

**Contributing Departments**

|                             |     |
|-----------------------------|-----|
| Public Works                | 94% |
| Planning, Prop. & Devl.     | 5%  |
| Community Services          | 1%  |
| 2007 Budget: \$28.6 million |     |

# Parks and Urban Forestry

**Includes:**

- *Park Grass Maintenance*
- *Park Amenity Maintenance*
- *Athletic Field Maintenance*
- *Park Pathway Maintenance*
- *Park Planning / Development*
- *Tree Planting*
- *Tree Pruning & Removal (non-DED)*
- *Dutch Elm Disease Control (DED)*
- *Weed Control*
- *Natural Areas Management*
- *Playground Management*
- *Winter Amenity Maintenance*

## Service Overview

**DESCRIPTION**

To enhance the quality of life for citizens and visitors by providing services that focus on maintenance, preservation and stewardship of parks, open spaces, the urban forest and natural areas.

This service includes park, boulevard, and open space maintenance, litter collection; athletic field maintenance (aerating, fertilizing, seeding, irrigation, line marking, baseball infields, goal posts, backstops); pathway maintenance; park planning & development (shared with the Planning, Property and Development Department); tree planting, pruning, removal, storm damage clean-up; Dutch Elm Disease control (inspection on private & public property, removal, disposal, public education); weed control (inspection on public & private property, serving of weed notices); natural areas management (replanting of native species, controlled burns, native & invasive species monitoring, education); playground equipment inspection & repair; winter amenity maintenance (knock-down hockey rinks, pleasure skating rinks/ponds, toboggan slides/hills, park pathway snow clearing, cross-country ski trails and speed skating oval maintenance).

**KEY GOALS**

1. Maintain and improve parks, athletic fields, playgrounds and related amenities to meet community leisure needs and interests.
2. Provide natural environment and conservation education.
3. Preserve and enhance natural areas across the City's park and open space system.
4. Protect and enhance the urban forest through effective tree care practices and replacement planting.
5. Invest strategically in new and existing infrastructure.

**SERVICE LEVEL STATISTICS**

| Description                                  | 2004                   | 2005                   | 2006                   | 3 Year Avg             |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Number of park and open space sites          | 937                    | 970                    | 1003                   | 970                    |
| Total hectares of parks and open spaces      | 4,185                  | 4,196                  | 4,210                  | 4,197                  |
| Hectares of park and blvd turf mowing        | 2,373                  | 2,384                  | 2,395                  | 2,384                  |
| Park pathways/walkways maintained            | 704,540 m <sup>2</sup> | 706,540 m <sup>2</sup> | 708,540 m <sup>2</sup> | 706,540 m <sup>2</sup> |
| Number of environmental program participants | 5,587                  | 6,895                  | 7,850                  | 6,777                  |
| Ecologically Significant Natural Areas       | Not available          | 354                    | 360                    | 357                    |
| Number of athletic fields                    | 585                    | 594                    | 601                    | 593                    |
| Number of weed complaints                    | 2,748                  | 2,762                  | 2,310                  | 2,606                  |

| Description   | 2004        | 2005        | 2006        | 3 Year Avg  |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Number of boulevard and park trees  | 270,000     | 270,000     | 280,000     | 273,000     |
| Number of trees planted   | 1007        | 754         | 663         | 808         |
| Number of DED trees & non-DED trees removed   | 5,068/1,017 | 3,915/2,205 | 5,613/3,064 | 4,865/2,095 |
| Number of trees pruned  | 5,068       | 4,144       | 18,855      | 9,355       |
| Number of playground equipment sites inspected & maintained (includes toboggan slide & water slide sites) | 493         | 516         | 523         | 518         |
| Number of skating rinks and ponds   | 69          | 57          | 55          | 60          |
| Number of community partnerships  | N/A         | N/A         | 222         | 222         |

