

Imagine Parks



2025 Monitoring Report

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 2025.

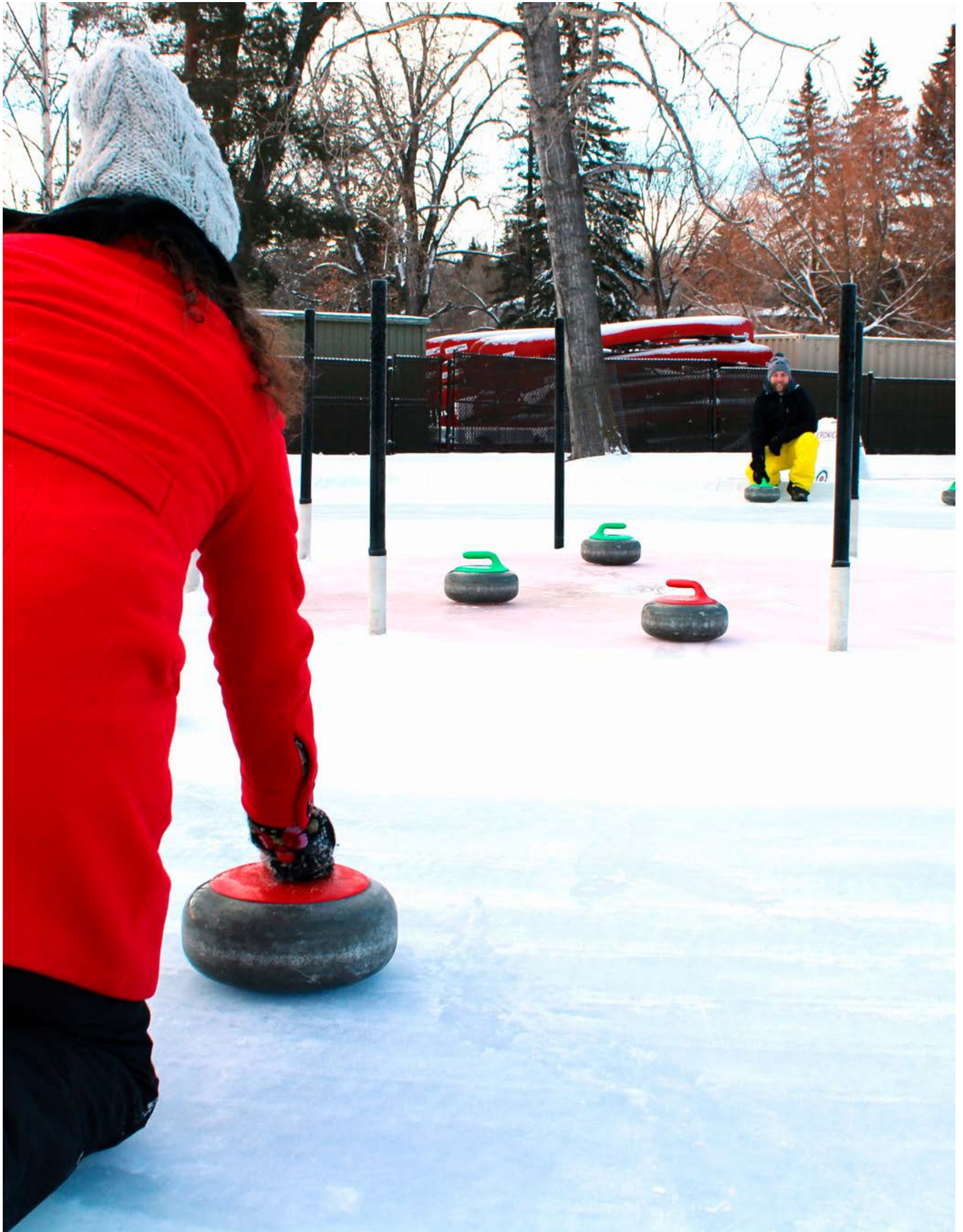
Connection with our environment and each other is more important than ever, as Calgary and other municipalities work to improve the physical and mental wellbeing of our communities while grappling with the impacts of climate change on urban environments and natural areas.

I want to thank our team, partners, community members and City Council for their continued passion for improving our parks and open spaces. I look forward to our continued collaboration in 2026 to provide equitable access to parks for all.

Kyle Ripley
Director, Parks and Open Spaces

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Bowness Park – Crockicurl

Executive Summary

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 Calgarians’ vision for Parks and Open Spaces and how our work is progressing towards this vision, nine indicators of success were created. Along with these indicators of success, measurable targets were established to allow Parks and Open Spaces teams to align their efforts towards a few high-impact, shared goals that can track progress of impact over time, and, if necessary be course corrected as required.



Reader Rock Garden

Imagine Parks Indicators



Connection

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



Wellness

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



Reducing Barriers to Access

Increase the percentage of households within a 400m pedestrian trip to a multi-functional park to 69 per cent 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 per cent 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 per cent in the Yardstick Report until 2030.



Valuing External Partnerships

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



Parks Workplace Culture

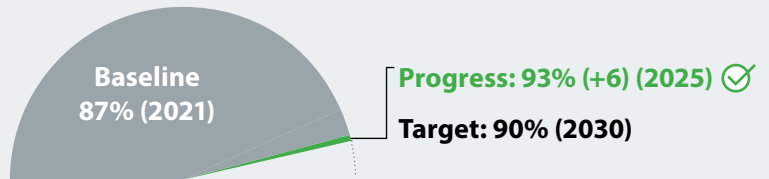
Increase the Corporate Employee Survey score to 75 per cent for select questions by 2030.

