

Executive Summary



The Kelowna Parks Master Plan provides a roadmap for how the City will expand, manage, and invest in its parks over the next 20 years.

Building on the direction and targets of the Official Community Plan, it outlines priority actions to create a park system that focuses on equity, diversity and community well-being.



Purpose of the Parks Master Plan

High-quality parks and public spaces are essential to livability in urban environments. They support our health and wellbeing and the overall health and resilience of our city, as well as connect us with nature and to each other. Our parks are also an important part of what makes Kelowna unique—showcasing the diverse Okanagan landscapes from the lake to the mountains.

The purpose of Parks Master Plan is to set the long-term priorities for our parks system. The Parks Master Plan establishes a 20-year framework to guide development, management, and investment in public parks and open spaces.

Trends and Drivers

Kelowna is rapidly changing, and the Parks Master Plan responds to a number of trends and drivers.



Keeping pace with growth and change

Kelowna is on track to add 26,000 to 85,000 people to its population by 2041. More parks will be needed to respond to this growth and demographic changes.



Celebrating Kelowna's Unique Sense of Place through Parks

Kelowna is a diverse city. This is reflected in both our cultural diversity as well as the landscapes, ecology and topography of the area. Parks will continue to reflect Kelowna's unique identity and cultures.



Becoming a Sport Tourism and Events Destination

The Parks Master Plan responds to Kelowna as a destination for sport tourism and cultural events. The parks system plays an important role in providing the amenities and infrastructure to support large volumes of visitors, competitors, and events.



Expanding and Connecting Our Waterfront

One of the Official Community Plan (OCP) objectives for Kelowna is to create a connected and publicly accessible waterfront along Okanagan Lake. The Parks Master Plan builds on this vision for a comprehensive Sapphire Shoreline.



Responding to Climate Change

Kelowna's climate is changing, with projected increases in extreme heat and weather events. Parks will continue to be important spaces for cooling down, protecting biodiversity, and supporting resiliency.

Strategic Alignment

The Kelowna Parks Master Plan implements the direction from Kelowna's 2040 Official Community Plan (OCP) and Imagine Kelowna. The Parks Master Plan is also informed by a number of other city-wide policies and plans and, in turn, informs strategies and policies that provide specific direction on the parks system.



Figure 1 : How the Parks Master Plan fits in Kelowna's Planning Framework.

The Parks Master Plan

The Parks Master Plan is made up of two phases. Phase 1 was completed in 2022, and its maps updated in 2025 to reflect the new growth scenario. Phase 2 integrates the mapping results of Phase 1 together with the goals of responding to growth, the focus of local parks, waterfront and water access, sports and recreation, climate and environment, and emphasizing our unique natural and cultural character. The Parks Master Plan Phase 2 is made up of six chapters. A high level summary of each chapter is presented below.

1: Introduction

The purpose and foundational direction of the Parks Master Plan, including Vision, Guiding Principles, and Goals.

2: City-wide Context

Context about the parks system today, growth projections, and how the City is performing on the Official Community Plan targets for parks.

3: City-wide Strategic Approach

City-wide direction for the parks system, divided into thematic sub-themes.

4: Kelowna's Urban Core

Urban Core specific direction and strategies.

5: Kelowna's Suburban Areas

Suburban Area specific direction and strategies.

6: Implementation

Comprehensive list of actions to achieve the direction of the Parks Master Plan and Metrics of Success.

Vision

Where we want to be

The vision and guiding principles are the foundational direction of the Parks Master Plan. All actions identified in the plan must be aligned with the vision and principles.

Kelowna's parks celebrate and protect the unique landscapes and people of the Okanagan Valley.

From the lake to the mountains, they connect our communities through a network of vibrant destinations that bring people together and foster responsible stewardship.

Our parks support a resilient and active city by providing equitable access to diverse recreational and cultural experiences.

Guiding Principles

How we do things

The guiding principles set out the important factors that must be considered in all parks decisions and processes.



Stewardship: Natural areas are protected and managed to support ecological health and to provide natural experiences for present and future generations.



Equity: Parks and amenities are provided and designed inclusively for the safety and enjoyment of everyone, including equity-seeking groups.



Connectivity: Parks are walkable and connect our communities by providing recreational and leisure routes to support active living.



Adaptability: Parks and amenities are managed adaptively to respond to changing needs, ensure resiliency, and respond to future opportunities.



Vibrancy: Parks contribute to community vibrancy by supporting a variety of year round activities, experiences, and needs in shared spaces.



Celebration: Parks bring people together, foster a sense of place and community, and express the diverse culture and histories of our region.



Collaboration: The City works with regional partners, community organizations, and the private sector to fund, acquire, develop, and program parks.

Goals

What we plan to achieve

The goals set out the main city-wide direction and priorities for the Parks Master Plan over the next 20 years.



Growth

Kelowna's park space and access targets are met through strategic land acquisition and park development, focused on priority growth areas.



Local Parks

Local parks and their amenities are inclusively designed and distributed equitably across Kelowna.



