

## Urban Growth and Open Space Park Minimum Requirement for Developers Park Site Concept Review

**Note:** This document will be updated after the Breathe Implementation work is completed in 2026 to ensure alignment. The update will also incorporate feedback gathered from Industry.

**Rollout:** These requirements are applicable to all projects that are initiated into circulation as of March 1, 2025. Projects initiated into circulation prior to March 1, 2025 are subject to the previous requirements. A project is considered initiated once the “engineering drawings” have been accepted into first circulation.

### Introduction

Concept review is a process where the developer / consultant submits a high level concept plan for an incoming park site for initial review and approval by the City. By reviewing concept plans at this early stage the City is able to ensure alignment with current Open Space policies and strategies (including [The City Plan](#), [Breathe](#) -currently undergoing implementation work to be completed 2025-, [Urban Parks Management Plan](#) - to be retired upon completion of Breathe Implementation-, [Community Parks Framework](#), and relevant statutory plans). This will also allow opportunities for early input from other City business areas, and will identify any potential concerns, issues, conflicts, or adjustments required prior to the developer / consultant beginning detailed design.

This concept review process document is to be used in combination with the [Park Minimum Requirements](#). This document provides further guidance on some of the specifics noted in the Park Minimum Requirements. All new Municipal Reserve (MR) and other parks subject to servicing agreements must meet the minimum requirements as outlined. Developers / consultants are able to propose additional items (including enhanced amenities, increased planting, etc) at their discretion. Proposed enhancements are subject to City approval based on equitable provisioning, maintenance and renewal considerations, and neighbourhood trends. The Park Minimum Requirements were developed to be in alignment with the Municipal Government Act (MGA), and some park classifications will require contributions from the City before they can be considered fully developed.

## Benefits

There are a number of benefits to the concept review process both for the City and the Development Industry:

Benefits to the Development Industry:

- Improved collaboration between the City and the Development Industry on park spaces.
- Initial concept support for proposed programming elements on a park site.
- Early support for site furniture/amenities allowing for earlier ordering of materials with limited risk of future rejection.
- Avoids significant redesign at the detailed design drawing phase.
- Typically results in faster drawing approvals for park spaces.

Benefits to the City of Edmonton:

- Ability to better align developer-initiated park sites with open space strategies.
- Ability to ensure alignment with provisioning standards for proposed amenities.
- Ability to ensure an equitable distribution of assets throughout the developing area.
- Allow for early insight into the operations and maintenance impacts of contributed assets.
- Developer-initiated parks are typically completed much earlier in a neighbourhood's development, contributing to substantial completion of the developing area.

## Design Guidelines

### General

- All elements are to align with the City of Edmonton Design and Construction Standards.
- Grade - Level - Seed requirement for all park sites
  - A minimum 2% gradient across all parks. Site grading (including swales, berms, etc) must not impede site functionality and accessibility.
  - Excessive fill that compromises the site design will not be acceptable.
  - Building envelopes (including schools and community leagues) must be level with adjacent grades (including roads).
- Site Furniture
  - Bench and picnic table requirements are based on a minimum required number of seats. A bench is 2-3 seats and a picnic table is 4-6 seats. As long as the minimum number of seats for a site is met, any combination of benches and picnic tables can be proposed.
  - Site furniture should be located:
    - Adjacent to hard surfaces in order to be accessible.
    - To complement any site amenities.
    - Clusters of seating to create gathering areas are encouraged.
  - Waste receptacles should be located near park entrances and seating areas.

- Unprogrammed Open Space
  - Open Space that is available for unprogrammed use and can adapt to changing needs including informal play and pop-up events.
  - These spaces need to be left as grade-level-seed only. These areas need to be relatively flat (2% slope), include no tree planting, and be free of any encumbrances (such as swales).
- Walkways and Accessibility
  - Shared use paths are required whenever indicated in the Land Development Application (LDA)
  - Walkways should be provided to any amenities and gathering spaces/ clusters of site furniture to ensure accessibility.
- Amenities
  - Amenities above the minimum requirements (such as playgrounds, fitness equipment, sliding hills, sports courts, etc) are not required, however they can be proposed at the discretion of the developer / consultant. Proposed amenities are subject to City approval and will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

## Development Activity by Park Classification

The following table outlines who is responsible for various development activities at a high level. Not every park will require every item (for example many pocket parks will not require shared use pathways) and more detail and definitions of park classifications is included in the following sections and the [Park Minimum Requirements Tables](#).

