

City of St. Albert Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines

Adopted November 2018, updated November 2023

This document was developed in partnership with McElhanney Consulting Services



Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
1.1 Purpose of the Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines	1
2. Foundations.....	2
3. Parks and Open Space Principles & Criteria.....	3
Principle 1: Quality of Life	3
Principle 2: Connectivity & Integration	4
Principle 3: Diversity & Inclusivity	5
Principle 4: Sustainability & Conservation.....	6
4. Parks and Open Space Classification.....	8
4.1 Purpose of the Parks & Open Space Classification	8
4.2 Parks & Open Space Classifications.....	8
4.3 Parks & Open Space Tables	8
5. Parks and Open Space Amenities	16
5.1 Purpose of Parks and Open Space Amenities	16
6. Evaluation.....	19
6.1 Evaluation Tools	19
Figure 1: Evaluation Tool for a Two-Tier Area Structure Plan	22
Figure 2: Evaluation Tool for a Single-Tier Area Structure Plan or Neighbourhood Plan	27
7. Definitions	34

1. INTRODUCTION

St. Albert residents cherish their parks and the City's network of parks is an essential community service that yields many benefits to individuals, families, the environment, and economy. To realize these benefits, the park system must be purposefully planned, and individual parks must be thoughtfully designed, constructed, and operated. To enable the development of a well-planned and designed park system, the City has Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines.

1.1 Purpose of the Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines

The Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines are intended to provide a clear, modernized and principle-focused approach to parks planning and design at both the Area Structure Plan and Neighbourhood Plan. This document replaces the 1994 City of St. Albert Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines and provides a strong guide to enable the City, developers, partners, and stakeholders to design and build parks that meet the present and future needs of the community.

The *Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines* are comprised of 4 key components:

Parks and Open Space Principles & Criteria

Parks and Open Space Principles & Criteria provide the framework and the action items for designing parks in alignment with the principles and policies of the Municipal Development Plan. The evaluation of parks and open space system in a single-tier Area Structure Plan, two-tier Area Structure Plan, and Neighbourhood Plan, are directly aligned with the Principles and Criteria.

Parks and Open Space Classifications

The Parks and Open Space Classifications provides direction on the types of parks to be included in a single-tier Area Structure Plan, two-tier Area Structure Plan, and Neighbourhood Plan to provide a well-balanced, cohesive parks and open space system.

Parks Amenities

The Parks Amenities provides direction on the park amenities (or components) to be provided with each park. The amenities are defined by park classification and identified as:

- Standard for Park Classification
- Optional for Park Classification
- Incompatible with Park Classification

Evaluation

A comprehensive evaluation tool helps the City to determine how well a single-tier Area Structure Plan, two-tier Area Structure Plan, and Neighbourhood Plan, meet the City's Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines.

2. FOUNDATIONS

The City's park system is planned, designed, constructed, and operated in alignment with the City's statutory and non-statutory plans and policies. Any new parks must adhere to the vision, policies, and regulations of the following statutory and non-statutory plans:

- The City's **Municipal Development Plan (MDP), *Flourish***, directs the City to maintain and develop a city-wide integrated system of schools, parks, open space, culture, recreation, and library facilities, which enhances the quality of life for all residents and helps preserve the natural environment.
- The **City of St. Albert Land Use (LUB)** provides the regulatory direction for the use and development of land for the City, including parks.
- The **Area Structure (Single-tier) & Redevelopment Plans, and Redevelopment Sites: Technical Report Terms of Reference** details the application requirements for Area Structure Plans approved in 2021 or earlier (referenced in this document as single-tier ASP), Area Redevelopment Plan or an amendment to an existing Plan including requirements for parks.
- The **Area Structure Plan & Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference** details the application requirements for the two-tier policy structure for Area Structure Plans approved in 2022 and onward (referenced in this document as two-tier ASP), and Neighbourhood Plans (NP). The two-tier ASPs are areas of approximately 256 hectares, and NP are areas of approximately 64 hectares.
- The **City of St. Albert Municipal Engineering and Landscape Standards** provides the standards for the design of municipal infrastructure including landscape design guidelines, drawing standards, park amenities, pathways and trails, plantings, storm water management and maintenance.
- The **City of St. Albert Recreation Master Plan** is a non-statutory 'road map' that guides recreation development in the City.
- The **City of St. Albert Environmental Master Plan** provides strategic direction for environmental performance including a framework for environmental objectives and targets.
- The **City of St. Albert Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan** identifies the City's important natural areas, provides the tools for conserving natural areas as well as the principles and objectives of managing natural areas.



3. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE PRINCIPLES & CRITERIA

Aligned with the City's Municipal Development Plan and policy direction from MDP Section 5: Green Environment, and MDP Section 11: Community Well-being, along with best practices from the recreation and parks sector, the following Parks and Open Space Principles and Criteria are to be used to guide the design of a new park system. The rationale for each principle is provided and specific planning criteria are described on which evaluation of the proposed park system will occur. When effectively applied, the Principles and Criteria will ensure the new park system will deliver on the City's vision.

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE includes all parks and / or open space associated with a defined classification (see Section 4).

