

2021 Year-End Report – Parks Department

ISSUE

This report highlights work completed in 2021 by the Parks Department and provides an overview of significant activities anticipated in 2022.

BACKGROUND

Parks plays a lead role in developing, preserving, and enhancing the City of Saskatoon's investment in its parks system and green spaces; Department programs include:

1. Park and Open Space Maintenance;
2. Naturalized Park Maintenance;
3. Woodlawn and Pioneer Cemeteries;
4. Urban Biological Services;
5. Urban Forestry;
6. Sports Fields & Landscape Construction;
7. Irrigation;
8. Greenhouse;
9. Park and Open Space Design; and
10. Expressway Turf Maintenance.

CURRENT STATUS

Work that the Parks Department undertakes supports the Strategic Goals of Quality of Life and Environmental Leadership through the provision of maintenance and landscape development services. The Department takes great pride in caring for, developing, and upgrading parks and green spaces throughout Saskatoon.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS

The 2021 Year-End Report for the Parks Department provides an overview of the initiatives undertaken throughout 2021 and highlights planned 2022 activities (see Appendix 1).

Some key highlights of 2021 include:

1. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to challenge operations in 2021. Parks staff demonstrated commitment to service and adaptability, adhering to changes in safety protocols in response to the Public Health Orders and safety requirements.
2. Topdressing of 24 neighborhood sports fields throughout Saskatoon, where a 50/50 mix of City compost and soil was applied to improve turf quality and safety to users. The program was expanded from 12 neighborhood sports fields in 2020.

3. Forty-seven subsidized interments occurred at Woodlawn Cemetery.
4. Cemetery Masterplan that provides an overall vision to guide the future development, operations, and long-term sustainability of the City's cemeteries was completed and prepared for submission to City Council in 2022.
5. Municipal Weed Inspectors enforcement of The Weed Control Act included the administration of 179 weed agreements with landowners to address noxious and nuisance weed infestations. A copy of the Annual Report of the Weed Inspector is included in Appendix 2 of this report.
6. Parks responded to a positive case of Dutch Elm Disease in Leif Erickson Park. Removal of the infected tree and response activities were carried out to prevent spread.
7. The Urban Forestry Master Plan was approved, in principle, by City Council in March 2021.
8. A project to develop a new Tree Protection Bylaw for City trees was initiated in Q4 of 2021.
9. Provided winter snow removal services which included nine City recreation facilities and other locations, such as the Marr Residence and Access Transit.
10. Produced annual flowers for 734 flowerpots in the business improvement districts, 295 flowerpots for centre medians on major city corridors, and 275 flowerpots in parks and other areas.
11. Completed infrastructure construction and upgrades in Parc Canada, Aspen Ridge Drainage Channel, and the Kensington North Entry open space.
12. Co-ordinated with Meewasin and the Saskatoon Fire Department to conduct three prescribed fires in October in Gabriel Dumont, Lakewood, and Donna Birkmaier Parks.
13. Partnered with the Saskatoon Horticultural Society and featured a video in July educating on and highlighting naturalized parks in the city.
14. Participated in the implementation of the City's new online Utility Locate Request form on the City's website, streamlining irrigation locate request process for residents and contractors.
15. Conducted an evapotranspiration - based Irrigation Pilot. The pilot saved a total of 3.8 million litres of water, which is equivalent to \$9,160 in cost savings and 1,630 kg CO₂e in 2021.
16. Managed contracted Freeway/Expressway mowing services on over 490 hectares of Road Rights of Way.
17. Improved Traffic Control Plans, in work zones, to ensure worker safety.
18. Developed a Contract Administrator resource to oversee turf maintenance contract areas, improving work safety and quality of work.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial, legal, environmental, or social implications identified.

NEXT STEPS

The Parks Department reports annually on its activities.

APPENDICES

1. 2021 Year-End Report – Parks Department
2. Annual Report of the Weed Inspector for the City of Saskatoon - 2021

REPORT APPROVAL

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