

CITY OF SASKATOON - PARK UPGRADES

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are parks upgraded?

The Park Upgrade Program is an ongoing Capital project that provides for improvements to existing neighbourhood parks. Candidate parks have safety, programming, drainage, layout or other issues, or a combination of these. Upgrade requests are submitted by the community (through their Community Association), or by a City department such as Parks Division and Recreation & Community Development Division. The goal is to address the issues presented and provide a park that meets current park development standards.

Once a park is on the upgrade list, how long will it take before the work is done?

Due to the large number of parks on the upgrade list and limited funding, there can be a significant wait for the work start. Ten years or more is common.

How long does the park upgrade process take?

Once funding is in place for an upgrade, work is completed over a number of years. The construction phase may span a number of years, depending on the size of the site.

Phase One: Public input, site surveying, site assessment, design and costing.

Phase Two: Tendering and construction. Depending on the size and cost of the project, construction may span multiple years. The park is typically open for use, but turf areas are not.

Phase Three: Establishment and Maintenance period. The contractor looks after maintenance and establishes turf areas. Deficiencies are addressed. At the end of this period the project is turned over to the City of Saskatoon maintenance staff.

How is the extent or scope of work determined?

The scope of work is determined based on the needs expressed by the community, user groups and City staff. Landscape Architects will assess the program needs, site restraints and opportunities, context and other relevant factors to determine the scope of the work. The community, other organizations (such as school boards), maintenance staff and other departments are consulted during the process.

What are some typical amenities or improvements that we can expect with the upgrade?

Amenities vary with the site and are based on input and current standards, but look for new 2.4 metre (8') wide paths, path lighting, site furniture, park signage, irrigation, play areas, drainage structures and re-grading, sports fields, trees, shrubs and turf.

Will we have the same number of sports fields after the upgrade?

This varies depending on the site, but experience tells us that there are generally fewer fields in the park after the upgrade is completed. This is because standard field sizes have increased, we do not overlap fields, and layout and location must work with other amenities and drainage patterns in the park.

Will the park be accessible?

Accessible sidewalk ramps, paths and picnic table(s) will be provided. The level of playground accessibility will be determined during the input and design phase of the project.

Who can I contact with questions about the work being done?

If there are questions regarding the project, you can contact Parks Division, Design Section – Project Manager (reception 306-975-3300), or Recreation & Community Development Division – Community Consultant (reception 306-975-3378). Website information will be provided as well, including specific contact information for the project. Go to www.saskatoon.ca, under 'P' for Parks.

What about vandalism?

As unwelcome as it is, vandalism seems a fact of life. Please help us by reporting acts of vandalism to the Police, Parks Division, or the contractor on site. In most cases we will not replace plant material damaged by vandalism. Damage to new or existing infrastructure means additional costs for repairs, and potentially fewer amenities for everyone's enjoyment.

What happens to the existing trees within the park?

Existing trees are assessed during the design phase, including a review by Urban Forestry staff. Although we try to keep as many existing trees on development sites as

possible, in most cases some trees will be removed. There could be a number of reasons for tree removal, including:

- They are hazard trees or are performing poorly, under stress, diseased or damaged.
- They are in the way of new park components such as sports fields or paths.
- They are a tree species with poor growth characteristics or habits.
- The grade needs raising or lowering in the adjacent area, compromising the tree roots.
- Views need opening up due to safety concerns.

New tree plantings are typically a part of the upgrade work. In most cases trees removed will be replaced with at least an equal number of new trees. New species and varieties are introduced whenever possible.

Once the park is completed, when can the sports fields be used?

Allocation of fields takes place once the turf is fully established and can sustain active use. This varies depending on weather conditions and soil types, but generally fields can be used two growing seasons after they have been seeded. Turf conditions are assessed regularly during the establishment period.

What can I expect during construction? Can we use the park?

The park will not be usable. There will be equipment, trucks and construction hazards including open excavations and uneven ground. You may experience additional noise, dust, mud, and traffic. Temporary fencing may be installed to separate active public areas from the construction site, but due to the size of the sites, they are usually not fully fenced to restrict access. **Do not use or travel through the park during construction.** Once the park has been completed, keep in mind that grass areas need to germinate, and trees and shrubs are newly planted. Avoid using or crossing seeded areas; stay on paths and other hard surfaced areas.

What other parks have been upgraded recently?

Dundonald Park (2013-2015) Pleasant Hill Park (2012)