Imagine Parks Targets – Progress Report

Connection

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

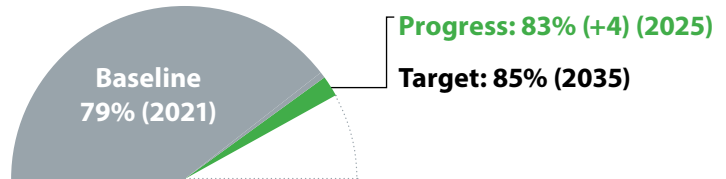
[For more information, please see page 7.](#)



Wellness

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

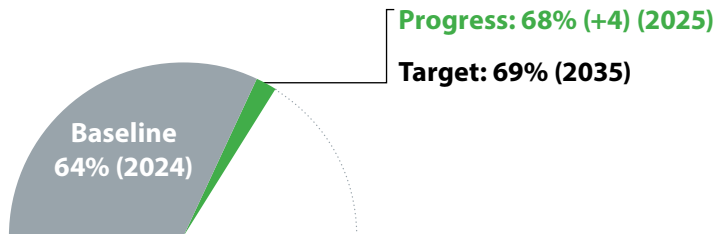
[For more information, please see page 10.](#)



Reducing Barriers to Access

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

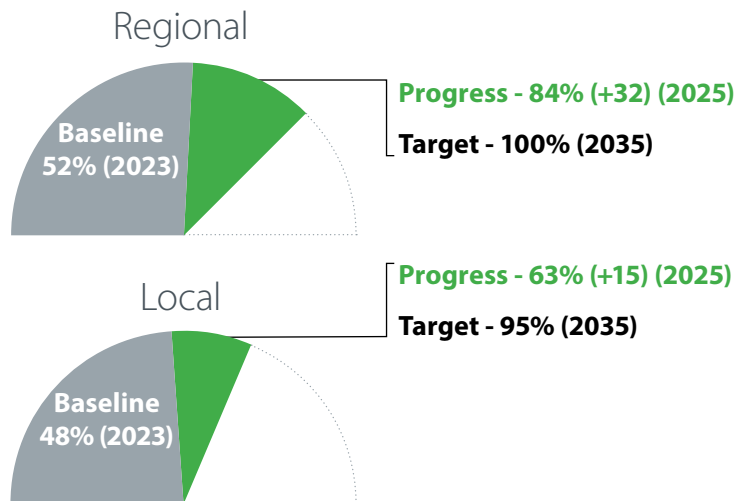
[For more information, please see page 12.](#)



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 14.](#)



Conservation and Ecosystem Resiliency

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

[For more information, please see page 16.](#)

2021

Fair to moderate

- Edworthy Park
- Douglasdale Natural Environment Park (NEP)

Poor

- J.H. Woods Park

2025

Work is being progressed. Improvements have been made but no measurable change to the formal ratings has been documented.

Fair to moderate

- Edworthy Park
- Douglasdale NEP

Poor

- J.H. Woods Park

2035

Good to excellent

- Edworthy Park
- Douglasdale NEP

Sustainable Management

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

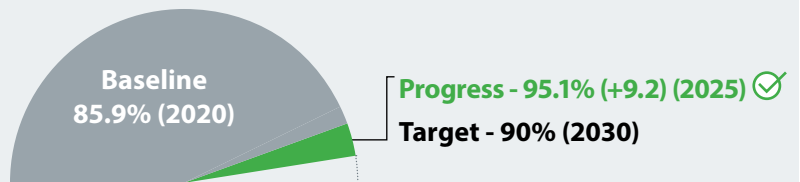
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Will be approved in Q2 2026 by PMT and will be reported on in 2026

Best Practices

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

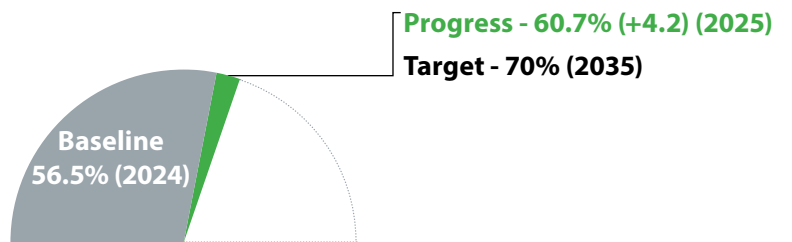
[For more information, please see page 22.](#)



