



Connecting Youth to

Teacher/Group Leader
Activity Facilitation Guide



Table of Contents

How to use this guide	Page 3
Part 1: Activity descriptions	Page 4
Activity #1 Create a base map– option 1	Page 5
Activity #1 Create a base map– option 2	Page 6
Activity #2 Emotional mapping	Page 7
Activity #3 Empathy Walk	Page 8
Activity #4 Finding Examples of Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan Guiding Principles	Page 9
Part 2: Activity #5- Design a park of the future	Page 10
Space to design your park	Page 11
Space to describe your park	Page 12
Park surfaces	Page 13
Park features	Page 14
Innovation thinking hat	Page 15
Economic resilience thinking hat	Page 16

Connecting You to Parks

About Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan

The City of Calgary is writing the next 20-year plan on how we develop, redevelop, and manage parks in Calgary. Our goal is to connect you with nature, wellness, culture and each other, through our shared public park spaces.

How to use this guide:

This activity guide is designed to connect your students or youth group to a local park in their community and get them thinking about what matters most when it comes to our city's parks. There are a total of five activities outlined in this guide. You are welcome to complete all of them or pick the ones that work best for your needs.

Part 1 includes three activities titled Create a Base Map, Emotional Mapping and Empathy Walk, which were originally designed by [Sustainable Calgary](#) and included in this guide with their expressed permission. These activities were designed as part of the Reimagine Catwalks Playbook project and the instructions refer to exploring neighbourhoods and catwalks.

For the purpose of this exercise guide, please apply the instructions for each activity to the school yard or local park you have chosen.

The 4th activity in this section, 'Find Examples of Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan Guiding Principles', gets participants to consider best practices in parks planning and look for examples of each in their chosen park or school yard.

Part 2 involves creating a park of the future by applying the project guiding principles. Students can let their creativity and problem solving skills soar to design a future park while wearing different "thinking hats".

Part 3 requires you to return to the project engagement [Kids Zone](#) page where you or your students can share the results of the activities. This feedback will be summarized and considered as part of the project decision making.

Learning objectives:

- ♦ Increasing connection with youth's school yard or community park
- ♦ Identifying and understanding the needs of others
- ♦ Considering competing priorities when planning a park
- ♦ Creating solutions by wearing different "hats"

Curriculum connections:

- ♦ Map making
- ♦ Writing
- ♦ Community
- ♦ Local government
- ♦ Geometry

Part 1: Explore your school yard or local park

Activity 1– Create a base map (page 5 & 6)

Objective: Create a map of your school yard or community park to complete the rest of the activities.

Overview: There are two options to create a map. The first option requires printing an existing digital map, and the second requires making a sketch of the area by hand. Clear instruction for each option are outlined on pages 5 and 6. Choose the option that makes most sense for your group or class. You can decide to make one map for the whole class/group, one map for a small group or one map for each participant.

Activity 2- Emotional mapping (page 7)

Objective: Participants map how different spots in their school yard or selected park make them feel and why.

Overview: We recommend following Method #2 (Stationary mapping), outlined on page 7. This method requires participants to pick multiple spots in the park to access how it makes them feel. We recommend selecting a maximum of 5 spots in your chosen park. Participants should record how they feel in each spot and try to explain why.

Sharing your feedback: On the online engagement page, participants will be asked to enter the park's name or address into a map. Teachers or individual participants can then add markers to the corresponding spots on the map and add the emotion(s) they felt in that area and a brief note about why they felt that way. Four markers are colour-coded on the online map exercise for 1) generally positive emotions, 2) neutral emotions, 3) generally negative emotions, and 4) mixed emotions.

Activity 3- Empathy walk (page 8)

Objective: Participants explore the area “in the shoes of another” to think about another person's experience and the concept of equity.

