

COLUMBIANA PROJECT PLAYGROUND



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Playground

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THE PROJECT OVERVIEW

About Columbiana Project Playground

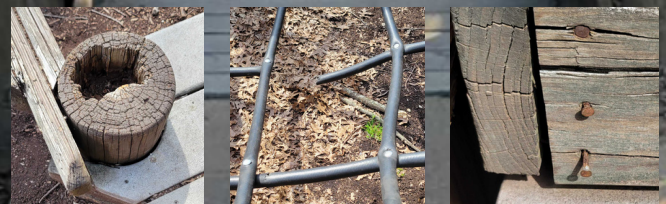
The \$1.25 million Firestone all-inclusive playground, located in Columbiana's Firestone Park, will replace the current Firestone Funland with a modern, full accessible play area designed to serve children of all abilities for generations to come.

Firestone Funland is an all-wood play structure built by community members in 1995. While much loved, thirty years of wear and tear have taken their toll. In addition, the playground is largely inaccessible to kids (or caregivers) with mobility limitations. The new Firestone all-inclusive Playground will be safer, more durable, require less maintenance, and be usable by the entire community.

Columbiana Project Playground revealed the final design for the Firestone all-Inclusive playground in February 2025 and have the approval of the City of Columbiana. They hope to open phase one of the new play area by late spring 2026.

The Firestone all-Inclusive playground is the latest in a string of improvements to Firestone Park over the last decade, an effort launched by an \$11 million, privately funded investment by the Bradford and Patricia Tingle Foundation as well as the Columbiana Restoration and Beautification Committee. These improvements position Firestone Park to remain the primary public greenspace for the City of Columbiana and surrounding communities.

Columbiana Project Playground is an independent, all-volunteer 501c(3) organization created in 2023 to coordinate design, fundraising and construction of a new playground in Firestone Park.



OUR MISSION

Columbiana Project Playground is dedicated to the planning, fundraising, building and upkeep of the Firestone all-inclusive playground, a safe, accessible and engaging play space where children and families from Columbiana Ohio and surrounding communities can explore, learn and grow together.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Accessibility: Ensure that the playground is accessible to individuals of all abilities, including those with physical, sensory, and cognitive disabilities.

Inclusivity: Foster a sense of belonging and community by providing opportunities for all individuals to play and interact together.

Safety: Implement safety measures and inclusive design features to minimize hazards and accommodate various needs.

Engagement: Collaborate with local stakeholders, including residents, organizations, and businesses, to ensure community input and support throughout the project.

KEY FEATURES

Accessibility: By incorporating the principles of universal design across all areas of the playground, from parking to play equipment, enable those with mobility limitations, including wheelchair users, as well as those with other special needs to play with their peers. Freedom of movement enables children of all abilities to self-manage social interactions and achieve increased independence from caregivers, boosting self-confidence.

Sensory Stimulation: Integrate sensory-rich experiences such as textured surfaces, roller slides, musical elements and interactive panels to engage children with sensory processing disorders.

Physical and Cognitive Development: The Firestone all-inclusive playground's varied play structures combined with ample room for free play and the walking path encourages healthy childhood development.

STEM: Integrate real-world learning experiences into the playground design, creating a learning lab for science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Multi-Generational: Designing a playground for children of varied ability also opens the play area to caregivers with mobility limitations who might wish to play alongside their children or be nearby in case they are needed.

