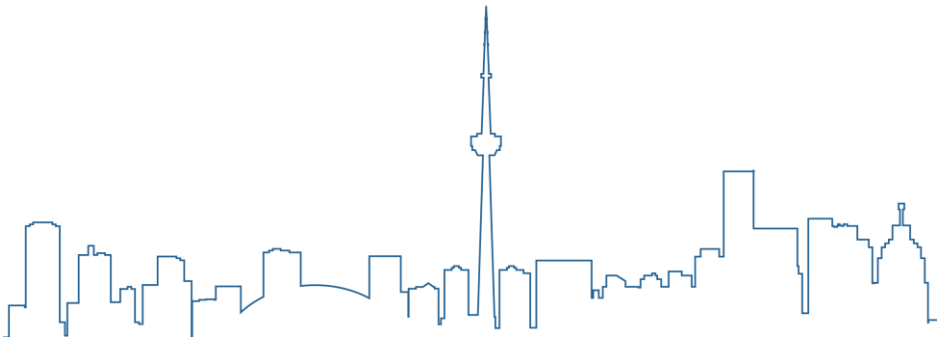
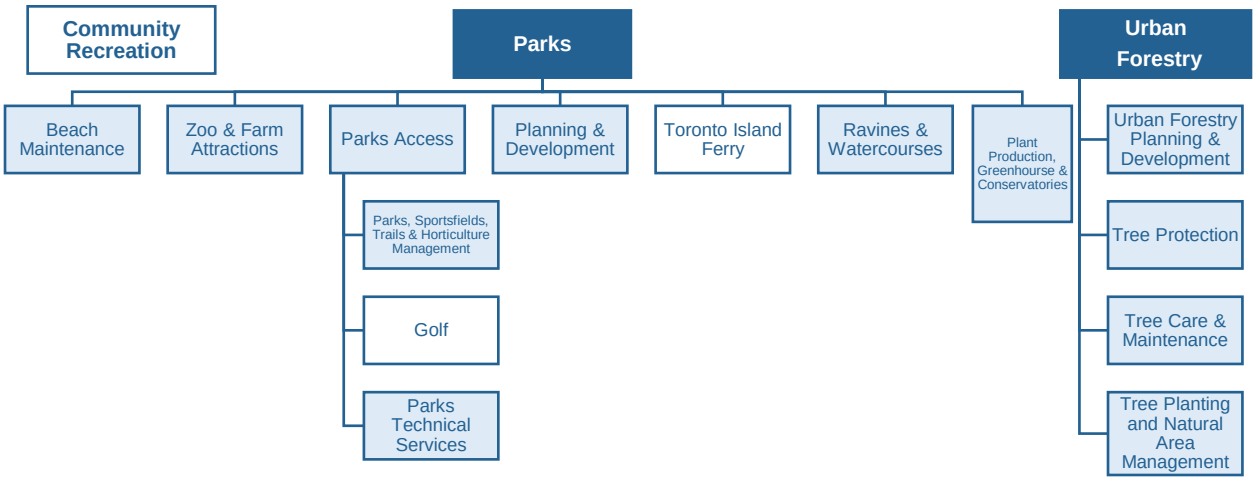
TORONTO



PARKS SERVICES

PROGRAM MAP

Parks, Forestry & Recreation



Shaded boxes reflect the activities covered in this report

Parks Services include the provision of parkland for residents and visitors of all ages to enjoy nature and open green space. Ravines, naturalized areas, watercourses and woodlots are maintained and managed by the Parks and Urban Forestry branches of the Parks, Forestry & Recreation Division. There are parkettes, as well as neighbourhood, regional and destination parks that attract visitors from across the Greater Toronto Area. Many parks include amenities such as benches, drinking fountains, grassy areas, flower and shrub beds, trails and pathways and trees for the passive enjoyment of everyone. Other features can include greenhouses, conservatories, formal gardens, allotment gardens, animal displays and butterfly habitats.

Active pursuits including baseball, cricket, football, soccer, jogging and walking are available in many of the larger parks. Outdoor swimming and skating are provided in every district of the City. There are many resident demands for permits for sport fields, diamonds, stadiums, and parkland for organized play, special events for community celebrations and wedding photographs. Waste reduction and diversion, waterfront development, restoration and naturalization of parkland are examples of initiatives that factor into the costs of providing parks services in Toronto. Toronto provides a wide range of park maintenance activities, which reflect the diverse character of its Parks Services. These activities include the upkeep and care of grasses, athletic fields, pathways, park washrooms, playgrounds, and sports courts – on a year-round basis.

