



Parks & Urban Forestry 10-year Capital Infrastructure Needs Assessment

March 2026

1. Service Overview

This Capital Infrastructure Needs Assessment includes the following services: parks & open spaces, urban forestry and city cemeteries.

Parks & Open Spaces

Calgary's parks and open spaces are cherished places that connect Calgarians with nature, our heritage and each other. The citywide parks system provides Calgarians with safe, inclusive, active living opportunities. The system includes regional and local parks, natural areas and river valleys. The City maintains and stewards 9,373 hectares of public spaces (2024 data: the equivalent of 11,497 Canadian football fields). Parks and Open Spaces conserves and promotes biodiverse ecosystems and cultural landscapes. We provide affordable and accessible opportunities to play golf at Calgary's seven municipal courses and three driving ranges.

Urban Forestry

Urban forestry manages public trees and promotes tree stewardship to Calgarians. Trees increase climate resilience by improving air quality, reducing storm water runoff and providing shade, cooling and wildlife habitat. Trees increase property values and create attractive, stress-reducing environments. The City plants public trees to replace those lost from construction and natural decline and grows the urban canopy to benefit future generations. The City also receives public trees from the development industry. Urban forestry waters newly planted trees to help them establish, assesses tree-related risks to public safety, prunes trees to increase their lifespans and reviews development projects to protect trees.

City Cemeteries

The City has two active operating cemeteries that offer a wide range of burial and memorial products and services: Prairie Sky Cemetery and Queen's Park. A new regional park and cemetery are being planned to serve the northern part of the City to meet the needs of Calgary's growing population. The City also manages four historic cemeteries (Union, Burnsland, Chinese and St. Mary's).

2. Strategic Alignment

The proposed capital investments included in this needs assessment are directly influenced by several Council-approved and corporate strategies that guide infrastructure planning, service delivery and sustainability across Calgary.

- **Municipal Development Plan**

Calgary's Municipal Development Plan (MDP) is our vision for how Calgary grows and develops over the next 60 years. The *Connect Plan* is a city-wide strategy that supports implementation of the MDP. In addition, the MDP has identified tree canopy as a core indicator, with a target of 16 per cent canopy coverage by 2060.

- **Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan (2025)**

The Council-approved [Connect Plan](#) has been developed to carry out the park system vision and respond to the significant growth and demographic changes that have occurred in Calgary over the past two decades. This plan is critical to ensuring that the planning, design and management of the park system will continue to respond to the diverse needs of Calgarians by serving their social, recreational and environmental needs in a manner that ensures those spaces are resilient, accessible and inclusive.

Connect replaces the Open Space Plan (2002) and aligns with provincial Land Use Policies, Municipal Government Act, Historic Resources Act and the South Saskatchewan Regional Plan. *Connect* also aligns with many other citywide strategies and plans, including the Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050, Source Water Protection Plan, Riparian Action Program and the Cultural Landscape Strategic Plan. The plan also aligns with important policies such as The City's Environmental Policy and Pest Management Policy.

- **Imagine Parks (2015)**

[Imagine Parks](#) is a 30-year vision that sets the overall strategic direction for the development and management of public parks and open space in Calgary. Its nine key themes aim to measure the quality of the parks and open spaces in Calgary.

