

# Advisory Committee of Council Staff Report



---

To Accessibility Advisory Committee  
Date Tuesday, February 20, 2024  
Subject **Playground accessibility special meeting**

---

## Recommendation

1. That the AAC recommends a special meeting with Parks staff to discuss the following items, as directed by Council:
  - That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include a minimum of two wheelchair accessible play equipment, and that talk tubes are not considered one of those features.
  - That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include at least one play structure that is wheelchair accessible to the lowest deck.
  - That recommendation 33 in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan be revised to read "Apply a service level target of one rubber surface playground within 2.5 kilometres of residential areas until 2025, moving to a target of one rubber surface playground within 1.5 kilometres of residential areas starting in 2026.
  - That the final PRMP include a recommendation that areas of economic need will be a factor in determining the location of playgrounds with rubber safety surface.
  - That the final PRMP include a recommendation to work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to establish a target ratio of playgrounds that have rubber safety surface.
2. That the AAC recommends that this special meeting take place on May 21, 2024 from 3-5 PM.

---

## Executive Summary

### Purpose of Report

To request a special meeting between Parks staff and the AAC to discuss playground accessibility as directed by Council.

### Key Findings

Parks staff presented the final Parks and Recreation Master Plan to City Council in October 2023. The master plan contains some information relating to playground accessibility.

On October 24, 2023 Council approved the Parks and Recreation Master Plan, and referred five items to staff to continue to work with the AAC and report back if any new service levels are required. The five items referred to staff are:

- That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include a minimum of two wheelchair accessible play equipment, and that talk tubes are not considered one of those features.
- That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include at least one play structure that is wheelchair accessible to the lowest deck.
- That recommendation 33 in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan be revised to read “Apply a service level target of one rubber surface playground within 2.5 kilometres of residential areas until 2025, moving to a target of one rubber surface playground within 1.5 kilometres of residential areas starting in 2026.
- That the final PRMP include a recommendation that areas of economic need will be a factor in determining the location of playgrounds with rubber safety surface.
- That the final PRMP include a recommendation to work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to establish a target ratio of playgrounds that have rubber safety surface.

Parks staff are seeking to schedule a special meeting with the AAC to allow appropriate time to engage the committee on the above items.

### **Strategic Plan Alignment**

The topic of playground accessibility aligns with the Strategic Plan theme of Foundations, specifically by “fostering a culture of continuous improvement” and “removing barriers by integrating Guelph’s Equity Lens into everything we do.”

This topic also aligns with the Strategic Plan theme of City Building, specifically by “attracting more people to our parks and programs by making them easier to access and enjoy.”

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with staff’s request for a special meeting with the AAC. There may be future financial impacts if modifications to playground service levels are implemented, which will be reported to Council as directed.

---

## **Report**

The [Parks and Recreation Master Plan](#) (PRMP) is a strategic document that guides how the City plans, designs, funds, builds, and maintains the park and recreation network. The master plan and the accompanying [Needs Assessment](#) identify needs for current and future residents, establish future initiatives, and guide strategic investment for parks and recreation in the city.

The master plan was developed over four phases of work, and staff engaged with the AAC four times over the course of the project.

In October 2023 staff presented a new iteration of the PRMP to City Council for approval. Council approved the PRMP but referred five items relating to playground accessibility to staff to discuss with the AAC, including:

- That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include a minimum of two wheelchair accessible play equipment, and that talk tubes are not considered one of those features.
- That the final PRMP include a requirement that all new playgrounds in Guelph include at least one play structure that is wheelchair accessible to the lowest deck.
- That recommendation 33 in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan be revised to read "Apply a service level target of one rubber surface playground within 2.5 kilometres of residential areas until 2025, moving to a target of one rubber surface playground within 1.5 kilometres of residential areas starting in 2026.
- That the final PRMP include a recommendation that areas of economic need will be a factor in determining the location of playgrounds with rubber safety surface.
- That the final PRMP include a recommendation to work with the Accessibility Advisory Committee to establish a target ratio of playgrounds that have rubber safety surface.

To facilitate a meaningful discussion with the AAC with appropriate time allocated toward the topic of playground accessibility, Parks staff are requesting a special meeting with the committee. Parks staff are requesting a two-hour meeting with the AAC on Tuesday May 21, 2024 from 3-5 PM.

### **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with staff's request for a special meeting with the AAC. There may be future financial impacts if modifications to playground service levels are implemented, which will be reported to Council as directed.

### **Consultations**

None

### **Attachments**

Attachment-1 Minutes of Guelph City Council, October 24, 2023

### **Departmental Approval**

Mallory Lemon, Manager, Park and Trail Development

### **Report Author**

Mallory Lemon, Manager, Park and Trail Development

**This report was approved by:**

Mallory Lemon  
Manager, Park and Trail Development  
Public Services  
519-822-1260 ext. 3560  
mallory.lemon@guelph.ca