

# FINAL REPORT

## Town of Blackfalds All-Star Park Master Plan

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## REFERENCES

RC Strategies. (October 31, 2008). *Facility and Parks Needs Assessment Master Plan*.

## 1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

As a growing community, Blackfalds requires new facilities to provide for its active recreational, social and cultural needs. One key site to address the ongoing demand for recreation and public spaces is All-Star Park. All-Star Park is a well-maintained complex of four national level ball diamonds, two soccer pitches, change rooms with hot showers, as well as camping and picnic facilities. It has been designed as a destination sports complex and activity area that can be booked for major local or provincial level tournaments and outdoor social activities. The future expansion of the park will help serve the dynamic demography of Blackfalds with an emphasis on youth and family opportunities.

**A Recreation, Culture, and Parks Needs Assessment and Master Plan is being developed concurrent to this All-Star Park planning exercise. Enhancements to the All-Star Park site outlined in this report reflect broader community priorities that have been identified through the Master Plan.**



Figure 1-1: Location of All-Star Park in the Town of Blackfalds

## 1.1 Site Characteristics

All-star Park is a 26.4-hectare site located in the southwest corner of the Town of Blackfalds near the busy Queen Elizabeth II Highway. The site possesses some topographic relief, principally in the northwest corner, while the south half of the site is relatively flat. The highland areas offer panoramic views to the south while the open prairie landscape ensures the site is easy to surveil.

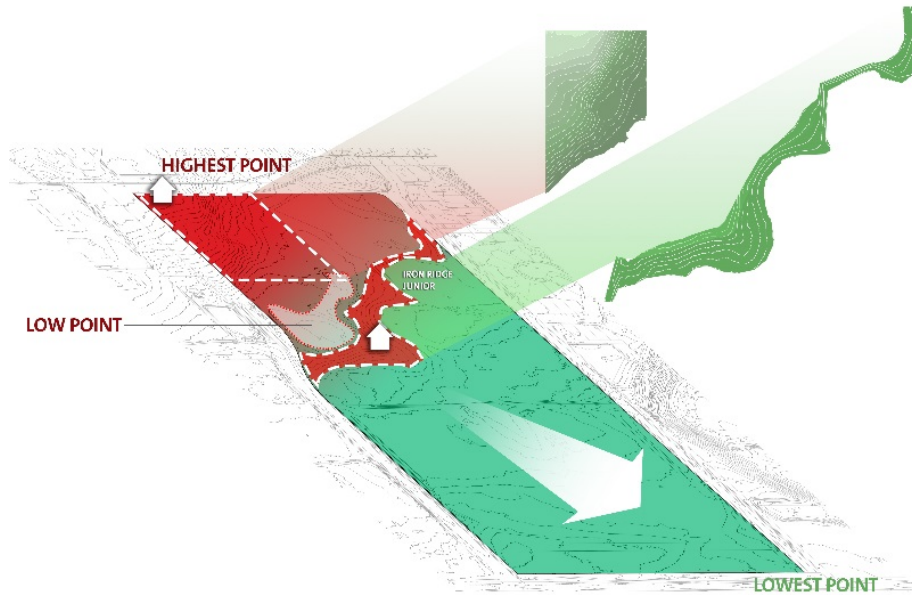


Figure 1-2: Topography of All-Star Park

## 1.2 Public Facilities

Currently, the site is home to a four-diamond softball facility, a camping area, and the Iron Ridge Junior Campus. The Abbey Master Builder Centre is located within walking distance, immediately north of the park.

### 1.2.1 Abbey Centre



Figure 1-3: Abbey Centre. Image courtesy of Town of Blackfalds

The Abbey Master Builder Centre is a new public facility located North East of the park and is accessible by a pedestrian crosswalk at Womacks Street. The Abbey Master Builder Centre is a popular gathering place for area residents and an attraction for visitors to the community. The complex is actively used by a wide range of user groups of different ages. As complimentary facilities, both the Abbey Centre and All-Star Park benefit from their proximity to each other. The connection

between the two facilities should be reinforced for improved integration in order to encourage the public to move between Abbey Centre and All-Star Park.