3. Service Risks

- **Aging infrastructure:** Many park assets are aging and new spaces are added every year, increasing maintenance needs. Currently, funding for these assets covers only about 35 per cent of what is needed to maintain them over their lifecycle. This shortfall increases the risk of infrastructure failing over time. When assets deteriorate, they may need to be removed or fenced off for safety, which can reduce service levels, affect community enjoyment and impact The City's ability to meet policy goals.
- **Calgarians' changing needs:** Demand for amenities like pickleball courts and bike pump tracks continues to grow, requiring investment for development and upkeep. The City's golf courses have surged in usage and popularity in recent years. Clubhouse upgrades are needed to meet customer needs.
- **Accommodating growth:** With a population increase of 6.2 per cent in 2024, demand for services and amenities is rising and we strive to meet these evolving needs, including providing emerging sports infrastructure, golf and year-round activities. As Calgary grows, there is an increasing need for a new cemetery in the city's north which will require capital funding. However, while capital investments help to build parks, matching operating and maintenance funding is needed to keep them safe, clean and open. Operating funding historically has not kept up with growth, which has led to decreased service levels that do not meet Calgarians' expectations or asset requirements.
- **Climate mitigation and adaptation:** Natural assets such as trees, turf, planting beds and natural areas must be maintained to mitigate climate risks. As more frequent and severe weather-related events arise and invasive pests and diseases or natural disasters occur, there is a high potential for increased damage to our natural assets. Decline in the condition of natural assets threatens citywide biodiversity.

and Calgary's ecological network, impacts individual parks' capacity to provide Calgarians with critical ecosystem services and substantially increases required capital rehabilitation costs.

- **Tree canopy targets:** Achieving canopy growth depends on planting new trees, preserving existing ones and maintaining healthy trees so they reach full maturity. Without continued investment, Calgary faces a risk of not meeting its long-term urban tree canopy target of 16 per cent by 2060. Falling short of the canopy target impacts the City's climate strategy and reduces the benefits of a robust urban forest, including cooling during heat events, improved stormwater management, enhanced biodiversity and overall community wellbeing.
- **Legal and regulatory compliance:** Without investment, the City risks non-compliance with regulatory requirements. Examples include Canadian Standards Association (CSA) standards for playgrounds and provincial water legislation.

4. Service Objectives

Parks & Open Spaces

The *Imagine Parks* targets are as follows and are also listed in *Connect*:

- **Reducing Barriers to Access:** Maintain/increase the per cent of households within a 400m walking distance of a multifunctional park or open space. 2024 actual: 64 per cent; 2035 target: 69 per cent.
- **Connection:** Increase the per cent of Calgarians that have connected with parks and open spaces to 90 per cent by 2030. 2024 actual: 93 per cent of Calgarians have spent 20 minutes or more in parks during months without snow.
- **Experiences:** Increase per cent of regional parks that have a Customer Level of Service (CLOS) rating of at least 2.0 (Good) and a rating of at least 3.0 (Fair) for local parks. 2024 actuals: 61 per cent for regional parks, 94 per cent for local parks. 2035 target: 100 per cent for regional parks, 95 per cent for local parks.

Connect also lists the following Inclusivity and Accessibility metrics:

- Ensure there are regional parks within a 5km radius from all Calgarians' homes.
- Provide 2 hectares of parkland for every 1000 Calgarians in local communities and 1 hectare in the downtown.
- Increase the number of inclusive playgrounds from 21 in 2024 to 35 by 2035.
- Increase the number of hectares of Park Habitat Restoration from 447 hectares in 2024 to 1000 hectares by 2035.
- Increase the number of natural areas with Habitat Management Plans to 65 by 2035.

Urban Forestry

The City has set a target of 16 per cent urban tree canopy coverage by 2060 in the MDP. Significant tree canopy coverage increases 10-20 years after planting dates. A combination of public and private commitment is required to access enough planting space, soil and water to achieve

objectives, The Calgary Climate Strategy – Pathways to 2050, accelerated the 16 per cent 2060 MDP target to 2050. Urban forestry has the following objectives:

- Achieve 10 per cent urban tree canopy coverage by 2030. 2024 actual: 9.62 per cent.
- Achieve 16 per cent urban tree canopy coverage by 2050.
- Number of trees planted on public land is 1.3 million by 2035 (10-year target). 2023-2025 actual: 343k trees. Current annual installations are 4,000-9,000 large caliper trees and 100,000-180,000 smaller trees.
- Engage with policy, private programming and education campaigns to increase tree canopy on private lands. Approximately 70 per cent of land is privately held within the municipal boundary.

