





City of St. Albert

CHEROT EAST

PARKS MASTER PLAN

July 2024



LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We respectfully acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, traditional lands of First Nations and Métis peoples. As treaty People, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, we share the responsibility for stewardship of this beautiful land.

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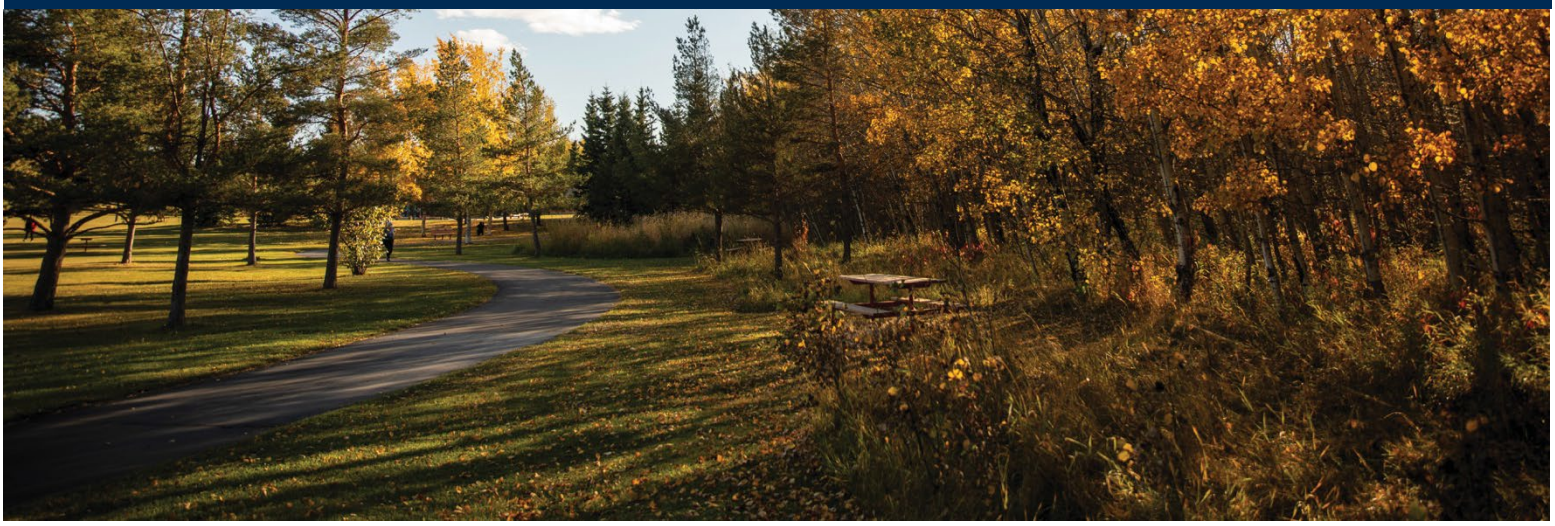
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Cherot East Parks Master Plan is developed to conceptually show the neighbourhood's park and open space sites. Through this process, themes are identified and connected to the City's Parks and Open Space Guidelines and Standards principles and objectives, the scope of the neighbourhood's context is understood, and finally the conceptual design of park spaces and there amenities are planned for with those identified themes and the neighbourhood context incorporated.

Cherot is bordered by the natural corridor of Carrot Creek to the west, by Ray Gibbon Drive to the east, and Giroux Road to the south with Villeneuve Road to the north (Figure 1). Cherot East is one of two neighbourhoods' in Cherot and includes the area between Ray Gibbon Drive and Range Road 260.

