



Joe Cressy 周凱捷

City Councillor | Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina

PE12.2

June 1, 2016

Chair and Members
Parks and Environment Committee
100 Queen Street West, Toronto City Hall
Toronto, ON
M5H 2N2

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Opportunities for Adventure Play in the City of Toronto

Adventure play is defined as outdoor, child-directed, unstructured, spontaneous, free play. In many of our urban environments, this type of play has been disappearing from the opportunities available to many of our children.

Adventure playgrounds provide the opportunity for children to discover and build. They are often open spaces, with few or no play structures, separated from the street by a fence, wall or plantings. Within the site, there is often a storage structure containing materials for children to use (wood, sand, water, etc.). They are supervised by an adult play leader, who has experience working with children, and who assists and assures safety. The play leader provides advice on using the materials available, but does not direct the children's play.

The adventure playground maximizes the benefit of urban open space by recapturing some of the magic and excitement of natural spaces. Benefits of adventure play include the development of problem-solving skills, facilitation of cooperation and teamwork, responsibility, adaptability and more.

Earth Day Canada has recently launched a new initiative called EarthPlay. The objective of EarthPlay is to put freely chosen self-directed outdoor play back into the lives of children as a natural part of their day to day lives. This program will strengthen the opportunities for children to connect with nature in order to support their health, wellbeing, socialization and connection to the environment.

I believe that adventure playgrounds can be an asset to our new and older parks in the City of Toronto, and that we should review our ability to facilitate adventure play structures in our City.

It is recommended that the Parks and Environment Committee:

1. Request the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to review opportunities to build/implement adventure playgrounds in City of Toronto parks, and report back in the first quarter of 2017.

Sincerely,

Joe Cressy
City Councillor
Ward 20, Trinity-Spadina