

# Imagine Parks



2024 Monitoring Report



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# As we continue our commitment to plan, build and maintain excellent parks and open spaces that are safe, inclusive and welcoming for all Calgarians, I’m pleased to provide an update on the progress our team is making towards our Council approved Imagine Parks in 2024.

Connection with our environment and each other is more important than ever as Calgary and other municipalities work towards improving the physical and mental wellbeing of our communities and grapple with the impact of climate change on our urban environments and natural areas.

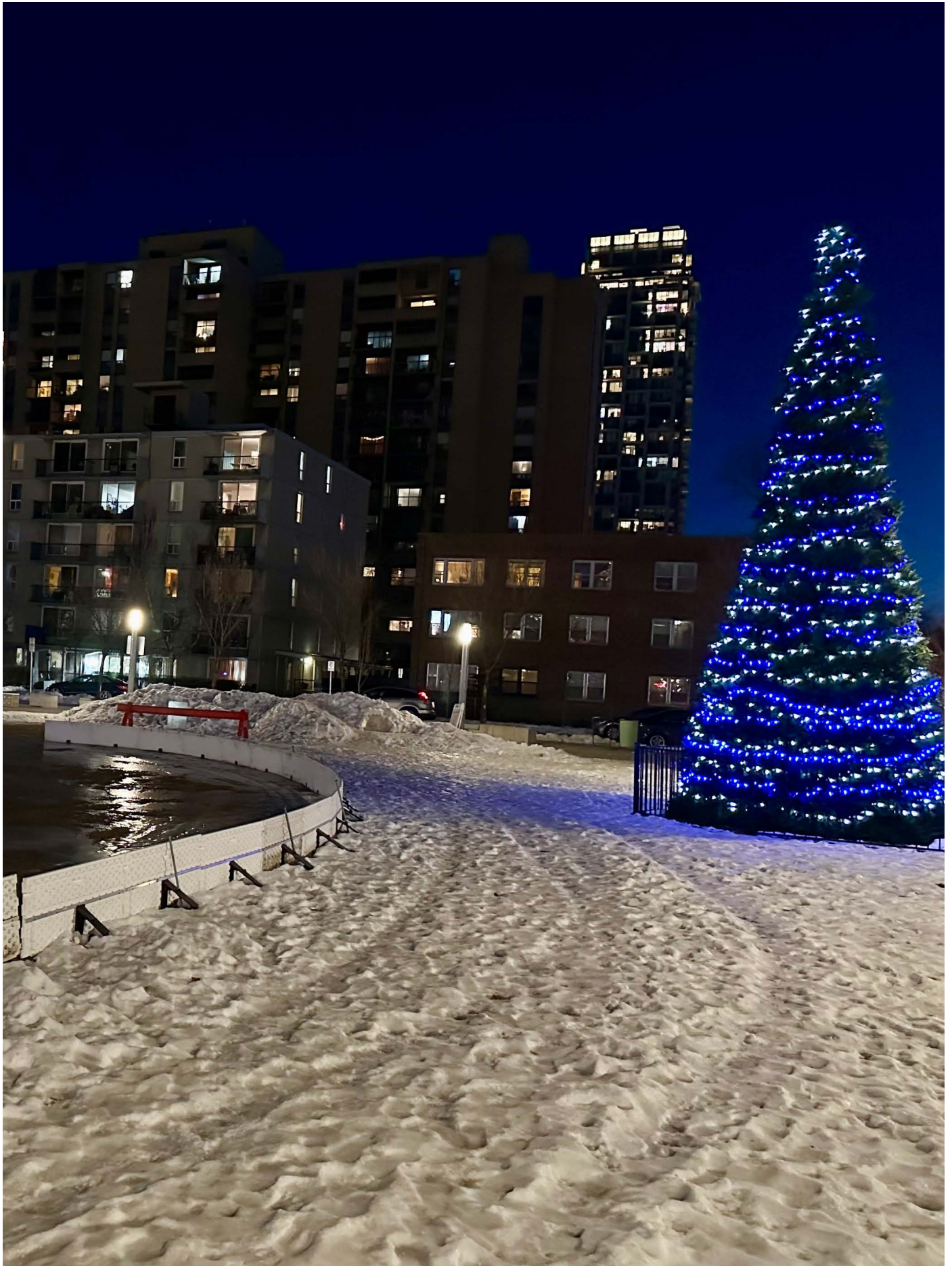
I want to thank our team, partners, community members and City Council for your continued passion to improve our parks and open spaces. I look forward to our ongoing collaboration in 2025 to provide equitable access to parks for all.

*Kyle Ripley*  
*Director, Parks and Open Spaces*

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Barb Scott Park

# Executive Summary

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**Imagine Parks is the 30-year vision that sets the overall strategic direction for the development and management of public parks and open spaces in Calgary. Calgary's parks and open spaces are cherished places that connect us to nature, our heritage and one another.**

Imagine Parks was approved by Council in 2015 and helps to align the work of Parks and Open Spaces with the 100-year imagineCALGARY urban sustainability plan and vision for Calgary. To bridge the gap between Calgarian's vision for parks and open spaces and how our work is progressing towards this vision, nine indicators of success

were created. These indicators have been created with a 10-15 year time-frame in order for progress to be made, measured, tracked and if necessary, course corrected. These indicators of success allow Parks and Open Spaces to clearly and succinctly communicate our story and the value that our work provides to Calgarians.

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## Connection

Increase the % of Calgarians that have connected with parks and open spaces to 90% by 2030.



## Wellness

For months with snow, increase the % of Calgarians spending more than 20 minutes in a park or open space to 85% by 2035.



## Reducing Barriers to Access

Increase the % of households within a 400m pedestrian trip to a multi-functional park to 69% by 2035.







## Experiences

To achieve a Customer Level of Service (CLOS) rating of at least 2.0 for all regional parks and at least 3.0 for all local parks by 2035.



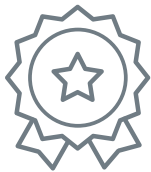
## Conservation and Ecosystem Resiliency

Increase the Habitat Condition Rating (HCR) category for 20% of the priority 1 and 2 Natural Environment Parks to perform at their full ecological potential by 2035.



## Sustainable Management

Sustainable and resilient practices in planning and managing parks and open space are increased.



## Best Practices

Maintain the 'Overall Best Practices' score of 90% in the Yardstick Report until 2030.



## Valuing External Partnerships

Improve partners' alignment with Imagine Parks priority areas to 70% by 2035.



## Parks Workplace Culture

Increase the Corporate Employee Survey score to 75% for select questions by 2030.



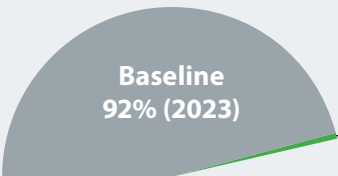
The Confluence

# Imagine Parks targets – Progress report

## Connection

Increase the % of Calgarians that have connected with parks and open spaces to 90% by 2030.  
[For more information, please see page 9.](#)

Baseline was measured at 87% in 2021

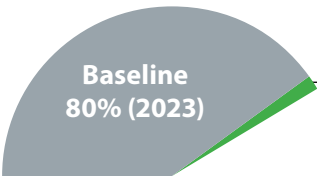


**Progress - 93% (+1) (2024)**  
**Target - 90% (2030)**

## Wellness

For months with snow, increase the % of Calgarians spending more than 20 minutes in a park or open space to 85% by 2035.  
[For more information, please see page 12.](#)

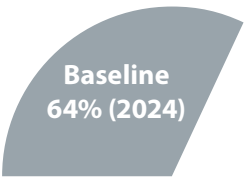
Baseline was measured at 79% in 2021



**Progress - 83% (+3) (2024)**  
**Target - 85% (2035)**

## Reducing Barriers to Access

Increase the % of households within a 400m pedestrian trip to a multi-functional park to 69% by 2035.  
[For more information, please see page 13.](#)

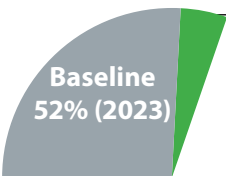


**Target - 69% (2035)**

## Experiences

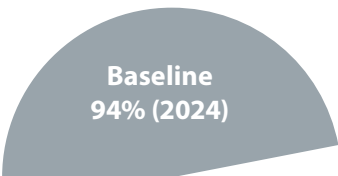
To achieve a Customer Level of Service (CLOS) rating of at least 2.0 for all regional parks and at least 3.0 for all local parks by 2035.  
[For more information, please see page 15.](#)

Regional



**Progress - 61% (+9) (2024)**  
**Target - 100% (2035)**

Local



**Target - 95% (2035)**

# Conservation and Ecosystem Resiliency

Increase the Habitat Condition Rating (HCR) category for 20% of the priority 1 and 2 Natural Environment Parks to perform at their full ecological potential by 2035.