### 1.2.2 Iron Ridge Junior Campus

The Iron Ridge Junior campus hosts a 29,000 sq. ft. middle school facility that provides instructional spaces designed for educational and extracurricular programs as well as after-hours community use since 2003. Located on the east side of All-star Park, the Iron Ridge Junior campus is well integrated in the park site and currently utilizes an adjacent soccer field as its primary sports field. Two additional soccer fields are located much further away near the ball diamonds (see **Figure 1-5**). Park improvements will greatly benefit Iron Ridge Junior as easily accessible sports fields are currently in short supply.



Figure 1-4: Iron Ridge Junior, Images courtesy of Riddell Kurczaba Design

### 1.2.3 Softball Facility

The four softball diamonds located at the south end of the park are utilized for league play and tournaments. A field house and washroom facility as well as an asphalt parking lot accessed from Leung Road are currently servicing the fields.

### 1.2.4 Camping Area / RV Park

A camping area / RV Park located at the south end of the park is currently utilized primarily during tournament events and requires improvements to continue to function in this capacity.



Figure 1-5: All-Star Park Existing Conditions

## 1.3 New Buildings Proposed for the Park

### 1.3.1 Wadey Heritage House Relocation

The southwest corner of the park is reserved to house the Wadey House, a Blackfalds heritage building. The town of Blackfalds has received federal funding to restore and relocate historic Wadey House which will in turn be the new home of the Blackfalds and Area Historical Society. A past report to Council stated,

*“For many years administration and council have discussed a tourist / information centre and it has been determined that the Wadey House has the potential to serve this need and also that of a small museum that depicts the history of Blackfalds”.*

This historical building has been identified as a new landmark for the park and an important attraction for the Town of Blackfalds.



Figure 1-6: Historic Wadey House.  
Image courtesy of Blackfalds Life

### 1.3.2 Proposed High School

A new high school designed to accommodate 500 students is proposed for the site. This new facility will be located on the south side of Iron Ridge Junior, forming a central campus facility together with the existing school. The building will be served by a new parking area and sports facilities including a track and field facility.

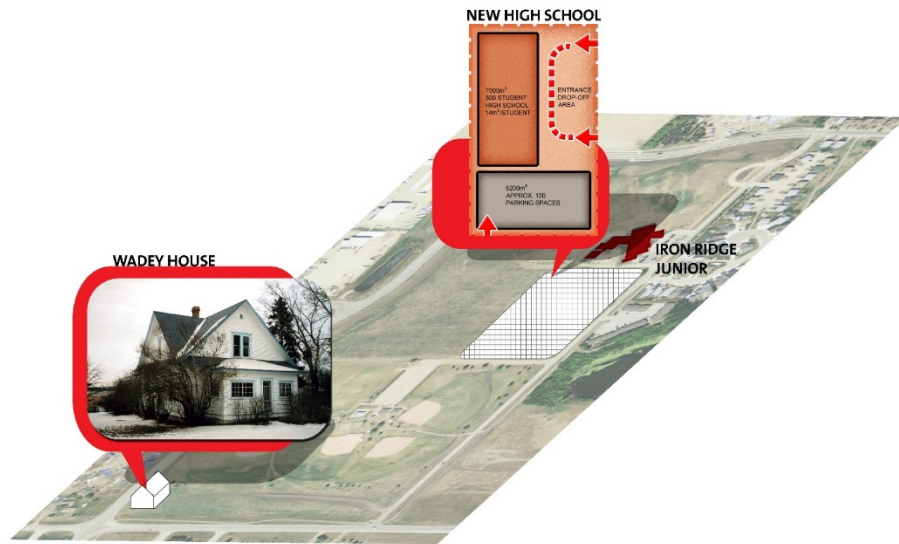


Figure 1-7: Decisions affecting the Park Master Plan

## 2 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROCESS AND INPUT

As previously mentioned, a Recreation, Culture, and Parks Needs Assessment and Master Plan was developed at the same time as the All-Star Park concept planning. The development of the Master Plan has involved significant public and stakeholder engagement as well as secondary research. The following chart summarizes the project engagement that was undertaken.

Engagement Mechanism	Responses
Resident Household Survey (Mail-out)	462
Resident Survey (Web)	91
Stakeholder Group Survey	13
Student Survey	431
Intercept Survey	381

The Master Plan identifies strategies pertaining to recreation, culture and parks facilities and amenities as well as seven (7) priority projects for consideration by Town decision makers. Of these seven priority projects, three (3) have direct relevance to future All-Star Park and have been included in the concept plans.

