

Parks Development Standards

Introduction

The Parks Development Standards document is prepared to assist City staff, Landscape Architects, the development industry, City Council members and the general public with understanding and moving forward with the planning and design of new or redeveloped existing parks and open spaces that contribute to the City's overall park and open space system. The Park Development Standards represent current best practices for parkland planning and design and were vetted thorough a stakeholder and First Nations engagement process and guided by a Municipal Review Committee.

The Parks Standards document is a living document that should be updated on a regular basis to keep pace with changes to Peterborough's demographics, new recreation and park trends or to address changes to standards of practice within the broader realm of Park Planning and Design.

Executive summary

The Parks Development Standards are presented in three sections that include Section 1 – Planning for Parks, Section 2 – Design for Parks and Section 3 – Construction Details for Parks. A summary of each section is provided below.

Section 1 | Planning for Parks

This section combines current best practices around planning for parks with findings and planning recommendations from the Assessment of Parks and Open Space document (prepared in conjunction with these Standards). It was also coordinated with the City of Peterborough's new 2019 Official Plan sections that pertain to Parkland and Open Space. Recommendations from the Vision 2025 Report (2016) were also used as a guiding document.

Section 1 outlines the five-tiered park classification system consisting of:

1. Regional Parks and Other Open Spaces
2. Community Parks and Other Open Spaces
3. Neighbourhood Parks and Other Open Spaces
4. Pocket Parks
5. Urban Park Spaces (ranging from Urban Community Parks to Connecting Links)

The park classification system (in particular, the five types of Urban Park Spaces) responds to future park needs as future development intensifies in the Downtown and along mixed-use corridors beyond the City core.

Within Section 1, the purpose of each park classification is generally described in terms of the use it serves and the type of typical activities and features within that type of park.

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Typical size guidelines are provided along with provision standards that are reflected in ha/1000 of population. For Neighbourhood Parks and Pocket Parks, a service area radius is also identified based on a reasonable walking distance or time to reach a park from residential areas.

The remainder of Section 1 provides planning guidance pertaining to the establishment of new parks within residential areas, using Secondary Plans as a tool for planning and integrating new development “around” predetermined parks, open space systems and natural heritage lands. Planning guidance is also provided in association with sharing park facilities with schools and institutions, green infrastructure, tree and woodlot preservation, parks and storm water ponds and open space management plans.

Section 2 | Design for Parks

The Design and Development Standards section focuses on requirements and expectations under two important processes for parkland development. The first is developer requirements for the condition, pre-servicing and physical requirements of lands to be conveyed to the City for the establishment of new Neighbourhood parks. The second area of requirements is associated with types of park features, spatial needs for park features, design process and an implementation framework for design and construction of parks. The design features for each classification of park set out minimum requirements that will bring Peterborough parks to a level of standard that ensures that accessibility, recreational, environmental, community health, and social needs are met in each new or refurbished park. Since the requirements are minimum in nature, flexibility within the design process allows for the addition of other design features that may be deemed appropriate based on the community and/or physical context of a park.

Some key aspects of the Design for Parks section include:

- a) The formulation of design features associated with each Park Classification as either anticipated typical features such as in Regional and Community Parks or minimum requirements as identified under the Neighbourhood Parks classification.
- b) Developer requirements prior to the conveyance of new parkland that include topsoil, fill and grading needs, storm water and/or sanitary sewer stubs, perimeter fencing, design and construction agreements, and sequencing and timing of construction.
- c) Requirements and responsibilities for development, a process for design and construction and established minimum requirements for park features will allow the City to better forecast, budget and manage parkland capital expenditures.
- d) The establishment of a design process to ensure that parks are suitably sized and located early in land development phases through to a series of facility fit, conceptual and detailed design plans.
- e) A defined community engagement opportunity within the design process.

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- f) A set of park design criteria and design strategies that will contribute to universal accessibility, crime prevention, sustainability and public health. Technical design criteria are also included for sport field sizes, orientation and setbacks, parking, playgrounds, water play, surface grading, provisions for shade, tree and shrub planting and walkways and pedestrian circulation.

Section 3 | Construction Details for Parks

The intent of Section 3 is to provide a library of standard details that can be used by developers, consultants and City staff during the preparation of tender drawings for new or renovated parks. It is expected that as individual park designs move forward, adaptations and modifications to these details will occur to serve site-specific conditions or expanded design expectations.

There are 71 details that are numbered and labeled for easy access within the document. They may be copied and attached to construction drawings if modification of such details is not required. They are intended to set out the minimum requirements for construction of park features. Any modifications to the details that minimizes dimensions, use of materials, sizes or volumes and types of materials must be approved by the City prior to change.

Examples of typical details include various sport field layouts and associated apparatus, multi-purpose courts, tennis courts, plantings, paving surfaces, curbs, fences and site furnishings.