

Dig Deeper

A PARK'S PURPOSE



What is the purpose of a park?

Parks play a crucial role in communities—they are spaces to play, picnic, explore and build memories. Most people recognize the recreational values that parks provide, but there are many other reasons that parks are important. What other roles do parks play?

Guiding Questions

- + Are parks made for people and/or for wildlife?
- + How do you know which parts of the park are for whom? (Hint: it might not always be clear.)
- + How do people use parks? Why do we need parks?
- + How do different parks serve different purposes?
- + How would you design a park that balances the needs of both people and wildlife?
- + What pressures are facing our urban parks?
- + What are the health benefits of being in nature?
- + How do municipal, regional, provincial and national parks differ?
- + What roles do parks play in different cultures?
- + How accurately can you map your local parks from memory?
- + How could you determine a park's worth?
- + How does the City of Surrey take care of parks?
- + How can you take care of parks?

Background

Parks make up a large part of the urban forest and provide many benefits to our community; they are important for social, economic and environmental reasons. Consider the benefits of your local park to you, your neighbourhood, your community, and the city overall.

Values of parks:

Social/recreational: opportunities for community to gather, play, access sports fields/courts, connect with nature, see wildlife, exercise

Psychological: improved emotional well-being, opportunities to reduce stress

Environmental: storm water collection, reduction of urban heat island effect, protection of wildlife and natural ecosystems, cleaner air, wildlife corridors

Economic: mitigation of costs associated with climate change, reduced crime, increased value of nearby homes, prevention of flooding and storm water surges

Aesthetic: community beautification, provision of more attractive places to live, work and play

Curricular Connections

Content for students to explore:

Kindergarten: communities are diverse and made up of people who have a lot in common

Grade 1: experience and interpret local environments, shaping the local environment, and how the local environment shapes us

Grade 2: relationship between people and the environment, water cycle

Grade 3: aspects of life shared by and common to peoples and cultures, local jobs

Grade 4: biomes, history of local community, connections to community

Grade 5: First Peoples concepts of interconnectedness in the environment

Grade 6: urbanization

Grade 7: survival needs and evolution (e.g. urban wildlife), climate change mitigation

Curricular competencies for students to develop:

- Experience and interpret the local environment
- Identify some of the social, ethical, and environmental implications
- Communicate ideas, explanations, and processes in a variety of ways
- Assess significance of places
- Express and reflect on a variety of experiences and perspectives of place



Surrey Parks works together with the community to celebrate nature and protect the environment.

Visit us online to plan your park visits, connect with nearby nature and help your students become stewards of our urban forest.

Additional Resources

City of Surrey [Natural Areas Management Plan](#)

City of Surrey [Shade Tree Management Plan](#)

Nature Trails brochure & parks kiosks

Surrey Archives