- All-Star Park expansion: skate park and other site components and amenities
  - (#1 Project Priority).
- All Star Park expansion: sport field and ball diamond development
  - (#3 Project Priority).
- All Star Park expansion: heritage interpretive and tourism information facility
  - (#5 Project Priority).



### 3 DESIGN CONCEPT AND VISION

All-Star Park will take advantage of the site's grand vistas and openness and will enhance community connectivity to public facilities. The park master plan offers new sports and recreational opportunities for local and regional events and tournaments while also responding to the future educational needs of the community. The plan maintains a green buffer to help screen the park from the industrial lands to the west, and it provides a porous edge east side of the site to maintain and improve connectivity to the adjacent residential area.

In terms of broader community connectivity, the park will also accommodate a segment of a new north-south Trans Canada Trail - linking the park's facilities to Blackfalds' trail network. The plan seeks to preserve the site's existing topography by locating program elements where they can take advantage of natural features. The masterplan also considers storm water management by proposing a pond and wetland area in the site's natural low land. Various plazas, picnic areas and an improved campsite also add new dimensions to the park and provide an engaging place for all age groups.

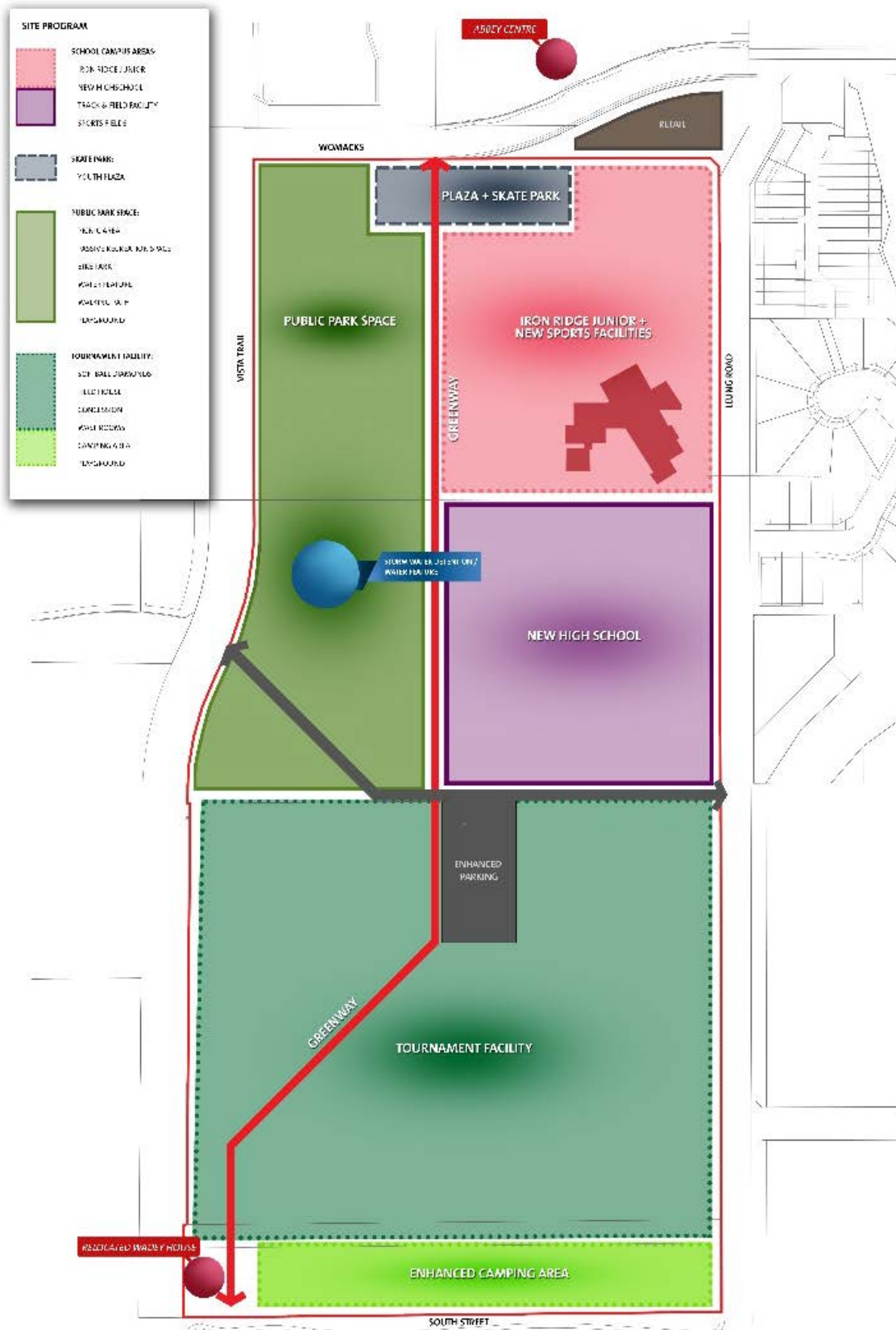


Figure 3-1: Park Functional Diagram

## 4 SITE PROGRAM

The grand vision for the park is to transform the site into a unique civic space which will take an active role in enhancing the Blackfalds community as it grows and transitions to a distinct town centre. The concept plan seeks to activate the public space with a series of flexible plazas, sports facilities and an academic campus around a clearly defined internal circulation network which links to the greater community. The concept plan consists of three major zones: North, Centre, and South.

### 4.1 North Zone

The North Zone is currently home to Iron Ridge Junior Campus and is the proposed site for a future High School expansion. Two new full-size soccer fields are proposed to ensure the current and future demands for sport fields accessible to students are met. The concept also provides spectator space at both fields. The school's commons area provides a link between the existing junior high and new senior high school, creating a 'campus feel'. The space consists of a grassy slope for casual gatherings and a more formal paved plaza space for accommodating a variety of school events and activities. The commons also creates a transition space between the school campus and All-Star Park, ensuring the schools are functionally integrated with other park facilities.

The northwest corner of the site benefits from a significant raise from the flat ground in the central zone which makes this area distinct from the other areas of the site. To further elevate this area as a focal point for the park, a uniform 'orchard style' planting of trees is proposed. With significant accessibility, sun exposure, and good sitelines, the south facing slope provides an ideal place for an orchard style planting, and creates a natural landmark.