[For more information, please see page 19.](#)

2021	2024	2035
<b>Fair to Moderate</b>	<b>Fair to Moderate</b>	<b>Good to Excellent</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Edworthy Park</li><li>Douglasdale Natural Environment Park (NEP)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Edworthy Park</li><li>Douglasdale NEP</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Edworthy Park</li><li>Douglasdale NEP</li></ul>
<b>Poor</b>	<b>Poor</b>	<b>Fair to Moderate</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>J.H. Woods Park</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>J.H. Woods Park</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>J.H. Woods Park</li></ul>

# Sustainable Management

Sustainable and resilient practices in planning and managing parks and open space are increased.

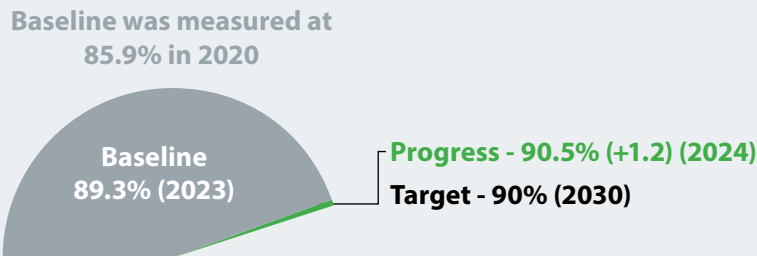
[For more information, please see page 21.](#)

Pending, to be established in Q1 2025

# Best Practices

Maintain the 'Overall Best Practices' score of 90% in the Yardstick Report until 2030.

[For more information, please see page 25.](#)



# Valuing External Partnerships

Improve partners' alignment with Imagine Parks priority areas to 70% by 2035.

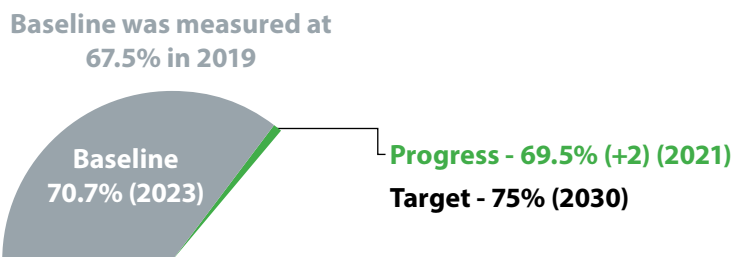
[For more information, please see page 28.](#)



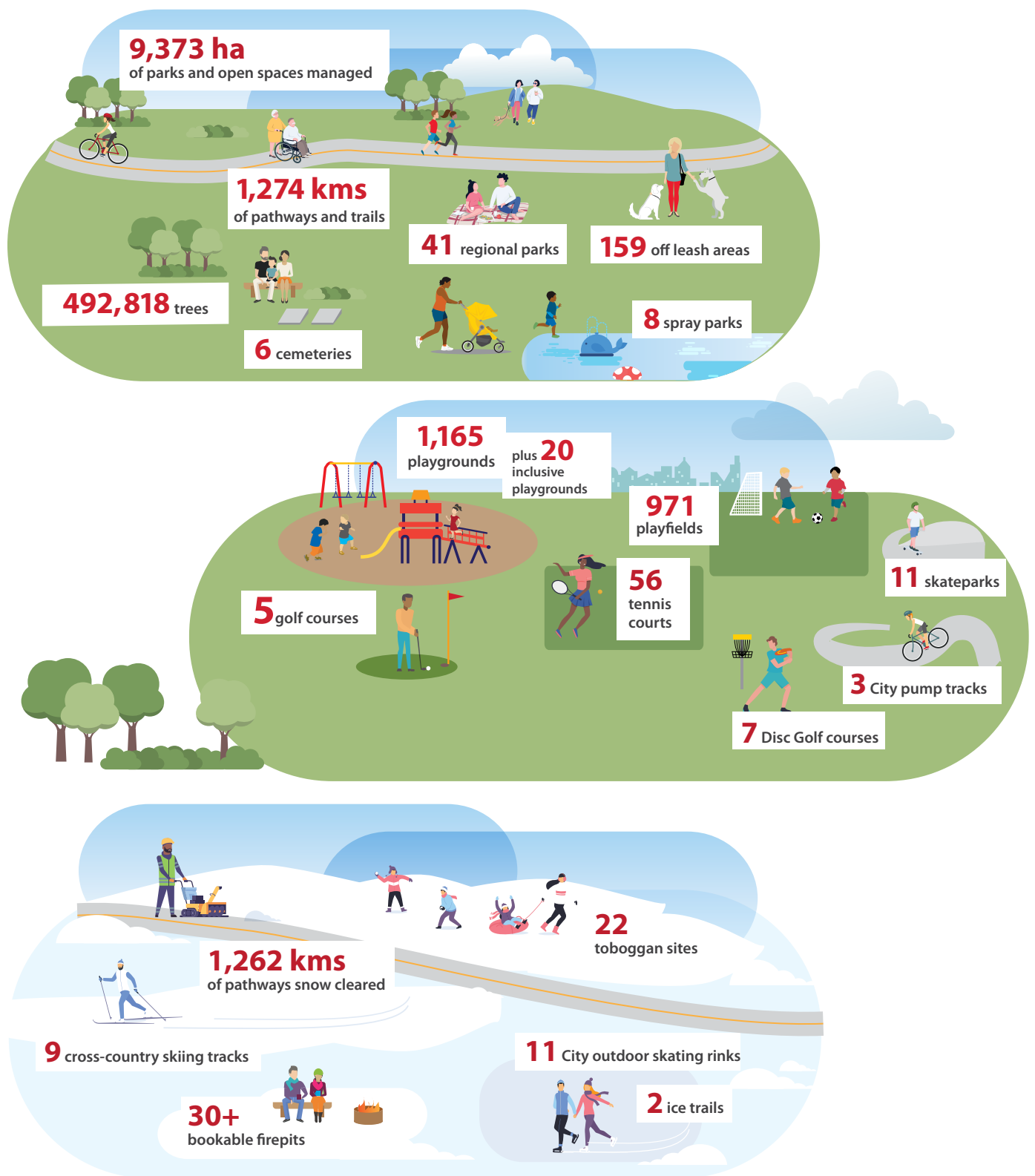
# Parks Workplace Culture

Increase the Corporate Employee Survey score to 75% for select questions by 2030.

[For more information, please see page 32.](#)



# Calgary's parks in 2024





# Parks awards 2023 and 2024

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## 2023 Location of the Year Award

**Shaganappi Point Golf Course:** Youth on Course – Location of the Year

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## 2024 Consumer Choice Award

**Shaganappi Point Golf Course:** 2024 Consumer Choice Award under the Golf Course – Public category

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## 2024 Heritage Calgary Awards

**Calgary Parks' Land Acknowledgement Project:** 2024 Heritage Calgary Awards – Heritage Storytelling Award

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## 2024 Mayor's Urban Design Awards

**Riverwalk West Urban Design:** Conceptual Theoretical Urban Design – Winner  
**Beltline Playbook:** Approved or Adopted Plans – Winner

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## 2024 National Award

**Bow to Bluff Park:** Canadian Society of Landscape Architects – 2024 National Award for Small-Scale Public Landscape

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# 2024 Progress Toward Target Connection



## Connection is the overarching indicator of success and directly links to the vision statement for Imagine Parks.

Our top priority is to build a connection between Calgarians and their parks and open spaces. For our purposes, Connection is defined as “The experience of being outdoors, enjoying nature and socializing with

friends and family in parks and open spaces”. Through public surveying this is how Calgarians have told us they understand the concept of what connecting with parks means to them. It is why our staff do what they do.

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### Washroom Attendant Program Extended

Due to improvements in safety, cleanliness and inclusion, the washroom attendant service was extended to Century Gardens and Central Memorial Park. A committee, including representatives from Parks & Open Spaces, Calgary Police Service, and Community Strategies, awarded the contract to Hiregood for the 2025 Downtown Washroom Attendant Program.

