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TO: Goodhue County Parks, Trails, and Recreation Advisory Board

FROM: Jess Greenwood, Public Works Director

RE: 15 Aug 25 Park Board Meeting
Byllesby Park Playground Replacement Costs

Date: 30 Jul 25

Summary

It is requested that the Park Board determine types of play structures and surfacing that they would like to pursue for the Byllesby Park playground replacement project in 2027.

Background

The hard structure playground at Byllesby Park is approaching 20 years old. It was installed in 2007 and most municipalities replace their playgrounds every 15-20 years. The Byllesby Park playground is slated for replacement in 2027.

The current playground features a small climbing wall, a set of swings with one handicap swing, a play structure for kids ages 2-5, and a play structure for kids ages 5-12. The playground is surfaced with woodchips that get top-dressed every year or two and it does not have many accessibility play features.

This playground was instrumental in transitioning the park to a family gathering place and continues to be heavily used. The current Master Plan calls for maintaining this area as a hard structure playground and adding a nature playground in the pine grove area.

Due to uncertainty around price spikes during the pandemic, staff has begun requesting quotes for playground replacement to ensure that the funds in the Capital Plan would be able to replace the existing structures with similar equipment. Staff requested prices for both full poured in place rubber (PIP) to provide enhanced accessibility, as well as a mix of PIP and mulch. Increases in price are estimated at approximately 5% per year, with the exception of pricing in 2021 and 2022. Prices for the attached schematics came in as follows:

<u>Option</u>	<u>2025 Price</u>	<u>2027 Price (Projected)</u>
Option 1 with mulch/PIP	\$166,289.09	\$183,300
Option 1A with full PIP	\$226,092.92	\$249,300
Option 2 with mulch/PIP	\$166,031.60	\$183,100
Option 2A with full PIP	\$251,263.00	\$277,000

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This is a small sample of what could potentially be constructed. Designing a playground can be quite time consuming. With staff work load in mind, the playground would need to be designed this winter and ordered in 2026, or designed November 2026-January 2027 while knowing that the playground may not be able to be installed if it is designed and ordered at this later date.

Additional Considerations:

- Poured in place rubber provides enhanced access to the play structures and comes in at a cost of approximately \$100,000 to pour the entire surface.
- Poured in place rubber would see extra wear and tear underneath slides and swings and may require additional maintenance.
- The poured in place rubber has a life span of 15-20 years and would need to be fully replaced when the playground is next replaced.
- The wood chips at the park currently are raked twice per week, especially under slides and swings.
- Access to the play structures is only one piece of accessibility. If increasing accessibility is an intended goal, what inclusive pieces of equipment should be incorporated? Inclusive pieces can be more expensive than traditional pieces.
- Another option would be to build a nature based playground at the current site and eliminate the hard structure playground. Nature based playgrounds can have very different accessibility, installation and maintenance costs, and labor inputs.

The final design and cost will require County Board approval.

Alternatives

- Proceed with design of a traditional hard structure playground with a mixture of wood chips and poured in place rubber surfacing.
- Proceed with design of a traditional hard structure playground with full poured in place rubber surfacing.
- Proceed with design of a modified hard structure playground that provides additional accessible elements, with a mixture of wood chips and poured in place rubber surfacing.
- Proceed with design of a modified hard structure playground that provides additional accessible elements, with full poured in place rubber surfacing.
- Provide direction for design of an alternative playground type.

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Recommendation

It is the recommendation of staff that the Park Board provide direction for desired design elements. Staff would continue to develop a brief design, request preliminary quotes, and present those quotes to the County Board at a Committee of the Whole. If the County Board is supportive of the design direction and costs, staff would continue to develop a design. If the County Board is not supportive, the topic would be brought back to the Park Board for further consideration.

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Byllesby Park Playground - Option 2 Cannon Falls, MN



