



Recreation & Parks

2019/2020 REPORT CARD

SUMMARY

Each year, the City of St. Albert publishes a Recreation & Parks Report Card to update residents on the priorities set out in the [Recreation Master Plan \(RMP\)](#). St. Albert is an active community, and the Recreation Master Plan provides long-range vision for recreation in St. Albert.

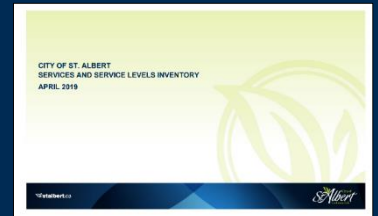
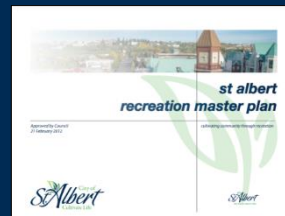
The priorities of this plan deliver recreation opportunities to residents of St. Albert that meet current and future needs, while achieving the community vision of creating quality of life through recreation. The RMP initiatives have been largely addressed; however, there are three areas still outstanding. These include the development of a partnership handbook, Servus Credit Union Place enhancements and Red Willow Park enhancements. This work will continue into 2021 and beyond.

As the services of Recreation & Parks were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, this Report Card compiles key projects and initiatives from both 2019 and 2020 to showcase the changing dynamic of services offered in these two years. The report card showcases new ways of delivering services as well as the ongoing response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite closures and utilization restrictions periodically being imposed on recreation service delivery, those services continued to be a high priority in the community and Recreation & Parks adapted, offering those services in new and innovative ways.

Utilization of existing recreation facilities and parks remained strong through 2019 and due to facility closures in 2020, access to outdoor recreation became an even more integral part of the community's well being.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT RECREATION & PARKS PHONE: 780-418-6063
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Other Reports that Help Tell Our Story



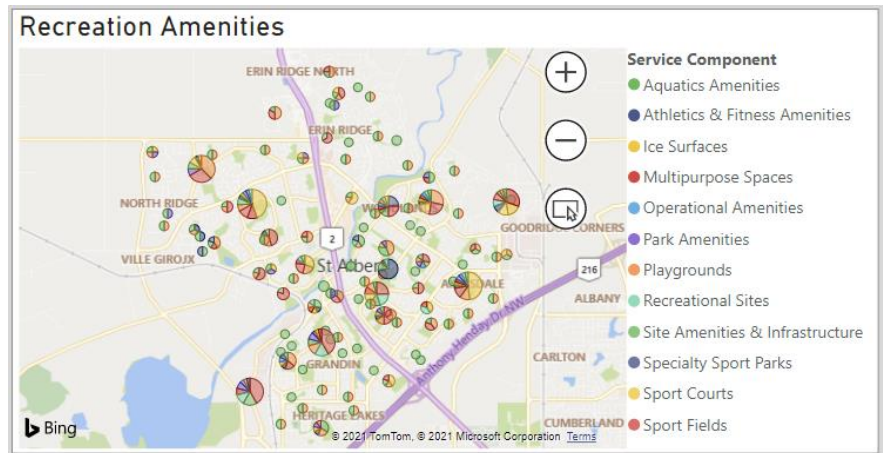
PRIORITY ONE: BUILDING

Recreation and Parks builds and maintains recreation facilities and parks to ensure longevity and meet community needs. The built environment supports St. Albert in building our community towards the future to sustain balanced development, with a reverent eye to the past. The Recreation & Parks department is responsible for parks and indoor and outdoor recreation and sport facilities.

TREND: PLANNING, INNOVATIVE GROWTH AND EFFICIENCIES

Progress Update

In 2019 and 2020, Recreation & Parks looked to the future of recreation facility and park development through planning and public engagement for several areas, including Riverside Park, Erin Ridge North Park, Lacombe Park West Park and the future community amenities site.

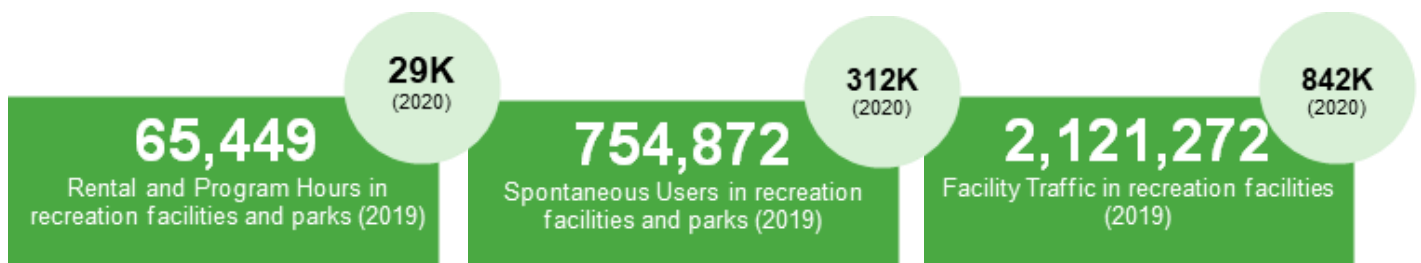


Recreation Facilities

2019 and 2020 provided many opportunities to seek innovation and capitalize on new efficiencies in facility operations. Safety is always the number one consideration for Recreation & Parks and COVID-19 introduced many changes to service delivery and operations. Recreation & Parks adapted the set up and traffic flow in facilities to provide safer, physically distanced experiences to users of aquatics. New standards for cleaning, service delivery and even how the facilities are scheduled allowed them to operate safely while aligning with **provincial public health measures**. Environment initiatives such as LED lighting and new pump systems in aquatics have lessened environmental impacts of operations and provided cost savings.

