Summer 221024

Big Marlborough Park Master Plan
What We Did Report- Summer 2024

Report Back: WWHR & WWDR

Introduction: The Big Marlborough Park Master Plan is focused on improving the park by getting the community involved, making it more inclusive, and adding better facilities. This report shares the feedback we received from the community and explains the initial steps we've taken to meet their needs. We're dedicated to working together to create a lively, welcoming, and well-equipped park for everyone.

Project Overview: The Big Marlborough Park Master Plan aims to revitalize the park by enhancing community engagement, social inclusion, and park amenities. The park, established in the 1970s, is an important greenspace in northeast Calgary, surrounded by schools and community facilities. The project addresses the urgent need for updated park facilities to serve the growing and diverse population in the northeast quadrant.

Engagement Process: The Big Marlborough Park Master Plan project will have three rounds of engagement. The first round of engagement took place from June 15 to July 29, 2024, involving over 400 in-person participants and 1,544 online visitors. Methods included community conversations, park pop-ups, an open house, and online feedback. Collaborations with local organizations and extensive outreach efforts were key components.

Key Themes from Community Feedback

Accessibility: Ensure pathways are accessible for all abilities. Develop inclusive playgrounds. Connect transit stop locations to the park.

Amenities & Infrastructure: Install accessible public washrooms and drinking water stations. Add more seating, picnic tables, shaded areas, and regular maintenance.

Gathering Space: Create inviting areas for family and community gatherings with picnic areas, BBQ grills, and fire pits.

Nature and Relaxation: Enhance the park's natural beauty with more trees, native species, and walking paths.

Recreational Activities & Facilities: Offer diverse recreational activities, such as spray park, skateboard park, and upgraded sports amenities.

Safety and Security: Improve lighting, signage, and regular maintenance. Increase patrols and surveillance to ensure safety.

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Community Priorities

Values and Priorities: Physical exercise, enjoying the outdoors, mental health, social wellbeing, and a sense of community were highly valued

Sports and Recreation: Walking, dog walking, racquet sports, and cycling were popular activities. There is a desire for more sports fields and amenities and organized events.

Concerns: Lack of washrooms and water, park condition, and safety issues were major concerns. Suggestions included better maintenance, more amenities, and increased security.

Future Vision

Participants envision a park that remains a vibrant, safe, and inclusive space for all community members, with enhanced natural beauty, diverse recreational opportunities, and strong community engagement.

Theme	Details (What We Heard)	Project Team Response and Details
Key Themes		
Accessibility	Ensure pathways are accessible for all abilities. Develop inclusive playgrounds. Connect transit stop locations to the park.	Enhancing the accessibility of Big Marlborough Park is a priority for all future improvements, as this is essential in creating parks that are more inclusive and welcoming for those of all ages and abilities. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - Identified inclusivity and accessibility as a key priority to guide all decisions and future design efforts. - Focused on providing clear connections to and through the site, including 1) connecting points of arrival (including transit!) with park destinations, 2) creating an enhanced pathway network that offers more variety in experience, and 3) providing greater connectivity among park spaces and amenities. - Identified areas dedicated specifically for play within the overall park site, to complement the existing playgrounds located at each elementary school and within the surrounding community. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Develop a pathway network with a clear hierarchy, with primary multi-modal pathway connections as part of the area's 5A Network and dedicated connections to/through the park's high-use areas.

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		- Create welcoming gateways (for all modes of arrival) into the park from the surrounding community, coordinating with Calgary Transit for the integration of transit stops. - Apply best practices and City accessibility standards when designing the park pathway network. - Provide diverse opportunities for play, considering the unique needs of those with mobility and sensory challenges, as well as neurodiverse individuals and those with a range of cognitive abilities.
Amenities & Infrastructure	Install accessible public washrooms and drinking water stations. Add more seating, picnic tables, shaded areas, and regular maintenance.	Amenities and infrastructure support the enjoyment of our park spaces, encouraging visitors to explore different activities, stay longer, and visit more often. They help to promote a strong park identity and contribute to the overall comfort for users. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - Publicly accessible washrooms have been identified as a key element in the park's transformation. - Washroom facilities will be centrally located within the park site to provide reasonable access from all areas. - Gathering spaces, like picnic areas, have been included, either as dedicated zones and/or integrated with other park areas. - Provide an idea of the type and location of some key site furnishings, to illustrate the design intent. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Finalize all materials and site furnishings. - Provide details for integrating all amenities and site furnishings within the overall layout. - Review the site servicing needs and provide details for the design and integration of washroom facilities, water access, lighting, and power.
Gathering Space:	Create inviting areas for family and community gatherings with picnic areas, BBQ grills, and fire pits.	Gathering spaces – of all sizes – provide opportunities for social connection and are vital in building a strong sense of community. They also create opportunities for celebration, cultural expression, and all kinds of programming to encourage participation and enjoyment of parks. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - Social connection has been identified as a key priority.