For the purposes of this section, the costs of golf courses, ski hills, marinas and the provision and maintenance of street trees (trees on the road allowance) are not included in order to be more comparable with results from other municipalities, as it is acknowledged that the MBNC municipalities (including Toronto) provide their own unique mix of Parks activities and services as well as various different levels of priority and maintenance.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT RESULTS

Question	Indicator/Measure	Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2016 vs. 2015 Results	External Comparison to Other Municipalities (MBNC) By Quartile for 2016	Chart & Page Ref.
Service Level Indicators				
How much total parkland of all types did Toronto have?	Hectares of all (Maintained and Natural) Parkland per 100,000 Population – (Service Level)	**Stable** **Total amount of all parkland was steady in 2016**	**4** **Lowest rate of hectares of all parkland in relation to population compared to others** (urban form leads to result)	23.1 23.2 pg. 5/6
How much maintained parkland did Toronto have?	Hectares of Maintained Parkland in Municipality per 100,000 Population – (Service Level)	**Stable** **Total amount of maintained parkland was constant in 2016**	**4** **Lowest rate of hectares of maintained parkland in relation to population, compared to others** (urban form leads to result)	23.1 23.2 pg. 5/6
How much natural parkland did Toronto have?	Hectares of Natural Parkland in Municipality per 100,000 Population– (Service Level)	**Stable** **Amount of natural parkland was constant in 2016**	**4** **Lowest rate of hectares of natural parkland in relation to population, compared to others** (urban form leads to result)	23.1 23.2 pg. 5/6
What was the length of Toronto's recreational trail system?	Km of Maintained Recreational Trails per 1,000 Persons – (Service Level)	**Stable** **Amount of maintained trails was steady in 2016 (no graph)**	**4** **Lowest rate of kilometres of trails in relation to population compared to others** (urban form leads to result)	23.4 pg. 8
Community Impact Measures				
What proportion of the municipality's area was maintained parkland?	Maintained Parkland in Municipality as a Percentage of Total Area of Municipality – (Community Impact)	**Stable** **Maintained parkland as proportion of city area was consistent in 2016 (no graph)**	**1** **Higher percentage of maintained parkland (in relation to area) compared to others**	23.3 pg. 7

Question	Indicator/Measure	Internal Comparison of Toronto's 2016 vs. 2015 Results	External Comparison to Other Municipalities (MBNC) By Quartile for 2016	Chart & Page Ref.
What proportion of the municipality's area was natural parkland?	Natural Parkland in Municipality as a Percentage of Total Area of Municipality – (Community Impact)	**Stable** **Natural parkland as proportion of city area was consistent in 2016 (no graph)**	**1** **Highest percentage of natural parkland (in relation to area) compared to others**	23.3 pg. 7
What proportion of the municipality's area was parkland (all types)?	All Parkland in Municipality as a Percentage of Total Area of Municipality – (Community Impact)	**Stable** **Total parkland as proportion of city area was consistent in 2016 (no graph)**	**1** **Highest percentage of all parkland (in relation to area) compared to others**	23.3 pg. 7
How many Toronto residents visited parks?	Percentage of Toronto Survey Respondents Visiting Toronto Parks – (Community Impact)	**N/A** **2016** **Annual public opinion survey was not conducted for this topic**	N/A	23.5 pg. 8
Customer Service Measures				
How satisfied were visitors to Toronto's parks?	Percentage of Toronto Survey Respondents Satisfied With Visits Parks – (Customer Service)	**N/A** **2016** **Annual public opinion survey was not conducted for this topic**	N/A	23.6 pg. 9
Efficiency Measures				
What did it cost to operate a hectare of parkland?	Operating Cost of Parks per Hectare - Maintained and Natural Parkland – (Efficiency)	**Stable** **Operating cost of parks per hectare decreased in 2016**	**4** **High operating cost of parks per hectare compared to others**	23.7 23.8 pg. 9/10
What did it cost to operate a hectare of parkland?	Total Cost of Parks per Hectare - Maintained and Natural Parkland (Efficiency)	**Increase** **Total cost of parks per hectare increased slightly in 2016**	**4** **High total cost of parks per hectare compared to others**	

