

Development of a City-wide Parks Plan

Date:	January 20, 2010
To:	Parks and Environment Committee
From:	Brenda Patterson, General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation
Wards:	All
Reference Number:	

SUMMARY

This report seeks City Council approval for the development of a City-wide, multi-year Parks Plan, based on a set of Guiding Principles identified in this report. The Plan will guide decision-making in the acquisition, development, management and operation of the system of public parkland across the City.

This report outlines the principles, the planning approach, a proposed work plan and timeline, including community and stakeholder engagement to support the development of the Parks Plan. The report also outlines a draft Parks Classification system that will be developed further as part of the Parks Plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation recommends that City Council approve the development of a City-wide, multi-year Parks Plan guided by the following principles:

1. Parks and Trails as City Infrastructure
2. Equitable Access for All Residents
3. Nature in the City
4. Place Making
5. Supporting a Diversity of Uses
6. Community Engagement and Partnerships
7. Environmental Goals and Practices

(Please refer to Attachment A: *Parks Plan: Guiding Principles* for details of specific principles and their related objectives.)

Financial Impact

This report has no immediate financial impact.

DECISION HISTORY

In 2004, City Council approved a strategic plan for Parks, Forestry and Recreation (PF&R), 'Our Common Grounds,' which set a direction for the future delivery of parks, recreation and forestry services. The strategic plan identified a vision for Toronto as the 'City within a park' whose diverse communities come together on 'our common grounds,' the City's extensive system of parks, trails, urban forests and recreation facilities. The three key pillars of the strategic plan are:

- Stewardship of the environment around us
- Social and physical development of children and youth
- Lifelong physical activity among all Toronto residents

Our Common Grounds also identified 53 recommendations as part of an Action Plan. Included in this was recommendation #14: the preparation of a Parks Master Plan to guide the renaissance of the City's parks and trails. In order to fulfill this recommendation, PF&R staff, in 2006, began work on the 'Parks Renaissance Strategy.' The research, consultation and initial findings from the draft Parks Renaissance Strategy will be used as the basis for the development of a comprehensive Parks Plan.

The Parks Renaissance Strategy was presented to Committee on two previous dates:

- May 4, 2006 meeting of the Economic Development and Parks Committee: information update and presentation (received by the Committee for information).
Report link: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/edp/edp060504/it001.pdf>
- May 8, 2007 meeting of the Parks and Environment Committee: progress report and presentation identifying a preliminary list of recommended action areas where future investments and activities should be concentrated (recommended action areas were amended by Committee and adopted by Council).
Report link: <http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/pe/bgrd/backgroundfile-3367.pdf>

Committee Decision link:

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2007/pe/decisions/2007-05-08-pe04-dd.pdf>

Council recommendations for action areas have been incorporated into the Principles being presented as part of the current report (see Attachment A).

City Council, at its meeting of August 5 and 6, 2009, approved the development of a city-wide multi-year Recreation Service Plan based on the principles of equitable access, quality, inclusion and capacity building. The Parks Plan and Recreation Service Plan are being developed concurrently to ensure a comprehensive, multi-year service-based approach to the delivery of parks and recreation services by the PF&R Division in the City of Toronto.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Toronto's system of parks is part of the green space fabric of the City, linking diverse cultures and communities together. With close to 8,000 hectares of public parkland representing 1,500 parks and over 225 kilometres of trails, the City's Parks, Forestry and Recreation Division manages the largest amount of land found within the City limits, approximately 13% of the City's land base.

The system of parks and trails in the city represent public assets that provide places for over 2.5 million residents to engage in play, to celebrate, to enjoy nature, to learn and to socialize. Parks and trails in the City of Toronto are part of a green space system that includes public and private open spaces and an extensive natural heritage system.

Parks and trails provide benefits to individuals on a physical and psychological basis and help to define the character of neighbourhoods across the City. Parks are an important component of the city's system of natural areas and the City's open space network and public realm. It is critical that the City's planning for its system of parks and trails ensures that all user groups (including all levels of ability) and all communities will benefit from access to a system of quality parks and trails with appropriate amenities.

