



# Places

Part of the City of Kitchener's Parks Master Plan





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## Related sections

### **Places**

### **Spaces**

Community Gardens  
Community Health & Wellness  
Dedication  
Dogs  
Downtown Kitchener  
Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation  
Park Amenities  
Park Design Approach  
Play  
Signature & Feature Parks  
Splashpads  
Sports & Games  
Trails & Lighting  
Winter Use

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# Team

The development of Places, part of the Parks Master Plan was made possible through the efforts of the City of Kitchener Parks and Open Space Design and Development team in collaboration with Openly consulting services.

This work would not have been possible without the ongoing meaningful input from many individuals, groups, organizations, and community partners. We would like to extend a sincere thank you to all who shared their perspectives to support the development of this Parks Master Plan.



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A scenic view of a pond with reeds and a forest under a blue sky, seen from a wooden deck. The foreground shows the wooden planks of the deck and a railing. The middle ground is filled with tall reeds in the water. The background is a dense forest of green trees under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The sun is shining brightly from the upper right, creating a lens flare effect.

# Acknowledgement



Places & Spaces is focused on the park service provided to the Kitchener community. Parks and open spaces are integral to communities, providing spaces where people play, explore, and build connections with the environment and with others.

The City is uniquely positioned to provide, care for, maintain, and secure public access to parks and open spaces for all members of its communities. The City of Kitchener recognizes that these public spaces are planned and built on land that is the traditional territory of the Chonnonton, Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee Peoples. We recognize our responsibility to serve as stewards for the land and honour the original caretakers who came before us. Our community is enriched by the enduring knowledge and deep-rooted traditions of the diverse First Nations, Métis, and Inuit in Kitchener today. The significance of this land to Indigenous communities is respected, and we value the role that parks and open spaces can play in Reconciliation.

The City of Kitchener acts as a steward for almost 2,000 hectares of land as part of a parks and open space system. Through the implementation of Places & Spaces, we will work to better understand and address community needs and the barriers preventing use of these spaces, so that all community members in Kitchener might feel welcome, safe, and able to use our parks and open spaces.



A scenic view of a park with a pond, trees, and a building. The foreground shows a paved path and a grassy area. In the middle ground, there is a pond with a small boat and a golf cart. The background features a large building with a covered entrance and a weeping willow tree. The sky is blue with some clouds.

# Executive Summary



The **Places and Spaces Parks Master Plan** is an update to the 2010 Parks Strategic Plan for the City of Kitchener.

This Parks Master Plan is made up of two parts: **Spaces**, which addresses the quantity of park space, and **Places**, which focuses on the quality of park experiences.

The Spaces part of the Parks Master Plan update was approved by Council in August of 2022.

An extensive period of rich engagement occurred from 2021 to 2023 to properly understand how residents felt about the quality of their park experiences in Kitchener. It took time to begin to build trust-based relationships with numerous community groups, neighbourhoods, organizations, and individuals. For nearly three years, through one-on-one interviews, online polls and surveys, focus groups, pop-up events, and meetings, the City sought to hear the public's perspective on their needs and experiences in parks and open spaces.

Major themes of accessibility, environmental sustainability, equity, health and wellbeing, inclusion,

information, partnerships, and safety arose naturally again and again throughout the engagement. The engagement findings highlight the value and importance of a welcoming and connected parks and open space system for the community.

Taking into consideration findings from all data sources, 50 recommendations are contained in **Places**. The recommendations are prioritized for implementation and grouped into four impact areas.

**Places** recommendations will be implemented in a way that prioritizes engagement while considering their meaning and impact on Kitchener's vision to "build a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us - and each other".

These four themes serve as core impact areas to organize recommendations in **Places** and guide the work of communicating Kitchener's vision:

Parks for everyone

Connecting park experiences

Planning parks for the future

Responsive park spaces

The Places & Spaces Parks Master Plan is organized into topic-based booklets.

### **Places**

### **Spaces**

Community Gardens

Community Health & Wellness

Dedication

Dogs

Downtown Kitchener

Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation

Park Amenities

Park Design Approach

Play

Signature & Feature Parks

Splashpads

Sports & Games

Trails & Lighting

Winter Use

Because of the complex inter-relationship between topics and findings related to parks and open spaces, the booklets work together to guide the future of parks and open spaces in Kitchener.









# Introduction



The **Places** part of the Parks Master Plan will serve as the guide for the development of the parks and open space system in Kitchener for the next ten years with a focus on providing quality park experiences for the Kitchener community.

**Places** also draws on other approved City strategies and plans that share a commitment to fostering sustainability and a sense of belonging in parks and open spaces.

Positioning this Parks Master Plan update within local community context was achieved through community engagement. The community asked for a Kitchener-specific approach to issues being faced in the city's parks settings. Responding to this feedback was critical to the development and maintenance of relationships through all stages of engagement.

The following section describes an overall approach that recognizes the interrelation and overlap of park use with other strategic City initiatives, and acknowledges the impacts of decisions affecting parks and open spaces on the public.

# Overall approach

This Parks Master Plan is made up of two parts: **Spaces**, which addresses the quantity of park space, and **Places**, which focuses on the quality of park experiences.

The Places & Spaces Parks Master Plan is part of Kitchener's vision to:

**Build a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us – and each other.**

Parks are public spaces. Taking an approach that amplifies voices disproportionately impacted by policies related to Kitchener parks contributes meaningfully toward achieving this vision.

Continuing to seek input from those who are marginalized in our community through the implementation of the Parks Master Plan recommendations remains a commitment when engaging with residents across the city. Belonging is for everyone, and safety, health, and wellbeing will look different for different people.

The City of Kitchener acknowledges that in order to realize and maintain this vision, effort, trust, intentionality, and partnerships are needed.



# Connected strategies

The City of Kitchener is made up of five departments, each containing multiple divisions that provide distinct services to residents. Within these divisions, formal strategies guide present and future priorities. Beyond the City of Kitchener, the Region of Waterloo and key partners have their strategies too. It is important to understand how the **Places** part of the Parks Master Plan connects and interacts with these overlapping approved strategies. In some cases, other strategies may support addressing gaps identified through Places. In other cases, Places may address gaps that exist in connected strategies.

Understanding how these strategies interact supports the implementation of the recommendations in Places. Where insights and feedback gathered through the

implementation of Places recommendations are out of scope for parks, it will be shared with the appropriate City divisions.

The City of Kitchener commits to integrating the Parks Master Plan with the other relevant strategies where possible to efficiently achieve shared objectives.

See Appendix A for the full list of relevant connected strategies.







# Methods

# Engagement

To create the foundation on which the vision for Places could be built, an extensive period of rich engagement to occurred from 2021 to 2023. The purpose of the engagement effort was to understand how residents felt about the quality of their park experiences in Kitchener. It took time to begin to build trust-based relationships with numerous community groups, neighbourhoods, organizations, and individuals.

For nearly three years, through a layered and extensive engagement effort including conversations with hundreds of community members, over thirty groups, organizations, committees and classrooms, the City actively sought to hear the public's perspective on their needs and experiences in parks and open spaces. Through one-on-one interviews, online polls and surveys, focus groups, pop-up events, and meetings, major themes of accessibility, environmental sustainability, equity, health and wellbeing, inclusion, information, partnerships, and safety arose naturally again and again.

The recommendations made in Places are directly informed by engagement.

See Appendix C and D for the list of engagement tools and sources.



# Engagement stages

Engagement for Places & Spaces partially overlapped, taking place incrementally over three stages:

1. Relationship initiation and development;
2. Active engagement; and,
3. Validation and feedback.

A summary of **Spaces** engagement is included in the Council-approved document.

