

Calgary



**Calgary Parks
Lighting Plan
2017**

Calgary Parks Lighting Plan

Plan at a Glance—Key Messages

- Calgary Parks recognizes the inherent beauty that dark spaces can provide, and is piloting a “minimal lighting” plan for parks. We provide lighting only in exceptional circumstances
- Minimal lighting allows us to preserve our environment, as well as be fiscally responsible
- The plan strongly encourages other options to be explored to address any concerns
- Lighting near natural areas is particularly disruptive and should be avoided
- If a group of residents, feels one of their parks has exceptional circumstances, a Calgary Parks staff can do an evaluation
- Evaluations are based on safety, use of park, commuter traffic, and community support



Calgary Parks Lighting Plan

Guiding Principles

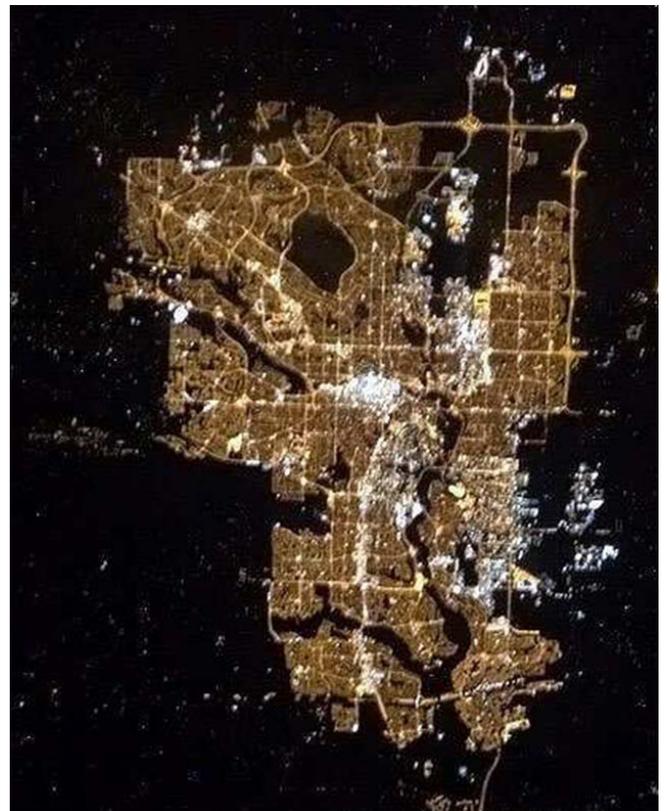
Calgary Parks recognizes the inherent beauty that dark spaces can provide. Calgary Parks will provide lighting only in very exceptional circumstances. A minimal lighting approach allows for environmental protection and fiscal responsibility.

Calgary Parks will not approve lighting:

- When the project is within 50m of a natural or environmentally sensitive area.
- When other options can be used to address concerns
- When the project is solely for aesthetic purposes
- When funding is not available

