

City of Toronto – Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Centennial Park Playground and Water Play Improvements

Phase 2: In-Classroom Youth Engagement

May 2023

Tonya Crawford, Senior Project Coordinator, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Alex Lavasidis, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator, Parks, Forestry & Recreation



Project Team

City of Toronto

Tonya Crawford, Senior Project Coordinator | Parks Development + Capital Projects

Daniel Fusca, Manager, Public Consultation, Parks, Forestry & Recreation

Alex Lavasidis, Senior Public Consultation Coordinator

PMA

Leslie Morton, Principle

Dylan Cassidy, Project Manager

SAFFY

Nadia Galati, Principal

Casey Hinton, Senior Strategist



This report has been prepared by SAFFY, a third-party strategy, research, and engagement consultant for the City of Toronto Parks, Forestry & Recreation.

Contents

1 Introduction	3
1.1 Workshop Purpose	3
1.2 Workshop Overview and Summary	3
2 What We Heard	4
Conclusion	6
Appendix A	6

1 Introduction

This document provides a summary of the in-classroom engagement workshops with youth that took place May 3rd, 2023 in a Grade 5 class at Mill Valley Junior School, and a Grade 6 and Grade 7 class at Hollycrest Middle School that saw 80 students ages 10 to 14 engaged.

1.1 Workshop Purpose

The purpose of these workshops was to::

- Introduce students to park planning and design
- Share project information, playground and water play concept designs and potential features
- Collect student input and feedback on proposed designs and features

1.2 Workshop Overview and Summary

Following a short presentation by the SAFFY team, the youth were guided through two activities. Each workshop lasted 1.5-2 hour each, taking place directly in the classroom with the support of their teachers.

Activity #1

Aspects of two different concept design and proposed playground and water play features were presented on slides to the entire class. Following along on their printed activity sheets, students were invited to make their selections; in some cases choosing their favourite between two items and in other cases selecting their top three favourites from a list of options. Following each portion of the activity, students were engaged in conversation around their selections and emerging preferences from their class and amongst their classmates.

Image 1: Activity 1 Worksheet

ABOUT YOU	PARK DESIGN	PARK PLAY FEATURES
Name: _____ Age: _____	Circle your favourites below! Which concept do you like best?  DESIGN #1: FOLDS  DESIGN #2: WAVES	Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite. <input type="checkbox"/> Swings <input type="checkbox"/> Water & Sand Play <input type="checkbox"/> Trampolines <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside Slide and Steppers <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Toys (Individual) <input type="checkbox"/> Spring Toys (Group) <input type="checkbox"/> Rubber Play Mounds
My favourite way to play in a park is:	Which climbing structure do you like best?  TOWER STRUCTURE  ROPE COURSE	Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite. <input type="checkbox"/> Ziptracks <input type="checkbox"/> Hillside Slide and Steppers <input type="checkbox"/> Group Disk Swing <input type="checkbox"/> Spinners <input type="checkbox"/> Balance and Post Play
My dream playground and water play area includes:	Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?  BIG SWINGS  RUBBER HILLS	Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite. <input type="checkbox"/> Water Jets <input type="checkbox"/> Water Bubblers <input type="checkbox"/> Water Rings <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket Dump <input type="checkbox"/> Water Channel <input type="checkbox"/> Tall Sprayer <input type="checkbox"/> Mister

Activity #2

With a more in-depth understanding of what the playground and water play area might include, students were invited to design their own playground. They were challenged to:

- Design their own playground and water play area using the elements they selected as their favourite on their activity sheet in Activity #1
- Use a layout map of the Concept Design they preferred as their base (although they were also given the option of working on blank paper)
- Encouraged to consider seating and gathering spaces for all ages, shade, diversity of park users and safety.

The resulting drawings and design layouts highlight their preferred feature options and offer inspiration for the Project Team in making decisions as they work towards the preferred option.

