

To: Parks and Recreation Committee

From: David Waligora, AICP

Date: August 6, 2026

Subject: Stanley Park Playground, Phase 2 Improvements, and Park Operations Update

Purpose

The purpose of this memorandum is to request Committee direction regarding the expanded Stanley Park playground concepts, provide an opportunity to continue discussing observations from the Committee's July walk-through, and obtain a formal recommendation regarding the proposed Stanley Park Phase 2 Improvement Plan prepared by Beckett & Raeder.

Stanley Park Phase 2 Improvement Plan

Beckett & Raeder has prepared the proposed Stanley Park Phase 2 Improvement Plan. Copies of the plan were provided to several Committee members during the July park walk-through and are also included in this month's meeting packet.

The Phase 2 plan is now being presented for formal Committee consideration and recommendation to the Township Board.

Although the proposed Phase 2 cost is higher than the cost of Phase 1, much of the difference can be attributed to inflation and the inclusion of additional structural and infrastructure design services. When the Phase 1 proposal is adjusted for inflation and the additional services included in Phase 2 are taken into account, the overall costs are generally comparable.

Suggested Motion

Motion to recommend that the Township Board accept the proposed Stanley Park Phase 2 Improvement Plan prepared by Beckett & Raeder and authorize staff to proceed with the preparation of final plans and bidding documents, subject to available funding, final engineering, and any minor administrative revisions.

Stanley Park Playground

At its June meeting, the Parks and Recreation Committee reviewed the proposed playground equipment for Stanley Park and recommended proceeding with the staff-preferred concept developed within the \$75,000 contribution provided by Kroger.

Following that meeting, Township Board members expressed interest in the Township matching Kroger's contribution with an additional \$75,000. This would create an

approximately \$150,000 equipment budget and allow for a larger playground footprint serving a broader range of children. The original concept was primarily oriented toward children ages 5 through 12, and the Committee was not aware at the time of its recommendation that additional Township funding might be available.

Staff subsequently returned to the same playground vendor and requested three concepts based on an approximately \$150,000 equipment budget. Each concept includes a larger play area for children ages 5 through 12, along with a separate, smaller play area intended for children ages 2 through 5. The concepts also include various combinations of swings, climbing features, freestanding play components, and sensory or interactive equipment.

The Committee is being asked to review the three attached concepts and identify a preferred option for presentation to the Township Board. Final dimensions and equipment components will remain subject to site verification and preparation of the manufacturer's final plans.

Suggested Motion

Motion to recommend that the Township Board select Stanley Park Playground Concept ____ as the Committee's preferred option, with an anticipated equipment budget of approximately \$150,000, funded through the \$75,000 Kroger contribution and a Township contribution of up to \$75,000, subject to final design, site verification, and Township Board approval.

Stanley Park Walk-Through Discussion

On July 8, the Parks and Recreation Committee conducted a walk-through of Stanley Park. Committee members were generally pleased with the completed improvements and identified several items for additional review or future consideration.

Staff invites the Committee to continue its discussion regarding the following observations:

- Placement of garbage receptacles so they do not interfere with wheelchair-accessible bench areas.
- The potential addition of an accessible kayak launch as a longer-term improvement.
- Development of a strategy for managing phragmites, poison ivy, and other invasive or undesirable vegetation along the interior side of the pathway.
- Whether the beach area should continue to be maintained as a grass and natural shoreline area.

Although these items were identified during the walk-through, the Committee did not express significant concern regarding the current condition of the beach area and was generally supportive of allowing it to remain grass.

The Committee may wish to identify which items should be addressed administratively, incorporated into the Phase 2 improvements, or considered as part of future park capital planning.

Operational Updates

Staff will be purchasing new covered metal trash receptacles for Stanley Park. The receptacles will be selected to complement the appearance of the existing park benches and will be placed so they do not obstruct accessible seating areas.

Staff has also been asked by Township Board members to purchase a second Horse Pal device to continue efforts to reduce deer flies and other biting flies at Stanley Park. The first Horse Pal has shown positive early results, collecting approximately three to four inches of flies while providing a chemical-free method of fly mitigation. The second device will be placed in an appropriate location consistent with the manufacturer's placement recommendations.

Staff also received a request to install new basketball nets at Hawley Park. In recognition of the 250th anniversary of the United States, staff selected red, white, and blue nets for installation.

Park Treatment Products

Staff also reviewed the products that have been used at Hawley Park, Vetter Park, the Township grounds, the Dublin Community Senior Center property, and Hidden Pines. In general, the products fall into three groups.

Trimec 992 is a selective herbicide used to control broadleaf weeds such as dandelions and clover. Ranger Pro is a nonselective glyphosate herbicide used where most or all vegetation is intended to be removed. Specticle FLO and prodiamine are preemergent herbicides used to prevent weeds such as crabgrass from becoming established. Talak, Stryker, Scion, and Demand CS are insecticides used to control mosquitoes, ticks, ants, fleas, flies, and other nuisance insects.

These products are not harmless, particularly in their concentrated form. Direct exposure may cause eye or skin irritation, and some products may be harmful if swallowed, inhaled, or absorbed through the skin. Trimec 992 carries the EPA signal word Danger because the concentrated product can cause irreversible eye damage. However, potential exposure to park visitors is substantially reduced when products are applied at the labeled rate and

people and pets are kept out of treated areas until the spray has dried or for any longer period required by the product label.

The insecticides present the greatest environmental concern because several are highly or extremely toxic to fish and other aquatic organisms, and some are highly toxic to bees when directly applied to flowering plants. Herbicides may also damage desirable vegetation and aquatic plants through overspray, drift, or runoff. These concerns are particularly important near lakes, wetlands, drainage areas, and flowering vegetation. The treated areas are not immediately adjacent to these features and contain little flowering vegetation, which reduces, but does not entirely eliminate, the potential for off-site environmental effects.