



City of Calgary Parks Zero-Based Review: Final Report

17 June 2014

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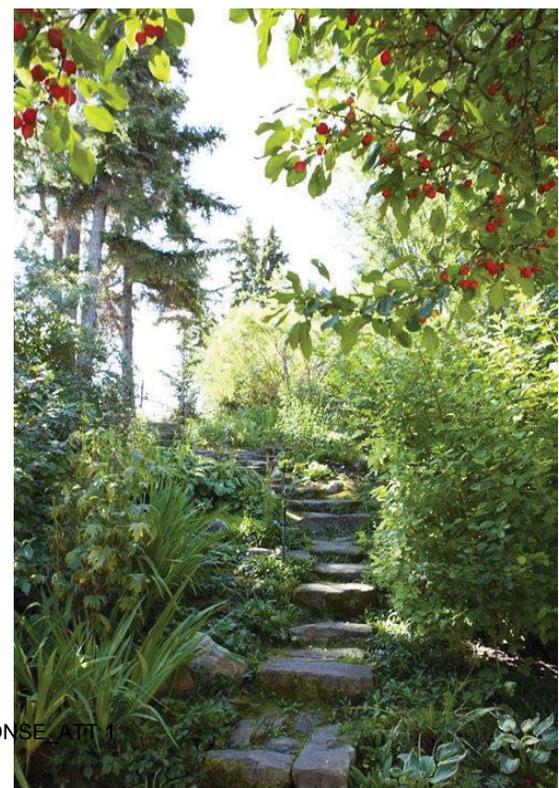


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CHAPTER ONE - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The PROS Consulting Team has been retained by The City to conduct an in-depth level assessment of selected Parks lines of services in keeping with The City's Zero-Based Review (ZBR) method that has been approved by Council. PROS Consulting is a small firm with a big presence in the field of management consulting for public entities and non-profit organizations that specializes in parks and recreation, tourism planning and development, economic development, and municipal utilities. With a small team of highly professional and experienced consultants, PROS is a flexible firm that is agile to the ever-changing dynamics of the social, economic, and political environments our clients operate in. The firm was formed in 1995 to uniquely serve the park, recreation and tourism services industry, and has worked on more than 800 projects in over 46 states and numerous projects internationally in seven countries.

This final ZBR report includes the results of work that has been conducted over a nine month period (August 2013-April 2014). It is a specific, analytical examination of the Organizational Functionality of the Parks Business Unit as well as an in-depth review of selected lines of service utilizing the ZBR method as the framework. The report also offers the development of key recommendations that can serve as a guide for increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of the Parks Business Unit. The lines of service that were selected for and approved by Council in June 2013 for an in-depth review are as follows:

- Natural Areas Maintenance
- Pathways Maintenance
- Parks Operations Maintenance (Grounds Maintenance)

1.2 FINAL REPORT OVERVIEW

In June 2013, upon completion of a high level analysis of the Parks Business Unit that culminated in a Preliminary Findings Report, PROS Consulting received direction and approval from Council to proceed with next two phases of the ZBR project. This final report details the analysis of the next two phases of the ZBR project and includes:

1. An in-depth analysis of the selected services areas with concluding recommendations and,
2. The development of business cases that support the implementation and cost benefit of said recommendations.

1.3 SUMMARY OF IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS (PHASE 2B)

Following the direction and approval from Council in June, 2013, the in-depth analysis phase of the ZBR was completed on the selected services using the following five fundamental ZBR questions as a guide for completing the analysis:

1. Service Rationale - Do we need to provide this service?
2. Service Level and Scope - What quality and quantity of service do we need to provide?
3. Service Effectiveness - Is the service achieving its intended outcomes?
4. Service Efficiency - Is the cost per output reasonable?
5. Service Funding - Is the funding sustainable?

1.3.1 ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONALITY SUMMARY

The narrative below summarizes the issues and recommendations from the Organizational Functionality in-depth analysis.

LEADERSHIP, MORALE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Parks has independently dispersed work locations and work performed in the field creates an “accountability challenge” as the more mobile workforces are, by nature, the less accountable they become. Often lost on leaders is the need to hold ALL staff accountable for their role in achieving the vision and intended outcomes, and the consequences of not doing so can impact performance. One such consequence is the degradation of morale, defined as the attitude that staff has towards the work they are performing. Lack of accountability can significantly contribute to low staff morale as it leads to the devaluation of their work as well as frustration in the low quality of work of their peers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **ENHANCE COMMUNICATION:** Develop communication standards for staff that mandates consistent and ongoing communication of the maintenance standards by which work is to be performed.
2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for park seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual’s performance at the end of each season but throughout.
3. **DEVELOP LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM:** Develop and implement a leadership training program that is specific to the needs of the Parks Business Unit with initial focus on the foreman position.
4. **CREATE ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM:** In conjunction with Human Resources, the Parks Business Unit should create a formal attendance support program in an effort to promote strong culture of work ethic and reduce the lost time associated with injury and illness.
5. **IMPROVE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCESSES:** Parks must, in conjunction with Human Resources, develop clear parameters, processes and accountabilities for reasonably accommodating employees who are ill or injured in order for Parks to support employee health and safety while maintaining productivity.

EQUIPMENT AND BEST PRACTICE TRAINING

The maintenance tasks performed by Parks is the backbone of the Parks Business Unit. The effectiveness and efficiency of the work performed in public spaces is heavily dependent upon two critical elements: equipment and best practice training. Through analysis of Parks inventory and level of utilization of its current fleet and equipment as well as the training program and maintenance program, it has been determined that Parks staff need to continually evaluate the inventory of their equipment, not only to ensure that the “right” equipment is available to do the jobs at hand but also that the appropriate level of key replacement parts are available and in stock to minimize the loss of productivity that can result from equipment failures resulting from wear and tear or misuse. And though park staff are trained on the proper and safe mechanical function of the equipment, they desire best practice training on how to utilize the equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **IDENTIFY ADEQUATE INVENTORY and MAINTENANCE:** Parks must identify the most needed and appropriate level of parts needed to repair “non-rolling stock” equipment quickly to reduce downtime in the field.

2. **DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE TRAINING:** Develop and implement a “hands on” training program to teach staff the best practices of how to use effectively use equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.
3. **ENHANCE FLEET PARTNERSHIP:** Continue to optimize relationship with Fleet for the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of parks “rolling stock” vehicles and equipment.

WORK PLANS AND PROCESSES

In the first phase of the ZBR project, it became apparent that inconsistent application of maintenance standards and process policies were impacting the operation of the Parks Business Unit. Further examination of the seasonal staffing program and the current maintenance standards, as well as other information related to the reorganization of parks, revealed processes not in keeping with the size of the Business Unit, nor the geographical size and population of the City of Calgary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **MANAGE TO STANDARDS:** Adopt and ensure consistent implementation of maintenance standards that were developed through two staff workshops in the fall of 2013.
2. **ENHANCE COLLABORATION:** Foster an environment of collaboration across lines of service achieve more effective and efficient outcomes of work.

SEASONAL LABOUR

The Parks Business Unit in the City of Calgary is heavily dependent upon unionized seasonal labour, hiring 600+ per year, to perform a wide variety of maintenance tasks throughout the park system during the months of May through September, otherwise known as the “growing season”. Through an analysis of data and information as well as two workshops with staff from Labour Management and Parks, PROS Consulting conducted analysis on the 2011-2014 Collective Agreement of the Corporation of the City of Calgary (the City) and the Calgary Civic Employees Local 37 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). And though the agreement with CUPE affects 24 business units or divisions within the City of Calgary, 80% of the total seasonal membership of Local 37 (L37) is comprised of parks seasonal employees. In consultation with the City of Calgary’s Labour Management Division and the Parks Business Unit, PROS Consulting has identified the following significant issues that are tied to the collective agreement and Parks management practices that have evolved as a result are as follows:

- Seniority
- Layoff
- Recall
- Schedules of Work
- High Cost of Seasonal Labour
- Grievance Procedures

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **EXPAND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING:** Further expansion of third party contracting of park maintenance services to further reduce personnel costs should be explored.

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2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for park seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual’s performance at the end of each season but throughout.

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1.3.2 SUMMARY OF NATURAL AREAS MAINTENANCE

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	4123 acres (40%) of Parks system is Natural Area; Current maintenance standards are incomplete though primarily at a Level 3 standard. Must implement consistent maintenance standards for natural areas across the entire parks system.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures that determine how successful Natural Areas are in accomplishing work do not exist. Must implement performance measures that have been developed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per hectare is \$291.05. Best management practice cost per hectare is \$2700-\$3200. Calgary is maintaining natural areas at with 11% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Line of Service reorganizes and implements a new strategic plan (beginning in 2014) and begins to approach work in natural areas more holistically, additional operational funding MAY BE required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **URBAN CONSERVATION RATING SYSTEM** - Implement a Habitat Condition Index and Asset Condition Rating to establish sustainable funding.
2. **IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES** - Implement performance measures so that both the effectiveness and efficiency of work can be better measured.
3. **STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN** - Fully develop a strategic action plan to successfully implement the Natural Areas’ realignment initiative that has been developed by the portfolio over the last 6 months.

1.3.3 PATHWAYS SUMMARY

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	760 km of hard surface pathways utilized both recreationally and as alternative mode of transportation for commuters; Largest system in North America; Level 3 maintenance standards are in place for spring, summer and fall. Level 1 standards utilized for snow and ice control. Currently developing an action plan to streamline work related to maintenance of soft surface trails.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures do exist in that the Line of Service is in the final year of implementing recommendations from the Safety Review Audit. Must implement more holistic performance measures that determine level of success of work that is being performed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per kilometer is \$3,147.28. Best management practice unit cost per hectare is \$4800-\$7000. Calgary is maintaining pathways at 66% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Pathway system continues to expand and the system as a whole "ages", additional operational funding MAY BE required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES** - Implement the performance measures so that both the effectiveness and efficiency of work can be better measured.
- 2. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN** - Fully develop a strategic action plan to shift the maintenance responsibilities along trails to the Pathways Portfolio. Note: The Pathways portfolio has begun the development of an action plan and expects to implement the plan in 2014.

1.3.4 PARKS OPERATIONS (GROUNDS MAINTENANCE) SUMMARY

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	Large and diverse system (10344 hectares) within an ever changing climate. Expansive inventory of assets that creates pressure on the system both operationally (short-term) and capially (long-term), Currently performing maintenance work at a Level 2 standard.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; The performance measures that have been developed to determine how successful Parks Operations is in accomplishing work must be implemented.
Service Efficiency	Unit cost of \$12,454.83 per hectare is in-line with best management practice (\$12,300-\$14,800 per hectare); Seasonal labour accounts for nearly \$13.5M of the personnel expenditures and efforts to reduce this cost must be made.
Service Funding Sustainability	Current level of funding is not sustainable as the system will continue to grow and the expansive inventory assets will continue to age. Parks Operations must target a reduction in seasonal labour and utilize the funding INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY to offset future growth and reinvest in the system. Evaluation of the future levels of service provisions is also necessary to slow the growth of assets

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. EXPAND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING:** Further expansion of third party contracting of park maintenance services to further reduce costs should be explored

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2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for Parks' seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual's performance at the end of each season but throughout
3. **PLAYFIELD STRATEGIC UTILIZATION AND COST RECOVERY PLAN**– The Parks Business Unit in cooperation with the Recreation Business Unit is embarking on a strategic plan for the utilization and future development of playfields that includes cost recovery. This plan will be instrumental in creating a balance of playfield utilization across the system while determining appropriate user charges based on user benefit and cost of providing the service.
4. **PLAYFIELD RESERVATION USER CHARGES:** Prior to the development of the Playfield Strategic Plan, increase the hourly user charge to recover at least 50% of the actual costs attributed to Playfield Maintenance.
5. **FULLY IMPLEMENT ASSET MANAGEMENT MODEL (PARIS)** – Fully Implement PARIS to become highly efficient & effective in managing lifecycle replacement and the tracking of the operational maintenance costs associated with the park system's assets by the end of 2015.
6. **LEVELS OF SERVICE PROVISIONS** – Further analyze the Standard Development Agreement (Park) for park system amenities and assets to curtail the trend of creating an expansive inventory of assets that is not financial sustainable.
7. **NATURALIZATION OF PARKS SYSTEM:** Develop and implement systematic process improvements to create a balance between manicured and naturalized land in the system, in an effort to reduce the level of "manicured" parkland in the system and return create a higher level of naturalization.

1.4 OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OVERVIEW

In February 2014, PROS Consulting commenced the Phase 3 of the project - Development of Options and Recommendations. In Phase 3, all information gathering, research and analysis are completed and service improvement options and change ideas are developed. The Final ZBR report develops business cases that incorporate the key recommendations and improvement options from the five analytical areas of review. The purpose of business cases is to allow key decision-makers at the City an opportunity to evaluate the merits of each recommendation, assess the benefits and costs of implementation, and provide guidance to the business unit in developing an implementation plan for the recommendations. The key recommendations that were developed as part of the Phase 2b phase were analyzed further and grouped into functional business cases. The business case groupings are as follows:

- Performance Measures and Maintenance Standards
- Increased Productivity
- Cost Savings
- Playfield Utilization and Cost Recovery
- Levels of Service Provisions

1.4.1 SUMMARY OF OPTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The following table summarizes the recommendations found within the business cases and the overall effective and efficient gains that can be made by the Parks Business Unit. Parks has achieved \$10.4 M in cost savings in the last budget cycle (2012 – 2014). An additional \$4.3 M should be achievable based on the recommendations below.

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CHAPTER TWO - IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS OVERVIEW

2.1 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The City of Calgary Zero-Based Review (ZBR) Method is a standardized City of Calgary approach to review programs and services within business units. The PROS Team followed the City's innovative ZBR methodology as described in ZBR Method Guide to prepare this independent report for the City of Calgary. The ZBR method has a specific governance model, which includes coordination by the Corporate Initiatives Division of the Chief Financial Officer's Department, oversight by an interdepartmental Steering Committee, and approvals and decisions by Council. In preparing this independent report for the Steering Committee the consulting team worked closely with Project Managers in Corporate Initiatives and Parks to ensure due diligence at each step of the process.

The PROS Consulting Team has been retained by The City to conduct an in-depth analysis of the Parks lines of services in keeping with The City's Zero-Based Review (ZBR) method that has been approved by Council. This report includes the results of work that has been conducted over a six month period. It provides analysis of how Parks is currently operating, and specifically addresses the five fundamental ZBR questions:

- Service Rationale - Do we need to provide this service?
- Service Level and Scope - What quality and quantity of service do we need to provide?
- Service Effectiveness - Is the service achieving its intended outcomes?
- Service Efficiency - Is the cost per output reasonable?
- Service Funding - Is the funding sustainable?

2.2 PROJECT METHODOLOGY

The methodology for completing the analytical examination of the organizational functionality of Parks Business Unit was based on the General Observations and Professional Findings chapter of the Preliminary Findings Report and consisted of the following elements:

2.2.1 REVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

A substantial amount of data was provided to PROS by The City which was in turn reviewed and analyzed to gain a fuller understanding of the depth and breadth of the operations of the Parks Business Unity. As described by the ZBR Method, this information can be broken down into six key sources:

1. Corporate Policies
2. Legislation
3. Management and Staff Input
4. Benchmarking and use of performance data
5. Existing Citizen and Customer survey data
6. Business operations information, including budgets, alternate service provisions

2.2.2 MANAGEMENT & MAJOR STAKEHOLDERS MEETINGS AND INTERVIEWS

Interviews were conducted with 102 key individuals and stakeholders as identified with the City staff to evaluate the overall organizational functionality of the parks business unit and gain key insight into the understanding, support and sensitivity involved in managing the park business unit operations. Additionally, 88 Parks Business Unit seasonal staff responded to a simple one question survey that asked them:

“If you were in charge of Calgary Parks, what are one to three improvements that you would make to the organization that would allow it to operate more effectively and efficiently?”

2.2.3 OPERATIONAL AND BUSINESS ANALYSIS

PROS examined the overall operations of the Parks Business Unit. This included, but was not limited to, the following: how are the operational areas structured; does the structure lend itself to maximizing revenues and controlling expenditures; determine the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information; determine the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of the operations; determine if operations are sustainable; determine if assets are safeguarded; determine if safety and risk management goals are in place; determine that the operations are in compliance with appropriate laws, regulations and contracts.

2.2.4 IN-DEPTH ASSESSMENT:

PROS reviewed the work performed for operations with the Grounds Maintenance, Natural Areas and Pathways staff to assess maintenance practices and evaluated all maintenance and asset management elements and requirements for the parks managed by the City. The assessment evaluated all aspects of the lines of service’s maintenance operations to determine strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to success. This assessment was performed through the evaluation and analysis of collected data. Including, but not limited to:

- Routine and preventative maintenance practices
- Deferred maintenance practices
- Existing maintenance and operational standards
- Existing maintenance and policy and procedures management
- Maintenance performance measures used to determine efficiency and effectiveness
- Staffing utilization and scheduling
- Work plans developed for crews
- Staff training by major maintenance job functions
- Service contracts
- Information systems and technology used to track asset management and work order systems
- Pathways management practices
- Natural Areas management practices

2.2.5 MAINTENANCE TEAM & PARKS MANAGEMENT STAFF WORKSHOPS:

PROS facilitated two workshops with the staff on maintenance practices and principles in order to determine the desired maintenance outcomes required for each site to support effective and efficient use of resources. These workshops include establishing maintenance standards for each element of the lines of service being evaluated so that PROS could gain further insight into how the Parks Business Unit allocates costs allocation, schedules staff, generates revenue to support operational costs, manages capital improvement lifecycle costs and schedules.

2.2.6 PERFORMANCE MEASURE WORKSHOP

The PROS Team conducted two workshops with the Parks Business Unit management to develop performance measures for each line of service within the Business Unity with impact metrics established and outcomes to be achieved that includes, people or groups responsible, timeline, operational impacts and measurement targeted.

2.2.7 BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

PROS conducted a benchmarking analysis that compared each line of service being evaluated in Phase 2b to other relevant peer agencies.

2.2.8 MAINTENANCE STANDARDS COST ANALYSIS:

PROS created appropriate frequency standards for mowing, edging, restroom cleaning of hard surfaces, trash removal, turf care, trail maintenance, and natural area care against current practices. From this information, PROS assessed the functional level of costs of maintenance including direct and indirect costs associated with producing major activities and tasks to measure allocation of costs to results derived.

2.2.9 THIRD PARTY SERVICE PROVIDER ASSESSMENT

Successful strategies for managing the equitable and sustainable participation by other service providers is a critical aspect in economically challenging times. Based on the research and analysis within the previous tasks as well as knowledge of the system, the PROS Team reviewed existing third party contracts for fairness and equity and provides recommendations for additional contracting opportunities.

2.3 PROJECT SCOPE: PARKS BUSINESS UNIT

2.3.1 BUSINESS UNIT OVERVIEW

The City's Parks business unit (Parks) is one of the business units within the Community Services and Protective Services Department. This zero-based review (ZBR) is only focusing on the Parks Business Unit.

The Parks System in Calgary has a rich legacy of over 100 years. Parks are valued by Calgarians for the role parks play in building complete communities by providing opportunity for experiencing nature in every community. Neighbourhood parks bring folks together as they enjoy the various activities. Whether it is for active participation from enjoying soccer, cycling or dog walking through the river valley, these activities keep the citizens and visitors healthy and balanced in their lives.

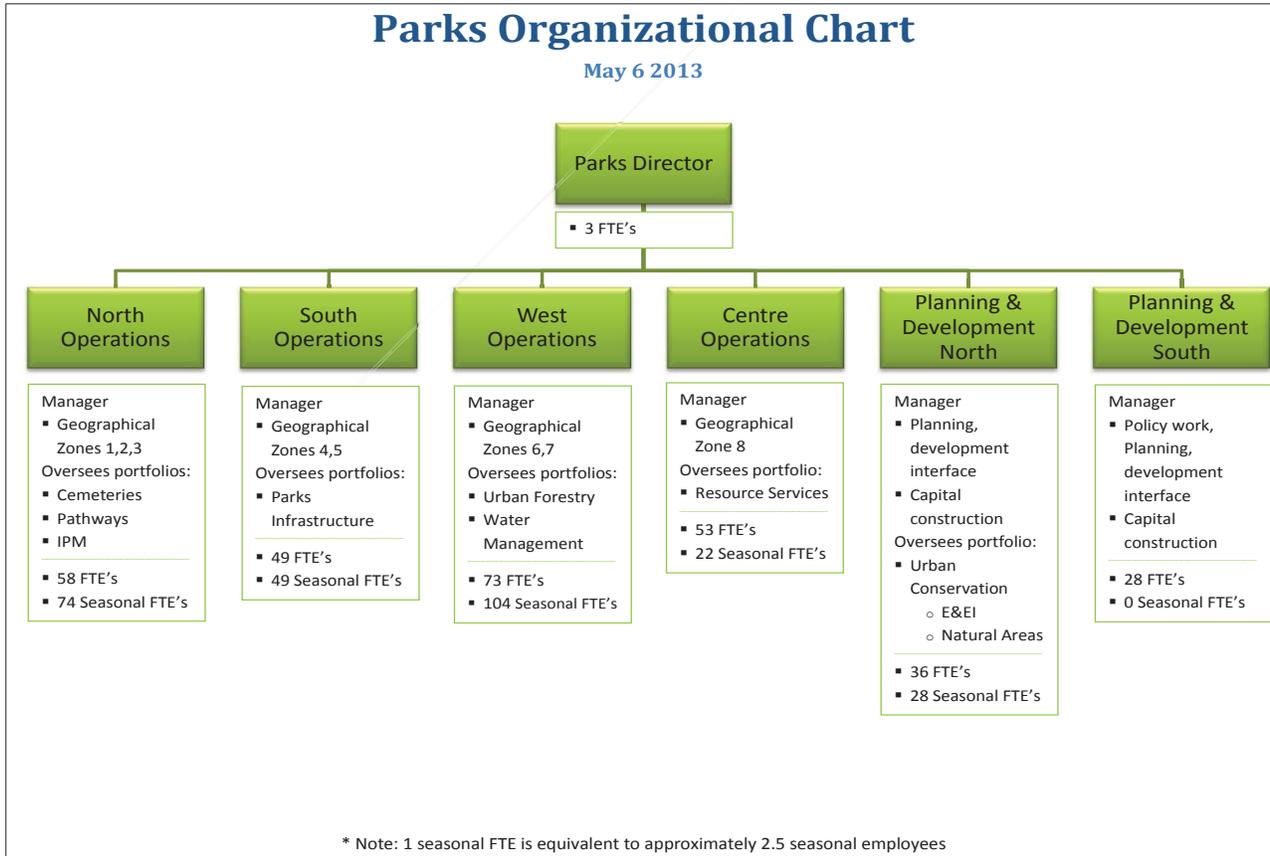
Calgarians see parks as freely accessible part of the community infrastructure; an important connection to nature both for respite and enjoyment as well as places for discovery and environmental education for the children.