## Strategic Direction

### LINK TO PLAN WINNIPEG

- 1A-07 Integrate Rivers, Parks, and Green Spaces in the Downtown
- 3A-01 Promote Orderly Development
- 3A-03 Integrate Land Use, Urban Design, and Transportation Planning
- 3B-09 Preserve Major Open Spaces
- 4B-01 Integrate Safety into Overall Planning and Urban Development
- 5A-06 Provide Safe and Effective Pest and Weed Control
- 5C-01 Maintain and Expand the System of Public Parks
- 5C-04 Protect Environmentally Sensitive Lands
- 5E-03 Protect and Enhance Urban Forest

### SYNOPSIS OF POLICY DIRECTION

Awareness of a broad range of legislation is required, including but not limited to:

#### Legislation

- *The Dutch Elm Disease Act* (prescribes programs or measures for the control of Dutch Elm Disease).
- Department of Fisheries and Oceans Act (applies to all types of activities carried out in and around watercourses serving to protect fish, fish habitat, and the use of fish (i.e. through quotas).
- Pesticides and Fertilizers Control Act (regulates the supply, sale, distribution and application of any pesticide or fertilizer unless a licence is obtained).
- Noxious Weeds Act (regulates noxious weed - control, destruction, inspection and offence penalties).
- The Environmental Act (regulates the use of pesticides).
- Workplace Safety and Health Act (promotes the well being of the worker, prevention of ill health due to working conditions, and the placing of workers in an adapted occupational environment).

- Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System Regulation 52/88 (regulates the handling of hazardous materials in the workplace).
- Species at Risk Act (Prevent Canadian indigenous species from becoming extinct and encourage the management of these species).
- The City of Winnipeg Charter describes the authority under which the following parks related functions are carried out.

#### By-Laws

- The Boulevard Maintenance By-law 125/2007 (regulates the mowing and beautification of city boulevards).
- Parks and Recreation By-law No. 3219/82.
- Tree Trimming By-law No. 8155/2002.
- Streets By-Law No. 148/77 ( contains schedule - Manual of Temporary Traffic Control in Work Areas on City Streets).
- Traffic By-law No. 1573/77 ( contains schedule - Manual of Temporary Traffic Control in Work Areas on City Streets).

#### Council Policy

- Dutch Elm Disease Control Program (programs established with the objective of preserving public Elm trees).
- Public Works Department, Parks and Open Space Division Fees & Charges Policy (policy that supports the Fee Schedule for the Parks and Open Space Division).
- Community Committee Land Dedication (policy regarding the distribution of funds derived from the sale of Parks land declared surplus).
- Guidelines for Naming Parks.
- Rental of City Owned Land for Garden Purposes (procedure regarding garden plots).
- Policing of City Parks (guidelines for Park Police).
- Community Centres Universal Funding Formula (Guidelines that specify grounds maintenance responsibilities for the city and community centers).

## Other

- Canadian Standards Association - Children's Play-spaces and Equipment Z614-07.

## KEY FACTORS INFLUENCING SERVICE DELIVERY

### Council's Clean and Green Initiative

Additional resources acquired in 2007 operating budget resulted in a dramatic improvement to park, boulevard and urban forest maintenance throughout the City of Winnipeg.

In 2007, funding was increased for Regional park/boulevard mowing and turf maintenance by \$750,000, tree planting by \$1,000,000, pruning by \$500,000 and stumping by \$330,000.

### Shortage of qualified contractors

A shortage of tree pruning and landscape construction contractors can often result in delays which may compromise quality and quantity standards.

### Fleet Costs

New equipment costs have increased 45% to 400% (includes full cost for depreciation, damage repair, consumables, borrowing costs and scheduled preventative maintenance).

By 2008 Parks equipment (example: Agricultural Tractors, Front End Loaders, Dump Trucks, Pick-Up Trucks or Riding Lawn Mowers) will be no older than 2000. This has allowed Parks to standardize our fleet, eliminating downtime due to worn out machinery or lack of repair parts available locally.

Fuel costs have risen approximately 5% per year for the last few years.

### Aging Workforce and Labour Shortage

The Conference Board of Canada in their report "Long Term Demographic and Economic Forecast for Winnipeg" forecasts the economy to create on average 3,600 new jobs per year from 2007 to 2030, with an average annual employment growth rate of 0.9%.