## Stage one - relationship initiation and development 2021

Before the launch of the Places & Spaces Parks Master Plan project, the City of Kitchener initiated relationship development with a wide variety of equity-deserving community groups and partners. Trust had to be built from the ground up, and reciprocal relationships established before any true project engagement could take place. Leaning on existing relationships and gentle introductions led to community connections which, in turn, supported introductions with more community groups and partners.



## Stage two - active engagement 2021-2023

As relationships initiated in stage one with community groups continued to grow, Places & Spaces engagement formally launched using a multi-faceted approach.

To chart the path toward creating a welcoming and connected park and open space system for the city, the **Places** engagement effort asked three key questions:

1. How are parks currently experienced?
2. How do we create parks that serve the community?
3. How do we create parks that are welcoming and responsive to all?

Stage two of the engagement process focused on topic-specific virtual engagement through 16 surveys, 10 idea boards, and four online polls. Surveys, idea boards, and polls spanned a wide range of park-related topics, from winter use to sports courts, natural areas, accessibility, and more. Topic-specific engagement was launched through a series of topic groupings over a span of nearly two years to encourage ongoing public engagement.

## Stage three - validation and feedback 2022-2023

Taking into consideration work already planned and conducted by the City of Kitchener, with support from Openly, a social purpose consultancy, a third stage of deeper engagement with equity-deserving communities was organized.

Timelines for engagement with equity-deserving community groups were guided by those community groups. By being flexible and hearing issues important to community groups, as well as meeting when, where, and how community members identified as most appropriate helped to build trust. Over one and a half years, City of Kitchener staff were part of ongoing conversations with hundreds of community members, and over thirty groups, organizations, committees, and classrooms. Focusing on building relationships and listening enabled a pop-up park in Kitchener to be shaped by local community partners that hosted a series of activities during the event. Allowing time and space for these relationships to develop served as a foundation for meaningful conversations with equity-deserving community groups throughout Kitchener about parks and open spaces.



This final stage of engagement was also informed by input from the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Indigenous Initiatives (now Equity, Anti-Racism and Reconciliation) team. The purpose of engagement during this phase was to share information gathered to-date to ensure feedback received was accurately reflected, and to provide opportunities for further in-depth conversations. All community groups were invited to share more feedback, and connections took place at the pace of the partner.

Engagement concluded with topic-based internal workshops with City of Kitchener staff, similar to engagement conducted with the public through surveys. The purpose of the workshops was to understand staff experience with park development and operations and to identify synergies among overlapping City strategies and plans to amplify shared impact and support decision-making.







# Findings

# Major themes

Several themes emerged across topic areas, engagement audiences, and data collection methods. These themes helped to describe the big picture, or deeper meaning in the data. The following major themes cut across several data sets and engagement methods. Each topic-based booklet discusses the engagement findings that related to each of these major themes.

## Accessibility

Designing parks and open spaces to eliminate barriers for individuals with disabilities, ensuring meaningful participation in the park environment by including features such as seating, tables, washroom facilities, playground equipment, trail surfaces, maintenance practices, and more.

## Environmental sustainability

Environmental sustainability includes protecting, maintaining, and expanding biodiversity, considering building materials and methods, and enacting climate change mitigation measures including water conservation efforts in parks and open spaces.

## Health and wellbeing

Recognizing that health and wellbeing will look different for different people, many community members recognized the physical, social, and mental health benefits provided by parks and open spaces

## Inclusion

Inclusion is focused on fostering an environment where everyone feels welcome, safe and included in parks and open spaces by having access to washroom facilities, spaces to play, opportunities to connect, and more.



## Information

The need to communicate relevant information about all parks and open spaces, including updated, bolstered, and diversified signage, communication, and education opportunities.

## Safety

The experience of a park visitor in relation to their feeling of physical, mental, and emotional security within that space. The importance of feeling safe day and night, year-round, arose from the engagement

## Partnerships

The strategic alignment of resources between two or more organizations to provide a shared benefit to the community. Thoughtful relationship development and engagement processes with community members and partners underline all the conceptual themes as a way to effectively deliver diverse, publicly available recreational opportunities in parks and open spaces.

# Interrelation of major themes

Each of the major themes is intertwined with the others. For example, ensuring terrain is made of **accessible** and well-maintained material contributes to the **safety** of community members moving through parks and on trails. Similarly, sharing **information** regarding natural spaces can better support **environmental sustainability** through fostering a sense of stewardship. Further, supporting **inclusion** by investing in **partnerships**, culturally relevant sports, activity spaces, and games contributes to the social and physical **health and wellbeing** of community members.

Because major themes interrelate with one another each has a positive association with others. Positively impacting one theme is likely to have a positive impact on another theme, which will then positively impact another theme, and so on.

## Parks for everyone

Kitchener's vision to "build a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us – and each other" inspires us to carefully consider the voices, feedback and experiences of those who have not traditionally been considered in how our city is planned and built.

By creating parks and open spaces that are accessible, promote environmental sustainability, offer free or low-cost activities, and consider the safety of those who feel the least safe in public spaces, we can ensure that all people are able to fully participate in city parks and open spaces without barriers.

Beyond the findings that surfaced through engagement and highlighted the major themes, additional data was sought on each topic area. The following pages outline all data sources used to gain a thorough understanding of each topic to inform the development of the recommendations.



# Data sources

This section highlights the sources of data and information used to inform recommendations for Places. A total of 12 sources, including all forms of engagement, have informed the Parks Master Plan recommendations.



## Legislation

Relevant laws that may impact or inform the current Parks Master Plan and decisions made about parks and open spaces.



## Equitable engagement

Engaging with the intent of inviting, including and amplifying the voices of those who historically experience inequitable experiences in parks and open spaces.



## Engagement with the broader community

A multi-stage process of surveys, idea boards, and polls used to understand the perspectives of those who visit or may like the opportunity to visit Kitchener parks and open spaces.



## Engagement with City of Kitchener departments

A cross-collaborative view from all five City departments to coordinate ideas, plans, connected strategies and understand perspectives that impact or are impacted by parks and open spaces.



## Engagement with partner organizations

Directed efforts to connect with public organizations within service delivery fields that related to parks and open spaces.



## Comparative analysis

A side-by-side comparison of options within a municipal or regional context to understand how they are similar and different from each other.



### **External research**

Other municipal, regional or provincial policies/guidelines or publications that are relevant to Kitchener park implementation.



### **Policy**

Formal guidelines established to influence actions, behaviors, decisions and recommendations made for this Parks Master Plan. Policies provide consistency, compliance, and alignment with the City's objectives and legal responsibilities.



### **City of Kitchener strategies**

It is important to understand how the Places Parks Master Plan connects to and interacts with other strategies. In some cases, other strategies may already address gaps identified through the Places strategy. In other cases, Places may address gaps identified through other strategies.



### **Region of Waterloo strategies**

Similar to City of Kitchener strategies, this includes formal strategies created by the Region of Waterloo that align with or support initiatives by the City. Understanding how the Parks Master Plan may interact with these plans is key to creating well-coordinated strategies and services in parks and open spaces.



### **Best practices**


Methods that have been most effective and have impact in a specific context.



### **City of Kitchener staff experience**

Informed by City staff with extensive knowledge and experience regarding designing and maintaining parks and open spaces.



A photograph of a sunny day at a bicycle park. In the foreground, a child in a pink shirt and black helmet is riding a red bicycle. To the left, another child in a red shirt and black helmet is also riding. In the background, a third child in a light blue shirt is riding away. The park features several dirt mounds and ramps. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. A large, semi-transparent dark grey rectangle is overlaid across the middle of the image, containing the text 'Recommendation Development' in white.

# Recommendation Development

# Prioritizing recommendations

Based on all of the engagement findings and review of other data sources, a comprehensive set of **50 recommendations** emerged as the key action items for the Places part of the Parks Master Plan.

