

# Service Business Plan



**Service Name** Parks and Open Space Maintenance

**Service Lead Name** Nadia Blackburn

**Service Lead Title** Manager of Parks Operations

## Service Description

A public service to provide a range of maintenance activities to keep parks and open spaces maintained, safe, inclusive and accessible

## Strategic Alignment with Vision to Focus Plan

Supporting sustainable infrastructure and a resilient environment

## Service Goals

Deliver park maintenance services professionally and efficiently in city parks and open spaces.

Ensure parks and open spaces are kept safe for the enjoyment of all users.

Maintain accessible facilities and amenities in parks and open spaces.

Collaborate with internal and external stakeholders to identify community needs and address concerns in a timely fashion.

Strive for innovation and service excellence in parks maintenance activities.

## Current State

Customers & Their Expectations

This service is delivered to:

Residents and non-residents to provide safe and enjoyable parks and open space city-wide.

Existing Service Delivery

Annual city-wide maintenance of parks and open space, including:

- Sportsfield maintenance- natural and artificial turf fields
- Horticultural maintenance- within parks and roadside displays
- Turf maintenance
- Playground Maintenance
- Maintenance of recreational trails, hard surface pathways and parking lots
- Park furnishing, fence and sign maintenance
- Maintenance of irrigation systems, water fountains and splash pads
- Waste collection and debris pick-up
- Washroom and changeroom facilities maintenance

Parks and Open Space Maintenance is performed through a combination of in-house and managed contracted

	services.  Maintenance of roadway medians and boulevards is also provided to Halton Region, consistent with the Regional Maintenance Agreement, Contractor Maintenance Services.
Existing Customer Engagement Tools / Methods	Customer engagement tools include telephone, mail, in-person, email, public information centres (PIC's) and the City's website.
Is this Service Provincially Legislated?	Yes Testing of drinking water is legislated by the Safe Drinking Water Act. Use of all registered pesticides including biologicals is legislated by the Pesticides Act.
For this Service are there Approved Service Standards?	Yes Council-approved level of service, Halton Region's and District School Board standards through reciprocal agreements, along with CSA standards for playground inspections.

## Programs

Parks and Open Space Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grasscutting of parkland, sportsfields, boulevards and hydro right-of-ways</li> <li>• Turf maintenance and cultural practices performed on sportsfields, including soft/hardball diamonds, soccer fields and artificial fields</li> <li>• Debris pick-up, waste and recycling removal from parks</li> <li>• Maintenance of recreational trails</li> <li>• Park washroom and changeroom facility maintenance</li> <li>• Participation in Fall Loose Leaf Collection Program</li> <li>• Participation in Winter Control Operations</li> </ul>
Horticulture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing, ordering, installing and removing of annual, perennial and shrub beds in parks, road medians and hydro right-of-ways</li> <li>• Maintenance of annual, perennial and shrub beds throughout the year</li> <li>• Pruning, elevating and clearing of roadside vegetation</li> <li>• Road closures and associated set-ups for work within the roadway</li> </ul>
Technical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inspection and repair of park assets, including playgrounds, splashpads, drinking fountains, fences, bridges, stairs and other furnishings</li> <li>• Maintaining and repairing irrigation systems in sportsfields and horticultural displays</li> <li>• Maintaining and repairing of washroom, changeroom and other amenities located in parks</li> <li>• Removal of graffiti from parks and roadway assets</li> <li>• Providing technical support to the Community Garden initiative throughout the City</li> </ul>

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Fall and Winter Operations

Parks and Open Space Maintenance staff participate in seasonal operations in conjunction with Roads staff, including:

- Roadside loose leaf collection
- Winter control operations; including road and sidewalk plowing and salting

## Recent Continuous Improvement Initiatives

In 2019, the Enhanced Sportsfield Maintenance program completed its second season. This proactive turf management program resulted in improved turf resilience and playability, allowing the City to provide sportsfields maintained at the industry standard that are available to all residents and sports groups. This demonstrates environmental leadership and stewardship while simultaneously contributing to enhancing the quality of the turf on these fields, leading to safer fields and maximized recreational use of these assets.

Parks and Open Space Maintenance has been evaluating the use of an efficient and cost saving centralized irrigation control system. With this irrigation system, water is applied in an efficient manner, resulting in reductions to water consumption while affording ideal water applications for optimal turf health. The ability to control all systems through an application saves on staff time required to routinely visit each irrigated location and allow for quick response times to issues that arise. By the end of 2019 there will be two locations with this system installed with the aim to continue installation at various city parks.

