

3.3 Playground Design Standards Summary

The chart on the following page provides an at-a-glance summary of the Park Playground Design Standards, organized by Community, Neighbourhood, and Nature Park Playgrounds. It compiles key standards, details, and budget considerations for each playground classification. Refer to Section 2 for more details.

City staff will begin the next phase of work to identify specific playground renewals and action the Park Playground Design Standards through detailed design and construction processes.

The extent of park playground upgrades will depend on the City's financial capacity to deliver playground renewals and funding priority as determined through asset management, playground asset inventory development, and annual budgeting processes.

Successful implementation of the Park Playground Design Standards will require coordination between a number of groups, including (but not limited to):

- » City Mayor and Council
- » City Departments
- » Community Associations
- » Interest Groups
- » Community Members

Ongoing participation and collaboration of all of these groups will help realize the vision, guiding principles, and standards established through the Let's Play, Courtenay! Park Playground Design Standards process.

	COMMUNITY PARK PLAYGROUND	NEIGHBOURHOOD PARK PLAYGROUND	NATURE PARK PLAYGROUND
Intent	Destination playgrounds that serve residents from the entire City and beyond	Playgrounds that serve the surrounding neighbourhood	Playgrounds in parks that are dominated by natural features such as forests and watercourses
Level of Use	High	Moderate	Moderate
Service Level	Accessible to the majority of residents within a ~10 minute walk (800m)	Accessible to the majority of residents within a ~5 minute walk (400m)	Accessible to the majority of residents within a ~30 minute walk (2.5 km radius) or short drive
Size Range	~1000m ² - 2000m ²	~250m ² - 1000m ²	~100m ² - 500m ²
Accessibility Level (see Standard 1)	Universal priority	Universal elements	Universal elements
Age Range	All ages	Tot Lot, 3-5, or 5-12 based on demand	All ages
Range of Play Elements (see Standard 6)	Diverse Standard and special play features. Features to be determined on a site-by-site basis	Moderate Standard play features. Special features to be considered on a site-by-site basis	Moderate Boulders / climbing rocks, log climbers, willow tunnels, forts, sand play, water play, loose parts play, areas for exploration (exact elements to be determined on a site-by-site basis)
Surfacing (see Standard 5)	Poured-in-place rubber surfacing for main play area (engineered wood fiber, synthetic turf considered for secondary zones)	Poured-in-place rubber surfacing, engineered wood fiber, or wood chips	Engineered wood fiber or wood chips. Sand or soil for low-height elements only
Edging (see Standard 5)	Cast-in-place concrete or composite bender board	Cast-in-place concrete, composite bender board, or timber edging	Timber edging, boulders, or no edging
Boundaries (see Standard 4)	Open, planted, chain-link, decorative, or split-rail fence, considered on a site-by-site basis	Open, planted, chain-link, or split-rail fence, considered on a site-by-site basis	Open, planted, or split-rail fence in select locations to protect sensitive natural areas
Supporting Amenities (see Standard 8)	Standard and special amenities. Amenities determined on a site-by-site basis (see Tables 4&5)	Standard amenities. Special amenities to be considered on a site-by-site basis (see Tables 4&5)	Standard amenities (see Table 4)
Capital Estimate Range	\$240,000 - \$1,650,000	\$75,000 - \$385,000	\$50,000 - \$220,000
Engagement	Engage entire City and interest groups	Engage with surrounding neighbourhood and interest groups	Engage with surrounding neighbourhood and interest groups

Table 7: Park Playground Design Standards Summary Table

Standard Amenities for Park Playgrounds

STANDARD AMENITY	DESCRIPTION AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE
<p>Gathering Spaces</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All Playgrounds: Add City of Courtenay standard park benches with back rests near playground areas (min. 2 per playground area). » Community Playgrounds: Provide flexible seating areas for small group gatherings including seat walls, benches, tables, picnic tables, and custom furnishings. » Allocate clear zones next to all benches and furnishings for parking wheelchairs or strollers. 	<p>High</p>	<p>All: \$ Community Parks: \$\$</p>
<p>Waste Receptacles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All Playgrounds: Provide double-stream waste and recycling receptacles in all park playgrounds. Select animal-proof models. » Locate waste receptacles in close proximity to other amenities (e.g., picnic shelters, trail connections). » Provide clearance zones surrounding waste receptacles for maintenance access. » Provide safe sharps disposal bins near park playgrounds on an as-needed basis. 	<p>High</p>	<p>\$</p>
<p>Shade Elements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All Playgrounds: Provide shade trees. Locate accordingly to shade key playground areas during the warmest hours of the day. Refer to the Shade Lookbook for appropriate shade tree species (see Appendix A). » Community Playgrounds: Provide shade trees and shade structures including shade sails or covered gathering spaces (see picnic shelters). » Prior to implementing shade elements, conduct a solar analysis and shade audit to maximize effectiveness. » Plan shade sails and shade structures with the support of a structural engineer. 	<p>High</p>	<p>All Parks: \$ Community Parks: \$\$\$</p>
<p>Bike Parking</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All Playgrounds: Provide convenient, safe bicycle parking opportunities near primary bike paths. » Community Playgrounds: At select Community Park Playgrounds, integrate amenities to support bikes and electric bikes (e-bikes) including electric bike charging stations and bicycle repair / fix-it stations. 	<p>High</p>	<p>All Parks: \$ Community Parks: \$\$</p>
<p>Signage</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » All Playgrounds: Provide regulatory signage indicating hours of use and codes of conduct. » Community Playgrounds: Provide welcome signage and playground wayfinding and interpretive signage to guide park users to and from the play area and provide information on the history of the park, playground, and unique design and placemaking elements. 	<p>Medium</p>	<p>All Parks: \$ Community Parks: \$\$</p>

