Minutes – Riel Community Committee – April 10, 2026

REPORTS

Item No. 5 City Play Structures

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE DECISION:

The Riel Community Committee concurred in the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service and received the report as information.

DECISION MAKING HISTORY:

Moved by Councillor Allard

That the recommendation of the Winnipeg Public Service be concurred in.

Carried

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Title: City Play Structures

Critical Path: Riel Community Committee

AUTHORIZATION

Author	Department Head	CFO	CAO
D. Domke	J. Berezowsky		

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Winnipeg has 1,389 parks, and 513 of those parks have playground sites. A playground site is:

- An area with one or more play structures and other play features, or;
- An area with one or more standalone play features but no play structures, such as swings, a sandbox, or other play components.

Parks and Open Space captures and maintains data for 551 playground sites in the city (some parks have more than one playground site):

- 545 sites in parks
    - 106 park sites are adjacent to school properties
- Six City-maintained sites on school properties

This report identifies the condition of the six City-maintained sites on school properties and the 106 sites on parks adjacent to school properties. Overall, only three percent of the playgrounds in the city are in poor condition, and none are in very poor condition.

Parks and Open Space is responsible for City-maintained playground sites. Playground inspections and maintenance are a priority:

- Playground safety is necessary and required
- Each site is inspected about once a month by certified staff
- Repairs are completed when required to eliminate hazards

Costs for playground maintenance have exceeded budget in recent years due to growth in the park inventory.

Parks and Open Space would not be able to absorb additional playground inventory from School Divisions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That this report be received as information.

REASON FOR THE REPORT

On February 3, 2026, the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services concurred in the recommendation of the Riel Community Committee and directed the Winnipeg Public Service to report back to the Riel Community Committee within 90 days on the following:

1. Current City of Winnipeg play structures located on school properties and properties adjacent to school properties.

2. Current conditions of City of Winnipeg play structures located on school properties and properties adjacent to school properties.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

City-maintained playground sites require regular inspections and maintenance to keep them safe. The ongoing increase in parkland inventory presents challenges for maintaining service levels, but playground maintenance must be prioritized given the associated risks. In recent years, this has resulted in playground maintenance exceeding the budget. Playground safety maintenance is performed with existing resources resulting in resources being taken away from maintenance to other park amenities and/or park services.

HISTORY/DISCUSSION

The City of Winnipeg's parkland system includes 1,389 parks, including 513 parks with playground sites. Some parks include more than one playground site. All playground sites are described by one of two types:

- A defined site with one or more **play structures** and supporting play features

- A defined site with one or more **standalone play features** but no play structures, such as swings, a sandbox, or other play components

The Parks and Open Space division in the Public Works department maintains an asset register with data for 551 playground sites across the city: 486 of 551 play structures sites and 65 of 551 standalone play features sites. Most sites (545) are located on parkland, including 106 on parkland adjacent to school properties. The parkland sites adjacent to school properties were identified by querying parcels with adjacent boundaries. The remaining six sites are located on school properties. Those school sites are in the asset register because they are City-maintained.

A five-point scale is used to rate playground conditions, from very poor to very good. Only three percent of the playgrounds in the City's asset register are in poor condition, and none are in very poor condition. This exceeds the performance target identified in the Winnipeg Parks

Strategy: very poor and poor playgrounds cannot exceed five percent of the playground inventory. Most park amenities are currently falling short of their condition-based performance targets, but playgrounds are consistently prioritized (both renewal and maintenance) due to the associated safety standards and risk management. **Appendix A** notes condition ratings for the six sites on school properties and the 106 sites on parkland adjacent to school properties.

Playgrounds on school properties are not formally captured in the asset register unless they are City-maintained. However, Parks and Open Space staff reviewed aerial imagery in 2025 and estimate 188 additional playgrounds are located on school properties across the city. This estimate only includes sites with play structures. The six City-maintained sites on school properties require further review to determine the status and details of the associated long-standing agreements.

Playgrounds on SCHOOL PROPERTIES	**Play structures**	**Standalone play features**
City-maintained	4	2
School-maintained	188 (estimate)	Unknown
TOTAL	**192**	**2**

Most playground sites (100 of 106) on parkland adjacent to school properties are inspected and maintained by Parks and Open Space staff (City-maintained). The remaining six of 106 sites are inspected and maintained by other stakeholders.

Playgrounds on PARKLAND – Adjacent to SCHOOL PROPERTIES	**Play structures**	**Standalone play features**
City-maintained	84	16
School-maintained	4	0
User group-maintained	1	1
TOTAL	**89**	**17**

City-maintained playground sites are inspected about once a month by a Canadian Certified Playground Inspector. Staff follow up on all safety issues and/or required maintenance identified during inspections. This work includes minor repairs, replacing play equipment, fixing edging, and maintaining safety surfacing. The associated work is considered necessary and required due to the risks associated with hazards and the requirements for maintaining safety standards. About half of all playgrounds require annual maintenance to maintain their standards. When a playground requires maintenance work, the cost ranges from a few hundred dollars for a component repair to over $10,000 for safety surfacing refurbishment.

Budget pressures for maintaining playground safety standards are expected to increase alongside inventory growth. Five of the 551 playground sites in the asset register (nonadjacent to school properties) are new. These sites are currently maintained by developers, but they will be turned over to the City as per the development agreements. More playground sites will be added by developers to new parks as the city continues to grow, further increasing the gap between budget and inventory. Given these gaps in funding, and the expected inventory growth, the City should continue to prioritize public safety and dedicate resources toward playground sites in parks. Therefore, Parks and Open Space would not be able to absorb additional playground inventory from School Divisions without significant resources.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Financial Impact Statement Date: March 24, 2026

Project Name:

City Play Structures

COMMENTS:

As this report is for information purposes, the are no financial implications.

J. Ruby, 2026/03/25

J. Ruby, CPA, CA
Manager of Finance and Administration

CONSULTATION

This Report has been prepared in consultation with: Community Services, Recreation Services

OURWINNIPEG POLICY ALIGNMENT

- **1.5 Evidence-Informed Decisions** – Invest in data and technology in order to support objective, evidence-informed decision-making; support open government and open data principles for collection and sharing; help coordinate records and information management; and improve process efficiency, results-based service delivery and accountability

- **3.16 Optimize Facility Access** – Maximize the use of existing municipal assets to promote recreation, community development, and social interaction, while optimizing equitable access, infrastructure reinvestments, service delivery methods and resource management.
- **4.11 Equitable Service Access** – Prioritize equitable access to recreation and parks systems, services, and infrastructure, in order to: enable active living; connect people and nature; create supportive environments; build community capacity; and achieve desired health outcomes, with a focus on children and youth.

WINNIPEG CLIMATE ACTION PLAN ALIGNMENT

Strategic Opportunity #7: Community Climate Resiliency

- 7.3 Preserve and Manage Parks and Natural Areas to Support Climate Change Mitigation *(Primary Responsibility: Public Works Department).*

WINNIPEG POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY ALIGNMENT

Goal 6: All City Services are Equitable, Inclusive, and Accessible

- Residents have equitable access to City services, in particular demographic groups who experience marginalization.
- Community development models and collaborative approaches are enhanced or initiated for service planning and delivery in areas of higher poverty.
- Use of City's tools and resources are maximized to reduce systemic inequities.

SUBMITTED BY

Department: Public Works
Division: Parks and Open Space
Prepared by: JP Perreault
Date: March 27, 2026

Attachments:
Appendix A: Details of City-Maintained Playgrounds on School Properties and Playgrounds on Parkland Adjacent to School Properties