Goals of the Lighting Plan

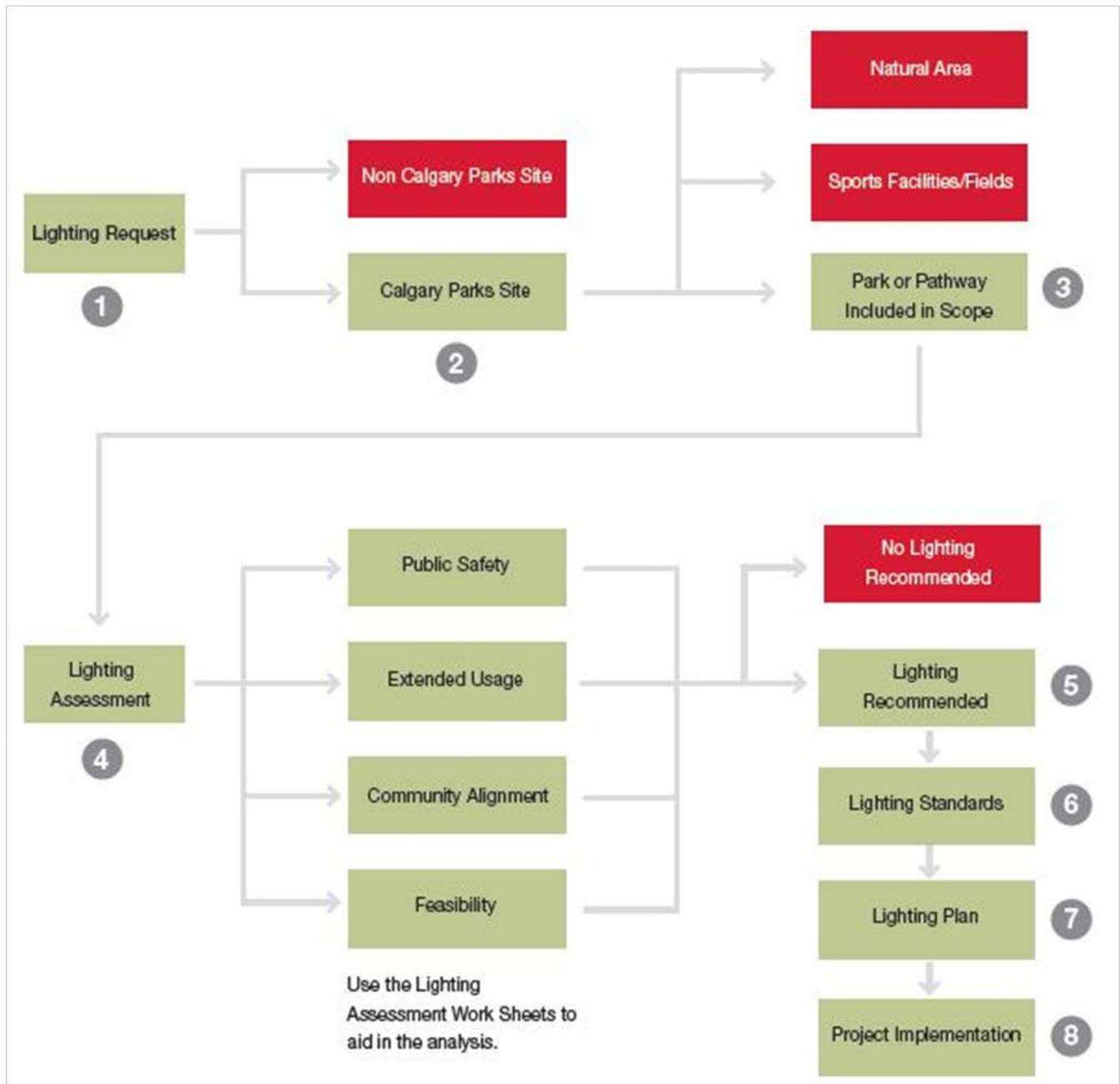
1. To help Calgary Parks make consistent, informed and sustainable decisions regarding the installation and management of parks and pathway lighting
2. To preserve the environment and wildlife connectivity, and inherent beauty that dark spaces can provide
3. To increase the use, enjoyment, safety and sustainability of parks and pathways in Calgary.



Calgary Parks Lighting Plan

Lighting Procedures

All lighting requests should be handled by a Parks Community Strategist and/or Superintendent.



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Lighting Project Assessment

Worksheets have been developed to help a Parks Community Strategist and/or Superintendent to assess a lighting project: in the following areas:

- Public Safety– Crime
- Extended Recreational Use
- Extended Commuter Use
- Public Safety—Collisions
- Community Alignment

At least three of the worksheets should apply for a project to be considered.

The worksheets provide a basis to create a business case for management consideration of a lighting project. If a lighting request is accepted, the worksheets must show that it was the best or only choice within the given set of circumstances. If a lighting request is rejected, the worksheets may be further used as a tool to explain the reasons for the decision and to move forward with alternative solutions.

Information from the worksheets can be used to generate a report back to the requestor of the lighting project, which would outline why the project has been accepted or rejected, as well as any other alternatives to address the concerns.