#### Lot 6 Winter Activation

Over the past 12 months, Centre Operations has collaborated with Downtown Strategies, the Calgary Downtown Association, and the Downtown West Association to activate Lot 6, a parking lot on the northwest end of downtown. Last winter, the Centre Operations Team built a Crokicurl rink. This year, we are expanding into the adjacent greenspace next to the parking lot and the newly established Riverhall by creating a natural ice rink.

#### Monarch Butterfly Waystation at Prairie Winds Park

Parks initiated a registered Monarch Butterfly Waystation at Prairie Winds Park, now included in an online directory of Monarch Waystations worldwide. These waystations provide the resources necessary for Monarchs to complete their life cycle and sustain their migration. The station will be situated in a planting bed with host plants to support larvae and provide energy sources.

#### “Go for the Green,” Golf Course Operations Strategic Plan

The Golf team completed the “Go for the Green” strategic plan, which includes six guiding priorities aligned with the Imagine Parks targets.

#### New Pathway Construction/ Missing Links

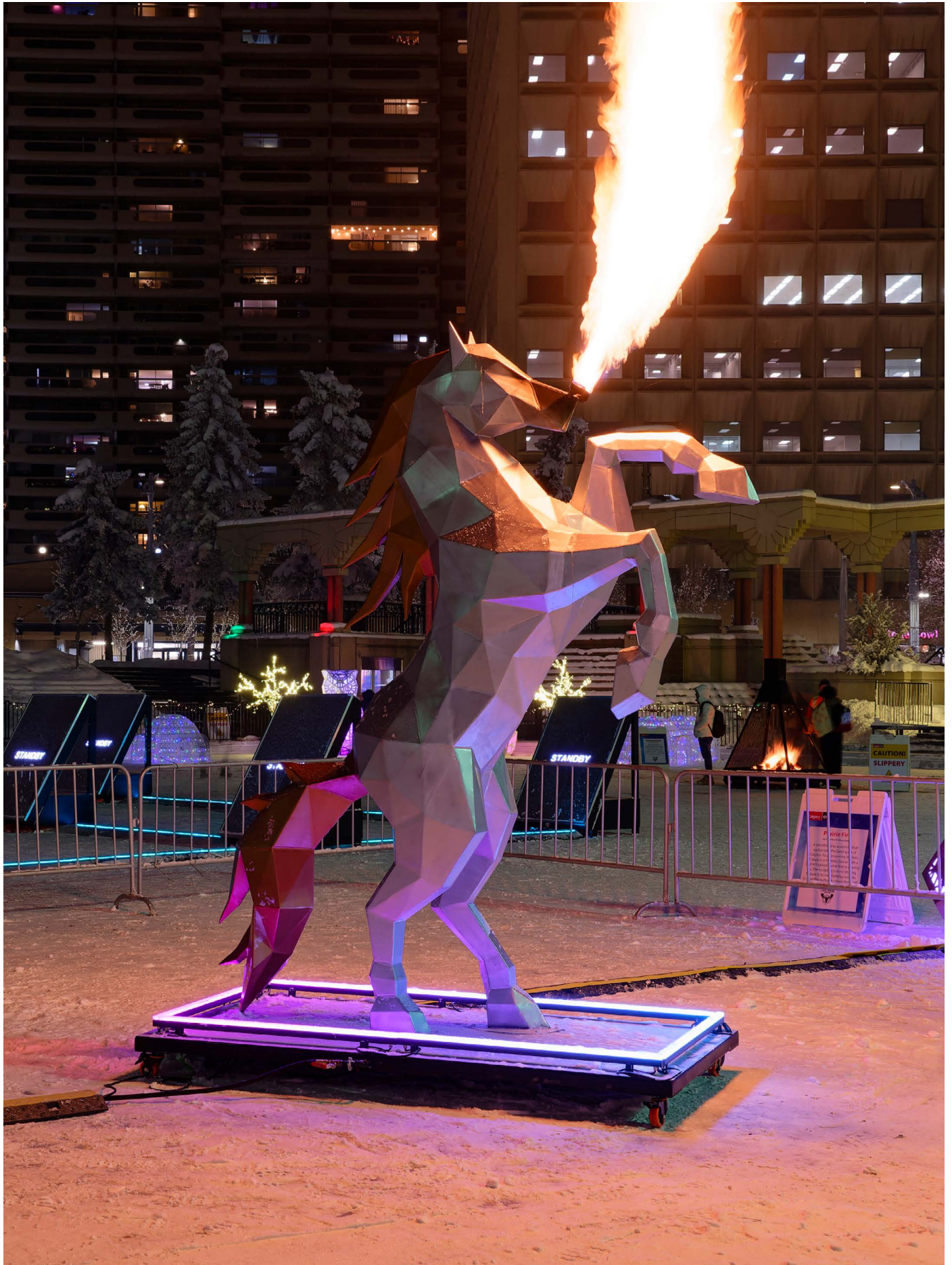
New pathway assets were constructed in 2024 to connect users to green spaces in park areas under Calgary’s Pathway and Bikeway Network (5A) Program, including ongoing work in Falconridge and scheduled construction in Marlborough Park for Q4 2024.

#### Improved Community Connectivity

New community connections will improve mobility options for residents, allowing them to travel more easily within their communities and access public spaces where connections did not previously exist.

#### Downtown Park Event Incentives

To encourage more events and greater attendance, booking permit fees were waived for public events within downtown parks.

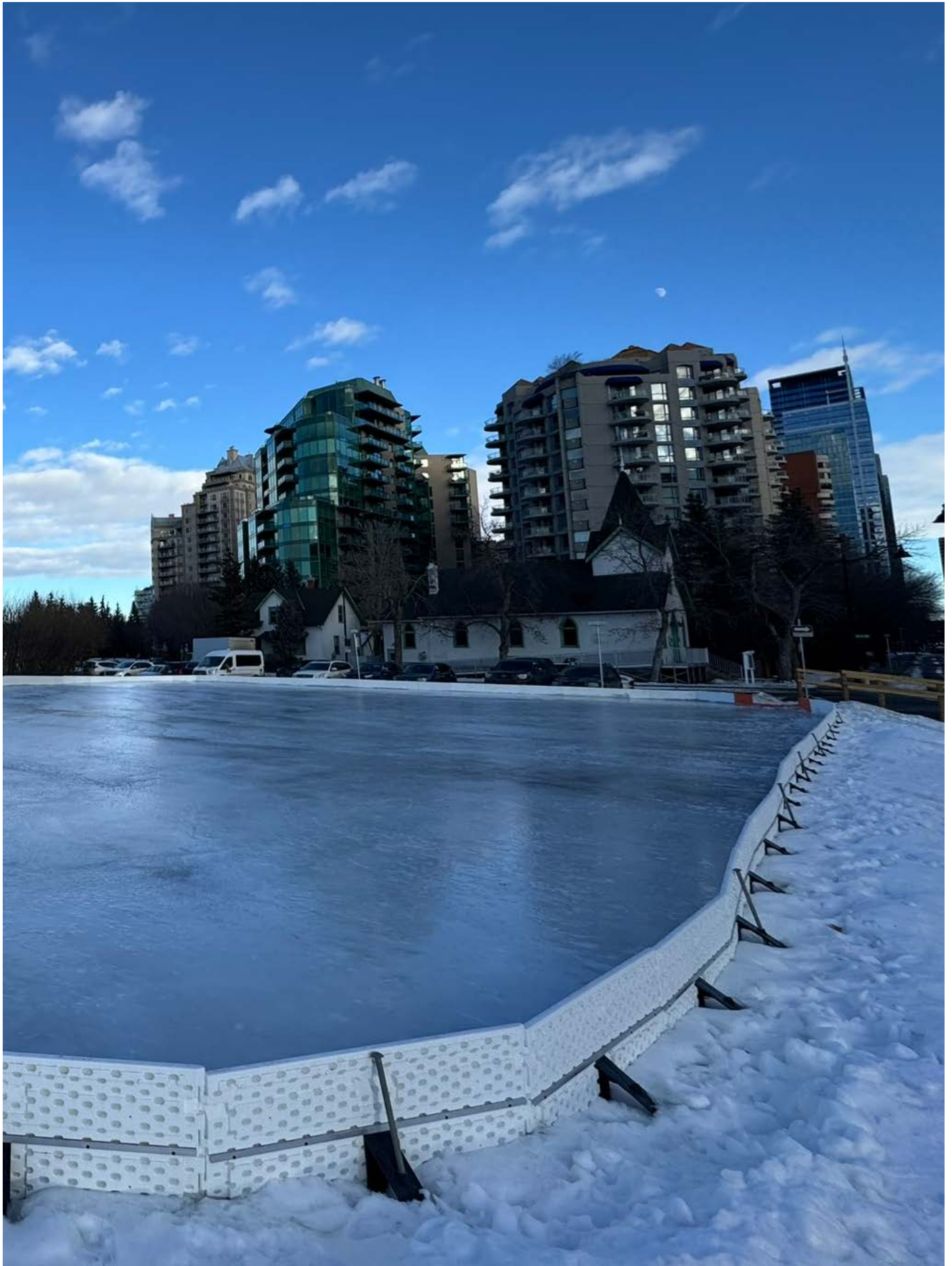


Plaza Palooza





Lot 6 Winter Activation



Lot 6 Winter Activation



# 2024 Progress Toward Target Wellness



**The focus of this indicator is to contribute to community wellness in our programming and activation of parks.**

Research shows that being in a park space, regardless of the activity being engaged in provides benefits to the mental, physical and social wellbeing of an individual. Parks and Open Spaces has chosen to focus on months

with snow on the ground as it is during this time frame that our data indicates there is room to positively impact the wellbeing of Calgarians.