Overview: Provide small groups or individual participants a character or persona of an imaginary, but possible Calgarian who has different considerations. A series of personas can be downloaded from the [Kids Zone](#) page. Participants then move around the area while considering and answering these key questions:

- What does this person feel in your park space?
- What does this person notice?
- What might this person want to change in the park to have a better experience?

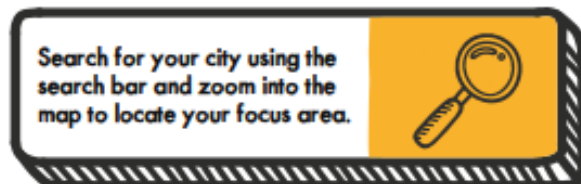
Sharing your feedback: On the online engagement page, participants will be asked to find the persona they used for the exercise and enter the results of their exploration for each question.

Part 1– Activity 1

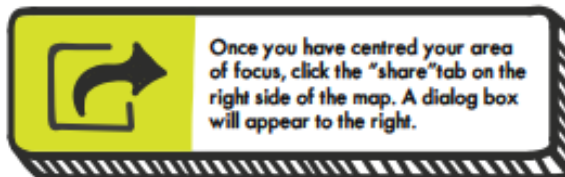
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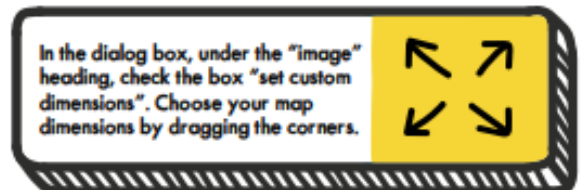
2



3



4



5



HOW TO CREATE A BASE MAP

FIRST THINGS FIRST!


Many of the activities you'll find in the next few sections will benefit from a base map!

OPTION 1 PRINT A BASEMAP

Objectives:

Use this guide to create easy DIY basemaps online with the website www.openstreetmap.org

