



## WEST HANTS REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY REPORT

|                                      |                                                    |                                           |                                              |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Information <input type="checkbox"/> | Recommendation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Decision Request <input type="checkbox"/> | Councillor Activity <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|

**To:** West Hants Regional Municipality Council

**Submitted by:** Kevin Bennett, Manager Parks & Recreation Facilities

**Date:** February 18, 2026

**Subject:** **Elmcroft Playground Design & Install WHRMCD25-11 Recommendation Report**

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### LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

Municipal Government Act, Section 65, Powers to expend funds for a municipal purpose.

### RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. Approves the award of tender WHRMCD25-11 RFP to PlayPower Canada for the Playground Design and Install for Elmcroft Park in the amount of \$389,982.70 plus applicable taxes to be funded through the Canada Community Building Fund.
2. Approves a contingency amount of \$58,497.41 or 15% of the project costs, plus applicable taxes for the project, to be funded through the Canada Community Building Fund.

### BACKGROUND

|                                              |                                            |                                                 |                                            |                                              |                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Property <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Public<br>Opinion <input type="checkbox"/> | Environment <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Social <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Economic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Councillor<br>Activity <input type="checkbox"/> |
|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|

During the September 23, 2025, Council meeting the following motion was passed:

“That Council direct staff to proceed with the tendering process for the replacement of the Elmcroft Play Structure.”

In December 2025 the old play structure was removed with the intent to tender and award the project in late winter/ early spring with an anticipated completion date of early summer 2026.

## **DISCUSSION**

The Elmcroft Play Structure Recommendation Report noted rubber safety mattings be considered to support not only accessibility within the space, but also cleaning should the site be subject to flooding. In the creation of the RFP scope of work staff were made aware of other options that would meet accessibility and maintenance requirements and included those options in the tendering process.

In drafting of the RFP staff contacted the Accessibility Committee Chair, Tracy's Place & Limitless Nova Scotia for support and practical knowledge of users with physical challenges to best inform decision making surrounding the project.

The RFP scope of work included the requirement that the tender was to design, supply and install a new and inclusive playground with a hard surface that meets or exceeds the requirements of CSA Z614-20 (Children's Playspaces and Equipment) and the Nova Scotia Built Environment Accessibility Standards. Bidders had to provide a minimum of two design options, each showing different play value, layout, and surfacing configurations. Surfacing must also provide full accessibility and must be suitable for wheelchair and stroller access.

Vendors were to offer multiple surfacing options that were to include:

Option A – Poured-in-Place (PIP) Rubber Surfacing

Option B – Rubber Tile System

Option C – Hybrid System: Combination of Hard Surfacing routes (asphalt or concrete) with CSA approved synthetic turf or rubberized play zones meeting accessibility standards.

In the recommended tender, the vendor has included a turf grass surface that meets CSA and Accessibility Standards and is also a product that can be cleaned. Additionally, it is a product that should it be torn, has the ability to replace smaller sections fairly easily.

Included in the 2026 - 2027 West Hants Regional Municipality Capital Budget, \$400,000 has been allocated for the installation of a new playground for Council's consideration.

Tenders were called on the Provincial Procurement site and closed on January 19, 2026, for the WHRMCD25-011 RFP.

Seven proponents responded to the tender with two options each, as follows:

| <b>Vendor</b> | <b>Item</b> | <b>Proposal Cost (excluding HST)</b> | <b>Total Value (incl. applicable taxes)</b> |
|---------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
|---------------|-------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|

|                        |                     |              |              |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------|--------------|
| ABC (Option 1)         | Elmcroft Playground | \$399,561.41 | \$414,984.48 |
| ABC (Option 2)         | Elmcroft Playground | \$399,953.88 | \$415,392.10 |
| Cobequid (Option 1)    | Elmcroft Playground | \$385,207.00 | \$400,075.99 |
| Cobequid (Option 2)    | Elmcroft Playground | \$368,185.00 | \$382,396.94 |
| Dirt Road (Option 1)   | Elmcroft Playground | \$396,950.00 | \$412,272.27 |
| Dirt Road (Option 2)   | Elmcroft Playground | \$396,950.00 | \$412,272.27 |
| Fundy Fence (Option 1) | Elmcroft Playground | \$393,517.64 | \$408,707.42 |
| Fundy Fence (Option 2) | Elmcroft Playground | \$388,612.68 | \$403,613.12 |
| PlayPower (Option 1)   | Elmcroft Playground | \$389,982.70 | \$405,036.03 |
| PlayPower (Option 2)   | Elmcroft Playground | \$408,727.61 | \$424,504.50 |
| Terra (Option 1)       | Elmcroft Playground | \$400,000.00 | \$415,440.00 |
| Terra (Option 2)       | Elmcroft Playground | \$380,000.00 | \$394,668.00 |
| Tessier (Option 1)     | Elmcroft Playground | \$301,683.57 | \$313,328.56 |
| Tessier (Option 2)     | Elmcroft Playground | \$271,080.85 | \$281,544.57 |