Working collaboratively with Parks and Open Space Design and Development Services as well as Recreation Services, Parks and Open Space Maintenance provides safe, functional and accessible park spaces suited to the desired recreational activities of the surrounding community. These three groups working together in such a fashion allows for timely communication and information exchange, consistency of service delivery and improved customer service. Using the Yardstick Park Check program, Parks and Open Space Maintenance can monitor trends and opportunities by which customer satisfaction and asset usage can be benchmarked.

Parks and Open Space Maintenance is responsible for the day-to-day operation and maintenance of parks and trails, while Recreation Services is responsible for the informal and formal recreation within parks and trails, as identified by the community for park programming opportunities and infrastructure, and Parks and Open Space Design and Development Services is responsible for the design, construction and renewal of parks and trails. Together, these 3 city service areas are working in a collaborative manner to enhance our customers' parks and trails experience.

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## Environmental Considerations

Improving the irrigation to a centralized system will allow Parks and Open Space Maintenance to save on water costs and avoid costly and wasteful events relating to leaks or major failures. Additionally, this system responds to the weather conditions, allowing for more efficient and environmentally-responsible use of water in real time.

The Enhanced Sportsfield Maintenance program improves turf quality. The environmental benefits of this are water conservation and groundwater and surface water quality preservation. Denser turfgrass provides soil erosion control, dust stabilization and absorption pollutants in the air.

## Emerging Opportunities and Anticipated Risks

Emerging Opportunities	<p>Through provincial funding, winter control and loose leaf collection operations will be subject to a service delivery and expenditure review. This creates an opportunity to find efficiencies in our operation that could lead to improved service delivery in these two areas as well as within Parks and Open Space Maintenance.</p> <p>To improve the safety of staff who work alone, specifically in the evenings, timed locks are being investigated for our washrooms to turn off at a certain time. This technology will increase safety of staff working alone by reducing the likelihood of being in a situation alone in a park in the evenings as well as reduce the requirement for evening staff to drive to multiple locations requiring locking up, allowing for these staff to be available to perform other duties.</p> <p>Quotes are currently being acquired for additional centralized irrigation control systems units at various parks. This will result in a more efficient use of water, staff time and equipment resources. As budget will allow, this system will be installed at additional park locations.</p>
Anticipated Risks	<p>Lack of technology puts Parks and Open Space Maintenance at risk. Without investment in technologies that will support our operation; such as iPads, smart phones, applications; we are at risk of not aligning our operations as effectively as possible with strategic initiatives as well as meeting industry standards.</p> <p>Parks and Open Space Maintenance is at risk of not meeting service levels without consideration for increased staffing and resource levels. Going forward, there must be a focus on how to attract and retain skilled workers who can meet the needs of the residents of Burlington and keep parks safe and functional for all.</p>
Enterprise Risk Considerations	<p>Labour Market &amp; Workforce - Attraction, Retention, Recruitment</p> <p>Climate Change - Increasing Number of Severe Weather Events</p> <p>Technology - IT Systems, Speed of Change</p> <p>Capacity and Volume of Work</p>

Service Initiatives	Target Completion
Continue a review and update of the Parks By-law in partnership with Parks and Open Space Design and Development, Recreation Services, Bylaw Enforcement and Legal staff.	Dec 2020
Begin installing a centralized irrigation control system at various parks that will allow for better water management, improved quality of turf and cost savings by improving staff's ability to respond to urgent issues that arise, as well as improve programming of these systems.	Dec 2020
Continue to work collaboratively with Organized Sport, and Parks and Open Space Design and Development to identify emerging parks and open space trends and opportunities based on Yardstick Park Check program data for amenity importance and customer satisfaction bench marking.	Dec 2020
Continue to review parks waste collection and recycling opportunities, with the goal of expanding recycling collection in parks.	Dec 2020