Diversity of race, religion and lifestyle help define and set Toronto apart from other world cities. Toronto is home to virtually all of the world's culture groups - more than 140 languages and dialects are spoken here. Toronto's rich multi-cultural diversity is expressed by the more than 200 distinct ethnic origins. Over thirty percent of City residents had a home language other than English or French. In the 2006 census, 47 per cent of Toronto's population (1,162,635 people) reported themselves as being part of a visible minority.

There clearly is a need to respond to and celebrate the diversity of needs in such a multi-cultural city, as well as recognize the needs of all ages and levels of ability through an appropriate planning approach.

COMMENTS

Context

The public park assets managed by PF&R overlap with the natural area system across the City, which is made up of watercourses, forest, meadow, successional habitat, wetlands and beach and bluff areas. Approximately 42% of the City's public parkland is made up of these natural systems. The natural heritage system is part of six regional watersheds and stretches beyond the City's boundaries. The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) is the owner of extensive natural areas in the City, most of which are managed by PF&R through a management agreement.

Public parkland is part of and helps to define the system of landforms and waterbodies that make up Toronto's signature landscape that gives the City its unique character. This distinctive landscape is made up of the waterfront, ravines, river and stream valleys, including the network of lost streams and the old Lake Iroquois shoreline bluff that runs across the City.

Toronto's natural system is part of a regional ecosystem that extends beyond the boundaries of the City, to the east and west along the Lake Ontario shoreline, to the north through six main watersheds (Etobicoke Creek, Mimico Creek, Humber River, Don River, Highland Creek and Rouge River) all the way to the provincially protected Greenbelt and the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Municipal parkland and trails are complemented by an extensive system of other open spaces, both private and public. These include:

- streetscapes and road rights-of-way;
- cemeteries;
- golf courses;
- hydro corridors;
- non-municipal parks such as Downsview Park;
- unique public places such as the Toronto Zoo, Harbourfront Centre, Fort York, Ontario Place and Black Creek Pioneer Village;
- publicly-accessible private open spaces such as courtyards and squares;
- university and college grounds; and
- an extensive system of schoolyards.

Parks and open spaces, along with streets and public buildings, are a significant part of the City of Toronto's public realm. Together, these elements of the public realm unify our diverse communities and convey the 'personality' or image of the city and its neighbourhoods.

The system of public parkland is home to numerous facilities and amenities, including:

- 136 community centres
- 281 indoor and outdoor pools

- 833 playgrounds
- 8 greenhouses & 3 conservatories
- 121 indoor arenas and outdoor ice rinks
- 2 alpine skiing centres
- 839 sports fields
- 756 tennis courts
- 40 ha. of horticultural displays
- 17 children's learning gardens
- 47 allotment & community gardens
- 11 swimming beaches, including 7 'blue flag' beaches
- 1 urban farm
- 3 animal farms
- 5 municipal golf courses
- 2.5 million trees

A key deliverable in the Parks Plan will be to confirm a classification system for parks which will outline the hierarchy of parks types and the roles that individual park types play in their respective communities and the City as a whole. As well, the classification system will identify specific planning and operational objectives for each park type. Fair and equitable allocation and programming of the City's parks for a vast range of users with diverse needs, as well as the need to meet natural environment objectives, requires a balancing of competing interests. The Parks Plan, through a set of Guiding Principles and a Park Classification System, will have to address this full range of interests.

(A draft *Parks Classification System* is provided for information as Attachment B)

The Planning Approach

The Parks Plan will define a focused program of investment in the City's system of parks and trails. It will align service delivery with the social, economic and cultural needs of a diverse and changing population and will identify the role of parks and trails as key city infrastructure that is also part of the City's natural and environmental framework. The Plan will guide decision-making over a five-year time frame, after which it will be reviewed and updated to keep its objectives current and ensure that it responds to a vision for Toronto as a vibrant and healthy city in the 21st century.