A bike skills park is also proposed for the northwest corner where the slope provides a great environment for this type of facility. Also proposed in this zone is a skate park rounding out a suite of complimentary youth-oriented facilities. The intent in creating a 'youth zone' is to concentrate youth activity in one area, thereby maximizing facility utilization. Further, by establishing the youth zone closer to Abbey Centre and a residential area, more people will be around the facility, ultimately improving safety and security on the site. The Abbey Centre is easily accessible via a pedestrian cross walk over Womacks Street, and adds another dimension to this new hub of activity.

South of the slope, the park transitions to a more relaxed atmosphere with garden landscapes and flexible spaces for seating, picnicking, and small events staging, all overlooking the park's new pond.

### 4.2 Central Zone

The east side of the Central Zone is allocated to the future high school building and parking area. The centre of this zone, and the park as a whole, is designed to accommodate a new eight-lane track and multi-use sports field (see **Figure 3-1**). This facility is strategically located on existing flat land close to the new high school and a short walk away from other major park attractions including the pond which creates an attractive backdrop. The multi-use track and field facility will be an important sports venue equipped with a grandstand for hosting larger events.

### **4.3 South Zone**

With Wadey House in its new role as a tourist information and welcome centre, the south zone will have its own unique landmark. New parking is located adjacent to the entrance to accommodate visitors to Wadey House as well as additional space for large softball tournaments and other events. In addition to the new parking the new enhanced camping area also provides additional overflow parking space. And finally, in anticipation of increased user-ship the parking area located on the north side of the softball diamonds will be improved and expanded.

### **4.4 Trans Canada Trail**

The north-south greenway path creates a pedestrian spine within the park which connects the Upper Terrace and entrance plaza park spaces to the lower picnic area, the pond, and ultimately Wadey House at the south end of the park. The greenway links all the park's major facilities and attractions and provides park visitors with an efficient means for navigating the site. This new pedestrian corridor will be a lively linear hub and an inviting public place during all seasons and times of day.

### **4.5 Vehicle Accessibility**

One key design element in the new concept masterplan for All-Star Park is the creation of a new vehicular connection across the park from Duncan Avenue to Leung Road. The new road would include gates to control access and allow park operations staff to open up or restrict access based on the demands of different events.