Increased attrition through retirements has resulted in loss of knowledge base, less experienced staff and a requirement for more training and orientation.

### Increase in Parks Material Costs

There has been a 25% increase in the cost of trees, soil, sand, baseball infield mix, lumber and fertilizer.

### Criminal Code Amendment

In 2004 the Criminal Code of Canada was amended to include Bill C-45 which covers the criminal liability of organizations. The Code now includes new legal duties for workplace health and safety which imposes serious penalties for violations that result in injuries or

death. This has resulted in an increased demand for operator training and qualification standards.

### Storm Damage Tree Clean-Up

In the summer of 2006 and 2007 the City experienced storms that resulted in significant tree damage and safety related situations. The 2007 storm damage tree clean up was estimated to be \$486,059.

### Aging Infrastructure

Approximately 30% of parks and related facilities (pavilions, picnic shelters, sport field houses, park washrooms etc.) will require repair, renovation or replacement within the next several years.

### Environmentally Significant Land

The basic biological function of natural elements and their critical importance to world survival results in a greater perception of public parks, open spaces and urban forests as being environmentally significant.

### Parks and Trails for Healthy Living

*Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy* approved by Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health at their annual Conference 2005 has targeted that by 2015 there will be a 20% increase in the number of Canadians that participate in regular physical activity. It is recognized that there is a direct connection between physical activity levels and the provision of parks, trails and active transportation corridors.

At the 2005 Ministers Conference it was stated that "improved infrastructure will advance sport and physical activity in communities across the country while addressing critical health challenges and strengthening Canadian communities". The #1 priority is "A Healthy Sustainable Community Sport and Recreation Infrastructure System". This includes parks and open space.

### Outdoor Activity Participation Rates Increasing

According to the 1995 Campell's Survey on Well-Being in Canada walking, gardening and cycling remain the most popular physical activities. There is an increased need for leisure services offered by public open space, unscheduled activities and pathways.

## SUMMARY OF GOALS AND STRATEGIES

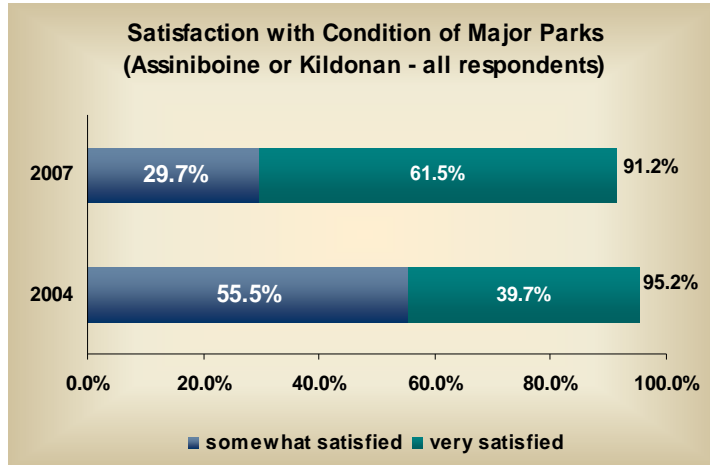
### 1. Maintain and continuously improve parks, athletic fields, playgrounds and related amenities to assist in meeting community leisure needs and interests.

- Implement the playground replacement plan (approximately 25 new structures per year).
- Revise and upgrade landscape design/construction specifications in consultation with developers and the landscaping community (soil and tree specification, retention pond design and turf & alternative ground cover specifications) by December 2009.

