

From Plan to Action

Every management plan contains management actions that relate to several key areas of management within parks and provides the drivers to ensuring the management plan is effectively implemented once it has been approved. These actions provide specific and detailed direction for park management. During the planning process, these actions are prioritized, and annually assigned to staff for implementation. Some management actions may be especially complex and long-term in nature, and implementation of those actions may occur over the longer-term rather than be fully completed during the lifespan of the management plan.

Monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing process during the lifespan of the management plan that assesses the park environment, management actions and progress towards implementation. This ensures that the effectiveness of management actions is evaluated and monitored against stated objectives. This process could, for example, investigate the results of a park research project that was recommended in the management plan, and recommend new and adaptive approaches to meet objectives. Through monitoring and evaluation, park staff are kept informed of any issues as they arise and can adapt their approaches accordingly.

Near the end of a management plan's ten year lifespan, it enters a formal review process. The entire plan and implementation to date are reviewed, to determine whether the management direction is still current, appropriate, and adequate. This review may determine that the plan is still relevant, it may require minor updating, a more thorough amendment, or the park may even require an entirely new management plan.



The Alberta Parks management planning process helps to ensure that Alberta's parks effectively conserve the province's natural landscapes and wildlife habitat, and inspire people to discover, value, protect and enjoy the natural world and the benefits it provides for current and future generations.

For more information, please visit [Albertaparks.ca/management-land-use/management-planning](https://albertaparks.ca/management-land-use/management-planning)



Management planning is critical for effective decision-making, managing for recreation and conservation values, and addressing land management conflicts in parks. Management planning is often done for parks with complex and significant natural values, and multiple and potentially conflicting uses. It is done within the context of existing legislation, classification, and policies. Developing a management plan can be a complex and lengthy process, but one that provides a long-term and comprehensive guide for managing a site's conservation and recreation values. The purpose of this brochure is to describe this process, provide an overview of the tools used in management planning, as well as opportunities for Albertans to be involved.

What is a Management Plan?

A management plan is a detailed plan for a specific park site or grouping of parks managed as a single unit, that provides day-to-day and operational guidance for park management for a ten year period. A management plan:

- Defines how a site will be managed to maintain ecological health and protect key natural and cultural values;
- Describes the type and extent of outdoor, nature-based recreation and tourism opportunities, facilities and services that will be permitted;
- Describes the services and facilities that will be provided to enable visitors to explore and learn about a site's natural and cultural values;
- Identifies issues, concerns and conflicts, and recommends solutions;
- Identifies upgrading and development requirements that will enhance outdoor, nature-based recreation opportunities and ensure that recreational use occurs in appropriate locations and in environmentally acceptable ways;
- Identifies boundary amendments, consolidations and reclassifications if required; and,
- Recommends effective and efficient allocation and prioritization of fiscal and staff resources.

Management planning is a process, and thus does not end with the production of a management plan. A good management planning process provides improved management of the park, improved use of financial and staff resources, increased accountability, and improved communication. In particular, plans must be prepared and implemented within the context of the lands and people not only within, but also surrounding the park.

