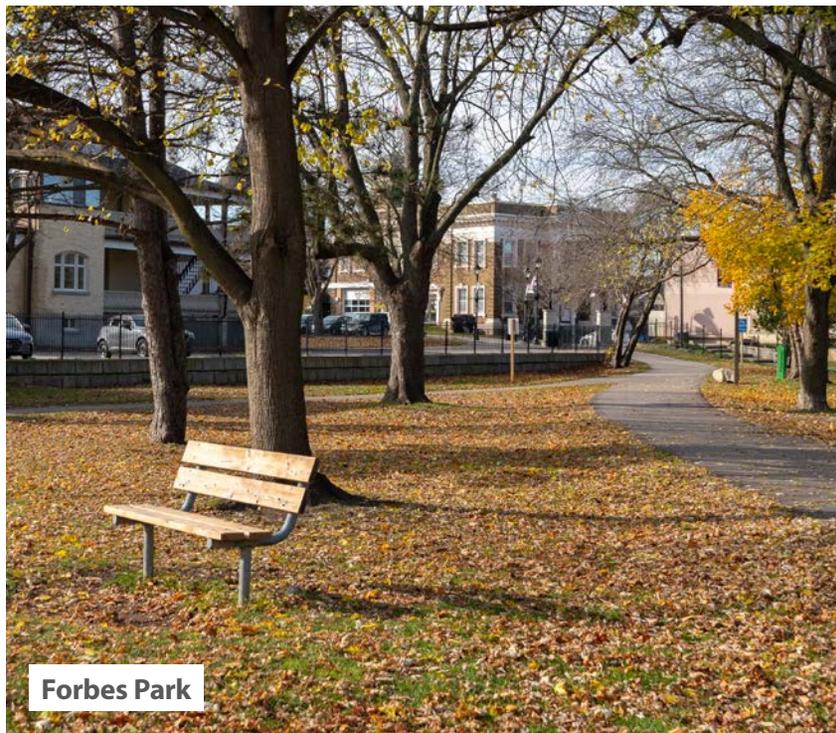
Annual operating cost of basketball courts vary depending on the site and features provided, on average, it is estimated to be \$5,500 to \$8,700 annually with an average installation cost of \$90,000 to \$175,000. Costs can be lower for smaller installations where site conditions are favourable.

8.11.2 Service Enhancement – Basketball Court Additions

Additional basketball courts should be considered in parks that are in need of additional amenities to provide activities for youth and where appropriate space is available.

8.12 Park Paths and Trails

Park paths and trails form an important element within parks as they are a means to safely access park amenities from park entrances, provide high impact physical activity for running/ jogging, or simply walking as a low impact form of exercise, and may also serve as an active transportation link connected to the broader on-road and off-road trail network. They may also be enjoyed by users on non-motorized bicycles and scooters, strollers, mobility devices, skateboards, and inline roller skates.



Forbes Park

8.12.1 Current Standard

Park paths and trail service levels are identified through the following classifications.

- **Multi-Use Primary** – Generally a section of trail through a park that is considered part of the active transportation trail network and commonly has a paved surface.
- **Multi-Use Secondary** – Generally a longer trail within a park, typically stone-dust surface, and does not directly contribute to an active transportation network.
- **Park Pathway** – A pathway within a local park to access amenities from the street frontage or providing a recreational walking experience.
- **Access** – A path from a street to a park area.
- **Walkway** – Typically a path from one street to another to provide pedestrian access between neighbourhoods.
- **Woodland** – A hard-packed low-maintenance soil trail through natural areas having a low environmental impact.
- **Informal** – A visible path created by public use over a period of time and is not maintained by the City.
- **Boardwalks** – A path created using a wooden structure on difficult grades or in environmentally sensitive areas.

Some paths and trails within a park are paved surfaces and are winter maintained.

City of Cambridge Parks Master Plan/Section 8 - Levels of Service

The city has a total of 163 km of paths and trails plus an additional 5 km within North Dumfries and 11 km on GRCA lands that are maintained by Cambridge. 94 km of paths and trails exist in park spaces with the remaining in road boulevards and utility corridors.

One third of paths and trails in park spaces (31 km) are winter maintained.

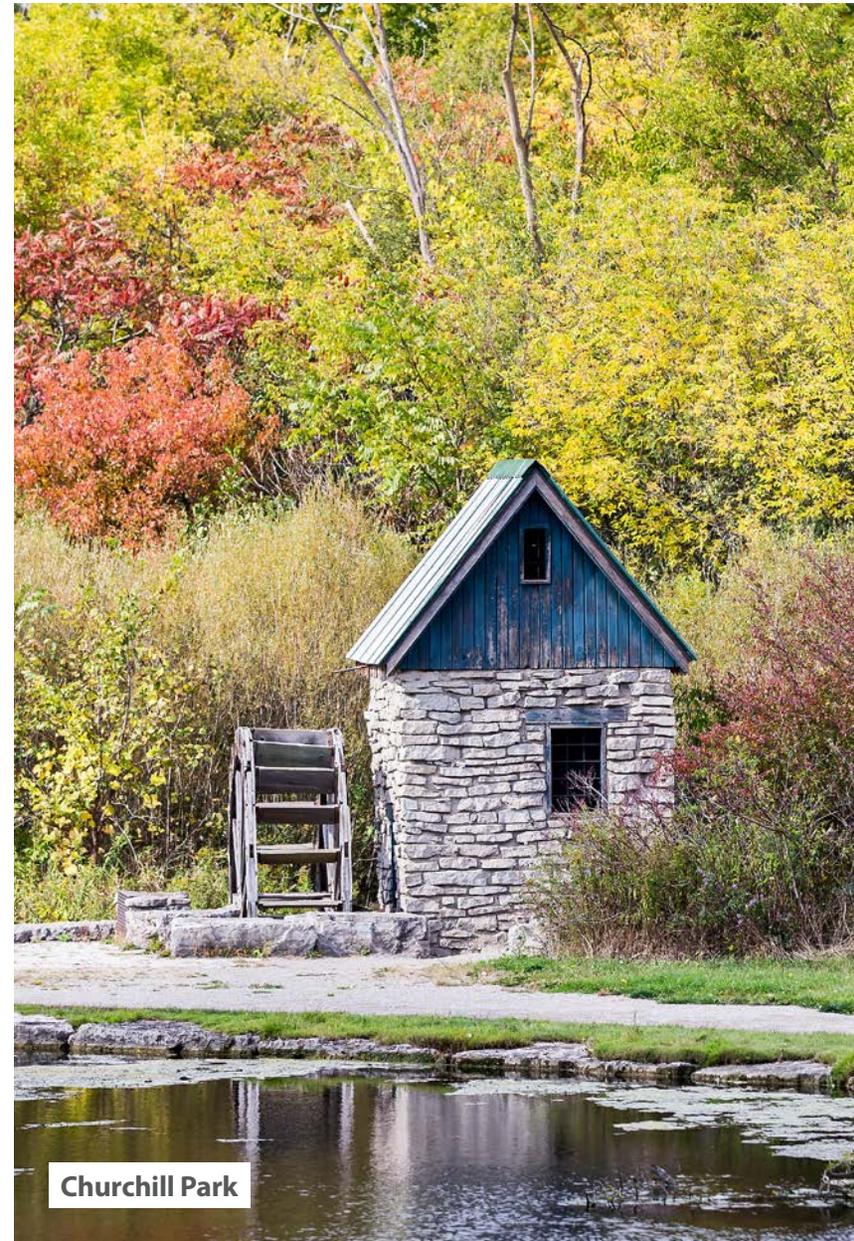
New trails and paths capital cost range from \$300,000 to \$451,000 per kilometer and annual operating cost to maintain ranges from \$1,600 to \$3,000 per km with an additional \$2,900 per km for winter maintenance. Boardwalks are estimated to cost \$8 million per km with an annual operating cost of \$9,300 per km.

Public consultation has identified that walking paths and loops are considered an important physical fitness and mental well-being feature of parks, particularly if they form one or more loops and are available year-round.

Where possible, pathways installed in parks are configured in such a way that a walking loop within the park is provided.

Public consultation has provided positive feedback to the existing trail network and winter maintenance levels.

There is some interest from community members in restoring, maintaining, and potentially creating additional Woodland trails that currently exist as informal paths. Opportunities for this can be explored with further development of volunteer programs as outlined in [section 11.4.2](#) of this document.



Churchill Park

8.13 Dog Parks

Dog parks are of ongoing interest to residents to spend time with their pets to enjoy outdoor spaces and to socialize their dogs. As Cambridge evolves into an increasingly urbanized and higher density environment, the interest and demand for more dog friendly spaces will grow.

8.13.1 Current Standard

The City currently operates one off-leash “drive-to” dog park off of Maple Grove Rd serving the entire city. It consists of a fenced natural turf area supported by a gravel parking lot, a portable toilet, and a number of garbage receptacles. It is approximately 1.6 acres (0.7 ha) in size. This site has a number of challenges regarding the ability to maintain turf in this small space and limited shade and seating.