Parks primary role as the steward of Calgary’s public parks and open space system is to provide a diverse range of services to Calgarians and visitors alike. Parks services cover a spectrum from planning and design, to development and management of the parks and the open space system. Examples of the range of assets and services include the following: the urban forest (400,000+ trees), over 5000 parcels of park land, community sports fields (1200+), playgrounds (1000+), a multi-use pathway system (700 + km), water management (1500+ irrigation systems), cemeteries (5), various park facilities and amenities, urban conservation, natural environment management (3500 + hectares), educational programs (24,000+ participants), volunteer management, events hosting and community engagement.

Most recently, Parks has engaged various stakeholders and the public throughout the 2012 year in developing imaginePARKS, a visionary plan for a sustainable, efficient, and effective open space system. This visionary plan has considered and built upon other long-term plans, including imagineCALGARY, 2020 Sustainability Direction (2020SD), the Municipal Development Plan (MDP) and Calgary Transportation Plan (CTP), and the Open Space Plan. The plan – imagineParks - will be presented to council early 2014 for approval and serve as a foundation to future Parks business plans.

2.3.2 ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Parks has undertaken one major reorganization and one minor revision in the last four years with the most recent change coming in 2011 - the consolidation to 4 operating divisions from 5 and subsequently 8 Zones from 16 divisions. As with all organizational change, it has not occurred without its challenges – lines of communication, roles and responsibilities, the reallocation of resources, and changes in leadership have all occurred in the recent reorganization and in some cases are still occurring.



2.3.3 LINES OF SERVICE – IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

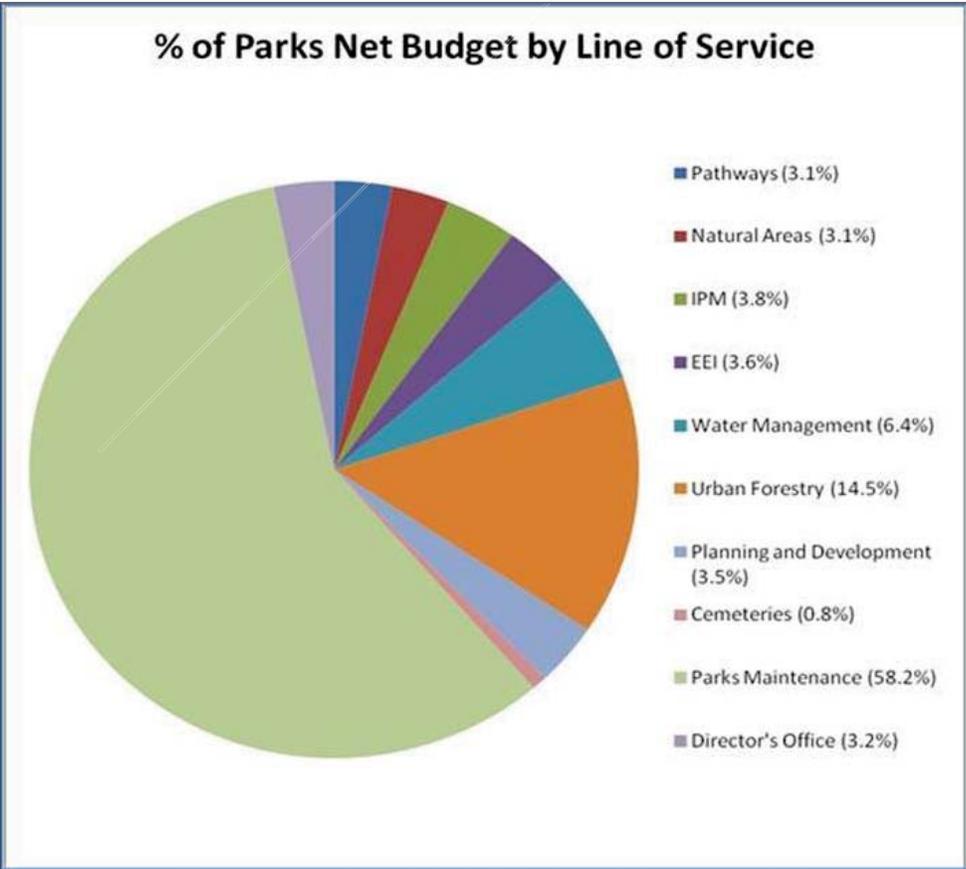
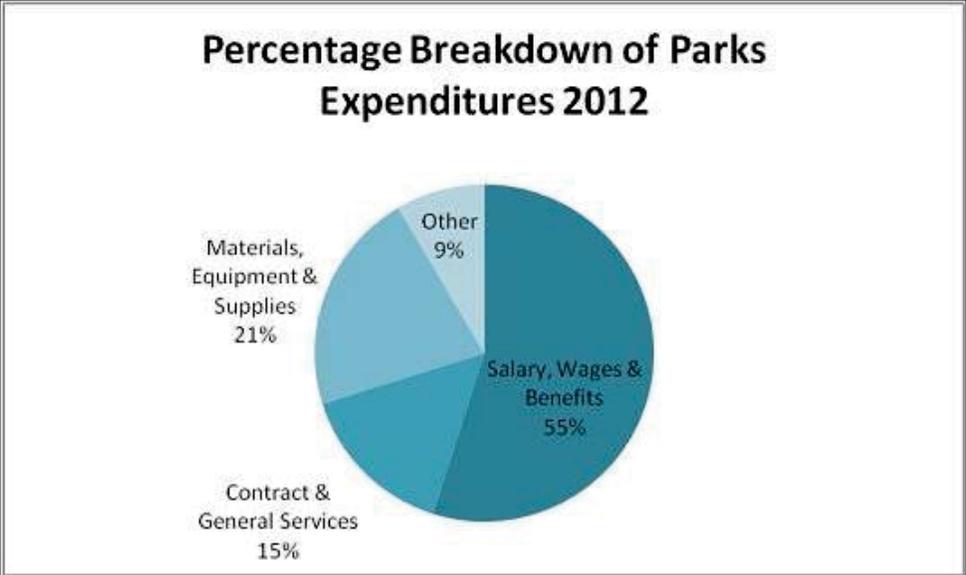
In order to undertake the ZBR, Parks was asked to identify its lines of service. The lines of service selected for the in-depth analysis are listed in the table below (note that the lines of service do not always correspond with the organizational chart).

Line of Service	Description	Net Budget (\$)	FTEs (P+S)
NATURAL AREAS	Almost half of all parks in Calgary are natural environment parks. Natural Areas staff are responsible for the protection of biodiversity, conservation, monitoring and management of natural environments and restoration.	2,386,406	29
PATHWAYS	Parks plans, builds and maintains more than 700 km of interconnected pathways. Winter work includes snow and ice removal of 300km of pathway and in season work focuses on pathway repairs, signage improvements, painting, and vegetation control.	2,391,932	11
PARKS OPERATIONS	A Parks Operations is organized into four divisions with 8 geographical Zones across the city. This front line group maintains the existing park system year-round from the regional park level down to the community/neighborhood level. Work includes customer interface and overall park maintenance, such as turf mowing, trimming, flowers, shrubs, litter collection, etc. It also includes site specific tasks such as festival hosting, skating rinks, snow clearing and stewardship of natural ecosystems.	45,397,853	305



2.3.4 OPERATING BUDGET

In 2012, Parks operating budget was approximately \$78 million and the capital budget was approximately \$52 million. The three lines of service being evaluated make up 64.3% of the total operating budget and 60.8% of the total FTEs for the Parks Business Unit. The following two graphs breakdown the Parks budget by lines of service and personnel vs. non-personnel costs.



2.4 COMMUNITY VALUES MODEL – GENERAL ANALYSIS

The Community Values Model™ is utilized as the foundation to assess data and to inform analysis and draw conclusions as a result of these investigations. The Community Values Model is a model that has been developed and used by PROS. The model and its strategic objectives have been widely used as the foundation for completed and implemented master plans, cost of service studies, business plans and feasibility studies in over 900 park and recreation agencies in North America. It has proven to be a meaningful way to look at an organizational unit and assess it from six perspectives. The following table outlines these six perspectives and identifies the main concepts that relate to each.

Community / Mandates / Priorities	Standards	Levels of Services	Financial / Revenue	Partnerships	Governance / Organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety & Health / Wellness • Principles of Community • Mandatory Elements for Facilities, Programs & Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land and Open Space • Facilities • Programs • Maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Levels of Service Delivery • Core Services • Role in Delivery vs. Other Service Providers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding Mechanisms to Support Operations & Capital 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public / Public • Public / Not-for-Profit • Public / Private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design / Align Organization to Support Vision and Values to Community

This model is the foundation for the Organizational Functionality section of this report and a summary of the evaluation of the Parks Business Unit at the commencement of the In-Depth Analysis phase of the ZBR project is as follows.

2.4.1 COMMUNITY MANDATES

Strategic Objective: The development and maintenance of a quality parks system by delivering safe parks and facilities to the community to meet the residents’ needs while also supporting tourism activities that make the City of Calgary a desirable place to live, work and play.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

The Parks Business Unit is valued by the Calgarians and supported by corporate policy as being a service that has a direct impact on the quality of life of residents.

2.4.2 STANDARDS

Strategic Objective: Managing parks, programs, facilities and services through established standards that focus on quality, cost-benefit, and can be achieved within available funding sources or create new funding options that deliver on what the community expects in the way of parks, facilities and services.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

Opportunities exist to develop the effectiveness and efficiency of the Parks Business Unit’s standard operating procedures.

2.4.3 LEVELS OF SERVICE

Strategic Objective: Provide balance and consistency in the delivery of maintenance, programs and services by meeting the needs of the diverse residents of the City of Calgary.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

Parks is currently operating in a state of transition with organizational and operational changes in process that greatly affect its ability to define and sustain levels of service. Significant steps have been taken by the Business Unit to streamline its service delivery through strategic contracting with third party service providers.

2.4.4 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY/REVENUE DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Objective: Create an effective, efficient and sustainable financial strategy for the City of Calgary Parks Business Unit's programs and facilities that are affordable while supporting the values and economic priorities of the City.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

Though Parks is typically a mill-rate supported business unit given the nature of the “task-driven” services that are provided, there are a number of financial variables that impact the efficiency and effectiveness of the work. The City of Calgary's Parks Business Unit is no exception and opportunity exists to generate additional user fee revenue through Playfields and minimize expenditures through the expanded third party contracting and changes to the existing Collective Bargaining Agreements.

2.4.5 PARTNERSHIPS

Strategic Objective: Proactively pursue and maintain partnerships to assist the City in investing in the system and by leveraging existing resources to create sustainable programs, facilities and services.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

The Parks Business Unit operates within an intricate network of interdependent working relationships with other Business Units of the City of Calgary. Most notably, the efficiency and effectiveness of the Parks Business Unit is impacted by the policies and processes that govern the working relationships that Parks has with Roads, Recreation, Land Use Planning, Fleet and Water Resources.

2.4.6 GOVERNANCE

Strategic Objective: Instill an organizational philosophy and culture that is result oriented, that focuses on customer service and being managed by standards with measurable outcomes that demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness of the services provided.

GENERAL ANALYSIS

Parks has accomplished one major reorganization and one minor revision in the last 4 years. As with all organizational change, it has not occurred without its challenges – lines of communication, roles and responsibilities, reallocating of resources and changes in leadership have all occurred in the recent reorganization and in some cases are still occurring.

CHAPTER THREE - ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONALITY

3.1 IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS FINDINGS

Determining the efficiency and effectiveness of the functionality and structure of an organization is imperative and a necessary first step that must be undertaken before conducting analysis on its individual lines of service. Put simply, the functionality of an organization is the foundation on which work is planned and performed to achieve the intended outcomes. The stronger the foundation, the greater likelihood that work will not only be accomplished but done in an effective and efficient manner. Building upon the General Observations and Professional Findings that were outlined in first phase of the ZBR project, PROS Consulting began its in-depth examination of the organizational functionality of the Parks Business Unit in June, 2013 by reviewing a plethora of data and conducting focus group interviews and surveys that engaged 190 parks staff.

Through the analysis of data as well as the responses to the interviews and survey, PROS gleaned that the Parks Business Unit:

1. Provides a safe, prideful environment to work in
2. Has employees that are passionate about the work of Parks and enjoy working in the great outdoors.

In delving further into the day to day operations, PROS also identified areas for improvement in the Parks Business Unit. The areas of significance that were identified as most needed for improvement were:

1. Leadership, Morale and Accountability
2. Equipment and Training
3. Work Plans and Processes
4. Seasonal Labour



3.1.1 LEADERSHIP, MORALE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Leadership is the act of leading people to achieve the intended outcomes of an organization and it requires leaders to:

- Establish a clear vision and the expected outcomes of that vision,
- Communicate that vision with staff so that understand their roles,
- Provide the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, and
- Coordinate and balance the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders

Often lost on leaders is the need to hold ALL staff accountable for their role in achieving the vision and intended outcomes, and the consequences of not doing so can be dire. One such consequence is the degradation of morale, defined as the attitude that staff has towards the work they are performing. Lack of accountability can significantly contribute to low staff morale as it leads to the devaluation of their work as well as frustration in the low quality of work of their peers.

Leadership and accountability are two guiding principles that continually need to be mentored and reinforced at all levels of the organization if wholesale improvement in staff morale is going to be accomplished.

Utilizing the foundational work developed during the first phase of the project, PROS further analyzed policies and data related to performance management, training, hiring and workplace accommodation processes. This analysis revealed that the business unit was is still in a state of change as staff was still adjusting to new positions, new roles and in developing new working relationships.

In a state of change it is not uncommon that the organization becomes “personality-driven” and as a result, the personalities at various levels of leadership dictate how standard operating procedures are implemented. PROS has identified inconsistency within the business unit as it applies to:

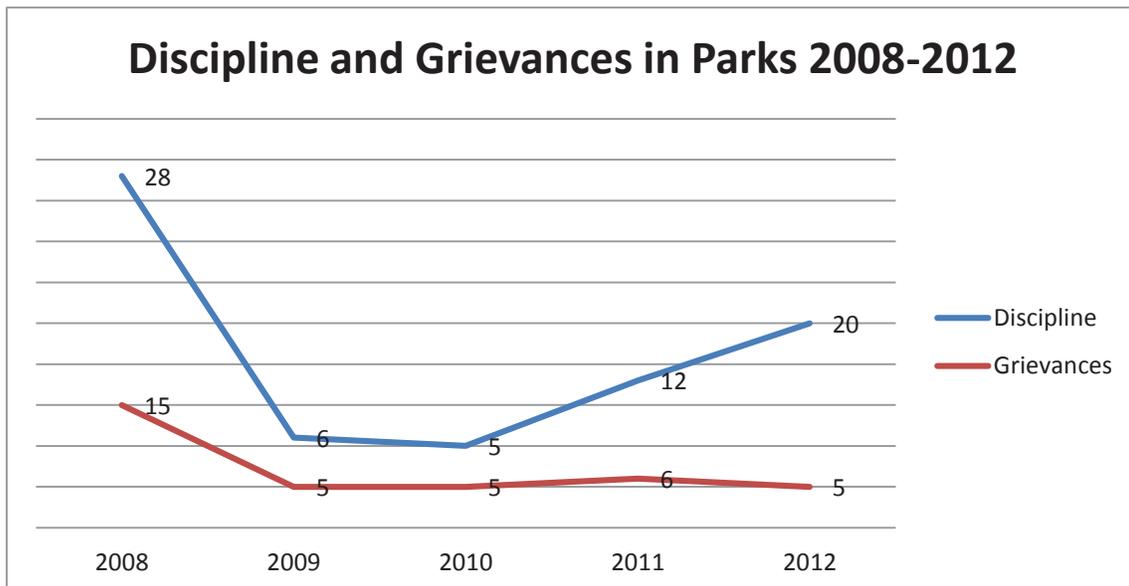
- Performance evaluation and management, in particular of seasonal employees
- Effective communication of vision and expectations
- Leadership mentoring and coaching

Additionally, the City’s policy regarding Reasonable (Workplace) Accommodation fulfills its legal obligations to accommodate as required by the Alberta Human Rights Act. Per the Supreme Court of Canada, there are factors that have been identified as being relevant to establishing undue hardship to the City that can be taken into consideration. The Parks Business Unit, to date, has not consistently developed data-driven business cases that demonstrate to Human Resources the threshold at which accommodation significantly interferes with legitimate operational requirements and/or creates staff morale problems.

The interviews and surveys of staff further revealed that **85%** identified Leadership, Morale and Accountability as an issue that is in significant need of improvement “out in the field”. The following is a sampling of the quotations provided by staff around the issue.

Increased conflict resolution training for employees (seasonal workers and foreman)
Improvement of morale within crews
No micromanaging
Making sure all staff feel safe in doing the work prior to doing it
Treat everyone fairly
Clear communication for expectations within upper staff to crews and within crews
Communicate with everyone and keep the level of friendship (everyone happy)
Reward people for each good job
Performance review of each employee before season "busy" time, during peak hours before lay off

A factor that contributes significantly to the high levels of dissatisfaction of staff as noted above is the lack of performance management. Currently, though a system is loosely in place, it is not consistently implemented across the Business Unit. A performance management system is not just the creation of an evaluation tool to assess an individual’s performance at the end of the season, but also the development of guidelines and resources that can be utilized to manage performance “in season”, including a “Job Well Done” Recognition Program. It must be noted the Calgary Parks Business Unit has already begun the process of managing “in season” with positive results. The table below indicates that the Parks business unit is making efforts to increase accountability through formal discipline (67% increase in 2012 vs 2011) but it is doing so at a much more effective rate as only 25% of the formal discipline actions taken in 2012 have resulted in grievances, which is down from 50% in 2011.



3.1.2 EQUIPMENT AND BEST PRACTICE TRAINING

The maintenance tasks performed by Parks is the backbone of the Parks Business Unit. The effectiveness and efficiency of the work performed in public spaces is heavily dependent upon two critical elements: equipment and best practice training. The range of equipment utilized in a park system is quite broad, from hand-held equipment such as weed-eaters and pruning shears to large rolling stock equipment such as large turf mowers and backhoes. Through analysis of Parks inventory and level of utilization of its current fleet and equipment, as well as the training program and maintenance program, it has been determined that Parks staff need to continually evaluate the inventory of their equipment, not only to ensure that the “right” equipment is available to do the jobs at hand but also that the appropriate level of key replacement parts are available and in stock to minimize the loss of productivity that can result from equipment failures resulting from wear and tear or misuse.. And though park staff are trained on the proper and safe mechanical function of the equipment, they desire best practice training on how to utilize the equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.

The interviews and surveying staff revealed that only 33% of staff identified Equipment and Training as an issue that is in need of improvement, however, these results can be attributed to a lack of overall knowledge of the right equipment that is necessary to perform tasks out in the field.

3.1.3 WORK PLANS AND PROCESSES

Parks, as has been mentioned, is a task driven operation that is dependent upon complex intricate and interdependent web of scheduling, work plans and processes. And if any part of the process is broken or non-functioning, the entire system can become bog down and cloaked in inefficiency regardless of the quality of leadership, equipment or training.

In the first phase of the ZBR project, it became apparent that inconsistent application of maintenance standards and process policies were impacting the operation of the Parks Business Unit. Further examination of the seasonal staffing program and the current maintenance standards, as well as other information related to the reorganization of Parks, revealed processes not in keeping with the size of the Business Unit, nor the geographical size and population of the City of Calgary. Examples include:

- A seasonal hiring process of 620 people that are to be dispersed across a complex business unit that does not evaluate the skill set of the applicant against the intended outcomes of the work that they will be performing.
- The shifting from an activity based to an asset based costing model has created some inconsistency on the best practices that are utilized to maintain the assets.
- Silo thinking has begun to set in as the roles and responsibilities of Divisions, Lines of Service and Portfolios were redefined through the reorganization. This has, in some cases, shifted focus away from creating a seamless, positive park experience for Calgarians.

Though only 14% of staff interviewed and surveyed, identified Work Plans and Processes as an issue that is in need of improvement “out in the field”, the datedness of the processes cannot be ignored.

3.1.4 SEASONAL LABOUR

The Parks Business Unit in the City of Calgary is heavily dependent upon unionized seasonal labour to perform a wide variety of maintenance tasks throughout the park system during the months of May through September, otherwise known as the “growing season”. For the growing season in 2012, Parks hired during the months of April and May (and then laid off during the months of August through October)

an astounding 620 seasonal employees to perform work across most every line of service. The sheer number of seasonal hires alone is daunting in and of itself and to simplify the hiring practice, the Parks Business Unit hires seasonal staff as a large collective group without respect to the specialization of the work performed in lines of service such as Urban Forestry. Through an analysis of data and information as well as two workshops with staff from Labour Management and Parks, PROS Consulting conducted analysis on the 2011-2014 Collective Agreement of the Corporation of the City of Calgary (the City) and the Calgary Civic Employees Local 37 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). And though the agreement with CUPE affects 24 business units or divisions within the City of Calgary, 80% of the total seasonal membership of Local 37 (L37) is comprised of parks seasonal employees. In consultation with the City of Calgary's Labour Relations Division of Human Resources and the Parks Business Unit, PROS Consulting has identified the following significant issues that are tied to the collective agreement and Parks management practices that have evolved as a result:

COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT CLAUSE 4.13 - SENIORITY

Seniority is defined as the length of service, subject to Clause 4.31, within the work unit, as per Clause 4.14.