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		- Identified community-focused areas that offer flexible and adaptable space for events. - Picnic areas have been included, either as dedicated zones and/or integrated with other park areas. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Design edges between functional spaces to accommodate places of pause, suitable for small-scale gathering. - Confirm size requirements for event spaces, and any service and infrastructure needs. - Ensure that seating areas are strategically located to provide comfort in a wide range of conditions (including shade for sunny, hot conditions!), and able to accommodate both intimate and small group gatherings. - Create spaces that can accommodate a classroom or group for outdoor learning, classes, or other programming. - Create picnic areas of different sizes, with a range of amenities such as shelters, fire pits and/or grills, and site furnishings. - Provide amenities that encourage gathering in all seasons, such as communal fire pits or shelters for the winter.
Nature and Relaxation:	Enhance the park's natural beauty with more trees, native species, and walking paths.	Trees and natural areas are important in our park spaces. They provide habitat for wildlife, support biodiversity, help us manage the adverse effects of climate change, and enhance mental health and wellbeing for visitors. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - Maintained the existing perimeter plantings and landforms. - Identified areas for naturalization – both a grassland ecosystem and urban forest would be appropriate for this park. - Proposed a network of pathways, with different types, to encourage visitors to explore the park, be active, and to enjoy access to nature. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Thoughtfully integrate trees and other plantings to create definition and edges between spaces, provide screening where needed, and to enhance the park's

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		various gathering spaces. - Use trees and other plantings to create visual interest in all seasons, create comfortable microclimates, and contribute to wayfinding and legibility. - Develop plant material lists that enhance the park's biodiversity and are appropriate for the local climate. - Develop a succession plan that encourages thoughtful replacement of trees over time, as they reach the end of their lifecycle or become hazardous to visitors. - Consider ongoing maintenance regimes required to support the long-term success of all vegetation and soils on site. - Explore opportunities for using planting design as art or culture expression. - Design pathways of different widths and materials to offer visitors a range of experiences.
Recreational Activities & Facilities	Offer diverse recreational activities, such as spray park, skateboard park, and upgraded sports amenities	Recreation – formal, programmed sports as well as informal, casual activity – is a core offering in the current park. A future Big Marlborough Park will continue to prioritize recreation, diversifying the range of opportunities as well as focusing on the integration of flexible, multi-use spaces. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - Significant reduction in the amount of park space dedicated to baseball diamonds; these are single-use spaces that no longer suit the needs of the community. - Included a wide range of recreational amenities. - Proposed recreation-focused spaces that can accommodate different uses (including uses in both summer and winter) and can be repurposed in the future as needs/desires change. - Integrated the stormwater dry pond as a flexible space in summer, while continuing to serve as a dynamic activity zone in the winter months. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Confirm size, access, and buffer requirements. - Select materials and develop details that optimize the functionality of these spaces and allow for varying intensities of use. - Coordinate management requirements including booking verses casual use.

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Safety and Security	Improve lighting, signage, and regular maintenance. Increase patrols and surveillance to ensure safety.	Safety and security are high priorities for any public space. The safer people feel visiting, the more opportunities they will have to enjoy the park, for trying different activities, for social connection, and for building community. **What We Did – Preliminary Master Plan:** - More gathering spaces, with a wider variety of things to do will encourage more people and more activity, more often provide greater 'natural surveillance' which is a deterrent to criminal activity. - Prominent gateways and a clear pathway hierarch increase the overall legibility and wayfinding. **What We Will Do – Future Detail Design and Beyond:** - Prioritize clear sightlines through the park. - Develop a lighting strategy that provides adequate and consistent lighting along pathways, as well as in parking lots, and to enhance key landmarks within the park. Avoid over-lighting and light pollution. - Develop a pathway hierarchy, supported by wayfinding signage where helpful, to promote clear navigation. - Establish ongoing maintenance protocols that prioritize rapidly addressing broken fixtures or amenities, vandalism, and visibly show that the park is well-cared for. - Encourage community partners to activate the park with local events! - Explore creative operational and programmatic strategies for enhancing security in the long-term.
Community Priorities		
Values and Priorities	Physical exercise, enjoying the outdoors, mental health, social wellbeing, and a sense of community were highly valued.	Key values and priorities for a future Big Marlborough Park are captured in the Priorities Summary: - Inclusivity & Accessibility - Flexibility & Adaptability - Social Connection - Wellbeing - Access to Nature - All Seasons - Local Community

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Sports and Recreation:	Walking, dog walking, racquet sports, and cycling were popular activities. There is a desire for more sports fields and amenities and organized events.	Desired Sports & Recreation Features: - Pathways - Sports fields - Sports courts - Spaces to accommodate organized events Preliminary master plans options include a wide variety of active uses, as well as spaces to accommodate organized events.
Concerns:	Lack of washrooms and water, park condition, and safety issues were major concerns. Suggestions included better maintenance, more amenities, and increased security.	Desired Amenities: - Washrooms - Water availability The preliminary master plan options locate public washrooms in a central location (near and/or inside the Community Hall). Providing water access in this location, at a minimum, is something that would be detailed in future design phases. Desired Outcomes: - Greater sense of safety - Improved park maintenance - More park amenities Preliminary master plans options include more opportunities for social and event gatherings, as well as the spaces and amenities to support a much wider variety of uses and activities. This is intended to respond to diverse needs and desires, encouraging more visitors to visit more often, and for longer periods of time. More activity within the park is the best way to increase safety and security. The finer details of a lighting strategy, security and surveillance, and the ongoing maintenance required will be addressed more fully in future design phases and long-term management strategies.