Table 4: Standard Amenities for Park Playgrounds

Special Amenities for Park Playgrounds

SPECIAL AMENITY	DESCRIPTION AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION	PRIORITY	CAPITAL COST ESTIMATE
Washroom Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide universally accessible facilities. » If locating in a Community Park with a splash pad or other recreational activities, consider integrating change room facilities. » Prioritize Community Parks with existing water / sewer connections in close proximity to the playground area to reduce costs and construction impact. » Consider composting or pit toilets if capital budgets or infrastructure do not allow for water / sewer connections. » Update maintenance / operational capacity to reflect additions 	High	~ \$250,000 - \$500,000
Splash Pad / Water Play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Prioritize implementation of a new splash pad at a Community Park on the east side of town (to complement existing amenity at Lewis Park). » Splash pads should be universally accessible with a range of interactive spray features. » Consider alternative use of splash pad area during winter months (e.g., multi-purpose paved space for recreational use). » Use effective water-management systems including high-efficiency nozzles and on-demand activation, Consider water re-circulation systems. 	High	~ \$200,000 - \$350,000 (+)
Public Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Integrate public art in the form of sculptures, murals, and interactive installations within or near playgrounds. » Integrate Indigenous art and storytelling within play spaces. » Feature local artists from Courtenay and the surrounding region. 	High	TBD based on capital budgets
Picnic Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Place covered picnic areas in close proximity to the playground and gathering space to accommodate small community gatherings. » Provide universally accessible surfacing and access routes to and from the picnic area. » Provide a range of furnishings including picnic tables and longer community tables. » Integrate clear zones next to tables for wheelchairs and stroller parking. » Consider integration of lighting to support evening use. 	Medium	\$\$\$
Water Fountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Locate new drinking fountains in close proximity to gathering and / or picnic areas. 	Medium	\$

Multi-sport Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Upgrade existing multi-sport courts. » In select Community Parks, consider addition of new pre-fabricated sports courts or flexible paved areas near park playgrounds, with lining for basketball, floor hockey and other recreational activities. » Provide fencing or sideboards around court areas to contain balls, as needed. » Provide benches. 	Medium	\$150,000 - \$300,000
Areas for Food Trucks / Retail Kiosk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Provide paved open areas for food truck parking or pop-up retail kiosks. Allow for vehicular access from adjacent roads or parking areas. » Locate near gathering spaces, waste receptacles, and shade elements » Provide electrical connections compatible for food trucks. » Consider reviewing Business License Amendment Bylaw No. 2847, 2016 to identify other park locations for Food Trucks than those established in the bylaw (i.e. near playgrounds). 	Medium	\$
Lighting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Add or upgrade pedestrian-scale lighting at playground entries and along primary park trails. » Integrate building-mounted lighting at washroom buildings and picnic shelters. » Consider addition of low-level lighting recessed in seat walls or mounted to the underside of benches or furnishings. » Use energy-efficient fixtures (e.g. solar LED lights) and consider integration of timers. » Design lighting for dark-sky compliance to avoid light trespass onto habitat areas and adjacent residential neighbourhoods. 	Medium	\$\$
BBQ Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consider raised charcoal BBQ grills in close proximity to picnic shelters / gathering areas. » Ensure surfacing and furnishings materials directly surrounding grills are non-flammable. » Provide counter tops or tables for placing food and cooking utensils adjacent to grills and coal disposal canisters for safe removal of unused coals. » Provide regulatory signage related to BBQ area codes of conduct. 	Low	\$\$
Game Tables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Consider game tables near playground gathering spaces (e.g., chess tables, ping pong, foosball). » Seek opportunities to partner with the K’omoks First Nation to develop spaces for traditional games. 	Low	\$

Table 5: Special Amenities for Park Playgrounds