



Regional Board Report

Request for Decision

To: Regional Board
From: Tamara Oljaca, Parks Manager, Capital Projects & Visitor Services
Date: April 17, 2025
Subject: Mission Creek Playground Budget Increase Request

Voting Entitlement: All Directors – Weighted Corporate Vote – Majority (LGA s.210)

Purpose: To consider using \$150,000 from the Growing Communities Fund allocated to regional parks accessibility projects, to advance accessibility in the Mission Creek playground project.

Executive Summary:

While the Mission Creek playground project was originally designed as a community-driven initiative to revitalize an aging play space, public feedback revealed concerns about a significant lack of consideration given to accessibility and inclusivity. The total budget estimate for the original scope of work was \$174,878.92. In response to the public feedback, staff conducted extensive public engagement, including consulting with community partners who have successfully completed similar projects, to a Your Say webpage and an open house, to ensure the revised design met community expectations. The updated design incorporates key accessibility upgrades such as pour-in-place rubber surfacing and more inclusive play structures, which have been met with overwhelmingly positive public feedback. To deliver an accessible playground with features the public has shared as vital, the revised budget estimate is now \$479,290.47. The revised design calls for specialized rubber surfacing to enable fair and equitable access to all children. It is the specialized surface that is driving the 56% of the increased cost. This report outlines the due diligence taken and recommends that the Board use \$150,000 from the Growing Communities Fund allocated for accessibility projects in regional parks.

Recommendation(s):

THAT the Regional Board approves using \$150,000 of the Growing Communities Fund, allocated to accessibility projects in regional parks, to enable accessibility improvements in the Mission Creek playground project.

Respectfully submitted by: Tamara Oljaca, Parks Manager, Capital Projects & Visitor Services

Report Approved by: Sally Ginter, Interim Director / Chief Administrative Officer

Approved for Agenda: Sally Ginter, Chief Administrative Officer

Strategic Plan Alignment:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency preparedness | <input type="checkbox"/> Truth and reconciliation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health and wellness | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment and climate – Regional priority only |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regional transportation | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth and development – Electoral Area priority only |
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Background:

The Mission Creek playground replacement project was initiated to modernize an aging play structure to create a safer and more engaging recreational area for families. The original design released in 2024 met standard accessibility requirements but did not fully address the community needs of children with diverse and varying abilities. Public feedback quickly highlighted the limitations of the initial plan, particularly concerning surfacing and inclusive play features.

Recognizing the importance of true accessibility, staff revisited the design process, incorporating insights from community advocates, accessibility experts, and play space designers. The most significant changes include replacing engineered wood fibre with pour-in-place rubber surfacing and introducing a wider range of inclusive play equipment. These updates ensure that children of all abilities can safely and comfortably enjoy the playground.

To validate the redesigned concept, additional public consultation was conducted through an online engagement platform and an open house. The response was positive, confirming that the revisions aligned with community needs and expectations. While these improvements significantly enhance the quality and accessibility of the playground, they also require additional funding to implement.

Strengths:

- Strong community support and positive public feedback
- Enhances accessibility and inclusivity for all children
- Aligns with regional goals for equitable community spaces
- Incorporates best practices in accessible playground design

Weaknesses:

- Increased project costs requiring additional funding
- Extended timeline due to redesign and consultation process

Opportunities:

- Strengthens the regional district's reputation as an inclusive community leader
- Encourages increased park usage and community engagement

Threats:

- Budget constraints may impact other community projects
 - Possible delays due to contractor availability and material procurement
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Considerations:

Organizational/External:

During the construction phase of the Mission Creek playground project, residents and park visitors will experience temporary disruptions, particularly in the availability of parking as sections of the parking lot will be unavailable to accommodate construction activities. To minimize inconvenience, park users will be redirected to utilize the Leckie Road entrance, which will remain accessible throughout the construction period. Signage and public notices will be in place to provide clear direction and ensure a smooth transition during this time.

Financial:

In December 2023, the Regional Board resolved to allocate \$374,000 of the monies received from the Growing Communities Fund to be used for accessibility projects in regional parks. This is the first project being proposed for these monies. The use of these funds for accessibility projects is included in the 2025-2029 Five-Year Financial Plan.

Considerations not applicable:

- Alternate Recommendation
- Legal/Statutory Authority

Attachment(s): Regional Board PowerPoint – MCP Playground