2 What We Heard

The following section contains a summary of the feedback received during in-classroom youth workshops. See Appendix B for some examples of responses, activity sheets, and drawings.

The youth were generally excited to be included in the design process and had positive feedback about the options presented to them. They were excited about the improvements to a park they know well, and engaged in both activities and the feedback they provided.

The majority of youth preferred the FOLDS concept (54%) over the WAVES concept (36%). Additionally, youth preferred:

Centennial Playground and Water Play Area In-Class Youth Workshop Summary

- Tower climbing structure (77%) over the rope course (13%)
- Rubber mound pavillion (48%) over the group swings (36%)

When asked their top 3 favourite junior play items youth selected:

- Trampoline (82%)
- Swings (62%)
- Sensory play with water and sand (54%)
- Hillside Slide (49%)
- Rubber Mounds (34%)
- Individual Spring Tous (11%)
- Group Spring Toys (9%)

When asked to choose their top 3 favourite senior play items youth selected:

- Ziptrack (91%)
- Hillside Slide and Steppers (74%)
- Balance Post and Play (62%)
- Spinners (34%)
- Group Disk Swing (30%)

When asked to choose their top 3 favourite water play items youth selected:

- Bucket Dump (85%)
- Water Channel (52%)
- Misters (53%)
- Tall Sprayers (44%)
- Water Jets (36%)
- Water Rings (33%)
- Bubblers (>1%)

Based on the questions, discussion and drawings provided, the following themes, insights and ideas emerged:

- **Play Structures and Equipment:** Swings, big slides, trampolines, rock climbing walls, towers, zip lines, monkey bars, and rope courses are the most common features seen in the drawings.
- **Water Play:** Water slides, bucket dumps, tall sprayers, water jets, misters, water rings, water channels, and pools are the most commonly included water features amongst the drawings.
- **Materials:** Many suggestions favor rubber ground surfaces instead of sand or wood chips. Rubber is perceived as aesthetically pleasing, low-maintenance, and potentially safer. Additionally, many students expressed that slides should not be made of metal, sharing many stories of metal slide related burns.
- **Age Separation:** Some ideas emphasize the importance of catering to different age groups with designated areas or structures for toddlers, youth/teens, and adults. This approach ensures that the park accommodates the varying needs and preferences of different age ranges. The youth in particular emphasized that younger children be separated from older children's and teen's play equipment in order to ensure fun and safety for all.

- **Sports Facilities:** Several suggestions include sports-related features such as basketball courts, soccer fields, volleyball courts, hockey courts, and ball hockey rinks.
- **Seating and Relaxation Areas:** Chillout areas, shaded areas, benches, and picnic tables are frequently mentioned, with many including drawings of the group swings for all ages.
- **Natural Elements:** Nature-inspired features are suggested, such as trees, grassy areas, shade umbrellas, and even incorporating a connection to pollinators and climate change education.
- **Food and Refreshments:** Food trucks, ice cream stands, and drink/snack areas are suggested, particularly by the youth aged 12-14, enhancing the overall park experience and providing convenient refreshment options.
- **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Some ideas emphasize the importance of creating a park that is inclusive and accessible to individuals with disabilities or special needs.
- **Artistic and Creative Elements:** Suggestions for artistic and creative elements include sculptures, murals, themed structures (like a treehouse or castle), or the inclusion of LED lights.

Appendix A

Selection of completed activity sheets.