PARK PLANNING PRINCIPLES are concepts that guide decisions about the configuration of the park system and the design of individual park sites.

PARK PLANNING CRITERIA outlines the specific planning direction that will be evaluated for each principle.

Principle 1: Quality of Life

Rationale: Parks and open space are essential to making St. Albert an attractive place to live and work. Parks and open space offer opportunities for the City and neighbourhoods to support social cohesion and celebrate the City's uniqueness. To do so, the Parks and Open Space system is planned to address known recreation and conservation priorities, needs and desires of the community, and to provide deliberate opportunities for residents to enhance their health and wellness.

Criteria: Community Needs & Trends

Parks and open spaces are planned and designed to address known community needs, as determined through available needs assessments, market research, city policies and city staff knowledge, and to reflect the contemporary trends in the parks and recreation sector.

Criteria: Health & Wellness

Parks and open spaces are sited to and include amenities that support and enhance physical and mental well-being.

Criteria: Social Interaction

Parks and open spaces are sited and designed to be a central focal point within neighbourhoods that enable community gathering and support social cohesion. Parks and open spaces contain amenities that enable social interaction and the opportunity for people to gather or share experiences.

Criteria: Character & Identity

Themes, amenities, and programming that reflect the distinct character of the City and the neighbourhoods are coordinated and integrated into the design of the park, amenities and

infrastructure to ensure aesthetic continuity and consistency with the development. The City's brand as a "Botanical Arts City" is reflected in park designs.

Criteria: *Safety*

Safety is provided by universal access design which aims to eliminate physical barriers. In addition, user safety and security will be enhanced by incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles into the parks and open space siting and design and through best practises.

Criteria: *Visual Aesthetics*

Parks and open spaces are designed and arranged to protect the scenic quality of the City and the visual and spatial relationships of the surrounding neighbourhood context.

Principle 2: Connectivity & Integration

Rationale: To ensure the City's park system can be enjoyed by all residents, the Parks and Open Space system needs to be easily accessible, conveniently and compatibly sited, inviting, and visually and physically integrated with the community and to each other.

Criteria: *Access*

From their home, every resident will be within a 400-metre unobstructed (high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk.

Criteria: *Active Transportation Integration*

Each park and / or open space is fully connected to and integrated with the City's public and active transportation network.

Criteria: *Inviting*

Parks and open spaces front onto the street with unobstructed visibility to be clearly welcoming and meet the minimum street frontage indicated in the Parks and Open Space classifications.

Criteria: *Compatibility*

Parks and open spaces are sited and designed to maximize compatibility and minimize conflicts with adjacent non-park land uses and between recreation uses within each park.

Criteria: *Wayfinding*

Cohesive wayfinding and spatial awareness are incorporated to identify landmarks and gateways, and to support easy orientation and route finding within and between parks and other destinations in the City; thereby, enhancing the user experience; promoting safety and security, and opportunities for learning.



Principle 3: Diversity & Inclusivity

Rationale: Recreation demands are diverse, and no single park can meet the full range of opportunities desired by city residents. It is key that the broadest range of people are able to equitably access parks and open spaces, increasing social integration. To meet resident's needs, deliberate attention needs to be given to ensuring the network offers a diversity of year-round opportunities that are desirable and available to all members of the community.

Criteria: *Functionality*

The land identified for a given park classification will facilitate the function as described in the Park Classifications (Section 4); shape of the park, topography and soil conditions are key to the functionality of the park.

Criteria: *Demographics*

Parks and open spaces are planned to meet the current and anticipated demographic needs of the community which include age, gender, and ethnic background.

Criteria: *Diversity*

Parks and open spaces are planned to include a diversity of park classifications and amenities as identified in Table 1: Parks and Open Space Amenities (Section 5).

Criteria: *Four Season Design*

Parks and open spaces are designed to embrace the winter season, making the most of opportunities to capture the sun and protecting from the wind as well as the inclusion of amenities which provide opportunities for four season use.

Criteria: *Universal Design*

In alignment with the park classification, parks and open spaces are designed, to the extent practical, to be universally accessible to support inclusivity. Park design should align with the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the province of Alberta barrier free design requirements.



Principle 4: Sustainability & Conservation

Rationale: To ensure future generations enjoy the Parks and Open Space system, sustainability of the parks and natural ecosystems must be considered. The City's Parks and Open Space system needs to be planned to protect its highest priority natural areas and to integrate ecological systems and green infrastructure in park design and operations. Alignment must occur with the current City of St. Albert Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan.

Criteria: *Conservation*

Parks and Open Space system is sited, planned, designed, and operated to protect and conserve high priority natural and sensitive areas and maintain or enhance natural ecosystem processes and wildlife habitat.

Criteria: *Landscape Connectivity*

The network of parks and open spaces should be planned and sited to maintain landscape connectivity throughout the City and to surrounding regional corridors, parks, open spaces, natural areas, environmentally significant areas, and protected areas. Wildlife corridors must be taken into account.

