

# Let's Play, Courtenay!

## Park Playground Design Standards



City of  
Courtenay

### Phase 1: Gathering Ideas

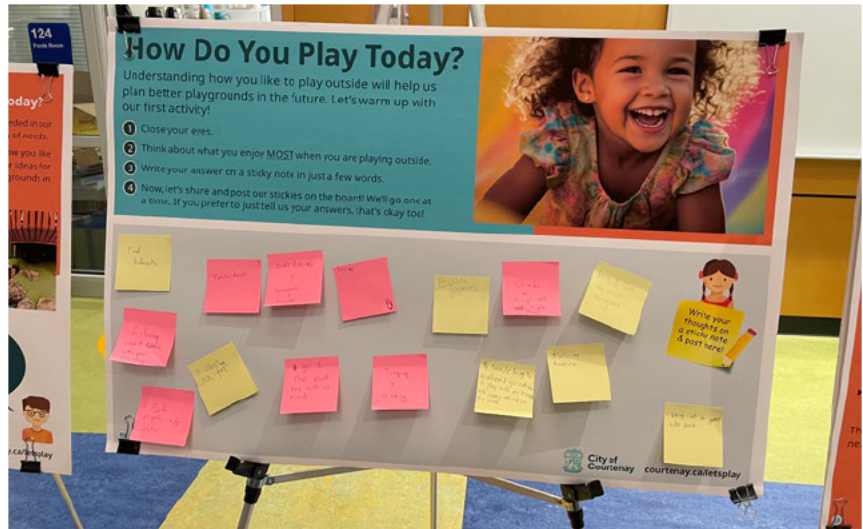
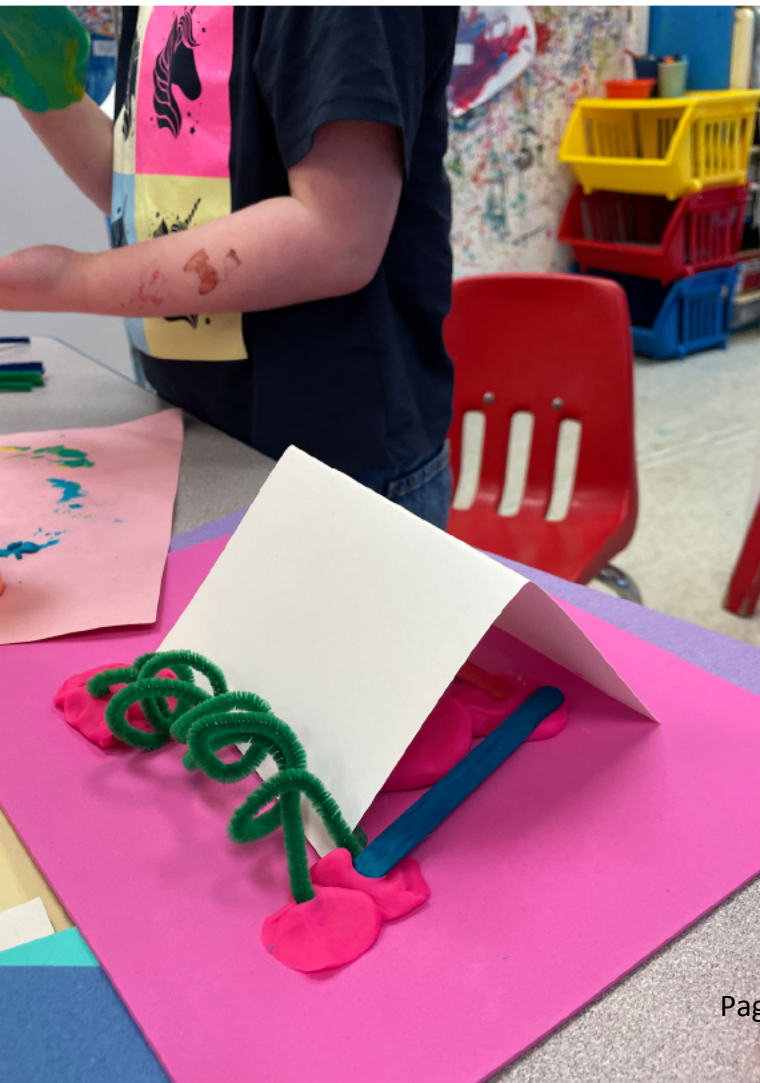


# Community Engagement Summary

Winter 2024


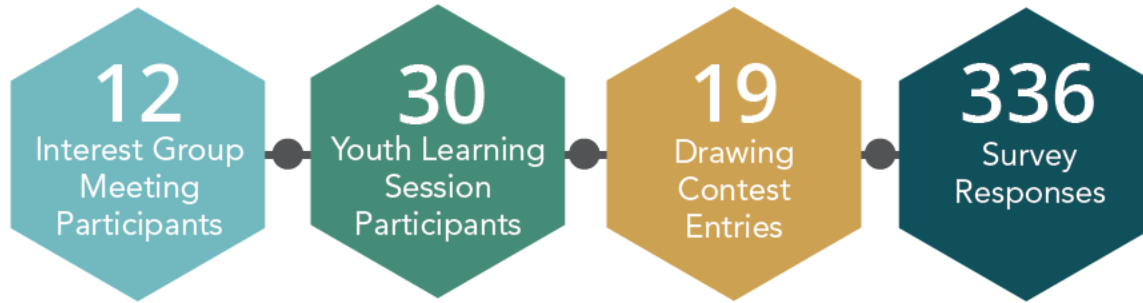
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# What We Heard...



**Phase 1**  
Gathering Ideas about our Playground System Today

## ➤ Summary Highlights:

### Participants love:

- » Nature play (e.g., trees, climbing boulders, balancing logs)
- » Inclusive play areas for all ages and abilities
- » Innovative and imaginative play structures that allow for many different ways to play
- » Playgrounds close to home that are connected to safe walking and biking paths
- » Splash pads and water play
- » Comfortable outdoor meeting and gathering places (e.g. benches, picnic shelters)
- » Risky play
- » Play areas that highlight Courtenay's unique sense of place



### Top Vision Words...

**Safe** 

**Fun** 

**Accessible** 

### Participants are concerned about:

- Public safety
- Litter and cleanliness
- Maintenance and upkeep
- Public washroom access
- Connectivity and safe access by active transportation (walking, cycling)
- Weather / all seasons use









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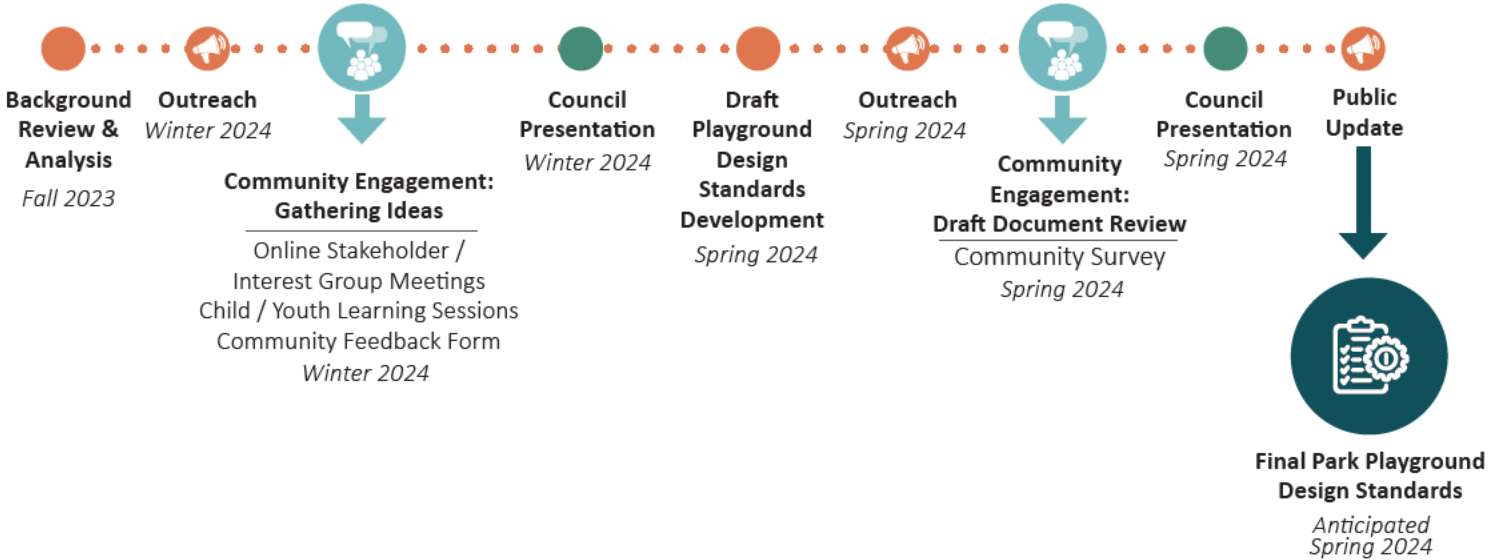
The City of Courtenay respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we gather and play is the unceded traditional territory of the K'ómoks First Nation.

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# Our Process



The project process involves two phases, with each phase involving engagement and community feedback. The above diagram provides an overview of the process.



# 1 | Engagement Overview

## 1.1 Process Overview

The “Let’s Play, Courtenay!” project will create new playground design standards for City playgrounds. These standards are a set of steps the City will follow to make sure Courtenay’s playgrounds are designed and upgraded to best meet the needs of the community.

An integral part of the process is engaging with community members of all ages to understand how playgrounds are being used today and what we should consider when planning and designing our outdoor playspaces in the future, including types of features, activities, and supporting amenities.

During Phase 1 of the two-phase process (see adjacent page), we gathered ideas from the community including key interest groups, youth, City staff, and the public. Topics included how we play today, BIG ideas for tomorrow including potential goals (guiding principles), and other ideas for future playground improvements.

This document summarizes all of the feedback gathered during the Phase 1 engagement window.

### What are Playground Design Standards?

The Playground Design Standards will provide a set of steps for how to design park playgrounds, including the types of materials to use, activities to include, where to put planting or furnishings, and how to make playgrounds more inclusive for all ages and abilities. Planners, designers, and builders will use the standards when designing new play areas or upgrading existing playgrounds.

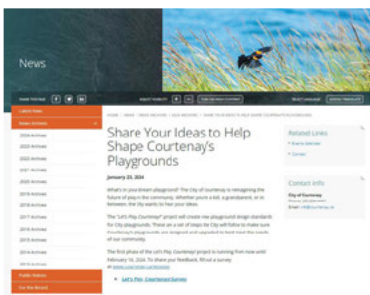


# 1.1 Phase 1 Outreach Tools

The following outreach tools developed by the City were used to inform community members about engagement opportunities:



Outreach tools such as social media posts, Google Ads, newspaper ads, and a media release raised community awareness of the project and engagement process.



News release on the City's news page.



Drawing Contest Form.

- **Project Page on City of Courtenay Website:** A project page was developed for the project on [www.courtenay.ca/letsplay](http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay). This page features an overview of the project, its process, key contacts, and next steps. It also provides important links to project materials.
- **Media Release:** The City issued a media release through its media outlets and posted on the City's news page [www.courtenay.ca/news](http://www.courtenay.ca/news).
- **Social Media Posts and Google Ads:** The City posted Google Ads as well as regular, scheduled posts on City social media channels including Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram, with key information and a link to the online survey.
- **E-Notifications:** Emails were sent out to key interest groups informing them of the public engagement process and inviting them to attend the interest group meetings.
- **Drawing Contest / Newspaper Advertising:** An ad was placed in the community newspaper which included information about the project and a Playground Ideas Drawing Contest. The contest was open from Jan.23 to Feb. 16. Participants could submit ideas for a chance to win a \$50 gift certificate for a Courtenay recreation program.
- **Community Posters:** Community Posters (8.5x11) were posted at park playgrounds and various public locations in Courtenay (e.g., City Hall, Lewis Centre) to direct the interested public to the City's project page and encourage them to complete the questionnaire to share input.
- **Eventbrite:** An eventbrite invitation was developed to invite youth to the learning sessions.
- **Word-of-Mouth:** City staff, project team members, and the general public were asked to share information about the project within their networks.

# 1.2 Who We Engaged

Key audiences included City staff and Committees, interest groups such as child, youth, family support groups, accessibility advocates, recreational organizations, arts and culture groups, other local government, and members of the public (of all ages).

# 1.3 Engagement Activities



## Online Interest Group Meetings (2)

DATE	Community: Tue., February 13, 2024, 12:00 - 1:30 pm City Staff: Tue., February 20, 2024, 2:00 - 3:00 pm
LOCATION	Facilitated online Via Zoom
DETAILS	These interactive online discussions were facilitated by Consultants and City staff and supported by an agenda, presentation, and interactive online activities. Participants were asked to discuss the playground system today including barriers to play, review and confirm draft goals (guiding principles), and share ideas for the future playground system.



## Youth Learning Sessions (2)

DATES	Ages 8-12: Tue., Feb. 6, 2024, 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm Ages 3-5: Wed., Feb. 7, 2024, 10:30 - 11:00 am
LOCATION	Ages 8-12: Lake Trail Community School Ages 3-5: Lewis Centre Cozy Corner Preschool
DETAILS	Children were engaged in learning sessions with an introduction to the project and an opportunity to design their own fun spaces to play using a variety of art materials. Input from youth was a key focus for this phase to understand kids' needs, desires, and ideas. Display posters were developed to communicate information and gather feedback.



## Community Survey and Drawing Contest

DATES	January 23rd - February 16th, 2024
LOCATION	Online at <a href="http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay">www.courtenay.ca/letsplay</a> Hard copy versions in person at City Hall
DETAILS	A community survey was available online linked from the City's Project page. Hard copies were also available at City Hall, the Lewis Centre, and at the youth learning sessions. The goal of the survey was to gather input on how playgrounds are being used today and ideas for improvements in the future. A drawing contest was also held during the survey window, which encouraged Courtenay's youth (18 and under) to draw or create their ideal playground. All input received will be used to develop the draft Park Playground Design Standards.

## By the Numbers

3

Written Submissions

12

Online Interest Group Participants

19

Drawing Contest Entries

30

Kids' Learning Session Participants

301

Clicks on Google Ads

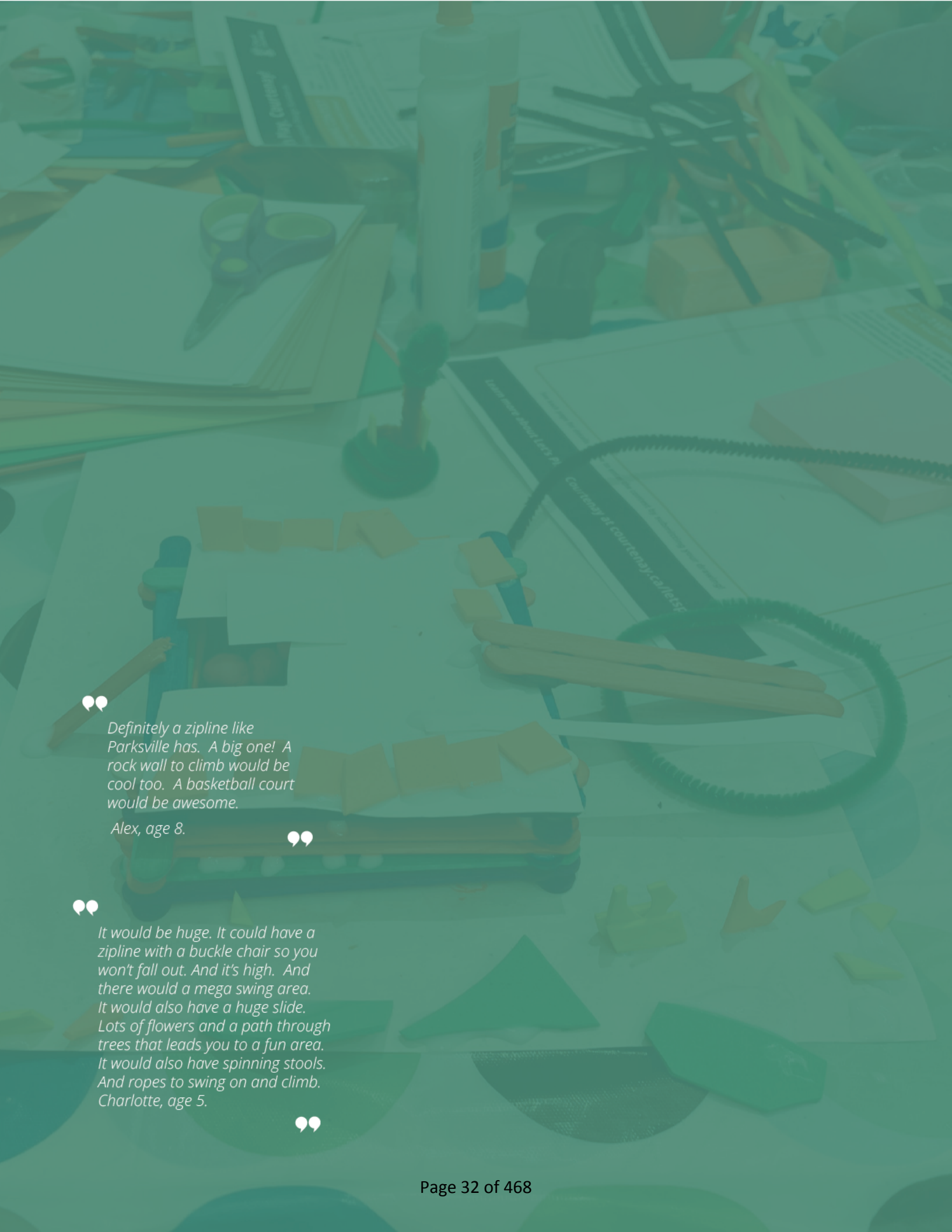
336

Community Survey Responses

764

Project Webpage Users





Definitely a zipline like Parkville has. A big one! A rock wall to climb would be cool too. A basketball court would be awesome.

Alex, age 8.

It would be huge. It could have a zipline with a buckle chair so you won't fall out. And it's high. And there would a mega swing area. It would also have a huge slide. Lots of flowers and a path through trees that leads you to a fun area. It would also have spinning stools. And ropes to swing on and climb. Charlotte, age 5.



## 2 | What We Heard

The following pages summarize the feedback that was received from Phase 1 of the community engagement process including the community survey, interest group meetings, youth learning sessions, and drawing contest.

This information is summarized as follows:

- How We Play - Our Park Playgrounds Today
- BIG Ideas - Our Park Playgrounds Tomorrow
- Other Ideas
- About You (Demographics)

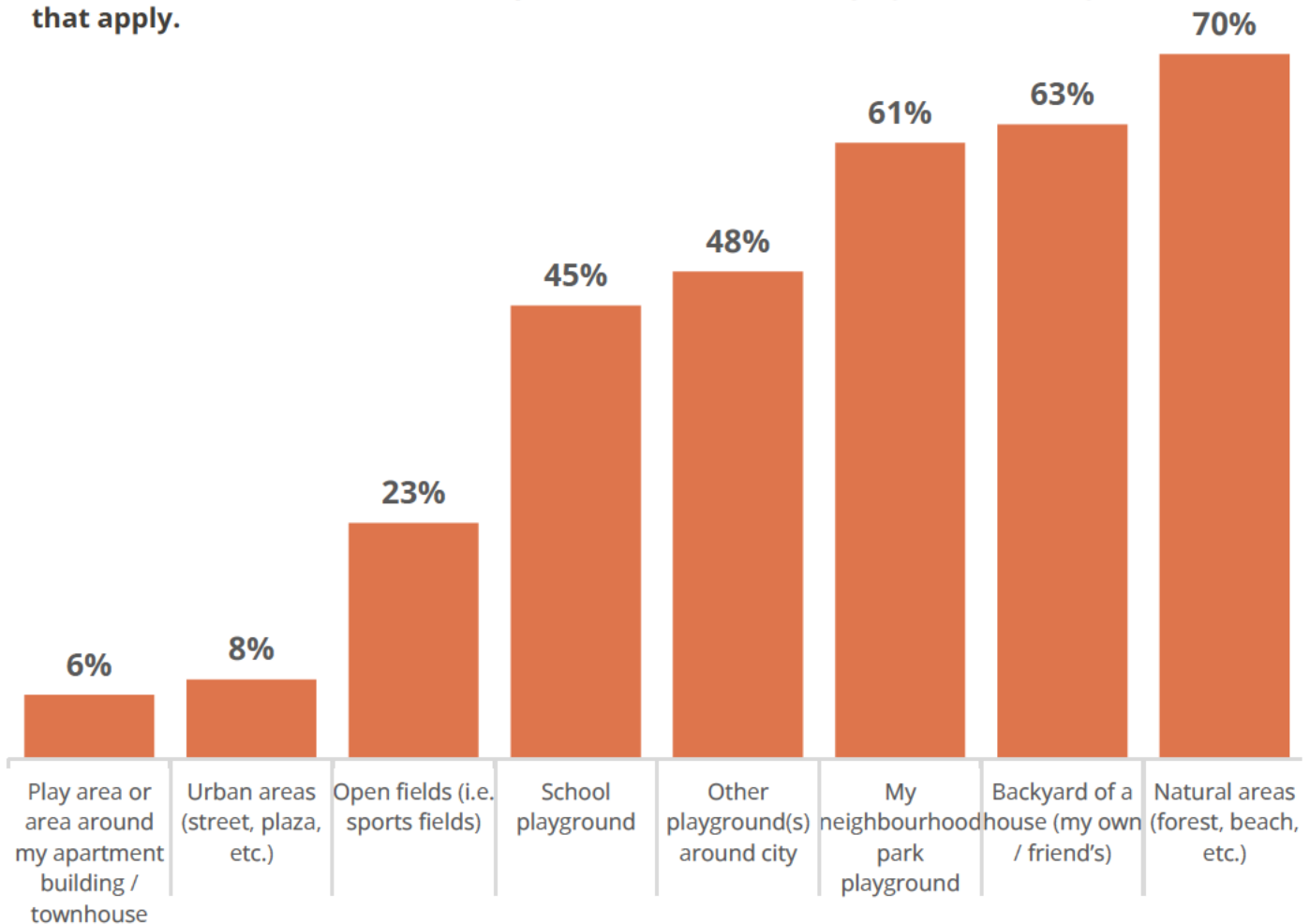
The graphs on the following pages summarize the data we received from the community survey. The "key findings" boxes provide an overview of input received from all sources of feedback.



## 2.1 How We Play! Our Park Playgrounds Today

### Where We Play

Question #1: Where do you usually play (or take children to play) in Courtenay? Select all that apply.



#### Key Findings

- The majority of respondents (70%) usually play in Courtenay's natural areas (e.g., forests and beaches).
- Many also play in their backyard or their friends/ neighbour's backyards (62%).
- Neighbourhood Park Playground was the third most common answer (61%).
- Feedback indicated that many community members often choose alternatives to Courtenay's Park Playgrounds due to concerns about safety and cleanliness.

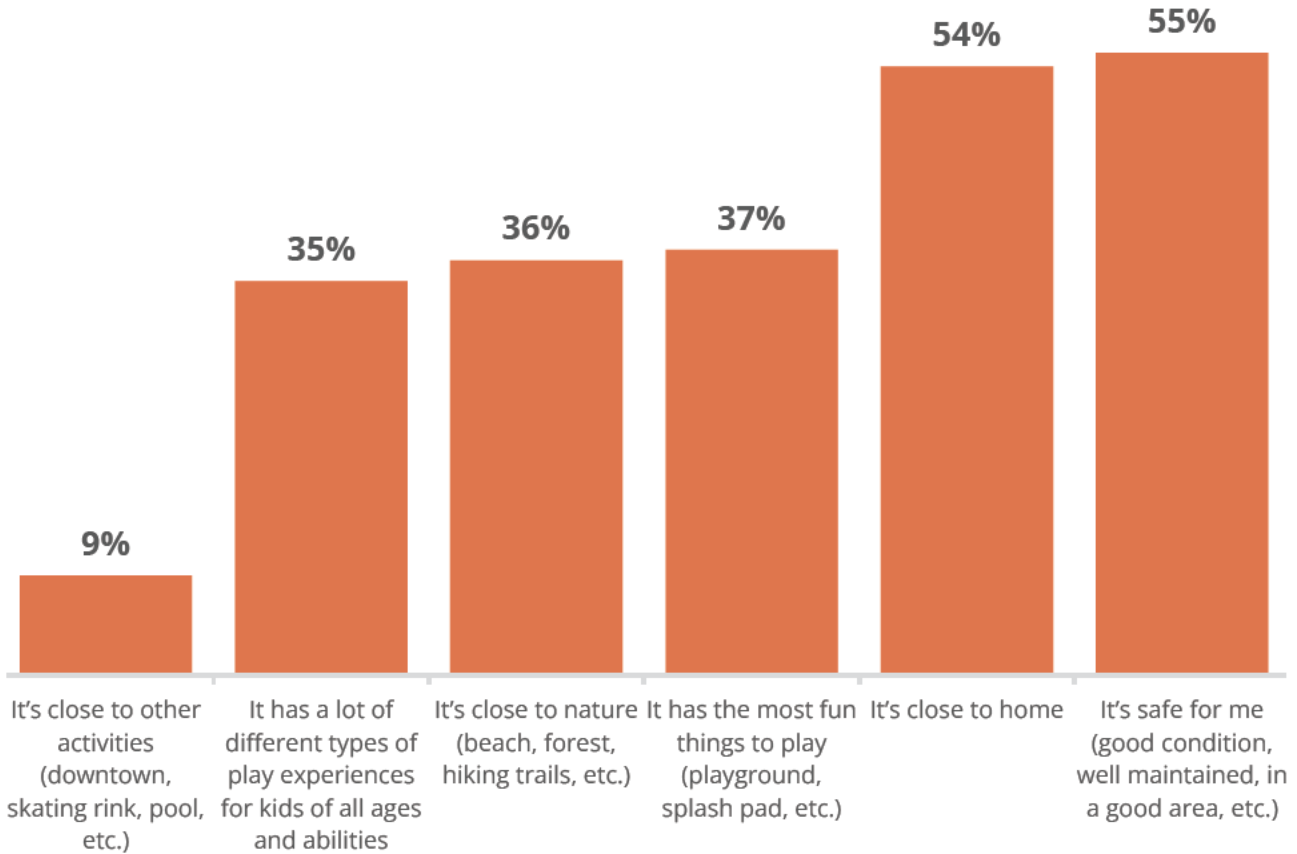
“Comox Marina Playground/Spray park is a family fave.”

“We are most often now at home or in the natural areas on the outskirts of Courtenay. We find that the overrun of unhoused people and drug paraphernalia in the local parks to be concerning as of late.”

# How We Play! Continued

## Why We Choose Playgrounds

Question #2: Think of the park playground that you go to the most. Why do you choose that playground to play at? Select all that apply.



### Key Findings

- Most respondents indicated that they value playgrounds that are safe and close to home.
- Proximity to other activities was not selected as a top priority (9%).
- Many participants noted that they often visit playgrounds in nearby communities to play (e.g., Comox, Cumberland, Parksville) because they feel safer in those locations and they offer more diverse play experiences and amenities.



*Beckton Estate Park. Diverse play equipment, lots of swings, safe, green space.*



*Martin Park. Its the closest playground thats still nice. Woodcote and Bill Moore are quite dated and not as fun to play on.*

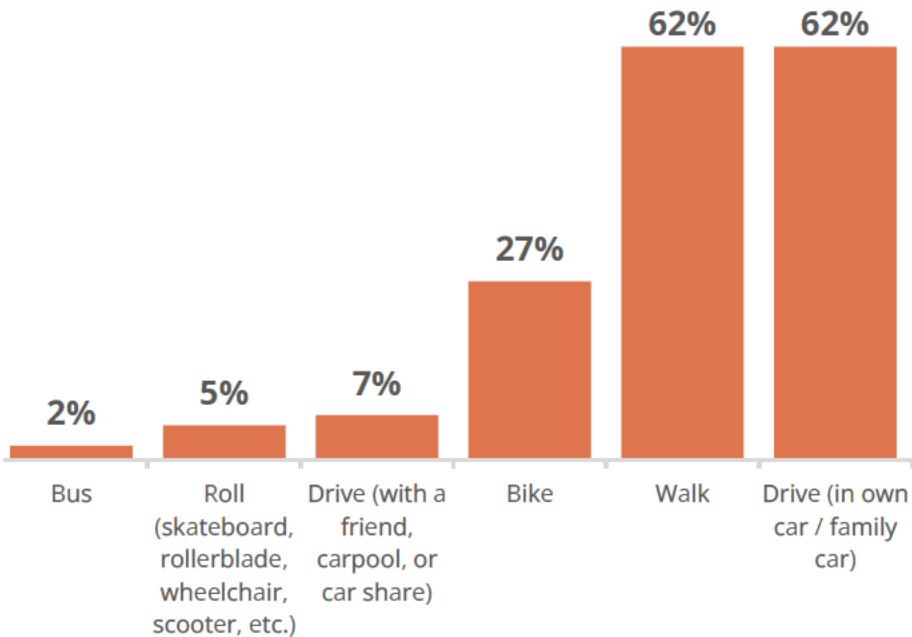




# How We Play! Continued

## How We Get to Playgrounds

Question #3: How do you usually get to the park playground that you visit the most? Select all that apply.



### Key Findings

- An equal amount of people either walk or drive to the park playground that they visit the most (62% each).
- Walking or driving to the park playground was the most common response with other modes of transportation such as biking garnering only 27%.
- Many noted that they would prefer to walk or bike more often but they are concerned about safety, especially in urban areas.



