

Jurisdictional Scan: Park Development Requirements in Canadian Cities

Using publicly-available park development standards and information collected through engagement with municipal representatives, cities across Canada were explored with regard to their requirements for park development in developing areas. Details of the cities studied - Calgary, Red Deer, Mississauga and Winnipeg - can be found in the sections below.

Edmonton, Alberta

For comparison, the City of Edmonton’s current requirements for Municipal Reserve park development are summarized in the table below.

Minimum requirements for developers on park sites	Leave the site undisturbed, or grade-level-seed for disturbed sites Fencing, trails and lighting when dictated by the Land Development Agreement (LDA)
Optional items for developers on park sites	Tree planting, trails, lighting, and site furniture Enhanced amenities including playgrounds, bike tracks, sportsfields, spray parks, off leash dog parks, etc.
Requirements for City	Full site development for any parks where developers do not opt to construct above the minimum

Calgary, Alberta

The City of Calgary (pop. 1,640,000) is the most similarly sized city to Edmonton that was included in the jurisdictional scan. Many of the same developers work in both Calgary and Edmonton, and both cities are regulated by the *Municipal Government Act*.

The Calgary Parks 2022 Development Guidelines and Standard Specifications: Landscape Construction outline the required development activities and responsibilities for the various park types (Sub-Neighbourhood Park, Neighbourhood Park, Community Park, District Park, and Linear Park). Each park type has defined minimum and maximum requirements for each development activity.

Development of municipal park sites in Calgary require the developers to receive approval of concept plans for all municipal reserve parks and other open spaces. Concept plans consist of written and visual representations of the intended

function of the park site. Developers have the option to propose development beyond the maximum standards; however, they must follow the maintenance agreement requirements as outlined in the corporate policy and procedures for Enhanced Maintenance Agreement and Infrastructure Agreements.

The following table outlines the development requirements for a Community Park - most comparable to the City of Edmonton’s Community Park designation.

Minimum requirements for developers on park sites	Grade, loam, seed to grass, fully-automatic irrigation, 1.2 metre chain link fence, post and cable fence, local pathways, trees, shrubs, benches, garbage receptacles, install dog bylaw signs, soccer fields
Optional items for developers	Optional amenities, regional pathways, trails, play equipment, exercise equipment, game tables, picnic tables, basketball/volleyball, ball diamond, bleachers, portable washrooms, parking, and lighting
Requirements for City	Supply dog bylaw signs, ice rinks, tennis courts, bleachers, and portable washrooms

Red Deer, Alberta

The City of Red Deer (pop. 109,489) is geographically the closest city to Edmonton that was included in the jurisdictional scan. Both cities are regulated by the *Municipal Government Act* and some of the same developers work in both Edmonton and Red Deer.

Red Deer’s design guidelines outline minimum and maximum requirements for the various open space types (Multi-Neighbourhood [High School] Park Sites, Neighbourhood School and Park Sites, Neighbourhood Park Sites, Parkette Sites, and Linear Parks). The developer would be required to construct some of the landscaping amenities for open spaces based on these guidelines, and have the option to construct additional amenities at their discretion. In instances where the developer does not opt to develop the park above the minimum requirements, the City of Red Deer would be responsible to fund and develop any missing items.

Developers may develop the parks in excess of the maximum standards, if approved by the Parks and Public Works Manager. Notification for this must be given at the time of Area Structure Planning. If excess landscaping and/or amenities are approved by the City, the developer will enter into a long-term maintenance agreement prior to execution of the Development Agreement.

Attachment 1

The following table outlines the development requirements for a Neighbourhood Park Site - most comparable to the City of Edmonton's Community Park designation.

Minimum requirements for developers on park sites	Grading a site, placing and finishing topsoil, planting grass (either seed or sod), plant materials (trees, shrubs, planter beds, etc.) and trails Discretionary items as dictated by the City - fencing, bollards, and site furniture
Optional items for developers	Tot lots and playground structures, trail signage, ornamental structures, gazebos, sculptures, feature walls, water features, fountains, spray pools, etc.
Requirements for City	Completion of school sites (where developer is only required to complete grade-level-seed), completion of amenities where developer does not opt to develop above the required minimum

Mississauga, Ontario

The City of Mississauga (pop. 668,549) is transitioning away from suburban (greenfield) development in response to constrained land supply to support continued greenfield development and policies which encourage urban densification.

The Mississauga Community Services Subdivision Requirements Manual (2003) provided guidance for park sites in greenfield neighbourhoods. In accordance with the 1997 Development Charges Act, most park development works were eligible for Open Space or Recreational Facilities and Equipment development charges. Funds collected under the Development Charges Act are collected and used for funding growth-related capital costs. Development Charges are structured so that "growth pays for growth" but revenues collected through Development Charges were often insufficient to fully address all of the City's growth initiatives.

The following table outlines the minimum requirements for developers for new park sites in Mississauga in a greenfield development context.

Minimum requirements for developers on park sites	Grade-level-seed and utility servicing of the park site, and pay the assessed Development Charge
Optional items for developers	Develop full park to City specifications and receive a credit for the assessed Development Charge

Requirements for City	Develop parks using the funds collected from developers to help pay for the cost of infrastructure required to provide municipal services to new development
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Winnipeg, Manitoba

The City of Winnipeg (pop. 632,063) utilizes a Land Dedication Reserve Fund (cash-in-lieu) to fund park development as well as capital budget allocated annually. In May 2023, Winnipeg City Council approved the municipality's revised Development Agreement Parameters, which now obligate developers to contribute to limited park improvements.

The City of Winnipeg Charter, Conditions for Plans of Subdivision requires that at least 10 per cent of land be conveyed to the City for purposes other than streets. The City's Development Agreement Parameters require developers, at the time of subdivision, to provide 8 per cent in land and contribute the remaining as public reserve landscaping and improvements or as cash-in-lieu. Cash-in-lieu is directed to the Land Dedication Reserve Fund.

Seventy-five cents from every dollar collected for the Land Dedication Reserve Fund is allocated to Parks and Recreation projects in the community from which the funds were collected. The remaining twenty-five cents from every dollar is to be redistributed on a city-wide basis. Revenues collected are often insufficient to fully fund required development, and the allocation to greenfield development may be revisited.

This fund may be used for the acquisition of land for parks or recreational facilities, development of properties for parks and recreational purposes including ancillary equipment and structures, and construction or renovation of recreation facilities on parks and recreation properties. The expenditure of funds is contingent upon the existence of the resources necessary for the ongoing operation, maintenance and support of any parks developed using the Land Dedication Reserve.

The following table outlines the minimum requirements for developers for new Municipal Reserve sites.

Minimum requirements for developers on park sites	Grade-level-seed, provide water service, construct primary pathways, plant trees, provide core amenities (playgrounds, picnic area, and multi-use space) where deemed required in accordance with Winnipeg Parks Strategy catchment target level of service for land provided
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Attachment 1

Optional items for developers	Secondary amenities
Requirements for City	Completing park development using dollars from the Land Dedication Reserve Fund, capital budget, and grants