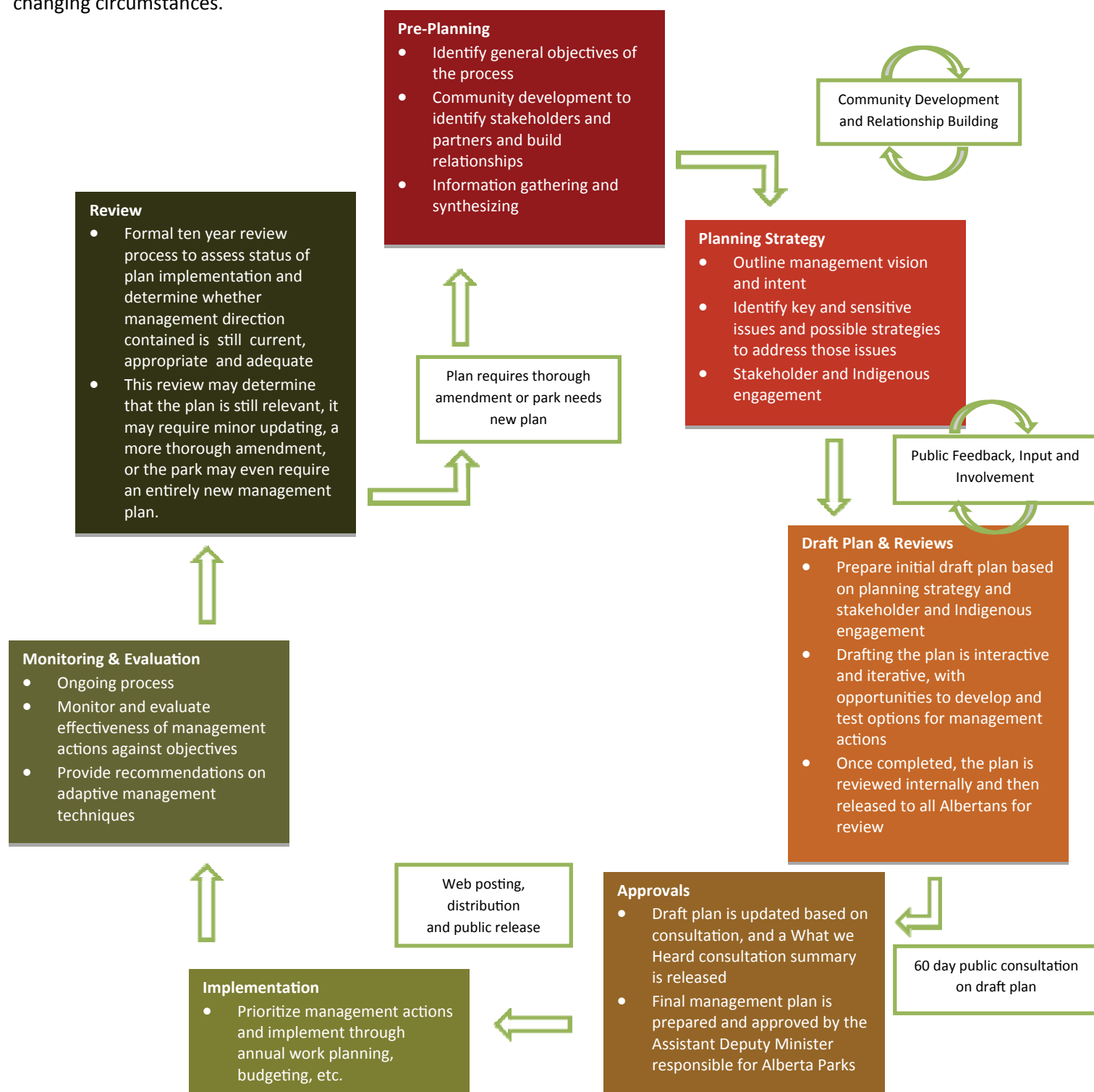
Guiding principles that are utilized in the development of management plans for parks include:

- Environmental leadership
- Indigenous Peoples rights
- Responsible stewardship
- Evidence-based decision-making
- Collaboration
- Inclusion



The Management Planning Process

The management planning process is essentially a feedback loop with seven main stages, from pre-planning through to implementation and review (see below). Pre-planning is typically the most critical and lengthy component of the planning process, as it ensures thorough preparation, information collection, and relationship-building with key stakeholders and the surrounding community. Without due diligence to this phase, there would likely be significant challenges in the later stages that result from incomplete information gathering or missing community interests. Continuous feedback at all stages, especially in the monitoring, evaluation and review stages, helps to ensure that the resulting plan is flexible and can adapt to changing circumstances.



Management Planning Inputs

A key component early on in the management planning process is the collection and evaluation of information from a diverse variety of sources. This ensures that, along with public feedback and input, all factors, issues and opportunities are considered when management direction is being determined. The extent of information collection may differ between sites, depending on factors such as the availability of information and the complexity of the park. Information that may be collected includes: information on conservation values such as species at risk habitat, biophysical inventories, wildlife movement corridors, and key areas for biodiversity; information on human uses and recreational values such as statistics on visitor use, the extent and condition of facilities to support recreation, and trails maps; information on public safety and enforcement; academic research and modelling; and, park threats, impacts, and significance.



How do the public, stakeholders and Indigenous peoples participate in the process?

The management planning process includes several critical points where stakeholders, Indigenous peoples and all Albertans are involved. This can include engagement with Indigenous peoples, park users, neighbouring landowners, academics, recreational and environmental organizations, local governments, business owners, and many others. Engagement and consultation are an important component of the management planning process, and one that is interactive and iterative.

Depending on the complexities of the park, several periods of early engagement and consultation may be required. Multiple tools may be used during these components, including formal meetings, stakeholder discussions, working groups, field visits, workshops, surveys, etc. These various methods are used to collect information, identify management issues and solutions, and develop and test options for management direction. All input and feedback gathering during engagement phases of the management planning process are fed directly into the development of a draft management plan.

Once a draft management is complete, it will be released to all Albertans for review. At a minimum, all management plans are posted online for a 60 day public comment period. The review of a draft management plan ensures that Albertans have an opportunity to provide input into decisions regarding how to manage the natural, cultural and recreational value of parks.

The management plan will again be updated with the consultation inputs, after which the plan will be approved and released. Communication back and the release of a What We Heard document describes the feedback received and how input was incorporated. The approved plan will guide management for the park for a ten year cycle, unless significant policy or legislative changes requires an earlier review.