8.13.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Dog Parks

The public consultation process revealed a strong desire for improvements to the existing dog park and the need for additional larger off-leash dog parks as well as smaller dog parks close to where residents live.

There is also a strong desire for enforcement of dogs to be on-leash in the parks.

A municipal scan and numerous site visits to off-leash dog facilities in other municipalities has shown that the use of naturalized open spaces with stone dust trails are commonly provided in other municipalities, particularly on lands that have limited other uses (e.g., former landfill sites, lands adjacent to sewage treatment plants, dry storm ponds, isolated woodlots, etc.). Interviews with users of these spaces indicate there is a very high level of satisfaction with dog parks of this style.

Public consultation combined with a municipal scan and progressively increasing population density in conjunction with a strong social desire for dog ownership all indicate there is a need to increase the level of service to residents with dogs. As such, additional dog parks should be considered. One dog park design project is already identified in the 2025 capital forecast with implementation in 2027 at an estimated cost of \$530,000. Funding estimates of this project could potentially fund more than one of the dog park location options listed below, and potentially, be advanced in timeline through the 2026 budget process.

8.13.2.1 Option 1 – Water Street South

This location is City-owned naturalized open space that is not suitable for development. It currently has an informal parking lot, a significant unmaintained trail network, is substantially fenced, and is adjacent to the Galt Wastewater Treatment Plant operated by the Region of Waterloo. It is informally used by residents for off-leash dog walking

This site would provide a positive experience for residents and their dogs in a natural setting and is approximately 14 acres (6 ha) in size.

This area would benefit from a higher level of public use.

Development of this area into a dog park would be subject to approval by the GRCA and moderate costs for additional fencing, gates, seasonal water service, signage, benches, gravel for parking and entrance road, and trail improvements.



8.13.2.2 Option 2 – Conestoga Blvd Utility Corridor

This location is City-owned naturalized open space that serves and supports overhead electrical power lines operated by GrandBridge Energy. This location is not suitable for development; however, it has options for parking. It is adjacent to a dry pond storm water management facility and an environmentally sensitive natural area.

This site would provide a positive experience for residents and their dogs in a central location in the city and within walking distance of several neighbourhoods. It is approximately 3 acres (1.3 ha) in size.

Development of this area into a dog park would be subject to approval by GrandBridge Energy and would require the installation of gates, perimeter fencing, trails, a seasonal water service, signage, and further development of parking.



8.13.2.3 Option 3 – Boxwood Woodlot

This location is a City-owned woodlot within an industrial park adjacent to a storm water management facility. This location is substantially fenced, contains walking trails, and two informal parking areas off of Boxwood Drive.

This site would provide a positive experience for residents and their dogs. It is approximately 33 acres (13 ha) in size.

Development of this area into a dog park would require the installation of gates, nominal additional fencing, some additional trails, a seasonal water service, signage, benches, and further development of parking.

This area would benefit from a higher level of public use.

It is recognized that this is very close to the existing dog park off of Maple Grove Road. Consideration should be given to decommission the Maple Grove Dog Park if the Boxwood site were to be developed as a new off-leash dog park as this would provide a significantly better experience for residents with their dogs.

R-28 It is recommended that the scope of the 2025 capital project “A/01059-30 Cambridge Dog Park Design” be revised to consider the three options presented in the Parks Master Plan; and that the 2027 capital project “A/01059-40 Cambridge Dog Park Implementation” be amended to fund one or more of the options within the current estimated budget value.

Financial Impact of Additional Dog Parks

The revised scope for the design project may require additional time to complete.



8.13.3 Service Enhancement – Neighbourhood Pop-Up Dog Park Pilot

Public consultation for this Plan has identified current public interest in having off-leash dog areas within walking distance (i.e. within local Neighbourhood Parks). The City has not had a positive experience with a prior installation (having had to remove it due to public concerns). From this perspective, the following will provide a means to determine if and where smaller permanent off-leash dog parks could be considered in Neighbourhood and Community Parks in the future.

The pilot would involve the following:

- Develop a tender for 3 years for the delivery of this pilot program.
 - Responsible for the supply, installation, and maintenance of temporary construction fencing (6 feet high) complete with double-gate system and signage for a period of one month in a series of locations identified by the City. One Community or Neighbourhood Park each month between the months of May and October (6 months – 6 locations).
 - Development of a communication plan for residents.
 - Provide a public notice communication plan for residents for each of the locations identified.
 - Receive, process, and respond to public comments and direct repair or maintenance issues to contractor or City staff in accordance with responsibilities identified.

- Annually provide a comprehensive report to the City for each location operated in that year that indicates the level of acceptance of this location as an off-leash dog park along with any significant concerns (if any) that should be taken into consideration if this location should be chosen to host a future permanent off-leash dog area.
- Operations would provide the following support:
 - Develop a list of recommended locations where the pilot would take place over the three-year period to be presented to Council for review and approval.
 - Daily litter and dog waste removal.
 - Provision of a standard park garbage can and bi-weekly garbage receptacle service.
 - Provide up to three picnic tables.
 - Weekly grass cutting and turf repairs by City seasonal staff.
 - Turf restoration following the removal of the temporary dog park.

R-29 It is recommended that a capital project be considered for a neighbourhood pop-up dog park pilot.

Financial Impact of a Neighbourhood Pop-Up Dog Park Pilot

A preliminary estimate to deliver this three-year pilot program is in the order of \$200,000. Cost to implement permanent neighbourhood leash-free dog areas that are publicly supported through the pilot program will be site specific and will need to be considered through future budget cycles.

8.14 Special Events and Festivals in Parks

Cambridge is host to many special events in park spaces that provide opportunities to residents and visitors to celebrate special days, music, food, and entertainment.

8.14.1 Current Standard

In 2024, over 125 events organized by 3rd parties were held in Cambridge with 53 of them in city parks.

Additionally, 8 large events and 18 smaller events were led by the City's Special Events Team. The most frequently used events spaces are in the following parks.

- **Riverside Park** – large scale events, such as Canada Day, are hosted throughout the park with a primary focus on the large open field area in front of Mickler grandstand
- **Dickson Park** – home of the Fall Fair, activities take place in front of the grandstand and inside the Dickson Arena
- **Churchill Park** – hosts the Highland Games, a Scottish festival largely in the open space adjacent to the Duncan McIntosh arena and parking area
- **Chaplin Park**
- **Forbes Park Bandshell**
- **Central Park (Preston) Gazebo**
- **Mill Race Amphitheatre** – regular bookings for wedding photos and in the past small music festivals

There remains opportunity to enhance park spaces to support a range of events in alignment with the Arts and Culture Action Plan (2023) and will be identified as specific projects through the regular budgeting process. Suggested improvements include:

- Potential re-location or re-purposing of spaces in Riverside Park to enhance the event venue near the grandstand.
- Potential improvements in Soper Park that may create small event venue spaces near the Galt Arena.
- Potential improvements in Dickson Park to enhance event opportunities.

8.14.2 Improved Parking and Electrical Services to Support Events

The following parks are in need of parking and electrical service improvements: Riverside Park, Dickson Park, Forbes Park, Gordon Chaplin Park.

Ideally, electrical service of 3-phase, 400A, 220V with camlock is required in each location.

R-30 It is recommended that a capital project be considered for the installation of electrical services to support special events in existing parks currently used to support events.

Financial Impacts of Improved Electrical Services to Support Events

Estimated costs to improve parking and electrical service upgrades are site specific and will be presented as capital project request as part of the regular budget process.

8.14.3 Development of Standardized Traffic Control Plans to Support Events

Managing pedestrians, traffic, and parking are often challenging for event organizers and are a significant challenge, particularly for short-duration events such as concerts. A set of standard traffic control plans that outline where event support staff will park, where patrons will park, and, when needed, options for off-site parking with clear expectations of movement of people to and from the off-site parking spaces to the event venue should be established.

R-31 It is recommended that a set of standard traffic control plans be established to support special events in Riverside Park, Churchill Park, and Dickson Park.

Financial Impacts of the Development of Standardized Traffic Control Plans to Support Events

It is expected that traffic control plans can be developed by existing staff to support this recommendation.

8.14.4 New Outdoor Event Venue

Existing City and Community Parks continue provide space for a range of events. There is a growing interest in hosting larger events, particularly music events, with higher number of attendees that is challenging to provide in existing spaces. As the population of Cambridge continues to grow, the demand to have more frequent larger events is also growing. As such, there is need to develop a designated outdoor event venue that can support events with larger attendance for residents and visitors.

R-32 It is recommended that the City consider a capital project to acquire or re-purpose suitable land for the purposes of establishing an outdoor event venue; and that land be developed to support events of this nature.

Financial Impacts of a New Outdoor Event Venue

Costs to acquire or re-purpose land and develop an outdoor event venue is site specific and subject to real estate market values.



Mill Race Park in Downtown Galt

8.15 Garbage Receptacles and Litter

Providing regularly maintained garbage receptacles provide the means for users of park spaces to keep the park free and clear of garbage and litter.

