

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Prairie Winds Park has been a popular and well-loved destination and gathering place for a quarter century. As the surrounding communities have grown and become more established around the park, the park's context has evolved and attendance has increased, resulting in new demands on its existing facilities. Some of the existing facilities are nearing the end of their service life and are in need of refurbishment or upgrades to meet current standards. It is timely to evaluate what this park means to Calgarians and to explore options for the park's future.

The vision statement that emerged through the public engagement process is that **Prairie Winds is a well-loved, family-oriented destination park that is both a celebration of community spirit and a recreational centrepiece in northeast Calgary. It is a place that invites visitors to play, be active, recharge, and connect with their environment.**

The Prairie Winds Park Design Development Plan builds on existing City plans, policies and initiatives; identifies public needs and priorities for the park; provides direction for environmental enhancement; and accommodates an engaging mix of civic, cultural and recreational uses appropriate to the area. Through the design process, the following ideas emerged as priorities for the development of Prairie Winds Park:

- **Welcome all ages, cultures and abilities.** The pathways in the park are extremely popular, but are not all accessible, do not connect to all areas of the park, and some have flooding issues. The wading pool is extremely popular but there is a strong demand for greater appeal for a wider range of ages. The design development plan upgrades the pathway network, provides improved and new entry points, rebuilds the wading pool, and expands the opportunities for water play to a wider range of ages.
- **Provide a range of spaces for year round activities.** Several areas within the park are under-utilized and lack functionality. The design development plan proposes to reclaim the space occupied by the decommissioned creek, rebuild the tennis courts in a better location with potential winter hockey rink use, and modernize the existing park centre building for more year-round use.
- **Protect and enhance the park's unique character.** The existing hill and large open spaces are important well-loved features of the park. There are currently several opportunities to enjoy the views both from the top of the hill in all directions and of the scenery within the park. The design development plan retains these vital features and improves the viewpoint at the top of the hill, reconfigures existing seating and adds new seating to take advantage of the scenery throughout the park, retains the characteristic open green spaces and topography, and introduces more types of trees and shrubs in the park to add more colour, texture and seasonal interest.
- **Include spaces for families and communities to gather and celebrate.** The park's popularity for family picnics, community gatherings, and large public events pushes the limits of the current facilities. The design development plan includes more bookable picnic shelters and adds water and power outlets to serve events and concerts, creating flexible spaces that allow for a range of activities from individual, to family, to large gatherings and festivals.
- **Provide places to play, learn and grow.** Since its creation, Prairie Winds Park was intended to be "a passive, family-oriented park that emphasizes extensive recreational opportunities." Although still popular, the existing play facilities are aging and are designed only for active play. The renewal of the park provides an opportunity to create a substantial new play destination with something for everyone that welcomes children of a wide range of ages to play learn and grow. It also strives to incorporate other important types of play including exploratory, nature-based and imaginative play.

The Prairie Winds Park Design Development Plan is intended to provide the framework to guide development and renewal of the park in order to help achieve the stated park vision in a way that integrates human and environmental objectives. Through identifying opportunities to increase the usability of the park by layering a greater diversity of programs, increasing site connectivity, and optimizing the layout and function of existing site activities, it is hoped that this plan will help Prairie Winds Park continue to be a well-loved gathering place in northeast Calgary for generations to come.





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Prairie Winds Park Preferred Concept Overview



Park Centre Area

The proposed redevelopment of Prairie Winds Park includes the creation of a new park centre area. With the relocation of the tennis courts, the park centre area will include a new plaza that welcomes visitors and functions as the park's main entry.

The main entry plaza will provide access to:

- The main parking lot;
- A new, large playscape for all ages;
- A new basketball court and upgraded skating rink;
- A water play area which includes a rebuilt wading pool with lazy river, spray park (completed in 2014) and more spots for picnicking;
- Walking paths to access all parts of the park, and;
- A renovated and expanded park centre building.

Park Centre Building

A renovated and expanded park centre building will better serve the needs of park users by providing year-round access to modern, accessible washrooms.

Upgraded change rooms will be open during the summer, and a bright, new warm-up space will be available for people using the park in the winter.

