



City of Kingston
Information Report to Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
Report Number MAAC-25-005

To:	Chair and Members of the Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee
From:	Jennifer Campbell, Commissioner, Community Services
Resource Staff:	Amy Elgersma, Director, Recreation & Leisure Services
Date of Meeting:	April 3, 2025
Subject:	Playground Accessibility Plan

Council Strategic Plan Alignment:

Theme: 3. Build an Active and Connected Community

Goal: 3.1 Expand parks and recreation opportunities and participation.

Executive Summary:

The *Playground Accessibility Plan* is the route by which the City can achieve Goal 3.1.2D in the Strategic Priorities for 2023-2026. This plan will review the City's 120 playgrounds and then provide strategies and recommendations for increasing accessibility via park renovations and new park development. The project began in March 2025 and will conclude in October 2025.

Supported by a consultant, the City will undertake an accessibility analysis of existing playground inventory, along with best practice research. Public and stakeholder engagement will be ongoing within this timeframe.

Deliverables include a draft plan that will be presented to Municipal Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC), with recommendations and implementation strategies to increase accessibility in City playgrounds. The plan will consider budget, human resources, and implementation and distribution strategies over a 10-year workplan.

To ensure the City engages a diversity of external perspectives on this topic, we request advice from MAAC on potential stakeholder groups that should be consulted as part of this project. We are also looking for suggestions from MAAC on how best to ensure the public consultation process is both accessible and inclusive.

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Recommendation:

This report is for information only

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Authorizing Signatures:

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY COMMISSIONER

**Jennifer Campbell,
Commissioner, Community
Services**

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY CHIEF 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
Neil Carbone, Commissioner, Corporate & Emergency Services	Not required
David Fell, President & CEO, Utilities Kingston	Not required
Ian Semple, Acting Commissioner, Transportation & Infrastructure Services	Not required
Desirée Kennedy, Chief Financial Officer & City Treasurer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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Options/Discussion:

Background - Accessibility in Parks and Playgrounds

The City of Kingston recognizes the importance of both accessibility and play.

Play is not just the work of childhood; play is wellness, at all life stages. Inclusive, accessible playgrounds allow children, youth and adults of all abilities to play together, to enhance their well-being.

Within the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan, Goal 3.1, under the priority to *Build an Active and Connected Community*, is focused on expanding opportunities and participation in parks and recreation. Playground accessibility is a priority identified within part 2D of this goal, directing the development of a City-wide *Playground Accessibility Plan* that identifies existing playground inventory and a strategy to increase accessibility in playgrounds.

Increasing accessibility in City playgrounds will benefit all members of society; it ensures broad usability, fosters meaningful participation and enriches collective experience.

Project Introduction

Accessibility in parks and playgrounds is about more than meeting legal standards and removing barriers. It is about creating an inclusive and equitable environment where everyone can engage, participate and play.

The *Playground Accessibility Plan* will review in the City's 120 playgrounds and provide recommendations to increase accessibility via park renovations and new park development. The project will begin in March 2025 and end in October 2025, and comprises four (4) phases, with public and stakeholder engagement an ongoing component across the project timeline (see Project Timeline below).

Project Timeline

Phase 1: Background Research/ Best practice + Policy Context Review

Timeline: Early 2025

Phase 2: Accessibility Analysis: Scoring and Ranking of Playgrounds

Timeline: Spring 2025

Public + Stakeholder Consultation Sessions

Timeline: Ongoing

Phase 3: Draft Recommendations and Implementation Strategies

Timeline Spring – Summer 2025

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Phase 4: Draft and Final Submission of Document
Timeline: August – September 2025

Data gathered in Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the project will be synthesized with data derived from consultation with the public, external and internal stakeholders. Integration of these separate data sets will form the basis for Phase 3 draft recommendations and implementation strategies, which will be presented to the public in a second phase of community consultation.

Phase 4 will include the production of the final deliverables and presentation of the final *Playground Accessibility Plan* document and project recommendations to MAAC. Final recommendations and implementation strategies will consider asset replacements, budgets and fiscal constraints, human resources and capacity, and a distribution strategy within a 10-year workplan based on feedback received through consultation and data analysis.

Public Engagement and Stakeholder Group Consultation

An extensive and ongoing campaign of community engagement is required as part of the process of developing the *Playground Accessibility Plan* with public and/or stakeholder consultation concurrent to each project phase.

Public Engagement and Stakeholder groups will allow the City to better understand needs, usage, opportunities and challenges related to current play equipment and playgrounds. It will also be instrumental in gathering data on desired future asset provision in City parks and playgrounds and strategies to prioritize investment in assets to greatest impact.

Consultation will also include internal City stakeholders to ensure project proposals and recommendations can be achieved as part of City operations and service level provision. These stakeholders are anticipated to include Recreation & Leisure Services, Engineering Services, Public Works, Transportation and Community Development, Wellbeing & IIDEA.

To ensure the City engages with a diversity of external perspectives on this topic, we request advice from MAAC on potential stakeholder groups that should be consulted as part of this project.

Actions to Date:

In 2024, playground visits were conducted to gather photos and data related to the accessibility of each site. In the Fall of 2024, the RFP for consulting services was posted and a consultant team was hired in early 2025.

Climate Risk Considerations

None

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Indigenization, Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IIDEA) Considerations

This project intersects with considerations related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity as well as Accessibility. Indigenous groups will be part of the consultation process. The recommendations and strategies proposed in the final document aim to:

- increase access to playgrounds and play equipment within City parks
- ensure inclusive play experiences are equitably distributed across the City

This policy relates to AODA 2005 requirements in relation to the Design of Public Spaces. All recommendations and strategies proposed in the final document will meet:

- the Accessibility Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA 2005) legislation
- City of Kingston's Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS 2019)

Any proposed playground amenities, or proposed renovations to existing playground amenities, will also meet:

- National Standard of Canada CSA Z614:20 Children's playground equipment and surfacing

And where possible, also meet the non-mandatory:

- *Annex H: Children's playgrounds and equipment that are accessible to persons with disabilities (as set out in CSA Z614:20.)*

This policy also relates to AODA 2005 requirements in relation to Information & Communication. The project team will ensure that information and communication during and about the project is inclusive and accessible. We welcome feedback from MAAC on how to best achieve this and propose the following:

- The community engagement strategy will make use of various forms of public consultation, both in-person and virtual settings, to ensure access and participation is available to as wide a swathe of the community as possible.
- Public and Stakeholder consultation will be designed with accessibility in mind, for both in-person and virtual meetings.
- The City's "Get Involved Kingston" online platform will also be used to engage with local citizens and seek their feedback. Documentation related to all public engagement sessions, will be posted online in advance of all public meetings.
- Information, products, deliverables and/or communication produced for inclusion on the City's website shall be in conformity with World Wide Web Consortium Web Content

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Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 Level AA and shall be provided as accessible documents.

Existing Policy/By-Law

[Parks and Recreation Masterplan 2021](#)

[Parks Asset Management Plan 2009/2024](#)

[POL-82 Accessibility Standards Policy](#)

City of Kingston's Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS 2019)

Financial Considerations

The budget for the Accessible Playground Plan is \$75K. This capital cost is captured within the 2025 budget.

Contacts:

Sara Miller, Project Manager, Parks & Shoreline, Recreation & Leisure Services, 613-546-4291 extension 1818

Other City of Kingston Staff Consulted:

None

Exhibits:

None