Worksheets, a template for the lighting evaluation report, and a sample lighting evaluation report, follows.



PUBLIC SAFETY CRIME		
Factor	Existing Concerns	Actions to Take
Incidents of Crime	Both park users and the Calgary Police feel that crime incidents are frequent in the area, and involve the infliction of harm on persons or property.	Talk to local police services to determine the number of reported crime incidents in the area within the previous twelve months and if there is an existing safety concern.
Notes:		
Risk of Crime	Both park users and the Calgary Police feel that crime incidents are relatively high in the park or pathway, compared to similar areas.	Talk to local police services to determine the number of reported crime incidents in the area within the previous twelve months. Compare that figure to the park or pathway usage statistics for the previous twelve months.
Notes:		
Fear of Crime	The affected community scores high on a Fear of Crime survey and action is already being taken to reduce the risk of crime in the neighbourhood.	Coordinate with local police services and complete a Fear of Crime survey with the affected community.
Notes:		
Visibility	There is low visibility around park entrances, parking lots, buildings or regional pathways where public safety concerns relating to crime exist.	Perform a site visit to the area during the day and after dark to determine the level visibility in the area. The optimal range for increasing the level and feeling of safety is 10 metres of clear sight around entrances, parking lots, buildings and regional pathways.
Notes:		
Alternative Options	If negative impacts from lighting parks for recreational purposes are expected to occur, consider other options to lighting. Examples of negative impacts could include the creation of an unrealistic precedent for other parks or promoting unwanted behaviour in the area.	Consult the community and crime prevention experts to determine any negative social impacts of lighting the park that may occur. Consider the larger impact of lighting on the neighbourhood and other parks in the region.
Notes:		



COMMUTER ROUTES		
Factor	Existing Concerns	Actions to Take
Alternate Routes	There are no lit commuter pathways, cycling routes or regional pathways within 3km. Alternatively, the pathway is the only connection between critical destinations, such as a transit stop or a building entrance.	Confirm with Calgary Parks GIS data that there are no lit pathways that are reasonable alternatives within 3km of the pathway.
Notes:		
Intensity of Pathway Use	The pathway is a very busy cycling commuter route from May to August. Evening use in the remaining months is desirable.	Complete a cyclist count between 5pm and 8pm to determine the number of users if intensity of use is unknown.
Notes:		
Visibility	The pathway travels through an underpass or tunnel, reducing visibility during the day as well as after dark.	Perform a site visit to the area during the day and after dark to determine the visibility around the area.
Notes:		
Alternative Options	If there are alternative solutions to lighting or negative impacts of lighting are expected to result, do not light.	Consult with park and pathway maintenance staff to determine if there are other opportunities for increasing awareness of user traffic and physical barriers in the area without lighting. See if there is an alternate pathway or street that may be used safely.
Notes:		



EXTENDED RECREATION USE

Factor	Existing Concerns	Actions to Take
Availability of Park Features	There are no lit parks nearby offering the same amenities.	Survey the region, and adjacent region, for similar parks and confirm there is no lighting in these areas. Confirm with Calgary Parks GIS data that there are no lit parks offering the same amenities within a 10km radius of the park.
Notes:		
Public Amenities	The park or pathway contains a feature or amenity that requires lighting to be safely used. This may include a ramp, tunnel, stairway, washroom, memorial structure or building that must be accessed after dark.	Confirm with Calgary Parks staff and Superintendents that the feature or amenity is intended to be used after dark and must be lit to be used safely.
Notes:		
Intensity of Park Use	The park area is very busy between 6pm and 11pm during the months of May to August. Evening use in the remaining months is desirable.	Complete park user counts between 6pm and 11pm to determine the number of users if the intensity of use is unknown.
Notes:		
Age and Ability of User Groups	The major user group of the park facilities or pathways are senior citizens or people with limited abilities related to vision. (For example, the park or pathway is situated next to a Long Term Care facility.)	Understand the composition of the neighbourhood and the user needs of the park with regards to accessibility. Seniors or persons with disabilities may require more lighting than others.
Notes:		
Alternative Options	If negative impacts from lighting parks for recreational purposes are expected to occur, consider other options to lighting. Examples of negative impacts could include the creation of an unrealistic precedent for other parks or promoting unwanted behaviour in the area.	Consult the community and crime prevention experts to determine any negative social impacts of lighting the park that may occur. Consider the larger impact of lighting on the neighbourhood and other parks in the region.
Notes:		



