

Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update

Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee Checkpoint (ESACAC) – March 26, 2026



London
CANADA

Project Overview

- The City of London last updated its Parks and Recreation Master Plan in 2019.
- Due to recent provincial policy changes, population growth, and community desires for green space, a **“scoped” Master Plan Update** is needed provide direction for the next 15 years.
- The project also includes a **financial planning strategy** to inform the City’s next Multi-Year Budget and 2028 Development Charges Background Study.





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2019 PRMP Goals

Vision:

In London, all residents – regardless of age, ability, culture, gender, income, or where they live – have the opportunity to participate and share in meaningful and accessible parks, recreation, and sport experiences.



The vision and goals are to remain with this update, with a specific **focus on Supportive Environments**.

Project Timeline

- We are currently in Phase 5 of the project and are working to finalize the PRMP Update
- This Phase includes several engagement opportunities to ensure the final plan reflects the community's interests





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“Let’s talk parks”

Community Engagement so far

2,210

completed
surveys

60

open house
attendees

+ other
engagement
tactics

Outreach Methods



Get Involved
London Webpage



Billboards, Posters &
Postcards



Email Blasts



Social Media

Engagement Tactics



Community Survey



Advisory Committees



Public Open Houses



Public Agencies



Community Connector
Pop-Ups

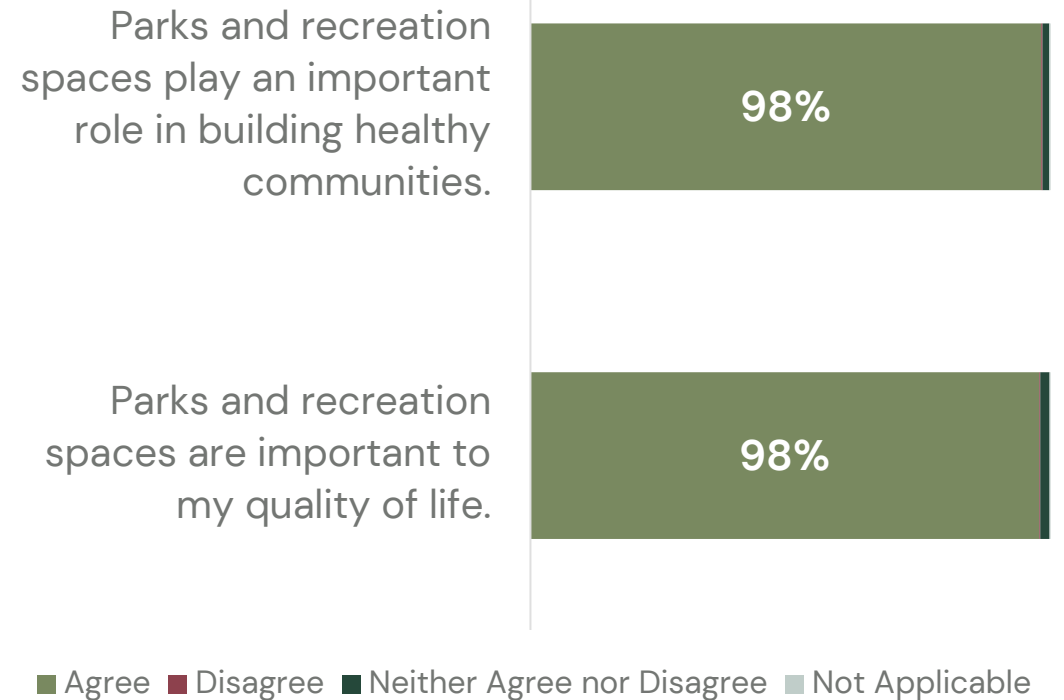


Short Questionnaire

“Let’s talk parks” Highlights

1. Nearly all residents agree that London’s parks, recreation trails, and pathways are **important to their quality of life**.
2. **Perceptions of park safety and inclusion are mixed.** 65% of survey respondents agreed that London’s parks are safe, welcoming and inclusive.
 - Suggested safety/inclusion improvements included increased maintenance, addressing encampments, and increased surveillance/enforcement of by-laws.

