April 20th, 2026

Dear Honesdale Borough Council,

The People's Playground Project is proud to present our guiding vision for the Playground at Central Park. In this packet you'll find the following core documents:

- Project Narrative
- Site Map
- Zone Map
- 3D Renderings
- Phased Implementation Plan
- Preliminary Budget
- Fundraising Plan
- Next Steps

as well as the following addenda:

- Community Feedback Consolidation (Placemaking Steps 1, 2, 3, and 4)
- Mood Board
- Bear Climber Detailed Site Plan
- List of Community Partners so far
- Letters of Support

We also have a digital 3D model available for view online at the following link (https://skfb.ly/pILLJ), from which one might better understand how the various components work together to create a cohesive design.

To get to this moment has taken more than 700 hours of volunteer time and involved more than 1600 ideas, votes, and suggestions from members of the Honesdale Community that have been reviewed by many committed community members. The attached plan is bold, yet is supported by checking and double checking our assumptions and insights about community needs: we're confident that it is going to be an incredible playground for kids of all ages and abilities in Honesdale. Implementation will happen in phases and take time, and we know that Honesdalers of many talents are willing to volunteer to make various aspects a reality, and that for the rest, the story of a community coming together to design a playground will help us to stand out among others seeking grant funding.

We look forward to discussing the details of this design and plan with you. As mentioned, we see this as a guiding document: one that will likely shift in small ways as professional reviews take place, with the spirit of the design remaining consistent. We hope to have the opportunity to keep working with you, the Parks & Rec Committee, the Borough Office, and the whole community of Honesdale to turn this design on paper into a physical reality that is fun for kids and reminds us all of what incredible feats are possible when we work together.

Cheers,
The many people who have contributed to People's Playground Project, including but not limited to Lisa Glover, Peggy Jones, Ashley Springer, Kitty Schmidt, Dr. Brianne Font, Lucas Green, Alexi Gilmore-Manookian, Kim Casey, Emma Huether, Ripley Fleury, Alexandra Difranesca, Annette Kulick, and Laura Rotella

Project Narrative

Play in Central Park in Context

Honesdale's Central Park was first designated as a "Public Square" by Jason Torey on May 1st, 1833. Since then, it has been, in accordance with the deed, "from time to time improve[d] and ornament[ed] in a progressive manner, appropriate to its being made a pleasant and ornamental plot of ground and place for public resort", with trees planted, a fountain constructed, and memorials dedicated over the years. It has been so well-known as a place for all people, especially children, to delight in that it was the inspiration for Dick Smith's 1934 hit song "Winter Wonderland".

Central Park's play equipment has evolved several times since 1991, when the Honesdale Area Jaycees donated a slide and a teeter-totter. Today, extra-tall climbers and tire mulch are often passed by in favor of more inclusive elements, obstacle courses, and natural features. At present, Honesdalers looking for these specific features have to head to Dunmore's McHale Park or Scranton's McDade and Nay Aug Parks. The playground near the Stourbridge Project has gained a few inclusive features in recent years, but neighbors have shared that having multiple parks with different features helps their children with impulse control or mobility differences to feel more welcome in their town.

When comparing Central Park to other Honesdale parks, it's the clear winner for supporting a dense array of play opportunities. According to geofan.org, there are approximately 2,240 people living within a half-mile radius of the Central Park play area, compared to 315 for Veterans Memorial Park and 1,540 for the flattest section in Gibbons Memorial Park. With census demographic data in mind, this means that about 180 kids ages 2-9, and another 200 kids ages 10-18 live within a 10-minute walk of it. Many more families who call the rest of the borough's 4 square miles home visit the park regularly, as do further flung residents when they stop in the county seat to run errands.

Especially in contrast to serenity of Apple Grove and Gibbons Memorial Park, the ever-present buzz of downtown ensures that the chatter of children isn't out of place in Central Park. Aside from being a fair fit noise-level wise, many small business owners see playgrounds as a steady driver of foot traffic, as parents are more likely to stop in for a snack, meal, or other necessity when their children are engaged for some length of time. For families who live further away or are new to the area, such a place also helps them to connect in more to Honesdale, opening the door to participation in future events, partnerships, and programming. In this way, a quality playground drives economic interest and local resilience.

Though the Borough stewards this park land, collaboration with citizens has been a regular feature. Peter Becker noted a couple years ago in a Tricounty Independent article[1] about Central Park, "While expenses were understood as a hurdle for the borough, the writer remarked that there were many enterprising citizens who would contribute generously if someone took the lead." The spirit of community involvement has been alive and well in Central Park for more than 100 years; and the People's Playground Project's efforts are just the latest iteration of it.

1
7/23/24, Honesdale park history: Central Park deeded to borough in 1833
https://www.tricountyindependent.com/story/news/history/2024/07/23/honesdale-park-history-central-park-cows-croquet/73893952007/

Brief Overview of Actions

On November 24th, 2025, Borough Council agreed to work in collaboration with the People's Playground Project, which was then a 5-person team of concerned citizens who wanted to make the best possible playground for Honesdale's Central Park using a planning process called Placemaking (people-powered public space design). Since then, our whole team has grown to around 30 enthusiastic neighbors, and the past five months have been a whirlwind of community insight and planning, with the highlights shared below.

- December- Built a website, newsletter, and social media presence to get the PPP out there
- January- Launched Placemaking Step 1: Initial Survey
- February- Conducted Placemaking Step 2: "Your Big Idea" workshops at various public locations, homes, and over video calls
- March- Launched Placemaking Step 3: Equipment Survey; developed Fundraising Plan
- April- Conducted Placemaking Step 4: Public Drafting Sessions in various locations on Main Street; budgeting; designing the playground

Placemaking and Our Guiding Principles

Honesdale has been a hotbed of Placemaking for a number of years, and the projects where this methodology has been employed have been very successful in cost effectively meeting the needs of a wide array of community members. This is because when we genuinely listen to diverse community voices from the start, we rarely need to return to the drawing board and retrofit solutions that were meant for certain groups but never actually worked for them.

The Placemaking Committee is made up of 8 neighbors who said yes to a public call for participation. Many of these individuals brought helpful expertise to the table, from playground installation to equipment research to inclusive play to social-emotional needs to contracting experience.

Our placemaking process had been thorough and robust, including more than 1600 pieces of feedback *(see our consolidation of community feedback (Placemaking Steps 1, 2, 3, and 4) in the addendum for details)*. We connected with park visitors of all ages and abilities multiple times in various ways; from Pre-Schoolers drawing on coloring sheets; to Elementary Schoolers filling out Mad Libs; to Middle Schoolers, High Schoolers, and Human Resource Center employees adding tallies to posters; to Seniors talking about their healthy habits around Area Agency on Aging lunch tables. Throughout the design process, the Placemaking Subcommittee's wide array of experts and age/ability representatives ensured that these direct insights persisted.

During Step 4, the placemaking committee developed guiding principals for evaluating public feedback and choosing equipment, to ensure that our small playground can be maximally enjoyed by the most people:

- <u>Equipment type and location should be chosen with social interactions in mind.</u> If something is chosen that doesn't have a social function, it needs to be both highly desired and not take up much space.
- <u>Equipment should be able to be played with in multiple ways.</u> If there's only one way to play with something, it needs to be both highly desired and usable by a wide array of ages/abilities.
- <u>Equipment should be inviting.</u> Small, thoughtful details that match the aesthetic preferences of the community at large and meet the needs of a wide array of individuals should be prioritized

The guiding vision, when combined with major themes from community feedback can further be distilled into one sentence: "Central Park's playground should be inclusive, accessible, and natural where possible; a place that has something for everyone, is in harmony with its surroundings, and encourages connection as well as creativity."

Design Explanation

The playground design broadly reflects the needs of the whole community. For a place as storied and beautiful as Central Park, it's important to choose colors and finishes that will enhance the park as a whole. An initial survey found that a "local nature" theme made of natural shades with pops of blue and green would fit in well there, and so much of this playground is wood where possible. When plastic or metal is involved, we picked out suppliers that use natural colors or can match our color scheme.

To further build on the "local nature" theme, 'Irving Hill' is modeled off of 'Irving Cliff', complete with a star on top and an accessible path the winds clockwise up to it. There are three entrances to the main play area; the one from the east converges with the one from the north, and then travels on south to the wider main entrance, mimicking how the Dyberry and Lackawaxen Rivers flow together.

The initial survey also cited swinging, sliding, and climbing as the most important play activities, so there are a wide variety of opportunities to do just that. In the design are six swings, an embankment with climbing and sliding features, a cedar-wood climber with many different ways up and down, a "Fallen Log Forest" climber, and a climb-on-and-through log, and quite a few others.

This design has something for everyone, which we believe will make Central Park a better place for all. Throughout the process, we found that many people felt an undercurrent of uneasiness about the park, yet almost no one could point to specific incidents that caused their fear. It mainly stemmed from feeling that certain people were out of place there. In delving into this further, we realized that most people had themselves been 'out of place' in a park at some point (such as being a childless adult sitting alone near the playground—which is often where the best seats are) without realizing that they might have been stirring up fears in their neighboring park-goers.

When we queried the public further about this, they felt that the best way to increase comfort and neighborliness in the park was to ensure that there was equipment geared towards specific groups, as well as equipment that was clearly for everyone (61%). They also felt that thoughtful signage (designating age groups for some areas, encouraging polite conversation between neighbors, etc) could further reduce friction and set shared norms for Central Park (19%).

Key Components of the Design

The playground has many parts to it, but we wanted to provide extra context around a few key components:

Swings

Swinging back and forth was noted early on as the topmost desired activity to be able to do in the park, cited by 83% of folks who participated in Step 1. It can be a solo activity or a social activity, and while "belt" swings and "toddler" swings are what might first come to mind, there are many other types of swings that allow a wider array of people of different ages and with different types of mobility/accessibility needs to enjoy the sensation of swinging through the air.

The specific swings we've recommend (2 belt swings, 1 flat swing, 1 co swing, 1 bench swing, and 1 accessible nest swing) take into account our community's needs and were heavily debated. They're placed outside of the fenced-in area, to reduce incidences of kids getting kicked by those on the swings, and to increase their use by the wider community. The main swing bank is also what we recommend be installed first—because it is community's top ask for the playground, it's a reasonable goal to fundraise for within the community, and it's out of the way of larger development projects related to the park. This phase may be broken into two parts: the nest swing has an accessible but expensive base so the other five swings that are more reasonably priced may be added as soon as funding is available.

Toddler Area

Many playgrounds are designed with kids above age 5 in mind, and aren't necessarily the safest or most engaging for younger kids. In contrast, many pieces of equipment designed for younger kids are able to be enjoyed by bigger kids, parents and grandparents, allowing community members of of all ages to have fun together. It can also be a challenge for parents of young children to keep kids of multiple ages in site. With a seat-height-and-width wall separating the "little kids" and "big kids" areas inside a fence, parents can more comfortably allow their kids to play.

13+ Zone

Many playgrounds are designed with kids under age 12 in mind, and though teens may physically still fit on typical playgrounds, they might be tempted to use it in ways that it wasn't safely designed for. They also have different needs than their younger community members—physically challenging and socially inviting pieces can keep them occupied in healthy ways. A curved bench area that can fit a group was chosen by the teens as their most desired piece of equipment and should be specifically designated for use by them when they're around. Additionally, a complex log climber, tether ball, and two pieces of fitness equipment welcome teens , adults, and seniors to test their strength and balance in fun, healthy ways.

Irving Hill

This is the crown jewel of the design, what we believe is the most accessible and the most authentic-to-right-here element. It will have multiple ways up and down for a variety of abilities, including access for those with mobility needs such as walker and wheelchair users. With a star above the embankment slide, and a blue walkway below that mimics the course of the local river and creek, it acts as a miniature depiction of town. The surface inside the fence will be a type of accessible surface to prevent erosion.

Furthermore, the mound will aid in combating further soil erosion in the park by slowing water and replenishing the system over time through sloped soil runoff. Outside the fence, wood mulch product on the slopes, replenished regularly, will further add to this benefit. It is recommended to plant native shrubs and deep rooted herbaceous ground cover to prevent soil collapse over time. Recommended plantings are a collection of viburnum species: arrowwood, blackhaw, highbush cranberry, and nannyberry due to their nontoxic edibility, strong root structure, and native wildlife value. The further addition of nitrogen fixing understory trees, such as alder and redbud, will work to replenish and repair soil in the system while also providing aesthetic and shade value. By planting native plants, butterflies and non-stinging bumble bees should be the primary visitors to the site (honey bees and wasps tend to be more attracted to non-native plants), adding the sense of delight of the hill.