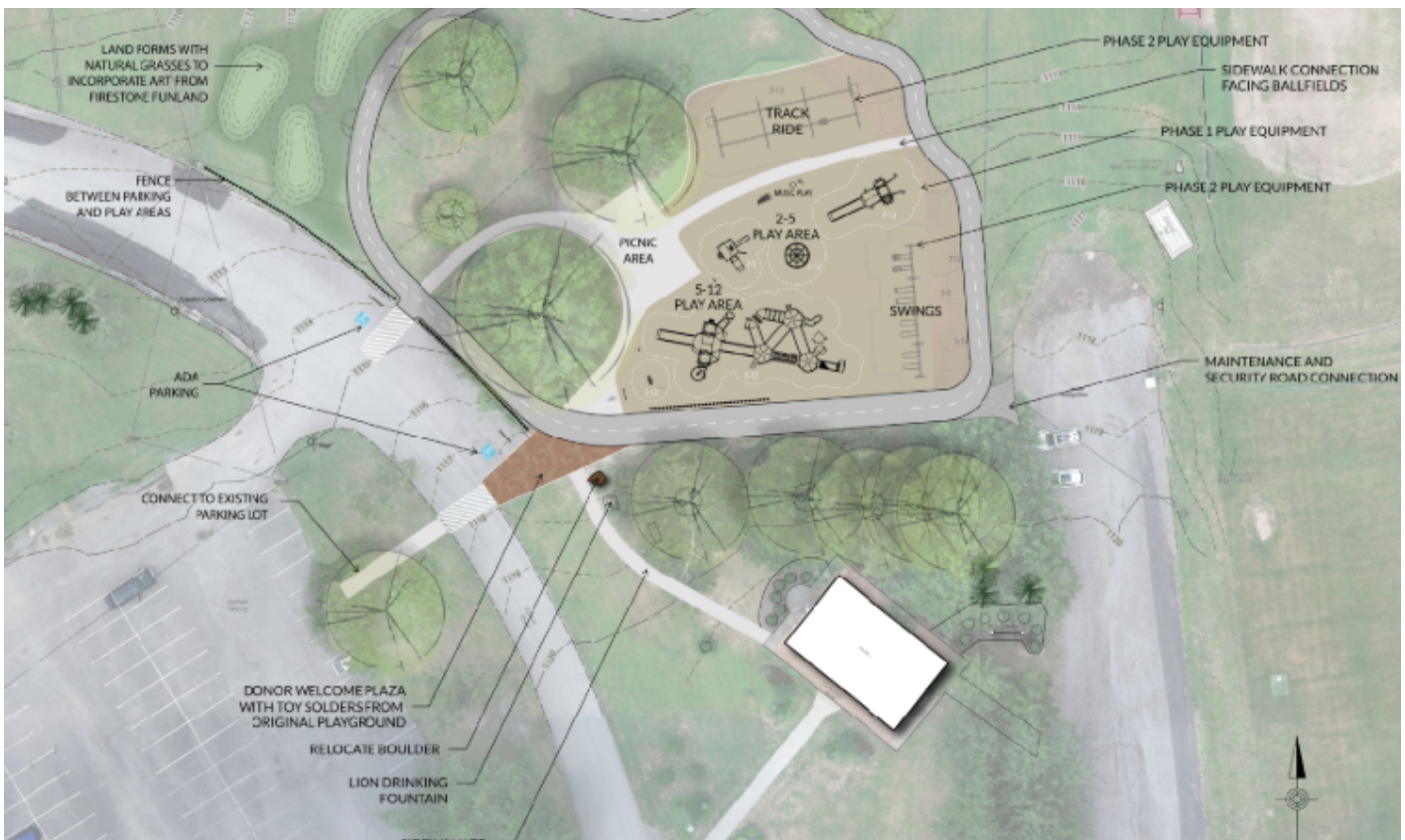
Shade: Mature tree cover and awnings in the picnic area, along with a turf "carpet" over the rubberized base, will help regulate temperatures and increase comfort on hot days, especially important for playground users whose bodies may struggle to regulate temperature.

Safety: Low maintenance, professionally designed playground equipment, appropriate clearances between playground elements, a rubberized base surface and physical barriers where necessary enable fun, active play while minimizing the risks of serious injury.

DESIGN

To ensure the Firestone all-inclusive playground met our goal of accessibility while also continuing the aesthetic, color palette overall design sense of recent park renovations, Columbiana Project Playground partnered with Herbert, Rowland & Gubric, Inc. (HRG) and Penchura.

An expert in fully inclusive playgrounds, Penchura has designed and built play areas throughout Ohio and Michigan. HRG, a leading municipal engineering and design firm serving Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland and West Virginia, developed the master plan currently guiding park restoration and has implemented many of the recent improvements. Columbiana Project Playground is very grateful to the Bradford and Patricia Tingle Foundation for encouraging the partnership with HRG.



Design Details

Parking and Donor Welcome Area

Accessibility starts with improved ADA parking near the playground's two primary entrances, along with a broad donor welcome area. Essentially the lobby of the playground, this area will feature new versions of the playground's beloved toy soldiers, the equally beloved lion-head water fountain and space to recognize the many community members who are coming together to create the new Firestone all-inclusive playground.

Nature and Green Space

Mature trees and expansive lawns within the walking path provided shaded space for spontaneous games of tag or catch, toddlers practicing steps, family picnics and groups to engage in organized group games. Unprogrammed space allows children to develop their own play rhythms, enhancing childhood development. Space away from the energy of the active play areas serves children and adults who tire easily, need calming space or prefer to play quietly while siblings or peers are being more active.