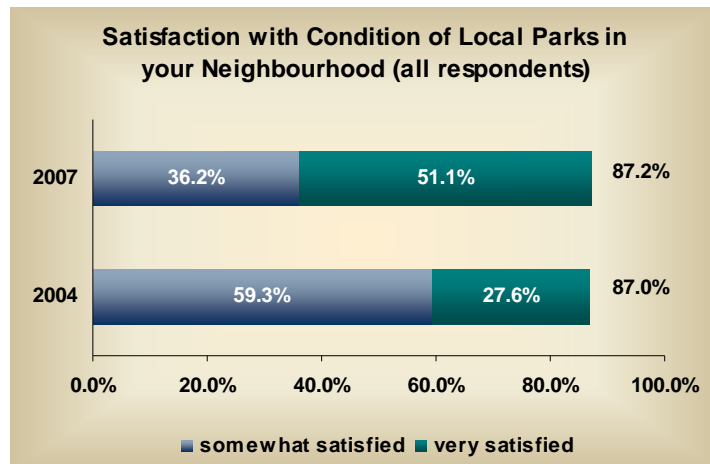
- Develop comprehensive business case analysis in support of capital redevelopment in Assiniboine Park.
  - Support and develop community partnerships to maintain and enhance parks and open space.
- 2. Provide natural environment and conservation education.**
- Promote awareness and conservation of natural areas through environmental education.
  - Improve public access to print and electronic information on Winnipeg's natural environment and related issues.
  - Offer and facilitate over 200 programs and workshops at the Living Prairie Museum.
  - Assist in implementing the Ecologically Significant Natural Lands Plan as approved by Council.
  - Expand community partnerships and stewardship initiatives to foster environmental education.
- 3. Preserve and enhance natural areas across the City's park and open space system.**
- Carry out river and creek enhancement initiatives with stewardship groups.
  - Continue the European Buckthorn control program in partnership with the Manitoba Naturalist Society.
  - Provide technical expertise on natural areas preservation and management to city staff and community groups.
  - Facilitate ecological gifts of natural lands to the City through the Federal gifting program.
- 4. Protect and enhance the urban forest through effective tree care practices and replacement planting.**
- Continue to develop asset management and maintenance management programs including refined service based costing.
  - Prune 23,000 trees by December 2008 (1 in 12 year cycle).
  - Place a priority on tree planting and protection in the downtown and along primary and secondary image routes.
  - Remove tree stumps within 4 months of requests and to a level of 6 inches below grade.
- Remove approximately 2,200 hazardous or diseased trees (non-DED) annually.
  - Remove approximately 4,000 DED trees on private and public property by "rapid removal" wherever possible and keep losses less than 2% of elm tree inventory annually.
  - Plant approximately 1,300 trees by December 2008.
- 5. Invest strategically in new and existing park and open space infrastructure.**
- Prepare a comprehensive capital redevelopment plan for Kildonan Park Peguis Pavilion and adjacent outdoor amenities by December 2008 followed by improvements 2009 – 2010.
  - Complete the first phase of tree inventory and condition assessment by December 2009.
  - Develop phase 1 of a strategic Parks and Open Space Management Plan to include a current status report (current by-laws, policies, procedures, inventories and best practices for strategic parks and open space plans) by March 2009.

# Performance Information

## CITIZEN SATISFACTION



The percentage of citizens who were satisfied with local neighbourhood parks and major parks like Assiniboine and Kildonan, remains high.  
 Source: City of Winnipeg, CAO Secretariat 2007 Survey ( +/- 4.2%, 19 times out of 20)



Additional funding was provided by Council in 2007 to address the declining trend in citizen satisfaction with park and boulevard maintenance, tree planting, pruning and stumping.

The following charts have been taken from the 2006 Public Works Citizen Satisfaction Survey which is an annual survey conducted in the fall.

The questions asked were – How satisfied are you with the:

| Question  | 2002  | 2003  | 2004  | 2005  | 2006  |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| How large City Parks are maintained                 | 88.4% | 84.8% | 93.6% | 77.1% | 83.3% |
| Condition of parks in your neighbourhood            | 73.5% | 80.2% | 73.9% | 66.9% | 77.1% |
| How boulevards are maintained                       | 56%   | 50.9% | 53.9% | 56.7% | 56.4% |
| How weeds in parks and on boulevards are controlled | 54.3% | 50.9% | 45.7% | 45.5% | 43.6% |
| How cycling/ walking paths in parks are maintained  | 65.3% | 60.2% | 67.6% | 63.7% | 55.1% |
| How boulevard trees are maintained                  | 62.7% | 50.9% | 55.2% | 56.1% | 55.8% |
| How athletic fields are maintained                  | 58.6% | 50.6% | 59.1% | 52.5% | 48.6% |
| How Dutch elm disease is controlled                 | 65.1% | 69.9% | 67.2% | 61.7% | 59.7% |
| Spring boulevard cleanup                            | 70.1% | 60.4% | 66.5% | 65.1% | 67.3% |