Fence

A secure fence provides peace of mind for every caregiver. It creates a protective boundary that prevents children from wandering into potential danger, whether that be a nearby road or an unexpected external hazard like a loose animal. This added layer of safety is especially important for young children who are still learning boundaries, as well as for those who may have impulsivity or difficulty with safety awareness. A fence allows caregivers a critical moment of extra time to respond, reducing risk while creating a more relaxed, enjoyable experience for families. It transforms the space from one that requires constant vigilance to one where children can explore more freely and caregivers can feel confident in their safety.

In this design, the fence has two swing-closed gates for the exits nearest the roadways, and one generally-open but able-to-be-closed main gate nearer to the fountain. While fence styles are still being considered, the goal would be to choose something that adds to the beauty of the park while providing peace of mind to parents. For additional community insights, see the Community's Fence Advocacy Letter in the addendum.

Bathroom

An inclusive and accessible bathroom recognizes that inclusion does not stop at play, it extends to basic human needs. In occupational therapy, a medical profession focused on fostering the confidence and skills people across the lifespan need to live more independently every day, basic human needs are referred to as Activities of Daily Living (ADLs). These include day-to-day tasks that need to be done in order for an individual to safely and comfortably participate in daily life. One essential ADL task is toileting. Without access to appropriate bathroom facilities, many individuals are unintentionally excluded from fully enjoying public spaces. Providing features such as an adult-sized changing station alongside a typical child changing station ensures that individuals of all ages and abilities can be cared for with dignity, privacy, and respect. This would allow families to stay, engage, and participate in the community without limitation.

Bathroom designs are still to be considered, but per considerations laid out in the 1884 deed for this parcel: "*there shall be no buildings whatever erected or built or otherwise introduced, upon said plot of ground hereby granted, or upon any part thereof, unless it shall be some respectable and important public building, the erection of which shall in a written and formal manner be approved by all the respective parties to these presents*". With this in mind, any bathroom planned for Central Park should be tastefully designed to fit in with its surroundings. However, since it is a later-stage consideration, the PPP recommends that the Borough find a Handicapped Accessible Porto Potty to rent during the warm season to meet community members needs. For additional community insights, see the Community's Bathroom Advocacy Letter in the addendum.

Surface Choices

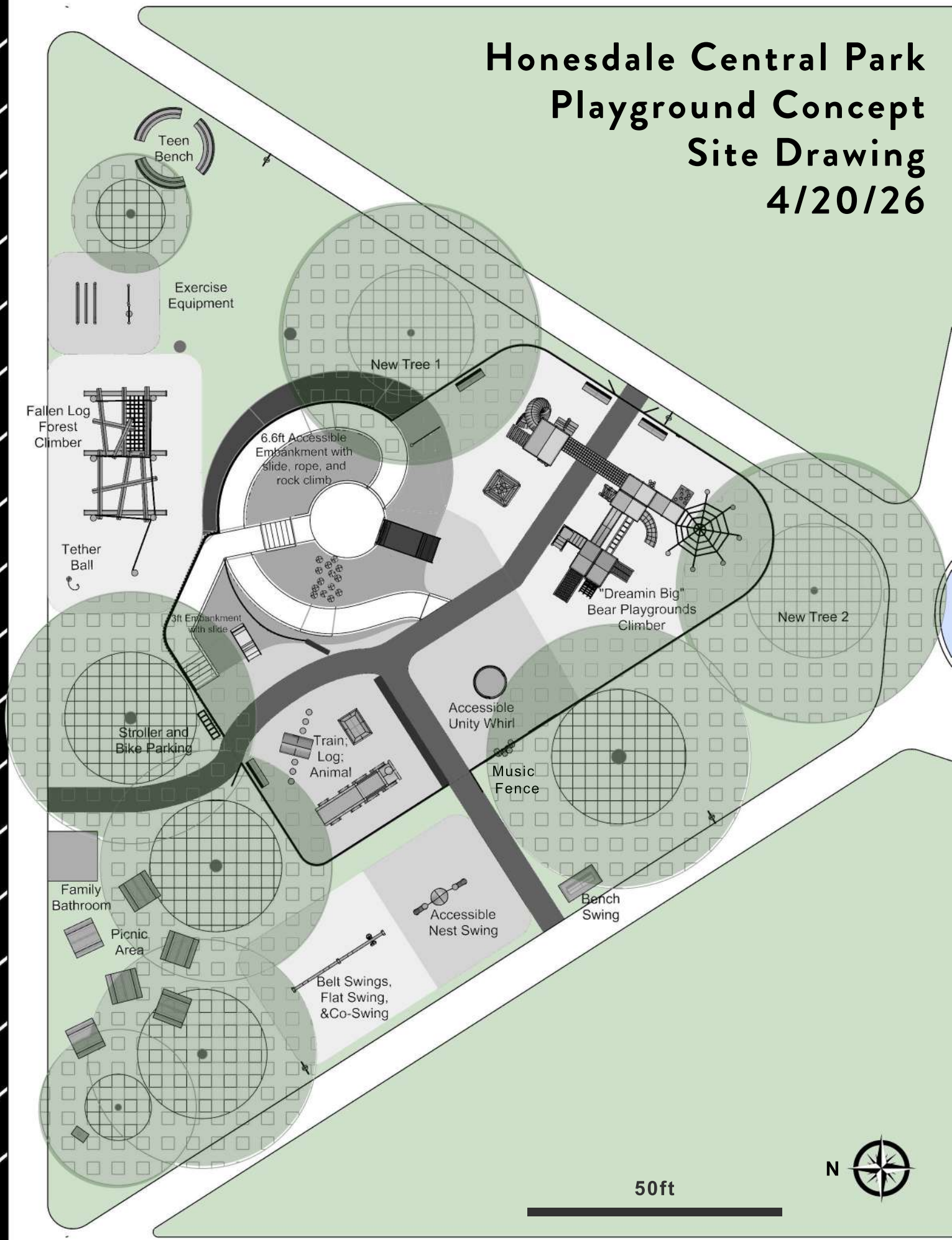
Having a safe and accessible surface ensures that the playground is physically reachable and usable for everyone. While loose materials such as wood chips, sand, or gravel are commonly used, they can create significant barriers to access. These surfaces shift underfoot, making it difficult for individuals using wheelchairs, walkers, or strollers to move independently. They can also be challenging for young children who are still developing balance and coordination, as well as for older adults who may have decreased stability or strength. In contrast, stable and accessible surfacing options, such as engineered wood fiber (when properly installed and maintained), poured-in-place rubber, or rubber tiles provide a firm, consistent surface that supports safe movement for a wide range of users. These surfaces reduce fall risk, promote independence, and allow individuals to navigate the playground with confidence rather than hesitation.

While some of these materials may come with a higher initial cost, they often offer long-term value through durability, reduced maintenance needs, and increased usability for the entire community. Ultimately, surfacing is not just a design detail, it is a deciding factor in who gets to fully participate. Choosing a safe, stable, and accessible surface ensures that this playground is not just present in our community but is truly open to all who wish to use it.

Pour in place is likely preferable to tire mulch due primarily to the decreased surface area available for degradation. The impermeable nature of the substance will reduce leachates, and the binder additive will prevent spread and consumption of granules. The potential overall toxicity of the substance, however, is dependent upon the chosen product and untested over longer timeframes. Some granules are composed of the same substances as standard tire mulch crumble. Wood mulch is preferred for the health of the system. Thus, this playground design tries to balance accessibility needs with the health of the local environment as well as overall project cost, so the sections with equipment that are most supportive of a wide range of abilities will feature accessible surfaces, and much of the rest will be based on funding and environmental health concerns.