Waterfront

Kelowna's waterfront is connected and access is provided to it and Kelowna's creeks and ponds to achieve access across the City to water and water-based activities.



Sports and Recreation

Sports and recreational amenities are expanded and enhanced to support both local sports and Kelowna's role as a sport tourism destination.



Climate and Environment

Healthy and connected ecological network that contributes to the city's climate resilience and biodiversity.



Park Uniqueness

Kelowna's parks are designed to reflect their unique natural and cultural context, including neighbourhoods, urban spaces, arts and culture, and spaces with opportunities for reconciliation for indigenous peoples.

City-wide Context

Growth Context

Kelowna is rapidly evolving into a more urban and dynamic regional hub, with a projected increase of between 26,000 and 63,000 new residents between 2025 to 2041.

Just under three quarters of this growth will be focused within the City's Urban Core and the remainder in Suburban Areas. This growth is accompanied by shifting demographics and increasing—and changing—demands on parks and open spaces across the community. As a result, the City must carefully consider what park services are provided, where they are located, and how they can be delivered effectively and efficiently in the future.



170,300

2025 Population

Source: Environics, 2025



233,000

2041 High-Growth Scenario

Source: BC Stats, 2025

Kelowna's Urban Core

Kelowna's Urban Core is made up of the Core Area and Urban Centres.

Core Area: The Core Area includes neighbourhoods that are adjacent to and connecting the 5 Urban Centres within the central part of the city. The Core Area will provide a wide variety of housing forms, focusing primarily on ground-oriented housing, such as smaller homes, house-plexes and row housing, along with low rise apartments along key corridors.

Urban Centres: are key hubs of employment, housing, entertainment, and shopping, that are characterized by compact, mixed-use, higher-density development. Kelowna's five Urban Centres are **Downtown, Pandosy, Capri Landmark, Rutland, and Midtown.**

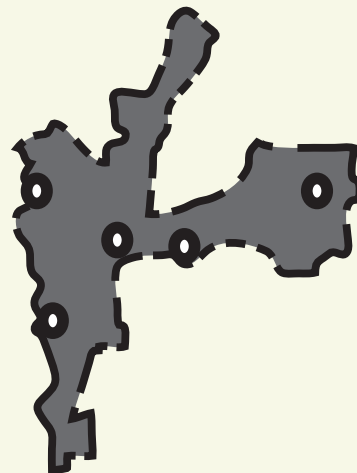
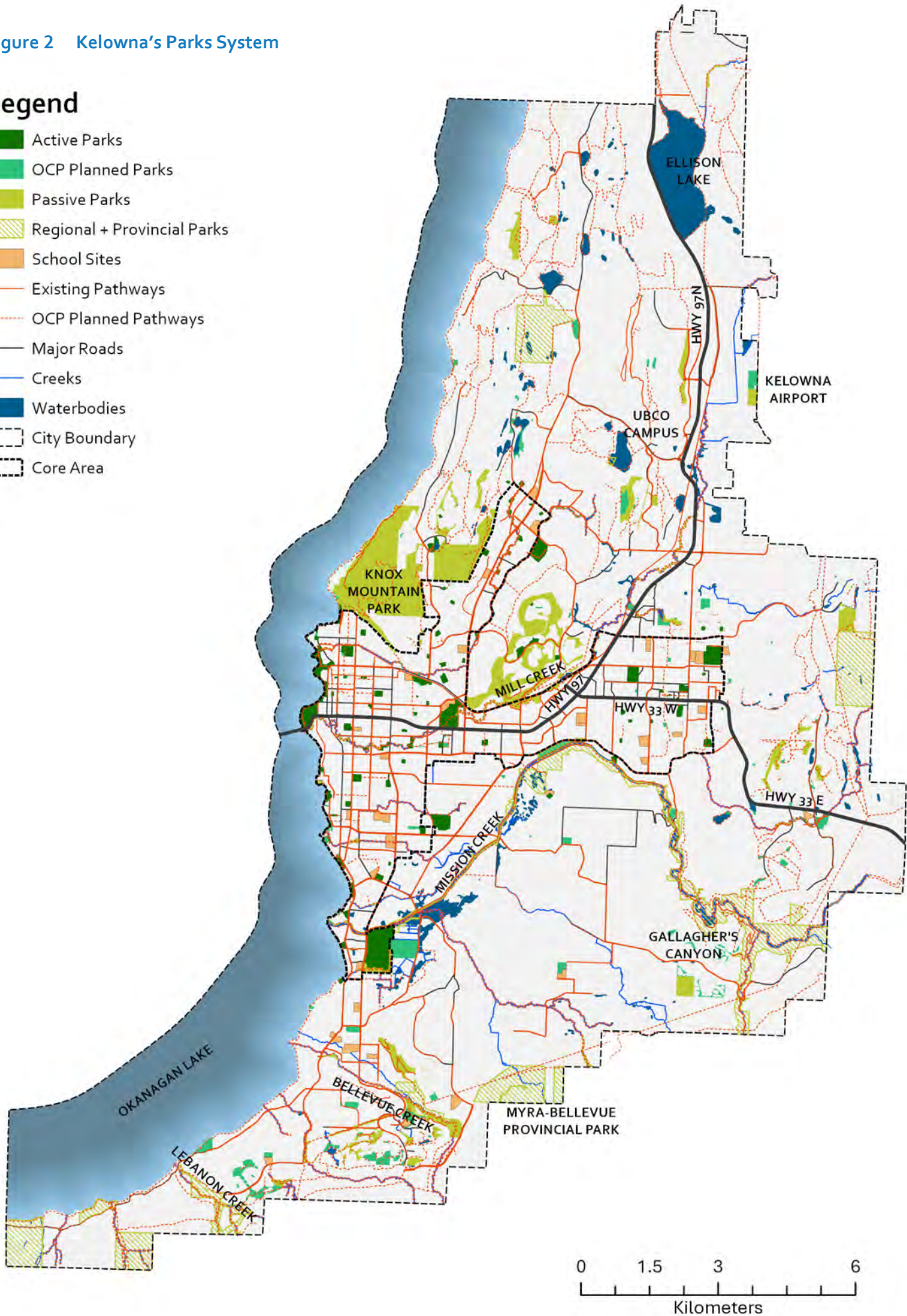