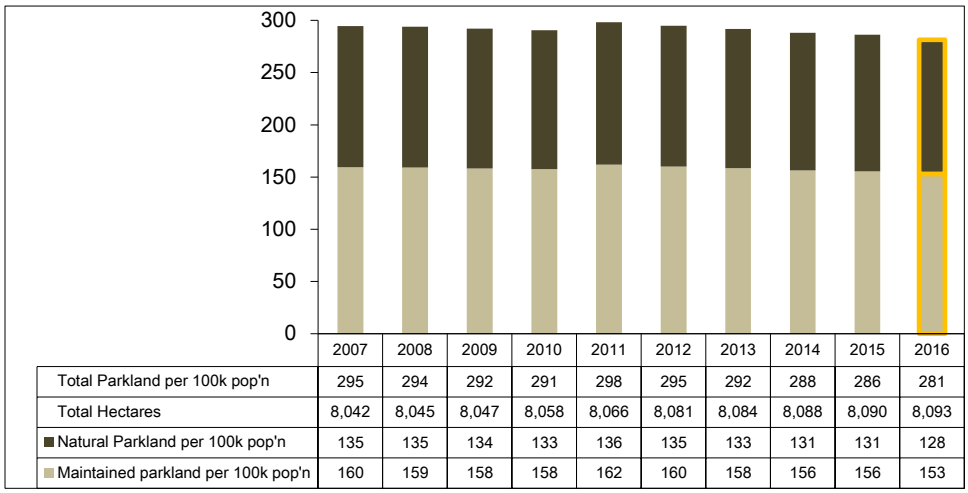
Overall Results	Service Level Indicators (Resources)	Performance Measures (Results)	Service Level Indicators (Resources)	Performance Measures (Results)
	0 - Increased 4 - Stable 0- Decreased	0 - Favourable. 4 - Stable 1 - Unfavourable	0 - 1st quartile 0 - 2nd quartile 0- 3rd quartile 4 - 4th quartile	3 - 1st quartile 0 - 2nd quartile 0 - 3rd quartile 2 - 4th quartile
	100% favourable or stable	80% favourable or stable	0% in 1st and 2nd quartile	60% in 1st and 2nd quartile

For an explanation of how to interpret this summary and the supporting charts, please see the Guide to Toronto's Performance Results. These quartile results are based on a maximum sample size of 10 municipalities.

SERVICE LEVELS

The number of hectares of parkland in a municipality is one way of examining service levels. Parkland includes maintained parkland (such as sports fields, recreational trails, picnic areas, and playgrounds); and natural parkland (such as ravines, watercourses, and woodlots), which is an integral component of a municipality's green space. Parks can vary in size and can include a variety of features such as field houses, sports fields, baseball diamonds, flower and shrub beds, fountains, playgrounds, natural habitats, paved areas and benches.

23.1 – HOW MUCH PARKLAND IS THERE IN TORONTO?



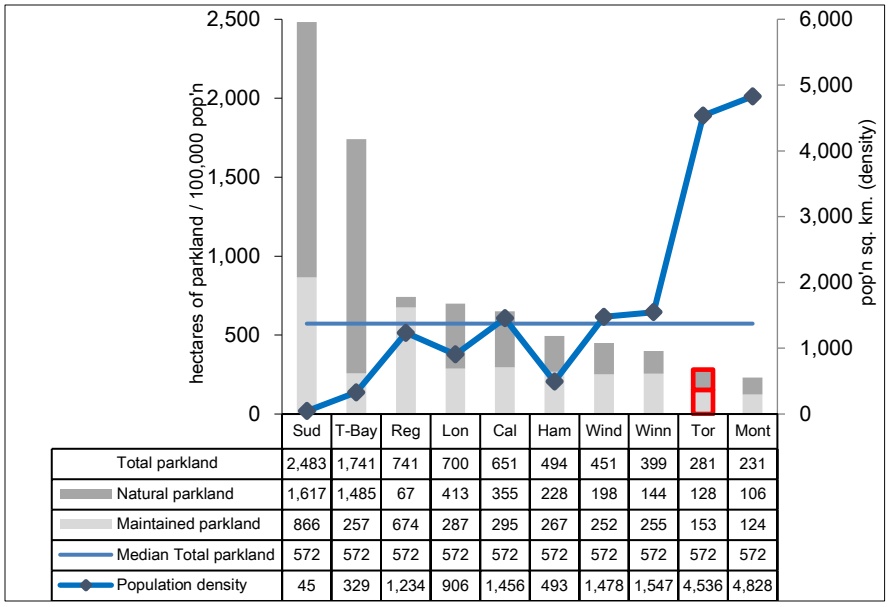
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total Parkland per 100k pop'n	295	294	292	291	298	295	292	288	286	281
Total Hectares	8,042	8,045	8,047	8,058	8,066	8,081	8,084	8,088	8,090	8,093
Natural Parkland per 100k pop'n	135	135	134	133	136	135	133	131	131	128
Maintained parkland per 100k pop'n	160	159	158	158	162	160	158	156	156	153

Chart 23.1 provides the total hectares of parkland in Toronto as well as the breakdown between maintained and natural parkland components, expressed on a per 100,000 population basis.

Chart 23.1 (City of Toronto) Natural and Maintained Parkland per 100,000 Population

The area of parkland in Toronto has been stable over the past year and is reflective of Toronto's fully developed urban form.