All CUPE Local 37 employees fall within one work unit under clause 4.14 of this collective agreement. In the past, there had been a number of Parks Work Units (ex: North, South, West, Centre and Cemeteries), but within the last ten years, Parks Management determined that it was better to amalgamate the five separate work units into one. Part of the rationale for doing so was that L37 employees cannot perform work outside of the work unit they belong to and movement between them means giving up the collective agreement benefits that come with seniority. For example, if a permanent employee in work unit A, takes a temporary assignment in work unit B, currently the language stipulates that the employee has no reversion, loses their permanent employee status and restarts their seniority from scratch in work unit B – thus losing all job security. Parks Management rationale for the amalgamation was that it was better to have one large work unit as opposed to several small ones thereby giving them a better chance to keep “their seasonals”, thereby providing Parks with the an easier “ramp up” period heading into the growing season. Simply, if you can keep the same seasonal employees coming back year after year, productive work can begin in earnest almost immediately as the necessary amount of time expended on training is reduced. This has allowed them to move their talent around more easily than was previously permitted under the multiple work unit model. Therefore under the current one work unit model, employees can move around from job to job freely without impact to their employee status, however the movement in and of itself can become counterproductive if there is not a vehicle in place to restrict it.

In 2013, 190 transfers were requested and granted. A combination of the CUPE and parks management practice of typically granting the request has created an environment of instability and inconsistency for Parks the constant and continual movement of staff across the business unit creates a lack of continuity and inability to plan work, train and re-train employees. Simply stated, seasonal work crews can change from day to day and the ability to accomplish work successfully is severely inhibited.

CLAUSE 4.25 - LAYOFF

Layoff of employees shall be made on the basis of the least senior in the work unit shall be the first laid off, taking into account the required qualifications, as per Clause 4.15, to satisfactorily perform the work available in the work unit.

No permanent employee shall be affected by a reduction in the work unit, while firstly temporary employees, and secondly probationary employees, remain on staff in the work unit, taking into account

the required qualifications, as per Clause 4.15, to satisfactorily perform the work available in the work unit.

Simply, every year an employee is more senior, he is “entitled” to higher paying work, due to the labour pool rules. Therefore as layoffs occur, those with the lowest amount of seniority (and the lowest amount of pay) are laid off, leaving parks with an “expensive”, aging seasonal labour pool that is more prone to injury.

CLAUSE 4.26 - RECALL RIGHTS

Employees laid off after completing an initial period of 4 or more month’s work in a continuous period of service in a work unit shall be recalled, by order of seniority, provided they have the required qualifications, as per Clause 4.15, to perform the duties for the positions to be filled. Recall rights shall apply only in the work units in which such work time was attained.

Seniority is important for seasonal employees because it drives not only the annual layoff dates as noted above, but also the recall dates, as demonstrated in Articles 4.25 Layoff and 4.26 Recall Rights. This language is not position specific, meaning if you are senior and qualified (able) to perform the available work, you get laid off last and recalled first.

Parks (similar to other work units such as Roads), operates a labour pool. The “rules” that govern labour pools for the most part don’t exist in City Policy nor in the Collective Agreement, which is where the issue becomes complicated. L37 seasonal employees are hired into a generic labouring position (typically the lowest pay rate available to Parks in the Collective Agreement) and assigned higher paying work based on their seniority and qualifications. In labour pools, employees only have to be qualified for the entry labour pool position and then the City provides training on more complex equipment, thus giving them the qualifications for higher paying positions. The relevant training language is captured in a Letter of Understanding not currently attached to the Collective Agreement and training is also offered on the basis of seniority.

This staffing model has been in place for 20+ years and is not exclusively driven by rules in the Collective Agreement, but also by longstanding past practice. This means that in order to implement a new staffing model for the L37 seasonal staff, Notices to End/Change Practice would have to be served to the union as well as Collective Agreement Language changes.

To further complicate matters, the Parks seasonal labour pool does not have one hire and one layoff period annually, they typically have four of each. This is what makes them unique from other Business Units who employ seasonal L37 labour, along with the fact that they hire on average 600+ L37 seasonals annually, and the next largest group has approximately 130.

CLAUSE 5.08 - SCHEDULES OF WORK

Whenever shifts are established, employees and/or shifts shall rotate at least every 6 weeks or be firmly scheduled. Where any shifts are not rotated, preference shall be by seniority and required qualifications to perform the required work.

Article 5.08 says that whenever shifts are not rotated (which is the case with the vast majority of shifts in Parks), the senior employee gets to choose. L37 members do not however get to choose their work location (although Parks Management has created a practice of allowing this to be permitted). From a Labour Relations standpoint, a shift means any identical days and hours of work. Meaning, if Parks Division A has a Monday thru Thursday shift from 7am-4:30pm and Division B has a Tuesday to Friday 7am-4:30pm shift - these would be different and although employees should not be able to pick which location they work in, they would be able to choose the shift preference by seniority based on the rules outlined in 5.08.

Additionally, the “past practice – labour pool rules apply” meaning once an employee has chosen their shift and been assigned a work location, they are also eligible for the highest paid work they are qualified/able to perform in that location.

Both the budget and the changing seasons dictated what work is available and when. Therefore, when Parks initiates its first round of seasonal hires, all work and shifts are not available to staff. Therefore, every time a new group of L37 seasonals are recalled and new shifts are available, Parks is required to revisit the shift allocation and the labour pool rules (seniority drives the movement). This means that every time a new seasonal hire occurs and new shifts are created, Parks management has had to move more senior employees to new shifts (and possibly in new work areas). This occurs on average 4 times during the hiring season (March-June) and 4 times during the layoff season (September-Nov). Obviously not every employee gets moved every time, but it does create a problem for productivity.

It should also be noted that Parks management has historically allowed additional movement than is required by the CBA, simply as a courtesy, which has compounded their problem. Once we have successfully negotiated a new CBA and the statutory freeze is no longer in effect, Parks may serve notice to end these practices on a go forward basis, which would help them manage the movement issues to some extent.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Within the Collective Agreement, an entire section is dedicated to the grievance procedures that govern, among other things, the process for Local 37 members who have been disciplined. The section outlines the four (4) step process that ALL Local 37 members, including seasonal staff, are entitled to and the process can take *up to* a year to complete, if grievances go all four steps. Simply taking actions to discipline seasonal staff can create inefficiency given that a non-permanent work assignment that lasts only 16-24 weeks. As a result, the Parks Business Unit has historically taken a very selective approach to disciplining seasonal staff, which has in turn negatively impacted accountability, productivity and morale.

HIGH COST OF SEASONAL LABOUR

Currently, the “Rates of Pay” for Local 37 as defined by Schedule B under which seasonal employees are hired is a significant cost to the business unit. Labour rates for seasonal employees are equal to that permanent employees (\$23.88-\$33.75 per hour plus 26% in fringe benefits), which equates to \$13.5 million annually or 17% of the total Parks Business Unit annual operating budget. In fact, the starting hourly wage of \$23.88 paid to Local 37 seasonal employees is **higher than the 95th percentile of wages** paid to Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers across Alberta. The description for this category of employment according to the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website is as follows: “Landscaping and grounds maintenance labourers perform manual work to assist in the construction of landscapes and related structures, and to maintain lawns, gardens, athletic fields, golf courses, cemeteries, parks, landscaped interiors and other landscaped areas.” This category description matches the work performed by the Parks Business Unit as a whole and in particular, CUPE Local 37 seasonal staff. (Currently, when responding to the survey, the City “lumps” the Parks Business Unit staff wage and salary data into a different employment category, that of Public Works and Maintenance Labourers.)

The table below summarizes the findings of the 2013 Wage and Salary Survey for Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers conducted by the Alberta Provincial Government for the Calgary Market.

**2013 ALBERTA WAGE AND SALARY SURVEY – CALGARY REGION
Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers**

Wages	Low (5 th percentile)	High (95 th percentile)	Average	Median
Starting	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$14.59	\$14.00
Overall	\$13.50	\$23.75	\$17.38	\$17.00
Calgary Parks Seasonals – Local 37	\$23.88	\$26.45	N/A	\$25.13



CHAPTER FOUR - NATURAL AREAS

4.1 SUMMARY OF IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

The following table summarizes the results of the in-depth analysis on each fundamental area as required by the ZBR process for the Parks Operations line of service.

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	4123 acres (40%) of Parks system is Natural Area; Current maintenance standards are incomplete though primarily at a Level 3 standard. Must implement consistent maintenance standards for natural areas across the entire parks system.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures that determine how successful Natural Areas are in accomplishing work do not exist. Must implement performance measures that have been developed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per hectare is \$291.05. Best management practice cost per hectare is \$2700-\$3200. Calgary is maintaining natural areas at with 11% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Line of Service reorganizes and implements a new strategic plan (beginning in 2014) and begins to approach work in natural areas more holistically, additional operational funding MAY BE required.

4.2 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

Natural areas management is one of the more scientific and complex divisions of the Parks Business Unit. The primary functions of this line of service are the protection of biodiversity through planning and policy, conservation, restoration and the monitoring, management and maintenance of natural environments. The work of Natural Areas is governed and in some cases restricted by a plethora of provincial and federal law including:

Provincial Acts (and Associated Regulations and Codes of Practice)

Alberta Land Stewardship Act	Water Act
Wildlife Act	Environmental Protection & Enhancement Act
Surveys Act	Public Lands Act
Weed Control Act	Municipal Government Act

Federal Acts (and Associated Regulations)

Species at Risk Act	Migratory Birds Convention Act
Canadian Environmental Assessment Act	Fisheries Act
Navigable Waters Protection Act	

4.3 IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS SCOPE

The scope and breadth of the Consulting team’s in-depth analysis of this line of service was limited to the maintenance of Natural Areas. This includes funding, standards of work, performance measures and the working relationship that Natural Areas has with the Parks Operations line of service.

4.4 SERVICE RATIONALE

The service of protecting, conserving, monitoring and managing natural areas is classified as a core essential service which is defined as a service that citizens reasonably expect and support through mill-rate dollars and that the Parks Business Unit must provide to:

- Meet its mission, and statutory and/or regulatory obligations;
- Maintain valuable assets and infrastructure investments; e
- Protect visitor safety;
- Preserve the integrity of natural and cultural resources;

Natural area management is a necessary service that must be provided by the City of Calgary and though not legally mandated, the line of service is highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws.

4.4.1 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE POLICY

The work performed by Natural Areas contributes significantly to all four corporate policies, including:

- Aligning with the CTP and encouraging retention of natural environments, hydrology and biodiversity, particularly in Parkways.
- Contributing to several environmental objectives of MDP policies related to protecting, conserving and restoring the natural environment.
- Contributing to numerous strategic areas of the Fiscal Plan including increase in green space/capita, protecting the natural environment, reduction in waste/recycling and the standards of development for Calgary.
- Offering many practices that support the 2020SD Biodiversity objective including the Wetland No Net Loss Policy; restoration projects; people management programs.

4.4.2 SERVICE RATIONALE CONCLUSION

Yes. The Consulting Team finds that the City of Calgary should continue to provide the Natural Areas Line of Service.

4.5 SERVICE LEVEL & SCOPE

The Parks Business Unit is committed to protecting and enhancing the natural environment in Calgary and contributing to citizen health through sound horticultural practices. Best practices, current science and staff training ensure conservation of the natural environment, adherence to legislative requirements and contributions to citizen knowledge, enjoyment, health and safety. Further, the portfolio offers volunteer opportunities, education and environmental awareness to provide citizens with a better understanding and appreciation of their open space environment.

And though the in-depth analysis of the portfolio focused on the maintenance of natural areas, the current scope of work performed by Natural Areas is interdependent and all encompassing. The subservices of the Natural Areas Line of Service are as follows:

- Planning and Development
- Policy Development
- Legislative Compliance
- Habitat Management (in-the-field)
- Wildlife Management (in-the-field)
- Biodiversity Management (in-the-field)
- Restoration Management (in-the-field)
- General Maintenance – includes soft surface trails (in-the-field)

4.5.1 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING AND RESULTS

During the fall and winter of 2013/14, PROS Consulting conducted a comprehensive, global benchmarking study of 6 “Calgary-like” agencies to gain insight into how the Calgary Natural Areas portfolio stacked up. The agencies benchmarked were:

- City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada – Population: 817,498
- City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada – Population: 2,791,140
- City of Sydney, Australia – Population: 3,600,000
- City of Helsinki, Finland – Population: 600,000
- City of Denver, Colorado, United States – Population 634,265
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States – Population: 384,000

Unfortunately, not all agencies were able to provide data to support the findings in the report as they either do not collect or track information in the same ways that Calgary does. Additional sources of benchmarking will be applied where applicable utilizing YARDSTICK, which is a qualitative and quantitative benchmarking system for parks and leisure that is owned and operated collaboratively through partnerships of industry organizations.

NATURAL AREA INVENTORY

In the City of Calgary, about 40% of the total hectares that make up the park system are designated as natural areas. Of the agencies, benchmarked against Calgary, only four of the six agencies classified natural areas as a standalone park classification. However of those that did, Calgary ranked second in the total number of hectares of natural areas in its system and is just slightly below the median provision of 4.4 hectares per 1000 population as defined by Yardstick. This is indicative that, through the application of best practices in planning, Calgary has been proactive in protecting and enhancing the natural environment in an urban setting.

Agency	Total Natural Area in Hectares	Hectares per 1000 population
Calgary	4,123	3.62
Agency A	2	0.0006
Agency B	6,092	10.15
Agency C	544	0.86
Agency D	Unknown	NA
Agency E	168	0.44
Agency F	Unknown	NA

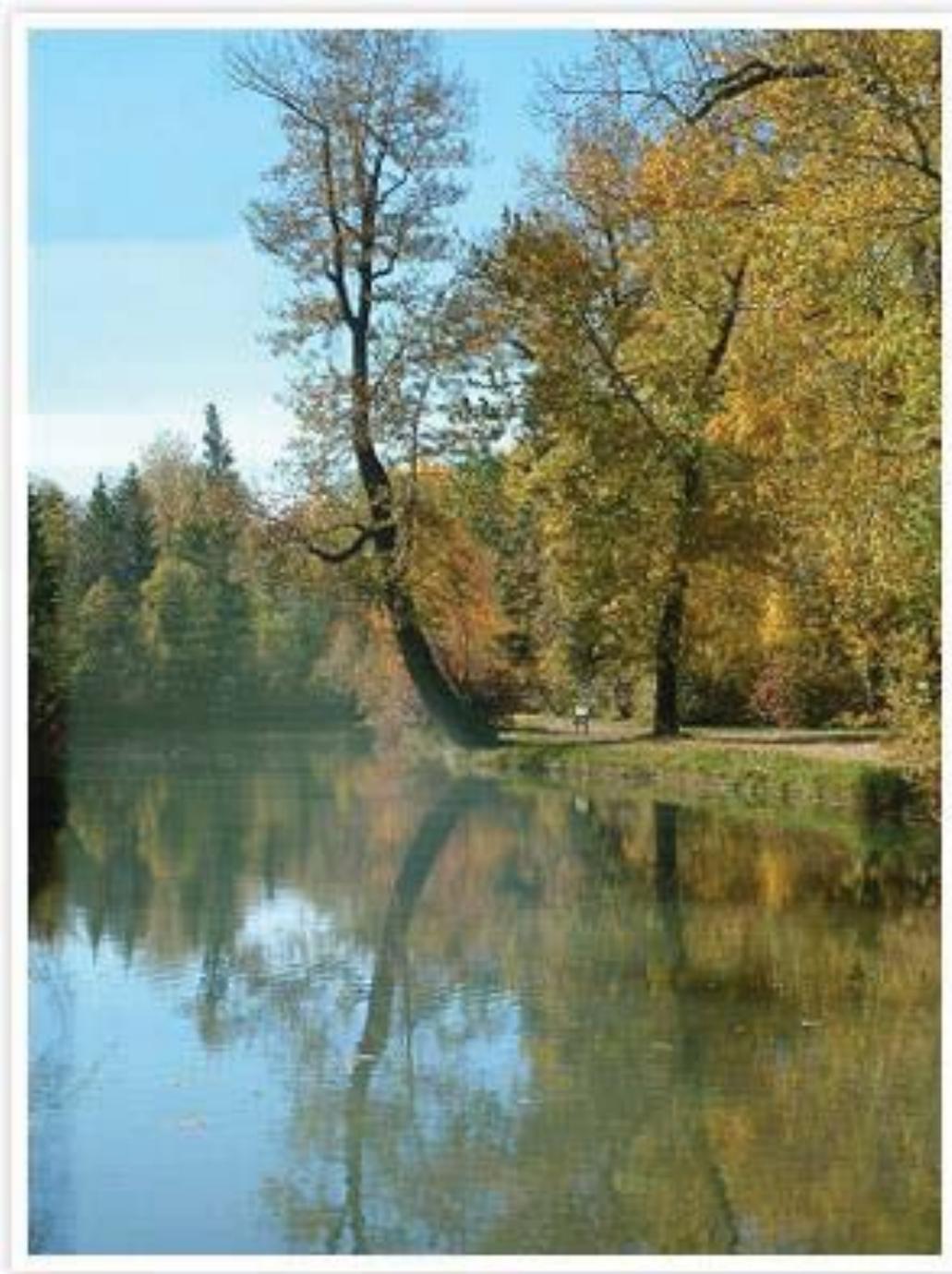
NATURAL AREA SCOPE OF WORK

As previously mentioned the scope of “in-the-field” work performed by the Natural Area portfolio is expansive and all encompassing, Comparing the scope or subservices of work that Calgary performs (as identified in the table below) with the benchmarked agencies, the management of Calgary’s natural areas are in-line with best practices as it provides all of the services that are inclusive of managing the continuum of the natural environment. The following table represents the percentage of benchmarked agencies that perform the various services in their system (Calgary is not included in the responses).

Scope of Work	Yes	No	Not Applicable
General Maintenance	100%(6)	0%(0)	0%(0)
Habitat Management	83%(5)	0%(0)	17%(1)
Wildlife Management	50%(3)	33%(2)	17%(1)
Biodiversity Management	83%(5)	0%(0)	17%(1)
Restoration Management	100%(6)	0%(0)	0%(0)

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Maintenance standards are the tasks and frequencies of work performed in a park system. The development and implementation of work plans to meet standards are essential to the efficient and effective maintenance management of a park system. The table on the following page represents the maintenance tasks and the various frequencies (Level 1 - High, Level 2 - Medium, and Level 3- Low) that are typical in the management of natural areas.



NATURAL AREAS

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Inventory/ Map Invasives	Annually	Spring, Summer	Every 2 years	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Inventory/ Map Natural Community	Annually	Spring, Summer	Every 2 years	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Inventory/ Map Native Plants	Annually	Spring, Summer	Every 2 years	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Wildlife Survey	Annually	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Species Introduction/ Translocation	Annually	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
GPS/ GIS	Bi-annually	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Ground-truth	As needed	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Photomonitoring	4x/year	Year-round	2x/year	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round
Treatment Monitoring	project-specific	Year-round	project-specific	Year-round	project-specific	Year-round
Sample Water	project-specific	Year-round	project-specific	Year-round	project-specific	Year-round
Cutback/Herbicide	2x/year	Fall, Winter	2x/year	Fall, Winter	Annually	Fall, Winter
Plant/ Seed	Annually	Spring, Summer	Annually	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Collect Seed	Annually	Fall	Every 2 years	Fall	As needed	Fall
Create Burn Break	Annually	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Flag/ Mark Features	Annually	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round	Every 2 years	Year-round
Mow and Remove Brush/Vegetation	Annually	Year-round	Annually	Year-round	Annually	Year-round
Tree Removal	Annually	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Prescribe Burn	3-yr rotation or as needed	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Install/ Repair Nestbox	Annually	Fall, Winter	Every 2 years	Fall, Winter	As needed	Fall, Winter
Install Signage	Annually	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Perimeter Walk	2x/year	Spring, Fall	Annually	Fall, Winter	Annually	Fall, Winter
Perimeter Clearing	Monthly	Fall, Winter	Annually	Fall, Winter	Annually	Fall, Winter
Remove Trash	Monthly	Appropriate soil conditions	Bi-Monthly	Appropriate soil conditions	3x per year	Appropriate soil conditions
Close Trail	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Mow Trail	Monthly	Growing season	3x per year	Growing season	2x/year	Growing season
Suspend Mowing	As needed	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Mitigate Dam	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Goose Control	Annually	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer	As needed	Spring, Summer
Mulch/ Compost	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season
Transport/ Deliver Materials	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Inventory/ Repair Field Equipment	2x/year	Year-round	1x/year	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Stock First-Aid Supplies	2x/year	Year-round	2x/year	Year-round	Annually	Year-round
Chip	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Skim Pond	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season
Install Erosion Control	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Install/ Remove Fencing	As needed	Fall, Winter	As needed	Fall, Winter	As needed	Fall, Winter

The City of Calgary currently performs approximately 80% of its maintenance in natural areas at a Level 3 (or less) service standard and the application of maintenance standards is inconsistent across the system. This service level is **BELOW** the majority of the benchmarked agencies as four of the six perform Level 1 and Level 2 standard work at 25% or greater (Calgary only performs 20% of its work at Level 1 and Level 2). A number of factors contribute to the low levels of service including the expansive and sprawling metropolitan area of Calgary (853 square kilometers), which increases drive-time between sites resulting in less work performed in the field, the significant number of hectares (4,123) that make up 40% of the total of the parks system and the corresponding maintenance budget of only \$1.2M. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	10%	10%	80%
Agency A	0%	0%	100%
Agency B	0%	25%	75%
Agency C	25%	50%	25%
Agency D	0%	50%	50%
Agency E	25%	25%	50%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA

4.5.2 SERVICE LEVEL AND SCOPE CONCLUSION

Though the quality of work that is being performed is acceptable and is meeting the expectations of the citizens of Calgary, it must be noted that the City of Calgary is providing a service level in natural areas that is below what is typically found in large metropolitan system (25% at Level 1 and Level 2 standards) and below that of four of the six benchmarked agencies.

4.6 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

At the onset of the Zero Based Review of the Parks Business Unit in the spring of 2013, the Natural Areas Line of Service did not have true performance measures in place that could determine the level of success in which it was achieving its intended outcome as defined by the Parks Business Unit: Protecting and enhancing the natural environment in Calgary. Without performance measures, the Natural Area portfolio measured its success in citizen satisfaction and compliance with corporate policy.