Legend

D = Developer Minimum Requirement

C = City Minimum Requirement

E = Enhancements

NA = Not Appropriate for Park Classification

Development Activity	Pocket Park	Community Park (no school)	Community Park (w/ school)	District Park	Linear Park	Ecological Park <small>*following NAMP</small>
Grade, Level and Seed/Sod	D	D	D	D	D	D
Tree Planting to Min. Requirements	D	D	D/C	C	D	D
Shared Use Path with Lighting	D	D	D/C	D/C	D	D
Walkways	D	D	C	C	D	D
Utilities/ Servicing (Currently under review and subject to change)	E	D	D	D	E	NA
Site Furniture	D	D	D/C	D/C	D	D
Post and Rail Fence	E	E	D	D	NA	NA
Park Sign	C	C	C	C	NA	C
Playground	NA	E/C	C	C	NA	NA
Gathering Area	E	E/C	C	C	E	NA
Sports Fields	NA	E	C	C	NA	NA
Unprogrammed Open Space	D	D	C	C	D	NA
Optional Amenities (subject to City approval)	E	E	E	E	E	E

- Enhancements are not required, but may be allowable, and can be proposed at developers' discretion
- Items labeled D/C will be partially required by developers and partially required to be completed by the City
- Items labeled E/C can be proposed by developers as enhancements, and if not provided by the developer will be completed by the City.

## Pocket Parks

Pocket Parks are small open spaces meant to serve the surrounding neighbourhood and may contain only one amenity or primarily serve one of the Breathe open space themes.

- The minimum requirements for Pocket Parks will constitute a “developed park” and these parks likely will not receive additional development from the City.
- These parks are intended to mostly serve passive uses. Larger active amenities (such as playgrounds) are typically not suitable on Pocket Parks and will only be approved at the City’s discretion.
- Larger Pocket Parks (over 0.5ha) are to include a minimum 20% unprogrammed open space. Parks that include developer proposed amenities may reduce or waive this requirement pending concept review.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Seed/Sod	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Tree Planting	70 trees per ha	As Suitable	As per UPMP/Breathe Can be a combination of stand alone/grouped park trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City
Ornamental Horticulture Beds	0m2 per ha	150m2 per ha	Located for ease of maintenance Subject to City approval
Shared Use Path with Lighting	As Required	As Required	As per approved LDA/ Concept Plans. May not be required for every site
Walkways	As Required	As Required	As per approved LDA/ Concept Plans. May not be required for every site
Utilities/Servicing	Power for lighting as required	Servicing for optional amenities as needed	May not be required for every site. Subject to ongoing review as part of Breathe Implementation work
Bench **	1 per site	2 per 1500 m2 of site	Near walkways Located to support any programming/ amenities (if applicable) Unless otherwise directed by City
Picnic Table **	0 per site	1 per 2000 m2 of site	Located to support any programming/ amenities (if applicable) Unless otherwise directed by City Can substitute required benches for picnic tables
Waste Receptacle **	1 per site	2 per site	Near walkways not benches Located to support any programming/ amenities (if applicable) Unless otherwise directed by City
Fencing	As Required	As Required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans Fencing to be placed on private property
Unprogrammed Open Space	0% if park under 0.5ha 20% if park over 0.5 ha	No max	To be finalized through concept review
Optional Amenities	If suited	If suited	Subject to concept review and approved by City

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furniture are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary.

## Community Parks

Community Parks are the primary components of the green network within a neighbourhood. They are large enough to contain multiple neighbourhood-level amenities and facilities, and serve the Breathe open space themes of Celebration and Wellness. There are two types of Community Park, those with a school and those without a school, and they require different levels of development.