Valuing External Partnerships

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

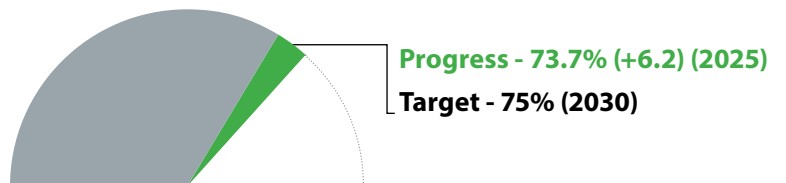
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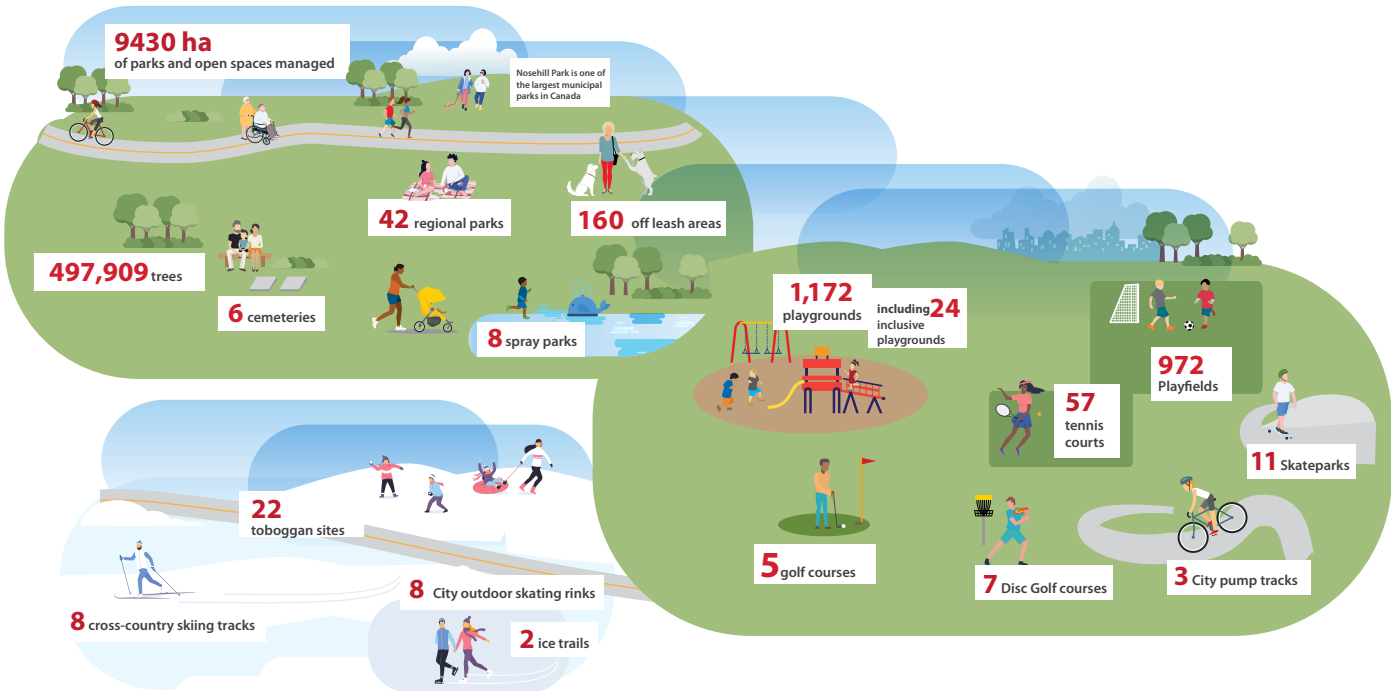
Parks Workplace Culture

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

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



Calgary's Parks in 2026



2025 Progress Toward Target – Connection



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”. This definition of the Connection was created through the results of a representative sample public survey of Calgarians conducted in 2021.

Notable 2025 Projects

Calgary Municipal Golf Championship

City of Calgary Golf proudly hosted the inaugural Calgary Municipal Golf Championship on August 2 and 3, launching an exciting new tradition for local golfers. The two-day tournament was held at Maple Ridge Golf Course on Day 1 and McCall Lake Golf Course on Day 2, with approximately 60 players aged 18 and older participating with a valid registered handicap.

Designed to celebrate community, connection, and the spirit of the game, the championship brought together players of varying skill levels in a well-organized and inclusive competition. Participants enjoyed clear rules, detailed flight sheets, and a friendly, supportive atmosphere led by City of Calgary Golf staff. The event showcased local talent and highlighted the pride and passion behind Calgary’s municipal golf courses. More than a tournament, it was a celebration of sportsmanship and shared love of the game—setting the stage for future championships.

Connect: Calgary’s Parks Plan

In May 2025, City Council approved Connect: Calgary’s Parks Plan, a long-term strategy that will guide the development, redevelopment, and management of Calgary’s parks over the next 20 years. The plan will inform future policies, projects, and investments related to the city’s parks system.

Developed based on extensive public engagement, Connect provides policy direction across four key priority areas:

- **Protecting and enhancing environmentally significant areas**, including wetlands, grasslands, and tree stands, with a focus on planting native species and growing Calgary’s urban tree canopy.
- **Connecting and growing the parks system** by increasing the minimum size of parks in new communities and adding functionality to parks in established neighbourhoods.
- **Creating inclusive and supportive spaces** that are welcoming to all Calgarians through thoughtful design, amenities, volunteer opportunities, and partnerships with community groups.
- **Enhancing park management and maintenance** by refreshing and standardizing approaches to funding and care across the system.

Connect lays the foundation for future implementation in collaboration with City departments, the development industry, and community partners.

Emerald Ash Borer Education

Integrated Pest Management (IPM), in partnership with Activations and Education (A&E), launched a city-wide education campaign focused on emerald ash borer (EAB), a non-native, wood-boring beetle that poses a significant threat to ash trees. While EAB has not been detected in Alberta, early detection is critical to slowing its potential spread should it arrive in Calgary.

The campaign increased public awareness through social media, pests and pruning workshops, and outreach by Parks Program Ambassadors in parks across the city. Education was also shared with LEAD youth volunteers, who conducted visual surveys for EAB during their volunteer shifts, helping build awareness and monitoring capacity among Calgarians.