Figure 2 Kelowna's Parks System

Legend

- Active Parks
- OCP Planned Parks
- Passive Parks
- Regional + Provincial Parks
- School Sites
- Existing Pathways
- OCP Planned Pathways
- Major Roads
- Creeks
- Waterbodies
- City Boundary
- Core Area



Achieving Official Community Plan (OCP) Park Targets

The OCP establishes targets for both amount of parkland per person and level of access to parks, to ensure parks remain an integral part of the city as it grows.

Active Parkland target

2.2 hectares per 1,000 people

Linear Park target

1.0 kilometre per 1,000 people

City-wide proximity to Local or Passive Park target

500 metres

Urban Core proximity to Local Parks target

400 metres

Types of Parks

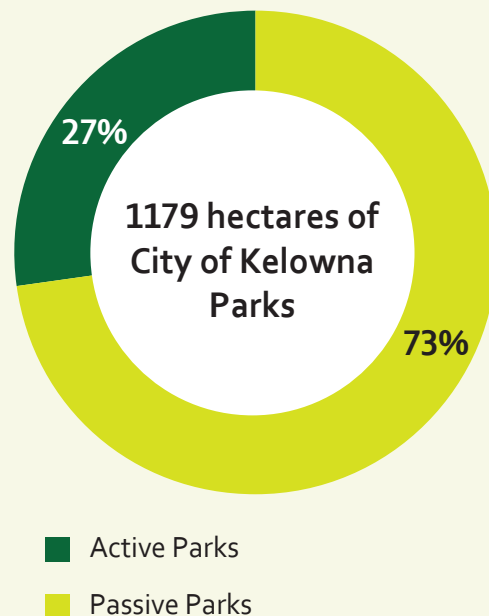
The City manages two main types of Parkland: **Active Parks** and **Passive Parks**.

Active Parks include Neighbourhood, Community, Recreational, and City-wide Parks, which typically provide a range of amenities to support sports, recreation, and leisure activities. **Local Parks** are a subset of Active Parks, which include Neighbourhood and Community Parks.

Passive Parks include Natural Areas and Linear Parks which typically don't include the same level of formal amenities, but often provide trails and seating to support nature-based activities.

There are also many other types of parks in the City that are managed by other jurisdictions, including Provincial Parks, Regional Parks, and school grounds.

More detail on Kelowna's classes of parks can be found in the Parkland Acquisition Guidelines (2011).