This planning exercise is a critical step for the Division to take to build a sustainable network of parks and trails, and to establish consistent processes and methodologies, including a framework to: identify current and desired service levels; articulate the diverse needs for parks-related services of the City's many communities; provide a basis for decision-making; and establish priorities and principles for investments. As part of this, it will be important to balance the vision of an extensive, well-used and well-designed parkland system with the need for sustainable levels of maintenance and operation that meet standards. Expectations need to be matched with fiscal realities and available staff resources.

Providing, developing, and maintaining a healthy system of parks and trails represents a key service delivery to City residents and visitors to the City and is a key driver in meeting overall City goals of social and physical health and environmental sustainability. Since parks host many of the City's recreation facilities and programs, the parks system has a key role in promoting involvement in recreation programs that enrich people's lives by building skills and linkages to their communities. As well, since parks are home to 2.5 million trees and extensive natural areas, the parks system has a key role in meeting the City's tree canopy targets, providing residents and visitors with attractive and comfortable public environments and accommodating natural habitat.

It is critical that the Parks Plan ensure that Parks, Forestry and Recreation programs and services remain relevant to the diverse and changing needs of the City's residents and communities. This approach will guide future planning, priority setting and investment, and will clearly articulate the core City services to be provided in relation to a set of Guiding Principles.

Guiding Principles

The principles provided below are presented in an order that does not imply that any of them take precedence over another when considering planning priorities for parks and trails. All are equally important as key principles that will drive future decision-making.

1. Parks and Trails as City Infrastructure

Parks and trails are vital components of city infrastructure and must be recognized for the contribution they make to a vital city. The system of parks and trails is part of a continuous city-wide green space system that also includes the natural heritage system, publicly accessible open spaces and streetscapes. This system provides recreational opportunities to residents and visitors and makes connections within the City and outside the city. As a green landscape component of city infrastructure, it provides relief from the built-up, urbanized environment typical of a large city like Toronto.

Parks and open spaces, along with streets and public buildings, are a significant part of the City of Toronto's public realm. Together, these elements of the public realm unify our diverse communities and convey the 'personality' or image of the City and its neighbourhoods. Planning must address sustainability of the parks and trails infrastructure. To that end, adequate capital and operating budget investment in this component of city infrastructure should reflect the importance of a high-quality system of parks and trails.

2. Equitable Access for All Residents

The system of parks and trails is a valuable city resource that must be accessible to residents in all parts of the City and must respond to the needs of a diverse population regardless of age, level of ability, income or cultural background.

3. Nature in the City

The natural heritage framework within the City is an important component of the City's green space system which performs many ecological functions important to the health of the City and should be protected, restored and expanded. As well, this natural framework is a component of a larger bioregion of tree canopy, natural habitat and watersheds that extend beyond the City's borders. The interaction of city residents, especially children and youth, with healthy and meaningful natural spaces should be protected and enhanced, as the City becomes an increasingly urbanized and structured environment.

4. Place Making

A high standard of quality and visual appeal must be emphasized in the planning, design and ongoing management of public parks and their associated assets. Attractive and comfortable spaces, when provided on a consistent basis across the City, invite use by residents and contribute to the overall quality of the public realm within the City. The unique identity of neighbourhoods can be celebrated through the design of local parks. Parks and open spaces should project a strong positive image within neighbourhoods and collectively should build the image of the City as a whole.

5. Supporting a Diversity of Uses

The parks and trails system must respond to a wide range of demands from active and passive users. Lifelong active living, fitness and active sports need to be encouraged as well as passive recreation and quiet enjoyment. As well as supporting the needs of active and passive users, parks also need to accommodate spaces for natural areas and habitat, tree canopy, community events, urban agriculture and cultural expression. Parks should be able to respond to a palette of uses appropriate to their location and role within the overall system.