4.6.1 CITIZEN SATISFACTION

In the October 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey performed by Ipsos Reid, “open space” is included with the other City of Calgary parks in determining value and level of satisfaction with the service. The results of that survey indicate that 95% of Calgarians are satisfied with the level of service provided by the parks and open space system and 97% view the system as important.

4.6.2 CORPORATE POLICY

The work performed by Natural Areas contributes significantly to all four corporate policies, as detailed below.

- **Calgary Transportation Policy** – The service contributes significantly to the CTP as the promotion of the concepts that are the foundation of natural area management are important to achieving the environmental objectives of the CTP, particularly policies 3.12.a, b and c by encouraging retention of natural environments, hydrology and biodiversity, particularly in Parkways.
- **Corporate Municipal Development Policy** – The service contributes significantly to the MDP and is directly aligned with various MDP policies related to protecting, conserving and restoring the natural environment
- **Council’s Fiscal Plan**
 - Investing In great communities and a vibrant urban fabric
 - Natural Areas contributes to this strategic area in a number of ways including increase in green space/capita, protecting the natural environment, reduction in waste/recycling and the standards of development for Calgary.
 - Moving people and goods throughout the city efficiently and sustainably
 - Natural Areas contributes to this strategic area through the development of the capital budget.
 - Making Calgary the best place in Canada for a business to start and flourish
 - Natural Areas contribute to this strategic objective as it is a significant “quality of life element” that attracts global talent and investment (people) in Calgary.
 - Becoming a more effective and disciplined organization
 - Natural Areas contributes to this strategic area by fostering innovation and creativity by conserving large tracts of land as open space within an urban area thereby better defining areas of development that support Council’s objective of increasing density within Calgary.
- **2020 Sustainability Direction** – This service area offers many practices that support the 2020SD Biodiversity objective including the Wetland No Net Loss Policy; restoration projects; people management programs. The 2020SD biodiversity targets are important and ambitious, and while we are moving toward the targets, "no net loss of unique and environmentally significant habitats" requires additional efforts to achieve. Currently, there has been an 81% loss of Environmentally Significant Habitats from 1998-2011. The Parks Naturalization Program naturalized or restored 23 hectares of manicured turf in 2012. Overall, the Service Area is aligned with 2020SD, but the outcomes are not achieving the targets partly because of provincial legislation not providing the mechanism to protect habitat. In the existing developed areas, challenges include fragmentation, invasive species and human use levels and active management and restoration is required to achieve the 2020SD targets.

4.6.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEVELOPMENT

Performance measures quantitatively inform organizations about how successful their services are in meeting their intended outcomes, as well as the processes that produce them. They are a critical tool that assists in the understanding, management, and improvement of organizations. Performance measures provide the information necessary to make intelligent decisions about work that is performed.

Performance measures can tell us:

- How **successful** work is being performed
- If **processes** are in statistical control
- If **goals** are being met
- If and where **improvements** are necessary
- If **customers** are satisfied

COMPONENTS OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures in recent years have become the backbone of successful organizations and moved beyond the simple collection of facts that measure volume of work. The key components of modern performance measurement are:

- **Outcomes** are the benefits or changes for participants in programs or recipients of services during or after the program or strategy is implemented.
- **Inputs** are the physical, financial and human resources allocated to or consumed to do work
- **Activities** are what the program or strategy does with the inputs provided. Activities include the tasks, steps, methods, techniques and operations performed
- **Outputs** are the elements of operation or level of effort, the products or services resulting from the implementation or accomplishment of work.
- **Efficiency** is measured by the unit cost required to perform the work in terms of dollars. “How well did you “use” your budget to perform work?”
- **Effectiveness** is a service quality measure of the work that you performed. Effectiveness is measured in % of work you set out to perform.

NATURAL AREA PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As previously mentioned, the Parks Business Unit did not have in place a set of performance measures across its lines of service. Though some did measure outcome based performance, most lines, including Natural Areas, only tracked “factoids” or the volume of work that was being performed. This is not unlike most governmental agencies including the benchmarked cities, where volume of work was the most common measure of performance.

In the fall of 2013, PROS Consulting conducted two workshops with Parks and the intended outcomes of the workshops were two-fold:

1. To teach the components of and the methodology utilized to develop performance measures.
2. To develop key performance measures for each line of service.

The following page represents key performance measures that were developed for the Natural Area line of service through the workshops that are currently being implemented in 2014.

Activity	Activity Goal (what, whom, why)	Input (Budget)	Output (End Product)	Efficiency Cost or Productivity	Effectiveness (service quality)
Natural Areas Operations	Ensure that there is an increase in naturalized landscapes in Calgary Parks where naturalization of manicured areas contributes to meeting Parks targets for biodiversity and reduction of chemical, physical and mechanical inputs	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total ha of maximum potential naturalization sites determined # of parks with naturalization projects Total ha of naturalized sites in Parks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ cost per naturalized ha \$ savings per naturalized ha (e.g. inputs, labour, maintenance) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % operational and capital savings realized on naturalized lands annually % of potential naturalization area naturalized
Natural Areas Operations, Planning, & Monitoring	Degraded habitats in natural environment parks are being restored	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of restoration projects in natural environment parks Total ha of natural environment parks under active restoration Total ha of natural environment parks with completed restoration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Costs for restoration projects are being tracked Cost ranges developed for restoration activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % of restoration projects deemed successful according to project objectives
Natural Areas Operations, Planning, & Monitoring	Ensure equitable workloads in order to adequately respond to a growing park system and enable staff development to meet changing professional and legislative standards	TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total ha natural environment parks to be managed Total ha stewardship area per Natural Areas Project Coordinator – Operations # development circulations per Natural Areas Project Coordinator – Planning Current staff development plans in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost ranges and budgets defined for staff development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % progress achieved against management plan objectives % of CPAG circulation deadlines met % progress against professional development objectives

4.6.4 ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONALITY

“Contracting In” The completion of general maintenance tasks in natural areas that do not require direct subject matter oversight such as mowing, litter pickup, and habitat management is performed by the Parks Operations Line of Service. In January of each year, Natural Areas develops the work plan and provides the necessary funding for the work to be performed in natural areas in each of the eight maintenance zones. Natural Areas does not provide direct oversight of the work, which has resulted in limited accountability that the work is being performed according to the plan and that the earmarked funding was appropriately spent. The resulting conclusion is that the level of effectiveness of the work being performed by Parks Maintenance is not tracked.

4.6.5 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS CONCLUSION

Though Calgarians are very satisfied and the work aligns with Corporate Policy, true measures of the effectiveness of work that is being performed by the Natural Areas Line of Service does not exist. Additionally, the current organizational relationship that exists between Natural Areas and Parks Operations has communication and accountability challenges. The implementation of the performance measures that have been developed as well as changes in the organizational structure of Natural Areas (that will be discussed in detail at the end of the chapter) will assist the line of service in determining how successful they are at accomplishing the outcomes they set out to achieve and ensure accountability on both sides.

4.7 SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Efficiency can best be measured by comparing the unit cost of work at a specific level of care against an acceptable standard. For the purposes of this analysis, the Consulting Team utilized the standards it has developed over the last 19 years of consulting in the field of parks and recreation as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for the basis of comparison for this project. As specified earlier, the Consulting team primarily focused its efforts on the maintenance operations of Calgary’s natural areas.

4.7.1 COST OF SERVICE

Currently, the Natural Areas line of service receives its funding primarily through mil-rate dollars and expends \$2,386,406. Of this, approximately \$1,200,000 is utilized for the maintenance of natural areas in the system. As noted previously, the 4,123 hectares of natural areas makeup approximately 40% of the total hectares of the system. The tables on the following page are a breakdown of the unit cost expended by Natural Areas for the total cost of service and the maintenance cost of service.



TOTAL BUDGET

Agency	Population Served	Total Natural Area in Hectares	Total Budget (Expenses)	Total Budget per Capita	Total Cost per Hectare
Calgary	1,200,000	4,123	\$ 2,386,406	\$ 1.99	\$ 578.80

MAINTENANCE BUDGET

Agency	Population Served	Total Natural Area in Hectares	Total Maintenance Budget (Expenses)	Total Budget per Capita	Maintenance Cost per Hectare
Calgary	1,200,000	4,123	\$ 1,200,000	\$ 1.00	\$ 291.05

The unit cost of \$291.05 to maintain a hectare of natural area in Calgary is extremely low, even when performing work at a Level 3 service standard. This is especially low given the high cost of the seasonal labor that is performing the maintenance work. The typical range of unit costs for maintaining natural areas at a predominately Level 3 service standard in Climate Zones 2 and 3 of North America is \$2700-\$3200 per hectare per NRPA. By this standard, the Calgary’s Natural Area portfolio is underfunded by a minimum of \$2,409 per hectare annually and is operating extremely efficiently.

To further explore the efficiency of Natural Areas, the Consulting Team performed analysis on the funding that was provided to Parks Operations for the purposes of implementing maintenance work plans in the naturalized areas of the system. PROS found that not only is funding the maintenance of natural areas minimal at best but that most of the Parks Operations zones did not expend all of the funds that they had received, in part due to the flood of 2013. In fact, 81% of the total funding provided to the eight zones was expended. The following chart shows the annual budgeted and actual costs incurred for the various maintenance zones for performing natural area maintenance. Due to the lack of mutual accountability and tracking as mentioned previously, detailed explanations are not available to explain the disparity between what was budgeted and what was expended. (2013 was the first year that the Business Unit tracked this information and the flood impacted work task priorities from July – September.)

Work Zone	Budget Provided	Actual Costs	Under/Over	% of Budget Expended
1	\$214,388.00	\$272,724.00	\$58,336.00	127.21%
2/3	\$123,099.00	\$107,228.00	-\$15,871.00	87.11%
4/5	\$196,322.00	\$195,069.00	-\$1,253.00	99.36%
6	\$227,013.00	\$193,618.84	-\$33,394.16	85.29%
7	\$341,597.00	\$180,376.81	-\$161,220.19	52.80%
8	\$97,443.00	\$23,071.00	-\$74,372.00	23.68%
Total	\$1,199,862.00	\$972,087.65	-\$227,774.35	81.02%

4.7.2 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

There is little relevance in comparing the efficiency of Calgary to its benchmarked agencies as only two of the six agencies that were surveyed break out expenditures attributed to natural areas from their overall parks budget.

4.7.3 SERVICE EFFICIENCY CONCLUSION

The efficiency with which the Natural Areas Line of Service is performing its work is seemingly astounding given the low level of funding dedicated to the maintenance of 4,123 hectares of natural area. Given that efficiency and effectiveness go hand-in-hand, the lack of funding provided for the maintenance of the natural areas combined with the variable use of the funding by Parks Operations is likely having a negative impact on the natural environment in Calgary. The implementation of performance measures that have been developed during this project will provide a better understanding and further insight into both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the work being accomplished.

4.8 SERVICE FUNDING SUSTAINABILITY

The mill-rate supported funding that Natural Areas currently receives is more than sustainable, but also far less than sufficient. Based on the typical range of unit costs, the portfolio is receiving only 11% of the “best practice funding targets” for work performed at a Level 3 service standard in natural areas. If Calgary’s Natural Areas Line of Service continues to develop and implement work plans at a Level 3 service standard, the portfolio is potentially underfunded by as much as \$9.9 million annually to accomplish work effectively.



CHAPTER FIVE - PATHWAYS

5.1 SUMMARY OF IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

The following table summarizes the results of the in-depth analysis on each fundamental area as required by the ZBR process for the Pathways line of service.

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	760 km of hard surface pathways utilized both recreationally and as alternative mode of transportation for commuters; Largest system in North America; Level 3 maintenance standards are in place for spring, summer and fall. Level 1 standards utilized for snow and ice control. Currently developing an action plan to streamline work related to maintenance of soft surface trails.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures do exist in that the Line of Service is in the final year of implementing recommendations from the Safety Review Audit. Must implement more holistic performance measures that determine level of success of work that is being performed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per kilometer is \$3,147.28. Best management practice unit cost per hectare is \$4800-\$7000. Calgary is maintaining pathways at 66% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Pathway system continues to expand and the system as a whole "ages", additional operational funding MAY BE required.

5.2 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

In the late 1960s, Calgarians began envisioning a system of connected pathways on which they could travel throughout the city and access areas of unique natural beauty. The first completed section of the pathway was built through Confederation Park in the early 1970s. Then paths along the Bow River and Elbow River, made from crushed red shale (clinker shale from burned out coal seams), were constructed before asphalt paths replaced the shale.

Today, Calgary's communities, parks and natural areas are connected by an extensive network of pedestrian and cycling paths that are available for all Calgarians to use whether for walking, running, rollerblading or cycling. In fact, Calgary has the most extensive urban pathway and bikeway network in North America with 760 km of hard surface pathways that connect along the Bow & Elbow Rivers, Fish Creek Provincial Park, Nose Creek, West Nose Creek, the Western Irrigation District Canal and the perimeter of Glenmore Reservoir.

The Parks Business Unit is the main service provider of the City's hard surface pathways system and plans, builds and maintains 760 km of interconnected pathways. This highly popular, multi-use, recreational amenity serves Calgarians of all ages, including walkers, runners, and in-line skaters as well as recreational and commuter cyclists. Winter work includes snow and ice control of 300km of pathway and in season work focuses on lifecycle maintenance, pathway repairs, signage improvements, marking and vegetation control. In addition, Pathways works with other City business units and regional partners to connect pathways with bike routes and regional and provincial pathways.

5.3 IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS SCOPE

The scope and breadth of the Consulting team's in-depth analysis of this line of service was limited to the maintenance of Pathways. This includes funding, standards of work, performance measures and the working relationship that Pathways has with other lines of service in the Parks Business Unit.

5.4 SERVICE RATIONALE

The service of planning, building and maintaining pathways is classified by PROS Consulting as a core essential service for the Parks Business Unit and it should continue to be offered by The City. Though the service is not legally mandated, it is highly supported by citizens and the City of Calgary's policy documents.

5.4.1 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE POLICY

The pathways line of service contributes significantly to all four corporate policies. Within the MDP and CTP it is recognized for its use for both commuter and recreational travel and its support to sustainable mobility options. The provision of pathways relates directly to core indicators such as increasing model split. In addition, it supports a number of community well-being objectives including equity, encouraging healthy and active lifestyles and improved quality of life.

5.4.2 CITIZEN SATISFACTION AND ENGAGEMENT

The October 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey performed by Ipsos Reid indicates that 94% of Calgarians are satisfied with the Pathway System and 90% view the system as important.

As part of the ImaginePARKS initiative, extensive public opinion was sought. The Leger Executive Summary Public Opinion Research Report August 2012 summarizes this work that included focus groups and telephone and internet surveys. Key highlights from this work that relate to Parks include:

- Pathways experience the highest use of all parks facilities, on average, respondents use pathways 9.4 times per month for running/walking (community parks come in next at 8.8 times/month) and Pathways for biking come in third at 5.4 times/month. Respondents would also like to see expanded pathway lanes with 74% of respondents indicating that this important).
- 80% of Calgarians agree that The City needs to focus on connecting its parks and pathways throughout all areas of Calgary.

Also worthy of note is that The Calgary pathways and bikeways map ranks number 1 in terms of Parks pages visited on Calgary.ca with over 46,000 views in 2012.

In addition to high level of citizen satisfaction, Calgary also boasts ongoing formal citizen engagement in the form of The Calgary Pathways & Bikeways Advisory Council (CPAC). CPAC is a citizens' advisory group that provides a liaison between pathway and bikeway users and the Parks Business Unit. Members of the advisory council provide advice and input on the planning, development, maintenance and management process of Calgary's pathways and on-street bikeways.

CPAC represents a diverse group of pathway and bikeway users. Members commit to a two-year term with possible renewal and are expected to volunteer approximately six hours per month of their time.

5.4.3 SERVICE RATIONALE CONCLUSION

Yes. The Consulting Team finds that Parks must continue to provide the Pathways Line of Service.

5.5 SERVICE LEVEL & SCOPE

The Parks Business Unit is committed to planning, building and maintaining nearly 800 km of interconnected pathways that serves Calgarians of all ages, including walkers, runners, and in-line skaters as well as recreational and commuter cyclists. Best practices in planning, assessment and maintenance ensure that Calgarians have access to an interconnected pathway system that provides both recreational opportunities as well as an alternative mode of transportation for commuters.

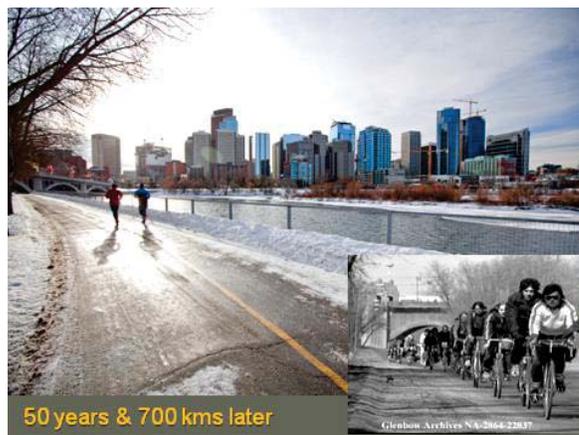
And though the in-depth analysis of the portfolio focused on the maintenance of pathways, the current scope of work performed by Pathways is interdependent and all encompassing. The subservices of the Pathways portfolio are as follows:

- Planning and Development
- Policy Development and Compliance
- Construction
- Assessment
- Maintenance
- Snow Removal

5.5.1 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING AND RESULTS

During the fall and winter of 2013/14, PROS Consulting conducted a comprehensive, global benchmarking study of 6 “Calgary-like” agencies to gain insight into how the Calgary Pathways portfolio stacked up. The agencies benchmarked were:

- City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada – Population: 817,498
- City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada – Population: 2,791,140
- City of Sydney, Australia – Population: 3,600,000
- City of Helsinki, Finland – Population: 600,000
- City of Denver, Colorado, United States – Population 634,265
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States – Population: 384,000



PATHWAYS INVENTORY

In the City of Calgary, the complex system of pathways is a highly valued amenity that is in high demand by Calgarians. In reviewing the benchmark data, Calgary, as expected, ranked first in total number of kilometers of pathways with 760 km with the next closest agency coming in at 410. In fact, Calgary’s network is so expansive that it has almost as many kilometers of pathways (760) as the combined total of the six benchmarked agencies (922). This is indicative that Calgary, through the application of best practices in planning, has been proactive in responding to the high demand that Calgarians have placed on pathways for the last 50 years. The table details the pathway inventory of the benchmarked agencies and includes Calgary.

Agency	Total Kilometers	Kilometers per 1000 population
Calgary	760	0.67
Agency A	NA	#VALUE!
Agency B	93	0.16
Agency C	410	NA
Agency D	149	0.18
Agency E	102	NA
Agency F	168	0.06

PATHWAYS SCOPE OF WORK

As previously mentioned the scope of work performed by the Pathways portfolio is expansive and all encompassing, Comparing the scope or subservices of work with the benchmarked agencies, the management of Calgary’s pathways are in-line with best practices as it provides all of the services that are inclusive of managing a pathways system. The table on the following page represents the percentage of benchmarked agencies that perform the various services in their system (Calgary is not included in the responses).

Scope of Work	Yes	No
Maintenance	100%(6)	0%(0)
Planning	100%(6)	0%(0)
Construction	100%(6)	0%(0)
Policy Development	100%(6)	0%(0)
Snow and Ice Control	83%(6)	17%(0)



SNOW AND ICE CONTROL

A primary function or subservice of the Pathways line of service is snow and ice control (SNIC). And though the frequency of snow and ice control is inconsistent year over year, the target for the number of kilometers of pathways in which snow and ice is removed within 24 hours after a winter weather event is a constant. Currently, Pathways performs snow and ice control on 300 km (or 39%) of its system. Of the six benchmarked agencies, only three could provide a quantifiable target (number of km) for their SNIC services. In comparing Calgary’s SNIC services to those three agencies, Calgary ranks first in number of kilometers of pathways cleared of snow and ice and ranks fourth in percentage of the entire pathway system in which snow and ice is removed (39%). In looking beyond the numbers, Calgary is very much in line with the best management practices and the benchmarked agencies for determining how SNIC services are “rolled out” on the pathway system.

Agency	Total Kilometers	Snow Removal Kilometers of Pathways	Snow Removal % of Pathways	Criteria for Snow Removal
Calgary	760	300	39%	Primary cycling route Connectivity to: LRT, transit, business districts, education & health facilities
Agency A	NA	NA	NA	NA
Agency B	93	230	247%	Access to public transport terminals, schools & commuting
Agency C	410	166	40%	Regional trails, high use pedestrian/commuter routes, school routes, bus routes, then general use paths/trails
Agency D	149	40	27%	1 - Facility Access, 2-Connector Routes, 3- River Valley Commuter Routes, 4- Maintenance Access
Agency E	102	88	86%	Access to parks for recreational users
Agency F	168	Unknown	NA	Done in following order: pathways / linkages, perimeter walkways and internal park roadways

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Maintenance standards are the tasks and frequencies of work performed in a park system. The development and implementation of work plans to meet standards are essential to the efficient and effective maintenance management of a park system. The table on the following page represents the maintenance tasks and the various frequencies (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) that are typical in the management of pathways.