Active Parkland Target

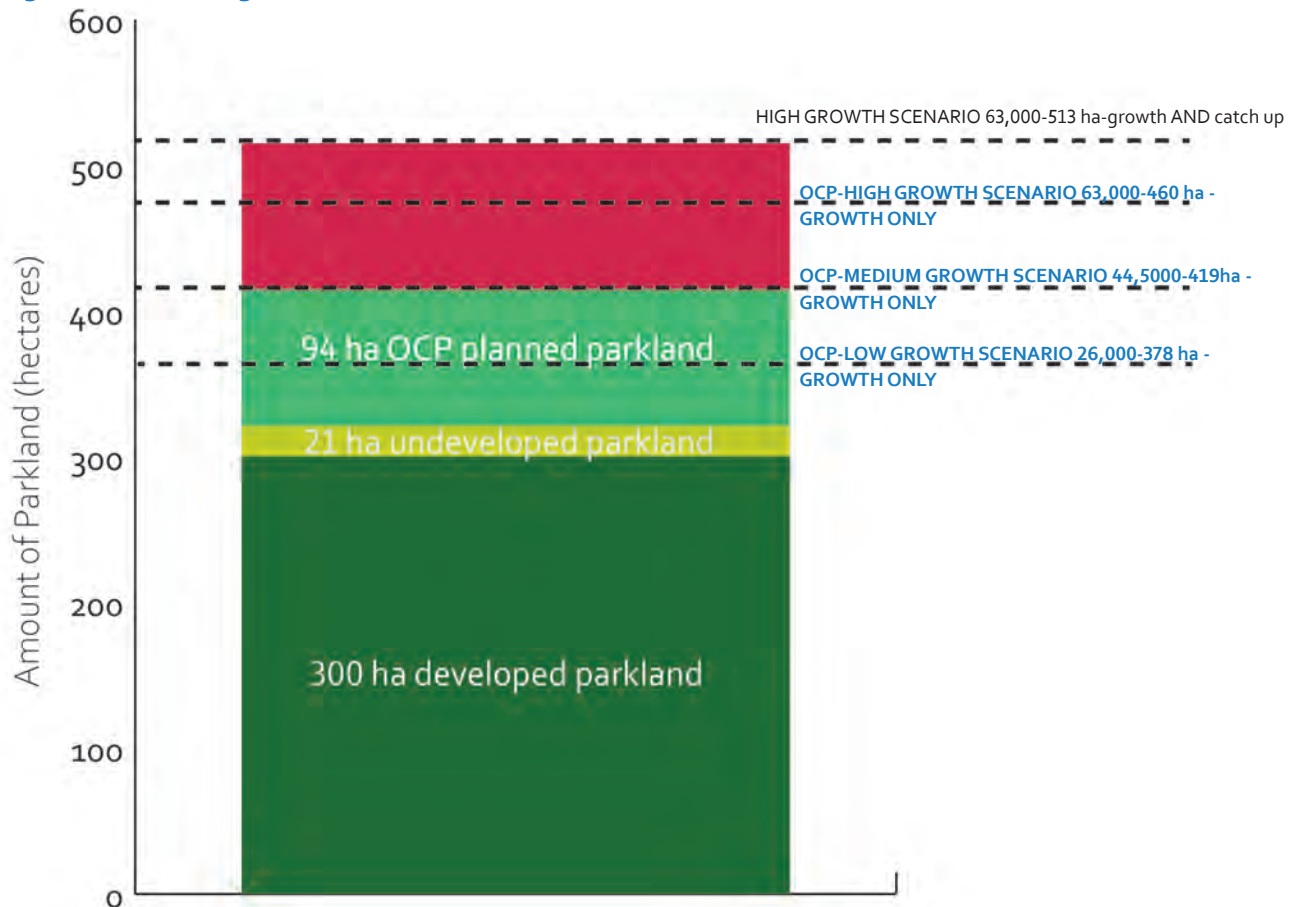
Kelowna currently has 167 Active Parks, totaling 321 hectares of land. As of 2025, the city has **1.88 hectares of Active Parks per 1000 people**—slightly below the OCP target of 2.2 hectares per 1000 people. This is a current gap of 54 hectares. The OCP identifies 94 hectares of future parks for the City to acquire, which would exceed the 2025 target.

Current Active Parks per
Population (2025)

1.88 hectares
per 1,000 people

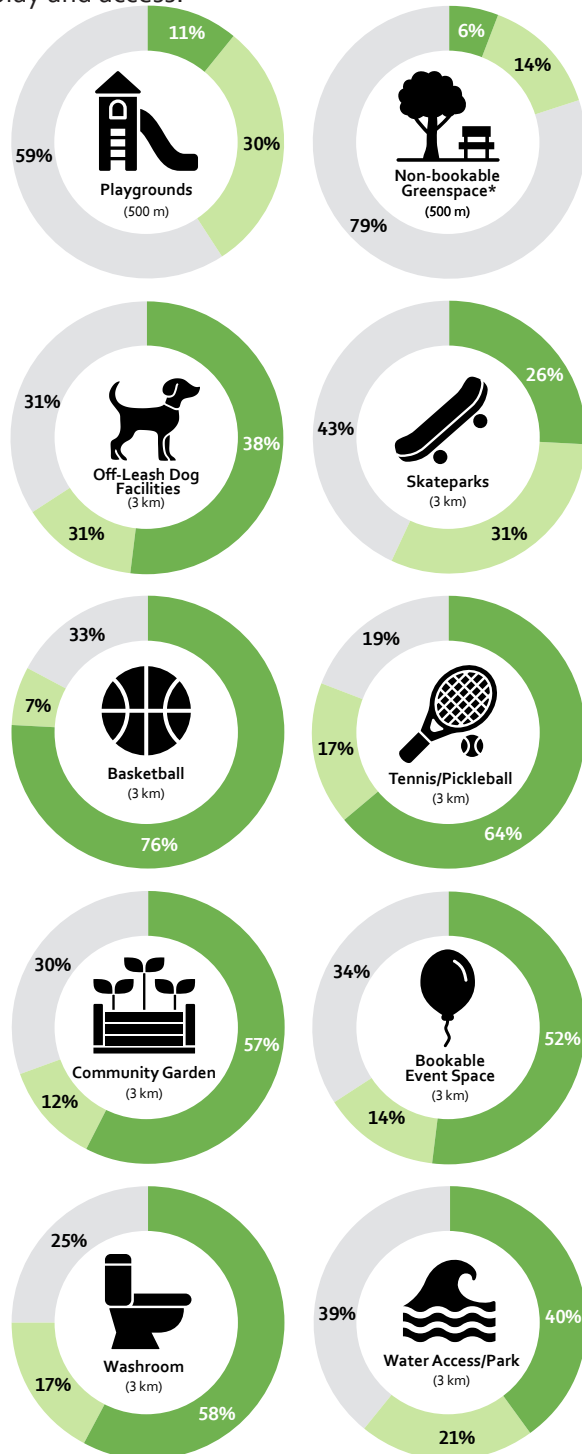
Figure 3 illustrates projections relative to the OCP target for parkland based on anticipated growth scenarios for population to 2041. In the Low Growth Scenario, with 26,000 additional residents in Kelowna by 2041, an additional 57ha of parkland is needed to achieve the OCP target. This is well within the 94 ha currently identified as PARK land use in the OCP. In the High Growth Scenario, with an additional 63,000 residents, an additional 139ha of parkland is needed to achieve the OCP target, representing a deficit of 45ha from what is already identified as PARK land use in the OCP. Should a 'Medium' Growth Scenario result in 2041, with an additional 45,000 residents, an additional 98 ha of PARK land would be needed, representing a deficit of 4 ha of what is currently identified in the OCP. Also shown, for information as a metric, is the amount of parkland that would be needed to achieve 2.2 ha/1000 for current residents and the High Growth Scenario in 2041. This would require 192 additional parkland to achieve this standard. Note that this is a measure for context only. For planning, only anticipated growth is accommodated in the measures for OCP targets.