ABOUT YOU
 Name: Lenna
 Age: 10

My favourite way to play in a park is:
 - Swings/slides/ferret cages
 - Climbing things
 - Zip lines
 - Trampolines

My dream playground and water play area includes:
 - Swings
 - Slides
 - Zip lines
 - Trampolines
 - Rock wall

PARK DESIGN
 Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?
 DESIGN #1: FOLDS
 DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?
 TOWER STRUCTURE
 ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?
 BIG SWINGS
 RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer
- Misters

You can make a lot of couples

ABOUT YOU
 Name: Leah
 Age: 10

My favourite way to play in a park is: Seesaws and Trampolines and Zip lines and Monkey Bars that have good grip

My dream playground and water play area includes: Soft meters and two water slides down the hill one short one and one tall one for different ages tunnels

PARK DESIGN
 Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?
 DESIGN #1: FOLDS
 DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?
 TOWER STRUCTURE
 ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?
 BIG SWINGS
 RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

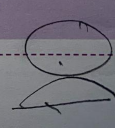
Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Misters
- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer

BIG Swing
Small area (just area of them)
Both Big for more people



ABOUT YOU

Name: Maya

Age: 10


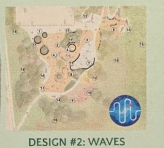
My favourite way to play in a park is: Swing and zipline

My dream playground and water play area includes:
 - water slide
 - zipline
 - trampoline

PARK DESIGN

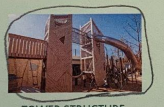

Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?



DESIGN #1: FOLDS DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?

TOWER STRUCTURE ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?

BIG SWINGS RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer
- Mistlers

ABOUT YOU

Name: Lucas Daniel Ortiz

Age: 13



My favourite way to play in a park is:
 - monkey bars
 - slides

My dream playground and water play area includes:
 - zipline that lands in water
 - tall slides

PARK DESIGN

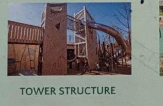
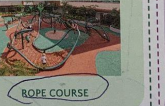
Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?

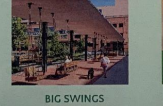
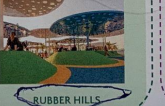
DESIGN #1: FOLDS DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?

TOWER STRUCTURE ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?

BIG SWINGS RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.



- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer
- Mistlers

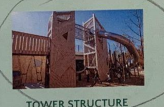
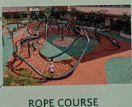
ABOUT YOU
 Name: Noah
 Age: 12


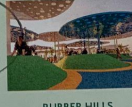
My favourite way to play in a park is:
I like to play football, ball hockey and soccer

My dream playground and water play area includes:
lazy river, under ground tunnel ball hockey, water gun park.

PARK DESIGN
 Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?
 
 DESIGN #1: FOLDS DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?
 
 TOWER STRUCTURE ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?
 
 BIG SWINGS RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer



misters

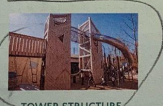

ABOUT YOU
 Name: Evon
 Age: 10



My favourite way to play in a park is:
hide and seek, tag, and coispos

My dream playground and water play area includes:

PARK DESIGN
 Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?
 
 DESIGN #1: FOLDS DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?
 
 TOWER STRUCTURE ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?
 
 BIG SWINGS RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer

ABOUT YOU

Name: Ayash
Age: 12

My favourite way to play in a park is: shooting range with net guns

My dream playground and water play area includes: A racino area

PARK DESIGN
Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?
 DESIGN #1: FOLDS
 DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?
 TOWER STRUCTURE
 ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?
 BIG SWINGS
 RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

