



# Julia's Junction

Backgrounder

July 31, 2023

## BACKGROUND

### *About Julia's Junction*

Julia's Junction is the first fully accessible play space for people of all ages in West Kelowna regardless of their physical or cognitive ability or medical diagnosis. The facility is centrally located in Westbank Centre Park, adjacent to the splash park, accessible washrooms, and accessible parking.

### *About Julia Grassmick*

Julia Grassmick is the nine-year-old daughter of Melissa and Ryan Grassmick who developed a spinal cord injury caused by a blood clot at the age of 17 months. The Grassmick family initiated the project in January 2022 and have been its driving force, partnering with the City of West Kelowna to build the municipality's first fully inclusive playground at 2569 May Street.

Features of Julia's Junction:

- Accessible rubberized playground: 12,000 square feet (1,115 square metres)
- Play structures and equipment installed at ground level to avoid ramps
- Universal sensory-rich design, including options for a quiet space
  - Spinning, swinging, sliding
  - Tactile engagement
  - Music experience
  - Safety, comfort, and access
- Construction
  - Started: Spring 2023
  - Opened: July 31, 2023
- Total Estimated Cost of Project:
  - \$900,000
- Funded by:
  - Government of Canada: \$120,000 through the youth innovation and small projects components of the Enabling Accessibility Fund (EAF), including:
    - The City of West Kelowna received \$10,000 under the EAF youth innovation component.
    - PURKIDS Charitable Foundation received \$100,000 under the EAF small projects component, and \$10,000 under the EAF youth innovation component.
  - City of West Kelowna: \$200,000 and City-owned land to build the facility.
  - Platinum Sponsors: Co-op and Gorman Bros. Lumber Ltd.
  - Other: corporate and individual donors, fundraising initiatives, community events and grants led by the Grassmick family; gifts-in-kind (benches and picnic tables).



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### **About City of West Kelowna Parks and Recreation**

- The City of West Kelowna maintains more than 130 athletic fields, beaches, boat launches, parks, sports courts, and trails, two arenas, an air-supported multi-sport facility, a newly expanded skateboard park, an indoor aquatic centre and four community centres.
- In 2022, the City of West Kelowna invested \$1 million to upgrade nine municipal parks across the City.

### **Media Contacts**

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