Figure 3 OCP Targets relative to Growth Scenarios.



Amenities

The Parks Master Plan looks at how parks and their amenities are distributed across the city. Considering the 2041 high growth scenario, the biggest gaps in access will be non-bookable greenspaces, skateparks, playgrounds, and water play and access.



■ 2+ Amenities ■ 1 Amenity ■ No Access
% people with amenity access within catchment

Park Proximity Target

Because of Kelowna's geography and historical growth, parks are not evenly distributed across the city. This means in some areas of the city, it takes longer to get to a park. A catchment analysis was used to evaluate these gaps (Figure 30).

When considering both Municipal and Non-municipal open spaces, 78% of residents have access to a park within 500 metres of their home. When measuring against the OCP proximity target, 66% of residents have a neighbourhood, community, linear, or natural area park within a 500 metre walk from home.

Measuring Proximity using Catchment Analysis

A catchment analysis uses the network of roads, sidewalks, and trails to calculate walking routes and uses this to determine how far it takes to travel from a specific feature or park. This is a more useful analysis than a typical "buffer" or "birds eye" catchment, as it takes into account on the ground routes and existing barriers to access.

Buffer: An area reflecting an even 500 metre radius from a park's centre, ignoring urban form and physical obstacles.

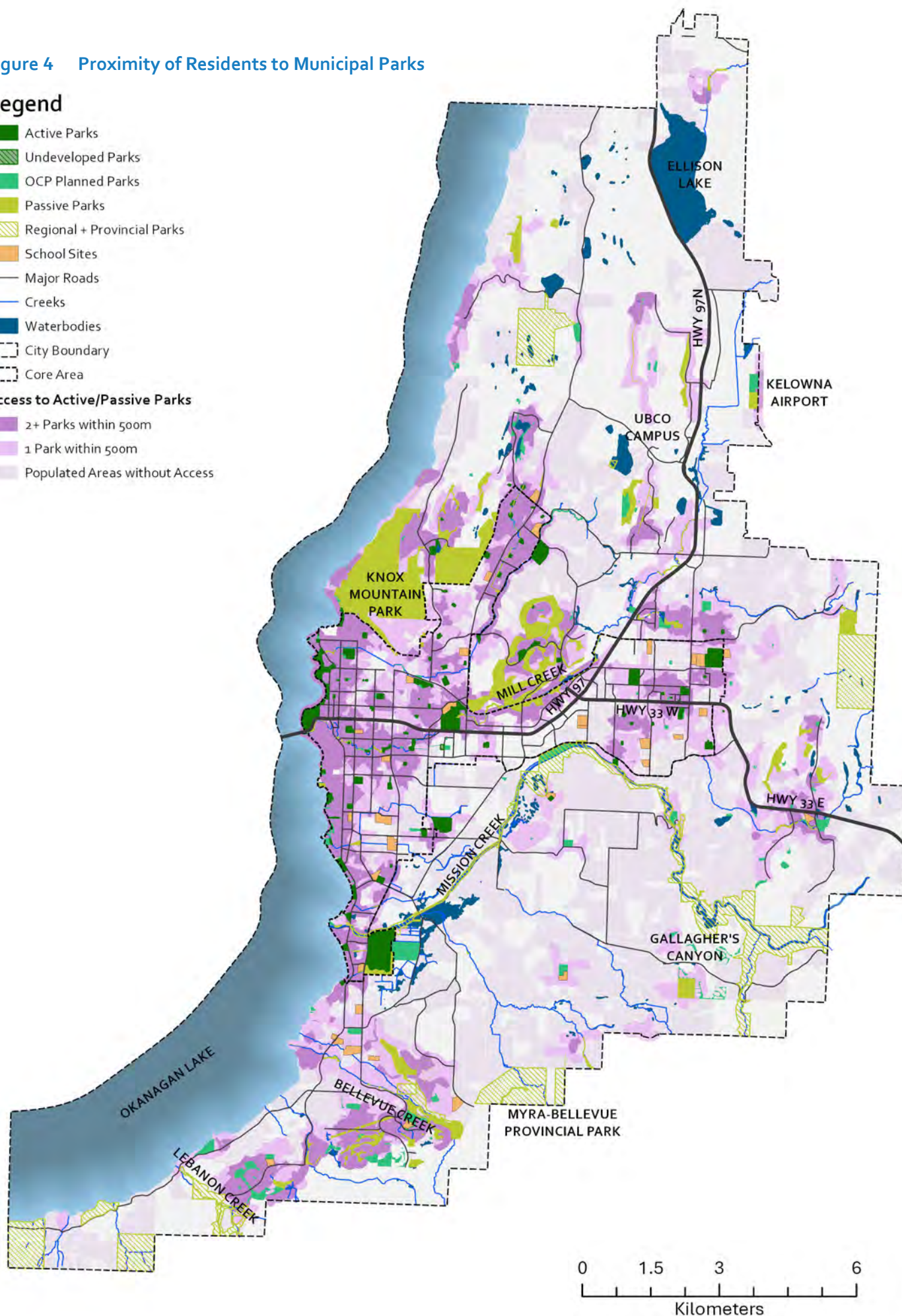
Catchment: An area following walkable 500 metre distances along roads and pathways.



Figure 4 Proximity of Residents to Municipal Parks

Legend

- Active Parks
 - Undeveloped Parks
 - OCP Planned Parks
 - Passive Parks
 - Regional + Provincial Parks
 - School Sites
 - Major Roads
 - Creeks
 - Waterbodies
 - City Boundary
 - Core Area
- Access to Active/Passive Parks**
- 2+ Parks within 500m
 - 1 Park within 500m
 - Populated Areas without Access



