



PARKS & RECREATION SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT

2023

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In 2023 the City of Brandon remained committed to investing in the renewal of municipal Parks and Recreation facilities, as we plan for future growth. Parks & Recreation Services is an important municipal service that provides parks, greenspaces, and recreation, improving the quality of life in our community.

We continue to strengthen our partnership with recreation providers throughout the city to improve public participation in recreation programs. Additionally, we have proudly offered a wide array of grassroots programs that meet the diverse interests of the community.

We have seen a dramatic increase in the usage of our parks and greenspaces, bringing new challenges in operating and maintaining these facilities. Parks has committed to improving and maintaining our urban canopy through education and tree planting.

The diverse needs of community members and environmental challenges are continually evolving. We strive to ensure we are aware of and addressing these evolving needs and challenges through community conversation and education.

Community groups in Brandon do important work to support recreation programming and facilities. There are dedicated volunteers who have adopted parks and gardens, as well as keeping our community clean. We are also lucky to have passionate groups operating sports facilities for all to enjoy. This is only some of the important work being done in our community by volunteers who understand the impact parks and recreation have on us all.

Mission Statement

Parks & Recreation Services mission is to enrich the community through positive service that supports, engages and inspires the public.

Vision Statement

Parks & Recreation Services strives to become an accessible resource, engaging a community that leads a healthy, green and positive lifestyle.

PERRY ROQUE

Director of Parks & Recreation Services



WHO WE ARE

Parks & Recreation Services' mandate is to improve the quality of life for our residents. Through programming, events, amenities and greenspaces our goal is to offer something for everyone. Our framework for service delivery is based on the Green Space Master Plan (2015), Recreation and Community Facilities Master Plan (2019), and Brandon's Assiniboine River Corridor Master Plan (2016).



Parks is made up of 2 sections, Forestry & Horticulture and Greenspace Maintenance, where a wide range of staff maintain and upgrade City parks, playgrounds, recreation facilities and greenspaces. Parks employs 15 full-time staff and 53 casual staff throughout the year who work out of the Parks Complex and Brandon Municipal Cemetery.

Recreation Services focuses on facilities and programming. We believe recreation is an essential public service for growing healthy, vibrant and connected communities. We have a large portfolio of both free programming and paid programming available to the public, and oversee Brandon's Community Sportsplex, the Brandon Youth Centre and Outdoor Water facilities. With 18 full-time staff and of 75 casual staff, Recreation offers a variety of services and programs in the areas of City Wide Initiatives and Recreation Hub Programs.

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In today's hectic world it's important to take time to enjoy each day for our health and well-being. Parks and Recreation services is committed to ensuring that everyone has an opportunity to experience recreational activities and parks, to build relationships with family and friends, for a sense of community pride.

- Perry Roque

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BUILDING FACILITIES IN 2023



Maple Leaf Foods Sports Complex

Located at First Street and Veterans Way, the Maple Leaf Foods Sports Complex will include a FIFA sized soccer field, up to eight 11 v 11 soccer fields, one dedicated 9 v 9 soccer field, a cricket pitch, a clubhouse with changerooms and washrooms, and 3.6 km of pathways. With investments from the governments of Canada and Manitoba, the City of Brandon is on track to see the project completed by early 2025.

AREAS OF FOCUS IN PARKS

Forestry and Horticulture

Activities within the Forestry & Horticulture section include tree maintenance and pruning, tree planting, tree stumping, greenhouse activities, flower planting and maintenance and landscaping.

Dutch Elm Disease (DED)

Dutch Elm Disease (DED) is an invasive fungus spread to American Elms via the native elm bark beetle. This disease has killed off many American Elms in urban forests but with the help of the Province of Manitoba it has been managed for a number of years. The Province of Manitoba's website provides, signs, symptoms, and the management program for Dutch Elm Disease.

Dutch Elm Disease is managed jointly between the Province and the City of Brandon. This program has been very successful in limiting the loss of elm trees in our community from this deadly disease.

Tree planting

In accordance with the Urban Forest Management Plan of the municipality, trees offer numerous environmental and social benefits. Planting trees is a crucial part of expanding our urban forest and restoring lost canopy. Trees are an essential part of public infrastructure.