23.2 –HOW DO THE HECTARES OF PARKLAND IN TORONTO COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Sud	T-Bay	Reg	Lon	Cal	Ham	Wind	Winn	Tor	Mont
Total parkland	2,483	1,741	741	700	651	494	451	399	281	231
Natural parkland	1,617	1,485	67	413	355	228	198	144	128	106
Maintained parkland	866	257	674	287	295	267	252	255	153	124
Median Total parkland	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	572	572
Population density	45	329	1,234	906	1,456	493	1,478	1,547	4,536	4,828

Chart 23.2 compares Toronto's 2016 results to other municipalities for the hectares of parkland per 100,000 population, which are reflected as bars relative to the left axis.

Chart 23.2 (MBNC 2016) Hectares of Parkland per 100,000 Population & Population Density

In terms of having the highest amount of parkland, Toronto ranks:

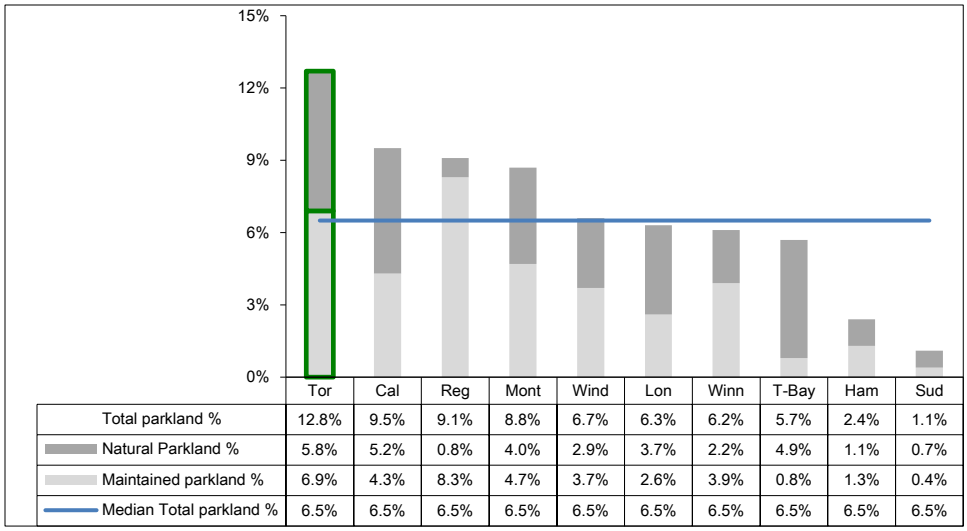
- Ninth of ten municipalities (fourth quartile) for maintained parkland;
- Eighth of ten municipalities (fourth quartile) for natural parkland; and
- Ninth of ten municipalities (fourth quartile) for all parkland.

Population density (population per square kilometre) is plotted as a line graph relative to the right axis in Chart 23.2 and it is a significant factor in these results. Toronto is more densely populated than many other municipalities. In the developed urban core area of municipalities, it is more difficult to establish new parks in terms of the availability, size, demand and cost of land and/or parkland.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

It is also important to consider what proportion of a municipality's total geographic area is parkland, which provides some indication of the public's proximity to, and the availability, of parkland for active and passive uses. From an environmental perspective, parkland helps control air pollution, returns oxygen to the atmosphere, helps cool the city (shade), controls storm water runoff, provides habitat for wildlife, and aids biodiversity.

23.3 – HOW DOES THE PROPORTION OF TORONTO'S GEOGRAPHIC AREA THAT IS PARKLAND COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Tor	Cal	Reg	Mont	Wind	Lon	Winn	T-Bay	Ham	Sud
Total parkland %	12.8%	9.5%	9.1%	8.8%	6.7%	6.3%	6.2%	5.7%	2.4%	1.1%
Natural Parkland %	5.8%	5.2%	0.8%	4.0%	2.9%	3.7%	2.2%	4.9%	1.1%	0.7%
Maintained parkland %	6.9%	4.3%	8.3%	4.7%	3.7%	2.6%	3.9%	0.8%	1.3%	0.4%
Median Total parkland %	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%	6.5%