Floating Lantern Peace Festival

On August 9, Devonian Gardens hosted the 2025 Floating Lantern Peace Festival, featuring a youth national speech contest centered on peace, societal norms, and advocacy. Youth participants had the unique opportunity to share the Parks boardroom with two Hiroshima survivors to witness public engagement with their words and messages.

Parks Venues supported the event in collaboration with onsite operations and electrical teams. Parks also approved the use of floating lanterns in one of Devonian Gardens' water features, allowing the public to engage meaningfully in an act of remembrance.

Rotary Park Enhancements

Parks and Open Spaces partnered with the Public Art team to enhance a section of Rotary Park while protecting the integrity of the historic Centre Street Bridge lion sculpture. Following repeated vandalism in recent years, the sculpture underwent careful conservation treatment.

To deter further vandalism while maintaining public access, new lighting was installed to highlight the sculpture's historical and artistic significance, particularly at night. Native plantings were also added to support conservation goals, subtly guiding respectful interaction and better integrating the artwork into the surrounding park landscape.

Salvation Army Cooling Station Support

Through the Parks for People permit program, The Salvation Army operated a weekly cooling station at Rouleauville Park, providing much-needed respite during the summer months. The station offered shade, water, basic medical care, and referrals to appropriate services. Over a ten-week period, 143 Calgarians received support, many of whom were experiencing homelessness.

School and Youth Programs

Demand for Parks and Open Spaces school programs continues to grow. Over the past year, participation increased by nearly 240 per cent compared to the previous year, resulting in the introduction of a waitlist due to sustained interest and program quality.

The Leadership Empowerment Achieving a Difference (LEAD) program also continued to expand, serving approximately 180 youth—up from 113 the previous year. In 2024, volunteer hours more than doubled compared to 2023, and nearly 50 per cent of participants earned their certificates, up from just 15 per cent. Registration for the current year opened on March 6 and reached full capacity within three weeks.

Community Trees: School Planting Program

Following a successful pilot with North Trail High School in 2024–2025, Parks and Open Spaces launched the Community Trees: School Planting Program. This year-long, curriculum-based initiative culminates in students planting a small-scale urban forest at their school.

The program fosters environmental stewardship while deepening students’ understanding of trees and Calgary’s urban canopy. The 2025–2026 program was fully subscribed, with five schools participating and more than 600 students engaged since the pilot began.

Volunteer Tree Plantings

During the planting season, Urban Forestry—supported by Activations and Education—partnered with dozens of volunteer groups to plant 5,000 trees across Calgary. As these trees mature, they will provide shade and cooling, improve air quality, reduce water runoff and soil erosion, support wildlife habitat, and contribute to improved mental well-being for Calgarians.

Parks and Open Spaces is grateful for the dedication of these volunteer groups and their ongoing contributions to growing and sustaining Calgary’s urban forest for the benefit of all.



Lions youth planting event location

2025 Progress Toward Target – Wellness



Research shows that being in a park space, regardless of the activity being engaged in, provides benefits to an individual’s mental, physical and social wellbeing.

Parks and Open Spaces have chosen to focus on months when snow is on the ground, as Calgarians may spend less time in parks during this period. Data indicates that this timeframe presents an opportunity to improve positive wellbeing outcomes for Calgarians.

Notable 2025 Projects

Concrete Curling Rocks

In collaboration with the Wave Tech Centre, Centre Operations designed and 3D-printed a concrete curling rock mould to create an affordable and replaceable alternative to traditional curling stones. The project supports natural ice curling and crokicurl rinks in Calgary parks, helping expand winter recreation opportunities in a cost effective way.

Following a successful proof of concept, the concrete curling rocks were piloted during the 2025 season at the new crokicurl rink in Barb Scott Park, demonstrating their suitability for public use.

Disc Golf Pilot Event on Prince’s Island Park

In fall 2025, Centre Operations partnered with the Calgary Disc Golf Club to host a pop up disc golf activation at Prince’s Island Park. The Disc Golf Club led City of Calgary Parks staff through a course design workshop, enabling the team to create a 10-hole layout tailored to the park.

The course was then used for a pilot community event, with registration fees collected as donations to the food bank. The activation attracted approximately 200 participants during the shoulder season, activated an underutilized area of the park, and provided valuable insight into the feasibility of establishing a seasonal disc golf course in the heart of Calgary.

New Year’s Eve Celebration at Prince’s Island Park

New Year’s Eve celebrations at Prince’s Island Park expanded to include Lot 59 near the Curling Club and sections of Memorial Drive, which was closed for the event. Programming featured a DJ at the lagoon to enhance the skating experience, family-friendly activities and art activations, fire pits, and food trucks.

The evening concluded with a fireworks display, which was accompanied by synchronized audio broadcast throughout the park and livestreamed online. Attendance exceeded 10,000 visitors—surpassing any other New Year’s Eve event over the past five years—and the fireworks livestream has since been viewed more than 46,000 times on YouTube.

Lot 6 Rebuild

To support the Downtown Strategy team, Parks and Open Spaces helped transform Lot 6, from primarily surface parking and limited green space, into a vibrant, year-round community hub. The project began with regrading the site and adding more than 100 yards of material to create suitable conditions for year-round activities, including a skating rink.