USING THE TOOL

 Computer and Access to internet



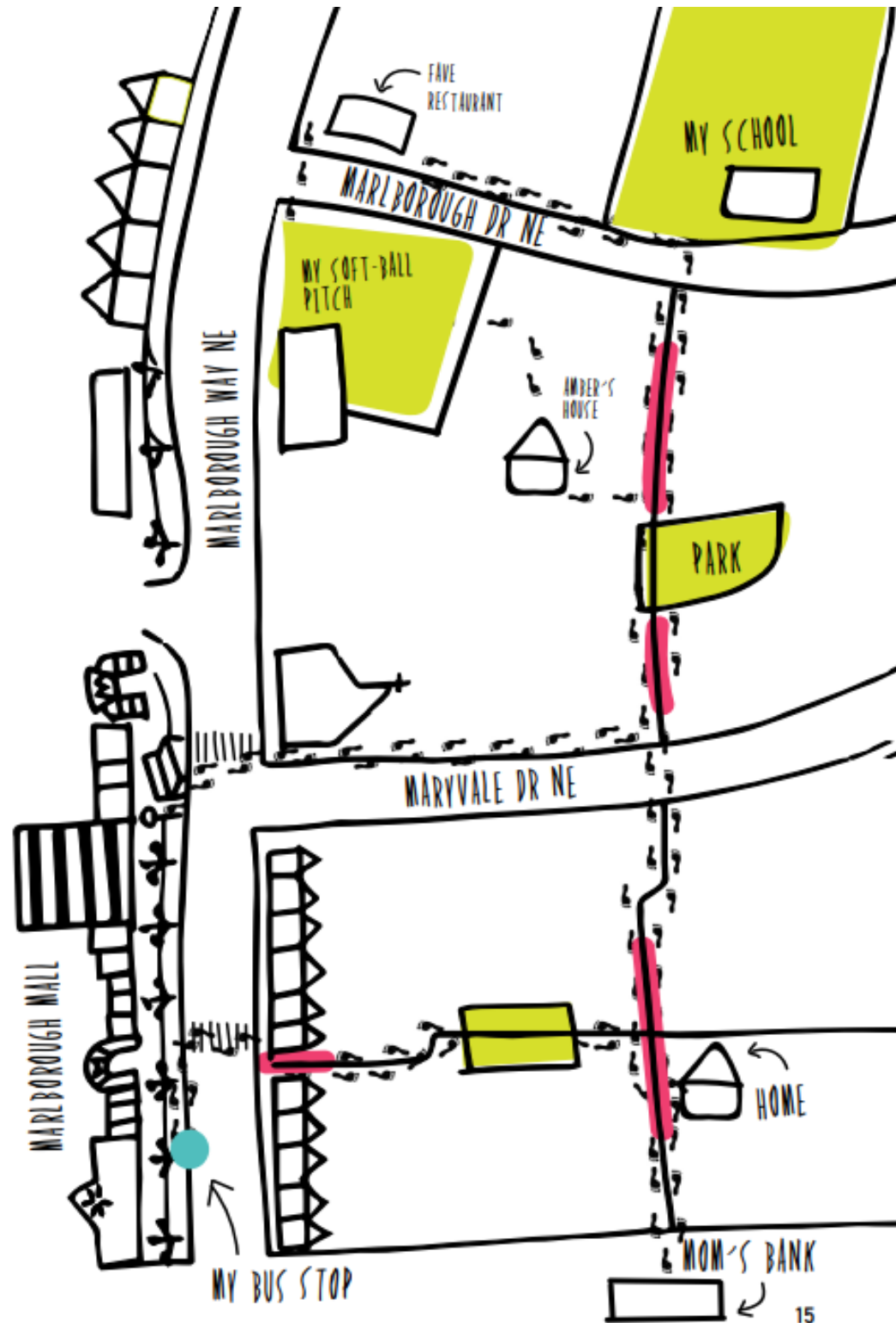
Part 1– Activity 1 continued

OPTION 2

DRAW IT OUT

Drawing your base map creates a more inviting feel. When things are less formal, people feel more comfortable contributing personal experiences - assessing their communities through point-of-view perceptions of the areas, spaces and places they interact with.

How do you see your community when you navigate by foot or bicycle?



Part 1– Activity 2

FACILITATION GUIDE

EMOTIONAL MAPPING

MAP HOW DIFFERENT AREAS OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD MAKE YOU FEEL

Objectives:

How you feel in your community is important. This tool allows participants an opportunity to explore how spaces make them feel at different points in their neighbourhoods. It indicates which areas feel useful, safe, comfortable and interesting, and which areas have room for improvement.

USING THE TOOL

MATERIALS

Materials needed for both methods:



Coloured dot stickers or emoji stickers

If using dot stickers, provide a colour key to associate different dot colours with a spectrum of emotional responses (from very positive to negative).

For Method 1

Route maps for each participant, with key neighbourhood nodes displayed. To create your own basemaps, refer to page 38.



Clipboards and pens



Notetaker with pen and paper

For Method 2



Large map (24 x 36) with nodes displayed



QUICK TIPS

Take into account that different people may experience different emotions. This can stem from factors like age, gender, mobility or past experience.

Use this tool alongside or in addition to other walk audit and mapping tools to add a layer of qualitative emotional observation.

Psssst!

Need Help Printing?
The Federation of Calgary Communities can help!

1. Method 1 (Walk-about)

- Give each participant their own neighbourhood base map with key points marked as well as a sheet of coloured stickers or emoji stickers.
- As a group, walk between key points.
- At each point, have a short discussion about people's emotional responses. The notetaker should write down notes from this discussion.
- Invite participants to put a sticker that best describes their feelings on the map at the key point. Invite them to write feelings that describe their emotion at the site (use next page for ideas).
- Participants can also colour the route between points on the map to record their feelings in transit.
- Compile the data by averaging out all of the ratings of each point to see which points were rated the most positive and the most negative.