Additionally, from a facilities perspective, Akinsdale Arena was renamed the Jarome Iginla Arena in 2019, honouring a local hockey player who began his career in St. Albert. The re-naming ceremony was attended by 700 residents and media. In 2020, Jarome Iginla and Kinex Arenas were closed for four months to complete extensive building infrastructure work and facility enhancements, including the installation of new flooring and lighting enhancements, completing yet another RMP initiative.

In 2020, Range Road 260 was identified as the location for a future community amenities site. The site selection was an exciting first step towards a location for new recreation amenities in the community. Negotiations with the developer are underway, with community engagement on the site to begin in late 2021. Administration will continue to evaluate future enhancements to Servus Place as part of the overall recreation needs of the community, previously identified in the RMP and in "Servus Place: A Plan for the Future."



Parks

Many new parks were completed through 2019 and 2020, including Joyal Park, Coal Mine Park and Lachance Park, offering residents the opportunity to explore traditional elements like outdoor playgrounds, sports fields and green space as well as new elements, like a pollinator garden and a bike skills area.

From a planning perspective, parks are being looked at through a fresh lens with elements such as the Kingsmeade Park warming shelter for winter months, Grey Nuns White Spruce Park outdoor classrooms and nature investigation area, and firefighting-themed water splash features at Versailles Park.

Several RMP initiatives related to park development or enhancement were either moved forward or completed throughout 2019 and 2020, including work related to Red Willow Park, Riel Recreation Park and Woodlands Skatepark.

Public engagement was a priority for the ongoing work within the Red Willow Park West Master Plan update. Residents were consulted during an open house for the Grey Nuns White Spruce Park and provided feedback through an online survey, which was then developed into a detailed design for this park.

Construction on Riel Recreation Park was completed and provided improved park access and connectivity to the rest of the Red Willow Park Trail System. Also concluding in 2020 was the Riverside Park Master Plan Public Engagement, which used the new [Cultivate the Conversation](#) platform to garner engagement from 42 residents.

The Woodlands Skatepark was replaced with a new and enhanced skate experience in the same location. After extensive public engagement, this updated skate park was built to meet the needs of the community today and into the future by providing improved terrain and features that will cater to users of all ages and skill levels. Features of the expanded 14,000 square foot site include new skate bowl designs, street elements, benches and lighting.

50K
(2020)

168,343
Website hits (2019)



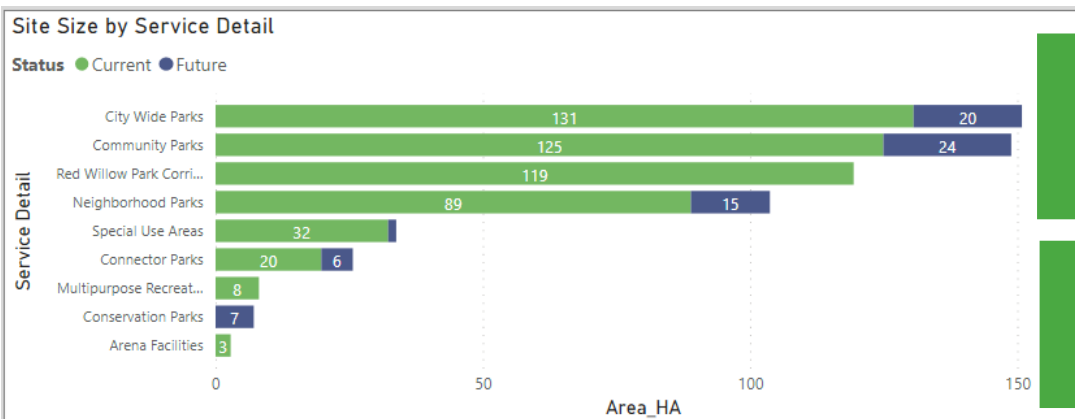
[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)
Grand Opening of Coal Mine Park



[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)
Grey Nuns White Spruce Park Planning



[CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE](#)
Woodlands Skatepark



526.9
Hectares of Rec
Facilities & Parks

73.5
(Future)

99.66
Km of Trails (2019)

105
(2020)

PRIORITY TWO: PARTNERING

Recreation and Parks partners with the community in the delivery of recreation to provide recreation opportunities and build community connectedness.

