



CITY OF HAMILTON
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Environmental Services Division

TO:	Chair and Members Public Works Committee
COMMITTEE DATE:	November 13, 2023
SUBJECT/REPORT NO:	Standardization of Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) for Parks Assets – Playgrounds, Spray Pads, Ball Diamonds, and Benches (PW23069) (City Wide)
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	City Wide
PREPARED BY:	Adriana Byrne (905) 546-2424 Ext. 2156 Shauna Hasselman (905) 546-2424 Ext. 7734 Ryan Van Balkom (905) 546-2424 Ext. 3445
SUBMITTED BY:	Cynthia Graham Director, Environmental Services Public Works Department
SIGNATURE:	

RECOMMENDATION

- (a) Pursuant to Procurement Policy #14 – Standardization, that the standardization of the products, services and manufacturers identified in the attached Appendices “A” Play Equipment , “B” Spray Pads, “C” Ball Diamonds and “D” Benches to Report PW23069 and as the single source of supply for the listed products, supplies and services for the Parks and Cemeteries Section be approved;
- (b) That the General Manager, Public Works, or their designate, be authorized to negotiate, enter into, and execute any required contract(s) and any ancillary documents required to give effect thereto with those suppliers identified in Appendices “A” Play Equipment, “B” Spray Pads, “C” Ball Diamonds, and “D” Benches to Report PW23069 with content acceptable to the General Manager of Public Works, and in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor; and
- (c) That the General Manager, Public Works, or their designate, be authorized to amend any contract(s) executed and any ancillary documents as required in the event that a service provider, manufacturer, or distributor identified in Appendices “A” Play Equipment, “B” Spray Pads, “C” Ball

OUR Vision: To be the best place to raise a child and age successfully.

OUR Mission: To provide high quality cost conscious public services that contribute to a healthy, safe and prosperous community, in a sustainable manner.

OUR Culture: Collective Ownership, Steadfast Integrity, Courageous Change, Sensational Service, Engaged Empowered Employees.

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Diamonds and “D” Benches to Report PW23069 undergoes a name change, and it shall be in a form satisfactory to the City Solicitor.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Parks and Cemeteries Section operates a network of amenities that require or benefit from the use of proprietary and design matched replacement parts, supplies, and specialized services in order to maintain amenities in a state of safe operability and good repair. These amenities include, play equipment and spray pads, ball diamonds, and benches. This practice satisfies several goals related to legislative compliance, continuity of operation, health and safety, cost-efficiency, productivity, and asset life cycle longevity.

Procurement Policy #11 – Non-competitive Procurements provides a mechanism for the Parks and Cemeteries Section to purchase specific products and services directly from a single source. This process has been utilized as required and in some instances, the Section has now exhausted the approval authority of the General Manager under this process. Since the Section’s requirements have not changed, it was determined that establishing standardization for these items pursuant to Procurement Policy #14 – Standardization, which provides guidelines for the standardization of goods and services and includes a streamlined process to purchase standardized goods and services. Report PW23069 recommends Council approval to standardize equipment, parts, supplies, and services as outlined in Appendices “A” Play Equipment, “B” Spray Pads, “C” Ball Diamonds, and “D” Bench Boards of Report PW23069 based on the business requirements of the Parks and Cemeteries Section.

Alternatives for Consideration – See Page 7

FINANCIAL – STAFFING – LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial: Appendices “A”, “B”, “C”, and “D” to Report PW23069 list the products and services recommended for standardization. From 2019 through 2023, the combined expenditures relative to these vendors has averaged \$767,981.00 annually. Budget for these purchases are approved each year through the Parks and Cemeteries Operating Budget.

Staffing: The approval of the recommendations contained within this report will reduce the amount of time spent on administrative work procuring goods and services and delays in acquiring the materials and service necessary to maintain Parks amenities in an operational condition.