### Community Parks (w/o a school)

These parks may contain a community league (but not a school), and may be managed under a License Agreement.

- The minimum requirements for Community Parks (without a school) will constitute a partially developed park. These parks will require additional contributions from the City (playground, gathering area, etc) to meet the requirements to be considered fully developed as per the Community Park Framework. Developers are able to propose items such as playgrounds and gathering areas at their discretion.
- Open space for future playgrounds (min 1000m<sup>2</sup>) and gathering areas need to be left as grade-level-seed only. These areas need to be relatively flat (2% slope), include no tree planting, and be free of any encumbrances (such as swales). These areas need to be located in a way that will allow for easy access for future development/construction, as well as in proximity of available storm servicing. The final locations/layouts will be subject to approval through the concept review process.
- Community League License Areas (as identified in the Neighbourhood Structure Plan (NSP)) are to be left as grade-level-seed only. These areas need to be relatively flat (~2% slope), include no tree planting, and be free of any encumbrances (such as swales). Reach out to [parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca](mailto:parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca) if confirmation of league areas is required.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Seed/Sod	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Tree Planting	65 Trees per ha	As Suitable	As per UPMP/Breathe Can be a combination of stand alone/grouped park trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City
Ornamental Horticulture Beds	0m <sup>2</sup> per ha	150m <sup>2</sup> per ha	located for ease of maintenance subject to City approval
Shared Use Path with Lighting	As Required	As Required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Walkways	As Required	As Required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Utilities/Servicing	Power for lighting (as required) 3-phase power, Storm, water, and sanitary stubs for each identified community league (as required)	Servicing for optional amenities as needed	As per UPMP/Breathe, located to serve future community leagues As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. May not be required for every site Subject to ongoing review as part of Breathe Implementation work
Bench **	2 per site	1 per 1500 m <sup>2</sup> of site	Located to support any programming/ amenities (if applicable) Cluster seating where appropriate Unless otherwise directed by City

Picnic Table **	0	1 per 2000 m2 of site	Can substitute picnic tables for benches Unless otherwise directed by City
Waste Receptacle **	1	1 per 2000 m2 of site	Near walkways not benches Located to support any programming/ amenities (if applicable) Unless otherwise directed by City
Open Space for playgrounds/gathering area	1000m2	As Suitable	As per Approved Concept Plan
Unprogrammed Open Space	25% of site	no max	To be finalized through concept review
Optional Amenities	If suited	If suited	Subject to concept review and approval by City
Fencing	As Required	As Required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans Fencing to be placed on private property
Community League License Area	0.81ha (if identified)		As per NSP, to be Grade, Level, Seed only Trees planted within license area will not count towards minimum requirements

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furnitures are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary. Site furniture requirements are based on number of seats.

### Community Parks (w/ a school)

These parks incorporate schools (typically K-9) and occasionally community leagues, and may be managed under a Joint Use Agreement and/ or License Agreement.

- The minimum requirements for Community Parks (with a planned future school) will provide a site ready for future development by the City/ Alberta Infrastructure once provincial funding for the associated school is announced. Reach out to [parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca](mailto:parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca) if confirmation of school locations is required.
- Any developer contributed items (shared use pathways, tree planting, etc) are to be constrained to the perimeter of the site.
- The intent is to have a site ready for future school construction without incurring additional removal/ relocation costs for previously installed infrastructure.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	Entire Site	Entire Site	as per standards
Seed/Sod	Entire Site	Entire Site	as per standards
Tree Planting	1 tree per 10lm of perimeter (excluding roads)	As Suitable	Perimeter planting to be along trails and private property fence as suited for the site, full planting to be completed as part of final school site design (City) Minimum is for calculation purposes only, trees can be planted in groupings Can be a combination of stand alone/grouped park trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City
Ornamental Horticulture Beds	0m2 per ha	0m2 per ha	Not suitable for interim site development
Shared Use Path with Lighting	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Walkways	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.