Considering the City's capacity to efficiently and meaningfully implement recommendations, they need to be prioritized over time and in a way that considers feasibility along with their individual and collective impact.

The criteria developed to prioritize the implementation of each of the recommendations was centered around the following question:

## **What strategic considerations need to inform prioritizing insights and recommendations?**

Ideas were brainstormed independently and then the project team discussed how different ideas might be

grouped and created those groups by consensus. The team then gave each group a title, adjusted these titles as needed to reflect the ideas, and arrived at six evaluation criteria. These criteria are closely tied to the five goals outlined in the City's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan:

**Building a connected city together**

**Cultivating a green city together**

**Creating an economically-thriving city together**

**Fostering a caring city together**

**Stewarding a better city together**

Each criterion was then weighted in keeping with Kitchener's vision to **"build a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us - and each other"**.

Equity, meaningful impact, and environmental sustainability carried the greatest weight, resource availability and context informed were weighted next, and time to implement was weighted the lowest.



# Prioritization criteria

## **Equity**

Considering those who are historically excluded from opportunities on the basis of one or more identity characteristics, who have a greater need, and who are often met with barriers to create change.

## **Meaningful impact**

Community members experiencing an improvement to their quality of life.

## **Environmental sustainability**

Building parks & amenities with climate-positive choices and longevity in mind.

## **Resource availability**

Access to existing people, materials, and money.

## **Context informed**

The extent to which the recommendation is informed by local needs, strategy, accountability, politics, and policy.

## **Time**

How long implementation takes.





# Prioritization process

A City of Kitchener staff group including individuals from cross-sectional departments with expertise and valuable knowledge about community context was formed to score each recommendation using the weighted criteria. The group was comprised of staff representing several divisions including Parks and Open Space Design & Development, Neighbourhood Programs and Services, Sport, Development Approvals, and Equity Anti-Racism and Reconciliation.

The group met in person for orientation to the prioritization process and review of the list of recommendations. Scoring involved individuals anonymously rating each criterion. Weights were averaged across the group. A group discussion followed about whether the results were as expected based on the shared understanding of the workshop objectives, current context, and strategic considerations. The scoring exercise and workshop discussion resulted in a prioritized list of recommendations.

# Impact areas

Based on feedback gathered from the criteria scoring workshop, the list of recommendations was reviewed and four main areas of impact emerged consistently:

**Parks for everyone**

**Connecting park experiences**

**Planning parks for the future**

**Responsive park spaces**

These four groups serve to support the communication about the implementation and impact of the recommendations and are described as follows:

## ■ Parks for everyone

The ranking exercise confirmed the essential importance of the City's role in fostering a sense of belonging in parks. Recommendations that have a primary focus on inclusion and belonging for all naturally fit into this group.

## ■ Connecting park experiences

This group of recommendations focuses enhancing the parks and open space system by looking at novel ways to create park experiences outside of traditional park spaces while prioritizing a balance of park uses in existing parks.

## ■ Planning parks for the future

Recommendations in this group are focused on the long-term sustainability of parks and open spaces through planning for community growth and changing demographics, considering the longevity and environmental impact of infrastructure investments, reviewing emergency response protocols, and more.

## ■ Responsive park spaces

This group of recommendations involves thinking creatively about park programming by examining how parks, trails, and open spaces are currently enjoyed and how they might evolve to adapt to future needs.





The natural emergence of the four distinct impact areas highlights the complex nature of the role that parks and open spaces play for Kitchener residents and, subsequently, the importance of a multi-layered approach to making meaningful progress toward Kitchener's vision to "build a city for everyone where, together, we take care of the world around us - and each other".







# Topics

The Places part of the Parks Master Plan is comprised of individual, topic-based booklets that work together. Each booklet includes the relevant background information, engagement findings, and recommendations on the topic. Booklet titles and descriptions are listed here alphabetically.

## **Community Gardens**

Community gardens are a key part of a strong local food system. This booklet describes the history of city-administered allotment gardening in Kitchener, its present, and the recommendations to support community gardening into the future.

## **Community Health & Wellness**

Many turn to parks and open spaces to maintain an active lifestyle and to support their mental health. This booklet explores the impact that parks and open spaces have on physical mental wellbeing, and recommendations to support their role during times of crisis or emergency.

## **Dedication**

The opportunity to memorialize a loved one in a public space is important to Kitchener residents. This booklet describes the revised Tree and Bench Dedication program.

## **Dogs**

Parks and open spaces are popular places to walk, run, or play with the family dog. This booklet describes the increasing desire for dedicated spaces for dogs in parks and open spaces and includes recommendations that support the anticipated growth in dog ownership.

## **Downtown Kitchener**

The core of the city presents unique opportunities and challenges for public park space. This booklet explores the limitations on creating new parks and open spaces downtown and makes recommendations to explore other ways of creating park experiences in the urban core.

## **Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation**

Parks and open spaces play an important role in climate adaptation and connection to nature. This booklet looks at how parks and open spaces might support other approved climate-adaptive plans and strategies already underway and how to strengthen connection to and along the Grand River.

### **Park Amenities**

Enough of the right kinds of benches, tables and shade can enhance a person's experience in a park. This booklet establishes updated standards for these functional park amenities while also looking at strategies to assess public washrooms and drinking water in parks.

### **Park Design Approach**

There are over 275 maintained parks across the city. This booklet explores how parks and open spaces are organized and designed across Kitchener and makes recommendations to help create a connected network of unique and complementary park experiences.

## **Play**

There are almost as many traditional play structures as there are parks in Kitchener. This booklet describes play infrastructure in Kitchener and how it can be re-examined and designed to support joy, play, and connection for people of all ages and abilities.

### **Signature & Feature Parks**

Kitchener has five unique and distinct parks that offer novel experiences for Kitchener residents and beyond. The vision for a sixth along the Grand River is underway. This booklet looks at their value to and impact on the community over time and into the future.

### **Splashpads**

Splashpads offer local opportunities for recreation and relief from the summer heat. This booklet includes recommendations that support construction of new splashpads in areas of need, and how the City can incorporate more efficient water use.



## **Sports & Games**

Parks are home to the majority of the city's outdoor sportsfields, sport courts, and games. This booklet establishes updated standards for sportsfield and sports court facilities and recommends ways they can be effectively designed in public park spaces.

## **Trails & Lighting**

A connected trail network enhances access to and through parks and open spaces. This booklet makes recommendations to support greater accessibility and connectivity across the city and along the Walter Bean Grand River Trail.

## **Winter Use**

Winter conditions change how parks are used. This booklet explores recommendations to support continued winter use and how that use is adapting to the realities of climate change.
















A large, light-colored wooden pergola structure with a series of parallel slats, casting shadows on a paved walkway. Two dark metal park benches are positioned under the pergola. In the background, there is a green lawn, a sidewalk, and a row of modern suburban houses with gabled roofs and large windows. The sky is clear and blue.

# Recommendations





This section includes the comprehensive list of all recommendations including their description, implementation status or priority, data sources, action type, impact area and booklet reference for more information on the recommendation.

### Data sources legend

-  Legislation
-  Equitable engagement
-  Engagement with the broader community
-  Engagement with City of Kitchener departments
-  Engagement with partner organizations
-  Comparative analysis
-  External research
-  Policy
-  City of Kitchener strategies
-  Region of Waterloo strategies
-  Best practices
-  City of Kitchener staff experience

*See p. 26-27 for data source descriptions*

### Impact area legend

-  Parks for everyone
-  Connecting park experiences
-  Planning parks for the future
-  Responsive park spaces

*See p. 33 for impact area descriptions*




































































# ✓ Recommendations underway

The Places part of the Parks Master Plan contains a total of 50 recommendations. Of those, 13 formalized in this Parks Master Plan update have been initiated or are already underway as part of Council-approved connected strategies or policies, or are a result of legislated changes implemented since the 2010 Parks Strategic Plan.