City-wide Strategic Approaches

The city-wide strategic approaches provide direction at a city-wide level for the different service areas influenced by parks. The Parks Master Plan provides this guidance for:

- 3.1 Acquisition and Development
- 3.2 Urban Local Parks
- 3.3 Waterfront & Water Access
- 3.4 Sports & Recreation
- 3.5 Culture & Events
- 3.6 Climate & Environment



Acquisition & Development

Focus park investment on acquiring strategic land and developing parks that address access gaps, support growth areas, and meet long-term recreation needs.



Urban Local Parks

Expand and renew playgrounds, greenspaces, community gardens, dog parks, spray parks, and supporting amenities to meet the everyday needs of residents.



Waterfront & Water Access

Enhance connection to the lake through the Sapphire Shoreline—a concept for improving access along and to the waterfront—supported by expanded lake entry points, paddle amenities, and new places to cool off across the city.



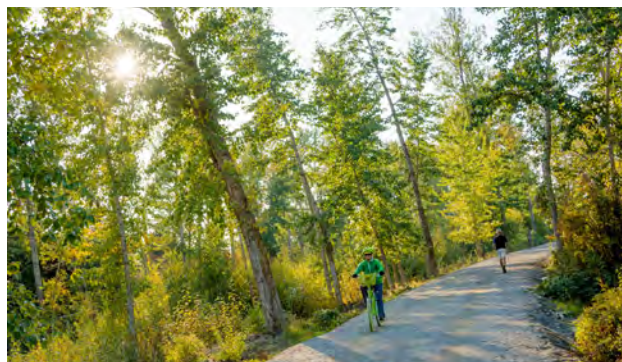
Culture & Events

Strengthen the cultural role of parks by supporting events, interpretation, public art, wayfinding, and inclusive spaces that celebrate Kelowna's identity.



Sports & Recreation

Deliver high-quality, multi-purpose sport facilities through a Feature Destination and Satellite Hub model, improving both community access and tournament capacity.



Climate & Environment

Enhance climate resilience by integrating green infrastructure, expanding the tree canopy, restoring natural areas, and designing parks that cool, absorb, and protect.

Sapphire Shoreline

The Sapphire Shoreline is a big idea to connect 27 kilometres of Kelowna's waterfront—linking parks, beaches, amenities, and the lake itself to strengthen the four-season experiences our city offers. It strings together the gems of our lakefront: distinctive spaces offering a diversity of activities, where every resident and visitor can find their place along the water.





