



## Frequently Asked Questions about the Spruce Grove Neighbourhood Park

### Q1: Why is a park being built in the Spruce Grove subdivision?

Park development is a required consideration for all Subdivisions in Saskatchewan. As part of the Spruce Grove Subdivision and Concept Plan, approved by Council on April 25, 2024 the developer was required to dedicate 10% of the land area of the Subdivision for park and greenspace. A Service Agreement with the developer, Whitford Construction, mandated that they were responsible for the entire cost of developing the land they dedicated. This aligns with the Village's 20-Year Parks and Green Spaces Master Plan and Strategic Plan pillars of **Recreation & Culture** and **Infrastructure & Environment**.

### Q2: Where will the park be developed?

The new park will be constructed along Birch Street will include the land dedicated by Whitford Construction plus adjacent municipal land owned by the Village that was dedicated by the developer of the Hayes subdivision in the neighborhood. At the time of dedication, the developer was not required to develop the park space. As a result, there never was no park developed for the Hayes subdivision. With a commitment to provide green spaces for recreation within neighborhoods in the community, Council committed to complete improvements to the municipal reserve and negotiated with Whitford Construction to do the work at the same time as they developed the park space for their subdivision.

### Q3: Who is paying for the park?

The Service Agreement with Whitford Construction required each party to be responsible for their share of the cost based on land area. The total cost of the park \$170,000

- **Whitford Construction (Developer):** Contributed 40% of the land and are responsible for 40% of the cost. Their contribution of in-kind through labour and materials (trail construction and landscaping) will exceed the 40% of the total park development cost.
- **Village of Candle Lake:** Contributed 60% of the land and will cover 60% of the costs, primarily through external sources:
  - \$20,000 sponsorship/donation from a service club
  - \$65,000 third-party grant

- \$15,000 from the Village's recreation reserve fund

**No new taxes** are being levied to fund this park.

#### **Q4: Is this park being built to help the developer sell lots?**

No. The Village has fulfilled the need for park space for the existing neighborhoods by including the development of the existing municipal reserve in the service agreement with Whitfords. The park includes land dedicated by Whitfords and municipal reserve lands already owned by the Village. Together they will serve all the existing nearby neighborhoods as well as the new subdivision. It has been designed so that it can serve the residents who live in and around Spruce Grove. Ensuring community amenities are developed in new neighbourhoods is standard best practice in community development—not a benefit solely to developers.

#### **Q5: Who decided what would be included in the Park design?**

The developer was required to prepare and present a comprehensive Concept Plan as part of the subdivision approval process. The plan was required to include a park space and a conceptual plan of the proposed improvements. The first draft concept plan included several amenities to align with the 20-year Parks and Green Spaces Master Plan which had identified the area for a potential Destination Park. However, based on feedback received from a public open house in May of 2024, the developer scaled back the design in their final approved Concept Plan to be reflective of a Neighborhood Park.

#### **Q8: How was the public involved in this project?**

- A **design committee** was formed led by Associated Engineers landscape architect and civil engineers along with representation from the developer, Council, and Administration.
- The proposed design was reviewed by Council before it was mailed to nearby residents and presented at a public open house.
- Feedback was received at the public meeting and consideration was given to maintaining the natural environment and preserving as much of the existing forest as possible and reducing Village costs by finding external funding sources

#### **Q6: I heard this project was defeated. Why is it proceeding now?**

After public consultation which included notification and a public hearing, a plan for the park was presented to Council for approval. In November 2024, a motion to approve the plan was presented to Council and an amendment to the motion was made and passed only approving the development of the trail system in the park. In February 2025 Council requested minor modifications to the plan to reduce the size of the off-street parking and enlarge the tree buffer along the front of the park and subsequently passed a resolution to add other elements of the park including a sledding hill, a natural playground structure, misc. park furniture and twelve off street parking spaces. Revisiting previous decisions based on new input, funding availability, and revised designs is part of Council's normal democratic process.

### **Q7: What about liability concerns?**

Liability is a valid concern and is addressed through:

- Professional design and engineering input from AE engineer and landscape architect
- Risk mitigation strategies (e.g., natural playground structures)
- Proper Park operation and maintenance procedures evidenced in new RVCL Policy.
- Insurance coverage for cases where a municipality is found liable

While earlier projects may have been denied due to liability, evolving design standards and new approaches now allow us to develop safe, low-risk recreation spaces.

### **Q8: Why does this subdivision get a park when others have been told “no”?**

In the past possibly some subdivisions were not provided with developed park spaces at the time they were developed or even denied subsequent applications for the neighborhood to develop municipal land in their neighbourhoods. These decisions may have been due to limited capacity to maintain the development within a park or other operational concerns. The village has since increased our capacity to maintain these public spaces. In addition, there have been many changes in development standards since some of the subdivisions were developed. Present day best practice is to provide a public space for residents to recreate, gather to socialize, or just enjoy the natural environment. With this current subdivision, Council has set this high standard for future subdivision development in the Village.

### **Q9: How can my neighbourhood get a developed park space?**

Council recognize that some neighbourhoods are deficient in park space and as a result they created the Community Matching Grant Policy. This policy allows community groups, including residents to apply for matching funding from the Village for approved projects on municipal lands in their neighbourhoods. We're open to re-exploring proposals in other subdivisions with these updated tools in mind. We are committed to improving park equity across all areas of Candle Lake, and welcome community-led initiatives and feedback.

### **Q10: Why not build a destination park near the hall or existing amenities instead?**

As previously stated, the Spruce Grove Park was redesigned to be a neighbourhood park and not a destination park. Neighbourhood parks provide a place right in residential neighbourhood for families to enjoy close to their homes. On the other hand, a destination park, such as the one near the RVCL Community Hall (with parking, washrooms, rink, etc.) typically require users to travel outside their neighbourhood to enjoy them. Both types of parks are important and serve different community needs.

## **Q11: What amenities will be included in the park?**

Approved features include:

- Walking trails
- A natural playground structure
- A sledding hill
- 12-stall parking area
- Park furnishings (benches, waste bins, signage)
- Future amenities may be added during Phase 2 of the subdivision

## **Have more questions?**

Please refer to our website for details concerning the Spruce Grove Park. If you have questions about this project or have ideas for developing park spaces in your neighbourhood, please reach out to the Village Office at (306) 929-2236.