

Report to Council



Date: February 24, 2025
To: Council
From: City Manager
Subject: Parks in Review - 2024
Department: Parks Planning & Design

Recommendation:

THAT Council receives, for information, the Parks in Review – 2024 Report from the Parks Planning & Design Department dated February 24, 2025.

Purpose:

To update Council on key park acquisitions and park development through 2024.

Council Priority Alignment:

Climate & Environment

Background:

In 2024, several key parks were acquired and developed, with more planned for 2025. These projects aimed to enhance recreational spaces and community benefits. Notable acquisitions included Truswell Park, Richmond Park, and Kirschner Mountain Park, each offering unique cultural, historic, environmental, and recreational benefits. Additionally, new neighbourhood parks such as Fawn Run, Acadia, and Cara Glen were completed through partnerships with the development community, providing various amenities for all ages. Improvements were also made to Tallgrass Neighbourhood Park, Knox Mountain First Lookout, Burne Avenue Park, and Dehart Community Park. Future developments for 2025 include the opening of Dehart Park and Summit Park. Additionally, in 2025, we look forward to the start of construction for Phase 5 of Glenmore Recreation Park, two artificial turf fields in Rutland Recreation Park, Plaza and Youth Park in Mission Recreation Park. City Park Promenade Phase 3 with improvements around the Sails through Kerry Park will start in 2025. Further, the North End Monument and Kelowna Signature Sign projects will continue through design and into construction in 2025.

Discussion:

Park investment in 2024 saw \$18 million in park infrastructure and \$26 million for park land for a total of \$44 million. The budget in 2025 includes investing up to \$21 million for park land and \$29 million in park infrastructure.

Key acquisitions included:

Truswell Park

Located on the north shore of the lake's largest tributary, the acquisition of 3896 Truswell Road represented a rare opportunity for the City to steward and enjoy one of the most iconic and unique waterfront parcels on Okanagan Lake. The acquisition represented an opportunity to offer unmatched cultural and historic benefits with boundless environmental and recreational returns to benefit future generations of residents and visitors alike.

As supported by the *2040 Official Community Plan*, this key property situated at the mouth of Mission Creek was identified for the purpose of improving foreshore access along Okanagan Lake by providing an additional 2+ acres of sandy beachfront land known as "Secret Beach". The acquired property also can provide meaningful public waterfront recreational opportunities and ensure a continuous, publicly accessible, linear trail connection with the Mission Creek Greenway to Rotary Beach Park and the Downtown beyond.

Richmond Park

Centrally located in the neighbourhood of Bankhead, the property acquisition of 1611 Richmond Street increases recreational space within the existing boundaries of Richmond Park and provides numerous other community benefits, including: a greater range of inclusive spaces for all ages; additional space for community events which helps strengthen the local sense of community; increased environmental benefits through plant materials improving air quality and supporting biodiversity; expanded open spaces to reduce stress and enhance mental clarity; as well as increased natural surveillance from Richmond Street.

Kirschner Mountain Park

This project is currently underway under a public and private partnership with Kirschner Mountain Developments who worked collaboratively with CoK staff to provide interim park improvements at a future neighborhood park during final stages of subdivision. Interim improvements included large trees for canopy cover with temporary drip irrigation, park fencing, trail baffles, topsoil, hydroseed and the construction of a 3m wide pathway for connectivity. Interim park improvements are now completed along with a schematic concept plan which will be included in future capital planning work.

Park development in 2024 is outlined below.

Tallgrass Neighbourhood Park

Tallgrass Park, located in the Tower Ranch neighbourhood, offers recreational features designed for all ages. The park includes an embankment slide, a swing set, and gravel pathway connections. Thoughtfully designed landscaping, site furnishings and a solar irrigation system enhance the park's overall appeal. In addition to these amenities, a community grant contributed to the introduction of the park's first "playbox," a special trunk filled with toys that visitors can use while enjoying their time at the park.

Fawn Run Neighbourhood Park

Fawn Run Neighbourhood Park is a partnership project with Mair Developments, Fawn Run Park provides a neighbourhood park in the Ponds community of the Upper Mission. The park includes a play structure, pathways, benches, picnic tables, trees, planting and open space for play and relaxation.