Coronation Park

Golf Course Garage

AREAS OF FOCUS IN PARKS

Greenspace Maintenance

Annual duties include grass mowing and clean up, maintenance of recreation facilities, playgrounds, parks and greenspaces, operation and maintenance of Brandon Municipal Cemetery, start up, maintenance and shutdown of all spray parks, pool, park washroom facilities and irrigation. Staff also administer the Mosquito Abatement Program alongside the Province.

Facilities Highlights

Parks & Recreation owns, operates and maintains a number of recreation facilities. For a full listing of facilities, Visit <https://www.brandon.ca/greenspaces> for a full listing of Parks & Recreation Services facilities. Highlight facilities include:

Dog Parks:

There are currently three dog parks located in the City of Brandon.

Doggy Diamond - 2720 Park Avenue

East End Paw Park - 11 Street East & Victoria Avenue East

Hanbury Hill Pooch Park - 600 Braecrest Drive

General Rules for Dog Parks

- Dogs must remain leashed until entry into park.
- Owners must keep dogs under control at all times.
- All messes must be cleaned up immediately.
- All dogs to have current City of Brandon license.
(License must be shown when requested by Animal Control Officer.)
- No food other than dog treats allowed.
- Dogs in heat not permitted at any time.

Spray Parks & Paddle Pools:

The City of Brandon owns and operates 5 Spray Parks throughout the City. These spray parks are a great way to beat the heat in the summer, and they are completely free for the community to use throughout the summer months. Each year a schedule of opening dates and hours is updated at brandon.ca

AREAS OF FOCUS IN PARKS



Park Stats



293
Hanging Baskets



280
Large Planters



212
Nursery Pots
(smaller black ones in concrete boulevards and around the city)



486
Trees Planted



10,000+
Total Plants



75+
Parks and Playgrounds



50 Km's
Paved Pathways



45+
Sports Fields &
Recreation Facilities



2,390 pieces
(2220 square meters)
Sod Laid



780 acres
(Riverbank Area)
53 acres
Area of Grass Cut

AREAS OF FOCUS IN RECREATION

2023 was a year of highs and lows for Recreation. In March the Sportsplex Arena was closed due to mechanical deficiencies. What we originally hoped would be a short-term shut down turned into an extended shut down as we discovered the ice plant could not be repaired. During the shut-down consultants led the City of Brandon and the community through a Recreation Needs Assessment for the Sportsplex. We explored alternative uses for the Sportsplex Arena and listened to community member's needs. While we heard that there was indeed a need for an indoor turf and sport court facility in Brandon, it was loud and clear that community desire was to retain the Sportsplex Arena. On a positive note, through the Recreation Needs Assessment we were able to create a long term plan for the Sportsplex that will address accessibility, functionality and aesthetics to renew this community facility.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 we worked with consultants on an Outdoor Aquatic Complex Feasibility Study. The City of Brandon has one aging outdoor facility that is in poor condition and does not meet the needs of the community. The feasibility study looked at current trends in aquatics, operating models and community needs to create a plan for a future outdoor aquatic complex in Brandon. This is the first step towards a future facility.

In 2023 Recreation programming and registrations continued to grow. Our creative and dedicated Programmers worked hard to deliver an array of programs that meet the many needs of our community members. If you are looking for a way to participate, check out the current program guide, we are sure you will find a program that fits you!

Community Partnerships

Parks & Recreation works with several facilities in the City of Brandon through service agreements, providing support to:

Wheat City Golf Course
Andrews Field and Sumner Field
Ashley Neufeld Softball Complex
John Reilly Rugby Field
Central Community Centre
East End Community Centre

Green Acres Community Centre
North End Community Centre
Park Community Centre
Valleyview Community Centre
West End Community Centre
Westridge Community Centre



AREAS OF FOCUS IN RECREATION

Brandon's Community Sportsplex

This multipurpose recreation facility houses a 50 meter swimming pool, arena, 3 racquetball courts, a 400 m outdoor track and offers multiple recreation programs for the community.

Aquatic Facility

The Sportsplex has the only 50 metre pool between Winnipeg and Regina which is used for mainly public programming offered by the City.