The Draft Concept Plan is presented on the following page.

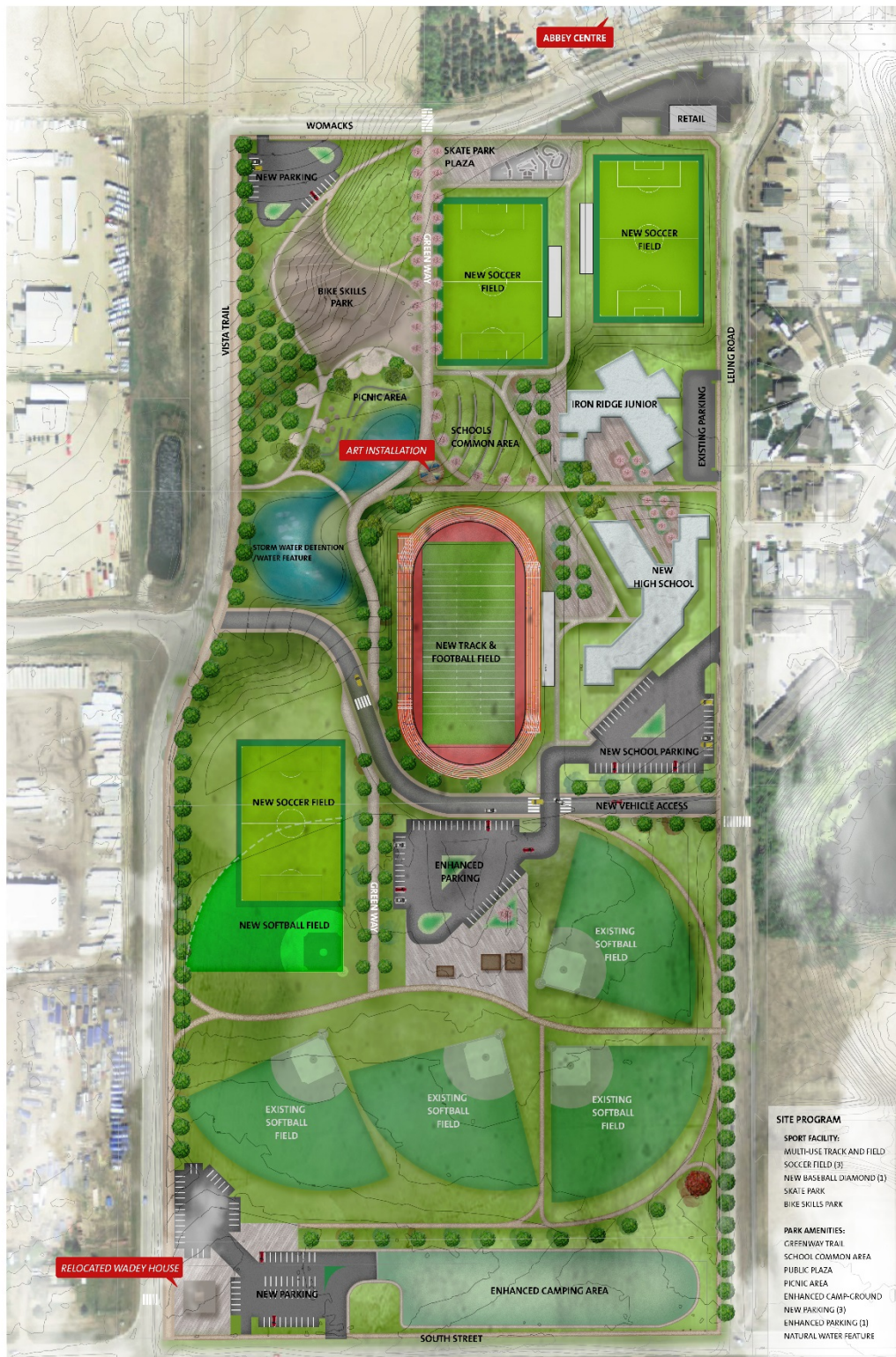


Figure 4-1: Concept Plan

## 5 PHASING

As a part of the All-Star Park Master Plan, the development of a preliminary phasing plan was developed to allow for an efficient and cost effective project build out. As shown on Appendix A, the phasing plan illustrates a sequence of 8 stages for development. It is important to note that the development phasing is not intended to show annual development plans or funding, merely a sequential order of development. The sequence summary is noted below.