## Notable 2024 Projects

### Olympic Plaza Winter Activation

Plaza Palooza took place at Olympic Plaza in November and December, drawing approximately 40,000 attendees over the scheduled weeks. The event featured live entertainment, a Battle of the Buskers, live ice sculpting, fire breathers, and more.

### Winter Evidence &

#### Investigation School Program

A new Winter Evidence & Investigation school program was created to raise awareness about nature and outdoor activities during the winter months.

### Prince's Island Lagoon Skating

Following up on the 2023 report, we successfully reintroduced the Prince's Island Lagoon Skating Rink. Funded by the Calgary Downtown Revitalization Fund, this initiative created a new winter destination in the downtown core. It will now be an ongoing activation as part of Centre Operations' winter programming.

### Prairie Winds Park Ice Rink Signage

Signage was installed at Prairie Winds Park to highlight the ice rink being built on the park's west side. Historically, the rink has seen low usage, so we wanted to ensure users are aware of it. The new signs include a QR code that translates the information into five different languages.

### Zone 6 Winter Activation

A new pleasure rink was established at the McKenzie Towne spray park in winter 2024. Previously managed by the McKenzie Towne Council, it is now under Parks' management.

### Cultural Landscape Winter Use Enhancement

Additional resourcing was added to advance the "enhance experience" initiative within Cultural Landscape sites. This included exploring winter use of Indigenous sites and locations with a significant winter use history, such as Bowness Park.

### Snow and Ice Control (SNIC)

#### Improvements for 2024/25 Season

SNIC activity was expanded on public pathways across the City, including new assets created as part of the 5A expansion (e.g., 37 St. SW, Anderson Rd. SW, McKnight Blvd. NE @ 4 St. NE). These additions improved access to pathways, especially for individuals with mobility challenges, ensuring they can travel in areas that were previously inaccessible.



# 2024 Progress Toward Target

## Reducing barriers to access



**The intent of this indicator is to reduce barriers that people have to accessing our parks and open spaces in order to improve the inclusivity of public spaces.**

Simply providing parks and open spaces does not fulfill Parks' mandate if there are barriers to access park spaces.

This indicator speaks to intentionally managing our provision and design of spaces to ensure that they are accessible to all Calgarians.

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### Inclusive Playgrounds

We supported the development of inclusive playgrounds across the city to ensure all children, regardless of ability, can enjoy play spaces.

#### Community Amenities

Installed smaller amenities in underserved communities, by collaborating with our colleagues in Mobility to pilot a play street, as well as a community rink to encourage local engagement.

#### Adopt-a-Rink Program

Collaborated with Parks Programming to approve new Adopt-a-Rink projects in our communities. This program provides the necessary lumber for communities to build outdoor natural ice rinks, along with a limited supply of water for flooding.

#### Carburn Park Stairway

A second stairway was installed at the Carburn Park Lagoon, enhancing access to the area. Additionally, a new floating dock was procured and installed, increasing opportunities for Calgarians to explore the pond.

#### Supplemental Watering

Continued efforts to evaluate and maintain the number of community parks receiving supplemental watering. Key decision factors include ensuring equal distribution of capital investments, equitable access to watered parks, and the installation of new infrastructure to expand watering services. This initiative is ongoing.

#### Tree Equity Tool

Developed a tree equity tool to guide decisions on tree planting locations and resource allocation, ensuring that tree planting efforts are distributed fairly across communities.

#### Bollard Removal Program (2024)

Launched a program to remove bollards from pathways where they do not enhance park functionality and hinder active users. Approximately 150 bollards were removed during the 2024 season.

#### Playground and Amenity Upgrades

Completed several playground upgrades and general amenity enhancements:

- Bridlewood Playground Upgrade
- Citadel Parking Lot Resurface
- Diamond Cove Playground Upgrade
- Falconridge Playground Upgrades
- General Amenity Inventory Purchase
- Missing Link Installation in Coventry to improve access to a natural area

These initiatives reflect our ongoing commitment to creating equitable, accessible, and engaging community spaces for all residents.





Carburn Park



# 2024 Progress Toward Target Experiences



## Parks intends to provide a safe, positive experience that meets the expectations of Calgarians visiting any park or open space.

It is the priority of Parks and Open Spaces to provide a consistent quality of experience for all Calgarians no matter where in the city they live and that all parks of a similar typology are equitably maintained. The Customer Level of Service (CLOS) metric is a city-wide tool measuring the quality and provision of assets within park spaces. A CLOS of 2.0 means that Calgarians

can experience a regional park that includes specialized amenities that are available, open, and maintained at “good” condition level. A CLOS rating of 3.0 means that Calgarians can enjoy a park space within their community with standard amenities that are maintained at a “fair” condition level (CLOS Rating Scale: 1 – Excellent, 2 – Good, 3 – Fair, 4 – Poor, 5 – Fail).

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### Safety Activations

Six parks were prioritized for safety improvements in 2024 to improve public perception and create more user-friendly spaces.

#### Parks Stewardship and Adopt-a-Park Program

Opportunities for residents to register as park stewards were increased by extending registration periods and hosting additional orientations.

#### Visitor Experience Enhancements

Various community partnerships and agreements were finalized in 2024 to respond to visitor needs. These included installations of Little Libraries, art projects, and skating rinks.

#### Cowboys Park Clock Tower

##### Perennials

The clock tower bed at the entrance to Downtown on 9th Avenue was renovated. The planter had not been maintained for several years, and this year it underwent full soil remediation using compost from Spy Hill, with an increased soil profile to support perennial plants and shrubs. The chosen plants are drought- and wind-tolerant, focusing on pollinator-friendly species. A new partnership agreement aims to revitalize the area and increase attendance at the event space.

#### Century Gardens Park

Two planting beds were renovated by removing old and damaged shrubs, grasses, and weeds. Healthy shrubs were transplanted to new locations, and fresh garden soil mix was introduced. New perennials were planted, and mulch was applied to heavily trafficked areas near the water feature.



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### **Pathway Asset Lifecycle and Construction Collaboration**

Collaboration with Infrastructure Services teams ensured alignment with pathway design guidelines and processes. The focus was on delivering pathway assets that meet public expectations and support long-term lifecycle management.

### **Harmony Park**

Four perennial beds were renovated. Soil remediation involved incorporating a new garden mix with the existing soil, followed by planting new perennials.

### **Pollinator Bed Conversion on Stephen Avenue (BMO Bed)**

Originally designed as a perennial pollinator bed, the BMO bed faced challenges due to its location at road level. The bed was converted to an annual pollinator bed, with soil replaced and new annual plants introduced to better suit the conditions.

### **Crescent Park**

This well-used, culturally significant park underwent a major rejuvenation, focusing on shrub bed restoration and historic features. A special historic shrub bed with buried sandstone blocks was restored. To enhance visitor experience, a hedge labyrinth and topiary bed were designed and installed by staff. The project received positive feedback from the community. Engagement with the Crescent Heights Community Association, the Parks Communications team, and Urban Forestry ensured successful collaboration. Informative signage and regular updates were provided to the community.

### **New Golf Initiatives**

Initiatives were launched to enhance the experience of new and novice players. Programs included Operation Tee Time, in partnership with Calgary Police Service and the South East Asian community, Fore the Love of the Game, and Come Out and Play Girls Golf Camp. Regular golf lessons and programs continue to see full subscription.