Criteria: *Ecological Design & Green Infrastructure*

Parks and open spaces incorporate ecological design and low impact development practices (e.g., stormwater management, rainwater harvesting, alternative energy use) during siting, design, construction, and operations.

Criteria: *Flexibility & Adaptability*

Parks and open spaces are designed to be flexible and adaptable to accommodate changing demands, trends, and innovations in park use and recreation.

Criteria: *Sustainable Funding & Resources*

Parks and open spaces are planned and designed to achieve operational efficiencies for the City through the integration of ecological design and the use of quality materials and construction practices.



4. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE CLASSIFICATION

4.1 Purpose of the Parks & Open Space Classification

The City's Parks and Open Space system is diverse and serves multiple functions. Some provide active recreation opportunities that elevate individual health or serve as places to gather and celebrate. Others protect environmentally significant areas and wildlife habitat and allow natural processes such as flooding and pollination to occur. While other parks and open spaces provide quiet contemplative places that improve residents' mental well being and provide opportunities to appreciate the City's natural and cultural heritage. Collectively, the system of parks and open space sites combine to deliver the outcomes that have been set for the City's Parks and Open Space system.

Deliberate planning can create a great parks and open space system. Clear design direction is required to ensure that each individual site plays a purposeful role in the City-wide system. Planning and design direction begin with a clear Parks and Open Space Classification system. A classification system is a useful tool to clearly articulate the desires and requirements the City has regarding the provision of parks and open spaces for its residents.

The purpose of the Parks and Open Space Classification is to:

- Clearly define the intended purpose(s) and uses of each park and open space.
- Ensure the Parks and Open Space system is consistently and effectively supplied and configured to provide a deliberate spectrum of opportunities across the city.
- Ensure the Parks and Open Space system is functional and accessible.
- Provide general design guidance and requirements for each class of park and open space.
- Enable developers and the City to evaluate how well the proposed Parks and Open Space system meet City requirements.

4.2 Parks & Open Space Classifications

Seven classes of parks and open space will be applied throughout the City:

- Conservation Park
- City Park
- Community Park
- Neighbourhood Park
- Urban Square / Plaza
- Special Use Area
- Connector Park

4.3 Parks & Open Space Tables

The following tables present the purpose of each park class as well as clear siting and design direction that is to be applied during park system planning.

CONSERVATION PARK

PURPOSE	To conserve environmentally sensitive areas and natural areas (as identified in the Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan). Conservation Parks are natural areas of land and / or water that are dominated by native ecosystems and vegetation in naturally occurring patterns. Conservation Parks may provide appropriate low-impact and low-density outdoor recreation opportunities and serve as physical connections throughout the City where these uses will not unacceptably compromise the site's environmental values and habitat connectivity.
----------------	--

PRIMARY FUNCTION	Conservation. Passive recreation.
-------------------------	--------------------------------------

SIZE	Variable – dependent on the conservation values the site is intended to protect.
-------------	--

LOCATION	Areas of high conservation value as identified in the City's Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan. Conservation Parks are identified at the single-tier ASP, two-tier ASP, and NP.
-----------------	--

STREET FRONTAGE	Recommend 15% but may be affected by site constraints.
------------------------	--

ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk. Minimum one access point – where compatible with conservation values.
--------------------------------	--

UNIVERSAL DESIGN	Desired. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements.
-------------------------	--

EXAMPLES

- Grey Nuns White Spruce Park
- Coal Mine Park

CITY PARK	
PURPOSE	A major multi-purpose destination for structured and unstructured recreation, social gathering and community events that attracts residents from across the City and motivates people from the Edmonton Metropolitan Region to visit the City. City Parks are focused on providing unique recreation opportunities and contain features that are not found in Community or Neighbourhood Parks.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Major city-wide / regional special events & city gatherings. Active structured and unstructured recreation. Competition quality outdoor sport.
SIZE	5 hectares or greater.
LOCATION	Located along crosstown and connector roads, near major intersections with safe and practical road crossings and are accessible by various modes of transportation. City Parks are identified at the single-tier ASP, two-tier ASP, and NP.
STREET FRONTAGE	Minimum 30%.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk. Minimum two access points into park.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	High priority for park amenities to be designed to be universally accessible. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements.
EXAMPLES	
• Red Willow Park • Lions Park • Kingswood Park • Lacombe Lake Park	

COMMUNITY PARK	
PURPOSE	Provide structured recreation amenities not available in City Parks or Neighbourhood Parks such as ball diamonds, outdoor rinks, sport fields, tennis courts, etc., either in association with a designated school site, or on its own. Additional unstructured spaces may be considered.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Active structured recreation. Minimum one Community Park with a school site(s) as per single-tier ASP terms of reference requirements. Under the two-tier ASP and NP framework, at least one school site (non-high school) is anticipated for every 64 hectares (NP), and one high school site is anticipated for each ASP. Each non-high school site must have an adjacent Community Park of a minimum of 2 hectares. Each high school site must have an adjacent Community Park. The size of the school site and size of the Community Park will be at the discretion of the City.
SIZE	2 - 5 hectares.
LOCATION	Located along neighbourhood roads with safe and practical road crossings. Community Parks are identified at the single-tier ASP, two-tier ASP, and NP.
STREET FRONTAGE	Minimum 30%.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk. Minimum two access points into park.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	Desired. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements.
EXAMPLES	
- Flagstone Park - Deer Ridge Park - Willoughby Park - Alpine Park - Natalia Park	

NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK	
PURPOSE	The outdoor recreation focal point of a neighbourhood, Neighbourhood Parks provide unstructured active and passive recreation opportunities for a variety of ages that aim to meet the interests of residents in the neighbourhood.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Passive unstructured recreation. Active unstructured recreation.
SIZE	0.5 - 2 hectares.
LOCATION	Distributed appropriately throughout the neighbourhood and adjacent to a local or neighbourhood road. Neighbourhood Parks are identified at the single-tier ASP and NP.
STREET FRONTAGE	Minimum 30%.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk. Minimum one access point into park.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	Desired. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements.
EXAMPLES	
• Delage Park • Naples Park • Gordon Park • Lafleur Park	

URBAN SQUARE / PLAZA	
PURPOSE	Urban Squares / Plazas are flexible spaces that provide opportunity for community gathering, civic events, and social interactions. They contribute to the character, vibrancy and livability of higher density mixed use and commercial areas.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Community and civic gatherings. Events providing social interaction. Urban squares generally encompass hardscaped surfaces and therefore create higher construction and maintenance costs. To ensure financial sustainability and adequate green space within the entire ASP park system, the number of urban squares will be limited.
SIZE	0.1 - 1 hectares.
LOCATION	Located in the single-tier ASP and NP within higher density mixed use areas. These spaces are highly visible with significant frontage along local or neighbourhood roads, are inviting to the general public, and are accessible by various modes of transportation. Urban Squares / Plazas shall be identified at the single-tier ASP and NP. Urban Squares / Plazas are identified at the two-tier ASP, if being considered.
STREET FRONTAGE	Minimum 50%.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	High priority for park amenities to be designed to be universally accessible. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements
EXAMPLES	
St. Albert Place Plaza	

SPECIAL USE AREA	
PURPOSE	A Special Use Area provides specialized and often single-purpose recreational opportunities. They are designed for a particular use such as BMX parks, mountain bike skills parks, skate parks, or specialty gardens. Special Use Areas are owned by the City, but can be operated and managed through a lease or license to a non-profit organization(s) who wish to provide recreational opportunities.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Specialized structured and unstructured recreation opportunities.
SECONDARY FUNCTION	N/A
SIZE	Dependant on the needs of the activity(s) to be provided.
LOCATION	Varies. Special Use Areas are identified at single-tier ASP and NP.
STREET FRONTAGE	Varies. Minimum of one access to a public roadway.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	Access to the park may or may not be restricted in accordance with stated hours of operation. Connectivity will vary. However, efforts should be made to ensure the park is connected to the City pathway and trail system, and located close to City transit stops and the active transportation network.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	Desired, but will be dependant on the activity provided at the park.
EXAMPLES	
• Woodlands Skatepark (City operated) • Woodlands Water Play Park (City operated) • St. Albert BMX in Riel Recreation Area (Leased) • Fowler Athletic Park (City operated)	

CONNECTOR PARK	
PURPOSE	Connector Parks provide physical connections and access to and between neighbourhoods, parks, shopping areas, roads, and other destinations in the City. Connector Parks are primarily pathways and trails with some associated open space and park amenities such as small seating areas or landscaping. In some cases, Connector Parks may occur along PULs (including SWMF) and will be designed and managed to ensure the original intent of the PUL is maintained.
PRIMARY FUNCTION	Provide physical connection and access.
SIZE	Varies. Minimum width of 20 metres for Municipal Reserve parcels.
LOCATION	Varies. Connector Parks are identified at the single-tier ASP and NP.
STREET FRONTAGE	Varies.
ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY	From their home, every resident must be within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space. This is an estimated 5-minute walk.
UNIVERSAL DESIGN	Desired. Refer to the City's adopted accessibility standards in alignment with the provincial barrier free design requirements.
EXAMPLES	
• Public Utility Lots (PUL) • Trails along Storm Water Management Facilities • Municipal Reserve	

5. PARKS AND OPEN SPACE AMENITIES

5.1 Purpose of Parks and Open Space Amenities

Park amenities facilitate quality park-based recreation experiences and enhance the comfort and convenience for park users. The City is working to ensure residents have access to a diversity of park-based experiences. Providing diversity is achieved, in part, but ensuring a diversity of park amenities are available to residents. **Table 1** illustrates which park amenities are most common in each park classification. Not all amenities are required, or even desired, in each park classification. As such, **Table 1** also illustrates whether those amenities are standard, optional, or incompatible with each park classification.

The list of amenities below is not exhaustive. Though the list includes the most common amenities, the City recognizes that some amenities may not have been included and that as technology and activities evolve, new amenities will emerge.



