

City Council**Motion without Notice**

MM43.40	ACTION			Ward:36
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Acceptance of a Donation for the Construction of an Accessible Baseball Diamond in Highview Park - by Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*

** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Mary-Margaret McMahon, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to accept a donation of up to \$2 million from the Jays Care Foundation for the construction of a new accessible baseball diamond at Highview Park in Ward 36, in compliance with the City's Policy on Donations for Community Benefits.
2. City Council authorize the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation to negotiate and sign a donation agreement, on terms and conditions satisfactory to the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.
3. City Council amend the 2018 Parks, Forestry and Recreation Capital Budget to create a new capital sub-project known as Highview Park Accessible Baseball Field and Recreation Hub in the Outdoor Recreation Centre project, with a project cost of \$2.000 million, cash flowed \$0.500 million in 2018 and \$1.500 million in 2019 funded by the donation.

Summary

Jays Care Foundation is an organization dedicated to creating lasting social change for children and youth in marginalized communities through the game of baseball. Since 2001, Jays Care Foundation has donated over \$2 million of capital funding towards the revitalization of Parks, Forestry and Recreation baseball diamonds and fields across the City of Toronto through their Field of Dreams program.

In August of 2017, it was announced that Jays Care Foundation committed up to \$2 million to build the first fully accessible baseball field and recreation hub at Highview Park in Scarborough (Ward 36). Following consultation with the local community, the project is now ready to proceed to detailed design.

As an accessible space, the diamond, playground and surrounding areas will be specifically designed to meet the unique play and accessibility needs of children living with physical and/or cognitive disabilities. While similar accessible baseball diamonds and recreation hubs can be found in other Canadian cities (Moncton, Ottawa and Vancouver), this is the first fully accessible field ever to be built in the City of Toronto. Once construction for the accessible diamond is completed, Jays Care Foundation will coordinate baseball programming for the community through their Challenger Baseball program. Challenger Baseball is an adaptive baseball program designed to empower children and youth living with physical and/or cognitive disabilities. The program teaches children and youth the core life-skills inherent to baseball, including: teamwork, communication, determination, resiliency, inclusion, support and courage. Challenger Baseball ensures every participant has the opportunity to play in a fun and safe environment where they can build a sense of independence, confidence, self-esteem and communication skills, and set and achieve their own personal goals.

Construction of the project will be managed by Parks, Forestry and Recreation, and, pending approval of the donation, it is estimated that the project will be completed in the fall of 2019.

This Motion is urgent due to the complexities of the donor partnership and project planning, and to ensure the planning phase remains on schedule to allow for all construction to be carried out in 2019.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM43.40