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
	<b>A vision for Grand River Park</b>  Continue with the Grand River Park strategy as identified in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.	Signature & Feature Parks								✓	✓				Policy	
	<b>Grow the urban tree canopy</b>  Use parks and open spaces to help implement the Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy tree canopy targets.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation		✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		Policy	
	<b>Engagement-informed design</b>  Tailor park experiences and amenities to the communities that use them and as supported through equitable community engagement.	Park Design Approach		✓		✓							✓	✓	Policy	
	<b>Walter Bean Trail support</b>  Support the pursuit of a continuous Walter Bean Grand River Trail and complete the feasibility study of the entire corridor to determine the long-term viability of the trail.	Trails & Lighting				✓					✓		✓	✓	Policy	

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
	<b>Consider water conservation systems for splashpads</b>  Design all splashpads as single-use systems with the option to become recirculation or hybrid systems where applicable. Include water conservation features such as isolated timers, motion sensors, and lower volume play features.	Splashpads			√	√			√		√		√	√	Policy	
	<b>Plan whole play spaces</b>  Resource new and renovated playground projects to provide suitable play experiences and supporting amenities such as seating, shade, playground curbing, and barrier-free infrastructure that support play, caregiving, and maintenance activities.	Play		√	√	√							√	√	Policy	
	<b>Acquire floodplain lots for open space network</b>  Continue or initiate active pursuit of properties in targeted floodplain areas.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation					√			√	√		√		Policy	
	<b>Pursue strategic master planning for select parks</b>  Create development plans for identified parks or park networks impacted by multiple connected strategies, initiatives, asset needs, and future recreational opportunities.	Park Design Approach				√					√		√	√	Strategy	
















Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
	<b>Faster playground replacement</b> Resource a sustained increase in the playground replacement rate at priority locations to address the current backlog.	Play	√			√							√	√	Policy	
	<b>Continue Grand River access improvements</b> Prioritize and improve Grand River canoe launch access points to established standards.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation					√			√	√				Capital project	
	<b>Introduce a revised dedication program</b> Proposed program to include a memorial forest program and rework of the park bench and tree dedication program.	Dedication		√	√	√		√	√	√			√	√	Policy	
	<b>More shade and seating in parks</b> Establish standards to support an increase in seating and shade options in parks.	Park Amenities		√	√						√		√	√	Policy	
	<b>Long term plans</b> Initiate or update existing strategic and asset management plans for each Signature and Feature park including Victoria Park (underway), Huron Natural Area (underway), McLennan Park (underway), Rockway Gardens, Kiwanis Park, and RBJ Schlegel Park.	Signature & Feature Parks				√							√		Strategy	






































# Prioritized recommendations
















The list of 37 recommendations below is in order of priority and will act as a guide for implementation. Refer to the Implementation Framework section of this booklet for the near-term, mid-term, and long-term implementation plan for policies, strategies and capital projects.

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
01	<b>Prioritize parkland as a use of current City-owned properties</b>  For suitable City-owned lands located in areas identified in Spaces as High or Critical Needs, prioritize parkland when considering land-use modification to compensate for reduced parkland acquisition tools and to support parkland provision targets when assessed in accordance with the City-Owned Land Disposition Framework (DSD-2024-044).	Downtown Kitchener	✓			✓				✓	✓				Policy	
02	<b>Create a park washroom and hydration strategy</b>  Develop a strategy to assess existing inventory, renovations, adaptations, future growth, alternative delivery methods, operating and staffing needs, all rooted in inclusive and accessible design at the lowest lifecycle cost.	Park Amenities		✓	✓	✓			✓				✓		Strategy	


















Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
03	<b>Review existing Parks By-Law</b>  Establish a cross-departmental team to complete a review and update of the existing Parks By-Law.	Community Health & Wellness		√		√					√	√	√		Strategy	
04	<b>Alternative spaces</b>  Pursue opportunities for recreation beyond park property boundaries. Continue cross-departmental re-imagination and adaptation of spaces such as roads and laneways to support and integrate with the parks system downtown.	Downtown Kitchener	√		√	√					√				Policy	
05	<b>Public drinking water in parks</b>  Support a pilot project to provide public drinking water at three locations and monitor their use, cost, and staff time implications. Incorporate findings from public drinking water pilot project into the park washroom and hydration strategy.	Park Amenities		√	√			√	√				√		Capital project	
06	<b>Change the way we play</b>  Establish play design standards for new and renovated parks that describe fun and play for all ages and abilities, and that allow a responsive approach to evolving local and broader trends.	Play	√	√	√	√	√		√				√	√	Strategy	



















Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
07	<b>Local park networks</b> Design local parks as networks of unique and complementary park experiences to deliver a variety of services while avoiding redundancies.	Park Design Approach			√	√			√				√	√	Policy	
08	<b>Park lighting standards</b> Establish park lighting criteria and policies to determine park eligibility and standards for pedestrian lighting.	Trails & Lighting		√	√	√			√	√	√		√	√	Policy	
09	<b>Public use of outdoor sportsfields facility program</b> Support the development of a public drop-in program for outdoor bookable sport facilities within public park settings.	Sports & Games											√	√	Policy	
10	<b>Increase biodiversity in parks</b> Using an asset management approach, identify strategic parkland areas that can be transitioned to naturalized areas through park renovation projects. Design plantings to mimic nature as much as possible in species diversification.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation		√	√	√							√	√	Policy	
11	<b>Resource relationship-building</b> Resource engagement for and in-between projects and in alignment with the outcomes of the corporate engagement review.	Park Design Approach				√		√			√		√	√	Strategy	

















Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
12	<b>Ensure community gardens are barrier-free</b>  Expand the Corporate Accessibility Fund mandate and budget to enable grant projects to meet accessibility requirements identified by Inclusion Services and the Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee (GRAAC).	Community Gardens	√	√	√	√							√		Policy	
13	<b>Match playgrounds to their parks</b>  Establish standards for traditional playground size and complexity in alignment with park size and classification.	Play				√							√	√	Policy	
14	<b>Standard agreements for POPS</b>  Develop a standard policy to outline the public use, design, and maintenance agreements for privately owned public spaces (POPS), consistent with the Park Dedication By-Law and Policy.	Park Design Approach	√			√				√			√		Policy	
15	<b>Evaluate the playground inventory</b>  Establish data-informed evaluation criteria to create a playground inventory management plan. Invest resources into increasing the size and improving the quality of traditional playgrounds at strategic locations and consolidating playgrounds where supported by engagement.	Play	√			√							√	√	Strategy	


































Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
16	<b>Active uses downtown</b> Encourage the development of active park uses in downtown parks. Consideration should be made for sport, play, activities and games during redevelopment opportunities.	Downtown Kitchener				✓								✓	Policy	
17	<b>Power in parks</b> Include publicly available outlets at each new or renovated shade structure, where possible to do so.	Park Amenities		✓	✓	✓								✓	Policy	
18	<b>Trail surfaces in parks</b> Establish that all new and renovated park developments include stable, firm surfaces of asphalt or concrete, unless otherwise required to be stonedust for environmental reasons.	Trails & Lighting	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓			✓	✓	Policy	
19	<b>Connect operating and life-cycle planning to capital works</b> All reporting and budget planning for capital park development to include recognition of changes to maintenance procedures and future life-cycling requirements including funding, labour, and equipment needs.	Park Design Approach				✓							✓		Policy	
20	<b>Less intensive turf</b> Diversify turf species to improve biodiversity and reduce cutting rotations.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation				✓							✓	✓	Policy	