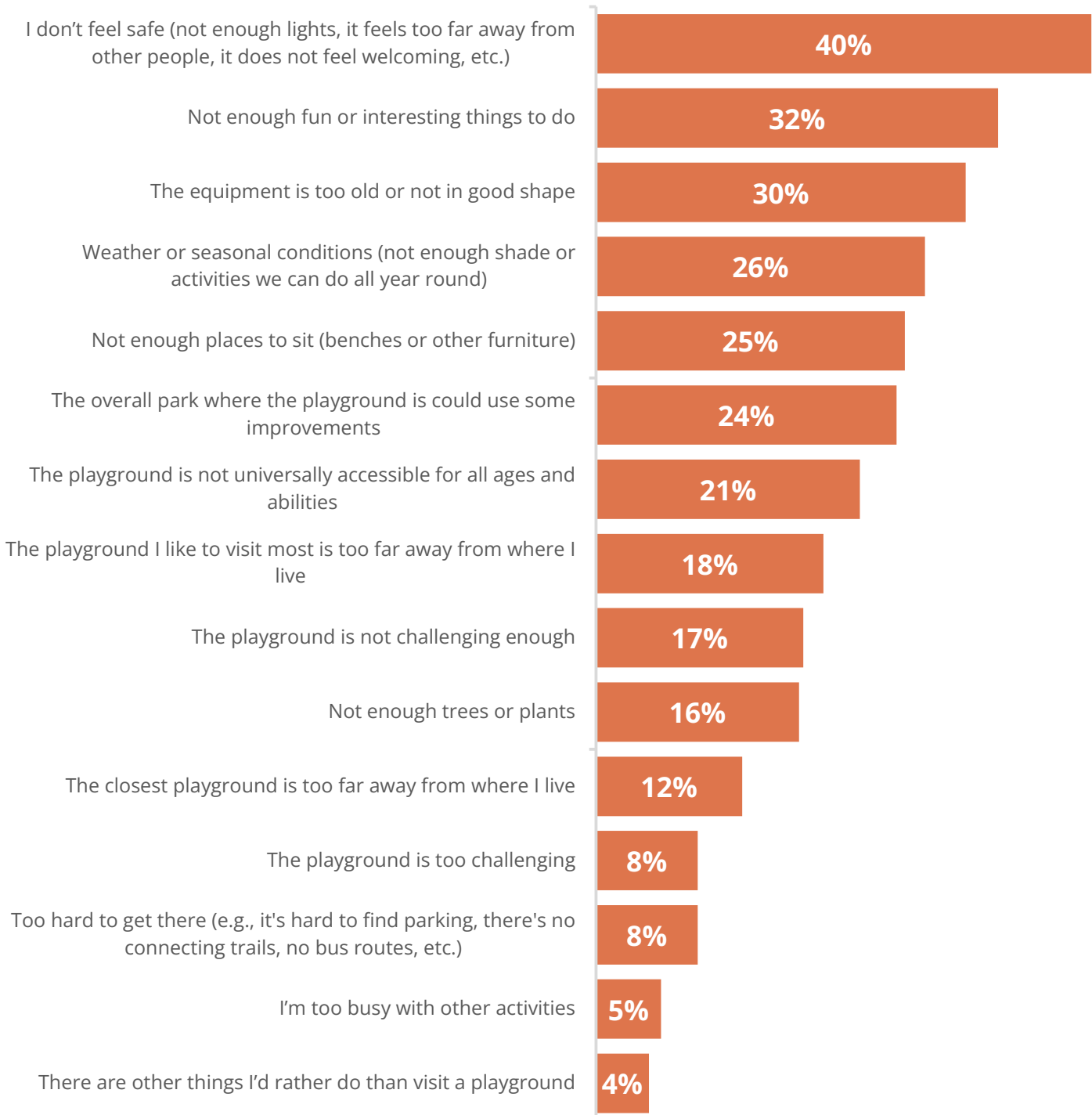
*But we want to walk! Please improve walking/stroller safety between Lewis Park and Exhibition Grounds!*



# How We Play! Continued

## Playground Barriers

**Question #4: What are some of the things that make it hard for you to enjoy park playgrounds? Select all that apply.**





## Key Findings

- A broad range of answers were provided, with most respondents indicating that they do not feel safe (40%). Many respondents noted specific concerns about substance use in or near playground areas.
- Not enough fun and interesting things to do (32%) and age / condition of play equipment (30%) were also common answers.
- Other key barriers frequently noted were lack of washrooms and lack of shade or covered areas for all seasons use.



The youth learning sessions included opportunities for children to share their favourite ways to play outside, and design their ideal playground.



*Can be difficult to find a playground that everyone wants to visit, e.g., good for all of the kids.*



*Safety is a huge concern, maintenance with garbage and debris*



*Mainly that most playgrounds are based around a single metal play structure. It does not offer many opportunities in wet, cold weather and the design is not accessible... and there are many more design options available nowadays. The fact that most parks are not fenced in with a small barrier can be challenging*



# How We Play!

## How We Play Outside!

**Question #5: Tell us about how you play outside! What do you (or the kids you are with) enjoy doing most when you play outdoors? Adults and big kids, think back to when you were younger. Share a memory of your best outdoor play experience.**

### Key Findings

- The following themes emerged from the answers received:
  - » Nature Play / Natural Features (boulders, logs, sand/mud play)
  - » Water Play (splash pads / water features, lazy rivers, creeks, fishing)
  - » Active Play Opportunities (climbing walls, slides, swings, monkey bars, hills for climbing and rolling, trampolines)
  - » Games (tag, hide and go seek, grounders)
  - » Free Play (pretend play, imaginative play)
- Respondents shared a broad range of thoughts, ideas, and memories about how they love to play outside, indicating Courtenay's park playgrounds could provide positive experiences for the community by including many different types and ways to play.
- Multiple respondents expressed ideas about socializing and gathering in addition to playing (picnicking, bbq'ing, birthday parties).
- Courtenay loves swings!
- Many respondents expressed concerns about safety and noted that safe play spaces for kids and families are a top priority.



*Playgrounds with natural features like logs, rocks, boulders, climbing walls, splash pads that also contain off-season play areas/features. Playgrounds with multi-age features so that big and little kids can play in tandem. Swings for kinesthetic learning and regulation.*



*Bike to the playground - climb, balance, swing, glide, spin, water park - have a picnic or snack - enjoy the view and explore nature - play in the sand, hike, beachcomb, climb kid-sized boulders and driftwood*



*Best memory was when parks were safe. Kids rode bikes to the park... you could feel safe going alone with your child to a park. We don't use parks anymore for this reason.*



*My kids love risky play, and playgrounds that also have shelters/forts type structures so that the playground play can also turn into more imaginative play.*







## Goals Review (Guiding Principles)

Question #7: Take a moment to review the goals below and then give us a thumbs UP if you AGREE with the goal, or a thumbs DOWN if you DON'T AGREE. Tell us why in the space below. To read more about the goals visit [www.courtenay.ca/letsplay](http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay).



### Let's try different ways to play!

Include a range of fun play opportunities.



### Everyone can play here!

Design universally accessible play areas that are safe and welcoming for all.



### Nature is fun!

Build playgrounds with nature in mind, connecting to the environment around us.



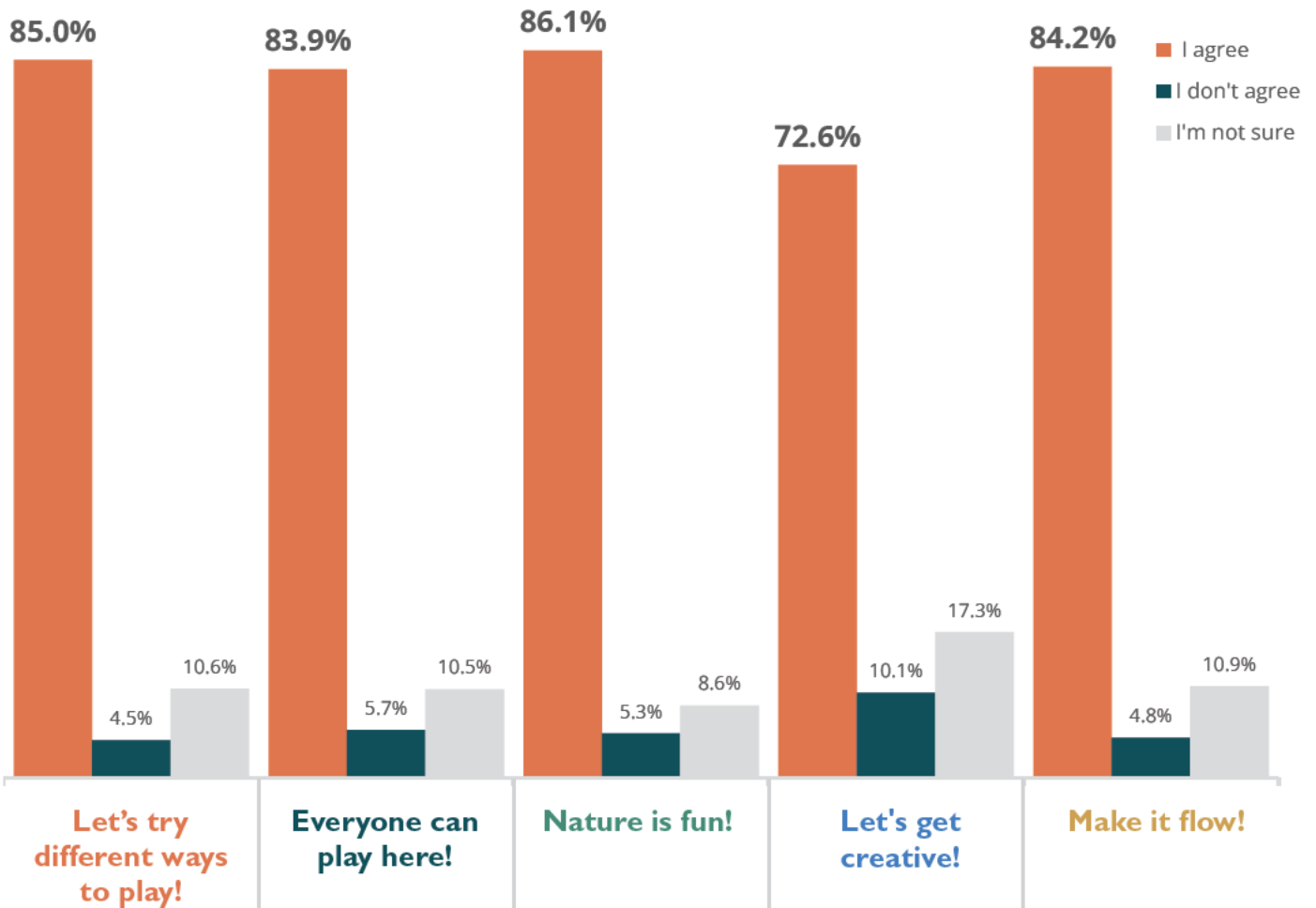
### Let's get creative!

Allow for creative play and expressions of arts and culture.



### Make it flow!

Connect play areas to the park and surrounding neighbourhood.





## Goals Review (Guiding Principles) Continued

Participants were asked to share more about why or why not they agreed or disagreed with the goals as well as share goals that were not listed.

### Key Findings

- The goals were strongly supported. Over 70% of respondents agreed with each goal.
- "Nature is Fun" received the most support (86% of respondents agreed).
- Many respondents shared that they would like to see safety emphasized further within the goals or as a separate goal altogether.
- Many respondents supported the idea that playgrounds can act as gathering places, indicating the project goals could be revised to provide a stronger emphasis on community and family gathering.
- Some respondents shared ideas for revising "Everyone can Play Here" including:
  - » Provision of separate spaces for different ages, abilities, and challenges, as well as central spaces where all can plan together.
- Respondents also shared feedback about emphasizing the following ideas as part of the goals:
  - » Ongoing maintenance and upkeep.
  - » Inclusion of supporting amenities like washrooms and seating areas
  - » Fostering all-seasons use
  - » Integrating sensory considerations (e.g., quiet / calming spaces for kids with diverse sensory needs),
  - » Using resilient, locally-sourced materials where possible.



*I think all of these goals are equitable. Depending on location some may lean towards one thing than the other. Sandwich Park, my local park, could really lean into the nature theme more considering it borders plenty of forest etc.*

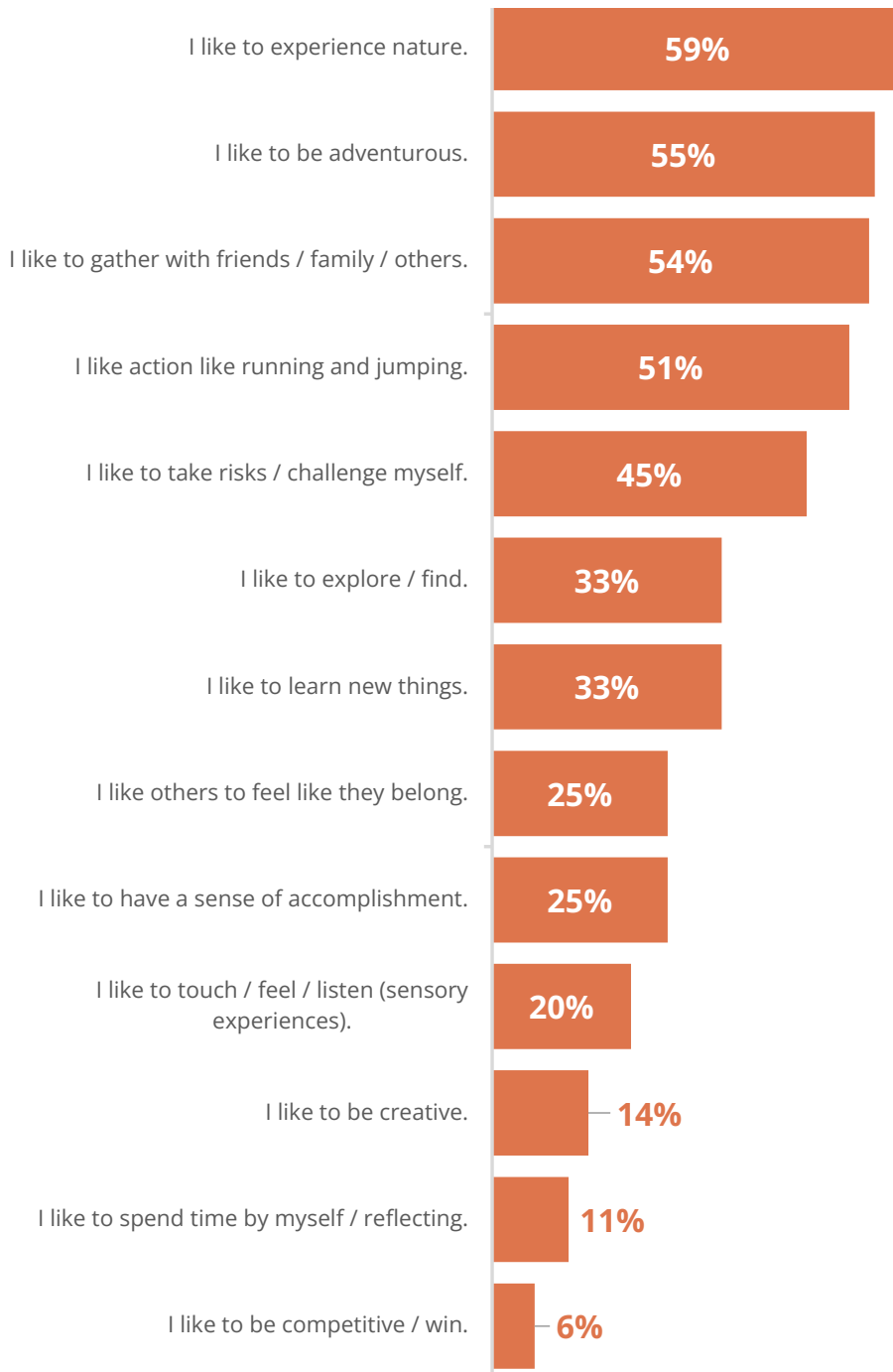


*It would be nice to include some educational components too - i.e., tie-in to arts/culture or info about the community the park is in, be that history about nature or ancestral indigenous lands.*



## Playground Experiences

**Question #8: What types of experiences would you (or your child / children you know) like to have at a playground? Choose your top FIVE.**



### Key Findings

- The top playground experience chosen by respondents was, "I like to experience nature" (59%), followed by "I like to be adventurous" (55%), and "I like to gather with friends / family / others" (54%).
- Experiences that received less support included "I like to be competitive / win" (6%), I like to spend time by myself / reflecting (11%), and I like to be creative (14%).
- When asked if there were other types of experiences not listed, respondents commonly answered that they would like to:
  - » Feel safe
  - » Enjoy a strong sense of community



## Playground Inspiration

**Question #9: Let's get inspired! Time to put on your playground designer hat! If you were creating a new playground for your neighbourhood, or improving an existing playground, what types of things would you like to include? Choose your FIVE favourite items from the list.**

The coloured circles below indicate the percentage of respondents who selected the image as one of their five favourite. **The green circles were the top five most commonly chosen.** Yellow circles indicate images that received moderate support, and red circles show images that received less support.

43%



Splash Pad / Water Play

41%



Inclusive Play Features for All Ages / Abilities

55%



Nature Play Opportunities (planting, sand, rocks, logs)

10%



Creative Play Opportunities (music, art programming, etc.)

42%



Areas for Exploration (willow tunnels, stepping-stone paths through planting, etc.)

28%



Open Lawn Areas (flat areas for running, field games, and picnicking, and hills for climbing and rolling)

17%



Outdoor Games (game tables, ping pong, square ball, etc.)

59% TOP PICK!



New Play Structures (swings, slides, climbing features, etc.)

12%



Areas for Quiet Play (playhouse, area for retreat, etc.)

8%



Exercise / Physical Fitness Stations (for all ages)

31%



New Adventure Pathways (trike loop with speed humps, "crosswalks", etc.)

39%



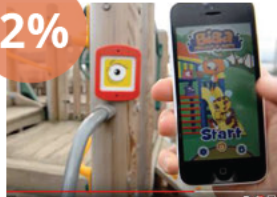
Other Park / Playground Amenities (washrooms, water fountains, lighting, etc.)

23%



Green Design Elements that Help the Earth (pollinator gardens, stormwater management, recycled materials, permeable surfaces)

2%



Smart Playground Features (wi-fi, app guided experiences, etc.)

30%



Covered Areas (shade structures, picnic shelter, etc.)

13%



New Furnishings and Gathering Spaces (benches, movable furnishings etc.)

## Playground Inspiration Continued...

### Key Findings

- From a review of inspiration images, the top 5 elements survey participants would like to include in their ideal playground are:
  - » New Play Structures (59%)
  - » Nature Play Opportunities (55%)
  - » Splash Pad / Water Play (43%)
  - » Areas for Exploration (42%)
  - » Inclusive Play Features for All Ages (41%)
- These answers were also well supported by participants in the kids' Learning Sessions and Interest Group Meetings, along with "Other Park Amenities".
- Less supported playground elements include:
  - » Smart Playground Features (wi-fi, app guided experiences) (2%)
  - » Exercise / Physical Fitness Stations (8%)
  - » Creative Play Opportunities (music, art programming (10%)).



*Create playgrounds that feel like a "village square" - lots of focus on community gathering spaces, designing in circles to promote integration and connection, features for all seasons not just summer splash pads. Lots of community gardens that incorporate school/ nonprofit programs, playground structures that are nature-based as much as possible*



*Playground ideas like Mission Creek Park playground in Kelowna, or an all abilities playground like Julius Junction in West Kelowna. These are great playgrounds really for kids of all ages. With 2 autism kiddos, it hard to find a structure they can both play on with ease and with things they can do safely.*



*I love natural spaces, but not all kids have the choice about how they can play. Play spaces that are inclusive to all abilities in the entire play area are very important. Otherwise those kids are stuck in one area or on the sideline or they can't go at all. I think natural play spaces can be adjacent to built ones. The MOST important thing about inclusive play is the surfacing. If rubber matting is put beside wood chips it actually makes the matting more dangerous. More spaces that allow for creative and imaginary group play like accessible forts or forts would be amazing, structures or spaces built into the natural landscape or slope would be amazing and support different abilities.*





## 2.3 Other Ideas

### Question #10: Do you have any other ideas about how we can make the best possible playgrounds in Courtenay's parks?

Commonly mentioned themes from the input questionnaire and engagement events included:



#### Safety

- Many public engagement participants shared concerns about safety in Courtenay's park playgrounds.
- Safety concerns were mostly related to mental health challenges and evidence of substance use in or near playground areas.
- Public engagement participants also shared safety concerns about the maintenance, upkeep, and condition of some existing play structures within the City.
- Survey respondents indicated that they often bring their children to natural areas outside of the city or visit play areas in other nearby communities where they feel more safe.



*We are concerned that most playgrounds and parks are unsafe spaces and have been avoiding our favourite parks. There have been numerous encounters and situations where we have felt unsafe.*



#### *A Note About Safety*

We received a large number of comments and concerns related to safety in Courtenay's parks and playgrounds, primarily focused on evidence of substance use in playground areas. The City has heard these comments and the creation of safe, welcoming playgrounds will be a key focus of this project moving forward.

Engagement participants also shared feedback about many other important community concerns that are not directly related to playground design standards including:

- » Sheltering in parks
- » Bylaw enforcement
- » Community mental health support



## Diverse, Multi-purpose Play Opportunities

- A broad range of play ideas were shared, from roller coasters, to boba stands, to trampolines, to reading huts, indicating support for diverse and different ways to play in Courtenay's playgrounds.
- Many participants noted potential for multi-purpose spaces that could be used in various ways throughout the day or seasons. Examples included splash pads that could become multi-purpose paved spaces in the winter, flexible lawn areas, and multi-sport courts / areas for games.
- Multiple respondents, especially youth, shared ideas about play areas organized in a circuit or loop where you could hop / climb / swing / slide from one "destination" to another.



*I think it will be important to provide a diverse array of experiences where certain parks can specialize in certain features. That would then encourage families and other residents to explore more neighbourhoods, as opposed to every park having the same 3-5 play elements or amenities.*



## Spaces for Community Gathering

- There was strong support for gathering in and around playgrounds and the potential for playgrounds to act as central gathering spaces for community members of all ages to come together.
- Respondents often mentioned opportunities for sharing meals and special occasions at park playgrounds. Ideas included:
  - » Picnic and bbq areas
  - » Spaces for birthday parties or family gatherings
  - » Food trucks or concessions



*Group picnic areas are great so that families have an easy and affordable way to host gatherings (like birthday parties, reunions).*



## Unique to Courtenay

- Respondents noted an opportunity for new and upgraded playgrounds to reflect Courtenay's unique sense of place.
- Special, landmark designs and custom play features could help encourage more positive activity in the City's parks and attract people from within Courtenay as well as the surrounding areas.



*There is a huge opportunity here to bring people into our community by creating something that is truly a landmark, a brand for the city... Think big, think drawing people here because we have something special and unorthodox for the kids to engage with.*

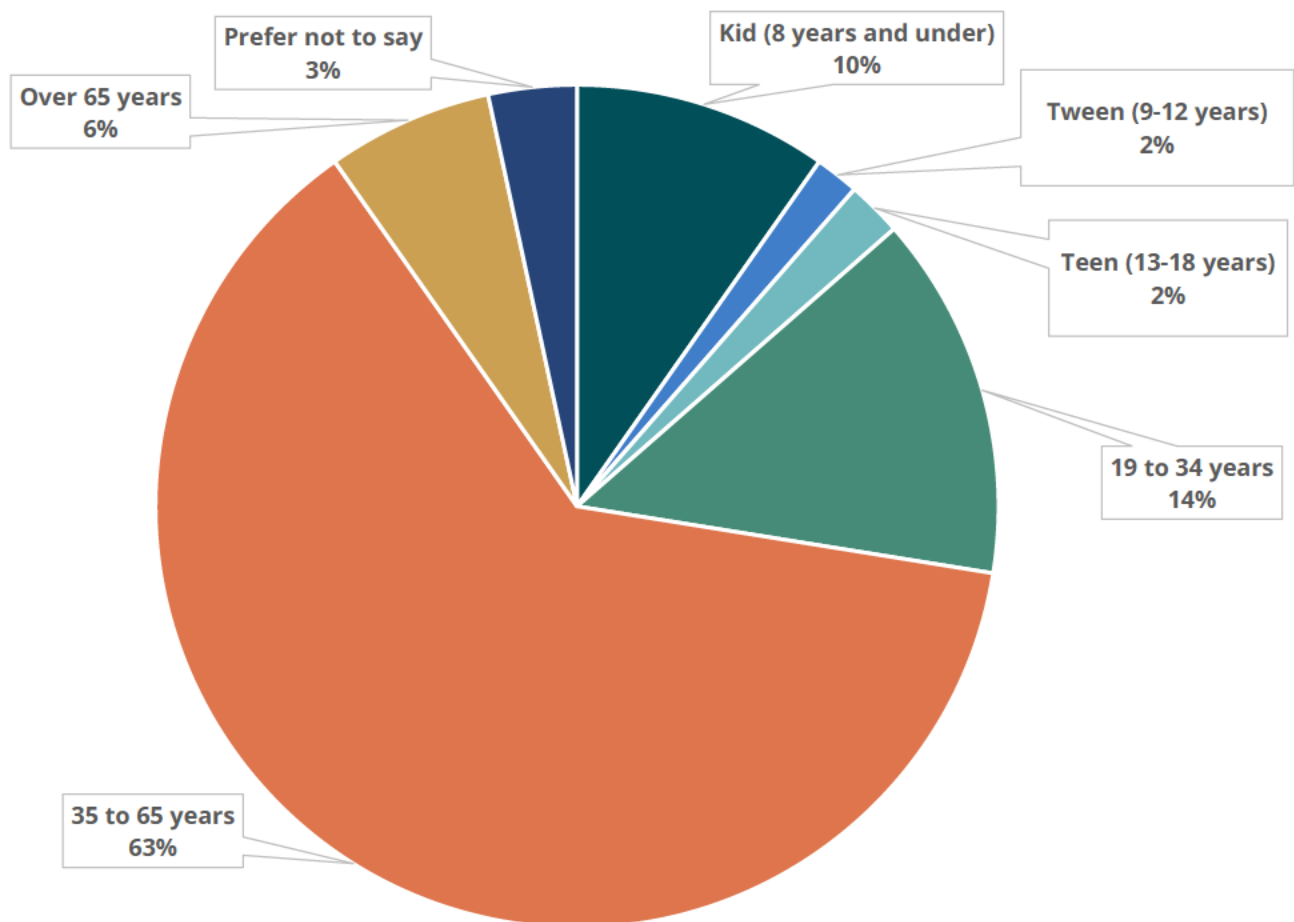


## 2.4 About Participants (Demographics)

Participants were asked to answer some questions to help the City understand who is participating in this survey to make sure we are listening to a range of voices. This section was optional to complete.

### Participant Age

Question #11: What is your age



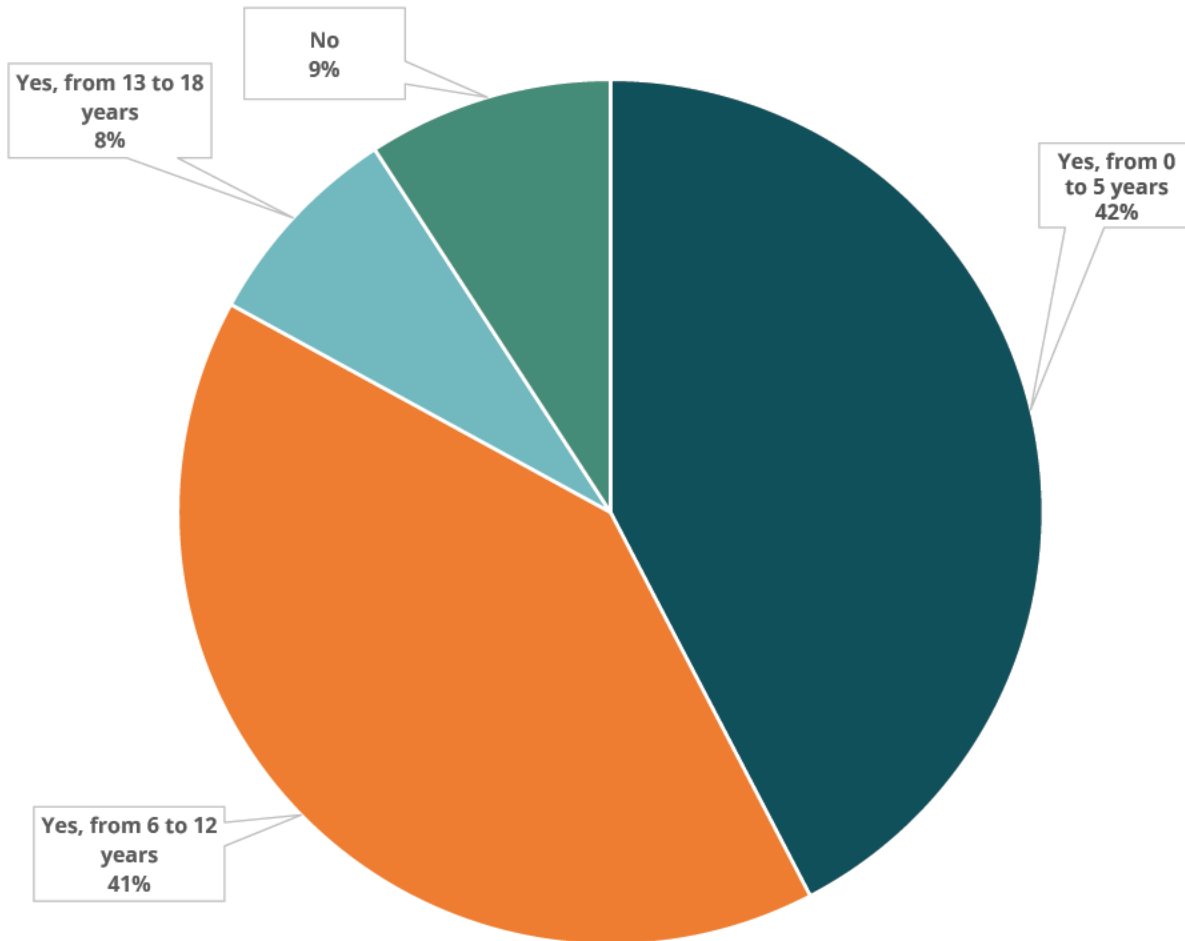
#### Key Findings

- The majority of survey participants were ages 35 - 65 (63%)
- The fewest survey respondents were in the Tween age group (9-12 years) however 8-12 year olds participated in the in-person learning session to share their ideas and 41% of parents who responded have 6-12 year-olds at home (see following page).