This year saw the Canadian Red Cross organization step away from offering its Swimming and Water Safety program. Because of this change, the Sportsplex pool transferred their swimming lesson program to the Lifesaving Society's Swim for Life program. In a very short period of time, the Sportsplex Pool staff had to transfer their accreditations from the Red Cross program to the Lifesaving Society Program. This was accomplished within 5 short months. In 2023, our Lifesaving Society Swim for Life program was in full swing. We offered lessons to over 2,450 participants with over 11,049 hours of instruction.

Arena

The Sportsplex has a full NHL sized arena that can have 500 spectators for events.

This year saw some changes to the offerings in the Sportsplex arena. With the shut-down of the ice plant in March of 2023 due to mechanical deficiencies, the Sportsplex had to change gears to dry floor offerings in the facility. The following public programming has been added: pickleball (6 courts), disco roller skate, public roller skate, ball hockey, and hoverboard, scooter and wheelie offerings. The dry floor space has been rented by the local pickleball club and cricket club.

AREAS OF FOCUS IN RECREATION

Track Facility

In 2023, there were 27 local and regional track meets at the Sportsplex outdoor 400 metre rubberize. The high school provincial track championships were held at the outdoor track in June of 2023. This saw participants from all over Manitoba compete for a spot to go to Nationals. Open for public use and many registered programs the track is often a hot spot of activity at the Sportsplex.

The track infield is also the home field for the Assiniboine Community College Cougars.

Racquetball

Brandon's Community Sportsplex has the only racquetball courts available for rental within the City of Brandon. It currently has three regulation courts that can be used for drop in programs or rented.

The Brandon Racquetball Association has a strong member base and calls these courts their home. With a robust junior program in place, the club has seen their numbers growing in recent years due to a dedicated team of coaches and board members.

Sportsplex Stats

11,450

Drop In Program Attendance

1,013

Pool Rental Hours

2,525

Swimming Lesson Registrations

1,756

Arena Rental Hours

240

Learn to Skate Registrations

300

Track Rental Hours

1,547

Racquetball Rental Hours

AREAS OF FOCUS IN RECREATION

Brandon Youth Centre

The City of Brandon Youth Centre provides a safe and inclusive space for all youth to grow, develop and discover their passion. Open seven days a week year-round, the centre is geared towards youth ages 8 to 17 years. The Centre offers a wide range of programming ranging from life-skills to educational to leisure.

In 2023 the Youth Centre received a grant from Healthy Together Now to design and facilitate an Indigenous Learning Program. The 6-week program was intended to encourage discussion, educate and provide culturally-based activities centered through indigenous leadership.

Youth Centre Stats



330

Members



10,093

Attendance



22

Total Days Closed
(15 days due to building maintenance)



AREAS OF FOCUS IN RECREATION



Youth Activity Centres (YAC)

YAC is a FREE, fun, active program for youth ages 7-15. Activities include sports, arts & crafts, themed days and pool days. Youth Activity Leaders support a safe, non-judgmental, confidential and inclusive environment that promotes youth to develop skills in leadership, cooperation, problem solving, positive relationships, responsibility and confidence.

The Youth Activity Centres were implemented in our community to provide healthy opportunities to youth during the summer months.

We offer 3 YAC centres, located in Community Centres around Brandon.

YAC East – East End Community Centre

YAC West – West End Community Centre

YAC Junior – Valleyview Community Centre

2023 YAC Stats

YAC Location	Number of Youth Attending	Total Number of Visits
YAC East	219	1,250
YAC West	263	1,789
YAC Junior	293	2,203
Total	775	5,242

Along with Council support and funds we received the following:

In-Kind Support	\$12,655
Sponsorship	\$48,895

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Soccer/T-Ball Program

A hit amongst the 4 & 5 year olds in Brandon! Kids are able to learn the fundamental skills of soccer and t-ball using a fun play-based curriculum. With their registration fee, they receive a customized t-shirt jersey and individual/team photos.

The Great Brandon Mystery

An extension of the Explorer's Club, the Great Brandon Mystery is an adult mystery-solving race. Participants race around Brandon in teams, solving riddles, puzzles and searching for clues. The first team to arrive at the last location wins a prize! The Great Brandon Mystery currently has two editions. The first is a beginner level race, taking participants to local historical places and museums. The second edition follows a fictional story that leads everyone to related locations to search for a final treasure.

Disc Golf

The Parks and Recreation Department along with community volunteers and business support, hosted 2 Disc Golf Tournaments this year, May 27th and Oct 21st with a total of 55 Disc Golfers!