#### Staff evaluation

| Vendor                 | Technical Score | Fee Score | Total Score | Total Bid Price (excluding HST) |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------|-------------|---------------------------------|
| ABC (Option 1)         | 64.5            | 20.4      | <b>84.9</b> | \$399,561.41                    |
| ABC (Option 2)         | 64.5            | 20.3      | <b>84.8</b> | \$399,953.88                    |
| Cobequid (Option 1)    | 56.5            | 21.1      | <b>77.6</b> | \$385,207.00                    |
| Cobequid (Option 2)    | 61.0            | 22.1      | <b>83.1</b> | \$368,185.00                    |
| Dirt Road (Option 1)   | 58.0            | 20.5      | <b>78.5</b> | \$396,950.00                    |
| Dirt Road (Option 2)   | 58.0            | 20.5      | <b>78.5</b> | \$396,950.00                    |
| Fundy Fence (Option 1) | 54.0            | 20.7      | <b>74.7</b> | \$393,514.64                    |
| Fundy Fence (Option 2) | 54.0            | 20.9      | <b>82.2</b> | \$388,612.68                    |
| PlayPower (Option 1)   | 68.5            | 20.9      | <b>89.4</b> | \$389,982.70                    |

|                      |      |      |             |              |
|----------------------|------|------|-------------|--------------|
| PlayPower (Option 2) | 68.5 | 19.9 | <b>88.4</b> | \$408,727.61 |
| Terra (Option 1)     | 47.0 | 20.3 | <b>67.3</b> | \$400,000.00 |
| Terra (Option 2)     | 47.0 | 21.4 | <b>68.4</b> | \$380,000.00 |
| Tessier (Option 1)   | 54.5 | 27.0 | <b>81.5</b> | \$301,683.57 |
| Tessier (Option 2)   | 54.5 | 30.0 | <b>84.5</b> | \$271,080.85 |

After reviewing all submissions, staff are recommending PlayPower Canada Option 1 in the amount of \$389,982.70 plus applicable taxes and a 15% or \$58,497.41 contingency be allocated to this project. In addition to achieving the highest overall technical score, Play Power's proposal represents the best overall value for money, achieving a balance between cost, quality, durability and community benefit and will further support the strategic actions within the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy Plan approved by Council in 2025.

*Strategic Action #4 Make municipal buildings and public spaces more accessible to people of all ages*

*4.1 Create a process to review and maintain the conditions of existing municipal infrastructure and public spaces that already meet accessible design standards. This includes getting a Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFA) Gold rating.*

*4.2 Evaluate and prioritize retrofits to existing municipal buildings and facilities to meet the accessibility requirements in the latest version of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations.*

*4.3 Commit a portion of the annual budget to go toward the installations and maintenance required for improving the accessibility of public buildings and public spaces in alignment with RHFA.*

*4.5 Evaluate and prioritize capital projects that have potential to improve accessibility and equity. This can include establish a standardized process in project planning stage, and accessibility impacts as a part of staff reports to Council.*

This project is a meaningful investment in West Hants Regional Municipality and will provide safe, inclusive and engaging outdoor play opportunities for our community. We are confident it will enhance the wellbeing of our residents and foster social connections and serve as a valued community asset for years to come. This playground also reflects a commitment to accessibility, inclusion, and fair access to play. Proceeding with this project will ensure that individuals of all abilities will be able to take part, connect, and thrive in this welcoming environment.

PlayPower Canada has a long history of providing communities with exceptional play experiences while keeping accessibility at the front of their design concepts.

### **Economic Ripple Effect**

Playgrounds have a meaningful and measurable impact on the local economy. Visits to well-designed and well-maintained play spaces often result in increased use of nearby amenities and services, creating positive economic activity for local businesses.