There are five different types of garbage receptacles.

In-Ground High Capacity: A fixed unit providing a large underground storage space.

In-Ground: A fixed unit providing underground storage below the above ground receptacle.

Dog Waste: A specialized receptacle for receiving and storing bagged dog waste.

Regular Receptacle: A garbage receptacle with a lid or flap that mitigates access by wildlife.

Regular Barrel: An open barrel.

There are three different levels of maintenance associated with those units.

Premium: Serviced one or more times per week all year round.

Standard: Serviced one or more times per week seasonally.

Basic: Serviced monthly or as-needed.

8.15.1 Current Standard

The City provides over 600 garbage receptacles in parks and includes a range of different types of units including 6 dedicated dog-waste in-ground units.

In-ground units are checked weekly in the summer and monthly in the winter months. Above-ground units are checked monthly, weekly, or bi-weekly depending on the amount of usage they receive.

Units that serve seasonal amenities such as sports fields and courts are placed in the spring and removed in the fall.

Most trails and trailheads do not receive winter maintenance; however, garbage receptacles remain at trailheads that are observed to continue to be used by residents through the winter months.



8.15.2 Garbage Service Review

Litter in Natural Areas is amongst the highest complaints received from residents throughout the year.

Public consultation has identified an ongoing concern with garbage and litter in park spaces and the following recommendations are intended to improve the result.

The current Blue Box recycling program is a significant contributor to this issue. The Ontario Resource Recover and Circular Economy Act (2016) shifts the responsibility of recycling materials management to the organizations that produce products and packaging. This transition will include future changes to residential and commercial recycling programs and will include the installation of recycling receptacles in parks with details yet to be determined. It is also anticipated to introduce residential cans with lids which should decrease the amount of “Blue Box blowout” litter and associated complaints. This will provide enhanced services to park users and is anticipated to be implemented in 2026.

No specific improvements to this service are identified at this time, however, a review of placement, routes, service frequency may identify operational improvements and or opportunities for larger changes to consider.

As part of this review, it is suggested that general litter pickup areas and routes be established identifying those that may be suitable for community volunteers.

R-33 It is recommended that Operations review garbage receptacle placement, usage, and service routes to identify efficiencies and improvements that can be achieved within current operating budgets.

Financial Impact of Garbage Service Review

No financial impact is anticipated to conduct this review with improvements expected to be found within current resource and operating budgets. Should the review identify a need for additional funding, a report would be presented to Council for consideration through the budget process.



Litter receptacle at Duncan Ferguson Park

8.16 Benches and Seating

Seating in parks provide a place for park users to enjoy the view, watch family members play, and provide needed rest spots for users of all ages, particularly to older adults and those with mobility challenges.

8.16.1 Current Standard

There are seven types of seating provided.

Bleacher: A structure that provides seating for spectators typically having multiple levels. May be a permanent or a movable structure.

Player: A simple bench provided for sport participants. Commonly does not have a back support.

Park: A standard metal or wood bench located in a park, in a trail head, or along a pathway and normally includes a back support and is often installed on a concrete pad.

Dedication: Similar to a park bench, but, will include a plaque with an inscription requested by the donor as per the city's sponsorship policy.

Urban: A standard metal bench commonly installed along sidewalks in urban core areas.

Stone: Typically a limestone block providing supplemental seating in parks, at trail heads, or other suitable spaces.

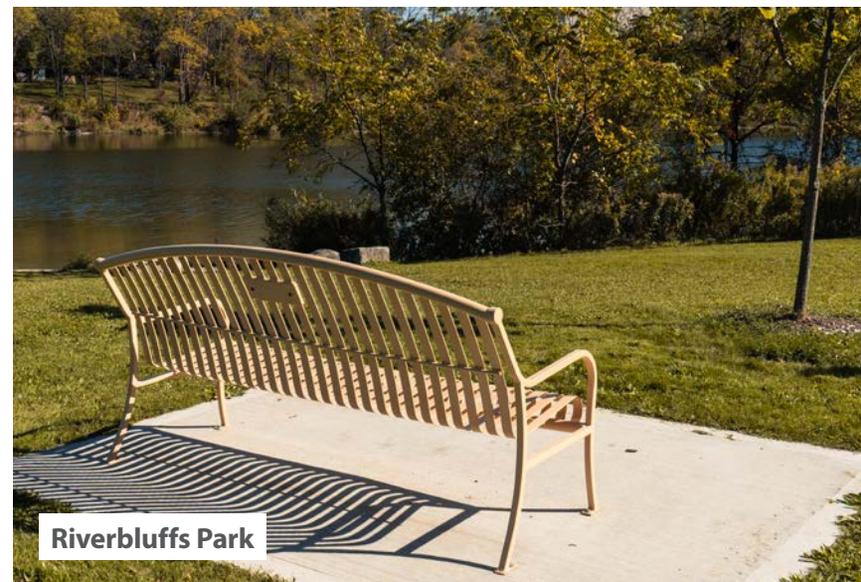
Picnic: Standard picnic tables that may be moved seasonally in designated picnic areas or provided as-needed for special events and other bookable spaces in parks.

The City has over 900 benches and sitting stones installed in the parks across the city (i.e., 47 armour stone sitting rocks, 155 bleacher or player benches, 141 dedication benches, with the remaining being park benches).

The City also deploys picnic tables in and around designated picnic areas within park spaces on an as-needed basis to support scheduled events.

Dedication benches are installed in locations requested by donors in locations that are identified to be needed in park spaces.

Park benches are typically installed near other park amenities such as playgrounds and splash pads, but, may also be found at vistas or other places throughout a park along park paths.



8.16.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Seating and Shade

Public consultation has identified a desire for more seating along paths, adjacent to splash pads, playgrounds, and in various vistas within parks. Additionally, there is a need to increase the number of rest places with shorter distances in-between to align with Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) Outdoor Spaces recommendations and is also being considered as future Provincial accessibility standards.

In particular, there are requests for more seating areas with shade. Ideally, the majority of shade would be provided through tree planting programs with shade structures constructed where trees are not a suitable option and be included with future new and renewal capital project submissions.

The transition to this expectation is already occurring as part of new park construction projects. However, the transition to this in existing parks is expected to occur over a long period of time in conjunction with amenity renewals and supplemented through the existing bench and tree dedication program.

Financial Impacts of additional Seating and Shade

Increased seating is expected to occur over a long period of time and gradually completed under existing budgets, supplemented with external funding through the bench and tree dedication program in alignment with the City’s Sponsorship and Naming Policy.

8.17 Water Bottle Fill Stations

Water bottle fill stations continue to be an amenity of interest to the public. These features provide access to free water to users using their own re-usable container resulting in a reduction of use of disposable plastics and an additional positive effect of reducing garbage and litter deposited in the park spaces.

8.17.1 Current Standard

The City currently has one water bottle fill station at the Soccer Complex and a station is planned as part of the Lions Can-Amara splash pad project (2025).

8.17.2 Service Enhancement – Additional Water Bottle Fill Stations

Public consultation has identified some level of interest in additional water bottle fill stations within parks.

The most cost-effective way to provide these amenities are installations that are part of new or existing park amenities that have water services such as washrooms, concessions, or irrigation systems and will be considered under future capital projects involving those amenities.

R-34 It is recommended that seasonal water bottle fill stations be provided through future park washroom renewal and new park washroom projects.

Financial Impact of additional Water Bottle Fill Stations

Water bottle fill station installations as part of a washroom project is in the order of \$5,000 each with a nominal annual operating impact.

8.18 Signage and Wayfinding

Signs are an important feature of all parks for identification, locational awareness, communicating expectations, and enabling residents to know what is available and how to get to it.

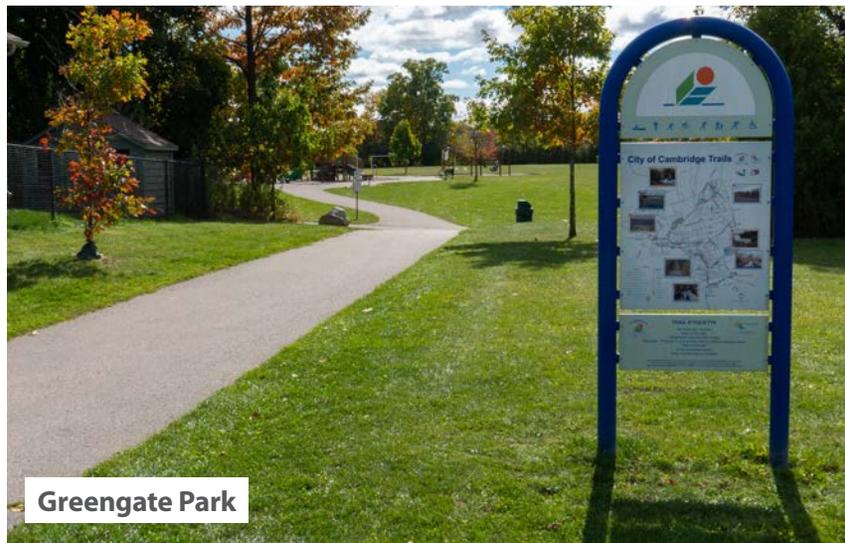
8.18.1 Current Standard

City and Neighborhood Parks generally have identification signs installed that reflect branding at the time of installation.