Utilities/Servicing	3-phase power, Storm, water, and sanitary stubs for each identified school/ community league		As per UPMP/Breathe, located to serve future schools/community leagues Subject to ongoing review as part of Breathe Implementation work
Bench **	1	1 per 1500 m2 of site	tied to any required SUP/walkways, no bench required if no SUP/Walkway Unless otherwise directed by City
Picnic Table **	0	1 per 1000 m2 of site	Can substitute picnic tables for benches Unless otherwise directed by City
Waste Receptacle **	1	1 per 1000 m2 of site	Near walkway, no receptacle required if no SUP/Walkway Located near site entry/exits Unless otherwise directed by City
Fencing	As Required	As Required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans Fencing to be placed on private property
Post and Rail Fence	As Required	As Required	Temporary post and rail fence Along road frontage placed on MR
School Envelope (s)	0.8ha - 1.82 ha (if identified)		As per NSP and UPMP/Breathe, to be Grade, Level, Seed only Trees planted within envelope will not count towards minimum requirements
Community League License Area	0.81ha (if identified)		As per NSP, to be Grade, Level, Seed only Trees planted within license area will not count towards minimum requirements

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furnitures are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary. Site furniture requirements are based on number of seats.

## District Parks

District Parks are designed to meet the needs of a cluster of neighbourhoods and specific communities of interest. They are large enough to accommodate district-level amenities and facilities to serve the Breathe open space themes of Wellness and Celebration.

- The minimum requirements for District Parks will provide a site ready for future development by the City/Alberta Infrastructure once funding for the associated school or recreation center is announced.
- Any developer contributed items (shared use pathways, tree planting, etc) are to be constrained to the perimeter of the site.
- The intent is to have a site ready for future construction without incurring additional removal/ relocation costs for previously installed infrastructure.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	Entire Site	Entire Site	as per standards
Seed/Sod	Entire Site	Entire Site	as per standards
Tree Planting	1 tree per 10lm of perimeter (excluding roads)	As Suitable	Perimeter planting to be along trails and private property fence as suited for the site, full planting to be completed as part of final district park design (City) Minimum is for calculation purposes only, trees can be planted in groupings Can be a combination of stand alone/grouped park trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City



Ornamental Horticulture Beds	0m2 per ha	0m2 per ha	Not suitable for interim site development
Shared Use Path with Lighting	as required	as required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Walkways	as required	as required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Utilities/Servicing	3-phase power, Storm, water, and sanitary stubs for each identified school		As per UPMP/Breathe Subject to ongoing review as part of Breathe Implementation work
Bench **	1	1 per 1500 m2 of site	Not tied to any required SUP/walkways, no bench required if no SUP/Walkway To be updated upon approval of revised accessibility guidelines Unless otherwise directed by City
Waste Receptacle **	1	1 per 1000 m2 of site	Near walkway, no receptacle required if no SUP/Walkway Located near site entry/exits Unless otherwise directed by City
Fencing	As Required	As Required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans Fencing to be placed on private property
Post and Rail Fence	As Required	As Required	Temporary post and rail fence Along road frontage placed on MR
School Envelope (s)	2.4ha - 4.85ha (if identified)		As per NSP and UPMP/Breathe, to be Grade, Level, Seed only Trees planted within envelope will not count towards minimum requirements

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furnitures are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary. Site furniture requirements are based on number of seats.

## Linear Parks

Linear Parks are connectors between other open space elements. They are wide enough to function as a park but are too narrow to accommodate facilities and most amenities. They primarily serve the Breathe themes of Wellness and Ecology.

- The minimum requirements for Linear Parks will constitute a fully developed park and these parks will likely not receive additional development from the City.
- These parks are intended to mostly serve uses such as recreation, habitat creation, or social encounters in addition to their role as connectors.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Seed/Sod	Entire Site	Entire Site	As per standards
Tree Planting	200 tree per ha	As Suitable	As per UPMP/Breathe Can be a combination of stand alone/grouped park trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City
Ornamental Horticulture Beds	0m2 per ha	50m2 per ha	located near site entry/exits for each maintenance access must not impede sightlines at pedestrian crossings
Shared Use Path with Lighting	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Walkways	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.