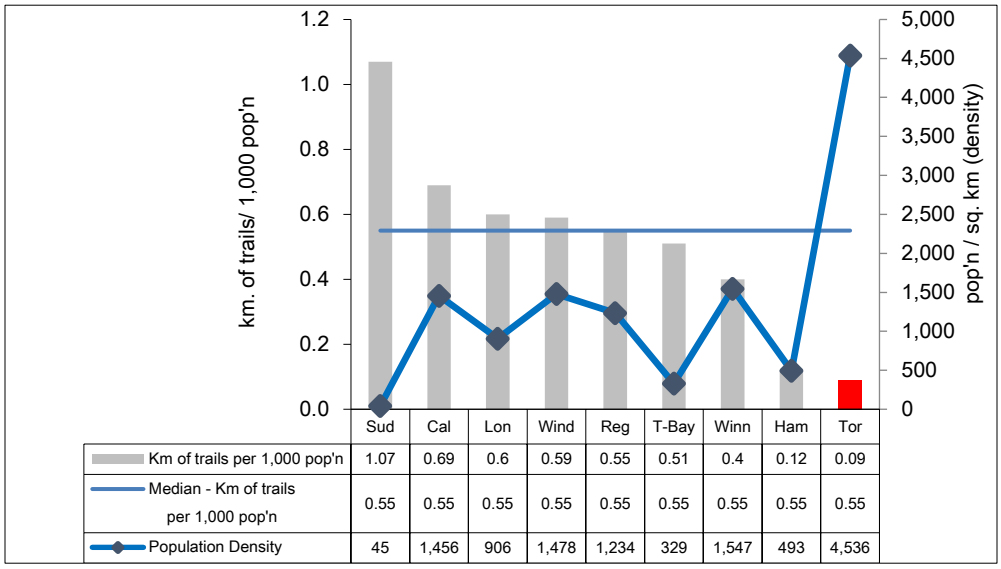
Chart 23.3 compares Toronto's 2016 results to other municipalities for the hectares of parkland expressed as a percentage of total geographic area.

Chart 23.3 (MBNC 2016) Hectares of Parkland as a % of Municipal Geographic Area

In terms of having the highest proportion of parkland relative to geographic area, Toronto ranks second of ten municipalities (first quartile) for maintained parkland; first of ten municipalities (first quartile) for natural parkland; and first of ten municipalities (first quartile) for all parkland.

In terms of Toronto change from the previous year, in 2016 maintained parkland, natural parkland, and all parkland remained stable.

23.4 – HOW DOES THE KM OF RECREATIONAL TRAILS IN TORONTO COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Sud	Cal	Lon	Wind	Reg	T-Bay	Winn	Ham	Tor
Km of trails per 1,000 pop'n	1.07	0.69	0.6	0.59	0.55	0.51	0.4	0.12	0.09
Median - Km of trails per 1,000 pop'n	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55
Population Density	45	1,456	906	1,478	1,234	329	1,547	493	4,536

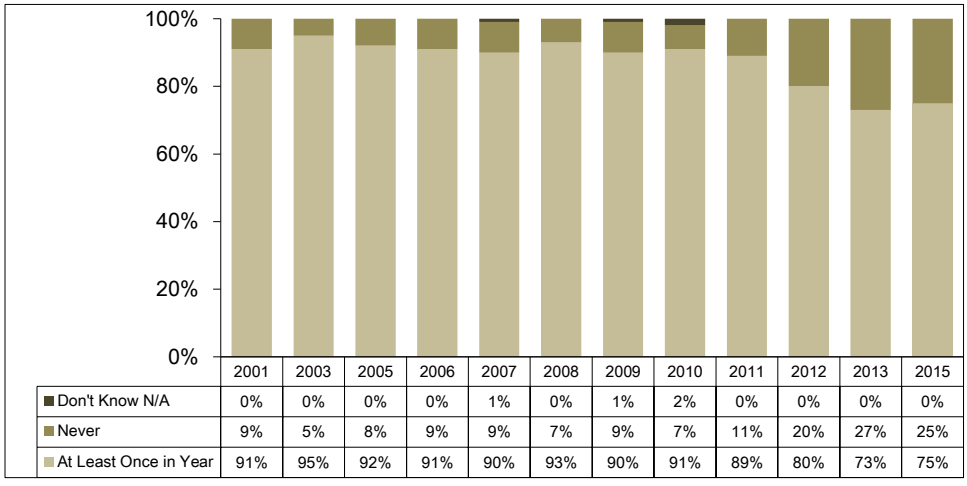
Chart 23.4 shows 2016 information for Toronto and other municipalities on the number of kilometres of all maintained recreational trails per 1,000 population, which are plotted as bars relative to the left axis.

Chart 23.4 (MBNC 2016) Km of Recreation Trails per 1,000 Population & Population Density

These trails have signage and are mapped, and they can be either owned or leased by the municipality. They support a range of non-motorized recreational uses such as walking, hiking, bicycling and riding/equestrian as well as motorized uses (City of Toronto trails do not allow motorized uses). The measure excludes the length of bicycle lanes on streets.

