

Mount Pearl Unveils Concept for New Smart Accessible Playground

Reimagined St. David's Playground will include smart technology and be fully accessible.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 11, 2021 (Mount Pearl, NL) – Significant upgrades to St. David's Avenue Playground were announced today, which include transforming the space into a fully accessible playground complete with the introduction of smart technology, improved lighting, and the addition of two new gender-neutral washrooms.

Playgrounds encourage healthy childhood development by broadening children's social skills, promoting physical activity, emotional development, and sensory exploration. The city is committed to providing outdoor play space that welcomes children and families of all abilities to enjoy the fun.

This new playground will be built using an accessible rubber surface, featuring elevated platforms that are accessible by way of a transfer station. The playground will be home to two structures, one for ages 0 to 5 and one for ages 5 to 12, both with play equipment designed for developmentally appropriate skills. In addition, the city has selected the Biba Smart Park Add-on, an application that uses augmented reality games to inspire imaginative play, while tracking important metrics such as peak hours, days of usage, weather impacts, and equipment condition.

Thanks to joint funding announced by Infrastructure Canada, the provincial Department of Transportation and Infrastructure, and the City of Mount Pearl's own investment, the St. David's Smart Accessible Playground will be installed in 2022.

"Today, we are making an important investment in an accessible playground that will provide safe inclusive play space for children to inspire their imaginations and encourage time spent outside. This exciting initiative continues to build on our city's commitment to diversity and inclusion," said Mayor Aker. "The improved lighting and addition of two gender-neutral washrooms further enhance these upgrades to St. David's Park."

"Our kids deserve the best. This new playground is a place where kids of all abilities can play safely. This is how we build a stronger, more inclusive community for everyone," said Hon. Seamus O'Regan Jr., Member of Parliament for St. John's South-Mount Pearl.

"We continue to work towards building safe, accessible and inclusive communities for the residents of our province," added Hon. Elvis Loveless, Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure. "A playground such as this one will provide the children and families of Mount Pearl and surrounding areas with a safe and fun place to make memories for years to come."

The total investment being made to create the accessible playground and enhance the surrounding greenspace is \$963,695 (less tax rebates) with \$151,169 provided from Infrastructure Canada's *Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program*, \$151,124 from the provincial government, and \$661,402 invested by

the City of Mount Pearl. To view the concept artwork for the new St. David's Smart Accessible Playground, visit www.mountpearl.ca or visit the city's social media profiles on Facebook or Twitter (@Mount_Pearl).

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