6. Community Engagement and Partnerships

Community involvement is a key ingredient in the planning, design and operation of parks and trails which must be fostered. Stewardship and volunteer participation should be encouraged to complement existing city resources and help to provide high quality parks and trails that best serve their communities. An effective program of communication with the public on all matters related to parks and trails should be maintained on a regular basis.

Creative opportunities to engage community and business partners to complement existing funding through fundraising, partnerships and sponsorships should be explored and implemented.

7. Environmental Goals and Practices

It is essential that environmentally responsible practices and green initiatives be incorporated into the day-to-day planning, design, operation and maintenance of the City's system of parks and trails and the City's key environmental goals as set out in the Official Plan and other supporting legislation are met. Parks and trails should be designed to meet current standards of environmental sustainability and green development.

Please refer to Attachment A: *Parks Plan: Guiding Principles* for details of specific principles and their related objectives.

Proposed Work Plan and Timeline

The development of the city-wide, multi-year Parks Plan will engage staff, key stakeholders, and the broader community and will be guided by a comprehensive consultation and communication strategy. Through focus groups, public sessions and web-based engagement, the plan will be informed by key stakeholders and the general public. As well as the guiding principles and draft parks classification system included in this report, the plan will have, as one of its key deliverables, an implementation strategy for the key moves required over a five-year time frame to realize the plan. It is expected that a multi-year Parks Plan will be submitted to City Council in 2011.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Parks Plan: Guiding Principles
Attachment B – Draft Parks Classification System

Parks Plan: Guiding Principles

1. Parks and Trails as City Infrastructure

Parks and trails are vital components of city infrastructure and must be recognized for the contribution they make to a vital city. The system of parks and trails is part of a continuous city-wide green space system that also includes the natural heritage system, publicly accessible open spaces and streetscapes. This system provides recreational opportunities to residents and visitors and makes connections within the city and outside the city. As a green, landscape component of city infrastructure, it provides relief from the built-up, urbanized environment typical of a large city like Toronto.

Parks and open spaces, along with streets and public buildings, are a significant part of the City of Toronto's public realm. Together, these elements of the public realm unify our diverse communities and convey the 'personality' or image of the city and its neighbourhoods. Adequate capital and operating budget investment in this component of city infrastructure should reflect the importance of a high-quality system of parks and trails.

City Infrastructure Objectives:

1. Promote the system of parks and trails as vital city infrastructure

- Recognize the system of parks and trails as important elements of city-building along with other city infrastructure
- Ensure that investment in capital assets and in the operation and maintenance of these assets reflects the importance of an extensive, well-used and well-designed system of parks and trails within the City
- Strengthen the natural environment as a continuous connected green system within the city
- Celebrate the distinctive landscape that defines the image of Toronto through the development of a connected public green space system that highlights these key features

2. Build the Public Realm as a continuous open space system

- Connect the system of parks & trails to the publicly-accessible Public Realm that includes streets, road rights-of-way, public buildings, natural heritage areas, and publicly accessible open spaces such as hydro corridors, cemeteries and schoolyards

3. Build a connected system of trails

- Provide a connected off-road system of multi-use trails that accommodate recreation as well as transportation functions
- Connect the trail system to the on-road system of bikeways that are part of the Toronto Bike Plan network
- Connect the trail system to public sidewalks and the pedestrian environment within streetscapes and other open spaces
- Recognize the system of unpaved hiking and biking trails in natural areas as an important city-wide resource that needs to be managed

4. Support the regional green space system

- Provide connections to the regional green space system and trails beyond the city's borders
- Strengthen the natural environment within the city as a continuous connected system that supports the overall function of the regional green space system

2. Equitable Access for All Residents

The system of parks and trails is a valuable city resource that must be accessible to residents in all parts of the city and must respond to the needs of a diverse population regardless of age, level of ability, income or cultural background.