Value of Parks & Recreation Spaces

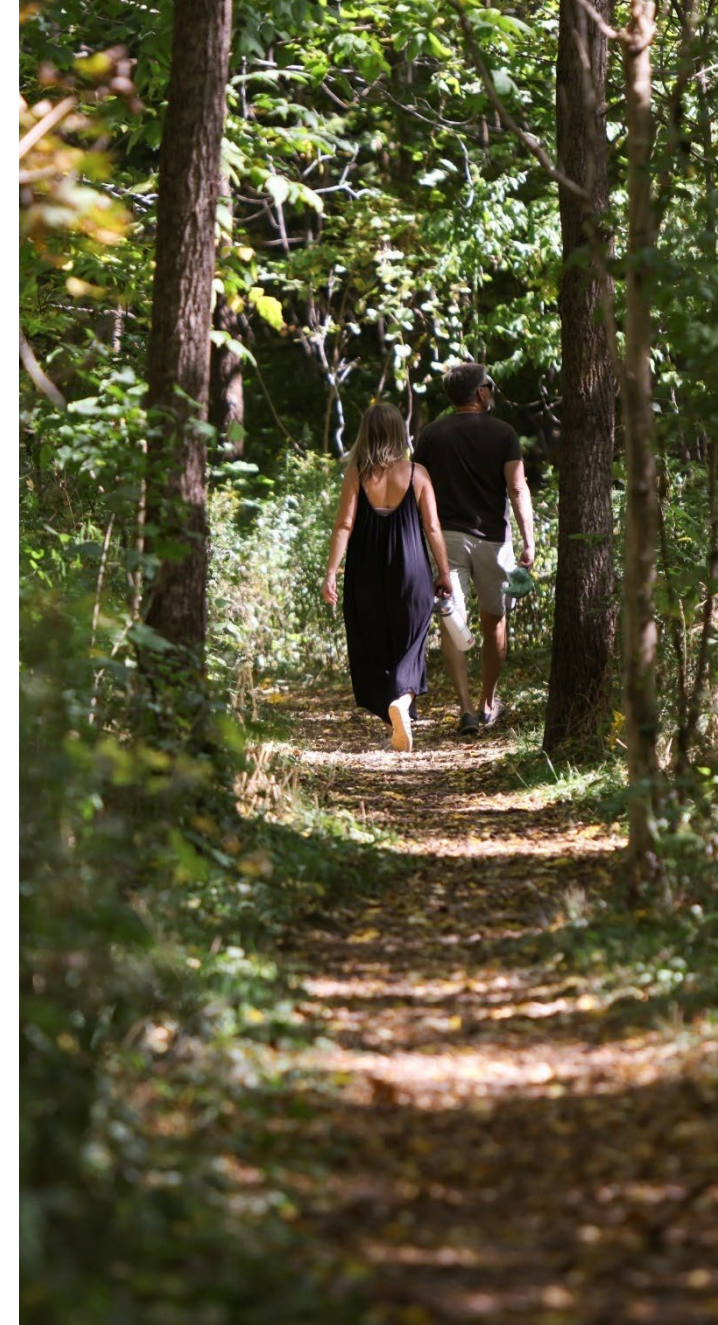


“Let’s talk parks” Highlights

3. **Local or neighbourhood parks** are the most used park type, suggesting residents primarily use parks that are nearby, convenient, and walkable.
4. **Washrooms, drinking fountains, and comfort amenities** had the largest gaps between satisfaction and importance in the survey, indicating they are top priorities for improvement.
5. Residents identified **barriers with accessing washrooms**, such as locked facilities, as well as safety and sanitary concerns. Adding gender neutral and universal washroom facilities to parks was a suggested strategy to improve the inclusivity of these spaces.
6. To support **year-round park use**, users would like to see increased maintenance of paths and access to waste receptacles during the colder months of the year.