Within Cherot East, the focus of this Parks Master Plan, there are six park sites totaling 7.89 hectares:

- Chelles Park (completed, 2023)
- Community Park 1 (4.05 ha), which includes a future school site.
- Community Park 2 (2.14 ha)
- Connector Parks 1, 2, & 3. (0.9 ha)

"St. Albert is a vibrant, innovative and thriving City that we all call home, that sustains and cherishes its unique identity and small town values. We are the botanical arts city."
– City of St. Albert Municipal Development Plan

The City's parks and open spaces are based upon a set of principles and criteria as outlined in the Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines which is incorporated into the conceptual design of the remaining Cherot East park spaces. The principles and criteria ensure new parks deliver on the City's vision as "…a vibrant, innovative and thriving City…" (City of St. Albert Municipal Development Plan).

Through the park master plan process a set of themes were created to guide the conceptual design of Cherot East park spaces. Those themes included,

- Park Connectivity – Connectivity within Cherot East (park spaces, Storm Water Management Facility (SWMF), school sites, Community Amenities, Carrot Creek, etc.) and to/from Cherot East.
- Park Identity – Align the park and open space identity with the french architecture theme of the neighbourhood while providing unique and innovative park features for area residents.
- Natural Environment – Foster biodiversity, climate change resiliency, and overall connection to nature for physical and mental wellbeing and enhancement of the natural environment.
- Inclusivity & Accessibility – Utilize the City of St. Albert Universal Access Plan and industry best practices in creating equitable, inclusive, and accessible parks and open spaces regardless of demographics.

All plans articulated in this document are conceptual and will be further assessed for financial and environmental sustainability, technical feasibility, and public acceptability during the detailed design process.

"Park planning must now contain a heightened devotion to resiliency, accessibility and connectivity – with options that will excite, engage and sustain residents on any given day or in response to future fluctuations in health, climate or social activity."
– Raine Gardener

OBJECTIVES

Objectives outline the desired outcomes to be achieved through the design of park spaces in Cherot East. The objectives of this parks master plan are to:

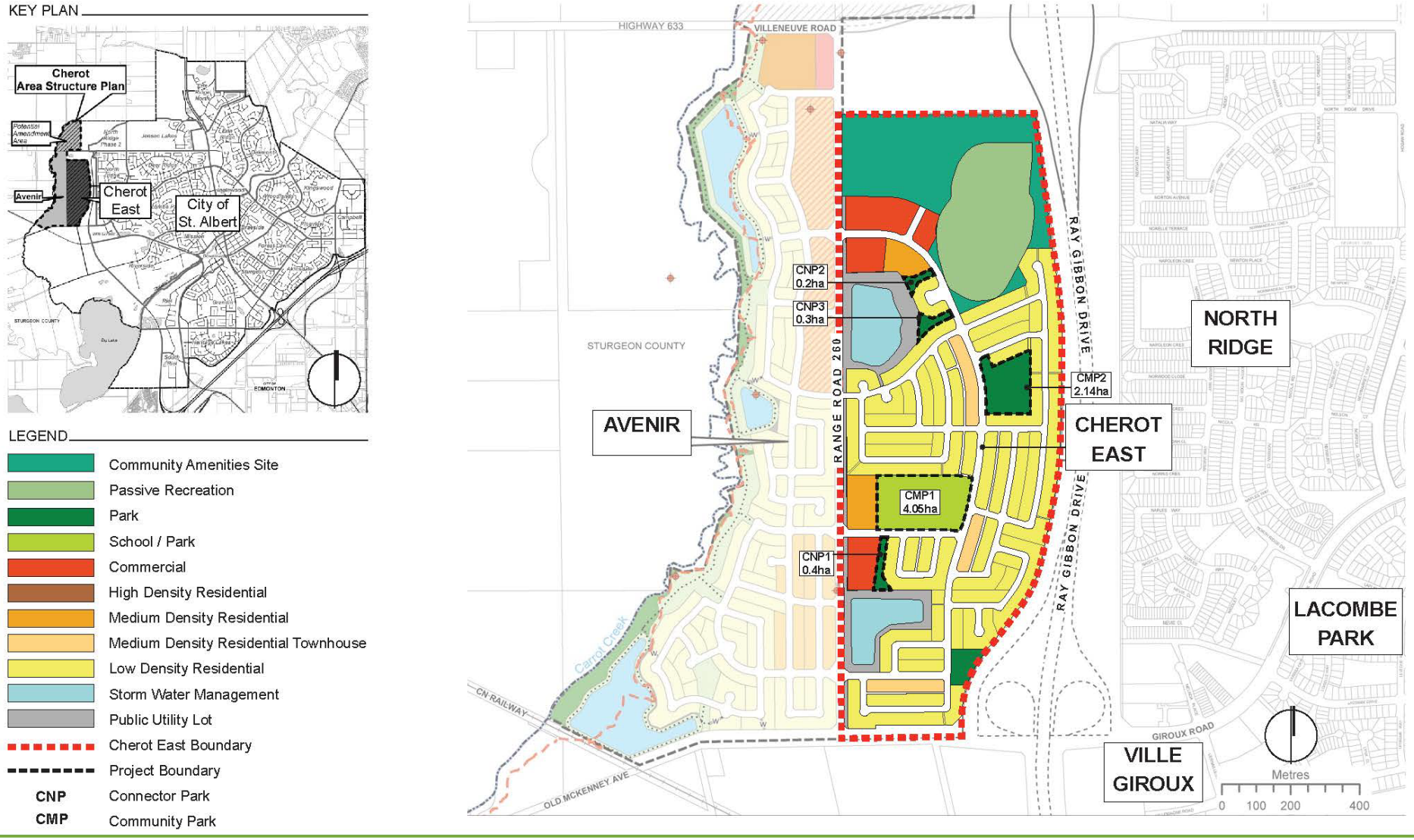
1. Provide vibrant, active spaces that encourage four-season use of parks.
2. To develop park spaces that are well connected to one another and provide community-oriented spaces that complement the city-wide amenities of the Community Amenities Site.
3. Support the naturalization of park spaces in Cherot East for the physical and mental well-being of residents, the biodiversity of St. Albert, and to create climate change resiliency.
4. Utilizing the City of St. Albert's Universal Access Plan, integrate industry best practices in creating equitable, inclusive, and accessible parks and open spaces in Cherot East.

PARKS & OPEN SPACE PLANNING SYSTEM

This parks master plan is guided by provincial legislation, City plans and policies, and departmental strategies and plan. The park and open space planning system works within a hierarchy that first follows the policies of provincial legislation and regulations, followed by City bylaws, policies and directives and finally department or subject matter specific guidance. All contribute to guiding the design and development of the parks and open space system.

Provincial	City	Departmental
• Municipal Government Act • Alberta Land Stewardship Act • Provincial Land Use Policies	• Municipal Development Plan • Bylaws (i.e. Land Use) • Area Structure Plans • Park & Open Space Standards & Guidelines • Engineering & Landscape Standards	• Green Environment Strategy • Natural Areas Conservation & Management Plan • Recreation Master Plan • Parks Master Plans

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CHEROT EAST CONTEXT MAP

AUGUST 2023

Figure 1 : Cherot East - Approved Future Land Use

PRINCIPLES

Cherot East is set to include two community parks, a neighborhood park, and three connector parks. This parks master plan adheres to the City of St. Albert Parks and Open Space Standards and Guidelines principles which guide the decisions about the configuration of the park system and the design of individual parks.