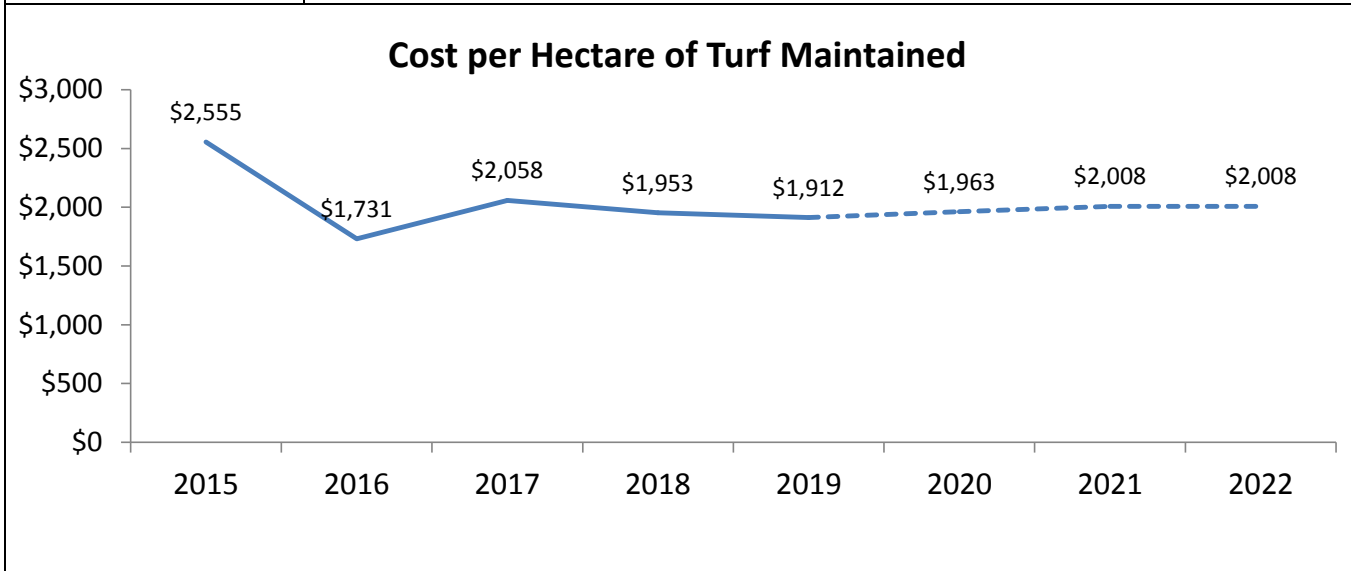
# MEASURING SUCCESS

## How much did we do?

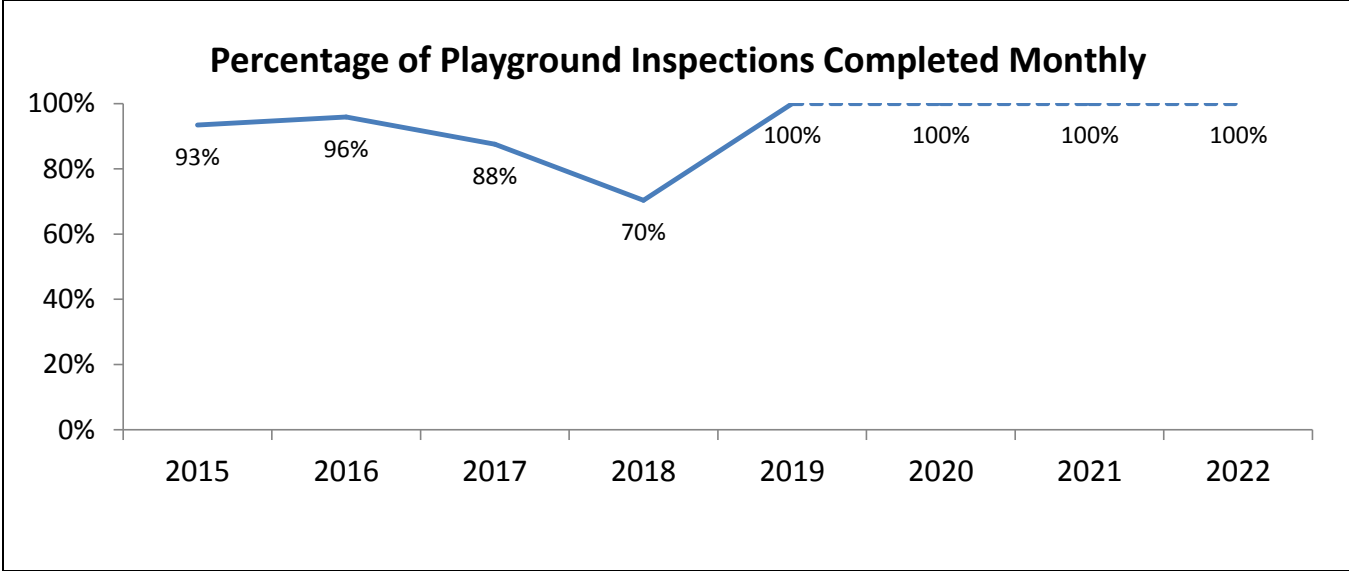
Performance Measurement	2015 Actual	2016 Actual	2017 Actual	2018 Actual	2019 Forecast	2020 Forecast	2021 Forecast	2022 Forecast
# of hectares of turf maintained	432.0	432.0	432.2	433.0	437.2	437.9	438.5	439.5
# of playground inspections completed	1,225	1,266	1,134	971	1,192	1,250	1,300	1,300
# of graffiti complaints resolved	106	89	55	50	40	40	40	40