Acadia Neighbourhood Park

Acadia Neighbourhood Park is a partnership project with Whitfield Hall Developments, Acadia Park provides a neighbourhood park in the University Heights Neighbourhood. The park includes a play structure, pathways, benches, picnic tables, trees, planting and open space for play and relaxation, as well as preserved ponderosa pine and Interior Douglas-fir trees and bunchgrass ecosystem.

Cara Glen Neighbourhood Park

Cara Glen Neighbourhood Park is a partnership project with Rutherford Crestview Developments, Cara Glen Park provides a neighbourhood park in the Clifton / Caramillo Community Neighbourhood. The park includes an outdoor games area, table tennis, pathways, seating, picnic tables, trees, planting and open space for play and community connection.

Knox Mountain First Lookout

The project's objective was to improve the experience for visitors enjoying the First Lookout. The First Lookout has been identified in the Knox Mountain Management Plan as an area to improve park amenities for users to facilitate better flow of traffic and parking configuration, provide amenities for users such as seating, and elements to facilitate better accessibility for mobility challenged individuals. The project includes a pedestrian travel path, improved fencing, a stage for small events, native planting, a railing to help mobility challenged individuals down to the Pavillion, and bike racks, including a bike rail along the fence. Within weeks of completion, the site was booked for events such as weddings.

Burne Avenue Park

Construction was undertaken in 2024 at Burne Avenue Park for full channel restoration and flood protection measures. Work will continue in 2025 to complete the park elements including a playground, trail, benches, picnic tables and greenspace. We look forward to imagery by our host nations representatives for stencil and representative imagery to be included in the hardscape and natural wood play structure. Additional work is underway for shared street work to explore opportunities and use of road frontage right of way for canopy cover, street trees and park amenities.

Dehart Community Park

Construction is underway for DeHart Community Park. The park includes a host of amenities, including an adventure playground, four pickleball courts, a basketball court, skateboard spot, fitness node, parkour area, water play area, plaza, community garden, dog run, and walking loop. It preserves existing mature pine, fir and cottonwood trees, as well as includes a meadow area.

The park is expected to be ready for opening in the late spring of 2025, with construction of the pump track and the washroom to start subsequently, in 2025.

Glenmore Recreation Park - Sports Lighting & ALR Buffer Trial

At Glenmore Recreation Park saw the installation of Sports Field Lighting at the existing two fields, and the installation of trial planting along the ALR Buffer around the dog park. The trial uses a combination of groundwater interruption and overhead sprinklers for irrigation. The results were very successful, with growth up upwards to 45 cm on the trees in a single season. We'll check to see how these trees make it

through the winter but are optimistic that this approach will be successful and if so, will continue it along the ALR through the rest of the park.

Mission Recreation Park – Sports Fields & Lighting

Mission Recreation Park saw the installation of sports field lighting at the new ball fields. The addition of lighting greatly increases the hours of use for these amenities.

Parks 2025

Looking forward to more park development in Kelowna for 2025. Glenmore Recreation Park will see the construction of a full soccer field, tennis and pickleball courts, a skate spot, and other amenities, with construction starting in Q1 or Q2. Rutland Recreation Park will have two lit artificial turf fields, additional pathways, parking upgrades, and reorientation of the dog park and community garden area, with construction beginning in Q2 2025 and completion in Q1 2027. Mission Recreation Park will feature a central plaza, youth park, and playground. Summit Park will be reconfigured for a reservoir expansion, including a new playground and an amenity area. Additionally, the North End Monument and Kelowna Signature Sign projects are in various stages of design and construction. Details are below.

Glenmore Recreation Park

For Glenmore Recreation Park, this year we will be tendering construction for Phase 5, including one full soccer field with lights, 3 tennis courts, 9 pickleball courts, 1 skate spot, 1 flume and misting spot, a picnic area, modifications to the storm water pond, irrigation, pathways, a fitness area, riparian area planting and a modular washroom. These will be tendered in Q1 with construction starting late in Q1 or Q2 of this year.

Summit Park

Summit Park is being re-designed to accommodate the upcoming expansion of Summit Reservoir. The park is being reconfigured and updated in conjunction with and in response to the reservoir expansion. The playground will be replaced, and a new amenity area will be available on the top of the reservoir. This will feature in place bistro tables and seats, table tennis and places for outdoor games such as large tic tac toe and hopscotch. The space will afford beautiful views of the lake.