### **Playground and Recreational Court Projects**

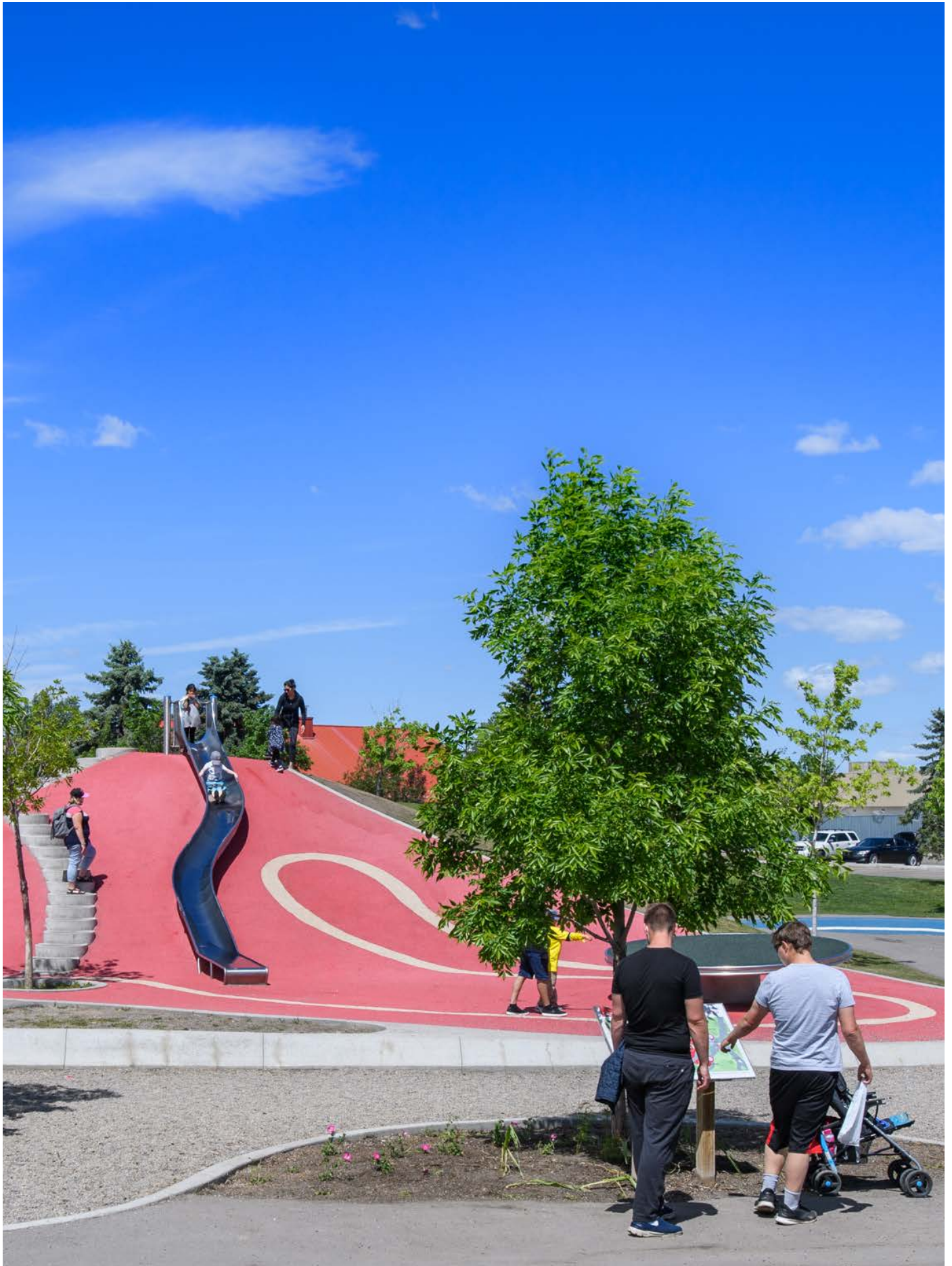
Twelve playground projects were completed, including four inclusive playgrounds, and four partner sites were built. Nine recreational courts, including tennis and pickleball courts, were resurfaced.

### **2024 Customer Level of Service (CLOS) Ratings**

680 parks were inspected and evaluated in 2024. Regional parks were re-evaluated, and 630 previously unevaluated parks received scores. The Expert Choice software was refined to display parks within each evaluator's zone. A dashboard for CLOS results is under development to inform work plans and coordinate efforts to address lower-rated parks.

### **Integrated Pest Management for Devonian Gardens**

A comprehensive program was launched for Devonian Gardens to enhance visitor experiences and improve pest control within the Core shopping mall. A dedicated technician is implementing various pest control procedures, and developing standard operating procedures to ensure consistent garden maintenance.



Prairie Winds Park



# 2024 Progress Toward Target Conservation and ecosystem resiliency



## In addition to providing a vital service, Parks & Open Spaces is an environmental steward for present and future Calgarians.

This indicator measures the ecological health of our natural environment parks using an internal tool called the Habitat Condition Rating (HCR). It has been specifically built for our three dominant terrestrial habitats here in Calgary: grasslands, forests, and shrublands.

Within each of these terrestrial habitat categories, separate metrics have been created to evaluate structure, function, and composition of habitat. Together these metrics result in the HCR score for a park.

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### New Seed Program

The Programs and Activation team distributed native wildflower seeds to the public through various City of Calgary initiatives, including Calgary Pride. This program aims to promote biodiversity and encourage residents to support local ecosystems.

#### Public Volunteer Initiatives

Volunteers participated in several environmental activities to help sustain Calgary's natural spaces. Initiatives included tree plantings, TD Tree Day, Pathway River Cleanup, weed pulling, and seeding projects. These efforts contribute to conserving the city's natural environment and promoting sustainability.

#### Prince's Island Lagoon

##### Draining Practices

Centre Operations has updated environmental practices surrounding the annual fish rescue at Prince's Island Park. Additional resourcing with subject matter expertise in aquatic systems was added in 2024. Key improvements include implementing turbidity monitoring, purchasing fish screens, and collaborating with Water Services to reduce potable water use when preparing the ice rink.

#### Prairie Winds Park Planting

Several native plant species were added to the natural habitat and rain garden in Prairie Winds Park. Additionally, two large tall grass areas were established in Prairie Winds Park and West Nose Creek Park. Converting regularly mowed turf into tall grass sites helps support native plants and increases biodiversity within Calgary parks.

#### Zone 4 Tree Planting

This project involved planting trees and creating large tree beds using Nature's Turf as ground cover instead of traditional mulch. Nature's Turf is a blend of native grasses grown in a soil-less medium, provided in a sod-like roll. This approach enhances soil health and reduces maintenance needs.

### **In-House Growing of Native Plant Material**

To support conservation and ecosystem resilience, 1,000 native perennial wildflower seedlings were cultivated in 2024. These seedlings were planted in naturalized areas across the city to improve biodiversity, habitat diversity, and drought resilience.

### **2024 Canopy Expansion Program**

As part of the city's ongoing efforts to expand its urban canopy, 92,000 seedlings were planted in 2024. This program aims to increase tree coverage, improve air quality, and contribute to climate resiliency.

### **Habitat Management Plans**

Progress continued on developing Habitat Management Plans for several parks including the completion of a draft plan for Weaselhead Glenmore Park as well as ongoing public engagement for Douglasdale. Plans for Edworthy and Haskayne parks have been initiated, while the J.H. Woods plan is currently on hold. These plans are essential for achieving the city's target of managing 20% of Priority 1 and 2 Natural Environment Parks.



Pathway and River Cleanup



# 2024 Progress Toward Target Sustainable management



**This indicator incorporates sustainable management into Parks' work with consideration for triple bottom line framework.**

It includes a balanced concern for social, environmental and economic impacts on decision-making, programs, improvements, investments, etc. This will ensure that the parks system is strong now and will remain strong

in the future. The resiliency of Calgary's parks and open space is integral to a sustainable operational and development framework.

## Notable 2024 Projects

### Rainwater Collection at Depot

Due to water restrictions and an increase in flower planting, rain gutters were installed on existing panabodes to collect rainwater, which is then stored in old watering tanks. This proved to be highly effective and will serve as an excellent water conservation method in the future.

### Fertilizer Pilot for Sports Fields

This year, a new type of fertilizer was piloted for sports fields that requires only one application annually instead of two. This pilot project has shown promising results in terms of both resource and cost savings.

