



**Subject:** *East Hants Playground Development Strategy*  
**To:** Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee  
**Date Prepared:** January 5, 2022  
**Related Motions:** N/A  
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**Approved by:** Kim Ramsay, CAO

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### Summary

The East Hants Playground Development Strategy is a working document intended to provide Council and Municipal staff with a road map on how to achieve Council's goals regarding new playground and splash pad development within the Municipality. As best practices regarding both evolve, the strategy as a living document, will adjust to reflect new guidelines to include industry trends and ensure compliance.

### Financial Impact Statement

Any financial impact through the implementation of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy will be brought forward after Council's adoption of the strategy through Municipal budgets and staff work plans.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy, dated December 2021.

### Recommended Motion

*Move that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy, dated December 2021.*

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### Background

The East Hants Playground Development Strategy was designed to determine areas for new playground and splash pad development within the Municipality. While there are no set rules and regulations as to where playgrounds and splash pads should be located, there are CSA-approved (Canadian Standard Association) standards to the type of equipment, construction and ongoing maintenance of play structures and splash pad components. Past practice was installation under open space agreements, in discussion with other municipal departments and looking at areas with high population density. These are all similar to components proposed within the new strategy, but they have been expanded upon in the document.

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### Discussion

There is alignment between the East Hants Playground Development Strategy, the current East Hants Strategic Plan and the East Hants Parks, Open Space and Active Transportation Master Plan. In the Strategic Plan, one of the key organizational values; informed and sustainable decision-making is the methodology behind developing a playground-specific strategy. In order for the Municipality to consider all relevant information and make decisions leading to a sustainable community, the organization required a guiding document that Council could review and endorse.

By assessing and reviewing a number of criteria, the Municipality can develop new playgrounds in areas that are in need based on demographics and recapitalize older structures once they reach the end of their lifecycle. This also allows criteria to be reviewed for splash pads, understanding that these are currently very desirable features and provide staff and Council the ability to review and make budget related decisions.

The Playground Development Strategy further supports the East Hants Parks, Open Space and Active Transportation Master Plan as playground space development and improvements was identified as a guiding concept within the Open Space Concept Plan. Playgrounds were one of the few amenities that were listed as being recommended to be located at neighborhood, community, district and potentially destination parks within the Municipality, indicating the value and importance put on the structures and the play they provide for the community at large.

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## Alternatives

Alternatives for Council's Consideration for the East Hants Playground Development Strategy:

1. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy.
2. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee do not recommend to Council the adoption of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy and provide further input on development standards and final recommendations for the strategy.

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## Conclusion

The East Hants Playground Development Strategy is a working document intended to provide Council and Municipal staff with a road map on how to achieve Council's goals regarding new playground and splash pad development within the Municipality. As best practices regarding both evolve, the strategy as a living document, will adjust to reflect new guidelines to ensure compliance and include industry trends.

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## Recommendation

Move that the Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee recommend to Council the adoption of the East Hants Playground Development Strategy, dated December 2021.