PATHWAYS

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Minor Surface Repair	Within 1 week of deficiency noted	Spring, Summer, Fall	Within 1 month fo deficiency noted	Spring, Summer, Fall	Annually	Spring, Summer, Fall
Minor Edge Repair	Within 1 week of deficiency noted	Year Round	Within 1 month of deficiency noted	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
Snow Removal	Within 24 hours of accumulating snow	Winter	Within 48 hours of accumulating snow	Winter	As needed	Winter
Major Inspection	Monthly	Spring, Summer, Fall	Twice/year	Spring, Summer, Fall	Annually	Spring, Summer, Fall
Clean and sweep	Weekly	Year Round	Monthly	Year Round	Annually	Spring
Striped/Marked	Yearly	Spring, Summer, Fall	Every two years	Spring, Summer, Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer, Fall
Mowed on both sides	Twice Monthly	Growing Season	Monthly	Growing Season	Once/year	Growing Season
Check/Repair signs	Monthly	Year Round	Twice/year	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
Overlays	As needed	Spring, Summer, Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer, Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer, Fall
Trim/Prune Tree Overhang	Twice/year	Winter/Summer	Annually	Spring, fall	As needed	Spring

The City of Calgary currently performs approximately 70% of its maintenance on pathways at a Level 3 service standard and SNIC is the only task that is being provided at a Level 1 service standards. This service level is **BELOW** the majority of the benchmarked agencies as five of the six perform maintenance at a higher standard than does Calgary. A number of factors contribute to the low levels of service including the expansive and sprawling metropolitan area of Calgary (5.1M square kilometers), the largest pathway system in North America (760km) and the corresponding budget of \$2.4M. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	20%	10%	70%
Agency A	100%	0%	0%
Agency B	0%	75%	25%
Agency C	25%	50%	25%
Agency D	0%	100%	0%
Agency E	50%	25%	25%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA

5.5.2 SERVICE LEVEL AND SCOPE CONCLUSION

Though the quality of work that is being performed is acceptable and is meeting the expectations of the citizens of Calgary, the City of Calgary is providing a service level in pathways aside from SNIC that is below what is typically found in large metropolitan system and below that of five of the six benchmarked agencies.

5.6 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

At the onset of the Zero Based Review of the Parks Business Unit in the spring of 2013, the Pathways Line of Service combined volume of work measures with high level performance measures. One excellent effectiveness measure used by Pathways is the rating system that has been developed to determine the quality of the pathway system as a whole. Parks inspects all 760+ kilometres of pathways annually as part of the Pathway Safety Audit requirements. Since 2010, the percentage of pathways rated as FAIL has decreased from 5% to 2.2% in 2012.

The table below, drawn from the Parks Performance Measure report, shows the 2012 percentages of pathways exhibiting various levels of condition.

CODE		
1	EXCELLENT	- Sound or "as new" physical condition. Routine maintenance. 20.8% - 166.4
2	GOOD	- Acceptable physical condition. Minor maintenance. 58.8% - 470.4
3	FAIR	- Tolerable physical condition. Significant ongoing maintenance. 18.2% - 145.6
4	FAIL	- Asset inoperable or unsafe. Immediate attention. 1.7% - 13.6 km
5		- Not present in segment

However these performance measures did not measure the level of efficiency which is a key component to determining if the work that is being performed is achieving its intended outcome: to efficiently maintain safe quality pathways for recreation, transportation and connectivity purposes.

5.6.1 CITIZEN SATISFACTION

The October 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey performed by Ipsos Reid indicates that 94% of Calgarians are satisfied with the Pathway System and 90% view the system as important.

5.6.2 CORPORATE POLICY

The work performed by Pathways contributes significantly to all four corporate policies, as detailed below.

- **Calgary Transportation Policy** – The service contributes greatly to the objectives of the CTP as an important facility for both commuter and recreational travel. The pathways, in conjunction with other facilities, provide higher quality cycling facilities and help form part of the Primary Cycling Network in the CTP. This work supports policies 3.2.a and k directly, and policy 3.2.b draws on elements of the pathway system to facilitate the Primary Cycling Network.
- **Corporate Municipal Development Policy** – The service contributes significantly to the MDP and is directly aligned with various MDP policies related to walkability, pedestrian connectivity, recreation opportunities, and sustainable mobility options.
- **Council's Fiscal Plan – Six Strategic Areas**
 - Ensuring every Calgarian lives in a safe community and has the opportunity to succeed
 - Pathways contributes to this strategic area by promoting walking and contributing to a safer park environment.
 - Investing in great communities and a vibrant urban fabric

- Pathways contributes to this strategic area by contributing land that adds to the city's park system while the corridors created by pathways contribute to the protection of natural and environmentally sensitive areas
- Moving people and goods throughout the city efficiently and sustainably
 - Pathways contributes to this strategic area by providing more pedestrian and cycling opportunities and mobility
- Making Calgary the best place in Canada for a business to start and flourish
 - Pathways contribute to this strategic objective as it is a significant "quality of life element" that attracts global talent and investment (people) in Calgary.
- Becoming a more effective and disciplined organization
 - Pathways contributes to this strategic area by fostering innovation and creativity by encouraging alternate modes of transportation and maintaining the City of Calgary as an employer of choice
- Investing in great communities and a vibrant urban fabric
 - Pathways contributes to this strategic area by providing alternate modes of transportation which can reduce transit and road infrastructure and the costs the higher unit costs associated with them.
- **2020 Sustainability Direction** – Pathways contributes significantly to most of the Community Well-being objectives in particular, Equity, and Healthy and Active. Pathways provide a network of active and passive recreation opportunities that are accessible to all citizens. The work undertaken through joint planning between Parks and Transportation and Transit Planning is essential to the appropriate design of the pathway system for both recreational and commuter users. This coordinated planning considers pathways and on-street facilities required to enhance our mobility goals by connecting to existing, refurbished and new Transit facilities and other transportation networks.



5.6.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEVELOPMENT

As noted in earlier in the report, performance measures quantitatively inform organizations about how successful their services are in meeting their intended outcomes, as well as the processes that produce them. They are a critical tool that assists in the understanding, management, and improvement of organizations. Performance measures provide organizations with the information necessary to make intelligent decisions about work that is performed.

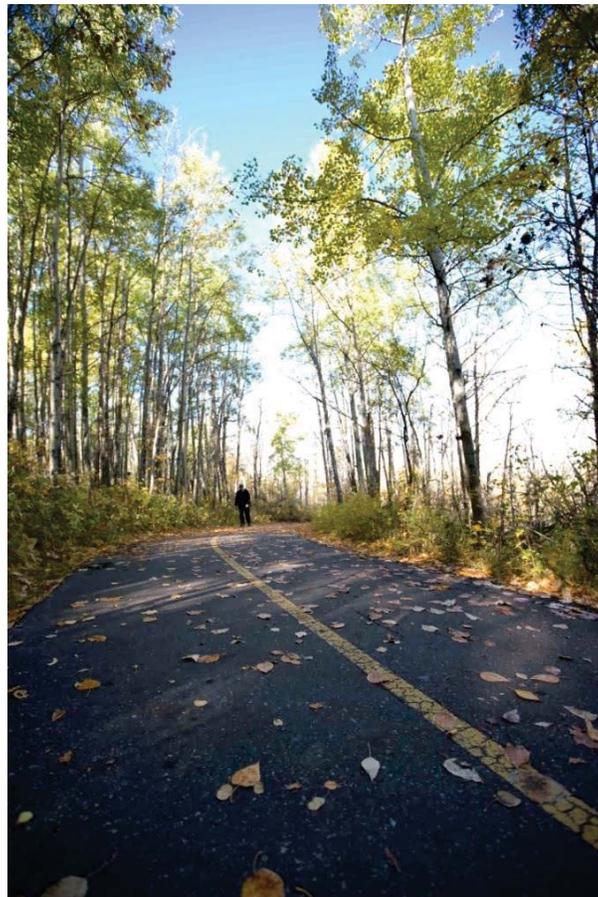
PATHWAY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As previously mentioned, the Parks Business Unit did not have in place all of the performance measures across its lines of service. Though some did measure outcome based performance, most lines, only tracked “factoids” or the volume of work that was being performed. This is not unlike most governmental agencies including the benchmarked cities, where volume of work was the most common measure of performance.

In the fall of 2013, PROS Consulting conducted two workshops with Parks and the intended outcomes of the workshops were two-fold:

- To teach the components of and the methodology utilized to develop performance measures.
- To develop key performance measures for each line of service.

The following page represents key performance measures that were developed for the Pathways line of service through the workshops that are currently being implemented in 2014.



Activity	Activity Goal (what, whom, why)	Budget (Input)	End Product (Output)	Unit Cost or Productivity (Efficiency)	Effectiveness (service quality)	Who's responsible
Pathway safety	To maintain year round pathway safety		- Inspect 90% of pathways annually - Repairs completed on priority basis	Cost per km	-number of claim per km -A CR rating at 1 - 3	Pathways Lead
Snow removal	Maintain pathway usability during winter months		-total km's cleared	\$ per km	-90% of pathways cleared as per priority level	Pathways Lead
Transportation connectivity	Providing alternative transportation options for Calgarians		% of available capital budget spent/missing links	# installed per year -Cost/km	-% of installation per year over outstanding planned missing links.	Pathways Lead

5.6.4 OPTIMIZATION OF SERVICES

In Calgary, there are many kilometers of soft surface trails that serve as extensions/tangents off of the main pathway arterials. The completion of general maintenance tasks such as mowing and trimming along the shoulders of soft surface trails in Calgary is funded and primarily performed by Natural Areas or by Parks Operations. These same tasks are also performed along the pathways system by the Pathways portfolio, however, as Pathways is performing these tasks they are “passing up” the same work that is required along the trail extensions. This creates an uneven maintenance experience for Calgarians that utilize the pathway and trails and could result in a duplication of services.

5.6.5 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS CONCLUSION

Though Calgarians are very satisfied and the work aligns with Corporate Policy and measures of effectiveness of work are in place, efficiency of work that is being performed by the Pathways Line of Service is not tracked. The implementation of the performance measures that have been developed will assist the line of service in determining how successful they are at accomplishing the outcomes they set out to achieve.

5.7 SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Efficiency can best be measured by comparing the unit cost of work at a specific level of care against an acceptable standard. For the purposes of this analysis, the Consulting Team utilized the standards it has developed over the last 19 years of consulting in the field of parks and recreation as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for the basis of comparison for this project.

5.7.1 COST OF SERVICE

Currently, the Pathways Line of Service receives its funding primarily through mil-rate dollars and expends \$2,391,932. As noted previously, there are 760 kilometers of pathways within the system. The following table provide a breakdown of the unit cost expended by Pathways for the total cost of service.

Agency	Population Served	Total Kilometers	Total Budget in Canadian \$ (Expenses)	Total Budget per Capita	Total Cost per Kilometer
Calgary	1,200,000	760	\$ 2,391,932	\$ 1.99	\$ 3,147.28

The unit cost of \$3,147.28 to maintain a kilometer of pathway in Calgary is low, even when performing work at a Level 3 service standard. This is especially low given the high cost of the seasonal labor that is performing the maintenance work. The typical range of unit costs for maintaining pathways at a predominately Level 3 service standard is \$4,800-\$7,000 per kilometer. This indicates that Calgary’s Pathway portfolio is underfunded by a minimum of \$1,642 per kilometer annually and is operating extremely efficiently.

The Pathways portfolio currently does not track costs by sub-service and no further analysis is available.

5.7.2 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

There is little relevance in comparing the efficiency of Calgary to its benchmarked agencies as only two of the six agencies that were surveyed break out expenditures attributed to Pathways from their overall parks budget. Unit costs of these two agencies range from \$1,436.14 - \$12,544.28 per kilometre.

5.7.3 SERVICE EFFICIENCY CONCLUSION

The Pathways line of service appears to be operating with great efficiency given the low level of funding dedicated to the operations and maintenance the largest pathway system in North America. The lack of funding provided for the Pathways portfolio will likely have a profound negative impact on the system as it ages. The implementation of performance measures that have been developed during this project will provide a better understanding and further insight into both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the work being accomplished.

5.8 SERVICE FUNDING SUSTAINABILITY

The mill-rate supported funding that Pathways currently receives is sustainable, but also far less than sufficient. Based on the typical range of unit costs, the portfolio is receiving 66% of the necessary funding for work performed at a Level 3 service standard for pathways. If Calgary's Pathways Line of Service continues to develop and implement work plans at a Level 3 service standard, the portfolio is underfunded by \$1.25 million annually to accomplish work effectively.



CHAPTER SIX - PARKS OPERATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY OF IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS

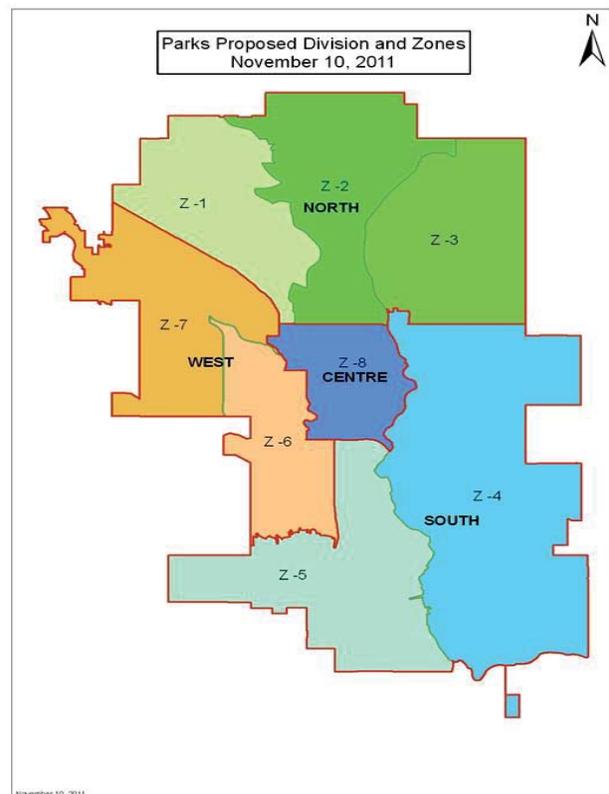
The following table summarizes the results of the in-depth analysis on each fundamental area as required by the ZBR process for the Parks Operations line of service.

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	Large and diverse system (10344 hectares) within an ever changing climate. Expansive inventory of assets that creates pressure on the system both operationally (short-term) and capially (long-term), Currently performing maintenance work at a Level 2 standard.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; The performance measures that have been developed to determine how successful Parks Operations is in accomplishing work must be implemented.
Service Efficiency	Unit cost of \$12,454.83 per hectare is in-line with best management practice (\$12,300-\$14,800 per hectare); Seasonal labour accounts for nearly \$13.5M of the personnel expenditures and efforts to reduce this cost must be made.
Service Funding Sustainability	Current level of funding is not sustainable as the system will continue to grow and the expansive inventory assets will continue to age. Parks Operations must target a reduction in seasonal labour and utilize the funding INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY to offset future growth and reinvest in the system. Evaluation of the future levels of service provisions is also necessary to slow the growth of assets

6.2 SERVICE DESCRIPTION

This front line group maintains the existing park system year-round from the regional park level to the community/neighborhood level. Work includes but is not limited to: customer interface and overall park maintenance, such as turf mowing, trimming, flowers, shrubs, and litter collection. It also includes site specific tasks such as festival hosting, skating rinks, and stewardship of natural ecosystems.

The Park’s Operations line of service is organized into four divisions with 8 geographical zones. It also includes City Wide services of the Infrastructure Portfolio which is a service delivered in the 8 zones. The Infrastructure services cover non horticultural assets such as playgrounds, trails, park furniture, playfields, fencing, signs etc. The following map depicts the alignment of the Parks Operations Divisions and Zones.



6.3 IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS SCOPE

The scope and breadth of the Consulting team's in-depth analysis of this line of service was focused on the maintenance of Parks Operations. This includes funding, standards of work, performance measures and the working relationship that Parks Operations has with other lines of service.

6.4 SERVICE RATIONALE

The Parks Operations service is classified as a core and essential service for the Parks Business Unit and **must continue to be offered by the City**. Well maintained parks and public spaces are not only supported by the four corporate policies but are highly valued by Calgarians and contribute significantly to their quality of life.

6.4.1 ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE POLICY

The work performed by Parks Operations contributes significantly to all four corporate policies, including:

- Facilitating pedestrian mobility and enhancing the public realm through good maintenance practices. Incorporating green infrastructure along park/roadway boundaries is also an important objective of Complete Streets (section 3.7).
- Maintaining all parks systems thereby meeting the Community Well-being goals of the MDP and the SD2020.
- Supporting the maintenance of all public spaces within the parks system and contributing to the reduction of waste.

6.4.2 CITIZEN SATISFACTION

In the October 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey performed by Ipsos Reid, Parks Operations is included as a service and 97% of Calgarians value parks and open space and 95% are satisfied with the services provided.

6.4.3 SERVICE RATIONALE CONCLUSION

Yes. The Consulting Team finds that the City of Calgary must continue to provide the Parks Operations Line of Service.

6.5 SERVICE LEVEL & SCOPE

The Parks Business Unit is committed to the stewardship of Calgary's municipal open spaces. Parks staff are proud and passionate and apply a wide range of professional expertise in the maintenance of public spaces. Parks provide citizens with accessible spaces for exercising, spending time with family, enjoying nature, playing sports and taking part in a wide range of community activities. The scope of work that Parks Operations provides is interdependent and all encompassing. The subservices of the Parks Operations portfolio are as follows:

- Grounds Maintenance
- Floral
- Infrastructure Maintenance
- Regional Parks
- Large Area Mowing

6.5.1 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING AND RESULTS

During the fall and winter of 2013/14, PROS Consulting conducted a comprehensive, global benchmarking study of 6 “Calgary-like” agencies to gain insight into how the Calgary Parks Operations portfolio stacked up. The agencies benchmarked were:

- City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada – Population: 817,498
- City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada – Population: 2,791,140
- City of Sydney, Australia – Population: 3,600,000
- City of Helsinki, Finland – Population: 600,000
- City of Denver, Colorado, United States – Population 634,265
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States – Population: 384,000

COMMUNITY VALUES

The maintenance of a park system is a service that is provided by all of the six benchmarked agencies with varying degrees of scope and frequency, in large part dictated by the values of the community. This table indicates the top three community values of each benchmarked agency and is consistent with the work that PROS Consulting has conducted over the last 19 years, in that no two agencies are alike.

Agency	Value #1	Value #2	Value #3	Primary Sources of Information
Calgary	Pathways	Park Maintenance	Trees/Urban Forest	Strategic Business Plan & Citizen Surveys
Agency A	Playgrounds	Trees and Urban Forest	Graffiti Removal	Citizen Satisfaction Surveys
Agency B	Pathways	Natural Areas	Playgrounds	Citizen Feedback via Customer Service
Agency C	Trees/Urban Forest	Landscaping and Beautification	General Park Maintenance	Internal Knowledge and Strategic Business Plan
Agency D	Playgrounds	Landscaping and Beautification	Trees/Urban Forest	Internal Knowledge
Agency E	Pathways	General Park Maintenance	Trees/Urban Forest	Strategic Business Plans & Citizen Surveys
Agency F	Communicate with Users	Preserve and Promote Nature	Maintain Quality Parks	Strategic Business Plan

PARK OPERATIONS SCOPE OF WORK

The Parks Operations Line of Service provides a full array of maintenance services for the parks system. Of reviewing the benchmark data, Calgary’s array of services are comparable to that of the benchmarked agencies. The table below outlines the services provided by the six agencies that participated in the benchmark survey.

Scope of Work	Yes	No
Grounds Maintenance	100%(6)	0%(0)
Floral	100%(6)	0%(0)
Infrastructure Maintenance	100%(6)	0%(0)
Regional Parks	100%(6)	0%(0)
Large Area Mowing	83%(5)	17%(1)
Playfields	83%(5)	17%(1)

PARKS OPERATIONS INVENTORY OF ASSETS

As previously mentioned the scope of work performed by the Parks Operations Line of Service is expansive and all encompassing. In an effort to get a better understanding of how expansive the scope of work is, the Consulting Team compared the quantity of assets within Calgary’s system with the benchmarked agencies and found that the Calgary Parks Business Unit possesses a significantly higher inventory of assets than the benchmarked cities as the City of Calgary ranked at or near the top in six of the seven categories. Simply, the more assets a system has, the more maintenance that is required. The following table represents a comparison of the quantity of the most common assets of the benchmarked agencies.

City	Total Developed Hectares	Total Undeveloped Hectares	Total Hectares	Total Hectares of Turf	Playgrounds	Sport Courts	Playfields
	Per 1000 people						
Calgary	6.47	2.15	8.62	2.48	0.89	0.18	0.76
City A	0.05	0.0001	0.05	Unknown	0.25	0.01	0.004
City B	0.75	9.3	10.84	1	0.43	Unknown	Unknown
City C	6.12	0.58	3.52	0.60	0.24	0.40	0.25
City D	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown	5.14	0.43	0.12	1.23
City E	30.63	1.79	32.42	Unknown	0.29	0.65	1.07
City F	1.57	1.32	2.90	Unknown	0.31	0.27	0.25 +4 stadiums

MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

Maintenance standards are the tasks and frequencies of work performed in a park system. The development and implementation of work plans to meet standards are essential to the efficient and effective maintenance management of a park system. The following sections represent the represents the maintenance tasks for each subservice of Calgary’s parks operations and the various frequencies (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3) that are typical in the management of a park system.