## Children & Caregivers

Question #12: If you are an adult, do you either have children under the age of 18 living at home OR do you look after children (e.g., daycare operator, grandparent)?

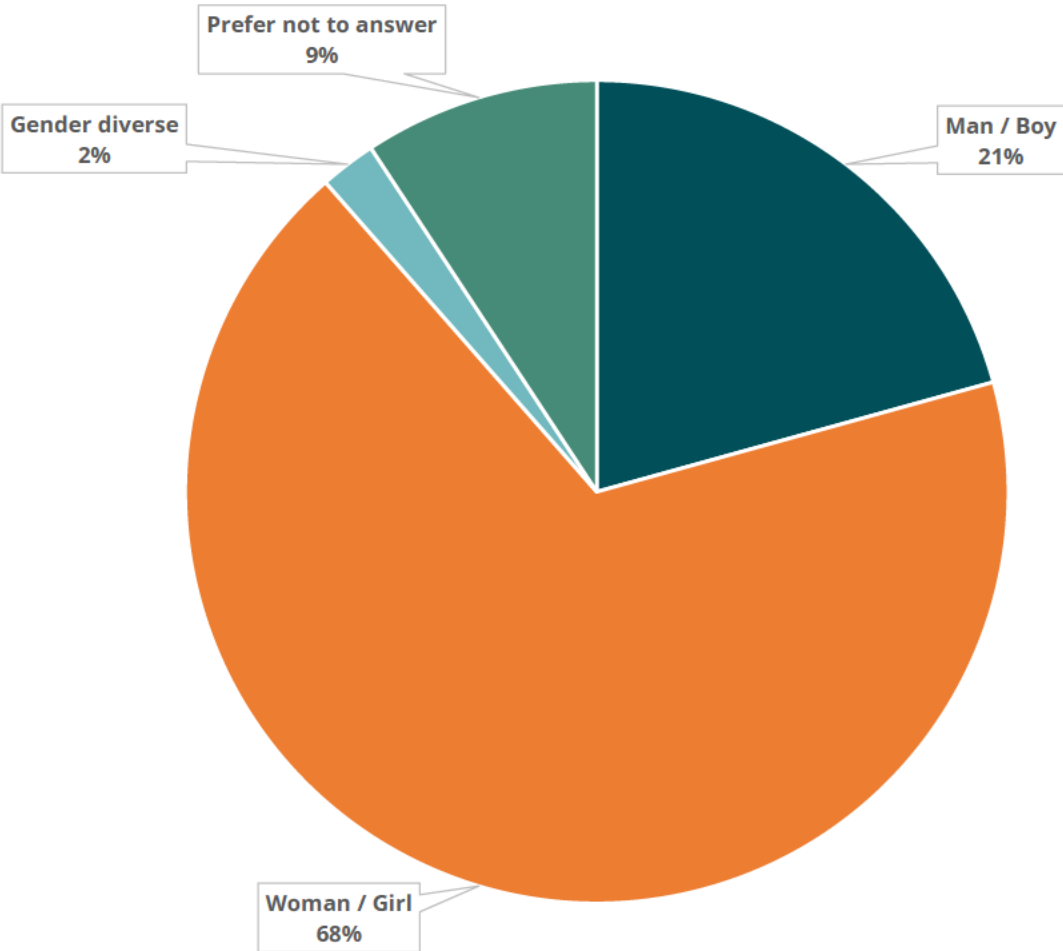


### Key Findings

- The majority of respondents (91%) are parents with children under the age of 18 living at home.

# Gender Identity

Question #13: Which gender identity do you most identify with?

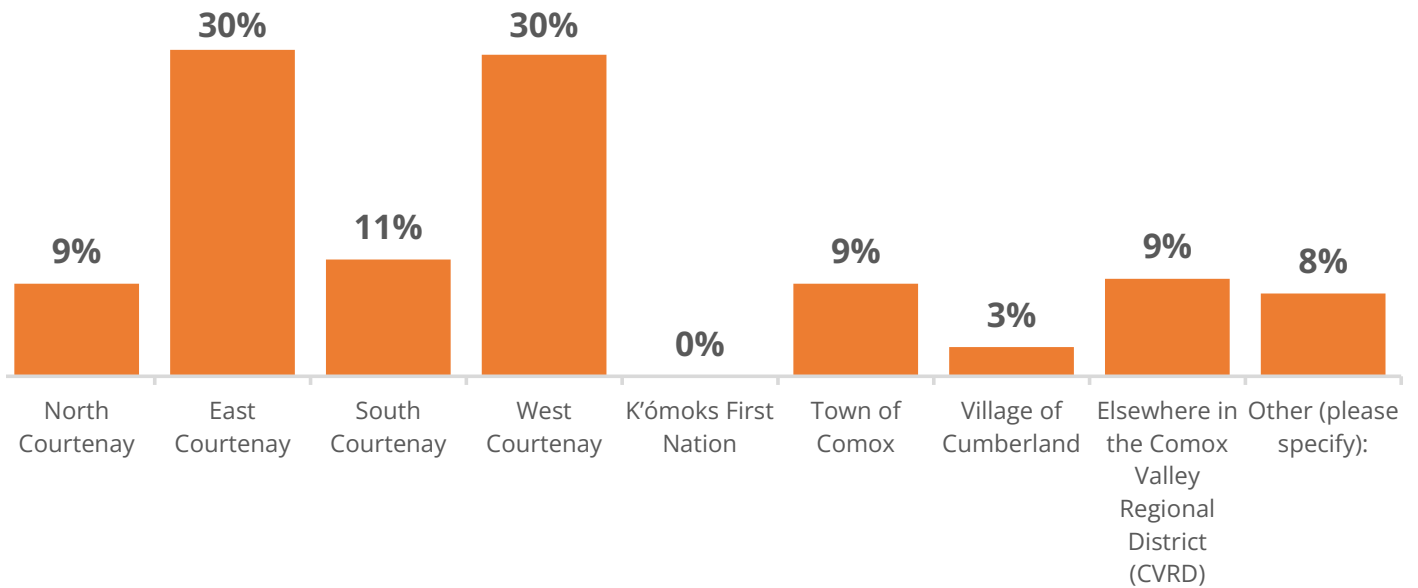


### Key Findings

- The majority of respondents identified as female (68%).

## Where Participants Live

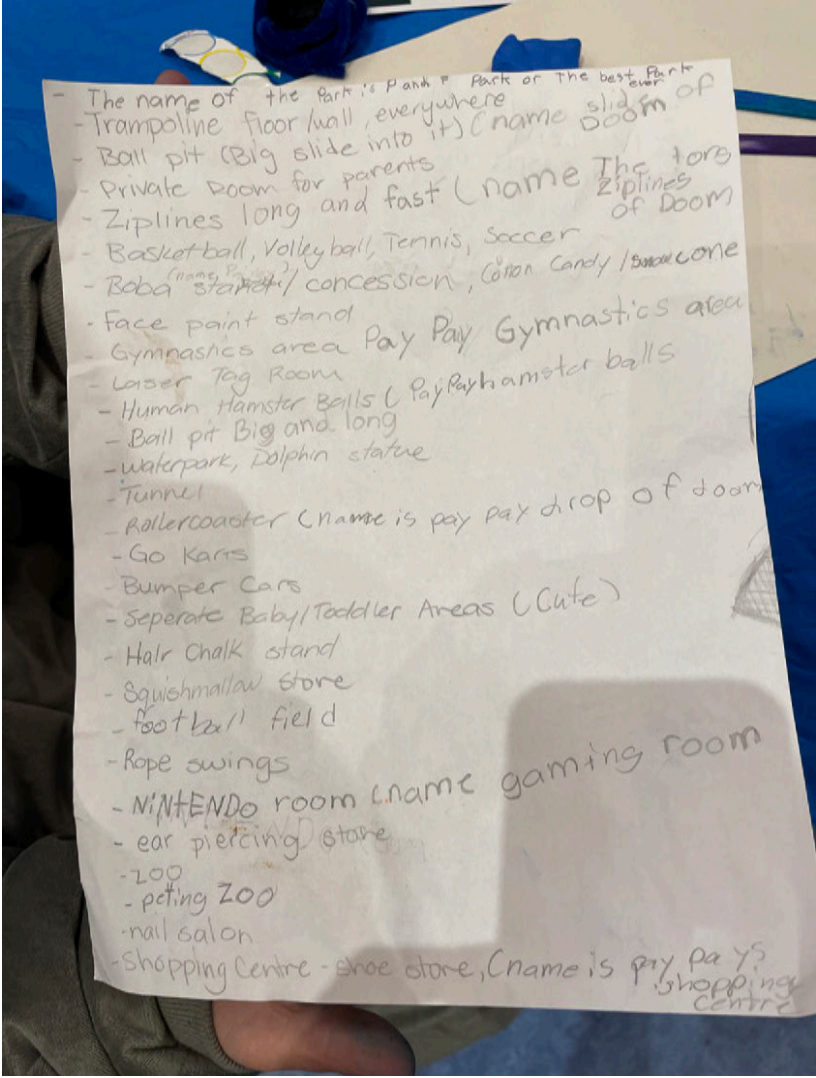
Question #14: What area do you live in? If you are not sure, you can skip this question.



### Key Findings

- Most respondents lived in East Courtenay (30%) or West Courtenay (30%).
  - Answers within the "Other" category included Downtown, Union Bay, Black Creek, and Royston.
- \*Note: Percentages have been rounded up and participants could select "Other" as a response in addition to the rest of the options, which is why results exceed a total of 100%.*









## 3 | Next Steps

We will consider EVERYONE'S ideas received as we develop draft Park Playground Design Standards during Phase 2. Next steps in the process include:

- Update about what we heard during Phase 1 of the engagement process (this Engagement Summary)
- Development of the draft Park Playground Design Standards including detailed recommendations
- Phase 2 Public Engagement to review the draft Park Playground Design Standards document (this spring 2024)
- Finalization of the Playground Design Standards
- Continued updates posted to the Project webpage: [www.courtenay.ca/letsplay](http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay)

The final Playground Design Standards will support capital planning efforts by identifying guiding principles and best practices for future playground improvements that diversify play experiences and best meet the needs of the community.







# Appendix A:

The following pages contain the community input received during Phase 1 of the engagement process, including:

- Interest Group Meetings:
  - » Community Interest Group Online Meeting
  - » City of Courtenay Staff Workshop
- Kids' Learning Sessions (ages 8-12 and 3-5)
- Graphic Facilitation from kids' Learning Sessions
- Written Submissions
- Drawing Contest Entries (Public and City Staff Kids)

# Interest Group Meeting

## Activity #1: Introductions & Visioning



**What to do:** Please introduce yourself and the organization you represent (if applicable). Then share ONE WORD that describes your idea of a great playground experience. Think about your priorities as well as what matters most to your children or children you know.

1. Name
2. Organization
3. One word

1. Nikki Holekamp
2. CVCDA
3. Inclusivity

1. Alan Douglas
2. School District, Courtenay Rec Board Member, PR Advisory Committee
3. Laughter

Nancy Clements  
Island Health  
FUN!

## Activity #2: Goals / Guiding Principles Review



**What to do:** Do you feel the draft Goals (Guiding Principles) are a good fit for Courtenay's playgrounds? Why or why not? Are there other goals you can think of that you would like to share?



Let's try different ways to play!



Everyone can play here!



Nature is fun!



Let's get creative!



Make it flow!

Parksville Community Park

accessibility vs. inclusivity. what does that actually mean in terms of entire space being accessible and inclusive

Rotary park at airpark in Courtenay is a great example of inclusivity. surfacing is working well

Valley View playground is supposed to be accessible but only one feature is. Inclusive for everyone not just bits and pieces of it

Airpark location is great to watch planes / overall location / proximity to beach. Interaction within community space

Maffeo Sutton Park

built up wall all around is a barrier for mobility challenges. Sand surfacing or wood chips to navigate across and that makes it really difficult. Airpark is well done.

climate change impacts on health. How can we address climate change impacts with playground design

trees for shade and comfort - slides are too hot. How can we be strategic about removing and replacing vegetation

locating play spaces adjacent to natural areas to allow for adjacencies.

How can we make parks function for multiple uses? How can we hold water and manage it appropriately. Reducing impermeable surfaces

places for programming / pop up in parks. making sure spaces are complementary for a wider range of activities

access to park washrooms, especially for young families

hereford park - so many children interacting with nature. Sticks and rocks and loose parts. You don't always need swings and slides to keep kids interested. They really love to interact with nature

**Other goals? Write them here:**



# Interest Group Meeting

## Activity #3: Playing Today



What to do: Let's think about our playgrounds today. Can you think of any barriers or issues that limit use of playgrounds or positive experiences in our playgrounds?

unsheltered / unsheltered people are posing some risks for people

looking for hazards (needles / glass) in sand. Broken glass in playgrounds. Likely a barrier for others

not as many play spaces that focus on a wide range of age groups (older and younger kids can safely play). Incorporate activities for a wide range of age

materials don't always work well in our climate (wet, mucky)

accessibility: pathways and surface materials - sand, gravel, woodchips are a barrier to use

not as many parks that incorporate areas for quiet play, dramatic play - not a wide enough range of play experiences

Connectivity to the wider community - is it easy for folks to walk or stroll there. Ensuring interconnectedness to the wider community (crosswalks, pedestrian safety)

inadequate lighting

## BIG Ideas for Our Park Playgrounds Tomorrow

What ideas below are you most excited about?



Splash Pad / Water Play



Inclusive Play Features for All Ages / Abilities



Nature Play Opportunities (plantings, sand, rocks, logs)



Creative Play Opportunities (music, art, programming, artistic play elements)



Areas for Exploration (e.g., willow tunnels, stepping-stone paths through planting)



Open Lawn Areas (flat areas for field games and picnicking, hills for climbing and rolling)



Outdoor Games (e.g., game tables, ping pong, square ball)



New Play Structures (e.g., swings, slides, climbing features, etc.)



Areas for Quiet Play (e.g., playhouse, area for thinking, reflecting, chatting)



Exercise / Physical Fitness Stations (for all ages)



New Adventure Pathways (trike loop with speed humps, "crosswalks", etc.)



New Park Amenities (washrooms, water fountain, lighting)



Smart Playground Features (Wi-Fi, app guided experiences, etc.)



Green Design Elements that Help the Earth (e.g., pollinator gardens, stormwater gardens, recycled materials)



Covered Areas (shade structures, picnic shelter, etc.)



New Furnishings and Gathering Spaces (benches, movable furnishings etc.)

Use the stickers to choose your top 3 favourite ideas for an outdoor play space. You can share your own ideas too!



### Let's Get Inspired!

There are SO MANY things that can be included in an outdoor play area — the items here are just a FEW ideas.

- First, have a look at the ideas on the left. What ideas are you most excited about?
- Place a sticker next to the pictures you like the most and make you the most excited. Choose your top 3!

### Other Ideas?

We want to hear YOUR ideas for how we can make our outdoor play spaces in Courtenay the best for everyone (families or even your adults or grandparents)!

Get ready for the next activity to design your own outdoor play space!



# Interest Group Meeting

## Activity #3: Ideas for the Future



**What to do:** Think back to when you were a kid. What did you enjoy doing most when you played outside? Where did you play? What kinds of activities did you do? Let's get inspired by some images then we'll brainstorm ideas for fun and inclusive outdoor play experiences. We will capture ideas on the online whiteboard. Feel free to type, draw your ideas, or use photos or graphics. If you prefer, you can share your ideas verbally and we will capture them on the whiteboard. You can also share examples you've seen in other communities that you feel are successful.

The school district has schools located in neighborhoods - share standards with School District. This is what we are thinking about doing in City's Parks - could this be of use for planning your playground. Cumberland, Comox, and Courtenay could share vs. separate ideas

playing in natural spaces - incorporating natural play spaces adjacent to playgrounds. Not overlapping surfaces (i.e. woodchips not being next to rubber surfacing because they spill over and make places less accessible).

how do we make parks function in a way that is similar to how we use and enjoy our backyard spaces - bbq's, cook dinner, amenities to support more diverse use in parks. What are some of the other amenities and features families might be looking for (considering dense neighbourhoods multi / family housing)

simple additions like logs - visiting, gathering,

what does the space look like in the fall when it's raining

seasonality of spaces. Making sure that playgrounds can be used in all seasons. Sledding - don't put the parking lot at the bottom of a sledding hill

grants to support funding for rubber surfacing. VI grant funding for recycled tire surfacing

Area near Superstore - apartments and dense areas, where will they play?

### Amenity contributions opportunities

garbage cans - they need to be accessible to keep parks clean and safe as well.

build with the existing context (slide example). Can present cost savings and overlapping play opportunities and safer access for parents and kids

safety surfacing for seniors areas. Non permeable surfacing - design for integrated stormwater management

Opportunities for grant funding partnerships - letters of support from Island Health or School Districts

Opportunities within the design of multifamily developments to accommodate play and gathering (rooftops, gathering spaces, community gardens getting to know your neighbours). How do we make those spaces inviting to get to know neighbours

working with grading / groundplane to build hills and mounds and opportunities for play (aspen grove in comox). Hereford Hill no playstructure but huge hill that gets used. Ropes or slides built into natural topography already

Wrap-Up

# City Staff Workshop

## Activity #1: Introductions & Visioning



**What to do:** Please introduce yourself and the department you represent. Then share ONE WORD that describes your idea of a great playground experience. Think about your priorities as well as what matters most to your children or children you know.

Name  
Department  
One word

Susie,  
RCCS,  
Variety

Mike Keams,  
Manager of Parks  
Services Options  
for Multiple Age  
Groups

Shane, parks  
supervisor  
urban forestry &  
natural areas -  
Risk

Curtis  
Mousseau,  
Engineering  
Services, Safety

Kathy, Manager of  
Recreation and  
Programming -  
Inclusivity - youth  
and gathering spots

Alexis, Supervisor  
Children and  
Youth  
Programming,  
Accessible

Adam Pitcher  
Manager of  
Capital Projects -  
Something for  
Adults

Marianne Wade  
Development services -  
Use of recycled and  
natural materials ,  
olympic plaza in whistler  
opportunities for  
interaction

Joy Manager of  
Business Admin.  
Intergenerational  
Opportunities or  
included in overall  
park design

## Activity #2: Goals / Guiding Principles Review



**What to do:** Do you feel the draft Goals (Guiding Principles) are a good fit for Courtenay's playgrounds? Why or why not? Are there other goals you can think of that you would like to share?



Let's try  
different  
ways to play!



Everyone  
can play here!



Nature  
is fun!



Let's get  
creative!



Make it  
flow!

Expand to include  
gathering spots for  
everybody to  
recreate or socialize  
for health and well  
being

support for integrating  
nature play (logs,  
balancing - Miracle Beach  
Park. Integrating natural  
surroundings - changing,  
opportunities for risk.

Something unique to  
Courtenay that is a  
destination for people  
that highlights what  
Courtenay is all about.

Opportunities to improve  
connectivity (busy roads,  
roads without sidewalks,  
really hilly). Pedestrian  
connectivity (still drive to  
most parks).

how different spaces flow  
together and are visible.  
Connections between elements  
of a park and park setting  
(visibility and comfort, both for  
kids, parents, and all. How the  
playground influences how the  
entire park is experienced

What are the  
maintenance  
considerations?  
What are the life  
cycle  
considerations

All seasons  
use (rainy  
day places)

shade structures  
closer to  
playgrounds as  
we experience  
hotter, dryer  
summers.

Other goals?  
Write them here:

# City Staff Workshop

## Activity #2: Goals / Guiding Principles Review



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**Nature is fun!**



**Let's get creative!**



**Make it flow!**

Expand to include gathering spots for everybody to recreate or socialize for health and well being

support for integrating nature play (logs, balancing - Miracle Beach Park. Integrating natural surroundings - changing, opportunities for risk.

Something unique to Courtenay that is a destination for people that highlights what Courtenay is all about.

Opportunities to improve connectivity (busy roads, roads without sidewalks, really hilly). Pedestrian connectivity (still drive to most parks).

how different spaces flow together and are visible. Connections between elements of a park and park setting (visibility and comfort, both for kids, parents, and all. How the playground influences how the entire park is experienced

What are the maintenance considerations? What are the life cycle considerations

All seasons use (rainy day places)

shade structures closer to playgrounds as we experience hotter, dryer summers.

**Other goals? Write them here:**

## Activity #3: Playing Today



**What to do:** Let's think about our playgrounds today. Can you think of any barriers or issues that limit use of playgrounds or positive experiences in our playgrounds?

Budget is a barrier to infrastructure improvements. no current budget for placemaking strategies. Look at whole park vs. just playgrounds

Parks within floodplains - with climate change and rising sea levels the flooding we experience will be increasing

Campbell River Pumptrack - Provincial Campsite - Kin Beach Cumberland Civic Park

Access to washrooms, water fountains,

Nowhere to sit and stay

Urban issues / use - some community members are reluctant to visit City playgrounds / play spaces

lighting (especially in winter months where it gets dark at 4)

Shade or cover from rain

places that encourage large mobile play - places to ride bikes (pumptrack)

Rotary Club contributing to paving existing pump track (Cumberland) for accessibility

surfacing choices - poured in place rubber are more accessible to wheelchairs (another common comment from community). Better than engineered wood fibre, sand - Rotary Sky Park is preferred

more diversity within our playground inventory (more choices, more ages, different types, to choose from)

more water play

more multi-sport courts



# Interest Group Workshop

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Gathering of people indicate success - activating park spaces in a way that makes people feel welcome and space

### Let's Get Inspired!

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30 minutes

Lowie Park - could be improved but serves a great range of ages, nice variety. Range of amenities surrounding

bigger play structures with elements that could be use different ways - some of the 'log' like play structures from the 90s

Mix of age appropriate play elements - allows you to "grow" within the park

as a tween: Somewhere I could get to by bike - stop at the store to grab snacks - play in a wading pool get out and hang out in the park - there all day

limitations: playground budget and placemaking budget (lack of); and the playground is just one part of the park, so need to look at overall park and park plan (and budget); more than the playground that makes the experience.

What you had in playground? What you would like

Options - play tennis then go play on a swing

Rotary Sky Park good for multi-ages

neighbourhood playgrounds that may just have swings, but can be accessible to a variety of ages vs play structures more geared to 'younger' ages

meeting friends / family friends at the playground and spending time there

access to food / snacks / drinks

multi sport surfaces for informal games

embrace the seasons - could a space be used differently in the winter than the summer (outdoor rinks)

Shipyards - north van: water park in the middle of the food court on the wharf

accessible park in nanaimo (maffeo park?)

Million Dollar Playgrounds in Vancouver-VancouverMom.ca

Indoor/covered options

School district collab

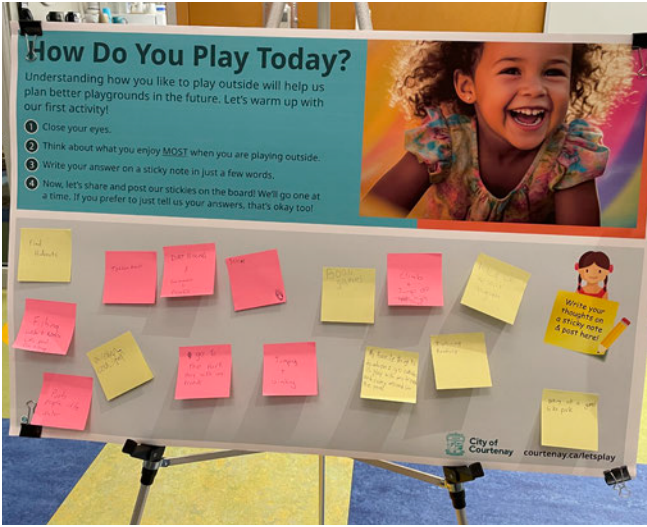


# Youth Learning Sessions

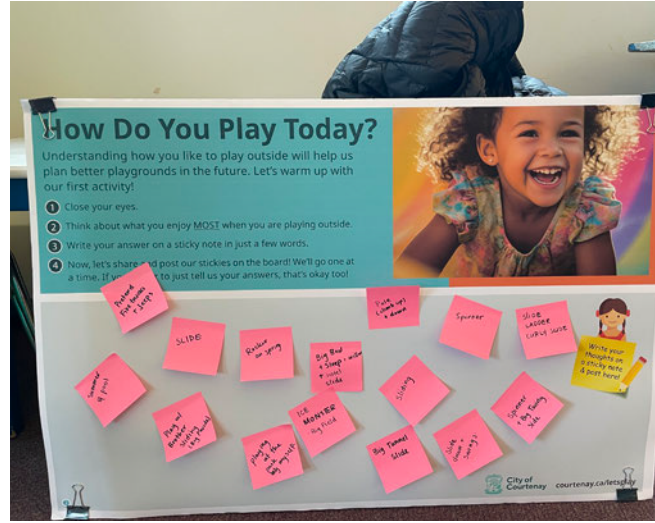




# Youth Learning Sessions



Children ages 8 to 12 in the Youth Learning Session wrote comments about how they play today.



Children ages 3 to 5 also shared their comments about what they most enjoy when playing outside. The facilitator captured these comments on the poster board.



Children ages 8 to 12 in the Youth Learning Session placed stickers on the images of playground elements that they liked the best.



Children ages 3 to 5 placed stickers on the images of playground elements that they liked the best.



# Community Feedback



Large-scale posters were posted in the Lewis Centre during the engagement window for community members to leave their feedback





# Graphic Facilitation



Graphics highlighting feedback heard about kids' dream play areas during the Learning Session for 8-12 year-olds.



# Graphic Facilitation



Graphics highlighting feedback heard about kids' favourite ways to play during the Learning Session for 8-12 year-olds.



# Graphic Facilitation



Graphics highlighting feedback heard on the project goals during the Learning Session for 8-12 year-olds.

# Written Submissions

---

Hi

I had some pretty specific feedback and images I wanted to share with your for the park consultation.

I am originally from the UK and was involved in the team that redeveloped a city park called The Level in Brighton, UK. You should check out some images. There is also a park called Blakers Park which was redesigned in a similar way: [Second playground revamp starts – Brighton and Hove News](#)



## Second playground revamp starts

The second playground revamp in the city's £3million overhaul of park play equipment is set to begin next week. ...

The playground spaces in the UK are more exploratory and exciting than any park I have visited here.

One thing I would love to see in the Valley is a nod to the way we use our natural spaces for recreation. It would be amazing to have a playground in the forest. Check out Moors Valley Country Park in the UK for some inspiration. This is such an incredibly creative playful space that adults and children enjoy.



# Written Submissions



# Written Submissions

Good day.

I am a father, coach, sports enthusiast, member of Masters soccer club and a retired Search and Rescue Technician that definitely knows how to play.

I have played on many great playgrounds around BC with the kids over the years and consider myself connected to what is fun.

One thing for sure is that a zip line should be the centre piece of this new playground. There are numerous other gems like a bouldering pillar and much more. Kids of all ages including adults should be able to enjoy it. There are so many examples in many hip towns around BC and beyond of playgrounds that work. We do not need to reinvent the wheel or waste money on something that really does not challenge, excite or get the kids active.

I myself have a climbing wall up the side of my house on Dike rd to challenge local kids supervised of courses, but there are much safer options for the public.

---

Hi there,

My son wanted to send this drawing of his for ideas for the new playground.

He forgot to include a water play trough, but we've added a picture and a video of the in-ground trampoline.

Elevated temperature trees platforms and ramps that go up through and around the trees.

Places for natural shade

Inspiration Parks.