With exception of a few barriers separating children from the parking area and park loop road, the entire play area is open and free flowing, making it easy for caregivers to simultaneously supervise children of multiple ages and abilities. The open design of playground elements enables caregivers to maintain near constant visual contact with children. The grouping of play equipment by age/ability and proper spacing between playground elements helps manage traffic flow while turf/natural grass transitions and the walking path visually corral playground users.

For Children & Families:

- Running & Tag Games – Classic games like tag, red rover, and duck-duck-goose thrive in open areas.
- Ball Games – Kickball, soccer, and catch can be played without needing dedicated fields.
- Frisbee & Disc Golf – A great way to enjoy a casual or structured game.
- Kite Flying – Open spaces with minimal obstructions are perfect for flying kites.
- Chalk Art & Outdoor Painting – Sidewalk chalk or portable easels encourage creativity.
- Parachute Games – Large parachutes are fun for group activities.
- Obstacle Courses – Cones, ropes, or natural elements can be used to create challenges.
- Bubble Play – Kids love chasing and popping bubbles in an open area.
- Storytime or Puppet Shows – A shaded green space is great for interactive storytelling.

For Fitness & Well-being:

- Yoga & Meditation – A peaceful outdoor setting enhances mindfulness and relaxation.

For Social Gatherings:

- Picnics – Families and friends can bring blankets and enjoy outdoor meals.
- Community Events – Outdoor movie nights, farmers' markets, or pop-up activities.
- Birthday Parties & Celebrations – A free space can be transformed for special occasions.

For Nature & Relaxation:

- Birdwatching & Wildlife Observation – Parks often attract diverse wildlife.
- Reading or Journaling – A quiet, shaded area makes for a perfect reading nook.
- Star Gazing or Astronomy Nights – An open field is ideal for looking at the night sky.
- Blanket Lounging – Simply enjoy the fresh air and unwind.

Whether for active play, fitness, socializing, or relaxation, an open green space in a park provides endless opportunities for everyone to enjoy the outdoors.

Walking Path / Kids Bike Loop

Fully surrounding the playground, the 8' wide, paved kids bike loop creates a visual boundary between the Firestone all-inclusive playground and the rest of Firestone Park. The path provides an alternative to the park's automobile friendly park loop road for kids to learn to ride bikes, parents to push strollers or older adults to get in their steps. The pathway will also allow emergency vehicles and maintenance staff to easily access the entire playground area and facilitate night-time safety patrols.

Barriers

Barriers separating the all-inclusive playground from nearby traffic and parking areas are essential for ensuring safety and accessibility. While the final design is still being determined, it will incorporate a variety of materials such as rubber tires, aluminum fencing, rocks, bricks, landscaping, and other durable building elements to create a secure and welcoming environment.

Picnic and Shaded Area

A paved, shaded picnic area lies in the center of the Firestone all-inclusive playground. Furnished with ADA accessible tables, this area provides the perfect "base camp" from which caregivers can supervise children and to which children can return for snacks, drinks or even a picnic meal. Essentially the playground's living room, the picnic area gives families space to relax, enjoy time together or even have a small birthday party.

Connectivity

A new network of pathways will improve connections between the playground area and three key park areas: Fisher Stadium, Spruce Tunnel Pavilion and the ball fields.

Fisher Stadium, which contains the nearest bathrooms to the playground along with additional parking, will be linked to the donor welcome area by a crosswalk on the park loop road and a new pathway.

Spruce Run Pavilion is popular with families and other groups who want exclusive space for gatherings but still want easy access to the playground. Currently pavilion users have to cross an uneven lawn or walk on the park loop road to traverse the short distance to the playground, making the walk difficult for those with limited mobility and dangerous for children.

Located behind the playground, the ball fields host high school baseball and softball as well as youth softball. They also provide additional parking. A new pathway will connect the ball fields parking lot with the picnic area.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

The incorporation of specialized equipment enables seamless interaction among individuals of all abilities, ensuring full inclusion for everyone—from those with mobility and communication challenges to those without.



Communication Board

A communication board at an all-inclusive playground is essential for promoting accessibility, inclusivity, and meaningful interaction among individuals of all abilities.

Enhances Communication for Non-Verbal Children: Those with speech delays, autism, or other disabilities rely on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) tools to express themselves. A communication board with symbols, pictures, or text allows those who are non-verbal communicate their needs, feelings, or play preferences.