Trail heads, where signs are installed, commonly include posts that identify some expectations regarding use of the trail in accordance with by-laws, and some wayfinding information.

Signage regarding expectations of usage in alignment with parks by-laws is inconsistent.

Natural Areas and other types of parks currently do not typically have signage.



Greengate Park

8.18.2 Service Enhancement – Improved and Updated Signage and Wayfinding

There is a need to establish an updated sign standard for parks and trails that reflect current branding and a consistent level of information regarding locational awareness, expectations, wayfinding as well as information boards.

Currently, there is no inventory of signage in parks and there is a need to undertake an effort to do so, assess their condition, and quantify the need for replacement and additional signage to align with an updated standard.

R-35 It is recommended that an inventory and condition assessment of park identification signs, by-law signs, trail head signs, wayfinding signs, and information boards be completed with a follow-up capital project to install missing signage and to replace signage that is in poor condition or require updates to meet current standards.

Financial Impact of Improved and Updated Signage and Wayfinding

Installation of one sign at the entrance or frontage of each park with park name, address, contact, and branding for all parks including Natural Areas and woodlots is estimated to be \$2.4 million.

Installation of signage informing users of park use expectations and the bylaw in all parks as well as wayfinding signage, where needed, is estimated to cost \$163,000.

Installation of information or education boards in select locations and parks is estimated to cost \$550,000.

8.19 Food Services

Food services are most commonly provided through seasonal concessions operated by the City or licensed to independent operators and at special events.

8.19.1 Current Standard

The City has a limited number of seasonal concessions in or adjacent to park spaces.

- **Lincoln Park (Fieldhouse)** – Operated by Cambridge Minor Baseball with limited operating hours.
- **Riverside Park (Kin Stadium)** – Licensed to a private operator (Duke’s Dugout) and operates evenings when sports fields are booked.
- **Riverside Park (Grandstand)** – Not currently in operation; requires capital investment to reactivate.
- **Dickson Park (Fieldhouse)** – Not currently in operation; requires capital investment to reactivate.
- **Mill Race Park** – Licensed to a private operator (LA Franks) operated seasonally.

Food is also commonly available as temporary cook/serving stations or in the form of food trucks as part of special events that occur in various park spaces throughout the City throughout the year.

8.19.2 Service Enhancement – Increase in Food Services in Parks

Public consultation has identified an interest in more food service offerings along with shaded places to sit and washrooms are available.

There are three potential opportunities where an increase in food services should be considered within park spaces.

- Renovate former concession spaces in Riverside Park and Dickson Park to enable operation of the concession by City staff or through licensed third party operator.
- Improve infrastructure in parks suitable for special events to enhance existing services such as electrical supply, water, and washrooms.
- Consider additional licensing agreements to food service providers to operate in more park locations with a focus on the locations that have suitable space and washrooms available.

R-36 It is recommended that additional opportunities to provide food services in parks are explored for future consideration.

Financial Impacts of Increased Food Services in Parks

Cost estimates for this service level improvement cannot be provided at this time as they are site specific and require further review expected to be completed by staff over the next 5 years. Recommendations following this review will be provided to Council for consideration as part of the budget process.

8.20 River Access Points

The City has a number of river access points enabling the public to enter the water with a personal watercraft or simply access the riverbank to passively enjoy the space and view of the river, birdwatching, or fishing.

8.20.1 Current Standard

The City provides and maintains 10 river access points that either exist within larger parks or within named parks providing solely that function and represented in the park classification “River Access” as described in [section 8.1](#) of this Plan. They are categorized as follows:

Boat Launch: Provides the ability to launch a trailered small watercraft by a vehicle. May also provide a form of a dock where water conditions are suitable. A seasonal portable toilet is typically provided. Utilized as an emergency river access point used by the Fire Department.

Canoe Launch: Provides pedestrian access to the river where parking is available within walking distance. A seasonal portable toilet is typically provided.

Portage: Provides an exit point for a non-motorized personal watercraft such as a canoe or a kayak above the dam and corresponding entry point below the dam with a walking path in-between.

River Access: Provides access to the shoreline via a pathway and may require stairs due to steep grades resulting in limited accessibility.

The locations of them are:

- **Jacob’s Landing Urban Square** – American Standard Dam Portage Exit
- **Milling Street Urban Square** – American Standard Dam Portage Entrance
- **Mill Run Trail** – Silkknit Dam Portage Exit
- **Mill Run Trail** – Silkknit Dam Portage Entrance
- **Mill Race River** – River Access
- **Ellacott Lookout Park** – Hespeler Mill Pond Canoe Launch
- **Riverside Park** – Canoe Launch
- **Moyer’s Landing (Blair)** – Boat Launch
- **Riverbluffs Park** – Boat Launch
- **Water Street South Park** – Boat Launch

License agreements have been periodically put in place with private operators for various water sport activities. There is an intent to continue offering river activities through private operators under license agreements in the use of river access points as noted in the agreements section of this report.

GRCA maintains portage access points above and below the Parkhill Dam on the Grand River.

8.20.2 Service Enhancements – Increased River Access Points and Improved Signage

An additional portage exit and entrance is included in the scope of the Riverside dam replacement project currently forecasted to be completed in 2029.

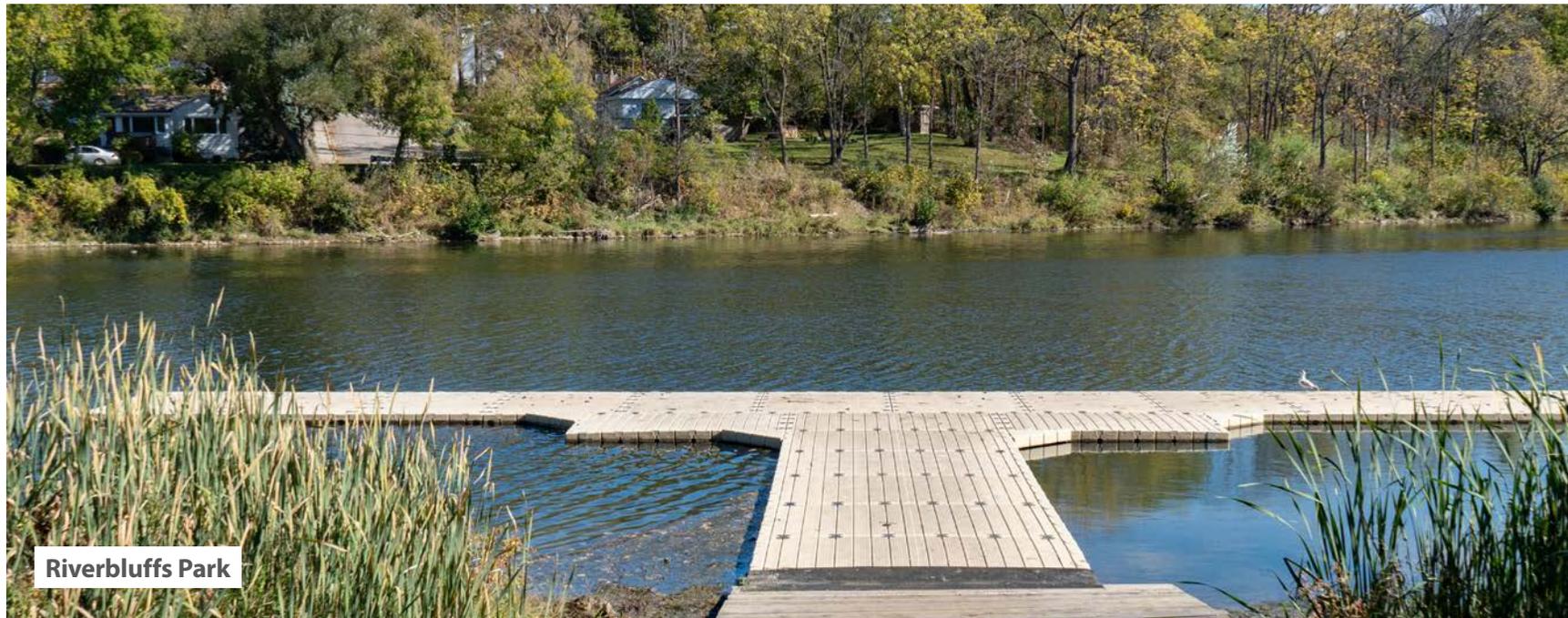
Construction of an additional canoe launch is included with the Blackbridge capital project that will begin in 2025.

A need has been identified by the Fire Department to ensure that boat launches are signed as emergency access routes and no-parking zones are identified. This will better enable the Fire Department to quickly respond with watercraft into the river when there is a need for a search and rescue or recovery effort.