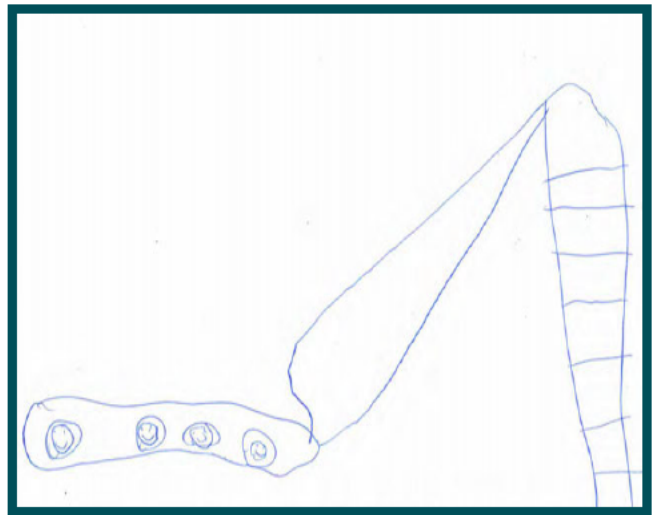
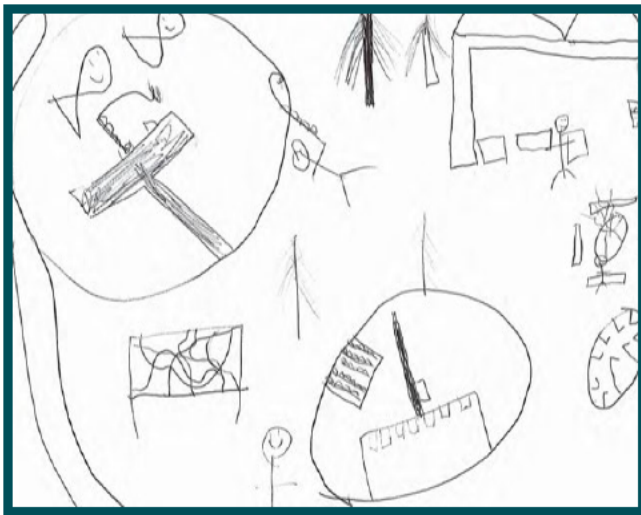
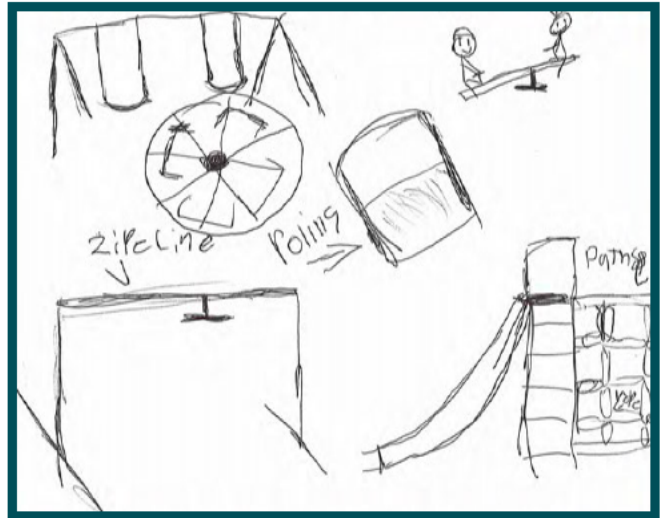
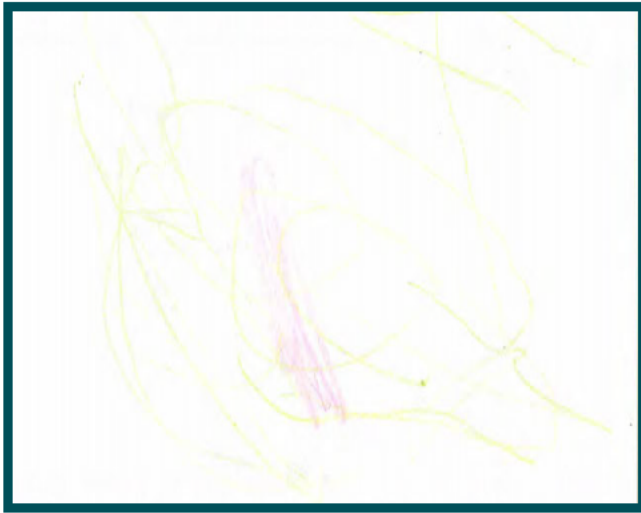
Terra Nova Play Environment in Richmond BC

Waterfront Park, Whitianga, New Zealand

Thanks!



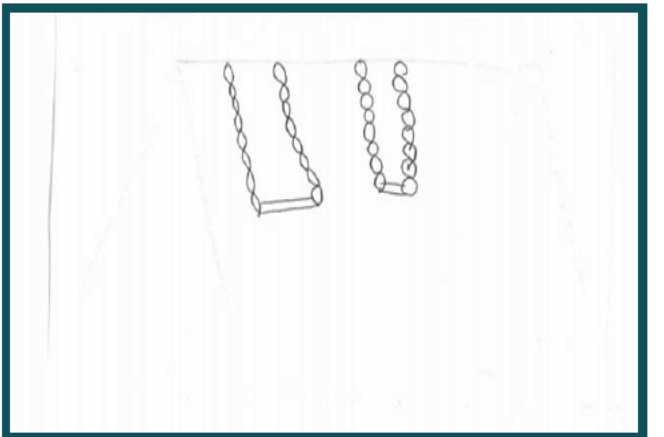
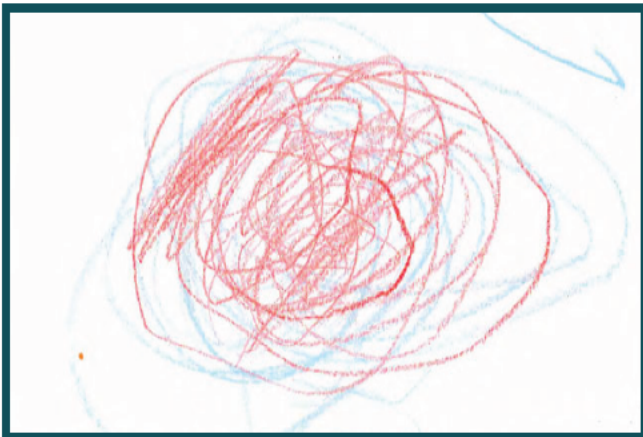
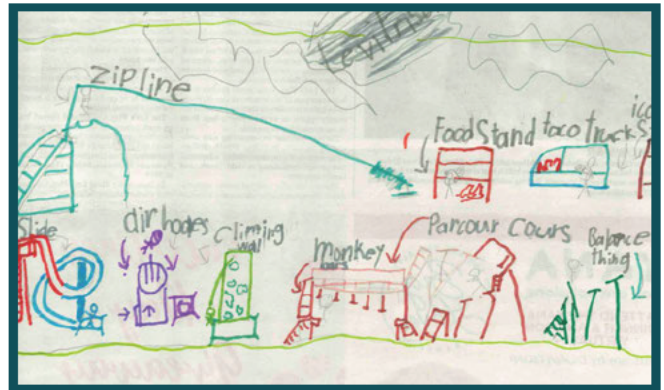
# Drawing Contest Entries - Public



# Drawing Contest Entries - Public



## Let's Play, Courtenay!





# Contest Entries - Public











# City of Courtenay

## Stay Connected

Visit [www.courtenay.ca/letsplay](http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay) to learn more and receive updates as the project progresses.

## Questions?

Recreation & Cultural Services

Phone: 250-334-4441

Email: [rscs@](mailto:rscs@courtenay.ca)

## Follow us!

Keep in touch by following us on Facebook, X (Twitter), or Instagram.



[www.courtenay.ca/letsplay](http://www.courtenay.ca/letsplay)

Airport Elementary  
Grade 5/6 entries

# Courtenay!

Design Standards

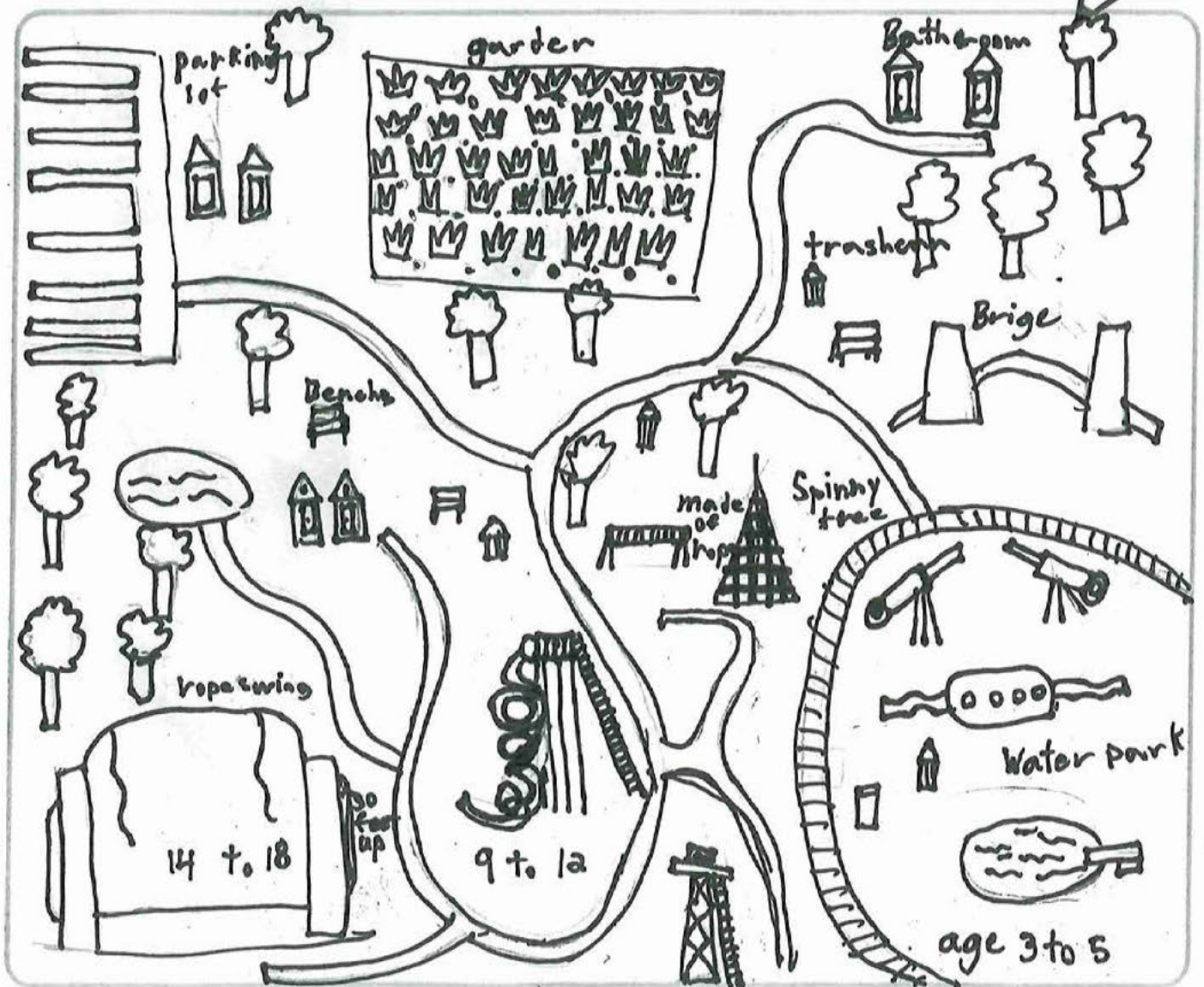


City of  
Courtenay

CONTEST  
and Ideas!

Included mind  
maps → just so  
you could see  
planning thoughts.

background in our city, or improving your neighbourhood  
it? Include all your ideas to make it fun for everyone in  
below to share your ideas for a chance to win a \$50 gift  
certificate towards a City of Courtenay recreation program!



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# Let's Play, Courtenay!

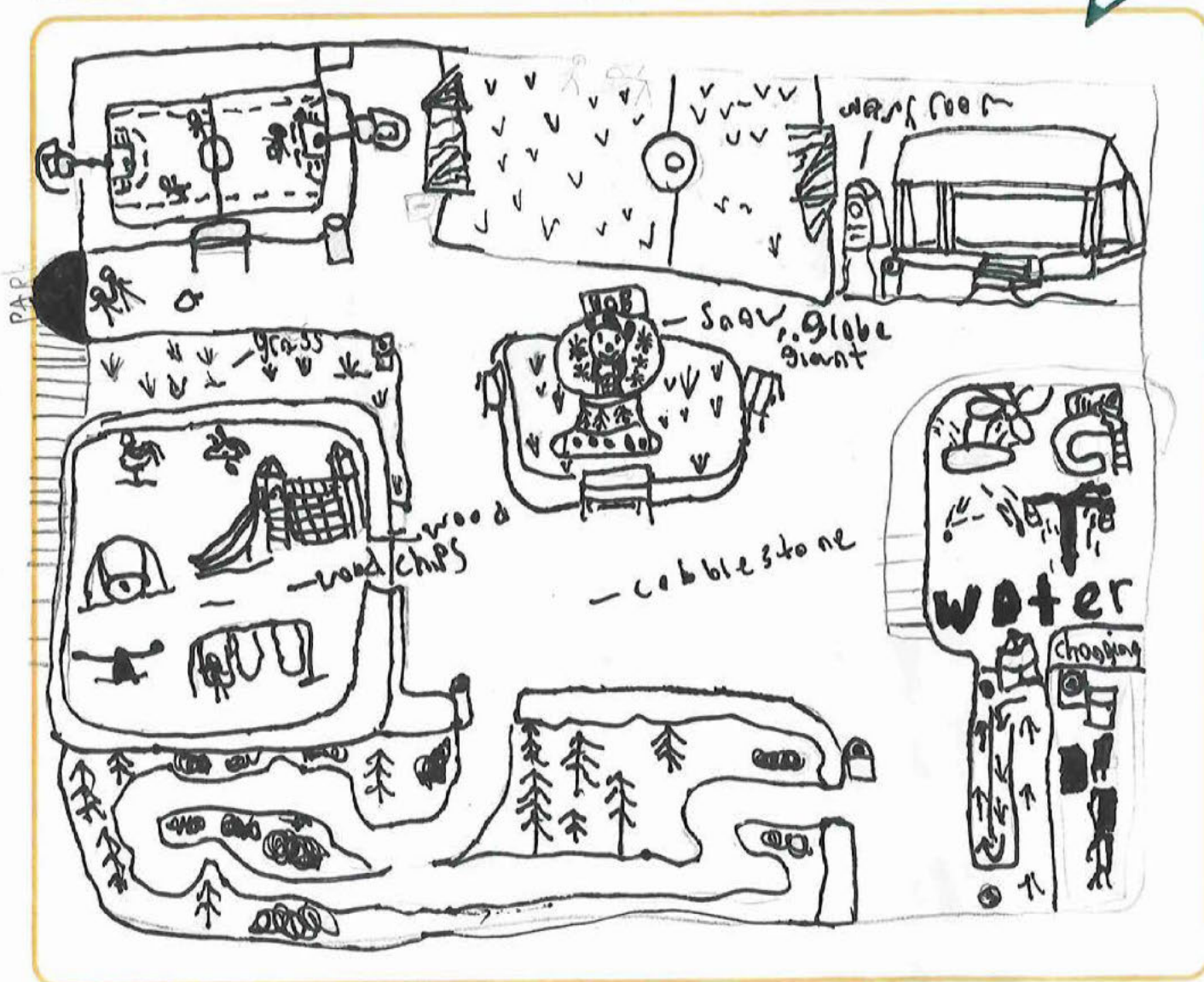
Park Playground Design Standards



City of  
Courtenay

## DRAWING CONTEST Draw Your Playground Ideas!

If YOU were creating a new playground in our city, or improving your neighbourhood playground, how would you design it? Include all your ideas to make it fun for everyone in your neighbourhood. Use the space below to share your ideas for a chance to win a \$50 gift certificate towards a City of Courtenay recreation program!



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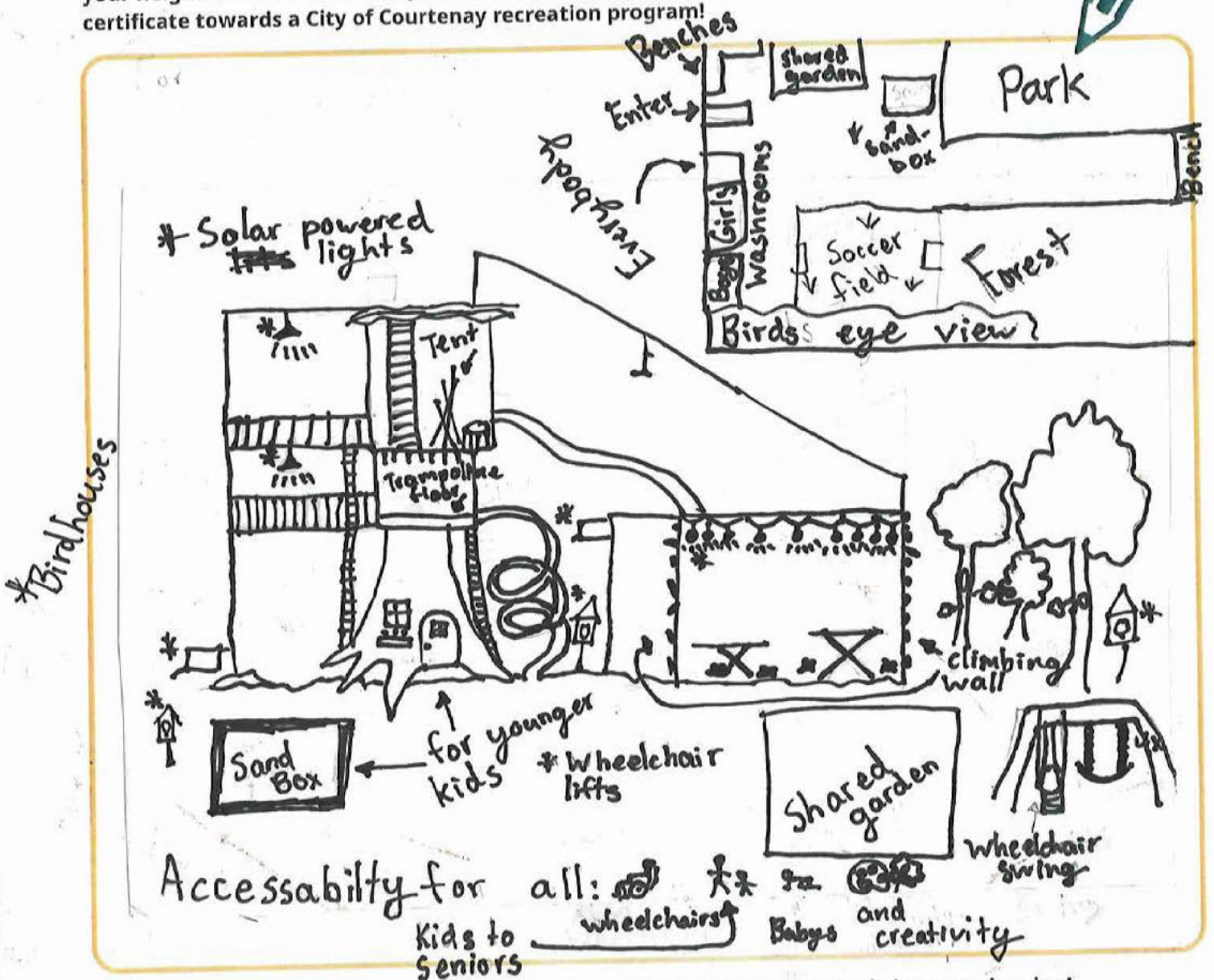
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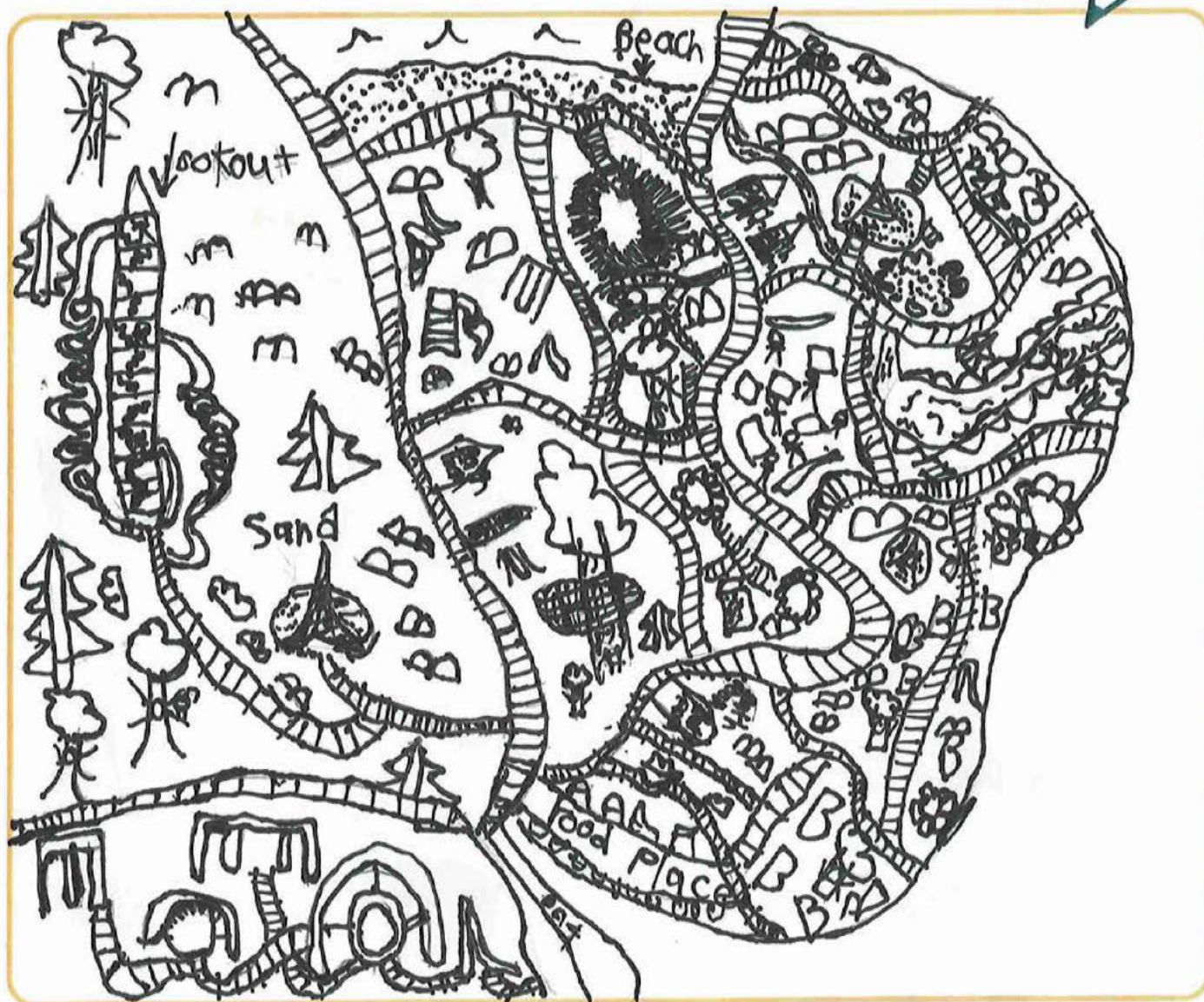


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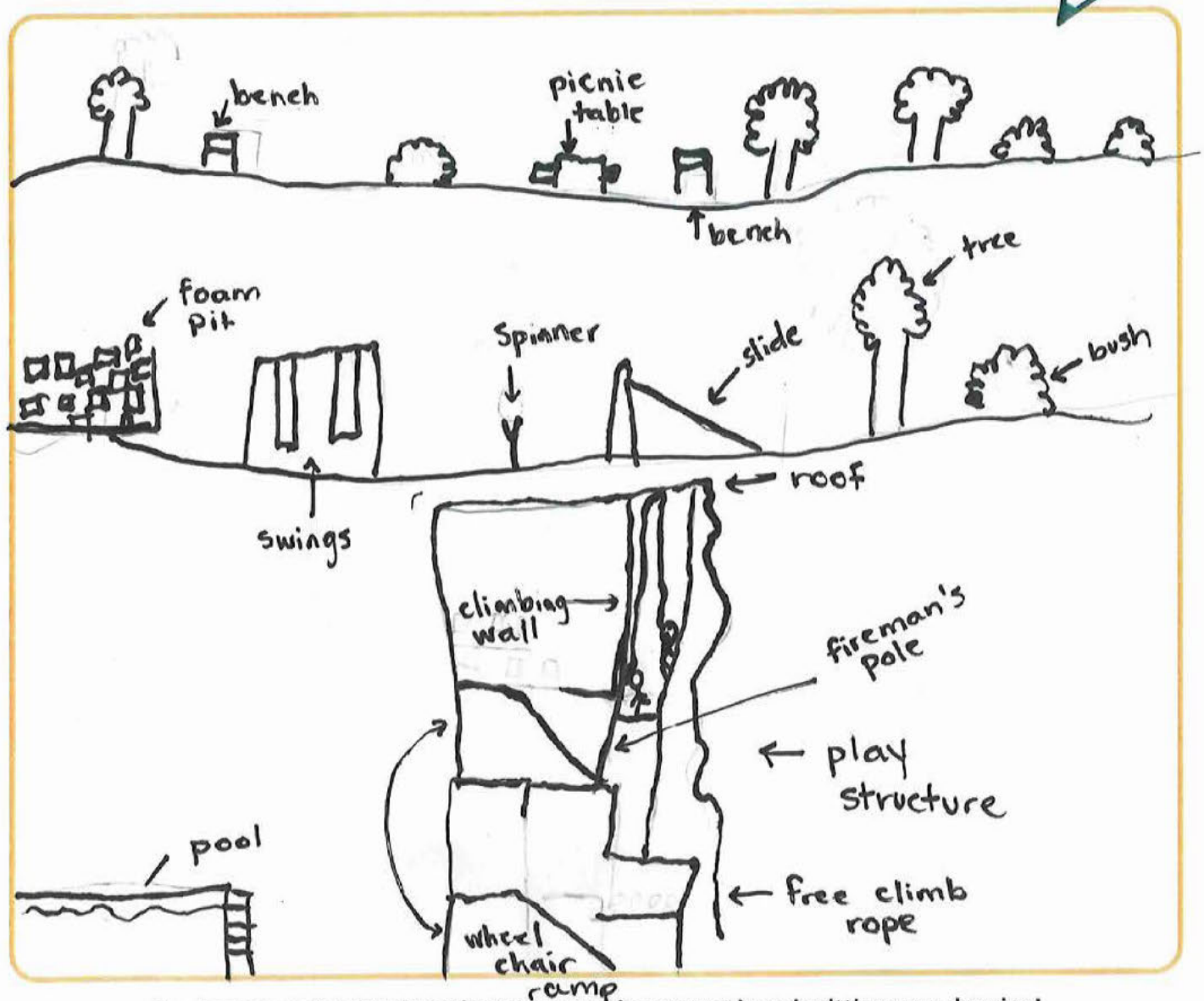
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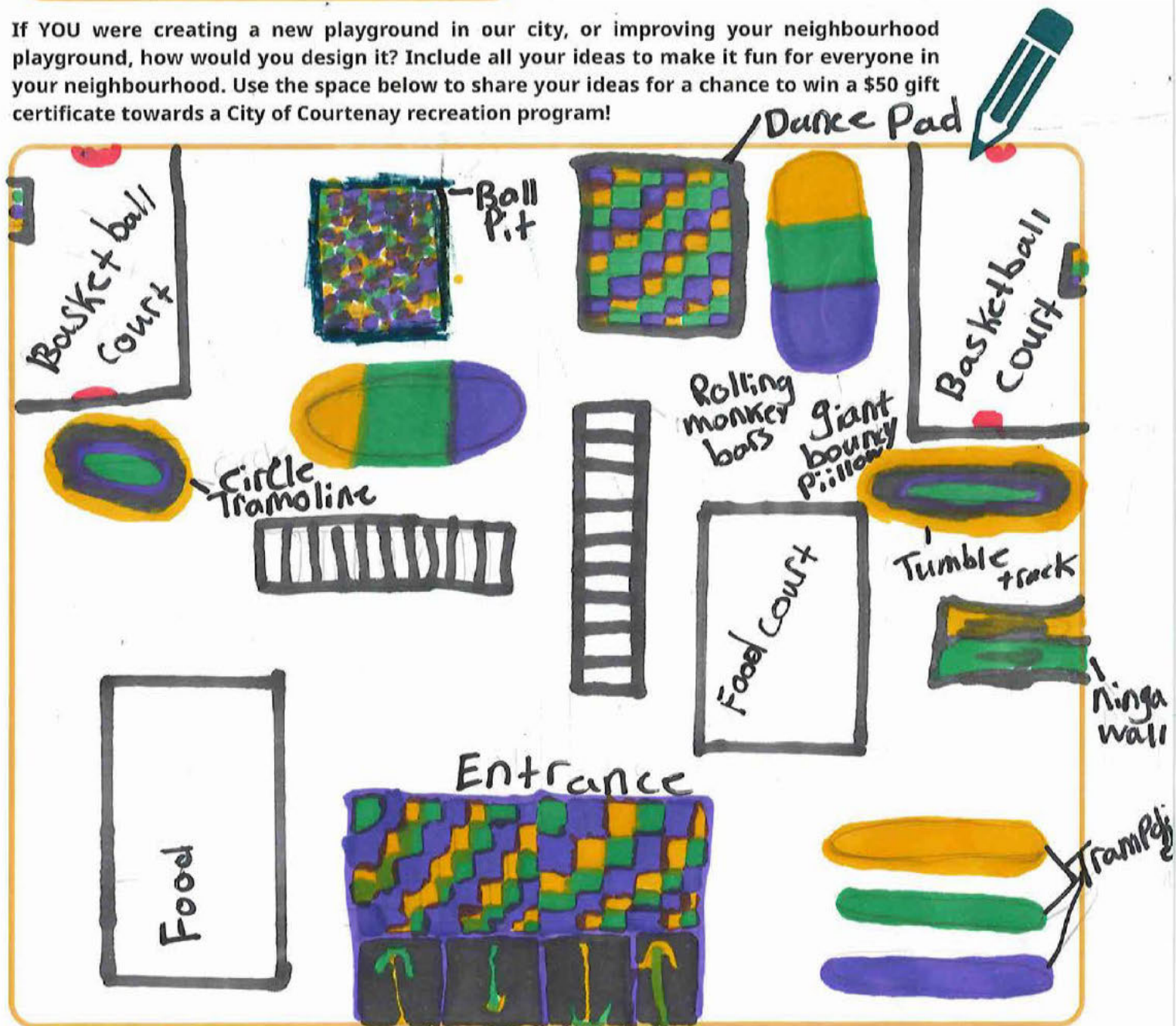


City of  
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City of  
Courtenay

## DRAWING CONTEST

Draw Your Playground Ideas!