### Curb Cuts Pilot Along Roadside Greens

Zones 3 and 4 piloted curb cuts along roadside greens. Rather than conducting a full cut of all turf along main roadways, selected areas were trimmed with curb cuts. This joint effort involved all North Zones in managing contractors, and the pilot yielded several positive results, including reduced maintenance time and improved aesthetics.

### Cacti Median Project

In 2023, a native cactus median was installed in Taradale with a survival rate of 77%. Building on this success, a second median was created in Cityscape in 2024. Lessons learned from the first project were applied to the installation and maintenance of the new median, further improving the process.

### Organic Fertilizer Trial

An organic fertilizer on two sports fields was trialled to evaluate its effectiveness compared to synthetic fertilizers. Initial results are promising, with plans to continue this trial next year as part of our commitment to sustainable turf grass management.

### Watering with Non-Potable Water

Throughout the year, we utilized non-potable water to irrigate plant materials, even during periods when water restrictions were not in place. This practice helped conserve potable water and demonstrated a sustainable approach to landscape maintenance.

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### **Reduction of Annual Flowers**

In an effort to conserve water, we reduced our annual flower order by 60%. This adjustment aligned with our sustainability goals while maintaining the visual appeal of our parks.

### **Enhancing Biodiversity in Cemetery Sites**

We made significant strides in tree selection to enhance the biodiversity of cemetery sites, supporting broader environmental initiatives and improving the overall health of these spaces.

### **Sustainable Management Project**

The Business and Asset Strategies team collaborated with Business and Policy Planning and Corporate Asset Management on a sustainable management project. Phase 1 involved completing best practices and an environmental scan, conducted by a Corporate Asset Management consultant. Phase 2, which focuses on developing a sustainability framework and evaluation tool, is currently underway and expected to be completed by year-end.

### **Parks and Open Spaces Drought Response Plan**

We developed a Parks and Open Spaces Drought Response Plan in anticipation of future seasonal drought conditions. The plan identifies risks, informs future infrastructure planning, and protects park assets during water scarcity. The plan, which helped guide our response to the feeder main emergency, was first initiated in May 2024 and remains ongoing.

### **Archaeological Reviews**

Cultural Landscapes completed approximately 300 archaeological reviews, resulting in over 100 applications to Alberta Culture. These reviews are essential to ensure compliance with provincial laws.

### **Roadside Greens Weed and Pest Control Program**

In 2024, Integrated Pest Management (IPM) assumed full responsibility for coordinating and executing the Roadside Greens weed and pest control program, which was previously managed by the Mobility business unit. The transition began in late 2023, with the IPM team working closely with the Mobility liaison to ensure a smooth and consistent transfer. The collaboration resulted in a sustainable and effective program throughout the 2024 season.

### **Urban Forestry Tree Planting Program**

Urban Forestry successfully secured a contribution agreement with Natural Resources Canada for a \$61 million tree planting program. Over the next five years, this initiative will support the planting and establishment of 930,000 trees, contributing to the city's long-term environmental sustainability goals.

### **Mini Forest Pilot Projects**

Interim results from monitoring five mini forest pilot projects have been mixed, with some sites showing success and others facing challenges. Lessons learned from both successful and less successful sites will be incorporated into final reports. Urban Conservation led a fall tour of the successful Marlborough mini forest site for the Biodiversity Advisory Committee. This project adds valuable naturalized space to a community with limited natural areas and was planned in collaboration with the Calgary Climate Hub.





Water saving efforts





Ralph Klein Park



# 2024 Progress Toward Target

## Best practices



### Best Practices ensures that new innovations and best practices are embedded in all aspects of Parks' work.

In 2024, the [Yardstick Annual Report](#) was adopted as the most comprehensive benchmarking tool currently available for municipally operated parks and open space operations. The report includes a comprehensive

'Overall Best Practices' assessment that measures how well each organization is performing in terms of operational excellence, asset management, and environmental sustainability.

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### MS Teams Transition for Centre Operations

In conjunction with the Co-Pilot for MS365 Pilot, Centre Operations began transitioning more operational resource management to MS Teams through the creation of four MS365 Groups. This transition has enabled deeper integration of MS Forms, Excel, MS Teams, and Outlook into daily operations. As a result, the team has adopted a more collaborative approach, allowing Centre Operations to evolve alongside advancing technology. Additionally, workflows have been introduced to streamline processes such as vacation approvals.

#### Flower Order Form

This year, Centre Operations enhanced the flower order form to include not only flower species and quantities but also to highlight drought-tolerant and bee-friendly plants. The updated form allowed gardeners to estimate the planting area and will help Centre Operations showcase its efforts to meet environmental initiatives. This improvement supports informed decision-making for future enhancements.

#### Turf Asset Condition Rating and Agronomics Program

This season, Centre Operations launched a turf asset condition rating program to assess park conditions and identify areas requiring maintenance. After evaluating all parks, the team implemented a blanket fertilization program to address the lack of consistent turf care over time. Priority areas with high traffic and compaction issues have been aerated, and rejuvenation plans are in place for the worst-rated sites in the spring.

#### Safety Improvement: Lopper Best Practice

Zone 3 researched and developed a best practice for securing loppers during hand-carrying and vehicle transport. This initiative has improved safety standards, reducing the risk of injury during transport and use.



Nose Hill Park

### **Request for Quote for Native Turf**

Recognizing the growing need for sustainable turf solutions, Centre Operations collaborated with procurement to create a Request for Quotation (RFQ) for native tall grass, known as Nature's Turf. This sustainable option is ideal for naturalized areas. The new RFQ can now be utilized across all park projects moving forward.

### **Yardstick Data Warehouse and Reporting**

A new Yardstick data warehouse was developed and completed and will now be in place for future years.

### **Indigenous Inclusion in Yardstick Report**

This year's Yardstick Report incorporated a Cultural Landscape perspective, emphasizing the importance of aligning with international co-management best practices. While there is room for improvement, the report highlights ongoing efforts to incorporate Indigenous inclusion and accommodate traditional ceremonies and practices. This work is essential to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

### **Goat Project Returns**

Grazing commenced at Fish Creek Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) on July 11th, 2024, and ran through July 22nd. This is the seventh season that Parks & Open Spaces' Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in conjunction with Water Services Operations & Maintenance Stormwater team have collaborated to have goats graze the land in and around Fish Creek WWTP. The goats have now moved on to grazing approximately 20 hectares of storm water infrastructure out at Shepard Wetland.





Goat grazing



# 2024 Progress Toward Target

## Valuing external partnerships



### Partnerships are essential to how Parks and Open Spaces delivers programs and services, develops strategies and constructs and manages assets.

Effective and efficient partnerships are founded on aligned objectives and on mutually agreed upon results that, in this case, provides value to Calgarians. This indicator seeks

to assess the holistic benefit that partnerships provide to Calgarians which includes but is not limited to the dollars leveraged through the relationship.

#### Notable 2024 Projects

##### Partnerships and Community Collaborations

- Continued collaboration with the Glenbow Ranch Park Foundation to protect Haskayne Park and promote appropriate park usage.
- Maintained partnership with ConocoPhillips Canada to sponsor the annual Pathway and River Cleanup, as well as the Mud Between My Toes wetland education program for schools.
- Engaged with various community associations, nonprofits, resident groups, provincial and federal governments, Parks Foundation Calgary, the Tsuut'ina Nation, and other interested parties on numerous projects. Maintained regular connections with Ward Offices, Calgary Municipal Land Corporation (CMLC), and Business Improvement Areas (BIAs).

##### Tomkins Park Service Increase

Mid-summer, the Business Improvement Areas surrounding Tomkins Park on 17th Avenue SW raised concerns about social disorder and garbage issues impacting their Summer on 17th event. In response, Beltline parks staff adjusted their service levels by making the park the first stop of each weekday morning shift and coordinating with the waste contractor to prioritize garbage collection. A week later, the BIA liaison expressed satisfaction with the improvements, noting increased staff presence and effective issue management. This enhanced service level continued for the rest of the season and will be considered moving forward.

##### West Nose Creek Park Improvements

- Organized the installation of additional seating in the off-leash area to better accommodate dog owners.
- Partnered with Urban Forestry to plant 150 trees, providing future shade and shelter in the park.
- Created designated tall grass areas around the newly planted trees to encourage native plant growth.
- Added decorative planters to enhance the park's aesthetics.

##### Zone 6 Public Engagement

Collaborated with Parks Community Strategist (PCS) to host a public engagement event with Ward 12 at Seton Regional Park. The event featured activities such as box hockey and a nine-hole mini-golf course, along with food vendors, to gather Calgarian's input on future park expansion plans.

