



**City of Kingston  
Report to Council  
Report Number 24-192**

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**To:** Mayor and Members of Council  
**From:** Brad Joyce, Commissioner, Infrastructure, Transportation & Emergency Services  
**Resource Staff:** Same  
**Date of Meeting:** August 13, 2024  
**Subject:** Inclusive Play Project

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**Council Strategic Plan Alignment:**

Theme: 3. Build an Active and Connected Community

Goal: 3.1 Expand parks and recreation opportunities and participation.

**Executive Summary:**

On September 19, 2023, Council received Report Number MAAC-23-011 'Proposed Community Led Accessible Playground Project' and passed the recommendation:

**That** Council direct staff to continue working with community partners to support the building of a highly inclusive playground in a City-owned park and report back to Council as required on the matter.

Since that time, work with the community partners has progressed and there have been numerous successful fundraising efforts as well as various grant application opportunities. Discussions have taken place with Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, a national charity committed to ensuring kids in need have equal access to sport and recreation. To date, Jumpstart has built 24 Jumpstart Inclusive Play Spaces and supported the development of an additional 19 inclusive play spaces across Canada and have been involved in multiple discussions over the past few months to discuss investment and support for the inclusive playground build at Shannon Park. The cost of this fully inclusive playground at Shannon Park is \$1.5M with construction completion in 2026. Other fundraising efforts have yielded donations and commitments of approximately \$200,000, including the Inclusive Fun Fair, an event in

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Shannon Park and at Rideau Heights Community Centre, with more events expected over the next many months. Staff are currently in advanced discussions to confirm the feasibility and timing of our playground for inclusion in the 2026 list of Jumpstart supported projects which, based on comparable builds in other communities, have been supported in the range of \$200,000 to \$500,000.

In order to move forward with a formal Gift Agreement, Jumpstart's process requires the City to commit to completing the civil site works for the playground, and staff are therefore recommending the approval of \$300,000 to complete this work, once the remaining project funding has been secured. There is potential through continued fundraising efforts and discussions with the Kingston Construction Association, that some of that civil site works may be completed as in-kind donations, thereby reducing the cost of that specific work by the City. The community has been rallied behind this project and in keeping with that spirit, the recommendation is that should the grants, donations, and the \$300,000 City contribution in total exceed the cost of the project, that any excess dollars be used directly by the City to fund other inclusive playground equipment.

**Recommendation:**

**That** Council approve an amount of \$300,000, funded from the Municipal Capital Reserve Fund, to provide partial funding for the Inclusive Play Project at Shannon Park that will enable the City to complete civil site works for the project once the remaining project funding has been secured; and

**That** should the total funding of the Inclusive Play Project, including grants, donations and the aforementioned \$300,000 amount, exceed the total cost of the Project, that the remaining monies be directed to fund additional inclusive playground equipment; and

**That** Council direct staff to waive all municipal and special event fees associated with planning and delivering the Inclusive Fun Fair in 2025 to support additional opportunities to generate community donations for the Inclusive Play Project.

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**Authorizing Signatures:**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

Brad Joyce, Commissioner,  
Infrastructure, Transportation &  
Emergency Services

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF

P.P. ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER  
Lanie Hurdle, Chief  
Administrative Officer

**Consultation with the following Members of the Corporate Management Team:**

Paige Agnew, Commissioner, Growth & Development Services	Not required
Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services	
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Peter Huigenbos, Commissioner, Major Projects & Strategic Initiatives	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	

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**Options/Discussion:****Background**

Since the spring of 2023, Rachel Doornekamp, a local community member, has been leading the effort with community volunteers, to advocate and raise funds for a fully inclusive playground in Kingston. Working with City staff, Shannon Park was identified as the prime location due to a number of factors such as the land attributes, its central locale in Kingston, and the appropriate close amenities offered at the Rideau Heights Community Centre.

The Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee endorsed the concept through Report Number MAAC-23-011 'Proposed Community Led Accessible Playground Project' and Council subsequently passed the recommendation on September 19, 2023:

**That** Council direct staff to continue working with community partners to support the building of a highly inclusive playground in a City-owned park and report back to Council as required on the matter.

With assistance from the City of Kingston, Ms. Doornekamp set up the Inclusive Play Project, and the local charity Extend-A-Family Kingston officially signed on as partner in September 2023 to help move the project forward. City staff have established mechanisms to process donations whether financial or in-kind, including setting up online donations through the Canada Helps web portal ([Donate Now - City of Kingston \(canadahelps.org\)](https://canadahelps.org)).

Over the past year, there have been a number of activities that have taken place in support of this project including the Inclusive Fun Fair on June 8, 2024 that was held at Shannon Park and the Rideau Heights Community Centre to raise awareness and garner donations for the playground project. A total of \$10,255 was raised at the Fun Fair.

More than \$55,000 has been raised from individuals, organizations, businesses, and special events towards this Inclusive Play Project. An additional \$137,963 has been committed through letters of intent from three local businesses who will submit their donations if the project is approved by Council.

Grant & Partnership Development staff are actively working with the community partners, including Extend-A-Family and volunteers, to pursue grant opportunities to advance the Inclusive Play project. At present, \$125,000 in grant requests are pending approval, including an application submitted to the Enabling Accessibility Fund. The grant team continues to actively research and identify prospective grants through community and corporate foundations and government agencies – currently, there are five new grant applications in development totalling an additional \$160,000 in value.

**Analysis**

The prospect of securing grant funding will be significantly strengthened by City support of \$300,000 and a potential grant from Jumpstart combined with the \$200,000 fundraised to-date.

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The investment opportunity will be more attractive to other funding agencies and additional grants will help to bring the project to the finish line.

There is great alignment with this playground project and Jumpstart's goal to address financial and accessibility barriers associated with helping kids overcome financial and accessibility barriers in sport and recreation. Discussions ensued with Jumpstart to determine whether there would be opportunity for that organization to support the development of Kingston's fully inclusive playground, and that has advanced to the point that Jumpstart has indicated initial alignment with the playground project and associated opportunities for funding.

As part of ongoing efforts by the Inclusive Play Project to garner awareness and community donations in support of this project, and to celebrate inclusivity more broadly, the Inclusive Fun Fair is scheduled to take place again in 2025. The Inclusive Play Project group will continue to take the lead on organizing the Fun Fair, coordinating all aspects including booking parks, facilities, and confirming vendors, activities and entertainment. In 2024, the Inclusive Play Project was reimbursed for all municipal fees including insurance, park rental, city permit, handwashing station rental, and road closure permit, through a Waiver of Fees application totalling \$1,640. Given the partnership between the Inclusive Play Project and the City, staff are recommending that Council waive all municipal and special event fees associated with planning the Inclusive Fun Fair in 2025. Staff will continue to support and promote the event.

**Public Engagement**

Public engagement on the Inclusive Play Project will continue at the Inform Level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. The Inform Level ensures the community remains updated on the project, including the event promotion support as defined in the Analysis section of this report.

**Financial Considerations:**

This report recommends the approval of \$300,000 from the Municipal Capital Reserve Fund for the inclusive playground. With a project capital budget of \$1,500,000, it is expected that fundraising efforts, including grants, will provide the remaining monies required to complete this playground. Staff will provide further updates to Council as appropriate over that timeframe.

Annual ongoing operational and maintenance costs are expected to be approximately \$10,000 and will be included in the municipal Public Works operating budget.

**Contacts:**

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**Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:**

Julie Fossitt, Manager, Marketing & Revenue Development, Strategy, Innovation and Partnerships

Troy Beharry, Partnership & Grant Development Manager, Strategy, Innovation and Partnerships

Neal Unsworth, Manager, Parks & Shoreline, Engineering Services

Danika Lochhead, Director, Arts & Culture Services

**Exhibits Attached:**

None