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
21	<b>Grow a city gardening hub</b>  Explore a cross-departmental pilot program to re-introduce a City-coordinated garden located in an area of need as identified through engagement. Program to support food security through opportunities for gardening, food literacy programming, community gathering, and demonstration.	Community Gardens		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	Strategy	
22	<b>Green infrastructure integration in existing parks</b>  Establish integrated design and development standards and criteria for retrofit stormwater management adaptations, natural assets, and low-impact development (LID) in park spaces.	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation				✓			✓		✓			✓	Policy	
23	<b>Comprehensive court strategy</b>  Conduct a complete asset management review and demand analysis for all sport courts in parks to inform the strategic renovation, replacement, or addition of sport courts.	Sports & Games	✓	✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	Strategy	
24	<b>Consider exercise equipment in parks</b>  Monitor existing exercise equipment locations for usage rates to determine if infrastructure should be expanded.	Play			✓	✓								✓	Strategy	



Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
25	<b>Install permanent waste receptacles</b>  Establish a suite of standard above-ground and subterranean waste receptacles appropriate to park classifications, uses, and need. Prioritize locations for the installation of preferred waste management improvements.	Park Amenities			√	√							√	√	Capital project	
26	<b>Refrigerated skating area</b>  Conduct a feasibility study for a public outdoor refrigerated skating area in a park space with city-wide access.	Winter Use			√	√			√					√	Strategy	
27	<b>Data-driven capital forecasting</b>  Employ evaluation criteria to prioritize park renovations. Criteria to include community priority, park asset conditions, and accessibility.	Park Design Approach				√							√	√	Policy	
28	<b>Align new grant infrastructure with park capital planning</b>  Where possible, align grant-led placemaking projects in parks with capital project forecasts to optimize budgets and infrastructure that support their implementation and maintenance.	Community Gardens				√							√		Policy	
29	<b>More splashpads</b>  Develop three new local splashpads in alignment with the Outdoor Pool Strategy.	Splashpads		√	√	√		√						√	Capital project	

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
30	<b>Review existing dog facilities</b>  Audit existing fenced dog parks to assess accessibility needs, waste management, and general improvements to user experiences.	Dogs	√		√	√							√	√	Strategy	
31	<b>Expand small-scale commercial licensing in parks</b>  Permit occasional, small-scale commercial use of park space.	Community Health & Wellness			√			√	√				√		Strategy	
32	<b>Rubberized surfacing in each ward</b>  Identify and resource one playground per ward to receive rubberized surfacing in a location with greatest access in the community.	Play	√	√	√	√	√						√	√	Capital project	
33	<b>Pilot off-leash areas</b>  Create a pilot project to use select hydro corridors and park space as designated off-leash areas. Establish permanent off-leash areas throughout Kitchener informed by the results of the pilot project.	Dogs			√		√	√	√				√		Capital project	
34	<b>Strategic locations for sportsfield lighting</b>  Continue or support future initiatives to install sportsfield lighting in parks that enable increased programming. Priority given to City Wide classified parks with available parking and meaningful separation from residences.	Sports & Games				√			√		√		√		Policy	

Priority	Recommendation	Booklet title	Data sources												Action type	Impact area
																
35	<b>Build a south-end dog park</b>  Establish an off-leash dog facility located in one of the southern residential communities sized to accommodate the projected 20-year population growth in the area.	Dogs			√			√	√					√	Capital project	
36	<b>Dogs in community parks</b>  Support “micro” dog parks in Community class parks, where brought forward by grassroots initiatives, grant programs, or supported by local consultation, and balanced with other recreational interests.	Dogs			√									√	Policy	
37	<b>Artificial turf for sportsfields</b>  Continue to invest in the conversion of eligible natural turf sportsfields to artificial turf, subject to future demand analysis.	Sports & Games				√			√		√		√		Policy	





# Implementation Framework



# Forecasting implementation

Identifying action types for each recommendation is a key step in establishing an implementation plan that considers timelines, projected costs, and sets an order of actions over a period of time.

The three recommendation action types are:

1. Strategy
2. Capital project
3. Policy

## Strategy

Strategic explorations establish a general plan or approach to work towards defined long-term goals or objectives. Strategies outline the City's overall direction and priorities, providing a framework to inform decision-making and resource allocation.

## Capital project

Capital projects are defined investment projects

typically involving the acquisition, development, or enhancement of physical assets such as buildings, infrastructure, or equipment. These projects are often characterized by significant financial investments and require long-term planning by the City.

All recommendations that have **strategy** and **capital project** action types will be identified and forecast through the City's annual budget process in order of their priority and efficient implementation. For example, a strategic exploration may precede a capital investment project to enable efficient use of projected budget resources.

## Policy

Policies establish formal principles and guidelines to influence actions, behaviors, and decision-making. Policies provide consistency, ensure alignment with the City's objectives and compliance with legal responsibilities.

All recommendations that have a **policy** action type will result in the development of specific principles and guidelines to inform decision-making on any future projects as relevant opportunities arise.



The City of Kitchener uses a 10-year time frame to forecast its capital commitments through an annual budget process. The City's budget process is reviewed annually to adjust resources within the 10-year forecast based on the City's current financial position and overall priorities.

Using this 10-year model, the projected available resources, indicative cost and time estimates, overlaid with the established priority of each recommendation and its effective implementation, the following three tables represent their recommended ordering over a 10 year time period.











Recommendations that involve the development of a strategy will be resourced to develop the strategies but strategy outcomes may require additional funding to implement. Any unfunded recommendations will be considered through future budget processes.













The implementation priority may be subject to change caused by any resource adjustments and recommendation order should be considered a guide for each year's budget process. Places recommendations requiring strategic exploration or capital investment have been forecast for








implementation in the following tables. The near-term timeline is generally defined as within 1-3 years, mid-term within 4-6 years, and long-term within 7-10 years.








# Near-term implementation






Priority	Recommendation	Near-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
	<b>A vision for Grand River Park</b> Continue with the Grand River Park strategy as identified in the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan.	Kitchener's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan	Signature & Feature Parks	Policy	
	<b>Grow the urban tree canopy</b> Use parks and open spaces to help implement the Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy canopy targets.	Tree planting initiatives in parks and open spaces	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation	Policy	
	<b>Engagement-informed design</b> Tailor park experiences and amenities to the communities that use them and as supported through equitable community engagement.	Indigenous placemaking projects in Victoria Park and Huron Natural Area	Park Design Approach	Policy	
	<b>Walter Bean Trail support</b> Support the pursuit of a continuous Walter Bean Grand River Trail and complete the feasibility study of the entire corridor to determine the long-term viability of the trail.	Walter Bean Trail feasibility study	Trails & Lighting	Policy	
	<b>Consider water conservation systems for splashpads</b> Design all splashpads as single-use systems with the option to become recirculation or hybrid systems where applicable. Include water conservation features such as isolated timers, motion sensors, and lower volume play features.	Chandler Mowat Community Centre splashpad, 2025	Splashpads	Policy	

Priority	Recommendation	Near-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
	<b>Plan whole play spaces</b> Resource new and renovated playground projects to provide suitable play experiences and supporting amenities such as seating, shade, playground curbing, and barrier-free infrastructure that support play, caregiving, and maintenance activities.	Future playground renovations	Play	Policy	
	<b>Acquire floodplain lots for open space network</b> Continue or initiate active pursuit of properties in targeted floodplain areas	City of Kitchener Official Plan: A Complete & Healthy Kitchener, 2014	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation	Policy	
	<b>Pursue strategic master planning for select parks</b> Create development plans for identified parks or park networks impacted by multiple connected strategies, initiatives, asset needs, and future recreational opportunities.	Gzowski Park Kaufman Park Laurentian Park (and network) Lions Park Rosenberg Park Schaefer Park, Weber Park	Park Design Approach	Strategy	
	<b>Faster playground replacement</b> Resource a sustained increase in the playground replacement rate at priority locations to address the current backlog.	Idlewood Park, Kinzie Park, Oaten Park renovations, 2024; future park networks	Play	Policy	
	<b>Continue Grand River access improvements</b> Prioritize and improve Grand River canoe launch access points to established standards.	Feasibility study for Bridgeport area	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation	Capital project	
	<b>Introduce a revised dedication program</b> Proposed program to include a memorial forest program and rework of the park bench and tree dedication program.	New Tree and Bench Dedication Program, 2025	Dedication	Policy	