Encourages Social Interaction: It helps bridge communication gaps between individuals of different abilities, fostering inclusion and friendship by allowing everyone to engage and play together.

Promotes Independence and Confidence: Those who may otherwise struggle to express themselves can navigate the playground more independently, making choices and engaging with peers without frustration.



We-Go-Round

Wheelchair Accessibility: Unlike traditional Merry-Go-Rounds, the We-Go-Round is designed to accommodate wheelchairs, allowing children who use mobility aids to actively participate in the fun without needing to transfer out of their chair. The ground-level entry makes it easy for access without barriers.

Promotes Social Inclusion and Cooperative Play: The spacious, open design encourages those with and without disabilities to play together, fostering friendships and shared experiences. Everyone can work together to spin the structure, promoting teamwork and cooperative play.

Encourages Independence and Engagement: The We-Go-Round allows individuals to control the speed and movement, giving them a sense of independence and decision-making in their play. Handrails and accessible seating ensure that everyone can participate safely and comfortably.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Continued



Roller Slide with Transfer bench

The main climbing structure's network of ramps terminates at a roller slide with a transfer bench. Unlike traditional slides, roller slides reduce static electricity, making them safer for those with cochlear implants or other medical devices. The gentle soothing sensation of the rollers can also help those with sensory needs to self-regulate and be a calming, yet fun, experience for children with autism.

With the addition of a transfer bench, the Roller Slide becomes easily usable by those using wheelchairs and mobility aids to easily self-transfer onto or off of the slide. For those unable to self-transfer, the benches enable caregivers to assist with less lifting and strain.

Facilitates Easy Transfers for those with Mobility Challenges: The transfer bench provides a stable surface for those using wheelchairs or mobility aids to move safely onto the slide, promoting independence in play. Caregivers can also assist more easily without lifting, reducing strain and making play more accessible.

Inclusive Play for All Abilities: Unlike traditional slides, roller slides reduce static electricity, making them safer for those with cochlear implants or other medical devices. The rolling surface provides a different sensory experience, benefiting children with sensory processing disorders or autism.

Encourages Sensory Stimulation: The tactile feedback from the rollers offers a gentle, soothing sensation, helping those with sensory needs to self-regulate. The movement of the rollers can also provide deep-pressure input, which is calming for some.

Encourages Confidence and Independence: The transfer bench and accessible design empower those with disabilities to play alongside their peers with less reliance on adult assistance, fostering self-confidence.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Continued



We-Go-Swing

Wheelchair Accessibility Without Transfer: Unlike traditional adaptive swings, the We-Go-Swing allows those in wheelchairs to roll directly onto the platform without needing to transfer out of their chair. This promotes independence and ensures that those with mobility challenges can enjoy swinging just like their peers.

Inclusive Play for Everyone: The spacious design accommodates multiple users at once, allowing everyone with and without disabilities to swing together, fostering friendships and shared play experiences. Caregivers or siblings can join in the fun, making it a multigenerational play experience.

Encourages Social Interaction and Cooperation: The interactive design allows users to work together to create movement, promoting teamwork, social skills, and communication. Everyone can contribute, whether by pushing, riding, or using the interactive handles.



Market Cafe (Target ages 2 to 5)

A contained, lower intensity area away from the hustle and bustle of the main climbing structure gives younger children a safe place to play away from higher-energy activities. The fully accessible lower level provides a play area for toddlers using wheelchairs or mobility aids, as well as for all children needing a calm, quiet space to play. The upper level provides an outlet for those needing to climb and slide. The café theme fosters creative role-playing, allowing children to play cook, serve or shop.

Encourages Imaginative & Social Play: A toddler café fosters creative role-playing, allowing children to pretend they are cooking, serving, or running a restaurant. Encourages peer interaction and communication, helping children build social and language skills

Provides a Safe & Engaging Space for Toddlers: A contained, lower-intensity area within the playground gives younger children a safe place to play away from high-energy activities. Soft surfaces and easy-to-navigate play stations make the space safe for children still developing mobility skills.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Continued



Ramps

By incorporating a network of ramps into the main climbing structure, the playground becomes a truly inclusive space where those using wheelchairs, walkers or mobility aids can independently navigate, explore and engage alongside their peers. They also provide a clear, accessible route through the structure for those with visual impairments, balance difficulties or cognitive disabilities who may struggle with uneven terrain, steps, ladders or climbing walls.