- **Quality of Life –** Park and open space are essential to making St. Albert an attractive place to live and work. The park spaces in Cherot East will seek to offer opportunities for residents to support social cohesion and integrate park design into the distinct character of the City and neighbourhood.
    - Highlight the french theme identified by the developer where feasible in park design of Cherot East.
- **Connectivity and Integration** – To ensure the park and open space network is easily accessible, inviting, convenient, and integrated with the community, the Cherot East park spaces prioritize the connectivity in the park space and among the multiple park spaces, SWMFs, and the future Community Amenities Site.
    - The park trails will connect with the neighbourhood's SWMF trails and the future Community Amenities Site establishing a strong north/south connection within Cherot East along with east and west connectivity to Carrot Creek.
- **Diversity and Inclusivity –** Park spaces will be designed to ensure equitable access for Cherot East residents.
    - Park design will integrate the City's Universal Access Plan for equitable access to park spaces including use in all four seasons.
- **Sustainability and Conservation** – Park spaces will contribute to the City's environmental goals, conservation efforts, and sustainable development practices.
    - Park design will promote biodiversity, water management strategies, and naturalization through the innovative use of landscaping design practices and demonstration garden opportunities (ex. xeriscape gardens).

CURRENT STATE OF CHEROT EAST

COMMUNITY & NEIGHBOURHOOD PROFILE

Alberta, and in particular its urban centres, are expected to grow in population (Government of Alberta – Alberta Population Projections 2021-2046). Data released in early 2023 showed Alberta saw a dramatic increase in its population growth at 4.1 per cent which is the single highest year of population growth since 1981. Albertans' average age is expected to rise and more than half of the population growth in the Edmonton area is expected to occur due to `international immigration. Although projections are not specific to St. Albert, it is reasonable to expect that St. Albert will likewise become an older and more diverse community.

The Cherot area profile outlined in the Area Structure Plan (ASP) anticipates it to be the third largest neighbourhood in St. Albert with 7,935 anticipated residents. The neighbourhood is expected to attract primarily young growing families with the presence of a future primary school and a high school. Cherot East will have a variety of residential developments from low, medium and high density to mixed-use which will accommodate a variety of families in multiple life stages.

The parks and open space planning process takes into consideration the changing needs of residents over time. The park design will integrate the anticipated characteristics at full ASP build out but will also incorporate design elements that adapt over the life span of Cherot East which will ensure the investment into the parks spaces is fully realized.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

The Cherot ASP applies to a gross area of 100 hectares with approximately 76.8 hectares as developable among two neighborhoods of Cherot East and Avenir. Cherot East design has an underlying french theme integrated throughout which the park space concepts will integrate where possible into the park design.

Development began in Cherot East in 2022. The development will proceed north from Giroux Road towards Villeneuve Road and the future Community Amenities Site. The first park site, Chelles Park, was opened to the public fall 2023 and includes a playground space that was uniquely designed to fit the french theme and caters to a wide range of ages and abilities.

Site Analysis

An analysis of natural and cultural features was conducted as part of the ASP process, which includes areas in Cherot East and Avenir.

- Cherot is undeveloped and is mostly cultivated farmland.
- Natural site assessment of the site identified Carrot Creek as a critical habitat linkage between Big Lake, Lois Hole Provincial Park, and the upper portion of Carrot Creek.

- The area slopes east to west towards Carrot Creek with elevation changes between 9 and 13 meters. Drainage for Cherot East matches the slope with multiple shallow drainage channels found throughout the site.
- Cherot is above the designated flood line with no watercourses and floodplain impacts to Cherot East.
- Two wetlands were identified in close proximity to Carrot Creek and they will be maintained through development.
- The two former landfills have not been in operation since 1996. Required development setbacks are to be determined and are directed by provincial legislation and studies of the landfill sites themselves.
    - Pit 1 will be in the Community Amenities Site for passive outdoor recreation.
    - Pit 2 will be the site of a future SWMF in Cherot East and has been fully remediated. Connector Parks 2 and 3 will bring people to and from the SWMF.

RECREATION AMENITIES CONTEXT

Current recreational amenities near Cherot East are limited as this is the first neighbourhood developed west of Ray Gibbon Drive. Ray Gibbon Drive is a major barrier to accessing parks and open spaces in other neighbourhoods as it's a major arterial road with no existing pedestrian crossing adjacent to Cherot East. As such, the parks and recreation amenities within Cherot East are especially important in meeting the day-to-day needs of the community.

