



Site Design

Planning Check List

Site Design

- Looking at the whole site
- First things first
- Preparing the plan

Sample Site Plans

- Adding information to the plan
- Adding comments from the surveys
- Adding ideas to the plan
- A plan for a paved playground
- Location Map and Planting Plan
- The Grand Plan

Planning Check List

- Measuring and Mapping the Site

Planning Check List

- Planning for building a model

- Building a Model Step by Step

Model Check List

PLANNING CHECK LIST

This check list provides you with most of the things you will need to find out about your site before you can start to plan. So that you do not forget anything while planning, make written notes on existing uses, features, and conditions and add them to your site plan. Since every schoolyard is different, you may have other items to add to this list.

❖ **PRESENT SITE USES** ❖ **COMMENTS FROM THE PEOPLE SURVEYS** ❖

THINGS TO CHECK	ANY COMMENTS ?	✓
Current site use including play structures and other play areas such as corners where children swap cards and play games such as pogs, sports fields, the noisiest, quietest and most overcrowded places at recess times.		
Places in the schoolyard that are currently used for curriculum activities.		
Routes currently used by people on foot between all doorways of the building and gateways or other points of official and unofficial (e.g. breaks in fences) access to the grounds, play spaces, sports fields, bike racks, dumpsters, storage sheds, portable classrooms, seating, etc.		
Present traffic patterns: sidewalks, informal pathways and shortcuts, access for all emergency and delivery vehicles, and school bus and child drop-off zones.		
Firelanes around buildings, and the turning space allowances for maintenance, snow removal, emergency, delivery, and garbage collection vehicles.		
Places where snow is piled in winter and where melt water drains to in the spring, particularly if the snow piles are likely to contain salt which can damage plants.		
The negative and positive comments made by the children, teachers, parents, support staff, neighbours and others in the community about any of the present uses of the grounds that occur during and after school hours.		

SITE DESIGN - PLANNING CHECK LIST

❖ **ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS** ❖ **OFF-LIMITS AREAS** ❖
❖ **VISIBILITY** ❖ **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR** ❖

THINGS TO CHECK	ANY COMMENTS ?	
Sun and shade patterns throughout the day, including areas of shade that are available or off-limits to children during the day.		
Wind patterns: direction of prevailing winds, areas prone to gusting or swirling, blowing dust, etc.		
Locations and brief description of any problems such as steep slopes, graffiti, diseased trees, places where litter collects, soil erosion around the base of trees, cracked pavement, damaged fences/signs, places where balls are regularly kicked over the fencing, etc.		
Drainage patterns, including problem spots (areas where water collects, or places that do not receive any rainfall such as under an overhanging roof), altered water flow and new natural water catchment areas such as swales.		
Changes in elevations (hills, slopes, depressions, etc.).		
Soil type (loamy, clayey, sandy, rocky, boggy, etc.) and the location and area of each; places where soil has been compacted or contaminated with road salt and is in need of improvement; and pH level of different types of soil.		
Areas where visibility is obstructed within the yard.		
Places where visibility into the yard from the street must be maintained for weekend and night surveillance.		
Areas that are off-limits to children and the reasons why.		
Locations that vandals tend to target on school property outside school hours.		
Places where anti-social behaviours occur within school hours and possible reasons such as places that are hidden from view by children, staff, neighbours, passers-by, etc.		

SITE DESIGN - PLANNING CHECK LIST

❖ **BUILT ENVIRONMENT** ❖ **NATURAL FEATURES** ❖ **VIEWS** ❖
❖ **SERVICES AND UTILITIES** ❖ **PLANNED NEW CONSTRUCTION** ❖

THINGS TO CHECK	ANY COMMENTS ?	✓
The location of doorways, windows, outdoor water valves, steps, canopies, gazebos, shelters, and existing buildings, including portable classrooms, storage sheds, green-houses, etc.		
The location of components such as play equipment, murals, painted pavement games, basketball hoops, bike racks, flagpoles, benches, garbage receptacles, signs, composters, bird feeders, dumpsters, fences, fire hydrants, hydro poles, street lights, motion lights, catchment basins, drains, driveways, parking spaces, etc.		
The existing plant and tree species together with details such as their exact location, height, spread, trunk diameter, condition, and also the size and shape of the areas in which they are growing.		
Species of plants and animals currently found on the grounds both seasonally and year round, as well as any problems with wildlife or domestic animals.		
Existing windbreaks and their condition.		
Places where the addition of large shade trees would cause problems for neighbours, for example, where they would shade gardens requiring full sunlight.		
Views of the grounds: where views can be preserved or enhanced or where unsightly views can be screened with vegetation, and photographs taken of views from places both within and from outside the yard.		
The services locates, including hydro, gas, water, cable, telephone, and sewage.		
New and future construction planned by the school board such as additions to the school building and the location of portable classrooms.		

New Features and Uses

In addition to making a check list of the current state of your grounds, it is useful to also create a “wish list” of items that have been suggested by the school community and mark them on a separate plan so that the possible new features and uses and their possible locations are not confused with existing ones.

❖ IDENTIFYING PLACES FOR POSSIBLE ADDITIONS AND CHANGES ❖

WISH LIST	ANY COMMENTS	✓
Places where you can plant trees, install shelters such as arbours, gazebos, and awnings, and plant vines and shrubs along fencing to add shade, together with the approximate size of the areas of shade they will create.		
The areas of the grounds that you would like to use for outdoor classrooms.		
New items such as play structures, sports equipment, signs, murals, pavement paintings, composters, bird feeders and baths, bat boxes, drinking fountains, bike racks, storage sheds for play equipment and gardening tools, motion lights, etc.		
New uses such as play areas, sports areas, quiet social spaces with seating, outdoor classrooms, etc., and new access to adjacent parkland or natural areas.		
New pathways, particularly those that you plan to make through planted areas, the possible relocation of existing pathways, any accessibility issues, etc.		
Any possible new locations for piling snow, and places where the land can be graded, or drains, such as French drains, constructed to help solve drainage problems.		
Places for wildlife habitat, edible gardens, planters, ponds, etc., and lists of trees and other plants that are appropriate for your site conditions.		