Access & Equity Objectives:

1. Ensure an adequate provision of a range of parkland and trail types across the city, to serve the range of needs of residents and visitors

- Provide local neighbourhood parks that serve residents at a reasonable walk-to distance
- Provide larger and more active district parks as centres for sports and specialized facilities which are accessible to a number of neighbourhoods

- Provide a connected system of feature parks and more specialized parks and trails that serve the needs of residents on a city-wide basis and act as destinations that attract visitors from outside the city

2. Incorporate Universal Accessibility into the design of all parks and trails

- Recognize Universal Accessibility as a key objective to meet in the planning and design of the parks and trail systems
- Promote parks and trails as inclusive environments that are welcoming to users of all abilities, including those with physical, sensory and intellectual disabilities

3. Celebrate the city's diverse, multicultural city population

- Recognize the needs and cultural customs of the city's diverse, multicultural population within specific neighbourhoods across the city through an inclusive planning and design process
- Ensure that programming and events reflect the diverse population

3. Nature in the City

The natural heritage framework within the city is an important component of the city's green space system which performs many ecological functions important to the health of the city and should be protected, restored and expanded. As well, this natural framework is a component of a larger bioregion of tree canopy, natural habitat and watersheds that extend beyond the city's borders. The interaction of city residents, especially children and youth, with healthy and meaningful natural spaces should be protected and enhanced, as the city becomes an increasingly urbanized and structured environment.

Natural City Objectives:

1. Strengthen the framework of natural areas across the city

- Incorporate natural areas as a component of parks and trails which complement other active and passive uses but are buffered from human use to protect natural integrity and function
- Enhance, protect and expand existing natural areas, wildlife habitats and corridors
- Encourage protection and stewardship of natural areas in adjacent private properties and other open spaces

2. Expand the urban forest and the tree canopy

- Work proactively to meet identified canopy targets for the urban forest across the city
- Maximize opportunities for tree canopy (new plantings, replacement of aging stock and protection of existing trees) in parks and trail corridors
- Co-ordinate tree planting, protection and management practices to optimize the tree canopy in other open spaces especially streetscape and road rights-of-way, to complement and connect to the urban forest in the parks and trail system

3. Celebrate nature in the city

- Incorporate interpretation and education of the natural system into promotion and communications about the parks and trails system
- Bring children and youth into the parks and trails system to learn the function and value of the city's natural systems

4. Place Making

A high standard of quality and visual appeal must be emphasized in the planning, design and ongoing management of public parks and their associated assets. Attractive and comfortable spaces, when provided on a consistent basis across the city, invite use by residents and contribute to the overall quality of the public realm within the city. The unique identity of neighbourhoods can be celebrated through the design of local parks. Parks and open spaces should project a strong positive image within neighbourhoods and collectively should build the image of the city as a whole.

Place Making Objectives:

1. Promote quality and innovation in the planning and design of parks

- Promote design quality on a city-wide basis to ensure that the design of all types of public parks and trails meet a consistent set of expectations
- Provide opportunities for design innovation through competitions and pilot projects that explore new ideas and approaches

2. Promote parks, trails and open spaces as the physical and social focus of neighbourhoods and communities

- Locate parks as prominent features in locations central and ‘up front’ within the neighbourhood and community which recognizes the important role of a parks and open space system to physically organize and provide focus to neighbourhoods
- Provide well-designed and well-managed parks and trails that foster a sense of community pride and ownership

3. Ensure that parks and trails are clean and well-maintained

- Identify and communicate standards for maintaining and cleaning all types of parks and trails
- Promote public participation and pride in the cleanliness and well-being of public spaces
- Ensure that operating funding supports the needs of the existing system and that operating and maintenance needs for new parks and trails are properly anticipated in annual budget planning

4. Maintain standards for safety and health in the planning, design and operation of the parks and trails system

5. Ensure that parks and trails have the necessary amenities to make them attractive and comfortable spaces

5. Supporting a Diversity of Uses

The parks and trails system must respond to a wide range of demands from active and passive users. Lifelong active living, fitness and active sports need to be encouraged as well as passive recreation and quiet enjoyment. As well as supporting the needs of active and passive users, parks also need to accommodate spaces for natural areas and habitat, tree canopy, community events, urban agriculture and cultural expression. Parks should be able to respond to a palette of uses appropriate to their location and role within the overall system.