The future Community Amenities Site is planned for the north end of Cherot East and is designated as a City-wide amenity that will provide access to large indoor and outdoor recreation opportunities that are not found in the neighbourhood park system.

Additionally, the Red Willow Trail System is planned to extend north along Carrot Creek which once developed, will be a major recreational feature. Cherot East will provide an east/west pedestrian connection to Carrot Creek. Further information on the planned trail extension can be found in the Red Willow Park West Master Plan.

RECREATION & PARKS TRENDS

Parks, trails, and natural areas in St. Albert are consistently rated as the most valued contribution to the quality of life in the City among residents. In 2021, 60 per cent of respondents in the *St. Albert Community Satisfaction Survey* reported parks, trails, and natural areas as a top factor contributing to their quality of life. St. Albert has consistently ranked parks, trails, and natural areas as being the top factor contributing to the quality of life since at least 2009. In addition to St. Albert residents recognizing the importance of recreation and parks to quality of life, 99 per cent of Albertans do too (2022, Alberta Recreation Survey)!

The 2022 Alberta Recreation Survey, the 2023 Canadian City Parks Report, and other provincial, and national park and recreation agencies provide insight into current trends for recreation and parks that include,

- Nearly all individuals and households in Canada participate in recreation, with active living and creative/cultural choices being the most common.
    - The importance of park spaces as the top location for recreation has increased since 2017, from 59 per cent to 76 per cent in 2022.

- Increased desire for more unstructured or self-guided activities (ex. walking on multi-use trails or sensory play)
    - Walking remained the top-ranked recreational activity in Alberta from 2017 to 2022.
    - Connecting people to nature activities that have grown in popularity since 2017 include bird watching, picnicking (within a city), and hiking.
    - The primary avenue for recreation participation by St. Albert residents is outdoor activities and self-guided activities (City of St. Albert, Recreation Amenity Needs Assessment, 2022).
- Increased park use through COVID rose sharply and has maintained elevated levels compared to pre-COVID figures.
    - Park People (2023) found a 15 per cent increase in park visitation from 2020 to 2022 across Canada.
    - St. Albert residents have indicated their overall participation in recreation is expected to increase in the coming years (City of St. Albert, Recreation Amenity Needs Assessment, 2022).
- The role parks play in addressing climate change continues to grow.
    - Parks can play a role in decreasing heat or managing water through the use of natural infrastructure (xeriscape gardens) and built infrastructure (shade structures).
    - The naturalization of parks either through the protection of natural areas in cities (ex. Red Willow Parks or Carrot Creek) or the use of micro or pocket naturalization in park spaces (ex. native trees and shrubs) is a growing practice to increase the municipal inventory of natural areas.
- The high levels of sedentary behaviours and the negative impact on health continue to plague Canadians.
    - Sedentary behaviours negatively impact obesity rates, chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease, and mental health (i.e. depression and anxiety).
    - The presence of parks trails, natural areas, and playgrounds in a neighbourhood can reduce sedentary behaviours.
    - St. Albert residents also identified the role of recreation and parks for their physical health, with 87 per cent of those surveyed in St. Albert indicating physical health as the reason for recreating, with mental health not far behind (City of St. Albert, Recreation Amenity Needs Assessment, 2022).

The purpose of showcasing recreation and park trends and values is that the conceptual plans are adaptive to evolving situations, characteristics, and circumstances that park spaces are responsive to while addressing the current values placed upon parks.



CONCEPT PLANS

Conceptual designs are intended to represent the best available information at the time of drafting and will be refined through detailed design and adjusted based on available budget, changes to neighborhood context and/or timing of construction as needed.