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### **Volunteer and Community Support**

- Continued support for volunteer groups, including cemetery grave cleanup programs and community ceremonies.
- Supported various community events and initiatives to promote park engagement.

### **Cowboys Park Sponsorship**

Secured a 10-year sponsorship agreement for Cowboys Park, providing funding to enhance the downtown park as a plug-and-play festival space.

### **New Park Vendors**

Introduced new vendors in parks, including the popular Parc Du Café at North Glenmore Park, which has significantly improved the visitor experience.

### **Parks Elder's Guiding Circle**

The Parks-specific Elder's Guiding Circle held its first meeting, with representatives from six of the eight Nations attending. The Elders and Nations committed to integrating Indigenous perspectives into the management and celebration of Calgary's parks and open spaces,

supporting societal expectations around Indigenous inclusion and Truth and Reconciliation.

### **Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Support**

Provided expertise to internal and external stakeholders on weed and pest control. New partnerships included Telus Spark, which sought assistance with Richardson Ground Squirrel control, and the Calgary Zoo and Water Services Storm Water Infrastructure for managing aquatic weed infestations at two additional locations.

### **Tree Planting Initiatives**

- Supported volunteer and Calgarian's tree planting initiatives across Calgary.
- Expanded the Branching Out tree giveaway program by 250%, distributing 5,000 trees to Calgarians in 2024 compared to 2,000 the previous year.

### **Calgary Captured/Calgary Connect**

In partnership with the Miistakis Institute, the City continued to support the Calgary Captured (also known as Calgary Connect) program. With five years of

wildlife monitoring data collected, the Miistakis Institute and Parks are preparing a fall communications release to share insights on how wildlife moves through Calgary's ecological network and parks system.

### **Chinese Cemetery**

The City of Calgary in cooperation with the Chinese community finished the first stage of the Chinese Cemetery Revitalization project in 2024. This project celebrates the contributions of the Chinese community to the City of Calgary. The project included:

- Removal and temporary storage of existing concrete monuments.
- Remove and dispose 8" of organic material.
- Prepare subbase and base using granular fill.
- MonuGrid installation.
- Replace removed monuments.
- Rehabilitate area with amended loam.
- Seed area and apply Cover Grow mulch.



West Nose Creek





Chinese Cemetery





Olympic Plaza

# 2024 Progress Toward Target

## Parks workplace culture



This theme is intended to create a vibrant and healthy workplace culture in Parks which ensures an enjoyable place to work and that Parks and Open Spaces is an employer of choice.

To achieve this, Calgary Parks and Open Spaces will focus on actions based on trust, accountability, safety, role clarity, and communication.

### Notable 2024 Projects

#### Passion Projects and Community Engagement

Staff were given the opportunity to engage in passion projects, leading to the development of our Bear Smart School Programs, a Bird Interpretive Theatre program, and an increase in the number of adopt-a-rink events planned for 2025.

#### Learning and Development Strategy for 2024

The Workforce Management (WFM) team developed a Learning and Development strategy for 2024, aligned with the objectives outlined in the Culture Plan. This strategy incorporates various learning formats, including in-person sessions and virtual updates, to ensure availability for both weekday and weekend Operations staff. Communications regarding training opportunities were shared with leaders through the Director's Bulletin, Safety Bulletin, and Teams channels.

#### Annual Foreman Update Restructured

To enhance communication the 'Annual Foreman Update' was restructured into three 'Frontline Leader Updates' in 2024, expanding the audience to include all P&OS frontline leaders. Each three-hour session focused on a specific leadership element and provided Parks-specific resources to improve knowledge and skills. These sessions were recorded and shared to ensure all employees could access the information.

#### Seasonal Staff Orientation Logistics

Work Force Management organized logistics for five separate orientations, including Snow and Ice Control, onboarding over 590 seasonal staff in 2024. This included collaborating with Team Leads and Superintendents to assign depot locations, arranging welcome addresses from senior management, coordinating presentations from support teams, managing A/V technology, facilitating corporate mandatory training (e.g., Code of Conduct, Respect In The Workplace, Information Security), tracking attendance, and entering completions in the Learning Management System (LMS).



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### **Psychological Safety Training Initiatives**

Work Force Management (WFM) also provided numerous training opportunities focused on psychological safety, in line with the Corporate Psychological Safety framework and the Culture Plan. An 'Embracing Psychological Safety' course was assigned to all leaders. In-person sessions included Psychological First Aid, Situational Awareness and Violence Prevention, Safe to Try, Skills for Being There, PALS Sessions (Pet Therapy), and Anti-Racism training, with over 200 employees participating. To offer a well-rounded training experience, WFM collaborated with internal Business Units and third-party partners (e.g., Canadian Mental Health Association, Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association) to schedule learning opportunities.

### **Safety Data Management System (SDMS) Report Submission**

We focused on involving all staff levels in the submission of SDMS reports. Staff members at every level have been trained and encouraged to report incidents, near misses, and hazardous conditions, with the goal of increasing submission numbers and providing staff with experience in identifying reportable events. By the end of the season, each foreman, gardener, and crew lead had completed at least one SDMS report and felt confident in their ability to do so.

### **Tipi Installation Project**

This year, staff participated in training on the proper setup of a Tipi. This included a step-by-step process for raising a Tipi, along with background knowledge about its cultural significance. This training aimed to equip our staff with the skills needed to assist in future Tipi setups in our parks, while also helping them understand the importance of these structures.

### **Working Alone App Trial**

This summer, Centre Operations trialed the Safetyline app for the Weekend Shift with Frontline Leaders. The app allows staff working alone to check in, triggering an external company to make escalating calls if the worker does not respond. The trial was presented to the Joint Worksite Health and Safety Committee, Business Unit Safety Implementation Team, and OHS Departments' Safety Summit.



Tipi Project

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### **Inclusion in Team Meetings**

To foster a more inclusive culture and enhance transparency, we invited staff from all frontline positions to participate in team meetings alongside foremen and the superintendent.

### **New In-House Orientation Document**

To help new and returning staff learn policies and practices, and to provide a useful reference, we created a comprehensive orientation document. This guide covers all relevant topics any city employee needs to know and includes QR codes linking to important forms and a detailed contact list. Staff provided positive feedback on both the orientation and the reference guide.

### **Support for a Positive and Safe Work Environment**

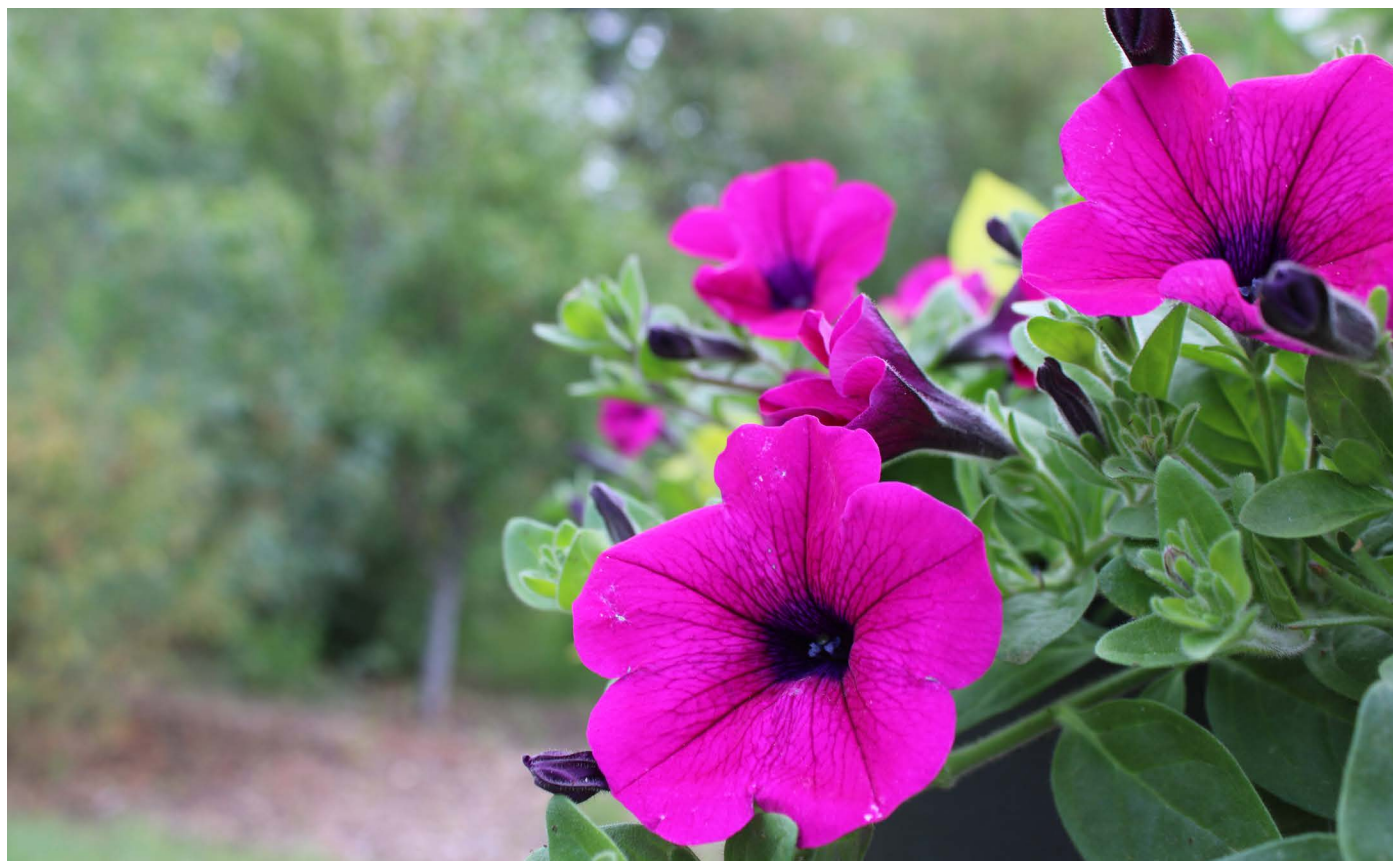
Cemeteries continues to prioritize staff training, ensuring that all employees attend required sessions, follow standard operating procedures, and participate in specialized training to support professional designations.