Once the foundational work was complete, the area was revitalized through hydro-seeding and targeted cultural practices to establish healthy, durable turf. The improved green space is now better equipped to host major events such as Taste of Calgary, as well as ongoing programming at River Hall. Parks and Open Spaces looks forward to continued collaboration with the Downtown Strategy team to further activate this important public space.

Pitch and Putt Disc Golf Course

The Canyon Meadows Community Association, in collaboration with Parks and Open Spaces teams from Waste Management, Infrastructure, and South Operations, launched a pilot Pitch and Putt Disc Golf Course in an underutilized park space previously used as a ball diamond. Inspired by a student-led project from the University of

Calgary, the initiative aims to activate the park during winter months while introducing residents to a new recreational activity.

By repurposing existing space and installing removable disc baskets, the project supports inclusive, low-cost recreation, encourages year-round outdoor activity, and strengthens partnerships between community organizations and City departments.

Prince's Island Park 2024–2025 Winter Season

After several years of reduced winter programming during the Jaipur Bridge construction, Prince's Island Park has been steadily restoring its popular cold weather amenities. Since 2023, Parks teams have worked to reintroduce the skating rink and expand winter experiences throughout the park.

The addition of crokicurl and the restored skating rink during the 2024–2025 season was highly successful, drawing strong public participation and inspiring opportunities for further enhancements. Looking ahead, the team is exploring options such as additional fire pits, skate rentals, expanded event programming, enhanced lighting, and a larger skating surface. Prince's Island Park continues to evolve as a vibrant winter destination for Calgarians.



Winter activation at Prince's Island Park

2025 Progress Toward Target – Reducing Barriers to Access



The intent of this indicator is to reduce barriers to accessing city parks and open spaces to improve the inclusivity of public spaces.

Notable 2025 Projects

All-Abilities Golf Tournament at Maple Ridge

Maple Ridge Golf Course proudly hosted the 2025 All Abilities Championship, celebrating inclusive sport and showcasing the skill and determination of golfers with diverse abilities. The tournament crowned two champions and reinforced Calgary's commitment to accessible, welcoming recreation opportunities for all.

Dementia-Inclusive Golf Programming

The *Fore the Love of Golf* pilot program explored the benefits of dementia-inclusive golf experiences. Developed in collaboration with community partners, the initiative offered thoughtfully tailored programming that supported cognitive health, social connection and physical activity for participants living with dementia.

Launch of the new Park System – Provision and Access Interactive Map

To support the newly launched Connect Parks Plan, the Business and Policy Planning team has been working with Corporate Analytics to produce an interactive set of maps that help planners and other interested parties better understand the distribution and accessibility of parks and open spaces across Calgary. Users can explore the full park system, including local and regional parks, natural areas and open spaces, see residential access by walking or driving, and view park provision by community and Local Area Plan (LAP).



Dementia-Inclusive Golf

West District's New Radio Park

Hundreds of people spent Saturday, September 20 exploring the newly opened Radio Park, located at 778 78 St. S.W. Designed as an urban living room for the West District community, the 8.4 acre park features the city's largest public slide, a playground, a fenced off-leash dog area, foggers, basketball courts, a storm pond, an amphitheatre and pathways, with winter skating also planned. The opening celebration included demonstrations by Calgary Wild FC and Calgary Surge, along with a dog show, magic show and bouncy castle.

Youth on Course Expansion

In partnership with Alberta Golf and Golf Canada, The City of Calgary expanded the Youth on Course program across all municipal golf courses. By providing affordable access and reducing financial barriers, the initiative significantly increased youth participation—from 5,000 in 2023 to more than 18,000 in 2025, and marked an important step toward making golf more inclusive and accessible for young Calgarians.



Radio Park

2025 Progress Toward Target – Experiences



Parks and Open Spaces 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 to ensure 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 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 2025 Projects

Downtown Washroom Attendant Program

In 2024, the Downtown Safety Leadership Table put forward 28 recommendations to support safety in Calgary’s downtown, including the provision of safe and clean public washrooms. In response, Parks and Open Spaces piloted several versions of a washroom attendant program and, by fall 2024, launched a model designed to best serve Calgarians using downtown park washrooms. In 2025, the program expanded to four locations operating seven days a week—Century Gardens, Central Memorial Park, Devonian Gardens and the Sunnyside Lift Station—with a fifth location at Riverhall/Lot 6 operating three days per week (Friday to Sunday). In August 2025, the program was further expanded to include services at the public washrooms in Cowboys Park.

Erlton Chinese Cemetery Revitalization Project

The Erlton Chinese Cemetery Revitalization Project, delivered in collaboration with Calgary’s Chinese community, supported the recognition and preservation of an important heritage site, honouring the legacy and contributions of the Chinese community in Calgary. The project included revitalizing monuments that had fallen into disrepair over several decades, installing Monogrid foundation stabilizers on impacted grave sites, and completing general turf and surface upgrades. Funded through the Parks and Playground Amenities (PAPA) Program, the work spanned seven cemetery blocks and 343 monuments, with 262 monuments repaired. Volunteers from Calgary’s Chinese community played a critical role, contributing hundreds of hours to gently clean monuments using eco-friendly methods and restore turf through loaming, seeding, fertilizing and watering. The project concluded with a Community Celebration in August 2025, recognizing volunteer contributions, sharing stories of cultural heritage and reaffirming the cemetery’s ongoing importance as a place of remembrance.

