

## Michael Oliveri

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**From:** Stephanie Bonnick [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, October 5, 2024 5:18 PM  
**To:** E\_Clerks  
**Subject:** Kin 1 upgrade

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To whom it may concern,

I'm writing in regards to the proposed upgrades to Kin 1 at Kinsman stadium.

My son joined Buddy League 3 years ago. We are from Waterloo, but travel to Cambridge to be a part of this amazing program. My son has a rare neurological syndrome that causes disabilities across all areas of development. He's had many surgeries, and fought through many challenges in his 10 years of life. He's fought to survive, and now he fights to belong. He is well aware of his disabilities and has desperately sought to fit in. To find friends and build relationships. He dreamed of being part of a team.

When we found Buddy League, he found a home. Somewhere he finally felt valued and included. Over the years it has eased his anxiety, and been his home away from home. His safe place. As a parent of a child with disabilities, I cannot express how it feels to watch him thrive and gain the confidence and independence he has so desperately sought. It gave us a community. One where no explanations are needed. Acceptance.

I am an Autism and Behavioral therapist, and previously worked for KidsAbility before deciding to stay home with my son due to his disabilities. I have witnessed first hand the hurdles families deal with when having a child with a disability. Families often felt isolated, and expressed frustration with wait times. Wait lists for services. Wait lists for specialists. Wait lists for help. A wait for an inclusive field where they can access barrier free sports.

An inclusive field, is exactly that - a field for everybody. Accessible washrooms. Wheelchair accessible. A field where everyone can be included, and not face barriers. Upgrading Kin 1 isn't just for those for disabilities, it's for the City of Cambridge as a whole. We know that those with disabilities are 2 to 3 times more likely to be in poor health, mentally and physically. This is our chance to create an inclusive space that will help change these statistics and the future outcomes for all those living with disabilities. Every person should have the opportunity to barrier free recreational sports. A community. A place to belong. This can't wait.

Thank you,  
Stephanie Bonnick