## How well did we do it?

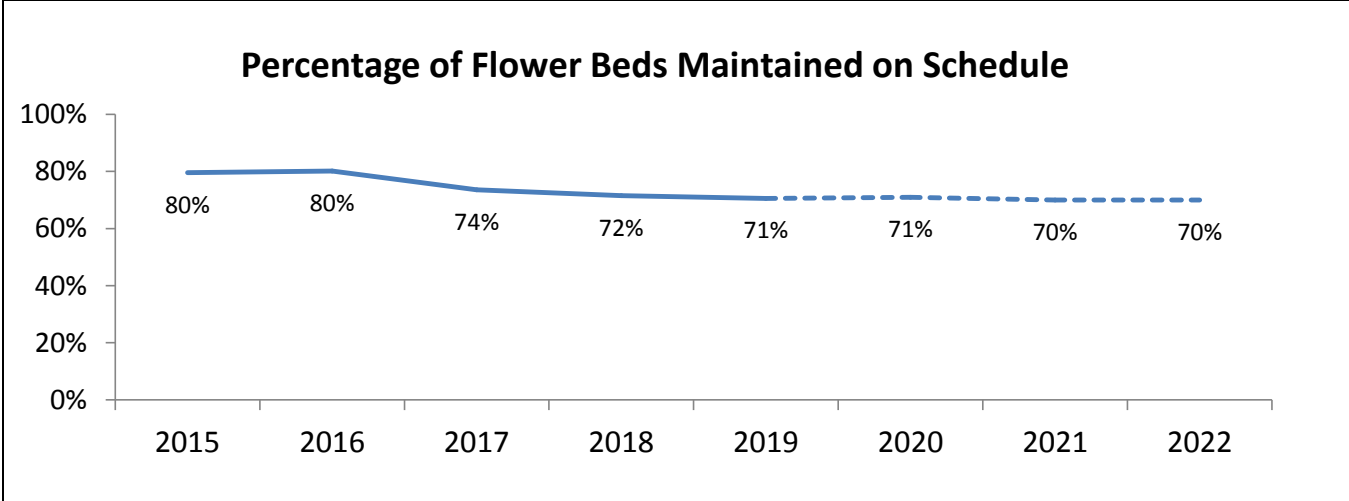
Performance Measurement	Cost per Hectare of Turf Maintained
Story behind the data	Additional turf maintenance requirements have been achieved through operational efficiencies and an increase to contracted services. The current turf maintenance contract will be retendered for 2020's operations, and increased costs beyond the consumer price index are anticipated.



<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Percentage of Playground Inspections Completed Monthly
Story behind the data	CSA recommends as a best practice monthly inspections for children's playspaces and equipment. The decrease in completed 2018 inspections reflects available certified staff to consistently perform the task. To assist with the tracking of inspections, the plan is to convert from hardcopy field notes to electronic records with the introduction of an updated work order/maintenance management system. Although the aim is to achieve 100% completion of inspections in 2019, this will depend on having staff that are certified and available to complete this task monthly.



<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Percentage of Flower Beds Maintained on Schedule
Story behind the data	Levels of service changes were implemented in 2013 to standardize the maintenance of the horticultural displays. Weather impacts Horticulture's operation significantly, and 2018 was another wet season similar to 2017, resulting in significant staff time to address weeds. Many displays are within the road right-of-way and poor weather can postpone the work---set-up of work zones for traffic control when roads are accessible, is mandatory. Increased horticultural assets have added further demands on staff without the corresponding increase to labour resources.



**Is anyone better off?**

<b>Performance Measurement</b>	Year over year increase in recycled materials collected in parks
Story behind the data	Large in-ground waste receptacles (Molok brand) were installed city-wide with an investment of \$400,000, in 2010. Separate units collect parks waste and recyclable materials. The receptacles have been well-received by park users and are practical to service due to the units' large capacity.
Where do we want to go?	Added capital and operating resources would afford the opportunity to expand the park recycling program with additional large, in-ground receptacles, as well as regular-sized units.