## EFFECTIVENESS DATA

### Mowing (2006 - number of times per year)

| Category                        | Ind. Stnd       | Wpg | Edm | Sask | Calg    |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----|-----|------|---------|
| High profile parks              | 20x's per year  | 20  | 20  | 20   | 20 – 30 |
| Premier Sport Fields            | 20 x's per year | 10  | 14  | 40   | 20 – 30 |
| Neighborhood Parks/ Sport Flds. | 12 x's per year | 9   | 12  | 10   | 15      |
| Blvds. or major streets         | 7 x's per year  | 9   | 7   | 4    | 6       |
| Ditches or rough mowing         | 2 x's per year  | 2   | 2   | 5    | 1       |

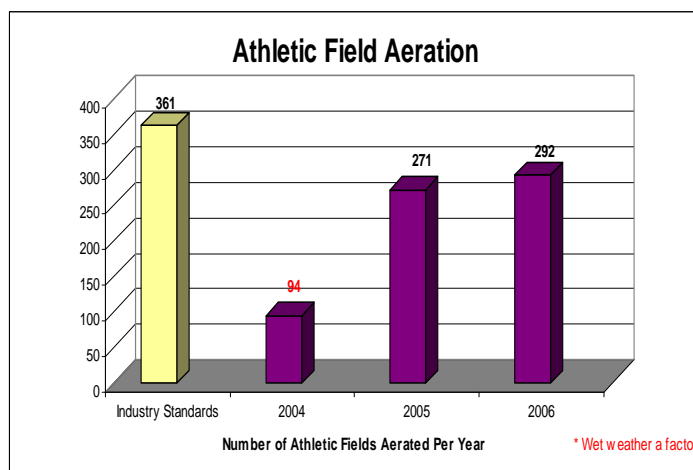
Winnipeg meets the industry standards related to mowing for all categories except premier sport fields.

| Category                        | Ind Stnd       | Wpg  | Edm | Sask | Calg |
|---------------------------------|----------------|------|-----|------|------|
| High profile parks              | 3 x's per year | 0.25 | 2   | 2    | 2    |
| Premier Sport Fields            | 3 x's per year | 2    | 1   | 4    | 2    |
| Neighborhood Parks/ Sport Flds. | Once a year    | .75  | 0   | 1    | 0    |
| Boulevards or major streets     | As needed      | 0    | 0   | 0    | 0    |

### Fertilizing (number of times per year)

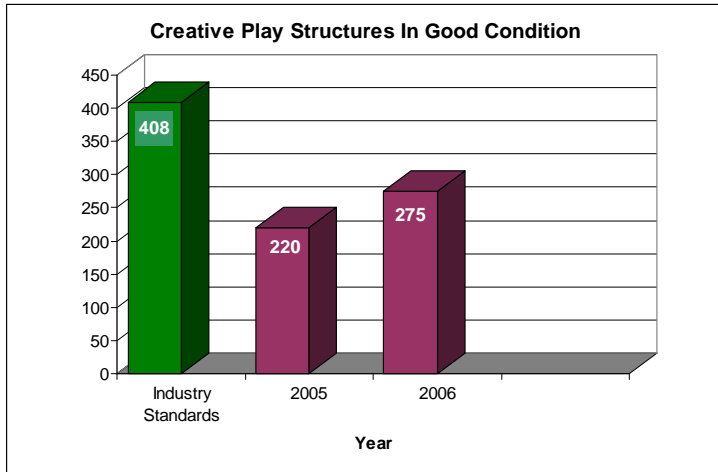
Like most other municipalities, Winnipeg's frequency of fertilizer application is below industry standards.