PLAYFIELDS

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Playfields - Baseball / Softball / Soccer / Multi-use						
Mow grass at 2.5-3" height per mowing	3x/week	Growing Season	2x/week	Growing Season	1x/week	Growing Season
Overseed and Topdress	Twice/year	Spring/Fall	Once/year	Fall	As Needed	Fall
Fertilizer	3x/year	Spring, Summer Fall	2x/year	Spring,Fall	1x/year	Fall
Aerate	2x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Fall	1x/year	Fall
Water (1 inch / week)	Daily	Spring, Summer, Fall	As Needed	Spring, Summer, Fall	As Needed	Spring, Summer, Fall

The City of Calgary currently performs approximately 75% of its maintenance on playfields at a Level 3 service standard. This service level is **ON PAR** with the majority of the benchmarked agencies as four of the six perform maintenance on playfields at or below the standard than does Calgary. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

PLAYFIELDS

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	0%	25%	75%
Agency A	100%	0%	0%
Agency B	0%	0%	100%
Agency C	25%	75%	0%
Agency D	0%	25%	75%
Agency E	0%	25%	75%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA

FLORAL

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Plant landscape flowers (annuals)	2x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Spring, Fall
Flowerbed preparation	1-2x/year	Spring	1x/year	Spring	1x/year	Spring
Mulch	2x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Spring	1x/year	Spring
Aeration, Fertilizer, Weed Control	1x/2 weeks or as needed	Spring	1x/monthly	Spring	Annually	Spring
Create floral display	3x/year	Early April, mid-June and mid-September	1-2x/year	Early April and mid-September	As needed/requested	Early April and mid-September
Clean weeds from beds	1x/week or as needed	Year-round	Monthly	Year-round	2x/year	Year-round
Prune and deadhead flowers	1x/week	Year-round	Monthly	Year-round	Bi-Monthly	Year-round
Edge Beds	1x/year and as needed	Growing season	Every 2 years	Growing season	Every 2 years	Growing season
Prune Shrubs	1x/month	Growing season	Every 2 months	Growing season	As needed	Spring
Trim Trees	1x/year	Growing season	1x/year	Growing season	As needed	Growing season
Move Plants indoors/outdoors	2x/year	Spring, Fall	Not performed	Not performed	Not performed	Not performed
Cut back ornamental grasses and plants	1x/year	Fall	1x/year	Fall	Annually	Fall
Water	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season	As needed	Growing season
Inspect and adjust irrigation heads	1x/week	Growing season	Monthly	Growing season	Monthly	Growing season
Replace/supplement Bulbs	1x/years	Fall	1x/3 years	Fall	1x/3 years	Fall

The City of Calgary currently performs approximately 75% of its maintenance on landscape beautification and flower beds at a Level 1 and Level 2 service standard. This service level is **ON PAR** with that of the benchmarked agencies as three of the six perform maintenance on landscape beautification at the same standard that does Calgary. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

FLORAL

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	50%	25%	25%
Agency A	100%	0%	0%
Agency B	75%	25%	0%
Agency C	50%	25%	25%
Agency D	25%	50%	25%
Agency E	50%	25%	25%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA

GENERAL PARKS MAINTENANCE						
Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
General Park - Lawn						
Mow/Trim/Blow Clippings	1x/5 days	Growing Season	1x/2 weeks	Growing Season	1 or 2x/year	Growing Season
Aerate	2x/year	Spring and Fall	1x/year	Fall	Not performed	Fall
Overseed	1x/year	Fall	As needed	Fall	Not performed	Not performed
Fertilize	2 to 4x/year	Growing Season	1x/year	Growing Season	Not performed	Not performed
Apply weed control	1x/year and as needed	Growing Season	As needed	Growing Season	As needed	Growing Season
Trim Shrubs	1x/month and as needed	Growing Season	1x/year	Spring or Fall	As needed	Year-round
Pick up trash prior to mowing	1x/5 days	Growing Season	1x/10 days	Growing Season	1x/10 days	Growing Season
Control pests	As needed	Growing Season	As needed	Growing Season	As needed	Growing Season
Manage leaves	2x/year and as needed	Fall	2x/year and as needed	Fall	1x/year	Fall
Line Trim	1x/week	Growing Season	1x/week	Growing Season	Monthly	Growing Season
Edge	1x/month	Growing Season	1x/year	Growing Season	As needed	Growing Season
Pavilion						
Clean and sweep	1x/week	March - October	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October
Remove and/or replace Garbage Bags and Trash cans	Daily	March - October	Weekly	March - October	As needed	March - October
Set-up Site	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October
Trim and Landscape	1x/week	March - October	2x/month	March - October	As needed	March - October
Power wash	1x/week	March - October	2x/year	March - October	As needed	March - October
Check/Spray for hornets, wasps	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October
Inspect Electrical System	1x/year	March - October	1x/year	March - October	1x/year	March
Clean port-a-jons/Restrooms	Daily	March - October	7x/week	March - October	1x/week	March - October
Pump port-a-jons	1x/week	March - October	1x/week or as needed	March - October	1x/week	March - October
Inspect Picnic Tables	1x/week	March - October	1x/week or as needed	March - October	Monthly	March - October
Inspect/Remove Debris from Roof	Daily	March - October	7x/week or as needed	March - October	Monthly	March - October
Remove Graffiti	Daily	March - October	1x/week or as needed	March - October	As needed	March - October
Setup Tables for Event	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October	As needed	March - October
Restrooms						
Clean and restock	2x/day (weekdays); 2x/day (weekends)	Year-round	1x/day (weekdays); 2x/day (weekends)	Year-round	Daily	Seasonal
Odor removal	7x/week	Year-round	7x/week	Year-round	Weekly	Year-round
Repair vandalism	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Wash aprons	Daily	Year-round	1x/week	Year-round	Monthly	Year-round
Remove and/or replace Garbage Bags and Trash cans	7x/week	Year-round	7x/week	Year-round	2x/week	Year-round
Paint trash barrels	1x/year	Year-round	1x/year	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Check Heating / Cooling	7x/week	Year-round	1x/month	Year-round	Quarterly	Year-round
Monthly Mechanical Inspection	1x/month	Year-round	1x/month	Year-round	1x/month	Year-round
Seasonal Mechanical System Startup	2x/year	Spring, Fall	2x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Spring, Fall
Schedule Lighting, Mechanical Systems	1x/week	Year-round	1x/week	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Seasonal start-up and close-up	2x/year	Spring, Fall	2x/year	Spring, Fall	1x/year	Spring, Fall
Storage Building						
Inventory and removed unused materials	Monthly	Year-round	Quarterly	Year-round	1x/year	Year-round
Clean	Weekly	Year-round	Monthly	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Check electricity	Monthly	Year-round	Quarterly	Year-round	1x/year	Year-round
Paint	1x/2 years	Seasonal	1x/3 years	Seasonal	as needed	Seasonal
Spray for bugs	Monthly	Year-round	Quarterly	Year-round	As needed	Year-round
Major Mechanical/Chemical System Inspection	1x/month	Year-round	1x/month	Year-round	as needed	Year-round
Mulching						
Apply Mulch	2x/year	Spring, Summer	1x/year	Spring	As needed	Spring, Summer
Weed Control	2x/year	Growing season	1x/year	Spring	As needed	Spring, Summer

The City of Calgary currently performs 50% of its general park maintenance at a Level 3 service standard. This service level is BELOW that of the benchmarked agencies as four of the six perform general maintenance above the standard that does Calgary. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	25%	25%	50%
Agency A	100%	0%	0%
Agency B	0%	50%	50%
Agency C	25%	50%	25%
Agency D	0%	100%	0%
Agency E	50%	50%	0%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA



LARGE AREA MOWING

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Mow/Trim/Blow Clippings	Weekly	Growing Season	Bi-Weekly	Growing Season	Monthly	Growing Season
Pick up trash prior to mowing	As Needed	Growing Season	As Needed	Growing Season	As Needed	Growing Season

The City of Calgary currently performs 100% of its mowing of large turf areas at a Level 2 service standard. This service level is **ON PAR** with that of the benchmarked agencies as three of the six perform mowing of large turf areas at the same standard that does Calgary. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

LARGE AREA MOWING

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	0%	100%	0%
Agency A	50%	50%	0%
Agency B	50%	0%	50%
Agency C	75%	25%	0%
Agency D	0%	100%	0%
Agency E	0%	100%	0%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA



PLAYGROUNDS

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Major Inspection (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	1x per year	Performed in April	1x per year	Spring Summer Fall	As needed	Spring Summer Fall
General Inspection (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	6x per year	Each playground across the city is inspected	3x per year	Spring Summer Fall	1x per year	Spring
Major Inspection (Furniture/Parking)	1x per 5 years	Spring	As needed	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
General Inspection (Furniture/Parking)	7x per year	Performed during inspections	3x per year	Spring Summer Fall	Weekly	Year Round
Clean up/Garbage Removal	7x per year	Performed during inspections	5x per year	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
Repair	1x per year	This includes vandalism incidents	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Refurbish (Play Equipment)	1x per 10 years	City staff prepare the surface for painting	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Rake Pea Gravel Safety Surface	7x per year	Performed during inspections	5x per year	Spring, Summer Fall	Bi-Monthly(4x/year)	Spring, Summer Fall
Replace (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	1x per 15 years	City staff remove/dispose of	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Replace (Furniture/Signage)	1x per 20 years		As needed	Fall	As needed	Fall

The City of Calgary currently performs 100% of its playground maintenance at a Level 1 service standard. This service level is ABOVE that of the benchmarked agencies as three of the six perform playground maintenance at a standard below that of Calgary's. The following table shows the percentage of work performed by each benchmarked agency at each level of service standard.

PLAYGROUNDS

Agency	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Calgary	100%	0%	0%
Agency A	100%	0%	0%
Agency B	0%	100%	0%
Agency C	25%	50%	25%
Agency D	100%	0%	0%
Agency E	0%	25%	75%
Agency F	NA	NA	NA

COMMUNITY RESPONSIVENESS

As mentioned earlier, community values play a significant role in how resources are allocated for the maintenance of park systems. Additionally, the level in which the community engages in the parks system on a day to day basis is another element that can affect the scope and breadth of maintenance work provided by a parks operations. The Calgary Parks Business Unit receives nearly 22,000 inquiries from Calgarians ANNUALLY, with 12,000 being attributed to the Parks Operations Line of Service. This is far and above any of the benchmarked agencies. The table below shows the number of citizen inquiries received and resolved by the Parks Departments/Divisions of the benchmarked agencies as a whole.

Agency	Number of Citizen Inquiries (Annually)	Number of Inquiries Resolved Annually
Calgary	22000	Majority
Agency A	NA	NA
Agency B	3000	3000
Agency C	1136	1136
Agency D	4358	4358
Agency E	NA	NA
Agency F	75	67

6.5.2 SERVICE LEVEL AND SCOPE CONCLUSION

The quality of work that is being performed by the Parks Operations is acceptable and is meeting the high expectations of the citizens of Calgary. The scope and breadth of the work is far greater than that of the benchmarked agencies as the system’s assets as a whole is expansive, the level of citizen engagement is extremely high and the level of service that is provided is in-line with the benchmarked agencies.

6.6 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS

At the onset of the Zero Based Review of the Parks Business Unit in the spring of 2013, the Parks Operations Line of Service did not have consistent performance measures in place that could determine the level of success in which it was achieving its intended outcome: the stewardship of Calgary’s municipal open spaces for the purposes of providing Calgarians, safe, clean, and dynamic spaces in which to recreate. Though Parks Operations does have some select performance measures in place such as comparing the cost of contracted work with the cost of the same scope of work performed by staff, the line of service has traditionally measured its success in citizen satisfaction and compliance with corporate policy.

6.6.1 CITIZEN SATISFACTION

In the October 2012 Citizen Satisfaction Survey performed by Ipsos Reid, Parks Operations is included as a service and 97% of Calgarians value parks and open space and 95% are satisfied with the services provided.

6.6.2 CORPORATE POLICY

The work performed by Parks Operations contributes significantly to all four corporate policies, including:

- Facilitating pedestrian mobility and enhancing the public realm through good maintenance practices. Incorporating green infrastructure along park/roadway boundaries is also an important objective of Complete Streets (section 3.7).
- Maintaining all parks systems thereby meeting the Community Well-being goals of the MDP and the SD2020.
- Supporting the maintenance of all public spaces within the parks system and contributing to the reduction of waste.

6.6.3 PERFORMANCE MEASURE DEVELOPMENT

As previously mentioned, the Parks Business Unit did not have in place all of the performance measures across its lines of service. Though some did measure outcome based performance, most lines, only tracked “factoids” or the volume of work that was being performed. This is not unlike most governmental agencies including the benchmarked cities, where volume of work was the most common measure of performance.

PARKS OPERATIONS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

As previously mentioned, the Parks Business Unit did not have in place consistent performance measures across its lines of service. Though some did measure outcome based performance, most lines, including Parks Operations, only tracked “factoids” or the volume of work that was being performed. This is not unlike most governmental agencies including the benchmarked cities, where volume of work was the most common measure of performance.

In the fall of 2013, PROS Consulting conducted two workshops with Parks and the intended outcomes of the workshops were two-fold:

1. To teach the components of and the methodology utilized to develop performance measures.
2. To develop key performance measures for each line of service.

The following page represents key performance measures that were developed for the Parks Operations Line of Service through the workshops that are currently being implemented in 2014.

Activity	Activity Goal (what, whom, why)	Budget (Input)	Effectiveness (service quality)	End Product (Output)	Unit Cost or Productivity (Efficiency)	Who's responsible
Play Fields Enhanced management	Providing high quality safe playfields		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 90% of fields with <math>\geq 400</math> booked hrs kept/maintained at ACR (Asset Condition Rating) 1 - 3 90% of irrigated fields have a functional irrigation system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 cm height Mowed every 7 days during the playing season. Fertilize 1 time/year Aerate 1/year Irrigation is activated and working no later than June 1 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$ for aeration sites/ha \$ for mowing/ha \$ for fertilize/ha \$ for irrigation (water consumption)/ha % of cost recovery 	Zone Superintendents
Management of Playgrounds	Provide safe quality playgrounds		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Down time $\leq 1\%$ due to repairs 95% playgrounds are ACR 1 - 3 100% of playgrounds are inspected as per schedule. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of injury incidents # of inspections # of claims # per child /capita 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost of inspection/playground Cost of repairs/playground Cost of replacement or refurbishment 	Infrastructure
311 SR Phone Request	Effectively communicate with Citizens via the 311 system.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measured success based on monthly reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Query responded to within 14 days 90% of SRS closed within deadlines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unknown - efficiency based on repeat SRS and successfully completed SR's 	Parks

6.6.4 COORDINATION OF WORK

Currently, there is one city wide portfolio that can be classified as a subservice of Parks Operations, that being Parks Infrastructure which is responsible for the maintenance of all assets within the parks system with the exception of the green infrastructure (trees, shrubs, flowers, turf), irrigation and pathways. The interface of the Parks Infrastructure portfolio’s work with that of the other work performed within the Parks Operations Line of Service is not optimal which can create an “uneven” experience by Calgary park users. At the recommendation of the Consulting Team, the Parks Business Unit has begun internal discussions to determine what asset maintenance is best completed by the zones to develop a more effective service delivery system and create a better park experience for Calgarians.

6.6.5 SERVICE EFFECTIVENESS CONCLUSION

Though Calgarians are very satisfied and the work aligns with Corporate Policy, true measures of the effectiveness of work that is being performed by the Parks Operations Line of Service is not consistently applied. Additionally, the current organizational relationship that exists between the Parks Infrastructure portfolio and the Parks Operations is not optimal and has resulted in silo thinking. The implementation of the performance measures that have been developed as well as the implementation of a new approach to asset maintenance will assist the line of service in determining how successful they are at accomplishing the outcomes they set out to achieve.

6.7 SERVICE EFFICIENCY

Efficiency can best be measured by comparing the unit cost of work at a specific level of care against an acceptable standard. For the purposes of this analysis, the Consulting Team utilized the standards it has developed over the last 19 years of consulting in the field of parks and recreation as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for the basis of comparison for this project.

6.7.1 COST OF SERVICE

Currently, the Parks Operations line of service receives its funding primarily through mil-rate dollars and expends \$45,397,853 annually to maintain 3,645 hectares of groomed public spaces, including the Parks Infrastructure portfolio that maintains parks assets city-wide. The table on the following page is a breakdown of the unit cost expended by Parks Operations for the total cost of all maintenance services provided.

Agency	Population Served	Total Developed Hectares (not including Natural Areas)	Total Budget in Canadian \$ (Expenses)	Total Budget per Capita	Total Cost per Hectare
Calgary	1,200,000	3645	\$ 45,397,853	\$ 37.83	\$ 12,454.83

The unit cost of \$12,454.83 to maintain a hectare of parkland at a Level 2 service standard, not including irrigation, urban forestry and integrated pest management in Calgary is in-line with best practices of \$12,300-\$14,800 per hectare.

And though Calgary is performing parks maintenance in-line with best practices, the “high cost of seasonal labour” prevents the line of service from being more efficient. Personnel costs for the Parks Operations Line of Service is approximately \$28 million or /hectare with 48% of the total cost of personnel (\$13.5 million) being attributed to seasonal labour. Parks has significantly expanded the third party contracting of parks maintenance functions, namely mowing, trimming and trash collection. This expansion has resulted in in annual savings that had not been realized prior to 2010. Additionally, the expansion of contracting out has also begun to reduce its dependency on season staff as the number of seasonal staff hired in 2013 was less than was hired in 2010. Further reduction in the workforce and corresponding costs should be pursued so that funding can be shifted to manage the growing system.

With the advent of PARIS, Calgary’s customized asset management system, the Parks Business Unit has moved away from activity based cost tracking. Therefore further analysis is not available on the sub-services that make up the Parks Operations Line of Service as Calgary currently does not track costs at that level.

6.7.2 COMPARATIVE BENCHMARKING ANALYSIS

There is little relevance in comparing the efficiency of Calgary to its benchmarked agencies as only two of the six agencies that were surveyed break out expenditures attributed to parks maintenance.

6.7.3 SERVICE EFFICIENCY CONCLUSION

The efficiency with which the Parks Operations is performing its work is in line with best practices from a unit cost perspective. Given that efficiency and effectiveness go hand-in-hand, the unbalanced ratio of personnel-to-non-personnel costs is likely negatively affecting the effectiveness of the actual work performed on the park system. The implementation of performance measures that have been developed during this project will provide a better understanding and further insight into both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the work being accomplished.

6.8 SERVICE FUNDING SUSTAINABILITY

The mill-rate supported funding that Parks Operations currently receives is not sustainable. The Business Unit must work to reduce the personnel to non-personnel ratio of costs and change the level of service provisions to slow the growth of its assets. Additionally, the Parks Business Unit has an opportunity to grow its User Charge Revenue, in particular through the reservation of Playfields. Currently, the Parks Business Unit charges \$2.05 per team per hour for youth sport allocation and utilization of playfields. This inexpensive rate provides youth sport organizations the opportunity to reserve more hours of playfields that they have the ability to use, thereby resulting in playfields going “unused” and the inability to accommodate emerging sports.

CHAPTER SEVEN - IN-DEPTH ANALYSIS SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Parks System in Calgary has a rich legacy of over 100 years. Parks are valued by Calgarians for the role parks play in building complete communities by providing opportunity for experiencing nature in every community. Neighbourhood parks bring folks together as they enjoy the various activities. Whether it is for active participation from enjoying soccer, cycling or dog walking through the river valley, these activities keep the citizens and visitors healthy and balanced in their lives.

Calgarians see parks as freely accessible part of the community infrastructure; an important connection to nature both for respite and enjoyment as well as places for discovery and environmental education.

Parks primary role as the steward of Calgary’s public parks and open space system is to provide a diverse range of services to Calgarians and visitors alike. Parks services cover a spectrum from planning and design, to development and management of the parks and the open space system. Examples of the range of assets and services include the following: the urban forest (400,000+ trees), over 5000 parcels of park land, community sports fields (1200+), playgrounds (1000+), a multi-use pathway system (750 + km), water management (1500+ irrigation systems), cemeteries (5), various park facilities and amenities, urban conservation, natural environment management (3500 + hectares), educational programs (24,000+ participants), volunteer management, events hosting and community engagement.

The Parks Business Unit operates, manages and maintains the system in a way that exceptionally meets the community values that Calgarians hold near and dear. However, as noted in detail in the report, opportunity exists to increase the level of effectiveness and efficiency in the system. The following summarizes the organizational functionality and the line of services that were evaluated during Phase 2b of the Zero Based Review project. The recommendations that have been presented will be further developed into prioritized business cases, complete with strategic action plans and further cost analysis.

7.1 NATURAL AREAS SUMMARY

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	4123 acres (40%) of Parks system is Natural Area; Current maintenance standards are incomplete though primarily at a Level 3 standard. Must implement consistent maintenance standards for natural areas across the entire parks system.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures that determine how successful Natural Areas are in accomplishing work do not exist. Must implement performance measures that have been developed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per hectare is \$291.05. Best management practice cost per hectare is \$2700-\$3200. Calgary is maintaining natural areas at with 11% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Line of Service reorganizes and implements a new strategic plan (beginning in 2014) and begins to approach work in natural areas more holistically, additional operational funding MAY BE required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. URBAN CONSERVATION RATING SYSTEM** - Implement a Habitat Condition Index and Asset Condition Rating to establish sustainable funding.
- 2. IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES** - Implement performance measures so that both the effectiveness and efficiency of work can be better measured.
- 3. STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN** - Fully develop a strategic action plan to successfully implement the Natural Areas’ realignment initiative that has been developed by Parks over the last 6 months.

7.2 PATHWAYS SUMMARY

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	760 km of hard surface pathways utilized both recreationally and as alternative mode of transportation for commuters; Largest system in North America; Level 3 maintenance standards are in place for spring, summer and fall. Level 1 standards utilized for snow and ice control. Currently developing an action plan to streamline work related to maintenance of soft surface trails.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; Performance measures do exist in that the Line of Service is in the final year of implementing recommendations from the Safety Review Audit. Must implement more holistic performance measures that determine level of success of work that is being performed.
Service Efficiency	Unit Cost per kilometer is \$3,147.28. Best management practice unit cost per hectare is \$4800-\$7000. Calgary is maintaining pathways at 66% of desired funding level
Service Funding Sustainability	Within existing work plans, the current funding is sustainable. As the Pathway system continues to expand and the system as a whole "ages", additional operational funding MAY BE required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- PERFORMANCE MEASURES** - Implement the performance measures so that both the effectiveness and efficiency of work can be better measured.
- STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN** - Fully develop a strategic action plan to shift the maintenance responsibilities along trails to the Pathways Portfolio. Note: The Pathways Portfolio has begun the development of an action plan and expects to implement the plan in 2014

7.3 PARKS OPERATIONS SUMMARY

Area of Analysis	Comments
Service Rationale	Highly supported by City of Calgary policy and bylaws and highly valued by Calgarians
Service Level and Scope	Large and diverse system (10344 hectares) within an ever changing climate. Expansive inventory of assets that creates pressure on the system both operationally (short-term) and capially (long-term), Currently performing maintenance work at a Level 2 standard.
Service Effectiveness	Meets Citizen Expectations and Corporate Policy; The performance measures that have been developed to determine how successful Parks Operations is in accomplishing work must be implemented.
Service Efficiency	Unit cost of \$12,454.83 per hectare is in-line with best management practice (\$12,300-\$14,800 per hectare); Seasonal labour accounts for nearly \$13.5M of the personnel expenditures and efforts to reduce this cost must be made.
Service Funding Sustainability	Current level of funding is not sustainable as the system will continue to grow and the expansive inventory assets will continue to age. Parks Operations must target a reduction in seasonal labour and utilize the funding INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY to offset future growth and reinvest in the system. Evaluation of the future levels of service provisions is also necessary to slow the growth of assets

RECOMMENDATIONS

- EXPAND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING:** Further expansion of third party contracting of park maintenance services to further reduce costs should be explored

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2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for park seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual's performance at the end of each season but throughout the season.
3. **PLAYFIELD STRATEGIC UTILIZATION AND COST RECOVERY** – The Parks Business Unit in cooperation with the Recreation Business Unit is embarking on a strategic plan for the utilization and future development of playfields that includes cost recovery.
4. **PLAYFIELD RESERVATION USER CHARGES:** Prior to the development of the Playfield Strategic Plan, increase the hourly user charge to recover at least 50% of the actual costs attributed to Playfield Maintenance.
5. **FULLY IMPLEMENT ASSET MANAGEMENT MODEL (PARIS)** – Fully Implement PARIS to become highly efficient & effective in managing lifecycle replacement and the tracking of the operational maintenance costs associated with the park system's assets by the end of 2015.
6. **EVALUATE LEVELS OF SERVICE PROVISIONS** – Further analyze the Standard Development Agreement (Park) for park system amenities and assets to curtail the trend of creating an expansive inventory of assets that is not financial sustainable.
7. **NATURALIZATION OF PARKS SYSTEM:** Develop and implement systematic process improvements to create a balance between manicured and naturalized land in the system, in an effort to reduce the level of "manicured" parkland in the system and return create a higher level of naturalization.