The conceptual designs aim to accommodate the structured and unstructured recreation amenity needs of users for an expansive audience of varying ages, abilities, and interests. For Cherot East, the french theme was integrated where possible to provide a cohesive identity and character for the park spaces while ensuring compatibility with adjacent land uses. Concept designs integrated winter use principles (ex. colour, sunshine, lighting, wind, and winter infrastructure) and designed for cold climates. Other conceptual design features included incorporating natural landscape features to support climate resiliency, including components, such as trees for shade near seating nodes and play features, pollinator gardens to support biodiversity, xeriscaping to reduce watering needs, and a shade structure near a playground to provide shade during the increasing number of extreme heat events.

Public participation is a key component of the detailed design phase and may require changes to this plan to address resident desires or previously unidentified community needs and/or constraints. Changes to the ASP, should they occur, may impact the viability of certain amenities, and will be further explored at the detailed design stage. Significant changes to the size, location, configuration, or classification of the park outlined in this plan may require updated concepts.



Park Development Process

CHELLES PARK

Chelles Park is the first completed park within the neighbourhood. Completed by the developer, Rohit Group of Companies. The collaborative process was initiated and driven by the developer to design, construct, and open a completed park space.

Chelles Park is 0.8 hectares and is adjacent to Ray Gibbon Drive to the east, low density residential to the north and south and a local road to the west. A berm and noise attenuation fence separate Ray Gibbon Drive and Chelles Park.

The french theme is evident in the design of the playground. The remainder of the park includes an open green space for spontaneous play and a hill for winter sledding.







Photo Credits - Chérot, Rohit Land Development.

COMMUNITY PARK 1

Community Park 1 is the largest neighbourhood park space in Cherot East, with 4.05 total hectares, including 1.8 hectares allocated for a future school, and the remaining land available as park space. Medium and low-density residential land border the west and north end of the park with a collector road bordering the south and east.







Reference imagery is provided to support understanding of the design and should not be considered representative of the amenity to be constructed.

Two north/south trails intersect the park space with one linking to the south through the Connector Park 1 and the other separating the future school site from the public park.

The natural turf field provides an opportunity for structured recreation while adjacent open green space provides unstructured or spontaneous recreation. With four-season use in mind, the hill within the open space gives the space use during winter months for sledding, snowshoeing, and spontaneous winter play.

The amphitheater/learning node is an area for cultural and educational gathering for groups with a connection to the trail system for accessibility.

The conceptual design showcases several social gathering opportunities for spontaneous use or intentional activities. The central promenade and the central lawn tie together these social gathering locations within the park for community residents.

With an abundance of connectivity, structured and unstructured recreation, naturalized plantings, and social gathering opportunities Community Park 1 will provide the community with a significant area for physical and social wellbeing.



*** A minimum 3m width mow strip adjacent to private development is to be maintained
*** Ensure 2.5m offset of waste receptacles from benches

Figure 2: Community Park 1 Landscape Concept Plan – Summer



*** A minimum 1m width mow strip adjacent to private development is to be maintained
*** Ensure 2.5m offset of waste receptacles from benches

Figure 3: Community Park 1 Landscape Concept Plan – Winter

COMMUNITY PARK 2

Community Park 2 is 2.15 hectares in size. The park space is bordered by low-density residential housing and a collector road.

A boarded ice rink is central to the park amenities and provides recreational activities in all seasons. The use of the boarded ice rink in summer for an off-leash dog area is in addition to the off-leash dog area proposed for Cherot in the Red Willow Park West Master Plan. Further amenities, include the neighbourhoods only tarmac (excluding the Community Amenities Site), second City playground (in addition to Chelles Park), and a parking lot.

The french theme among the multiple park sites in Cherot East continues the central character, vibrancy, and identity that encourages social gathering and connection for residential wellbeing.

Climate resiliency through park design for Community Park 2 includes a shade structure near the playground that will provide cover on increasingly hot summer days and naturalized planting areas to provide shade and increase biodiversity.