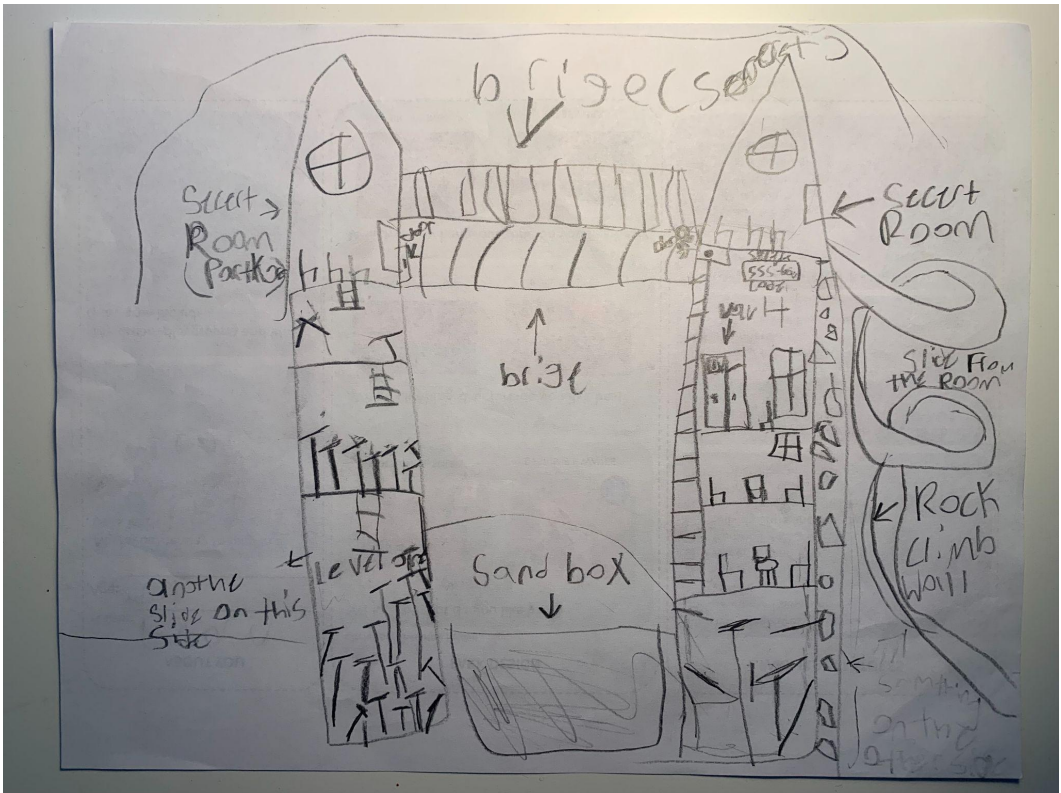
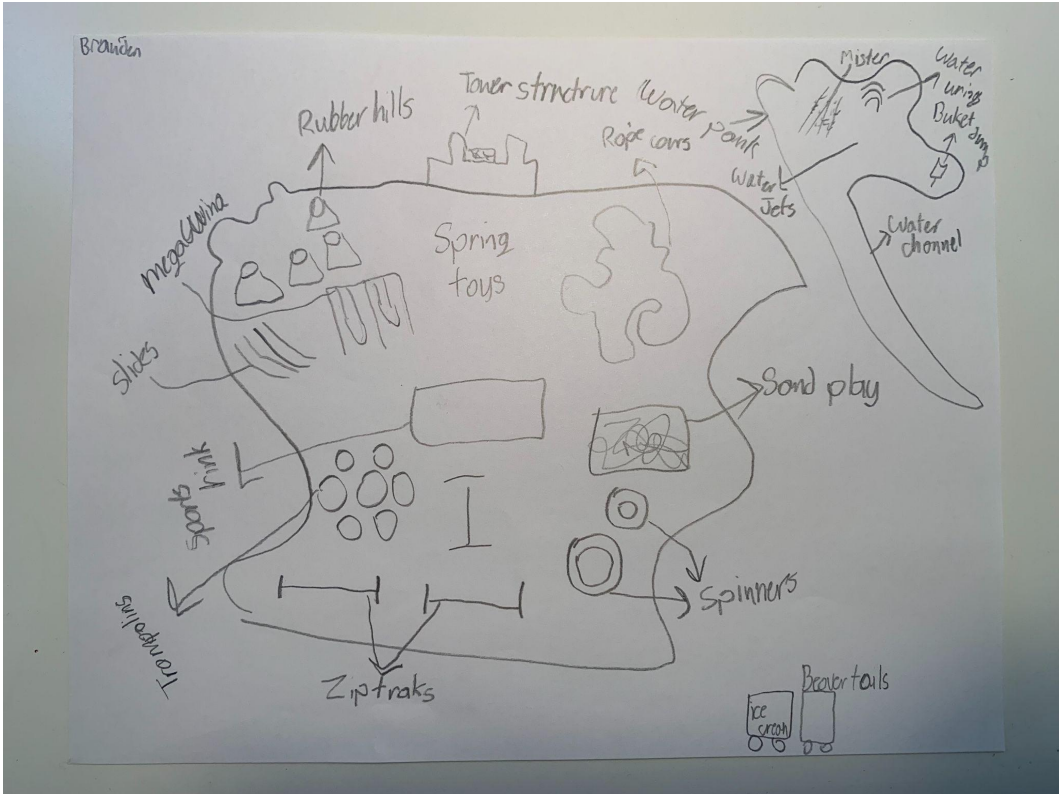
- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer

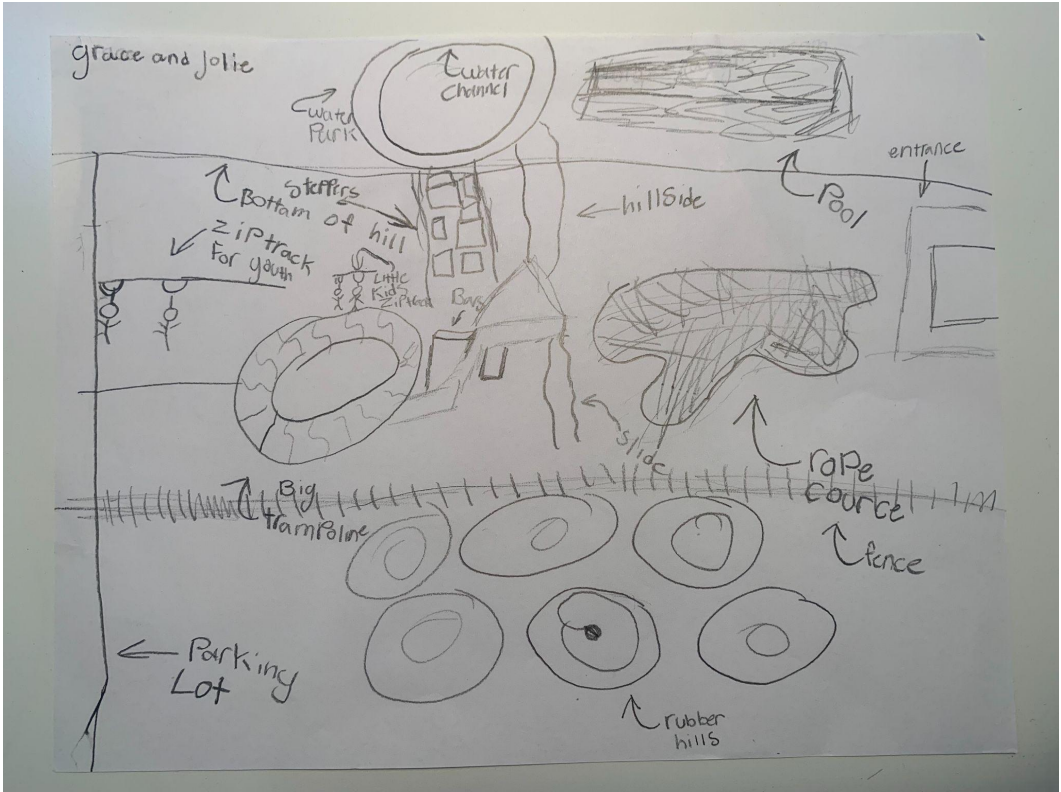


Centennial Playground and Water Play Area
In-Class Youth Workshop Summary



Centennial Playground and Water Play Area

In-Class Youth Workshop Summary



Centennial Playground and Water Play Area
In-Class Youth Workshop Summary

noh2 ent5A mly -
(ent5A) 2019 2320

ABOUT YOU

Name: Sasha

Age: 17


My favourite way to play in a park is:
- Climb things

My dream playground and water play area includes:
- Circle swings


PARK DESIGN

Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best? 2320




DESIGN #1: FOLDS




DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?