TREND: STONG LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS, GROWING REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

Progress Update

In 2020, technology was utilized in new ways through the livestreaming of hockey games in City arenas, as an alternative for spectators to view games from home. As well, community groups were offered an introductory workshop on social media, allowing them to learn how to promote their programs and services online.

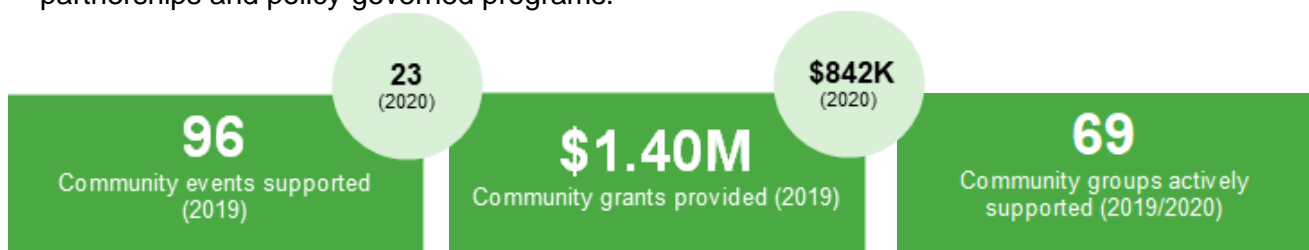
As identified in the RMP, a new City-wide fund development directive was approved, providing a cohesive corporate direction in the delivery of corporate fund development through advertising and sponsorship partnerships with the community.

Through COVID-19 closures, Recreation and Parks worked collaboratively with regional partners to seek out opportunities and insight, and to provide consistency and service alignment within the region. These partnerships remained in place throughout 2020 and will continue to be a resource for future service delivery. For example, a partnership with St. Albert Nordic Ski Club opened the door for the development of an expansion of the ski trail system from St. Albert into Sturgeon County. The City also continues to formally work through an Inter-municipal Collaborative Framework with the City of Edmonton to explore opportunities for joint recreation service delivery and planning.

Events continued as usual through 2019. Staff worked on and vetted event applications for larger scale sporting events at facilities. Staff also continually worked with sport partners as they drew high prestige events, like the John Reid Memorial AAA Bantam Hockey Tournament and St. Albert Ringette Association Turkey Ring Tournament, to the region. In 2020, events were heavily impacted by public gathering restrictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. A virtual Canada Day celebration took place in collaboration with municipalities around the Edmonton Metropolitan Region, which included a free concert series for residents to watch from the comfort of their own homes.

From a community group perspective, several developmental workshops were provided by Recreation & Parks, including one on Occupational Health & Safety and Strategic Planning, which was offered collaboratively with the Community Development Unit of the Government of Alberta and facilitated three local groups in the development of a strategic plan for their associations.

In 2019, work began on the development of a partnership handbook as identified in the RMP. The purpose of this handbook is to address not only relationships between the City and community groups, but also funding opportunities available to community groups through partnerships and policy-governed programs.



PRIORITY THREE: DELIVERING

Recreation and Parks directly delivers recreation programs, services, facilities and parks to foster community well being.

TREND: INNOVATION AND ADAPTATION

Progress Update

Over the last two years, Recreation & Parks has launched many new initiatives and delivered services in new ways.

A track lane membership offered residents who may not want access to all facility amenities an opportunity to take advantage of a cost-effective way to walk the track year-round. From a programming perspective, changes included high demand aquatic programs being offered at Landrex Water Play Centre, a reservation system for high demand fitness programs and the introduction of the Roaming Rec Crew who “roamed” the community, engaging residents to educate them about the City’s recreation services while offering fun program opportunities.

The fitness programming team partnered with the community to launch classes tailored to seniors. These included Minds in Motion®, in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Society of Alberta & Northwest Territories, Step Forward, a partnership with Alberta Health Services, and Prescription to Get Active, a partnership with the Primary Care Network.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic was a major catalyst in changing the ways in which services were offered, while still maintaining programming residents were familiar with and would enjoy.

Swimming lessons changed scope to ensure physical distancing and included significant testing and research to maintain a productive learning environment, while ensuring participant and instructor safety. New equipment to deliver programs was implemented - most notably teddy bears for the younger levels - to be used to teach and demonstrate swimming skills from a safe distance.

Virtual programming for drop-in and registered fitness classes launched at the end of 2020. The first nine classes, offered over three days, had an amazing opening response with an average of 27 participants per class. It is expected that offerings of virtual classes will remain strong until in person programming resumes without restriction.

Outdoor rinks opened earlier in 2020 than previous years, due to the shutdown of indoor facilities and redeployment of staff. Additionally, a new frezeway opened in Lions Park as another alternative for outdoor recreation during a time when individuals could not gather with anyone outside their household.

Online communication also increased to keep residents informed and engaged about the ever-evolving nature of programming throughout the pandemic. The department created reopening videos to walk users through the changes to facilities, sent consistent e-mails to community partners and program participants, and used social media more than ever to communicate with residents.