### **Enhanced Pesticide Applicator Accreditation**

In early 2024, Integrated Pest Management introduced an enhanced pesticide applicator accreditation program. This initiative offers employees the opportunity to gain additional licenses that meet early-season hiring requirements. To date, 11 employees are enrolled in this program.

### **Monthly Administration & Staff Engagement**

We provided monthly opportunities for administrative staff to collaborate with leadership to assess work quality, offer guidance on projects, and discuss leadership feedback. These meetings create a safe space for staff to voice concerns and foster open, honest dialogue. Leadership uses this feedback to address issues promptly and ensure continuous improvement.



North Glenmore Park





## Elder Stories

Listen/Learn/Reflect

### Five Bullets

In 2022, The City of Calgary's Parks and Open Spaces initiated and installed 25 land acknowledgement signs across various park locations around the city. We believe in understanding and acknowledging the Indigenous people of this land, who were the original stewards since Time Immemorial. When you scan the QR code, you'll be able to hear Elders and knowledge keepers from each of these Nations, sharing stories about the rich history and culture of the landscape you're standing on. The City has also included art, created by talented First Nations and Métis artists, in the hope that you'll enjoy learning the history of these lands.

Calgary



Listen to Elder  
**Henry  
Holloway**



Learn more  
about artist  
**Andrew  
Holloway**



# Our actions

Within the original Imagine Parks strategy there is a list of action items identified that would contribute to the successful delivery of parks and open spaces to Calgarians (P13 - 19). The Imagine Parks strategy has evolved beyond the scope of these action items, however these items will continue to be monitored until complete for reporting purposes.

Project	Status Update
Implement guidelines to determine appropriate allocation of “Wi-Fi hotspots” in parks and open space.	<b>On Hold</b> – There were capacity limitations to resource the project in 2024. This will be added to the workplan for 2025.
Implement a score to measure if park design and services are providing intergenerational, economic and gender equity and security and are adaptive to changing community demographics.	<b>Complete</b> – Included as part of Imagine Parks implementation and the Connect Calgary’s Parks Plan will continue to analyze park provision. Scheduled approval March 2025.
Implement an open space acquisition and disposition strategy to manage land and service delivery more effectively.	<b>Not Yet Started</b> – Scheduled to be initiated after completion of the Parks Plan in 2025.
Identify future regional park location sectors and ensure a timely funding and acquisition process.	<b>Complete</b> – Regional park gaps identified. Funding will be developed as part of the Parks Master Plan.
Implement public art and culture guidelines for parks and open space.	<b>Complete</b> – The Policy for public art has been completed and incorporated in the Parks Plan. Scheduled approval March 2025.
Develop guidelines to formalize a process to seek alternative sources of funding for initiatives and programming in parks and open space.	<b>In Progress</b> – A substantial sponsorship was secured for Cowboys Park in 2024. We are also working with another proponent on a naming of the stage in Princes Island Park which has the potential for a second significant sponsorship agreement.  The draft sponsorship framework is completed and just needs to be reviewed and shared. To be finalized by end of Q1 2025.



# 2025 Priorities

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In reviewing our 2024 accomplishments as well as data collected from Calgarians, a few themes were identified that would inform decision making and work priorities in 2025.

## Imagine Parks targets

- Establish outstanding target – Sustainable Management
- Focus on Parks Workplace Culture. This work is on track to reaching target, is supported by a culture plan to guide efforts on this target.



Water saving efforts

# Notable events in 2024

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## Notable 2024 Projects

### Bearspaw Feeder Main

On June 5, 2024, Calgary faced a significant water crisis when a leak occurred in the Bearspaw South Feeder Main, the largest pipeline in the city's water network, responsible for distributing a major portion of Calgary's treated water supply. Over the summer, 29 pipe segments required repair to stabilize the feeder main.

This unprecedented event had a profound impact on day-to-day operations, creating a period of uncertainty and unknowns. However, in true Parks fashion, our staff quickly adapted, working tirelessly to find

solutions to ensure our living assets and park spaces were well-maintained.

Each zone developed unique techniques for conserving and collecting non-potable water whenever possible. The team's ability to think creatively and deliver value was truly remarkable.

The Bearspaw Feeder Main crisis is an event that will be remembered for a very long time. The lessons learned will benefit Parks for many years in the future.



## Notable 2024 Projects

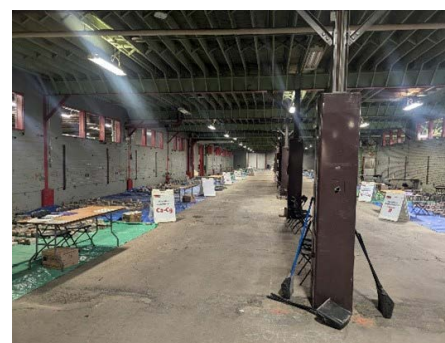
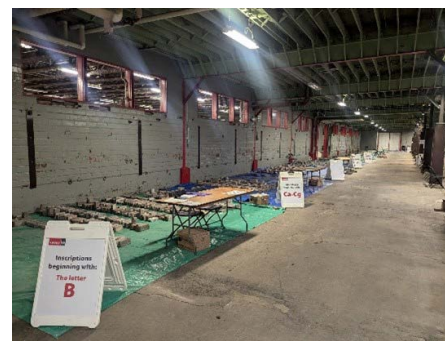
### Olympic Plaza Brick Event

In December, the Arts Commons Transformation project was approaching its start date, marked by the scheduled demolition of Olympic Plaza. For many Calgarians, Olympic Plaza holds deep sentimental value, rich with history and memories from the 1988 Winter Olympics.

Initially, it was believed that none of the inscribed bricks could be salvaged, and that they would sadly be lost forever.

However, after further discussions, the Parks team was entrusted with finding a solution for those who wished to preserve their inscribed bricks.

Through countless hours of planning and coordination, the team successfully processed approximately 8,000 requests with 5,600 bricks being removed and returned to owners.







Maple Ridge Golf Course









# Production Tag

Approval of the attached proof constitutes approval of the specifications listed below, as well as the artwork.  
Please review thoroughly and ensure all information is correct.

**Docket#** 24-0042956 CRV-33310

**Project Title** Parks & Open Spaces Imagine Parks 2024 Report

**Client** Kyle McNichol

**Audience**

**CSA** N/A

**Art Director** Stephen Scullion

**Designer** Daniel Blais

**Production Artist** Daniel Blais

**Writer** N/A

**Videographer** N/A

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**Flat Size** 8.5x11"

**Bleed** no

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**Section**

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**Approved**

☐

**Approved With Changes**

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**Back to Creative**

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**Back to CSA**

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**Back to Communicator**

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**Review Tomorrow**

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**Signature**

**Date**

**Miscellaneous**