Utilities/Servicing	Power for lighting (as required)		
Bench **	1 per intersection w/ roadways	As Suitable	Unless otherwise directed by City
Picnic Table **	0	2	If suitable Unless otherwise directed by City
Waste Receptacle **	1 per intersection w/ roadways	1 per intersection w/ roadways	located near site entry/exits for easy maintenance access Unless otherwise directed by City
Fencing	As Required	As Required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans Fencing to be placed on private property

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furnitures are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary. Site furniture requirements are based on number of seats.

## Ecological Parks

Ecological parks are intended to protect an area of naturally-occurring landscapes. These parks are managed for the primary purpose of preserving natural processes, species and habitat, and serve the Breathe theme of Ecology.

- All proposed work on Ecological Parks must align with any approved NAMP's.
- The main intent of Ecological Parks is to remain undisturbed. Disturbed areas should receive restoration planting to assist in returning the site to its original state.
- Activities in these parks are primarily passive with the expectation that any installed infrastructure (trails, site furnishings, etc) do not compromise the primary purpose of protection.

Item	Minimum	Maximum	Type/Comment
Grade/Level	As required	As required	Minimal site disturbance to retain existing natural features - existing grading should not be altered Grading external to the site should support the ongoing sustainability of the natural features within the site Grade/level limits to be based on site disturbance
Seed/Sod	As required	As required	Minimal site disturbance to retain existing natural features Seed/Sod limits to be based on site disturbance
Tree Planting	70 trees per ha for areas disturbed	As Suitable	As per UPMP/ Breathe/ any relevant SSNAMP's Can be a combination of B&B trees and naturalization, subject to approval by City
Shared Use Path	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. Connect to adjacent active mode infrastructure.
Walkways	As required	As required	As per approved LDA/Concept Plans. May not be required for every site Ecological Parks may allow alternative surfaces such as granular
Bench **	1 per site	2 per 1500 m2 of site	Unless otherwise directed by City
Picnic Table **	0	2	If suitable Unless otherwise directed by City
Waste Receptacle **	1 per site	2 per site	located near site entry/exits for easy maintenance access Unless otherwise directed by City
Fencing	As required	As required	As directed by LDA/ Concept Plans

\*\* Minimum/Maximum quantities for site furnitures are starting guidelines. Adjustments may be allowed pending City approval for unique sites/features as needed. Sites can vary greatly in size and depending on the user group or the amenities furniture needs on site may vary. Site furniture requirements are based on number of seats.

## Submission Requirements

The following are the minimum requirements for a concept submission.