Priority	Recommendation	Near-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
	<b>More shade and seating in parks</b> Establish standards to support an increase in seating and shade options in parks.	Alpine Park renovation, 2023; tree planting initiatives in parks	Park Amenities	Policy	
	<b>Long term plans</b> Initiate or update existing strategic and asset management plans for each Signature and Feature park including Victoria Park (underway), Huron Natural Area (underway), McLennan Park (underway), Rockway Gardens, Kiwanis Park, and RBJ Schlegel Park.	Victoria Park, Huron Natural Area, McLennan Park	Signature & Feature Parks	Strategy	
02	<b>Create a park washroom and hydration strategy</b> Develop a strategy to assess existing inventory, renovations and adaptations, future growth, alternative delivery methods, operating and staffing needs, all rooted in inclusive and accessible design at the lowest lifecycle cost	Assessment of current service levels city-wide	Park Amenities	Strategy	
03	<b>Review existing Parks By-Law</b> Establish a cross-departmental team to complete a review and update of the existing Parks By-Law.	Review of Chapter 270 Parks By-Law	Community Health & Wellness	Strategy	
04	<b>Alternative spaces</b> Pursue opportunities for recreation beyond park property boundaries. Continue cross-departmental re-imagination and adaptation of spaces such as roads and laneways to support and integrate with the parks system downtown.		Downtown Kitchener	Policy	



Priority	Recommendation	Near-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
05	<b>Public drinking water in parks</b> Support a pilot project to provide public drinking water at three locations and monitor their use, cost, and staff time implications. Incorporate findings from the water pilot project into the park washroom and hydration strategy.	Three locations to be determined	Park Amenities	Capital project	
06	<b>Change the way we play</b> Establish play design standards for new and renovated parks that describe fun and play for all ages and abilities, and that allow a responsive approach to evolving local and broader trends.		Play	Policy	
08	<b>Park lighting standards</b> Establish park lighting criteria and policies to determine park eligibility and standards for pedestrian lighting.		Trails & Lighting	Strategy	
11	<b>Resource relationship-building</b> Resource engagement for and in-between projects and in alignment with the outcomes of the corporate engagement review.		Park Design Approach	Strategy	
15	<b>Evaluate the playground inventory</b> Establish data-informed evaluation criteria to create a playground inventory management plan. Invest resources into increasing the size and improving the quality of traditional playgrounds at strategic locations and consolidating playgrounds where supported by engagement.		Play	Strategy	








Priority	Recommendation	Near-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
21	<b>Grow a city gardening hub</b>  Explore a cross-departmental pilot program to re-introduce a City-coordinated garden located in an area of need as identified through engagement. Program to support food security through opportunities for gardening, food literacy programming, community gathering, and demonstration.		Community Gardens	Strategy	
23	<b>Comprehensive court strategy</b>  Conduct a complete asset management review and demand analysis for all sport courts in parks to inform the strategic renovation, replacement, or addition of sport courts.		Sports & Games	Strategy	
24	<b>Consider exercise equipment in parks</b>  Monitor existing exercise equipment locations for usage rates to determine if infrastructure should be expanded.		Play	Strategy	
25	<b>Install permanent waste receptacles</b>  Establish a suite of standard above-ground and subterranean waste receptacles appropriate to park classifications, assets, and need. Prioritize locations for the installation of preferred waste management improvements.		Park Amenities	Capital project	
29	<b>More splashpads</b>  Develop three new local splashpads in alignment with the Outdoor Pool Strategy.	Location 1  Three locations to be determined through engagement	Splashpads	Capital project	












# Mid-term implementation

No.	Recommendation	Mid-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
	<b>Continue Grand River access improvements</b> Prioritize and improve Grand River canoe launch access points to established standards.	Stanley Park Optimist Natural Area Access Point	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation	Capital Project	
	<b>Long term plans</b> Initiate or update existing strategic and asset management plans for each Signature and Feature Park including Victoria Park (underway), Huron Natural Area (underway), McLennan Park (underway), Rockway Gardens, Kiwanis Park, and RBJ Schlegel Park.	Rockway Gardens	Signature & Feature Parks	Strategy	
	<b>Pursue strategic master planning for select parks</b> Create development plans for identified parks or park networks impacted by multiple connected strategies, initiatives, asset needs, and future recreational opportunities.	Heritage Park Budd Park Queensmount Park (and network)	Park Design Approach	Strategy	
26	<b>Refrigerated skating area</b> Conduct a feasibility study for a public outdoor refrigerated skating area in a park space with city-wide access.	Feasibility Study	Winter Use	Strategy	







No.	Recommendation	Mid-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
29	<b>More splashpads</b> Develop three new local splashpads in alignment with the Outdoor Pool Strategy.	Location 2	Splashpads	Capital project	
30	<b>Review existing dog facilities</b> Audit existing fenced dog parks to assess accessibility needs, waste management, and general improvements to user experiences.		Dogs	Strategy	
31	<b>Expand small-scale commercial licensing in parks</b> Permit occasional, small-scale commercial use of park space.		Community Health & Wellness	Strategy	
32	<b>Rubberized surfacing in each ward</b> Identify and resource one playground per ward to receive rubberized surfacing in a location with greatest access in the community.	Seven locations to be determined through engagement	Play	Capital project	
33	<b>Pilot off-leash areas</b> Create a pilot project to use select hydro corridors and park space as designated off-leash areas. Establish permanent off-leash areas throughout Kitchener informed by the results of the pilot project.	Hydro corridor location	Dogs	Capital project	








# Long-term implementation

No.	Recommendation	Long-term initiatives	Booklet title	Action type	Impact area
	<b>Continue Grand River access improvements</b> Prioritize and improve Grand River canoe launch access points to established standards.	Freeport Access Point	Natural Spaces & Climate Adaptation	Capital project	
	<b>Long term plans</b> Initiate or update existing strategic and asset management plans for each Signature and Feature Park including Victoria Park (underway), Huron Natural Area (underway), McLennan Park (underway), Rockway Gardens, Kiwanis Park, and RBJ Schlegel Park.	Kiwanis Park RBJ Schlegel Park	Signature & Feature Parks	Strategy	
29	<b>More splashpads</b> Develop three new local splashpads in alignment with the Outdoor Pool Strategy.	Location 3	Splashpads	Capital project	
35	<b>Build a south-end dog park</b> Establish an off-leash dog facility located in one of the southern residential communities sized to accommodate the projected 20-year population growth in the area.	Location to be determined through engagement	Dogs	Capital project	