Toronto ranks ninth of nine (fourth quartile) with the smallest length of trails per 1,000 persons. The primary factor behind this ranking is Toronto's densely populated urban form, which makes it more difficult to establish new trails. Population density (persons per square kilometre) in each municipality is plotted as a line graph relative to the left axis and shows Toronto's density is much higher than other municipalities. Toronto's maintained recreational trail system amounted to a length of greater than 250 km but remained stable compared to 2015.

23.5– HOW MANY RESIDENTS VISITED PARKS IN TORONTO?



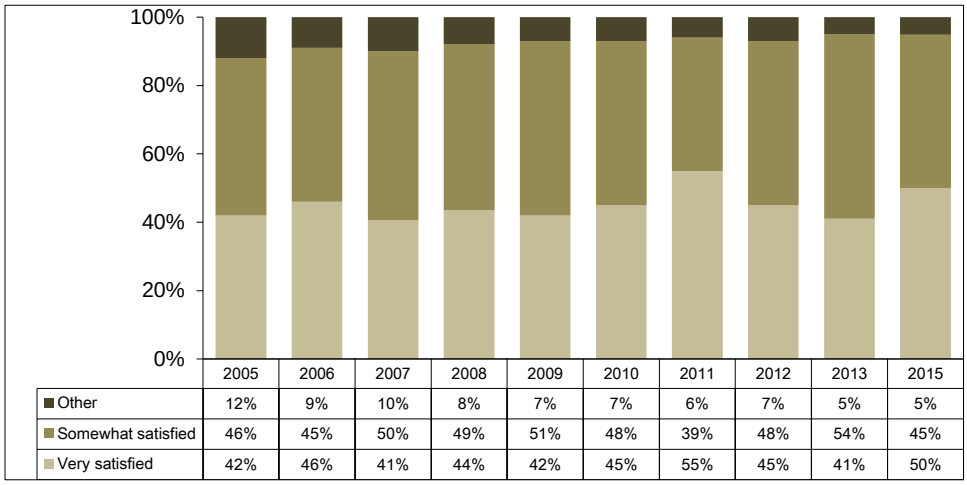
	2001	2003	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015
Don't Know N/A	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Never	9%	5%	8%	9%	9%	7%	9%	7%	11%	20%	27%	25%
At Least Once in Year	91%	95%	92%	91%	90%	93%	90%	91%	89%	80%	73%	75%

Chart 23.5 reflects Years 2001 to 2015 results of public opinion surveys of the percentage of Toronto respondents who visited at least one City of Toronto park in the year. There was no survey conducted in 2016.

Chart 23.5 (City of Toronto) % of Respondents Visiting Parks

The survey sample size, has a credibility interval of plus or minus between 3.5 and 4 percentage points with a 95% confidence interval. Results were not collected in 2014. Approximately 75 percent of survey respondents visited the parks system at least once in 2015. As of 2012, the survey became web-based (where in prior years the survey was telephone based). This is now the preferred method for conducting surveys by public opinion firms.

23.6 – HOW SATISFIED WERE THE VISITORS WITH TORONTO'S PARKS?



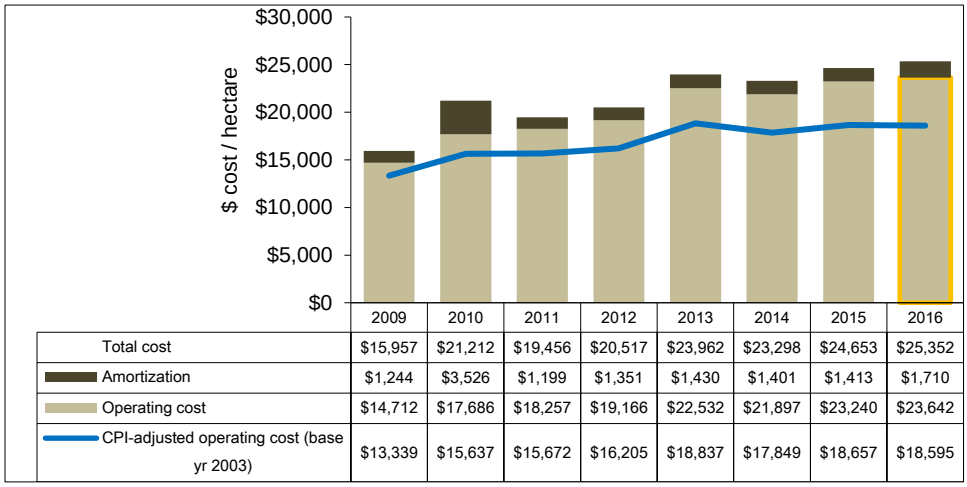
	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2015
Other	12%	9%	10%	8%	7%	7%	6%	7%	5%	5%
Somewhat satisfied	46%	45%	50%	49%	51%	48%	39%	48%	54%	45%
Very satisfied	42%	46%	41%	44%	42%	45%	55%	45%	41%	50%

Chart 23.6 (City of Toronto) Overall Satisfaction with Visits to Parks

Chart 23.6 is also based on the results of the Parks, Forestry & Recreation contracted public opinion surveys. In 2015, approximately 95 per cent of the visitors were satisfied with City of Toronto parks. There was no survey conducted in 2016.