Table 1: Parks and Open Space Amenities

■ Incompatible - would not be considered ■ Optional - could be considered ■ Standard for Park - located in every park PARK CLASSIFICATION	Conservation Park	City Park	Community Park	Neighbourhood Park	Urban Space / Plaza	Special Use Area	Connector Park
AMENITIES							
Aquatics							
Outdoor Leisure Pool							
Outdoor Spray Park							
Spray / Water Feature							
Ice Surfaces							
Outdoor Rink							
Social Ice Surface							
Park Signage							
Identification Sign							
Information Sign							
Site Furnishings							
BBQ Pit / Fire Pit							
Bike Racks							
Picnic Tables							
Shelters							
Clubhouse							
Pavilion							
Picnic Shelters							
Shade Shelters							
Sport Courts							
Basketball Court							
Beach Volleyball							
Small Unstructured Courts (e.g., bocce ball, horseshoe pit, etc.)							
Tarmac Area							
Tennis Court							

Incompatible - would not be considered Optional - could be considered Standard for Park - located in every park PARK CLASSIFICATION	Conservation Park	City Park	Community Park	Neighbourhood Park	Urban Space / Plaza	Special Use Area	Connector Park
Washrooms							
Full-Service Washroom							
Portable Washroom							
Other							
Amphitheatre							
Cross Country Ski Trails							
Dog Designated Area - Fenced							
Multi-Purpose Rectangular Field / Sport Field							
Mountain Bike							
Off-leash Dog Area - Non-Fenced							
Outdoor Fitness Equipment							
Playground							
Skateboarding / Inline							
Sliding Hill							
Parking Lot							
Servicing Requirements							
Water							
Sanitary							
Stormwater							
Power							
Gas							
Telecommunications							

The list of amenities above is not exhaustive. Though the list includes the most common amenities, the City recognizes that some amenities may not have been included and that as technology and activities evolve, new amenities will emerge. The City will work to maintain this list of amenities with feedback from developers and stakeholders.

As per the Municipal Engineering Standards, developers are required to install, at minimum, benches, and garbage cans within a park.

6. EVALUATION

The planning and design of Parks and Open Space system will be evaluated objectively and consistently against the Principles and Criteria presented in Section 3. This principles-based evaluation will foster a collaborative planning process that encourages the City and the development community to undertake excellent park and open space planning and design.

6.1 Evaluation Tools

Park and open space content provided in two-tier Area Structure Plan (ASP), single-tier ASP, and Neighbourhood Plan (NP) will be assessed through the appropriate evaluation tool. The tool is an objective and consistent means of assessing how well a proposed park system meets the standards and guidelines. Since different levels of details on Municipal Reserve is needed for the review of two-tier ASPs, single-tier ASPs, and NPs, choose the appropriate evaluation tool.

The following categories are used to assess each criterion:

- **Meets Expectations:** Plan meets expectations for that criteria and does not require any revisions.
- **Needs Improvement:** Plan does not meet the expectation for that criteria and needs revisions.
- **Not Applicable:** Due to specific circumstances the criteria are not applicable for this plan, or the criteria cannot be met. Example:
 - *Criteria: Flexibility and adaptability may not be appropriate for a Conservation Park.*

6.1.1 Evaluation Process for Two-Tier Area Structure Plan

1. Pre-application meeting to discuss park planning.
2. Applicant to provide the following in two-tier ASP submission, as AutoCAD, PDF, and paper:
 - Identify Conservation Park(s), City Park(s), Community Park(s), and Community Park with school site(s).
 - Conservation Park parcel size.
 - Municipal Reserve parcel size for the identified City Park(s), Community Park(s), and Community Park with school site(s).
 - Percentage of Municipal Reserve (MR) to be added at the Neighbourhood Plan stage to achieve a minimum of 10% MR dedication.
 - Street classification, as per the Complete Streets Guidelines and Implementation Strategy.
 - Proposed policy statements that are relevant to provision of parks and open spaces.
 - Reference the sections of the studies provided with the ASP application, to outline the reasons for that park classification. If the ASP was written by the applicant, reference the park policy section of the ASP.
 - PDF of the Parks Map(s) to scale, with scalable bar, labeled park types, park sizes.

3. Using the Evaluation Tool, **Figure 1**, applicant completes the comments section and provides a short explanation of how the plan meets the specific criteria. The completed Evaluation Tool is submitted as part of the two-tier ASP application.
4. City reviews and provides comments through the two-tier ASP review process.

Note: Although not directly evaluated at the two-tier ASP stage, the Neighbourhood Plans within the two-tier ASP must conform to the criteria in this document, including, but not limited to:

- All residences must be within a 400-metre unobstructed walk (free from any high traffic road, railway line, fence, or other barriers) to parks and/or open spaces.
- All parks must meet the minimum street frontage requirement appropriate to the Parks and Open Space Classification.
- Active transportation network must be considered within a Neighbourhood Plan with connections to the parks within the neighbourhood and connections to adjacent neighbourhood(s).
- Connection to the Red Willow Trail System should be enabled wherever possible.