- Compile the ratings onto a map of the points to demonstrate findings.

2. Method Two (Stationary mapping activity)

- Orient participants using the large base map, and explain each point.
- Provide participants with coloured stickers or emoji stickers.
- Ask participants to place a dot on the map that best describes their feelings at each point that they are familiar with. Invite them to write feelings that describe their emotions at that point (use next page).
- Take a photo of the completed map.
- While mapping, participants can discuss the benefits of good design and factors that increase or limit physical activity in the community. Document feedback from participants.

Part 1– Activity 3

FACILITATION GUIDE

EMPATHY WALK



Evaluating accessibility and safety for the visually impaired in catwalks with the YMCA's Kids in Motion.

EXPERIENCE YOUR COMMUNITY FROM YOUR NEIGHBOURS' SHOES

Objectives:

Different people have differing experiences relating to mobility and safety as they travel through their neighbourhoods. Understanding these different experiences can build equity and empathy. It can also help identify accessibility concerns and infrastructural gaps in the built environment.

This is an important tool that creates awareness about potential challenges faced by different users affecting their mobility, use and presence in certain spaces. It also shows that when a community is built with different people in mind, everyone can use it.

USING THE TOOL

1. Give participants profiles or support participants in developing their own user roles. A few examples are provided in the next page.
2. Allow the participants a minute or two to read the profile they have been assigned.
3. Walk around the neighbourhood and ask participants to think about the issues the person they are role-playing would experience.
 - Invite participants to make notes on basemaps.
4. Bring the participants together afterwards to discuss their experiences. Take notes from the discussion, and collect participants' maps and handouts.



MATERIALS



Clipboards



Paper and pens to record feedback



QUICK TIPS

Lived experience is valuable. Invite people with differing experiences of mobility to share their perspectives.

Think about all seasons. Facilitating this activity in icy or rainy weather can increase mobility constraints, and provide a valuable perspective.

Consider planning the walk in the evening. This can highlight the experience of traveling through the neighbourhood in the dark, which may pose additional mobility or safety concerns.

Psssst!

Try reaching out to different community groups to introduce a broader scope of diversity and representation.



Part 1– Activity 4

Finding Examples of Connect: Calgary's Parks Plan Guiding Principles

Objective: Explore your school yard or community park to and look for examples of best practices for parks planning.

Overview: This exercise can be completed in different ways, depending on your group's needs. Small groups of participants can each be assigned one principle to explore and find examples, or be given time to look for examples of all principles.

Sharing your feedback: On the online engagement page, participants will be asked to add in the examples they found in their park into an idea generator type format.

The City of Calgary has identified the following guiding principles to direct the future of park planning and decision making in Calgary over the next 20 years. Your group can learn more about each guiding principle by watching the video posted on the engagement [Kids Zone](#) page.

Climate Resiliency: Identify and implement measures to reduce and combat the negative impacts of climate change.

Healthy Environment: Improve the health and functionality of Calgary's natural environment through decision-making that puts the environment first.

Equity: Increase inclusive and accessible opportunities city-wide by consistently reviewing and evaluating our services.

Calgarians Health and Wellbeing: Take a people-based approach to the development of our parks which supports multidisciplinary planning initiatives and creation of complete communities.

Celebration of Culture: Support the consistent pursuit and preservation of Calgary's history, culture and the principles of Truth and Reconciliation by weaving them into the fabric of our parks.

Part 2– Design a park of the future

Objective: Explore your school yard or community park to and look for examples of best practices for parks planning.

Overview: This exercise does not need to be completed in the park environment, and can even be completed on a different day if desired. Like other activities, this one can be done in different ways, depending on your group's needs. Small groups of participants can work together to design one park, each participant can design their own park, or the whole group could design one park together.

For this exercise, participants design the park of the future that they would like to see. The challenge is for them to achieve the guiding principles in their design, and also wear different thinking hats while making their design.

