

Inclusive Park Proposal



A Community-Driven Vision
City of St. James



A place where everyone can play, connect, and belong

THE PROPOSAL

Every child deserves a place to play and feel welcome.

Community members have expressed a strong desire for an inclusive park in St. James: a welcoming public space intentionally designed so people of different ages and abilities can play, gather, explore, and connect together.

Unlike a traditional playground that simply meets minimum accessibility requirements, an inclusive park is designed around meaningful participation. The goal is to reduce physical, sensory, and social barriers so children and adults can enjoy the same space alongside family members and friends.

This proposal responds to that community-driven vision by establishing a framework for planning an inclusive park that can serve St. James residents while becoming a welcoming recreational destination for families throughout the region.



THE VISION

- Create a place where ability is not a barrier to participation.
- Provide opportunities for play, movement, sensory experiences, and social connection.
- Design a park that supports children, caregivers, adults, and multi-generational families.
- Build a community asset that reflects St. James' commitment to belonging and quality of life.

BENEFITS

Inclusive play strengthens children, families, and communities.



PLAY



CONNECT



GROW



BELONG

- Encourages children of different abilities to play together rather than in separate spaces.
- Supports physical activity, balance, coordination, confidence, and healthy outdoor recreation.
- Creates opportunities for communication, friendship, cooperation, and social development.
- Provides sensory-rich experiences as well as calmer areas for visitors who may become overwhelmed.
- Gives parents and caregivers more opportunities to participate alongside their children.
- Creates a gathering place for families, schools, community organizations, and visitors.
- Demonstrates that St. James values accessibility, inclusion, and community connection.

Inclusive Play is Community Building

When children share spaces, they learn from one another. Inclusive environments encourage empathy, confidence, independence, and a sense of belonging while allowing families to participate together in everyday community life.

INCLUSIVE DESIGN

A successful inclusive park is designed for participation, comfort, choice, and dignity.

ACCESSIBLE MOVEMENT

Firm, stable routes; transfer opportunities; ramped play; wheelchair-accessible equipment; and spaces that support mobility devices.

SENSORY CHOICE

Music, texture, movement, tactile features, imaginative play, and quieter spaces for visitors who need lower stimulation.

PLAY FOR MANY AGES

A mix of activities for younger children, older children, caregivers, and families so the park functions as a true community destination.

COMFORT & SUPPORT

Shade, seating, accessible picnic areas, clear sightlines, rest areas, and convenient access to supporting amenities.

COMMUNICATION & WAYFINDING

Clear signs, intuitive circulation, visual cues, and opportunities to incorporate communication boards or other supportive tools.

SAFETY BY DESIGN

Age-appropriate zones, accessible surfacing, separation from traffic, thoughtful fall zones, and layouts that help caregivers supervise.

NEXT STEPS

1

Confirm Site & Project Scope

Identify the preferred location, available space, supporting infrastructure, and initial project boundaries.

2

Community Engagement

Gather feedback from families, accessibility advocates, schools, community organizations, and future users.

3

Concept Design

Work with qualified designers to develop a concept plan, preliminary amenities, accessibility strategy, and cost estimate.

4

Funding Strategy

Pursue grants, donations, sponsorships, partnerships, and local funding opportunities appropriate for the final scope.

5

Final Design & Construction

Complete engineering/design, procure equipment and construction services, and establish long-term maintenance expectations.

6

Celebrate & Sustain

Open the park as a community destination and continue evaluating how well it serves residents over time.

COMMUNITY-DRIVEN. ACCESSIBLE. WELCOMING.

A shared vision for play and belonging in St. James.

Thank You

Together, we can create a park where everyone belongs!

The St. James Inclusive Park proposal reflects a community-driven desire to create a welcoming destination centered on accessibility, connection, play, and opportunity for all.