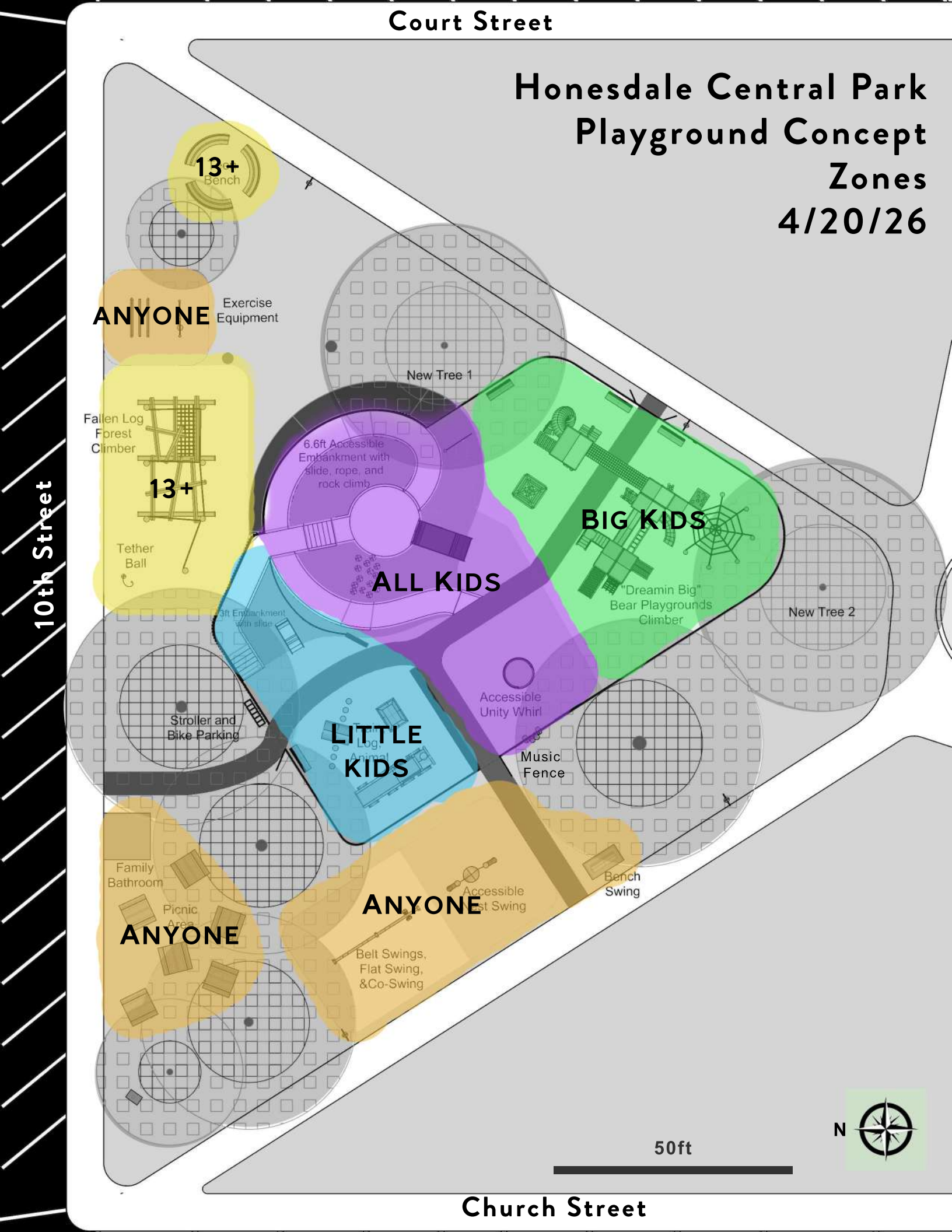
Court Street

Honesdale Central Park Playground Concept Site Drawing 4/20/26

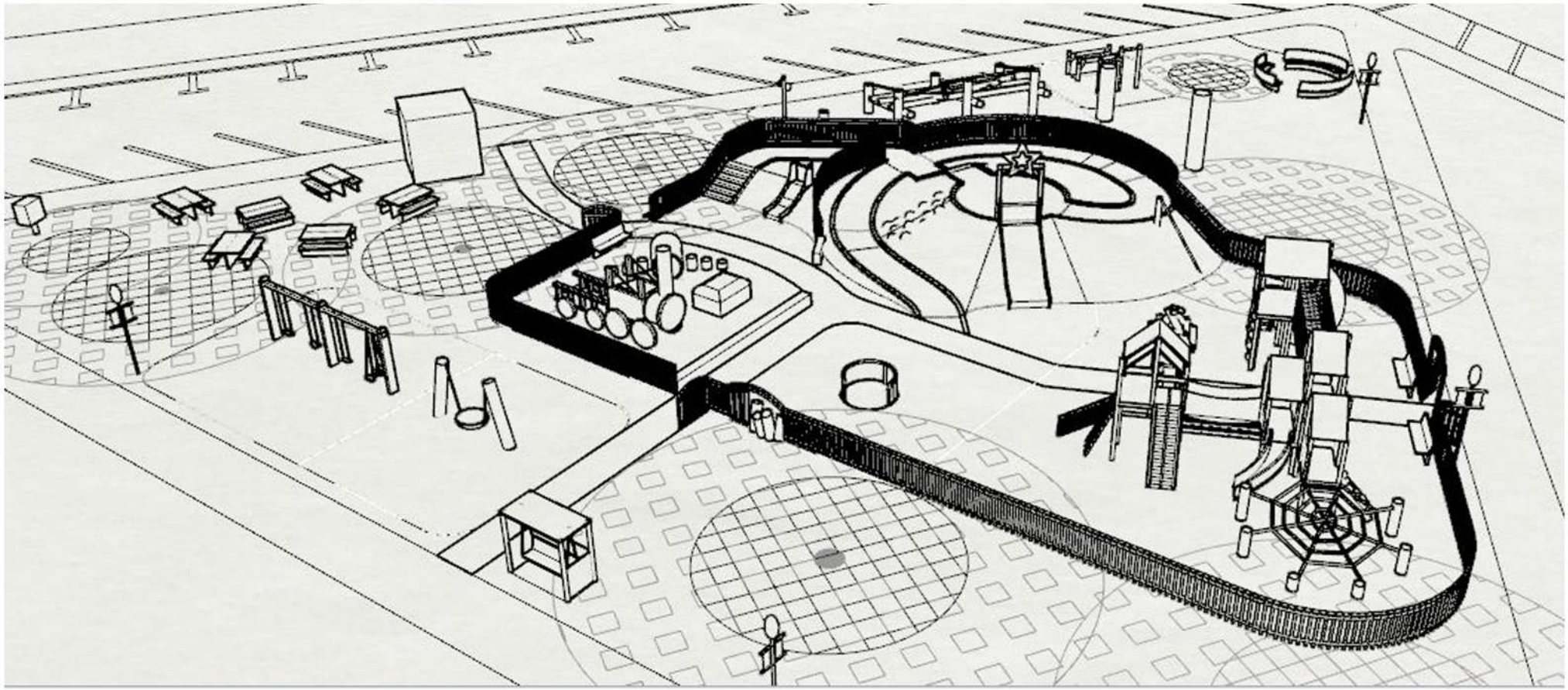


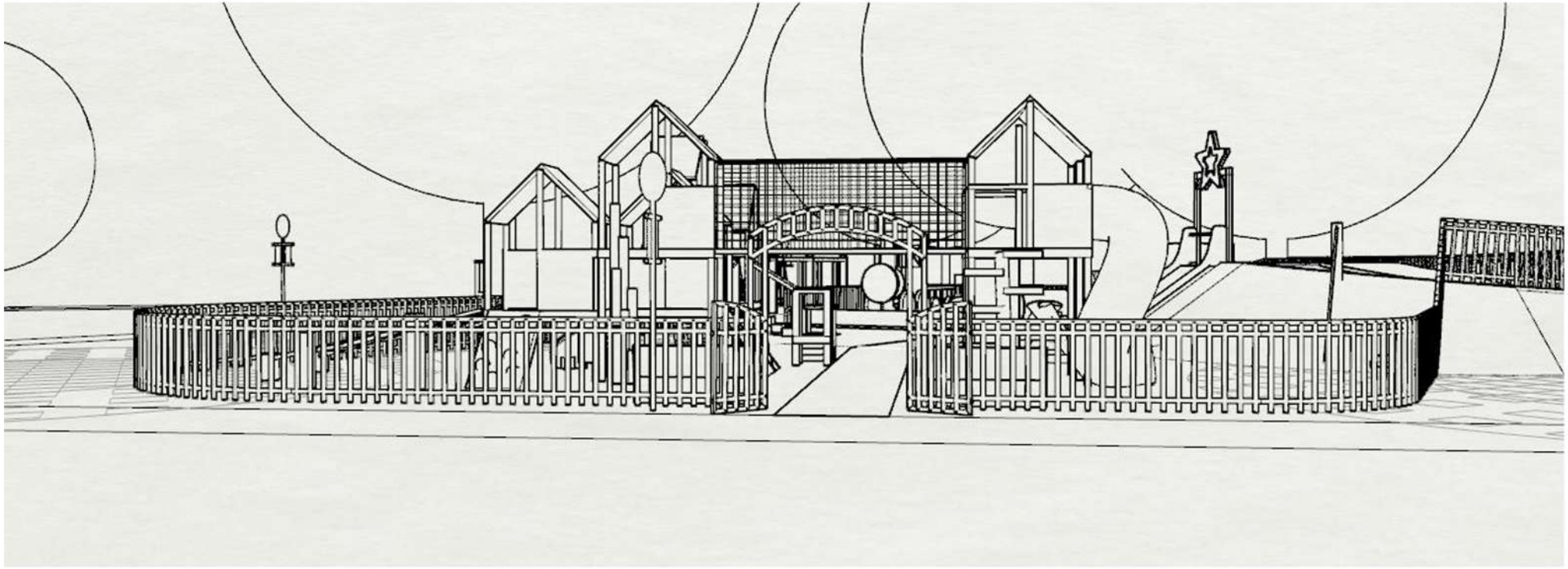
10th Street

Church Street

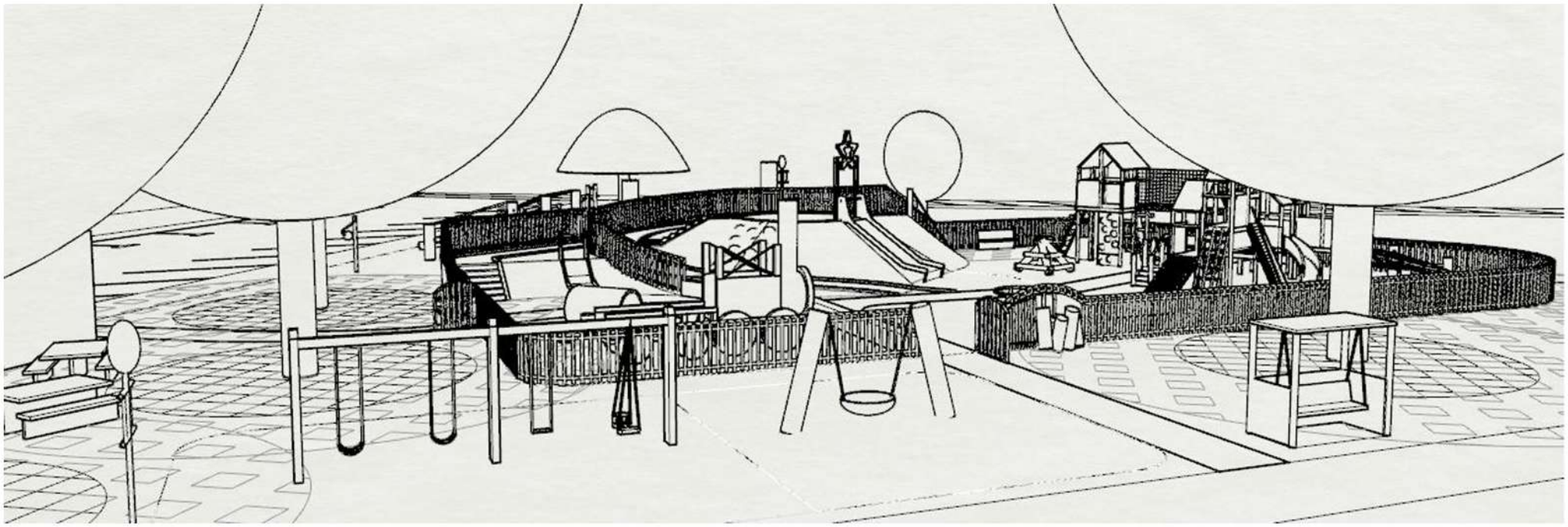

Court Street
Honesdale Central Park
Playground Concept
Zones
4/20/26
13+
Bench
ANYONE
Exercise
Equipment
New Tree 1
Fallen Log
Forest
Climber
13+
6.6ft Accessible
Embankment with
slide, rope, and
rock climb
BIG KIDS
Tether
Ball
ALL KIDS
"Dreamin Big"
Bear Playgrounds
Climber
New Tree 2
10th Street
3ft Embankment
with slide
Accessible
Unity Whirl
Stroller and
Bike Parking
LITTLE
KIDS
Log,
Animal
Music
Fence
Family
Bathroom
Picnic
Area
ANYONE
ANYONE
Accessible
st Swing
Bench
Swing
Belt Swings,
Flat Swing,
&Co-Swing
N
50ft
Church Street

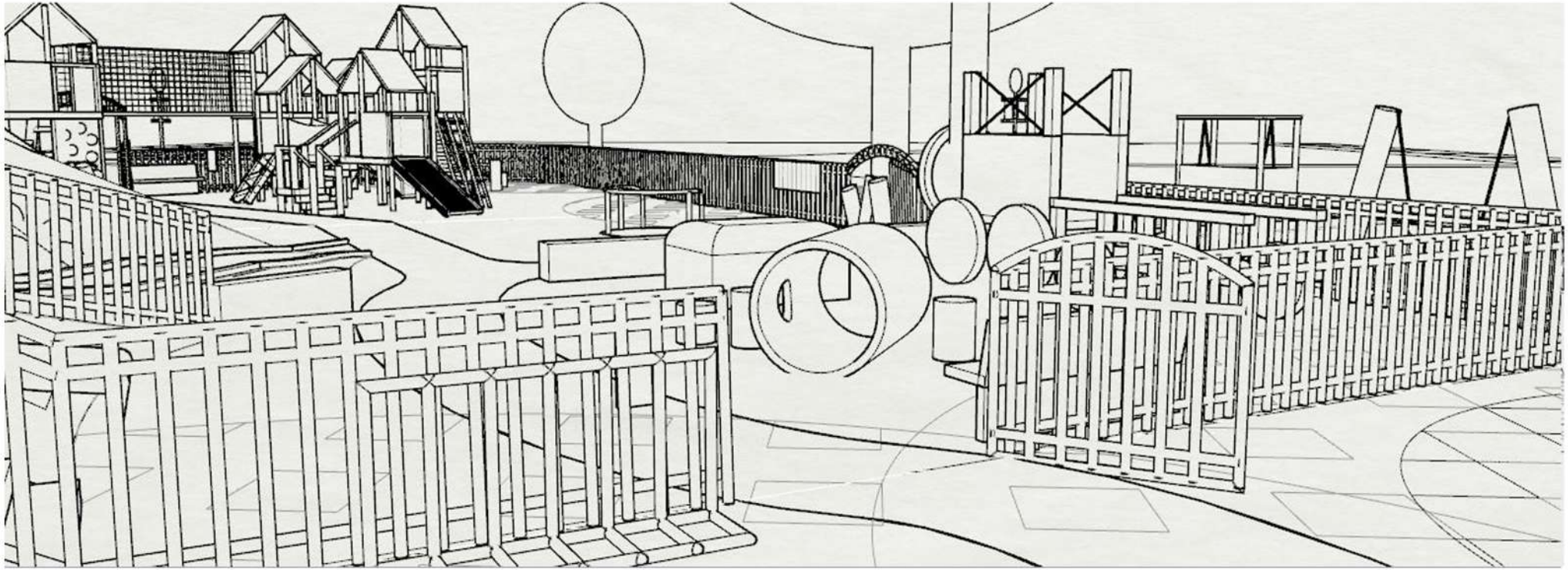
Below: Birds eye view of the playground with trees hidden





