

Natural Environment



Recommendations

- > Work with existing volunteers, and organizations to create an "Adopt-a-Park" organization for the entire park that can assist with stewardship of the natural environment.
- > Establish Preservation and Restoration zones to protect the most valuable and sensitive natural areas. Reclassify Restoration Zones as Preservation Zone once restoration is completed.

Protect and restore escarpments.

- > Provide granular trails and low impact, transparent fencing along the edge of escarpments to reduce erosion and limit access to the escarpment slope.
- > Evaluate erosion and slumping at the top of escarpments annually, and move fences and trails as needed to preserve public safety.
- > Preserve open views at the top of escarpments by avoiding the planting of tall trees or shrubs, or the addition of any structures.
- > Keep irrigation systems at least 30 metres back from the edge of escarpments.
- > Restrict access to escarpments to designated trails. Close undesigantated trails and discourage the formation new undesigantated trails to the greatest extent possible.
- > Protect the lower escarpment slopes adjacent to off-leash areas with living fences.
- > Use handrails on steep escarpment trails to enhance safety and discourage off-trail use.
- > Avoid the use of stair structures on escarpments unless other methods fail to reduce impacts and erosion.

Protect and restore riparian areas and streambanks.

- > Restore Balsam Poplar forest through active planting.
- > Use restoration barriers on the top of the streambanks where necessary to discourage the use of undesigantated river access points.
- > No off-leash areas will be located in riparian areas except designated dog river access points.
- > Close river access points during fish spawning and incubation periods. Periods of closure will vary each year depending on weather conditions, but river access in the summer will not be affected.
- > Sustain existing native habitats, and expand native habitats where feasible.
- > Manage natural vegetation communities at a variety of stages of maturity. In some cases, active control may be required (e.g. replanting, re-seeding, soil scarification).
- > Perform an annual inventory of weed problems, and remove weeds when they threaten native vegetation or manicured landscapes.
- > Educate adjacent homeowners about the impacts of invasive species, and the value and benefits of native plants.
- > Identify options and opportunities to support Parks "naturalization initiative" by transitioning some parkland towards a more natural state while balancing current use.

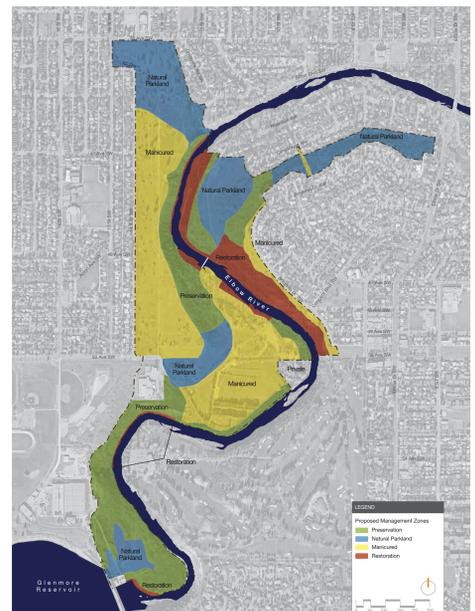
Use best practices and up-to-date research to plan and implement restoration projects.

- > Develop detailed plans for each restoration project including objectives, restoration techniques, materials, timelines, and plant materials.
- > Stay current on habitat management research and update guidelines as needed. Continue to research techniques for Balsam Poplar forest regeneration.
- > Include a public information component for each restoration project to inform, educate and involve the public.
- > Use soft, bioengineering techniques, and native seed of local provenance wherever possible. Encourage seed collection by local volunteers through the Adopt-a-Park program.
- > Where practical, plan restoration projects in concert with other capital improvements.

Key Features

- > Preservation Zones – areas where sensitive natural areas are intact, but require ongoing protection
 - > Restoration Zones – areas where active restoration (planting, seeding, etc.) is recommended
 - > Natural Parkland Zones – areas with less sensitive natural habitat or where natural re-vegetation is desirable
- 1 Living Fences - low impact fencing hidden within shrubs to delineate off-leash areas
 - 2 Designated River Access Points – provides access to the river in a more sustainable way
 - 3 Restoration Barriers – restricts access to streambanks under restoration
 - 4 Escarpment fence – restricts access to escarpments

See other display boards for additional recommendations related to Natural Environment.



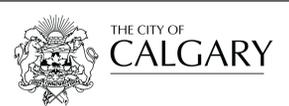
Rationale

Public input provided strong direction for the protection and restoration of the natural environment. Many suggested this goal be achieved through better education and enforcement, rather than barriers. The recommendations in the Draft Plan minimize, but do not exclude the use of fencing and barriers. Restricted access is required in key locations to support restoration and protection of sensitive areas such as escarpments and riparian areas. The plan proposes to integrate living fences (low impact fencing hidden within shrubs) in natural parkland and manicured zones into the landscape design. Restoration barriers are envisioned to be used during restoration, and could be removed if current patterns of use can be altered. Restoration of natural areas represents a significant investment of public dollars, and Parks should use some limited fencing and barriers to adequately protect that investment.



DRAFT

Proposed Design Development Plan
Sandy Beach | River Park | Britannia Slopes
Combined Park Management + Design Development Plan



O2 PLANNING + DESIGN