Inclusive Play: Children, caregivers, parents and grandparents with mobility challenges using wheelchairs, walkers, or strollers can move throughout the playground independently.

Supports Development of Physical & Cognitive Skills: Helps those with mobility challenges build confidence and independence in movement. Encourages gross motor development for everyone, as ramps require balance and coordination. Provides a clear, accessible route for those with cognitive disabilities who may struggle with uneven terrain or steps.

Creates Safe and Easy Navigation: Ramps provide a gentle, gradual incline, reducing fall risks compared to steps or ladders. They allow those with visual impairments or balance difficulties to navigate the playground safely.

PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Continued



Interactive Panels

The interactive panels will integrate awareness of mental health, nutrition and STEM topics into the play area. The panels educate, encourage curiosity and support emotional wellbeing for any child. They also make it easier for early childhood educators to integrate playground trips into the curriculum.

BUDGET PLAN

	Value	Includes
Phase 1	\$680,000	- Removal of the existing "Funland" - Bringing soil down to 6" below grade - Phase 1 equipment & surface - Initial landscaping and design
Phase 2	Estimated \$520,000	- Additional landscaping - Additional picnic area and shades - Swings - Track ride - Additional surfacing
Maintenance	\$50,000	Used for yearly maintenance and repairs
TOTAL	~\$1,250,000	

Funding Breakdown:

- Phase 1 Project Cost: \$680,000
- Funds Raised (as of February 2026): \$530,000
- Remaining Funds Needed by April 1st for Phase 1: \$150,000

FUTURE PLANS & MILESTONES

Due to the deterioration of the current playground, we divided the new playground project into manageable and affordable phases. This approach also established additional milestones to guide the project's progress.

Fundraising will continue Milestone 1 – 4



DEMOGRAPHICS

Columbiana, Ohio native Harvey S. Firestone gifted the 68-acre Firestone Park to his hometown in 1935. The park, which contains a pool, sports courts, gardens, walking paths, picnic shelters, pavilions, an amphitheater, sports facilities and the existing Firestone Funland playground, is the only public park in the City of Columbiana and is the primary public greenspace for large portions of northeast Columbiana and southeast Mahoning counties.*

An estimated 250,000 distinct visitors use Firestone Park in a year, whether local residents who use the park regularly or out-of-town guests who come for athletic events, family reunions, concerts or to attend annual events including the Fourth of July Celebration and the Joy of Christmas Light Show. Centrally located within the city, many residents can easily reach Firestone Park by foot or bicycle.

Straddling the line between Columbiana and Mahoning counties, the City of Columbiana has an estimated population of 6,688 (2022) and is slightly growing. An older community, 27% of residents are above 64 years of age. 18% are under eighteen, while almost half of the population is between the ages of 25 and 64. The community has very few adults between the ages of 18 and 24. 94% of residents identify as white, with multi-racial and Hispanic largely splitting the remainder. Columbiana has a median income of \$46,000 and a poverty rate of just under 10%.

Note

*Specific areas served include: City of Columbiana, Village of Leetonia, Rogers, New Waterford, New Springfield and North Lima and all or portions of the townships of Fairfield, Unity and Salem in Columbiana County and Beaver, Springfield and Green in Mahoning County.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Michaela Good

President

Michaela Good, a dedicated mother of two girls, spent a decade working as a lifeguard at Firestone Park before being appointed to the Firestone Park and Cemetary Board in 2024. As a Vice President at a marketing and advertising company, she balances a dynamic career with motherhood. In her free time, she enjoys traveling, relaxing at the beach, and watching basketball.

Stephanie Kale

Vice President

Stephanie Kale, a devoted mother of three, understands firsthand the importance of all-inclusive playgrounds. Her oldest daughter, Sofia, was diagnosed with leukodystrophy in 2020 and now relies on a wheelchair. When she's not balancing motherhood or her career at Old Dominion Trucking, Stephanie loves spending time outdoors with her husband, Rodney.

Fritz Nelson

Treasure

Fritz Nelson is the pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Columbiana and a devoted father to one son, whose earliest memories include playing at Firestone Park. In a previous chapter of his life, he was a passionate advocate for green spaces and parklands, playing a key role in the planning stages of the \$2 million Lynch Family Skatepark in Cambridge, MA. With extensive experience in fundraising and community engagement, Fritz continues to foster meaningful connections and support local initiatives.