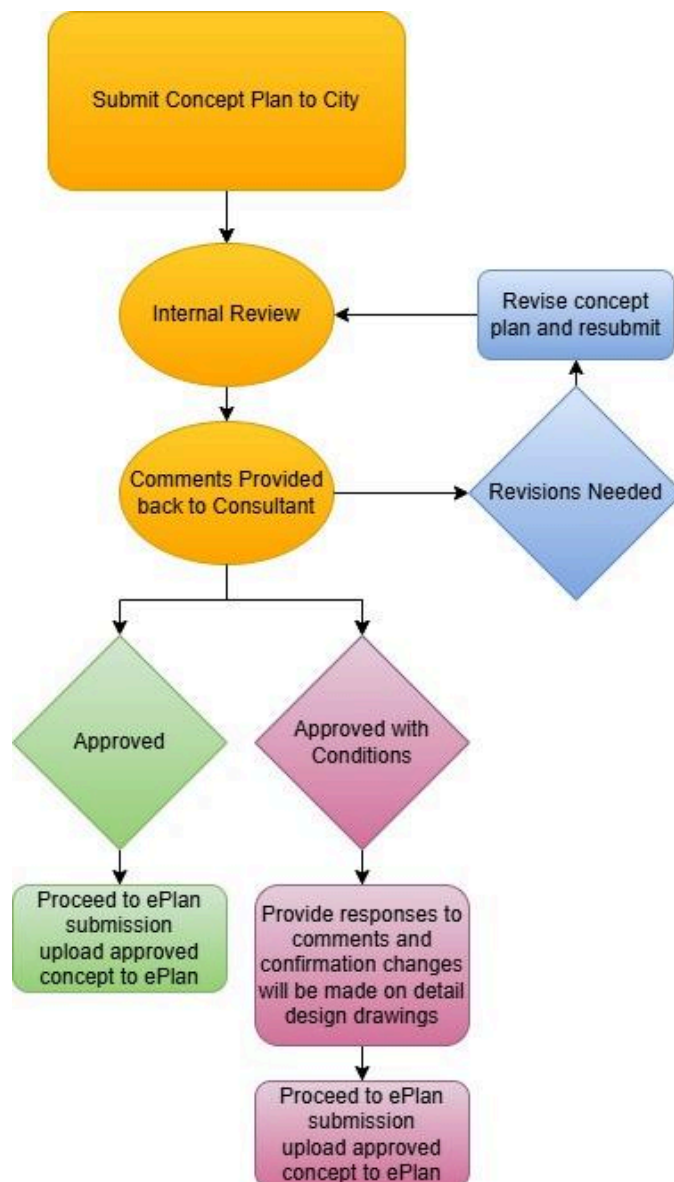
- The concept plan should indicate the type of park classification and its associated theme/function. For example, a Pocket Park's primary theme/ function may be Wellness through the provision of a community garden and gathering spaces while an Ecological Park's primary theme would be Ecology through preservation of existing natural features. Definitions and appropriate levels of development for each park classification can be found in Breathe.
- Identify site size and location (i.e., context within the broader neighbourhood)
- Concept plan showing the relationships of the major functions/ spaces/ constructed features with respect to the site and each other. Concept plan to include:
  - Conceptual planting locations and locations of any existing vegetation to be retained
  - Approximate alignments of walkways/ shared use pathways
  - Site furniture locations/ types
  - Preliminary grading information with minimum and maximum slopes and conceptual contours
- Provide manufacturer specification sheets for any proposed site furniture for City review. Unique/ difficult to maintain furnishings may require maintenance agreements.
- Identify any proposed amenities above the minimum requirements including type, size, location, and relationship with the site/ community.
- Provide any supporting information describing design intent or relevant support information from the community.
- Description of alignment with City of Edmonton strategies including Breathe and The City Plan.

## Process

### Process summary

0. *Optional* - If an amenity above base level is being proposed (playground, sports court, bike bumps, etc), consultant/ developer can reach out to Urban Growth and Open Space ([parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca](mailto:parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca)) to review and approve appropriateness of the amenity for the selected site prior to any design work being undertaken.
1. Submit concept plan to the Urban Growth and Open Space Landscape Architect ([parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca](mailto:parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca)).
2. Concept plan is circulated internally for comments (4 weeks).
3. Comments are provided back to the consultant. Consultant is required to provide written responses to all comments.
  - If the concept is **approved** - no further concept review is required and the project can proceed to detailed design.

- If the concept is **approved with conditions** - responses to comments are required and an acknowledgement in writing from the consultant that required design changes will be made prior to detailed design submission.
  - If the concept requires **revisions** - a revised concept needs to be submitted for internal circulation (2 weeks).
4. When submitting for detailed design, the approved concept and responses to comments are to be uploaded to [ePlan](#) under the documents tab by the consultant.
    - If drawings for the surrounding stage are currently in circulation or already approved, the park site should be submitted as a separate cover.
    - If drawings for the adjacent stage are not yet circulated, the park site can be part of the overall stage package.
    - Redlines for new park design being added to an existing stage will not be accepted.
  5. Park design will continue through the typical ePlan detailed design process.



**Timelines**

First circulation of concept - 4 weeks

Subsequent circulations (if required) - 2 weeks

**Contact information**

Principal Landscape Architect - Urban Growth and Open Space

[parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca](mailto:parkdevelopment@edmonton.ca)