

To: COUNCIL

Meeting Date: 7/22/2025

Subject: Kin 1 Ball Diamond Accessibility Improvements and Debt Funding By-Law

Submitted By: Shane Taylor, Manager of Recreation, Placemaking Capital Projects

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Report No.: 25-090-CD

File No.: C11

Wards Affected: Ward 1

RECOMMENDATION(S):

THAT Report 25-090-CD re: Kin 1 Ball Diamond Accessibility Improvements and Capital Funding By-Law be received;

AND THAT capital project A/00557-40 Accessible Ball Diamond – Construction be fully funded from debt in the amount of \$3,025,000;

AND FURTHER THAT the associated Debt By-law, attached to Report 25-090-CD as Appendix A, be passed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Purpose

- To provide Council with a status update on the Kin 1 Ball Diamond Accessibility Improvements.
- To obtain Council approval to proceed with the debt-funded construction of the Kin 1 Accessible Ball Diamond project and fulfill financial by-law requirements.

Key Findings

- The conceptual design for accessibility improvements to the Kin 1 Ball Diamond was endorsed by Council in October 2024 (Report 24-110-CD).

- Construction on the site elements will begin after the 2025 baseball season.
- Washroom renovations supporting the field are proceeding in 2025 under separate construction contract.
- Permitting is underway, including approvals required from the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario (MTO).
- The total cost of the accessibility improvement project is \$3,025,000. Originally, it was anticipated that \$1,512,500 would be supported through grant funding, sponsorship and donations. However, the City was unsuccessful in its application to the Jays Care Foundation. Staff now recommend funding the entire cost through debt.
- A fund-raising campaign is underway for the ball diamond improvements, under Play It Forward Cambridge (www.Cambridge.ca/PlayitForward).

Financial Implications

The total cost of the accessibility improvement project is \$3,025,000. Due to the unsuccessful application for the Jays Care grant, Council approval will be required to increase tax-supported debt by \$1,512,500 to fully fund the Accessible Ball Diamond capital project.

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT:

☒ Strategic Action

Objective(s): INCLUSION - Deliver accessible, diverse and inclusive services, programs and infrastructure for all ages and abilities

Strategic Action: Provide age-friendly services that are accessible to all

OR

☐ Core Service

Program: Not Applicable

Core Service: Not Applicable

BACKGROUND:

The conceptual design for the Kin 1 ball diamond accessible improvements was endorsed by Council in October 2024. The design includes key accessibility upgrades: accessible dugouts, pathways, bleachers, and artificial turf. Construction on the field improvements is scheduled to commence in fall 2025, following the conclusion of the 2025 baseball season, and will be completed summer 2026. Staff are currently advancing the project toward permitting and tendering.

Washroom renovations supporting the field are currently in the tendering phase and will be underway summer/fall 2025.

A new fundraising campaign has been added under the Play it Forward Cambridge campaign to raise funds for recreational facilities through sponsorship and donations. Residents, sports groups, and local businesses can get involved to support this project; details are available at www.Cambridge.ca/PlayitForward.

ANALYSIS:

Staff are seeking Council authorization to fund and proceed with construction of the Kin 1 Accessible Ball Diamond project. While the City pursued external funding through Jays Care Foundation's "Field of Dreams" grant, this application was not successful. Given the project is a priority of council and given its scheduled timeline, staff recommend proceeding with full debt funding. Staff will continue to seek grant opportunities, sponsorship and donations to support the project funding, but having debt funding in place in advance of other external funding sources will ensure the project proceeds without delay.

Construction work on the washrooms is expected to begin late summer and work on the fields is anticipated to begin in fall 2025, once the baseball season concludes.

EXISTING POLICY / BY-LAW(S):

This report aligns with the requirements under the City's Budget Control By-law 152-14.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

The construction project was initially approved for debt financing during the budget process, with the intention that it would be funded equally through debt and donations or a grant from Jays Care. However, the City was ultimately unsuccessful in securing the Jays Care grant. As a result, it is now recommended that the full cost of the project be fully funded through debt, so this important project can move forward on schedule.

The total project cost of \$3,025,000 will be fully funded through debt. To proceed,

approval of the attached Debt By-law (Appendix A) is required by the Region of Waterloo to confirm Council's intention to finance the project through debt.

The table below summarizes the financial impact:

Project Name	Funding Source	Approved Budget	Revised Funding	Savings/ (Deficit)
A/00557-40 Accessible Ball Diamond – Construction	Donations	\$1,512,500	\$0	\$1,512,000
A/00557-40 Accessible Ball Diamond – Construction	Debenture	\$1,512,500	\$3,025,000	(\$1,512,500)
Total Project Savings/(Deficit)	N/A	\$3,025,000	\$3,025,000	\$0

PUBLIC VALUE:

Leadership:

This project delivers a one-of-a-kind accessible diamond within the Region of Waterloo and reinforces the City's commitment to inclusive recreation. It showcases leadership in creating age- and ability-friendly infrastructure for residents and regional users alike.

Engagement:

The design was informed through early engagement with user groups, including the Buddy League, and through consultation with the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE INPUT:

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Accessibility Advisory Committee was consulted on July 22, 2024. Feedback included design improvements to bleachers to support integrated accessible viewing and consideration of an accessible change table within future washroom upgrades. These items are reflected in the current design where feasible.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Early consultation was held through a pop-up engagement event at a Buddy League game on August 17, 2024. Input from other user groups, including Cambridge Girls Softball and local slo-pitch leagues, has helped shape the design.

INTERNAL / EXTERNAL CONSULTATION:

Consultation has occurred with internal departments (Facilities, Public Works, Planning, Finance) and external groups including user leagues. Pre-consultation with MTO staff has been completed and permitting applications are underway.

CONCLUSION:

The Kin 1 Ball Diamond Accessibility Improvement project represents a key opportunity to provide inclusive recreation opportunities and improve an aging facility. With design completed, staff are requesting Council approve the project to proceed using full debt funding. For the Region of Waterloo to issue debt on behalf of the City, Council approval is required for the Debt By-law outlined in Appendix A, in the amount of \$3,025,000. This approach ensures the project remains on schedule and aligns with strategic accessibility goals.

REPORT IMPACTS:

Agreement: **No**

By-law: **Yes**

Budget Amendment: **Yes**

Policy: **No**

APPROVALS:

This report has gone through the appropriate workflow and has been reviewed and or approved by the following as required:

Director

Deputy City Manager

Chief Financial Officer

City Solicitor

City Manager

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 24-090-CD Appendix A – Debt By-law