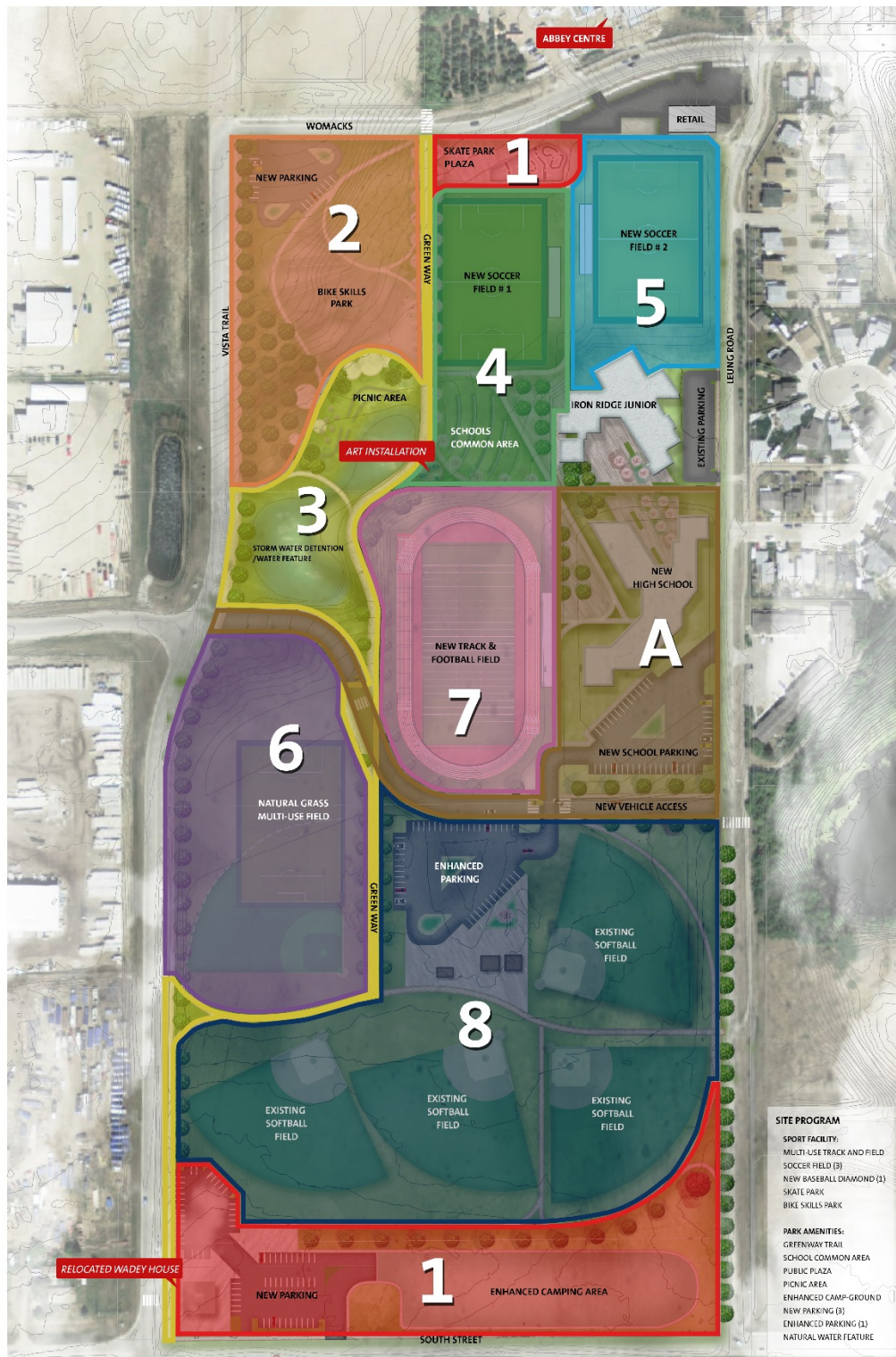
- Stage 1 Skate Board Park, Wadey House, Campground, and parking development
- Stage 2 Bike Skills Park, additional parking, and open space improvements
- Stage 3 Trans Canada Trail development and stormwater upgrades
- Stage 4 New Soccer Field development – Field #1
- Stage 5 New Soccer Field development – Field #2
- Stage 6 New Multi-Use Field development – Field #3
- Stage 7 New Track and Football Field development
- Stage 8 Softball Field enhancements
- Stage A New High School and Vehicle Access