Connectivity proposed in Community Park 2 provides multiple entrances to the park site intersecting at the playground and the shade structure. The east connection, through the ASP, shows a probable future connection to the Ray Gibbon Drive multi-use trail.









Reference imagery is provided to support understanding of the design and should not be considered representative of the amenity to be constructed.

KEY NOTES

1	Entry Plaza
2	Picnic Area w/ High Canopy Trees
3	Decorative Planting Bed
4	Dog Off-leash Area
5	Parking Lot (18 Stalls + 2 Accessible Stalls)
6	Tarmac Area
7	Gathering Space: Benches, Picnic Tables, and Waste Receptacle on Concrete Pad
8	Seating Node: Bench and Waste Receptacle on Concrete Pad
9	Seating Node: Bench on Concrete Pad
10	Shade Structure
11	Pump Shack on Concrete Pad
12	Playground
13	Hill
14	Open Passive Green Space
15	3m Width Multi-use Trail
16	Meadow Seed Mix w/ Flowers
17	Woodland Style Planting
18	Naturalized Area w/ Native Planting
19	Park Sign
	Grass (mow)
	Grass (no mow)



*** A minimum 3m width mow strip adjacent to private development is to be maintained
*** Ensure 2.5m offset of waste receptacles from benches

Figure 4: Community Park 2 Landscape Concept Plan – Summer

KEY NOTES

1	3m Width Multi-use Trail
2	Entry Plaza
3	Sliding Hill
4	Open Play / Snowshoeing Area
5	Shade Structure and Seating Area
6	Pump Shack on Concrete Pad
7	Boarded Hockey Rink
8	Parking Lot
9	Park Sign



Figure 5: Community Park 2 Landscape Concept Plan – Winter

CONNECTOR PARKS

Connector parks provide an essential physical connection to and between areas of the neighbourhood. Connector Park 1 connects the first SWMF with Community Park 1 and will provide pedestrian access to the designated school site at Community Park 1.

Connector Park 1 is perpendicular to the south SWMF and a collector road with commercial developed planned to one side and low density residential to the other (Figure 6). A flower garden near the SWMF provides an area for passive enjoyment in a natural sanctuary of greenery. Naturalized plantings are found throughout the remainder of the site to increase biodiversity, cooling and enjoyment of the space. Plantings and amenity placement will consider the needs of neighbouring landowners as much as possible.

Connector Parks 2 & 3 are perpendicular to the north SWMF and a collector road (Figures 7 & 8). With the proximity and small size of Connector Parks 2 & 3 they are conceptually compatible with one another as they provide connection to the future Community Amenities Site. Adjacent development includes a mix of low and medium-density residential. In addition to a seating node and increased plantings, Connector Park 2 & 3 feature a reflexology path and a xeriscape demonstration garden. A reflexology path provides sensory experiences for users as they make their way through a short meandering path. The xeriscape demonstration garden will use native and drought-tolerant plants that contribute to climate sustainability through reduced watering needs. Supporting mental and physical well-being, these unique





Above: Connector Park 1; Below: Connector Park 2 & 3





Reference imagery is provided to support understanding of the design and should not be considered representative of the amenity to be constructed.

features will be places of education and beauty, while respecting the natural environment, and increasing sustainability.

An asphalt trail runs the length of each connector park with seating nodes to maintain the standard of a seating area every 400 meters along the active transportation network.

Due to the proximity of the SWMF and a collector road, active play features were intentionally not placed in this park, focusing more on connectivity and passive enjoyment. SWMF experiences fluctuating water levels and varied water quality in the summer months and varying ice thickness due to moving water in winter months. These facilities are not safe for any use, including sledding, skating, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and swimming.











Figure 6: Connector Park 1 Landscape Concept Plan



Figure 7: Connector Park 2 Landscape Concept Plan



Figure 8: Connector Park 3 Landscape Concept Plan

APPENDIX A: CITATIONS

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