Legal: N/A

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Parks and Cemeteries operates more than 600 properties and a network of amenities including 288 play equipment locations, 71 spray pads, 194 baseball diamonds, and a large inventory of benches. The goal of the Parks and Cemeteries Section is to ensure the amenities are safe to use, in good working condition and available to users who are accessing the services intended. With a large number of properties and variety of amenities, successful service delivery depends on the effective coordination of operations (routine inspections) and maintenance (minor or other repairs) to ensure that amenities remain open and available for use and closures are limited. The Parks and Cemeteries Section has identified key areas where the standardization of products, services, manufacturers, and distributors are critical to service delivery: play equipment, spray pads, ball diamond maintenance and restoration, and benches.

Play Equipment and Spray Pad Parts

Since 2017, play equipment replacement parts and spray pad replacement parts have been purchased under the procurement authority, Policy # 11 – Non-competitive Procurements, single source, approved by the General Manager of Public Works. Orders for original equipment manufacturer parts have been issued to each vendor identified in Appendix “A” for play equipment and Appendix “B” for spray pads, as the manufacturers of our existing play equipment and spray pads. The Policy # 11 – Non-competitive Procurements approvals are now expired.

Ball Diamonds

Between 2018 and 2021 several competitive procurement processes were completed for ball diamond grading, restoration services and clay products. None of the resulting contracts were successful in delivering the required services at an acceptable quality and reasonable price. The 2018 Request for Tender was awarded but not renewed after the first year of the contract due to issues with vendor performance.

The 2019 Request for Quotation (RFQ) included revised specifications with a requirement for the vendor to use specialty ball diamond grading equipment, the City was only able to secure two bids. Procurement staff approved award to the low bid received. The contract was based on time and materials and the vendor was unable to complete the work in a timely manner. The result was low work output and high costs per site.

The 2020 Request for Quotation included a further revised specification to make

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the equipment requirements more generic. Three bids were received, the lowest bidder was unable to perform the fine grading and slope restoration requirements with the equipment they had available to complete the work.

In 2021, a low dollar value purchase order (purchase order with an aggregate amount of less than \$10,000) was issued to Mar-Co Clay Products Inc. to complete as many diamonds as feasible within the budget provided. Due to the challenges with vendors, the baseball diamonds were in a poor state of repair and in 2022, a Policy # 11 – Non-competitive Procurements, single source was approved by the General Manager of Public Works to Mar-Co Clay Products Inc. to restore some of the City's ball diamonds to the appropriate grade and infield radius to ensure they are playable fields.

Throughout 2022 and 2023 Mar-Co Clay has been operating as the sole contractor for these services through the above-mentioned Policy #11 Non-competitive Procurement effort with a max budget of \$150,000. To date, Parks and Cemeteries have exhausted these funds and require standardization to continue providing a high level of service to ball diamond user groups and residents with competitive pricing. Mar-Co Clay provides these services to a quality unmatched by previous vendors and demonstrated positive user group feedback received in 2023.

Additionally, Mar-Co Clay also supplies the City with infield material (clay) which is installed annually at Bernie Arbour stadium and other clay-based fields. This clay is the preferred composition that the Parks Section uses, and it has been proven difficult to procure via Request for Quotation or Request for Tender as each manufacturer or distributor offers a different product. Mar-Co Clay's product has been the established product used by the City of Hamilton for the previous 10+ years. The operation needs and requirement for clay has surpassed our annual expected budget of \$10 000.

Bench Components and Decorative Benches

In 2017, after extensive industry research and product sampling, a Policy 11 – Non-competitive Procurements, single source was approved by the General Manager for Classic Displays and the supply of bench components (bench boards and decorative bench ends) used by Parks and Cemeteries to build standard concrete park benches, replace boards in existing benches, and repair decorative benches. This Policy 11 has now expired. Due to vandalism and requests for new benches, the need for bench boards and bench components is an annual requirement. Replacement of decorative benches is also an annual requirement.

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The City of Hamilton has a significant number of benches across the City in Parks and Open spaces. Some of these benches, at key locations – such as Bayfront Park, City Hall, and the Downtown Core – are specialty benches. As well, the City offers a commemorative bench program that includes the same specialty bench style, to individuals who wish to donate a bench amenity in a loved one's name. At this time repairs to these assets are limited as the city's current stock and supplies are almost all used. The General Manager approval limit has been reached in procuring these items.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS AND LEGISLATED REQUIREMENTS

The City of Hamilton Bylaw #17-064 - Procurement Policy, Policy #14, Section 4.14, allows for standardization.