### 5.1 High School Development

The future High School development and the new east-west vehicle access has been noted as a Stage A, as they are considered an independent element for the All-Star Park development. It is expected the Wolf Creek Public Schools Division will be a driving force for the High School Development, and if the new High School is developed, it would necessitate the development of the additional vehicle access on Vista Trail.

# APPENDIX A

## PHASING PLAN



Draft Phasing Plan



# APPENDIX B

## COST ESIMATE

**Blackfalds All-Star Park Redevelopment Concept  
Preliminary Budget Items**

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	UNIT PRICE	QTY	AMOUNT
<b>Section 1 - Recreational Areas</b>					
1.01	Skate Park Plaza	LS	\$500,000	1	\$500,000
1.02	Bike Skills Park	LS	\$550,000	1	\$550,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$1,050,000</b>
<b>Section 2 - Parking &amp; Site Circulation</b>					
2.01	New North Parking Lot	LS	\$300,000	1	\$300,000
2.02	Enhanced Central Parking Area	LS	\$150,000	1	\$150,000
2.03	Wadey House Re-Location & Parking Enhancements	LS	\$500,000	1	\$500,000
2.04	New Vehicle Central Access	LS	\$300,000	1	\$300,000
2.05	Trans Canada Trail Development / Greenway	LS	\$150,000	1	\$150,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$1,400,000</b>
<b>Section 3 - Sports Fields</b>					
3.01	New North East Soccer Field (Natural Grass)	LS	\$400,000	1	\$400,000
3.02	New North Central Soccer Field (Natural Grass)	LS	\$400,000	1	\$400,000
3.03	New West Softball/ Soccer Field Overlap (Natural Grass)	LS	\$600,000	1	\$600,000
3.04	Existing Softball Upgrades (i.e. add drainage or irrigation)	LS	\$100,000	4	\$400,000
3.05	Central Rubberized Track and Grass Field (No Lights)	LS	\$1,750,000	1	\$1,750,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$3,550,000</b>
<b>Section 4 - Common Areas</b>					
4.01	Picnic Area (assume no shelter)	LS	\$75,000	1	\$75,000
4.02	Enhanced Camping Area	LS	\$1,250,000	1	\$1,250,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$1,325,000</b>
<b>Section 5 - Landscaping</b>					
5.01	Storm Water Detention/ Water Feature	LS	\$250,000	1	\$250,000
5.02	Landscape Areas throughout Site	LS	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
5.03	Public Art Allowance	LS	\$100,000	1	\$100,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$550,000</b>
<b>Section 6 - Site Preparation (To Be Confirmed)</b>					
6.01	Misc. Site Prep, Excavation and Backfill North Side	LS	\$750,000	1	\$750,000
6.02	Misc. Site Prep, Excavation and Backfill South Side	LS	\$750,000	1	\$750,000
6.03	Servicing Upgrades (Underground Utilities & Electrical)	LS	\$500,000	1	\$500,000
6.04	Retaining Wall Allowance	LS	\$500,000	1	\$500,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$2,500,000</b>
<b>Section 7 - Miscellaneous Items</b>					
7.01	Site Furniture/ Fitments	LS	\$75,000	1	\$75,000
7.02	Playground	LS	\$200,000	1	\$200,000
	Subtotal:				<b>\$275,000</b>
<b>Subtotal Construction Costs:</b>					<b>10,650,000</b>
<b>Contingency Allowance (20%):</b>					<b>2,200,000</b>
<b>Consulting Allowance and Permits (10%):</b>					<b>1,300,000</b>
<b>Total Estimated Construction Cost:</b>					<b>14,150,000</b>

**Estimate Notes:**

- a) Costs are based on average 2015 construction prices and typical field construction methods.
- b) Costs exclude off-site upgrades to municipal systems
- c) New High School and associated new Parking Lot and Commons are excluded from this scope by Blackfalds Municipal capital funding.
- d) Cost estimate based on Concept Plan dated October 8, 2015