Public consultation has identified a benefit to users to provide information and river wayfinding signage at river access points. In consultation with the GRCA, signage of this nature is expected to be placed on land and potentially, where feasible and warranted, on bridges visible from the watercourse.

Financial Impacts of Increased River Access Points and Improved Signage

These signage improvements are expected to be completed through existing operating budgets, where feasible, or included as part of recommendation **R-35** related to signage and wayfinding.



Riverbluffs Park

8.21 Skateboard Parks

Skateboard parks provide a positive space for youth to socialize and participate in physical activity. Although they originally were developed to be used primarily by skateboarders, the use of these spaces has expanded as a variety of wheeled sports equipment has become readily available at a low cost.

“All-Wheel” terminology is commonly used to describe these spaces as a sport that appeals to a broad range of users including those that may not be interested or have the means to participate in organized sports.

8.21.1 Current Standard

Premium: Contains more challenging elements including deeper bowls and ramps. Generally located in a park of higher classification such as the City Park or Community Parks where parking and washrooms are available. May also include other features such as a graffiti wall.

Standard: Contains a range of elements that are suitable for a range of age and skill levels with medium sized vertical elements.

Basic: Contains limited simple elements. These are also often commonly known as a ‘Skateboard Spot’.

The City currently has four skateboard parks as listed below.

- Riverside Park – Premium
- Bismark Park - Standard
- Churchill Park - Basic
- Greengate Park - Basic

8.21.2 Service Enhancements – Additional Skateboard Parks

Public consultation has identified an interest in having more skateboard or “All-Wheel” parks in Cambridge. In particular, there is an interest to ensure there is a fair distribution of them across the city.

At this time, a skateboard park does not exist in the Hespeler area and has been identified in the capital budget forecast for design in 2025.

Construction of the skateboard park in Hespeler has been identified as a capital project, but, at this time, does not have funding available and, along with other unfunded projects, will be considered through annual budget development cycles when additional funding is available.

Additional opportunities may exist to install skateboard parks in new parks or existing parks that will support increasing the range of amenities in parks as discussed in [section 8.3.2](#) of this Plan and funded as per recommendation [R-6](#) or recommendation [R-39](#).



Skateboard Park at Churchill Park

8.22 Vistas and Lookouts

Cambridge has a number of park locations that offer views and opportunities to appreciate vistas.

8.22.1 Current Standard

The City currently has 16 vistas and lookouts.

- Ellacott Lookout
- Jacob’s Landing – Mill Pond Lookout
- Jacob’s Landing – River Lookout
- Milling Road Urban Square – River Lookout
- Mill Run Trail – Lookout
- Parkhill Rd Park – River Lookout #1
- Parkhill Rd Park – River Lookout #2
- Blair Trail – Lookout
- Linear Park – River Confluence Lookout (Founder’s Point)
- George St – Lookout
- George St – Devil’s Creek Waterfall Lookout
- Centennial Park – Lookout
- Barradell’s Loft Lookout
- Craig’s Crossing – Pedestrian Bridge Lookout
- Griffiths Ave Park – Lookout
- Gouda Place Park – Lookout

Public consultation and staff observation has identified a need to improve the vegetation maintenance so that sight lines are maintained. These areas are being incorporated into the existing operating budgets noting that vegetation maintenance will be limited to pruning so that slope stability is not impacted.

Condition assessments for structural elements such as retaining walls and safety fencing will be undertaken through Asset Management and corresponding repairs and renewals will be identified in future capital and operating budgets.



Centennial Park Lookout

8.23 Outdoor Seasonal Ice Rinks

Outdoor skating rinks provide additional opportunities for residents for recreational play in the winter months.

8.23.1 Current Standard

Outdoor skating rinks require a flat hard surface (paved, concrete, or hard-packed granular material) with at least a 1 inch water service with a heated structure for the hose connection. Typically, they are constructed on sports courts or baseball infields and where parking is available. Ideally, an outdoor rink is planned as a park amenity near a washroom (with a heated utility room) in a Community Park to support water supply through the winter months and with lighting.

Through a written agreement with volunteers, seasonal winter rinks are constructed as directed by City staff, weather permitting.

Five seasonal outdoor skating rinks are available for community volunteers to construct and maintain for residents using supplies provided by the City (water and hoses).

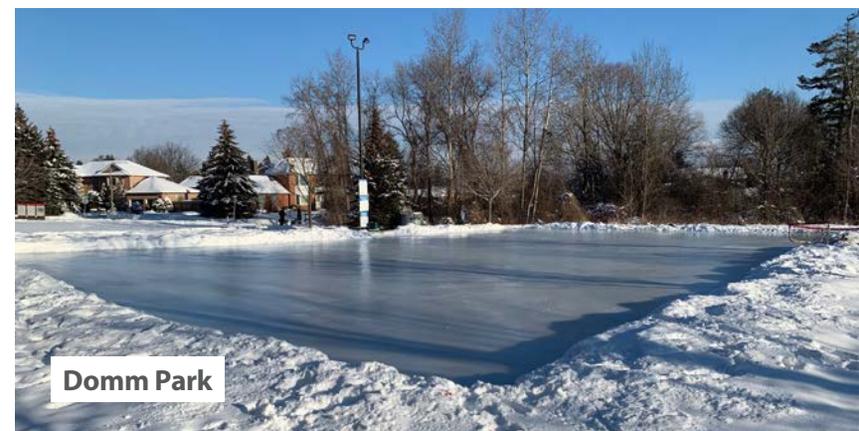
- Domm Park
- Angewood Park
- Lincoln Park
- Lions Can-Amera Park
- Victoria Park (Hespeler)

Suitable weather conditions have become limited in recent years as sufficient cold weather has not occurred consistently enabling outdoor ice rinks to exist.

The winter of 2024/2025 was an ideal year in terms of weather and has resulted in a resurgence of interest by volunteers and the community to have them operational.

There are a growing number of municipalities in Ontario that have moved towards refrigerated outdoor ice rinks that can be sustained through the warmer winter weather. The cost to construct and operate these is similar to an indoor ice rink. It is suggested that the City focus on sustaining indoor ice rinks and not move to outdoor refrigerated units.

It is suggested that winter weather conditions be monitored, and, if suitable winter weather conditions remain consistent, additional outdoor skating rinks be considered in new parks or existing parks (including Victoria Park – Galt) that will support increasing the range of amenities in parks as discussed in [section 8.3.2](#) of this Plan and funded as per recommendation [R-6](#) or recommendation [R-39](#).



8.24 Outdoor Tracks

Outdoor running tracks directly support sports and physical fitness education programs offered in schools and also provide opportunities for advancement for individuals and teams in competition. These facilities are also commonly used by members of the public for physical fitness.

8.24.1 Current Standard

The City does not currently own, operate, or maintain tracks.

A number of tracks exist on school properties to support education programs, and as noted above, are also used by members of the public.

The City provides trails and walking loops in parks.

Additionally, an indoor walking track is within scope of the recreation complex under construction and will be available to the public in 2026.

Given that the City does not currently offer outdoor tracks, and instead provides walking paths and trails, there is no recommendation to install or maintain outdoor track facilities at this time.

8.25 Other Park Amenities

There is a range of additional amenities within Cambridge parks as listed below:

Gardens

Type of Amenity: Community Garden

Qty: 3

Comments: Maintained by community members

Type of Amenity: Pollinator Gardens

Qty: 1

Comments: Maintained by community members

Type of Amenity: Sculpture Garden

Qty: 1

Comments: Maintained by community members

Horticulture Bed

Type of Amenity: Annual

Qty: 70

Type of Amenity: Annual / Perennial

Qty: 12

Type of Amenity: Annual / Perennial / Shrub

Qty: 1

Horticulture Bed

Type of Amenity: Annual / Shrub
Qty: 8

Type of Amenity: Perennial
Qty: 40

Type of Amenity: Perennial / Shrub
Qty: 127

Type of Amenity: Shrub
Qty: 49

Pavilion

Qty: 6

Pergola

Qty: 12

Picnic Shelter

Qty: 9

Shade Structure

Qty: 5

Outdoor Sports

Type of Amenity: Bike Park
Qty: 1

Type of Amenity: Disc Golf Course
Qty: 2

Type of Amenity: Outdoor Fitness Areas
Qty: 8

Type of Amenity: Volleyball Courts
Qty: 7

Opportunities to further expand the range and types of amenities are expected over time as new ideas emerge. Some examples that do not currently exist in the city, but are known to be of interest at this time include:

- Ceremonial Fire Pits
- Prayer Spaces
- Sensory Trail / Garden

Additional installations are to be considered, on a case-by-case basis, where space permits, to align with recommendation **R-11** and brought forward for consideration as per recommendation **R-39** described in **section 9.2** of this Plan.



Duncan Ferguson Park

8.26 Park Vegetation Maintenance

Much of the park spaces are vegetated with a wide variety of turf, grasses, trees, shrubs, vines and receive varying levels of maintenance.