Urban Core

Kelowna's Urban Core includes the highest density and most built-up areas of the city, which are anticipated to accommodate most of Kelowna's future growth.

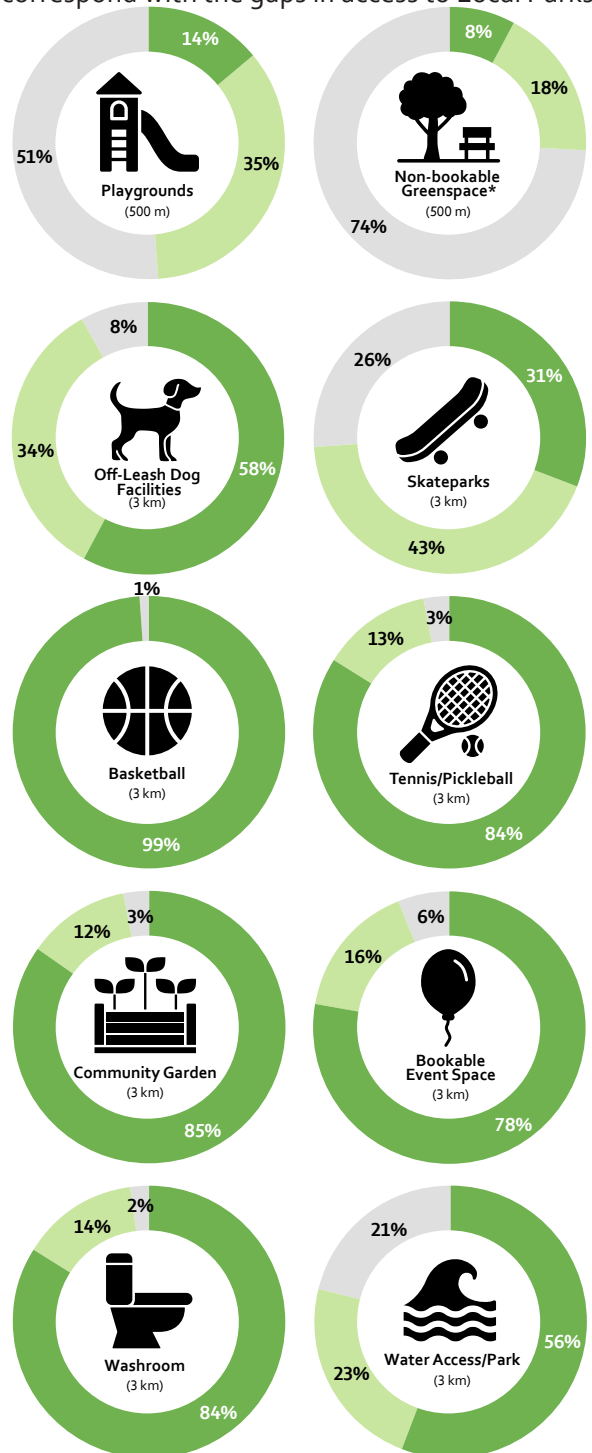
Proximity Target

The Official Community Plan (OCP) sets out a specific proximity target for the Urban Core of 400 metres to a Local Park to ensure urban residents have access to local park amenities. A catchment analysis was completed for the Urban Core (Figure 31).

Half (50%) of Urban Core residents meet the OCP target today. The other half of the population in the Urban Core must travel more than 400 metres to get to a Local Park. The Parks Master Plan identifies several acquisition areas to address these gaps.

