



Policy	Playground Replacement Policy (PRC-003)
Approved By:	Council
Approval Date:	October 23, 2023
Amendment Date:	

PURPOSE

The District of Oak Bay is undertaking a multi-year plan to update and upgrade playground equipment in the District’s Parks. The purpose of this policy is to provide a foundation of guiding principles for the ongoing redevelopment, replacement and/or the installation of new playground equipment. A principle is generally considered a rule, guideline, or regulation that provides the foundation of future actions and plans.

PRINCIPLES OF PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT

The following is a list of “guiding principles,” for the planning, development, design and installation of playground equipment within the District of Oak Bay:

1. Safety
 - All playground equipment and surfacing must meet CSA Standards and must account for the unique environmental factors that may impact the installation and/or ongoing maintenance of equipment to continually meet the CSA Standards (i.e. sea water spray impact on metal equipment, high wind impact on surface materials).
 - i. Where feasible, and without creating a disturbance for neighbors, lighting options should be considered in and around playgrounds to support safe evening and dusk play.

2. Accessible and Inclusive
 - All playgrounds in the District of Oak Bay must have options and opportunities for children, youth, and families of various sensory, physical, intellectual and/or social abilities to play and participate in the use of the playground.
 - i. Playground equipment should provide options for children ages 1-12 at a minimum.
 - ii. Where appropriate and feasible, playground equipment should provide options for youth ages 13 and up to gather, socialize and play in a safe setting.

Equipment selections and playground designs should consider options to facilitate safe gathering for youth.

- iii. Where appropriate and feasible, design considerations shall be given to the development of a complete, comfortable playground atmosphere which supports the needs of all ages (parents, grandparents, etc.) including considerations for additional shade (i.e. trees or canopies), seating, tables, bicycle racks and/or activity equipment for all ages.

3. Physical Literacy

- All playgrounds must provide a challenging and exciting environment which encourages and facilitates children's exploration and experimentation with physical movement and/or with cognitive/spatial learning.

4. Connections to Nature

- All playgrounds will provide an opportunity for children, youth, and their families to be present in and/or engage with their local, natural environment.

5. A Child's View

- All playground equipment and playground upgrades should be considered from the perspective of children and their views of what constitutes exciting, interesting, and engaging play opportunities.
 - i. Each playground replacement will provide opportunities to engage children and their families in opportunities to select and/or provide input into the selection of pieces of equipment and/or of the overall playground design features.

6. Sustainable and Environmentally Sensitive

- All materials used in the playground equipment and surrounding surfacing should be made from sustainable materials and components which support the principles of the District's Sustainable Procurement Policy and support the goals of environmental stewardship of the District.

FEASIBILITY

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance in designing and developing plans for the replacement of playgrounds in the District of Oak Bay. However, in some cases it may not be feasible to address all of these guiding principles with each and every playground replacement. Factors which may impact the feasibility of incorporating all of the element of these guiding principles may include: impact on direct neighbors of a playground/park, size of footprint and available park space, environmentally, ecologically and/or culturally sensitive spaces and places, available funding, public input and feedback, insurance considerations and/or availability of equipment and/or surfacing materials.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Director of Parks, Recreation and Culture and/or Manager of Parks:

- Determine the feasibility of addressing and incorporating all the guiding principles when seeking to redesign and replace any playground equipment,
- Ensure the principles of playground replacement are utilized in any procurement processes and are reflected in the evaluation of submissions to tender and/or request for proposals,
- Ensure that these principles are considered when planning for and designing spaces for playground replacements,
- Consider the need to alter or change budget allocations to address all elements of the principles presented in this policy,
- To engage the public in the selection of playground equipment,
- Communicate these principles to external service/equipment providers to ensure an understanding of the goals of the District for the replacement of playground equipment.

PRC Marketing Specialist and/or District Communications Staff

- Ensure that the messaging regarding playground replacement processes incorporates and utilizes the language presented in this policy,
- Supports the development and implementation of community consultation opportunities such as surveys and questionnaires.

REVIEW

This policy shall be reviewed two years after the initial implementation of the policy and/or after such time as a minimum of two playgrounds have been replaced and installed. After this initial review, this policy shall be reviewed every five years or more frequently if staff identify a need for an earlier review.