“Let’s talk parks” Highlights

7. Improvements are desired to make parks more accessible and inclusive for people of **all ages and abilities**.
 - People are seeking playgrounds with accessible surfaces and structures for people with disabilities, as well as equipment that can entertain young children, teenagers, and adults.
8. Residents expressed support for the **environmental benefits of natural areas and Environmentally Significant Areas** and did not want to see these areas compromised by non-sensitive recreation uses.
9. School Boards and Conservation Authorities lent support for **partnerships that can enhance public access** to parks and green spaces.



“Let’s talk parks”

ESACAC Feedback



22 recommendations under the following themes:

- **Vegetation Management:** Reduce mowing, naturalize, reduce non-native planting, develop woodlot management plans, public education about vegetation management (e.g., tree removals), plant fruit trees in parks.
- **Engagement:** Co-stewardship park programs, Indigenous partnerships, publicize tree canopy goals, review commemorative program costs through an equity lens, incorporate language centering people and connection to nature.
- **Communications & Service Delivery:** Communicate the distinction between ESAs and parks, provide informational signage on the rules of ESAs at entrances, fence off tree planting sites, expand Service London portal to support ESAs/woodlands, create park-specific emailing lists.
- **Planning, Infrastructure, & Amenities:** Washroom access for events, align park improvements with service expansions, clarify provision of parks per resident, clearly designate events spaces in parks, provide secure bicycle storage.

“Let’s talk parks”