Forest Bathing Trail

Parks and Open Spaces was pleased to open the Forest Bathing Trail at Inglewood Bird Sanctuary—Calgary’s first forest bathing trail. Designed to support the well-being of residents and visitors, the self-guided experience invites users to engage in a sensory exploration of the sanctuary. The trail is certified by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy (ANFT), a global leader in forest therapy training and practice. Since implementation, the trail has been well received, with the sanctuary team noting a significant increase in visitor numbers.

Harvie Passage Safety Signage

Recognizing the need for clearer and more visible river safety information at Harvie Passage, Parks and Open Spaces worked with the Calgary Fire Department to develop messaging that better communicates how to stay safe while enjoying the passage. This messaging was used to create A-frame signage featuring simple, bullet-point safety information and visual design icons on one side, with more detailed guidance on the other. The signs include a short URL—calgary.ca/harviepassage—and a QR code linking to a new Parks and Open Spaces webpage dedicated to Harvie Passage. The webpage includes a Safety Information section with images of the signage to reinforce key messages for visitors.

Seasonal Water Station Program

In collaboration with the Calgary Emergency Management Agency and Water Services, Parks and Open Spaces’ Water Management group introduced seasonal water stations to six downtown and Beltline parks and green spaces in 2025 and 2026. Each station includes a drinking fountain, bottle filling station, pet water fountain and overhead misting feature to help keep people and pets cool and hydrated during warmer months. The teams worked together to select locations, with Water Services responsible for installing the hard infrastructure and Parks providing water service and ongoing operations and maintenance. Stations at Enoch Park and Sien Lok Park were fully installed and operational in 2025, with installations at Tomkins Park, Haultain Park, Century Gardens and the Bow River pathway at the west end of Prince’s Island Park planned for completion by spring 2026.

Shaganappi Bunker Renovations

Golf Operations moved forward with long anticipated bunker renovations at Shaganappi Point Golf Course, responding to valuable feedback received from golfers over several years. While the work caused short-term disruption, the improvements will deliver long-term benefits and a significantly enhanced playing experience.

The project includes:

- Reducing the overall bunker area to improve course conditions, lower maintenance costs and enhance visual appeal.
- Reconfiguring hazards to better challenge experienced golfers while maintaining an enjoyable and accessible course for players of all abilities.
- Regrading select green surrounds to introduce more short-cut turf, improving playability and variety around the greens.

2025 Progress Toward Target – Conservation and Ecosystem Resiliency



This indicator measures the ecological health of Calgary’s 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 2025 Projects

Aquatic Ecologist Support for Lagoon Ice Rinks

Urban Conservation’s Aquatic Ecologist supports the seasonal transformation of waterbodies at Bowness Park, Carburn Park, and Prince’s Island Park into natural ice rinks. These lagoons are carefully managed year-round to meet legislative requirements, protect aquatic habitats, and support safe, multi-season recreation. The Aquatic Ecologist coordinates fish rescue operations, oversees dewatering and refilling processes, liaises with regulators, and supports ice rink construction and maintenance. This work ensures that ecological health and public enjoyment can thrive together, even through the winter months.

Branching Out 2025

The Branching Out residential tree planting partnership program was a strong success again this year, with 5,000 trees finding new homes across Calgary. Resident interest was exceptionally high, with all trees claimed within minutes of registration opening in 2025. In response, Urban Forestry plans to significantly increase the number of trees available in 2026. The program’s continued success reflects close collaboration between Parks’ Urban Forestry and Activations & Education teams, with valuable support from The City’s Web, Communications, 311, and IT (Forms and Automation) teams.

Clover Leaf Meadow Project

The Clover Leaf Meadow Project is transforming four roadside areas at 16 Avenue and Barlow Trail N.E. into native prairie meadows. By replacing invasive species with native grasses, wildflowers, and shrubs, Parks and Open Spaces is creating a self-sustaining plant community that improves pollinator habitat and reduces long-term maintenance needs. Once established, these meadows will provide vibrant, seasonal landscapes for commuters while supporting Calgary’s broader naturalization goals.

Community Naturalization

Urban Conservation partnered with the Edgemont Community Association and Renert School to maintain and monitor naturalized grassland sites planted in Fall 2024. In Edgemont, community-led stewardship activities—including weed pulling, native shrub planting, and watering—helped restore a degraded natural area. At Renert School, students co-designed and implemented a pollinator-friendly planting plan, installed bee logs, and participated in ongoing site care. Together, these projects foster ecological literacy and strengthen community connections to the land.

Confederation Park Pilot Project

In 2025, Confederation Park piloted the use of native plants, felled logs, and dead hedges to increase biodiversity while reducing maintenance, water consumption, and the need for pesticides and fertilizers. Dead hedges—piles of logs, branches, and leaves held together by stakes—provide habitat and, over time, enrich the surrounding soil as they decompose. Mowing has also been reduced in the pilot area, allowing grasses to grow taller and transition into a naturalized meadow.

Mini Forest Pilot Project

Urban Conservation and Urban Forestry are testing the Miyawaki method, which clusters native trees and shrubs closely together to encourage rapid growth, deep root development, and the formation of a small forest ecosystem within a few years. Over the past three years, Parks has planted five sites and continues to monitor and maintain them. These mini forests help restore native ecosystems, increase biodiversity, and build climate resilience across the city.