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# Let's Play, Courtenay!

Park Playground Design Standards

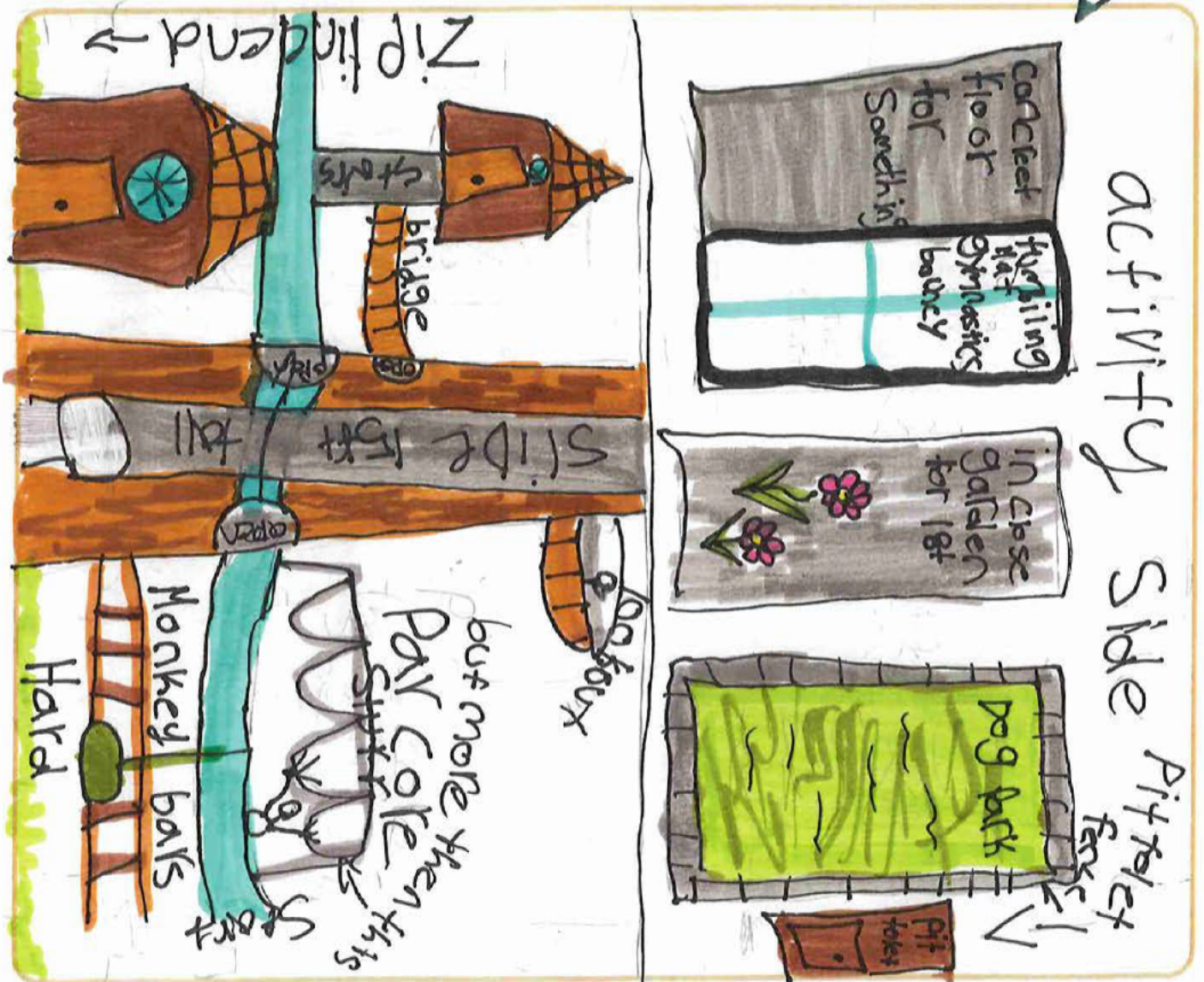


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Page 1



City of Courtenay

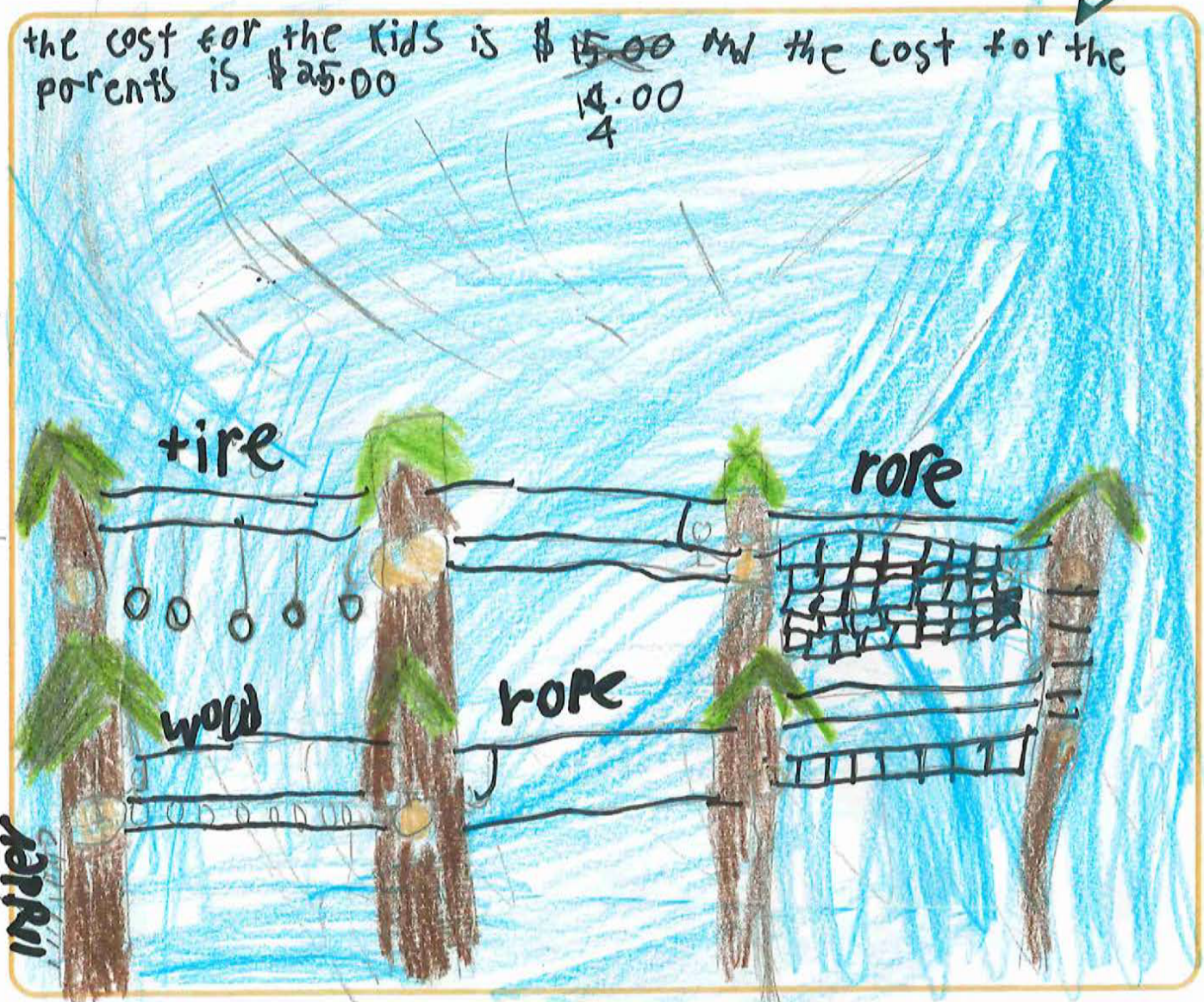
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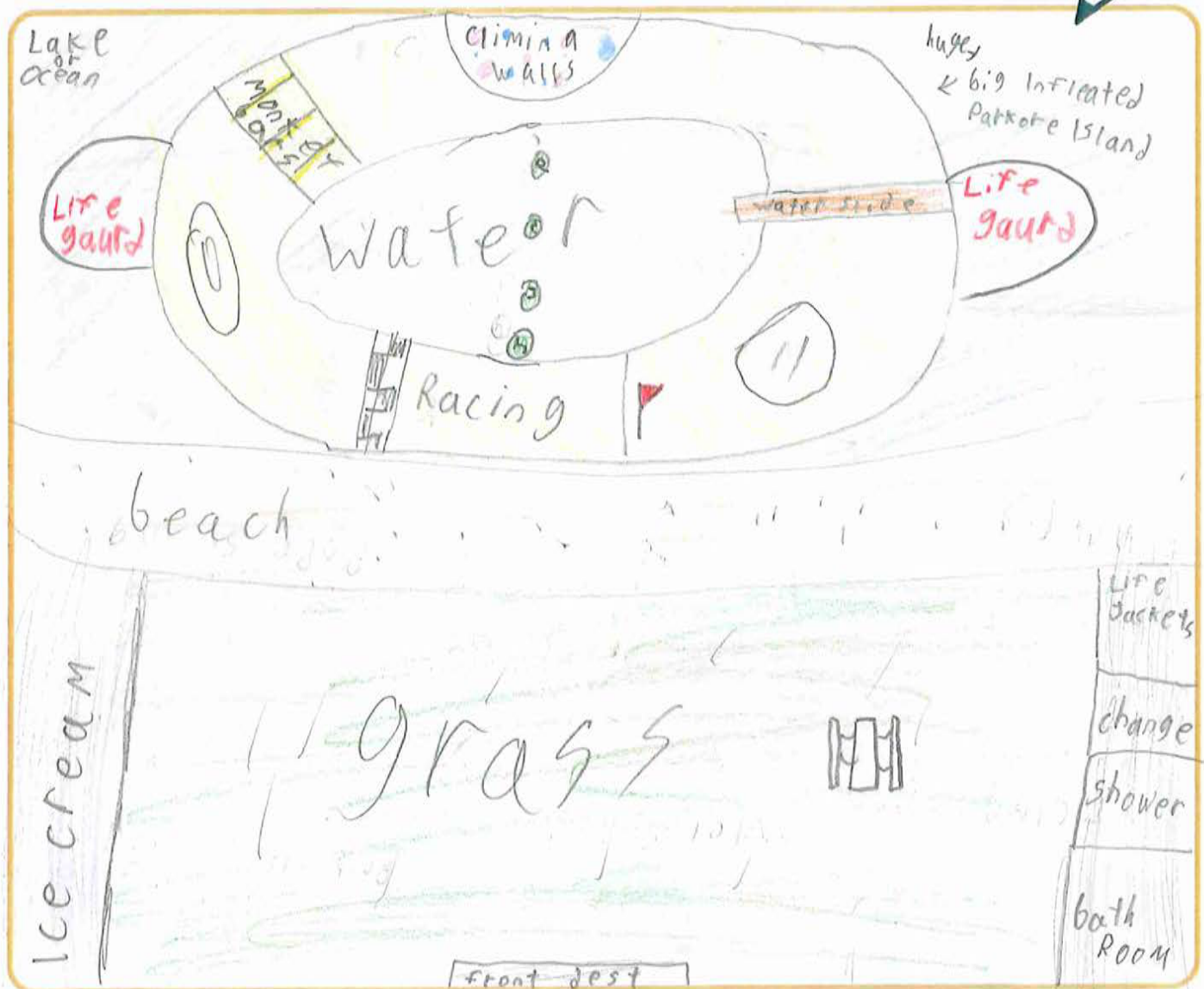
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All have to do with water!



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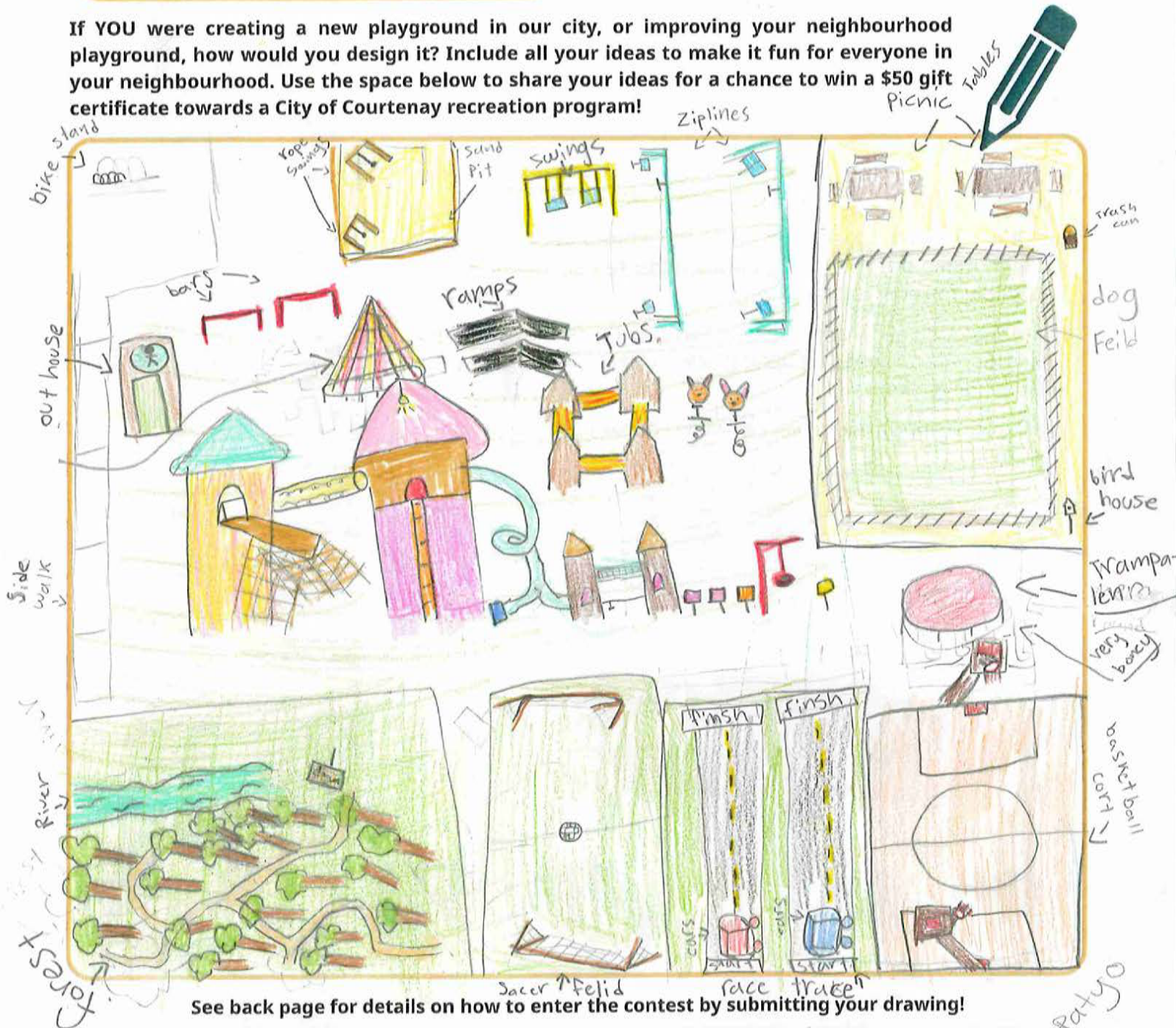


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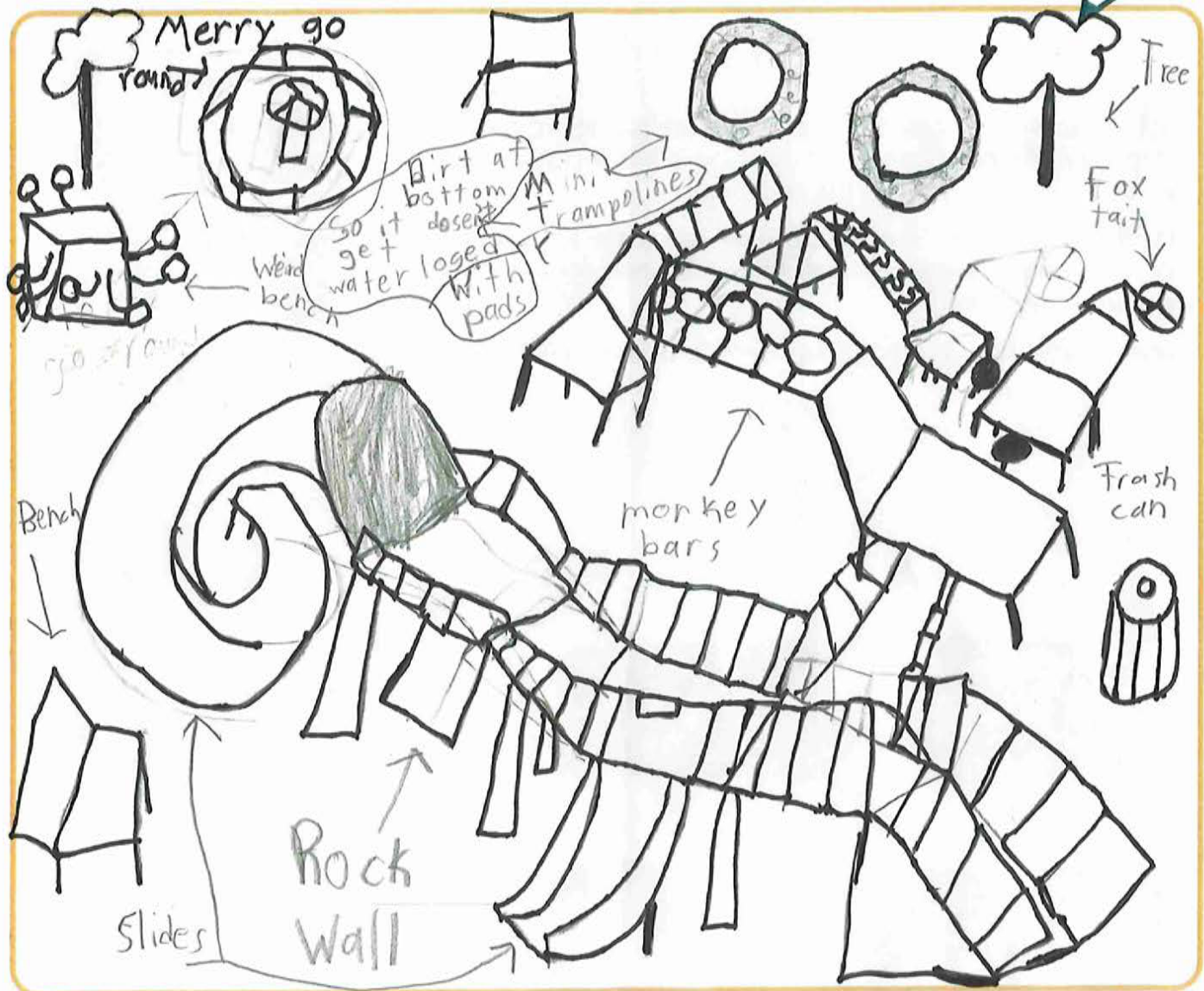
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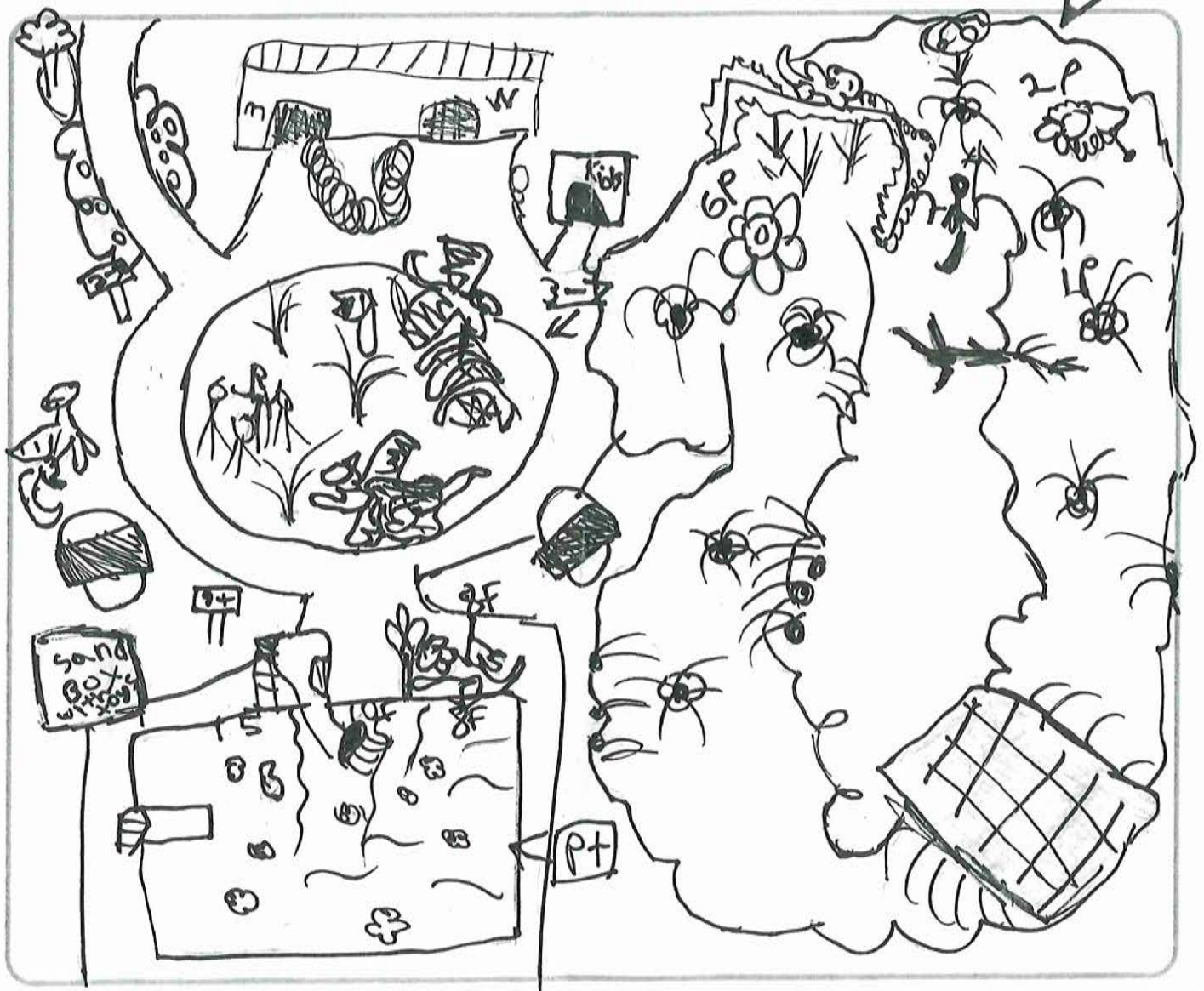
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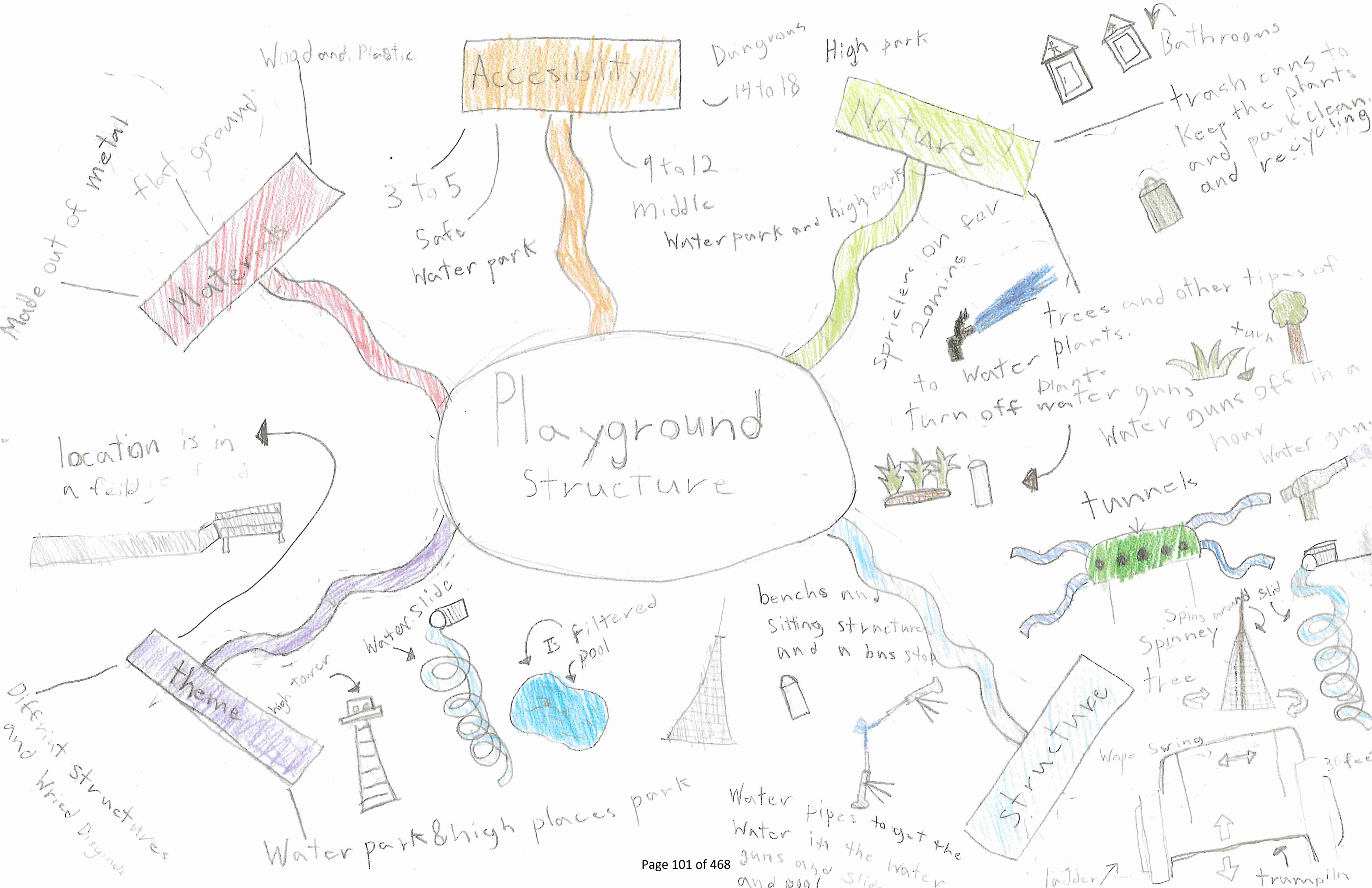


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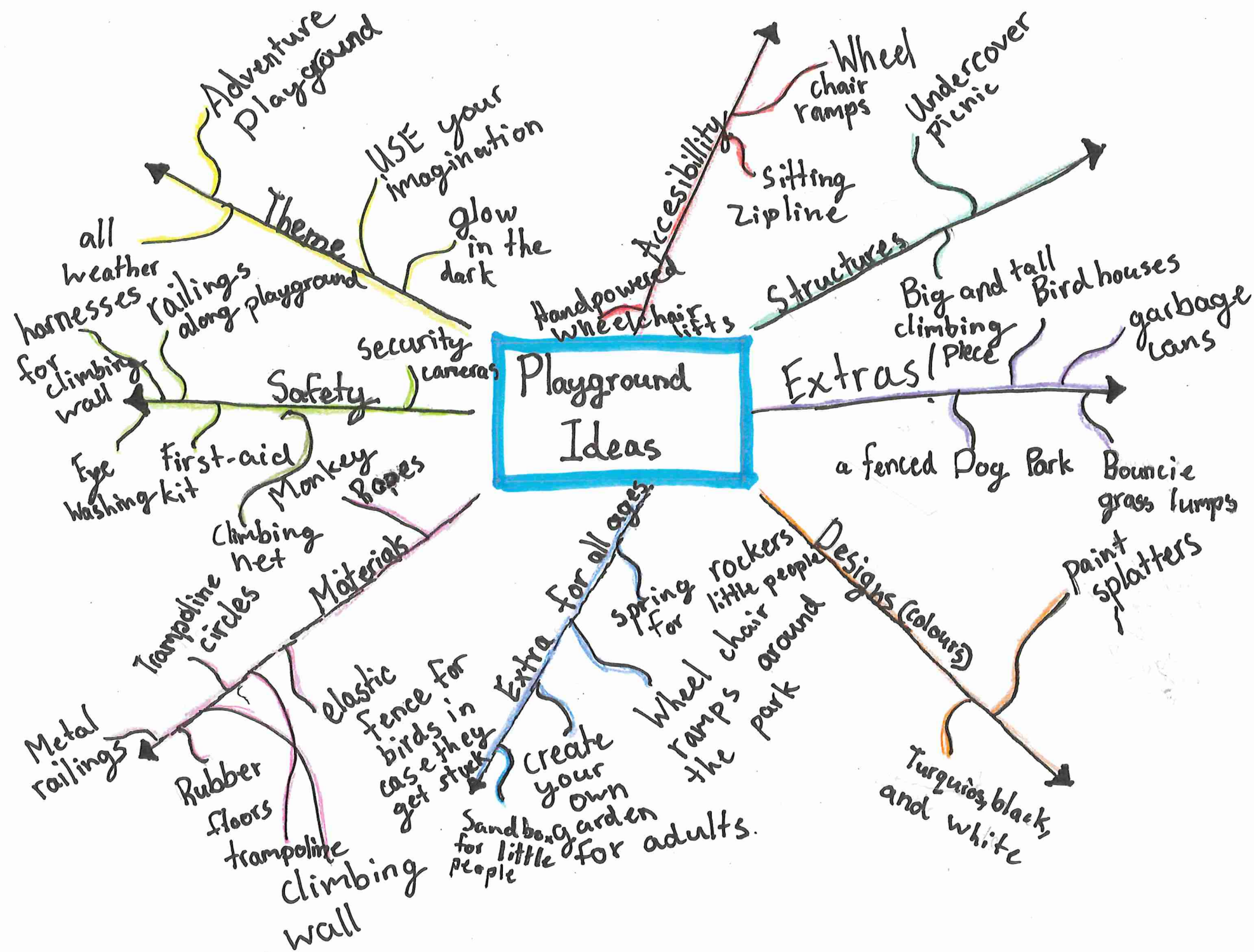
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# Playground Structure