Option 1– We get you started

- Use the empty design space to begin (page 11)
- Print, cut and paste the park elements provided on pages 13 and 14 OR use the Word version of these design elements to create a digital park design on the computer. The Word doc is available to download on the engagement [Kids Zone](#) page.

Option 2– DIY

- Alternatively, participants can create their park design from scratch, by drawing it out and adding labels to identify each element.
- For either option, participants can also add their own elements to their desired park. This might include things like a skating rink, pond or gazebo. There are no limits to the design, apart from achieving and balancing the guiding principles.

Sharing your feedback: On the online engagement page, participants will be asked to upload a picture of their park and their description of why they chose the features in their park design.

Part 2– Design your park of the future

Use this blank space to **design** your park.

Name of your park: _____

Part 2– Describe your park of the future

Use this space to **describe** your park!

Name of your park: _____

Why is your park the best park for the future?

Surfaces

Paved pathway

Paved pathway

Manicured grass

Manicured grass

Manicured grass



Sports field



Features



Public Art

Amenities



Landscaping



Tree



Tree



Tree



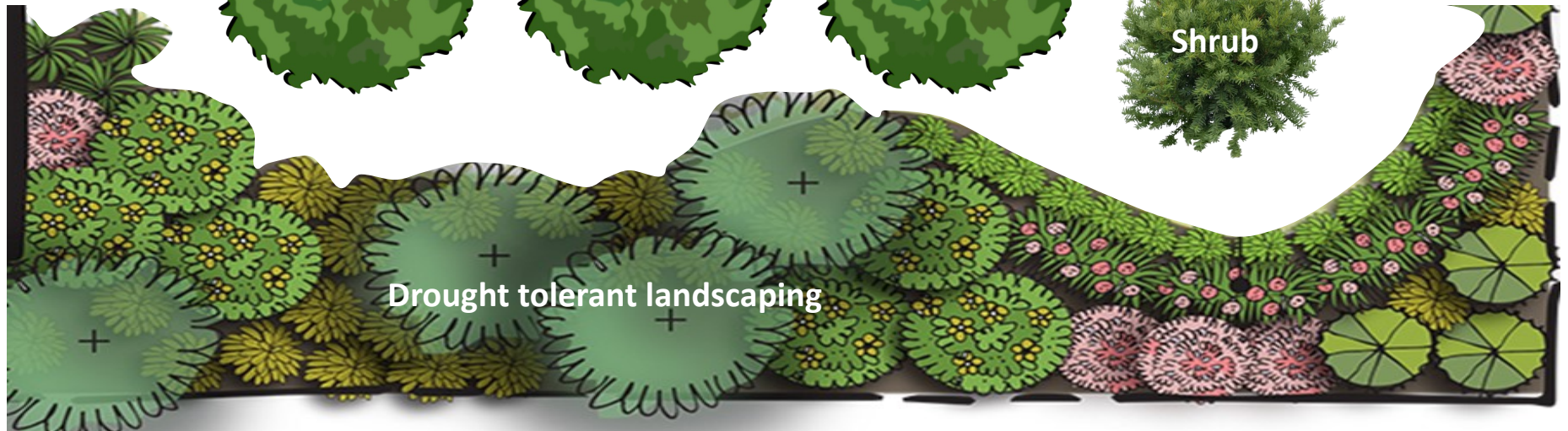
Shrub



Shrub



Shrub



Drought tolerant landscaping



Innovation


What new and exciting ideas could you use to achieve the guiding principles?

How can you ensure that Calgarians with different needs will benefit equally from your park?

How do you design a park for people of all ages?

What would people need in this park on a very hot day?

What would encourage people to use the park in the winter?



Which guiding principle
do you think would cost
the most to achieve in
your park?

How much do you
think each type of
feature or surface
might cost?

Economic Resilience

How much do you
think it costs to
maintain each part
of your park?

Can you think of
interesting ways to
save money?