8.26.1 Current Standard

Vegetation maintenance within parks continues to be one of the most common service request concerns raised by the public and can result in conflicts between park users and neighbours and present operational and budgetary challenges. For these reasons, this Plan has incorporated a clear definition of the types of vegetation maintenance provided by the City and, through [Appendix A – Park Atlas](#), a clear visual delineation of what level of vegetation maintenance is applied to particular areas of each park.

Parks have four levels of vegetation maintenance: sports field turf mowing, park turf mowing, rough cut mowing, and naturalized areas (where no mowing takes place). Some parks contain only one form of vegetation maintenance, while other parks may have portions maintained at various levels to align with the amenities within the park and proximity to natural features such as streams, rivers, wetlands, and woodlands.

Sports Field Mowing: Sports fields are mown up to twice per week. Premium and Standard sports fields are typically irrigated and the turf regularly fertilized. Recreational level sports fields are mown less frequently and rely on rainfall and fertilizer application is limited.

Park Turf Mowing: Park grass areas are typically mown once per week and rely on rainfall and are typically not fertilized. Mowing will be less frequent during dry periods.

Rough Cut Mowing: Areas of parks that are intended to remain as semi-naturalized grass areas are mown infrequently. These areas are typically mown between once and three times per season to maintain the areas as long grass natural habitat and are often around the perimeter of parks, on moderate slopes, or adjacent to woodland or wetland areas.

Naturalized Areas: A substantial number of parks, utility corridors, and areas within parks are naturalized. These areas do not receive mowing or pruning of vegetation which enables the unconstrained growth of a range of grasses, vines, shrubs, and trees. These are common along the perimeter of parks, on slopes, adjacent to woodlands, and in environmental features such as wetlands and watercourses. These areas currently do not receive regular inspection or maintenance. These spaces are intended to support flora and fauna and will include a range of vegetation, insects, and wildlife (including rodents) and are an important part of the city's natural heritage. The City does not actively remove or control insects, wildlife, or rodents.

Trees within Natural Areas that pose a hazard to adjacent properties may be pruned or removed by the City reactively as identified through trail inspections or when notified by a resident of a concern.

As per the Ontario Forestry Act, property owners adjacent to naturalized spaces are able to prune, cut, and remove vegetation that crosses their property line. Trees that straddle the property line are considered boundary trees and property owners should contact the City prior to pruning or removal in accordance with the City's Private Tree By-law.

8.26.2 Service Enhancement – Natural Area Public Education Program

Residents are strongly discouraged from feeding wildlife or placing garbage, kitchen scraps, or yard waste into Natural Areas as they result in the spread of unwanted populations of rodents and invasive species of plants. However, it is evident that many residents are not aware of these expectations.

Public education is needed to help the public, particularly, residents who visit these locations or live adjacent or in close proximity to them, better understand what to expect in natural spaces and how to positively contribute to these spaces. This is anticipated to include various forms of communication such as educational sign boards at trail heads with QR codes to web pages, social media posts, and other forms of public messaging.

R-37 It is recommended that a program be developed to educate residents about the natural environment in parks and how they can contribute in a positive way to these spaces.

Financial Impact of Proposed Natural Area Public Education Program

Estimates for installation of information and education signage is included as part of recommendation **R-35** related to signage and wayfinding. Additional costs to fully develop a Public Education Program to be presented in a future business case for consideration as part of the budget process.

8.26.3 Service Enhancement – Natural Area Inspection and Maintenance Program

The City currently does not have a proactive program in place to inspect Natural Areas to identify hazard trees, issues with fences, or identification of invasive species. A five year cycle is considered industry best practice along with resources to address hazard trees that have a fall-zone that would impact adjacent properties, repair fences, or mitigate the spread of invasive species. A number of municipalities in Ontario have started implementing such programs. Development and implementation of such a program is in progress within the Forestry group.

Financial Impact of Proposed Natural Area Inspection and Maintenance Program

Initial development of this program is expected to be completed with existing resources. It is anticipated that some maintenance related to mitigating the spread of invasive species can be achieved through community volunteers and will be further explored. As this program evolves, additional costs that are identified will be presented through future budget cycles.



Riverside Park

Section 9 - Park Service Level Change Management

Over time, there is a need to consider changes to existing parks when: major amenities reach the end of their useful life; the needs of the neighbourhood residents change; or the vegetation in the park has substantially changed from its original state and may be impacting area residents or having a negative impact on native plant/animal species. This section outlines a few of the most prominent aspects of park maintenance and the ways in which changes in service levels are made for a park.

9.1 Vegetation Maintenance

9.1.1 Current Standard

The City will make changes to vegetation maintenance levels within a park when a park amenity is added or modified that requires a change in vegetation maintenance, when sight-lines have become obstructed, invasive species mitigation, or other forms of maintenance issues have arisen.

Appendix A – Park Atlas provides a visual reference on the current service level of vegetation provided within each park.

Conversion of areas that have naturalized to an area that is rough-mown or developed into landscaped maintained area typically requires a substantial effort to remove the existing vegetation, grubbing and stump removal, and in some cases grading, drainage, and installation of maintenance access routes that did not previously exist.

Capital projects in park spaces currently have a public notice process where area residents are provided information about the new or replacement amenities in parks and any substantial landscaping changes that will happen as part the project. This public process provides residents the opportunity to comment and voice any concerns to be considered in the capital project implementation.

9.1.2 Public Process for Significant Changes to Park Vegetation

Historically, complaints from property owners adjacent to a park have driven one-time or non-sustainable changes in vegetation management within park spaces. This type of change may be welcomed by some users, it is also commonly un-welcomed by other park users or adjacent property owners resulting in conflict between residents of a neighbourhood and the City.

When changes of this nature are requested, or needed outside of a capital project, it is suggested that a more robust change management process be implemented by including a public process for notification and opportunity for the public to comment.

R-38 It is recommended that significant changes to vegetation maintenance that are requested or needed in a park include a public notice process: and that, it be presented to Council as part of the budget process if capital funding and/or operating impacts are required to support the change.

Financial Impact of Public Process for Significant Changes to Park Vegetation

Financial impact for specific requests and changes cannot be provided at this time as they are site specific and on a case-by-case basis and will be presented to Council through the budget process as-needed.

In most cases, the capital cost would fall within minor capital thresholds in the annual operating budget and should be planned for as part of the annual budgeting process.

9.2 Addition of an Amenity Request by Public or Councillor

This Plan has identified opportunities for additional amenities to be added to existing parks to provide a broader range of activities for an increasing diverse set of interests and needs. Examples include the addition of shade structures, basketball courts, pickleball courts, cooling stations, exercise equipment, walking paths, etc.

Appendix A – Park Atlas provides a full inventory of what amenities exist in each Neighbourhood and Community Park, along with a list of potential amenities that are suitable for the park and may physically fit within the available space.

There are several aspects to consider when these requests are made:

Funding

Amenities in parks are generally provided as part of the development process funded by development charges. Requests to add amenities outside of the development process put additional pressure on capital funding reserves that, at this time, does not have capacity to fund the additional requests without deferring other projects already identified.

It is suggested that external funding should be the primary means to support these types of requests.

Equity

There are many needs and opportunities to add amenities into parks across the city. Establishing a fair and equitable distribution is an important factor to consider.

Parks having a high number of residents with relatively few park amenities is commonly considered to have a higher need for additional amenities vs a park that already has a broader range of amenities and an equal or smaller number of residents.

Appendix A of this Plan provides a current snapshot of each park identifying the number of residents being served, and the amenities that are provided.

At the time of publication of this plan, the following are identified as parks that are in higher need for additional amenities or improvements and are listed in alphabetical order below.

A. Wayne Taylor Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 3,472
Current Amenities & Features: Playground and two baseball diamonds

Apple Drive Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 1,050
Current Amenities & Features: Swing Set

Angewood Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 1,089
Current Amenities & Features: Playground and seasonal outdoor ice rink

Arlington Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 957
Current Amenities & Features: Playground

George Hancock

Park Classification: Community
Population Served: 1,821
Current Amenities & Features: Playground, outdoor pool with seasonal washroom

Hill 60 Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 2,837
Current Amenities & Features: Playground

John Erb Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 2,388
Current Amenities & Features: Playground, full basketball court

Perbeck Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 1,626
Current Amenities & Features: Playground

Red Wilfong Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 1,612
Current Amenities & Features: Playground

Winston Blvd Park

Park Classification: Neighbourhood
Population Served: 2,984
Current Amenities & Features: Swing Set

R-39 It is recommended that an application process for Park Amenity Additions be developed in alignment with the City’s Sponsorship or Naming Policy; and that applications be limited to parks that have been identified having the highest need.

Additional amenity requests for parks should be paused until the application process has been developed and activated.

Capacity to Support

Unplanned requests to install additional park amenities require support from staff to communicate with residents leading the request for the amenity, public engagement, and often, considerable time supporting applications for grants and/or interaction with potential donors or fundraising efforts. This takes away from the ability to support existing approved and funded projects which have an expectation of being completed in a timely manner.