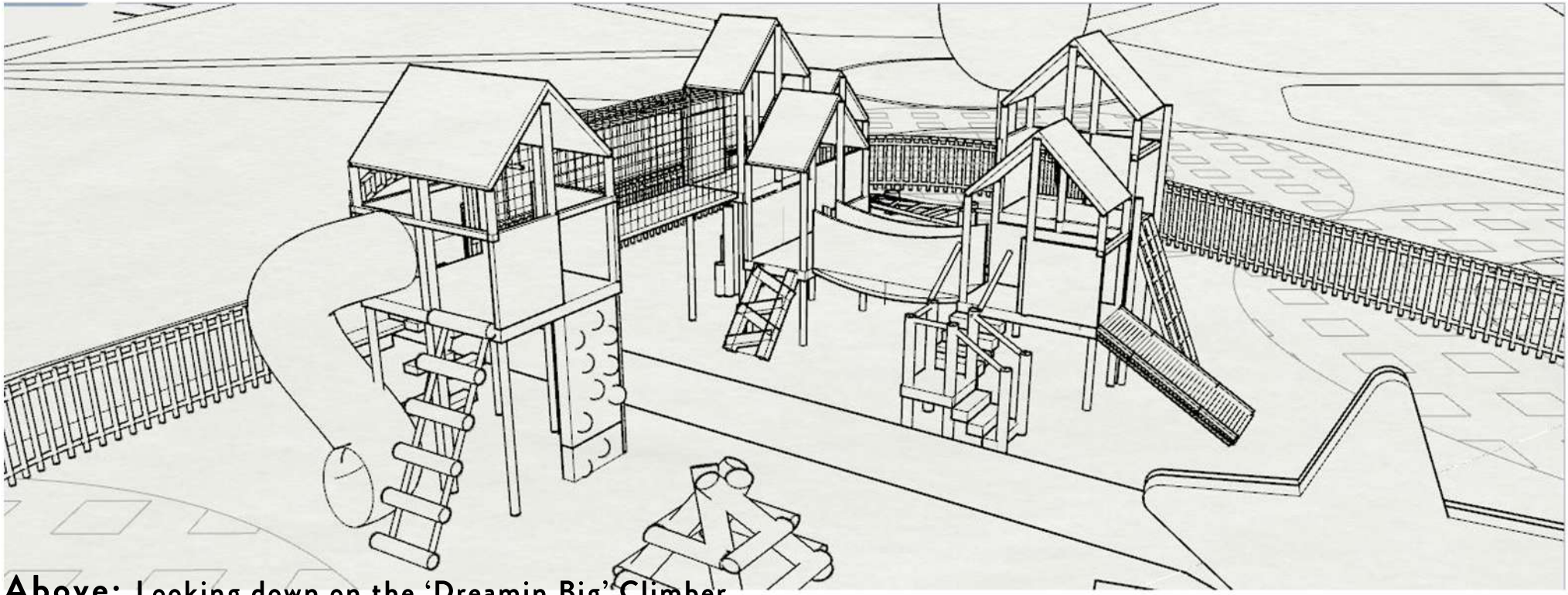
Above: Looking north towards the Main Entrance with 'Dreamin Big' Climber and Irving Hill beyond;
Below: Looking east towards the Swing Corridor and fenced in playground





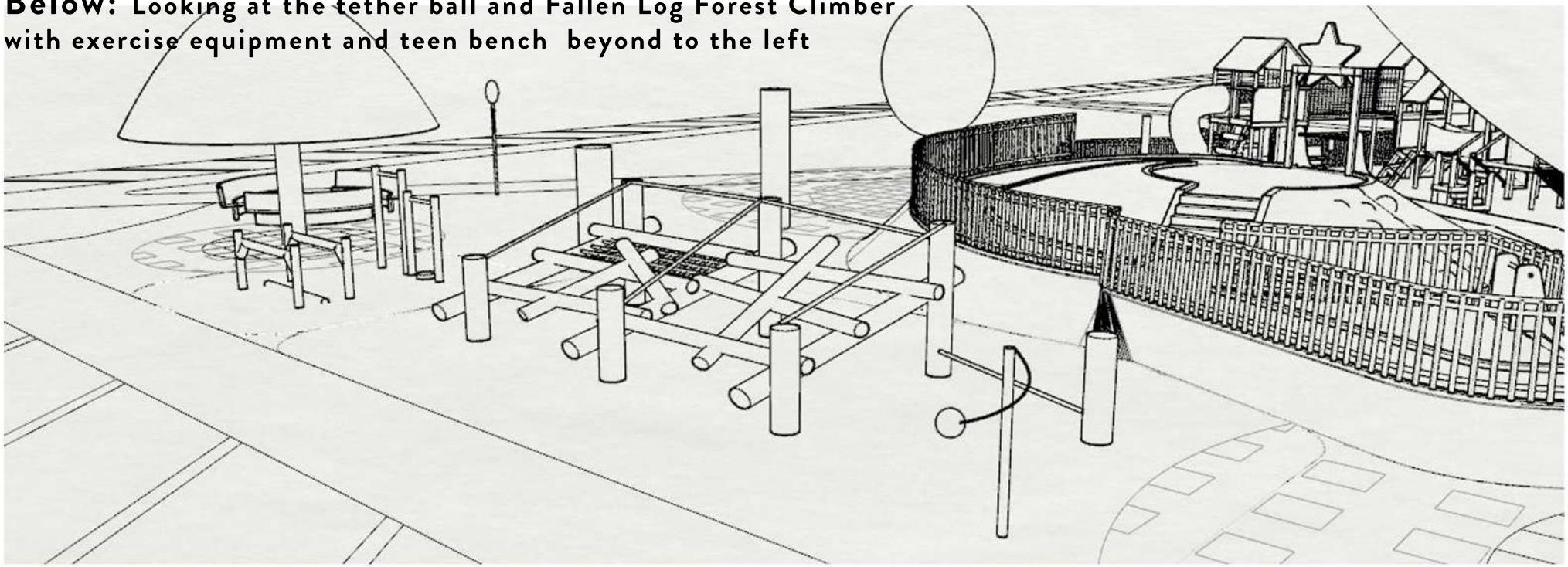
Above: Looking south towards the Little Kids entrance with stroller/bike parking in left foreground

Below: Looking towards Irving Hill with Unity Whirl in foreground



Above: Looking down on the 'Dreamin Big' Climber

Below: Looking at the tether ball and Fallen Log Forest Climber with exercise equipment and teen bench beyond to the left



Phased Implementation Plan

Phase 1: A quick win for everyone: (Install Summer 2026)
- Main Swing Bank (Co-swing, belt swings, flat swing) and Bench Swing
- Accessible Nest Swing (note that this item could be installed as a “phase 1, part 2” depending on funding)

Phase 2: A little more for everyone (Install Spring 2027)
- Irving Hill, embankment amenities, and interior paths
- Stourbridge Lion
- Exercise Equipment
- Tether Ball

Phase 3: The big equipment and accessibility push: (Summer/Fall 2027)
- Accessible Unity Whirl
- Remaining little kid equipment
- Bear Playground
- Log Climbers
- Benches (including Teen Bench)
- Fence
- Shade Structures

Phase 4: Final Amenities (2028)
-- Bathroom
-- Stroller/Bike Parking

Preliminary Budget:

Total So Far: $281K with various parts not yet quoted, with the ballpark idea that it may cost around $400K

Phase 1: A Quick Win for Everyone

Installation Summer 2026
Estimate Total: $44,000-51,000
Equipment Total: $12,705
Install Total: $6,753
Safety Surface: $24,500-32,000

Company	**Structure Name**	**Picture**	**Space**	**Cost**	**~Install Cost**
Bear Playgrounds	Wood Swing Set- 2 Bay			$2,999	Shipping $1,486
Bear Playgrounds	Belt Swing		NA	$100 each	Install by Bears $1,867
Playset Parts	Molded Flat Swing Seat with 8'6" Plastisol Chain		NA	$137	NA
Playworld	Swing Along Seat		NA	$1,371	NA

Bear Playgrounds Kompan	Tilted Posts with Birds Nest Shell Nest	 		$2,999 *With Bears version OR Shell Nest	Est. $1,200
Bear Playgrounds	Covered Swinging Bench			$4,999	Est. $1,500
Wood Chip Base for 4 swings	TBD	$5 per sq ft	1400 sq ft	$7,000	Included
Accessible Base for Nest Swing	TBD	$25 per sq ft	700-1000 sq ft	$17,500-25,000	Included

Phase 2: A Little More for Everyone

Installation Spring 2027
Estimate Total: $31,396*
Equipment Total: $7,998
Install Total: $23,390
*Missing toddler area surfacing, exercise equipment surfacing, and Irving Hill Surfacing

Company	**Structure Name**	**Picture**	**Space**	**Cost**	**~Install Cost**
Pinecraft *This is a place holder. Looking for more customized version of Stourbridge Lion	Wooden 4 Piece Train Playground Set		4'w x 30'l x 6'h	$5,698, $455.84 sealer	$550
Playworld*	Tetherball		12’ by 12’	$347	Est. $140
Bear Playgrounds	Assisted Balance Walk for adults *Combination of Bear Parallel Bars and inground balance beam			$249+599	Est. $400
Bear Playgrounds	Chin Up Bars-Double *Checking with Bear to add additional set modeled off of waist trainer			$399+250	Est. $300
	Irving Hill Construction			$22,000-$55,000 with community help	

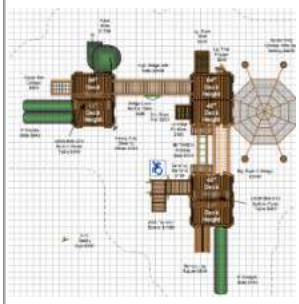
Kompan	Slide 1				
Kompan	Slide 2				
Kompan	Hill Climber Rope with EPDM				
Kompan	Rock Climber Little				
Forest, Fen, & Field/ Known Grove Sacred Land Stewardship	Outside-of-Fence Enbankment Plantings			Donated	
Kompan	Rock Climber Big				

Phase 3: The Big Equipment & Accessibility Push

Installation Summer/Fall 2027
Estimate Total: $199,296*
Equipment Total: $159,190
Install Total: $40,106
*Missing Bear Dreamin Big surface, Accessible Whirl surface

Company	**Structure Name**	**Picture**	**Space**	**Cost**	**~Install Cost**

Playworld*	Turtle		16' 7" × 18' 1"	$8,748	NA
Pro Playground	Log Crawl Playground Tunnel (4 ft)		18 x 16	$5,542	NA
Bear Playground	Flat Top Stump Logs			$149 each (6 for young children's area)	
Playworld*	Accessible Whirl		24' 11" x 24' 11"	$17,315	Est. $6,900
Bear Playground	Fallen Tree Forest Climber (teen/adult)		52' 31'	$24,999	Shipping $3,499
Bear Playground	Log Climber		18' x 18'	$3,999	Install by Bear $9,507.40

Kay Park *Place holder, would like to make our own or have a local carpenter make	5’ Curved Mesa Bench			$488 each (4 form have circle)	Freestanding or in ground mount available
Bear Playgrounds *Multiple Benches will be located around park based on need/space. Place keeper, will use local carpenter if possible	Cedar Log Bench			$699 each	
	Slab Bench			$499 each	
Bear Playground *Initial Design, edits will be made based on community input	Dreamin Big		58’ x 52’	$41,000	Shipping $3,500 Install by Bears $13,000
Percussion Play *To be used in music	Emperor Chimes (no mallets needed!)			$8,635	

wall/embedded near fence. Will be using a local artist to create if possible. Model for interest in designs	Rainbow Sambas (5)		Each Length 32.5cm Width 40cm Height 85cm	$3,710	
	Fence		4’ High	$35,000-$40,000	

Phase 4: Final Amenities

Installation Spring/Summer 2028
More information needed to provide install total.

Company	**Structure Name**	**Picture**	**Space**	**Cost**	**~Install Cost**
	Bathroom				
Playworld	8 Bike Rack (Portable) *Portable can be moved for various park needs		3' 2" × 4' 11" × 2' 8"	$850	
Construction only	Stroller Parking Pad	Material TBD Concrete? Tile for fundraiser?			

Project Fundraising Plan and Timeline

The families and individuals that make up the People's Playground Project understand that fundraising is a crucial aspect of turning our innovative design plan for the Central Park Playground into a reality. The PPP is committed to helping raise the necessary funds for the new playground through a multi-pronged strategy including:

1. Collaborating on grant applications with Wayne County Community Foundation and Honesdale Borough.
2. Soliciting monetary and in-kind contributions from local businesses and individuals.
3. Organizing fundraising events that align with the project goals and timeline.