ESACAC Feedback

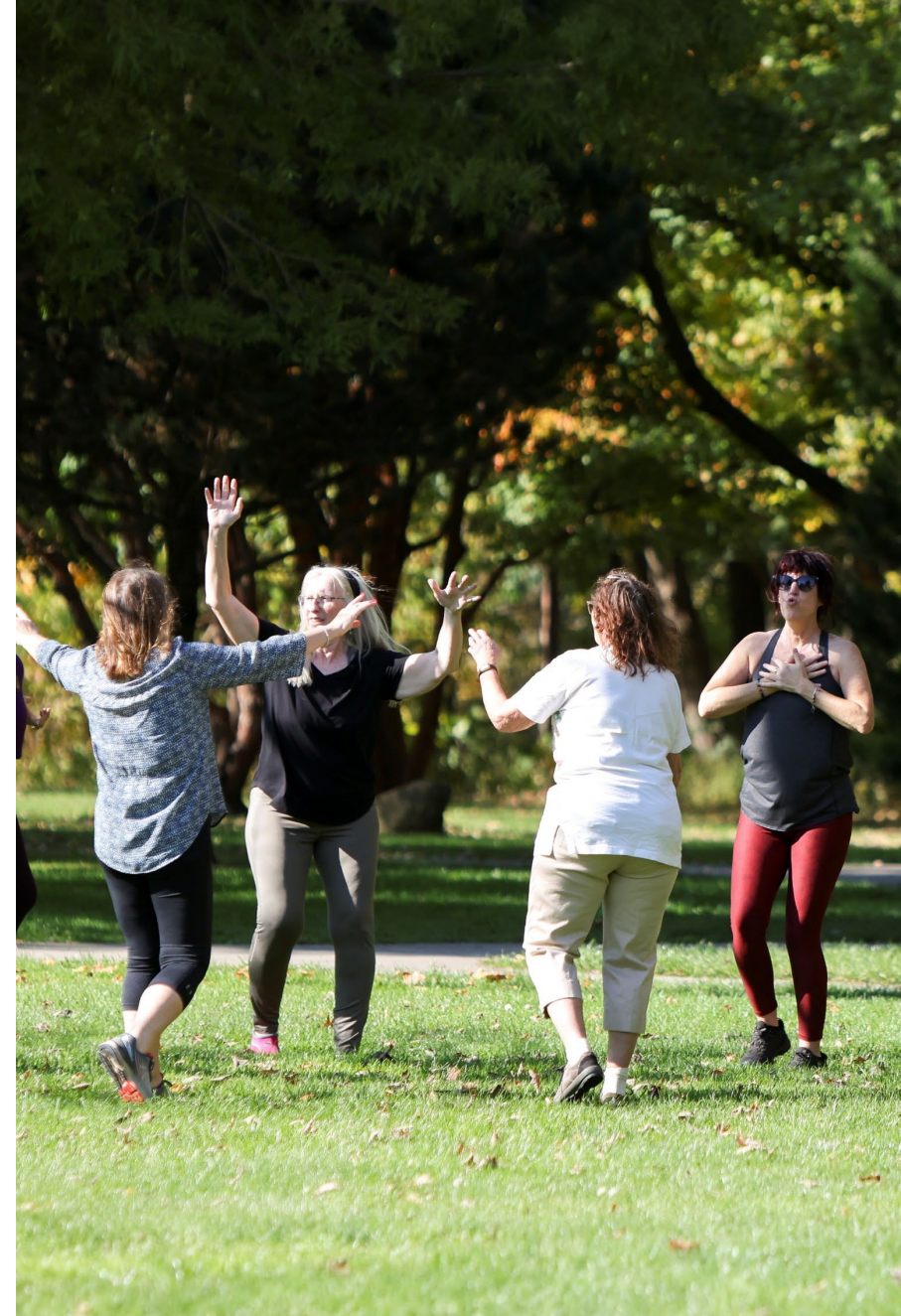


- Of the 22 recommendations, most have been considered in the Master Plan or are already part of the city current policies or processes.
- Some have been shared with other departments for their considerations.
- 3 have been deemed non-feasible, including:
 - Plant fruit trees in parks (high maintenance and harvesting requirements)
 - Leaf litter drop-off stations (already curb pick-up in place, risk of increased dumping)
 - Increase park catchment target to 300m (current achievable target is 800m or a 10-minute walk)

Emerging Directions (Draft)

The Master Plan Update will introduce guidelines relevant to **Goal 4 Supportive Environments**. These are organized around the following themes:

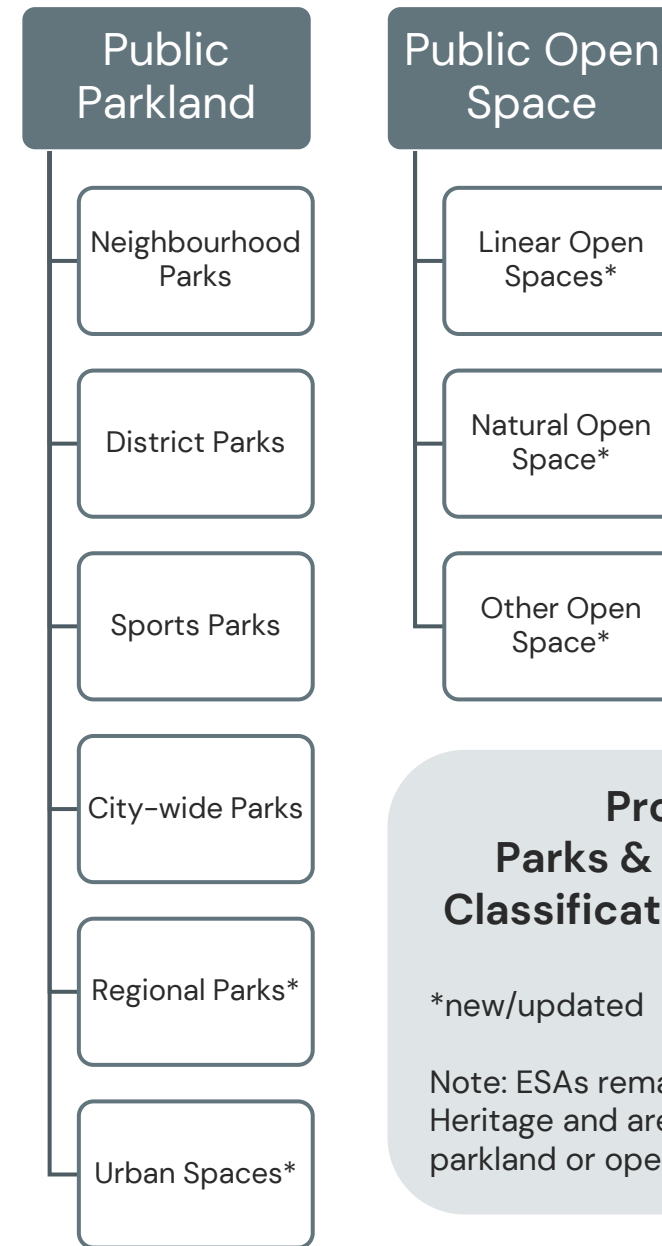
- A. **Modernizing Parkland Policies & Standards**
- B. **Designing Inclusive, Sustainable & Adaptable Parks**
- C. **Focusing on our Parks & Recreation Facility Priorities**
- D. **Leveraging Partnerships & Funding Solutions**



