



City of Prince Albert

RPT 2026-98

TITLE: Playground Program 2026

DATE: March 20, 2026

TO: Executive Committee

PUBLIC: X

INCAMERA:

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Playground Program Update for 2026 be received as information and filed.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The City of Prince Albert's Summer Drop-in Playground Program ran for seven weeks in 2025, serving children ages 6–12. The free program operated Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at ten locations across the city. The program offered a wide range of sports, cultural, educational, recreational, and arts activities, providing a safe, inclusive, and engaging environment for children.

In 2025, the program employed 24 staff, including a Playground Coordinator, 20 Playground Leaders, and 3 travelling staff. In addition to regular programming, there were three Inclusive Play Days at Alfred Jenkins Fieldhouse Jump Start Accessible Playground. There were five themed special events, with the 30th annual KidzFest at Kinsmen Park as the highlight.

For 2026, the Summer Playground Program budget reflects a \$50,000 reduction from the previous year. To achieve this target while maintaining city-wide accessibility, administration recommends eliminating five sites including Westview School, Alfred Jenkins Field House, Ella Muzzy, Kinsmen Water Park, and Hazeldell Community Club. The rationale for the changes is based on attendance, location proximity, safety, and facility limitations. These changes allow the program to continue with an even distribution of locations throughout the community.

The budget reduction of \$50,000 represents a 67.5% savings in comparison to 2025. The reductions for 2026 come from eliminating Playground Leader positions at the affected sites in combination with other reductions including bussing, staff meetings, and chlorine contributing to the remaining savings. Total reductions slightly exceed the \$50,000 target by \$1,399.50, providing a small financial buffer to meet the budget expectations approved during the Budget Committee deliberations.

This approach ensures the 2026 Summer Playground Program remains accessible, inclusive, and aligned with the City's Strategic Plan for Promoting a Progressive Community.

PROPOSED APPROACH AND RATIONALE:

The City of Prince Albert operated a seven-week Summer Drop-in Playground Program from July 2 to August 15, 2025, for children ages 6–12. This free program operated Monday through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at ten locations including Crescent Acres, Crescent Heights, Kinsmen Park, Miller Hill, Midtown, Alfred Jenkins Field House, Hazeldell, Westview, West Hill, and Lions Park. Six of the ten sites were based in community clubs or schools.

The program offers a wide range of sports, cultural, educational, recreational, and arts activities, creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for children throughout the summer.

A total of 24 staff were employed, including a Playground Coordinator, 20 Playground Leaders, and three travelling staff who supported high-demand locations and the program at Kinsmen Water Park. Inclusive programming took place through three Inclusive Play Days at the Alfred Jenkins Fieldhouse Jump Start Accessible Playground.

Weekly themed special events were held (excluding statutory holiday weeks), drawing 1,467 participants in 2025. The highlight was the 30th annual KidzFest at Kinsmen Park. KidzFest is a free community carnival type of event supported by volunteers, local organizations, with major funding from Northern Lights Community Development Corporation in the amount of \$10,000. Total KidzFest costs exceeded \$12,000 and were supplemented by donations and canteen fundraising.

Rationale for Location Changes:

An analysis of the program attendance is outlined below and was considered as part of the review.

2025 Program Attendance

Location	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Total
Alfred Jenkins Field House	26	64	52	66	75	51	65	399
Crescent Acres	33	49	45	40	48	23	32	270
Crescent Heights	23	27	22	26	21	12	17	148
Kinsmen Park (Ella Muzzy)	16	57	30	54	72	26	53	308
Hazeldell	7	48	3	10	12	19	25	124
Lions Park	44	86	55	54	70	37	24	370
Midtown	37	41	32	37	29	28	28	232
Miller Hill	18	34	23	29	28	11	32	175
West Hill	45	72	39	43	58	32	53	342
Westview	29	32	35	36	22	18	35	207
Totals	278	510	336	395	435	257	264	2575

Below is a summary of the points considered to reduce the number of locations:

Westview School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close to Lion's Park, offering similar programming. ○ Difficulties coordinating gymnasium access with school staff. ○ Low attendance in 2025 (207 participants)
Alfred Jenkins Field House	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close to West Hill, where most children already live. ○ Higher attendance (399 participants) however many children are dropped off, so relocation to a nearby program is feasible.
Kinsmen Water Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Low attendance (152 participants) ○ Only open to individuals registered in swimming lessons. ○ This staff member is also assigned traveling Play Leader duties which have been eliminated.
Ella Muzzy (Kinsmen Park)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Safety concerns: incidents involving transients and prior threats to staff. ○ Higher attendance (308 participants) ○ Limited indoor space. ○ Splash park location, many parents in attendance.

BUDGET/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The following adjustments are being made to achieve the \$50,000 reduction to the 2026 Playground Program as approved through the 2026 Budget Committee deliberations.

1.	Elimination of 2 Play Leaders at Westview School	\$11,544.00
2.	Elimination of 2 Play Leaders at Alfred Jenkins Field House	\$11,544.00
3.	Elimination of Play Leaders at Kinsmen Water Park	\$5,772.00
4.	Elimination of 2 Play Leaders at Ella Muzzy (Kinsmen Park)	\$11,544.00
5.	Elimination of Traveling Play Leader	\$5,772.00
6.	Decrease in Thursday staff meetings due to elimination of Special Events	\$1,423.50
7.	Elimination of bussing due to canceled Special Events	\$3,000.00
8.	Elimination of need for chlorine at Hazeldell due to closure of location	\$800.00
Total		\$51,399.50

This slightly exceeds the \$50,000 target by \$1,399.50.

The program will continue to align with the City's Strategic Plan under the Strategic Priority of Promoting a Progressive Community by providing accessible, community-based summer programming that supports youth development, inclusion, and engagement, particularly for at-risk and underprivileged children. The elimination of these locations allows the Playground Program to continue while maintaining an even distribution of program sites throughout the City.

PUBLIC NOTICE:

Public Notice pursuant to the Public Notice Bylaw No. 24 of 2015 is not required.

Written by: Curtis Olsen, Sport & Recreation Manager

Approved by: Director of Parks, Recreation & Culture and City Manager