

### REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS

#### RE: THE RELOCATION OF AUTISM SENSORY EQUIPMENT TO THE SPINE BEACH PLAYGROUND

To provide Council with new information regarding the relocation of the autism sensory equipment from Westview Park to the Spine beach playground.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Choose an item.

**THAT** the report from the Director of Public Works dated July 19, 2022 be received;

**AND THAT** Council approve the installation of autism sensory equipment, that was recently removed from Westview Park, to Spine Beach playground.

## BACKGROUND

Fundraising was completed in 2017 by local organizations, where money earned was used to purchase autism sensory equipment that was gifted to the city to be installed in one of the parks. Parks staff was directed to install the equipment at Westview Park, which was completed in the summer of 2018. In the fall of 2021 complaints by local residents were brought forward to council requesting the relocation of the equipment due to the volume of noise echoing throughout the neighbourhood within close proximity, including all hours of the night. Westview Park to neighbouring homes yards is as little as 70 metres away. After further investigation, council directed staff to relocate the equipment from Westview Park to the firetower lookout park and to have the newly purchased visual sensory equipment installed in its place.

## ANALYSIS

After a more detailed investigation, staff realized that the Spine beach may be a better location for the autism sensory equipment than the lookout tower park. Reasons include

- Closest homes are more than 250 meters away and are buffered by trees and a hill compared to Westview at 80 meters away and no buffer zone, allowing noise to travel freely.
- Would be 400 meters away from any potential future development
- Along the city's conventional transit route and walkable to many residents (as opposed to the firetower)
- Spine beach is staffed with lifeguards who can keep an eye on the equipment, as well as the children utilizing it around the water.
- Easier to install for city staff

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

n/a

## SUMMARY

As discussed at the last Public Service Committee meeting on July 18, 2022, staff is recommending that council approve the relocation of the autism sensory equipment from Westview Park to Spine Beach playground, opposed to the decision to have it installed at the Lookout Tower playground, for reasons stated above.