Winnipeg has been improving on the number of athletic fields aerated, but is still below industry standards.



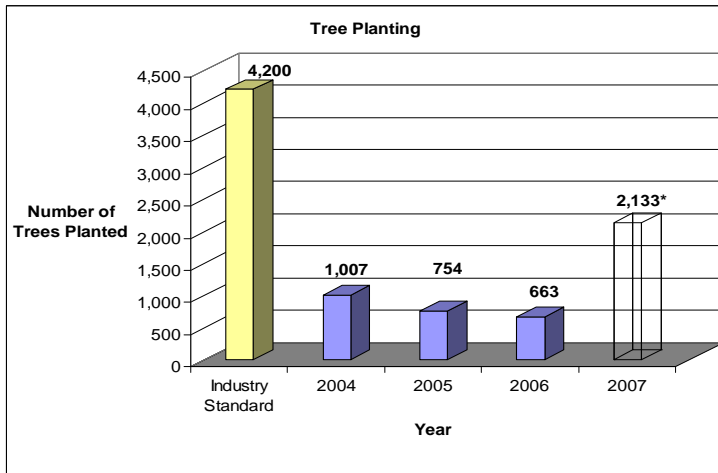
**Industry standard** - Turf grass researchers maintain that proper cultural practices include minimal aeration of once a year in order to preserve the integrity of an athletic field asset. Statistics include 361 soccer, football and rugby fields (does not include baseball diamonds). Baseball diamonds do not experience the same traffic/use issues therefore aeration is on an "as requested" basis.

Winnipeg has been upgrading its creative play structures as resources permit to meet industry standards.



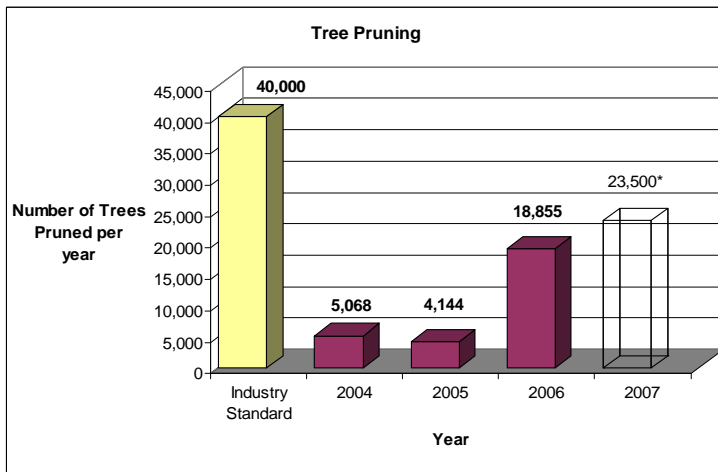
**Creative play structure definition:** two or more play structures attached or functionally linked to create an integral unit that provides more than one play activity (ex. combination climber, slide and horizontal ladder).

**Industry Standards** – in this case, the industry standard represents the total number of creative play structures as 408.



**Industry Standard =** (Total # trees in City inventory 280,000 x 1% removed per year = 2,800 x 1.5% replaced/planted per year = 4,200 trees planted per year.

\* The 2007 planting season has not yet been completed; however, with the increased budget this year, we are anticipating being able to plant approximately 2,133 trees.



**Industry standard = 280,000 trees in city inventory pruned once every 7 years = 40,000 trees a year**  
 In 2006, tree pruning cycle was once every 15 years (1:15)

\* In 2007, the pruning cycle is not yet complete; however, with the additional budget, we anticipate being able to prune approximately 23,500 trees (for an improved cycle time of once every 12 years).

The following effectiveness measure will be collected for 2007 and will be provided in the 2008 Service Plan: Percentage of customer satisfaction & retention for Living Prairie Museum's Environmental Education Programs

### EFFICIENCY MEASURES

The following efficiency measures will be collected for 2007 and will be provided in the 2008 Service Plan:

- Expenditure per hectare for turf mowing maintenance
- Cost per tree pruned
- Cost per tree planted
- Cost per athletic field aerated