Fundraising Strategies and Goals

- Grants ($100k goal): The PPP has applied for grants through WCCF and will continue to seek grant opportunities throughout the project. The Borough also applied for funding through DCNR that should be allocated towards this project if awarded. Additional grants could be pursued specifically to fund inclusive playground equipment.
- The PPP has identified various fundraising opportunities to solicit individual and business donations in 2026 with a total fundraising goal of $50,000 by end of 2026. Additional events will be planned for 2027 and the goals for those events will be set by Fall 2026.
    - Basket raffle ($5,000 goal): Local businesses are contributing prizes, and tickets will be sold throughout May with the raffle prize drawing in June. Tickets will sell for $10, and the goal is to sell 500 tickets.
    - NEPA Gives ($25,000 goal): The PPP will participate in the 2026 NEPA Gives event on June 4th and 5th. NEPA Gives is an area-wide organized fundraising opportunity that leverages a large community of invested families and connections with local businesses to maximize the impact of individual donations to participating organizations.
    - Community Event at a local venue ($5,000 goal): This will be a family-friendly sing-a-long brunch event. Tickets will be sold in advance to raise funds. People can also sponsor local celebrities to sing at the event.
    - Holiday Appeal Letter November 2026 ($15K goal): We will mail a letter to all Honesdale households letting them know where we are in the process of completing the project and the impact their donation will have.
    - In-kind donations: We have connections to several construction companies that may be able to assist with installation of the playground equipment, ground cover, landscaping and fencing. Once the plan is further along and approved by the Borough we can contact them with specific requests.

Fundraising timeline

November-December 2025:

- The PPP structure and fund were created to establish fundraising capacity for playground.
- The Borough approved collaboration with PPP on the Central Park playground design and fundraising process.

January-March 2026:

- The Fundraising Committee was established and began to organize a fundraising plan and solicit donations. The committee has met twice and will continue to meet monthly or more frequently as needed. Fundraising events for 2026 were confirmed and the Fundraising plan was developed.
- Solicitations for the Spring raffle began in late February.
- The PPP fund held through Wayne County Community Foundation had a balance of $6,070 as of 3/29/26

April-June 2026:

- Raffle tickets will continue to be sold until goal met or exceeded by end of May.
- Outreach to major supporters to secure matching gifts for NEPA gives is underway.
- Our NEPA gives campaign will launch in late April, with promotion of event increasing as we near June 4th.
- Funding sources for specific equipment and features included in the approved playground design (such as inclusive playground equipment) are being developed.

July- September 2026:

- A family-friendly community fundraising event will be held (details TBD).

October-December 2026:

- A holiday appeal letter will be drafted and mailed by November.

April-June 2027

- PPP participation in NEPA Gives 2027 will be planned and carried out.
- Additional fundraising events (TBD) will be planned.

October-December 2027

- A holiday appeal letter will be drafted and mailed by November.

Next Steps

Below are the steps we recommended take place in the near future to keep the playground development process moving forward:

For Borough Council:
1. Have Borough Council approve a motion to "Accept the People's Playground Project (PPP) Central Park playground design and plan as a guiding document; and continue the Borough's partnership with the PPP into the professional review, fundraising, and installation phase."

We'd ask that Borough Council consider accepting this design and plan for a new Central Park playground as a guiding document. The plan delivered here is made up of over 1,600 pieces of community feedback, includes over 700 hours of volunteer research, and was compiled by many engaged citizens assisting Borough officials. While the PPP recognizes that some aspects of this plan are likely to shift in small ways as reviews with professionals continue to take place, we anticipate that the spirit of the playground design will remain true to this guiding document. Any significant changes would be reviewed with the Parks & Rec Committee prior to fundraising or installation efforts.

Continuing to the next phase in the Borough's partnership with the People's Playground Project will allow the PPP to have the design vetted by professionals, allow people to donate time, materials, and services with confidence, and allow installation to take place as expeditiously as reasonable. This is especially key for "Phase 1: Swing Bank" during a time of the year when many families and children visit Central Park and look for recreational opportunities.

For the People's Playground Project team to oversee:
2. Review of Playground Design by Professionals- by a local or regional professional, using funding from Friends of the Honesdale Parks Central Park Playground account

4. NEPA Gives Fundraiser- to raise money for Phase 1: Swing Bank

For Honesdale Borough DPW to oversee:
5. Installation of Phase 1: Swing Bank as fundraising allows

6. Rent a Handicapped Accessible Porto Potty for the warm season

Playground Placemaking Survey 1: Key Findings Jan 2026 (289 responses)

What are the most important play activities to have there?

(People could choose more than one option)



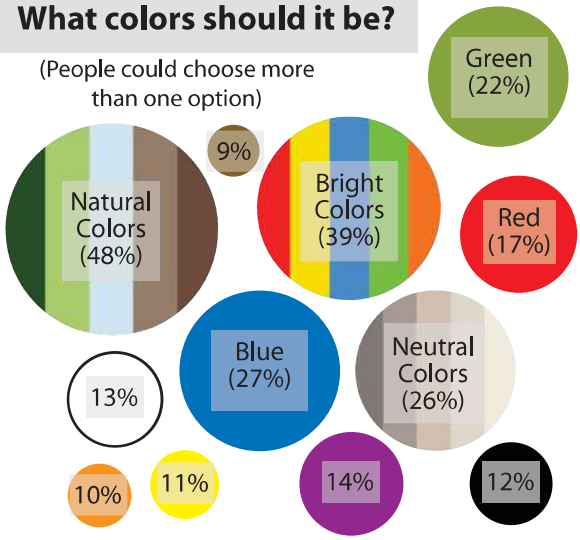
What theme should it have?

(People could choose more than one option)



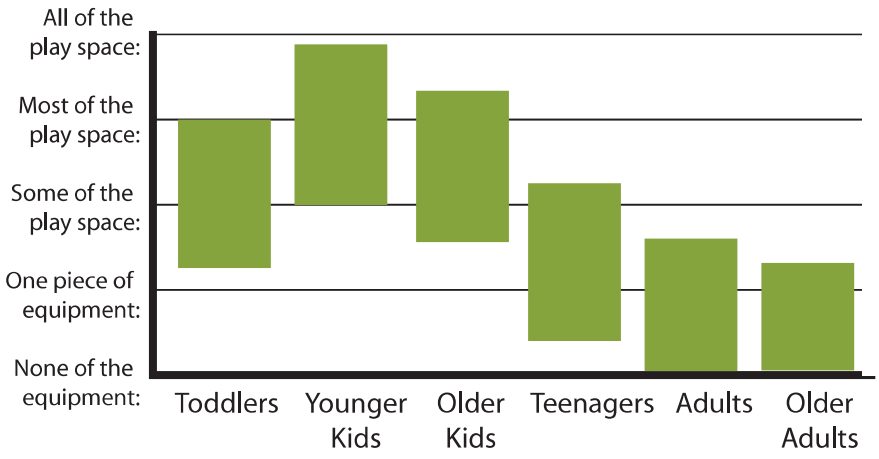
What colors should it be?

(People could choose more than one option)



How much space should different age groups have?

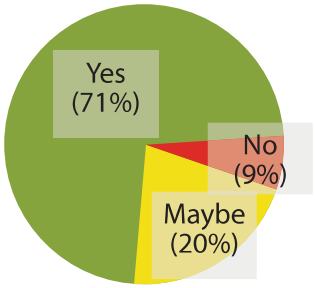
These blocks show the range of answers given for each group



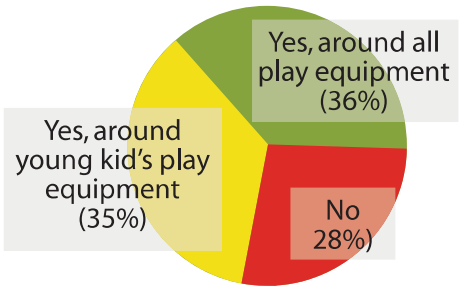
These were the most common words used in the open-ended responses.



Should there be a bathroom?



Should there be a fence or short wall?



Playground Placemaking Step 2: "Your Big Idea" Workshops Key Findings Feb 2026 (12 groups; 178 individuals)

Below are consolidated findings from the various groups interviewed, by category, of what equipment and other things they think would make for a good placeground.

Little Kids- Nature-based play in a spot that feels right-sized

Swings · Climbing · Tunnel · Stroller Parking · Bench with back · Sensory (sound garden?) · Wooden Castle · Interactive Train · "Small Town" · Hobbit Hole · Large Animals · Large Rocks · Splashpad · Sticks · Fence · Ladder · Bridge · Cars to Drive

Big Kids- Multiple ways to play; greater value based on arrangement

Monkey Bars · Zip Line · Slide · Swings · Wobbly Bridge · Tunnel · Rock Wall · Wooden Castle · Large Animals · Merry Go-Round · Obstacle Course · 4-Square Court · Splash Pad · Fire Pole · Robe Climb · Ball Pit · Scavenger Hunt · Sound Garden · Sensory Play

Teens- A *hang* spot and sports-like equipment that is meant for them

Monkey Bars · Swings · Exercise Equipment · Basketball Hoop · Games · 4-Square · Rock Climbing Wall · Equipment Locker · Obstacle Course · Multisport Area · Hang-out Space · Merry Go-Round · Hop-skotch · Phone Chargers · "No Smoking/Vaping" Signs · Zipline · Roller/Skateboard Area · Tree House

Inclusive- Surface material, equipment height, and enclosure

Wheelchair swing · Wheel-chair Accessible Sensory Play · Accessibel Surface · Adaptive Slides · Wheelshair Transfer Station · Ground-Level Equipment · Sound Garden · Spinning Chairs · Zipline with Chair · Merry Go-Round · Communication Board · No Gaps in Stairs · Equipment for Older Kids · Water Feature

Parents- Small accomodations make a big difference

Stroller Parking · Comfortable Seating for Breastfeeding · Quiet Bench · Space for Multiple Age Groups to Interact · Horizontal Play, not Vertical · Nature-themed · Bathroom · Space for parents to play alongside kids

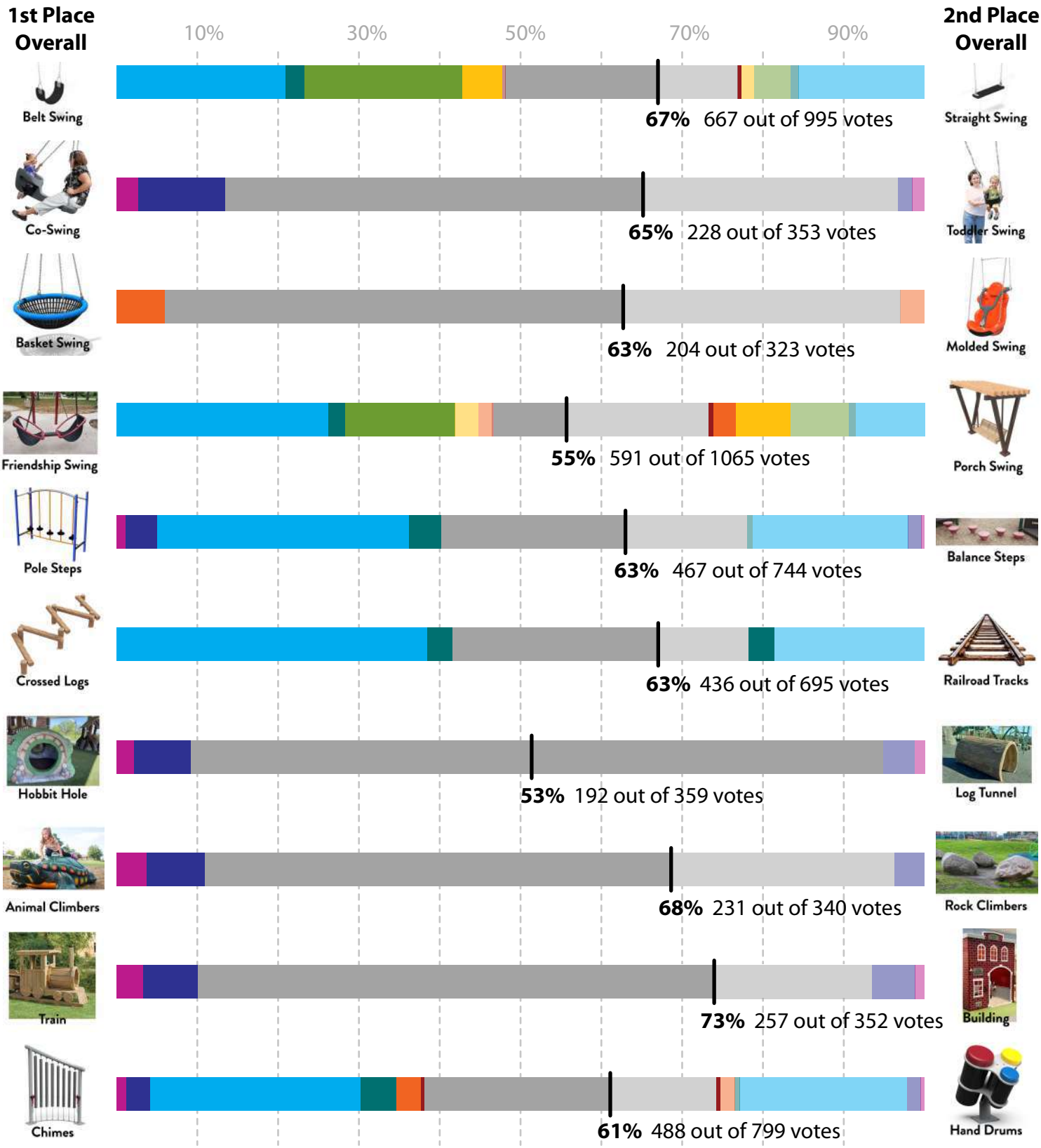
Adults/Older Adults- Adding to existing habits to increase benefit