Diverse Use Objectives:

1. Accommodate active recreation, fitness and sport development in the system of parks and trails

- Ensure that the system of parks can support organized sports by providing appropriate park types throughout the city which can accommodate active recreation facilities such as soccer fields, cricket pitches and baseball diamonds
- Ensure that the system of parks can support informal active sports by providing appropriate park types throughout the city which can accommodate facilities such as sports courts, skateboard parks and tennis courts
- Include connected and looped trails as part of the hierarchy of trail types to allow for fitness training

2. Accommodate passive and community uses in the system of parks and trails

- Accommodate quiet enjoyment and passive uses such as picnicking, socializing, hiking, nature viewing and casual play as part of the program of uses for parks
- Preserve areas for special community uses (e.g. meeting spaces, space for community gardens and farmers markets) within parks
- Ensure that walking routes and pedestrian uses are properly buffered from active cycling, rollerblading and commuting users on trails

3. Ensure that active or passive uses are appropriate for specific park and trail types and their communities

- Preserve spaces in parks for natural areas and buffer them from other uses
- Locate active park elements and facilities in appropriate park types (e.g. larger neighbourhood parks, district and city-wide park types) that can handle the level of use and do not adversely affect adjacent residential areas
- Preserve neighbourhood parks as locally-serving spaces that focus on passive use and respect the neighbourhood character

4. Encourage Year-Round Uses for Parks and Open Spaces

- Accommodate uses for winter and shoulder seasons in planning and design of parks spaces and parks facilities to promote use and enjoyment year-round
- Consider the provision of winter maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities where possible to accommodate year-round use

5. Promote cultural expression, heritage recognition and the celebration of the arts

- Provide for the celebration and interpretation of local history in parks and trails where appropriate
- Identify opportunities to incorporate public art in key areas
- Provide spaces for cultural expression and events within parks that can support that level of activity
- Incorporate interpretation and education of natural heritage

6. Promote tourism and use of parks & trails by visitors to the City of Toronto

- Support the use of appropriate destination parks and feature trails by outside visitors to promote tourism
- Communicate the system of parks and trails as attractive destinations for visitors to the city

6. Community Engagement and Partnerships

Community involvement is a key ingredient in the planning, design and operation of parks and trails which must be fostered. Stewardship & volunteer participation should be encouraged to complement existing city resources and help to provide high quality parks and trails that best serve their communities. An effective program of communication with the public on all matters related to parks & trails should be maintained on a regular basis.

Creative opportunities to engage community and business partners to complement existing funding through fundraising, partnerships and sponsorships should be explored and implemented.

Community Engagement and Partnerships Objectives:

1. Engage the public and stakeholders in the planning and design of parks and trails

- Identify relevant community groups and special stakeholder groups to be included in regular PF&R communications and the consultation for all project scales and types
- Develop a consistent approach to communicating project information to the public and stakeholders and including them in planning and design processes

2. Encourage volunteer participation and stewardship by local communities

- Take advantage of opportunities for the participation of community groups to augment existing staff resources in the ongoing management and operation of parks and trails
- Develop a consistent approach to guide the activities of community groups as advisors and stewards in the management and operation of parks and trails city-wide

3. Build relationships with outside funding partners

- Identify opportunities to build formal partnerships with corporate donors and foundations

4. Provide a comprehensive and inclusive program of communication with the public

- Develop a comprehensive communications program to inform the public about current PF&R goals, strategies, projects and programs
- Make use of current media and technologies to reach as broad an audience as possible
- Develop communications to reach all communities and diverse cultures and languages across the city
- Market the system of parks and trails to potential visitors outside the city to promote tourism

7. Environmental Goals and Practices

It is essential that environmentally responsible practices and green initiatives be incorporated into the day-to-day planning, design, operation and maintenance of the city's system of parks and trails and the City's key environmental goals as set out in the Official Plan and other supporting legislation are met. Parks and trails should be designed to meet current standards of environmental sustainability and green development.