PUBLIC SAFETY: COLLISIONS

Factor	Existing Concerns	Actions to Take
Number of Collisions	Frequent collisions involving one or more persons walking, cycling, using a mobility device or driving a motorized vehicle have been reported.	Talk to local police services and 311 to determine the number of reported collisions in the area within the previous three months.
Notes:		
Risk of Collision	Collisions are relatively high compared to the frequency of park or pathway use within previous three months.	Talk to local police services and 311 to determine the number of reported collisions in the area within the previous three months. Compare that figure to the park or pathway usage statistics for the previous three months.
Notes:		
Visibility	Calgary Parks staff feel there is low visibility around park entrances, parking lots, buildings or regional pathways where public safety concerns relating to collisions exist.	Perform a site visit to the area during the day and after dark to determine the visibility around the area. Sight lines along pathways, roadways and in parking lots should be clear.
Notes:		
Alternative Options	If there are alternative solutions to lighting or negative impacts of lighting are expected to result, do not light. Consider other options for increasing visibility, including managing vegetation and removing other barriers to sight. If the root cause of collisions is from improper use of the park or trails, consider using signage or educational opportunities to mitigate the risk.	Speak with park and pathway maintenance staff to determine if there are other measures that can be taken to reduce the number of collisions in the area besides lighting. Also speak with the community and crime prevention experts to determine any negative social impacts of lighting the area. See if there is an alternate pathway or street that may be used safely.
Notes:		



COMMUNITY ALIGNMENT

Factor	Existing Concerns	Actions to Take
User Interest	There are a large number of existing or potential users that are requesting lighting in an area. The request is not the concern of only a few individuals.	Community to provide indication that consultation has been completed. Obtain letters of support from the community association, city wide user groups, and the general public/users.
Notes:		
Neighbouring Residents	Neighbouring residents may oppose lighting as they may find it intrusive.	Community to provide evidence that neighbouring residents and community association are in support of the lighting project.
Notes:		
Councillor Support	The Councillor strongly supports the lighting project.	Contact the Councillor's office for an opinion.
Notes:		
Community Association Support	Is the Community Association in support of the project?	Contact the Community Association for a letter of support.
Notes:		
Alternative Options	If negative impacts from lighting parks for recreational purposes are expected to occur with users, neighbouring residents, or the Councillor, consider other options to lighting.	Consider the issues presented by the community and identify potential alternatives to lighting.
Notes:		



CALGARY PARKS - LIGHTING EVALUATION

Park Name and Address:		<p><i>Calgary Parks Position on Lighting</i></p> <p><i>Calgary Parks recognizes the inherent beauty that dark spaces can provide, and has a minimal lighting plan for parks. It is the practice of Calgary Parks to provide lighting only in exceptional circumstances.</i></p> <p><i>Calgary Parks Position on Trees</i></p> <p><i>Calgary Parks strives to increase the urban forest canopy which is critical for the environment and provides significant social and economic benefits. Trees are removed only when at risk for falling.</i></p>
Evaluation completed by:		
Date:		

BACKGROUND	
Description of Park:	
311 Records:	
Police Records:	

ASSESSMENT

Public Safety (Crime)	
Public Safety (Collisions)	
Extended Recreational Use	
Extended Commuter Use	
Community Alignment	

RECOMMENDATIONS

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CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, or guidance on implementation of recommendations, please contact:

Parks Community Liaison

Zone Superintendent



CALGARY PARKS - LIGHTING EVALUATION BUCKMASTER PARK

Park Name and Address: Buckmaster Park
1629 – 21 Ave SW

Evaluation completed by: Deanne Fairbrother
Ron Buchan
David Plouffe
Laura Smith

Date: December 2016

Calgary Parks Position on Lighting
Calgary Parks recognizes the inherent beauty that dark spaces can provide, and has a minimal lighting plan for parks. It is the practice of Calgary Parks to provide lighting only in exceptional circumstances.