EFFICIENCY

23.7 – WHAT DOES IT COST TO OPERATE A HECTARE OF PARKLAND IN TORONTO?



	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total cost	$15,957	$21,212	$19,456	$20,517	$23,962	$23,298	$24,653	$25,352
Amortization	$1,244	$3,526	$1,199	$1,351	$1,430	$1,401	$1,413	$1,710
Operating cost	$14,712	$17,686	$18,257	$19,166	$22,532	$21,897	$23,240	$23,642
CPI-adjusted operating cost (base yr 2003)	$13,339	$15,637	$15,672	$16,205	$18,837	$17,849	$18,657	$18,595

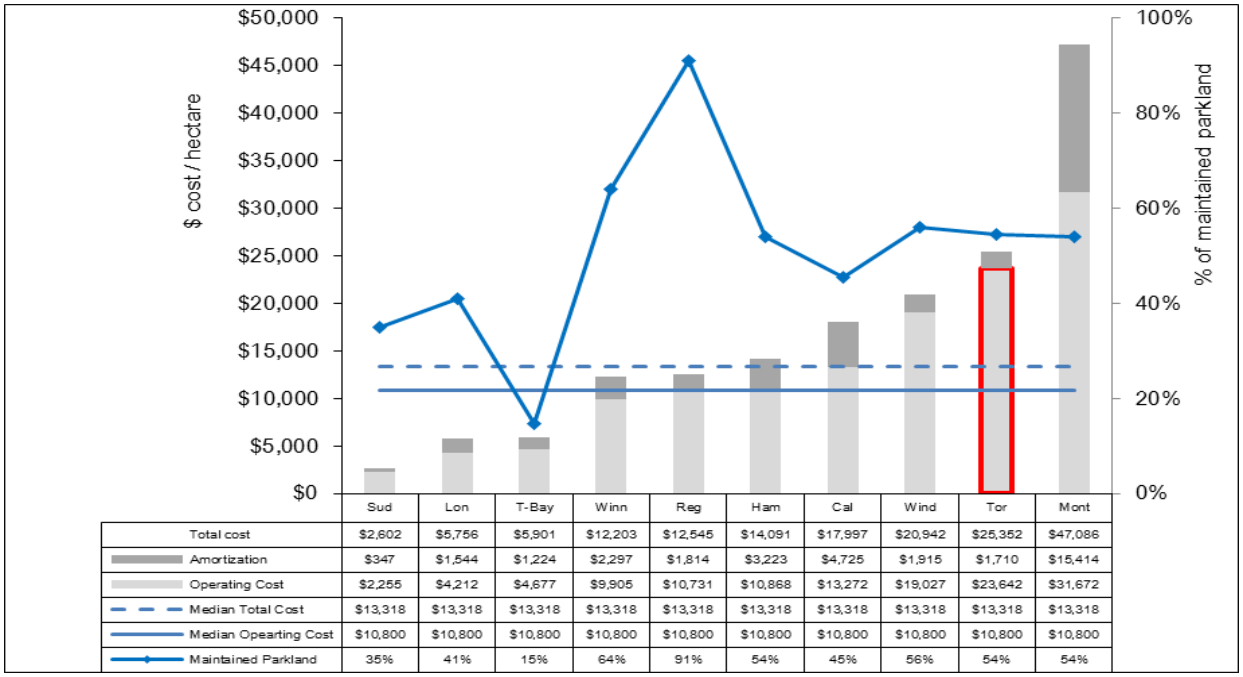
Chart 23.7 (City of Toronto) Cost of Maintaining All Parkland per Hectare

Chart 23.7 reflects the operating cost and total cost (operating cost plus amortization) per hectare of all parkland in Toronto. To reflect the impact of inflation, the Consumer Price Index (CPI) adjusted operating cost results is also plotted as a line graph.

These costs exclude the portions related to boulevard tree maintenance (which are considered as roads expenditure for benchmarking purposes), as well as costs for ski hills, marinas and golf courses, to allow for better comparability with other municipalities.

Compared to 2015, Toronto's 2016 operating cost per hectare and the total cost (which includes amortization) increased by 2.8% and operating cost remained relatively stable with an increase of 1.7%. These increased can be attributed to operating budget pressures resulting from opening new parks, salary and benefit increases and inflationary pressures.