A. Modernizing Parkland Policies & Standards

Possible directions include (subject to change):

1. Updating how the City classifies and manages different types of parks to better reflect their roles in the community.
2. Exploring opportunities to maximize parkland acquisition.
3. Continuing to create connected and integrated parks, open space, and pathway networks.





B. Designing Inclusive, Sustainable & Adaptable Parks

Possible directions include (subject to change):

1. Designing parks to serve diverse users and abilities, prioritizing equity and access for underserved communities.

For example:

- Continue to make parks and facilities more accessible for persons with disabilities through the application of FADS, AODA, and universal design principles.
- Optimize parks through multi-functional designs that are adaptable to changing community needs.
- Enhance safety and comfort through thoughtful design, such as weather protection, shade, seating, lighting, visible sight lines, and amenities for extended use, where feasible.



B. Designing Inclusive, Sustainable & Adaptable Parks

2. Continue pursuing environmental sustainability and climate resilience initiatives in alignment with municipal objectives.

For example:

- Continue to maintain natural heritage features in their natural state.
- Incorporate green infrastructure, native plantings, and environmentally responsible materials, where feasible.
- Design and manage parks to mitigate climate impacts (heat, flooding, storms), support biodiversity, and enhance ecological functions.
- Identify and delineate natural features on City-managed lands to support ongoing planning and management.

B. Designing Inclusive, Sustainable & Adaptable Parks

3. Keep engaging communities in park design and stewardship.

For example:

- Involve residents, including equity-denied communities, in planning and designing parks.
- Support community-led activation, programming, and maintenance initiatives, where feasible.
- Strengthen relationships with Indigenous community members and organizations with the goal of integrating cultural perspectives, knowledge, and expression into park planning, design, and management.

C. Focusing on our Parks & Recreation Facility Priorities

Possible directions include (subject to change):

1. Maintaining service levels in pace with population growth, prioritizing geographic gaps and demonstrated demand.
2. Investing in unprogrammed and community-activated park spaces that support wide use by residents of all ages and backgrounds.
3. Planning proactively for emerging and specialized facilities.
4. Expanding recreation facility capacity strategically across the city.



D. Leveraging Partnerships & Funding Solutions

Possible directions include (subject to change):

1. Collaborating with school boards, public agencies, and the private sector to increase public access to parks, open space, and recreation and sport facilities.
2. Maximizing funding tools to keep pace with park and facility renewal and growth-related needs.



Next Steps

- 1. April 13**
Draft PRMP Update to CPSC
- 2. April/May**
Public Engagement
 - Get Involved website
 - Open houses and more
- 3. July 13**
Final PRMP Update to CPSC

