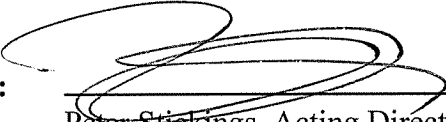




PO Box 1749
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Halifax Regional Council
May 24, 2004

TO: Mayor Kelly and Members of Halifax Regional Council

SUBMITTED BY: 
Peter Stickings, Acting Director of Real Property and Asset Management

DATE: May 12, 2005

SUBJECT: Playground Compliance Program

INFORMATION REPORT

ORIGIN

At the September 28, 2004, Regional Council Meeting Councillor Cooper, seconded by Councillor Hetherington requested that staff provide to Council a report outlining what, if any, comprehensive plan for the repair and replacement of playground equipment is in place and the timeline for that plan.

BACKGROUND

In response to a request from council in 2002, Parks conducted a Playground Compliance Audit on all play structures owned by HRM. The purpose was to identify the current conditions of these structures and to develop a program or strategy to comply with the Canadian CSA-Z614-98 Guidelines manual.

The approach is two fold:

- 1) Regular attention to maintenance using HRM operational resources in an effort to sustain the condition of existing structures meeting the Guidelines.
- 2) Identify, upgrade, or remove units, through the Compliance Audit and Playground Compliance Program, funded through HRM Capital resources

DISCUSSION

The Playground Compliance Audit conducted in 2002 resulted in an assessment of 375 Playgrounds containing 1135 individual units or structures.

These units were assessed and placed into three main categories listed below:

Good: Unit meets the current Playground Compliance Standards as of 1998. This included a Grandfather clause.

Fair: Unit meets the Standards in place at the time the unit was installed, and could be upgraded to the 1998 Standards.

Poor: Unit was an Immediate Safety Hazard and was not considered practical nor cost effective to upgrade. This would result in removal.

Through the efforts of this program we expect to have eliminated the immediate safety hazards by the end of 2005 resulting in a significant reduction in the units which require removal. The focus will then be on improvements to existing units and installations of new units.

This program is delivered by HRM operational staff, who have received the necessary certification to carry out the assessment, repair, and general maintenance of HRM play structures.

The table below provides a snap shot of our progress to date, along with a projection of the planned approach in 2005. Installation of new structures outside of the Compliance program are not listed in the total number of units identified in the table below:

Year	# of units	Good	Fair	Poor	Remove	Replace	Upgrade
2002	1135	533	387	215	none	none	none
2003	1135	590	339	138	138	76	43
2004	1130	648	315	35	145	63	113
2005	1048				63	63	33

The 2002 Playground Audit was conducted in accordance with the 1998 Canadian CSA-Z614-98 Standards Manual. In 2003 there was a revision to this manual CSA-Z614-03. The guidelines contained in this manual are recognized by the Standards Council of Canada.

One of the most significant changes was to eliminate the Grandfather clause. This will certainly impact on the figures in the table above. We will not know to what extent until a new audit is complete.

We intend to conduct an Audit in 2005/06 in accordance with the 2003 Guidelines. This new assessment will guide our Maintenance and Compliance program into the future.

The timeline for completion of this Playground Compliance Program is five years. The program has been in place for three years and is on schedule. Once the program is complete, our ongoing operational maintenance program should help sustain the units in compliance with the Canadian Standards Manual.

The condition of the play units change due to vandalism, wear and tear, and weather events and these structures require constant monitoring and maintenance. With a stable approach to care and maintenance, these structures can be maintained in accordance with the current Canadian Standards Manual.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

There is a total of \$100,000 in the Approved 2005/06 Capital Budget under Account No. CP300559, Playground Upgrades and Replacements, for the Playground Compliance Program. The budget availability has been confirmed by Financial Services staff.

Budget Summary:	<u>Account No. CP300559, Playground Upgrades and Replacements</u>	
	Cumulative Unspent Budget	\$559,435
	Less: Playground Compliance Program	<u>\$100,000</u>
		\$459,435

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES / BUSINESS PLAN

This report complies with the Municipality's Multi-Year Financial Strategy, the approved Operating, Capital and Reserve budgets, policies and procedures regarding withdrawals from the utilization of Capital and Operating reserves, as well as any relevant legislation.

ALTERNATIVES

None

ATTACHMENTS

None

**Playground Compliance Program
Council Report**

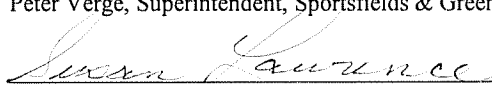
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May 24, 2004

Additional copies of this report, and information on its status, can be obtained by contacting the Office of the Municipal Clerk at 490-4210, or Fax 490-4208.

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