City Cemeteries

City cemeteries has several Service Performance Measures to monitor and report on levels of service as well as the main provision of service:

- Total interments per year. 2024 actual: 1579 interments.
- Cemetery Interment Revenue. 2024 actual: \$1.4M.
- Meet Calgarian’s needs and expectations for cemetery services by designing and constructing a customer interfacing administration building at Prairie Sky Cemetery. Will be completed in 2026.

Asset Objectives

Parks & open spaces is currently working on defining technical levels of service and is focused on maintaining service levels for assets. Parks & open spaces measures the asset condition of natural and hard assets using “Parks Assets in Poor and Very Poor Condition (per cent)”. This performance measure captures the percentage of our municipal park infrastructure in need of repairs or replacement.

- **Hard Assets:** Target: less than 20 per cent of these assets in poor or very poor condition, or 80 per cent in fair to excellent condition. 2024 actual: 19 per cent of assets were in poor or very poor condition. 2026 expected: 22 per cent, with the current investment level.
- **Natural Assets:** Target: increase or maintain the number of natural areas that have a Good or Excellent Habitat Condition Rating (HCR). 2024 actual: 68 Good or Excellent HCR. Currently, only one-third of Calgary’s natural area parks of regional significance are meeting habitat condition targets.
- **Public Trees:** Target: all public trees to be in Fair to Excellent condition. 2025 actual: 92 per cent.

5. Previously Approved and Capital Infrastructure Needs

Table 1: Previously Approved and Capital Infrastructure Needs (\$ millions)

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031-2035	Total
Previously approved	32	44	56	51	30	37	55	40	60	10	-	-	415
Capital Infrastructure Needs	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	160	181	156	195	825	1,517

A listing of previously approved investments has been provided in **Appendix A** for 2026+. A listing of capital infrastructure needs for 2027-2035 has been provided as **Appendix B**. Note that programs have been broken down into projects where possible.

Figure 1: Summary of Capital Infrastructure Needs by Investment Driver

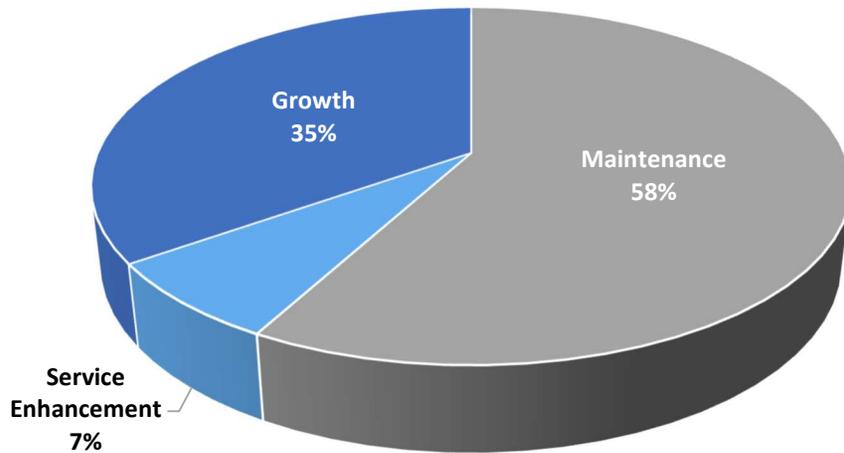


Table 2: Summary of Operating Cost of Capital for Capital Infrastructure Needs by Year (\$ millions)

	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031-2035	Total
Total	1	2	2	3	30	38

Appendix A: Previously Approved Capital

The values presented reflect planned investments in the last year of the approved 4-year business cycle, as well as pre-approved budget for the 2027-2030 business cycle. These values have been rounded to the nearest million for presentation purposes.