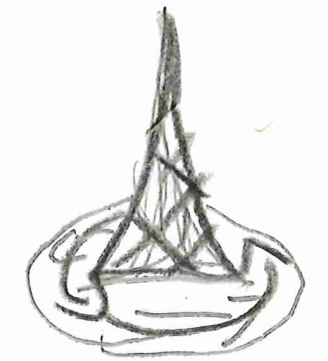
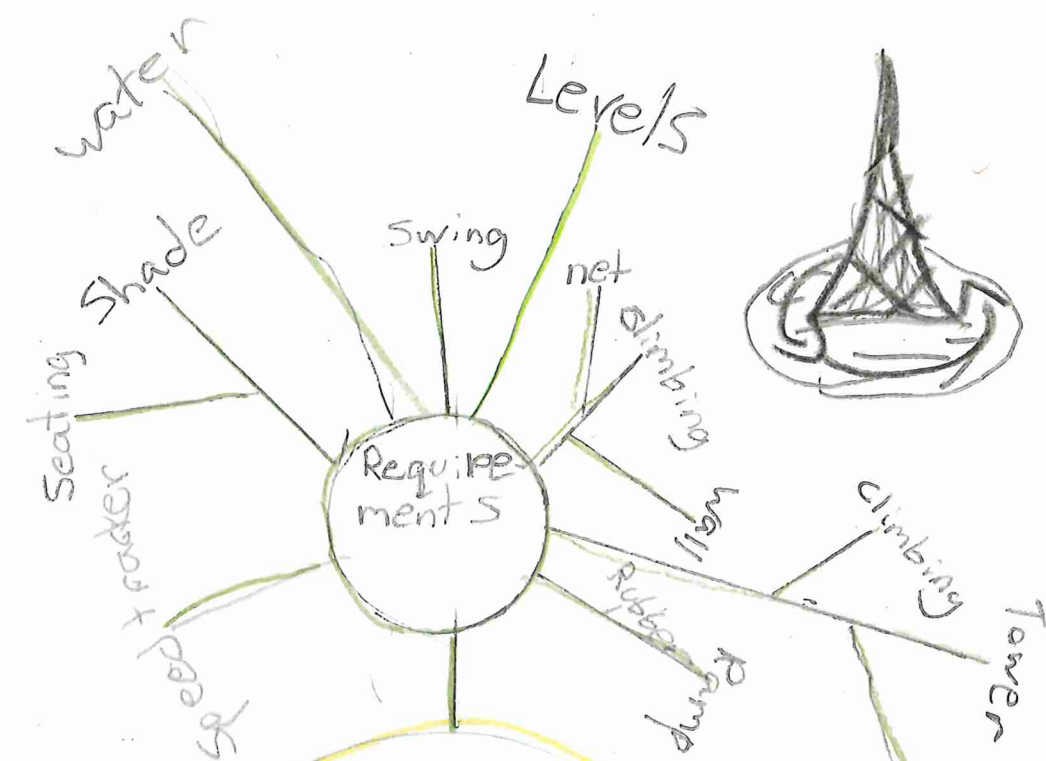
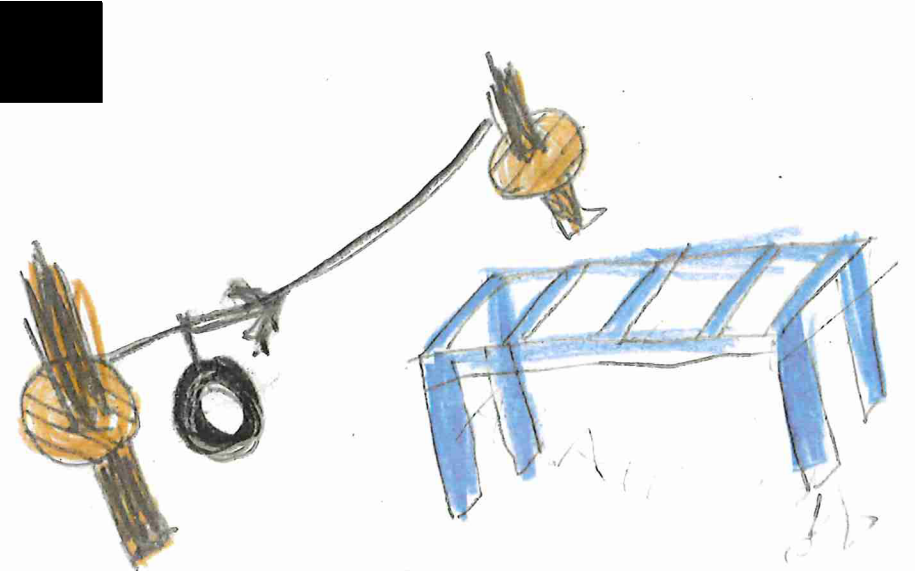




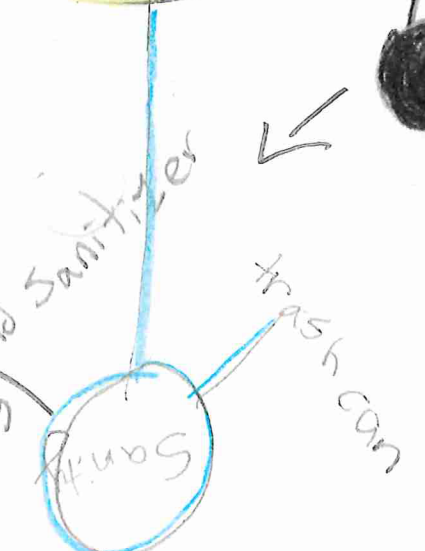
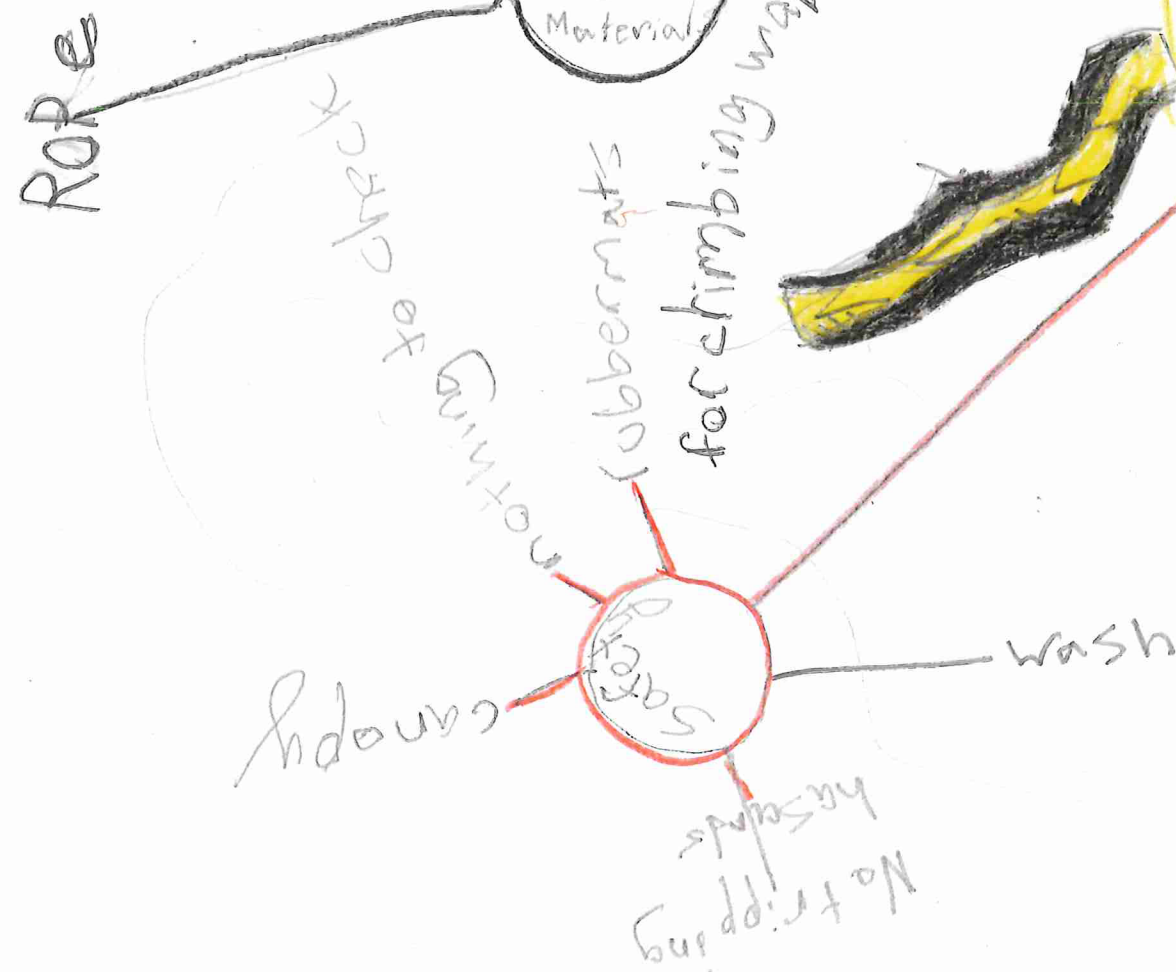
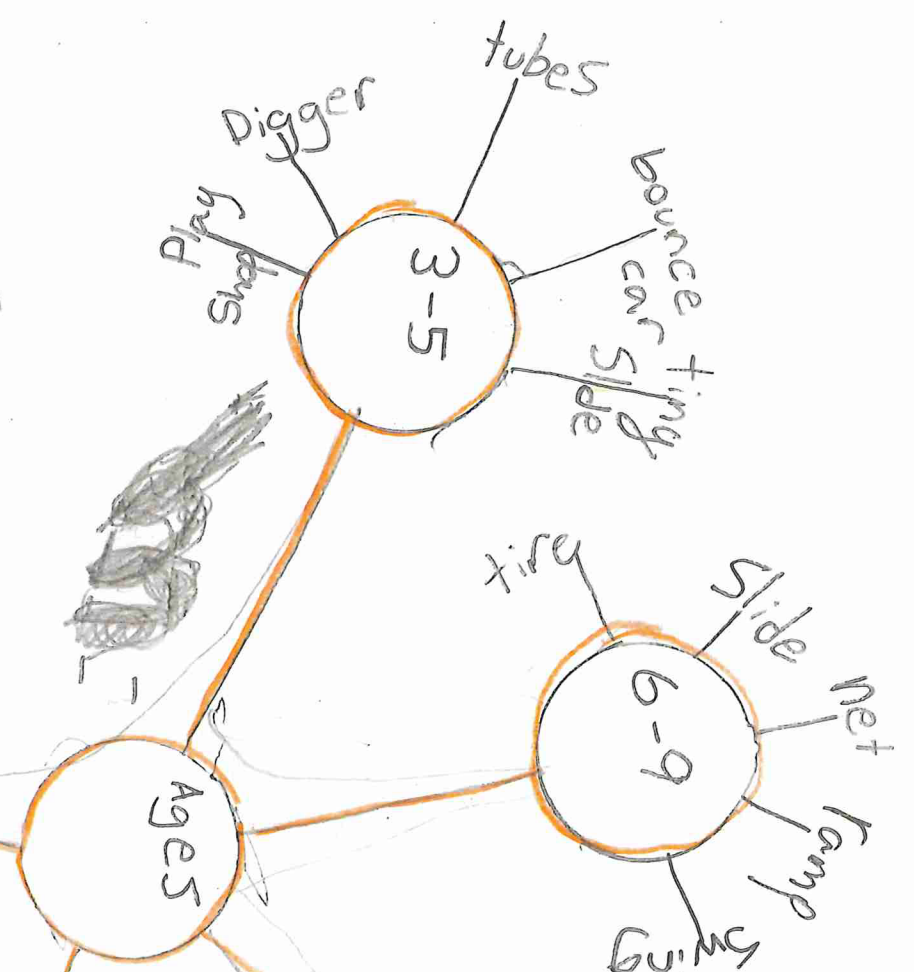
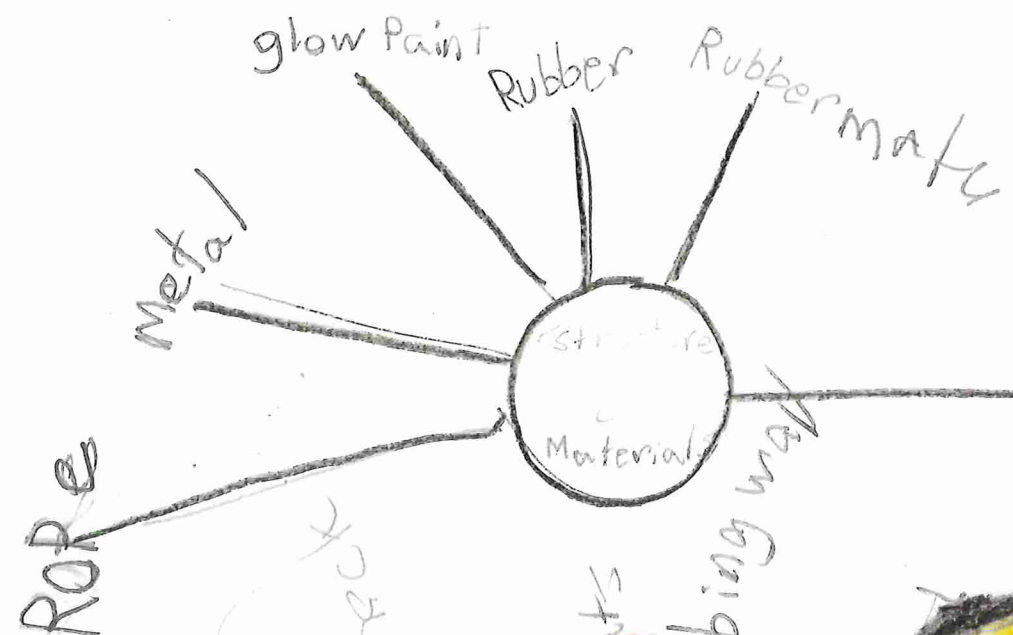








# PLAY STRUCTURE IDEAS



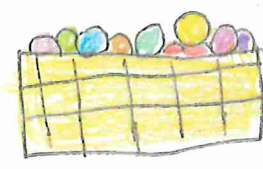
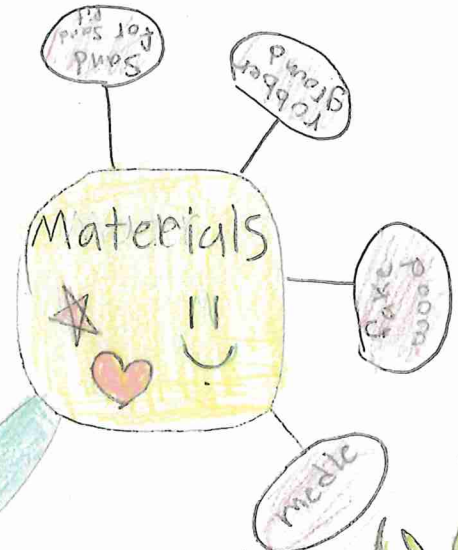


Field for dogs

Kastle Park

Field for dogs to run and play

- (bike stands) 1) are taken up off of the ground
- (Picnic benches) 2) lots of layers
- zipline 2) rope ladders bumper cars
- Tubs 3) bird house 1) bars
- rope swings 2) sand pit 1)
- ramps 2) near forest
- basketball court
- bridges



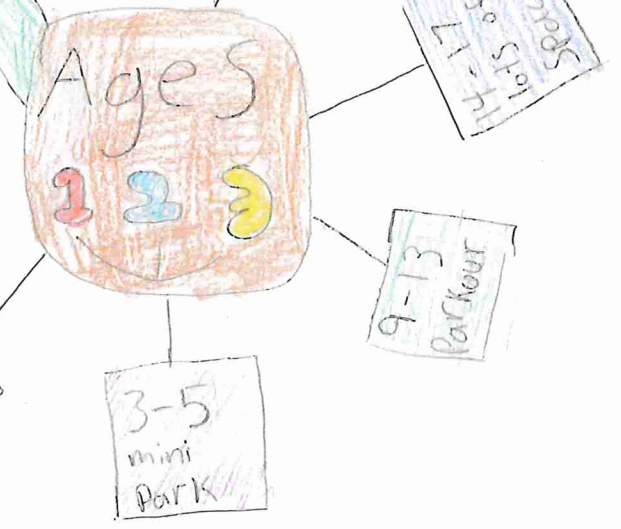
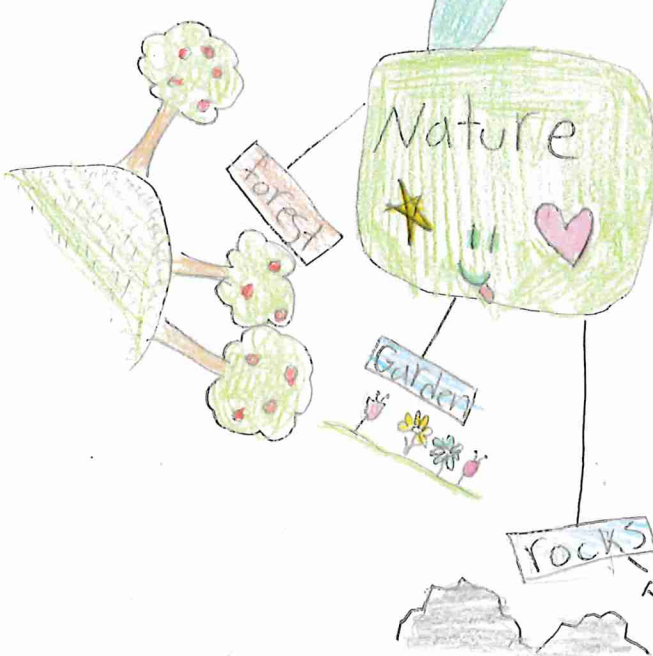
ball for dogs maby?



Play Ground Ideas



lots of grass





3-5  
Baby park  
Mini playgrounds

15-17  
Dark  
Isolated  
Hangout / Kissing  
Spots

6-8  
Colorful  
Themed

18+  
View  
Seating

9-14  
Movement  
Parkour  
Space  
Risk

level  
ground

Forests  
Field  
Hill  
Rubber  
Floors

Trails

Bushes

Near a bathroom

2 main structures  
2 diggers  
2 benches  
2 Trashcans  
4 Big Swings  
4 Slides/Tubes  
4 Small Swings  
1 Merrygorounds  
2 little slides  
1 zipline  
3 Ramps  
4 Spinners  
7 Monkey bars  
1 Rock wall  
2 bike stand  
8 climbing  
3 picnic benches  
1 pole

Ages

Surroundings

Structures

Play ground  
Ideas

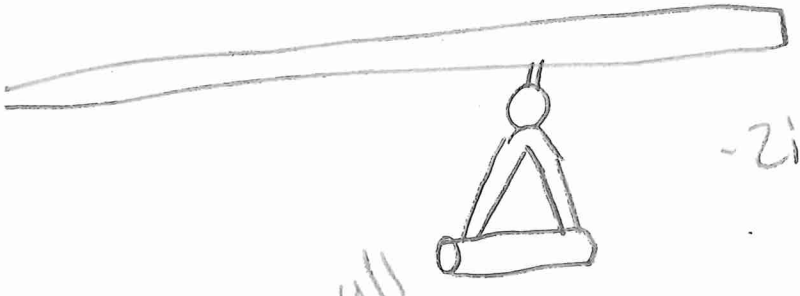
Mats

Wood & picnic tables  
benches  
Signs  
telescope  
Metal → poles  
Trashcan  
Bike stand  
Monkey bars  
base for play ground  
Merry go round  
poles  
Spinners  
Wheel → tube slides/Tubes  
FLIP → rock wall  
→ zipline holder  
mats cotton  
Rope → net  
zipline Rope

Trash

Spinner

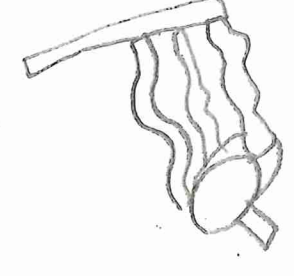
Sign

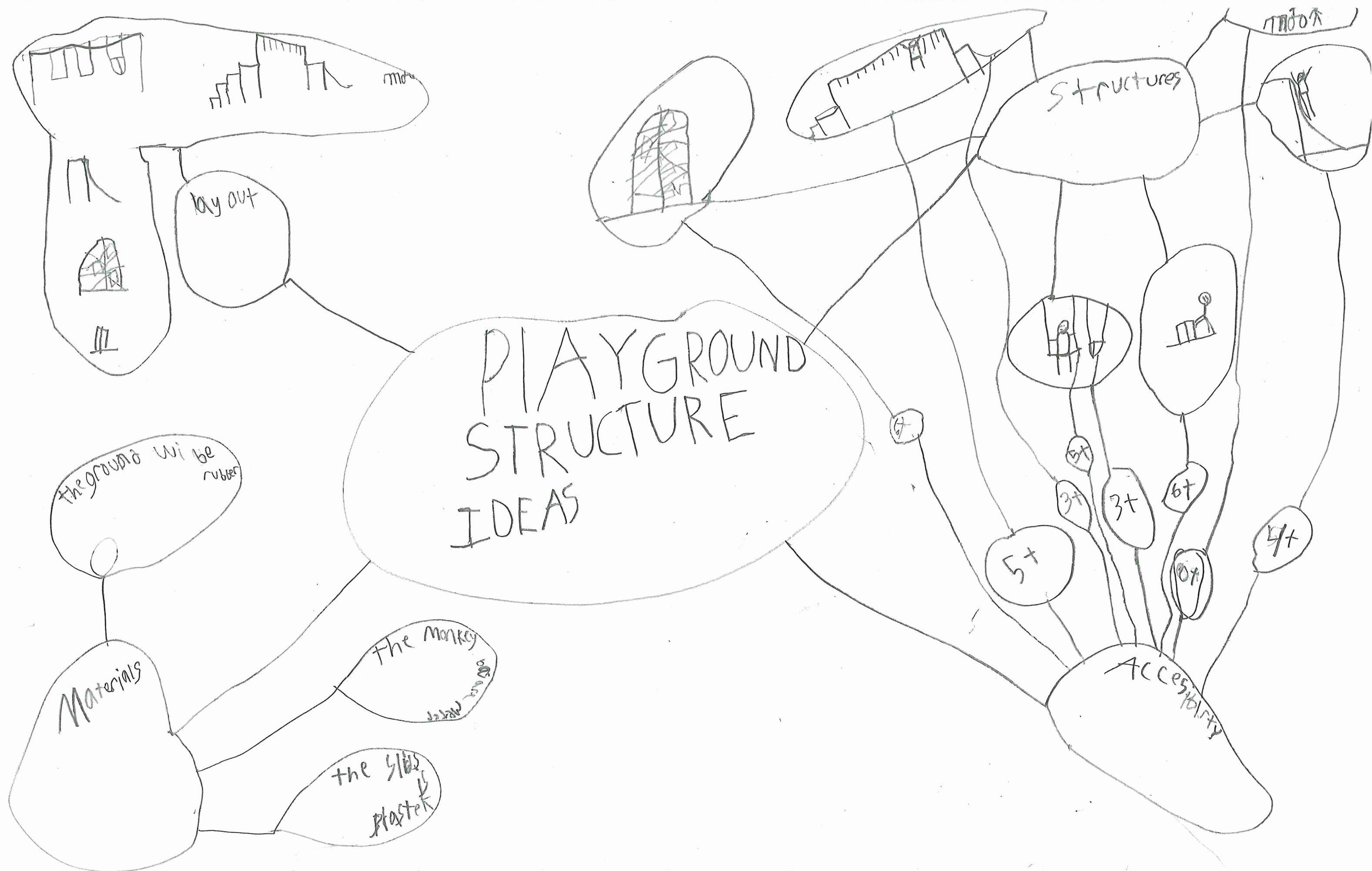


-zipline



Ramp







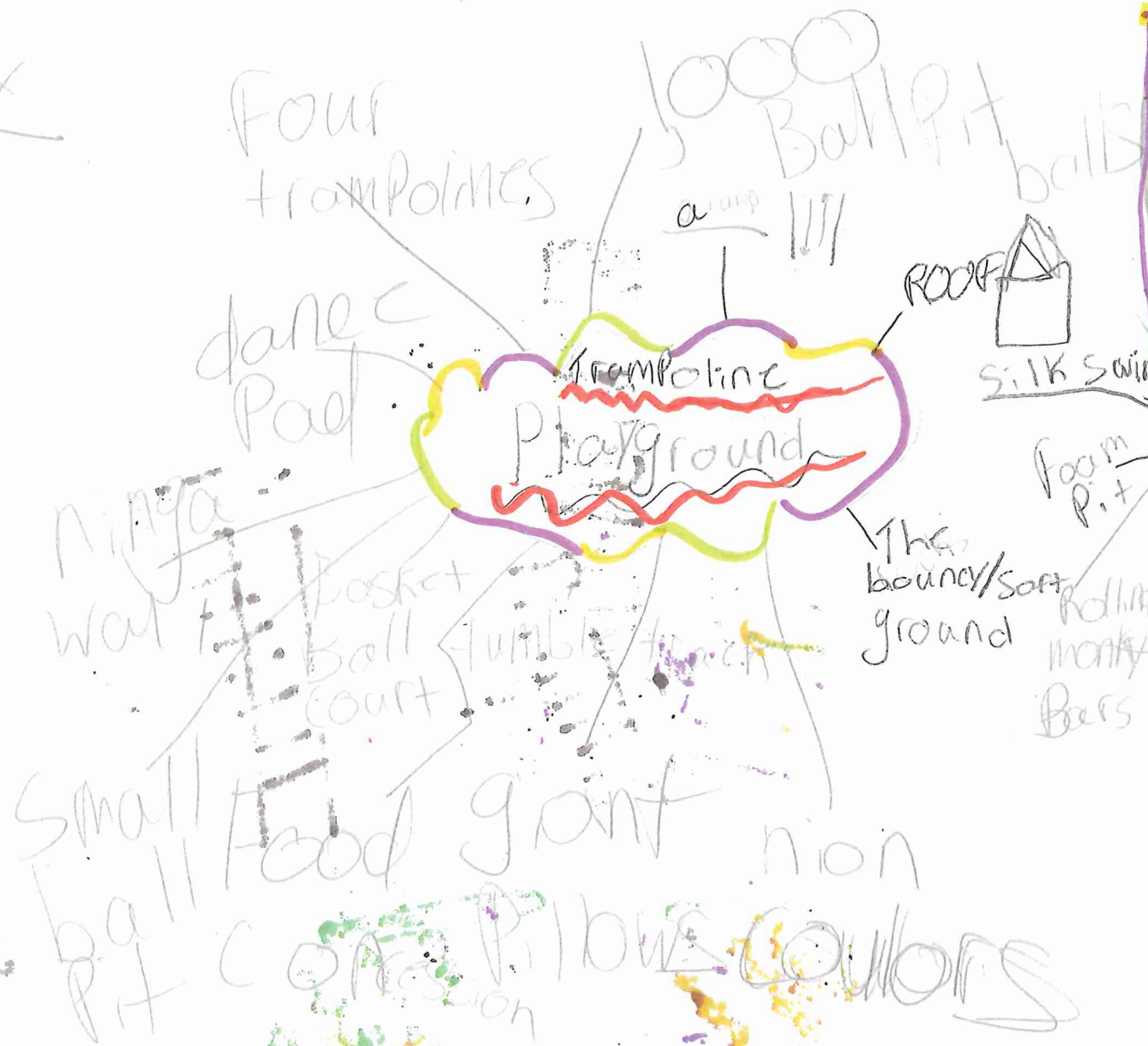
# INSIDE Park

4 - Leftside Ages 4+ Rightside

Essential bits on both sides

Location

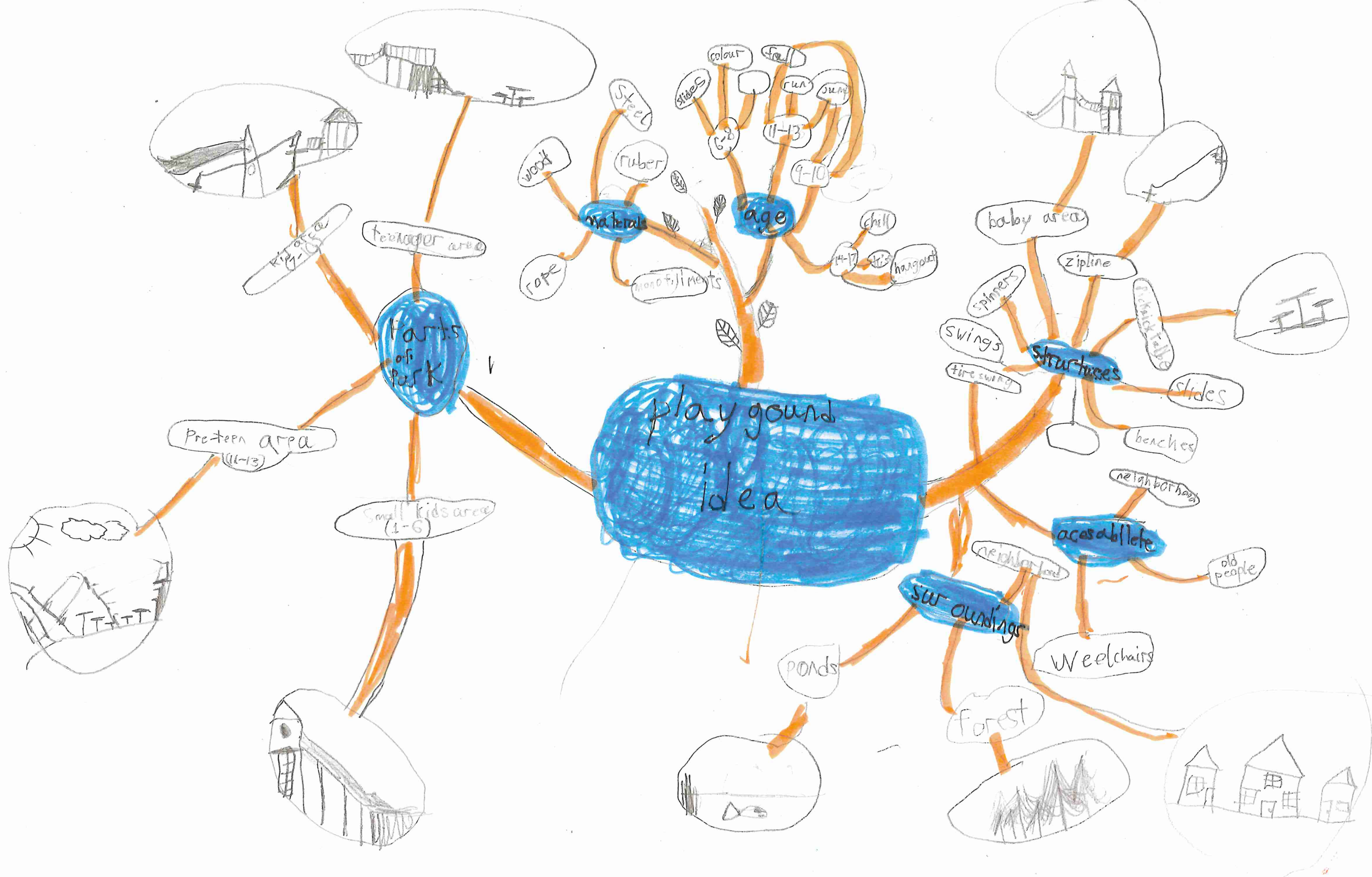
COMOX COURTHOUSE













# Playground IDEAS

## Structures

- ✓ 12 benches
- ✓ merry go round
- ✓ security cameras
- ✓ climbing net
- ✓ tube slides
- ✓ swings
- ✓ mini trampolines
- ✓ signs
- ✓ soil
- ✓ trash cans
- ✓ rock wall
- ✓ picnic tables
- ✓ fox tail
- ✓ monkey bars
- ✓ bike stand
- ✓ platforms with holes
- ✓ slides
- ✓ trees
- ✓ tire swings