Climbing · Hanging from Arms · Games (Chess?) · Pull-Up Bar · Varied Seating Types (wood, metal) · C-Shaped Bench · Exercise Equipment · Friendship Bench

General- Shade, something for everyone, and clear communication

Swings · Bike Parking · Trash Cans · Shade · Picnic Tables · Benches · Cameras · Soft Surface · Chalk Drawing · Bathroom with Changing Table · Lights · Songbird Habitat · Hop-skotch · Jumprope · Permanent Stage · Neighborly Signs · Emergency Phone

Playground Placemaking Step 3: Equipment Survey
Key Findings Mar 2026 (302-1093 individuals (question dependent))



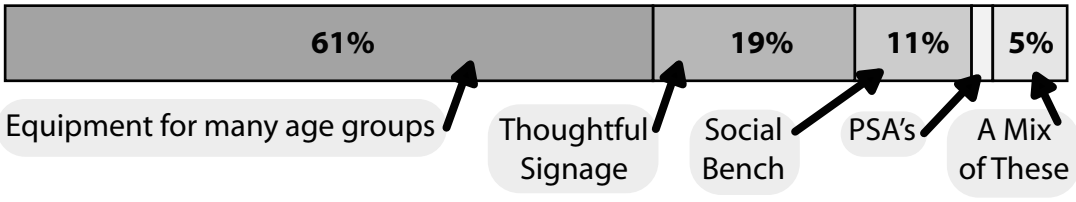
Group Key: For each equipment question a group was asked, their answers are represented by a bolder shade and a muted shade. The bolder shade signifies which piece of equipment came in 1st Place (or tied) for that specific group.

Women's H. Center | Owl/ St. Dominicks | Stourbridge Prim. | Lakeside Elem.

W. H. Middle School | H'dale Highschool | Human R. Center | A. Agency on Aging | Online

1st Place Overall		2nd Place Overall
 Natural Shade	**67%** 212 out of 315 votes	 Shade Cloth
 Rope Crossing	**57%** 392 out of 693 votes	 Step Crossing
 'Monkey' Bars	**61%** 643 out of 1058 votes	 'Multi Grip' Bars
 Orbital Spin	**77%** 560 out of 727 votes	 Rotational Spin
 Zip Line	**51%** 369 out of 725 votes	 Sky Runner
 Net Climber	**55%** 391 out of 712 votes	 Rock Wall
 Curly Slide	**77%** 543 out of 701 votes	 Straight Slide
 Tether Ball	**68%** 740 out of 1093 votes	 Toss Up
 Curved Seating	**70%** 395 out of 565 votes	 Climbing Seating
 Pull-Up Bar	**52%** 362 out of 690 votes	 Parallel Bar
 Balance Walk	**65%** 214 out of 330 votes	 Sit-up Bar

Which do you think would increase comfort and neighborliness near the playground? (302 responses)



Playground Placemaking Step 4: Public Drafting Sessions Key Findings April 2026 (4 sessions; 62 individuals)

Below are consolidated findings from the various groups who stopped by or otherwise provided feedback on drafts of the playground design. The sessions took place at a local coffee shop and bookstore that offered some of their extra space at no charge.

Session 1- Reviewing data from the other three steps

Friendship swing was slightly more popular, but the bench swing was more age inclusive and the nest swing met a similar need · Rock walls need to have a destination · Zip line and sky runner were close; further evaluation needed · Could chimes be near a 'railroad crossing? Or played from multiple sides? · Toddler area should be near bathroom · Don't have too many net things in one area · Ball run along the fence? · Can hobbit hole incorporate a slide for rock climbing? · Have accessible surface in key areas · Maybe crossed logs could be outside for 13+ use · Riding lane around perimeter of path?

Session 2- Firming up zone locations and key priorities

What all can be accessible? Merry go round? Zipline? Animal Climber? · There are bulk discounts from ordering multiple pieces of equipment from the same supplier, so be mindful not to choose too many · A fully custom climber (like Earthscape Play) is going to be too expensive for us · Reminder, kids want to slide, swing, climb, and run more than anything · Anything that can only be used in one way shouldn't be a priority · Anything that can only be used by one person at a time shouldn't be a priority unless it's highly desirable · The more it can be used socially, the better · Obstacle course! · It should look like here, and be beautiful

Session 3- Getting into the nitty-gritty

Having the toddler area near the shade is important · Having a gate in the toddler area is extra convenient · Bubble look-throughs always frost over quickly · Bridge as part of the grand entrance? · Swing debate: definitely two belts, a co-swing, a nest, and a bench swing, but should the last be flat or molded? · Mulch takes up a lot of space, but digging around large tree branches is okay · Everyone loved the Bear Playground Aesthetic · Can milk paint be used on Bear Playgrounds to match the desired color scheme?

Session 4- The Final considerations

Exercise Equipment Debate: can waist twist and pull up bar be combined? Can Bear make us a custom balance beam with parallel bar? · Engineered Wood Mulch could be an option for accessible and eco surfacing · Add a steering wheel to the Bear climber · Make sure there's a shade structure in key areas (ex. Irving Hill Slide) · Add an extra tree for shade? · Have tables underneath Bear · Sponsored bricks in the low wall? · Communication board + Fringe ones too · Vending Machine for balls for ball run? · Signs for different age groups · Yoga move panels near exercise area?

Playground Design Mood Board

This shares the “look and feel” of the equipment that the PPP believes will enhance the aesthetic of the park while providing a fun place for all to play. To better match the desired green-blue-natural color scheme, some elements would be painted similar shades to the stump statues.











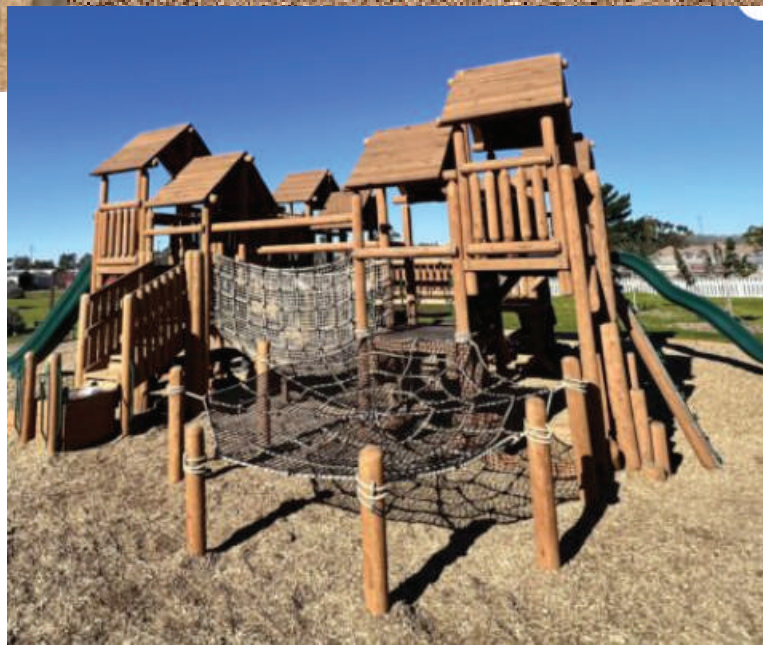














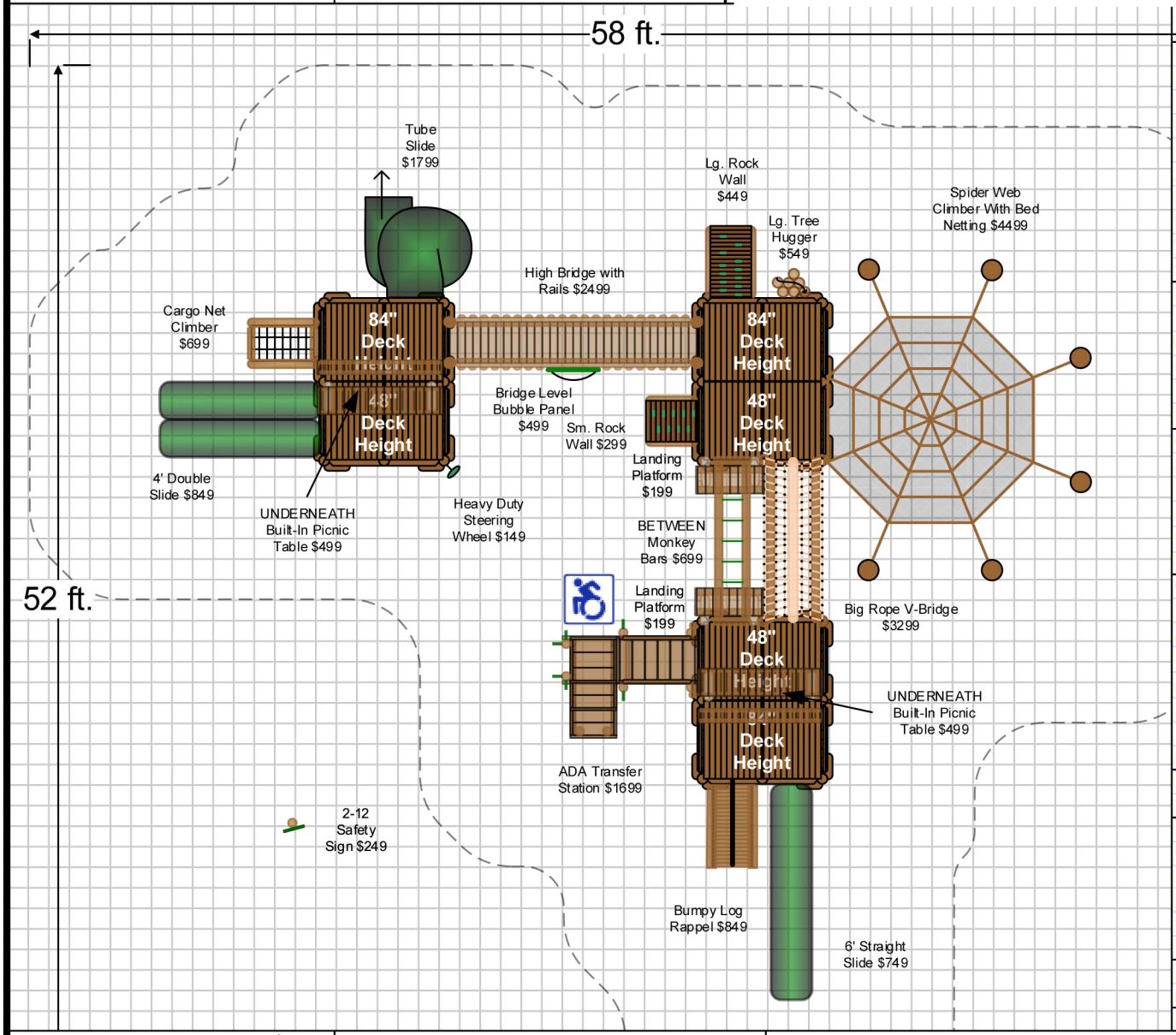




BEARS
bearsplaygrounds.com
7577 E. Main St, Lima NY 14485
877-807-7529 (p) 585-624-7590 (f)
info@bearsplaygrounds.com

People's Playground Project
Honesdale, PA 18431

Note that this arrangement is close to but not exactly what we have in the Site Plan; some elements are subject to change.