Thank-you to our supporters Patches Family Restaurant, Disc Golf Manitoba, Disc Republic, Creation Nation Maker Space and our volunteers!!



PROGRAM STATS

Leisure Programs

Registrations

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons	10
Birthday Parties	47
Brick Makerz	26
Cookie Mastery Workshop	12
Crochet – Toque & Scarf	21
Crochet a Throw	16
Dad & Me	24
Day Camp	142
Disc Golf Tournament	55
Explorer’s Club	7
Explorer’s Club Chapter 2	28
Gift Wrappers Workshop	2
Great Brandon Mystery	82
Haunted Forest Hikes	122
Introduction to Dungeons & Dragons	51
Just the Two of Us – Grandparent & Child Workshop	6
Pizza from Scratch	36
Story Trail	22
Trivia Night	140

Educational Programs

Registrations

Babysitter’s Course	120
Canine Good Neighbour	12
French 1	7
French 2	9
Introduction to Dog Grooming	12
Pet First Aid	12
Spanish 1	56
Spanish 2	7
Stay Safe	69

PROGRAM STATS

Arts & Culture Programs

Registrations

Art Workshop – Holiday Books	13
Art Workshop – Holiday Rounds	28
Art Workshop – Scrabble Tile	18
Art Workshop – Spring Welcome Sign	21
DIY – Landyard	2
DIY – Squirrel Picnic Table	3
DIY – Welcome Mat	3
DIY – Yardzee	2
Introduction to Acrylics	6
Learn to Dance	27
Practical Paint Night	25
Preschool Ballet	16
Spring Break Arts Camp	102
Spring Break Day Camp	146
Summer Day Camp - Daily	394
Summer Day Camp - Weekly	187
Ukulele Youth	15

Sports & Fitness Programs

Registrations

50+ Fitness	20
Indoor Soccer	44
Intro to Hiking	6
Intro to Track & Field	12
Learn to Skate	212
Learn to Skate: Teens & Adults	12
Multi-sport: Soccer & Tball	88
Ninja Warrior Training	111
PD Day Camp	39
Running Strength & Conditioning	25
Snowshoe Rentals	10
Ultimate Youth Program	6
Youth Cross Country Ski Rentals	8
Youth Dodgeball	66
Zumba Gold	25



CITY WIDE INITIATIVES – PROGRAMS AND EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Brandon Municipal Cemetery Tours

This year we ran multiple free guided tours of the Brandon Cemetery. We took in the beautiful spring and fall scenery and learned about a few of the fascinating people that have been laid to rest over the last century. Our tour guide was David McConkey. David is a history buff and Brandon Sun Columnist and has a vast array of knowledge about the Cemetery and the interesting people who reside here.

Story Trail Hikes

2023 marked the second year we have offered Story Trail hikes to the public. The program consists of guided hike through local green spaces and forests. Along the hike, a local indigenous storyteller speaks to the land, and legends of local animals and landscape. Participants can attend for free and are offered a free snowshoe rental for the duration of the hike. This year the first hike took place in the Assiniboine Food Forest trails, where our storyteller, Dannielle Morrisseau, and Dave Barnes (AFFI) worked together to educate hikers on the area.

CITY WIDE INITIATIVES – PROGRAMS AND EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS

Open Garden Tours

Open Garden Tours - 11 Tour Locations: 500+ unique participants, approximately 1500 total site visits. Open Garden Tours is a longstanding and popular program in which select community members open up their gardens to the public for a weekend of self-guided tours. This year the tours took place on July 22nd and 23rd 9:30am – 1:30pm. There were 11 participating locations, with 6 locations showing Saturday only, 3 locations showing Sunday only, and 2 locations showing both days. Over 1500 site visits were recorded including overwhelming positive feedback from participants and attendees!

Music in the Park

Held every Tuesday in June, July and August, in Princess Park in Brandon's Downtown, Music in the Park features performances by local musicians, who generously volunteer their time and talents to entertain their community. In 2023, almost 2000 people attended Music in the Park across ten performances. In addition, the Recreation Department, in partnership with the Riverbank Discovery Centre, hosted four free concerts at the Fusion Credit Union Stage featuring higher profile performers. These four concerts drew a total of nearly 4000 attendees, with over 1000 attending the Royal Canadian Air Force Band's show on August 17th, and over 1500 in the crowd for the final performance of the summer on September 7th, featuring Canadian Folk Music Icon Valdy.



