



2025 Budget Request

Request: Kemble Athletic Fields Playground

From: Niall Lobley, CAO

Department: Community & Environmental Services

Total Financial Ask: \$250,000

Type of Budget Request: *Capital*

This document and its attachments are public and available in an accessible format upon request.

Background and Strategic Priority

On October 16th Council meeting, a petition was presented to Council seeking consideration of adding a playground in the Village of Kemble. Council passed a recommendation directing staff to present a budget request to the November 12th Strategic Session in respect to Budget 2025.

Analysis

The Township of Georgian Bluffs has three public playgrounds. These are located in Balmy Beach at Sarawak Family Park, at Shallow Lake at the Shouldice Family Park adjacent to the arena and Community Centre and at Derby, in the Village of Kilsyth, adjacent to Derby Community Centre. The newest play area is in Derby, built in 2023/4.

There have been requests for a number of years for play equipment to be reinstalled in Kemble. Staff understand that there were, in the past, a small number of play elements at the arena property which were removed for safety concerns a number of years ago. In fall, 2024, Council were approach by delegation and received a petition requesting that Council consider putting a playground back into the village, at the athletic fields, just north of the village.



The Athletic Fields represent one of the larger and less intensively used managed greenspaces in the Township. The property is owned (with certain covenants extending use to others) by the Township and is managed greenspace.

It has adequate space to install a small playground and an associated parking lot to support use.

The ideal space would be the existing arena property. Ownership and long-term use of this site is less clear than at the athletic fields. Further, the property is almost completely used; the arena footprint is significant, there is a large septic field that takes up much of the balance of the property and the parking takes up the remainder. There is not adequate space at the arena site to support a playground with satisfactory safety set backs.

The Township is undertaking in 2024/5 a Facilities Master Plan which will provide direction on future facility needs in the Township. Work completed in 2023 demonstrated that the existing arena in Kemble is in deteriorating condition and will require extensive repairs if it is to be retained. The work through the redevelopment proposal suggests that the existing building is not suited for the needs of community and requests have been made for a replacement building. The Township does hold additional lands in Kemble, which, should the Facilities Master Plan support the need, could, potentially, be used for a new community facility in the future.

As such, it is not clear where the centre of community facilities will be in the village in the future. A play area at the Athletic Fields would address an immediate need and could be developed in such a way so that if an alternative, and better location was to present itself over coming years, the equipment could be moved and re-purposed at a new location.

Based on works completed in 2023/4 in Derby, staff believe that a small play area, with accessible features and engineered wood fibre surface, supported by a small parking area, connecting trail, seating and shade tree planting could be delivered for approximately \$250,000.

Financial Impact

\$250,000. Staff believe that this work could be bundled with other projects identified in the 2025 budget and may well attract grant support which would offset costs to the Township. If supported, staff believe works could be planned in 2025 and construction would occur in 2026.