## Materials

- cameras
- bounce trampoline
- metal paint
- metal poles
- rubber springs
- rock wall things
- concrete

## Colour

- blue
- white

## Requirements

- lights
- trees
- seating
- garbage cans
- can withstand weather

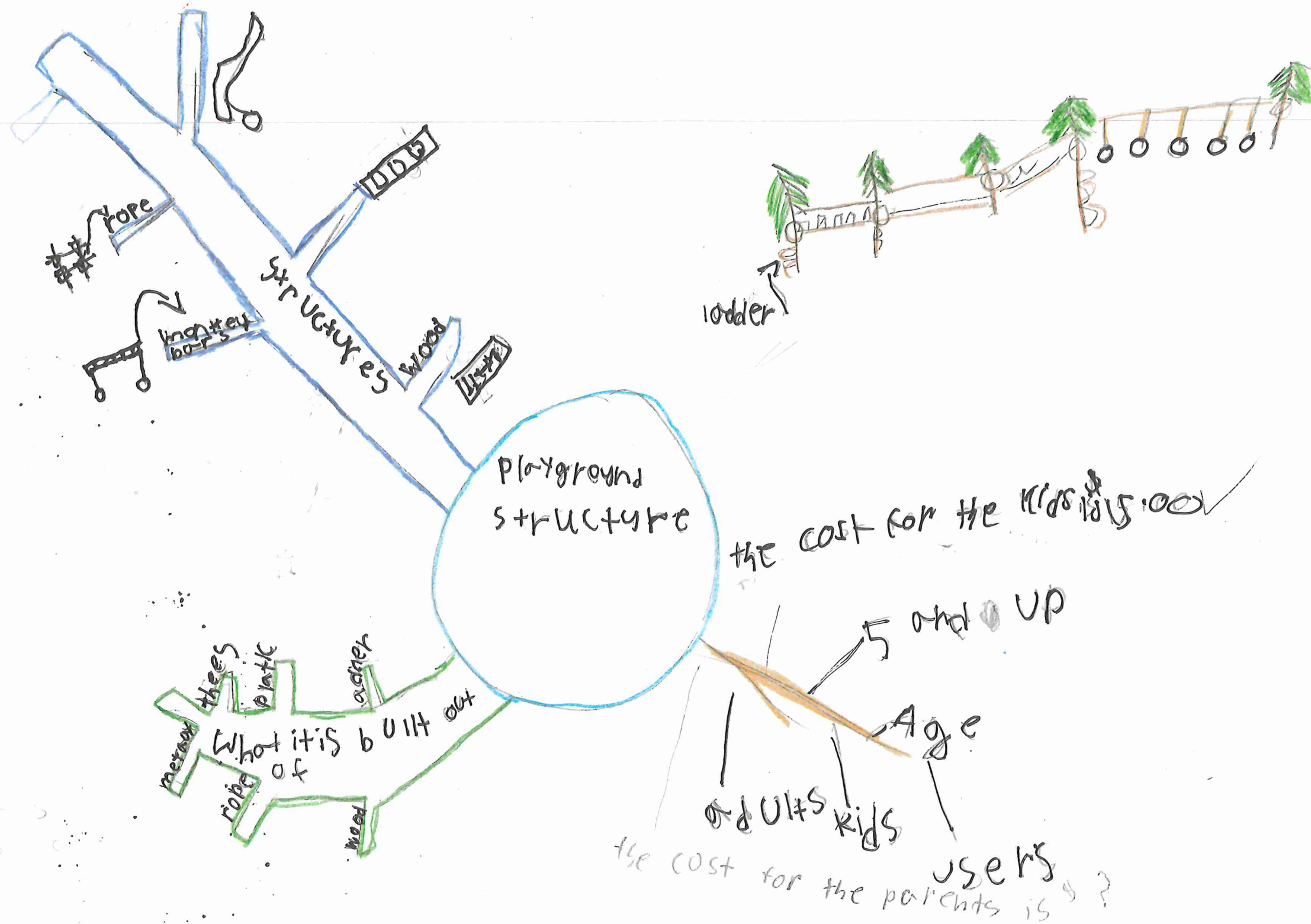
## Accessibility

- smaller stairs
- small child
- wheel chair
- ramps up to playground
- in rain

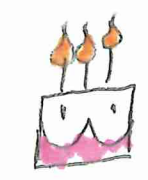
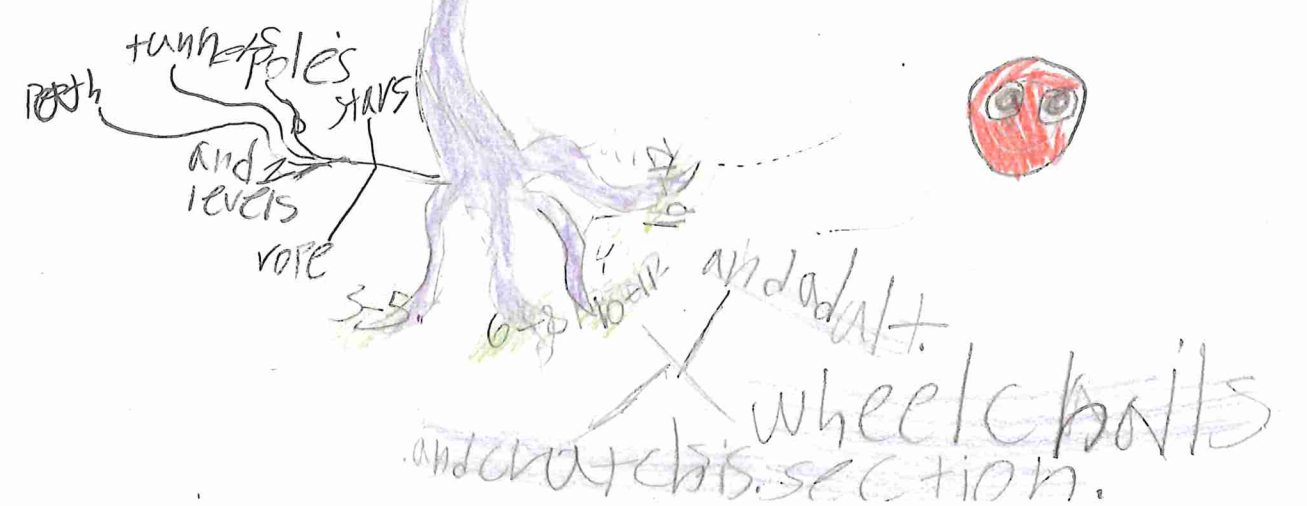
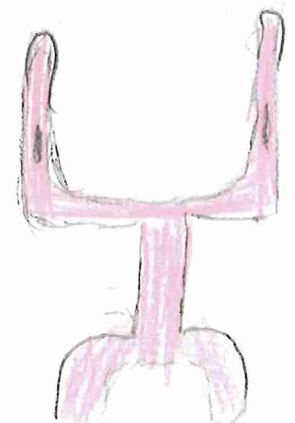
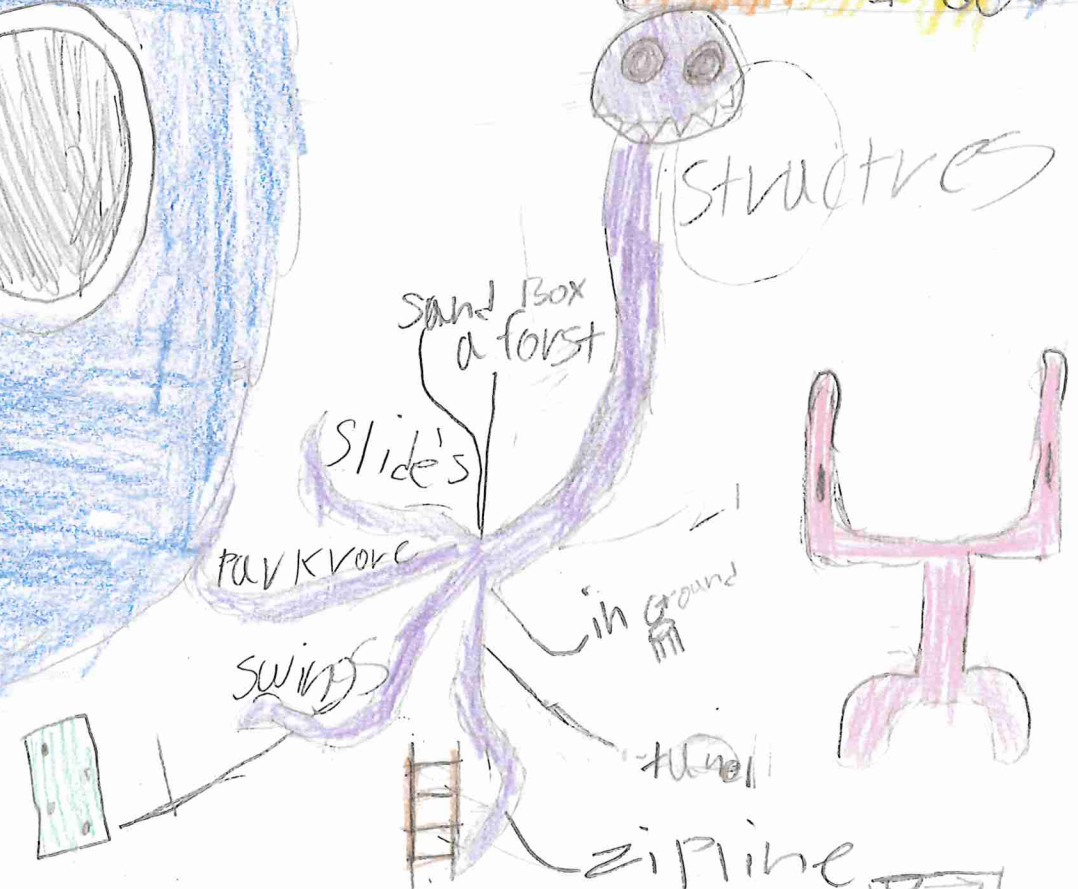
## Age

- by all ages











# No Wood Chips

Materials/colour

cobble grey white black baby blue

Metal rubber  
light up but sun absorbed

Rubber floor

Structure a Park needs

colliding giant swing

for giant slides tunnel

Huge Park  
other stuff



benches

5-38?

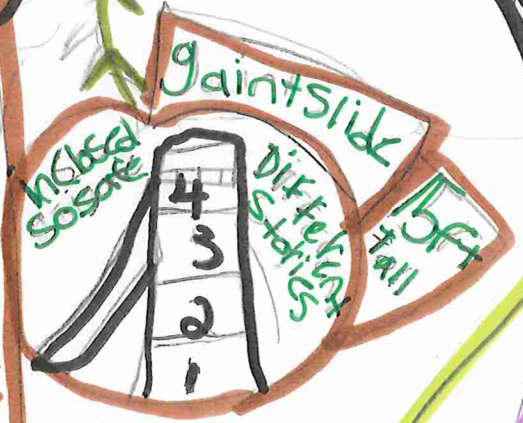
9 sun roof if needed

Accessibility / etc



parked bars but hard

like jungle  
for adults garden bed or someone else



MUST have tree house  
Dagparks?  
Must have tree house

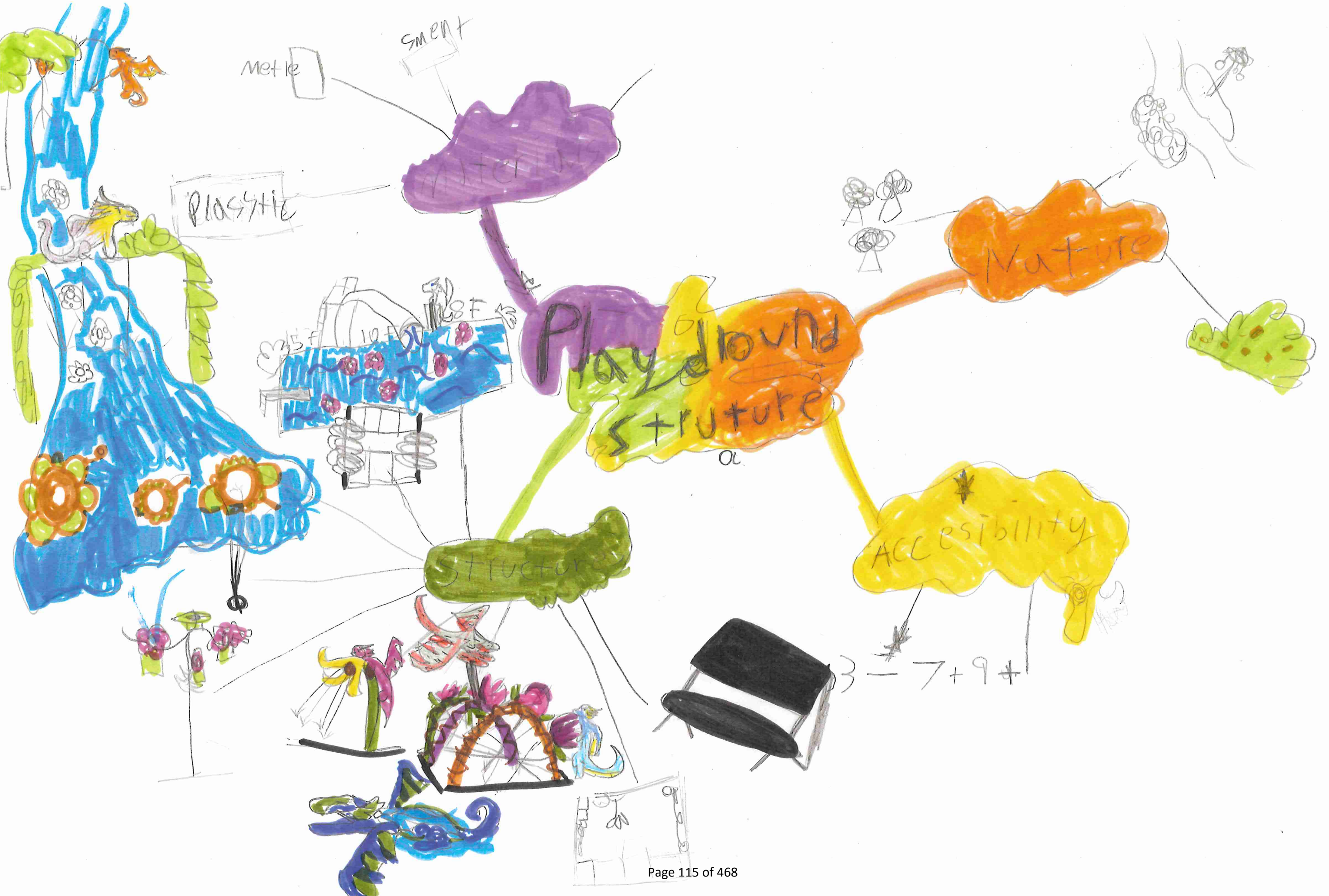
this park should be a big popular ones like Vancouver



Must have

Adventure playground







colour  
 Red  
 black  
 white  
 yellow  
 blue

EXIT COLOUR  
 EXIT

Life guards  
 Bathrooms/Changer  
 Radio

Location

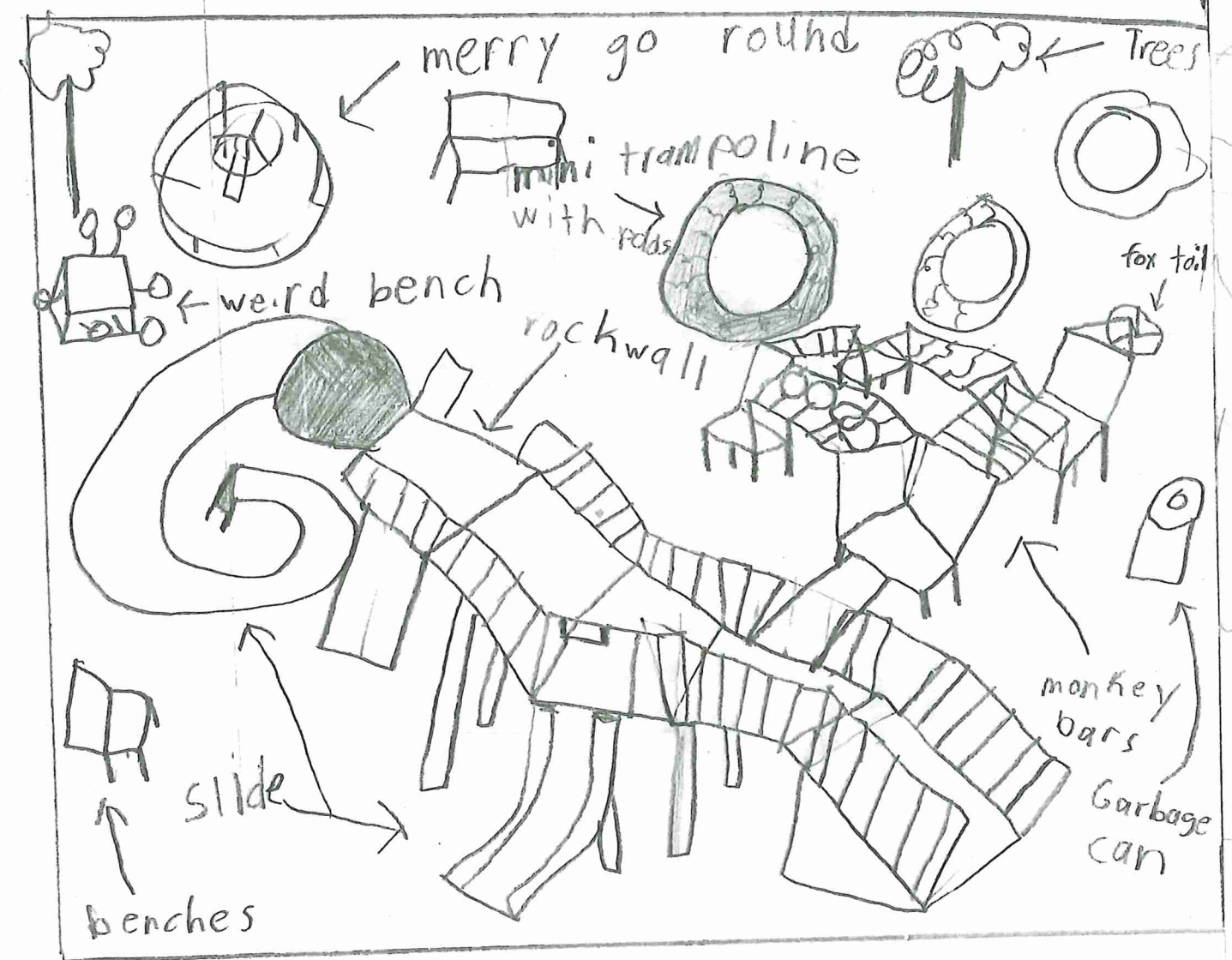
not near mud

Open and  
 closed in w  
 fall

So you can keep feet  
 clean

in a large area

courtyard



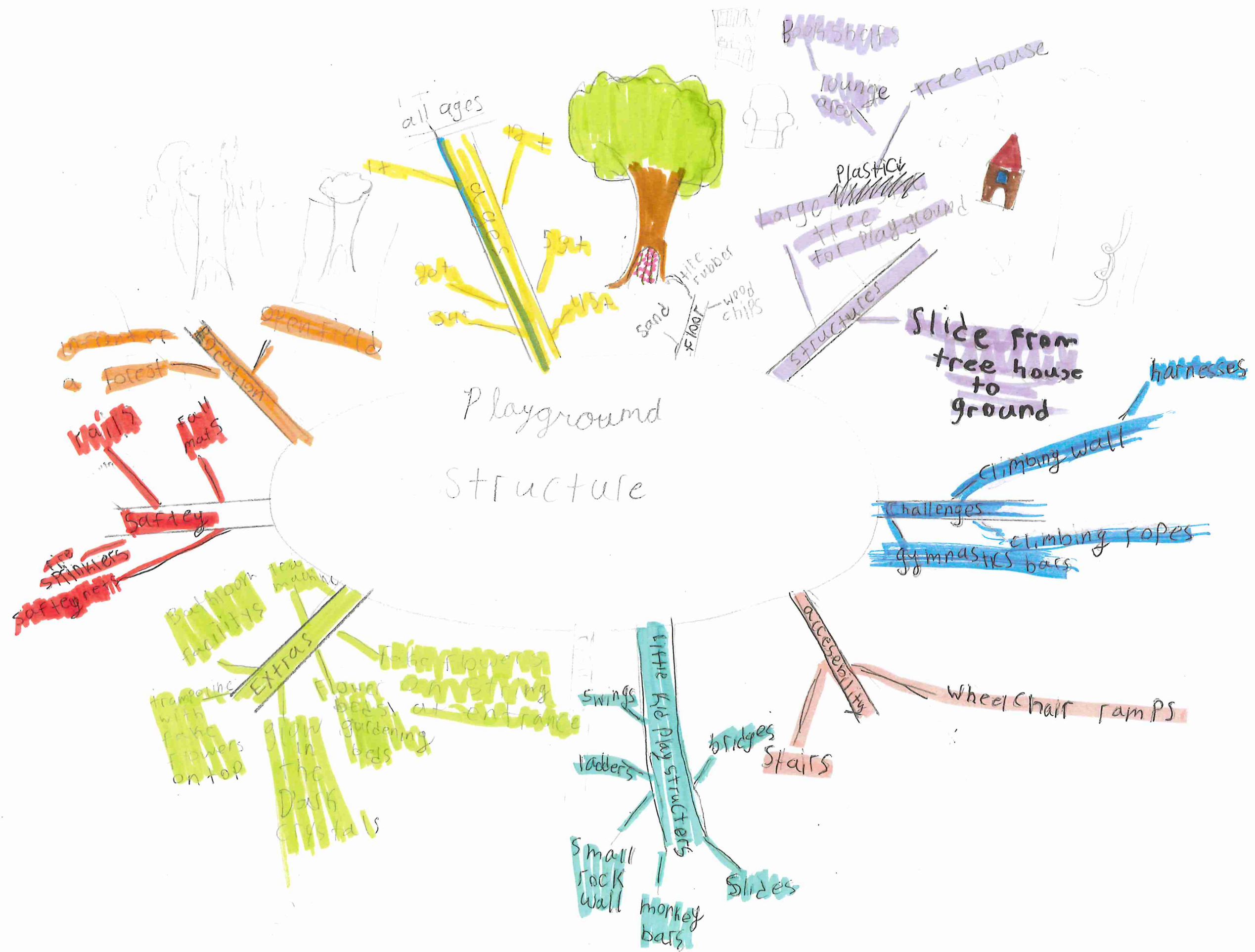
ing wall

you run











# The Community Playground Ideas

**Location**  
In a big field  
Close to the trees.

Soccer field

A basketball court next to the playground.

**Materials**  
Tires - metal - steel - plastic - Rubber

Have the tires in a certain form like an obstacle course!

Age 8-18 years

**Accessibility**  
8-16  
Eight to sixteen or younger

**Play**

Multiple slides

Have the slides leading to different stories

A big playground base with a slide and swings with a zipline

A zipline coming from the top of the main structure

Color slides  
Pumps

2 stories tall

A fort under the main structure

Slippery pavement for people in wheel chair



# Structure

lots of slides and swings + stairs to get to the top floors (3 floors) lots of ziplines around the park.