Amenities

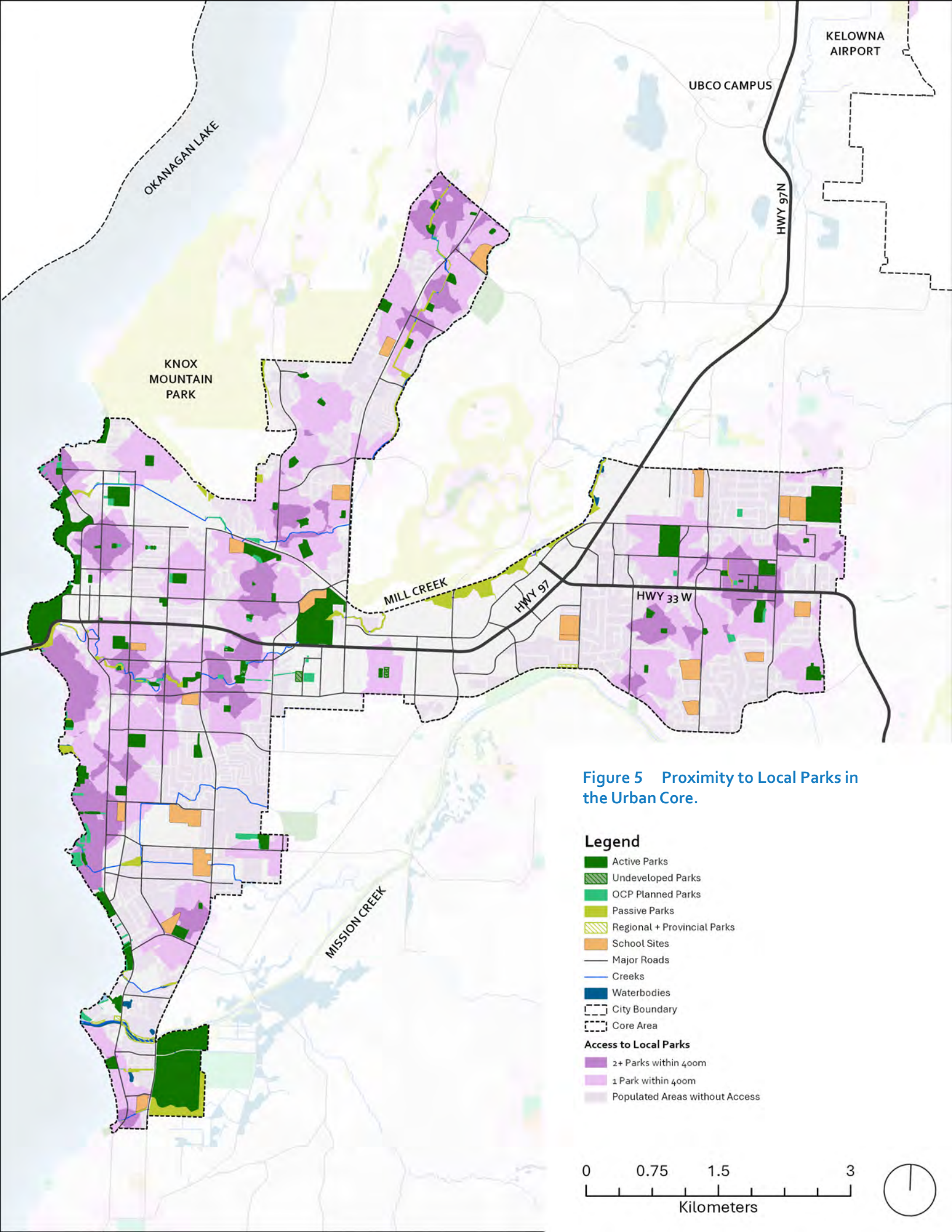
Across the whole Urban Core, the most significant gaps are Non-bookable Greenspace and Playgrounds, which were assessed at a 500-metre catchment. These types of amenities are important for leisure and supporting residents and visitors in urban areas. The gaps for these amenities generally correspond with the gaps in access to Local Parks.



■ 2+ Amenities ■ 1 Amenity ■ No Access

% people with amenity access within catchment

*2000 m² or greater



Implementation

The Implementation section outlines how the Parks Master Plan will be carried out over the next decade. It translates the direction set out in the earlier chapters into implementation actions for the delivery of new parks, amenities, and experiences that reflect community needs.

Implementation Actions Table

The implementation actions are prioritized into ongoing, short-term (1-3 years), medium-term (4-10 years), and long-term (10+ years) actions. These are grouped into the following categories:

Relationships and Engagement: Actions such as public communications and collaboration with partners.

Process and Monitoring: Actions such as creating a dashboard of metrics for the Parks Master Plan and tracking data.

Park Acquisition and Development: Actions such as pursuing alternate methods and funding to acquire parks.

New Strategies and Guidelines: Actions such as the creation of new amenity-specific plans and guidelines for park design.

Internal Collaboration: Actions that require internal collaboration between City departments.

Existing Plan and Policy Updates: Actions such updating OCP policies and implementing existing plans.

10-Year Capital Plan: Actions that are outlined in the existing 10-Year Capital Plan.

Metrics of Success

The metrics of success provide key indicators to track the overall progress of the Parks Master Plan. Data should be collected annually, and compiled at 3, 5 and 10 year increments.

Goals	Metrics	Success
Overall	number of implementation actions completed	↑ increasing
 Growth	percent of population within 500m proximity to a park	↑ increasing
	percent of population within 400 m proximity Local Park in the Urban Core	↑ increasing
	percent of population with access to each amenity within its catchment	↑ increasing
 Local Parks	number of parks	↑ increasing
	total area of Active Parks per 1000 people	2.2ha / 1000 people
	total km of Linear Parks per person	1.0km / 1000 people
	total area acquired	↑ increasing
 Water Access	percent of population with access to the Lake or water feature within 3 km	↑ increasing
	kilometres of connected trail along the waterfront	↑ increasing
	kilometres of publicly accessible waterfront	↑ increasing
 Sports and Recreation	percent of population with access to sport amenities within its catchment	↑ increasing
	number of sporting events hosted in the city	↑ increasing
	total capacity of bookable sport facilities	↑ increasing or meeting total demand
 Climate and Environment	% natural areas in parks	↑ increasing
	% Tree canopy in parks	↑ increasing
	Hectares of natural area restored	↑ increasing
 Park Uniqueness	Natural site elements and community character incorporated into park designs	↑ increasing