Natural Area Protection Plan (NAPP)

The Natural Area Protection Plan (NAPP) is a checklist tool developed by Urban Conservation to help City business units assess and mitigate environmental impacts from small-scale construction projects in natural areas, such as pathway lifecycle work. NAPP provides a streamlined alternative to full Biophysical Impact Assessments for low-risk projects, ensuring environmental standards are met while supporting efficient project delivery. The tool supports a collaborative approach to identifying potential impacts, establishing mitigation measures, outlining restoration requirements, and confirming regulatory responsibilities.

Nose Hill Grazing Program

From August 12–27, Urban Conservation reintroduced goat grazing to the Rubbingstone Management Area of Nose Hill Park to support ecological restoration and wildfire risk reduction. The goats helped reduce invasive species such as Canada thistle and sow thistle, cycled nutrients, and tilled soil—mimicking the natural grazing patterns that once shaped Calgary’s grasslands. The program also generated strong public interest and educational engagement. Long-term monitoring plots were established to assess ecological outcomes and inform future grazing initiatives.

Trees for Residents of Coral Springs

Urban Forestry provided 200 trees to residents of Coral Springs to plant on private property as part of a pilot project to increase Calgary’s tree canopy on private land. The pilot is part of the Community Tree Ambassador Program, with Coral Springs selected due to its lower existing tree canopy and the opportunity for targeted investment. Urban Forestry plans to expand the program to additional communities, prioritizing a more equitable distribution of trees across Calgary.



Nose Hill Grazing Program



Branching Out residential tree planting program



Branching Out residential tree planting program

2025 Progress Toward Target – Sustainable Management



This indicator incorporates sustainable management into Parks’ work through the lens of the Triple Bottom Line framework. It is a systematic and integrated approach to decision making that considers a balance of economic, environmental, and social outcomes.

The target that is in development will align with the newly approved Service Accountability Approach and decision-making framework within the Corporate Strategic Plan Pillar of Operational Excellence. 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 2025 Projects

Celebrating Safety Excellence

On September 11, 2025, Parks and Open Spaces proudly hosted its first Parks Safety Recognition Event, celebrating the outstanding contributions of the Joint Workplace Safety and Health Committee members, Business Unit Safety Implementation Team members, and Green Guardians nominators and nominees. Their commitment to fostering a safe and healthy

workplace continues to make a meaningful impact across Parks. The event welcomed 138 Parks and Open Spaces employees from across the business unit and featured guest speaker Jolene Gust, who delivered a powerful and personal message highlighting how workplace safety extends beyond the job site to the people we care about most.



Parks Safety Awards

Digital Equipment Manual Library

Parks Operations Zone 7 has been developing and piloting a Digital Equipment Manual Library to provide staff with easy access to user manuals for equipment used across Parks Operations. The initiative focuses on downloading or digitizing existing manuals while identifying storage solutions that do not impact Parks Shared Drive limits. Early trials have been successful, and work is underway to identify next steps for expanding the program across Parks Operations.

Ralph Klein Park Storm Water Fill Station

Water Management launched a pilot project at Ralph Klein Park to convert a stormwater pond into a non-potable fill station for water trucks. This initiative supports water conservation efforts, particularly during spring and summer months when outdoor watering restrictions may be in place. Following the success of the pilot at Ralph Klein Park, additional locations are planned for conversion in 2026.

The Mowing Audit is Officially Complete

In 2024, Parks completed a comprehensive Mowing Audit that resulted in 10 action-item recommendations to improve mowing practices. Over the past year,



Mowing at Bowness Park

significant work has been undertaken to implement these recommendations and enhance service delivery. Improvements include establishing Standard Operating Procedures, refining Key Performance Indicators, and developing a mowing app to track, monitor, and report on operational goals. Together, these actions support improved mowing strategies, alignment with best business practices, and data-informed decision-making.

Urban Forestry Wood Waste Recycling Project

Urban Forestry generates significant volumes of live and dead woody material through routine pruning and tree removals. In Fall 2025, Urban Forestry partnered with the Calgary Zoo to redirect this material for reuse as browse and habitat enrichment for zoo animals, including herbivores such as giraffes. This partnership reduces unnecessary waste while delivering shared environmental benefits for both organizations.

Urban Forestry Takes Part in Stormwater Pond Sediment Soil Remediation Pilot Project

The City of Calgary operates more than 150 stormwater ponds, each requiring periodic sediment removal to maintain performance. Annually, sediment from 7–10 ponds is removed and typically disposed of in landfill. Through a pilot project, Urban Forestry used remediated pond sediment as a fabricated soil to improve conditions at a micro-forest planting site. This approach diverts material from landfill while supporting urban forest growth and soil health.

Water Saving Efforts

As stewards of water across Calgary's parks and green spaces, Parks and Open Spaces continues to pursue opportunities to improve water efficiency. In 2025, Parks reduced overall annual flower planting and increased the use of perennials, which require less water over time. Parks is also phasing out wire hanging baskets in favour of self-watering baskets, further improving water efficiency across the park system.

2025 Progress Toward Target – Best Practices



In 2021, the Yardstick annual benchmarking program was adopted by the City of Calgary’s Parks and Open Spaces.

This metric is the most comprehensive benchmarking tool for municipally operated parks and open spaces operations to track progress against best practice indicators on operational excellence, asset management and environmental sustainability and other municipalities of similar size.

Notable 2025 Projects

Green Flag Award

Parks and Open Spaces were incredibly pleased to have been awarded the first Green Flag Award in Canada.