Legend (% of capital \$ per opportunity item)

1% ~ 10%	
11% ~ 25%	
25% +	

Appendix A: Previously Approved Capital (\$ Millions)	Total										
	2026-2035+	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035+
Cemetery Development	5										
Cemetery Lifecycle	2										
Land Acquisition Joint Use Coordinating Committee	26										
Park Delivery 1 - Development of New Regional Parks	39										
Park Infrastructure Lifecycle	14										
Park Lifecycle	5										
Park Delivery 2 - Upgrade Existing Regional Parks	70										
Urban Forestry Lifecycle	2										
Urban Forestry Upgrades	2										
Total Previously Approved Capital - Parks & Urban Forestry	164										

Appendix B: Capital Infrastructure Needs

The values presented reflect identified capital needs and have been rounded to the nearest million for presentation purposes. These capital needs have not received approved budget and will be considered for future business cycles.

Legend (% of capital \$ per opportunity item)

1% ~ 10%	
11% ~ 25%	
25% +	

Appendix B: Capital Infrastructure Needs (\$ Millions)

Priority (H / M / L) **Total** 2027-2035+ 2027 2028 2029 2030 2031 2032 2033 2034 2035+

Maintenance - Primary Driver

	Priority	Total	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035+
Golf Course Lifecycle Program	H	15									
Habitat Restoration	H	102									
Park Infrastructure Lifecycle	H	456									
Urban Forestry - Lifecycle	H	88									
Confederation Park Golf Course Clubhouse Upgrade	M	4									
Cultural Landscape Conservation	M	5									
Park Delivery 2 - Upgrade Existing Regional Parks	M	196									
12-Mile Coulee		0									
Baker Park		1									
Big Marlborough		10									
Bottomlands Park		1									
Bowness Lagoon		5									
Carburn Park		1									
Chinese Market Gardens		4									
Clearwater Park		10									
Confederation Park		1									
Corridor Park Improvements		3									
Cowboys Park		30									
Edworthy Park		20									
Homestead Trail Improvements		1									
Inland Athletic Park		1									
McHugh Bluff		1									
N. Glenmore Reservoir Park		26									
Pearce Estate Boathouse		5									
Pearce Estate Destination Playground		2									
Pearce Estate Parking Lot		1									
Pearce Estate Washrooms		3									
Poppy Plaza		1									
Richmond Green		24									
Sandy Beach Washrooms		3									

<i>Shouldice Park Washrooms</i>		3				
<i>Sien Lok Park</i>		15				
<i>Stanley Regional Park</i>		12				
<i>Sue Higgins Park</i>		1				
<i>Tomkins Park</i>		15				
Parks Project Development Program	M	9				
Parks Technology Annual Investment Plan	M	5				
Service Enhancement - Primary Driver						
Parks and Playgrounds Amenities (PAPA)	H	100				
<i>Elliston Park Washrooms</i>		4				
<i>Kingsland Park</i>		3				
<i>New Inclusive Playgrounds</i>		6				
<i>R.B. Bennet School Redevelopment</i>		2				
<i>Rouleaville Square</i>		4				
<i>Other Components</i>		82				
Park Site Event Upgrades	L	10				
Growth - Primary Driver						
Cemetery Development	M	43				
Park Delivery 1 - Development of New Regional Parks	M	295				
<i>Bearspaw Reservoir Park</i>		4				
<i>Haskayne Regional Pk(wayfinding + improvements)</i>		30				
<i>Medicine Hill Interpretive Centre</i>		8				
<i>Medicine Hill Reg'l Park</i>		30				
<i>MOBS Site</i>		40				
<i>North Central Regional Park</i>		31				
<i>Nose Creek Regional Park</i>		40				
<i>Open Space Acquisition</i>		68				
<i>Priddis Slough</i>		25				
<i>Seton Regional</i>		20				
Urban Forestry - MDP Target	M	99				
Cemeteries Land Fund	L	30				
North Cemetery	L	60				
Total Capital Infrastructure Needs - Parks & Urban Forestry		1,517				