DREAMIN BIG

		OPTIONAL EXCLUDED
PONDEROSA STRUCTURE 1	5499	
PONDEROSA STRUCTURE 2	5499	
PONDEROSA STRUCTURE 3	5499	
HIGH BRIDGE W/RAILS	2499	
BRIDGE LEVEL BUBBLE PANEL	499	
BIG ROPE V-BRIDGE	3299	
MONKEY BARS ACROSS	699	
WOODEN RAIL X 8	600	
WOODEN ROOF X 6	2394	
SAFETY SIGN x 1	249	
ON STRUCTURE 1		
TUBE SLIDE	1799	
CARGO NET CLIMBER	699	
4' DOUBLE SLIDE	849	
UNDERNEATH PICNIC TABLE	499	
HEAVY DUTY STEERING WHEEL	149	
ON STRUCTURE 2		
LG TREE HUGGER	549	
LG ROCK WALL	449	
SM ROCK WALL	299	
LANDING PLATFORM	199	
SPIDER WEB W/ BED NET	4499	
ON STRUCTURE 3		
LANDING PLATFORM	199	
ADA TRANSFER STATION	1699	
BUMPY LOG RAPPEL	849	
6' STRAIGHT SLIDE	749	
UNDERNEATH PICNIC TABLE	499	
SUB TOTAL	**$40,721.00**	
SHIPPING ESTIMATE / MOBILIZATION	$ 3,499.00	
INSTALL BY BEARS	$13,024.30	
SAFETY SURFACING PACKAGE		
CERT. WOODEN MULCH- ? YDS^3	NOT YET INCLUDED- AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST	
BARRIER FABRIC- ? FT^2		
DOUBLE HIGH LOG BORDERS X ?		
HEAVY DUTY Swing/Slide Mat X ?		
SURFACING PACKAGE INSTALL		
NEW TOTAL	$57,244.30	
SALES TAX	$ 3,434.66	
GRAND TOTAL	**$60,678.96**	

Designed by: Trey Socash
Certified Playground Safety Inspector

4-16-2026 Drawing 1

Dreamin Big

BEST AGES 2-12

List of Community Partners

The following is a list of businesses who have or plan to contribute in one way or another to moving the playground project forward. Many of these have contributed to the initial raffle basket fundraiser through the Northern Poconos Leadership program.

- Ariel View Inn
- Be Kind Bakehouse
- Bold Gold Media
- CB Brown Excavating
- Church Street Automotive
- Entech Engineering, Inc.
- Firmstone Lakewood Fuels
- Forest, Fen, & Field
- Gather
- Giggeri's of Honesdale
- Gravity Studios
- Green House
- Grimm Construction
- Highhouse OIl
- Honesdale National Bank
- Human Resources Foundation
- Known Grove Books
- Known Grove Sacred Land Stewardship
- Koberlein Environmental Services
- Leeward Construction
- Mount Pleasant Herbary
- Native
- Nature's Grace
- OWL and Friends
- Palermos Pizza
- Pocono Whitewater Rafting
- ReMAX Wayne
- Settlers Hospitality
- Spencer Printing
- The Forest Lake Club
- The Ridge, Hawley
- TM Morey, Inc
- Watson Bros
- Woodloch Springs

Craig E. Rickard
Director of Planning

Wayne County
Department of Planning/GIS

BOARD MEMBERS

Peter Ridd, *Chairman*
Kurt Caruth
Kathy Enslin
Robert Flynn
Richard B. Henry
Michael Kuzmiak
Paul Meagher Jr.
Ronald Shemanski
William Troop

March 30, 2026

Honesdale Borough Council
c/o: Judy Poltanis, Secretary
958 Main Street
Honesdale PA 18431

RE: Honesdale Central Park – New Playground Project.

Dear Borough Council:

Please allow this letter to serve as support towards the "People's Playground Project", which is a local community effort to design and build a new playground area in Central Park of downtown Honesdale. This local group has been working with the Parks and Recreation Committee to achieve the design of this park construction project.

Some key aspects of the playground plan that have been completed include a four-step placemaking exercise to ensure community needs are fully considered. The playground design will have elements that are accessible to visitors with a wide range of abilities and to further promote outdoor socialization among various age groups utilizing this public open space.

One of the goals in the updated County Comprehensive Plan is to promote the availability of recreational facilities and attractions by continuing the development and support of municipal park improvements. This project will assist with achieving this identified County goal. Also, as inventoried and assessed within the County's Recreation, Parks and Natural Resources Plan, Honesdale Borough Central Park provides a centrally located park space with many recreational offerings heavily used by the public.

Based on these findings, the Wayne County Planning Department supports the Borough's Park and Rec Committee efforts to replace and construct a new playground area on the north end of the park.

Sincerely,

Craig E. Rickard
Planning Director

Cc: Lisa Glover, PS Designer
file

Andrea C. Murray
School Counselor

Wayne Highlands Middle School
482 Grove Street
Honesdale, PA 18431-1098
Telephone: 570-253-5900 Fax: 570-253-5259

John D. Kretschmer, Ed.D.
Principal

Gerard Burns, Jr.
Assistant Principal

April 15, 2026

Dear Borough Council Members,

I am writing to share my support for the proposed Central Park playground improvements. Our middle school students participated in the survey process and were excited to have their voices heard and reflected in the design.

It is encouraging to see a plan that considers their interests and creates opportunities for them to engage in a positive, active environment within our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John D. Kretschmer, Ed.D.
Principal, Wayne Highlands Middle School

WAYNE MEMORIAL
HOSPITAL

Borough of Honesdale
958 Main Street
Honesdale, PA 18431

April 17, 2026

Dear Borough Council,

Wayne Memorial Hospital is writing to express our strong support for the People's Playground Project's proposed design for a new playground in Central Park. The plan thoughtfully accommodates a wide range of ages and abilities, creating opportunities for more community members to engage in healthy, active living. We are especially encouraged by the inclusion of equipment designed for teens, adults, and seniors.

Features that promote stretching, balance, and strength are essential for maintaining health and mobility as people age. We appreciate that the PPP has actively engaged community members—including input from the Area Agency on Aging—and is consulting with physical therapists to ensure the equipment is both safe and effective.

This inclusive and well-informed approach represents a meaningful, long-term investment in the health and well-being of our community. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol Kneier

Carol Kneier, MS, RDN, LDN, CDCES
Community Relations Manager
Wayne Memorial Hospital

Dear Members of the Honesdale Borough Council,

My name is Dr. Brianne Font, OTD, MS, OTR/L. I am a Honesdale resident, Occupational Therapist, and owner of True To You Therapy, a pediatric outpatient clinic in Honesdale that provides speech, occupational, and physical therapy services to children ages 0–21. I am writing to advocate for thoughtful, inclusive design in the development of Honesdale's new playground in Central Park.

As an Occupational Therapist, my role is to help individuals of all ages participate fully in meaningful daily activities. I am uniquely trained to see how environments either open doors or quietly exclude people. Often exclusion is not intentional, it is simply the result of design decisions that did not consider every member of the community.

At its core, this playground is not about equipment. It is about belonging.

Inclusivity is not a feature, it is a foundation. It is the difference between a space that some people can use and a space where everyone feels welcome, safe, and able to participate. True inclusivity means designing for the full breadth of our community: infants and older adults, individuals with disabilities and those without, first-time walkers and lifelong residents.

Without inclusivity, a playground creates moments where people are left out. It looks like a grandparent sitting on a bench because the path is too uneven to safely walk beside their grandchild. It looks like a toddler falling again and again on unstable ground. It looks like a child in a wheelchair arriving at the playground only to realize they cannot access the equipment. It looks like a parent constantly on edge, afraid their child may wander toward the street. It looks like a family cutting their visit short because there is no accessible bathroom.

With intentional, inclusive design, those same moments become something entirely different: a grandparent walking hand-in-hand with their grandchild, a toddler taking confident first steps, children of all abilities laughing and playing together, and families staying longer because their needs are fully supported.

There are several key features that would bring this vision to life:

A **secure fence** provides peace of mind for every caregiver. It protects children from nearby roads or unexpected hazards such as a loose animal and gives caregivers those critical extra seconds to respond. A fence transforms the space from one that requires constant worry to one where children can explore more freely and safely.

An **inclusive bathroom** recognizes that inclusion does not stop at play, rather it extends to basic human needs. In Occupational Therapy, these needs are called Activities of Daily Living (ADLs), which include toileting. Providing an accessible restroom with an adult-sized changing station in addition to a standard child changing station would allow individuals of all ages and abilities to be cared for with dignity, privacy, and respect.

A **communication board** creates connection. These boards use symbols, pictures, and words to help children and adults express themselves and engage with others. While essential for some, they

benefit everyone by supporting empathy, social interaction, and language development. Even verbal children benefit by expanding vocabulary and learning that communication is not one-size-fits-all.

In addition to one general communication board, I strongly encourage **smaller fringe communication boards** near individual pieces of equipment. These boards include words related to the activity specifically, such as “swing,” “push,” “more,” “slide,” or “my turn.” This way children can fully communicate while they play. No other local playground currently offers these equipment-specific boards. Including them would make this playground a truly innovative and inclusive space where every child has a voice.

Safe, accessible surfacing is equally important. Loose materials such as wood chips, sand, and gravel can create barriers for children learning to walk, older adults, and individuals using wheelchairs, walkers, or strollers. More stable options such as engineered wood fiber, poured-in-place rubber, or rubber tiles provide a safer, more accessible surface that allows more people to move confidently and independently. While these materials may cost more initially, they offer long-term value through durability, lower maintenance, and greater accessibility for the entire community.

Finally**, playground equipment** should be chosen with inclusion in mind. The goal should not be separate experiences, but shared ones. Net climbers, for example, allow one child to climb while another can still play underneath and be part of the experience. Lower climbing elements and ground-level activities allow grandparents and caregivers to assist without climbing or straining. Adaptive swings with adjustable straps can support children, teens, and adults of different sizes and abilities while reducing the physical strain on caregivers. Most importantly, playground equipment should allow adults with disabilities to participate as well. Play does not have an age limit, and neither should access to it.

When inclusivity is prioritized, the result is not just a better playground, it is a stronger community. It becomes a place where differences are normalized, where families feel welcomed instead of accommodated as an afterthought, and where no one has to ask, “Can I be here too?”

I respectfully urge the council to place inclusivity at the center of all planning and decision-making for this playground. Not as an added feature, but as the guiding principle. I would welcome the opportunity to offer my professional insight in any way that may help.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your continued commitment to Honesdale.

Respectfully,
Dr. Brianne Font, OTD, MS, OTR/L
Owner, True To You Therapy

I leave you with this final thought:
An inclusive playground is more than a place to play, it is a reflection of who we are as a community and the values we choose to uphold. When we choose to design inclusively, we choose to say to every person in this community: You belong here.

LETTER TO THE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Inclusive Outdoor Exercise Equipment (OFE) for Central Park

A Research-Based Case for Multi-Generational Fitness Access

Dear Members of the Honesdale Borough Council,

Access to physical activity infrastructure is essential for **public health equity**. We request the installation of three inclusive outdoor fitness stations next to the Playground at Central Park. Research shows that **52% of park visits involve bringing children**, but adult caregivers commonly remain inactive. Placing fitness equipment near the playground can address this missed opportunity (Playground Design and Physical Activity, PMC10264149). Additionally, a review in *Gerontology & Geriatric Medicine* (Lee & Ho, 2022; PMC8918966) notes that approximately 18% of children under 13 are cared for by grandparents, highlighting the need for intergenerational amenities.