RELEVANT CONSULTATION

- Procurement Section of the Financial Services Division to ensure adherence to the Procurement Policy.

ANALYSIS AND RATIONALE FOR RECOMMENDATION

In consultation with the Procurement Section, the recommendations to standardize and single source with various products, manufacturers, and distributors contained within the Appendices to Report PW23069 are considered to be the best option for ensuring that:

- replacement play equipment and spray pad parts are available as required and acquired in a timely fashion;
- ball diamond products and services are available as required and acquired in a timely fashion; and
- matching parts for benches and new benches are available as required and acquired in a timely fashion.

Play Equipment and Spray Pad Parts

Play equipment and spray pads are operated and maintained by a specialized team within the Parks and Cemeteries Section who are trained to complete inspections, identify hazards and complete repairs to ensure that all play equipment meets the Canadian Standards Association standards. Every play structure in the City of Hamilton is inspected monthly. Every spray pad in the City of Hamilton is inspected every twenty days during the operating season, with additional enhanced inspections by Public Health staff at the beginning of the operating season. When replacement parts produced by the original manufacturer

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of the play equipment are used for repairs and maintenance, the Play Equipment team is able to complete 85% of the necessary repairs within 60 minutes. This quick turnaround for routine repairs minimizes the amount of time the equipment is closed and ensures compatibility by using original equipment manufactured parts for replacement. Any repairs that cannot be completed by staff are performed by the manufacturer either directly or through the manufacturer's designated service provider as they are available and well versed in repairing the equipment. Both play equipment and spray pad parts are proprietary to the original manufacturer and are not interchangeable.

The City of Hamilton currently has play equipment made by 10 manufacturers and spray pads made by 5 manufacturers installed in City Parks. The design, supply and installation of new play equipment and spray pads is procured through a competitive bidding process, led by the Landscape Architectural Services Section or by the Parks and Cemeteries Section capital team.

Ball Diamonds

Ball diamond maintenance and restoration is a specialized service with a limited number of service providers in Ontario. Some municipalities have chosen to provide all ball diamond maintenance and restoration services internally, whereas the City of Hamilton completes some minor work in-house and otherwise relies on external services. The Parks and Cemeteries Section has completed various competitive procurement processes for these services and awarded several contracts with little success in supporting Parks and Cemeteries Section to achieve the required level of service. Mar-Co Clay Products Inc. is the sole provider in southern Ontario for ball diamond clay products and one of the only providers of ball diamond restoration services. Over the last 10 years Mar-Co Clay Products Inc. has been the only service provider to allow the Parks and Cemeteries Section to meet the service level standard for baseball diamonds.

Bench Components and Decorative Benches

Parks and Cemeteries Section staff build and repair the benches within the parks system and in the business improvement areas. There are two different styles of benches, both styles of bench use the same recycled plastic bench boards. Classic Displays is the sole distributor for the recycled plastic bench boards in the colour that is used across the City. Standardization of the bench boards allows for the replacement of single boards which is a more cost-effective approach to managing wear and tear and vandalism than full bench replacement.

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ALTERNATIVES FOR CONSIDERATION

An alternative to the recommendations in this report is to continue under the authority of Policy # 11 – Non-competitive Procurement and General Manager approval, in the instances where that authority has not yet been exhausted. The appendices to this report identify where there is remaining approval authority of the General Manager. For both Mar-Co Clay and Classic displays staff have exhausted General Manager approval authority.

Financial: N/A

Staffing: N/A

Legal: N/A

APPENDICES AND SCHEDULES ATTACHED

Appendix “A” to Report PW23069 – Parts, Supplies, Equipment and Services for City of Hamilton Play Structures

Appendix “B” to Report PW23069 – Parts, Supplies, Equipment and Services for City of Hamilton Spray Pads

Appendix “C” to Report PW23069 – Supplies, Equipment and Maintenance Services for City of Hamilton Ball Diamonds

Appendix “D” to Report PW23069 – Component Parts, Supplies and Equipment for City of Hamilton Park Benches