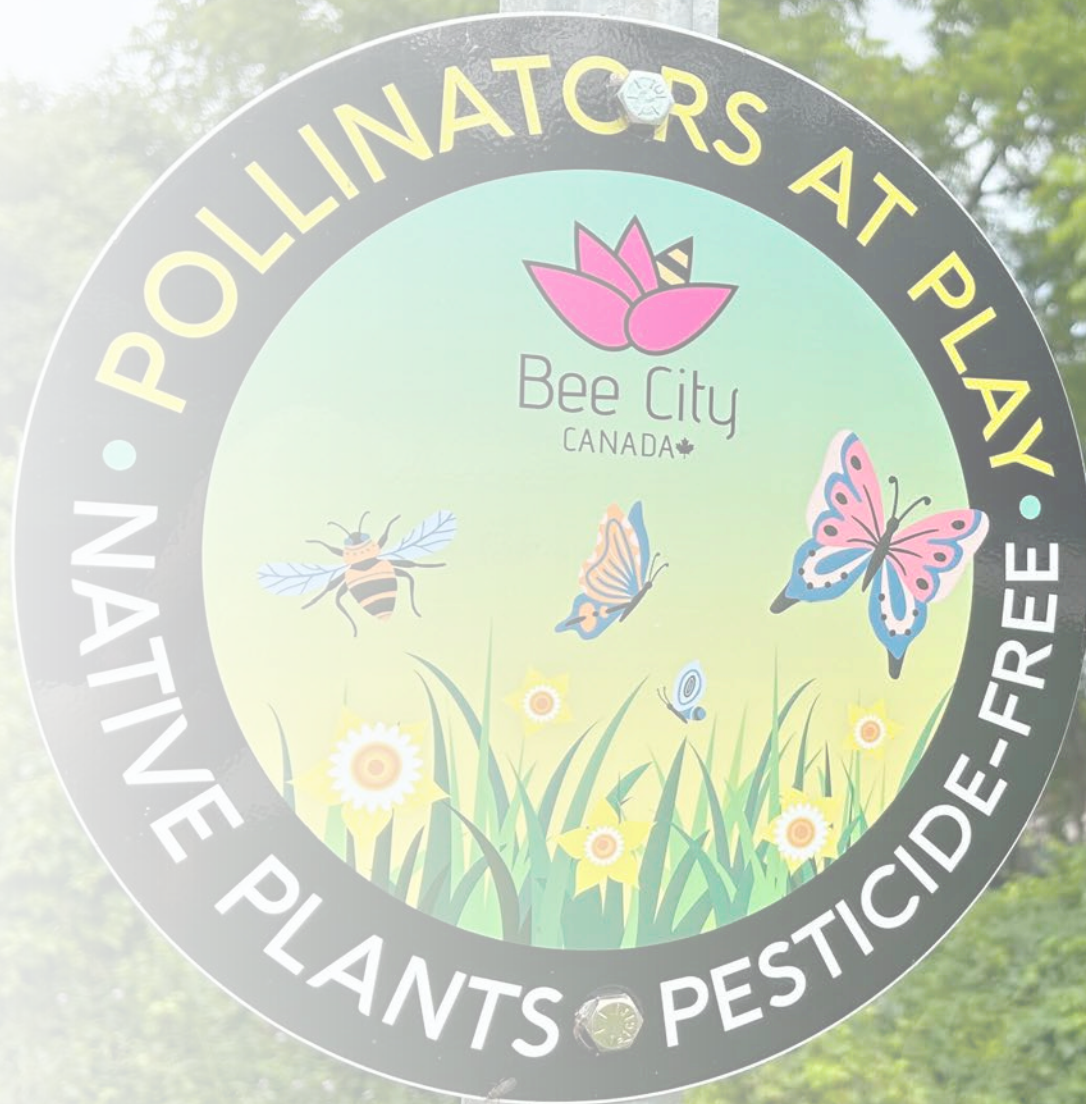
# Appendix A: **Connected Strategies**



<b>Title</b>	<b>Acronym</b> (where applicable)	<b>Web address</b> (where available)
Accessibility Standards for the Built Environment	AODA CoKUDM DOPS	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_UD_5.0_Accessibility_Standards_For_The_Built_Environment.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_UD_5.0_Accessibility_Standards_For_The_Built_Environment.pdf</a>
Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act	Bill 23	<a href="http://ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-23">ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-43/session-1/bill-23</a>
Chapter 270 Parks By-Law		<a href="http://lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&amp;id=1412612">lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&amp;id=1412612</a>
Chapter 273 Park Dedication By-Law		<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Park_Dedication_By-Law_2008-93.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Park_Dedication_By-Law_2008-93.pdf</a>
Chapter 599 Licensing and Regulation of Businesses		<a href="http://lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=1789212&amp;cr=1">lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=1789212&amp;cr=1</a>
City of Kitchener Official Plan; A Complete & Healthy Kitchener	OP-2014	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_City_of_Kitchener_Official_Plan_2014.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_City_of_Kitchener_Official_Plan_2014.pdf</a>
City-Owned Land Disposition Framework		<a href="http://lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=2073195&amp;dbid=0&amp;repo=CityofKitchener&amp;searchid=ac4de0a9-4745-4acb-8878-e383d008218c&amp;cr=1">lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=2073195&amp;dbid=0&amp;repo=CityofKitchener&amp;searchid=ac4de0a9-4745-4acb-8878-e383d008218c&amp;cr=1</a>
Community Engagement Policy	GOV- COU-2010	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/COR_COMM_Community_Engagement_Policy.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/COR_COMM_Community_Engagement_Policy.pdf</a>
Cycling and Trails Master Plan	CTMP	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/strategic-plans-and-projects/cycling-and-trails-master-plan.aspx">kitchener.ca/en/strategic-plans-and-projects/cycling-and-trails-master-plan.aspx</a>
Emergency Response Plan and Emergency Management By-Law	ERP & EMP	<a href="http://lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=2073220&amp;dbid=0&amp;repo=CityofKitchener&amp;searchid=c8671c20-0f61-4886-a067-d4b8a44b2751">lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?id=2073220&amp;dbid=0&amp;repo=CityofKitchener&amp;searchid=c8671c20-0f61-4886-a067-d4b8a44b2751</a>
Housing For All: A blueprint for a more caring community		<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Housing_For_All_Kitchener_Housing_Strategy.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Housing_For_All_Kitchener_Housing_Strategy.pdf</a>

<b>Title</b>	<b>Acronym</b> (where applicable)	<b>Web address</b> (where available)
Integrated Stormwater Master Plan, and Implementation Plan	ISWM-MP	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_ENG_Stormwater_Master_Plan_Implementation_Plan.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_ENG_Stormwater_Master_Plan_Implementation_Plan.pdf</a>
Kitchener, Changing For Good; Our corporate climate action plan for sustainability	CorCAP	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_Kitcheners_Corporate_Climate_Action_Plan.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_Kitcheners_Corporate_Climate_Action_Plan.pdf</a>
Kitchener's 2023-2026 Strategic Plan		<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/CAO_2023-2026_Strategic_Plan.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/CAO_2023-2026_Strategic_Plan.pdf</a>
Kitchener's Sustainable Urban Forest Strategy 2019-2028	SUFS	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_Urban_Forest_Strategy.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_Urban_Forest_Strategy.pdf</a>
Leisure Facilities Master Plan	LFMP	<a href="http://lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&amp;id=1741532&amp;page=1&amp;cr=1">lf.kitchener.ca/WebLinkExt/DocView.aspx?dbid=0&amp;id=1741532&amp;page=1&amp;cr=1</a>
Love My Hood Neighbourhood Strategy and Matching Grant	LMH	<a href="http://lovemyhood.ca/en/tools-money/neighbourhood-matching-grant.aspx">lovemyhood.ca/en/tools-money/neighbourhood-matching-grant.aspx</a>
Park Dedication Policy		<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Park_Dedication_Policy_2012.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/DSD_PLAN_Park_Dedication_Policy_2012.pdf</a>
Parks Strategic Plan, 2010	PSP	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_ParksStrategicPlan-September2010.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_ParksStrategicPlan-September2010.pdf</a>
Racialized and Indigenous Supports for Equity Fund	RISE Fund	<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/taxes-utilities-and-finance/rise-fund-racialized-and-indigenous-supports-for-equity.aspx">kitchener.ca/en/taxes-utilities-and-finance/rise-fund-racialized-and-indigenous-supports-for-equity.aspx</a>
Spaces		<a href="http://kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_Places_and_Spaces_Spaces.pdf">kitchener.ca/en/resourcesGeneral/Documents/INS_PARKS_Places_and_Spaces_Spaces.pdf</a>









# Appendix B: **Glossary**

This appendix provides definitions for terms used throughout the Parks Master Plan.