7.4 ORGANIZATIONAL FUNCTIONALITY SUMMARY

The narrative below summarizes the issues and recommendations from the Organizational Functionality in-depth analysis.

7.4.1 LEADERSHIP, MORALE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Parks has independently dispersed work locations and work performed in the field creates an "accountability challenge" as the more mobile workforces are, by nature, the less accountable they become. Often lost on leaders is the need to hold ALL staff accountable for their role in achieving the vision and intended outcomes, and the consequences of not doing so can impact performance. One such consequence is the degradation of morale, defined as the attitude that staff has towards the work they are performing. Lack of accountability can significantly contribute to low staff morale as it leads to the devaluation of their work as well as frustration in the low quality of work of their peers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **ENHANCE COMMUNICATION:** Develop communication standards for staff that mandates consistent and ongoing communication of the maintenance standards by which work is to be performed.
2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for park seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual's performance at the end of each season but throughout the season.
3. **DEVELOP LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM:** Develop and implement a leadership training program that is specific to the needs of the Parks Business Unit with initial focus on the foreman position.

4. **CREATE ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM:** In conjunction with Human Resources, the Parks Business Unit should create a formal attendance support program in an effort to promote strong culture of work ethic and reduce the lost time associated with injury and illness
5. **IMPROVE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCESSES:** Parks must, in conjunction with Human Resources, develop clear parameters, processes and accountabilities for reasonably accommodating employees who are ill or injured in order for Parks to support employee health and safety while maintaining productivity.

7.4.2 EQUIPMENT AND BEST PRACTICE TRAINING

The maintenance tasks performed by Parks is the backbone of the Parks Business Unit. The effectiveness and efficiency of the work performed in public spaces is heavily dependent upon two critical elements: equipment and best practice training. Through analysis of Parks inventory and level of utilization of its current fleet and equipment as well as the training program and maintenance program, it has been determined that Parks staff need to continually evaluate the inventory of their equipment, not only to ensure that the “right” equipment is available to do the jobs at hand but also that the appropriate level of key replacement parts are available and in stock to minimize the loss of productivity that can result from equipment failures resulting from wear and tear or misuse. And though park staff are trained on the proper and safe mechanical function of the equipment, they desire best practice training on how to utilize the equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **IDENTIFY ADEQUATE INVENTORY and MAINTENANCE:** Parks must identify the most needed and appropriate level of parts needed to repair “non-rolling stock” equipment quickly to reduce downtime in the field.
2. **DEVELOP BEST PRACTICE TRAINING:** Develop and implement a “hands on” training program to teach staff the best practices of how to use effectively use equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.
3. **ENHANCE FLEET PARTNERSHIP:** Continue to optimize relationship with Fleet for the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of parks “rolling stock” vehicles and equipment.

7.4.3 WORK PLANS AND PROCESSES

In the first phase of the ZBR project, it became apparent that inconsistent application of maintenance standards and process policies were impacting the operation of the Parks Business Unit. Further examination of the seasonal staffing program and the current maintenance standards, as well as other information related to the reorganization of parks, revealed processes not in keeping with the size of the Business Unit, nor the geographical size and population of the City of Calgary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **MANAGE TO STANDARDS:** Adopt and ensure consistent implementation of maintenance standards that were developed through two staff workshops in the fall of 2013.
2. **ENHANCE COLLABORATION:** Foster an environment of collaboration across lines of service achieve more effective and efficient outcomes of work.

7.4.4 SEASONAL LABOUR

The Parks Business Unit in the City of Calgary is heavily dependent upon unionized seasonal labour, hiring 600+ per year, to perform a wide variety of maintenance tasks throughout the park system during the months of May through September, otherwise known as the “growing season”. Through an analysis of data and information as well as two workshops with staff from Labour Management and Parks, PROS Consulting conducted analysis on the 2011-2014 Collective Agreement of the Corporation of the City of Calgary (the City) and the Calgary Civic Employees Local 37 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). And though the agreement with CUPE affects 24 business units or divisions within the City of Calgary, 80% of the total seasonal membership of Local 37 (L37) is comprised of parks seasonal employees. In consultation with the City of Calgary’s Labour Management Division and the Parks Business Unit, PROS Consulting has identified the following significant issues that are tied to the collective agreement and Parks management practices that have evolved as a result are as follows:

- Seniority
- Layoff
- Recall
- Schedules of Work
- High Cost of Seasonal Labour
- Grievance Procedures

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **EXPAND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING:** Further expansion of third party contracting of park maintenance services to further reduce personnel costs should be explored

INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY

2. **ENHANCE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT:** Create a formal performance management system for park seasonal employees that not only assesses an individual’s performance at the end of each season but throughout.

- 3.

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4. *INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY*

5. *INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY*

7.5 BUSINESS CASE RECOMMENDATIONS

In February 2014, PROS Consulting commenced the Phase 3 of the project - Development of Options and Recommendations. In Phase 3, all information gathering, research and analysis are completed and service improvement options and change ideas are developed. The Final ZBR report develops business cases that incorporate the key recommendations and improvement options from the five analytical areas of review. The purpose of business cases is to allow key decision-makers at the City an opportunity to evaluate the merits of each recommendation, assess the benefits and costs of implementation, and provide guidance to the business unit in developing an implementation plan for the recommendations. The key recommendations that were developed as part of the Phase 2b phase were analyzed further and grouped into functional business cases. The business case groupings are as follows:

- Performance Measures and Maintenance Standards
- Increased Productivity
- Cost Savings
- Playfield Utilization and Cost Recovery
- Levels of Service Provisions



CHAPTER EIGHT - BUSINESS CASE #1 - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE STANDARDS

8.1 MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

8.1.1 ISSUE #1 – EFFECTIVENESS

At the onset of the Zero-based review of the Parks Business Unit in the spring of 2013, the Parks Operations Line of Service did not have consistent performance measures in place that could determine its effectiveness and the level of success in which it was achieving its intended outcome: the stewardship of Calgary’s municipal open spaces for the purposes of providing Calgarians, safe, clean, and dynamic spaces in which to recreate. Though Parks Operations does have some select performance measures in place such as comparing the cost of contracted work with the cost of the same scope of work performed by staff, the line of service has traditionally measured its success in citizen satisfaction and compliance with corporate policy.

8.1.2 ISSUE #2 - EFFICIENCY

Efficiency can best be measured by comparing the unit cost of work at a specific level of care against an acceptable standard. For the purposes of this analysis, the Consulting Team utilized the standards it has developed over the last 19 years of consulting in the field of parks and recreation as well as the National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) standards for the basis of comparison for this project.

Currently, the Parks Operations line of service receives its funding primarily through mil-rate dollars and expends \$45,397,853 annually to maintain 3,645 hectares of groomed public spaces, including the Parks Infrastructure portfolio that maintains parks assets city-wide. Of the \$45,397,853 operating budget for Parks Operations, 16% or \$7.64M is attributed to Internal Overhead costs. The table below is a breakdown of the unit cost expended by Parks Operations for the total cost of grounds maintenance services provided.

Agency	Population Served	Total Developed Hectares (not including Natural Areas)	Total Budget in Canadian \$ (Expenses)	Total Budget per Capita	Total Cost per Hectare
Calgary	1,200,000	3645	\$ 45,397,853	\$ 37.83	\$ 12,454.83

The unit cost of \$12,454.83 to maintain a hectare of parkland at a Level 2 service standard, not including irrigation, urban forestry and integrated pest management in Calgary is in-line with best practices of \$12,300-\$14,800 per hectare.

And though Calgary is performing parks maintenance in-line with best practices, the “high cost of seasonal labour” prevents the line of service from being more efficient. Personnel costs for the Parks Operations Line of Service is approximately \$28 million /hectare with 48% of the total cost of personnel (\$13.5 million) being attributed to seasonal labour. Further reduction in the workforce and corresponding costs should be pursued so that funding can be shifted to manage the growing system.

8.1.3 RECOMMENDATION #1 – IMPROVE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The development and implementation of a formal performance management system for all Parks Business Unit staff is needed. Currently, though a system is loosely in place, it is not consistently implemented across the Business Unit. A performance management system is not just the creation of an evaluation tool to assess an individual's performance at the end of the season, but also the development of guidelines and resources that can be utilized to manage performance "in season". The inclusion of positive reinforcement performance management including a non-monetary "Job Well Done" programs can, over time, increase job satisfaction that in turn will reduce the misuse of the City of Calgary's sick time policy.

TARGET START DATE: 2015

PROCESS

- Parks has an overall strong training program, however, a leadership training program must be fully developed and specific to the needs of the foremen within the Parks Business Unit. Parks recognized the need for training of foremen, especially given the recent organizational structure changes and has recently re-introduced Foremen Training. Parks needs to formalize operational specific training for seasonal staff in conjunction with system wide performance management.
- The Parks Business Unit must work with the Human Resources Business Unit to develop and implement performance management tools that address both technical work and intangible skills.
- The Parks Business Unit must work with the Human Resources Business Unit to develop "Job Well Done" recognition programs within the limits of corporate policy.
- The Parks Business Unit must deploy a change management process to ensure staff "buy-in" to this new strategic approach.
- Parks must establish goals and internal performance measures that track the lost productivity due to Sick and Accident Days as well as Accommodations. Parks should target a 10% reduction in the first year of this recommendation's implementation.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT - PARKS

A paradigm shift in culture will require an emphasis on positively managing the change. It must be communicated by the Parks Business Unit Leadership that the implementation of formal evaluation tools is not the development of a "gotcha" policy. Having recently employed change management successfully during the recent reorganization, Parks must evaluate that process and utilize the successes of that process on which to build on for this recommendation.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

There are a number of efficiency and effectiveness benefits associated with the implementation of this recommendation and are as follows:

- **Improved Leadership and Accountability** – Leadership is the act of leading people to achieve the intended outcomes of an organization and it requires leaders to:
 - Establish a clear vision and the expected outcomes of that vision,
 - Communicate that vision with staff so that understand their roles,
 - Provide the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, and
 - Coordinate and balance the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders

Often lost on leaders is the need to hold ALL staff accountable for their role in achieving the vision and intended outcomes. Performance management is a key component to establishing workplace accountability and leadership must exist at all levels of the organization.

- **Improved Staff Morale** - Leadership and accountability are two guiding principles that continually need to be mentored and reinforced at all levels of the organization, This recommendation supports these guiding principles and should result in an increase in the level of staff morale and can be measured through annual employee surveys.

RISKS

The most common risk associated with the implementation of formal performance and attendance management is the lack of employee “buy-in”. This risk can be minimized through the implementation as noted above by proactive change management process.



8.1.4 RECOMMENDATION #2 – MANAGE TO STANDARDS

The Parks Business Unit is committed to the stewardship of Calgary’s municipal open spaces. Parks staff are proud and passionate and apply a wide range of professional expertise in the maintenance of public spaces. Parks provide citizens with accessible spaces for exercising, spending time with family, enjoying nature, playing sports and taking part in a wide range of community activities. The scope of work that Parks Operations provides is interdependent and all encompassing.

Maintenance standards are the tasks and frequencies of the scope of work performed in a park system. The development and implementation of work plans to meet standards are essential to the efficient and effective maintenance management of a park system.

TARGET START DATE 2014

PROCESS

In a workshop with the Parks Business Unit, PROS Consulting validated the appropriate frequency standards for all aspects of parks operations in Calgary.

The following table provides an example of the maintenance tasks for Calgary’s playgrounds and the various frequencies (Level 1, Level 2, and Level 3).

PLAYGROUNDS

Task	Level 1		Level 2		Level 3	
	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe	Frequency	Timeframe
Major Inspection (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	1x per year	Performed in April	1x per year	Spring Summer Fall	As needed	Spring Summer Fall
General Inspection (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	6x per year	Each playground across the city is inspected	3x per year	Spring Summer Fall	1x per year	Spring
Major Inspection (Furniture/Parking)	1x per 5 years	Spring	As needed	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
General Inspection (Furniture/Parking)	7x per year	Performed during inspections	3x per year	Spring Summer Fall	Weekly	Year Round
Clean up/Garbage Removal	7x per year	Performed during inspections	5x per year	Year Round	As needed	Year Round
Repair	1x per year	This includes vandalism incidents	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Refurbish (Play Equipment)	1x per 10 years	City staff prepare the surface for painting	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Rake Pea Gravel Safety Surface	7x per year	Performed during inspections	5x per year	Spring, Summer Fall	Bi-Monthly(4x/year)	Spring, Summer Fall
Replace (Play Equipment/Safety Surface)	1x per 15 years	City staff remove/dispose of	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall	As needed	Spring, Summer Fall
Replace (Furniture/Signage)	1x per 20 years		As needed	Fall	As needed	Fall

BENEFITS OF RECOMMENDATION

Performing work by a set of best management maintenance standards will:

- Assist in clearly defining customer needs and expectations
- Be tied to performance measures with outcomes
- Create a sustainable system
- Highlight areas where excessive assets exist based on levels of service provisions to demonstrate inefficiency and areas of improvement
- Quantify resources required to support desired changes and meet community needs

RISKS

The greatest risk in implementing maintenance standards is the inability to community expectations. It is imperative that Parks develop a strategy to communicate standards and expectations to Calgarians via zone PCLs.

8.1.5 RECOMMENDATION #3 – IMPLEMENT PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Performance measures quantitatively inform organizations about how successful their services are in meeting their intended outcomes, as well as the processes that produce them. They are a critical tool that assists in the understanding, management, and improvement of organizations.

As previously mentioned, the Parks Business Unit did not have in place consistent performance measures across its lines of service. Though some did measure outcome based performance, most lines, including Parks Operations, only tracked “factoids” or the volume of work that was being performed. This is not unlike most governmental agencies including the benchmarked cities, where volume of work was the most common measure of performance. In the fall of 2013, PROS Consulting conducted two workshops with Parks and the intended outcomes of the workshops were two-fold:

- To teach the components of and the methodology utilized to develop performance measures.
- To develop key performance measures for each line of service.

TARGET START DATE: 2014

PROCESS

The Parks Business Unit must:

- Establish a clear vision for the performance measures and the expected outcomes of implementing them,
- Communicate the need for performance measures and how they interface with the City’s Action Plan 2015 - 2018 budget process and the roles staff plays,
- Provide the information, knowledge training and methods to collect data and measure performance,
- Hold staff accountable for proper data collection and its integrity.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT

None

BENEFITS OF RECOMMENDATION

Performance measures will provide the Parks Business Unit with the information necessary to make intelligent decisions about work that is performed. Performance measures will tell:

- How **successful** work is being performed
- If **processes** are in statistical control
- If **goals** are being met
- If **unit costs** are inline
- If and where **improvements** are necessary
- If **customers** are satisfied

Currently, parks does not track costs at the unit cost level. It is recommended that the Parks Business Unit measure these costs in 2014 to serve as a baseline against which future training costs can be compared.

RISKS

None

CHAPTER NINE - BUSINESS CASE #2 - INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

9.1 COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT

9.1.1 ISSUE

The Parks Business Unit in the City of Calgary is heavily dependent upon unionized seasonal labour to perform a wide variety of maintenance tasks throughout the park system during the months of May through September, otherwise known as the “growing season”. For the growing season in 2012, Parks hired during the months of April and May (and then laid off during the months of August through October) an astounding 620 seasonal employees to perform work across most every line of service. The sheer number of seasonal hires alone is daunting in and of itself and to simplify the hiring practice, the Parks Business Unit hires seasonal staff as a large collective group without respect to the specialization of the work performed in lines of service such as Urban Forestry. Through an analysis of data and information as well as two workshops with staff from Labour Management and Parks, PROS Consulting conducted analysis on the 2011-2014 Collective Agreement of the Corporation of the City of Calgary (the City) and the Calgary Civic Employees Local 37 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE). And though the agreement with CUPE affects 24 business units or divisions within the City of Calgary, 80% of the total seasonal membership of Local 37 (L37) is comprised of parks seasonal employees. In consultation with the City of Calgary’s Labour Relations Division of Human Resources and the Parks Business Unit, PROS Consulting identified several significant issues as detailed earlier in the report. The following is a summary of the significant issues that are tied to the collective agreement and Parks management practices that have evolved as a result:

- Seniority
- Layoff
- Recall Rights
- Schedules of Work

9.1.2

*RECOMMENDATION #1, #2, and #3 OF BUSINESS CASE #2 PGS. 75-81
WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY*

9.2 HEALTH MANAGEMENT

9.2.1 ISSUE – EMPLOYEE ATTENDANCE

The City of Calgary has a corporate direction and value that supports employee health, safety and wellbeing as well as diversity. This is reflected in a number of policies and programs, including: Health & Wellness Policy, Safety Policy, Duty to Accommodate Policy, and Respectful Workplace Policy. This corporate direction and value is to be commended and is representative of an organization that puts its employees first. This corporate direction is very much valued by the Parks Business Unit where much of the work performed is considered to be “manual” labor and many of its employees are often exposed to harsh and unpredictable climate conditions. As expected this can take its toll not only on their productivity in the field, but on their health, resulting in illness and accidents. The following statistics from 2013 provided by the Health Management Division of the City’s Human Resources Business Unit shed light on the lost productivity occurring in the Parks Business Unit.

- Number of Sick and Accident claims: 1,316
- Number of Sick and Accident days: 4,520 = 3% of Annual Parks work days
- Costs of Sick and Accident Days: \$1,355,208 (of which \$621,536 (46%) was attributed to absences 5 work days or less.)
- Average Cost per day of absence: \$299.82

Additionally, City’s policy regarding Reasonable (Workplace) Accommodation, known as “The Duty to Accommodate Policy” is in place to fulfill its legal obligations to accommodate as required by the Alberta Human Rights Act. In 2013, the Parks Business Unit accommodated 87 accommodations for 64 employees of which 43 were seasonal staff.

The combination of Sick and Accident Days and Accommodations contribute to a lack of manpower on a daily basis that significantly interferes with meeting legitimate operational requirements and creates widespread staff morale problems.

9.2.2 RECOMMENDATION #1 –DEVELOP ATTENDANCE SUPPORT PROGRAM

The development and implementation of an attendance support program for all Parks Business Unit seasonal staff is needed. Currently, though a system is loosely in place, it is not consistently implemented across the Business Unit and does not address attendance. An attendance support program is a part of an over-arching evaluation tool to assess an individual's performance at the end of the season. The inclusion of positive reinforcement for attendance and overall performance management including a non-monetary "Job Well Done" programs can, over time, increase job satisfaction that in turn will reduce the misuse of the City of Calgary's sick time policy.

TARGET START DATE: 2015-2016

PROCESS

- The Parks Business Unit must work with the Human Resources Business Unit, including Labour Relations, to develop and implement an attendance support program that can be supported corporately.
- The Parks Business Unit must work with Human Resources to develop "Job Well Done" recognition programs within the limits of corporate policy.
- The Parks Business Unit must deploy a change management process to ensure staff "buy-in" to this new strategic approach.
- Parks must establish goals and internal performance measures that track the lost productivity due to Sick and Accident Days as well as Accommodations. In a workshop with Parks and Human Resources, consensus was developed around the goal of Parks targeting a 10% reduction in the first year of this recommendation's implementation.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT - PARKS

A paradigm shift in culture will require an emphasis on positively managing the change. It must be communicated by the Parks Business Unit Leadership that the implementation of formal evaluation tools is not the development of a "gotcha" policy. Having recently employed change management successfully during the recent reorganization, Parks must evaluate that process and utilize the successes of that process on which to build on for this recommendation.

BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

There are a number of efficiency and effectiveness benefits associated with the implementation of this recommendation and are as follows:

- **Improved Leadership and Accountability** – Leadership is the act of leading people to achieve the intended outcomes of an organization and it requires leaders to:
 - Establish a clear vision and the expected outcomes of that vision,
 - Communicate that vision with staff so that understand their roles,
 - Provide the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, and
 - Coordinate and balance the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders

Often lost on leaders is the need to hold ALL staff accountable for their role in achieving the vision and intended outcomes. Performance management is a key component to establishing workplace accountability.

- **Improved Staff Morale** - Leadership and accountability are two guiding principles that continually need to be mentored and reinforced at all levels of the organization, This recommendation supports these guiding principles and should result in an increase in the level of staff morale which can be measured through annual employee surveys.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Achieving a 10% reduction in Sick and Accident/Accommodation will result in increased productivity by \$135,521 in the first year of the implementation of the recommendation.

RISKS

The most common risk associated with the implementation of formal Attendance support program is the lack of employee “buy-in”. This risk can be minimized through the implementation as noted above by proactive change management process.

