

Executive Summary



City of Abbotsford
Mill Lake Park Master Plan
2025



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Abbotsford is one of the fastest growing communities in BC. The estimated population in 2024 is approximately 172,000 people, and a future population of 250,000 people is estimated by approximately 2050 under a medium growth scenario of 1.45% per year (Draft Official Community Plan).

Mill Lake Park is Abbotsford's premier urban Park located in the City Centre. The Park has been providing sport, play, recreation, and culture amenities for residents and visitors for the past 68 years. Population growth, along with population density envisioned in the Official Community Plan (OCP) is expected to substantially increase the number of visitors and users of the facilities and amenities within the Park.

This Master Plan provides a framework for the Park's ongoing development, management and use within the context of its location, natural assets, and the community's vision. The Plan will provide the direction and prioritization of park projects and programming that can enhance Park use for the next 20 years.

This report includes extracts from the Key Findings Report prepared in Stage 1 of the project including an outline of:

- A draft vision and guiding principles for Mill Lake Park;
- The culture and history of the Park;
- The role of the Park in the green space network;
- An inventory of assets; and
- A review of opportunities and constraints;

Subsequently, key themes and guiding principles were identified to guide the conceptual design work in the Master Plan, including themes of:

- Environment and landscape;
- Amenities;
- Safety and accessibility and
- Culture.

Three proposed concept design options were formulated and shared with the community and stakeholder organizations. Based on community perspectives and insights, a draft preferred concept design option was developed, which included elements

of the three proposed concept design options, with a focus on 7 Big Moves identified for the Park:

1. Create space for community and culture
2. Prioritize broad public use
3. Reallocate parking
4. Enhance amenities
5. Environmental enhancements
6. Upgrade the lake loop
7. Improve park entrances and edges

To ensure the Master Plan was going to serve the community's needs for the Park over the next several decades, consultation was conducted to confirm the key elements for the Park's future. These key elements included:

1. Fenced dog off-leash area
2. Centennial Pool
3. Food services
4. Mixed use lake loop pathway width
5. Lighting in the Park
6. Lake Loop Boardwalk
7. Temporary event space
8. Permanent covered event space
9. Multi-purpose Arts, Culture and Community Building
10. Ball Diamonds

With affirmation that the direction of these key elements proposed in the Master Plan, which includes consideration of the future of some key elements in parallel planning processes, the Mill Lake Master Plan provides direction for the future of the Park as *Mill Lake Park is the "heart" of the City of Abbotsford's parks system connecting our diverse population with nature and each other in a Park where ecological integrity is prioritized, play and exploration are fostered, and where culture is celebrated.* The Master Plan is predominately focused on social and recreational pursuits centered around Mill Lake and the cherished Lake Loop Pathway, including the Boardwalk.