### **Active programming**

Recreational activities typically found in Planned parks that are encouraged through the use of specific infrastructure (e.g., playground, seating areas, sports courts, sports fields). Also referred to as “programmed” parks.

### **Alternative open space**

Defined in Spaces as open spaces located within the city that contribute to outdoor recreation and leisure activities, including but not limited to golf courses, cemeteries, conservation lands, privately owned public spaces (POPS), hydro corridors, school grounds, Chicopee Ski & Summer Resort, other public spaces such as Carl Zehr Square, Gaukel Street, and Market Square.

### **Climate change adaptation**

Taking actions to respond to the impacts of climate change.

### **Climate change mitigation**

Taking actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and

impacts of climate change.

### **Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

A site design approach that uses the built environment to promote natural surveillance by the community to minimize the need for traditional security measures.

### **Embodied carbon (CO<sub>2</sub>e)**

Greenhouse gas emissions caused by manufacturing, transportation, installation, maintenance, and disposal of building materials.

### **Innovation District**

The Innovation District is at the northwestern end of the Downtown and centred around the intersection of King Street and Victoria Street. This district is characterized by many large, old industrial buildings which have already been converted or have the potential for conversion to loft style office, residential, and other uses. The Innovation District will continue to turn into a dense, modern, urban setting through high-tech and health science-related office uses, as well as new post-secondary and research-related institutional uses. This area is different from the rest of the Downtown as Victoria Street carries through traffic not necessarily

destined for the City Centre. Primary uses permitted in the Innovation District are:

- Complementary commercial uses such as restaurants and bars, personal services, craftsman shops, commercial entertainment, specific types of retail, and those uses that service the office sector and residential uses will also be permitted
- Exhibition and/or conference facilities
- Existing light industrial employment
- Institutional
- Offices, particularly research and high-tech offices and creative industry
- Residential
- Studios

### **Natural lands**

Undeveloped land with a purpose of preserving and protecting natural features and ecological habitats.

### **Park classification**

Applied to Planned parks and made up of five categories representing park type, size, and function, park classification provides a framework for assessing needs for each Planning Community and the city as a whole.

1. City parks: Planned parks containing high-intensity

programming for City and Region-wide activities (e.g. pools, arenas, stadiums, community gardens, permanent washroom facilities)

2. Community parks: Local Planned parks containing enhanced outdoor features, community gathering facilities and amenities, (e.g., splashpads, community gardens).
3. Neighbourhood parks: Local Planned parks containing various outdoor active uses with direct connection to immediate neighbourhood (e.g., playgrounds, sports courts).
4. Passive programming: Recreational activities typically found in all park and open space settings that do not have a pre-determined action or specific recreational infrastructure. This can include general park uses such as walking, viewing, sitting, or picnicking. Also referred to as unprogrammed parks.
5. Signature or Feature parks (formerly Legacy parks): Planned parks or open spaces containing unique landscapes with significant natural, cultural, or heritage value; may also contain high-intensity programming.

### **Park network**

Defined as a group of several local parks of various sizes often within walking distance from one another



and generally in the same Planning Community.

### **Park programming**

A collection of recreational and functional amenities in a Planned park environment to engage visitors. Park programming can encourage active or passive uses, or a combination of both.

### **Planning community**

Defined in the City's Official Plan (2014) as locations that are planned, designed, developed, and monitored as a group. These areas should have a variety of land uses, housing types, and transportation options, but will often not each fully make up a complete community on their own.

### **Planned park**

A traditional park space created, constructed, and managed with the intent to serve as a recreational amenity. Planned park sizes include:

- Micro park: A Planned park that is less than 0.1 hectare in area.
- Parkette: A Planned park that is 0.1 - 0.5 hectares in area.
- Small park: A Planned park that is 0.5 - 1.5 hectares in area.

- Medium park: A Planned park that is 1.5-3.0 hectares in area.
- Large park: A Planned park that is 3.0 - 10.0 hectares in area.
- Vast park: A Planned park that is greater than 10.0 hectares in area.

### **Resource lands**

Land with a primary function of resource management, typically stormwater ponds and engineered creek channels.


### **Urban Growth Centre (Downtown)**

The purpose of the Urban Growth Centre (Downtown) is to handle a large portion of the city's and region's future population and job growth. It is meant to be the main area for building more homes and for new investments in public services, businesses, offices, recreation, culture, and entertainment.

### **Urban plaza**

Public spaces that can provide recreational opportunities that mirror park experiences and are generally located in the downtown core (e.g., Carl Zehr Square, Gaukel Street, Market Square).





# Appendix C: **Engagement Tools**

## EngageKitchener surveys

Survey title	Number of respondents
Accessibility and Parks	59
All Ages Play in Parks	72
Downtown Parks	282
Kitchener Parks	1175
Natural Areas	90
Park Access, Community Use, and Welcoming	120
Park Dedications, Sponsorships, and Alternative Open Spaces	47
Parks and Food Access	51
Parks Maintenance	85
Parks Signage	77
Pets in Parks	305
Skateparks	16
Splashpads	93
Sports Fields and Sports Courts	34
Winter Use and Parks Education	266
Spaces	84



## Ideas boards

Title	Number of respondents
How can we create park spaces that support community gathering and growth	25
How do we make a park that is pet-friendly	8
How might we create spaces where adults and older youth can play	30
How would you like to play in Kitchener parks	15
What alternative sports and recreation do you want to do	16
What can we do to help foster belonging in Kitchener parks	7
What does an accessible park space look like for you or your loved one	9
What makes a good park	25
What makes a great park in the winter	3
Which are the most accessible and welcoming parks you have visited	3



# Polls

Title	Number of respondents
Are you interested in learning how to get involved in parks all year round	27
Are you willing to volunteer to maintain your local parks so they can remain open during the winter season	10
Do you think your use of public parks will continue in the post-pandemic new normal	11
How has your use of Kitchener's public parks changed during the pandemic restrictions	50







# Appendix D: **Engagement Sources**



- Accessibrand
- ACCKWA
- Active Transportation and Trails Advisory Committee
- Bridges to Belonging
- Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health (formerly KW Counselling)
- Centreville Chicopee Community Centre Teen Drop-in
- Centreville Chicopee Community Centre Teen Night Group
- City of Kitchener staff
- Coalition of Muslim Women
- Community advocates for a human rights approach to housing, including members from The Social Development Centre, The Unsheltered Campaign
- Community centre managers
- Carizon Family and Community Services
- EngageKitchener respondents
- Equity and Anti-Racism Advisory Committee
- Extend-A-Family
- Forest Heights School presentations and discussions
- Grand River Accessibility Advisory Committee
- GreenHouse (University of Waterloo)
- Immigration Partnership
- Inclusive Playgrounds Author Melissa Martz
- Kitchener-Waterloo Multicultural Centre
- Kitchener Youth Action Council (KYAC)
- LGBTQ2S+ special interest group
- Mayor's Advisory Council for Kitchener Senior
- Multicultural Center
- Nurture
- Q3 2022 Playgrounds Report
- One-on-one interactions with residents
- Rainbow Community Council
- Sanguen Health
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Social Development Centre
- Spectrum
- Sunnyside Parks Survey
- Sunnyside School Places and Spaces survey feedback
- Unsheltered Campaign
- Waterloo Region Community Garden Network
- Waterloo Region Rainbow Coalition

# Thank you

The project team would like to sincerely  
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Your input has had a direct impact on the  
Places & Spaces Parks Master Plan.