Investment in a playground can uplift an entire area and contribute to the broader socio-economic fabric of a community. Investing in quality play spaces is not just about recreation — it is about fostering economic vibrancy, tourism growth, and long-term community development.

### Playgrounds as Tourism and Economic Development Assets

- **Family-Friendly Destinations:** Playgrounds can transform routine stops into intentional destinations, particularly for families travelling with children.
- **Increased Dwell Time and Spending:** Attractive and accessible play areas encourage longer visitor stays, contributing to increased patronage of nearby cafés, restaurants, retail establishments, and services.
- **Destination Playgrounds:** Unique, themed, or large-scale playgrounds — including natural play environments and water-based features — have the potential to draw visitors from outside the immediate region, strengthening tourism appeal.
- **Economic and Social Return on Investment:** Beyond recreation, investing in playground infrastructure delivers significant economic and social value, often generating strong returns through tourism activity, improved public health, and enhanced community well-being.
- **Integration with Tourism Infrastructure:** Globally, playgrounds are increasingly being incorporated into accommodations, commercial centres, and public spaces as a means of attracting families and differentiating destinations within a competitive tourism market.

### Visual Concept – Option 1



PlayPower  
Serving Canada Since 1987

CAN260003A - View 6  
RFP WHRMCD25-11 West Hants Regional Municipality  
Elmroft Playground (Proposal 1)

Miracle

These are visual concepts **ONLY**, we have the ability to sit down with the vendor and discuss overall layout, the color scheme and add or remove elements we wish.

Staff will work with the vendor to provide a playground the meets the needs of our entire community now and into the future.

Where this project has the potential to be a multi-year phase approach to achieve the standards approved by council, we feel this initial concept will make this playground a “destination” for our community and those that visit.



PlayPower  
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CAN260003A - View 5  
RFP WHRMCD25-11 West Hants Regional Municipality  
Elmcroft Playground (Proposal 1)

Miracle



PlayPower  
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CAN260003A - View 3  
RFP WHRMCD25-11 West Hants Regional Municipality  
Elmcroft Playground (Proposal 1)

Miracle

## NEXT STEPS

Upon approval of Council, staff will proceed with issuing this tender to PlayPower Canada.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

|                       |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| Posted to Procurement | December 11, 2025 |
| Closing Date          | January 19, 2026  |
| Price Expiry Date     | March 13, 2026    |

## 2026-27 Capital Budget – Elmcroft Playground

|                                 |                            |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Proposed Bid Total:             | \$389,982.70               |
| <u>15% Project Contingency:</u> | <u>\$58,497.41</u>         |
| <i>Total (applicable taxes</i>  | <i>\$448,480.11</i>        |
| Applicable Taxes (3.86%):       | \$17,311.33                |
| <b>Total Project Costs:</b>     | <b>\$465,791.44</b>        |
| <br>                            |                            |
| <b>2026-27 Capital Budget</b>   | <b>\$400,000.00</b>        |
| Variance ( <b>over</b> )/under: | <b><u>-\$65,791.44</u></b> |

The playground funded by the Canada Community Building Fund. With this project coming over budget, it will increase the withdraw from the CCBF reserve by \$65,791.44.

The projected balance at the end of March 31, 2026, for the Canada Community Building Fund is \$1,987,938. The projected 5 year balanced based on the 2025-26 Capital Budget is 948,232, prior to any additions in the 2026-27 Capital Budget. If Council chooses to proceed with this project, it may reduce future affordability of other capital decisions funded through Canada Community Building Fund.

### ALTERNATIVES

1. Council may choose not to proceed with project.
2. Council may choose to award this contract to an alternative proponent.

Neither of these alternatives are recommended by staff.

### ATTACHMENTS

None

### CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER REVIEW

The project aligns with the direction of Council both through the Equity, Anti-Racism, and Accessibility Strategy Plan and Council's direction. The vendor selection is rationalized in the report, as well as the increased cost and additional funding from CCBF is noted.

I support the recommendation.

Report Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Bennett, Manager, Parks & Recreation Facilities

Report Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kathy Kehoe, Director Community Development

Report Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
VanEssa Roberts, Manager, Community Economic Development

Report Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Carlee Rochon, Director Financial Services

Report Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mark Phillips, Chief Administrative Officer