SALES & MARKETING

Tree and Bench Celebration Program

This program has been designed to recognize a loved one, recall a momentous occasion, celebrate a unique occasion, or demonstrate a desire for improving our community!

In 2023 we have had 5 Benches and 10 Trees sponsored.

Social Media Marketing

Our residents made it very evident throughout the public consultation phases of the Recreation and Community Facilities Master Plan that they were not aware of the recreational options available in our neighborhood. Our voice in the community has grown as a result of our usage of social media.

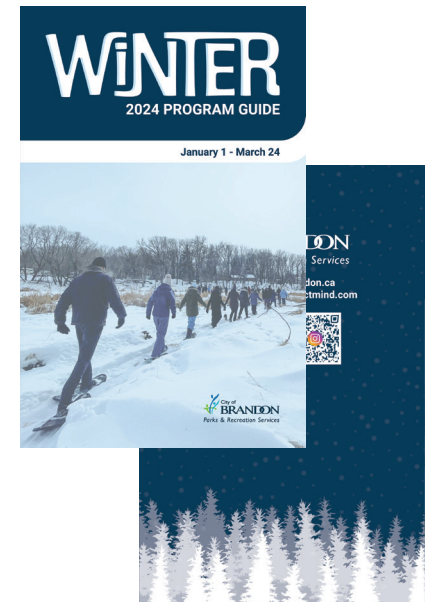
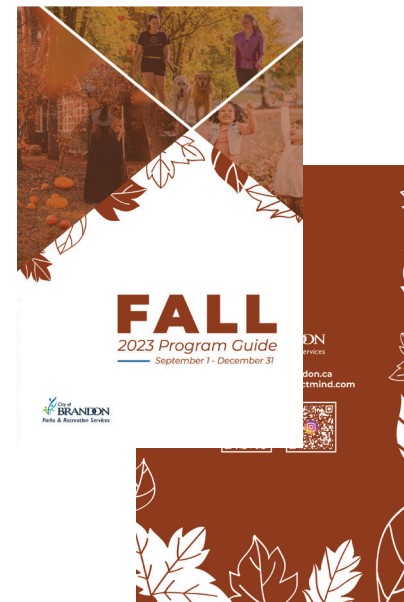
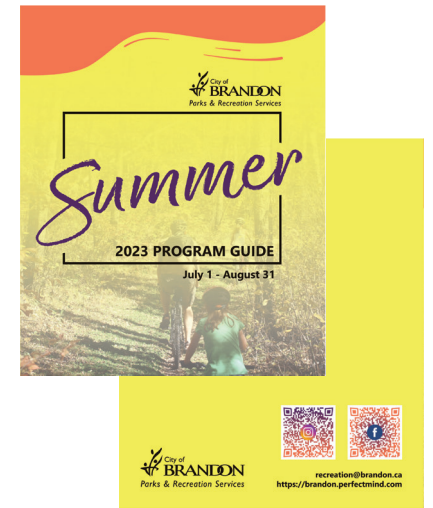
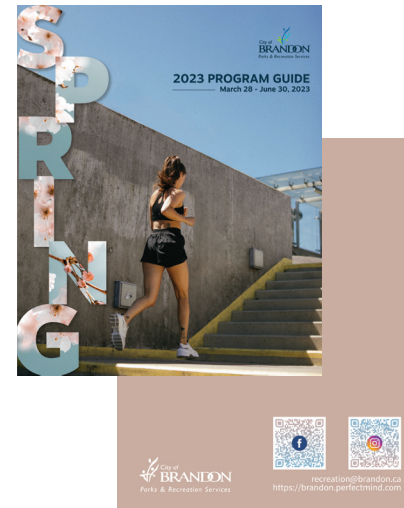
2023 Visual for Stats

			
FACEBOOK		INSTAGRAM	
Followers	Reach	Followers	Reach
6,826	419,440	1299	73,697

SALES & MARKETING

Program Guides

We have created many program guides in collaboration with ITC; fresh guides are being presented in the Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall program sessions. These guides highlight the events and activities that Parks & Recreation is hosting.





recreation@brandon.ca
www.brandon.ca/recreation