6.1.2 Evaluation Process for Single-Tier Area Structure Plan or Neighbourhood Plan

1. Pre-application meeting to discuss park planning.
2. Applicant to provide the following in single-tier ASP or NP submission, as AutoCAD, PDF, and paper:
 - Identify every park and the park's classification.
 - Identify Municipal Reserve parcels with 'MR'.
 - Municipal Reserve parcel size (all Parks must be 0.5 ha or larger, unless intended as a Conservation Park, Special Use Area, or Urban Square/Plaza) suitable for park development and programming.
 - Width of Connector Parks (minimum 20 m).
 - Active transportation design connections within single-tier ASP or NP, which includes connections within the Plan area, connections to adjacent neighbourhoods, and connection to the Red Willow Trail System, where possible.
 - Percentage of street frontage must be met for each Park Classification.
 - Street classification, based on the Complete Streets Guidelines and Implementation Strategy.
 - All residences must be within a 400-metre unobstructed walk to parks and/or open spaces.
 - Reference the sections of the studies provided with the single-tier ASP or NP application, to outline the reasons for that park classification. If the single-tier ASP or NP was written by the applicant, reference the park policy section of the single-tier ASP or NP.
 - Park configuration, space, access, and connectivity are proposed with thoughtfulness for the park's future design.

- PDF of the Parks Map(s) to scale, with scalable bar; label – park type, size of park, park dimensions, MR designation, and percentage of street frontage.
3. Using the Evaluation Tool, **Figure 2**, applicant completes the comments section and provides a short explanation of how the Plan meets the specific criteria. The completed Evaluation Tool is submitted as part of the single-tier ASP or NP application.
 4. City reviews and provides comments through the single-tier ASP or NP review process.

FIGURE 1: EVALUATION TOOL FOR A TWO-TIER AREA STRUCTURE PLAN

Evaluation – Two-Tier ASP				
Name of Two-Tier Area Structure Plan:				
CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	COMMENTS	CITY ADMINISTRATION ONLY	
			QUALIFICATION	COMMENTS
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY OF LIFE				
Community Needs and Trends	Has information been provided on how the Parks and Open Space system responds to city policies and known city needs? Do the proposed parks and open spaces adequately address city policies and known city needs? Provide proposed ASP policy statements for parks and open space planning.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Social Interaction	Are the proposed parks and open spaces located in a way that future Neighbourhood Plans within this two-tier ASP have parks and open spaces? Are there policies for parks and open spaces to be appropriate focal points in Neighbourhood		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Two-Tier ASP				
	Plans to enable social interaction?			
Character and Identity	Based on the proposed parks classification, what policies will enable those parks classification? What consideration have been given for park themes, amenities, and programming to reflect the distinct character of the anticipated neighbourhoods within the ASP and the relationship the City has a whole?			
Visual Aesthetics	How are the proposed parks and open spaces arranged to protect the scenic quality of the surrounding area?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 2: CONNECTIVITY & INTEGRATION				
Access	What are the policies within the two-tier ASP that supports locating a park or open space within a 400-metre unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space, at the Neighbourhood Plan stage?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Two-Tier ASP

Active Transportation Integration	For future Neighbourhood Plans within the two-tier ASP, what policies support that each park and open space is fully integrated with the public and active transportation network? What policies will provide for connectivity to parks within future NPs, to adjacent neighbourhoods, and to the Red Willow Trail System? What policies provide required road frontage to the various Park Classifications?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Compatibility	Consider proximity to medium and high density housing, park classification and compatibility with non-residential uses. Are the proposed parks sited to maximize compatibility and minimize conflicts with adjacent non-park land uses? Example: A neighbourhood park may not be appropriate in a proposed industrial area.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 3: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION				
Functionality	Is the configuration and size of the park conducive to future siting of amenities?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Two-Tier ASP				
	Example: Does the quality of the land, the shape and or size, limit options for amenities or placement of amenities?			
Diversity	Does the two-tier ASP include city park(s), community park(s), and community park/school site(s) including space for a high school? How many parks are there, and what is the anticipated park classification for each park?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Universal Design	What policies are there that support universal design principles in the development of parks and open spaces?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 4: SUSTAINABILITY & CONSERVATION				
Conservation	Are the proposed parks and open spaces planned, designed, and operated to protect and conserve the City's natural areas and wildlife habitat?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Landscape Connectivity	Does the network of parks and open spaces create and/or maintain landscape connectivity to surrounding regional corridors, parks, open spaces,		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Two-Tier ASP				
	environmentally significant areas, or protected areas?			
Ecological Design & Green Infrastructure	Discuss the general locations of proposed stormwater management facilities. What green initiatives may be considered for stormwater management, rain harvesting, or alternative energy use?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

	Completed By:	Reviewed By:
	Name (Print)	Name (Print)
	Signature	Signature
	Organization	Position
	Date	Date

FIGURE 2: EVALUATION TOOL FOR A SINGLE-TIER AREA STRUCTURE PLAN OR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan				
Name of Single-Tier Area Structure Plan or Neighbourhood Plan:				
Name of the Two-Tier ASP the NP is Within:				
CRITERIA	EVALUATION QUESTIONS	COMMENTS	CITY ADMINISTRATION ONLY	
			QUALIFICATION	COMMENTS
PRINCIPLE 1: QUALITY OF LIFE				
Community Needs and Trends	Has information been provided on how the Parks and Open Space system responds to market research; city policies and known city needs? Do the proposed parks and open spaces adequately address the market research, city policies and known city needs?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Social Interaction	Are the proposed parks and open spaces sited in a location with an appropriate focal point in the neighbourhood? Examples: Urban Square is located within high use area.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan

	No enclosed parks.			
Safety	Are parks and open spaces adequately incorporating Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles? Examples: - Minimum width of Connector Park(s) is met. - Minimum street frontage is met. Please note that MR parcels adjacent to SWMF pose a safety risk and are discouraged.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 2: CONNECTIVITY & INTEGRATION				
Access	From their home, every resident must be within 400-metre or 5-minute unobstructed (free from any high traffic road, rail line, fence, or other barriers) walk on the active transportation network to a park or open space.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Active Transportation Integration	Is each park and open space fully integrated with the public and active transportation network?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan

	How do trails connect to adjacent neighbourhoods, and existing and proposed trails? What is the connection to the Red Willow Trail System? Confirm that street frontages, as identified for each Park Classification, is met. Example: Do any trails lead to dead ends or are there any gaps in the trail system?			
Compatibility	Are parks and open spaces adequately sited and designed to maximize compatibility with adjacent non-park land uses? Are the proposed parks and open space amenities compatible with each other or will they lead to potential conflict between uses within each park? Examples of potential compatibility: • Urban Square is adjacent to high density area. • Outdoor fitness equipment adjacent to a playground.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan

	- Integration of existing tree stands or natural features. Examples of potential conflicts: - Lit outdoor sports field adjacent to residential area. - Off-leash dog area on an active transportation trail. - Sledding hill that leads to a SWMF.			
Inviting	Are all parks and open spaces fronting on the street with unobstructed visibility? Are all parks and open spaces clearly welcoming to the public and not just to surrounding residents? Example: Parks should have obvious gateways that provide a visually appealing first impression, so all feel welcome to enter.		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 3: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION				
Diversity	Is there a diversity of Park Classifications to serve the people that will live there and use the park system? Is there a Community Park as part of the school site?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan

	Special Use Area or Urban Square address these questions: • Context surrounding the park. • Does the park's configuration enable programming and accessible from more than one frontage? • If the Plan takes years to develop, will the Special Use Area or Urban Square be appropriate in that location? • Does an amendment to the single-tier ASP, or NP changes the Urban Square functionality? • If the Special Use Area or Urban Square are not developed, is there an alternate park classification? • Why is the Special Use Area or Urban Square being proposed in this location? • What is the developer's contribution?			
Four Season Design	Are the proposed parks and open spaces located in a way where they can attain sufficient sunlight, wind protection, and be used all year-round?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan				
	What qualities do the park and open space have to be four season places?			
Functionality	Is the configuration of the park conducive to the siting the appropriate amenities? Example: Does the quality of the land, the shape and or size, limit options for amenities or placement of amenities?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
PRINCIPLE 4: SUSTAINABILITY & CONSERVATION				
Conservation	Are parks and open spaces planned, designed, and operated to protect and conserve the City's natural areas and wildlife habitat?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	
Landscape Connectivity	Does the network of parks and open spaces create and/or maintain landscape connectivity to surrounding regional corridors, parks, open spaces, environmentally significant areas, or protected areas?		☐ Meets Expectations ☐ Needs Improvement ☐ Not Applicable	

	Completed By:	Reviewed By:
	Name (Print)	Name (Print)

Evaluation – Single-Tier ASP or Neighbourhood Plan		
	Signature	Signature
	Organization	Position
	Date	Date

7. DEFINITIONS

Access – Means an area that serves as the physical connection between a park and an adjacent site or a park amenity and a park (adapted from *St. Albert Land Use Bylaw*).

Active Recreation – Recreation activities which require physical exertion, e.g., jogging, bicycling, rowing, skating (*Edmonton Urban Parks Management Plan-June 2006*).

Active Transportation – Includes modes of travel that require physical activity, such as walking or cycling, in contrast to other modes that require little physical effort (adapted from *Active Alberta 2011-2021*).

Active Transportation Network – The network of sidewalks, trails, pathways on on-street cycling lanes that facilitate active transportation (adapted from *Active Alberta 2011-2021*).

Area Structure Plan Scale – Refers to the location, size, and classification of the Parks and Open Space system for a plan adopted by Council as an Area Structure Plan Bylaw pursuant to the Municipal Government Act that provides a framework for the future subdivisions and development of an area (adapted from *St. Albert MDP Flourish Bylaw 20/2020*).

Area Structure and Redevelopment Plans Technical Report Terms of Reference – Provides the application requirements for Area Structure Plan approved in 2021 or earlier (referenced in this document as single-tier ASP), Area Redevelopment Plan or an amendment to an existing Plan including requirements for parks.

Area Structure Plan & Neighbourhood Plan Terms of Reference – Provides the application requirements for the two-tier policy structure for Area Structure Plans approved in 2022 and onward (referenced in this document as two-tier ASP), and Neighbourhood Plans (NP). The two-tier ASPs are areas of 256 hectares±, and NP are areas of approximately 64 hectares.