Rutland Recreation Park

Adding value to our recreational park system, in 2024 the budget was amended to add an additional ATF field to the project scope to allow for additional concentration of use, early and late season play and lighting for field use later in evenings. Work will include full construction of two lit artificial turf fields, additional pathways for accessibility and circulation, upgrades and additional parking on the north end of site, plaza space and reorientation of dog park and community garden area. Schematic design is completed with budget validation underway and construction expected to begin in Q2 2025 with completion in Q1 2027.

Mission Recreation Park

Design is underway for the Plaza and Youth Park Project at the Mission Recreation Park. The project is the 'heart of the park' featuring both the Central Plaza and the Entry Plaza at the Transit Station. It includes the pathway network that will tie the park together, and it also includes a youth park and playground that will complement the recreation amenities present in the park. The project will also include plantings as well as site furniture.

City Park Improvements, Phase 3 Extension

The City of Kelowna is tracking towards a new chapter in its history. One that balances the legacy of steamboats, beaches and settlement with modern and urban flair. The Phase 3 Extension Project is the final occasion for capital improvements along City Park's notable public pathways and plazas that will feature: a 4.25-metre-wide pedestrian pathway and 3.0-metre-wide multi-use path to safely separate pedestrian and active transportation users; continuous and safe viewing and seating opportunities between City Park and Stuart Park; additional plaza lighting and wayfinding improvements; and introduction of a double row of tree plantings which once lined the historic promenade. Improvements to the waterfront along Kerry Park were also inspired by Kelowna's rich water transportation past including: re-faced masonry park entrance with seat walls and signing; new fountain basin for the Sails Sculpture; dedicated interpretive area; and refurbished Ogoopogo Sculpture.

Access into Okanagan Lake was also a big part of the project as new plazas with ramps, handrails, steps and improved lake access appear throughout the site design. The project boldly re-establishes City Park and Kerry Park as the City of Kelowna's civic heart and draws inspiration from nostalgic summers swimming in Lake Okanagan's freshwaters or relaxing on City Park's warm beaches.

North End Monument

The North End Monument, a collaboration with Sylix artists and local designers and fabricators, will be going through detailed design, fabrication and installation through 2025.

The north entry monument is envisaged as a highly visible civic landmark and characteristic welcoming agent to identify one's sense of arrival into the City of Kelowna. Its abstract form is inspired by the overarching vision of "weaving together" and comprised of multiple layers of laser-cut metal elements, or 'bands', that intertwine to form a whole and provide greater prominence when viewed from a distance.

The collaboration between Indigenous and non-Indigenous project jury and design team members in the creation of the entry monument is an outstanding example of an endeavor made stronger, and more meaningful, through the weaving together of different cultural perspectives.

Kelowna Signature Sign

The strategic council initiative for placemaking and cultural identification with the signature sign is currently awaiting expressions of interest from design and fabrication teams. The team selection will be underway in early February 2025 with design and fabrication in late summer / early fall 2025. Site preparation and installation are expected in fall 2025 with final completion in spring 2026.

Conclusion:

In 2024, several key parks were acquired and developed, including Truswell Park, Richmond Park, and Kirschner Mountain Park, each offering unique cultural, historic, environmental, and recreational benefits. New neighborhood parks such as Fawn Run, Acadia, and Cara Glen were also completed through partnerships, providing various amenities for all ages. Improvements were made to Tallgrass Park, Knox Mountain First Lookout, Burne Avenue Park, and Dehart Community Park. Looking forward to 2025, Glenmore Recreation Park will see the construction of a full soccer field, tennis and pickleball courts, and other amenities. Rutland Recreation Park will have two lit artificial turf fields, additional pathways, and parking upgrades. Mission Recreation Park will feature a central plaza, youth park, and playground. Summit Park will be reconfigured for a reservoir expansion, including a new playground and

an amenity area. City Park – Improvements Phase 3 with improvements around the Sails through Kerry Park will start in 2025. Additionally, the North End Monument and Kelowna Signature Sign projects will continue through design and into construction in 2025.

Internal Circulation:

Communications

Finance

Parks Operations

Submitted by:

M. Steppuhn, Parks Planning & Design Manager

Approved for inclusion: D. Edstrom, Partnerships & Investments Divisional Director