9.2.3 RECOMMENDATION #2 – IMPROVE REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION PROCESSES

The City’s policy regarding Reasonable (Workplace) Accommodation is in place to fulfill its legal obligations to accommodate as required by the Alberta Human Rights Act. Per the Supreme Court of Canada, there are factors that have been identified as being relevant to establishing undue hardship to the City that can be taken into consideration. In 2013, Parks accommodated 64 employees, of which 43 of these were seasonal employees. To date, the Parks Business Unit does not track the number of man-hours associated with accommodating but must consistently to do so as well as provide better oversight of the work being performed while being reasonably accommodated. Further the Parks Business Unit has created light duty work for purposes of accommodating employees though is not expected to do so where none exists. Parks must be proactive when it comes to accommodations and must identify, by zone and portfolio, the specific light duty responsibilities that are available and quantify weekly the number of man hours of productive work available for bundling as part of accommodations. Once Parks has established the necessary data to shed light on the magnitude of the issue, the Parks Business Unit should work with Human Resources to develop business cases, where applicable and prudent, that demonstrate undue hardship on the business unit within the parameters as defined by the Alberta Human Rights Act and rulings that have been handed down by the Supreme Court of Canada.

TARGET START DATE: 2015

PROCESS

- The Parks Business Unit must work with Human Resources to analyze the accommodations that occur in 2014 to determine which are accommodated into productive light duty responsibilities and which were accommodated into light duty jobs that Parks created. This analysis will better improve the process in the future.
- The Parks Business Unit must work with Human Resources to identify by zone and portfolio the specific light duties that are available for accommodation.
- The Parks Business Unit must work with Human Resources to quantify weekly the number of man hours of productive work available for bundling as part of accommodations.

ORGANIZATIONAL IMPACT - PARKS

Minimal. Parks must task a Human Resources Coordinator within its business unit to work with Human Resources on an on-going basis to track accommodations and keep lines of communication open.

GENERAL BENEFITS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

There are a number of efficiency and effectiveness benefits associated with the implementation of this recommendation and are as follows:

- **Improved Work Planning** – Identifying and quantifying the number of man hours of productive work for bundling as part of accommodation will provide staff with the ability to better plan work, in particular during the growing season.
- **Improved Staff Morale** - Leadership and accountability are two guiding principles that continually need to be mentored and reinforced at all levels of the organization, This recommendation supports these guiding principles and should result in an increase in the level of staff morale and can be measured through annual employee surveys.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

Decrease of Lost Productivity – By eliminating the “creation” of light duty of jobs, the Parks Business Unit will increase productivity by not having employees perform duties that do not have a positive impact on the operational outcomes that the business unit is trying to achieve. Using the median hourly wage (\$28.82) plus benefits (26%) paid, the current productivity loss per week of the creation of light duty work where it does not exist equates to \$1270.96. Therefore by taking proactive steps, the Parks Business Unit can decrease its lost productivity by \$1270.96 per week by not creating light duty jobs where none exists.

RISK

The risk of implementing this recommendation is possibility of an employee taking legal action against the city if the request for accommodation is denied. It is imperative to establish and make aware of all involved the consequences that MIGHT result.

9.3 SUMMARY

The following table summarizes the recommendations and cost benefit analysis as recommended by PROS Consulting to increase productivity in the day to day operations of the City of Calgary’s Parks Business Unit.

INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY

CHAPTER TEN - BUSINESS CASE #3 - COST SAVINGS

10.1 COST OF SEASONAL LABOUR

Currently, the “Rates of Pay” for Local 37 as defined by Schedule B under which seasonal employees are hired is a significant cost to the business unit. Labor rates for seasonal employees are equal to that permanent employees (\$23.88-\$33.75 per hour plus 26% in fringe benefits), which equates to \$13.5 million annually or 17% of the total Parks Business Unit annual operating budget. In fact, the starting hourly wage of \$23.88 paid to Local 37 seasonal employees is **higher than the 95th percentile of wages** paid to Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers across Alberta. The description for this category of employment according to the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada website is as follows: “Landscaping and grounds maintenance labourers perform manual work to assist in the construction of landscapes and related structures, and to maintain lawns, gardens, athletic fields, golf courses, cemeteries, parks, landscaped interiors and other landscaped areas.” This category description matches the work performed by the Parks Business Unit as a whole and in particular, CUPE Local 37 seasonal staff. (Currently, when responding to the survey, the City “lumps” the Parks Business Unit staff wage and salary data into a different employment category, that of Public Works and Maintenance Labourers.)

The table below summarizes the findings of the 2013 Wage and Salary Survey for Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers conducted by the Alberta Provincial Government for the Calgary market.

2013 ALBERTA WAGE AND SALARY SURVEY – CALGARY REGION Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourers

Wages	Low (5 th percentile)	High (95 th percentile)	Average	Median
Starting	\$12.00	\$18.00	\$14.59	\$14.00
Overall	\$13.50	\$23.75	\$17.38	\$17.00
Calgary Parks Seasonals – Local 37	\$23.88	\$26.45	N/A	\$25.13

As noted in the Chapter Nine, personnel costs for the Parks Operations Line of Service is approximately \$28 million or []/hectare with 48% of the total cost of personnel (\$13.5 million) being attributed to seasonal labour. The Parks Business Unit should target a further reduction in the workforce and corresponding costs equating to [] so that funding can be shifted to manage the growing system. With the annual unit cost per hectare being \$12,454, saving an additional [] annually would allow the Parks Business Unit the opportunity to absorb 200 hectares of growth without new funding. Current annual growth rate is 116 hectares.

10.1.1 RECOMMENDATION #1 – EXPAND THIRD PARTY CONTRACTING IN GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

RECOMMENDATION #1 OF BUSINESS CASE #3 PGS. 86-89 WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1.2 RECOMMENDATION #2 – INCREASE THE NATURALIZATION OF PARKS SYSTEM

In an effort to reduce the level of “manicured” parkland in the system and return create a higher level of naturalization, a series of systemic process improvements must be developed and implemented to create a balance between manicured and naturalized land in the system.

TARGET START DATE: BEGIN IN 2014

PROCESS

- Implement Habitat Condition Index and Asset Condition Rating to establish future sustainable funding.
- Fully develop a strategic action plan to successfully implement the realignment initiative that has been developed by Natural Areas management over the last 6 months. This realignment will directly shift the maintenance of work performed in Natural Areas and will create a more cohesive and comprehensive approach to its management. The key points of the realignment initiative as developed by the Parks Business Unit is as follows:
 - **Role transformation**
 - Change name of group to **Urban Conservation**

- Reflects a shift of focus to encompass ecosystem management and conservation in ALL Parks and open spaces (Core responsibilities will still lie with management of natural areas)
- **Create three distinct subservices**
 - Ecosystem Planning
 - Landscape and Analysis
 - Habitat Management (this subservice will transform how maintenance work is performed in natural areas and is further explained on the following page.)
- **Habitat Management**
 - Roles and Responsibilities - Improved role definition and accountability between Operational Zones and other Portfolios
 - Operational focus will shift from planning routine maintenance towards habitat management and restoration. Natural areas will no longer manage or plan routine maintenance
 - Natural Areas will continue to develop work plans and priorities with Operations for habitat management/restoration related activities
- **Work Planning** - will shift from annual work plans to outcome-based management plans
 - Each Park will have a long-term work plan, updated on an as-needed basis (at least biennially) and done in collaboration with Zone Superintendents.
 - Management plans will be used to set annual work plans for Operations and Maintenance.
 - City-wide priorities for restoration and habitat management work will be based upon the newly developed Environmental Integrity Index data (e.g. high-risk, core natural areas take priority)
- **Funding**
 - Routine Maintenance: Permanent transfer of funding to Parks Operations for routine maintenance such as litter pickup – estimated at \$200,000 annually.
 - Habitat Management/Restoration:
 - Agreement in advance on scope, timeline and funding required for each component of work plans developed
 - Natural Areas will monitor and report on performance
 - Natural Areas will retain funding and will allocate funding as work is completed
- **Community Education Program** – Through Environmental and Education Initiatives and the Park Community Liaisons, a formal community education program that communicates the natural resource and citizen benefits of increased naturalization must be developed and implemented.

BENEFITS

- Improves water quality within our ponds and streams by filtering water run off containing fertilizers, chemicals and other pollutants.
- Reduces shoreline and stream bank erosion and other park areas which are susceptible to erosion
- Reduces the chemical, herbicide and fertilizer usage (fewer manicured areas to maintain)
- Establishes a natural habitat for wildlife and plants
- Promotes growth of native plant species while suppressing growth of invasive species
- Reduces the amount of energy consumption required to maintain parkland
- Reduces the amount of labor required to maintain parkland, enabling the district to earmark more of its limited resources on high impact and high visibility areas

RISKS

The primary risk in implementing a naturalization program in Calgary is the potential for increased 311 inquiries as the primary community value in Calgary is for manicured parkland.

10.2 SUMMARY

INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE TO CONFIDENTIALITY

10.2.1 GENERAL RECOMMENDATION - ASSET MANAGEMENT MODEL (PARIS) –

Fully implementing PARIS will provide an even greater opportunity to become highly efficient & effective in managing lifecycle replacement and the tracking of the operational maintenance costs associated with the park system's assets. Parks is currently developing alternative measures to track cycles/frequencies of work performed. These data points will be used to measure activity costs per cycle. Parks is presently exploring a data warehouse & implementing Business Objects to expand reporting on recently developed performance measures. Implementation of the Customer Level of Service model will link overall service provision to smart, asset-based decisions with operating and life-cycle capital resources.

CHAPTER ELEVEN - BUSINESS CASE #4 – LEVELS OF SERVICE PROVISIONS

11.1 EXPANSIVE INVENTORY

As previously mentioned the scope of work performed by the Parks Operations Line of Service is expansive and all encompassing. In an effort to get a better understanding of how expansive the scope of work is, the Consulting Team compared the quantity of assets within Calgary's system with 6 "Calgary-like" agencies to gain insight into how the Calgary Parks Operations portfolio stacked up. The agencies benchmarked were:

- City of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
- City of Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- City of Sydney, Australia
- City of Helsinki, Finland
- City of Denver, Colorado, United States
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board, Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States

The comparative analysis found that the Calgary Parks Business Unit possesses a high inventory of assets per 1000 population. Simply, the more assets a system has, the more maintenance that is required. This not only has a significant financial impact on the lifecycle replacement of these assets, but also on the annual operating budget.

11.1.1 RECOMMENDATION – PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT ANALYSIS

The Calgary Parks system is home to an expansive and diverse portfolio of assets, and in some cases exceeds National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) level of service standards. This not only has a significant financial impact on the lifecycle replacement of these assets, but also on the annual operating budget. Further analysis of the level of service provisions of Calgary's park system will be completed when the Business Unit undertakes a thorough operational and standards assessment of Calgary Parks' Planning and Development division in the second half of 2014 outside of the Zero Based Review Process.

TARGET START DATE – 2015

PROCESS

- **Needs Analysis Survey** – Perform a random, scientifically valid community-wide household to quantify knowledge, need, unmet need, priorities and support for system improvements including both facility, programming, parks, trails and open space development needs of the community.
- **Demographic & Trends Analysis** – Utilize the City's population projections and supplement with census tract demographic data obtained from Environmental Systems Research Institute, Inc. (ESRI), the largest research and development organization dedicated to Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and specializing in population projections and market trends. This analysis will provide an understanding of the demographic environment for the following reasons:
 - To understand the market areas served by the park system and distinguish customer groups.
 - To determine changes occurring in the community and the region, and assist in making proactive decisions to accommodate those shifts.

- Provide the basis for Equity Mapping and Service Area Analysis
- Population density
- Age Distribution
- Households
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Household Income

This data will be mapped in GIS to produce density maps to support other tasks including the needs assessment and equity mapping. From the demographic base data, sports, recreation, and outdoor trends are applied to the local populace to assist in determining the potential participation base within the community.

- **Benchmark Analysis:** A benchmark analysis utilizing Yardstick information will compare the Business Unit to other relevant peer agencies.
- **Park Classifications and Facility Standards** – Work with the Business Unit to review and confirm, modify or add to existing park classifications, and preferred facility standards for all park sites, natural areas, pathways, trails, open space, amenities and outdoor facilities. These classifications will consider size, population served, length of stay, and amenity types/services. Facility standards will include level of service standards and the population served per recreational facilities and park amenities. These standards will be 100% customized to City’s requirements and community value. Any new or modified classification or standard will be approved as required. These are based on local needs compared to accepted regional parks and recreation standards and adapted based on the needs and expectations of the community.
- **Service Area Analysis/Equity Mapping** –Utilize the Business Unit’s PARIS system to perform equity mapping to identify service area analysis for specific facilities and programs. This includes mapping by classification and major amenities by facility standards as applied to population density and geographic areas. A service area is defined as a circular area around a park or amenity whose radius encompasses the population associated with the appropriate facility standard for each park classification and amenity. Using the facility standards and service areas provided by Consulting Team for each park and major facility type (amenity), a series of maps by each park classification and major amenities will be prepared. Maps of the entire system will be prepared. This mapping identifies gaps and overlaps in service area. It is assumed that the Division will provide base GIS information including inventory and general location of park sites and amenities.
- **Prioritized Park and Facility Levels of Service** – Synthesize the findings from the community input, survey results, standards, demographics and trends analysis, park and facility assessment, the equity mapping into a quantified facility and program priority ranking. This priority listing will be compared against gaps or surplus in recreation services, parks, facilities and amenities. This will list and prioritize facility, infrastructure, amenities, and program needs for the parks and recreation system and provide guidance for new levels of service provisions. The analysis will include probable future parks, open spaces and trail needs based on community input and user figures and trends.

BENEFITS

The outcome of the plan will provide the City of Calgary with a strategic approach to:

- Identify best practices that can be incorporated into Planning and Development’s policies and guidelines that further strengthen its role as a leading service provider.
- Streamline processes that remove communication and information exchange bottlenecks and ensure that all stakeholders play a role in the decision making of park development and redevelopment and design parks that operate efficiently.
- Identify inconsistencies in the application of the laws, policies, guidelines and processes that govern Planning and Development’s work.
- Develop performance measures that communicate the quality and quantity of work being completed.
- Ensure that “growth dollars” - operational and maintenance resources necessary to maintain renovations of existing parks and future parks – are accurately identified upfront and later appropriated in whole through the budget process.
- Evaluate and update new levels of service provisions for the assets and amenities of the Calgary Parks System.
- Refining operational levels of service and customer levels of service as parks within the system change to meet the demands of the community in which they exist.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS EXAMPLE

Best management practice indicates that one playground equals on average \$1,000-\$1500 in annual maintenance costs (dependent upon a number of variables including age, size, scope, fall zone surfacing, etc.). Given that Calgary has three times more playgrounds than the best management practice service level guidelines, it also expends approximately \$600,000-\$900,000 more in operational dollars annually to maintain its playground system.

RISKS

There is no risk to developing the plan.



CHAPTER TWELVE – BUSINESS CASE #5 - PLAYFIELDS UTILIZATION AND COST RECOVERY

12.1 PLAYFIELDS

Though Parks Operations is typically a mill-rate supported line of service due to the nature of the “task-driven” services that are provided, there are opportunities to generate revenue. In FY 2012 the Parks Business Unit generated \$1.2M in revenue of which \$853K or 71% of the revenue generated was via Playfield bookings by various sport organizations. Unfortunately the average hourly rate is astoundingly low at \$3.67 per hour and only \$2.05 per hour for youth sport allocation and utilization of playfields. This inexpensive rate can provide youth sport organizations the opportunity to reserve more hours of playfields than they have the ability to use, thereby resulting in playfields going “unused” and the inability to accommodate emerging and adult sports.

12.1.1 RECOMMENDATION #1 - PLAYFIELD STRATEGIC UTILIZATION AND COST RECOVERY PLAN

The Parks Business Unit in coordination with the Recreation Business Unit is embarking on a strategic plan for the utilization and future development of playfields, including revenue development, in Calgary.

TARGET START DATE – 2016

PROCESS

Issue an RFP that includes the following scope of work.

1. Establishing a detailed project plan in coordination with Parks and Recreation
2. Benchmarking best management practices with relation to identified Parks and Recreation objectives.
3. Understanding how the City of Calgary’s playfield and athletic field management programs compare to other Cities worldwide
4. Understanding and identifying gaps regarding how ongoing and planned activities related to playfields and athletic fields align across the corporation.
5. Define existing roles and responsibilities – who, what, when and why for Parks and Recreation objectives, including existing business processes.
6. Create and implement an engagement strategy for internal and external stakeholders.
7. Develop priority lists for objectives, projects, and outcomes going forward.
8. Creation of a playfield and athletic field strategic plan in accordance with current City standards. Plan to include the following sections:
 - Vision and Mission
 - Principles
 - Stakeholder Engagement – Voice of the Customer
 - 2015-2018 Implementation Plan
 - 10 and 30 year long range plans
 - Triple Bottom Line impact

BENEFITS

The outcome of the plan will provide the City of Calgary with a strategic approach to determine the:

- Highest and best use of existing fields and property
- Condition of existing fields
- Utilization of existing field resources
- Necessary improvements to existing fields to increase service
- *Potential* changes to field allocation policies or usage to increase service
- Number and type of fields required to serve 10 year population projection
- Proportion of fields that should be synthetic turf and locations for them
- Locations, existing or new sites, for field development that are convenient to residential development
- Investment Prioritization and Methodology needed to develop new fields
- User Charge Pricing Policy

RISKS

There is no risk to developing the plan.

12.1.2 RECOMMENDATION #2 – INCREASE PER HOUR FIELD RESERVATION USER CHARGES

Prior to the development of the Playfield Strategic Utilization and Revenue Development Plan, PROS Consulting recommends an initial increase in the average hourly user charge. Applying the PROS Line of Service Classification methodology, the use of playfields by sport organizations is classified as a Value Added service that should strive to recover up to 50% of the actual costs attributed to Playfield Maintenance

Value Added Services are defined as discretionary programs, services and facilities that the City may provide when additional funding or revenue exists to offset the cost of providing those services. These programs and services provide added value to the City's residents, businesses, customers and partners above and beyond what is required or expected of the City of Calgary. The criteria for value added services are:

- Service expands, enhances or supports Core or Important services, and the quality of life of the community.
- Services are supported and well utilized by the community, and provide an appropriate and valuable public benefit.
- Service generates income or funding from sponsorships, grants, user fees or other sources that offsets some or all of its cost and/or provides a meaningful economic, social or environmental benefit to the community.

TARGET START DATE – 2016

PROCESS

- Track actual costs associated with the maintenance of various playfields including all agronomy practices and infrastructure work to establish a unit cost of maintenance by playfield category.
- Utilize outcomes of the Playfield Strategic Utilization and Cost Recovery Plan to further inform strategic decision making related to establishing user charges by sport and age group.
- See approval from Council a revised fee schedule.
- Ensure alignment with fair Calgary policy
- Development of a strategy that addresses the needs of low income Calgarians

GENERAL BENEFITS

- Increase in revenue to offset a portion of costs associated with providing the service.
- Reduction in playfields going “unused” and the inability for Parks to accommodate emerging sports that resulted from youth sport organizations reserving more hours of playfields than they have the ability to use because of the current inexpensive rate.

COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS

The table below summarizes the current cost recovery and revenue generated by Calgary Parks as well as how a change in phased in user charges increases would impact cost recovery and revenue.

Average Hourly Rate	Number of Hours Reserved	Annual Maintenance Costs	Total Revenue Generated	% of Cost Recovery	Additional Revenue Generated
\$3.67	232750	\$4,000,000	\$854,193	21%	Current State
\$5.00	232750	\$4,000,000	\$1,163,750	29%	\$309,558
\$7.00	232750	\$4,000,000	\$1,629,250	41%	\$775,058
\$9.00	232750	\$4,000,000	\$2,094,750	52%	\$1,240,558

Current State

RISKS

Primary risk associated with this recommendation is the lack of political will to increase rates based on Calgarian’s community values system, in particular for youth.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN - OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 LEADERSHIP MORALE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Consulting Team recommends the following additional improvements be made to address the issue of Leadership, Morale and Accountability:

- **COMMUNICATION:** Mandate the consistent and ongoing communication of the maintenance standards by which work is to be performed. Additionally, the communication to staff of the expectations of not only how the tasks are to be accomplished but the code of conduct that must be adhered to in working with other staff in public spaces.
- **TRAINING:** Parks has an overall strong training program, however, a leadership training program must be fully developed and specific to the needs of the foremen within the Parks Business Unit. Parks recognized the need for training of foremen, especially given the recent organizational structure changes and has recently re-introduced Foremen Training. Parks needs to formalize operational specific training for seasonal staff in conjunction with system wide performance management.

13.2 EQUIPMENT AND BEST PRACTICE TRAINING

The Consulting Team recommends the following additional improvements be made to address the issue of Equipment and Training:

- **ADEQUATE INVENTORY and MAINTENANCE:** Identify the most needed and appropriate level of parts needed to repair “non-rolling stock” equipment quickly to reduce downtime in the field. Additionally, standard operating procedures must be developed for the maintenance as well as the life cycle management and disposition of Parks-maintained equipment.
- **BEST PRACTICE TRAINING:** Develop and implement a “hands on” training program to teach staff the best practices of how to use effectively use equipment in the field to achieve effective horticultural results.
- **FLEET PARTNERSHIP:** Continue to optimize relationship with Fleet for the acquisition, maintenance and disposal of parks “rolling stock” vehicles and equipment. Relationship should include provisions for parks to outsource tasks normally performed by fleet if private sector offers same scope of work at reduced cost. The Parks Business Unit has already initiated this recommendation.

13.3 WORK PLANS AND PROCESSES

The Consulting Team recommends the following additional improvement be made to address the issue of Work Plans and Processes.

OPTIMIZATION OF SERVICE DELIVERY: Though parks has recently undergone a series of reorganizations, results in particular those dependent upon working relationships of staff take time to be achieved. As a result of the findings presented in the Phase 2a report, the Parks Business Unit started to identify opportunities to tweak the work plans and processes by fostering an environment of open dialogue. Creating collaboration by staff will further reduce silo thinking and achieve more effective and efficient outcomes.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN QUANTITATIVE SUMMARY OF BUSINESS CASES

The following table summarizes the recommendations found within the business cases and the overall effective and efficient gains that can be made by the Parks Business Unit. The cost benefit realized by the implementation of these recommendations over the next 1-5 years is in addition to the \$10.4 million in cuts that the Parks Business Unit has endured during the last budget cycle.

Potential annual cost benefit is: \$4,312,000, however it must be understood that the Parks Business Unit does not have complete control in realizing the cost benefits due to the fact that many of the recommendations in the report are dependent upon the work of other business units as well as the boom-bust economy of Calgary.

INFORMATION WITHHELD DUE
TO CONFIDENTIALITY