MONTGOMERY COUNTY PARKS PLAYGROUND RENOVATION PROGRAM

Public Presentation

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Play is a fundamental part of each child’s world, enhancing cognitive, social, emotional and physical development.

Children learn to explore and manipulate their environments and interact with each other through play.

Play is perhaps the most influential catalyst for growth and learning during early childhood.
Approximately 300 playgrounds within the park system

This program renovates approximately ten existing playgrounds a year through the park’s capital improvement program (CIP).

The designed life expectancy for each playground is approximately 20 years.

The playgrounds in the current schedule for replacement are at the end of their lifecycle.
How do we determine when a playground gets renovated

Montgomery County Parks

Playground Renovation Program

- Playgrounds that have aged beyond the point where replacement parts can be ordered.
- Equipment that has been removed because of vandalism or wear that could affect safety.
- Playgrounds in neighborhoods where the population has changed and the need for new equipment has increased.
The priorities for playground renovations are determined by the department’s program coordinator in collaboration with the playground safety inspectors based on:

- The safety and condition of the playground
- The level of use
- Compliance with codes
- Availability of equipment to meet the needs of children from ages 2-12
CODE COMPLIANCE

There is not a federal playground safety law, but most states enforce playground safety in court as a standard of care. To maintain that standard of care, M-NCPPC follows the following guidelines and standards.

- ADA - Americans with Disabilities Act: This requires that there is an accessible route, surfacing that can support a wheelchair, sufficient number of ground level activities, ramps and transfer stations.
- ASTM - American Society for Testing and Materials International: This consumer safety performance specification provides safety and performance standards for various types of public playground equipment.
- IPEMA - International Playground Equipment Manufacturers Association: Provides 3rd party Product Certification services for U.S. and Canadian public play equipment and public play surfacing materials in the U.S.
SITE CONSIDERATIONS

Generally, the playground will be placed in the same location as the existing one, but in some instances, it might need relocating for the following reasons:

- Removal from the floodplain and/or wetland
- Removed from a forested area in order to preserve the trees
- If placed in shade, will it harm the trees
- Convenient to parking, restrooms, or other support facilities
- Separated from incompatible activities
Protective surfacing, edging and under-drainage system
Paved pedestrian access route
Separate activities for children ages 2-5
Separate activities for children ages 5-12
Mix of activity types: active, imaginary and social play
Seating for parents and caregivers
Maintenance access
TYPICAL MATERIALS IN THE PLAYGROUND

- Surfacing (Wood Fiber vs. Resilient Surfacing)
- Metal and Plastic vs. Wood
- Colors: Limit choices to 3-4 complimentary colors
FACILITY TYPE AND SIZE

- **MULTI-AGE PLAYGROUND FOR URBAN AND NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS**
  2,500 TO 5,000 SQUARE FEET

- **MULTI-AGE PLAYGROUND FOR LOCAL PARKS**
  3,500 TO 6,000 SQUARE FEET
SUITEABLE ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 2-5

- Enclosed swings
- Simple slides
- Crawl tubes
- Balancing activities
- Multi spring toys
- Spinning activities
- Jumping/bouncing activities
- Easy climbers
- Simple bridges
- Imaginary play (house, train, car)
- Semi-enclosed spaces (storefront panel)
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SUITABLE ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 5-12

- Swings
- Challenging slides
- Chain or cable walks
- Free standing climbers
- Log rolls
- Overhead rings and horizontal climbers
- Parallel bars
- Track rides
- Vertical sliding poles
- Spinning activities
SUITABLE ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 5-12

- Swings
- Challenging slides
- Chain or cable walks
- Free standing climbers
- Log rolls
- Overhead rings and horizontal climbers
- Parallel bars
- Track rides
- Vertical sliding poles
- Spinning activities
Once priorities are established and funding is available, meetings are set up with each community to obtain their input for what they would like to see within their playground.
A design is prepared based on the community needs and the standards of the department. The concept is sent to the community for final comment, then construction drawings are prepared, permits are secured, and equipment is ordered.