(including washrooms)

Vine bridge

Nature: lots of trees surrounding the area + trash bins bushes + animals. also include lots of grassy areas

trees

bush

# Playground Structures!

(1 baby/toddler park more safe)

(5/10 a bit more crazy) (11/14) some more fun

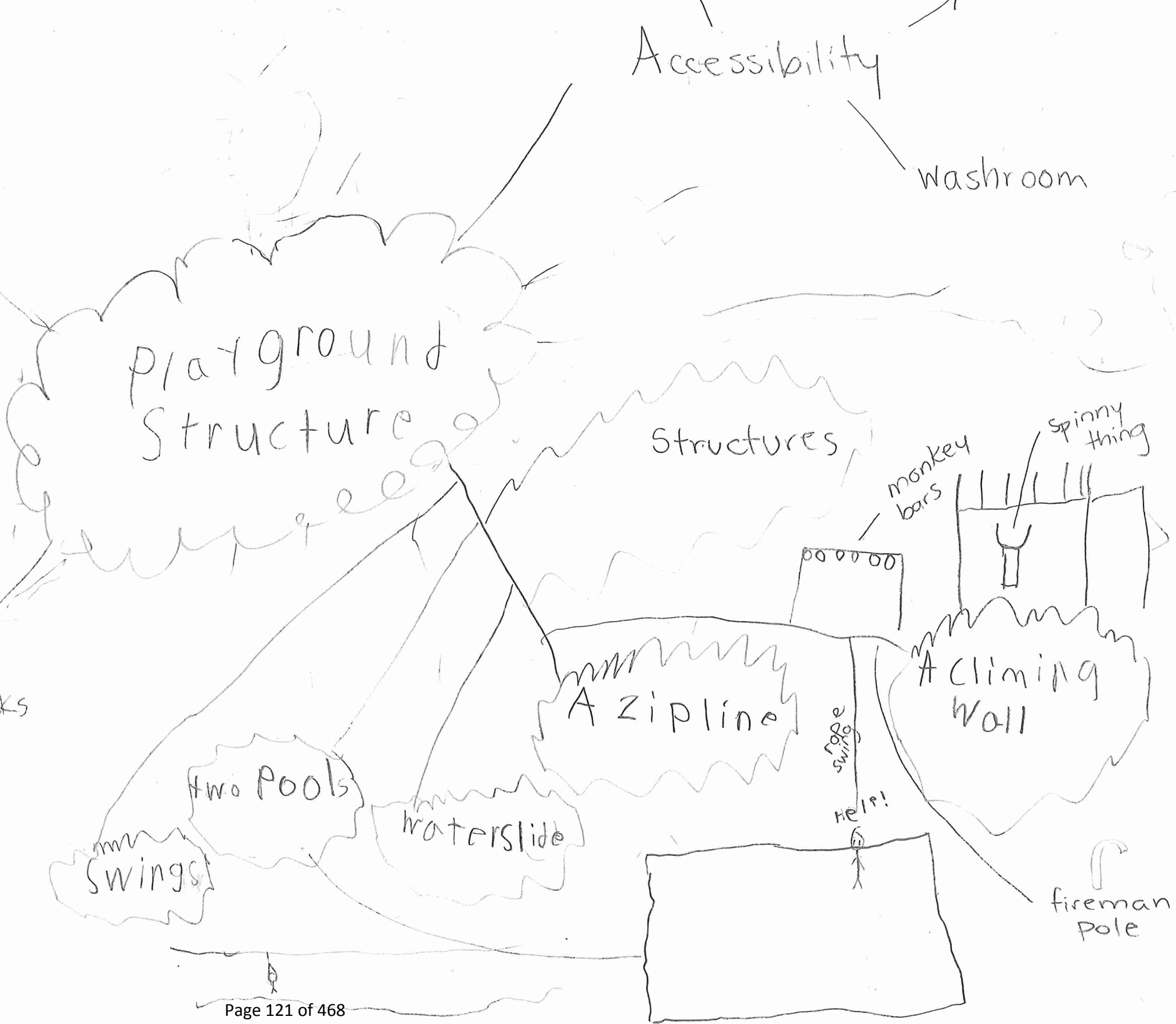
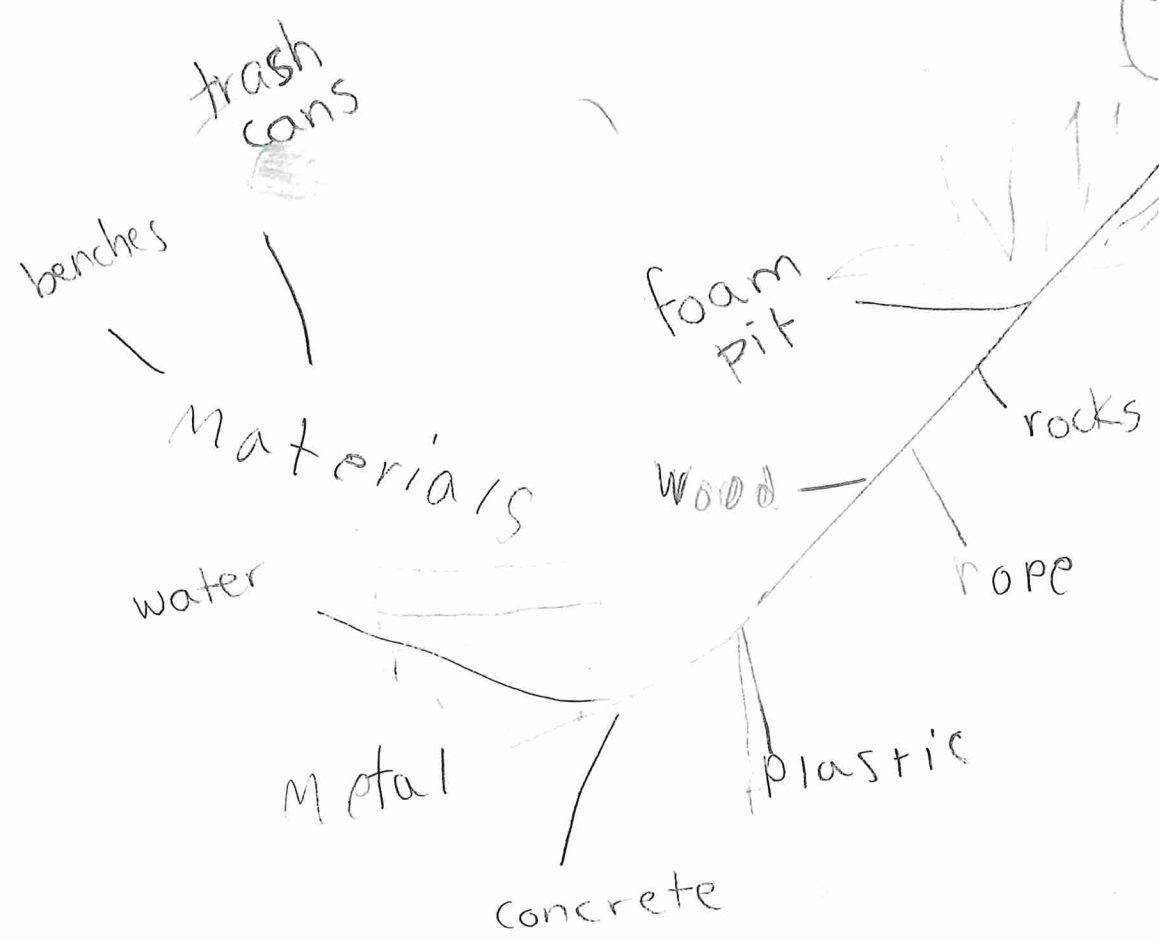
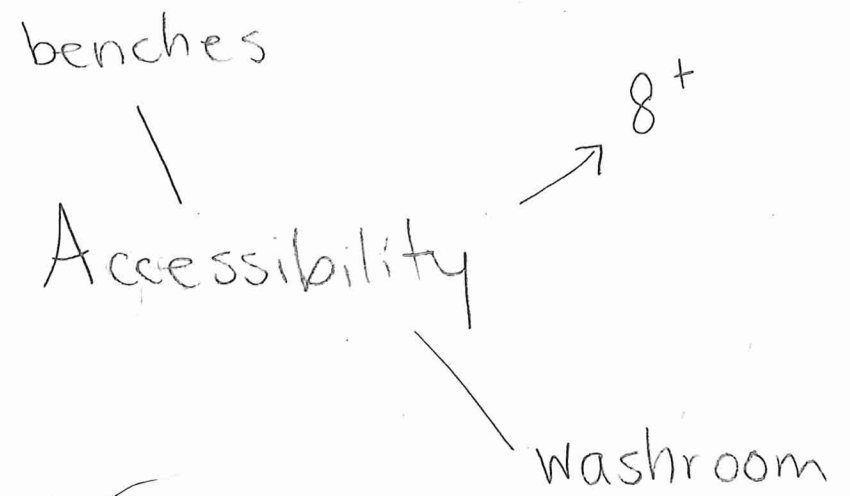
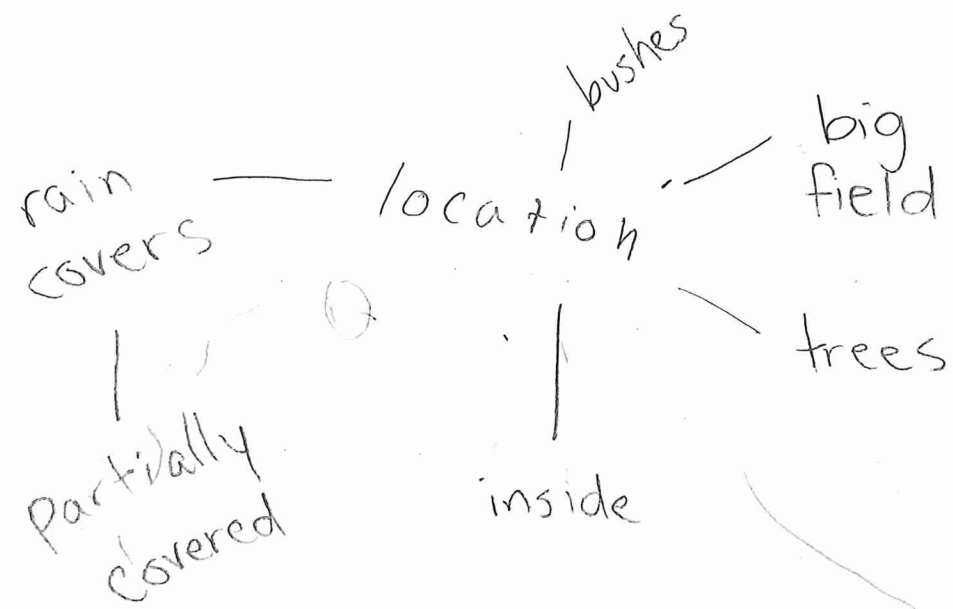
Materials: for people who don't like the feeling of wood chips and gravel best thing to use is rubber for the building its going to be rope and wood.

lots of wood and plastic

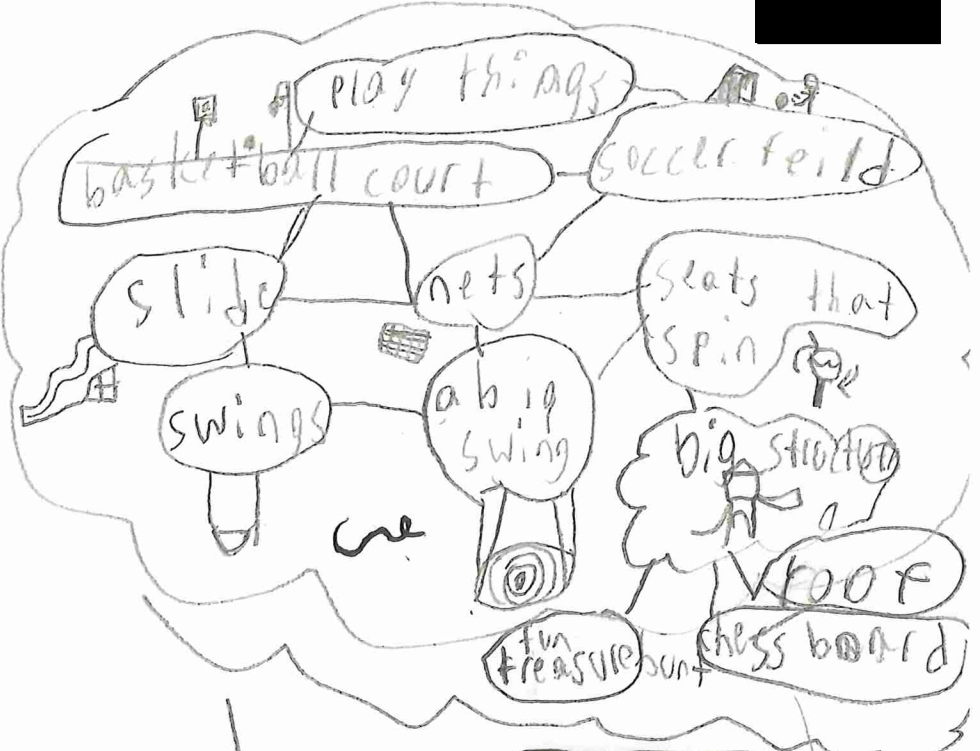
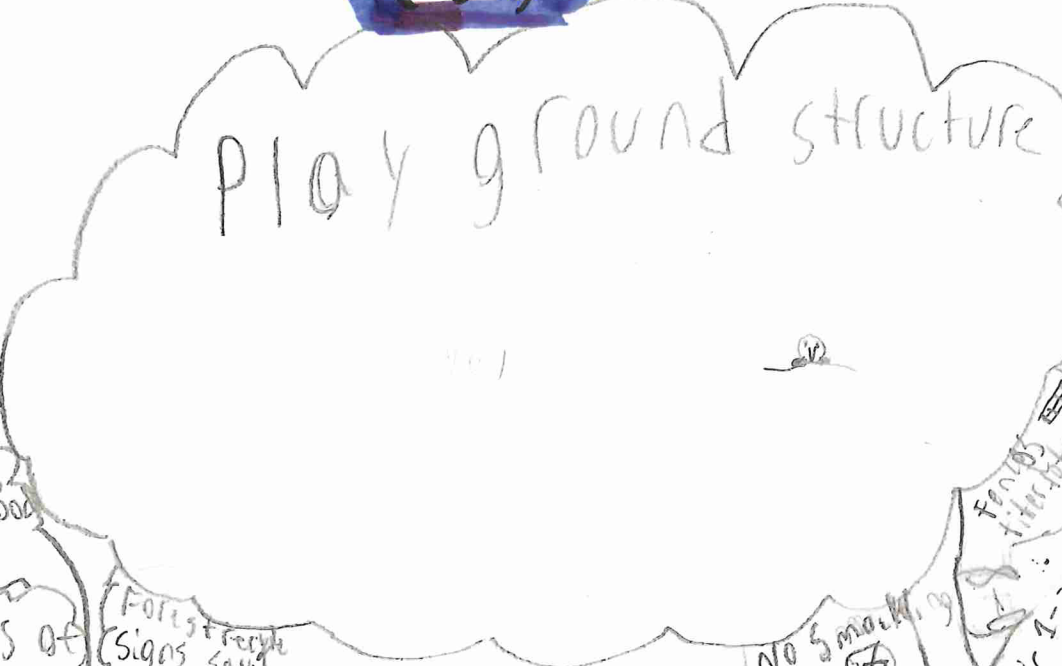
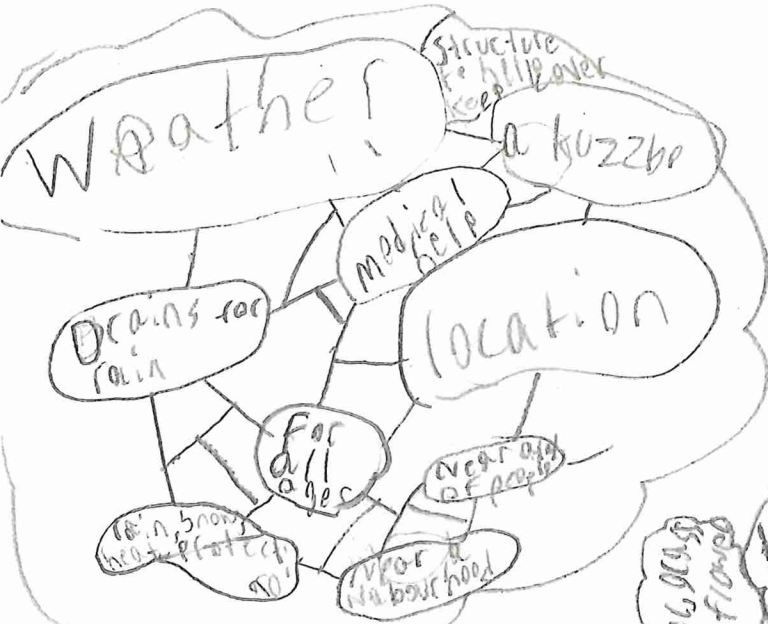
Accessibility: lots of ramps and benches/seating.

Location: The location will be by a big field with a bunch of trees!









RHE CASINO



# Park Playground Design Standards Emerging Directions

## Section 1 Planning: Framing the Standards

1. Project Purpose, Context & Process
2. Vision Statement & Goals
3. Guiding Principles
4. Playground System Today
5. Playground Classification Review
6. What We Heard from Phase 1

### Working Vision Statement

*Our City's park playgrounds are safe, fun, and inclusive places, where community members of all ages and abilities can gather, socialize, and play. Well-connected by paths and trails, playgrounds are the center of activity in Courtenay's parks - inviting and comfortable to enjoy all year long.*

*The playground system will offer a diverse range of innovative and exciting play opportunities, allowing everybody to challenge their abilities, stimulate their curiosity, and foster exploration and imagination. Each park playground will provide a different experience, all while celebrating Courtenay's unique identity and sense of place.*

### Goals and Guiding Principles



**Let's try different ways to play!**  
*Include a range of fun play opportunities*



**Everyone can play here!**  
*Design inclusive play spaces for all ages and abilities*



**Safety and comfort are key**  
*Invest in safe, activated, vibrant playgrounds*



**Nature is fun!**  
*Build playgrounds with nature in mind, connecting to the environment around us.*



**Connecting play, paths, and neighbourhoods**  
*Create connections for healthier communities by bringing people together to gather and play*

## Section 2 Design: Digging into the Details

- Accessible / Inclusive Design
- Siting the Playground



- Pathways and Connectivity
- Enclosure and Boundaries
- Surfacing and Edging
- Play Elements and Opportunities
- Trees & Planting
- Supporting Amenities
- Standard Amenities (e.g., gathering spaces, waste receptacles, shade)
- Special Amenities (e.g., washrooms, picnic shelters, game tables)
- Programming

### **Section 3 Implementation: Moving Forward**

1. Preliminary order-of magnitude cost estimating
  - Coordinated with playground industry representatives
2. Financial / budget recommendations for implementation





# Let's Play, Courtenay!

## Park Playground Design Standards



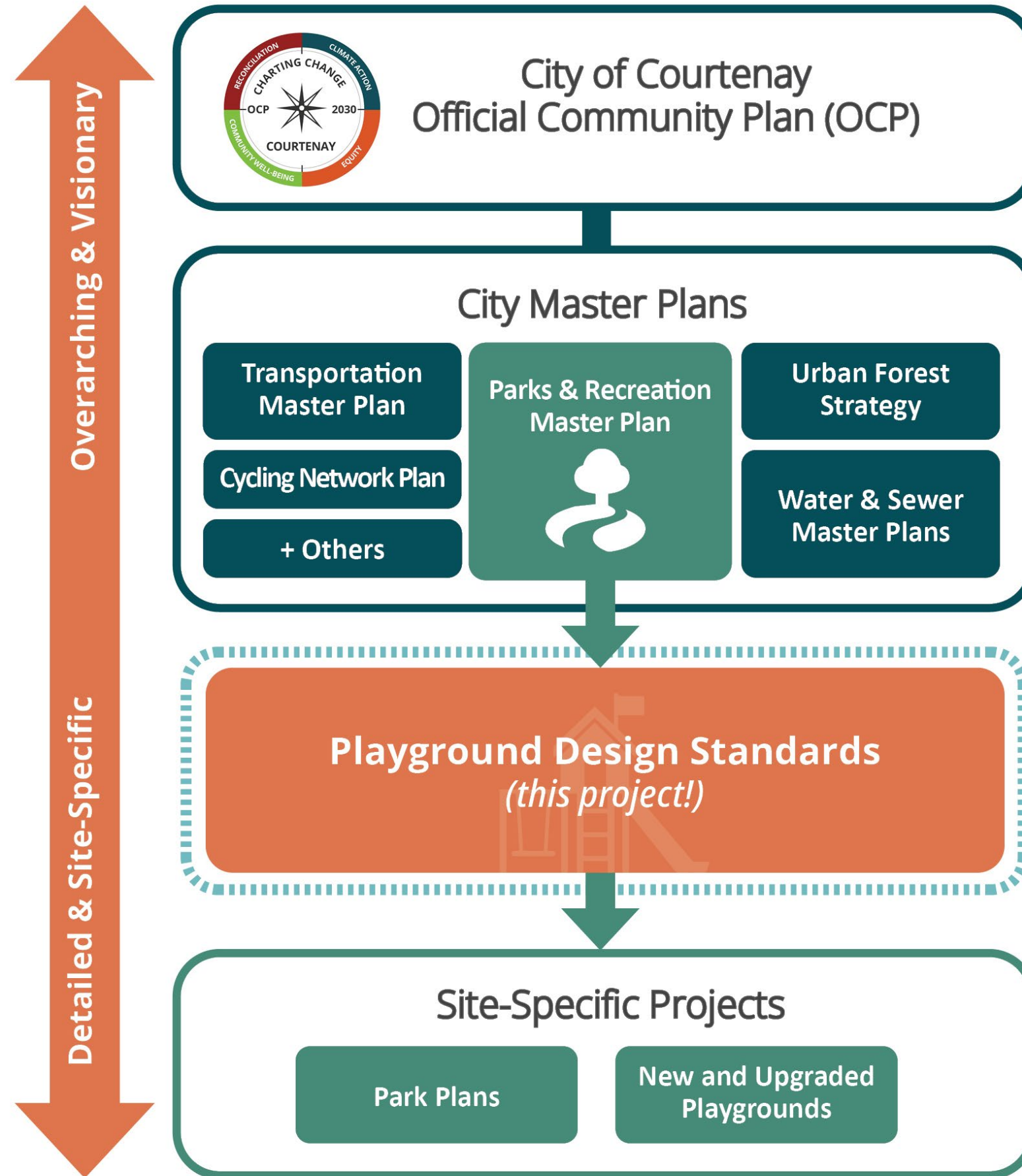
City of  
Courtenay

# Presentation Outline

- **Project Process Overview**
- **Progress & Foundation**
  - Phase 1 “What We Heard” Engagement Summary Highlights
- **Moving Forward**
  - Emerging Directions
  - Next Steps



# Project Context and Scope



# Project Process

## STEP 1 GATHERING IDEAS FOR THE PLAYGROUND SYSTEM TODAY

## STEP 2 DRAFT REVIEW PARK PLAYGROUND DESIGN STANDARDS





# Phase 1: Engagement Highlights

## *What We Heard*

---





# How Did We Engage?



## Children's Workshops

- Lake Trail Community School - Ages 8-12
- Cozy Corner Preschool - Ages 3-5

## Drawing Contest

- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> – Feb 16<sup>th</sup>

## Interest Group Meetings

- Community Groups – Feb 13<sup>th</sup> (online)
- City Staff – Feb 20<sup>th</sup> (online)

## Community Survey

- Jan 23<sup>rd</sup> – Feb 16<sup>th</sup> (online and hard copies)



# Who Did We Hear From?



**336**  
Survey  
Responses

**30**  
Children's  
Workshop  
Attendees

**19**  
Drawing  
Contest  
Submissions

**12**  
Interest Group  
Meeting  
Participants



# Key Concerns / Barriers to Play



1. Safety
2. Lack of interesting / fun things to do
3. The equipment is too old / not in good shape
4. Weather or seasonal conditions
5. Not enough places to sit (benches or other furniture)





# Draft Project Goals



**Let's try different ways to play!**  
*Include a range of fun play opportunities*



**Everyone can play here!**  
*Design universally accessible play areas that are safe and welcoming for all.*



**Nature is fun!**  
*Build playgrounds with nature in mind, connecting to the environment around us.*



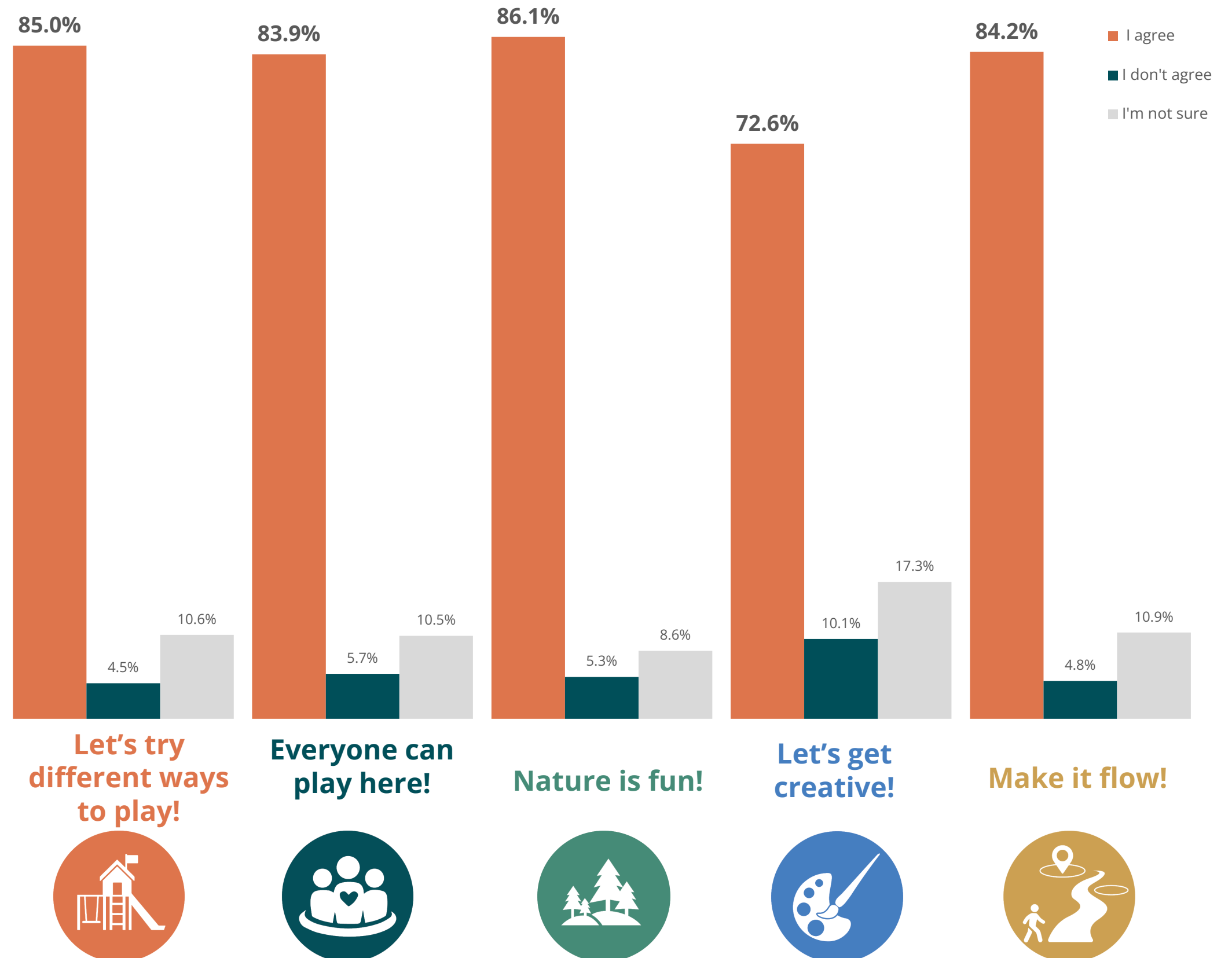
**Let's get creative!**  
*Allow for creative play and expressions of arts and culture*



**Make it flow!**  
*Connect play areas to the park and surrounding neighbourhood*



# Project Goals – Feedback



# Top Play Area Elements



1. New Play Structures (swings, slides, climbing features)
2. Nature Play Opportunities (planting, sand, rocks, logs)
3. Splash Pad / Water Play
4. Areas for Exploration (willow tunnels, paths through planting etc.)
5. Inclusive Play Features for All Ages / Abilities



# Other Ideas



**Diverse, Multi-purpose Play Opportunities**



**Spaces for Community Gathering**



**Places That Are Unique to Courtenay**

# Other Ideas



## Safety

- Evidence of substance use in or near playground areas (garbage, debris)
- Sheltering in parks
- Safety concerns about maintenance, upkeep, and condition of some existing play structures
- Respondents often bring children to natural areas outside of the city or visit play areas in nearby communities where they feel safer



**Community  
Feedback  
Phase 1**



**Emerging  
Directions  
Phase 2**



# Phase 2: Draft Standards Development

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# Emerging Directions



- **Section 1: Planning**  
*Framing the Standards*
- **Section 2: Design**  
*Digging into the Details*
- **Section 3: Implementation**  
*Moving Forward*



# Section 1 Planning: *Framing the Standards*

- Project Purpose, Context & Process
- Vision Statement & Goals / Guiding Principles
- Playground System Today
- Playground Classification Review
- What We Heard from Phase 1





# Section 1 Planning: *Framing the Standards*

## Working Vision Statement

*Our City's park playgrounds are safe, fun, and inclusive places, where community members of all ages and abilities can gather, socialize, and play. Well-connected by paths and trails, playgrounds are the center of activity in Courtenay's parks - inviting and comfortable to enjoy all year long.*

*The playground system will offer a diverse range of innovative and exciting play opportunities, allowing everybody to challenge their abilities, stimulate their curiosity, and foster exploration and imagination. Each park playground will provide a different experience, all while celebrating Courtenay's unique identity and sense of place.*

# Revised Project Goals



## **Let's try different ways to play!**

*Include a range of fun play opportunities*



## **Everyone can play here!**

*Design inclusive play spaces for all ages and abilities*



## **Safety and comfort are key**

*Invest in safe, activated, vibrant playgrounds*



## **Nature is fun!**

*Build playgrounds with nature in mind, connecting to the environment around us.*



## **Connecting play, paths, and neighbourhoods**

*Create connections for healthier communities by bringing people together to gather and play*





## Section 2 Design: *Digging into the Details*

- Accessible / Inclusive Design
- Siting the Playground
- Pathways and Connectivity
- Enclosure and Boundaries
- Surfacing and Edging
- Play Elements and Opportunities
- Trees & Planting
- Supporting Amenities
  - Standard Amenities (e.g., gathering spaces, waste receptacles, shade)
  - Special Amenities (e.g., washrooms, picnic shelters, game tables)
- Programming





# Section 3 Implementation: *Moving Forward*

order-of-magnitude cost estimating  
coordinated with playground industry representatives  
financial / budget recommendations for implementation

- Preliminary Order of Magnitude Costing
- Financial / Budget Recommendations



## Next Steps

- Draft Playground Design Standards Development
- Phase 2 Engagement (Spring 2024)
- Phase 2 Council Update
- Standards Finalization



# Thank you!