Calgary Parks Position on Trees
Calgary Parks strives to increase the urban forest canopy which is critical for the environment and provides significant social and economic benefits. Trees are removed only when at risk for falling.

BACKGROUND

Description of Park: This park is a valued treasure in the community of Bankview, which is deficient in open space. Especially busy in the summer, it is used for events, basketball, community gardens, relaxing on the hillside, or taking in the spectacular view of Calgary's skyline.

Spanning approximately two city blocks, the park is cut in half by 22 Avenue SW. This road has recently been closed in order to provide a more congruent park experience. This area is available for a variety of programming, which has not yet been implemented.

The park is bordered by a diverse housing mix ranging from large single family homes to apartments.

Lighting was identified as a potential improvement through the 'This is My Neighbourhood' project.

311 Records: Records in 2016 revealed 4 calls that reflected concerns about graffiti and safety.

Police Records: Calgary Police Service does not have any crimes or offences documented in this park in 2016.

ASSESSMENT

Public Safety (Crime)	There are very few reported incidents of crime, however a recent CPTED report has indicated that there may be insufficient lighting and obstructed sight lines.
Public Safety (Collisions)	While the park experiences high usage, there have not been any reports of collisions.
Extended Recreational Use	<p>Typical park activities are more appropriate for summer use and there have not been requests to extend use.</p> <p>The natural amphitheatre is available for events that could benefit extended use. In these situations it is recommended use of temporary lighting (eg using a generator).</p>
Extended Commuter Use	The pathway is snow cleared, but only spans a couple of blocks, therefore not attracting typical cyclist commuter traffic. Adjacent streets are likely more appropriate for commuter use. Further, increased commuter use is not recommended as it could potentially create user conflicts.
Community Alignment	<p>The only formal request for lighting has come through the Community Social Worker as part of the 'This is My Neighbourhood' report. There have not been formal requests directly from residents.</p> <p>The Councillor supports activation of the park, but has not mentioned lighting as his preferred mechanism for doing this.</p> <p>It is unknown if the Community Association is in favour of lighting.</p> <p>Residents backing on to the park could be negatively impacted by lighting and would need to be carefully engaged if lighting was to be considered.</p>

RECOMMENDATIONS

As there are no specific incidents or concerns in this park, that illustrate an exceptional circumstance, lighting is not recommended. In fact it is likely that lighting would diminish one of the main features of the park, which is the view of the Calgary skyline.

Instead, it is recommended adopting an overall approach of activating the park that fosters community safety. Specifically the following actions should be investigated and implemented as possible:

Education

- Encourage natural surveillance, especially with the large number of residents surrounding the park
- Provide information around safety when walking through this park (eg walk with others)
- Point out areas to be especially careful, such as the isolated spots with spruce trees
- Encourage walking on the adjacent lit streets at night instead of the pathway

Park Activation

- Encourage the community association and residents to have conduct more events and programs in the park
- Utilize temporary lighting for winter evening programs and events as necessary
- Promote use of the new space recently created by the road closure. This area would be ideal for markets, festivals, and more
- Work with the community garden group who wants to take on a more active role throughout the park
- Encourage participation in the Green Leader program which allows volunteers to get involved in the park, and provide a mechanism for natural surveillance

Physical Features

- Resurfacing the basketball court may encourage more use and activity in the park
- Some shrubs should be trimmed
- While trimming trees to the point of increased visibility would be too detrimental to their health, restricting further tree planting or limiting to trees that provide good visibility (eg elms) is recommended
- Ensure the one existing light in the park is operational, well placed, and effective
- Ensure any graffiti and litter is cleaned up immediately
- Parks Superintendent and Parks Community Strategist will conduct an on-site review to make further recommendations, especially in regards to the maintenance of the park

CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information, or guidance on implementation of recommendations, please contact:

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403-537-7571

Deanne Fairbrother
Zone Superintendent
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