Evidence Supporting This Proposal

Three key studies support this request. Naismith et al. (2021; PMC8359243) identify balance training as underrepresented in public parks and find that it can **reduce falls in older adults by up to 39%**. A 2023 narrative review in *Experimental Gerontology* (Marín-Cascales et al.; S0531556523002000) finds that structured outdoor fitness equipment programs boost **cardiovascular health, muscle strength, balance, and quality of life**, **while reducing depression and anxiety**. Chen et al. (2021; PMC8657271), published in the *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, provides clinical evidence that a waist twister (trainer) improves static balance and postural stability in older adults, and supports resistance exercises of 8–10 repetitions per major muscle group, twice weekly, in line with American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) guidelines for healthy ageing.

Two other studies emphasize the need for **clear instructional signage**. Chow & Wu (2019; PMC6388239) found that many users did not follow manufacturer guidance, which can reduce health benefits and increase improper use. An observational study at Xihu Park (PMC5409648) found that exercise durations often fell short of recommendations, partly because labels were unclear. The study recommends **signage specifying 8–15 repetitions with 30-second rest periods**, consistent with ACSM guidelines.

Based on this evidence, we recommend that each station feature durable, weather-resistant panels -- ideally with QR codes showing dynamic movements -- illustrating correct technique, recommended sets and repetitions, and providing beginner-to-advanced progressions.

Proposed Equipment

- **Waist Twister / Trainer** — Supports core stability and balance training. Clinically shown to improve static balance in older adults (Chen et al., 2021). Accessible and suitable for all age groups.
- **Bi-Level Pull-Up Bar** — Multi-height design expands usability across skill levels. Lower bar allows assisted movements, inverted rows, and stretching for beginners, older adults, and children. The upper bar serves advanced users.
- **Assisted Balance Beam with Handrails** — Addresses the balance and fall-prevention gap identified by Naismith et al. (2021). Handrails make it accessible to seniors and those with mobility concerns, while still providing a challenge for a broad range of users.

All three stations should have clear sightlines to the playground, be installed on accessible, non-slip surfacing, and include ADA-compliant access routes and [bilingual] instructional signage.

Our Request

We respectfully ask the Council to:

(1) consider approval of the three stations adjacent to the proposed Playground at Central Park;

(2) include ACSM-aligned instructional signage as part of the installation; and

(3) use the five peer-reviewed studies cited below as the evidence base for equipment selection and site design.

This is a low-cost, high-impact opportunity to support the physical and social well-being of our community across generations.

Respectfully submitted,

Alexi Gilmore-Manookian

RAISE Your Hearts 501(c)(3)

Founder + Chair

Contributor to the People's Playground Project

References

1. Naismith et al. (2021). Age-friendly outdoor exercise equipment. Health Promotion Journal of Australia, 32(3), 475–482. https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8359243/
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4-19-26
Dear Honesdale Borough Council,

As parents and caregivers in this community, we are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to help bring a new playground to life. This project reflects the heart of Honesdale, people coming together to create something meaningful and lasting for our community.

As we continue designing and executing the playground, we ask that a fence with gates be included. Above all, we value the safety and well-being of our children. Young children are naturally curious and often unaware of potential dangers, and without a physical boundary, there is a real concern about children wandering toward Main Street as well as the the parking spots around the Courthouse and Central Park.

A fence would provide an inclusive space for all people to enjoy. Families with toddlers or children who have developmental, sensory, or behavioral needs often rely on enclosed environments to ensure their children can safely participate and enjoy the space.

We appreciate your consideration and your continued support in helping us create a safe and welcoming space for everyone in Honesdale.

Sincerely,

S Phillips
Peach Foley
Kristi short
Gracie Mountain
Susan Hiller
Meighan Kizer
Natalie Boyd
Jazmyn Jacques
Emma Huether
Melissa C.
Jessica Mitschele
Breanna Hayes
Marisa R
Allyson Petschauer
Kimberly Casey
Heather Lyons
Grace Nebzydoski
Danielle Dieterich
Brianna Muir
Rebecca Vandermeer
Alex DiFrancesco
Marissa Westhoff
Catherine Schmidt-Jones
Alison Nobile
Jenna Motichka
+ seven additional in-person signatories who's names were unreadable

Anecdotes from parents about why they signed this letter:

- There has been an increase in pedestrian accidents. With the one way street change coming it could lead to more accidents in the beginning.
- Our children's safety is of the upmost importance. With roads being close to the playground, a fence will be a great added on protection
- Keeping kids away from road
- Some children need the clear boundaries, especially with the park being so close to the street. My daughter is starting to become more of a wanderer/runner so a fence would help bring more peace of mind.
- Safety
- Small children and special needs children can easily elope even with the best of supervision, especially to caregivers whom have multiple children. A fence would increase the safety for all the children.
- I've witnessed a lot of children who are runners and it would be a much more peaceful space if parents didn't have to worry about their child or other children running into the street. I also know many moms who won't even meet up at a playground if there's no fence

- My son will be a year old in July. Even with constant supervision I think I fence is important for safety. Especially how some drivers drive down church street. I also think a fence is good so child predators don’t have such easy access to children
- I would ensure the safety of my two-year-old who plays in the park.
- As a mother of 3 toddlers. It makes it much less worrisome letting them play. The road next to the park is very busy with lots of speeders. I would feel more confident meeting for play dates at the park with a fenced area.
- The park is surrounded by one of the busiest streets in town. Little kids are running all over. Having a fence provides protection against kids accidentally running into the street when playing
- A fence around the playground is important to me because it helps keep children safe, especially given the parks location right off a main road in town. It would prevent kids from accidentally wandering into traffic. It would also give parents and caregivers peace of mind, allowing children to play freely in a secure and protected space.
- Any parent would feel more secure knowing their child can’t dart off to the road
- Improved safety especially for younger children
- A fence is important for many reasons, one of which it provides a barrier for children who may have a tendency to run. As a parent with two littles, it's important to allow them to have fun, in a safe way. A fence can help support that by being a barrier to the road, as well as wandering too far too fast.
- My daughter is autistic and can run when she gets overly excited or upset. If there is a fence then it would keep her in the area or at least give me time to catch her before she gets too far.
- Keeps kids safer from wandering into traffic also keeps the area cleaner (dissuades animals from defecating in the space). Look into what percentage of park soil samples contain parasite eggs like roundworms
- A fully enclosed area will provide additional safety to prevent younger children and children without safety awareness to leave the area and get to any of the streets that border the park.
- A lot of parents have multiple small children and children love to just wander especially if they have special needs and they're fast so it helps put parents at ease and maybe encourage parents with multiple kids to come out more
- For parents or caregivers that bring multiple kids to the park, a fence around the playspace is crucial. It would provide peace of mind about the safety and location of those children. A fence opens the playground’s accessibility to kids of all ages and cognitive / developmental levels.
- I think a fence would be great for younger children especially. Around the park is a high-traffic area and cars zoom by and I've seen several instances in the past when young kids almost made it to the busy street before their parents grabbed them.
- Safety. I have two children but only one set of eyes and hands.
- I often take my quick, rambunctious grandson to the park. I can't move as quickly as I used to. A fence around the features that ignite his high spirits would make the park so much safer for us!

4-19-26
Dear Honesdale Borough Council,

We are writing to propose that a restroom facility be included in the playground area.

As the park continues to be a central gathering place, access to a safe and sanitary restroom would be beneficial. In the past park patrons would need to leave the park and rely on neighboring businesses for restroom access, which is not always convenient or reliable—especially for young children, elderly, or special needs individuals.

In the extensive process of receiving community feedback on enhancements to the playground area, the demand for bathroom facilities has consistently appeared as a highly desired amenity.

Our goal is to build a restroom that is both environmentally friendly and economical. We are exploring sustainable options, such as low-water or composting systems, energy-efficient design, and cost-effective maintenance strategies to ensure a low impact on the environment and the borough's resources.

In addition, we understand the importance of maintaining the park's safety and integrity. In light of this, we would propose that the playground area, including the restroom, operate on a dawn-to-dusk schedule. This would help ensure appropriate use and reduce the likelihood of misuse during off-hours.

We believe that adding a restroom facility would greatly enhance the usability and accessibility of Central Park for all people, making it a more welcoming and functional space for the community. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Troop
Peach Foley
Kristi
Jamie Brown
Gracie Mountain
Susan Hiller
Meighan Kizer
Trisha Sanders
Natalie Boyd
Jazmyn Jacquez
Christine DAvis
Emma
Jessica Mitschele
Breanna Hayes
Kimberly Casey
Heather Lyons
Danielle Dieterich
Brianna Muir
Rebecca Vandermeer
Alex DiFrancesco
Jenifer Wilcox
Catherine Schmidt-Jones

Anecdotes from parents about why they signed this letter:

- My 3-year-old was potty training last summer, on two different occasions , he had an accident as we were rushing to get to elegantes to use their bathroom. It's always a shame when playtime has to end early because someone has to use the bathroom , and everyone has to leave.
- One of the main reasons my family loves Hawley playground is because of the bathrooms convenience. It is a lot of work to pack up all the kids to go find a bathroom somewhere and then come back. It allows us to enjoy the playground longer
- People need to pee
- Then I don't have to rush to turkey hill myself or my children to go potty.

- We are starting to get ready for potty training and having a bathroom in an area where we do not have to drive or walk a long distance would be helpful to stay consistent with that. I am also pregnant and in need of frequent bathroom trips which again a close restroom would be much more convenient to enjoy the park with my littles.
- It's essential. Very convenient. All children need to use a facility.
- It’s logical. There are no public restrooms. Kids have to go to the bathroom and babies need to be changed .
- Bathrooms at playgrounds are essential because they allow families to stay longer, keep kids comfortable, and ensure everyone can enjoy the space without worrying about basic needs.
- I personally go into the town hall building to use the bathroom but many little kids can’t hold it in. I’ve seen kids and have even let my own kid pee on a tree at the playground in emergencies.
- A bathroom is important for little children to have access to at all times especially for potty training age, and if parents have infants it would be nice to have a spot to change diapers without public eyes on my baby’s butt being changed. Also would allow families more play time and maybe stop accidents since a child will be less likely to admit they have to use the bathroom if they know they have to leave to use one
- Having a young child that has "got to go" is usually why we've chosen the Stourbridge park in the past, it would be incredible to have a bathroom in the park!
- It would be helpful when my child learns how to be potty trained to have a bathroom right in Central Park
- Do I really need to tell you why a bathroom is important? There are events in the park all the time. Its crazy that we dont already have a bathroom like other parks do.
- A bathroom in the park is very important to me especially as a toddler mom who has just recently completed potty training. as well as for disabled individuals and children in our community. Having a clean, accessible restroom available would make the park more inclusive, sanitary, and usable for everyone, and would allow families to spend more time there comfortably and safely.
- When a child has to go you have to take them all the way to a local business and by that time the kid probably has already peed their pants.
- Lol so people can go to the bathroom? Most parks have them
- Provides a safe place for changing a littles diaper, as well as provides a quick place for littles to use a bathroom who may not be able to hold it until the parent finds another bathroom. Provides a place for people who don't know the area to have some where to use a restroom without worrying or leaving because there is not one.
- When you are there with your younger child and they have to go potty. There isn't a bathroom so you have to try to rush somewhere for them to go potty if they even make it in time.
- A bathroom provides a place for parents and kids to go to the bathroom.
- Bathrooms can help everyone stay longer at the park, especially parents of young children potty training or kids in general.
- PLEASE!!! Please put a bathroom in the park. A few unisex, individually locking bathrooms would be a HUGE improvement to the park. Having to walk to a Main Street business for a bathroom is annoying with children. Most times we would stay in the park longer, but instead we pack up and

head home instead of dealing with the bathroom hassle. It would also be incredibly convenient during summer events.

- Very helpful for families, especially ones with small children. Without bathroom access, I've had to leave the park early to take my daughter home when she needed to go to the bathroom. Also would be beneficial for elderly people who can't hold it for long periods of time. Makes the park overall more accessible.
- It is important because it helps if kids need to use it. Sometimes they can be unpredictable. And it gives parents peace of mind.
- A bathroom would make the playground so much more accessible, pleasant, and relaxing for families that bring little ones who are in diapers, are potty training, or simply haven't yet developed much ability to wait.