

City of Windsor

National Urban Park

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a National Urban Park?

- Parks Canada has launched a new National Urban Parks program in order to support access to nature in urban centres across Canada. Launched in August 2021, the program aims to create a network of national urban parks in the coming years.
- Parks Canada will collaborate with Windsor and other cities, with Indigenous partners, with residents, with provinces, and with various other stakeholders to create or expand urban parks that are readily accessible to people in Canada's urban centres and provide opportunities to connect to, and learn about, local nature and culture.
- National Urban Parks will contribute to protecting biodiversity, supporting climate resilience, connecting people to nature, improving mental health and wellness, increasing social inclusion, and supporting reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

Why is the Ojibway Prairie Complex being considered for a National Urban Park, isn't it already protected?

- The National Urban Park designation would signal to residents and the world that the Ojibway Prairie Complex is an important ecological and cultural area that is part of the fabric of Windsor, and that the city, Parks Canada, and other partners have come together to ensure that these values are maintained for both current and future generations of Canadians to enjoy.
- National urban parks may include a mix of different types of land. This could include existing, expanded and new protected areas, as well as other types of land that will be managed to conserve nature and provide places for people to connect with the rich natural and cultural heritage of the city.
- As a National Urban Park within the City, site management would focus on nature conservation and protection, reconciliation with Indigenous partners, promotion of universal access to green spaces for all, and removal of possible barriers related to transportation and infrastructure.

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Where could the National Urban Park be located?

- The City of Windsor is collaborating with Parks Canada in the initial stages toward creating a National Urban Park in Windsor's southwest end.
- The focus of the study area is the Ojibway Prairie Complex, which is home to oak forest, savannah, and tallgrass prairie habitats. The study area includes the following areas:
 - Ojibway Park
 - Ojibway Prairie Provincial Nature Reserve
 - Tallgrass Prairie Park
 - Spring Garden Natural Area
 - Black Oak Heritage Park
 - Ojibway Shores
 - Oakwood Natural Area
- The most striking aspect of the Ojibway Prairie Complex is the tremendous variety of its vegetation and animal life. Wetlands, forest, savannah and prairie ecosystems provide habitat for a great number of rare plants, insects, reptiles, birds and mammals.
- Other nearby natural areas may also be studied or considered for possible inclusion in the National Urban Park, particularly those that enhance opportunities for conservation, connectivity, accessibility and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

When will Windsor get a National Urban Park?

- Implementing a project such as this takes time. The project is currently in the Pre-Feasibility Assessment phase, which means it is in the initial stages of a multi-phase, multi-year timeline that may eventually lead to the creation of a National Urban Park within our City.
- The City of Windsor is actively working with Parks Canada to coordinate and undertake the necessary feasibility assessments for the park study area.

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What's being done?

- The City will continue working with Parks Canada to advance the objectives of this phase, and to engage with key partners and stakeholders to solicit their input and advice to inform a vision for the park.
- Parks Canada is reaching out to Indigenous communities with historic and linguistic ties to the site to participate in the exploration of the National Urban Park proposal, in the spirit of reconciliation.
- Various studies and assessments of the park study area will be undertaken during this phase to fully understand the natural and cultural values of the sites, their potential for restoration, conservation and use, and to identify associated challenges and potential opportunities.

Can I have a say?

- Yes, we are happy to hear any comments you may have. You can reach us at the email address below. Should the project progress beyond the Pre-Feasibility Assessment phase, there will be opportunities for public engagement to help inform and shape a vision for the park, conservation aims, and visitor experiences.

Will there be any changes to the park from the way it is now? Will I have to pay to get in?

- Determining operational plans, programming and entry fees, if any, will occur in future phases. It is not expected that your experience would change from today; in fact, we expect the designation of a National Urban Park would offer increased opportunities for immersive educational and recreational experiences and connection with the Ojibway Prairie Complex.

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For more information about the National Urban Park program, please visit:

<https://www.pc.gc.ca/en/pun-nup>

For more information about Ojibway Park, please visit:

<https://www.citywindsor.ca/residents/parksandforestry/City-Parks/Pages/Ojibway-Park-.aspx>

If you have any questions or would like to share any comments, please email:

nationalurbanpark@citywindsor.ca

For general information, call 311.