Environmental and Green Objectives:

1. Support the City's environmental goals in planning & design

- Incorporate current sustainability criteria and green goals and objectives in the planning and design of specific parks and trails

- Promote the development of pilot projects to incorporate innovative environmental and green practices
- Promote Green Development Standards, LEED accreditation and other measures of sustainable design in the development of parks and trails

2. Actively support the City’s agenda to address Climate Change

- Align divisional goals for the development and operation of the system of parks and trails with the City’s goals for greenhouse gas and air pollution reduction
- Enhance the tree canopy within parks and trail corridors to meet the City’s tree canopy coverage objectives and help to mitigate the effects of Climate Change
- Continue the development of infrastructure to promote cycling, walking and alternative transportation
- Incorporate community gardens, food markets and urban agriculture into the development and programming of parks

3. Actively support the City’s goals for management of stormwater set out in the Wet Weather Flow Management Master Plan

- Co-ordinate the development of stormwater management facilities with Toronto Water and identify opportunities for incorporating them into the system of parks to meet common goals
- Ensure that stormwater management facilities do not compromise core functions of the parks system and services provided to the public

4. Follow sustainable practices in the operation and maintenance of parks and trails

- Incorporate water efficiency, energy efficiency and the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants in operations and maintenance practices for parks and trails

Parks Plan: Draft Parks Classification System

Park Types	Description	Typical Size	Examples
DESTINATION	Parks with unique or exceptional features, specialized recreation amenities and/or major events which are promoted to tourists from outside Toronto.	Varies, depending on key features and amenities; typically over 15 hectares.	Toronto Island, High Park (multi-use); Rouge Park (natural heritage); Edwards Gardens / Toronto Botanical Garden, Toronto Music Garden (horticulture); Centennial Park (sports and special events)
CITYWIDE	Parks with unique or exceptional features, specialized recreation amenities and/or major events which draw users from across the city.	Varies, depending on key features and amenities; typically over 15 hectares.	Earl Bales Park, East Point Park, Western Waterfront Park System, Sunnybrook Park, Bluffer's Park, Eglinton Flats
DISTRICT	Larger parks with a wider range of features and recreation amenities (primarily sports-oriented) which draw users from beyond the local community.	Typically 5 - 15 hectares.	Amesbury Park, Riverdale Park East, L'Amoreaux Park South, Jack Goodlad, Stan Wadlow Park , Eglinton Park, Memorial Park
COMMUNITY	Large neighbourhood-type parks but with a wider range of features and recreation amenities (including active uses not typical of a Neighbourhood Park) which draw users from the local community.	Typically 3 – 5 hectares.	Cummer Park, Stephen Leacock Park, Monarch Park, Don Russell Memorial Park , Dufferin Grove Park

Parks Plan: Draft Parks Classification System

Park Types	Description	Typical Size	Examples
NEIGHBOURHOOD	Small parks offering a range of features and recreation amenities oriented to local users.	Typically 0.5 - 5 hectares.	Bickford Park, Burrows Hall Park, Roding Park , Cloverdale Park
PARKETTE	Very small parks with limited amenities and user draw; includes traffic islands, boulevards and road allowances maintained by Parks, Forestry & Recreation.	Typically under 0.5 hectares.	Twenty-eighth Street Park, Frank Stollery Parkette, Wilson Heights Parkette, Raleigh Parkette
GREENWAY	Linear parkland that focuses on trail use (recreation and transportation) with associated amenities to support that use. Typically in utility corridors, road rights-of-way, lost creeks.	Typically 10 to 30 m width, length varies.	CP PS Lead rail -trail, Belt Line Trail, CN Leaside rail-trail, Lower Don Trail, Lake Shore Blvd. east north side R.O.W