Financial Impact of Additional Amenity Request by Public or Councillor

Resources are needed to support the request process, write reports, support grant applications, investigate options, estimate prices, design and/or manage contracted services, and manage the procurement and installation process.

Financial impacts of the capital and operating impact of the additional amenities need to be determined on a case-by-case basis and will be submitted as part of the overall process. Sponsorships commonly only provide a portion of the capital funding needed to support a new amenity resulting in an impact to capital reserves and operating budgets.

It is expected that any approved applications will result in a capital project submission into the budget process to be considered, prioritized, and capacity to deliver are considered as part of the regular capital budget review and approval process.



Playground at Greengate Park

Section 10 - Governance Through Policies, Plans, By-Laws and Guides

This Plan has a relationship to number of other plans, policies, guides, and bylaws that when next updated, will need to reflect relevant changes outlined in this Plan. In particular,

- recognition of recreation land to support outdoor recreation facilities as being independent of parkland with respect to policy, planning applications, by-laws, and funding.
- mechanisms to address intensification growth where land dedication is limited or not available.

10.1 Plans

Existing plans that require review and revision are as follows: Official Plan and Secondary Plans.

10.2 By-laws

Existing by-laws that require review and revision are as follows: Development Charges (DC), Zoning, Parks, Purchasing Land Sales, Reserve Fund, Parkland Cash-in-Lieu.

New by-laws that should be considered are as follows: Community Benefits Charge and Parkland Dedication.

10.3 Policies

Existing policies that require review and may need revision include: Sponsorship, Naming, Local Services, and Affiliation policy.

New policies that should be considered are as follows: Stratified Parks, and POPS.

10.4 Other Strategic Plans

Recent and upcoming plans that have a relationship to this plan include: Arts and Culture Master Plan (2024), Older Adult Strategy (2024), Cricket Feasibility Study (2025), Cemetery Master Plan (2025), Recreation Master Plan (2026), Trails Master Plan (2010), Urban Forest Plan (2015), Cycling Master Plan (2020).

Future visioning plans needed are as follows: Churchill Park, Riverside Park, and Soper Park.

10.5 Other Guidelines, and Regulations

The design of new spaces and expectations for renewal of existing spaces are driven by a series of regulations, guidelines, and industry best practices. Some examples include: Engineering Standards and Development Manual, World Health Organization Age-Friendly Cities Framework, Cambridge Facility Accessible Design Standards (FADS).

Section 11 - External Funding and Support Opportunities

Parkland and amenities are normally established as part of the development process to serve new residents. However, Cambridge, like many other municipalities in Ontario, has evolved over time and established areas of the city have commonly benefited from community support including donations of land and contributions to the installation of park amenities.

11.1 Federal and Provincial Support for Parks

Federal and Provincial governments recognize the value of parkland and park amenities to support the well-being of Canadians and Ontarians. This recognition comes through a number of regular and one-time grant opportunities. Some examples include:

- Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure Fund
- Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF)
- Canada Community Building Fund

Cambridge continues to monitor grant opportunities and submit applications for eligible projects.



Linear Park

11.2 Fundraising, Sponsorship, and Donations

Sponsorship and donations are part of the history of the parks system in Cambridge; for example, Victoria Park in Galt was donated by Mr. Eugene Langdon Wilks to the Town of Galt (now part of the City of Cambridge) in the early 1900s “to be held for all time to come in its entirety as a free, open, and public park without any fences and to be left so far as can be in its present natural, wild, and wooded state except as may be reasonably required for drives and pathways.”

One of the most recent examples is that of Hallman Construction Ltd. who generously constructed and donated all the amenities and associated maintenance costs for six years of Bismark Park over and above the land dedication and development charges paid through the planning process. This park is considered a Community Park and this space and amenities serve not only the residents in this area, but, also the public at large with the provision of two playgrounds, a splash pad, a skateboard park, a washroom, a multi-use court, double half court basketball, a number of fitness stations, a three-hole disc golf course, along with a number of paved pathways and in-ground garbage receptacles.

This form of funding continues to be an important means to make positive contribution to Cambridge’s park spaces and amenities providing long term benefits to the residents of the City.

11.2.1 Naming of Park Spaces and Amenities

The current practice is to name new parks for the fronting street. It is proposed that parks continue to be named after their fronting street and not be subject to “naming rights” which are more temporary in nature. The focus of this part of the Parks Master Plan is naming of amenities and not parks. In accordance with the City’s Naming Policy, there is a range of options for the community to contribute to park amenities and include the following options of donations towards the purchase and installation of:

- Dedication park benches
- Dedication trees
- Memorial plaques

An application process to request the installation of memorial plaques does not currently exist.

R-40 It is recommended that an application process be developed to request the installation of memorial plaques in accordance with the City’s Naming Policy.

Additionally, donations in exchange for naming rights are an option for a range of park services such as:

- Sports fields
- Trails
- Park amenities

A list of eligible items open for naming is not currently available.

R-41 It is recommended that a list of trails, sports fields, and park amenities suitable for naming be developed and submitted to Council for review and approval as outlined in the City’s Naming Policy.

Staff resources needed to support the recommendations in the section will be presented to Council for consideration through the regular budget process.

11.3 User Fees

User fees are associated with bookable amenities and areas and include the following: sports fields, picnic shelters, areas designated for fitness groups, beach volleyball courts, and event areas.

Outdoor sports fields that are bookable to organized sports groups and include the following amenities: soccer fields, baseball diamonds, and cricket pitches. These may include annual allocation contracts or on an as-needed and as-available basis.

Revenue generated through user fees offset the cost of maintaining park and park amenities in the annual operating budget. Rates are reviewed annually as part of the budget process. A comprehensive rate review is scheduled to be initiated in 2025.

11.4 Community Support

The City embraces the support provided by the community through Neighbourhood Associations and volunteer efforts.

11.4.1 Neighbourhood Associations

Neighbourhood Associations provide programs to residents through a variety of organized social and recreational activities that often occur in city parks and the amenities within them in alignment with the Neighborhood Support Policy. They provide valuable services to align with the needs of residents in their respective geographic area and are complimentary to other programs offered by the City.

A list of current Neighbourhood Associations is provided below.

- Alison Neighbourhood Association
- Blair Road Neighbourhood Association
- Fiddlesticks Community Centre
- Greenway Chaplin Community Centre
- Grow Community Centre
- Hespeler Village Neighbourhood Association
- Kinbridge Community Association
- Langs Farm Village Association
- Preston Heights Community Group
- Silverheights Neighbourhood Association

11.4.2 Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in the community with positive engagement for scheduled community clean-up days through Cambridge City Green initiatives, various one-time events, and those organized through Neighbourhood Associations.

There is an opportunity to expand volunteer services in parks to assist in routine tasks such as regular litter patrols, minor trail vegetation trimming, monitoring and trimming/removal of invasive species in natural areas, etc.

Success of programs like this depends on establishing a structured set of tasks and schedules that can be coordinated and assigned to volunteer groups. Structured and managed programs can be very successful in providing meaningful work to youth, older adults, and individuals that are employment challenged and are looking to focus energy to productive tasks that positively contribute to the community.

R-42 It is recommended that staff define a park maintenance volunteer program.



11.5 Licensing and Leasing

The City collaborates with local school boards, the Grand River Conservation Area (GRCA), area businesses, associations, groups, and individuals to provide services, facilities, and amenities to the residents of Cambridge through a range of agreements for spaces, amenities, buildings, or portions of buildings within parks. These agreements compliment and extend the services provided directly by the City.

These agreements require periodic review, renewal, and amendments and require support from Legal and Realty Services.

They fall into the following categories:

Land Lease Agreements – These are agreements that permit someone other than the owner of the land to provide a service and/or conduct business upon. The City has agreements of this nature with the GRCA, School Boards, some local businesses, and private property owners.

Building Lease Agreements – These are agreements that permit the use of space in City-owned buildings to third parties for their exclusive or shared use to provide services for profit or non-profit. These commonly include concession areas, change rooms and club spaces for sports and community groups.

License Agreements – These agreements permit the use of a space for a period of time under certain conditions. These include agreements to install memorials, interpretive signs, special features, or to operate a business providing services to the public on city lands.

There is currently a backlog of renewals, a number of upcoming renewals as well as an ongoing demand to create new agreements.



Riverside Park in Preston

Section 12 - Supporting Resources

A broad range of resources are needed support park spaces and amenities to residents, including:

- Front line park staff who directly perform maintenance and inspections.
- Supervisors, Managers, and Administration that oversee front line staff, develop budgets, oversee contracted services, receive calls for service requests, manage bookings for sports fields, support Neighbourhood Associations, volunteer efforts, and coordinate support for events and bookings.
- Professional staff that design and oversee construction and renewal of park amenities, oversee regular formal condition assessments, support regulatory reporting, manage finances, and negotiate agreements for the various uses of park spaces.
- Communications support and corresponding technical staff and/or consulting services associated with public engagements to inform and receive comments about planned changes in park spaces and amenities.

The following outlines the need to consider capacity of staff to support the existing processes, new processes, and new projects from anticipated increased revenue streams.