Following an extensive judging process, Reader Rock Garden and Confederation Park were both awarded a Green Flag Award, an international accredited program that recognizes and rewards well managed parks and green spaces.

About our winning parks

Reader Rock Garden Historic Park is one of the city’s most unique cultural landscapes hosting thousands of different plant species and located in Calgary’s established community of Erlton. First created in 1913, its restoration has earned it an official designation as both a provincial and national historic resource.

Confederation Park was created in 1967 to mark the centennial of Canadian Confederation. This crescent shaped park of more than 160 hectares was once known as “the North Hill Coulee” and includes a wetland section and home to a host of aquatic wildlife and plant species. Confederation Park is also home to the nine hole Confederation Golf Course that is converted to over 7.5 kilometres of cross-country skiing trails over the winter months.

Collaborative Approach to Redesign and Improve Programs

Community Parks Initiatives, in collaboration with The Innovation Lab, hosted two sets of workshops with community groups, internal key audiences and Ward offices to gather ideas and provide insights on how to improve the Parks Special Tax Levy (STL) and Enhanced Landscape Maintenance (ELM) programs. Participants discussed current processes, provided recommendations for change, explored models for demonstrating community support, and imagined alternative ways to make community-driven improvements. This work produced a listening report and recommendations for next steps to consider in the process of improving and redesigning the ELM and STL programs.



Green Flag Award at Reader Rock Garden

2025 Progress Toward Target – Valuing External Partnerships



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

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

Notable 2025 Projects

Heidelberg Playfield Park

After several months of collaboration, Parks and Open Spaces finalized a renaming agreement that marks a significant milestone in the 25-year relationship with Heidelberg Materials Ltd. This formalized arrangement granted Heidelberg the opportunity to rename Inland Athletic Park under their new legal entity, resulting in the new official

name: Heidelberg Playfield Park. The agreement establishes a defined 5-year term, providing a framework for evaluating the sponsorship’s value at its conclusion. Should Heidelberg wish to renew, this opens the door to renegotiation and the potential for new revenue generation—ensuring the partnership continues to evolve and deliver mutual benefit.



Heidelberg Playfield Park

Siksika Board of Education – Learning About Parks

The Activations and Education team frequently partners with teachers to share information about City parks, programs, and ways to connect students with nature. While they often collaborate with Calgary’s school boards, they recently had the opportunity to deliver a customized session for the Siksika Board of Education.

During the session, teachers received a comprehensive presentation about Parks school programs, curriculum connections, and available resources. The day concluded with a guided walk through Ralph Klein Park (RKP).

The feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers were enthusiastic about spending time in the park, asked thoughtful questions, and captured photos to inspire future student visits. The team immediately received a request to host a school program at RKP, along with several requests for Nature Kits, which allow teachers to lead their own nature-based activities at RKP or in other city parks.



Siksika Board of Education – Learning About Parks

2025 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 is an employer of choice.

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

Notable 2025 Projects

Activations and Education Survey

Activations and Education conducted a survey among their staff about their work experience and received a 70 per cent response rate. Among respondents, 81 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that Activations and Education is a good place to work, 85 per cent reported having a good relationship with their supervisor, 89 per cent indicated strong relationships with coworkers, and 89 per cent felt the work environment is safe.

Centre City Goals and Priorities

To promote transparency and collaboration, the Centre City Operations management team developed a new priority workplan model in partnership with frontline leaders. Centre City Superintendents reviewed major risks, successes from 2024, and areas for improvement in 2025 to establish a clear set of operational priorities for Centre City Operations. This information was then shared with each foreman individually, allowing for discussion, adjustments, and additions to ensure alignment and clarity across all frontline leadership roles. Follow-up meetings were held throughout the season to review goals, priorities, and responsibilities, culminating in a final debrief at season's end.



Parks School

Parks and Open Spaces United Way Disc Golf Tournament

In support of United Way, Parks hosted its first United Way Disc Golf Tournament at Baker Park. The event engaged staff across all levels, from seasonal labourers to the Parks Acting Director in support of a meaningful cause while fostering connection in one of the city’s premier parks. The tournament raised just over \$600 in donations and is planned to return in 2026.

Parks School

On November 5, more than 400 Parks staff gathered at the Westin Hotel for the bi-annual Parks School—a full day dedicated to learning, connection, and reflection. The keynote, Elder Casey Eagle Speaker, delivered a heartfelt message reminding Parks staff of the importance of the work they do and the need to pause and reconnect with their peers. Throughout the day, over 35 presenters shared their knowledge and insights across a variety of learning sessions.



United Way Disc Golf Tournament – Baker Park

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 (p. 13–19). 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 spaces.

In progress

Initial work has begun, with guidelines targeted for completion by Q3 2026. Progress was delayed due to resource constraints, largely driven by extensive policy and program reviews that were higher-profile and politically prioritized.

Implement an open space acquisition and disposition strategy to manage land and service delivery more effectively.

Ongoing

Due to the most recent corporate realignment and recent updates to the land system, Parks and Open Spaces is no longer responsible for the acquisition/disposition of land. A list will be created by Parks and Open Spaces subject matter experts for consideration of park lands acquisition.

Develop guidelines to formalize a process to seek alternative sources of funding for initiatives and programming in parks and open spaces.

Ongoing

A sponsorship framework was approved by the Parks Management team in Q1 2026 with implementation to follow.





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.

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