

SAULT STE. MARIE

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West-end parks considered for splash pad

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Demetrius St. John, 6, plays at the splash pad at Bellevue Park in July 2020. BRIAN KELLY SunMedia

A splash pad is planned for a city park in Sault Ste. Marie's west end.

City council approved a motion introduced by Ward 5 Coun. Corey Gardi and seconded by Ward 4 Coun. Marchy Bruni calling on municipal staff to identify potential sites for the summer recreation attraction.

Gardi suggested Lennox Park on Lennox Avenue as a possible location.

Bruni and Ward 3 Coun. Matthew Shoemaker favoured Elliot Sports Complex on Rossmore Road.

Elliot park "makes the most sense" because the leisure space already boasts pickleball courts, baseball diamonds, soccer fields and walking trails, said Shoemaker during an online council meeting on Monday evening.

"Complementing that with a splash pad would just amp up the usage," he said, adding neighbourhoods to the south and west of the park would draw users.

Ward 1 Coun. Paul Christian, who helped bring the first splash pad to Bellevue Park in 2019, expressed regret sketching out a west-end site wasn't done earlier.

"Perhaps we could have at least identified the need in the west end so that it would just be simply a matter of budgeting it in when the time came," he said. "When we pass these things, when we consider them, I think we should be taking a more holistic approach. We should have had this thought out earlier."

Mayor Christian Provenzano is heartened when he regularly drives past the splash pad at Bellevue Park.

“I’m always happy with how busy it is,” he said. “Every time I drive by it I think it was money that was very well spent.”

Provenzano backs a second splash pad at a west-end park calling its future addition “a matter of equity, fairness and the building community that creates a quality of life for all of our residents.”

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