

**Operational Services Report to
Community Development Committee
2025 April 16**

**ISC: UNRESTRICTED
CD2025-0434**

Enhanced Maintenance Agreement and Infrastructure Agreements Policy Update

PURPOSE

Make it easier for Calgarians to deliver enhanced maintenance and amenities within parks and open spaces by amending the Parks and Pathways Bylaw and rescinding the Enhanced Maintenance Infrastructure Agreements Policy.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL DIRECTION

The Enhanced Maintenance Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS007) was originally approved by Council in 2004 and last updated in 2009.

RECOMMENDATION(S):

That the Community Development Committee recommend that Council:

1. Gives three readings to Proposed Bylaw 26M2025 to amend the Parks and Pathways Bylaw (Attachment 2).
2. Rescind the Enhanced Maintenance Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS007).

CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER/GENERAL MANAGER COMMENTS

GM Morgan concurs with this report.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Calgarians, through an association with community organizations, sport groups or development industry, wish to see a higher level of amenity and maintenance for their parks and open spaces.
- The current model restricts Administration's ability to respond to needs and requests impacting the customer experience.
- The proposed new model clearly identifies allowable activities, responsibilities, and requirements needed to better support Calgarians and improve processes to create better parks and open spaces by updating the Parks and Pathways Bylaw, rescinding the old policy and creating four new Administration Standards.
- The parks and pathways bylaw changes (attachment 2) will allow more groups to do more types of community led initiatives in parks, and the four administration standards (attachments 3-6) outline the four types of processes to enter into agreements allowable under the bylaw. These two pieces work together to provide the right level of flexibility while maintaining an appropriate standard for this work.
- This new model and approach will give organizations and the development industry more opportunity to invest in and enhance Calgary's parks and open spaces.
- Establishing a new model makes it easier for Calgarians to do work to enhance The City's parks and green spaces in their communities and care for nonstandard infrastructure in Calgary's parks and open spaces.
- This new model will meet the evolving needs and request of Calgarians, while retaining key requirements previously included in the Enhanced Maintenance Agreement and Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS007).

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DISCUSSION

The City's development industry and community partners regularly request the enhancement of Calgary's parks and open spaces through landscape maintenance and installation of nonstandard amenities like shade structures. The current Enhanced Maintenance and Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS007) is focused on administrative processes and legal requirements. This limits administration's ability to effectively respond to community needs with suitable solutions. In some cases, Administration is not able to accommodate all requests due to the current policy's limitations. For example:

- Sport groups seeking to maintain a playfield are not able to do so as these groups are not an approved group type in the current policy.
- The Landscape Maintenance Agreement in the current policy requires the entire community to be maintained. We receive many requests from community groups to maintain a smaller portion or a specific park in their community. Flexibility is needed to scale down the resourcing required and help meet the community groups where they are at, thus improving equity.

These limitations create liability issues for The City, increase administrative time and cost while generating frustration for industry and community partners.

To implement this new model, which will improve community investments and participation in parks and open spaces by Calgarians, we need to:

- Amend the Parks and Pathways Bylaw to include allowable activities for landscape maintenance and nonstandard infrastructure; and
- Rescind the existing Enhanced Maintenance and Infrastructure Agreements Policy (CSPS007) and capture the roles, requirements and responsibilities in four new Administration Standards.

This new model will allow more flexibility to develop agreements, work with organizations and address identified gaps and barriers that currently prevent more of Calgary's parks and open spaces having grass roots enhancements.

Engagement with Council, special tax levy groups, BILD and key sport organizations will continue over the next year to address specific program and process requirements, and barriers.

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EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public engagement was undertaken | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dialogue with interested parties was undertaken |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public/interested parties were informed | <input type="checkbox"/> Public communication or engagement was not required |

Parks and Open Spaces engaged externally with community organizations who utilized special tax levy in the summer of 2024. This engagement supported that the policy is limiting the program improvements by creating barriers. The consensus was that the programs need more exploration on barriers, roles, responsibilities, and requirements once the policy is rescinded.

In the fall of 2024, Parks and Open Spaces engaged with members of Council, presenting the framework outlining the updates required to the Parks and Pathways Bylaw and the need to rescind the existing council policy. No significant issues were identified with the proposed model and rescindment of the policy. Primary concerns expressed were related to programs and not the policy.

IMPLICATIONS

Social

This makes Calgary a better place to live. Groups that maintain lands and non-standard infrastructure in Calgary's parks and open spaces contribute to building community connectivity between people and the environment while increasing community pride. Calgarians investing in their community enhances the livability of neighbourhoods and encourages residents to spend more time utilizing and appreciating the parks and open spaces.

Environmental

Through the agreements, each group is required to follow The City's best practices and applicable policies, plans and bylaws for water, pest, and turf management to support biodiversity within Calgary's urban ecosystem. They also support The City of Calgary's Environmental Policy (UCS2012-0144) and the Climate Resilience Strategy and Action Plans (UCS2018-0688).

Economic

Well maintained and managed parks, open spaces and assets positively impact the image and economy of Calgary and are indirectly associated with increased property values and tax revenue. The programs support community investment into parks and open spaces and support the local economy through purchasing and hiring using local business. This work provides an avenue for property owners and Calgarians to invest directly into their neighbourhood parks and open spaces which benefits all who live, work, or play in the community.

Service and Financial Implications

Existing operating funding - base

There is no impact on operating funds.

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RISK

If the new model is not accepted, Administration will not be able to meet requests from community and industry that fall outside of the current policy. The barriers created by the current policy will continue to hinder the ability to be flexible and work with Calgarians to find solutions to enhance our parks and open spaces.

This would create a risk of losing community generated funds being invested into Calgary's parks and open spaces. The loss of these funds would reduce Calgarians' access to non-standard infrastructure (like shade structures), snow removal of pathways that are not cleared by The City and grass roots beautification initiatives such as planting and maintaining flowers in planters and beds.

There likely would be an increased risk of dissatisfaction in the quality of our parks and open spaces and a reduction in time Calgarians spend outdoors connecting with people and nature.

ATTACHMENT(S)

1. Previous Council Direction and Background
2. Proposed Wording to Amend the Parks and Pathways Bylaw
3. Administration Standard #1 – Non-standard Infrastructure (Pre-FAC)
4. Administration Standard #2 – Non-standard Infrastructure (Post-FAC)
5. Administration Standard #3 – Landscape Maintenance Services (Third-Party)
6. Administration Standard #4 – STL for Landscape Maintenance
7. Presentation

Department Circulation

General Manager/Director	Department	Approve/Consult/Inform
Kyle Ripley	Parks and Open Spaces	Approve
Doug Morgan	Operational Services	Approve
Maggie Burlington	Law	Consult
Tat Fan	Law	Consult

Author: Community Parks Initiatives Team, Parks and Open Spaces, Operational Services