12.1 Planning

Supports the planning process as it relates to parks for parkland dedication, pre-consults, draft submissions regarding parkland layouts, sizes, shapes, and access to parkland and natural lands.

12.2 Development Engineering

Monitor and accept new parklands from developers and oversee design and construction of new park amenities in new parks.

12.3 Operations

Perform maintenance of all park spaces and amenities that are used by the public between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. 7 days per week with some spaces and amenities remaining open to the public all year.



12.4 Legal and Realty Services

Is responsible for the renewal, maintenance, and establishment of new agreements and provides advice for uses of park spaces as well as litigation support, as needed.

12.5 Recreation

Provides project management services for the park amenities installation and renewal projects. Additionally provides and coordinates booking of outdoor sports fields, picnic areas, and all other bookable spaces within park spaces.

12.6 Communications

Supports public notices, public education programs, graphics and branding for signage, and website support.

12.7 Technology Services

Supports computing hardware, networks, and business solutions.

12.8 Asset Management

Is responsible for maintaining the registry of park lands and amenities. Takes the lead on condition assessments to identify repair and renewal needs outside of normal inspection maintenance activities. Provides regulatory reporting of assets, service levels, condition, and renewal needs.



Appendices

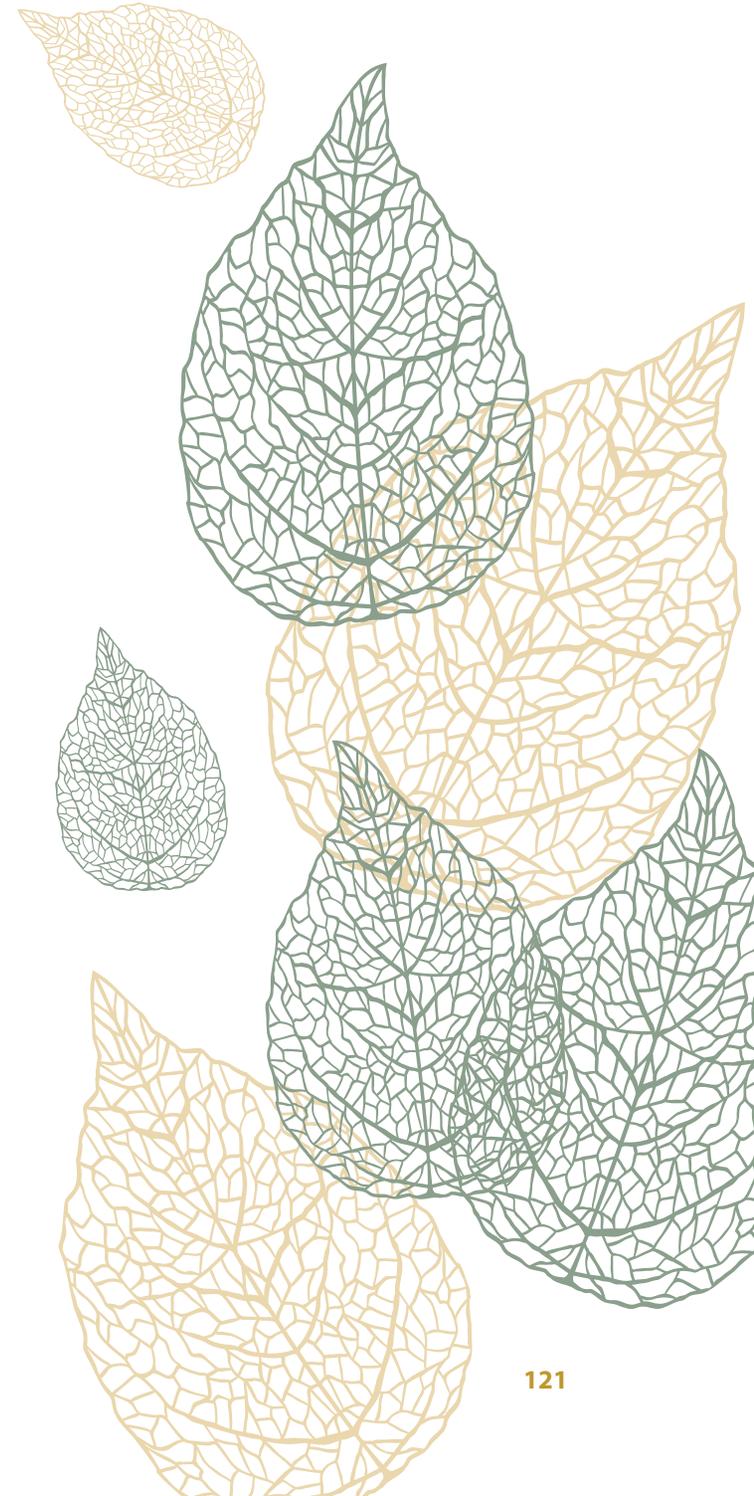
Please click to view the following appendices below for more information.

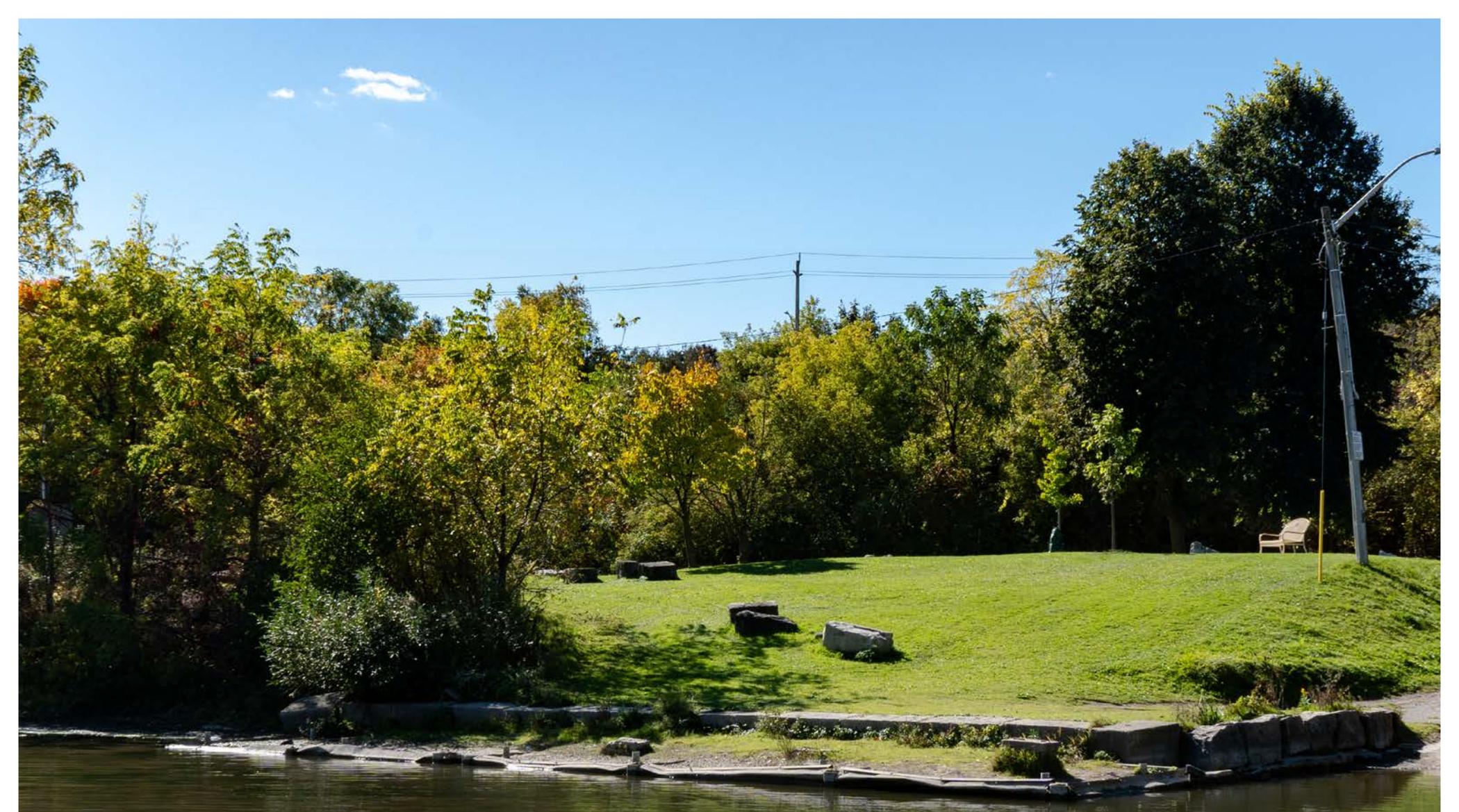
[Appendix A – Park Atlas](#)

[Appendix B – Public Consultation](#)

[Appendix C – Park Amenity Operating Impacts](#)

[Appendix D – Park Classifications, Metrics, and Asset Summaries](#)





Parks Master Plan

2025 - 2055

Growing Together: Shaping the Future of Cambridge Parks