Catchment – The area from which a park attracts a population that uses its services (*Center for Spatially Integrated Social Science*).

City of St. Albert Environmental Master Plan – Provides strategic direction for environmental performance including a framework for environmental objectives and targets. This document defines how the City will protect the natural environment as part of long-term economic and social prosperity. The Parks and Open Space system will support the implementation this plan by aligning parks classifications with the environmentally significant and natural areas of the City.

City of St. Albert Land Use Bylaw (LUB) – The bylaw that divides the City of St. Albert into land use districts and establishes procedures for processing and deciding upon development applications. It sets out rules that affect how each parcel of land in the City of St. Albert can be used and developed and includes a district (zoning) map.

City of St. Albert Municipal Engineering and Landscape Standards – Provides the standards for the design of municipal infrastructure including landscape design guidelines, drawing

standards, park amenities, pathways and trails, plantings, stormwater management and maintenance. The standards are minimums and are intended to ensure that new municipal infrastructure is acceptable to the City regarding overall quality, safety and environmental considerations, functionality, operation and maintenance requirements, and lifecycle costs. These standards will be applicable to all parks and open space.

City of St. Albert Natural Area Conservation and Management Plan – Provides the tools for conserving natural areas as well as the principles and objectives of managing natural areas. This document identifies the legal tools used to conserve natural areas including and the management requirements to ensure these natural areas are protected for future generations.

City of St. Albert Recreation Master Plan – A non-statutory ‘road map’ for all things recreation that responds to resident and group recreation needs for the City of St. Albert. This plan provides a long-term framework for addressing recreation in St. Albert including casual recreation opportunities such as parks and trails, scheduled activities, such as swim programs. This plan provides the framework for how to achieve and integrate recreational opportunities in St. Albert. Park design and amenities, as well as the location and sizing of parks will compliment and facilitate the recreation priorities for the City.

Municipal Development Plan (MDP) – A “plan adopted by Council as a Municipal Development Plan pursuant to the Municipal Government Act” (*St. Albert Flourish Bylaw 20/2020*).

Individual Park (or Site) Scale – Refers to size, location, orientation, integration, and amenities of one park within the overall neighbourhood Parks and Open Space system.

Landscape Connectivity – The degree to which the Parks and Open Space system facilitates movement (adapted from the *Ecological Society of America*).

Local Pathway – Is a pathway that provides secondary routes within communities, linking residential areas to facilities such as neighbourhood parks, schools, and other local community designation. Local pathway may also serve as links to the regional pathway system. (*City of St. Albert Engineering Standards*).

Low Impact Development (LID) – A land development and stormwater management approach that works with nature to manage stormwater as close to the sources as possible. (*City of Edmonton*).

Park – A specific use for open space area which is managed to provide opportunities for recreation, education, cultural or aesthetic use (*St. Albert Green Assets Committee City Manager Directive- 2017*).

Park Planning Criteria (Criteria) – Outlines the specific planning direction that will be evaluated for each principle.

Park Planning Principles (Principles) – Are concepts that guide decisions about the configuration of the park system and the design of individual park sites.

Passive Recreation – Recreation activities which require limited physical exertion such as bird watching, walking, photography (*Edmonton Urban Parks Management Plan 2006*).

Percent Developed – The percentage of a park that is altered from its natural state to accommodate the function and amenities of the proposed park design.

Open Space – Space owned and maintained by a public agency and dedicated for the common use and enjoyment of the general public. This could include open green space, parks, public squares, or other spaces, and may include stormwater ponds or systems (*St. Albert Green Assets Committee City Manager Directive 2017*).

Regional Pathway – Regional pathway system is a citywide linear network that facilitates non-motorized movements for recreation and transportation purposes. The regional pathway is hard-surfaced, typically asphalt and located off-street. It is a multi-use facility and no one user or type of user is to be given preference (*City of St. Albert Engineering Standards*).

Street frontage – Means the width of a lot, parcel, or site at the front property line adjoining a public roadway (*St. Albert Land Use Bylaw*). Street frontage percentage, as identified in the Park Classifications, is calculated by property line distance adjacent to the public roadway divided by the overall property line for the entire park.

Structured Recreation – Recreation activities that are organized and typically have clear rules, set times, and set locations / equipment (adapted from *National Recreation and Park Association*).

Tertiary Pathway – Tertiary pathway is a pathway generally located in natural areas or in parks in addition to a regional or local pathway (*City of St. Albert Engineering Standards*).

Universal Design – The design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design (*Center for Universal Design*).

Universal Design Principles – The principles by which the environment can be designed to accommodate the abilities of all.

Unstructured Recreation – Recreation activities that are not organized, and can be impromptu, have little to no rules, set times or required equipment (adapted from *National Recreation and Park Association*).

Wayfinding – Refers to information systems, including environmental cues and / or signage, that guide people through a physical environment and enhance their understanding and experience of the space (adapted from *Society for Experiential Graphic Design*).