Lauren Halverstadt

Secretary

Lauren Halverstadt, a devoted mother of three girls, is a preschool teacher at Joshua Dixon Elementary in Columbiana, Ohio. When she's not cheering on her daughters at their games and practices, she enjoys reading, playing with her dogs, and spending quality time with her husband, Shawn.

OUR TEAM

Lauren Wiley

Event Committee Chair

Lauren Wiley, a soon-to-be mom, spent several years as a lifeguard at Firestone Park. When she's not casting arms and legs at Akron Children's hospital, she can be found working on the family farm, bartending at Birdfish Brewery, spending time with her husband, Cooper, and cheering on the Ohio State Buckeyes.

Mallory DeMaiolo

Social Media Manager

As a mom of three energetic boys, she understands the importance of having access to a safe playground. When she's not running between sports practices and games, Mallory, along with her husband, Nick, dedicate their time to bettering their community by serving on multiple nonprofit boards. If any free time, you can find her in Florida with her family!

Monica Blasdel

Community Outreach

Monica Blasdel, a devoted mother of two girls, serves as the State Representative for Ohio's 79th District, tirelessly advocating for the citizens of Ohio in Columbus. When she's not championing her community, she enjoys spending quality time with her husband, Chuck, and their family.

AVAILABLE SPONSORSHIPS



MAIN STRUCTURE & INITIAL LANDSCAPING

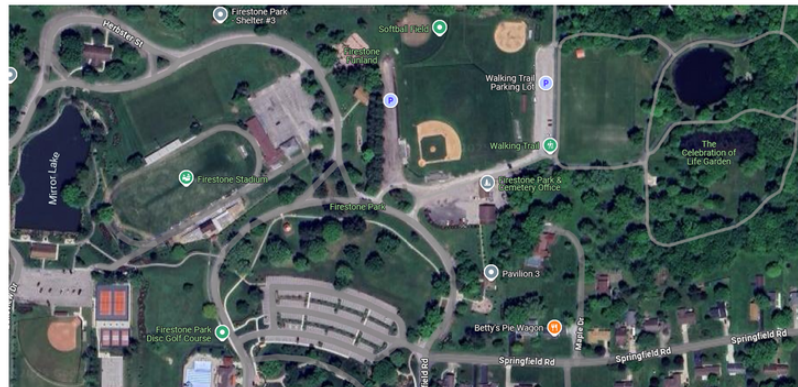
\$350,000
Includes Equipment & Surfacing



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN INTO THE FIRESTONE PARK MASTER PLAN

\$24,200

**FULLY FUNDED BY:
BRADFORD AND PATRICIA
TINGLE FOUNDATION**



FULLY FUNDED BY:
COLUMBIANA COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

ACTIVITY LOOP

\$15,000

ENTRANCE WAY

\$20,000



AVAILABLE SPONSORSHIPS



MARKET CAFE

\$60,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:



ROLLERSLIDE & TRANSFER BENCH

\$28,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:
MARK & MICHELE PEASE

TUNNEL SLIDE

\$8,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:



SLIDE WINDER

\$5,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:



WHOOSHWINDER SLIDE

\$15,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:
UPPER ROOM CHURCH

SHADES & PICNIC AREA

\$25,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing

AVAILABLE SPONSORSHIPS



FULLY FUNDED BY:
GREG & ANN GUSTAFSON

COMMUNICATION BOARD

\$5,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:
HUMTOWN PRODUCTS

STEM PANELS

\$6,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:
FARMER'S BANK

STEM PANELS

\$6,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



FULLY FUNDED BY:
JANET MONG

STEM PANELS

\$6,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



WE-GO-ROUND

\$100,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing



WE-GO-SWING

\$90,000

Includes Equipment & Surfacing

THANK YOU!

While we have so many people to thank, we would like to honor our \$5,000+ donors so far!

FOUNDATIONS & COMMITTEES

Columbiana Community Foundation
Bradford and Patricia Tingle Foundation
S & B Philanthropic Foundation
R & B Committee

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TOP INDIVIDUALS

Mark & Michele Pease
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Janet Mong

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_____ \$1000 _____ \$5000 _____ \$10000 _____ Other Amount \$ _____

Columbiana Project Playground, Inc is a registered 501c3 (EIN: 34-1781819)

Donations can be mailed to PO Box 156 Columbiana, Ohio 444408

Please make checks payable to Columbiana Project Playground

CONTACT US FOR FURTHER INQUIRIES



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