23.8 – HOW DOES TORONTO'S PARKLAND OPERATING COSTS COMPARE TO OTHER MUNICIPALITIES?



	Sud	Lon	T-Bay	Winn	Reg	Ham	Cal	Wind	Tor	Mont
Total cost	$2,602	$5,756	$5,901	$12,203	$12,545	$14,091	$17,997	$20,942	$25,352	$47,086
Amortization	$347	$1,544	$1,224	$2,297	$1,814	$3,223	$4,725	$1,915	$1,710	$15,414
Operating Cost	$2,255	$4,212	$4,677	$9,905	$10,731	$10,868	$13,272	$19,027	$23,642	$31,672
Median Total Cost	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318	$13,318
Median Opearting Cost	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800	$10,800
Maintained Parkland	35%	41%	15%	64%	91%	54%	45%	56%	54%	54%

Chart 23.8 (MBNC 2016) Cost per Hectare of Parkland and % of All Parks that are maintained

Chart 23.8 compares Toronto's 2016 result to other municipalities for the cost per hectare of operating or servicing all parkland (both maintained and natural areas), which are shown as bars relative to the left axis.

The proportion of maintained parkland is a significant factor in these results and has been plotted as a line graph on Chart 23.8 relative to the right axis. Maintained parkland is more costly to take care of than forests and other natural parkland due to the higher standards for turf maintenance and the maintenance requirements for varying ranges of amenities such as greenhouses, washroom structures, playgrounds, sports fields, and splash pads. Toronto's sports fields are also permitted at lower user fee rates than other municipalities. Toronto ranks ninth of ten municipalities (fourth quartile) in terms of both the lowest operating and total cost per hectare.

Toronto has many small parks spread over a large geographic area. The City's high population density creates pressure for more frequent park maintenance and rehabilitation and Toronto's special destination features and tourism create additional costs not borne by other MBNC cities. Toronto's traffic congestion makes access to parks for maintenance more expensive.

2016 ACHIEVEMENTS AND 2017 PLANNED INITIATIVES

The following achievements / initiatives have improved or will help to further enhance the effectiveness of Toronto's Parks Services:

2016 Initiatives Completed/Achievements

Parks

- Invested in new and existing parks to encourage social gatherings, improved maintenance on all Premier and Class A sports fields to provide better service for high level competition, and increased accessibility in parks
- Transported highest number of passengers to Toronto Island to date.
- Opened new parks, increased accessibility in multiple parks through new projects and amenity upgrades and invested in parks by constructing new social gathering spaces in park and continued improving the maintenance on all Premier and Class A sports fields through enhanced turf management practices
- Implemented modernization initiatives such as a parks inspection tool, park and amenity maps.

2017 Initiatives Planned

The 2017 Operating Budget will enable the Program to:

- Deliver instructional and drop-in recreation programs for all ages that teach a new skill or improve the competency level in a variety of activities including swimming, skating, summer and holiday camps, fitness, sports and arts.
- Provide self-directed recreational opportunities through permits for recreational facilities such as ice rinks, facilities, parks and sports fields to individuals and community groups.
- Provide clean, safe and well-maintained green space, park amenities and beaches including the management of natural areas through restoration and preservation activities.
- Operate two animal attractions.
- Provide transportation services to the Toronto Island Park through Ferry Operations.
- Enhance the urban forest asset through investment in new trees, protection and maintenance of the existing asset, and planning for the future.
- Participate in the development of key policies to guide parks and recreation system enhancement, including the TOcore study with City Planning, Parkland Strategy, and Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan.
- Modernize and transform business processes by leveraging technology solutions including the replacement of the Recreation Registration and Permitting system, a new work order management system and an effective on-line self-serve channel for customers.

Factors Influencing the Results of Municipalities

The results of each municipality can be influenced to varying degrees by factors such as:

- Service delivery: differences in service standards established by municipal councils (e.g., types of amenities maintained, frequency of grass cutting).
- Geographic location: varying topography affects the mix of natural and maintained hectares of parkland in each municipality as well as the number of parks and size of an average park.
- Environmental factors: soil composition, weather patterns, etc.
- Population density: higher densities may mean more intense usage and require different types of maintenance strategies (e.g., irrigation, artificial turf, sport field and pathway lighting). More intense use of natural parkland can also necessitate more maintenance.
- Changing demographics and community use: increased demand for large social gatherings and various other sports.
- Amount of parkland / trails in municipalities- there is limited availability of land in municipalities with a predominantly urban form, it may be more difficult to establish new parks in developed areas and acquire new parkland than it is in municipalities with greater rural areas.