TOWER STRUCTURE




ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?



BIG SWINGS



RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer



Centennial Playground and Water Play Area
In-Class Youth Workshop Summary

ABOUT YOU

Name: Nelien

Age: 13

My favourite way to play in a park is: To play tag with my friends

My dream playground and water play area includes:
A huge waterside Swings
Zip lines into the water tall playground!

PARK DESIGN

Circle your favourites below!

Which concept do you like best?

DESIGN #1: FOLDS DESIGN #2: WAVES

Which climbing structure do you like best?

TOWER STRUCTURE ROPE COURSE

Which shady hang-out zone do you like best?

BIG SWINGS RUBBER HILLS

PARK PLAY FEATURES

Which play features for little kids do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

- Swings
- Water & Sand Play
- Trampolines
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Spring Toys (Individual)
- Spring Toys (Group)
- Rubber Play Mounds

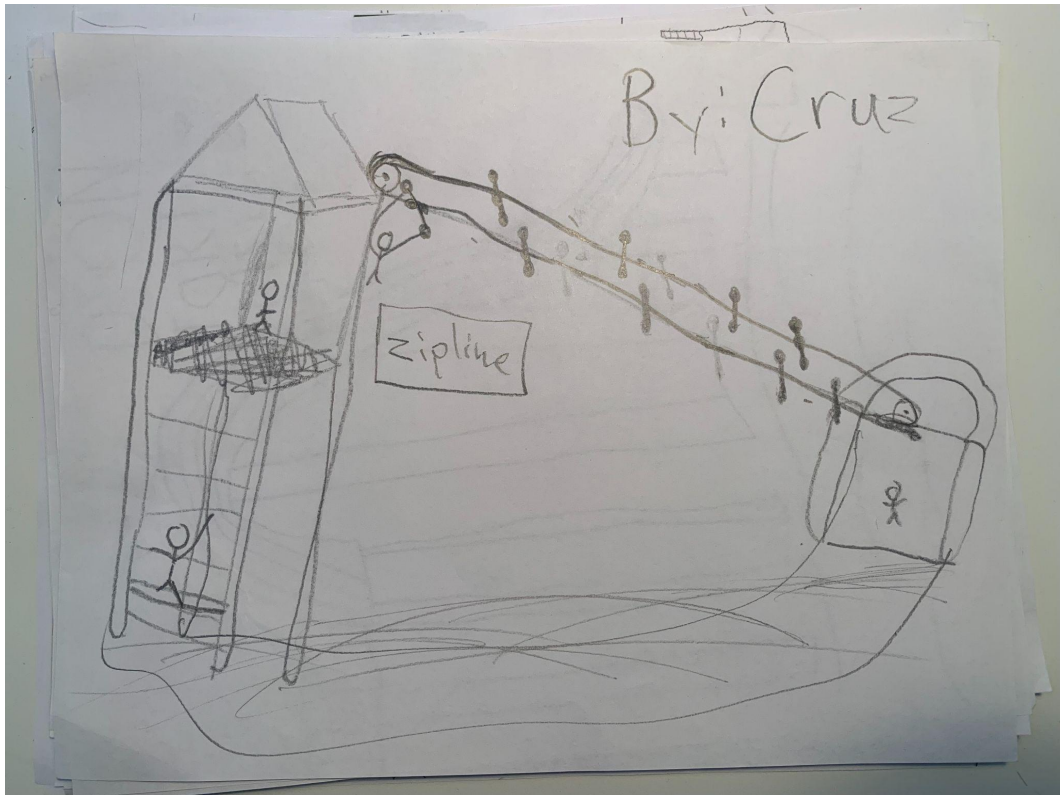
Which play features for youth do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

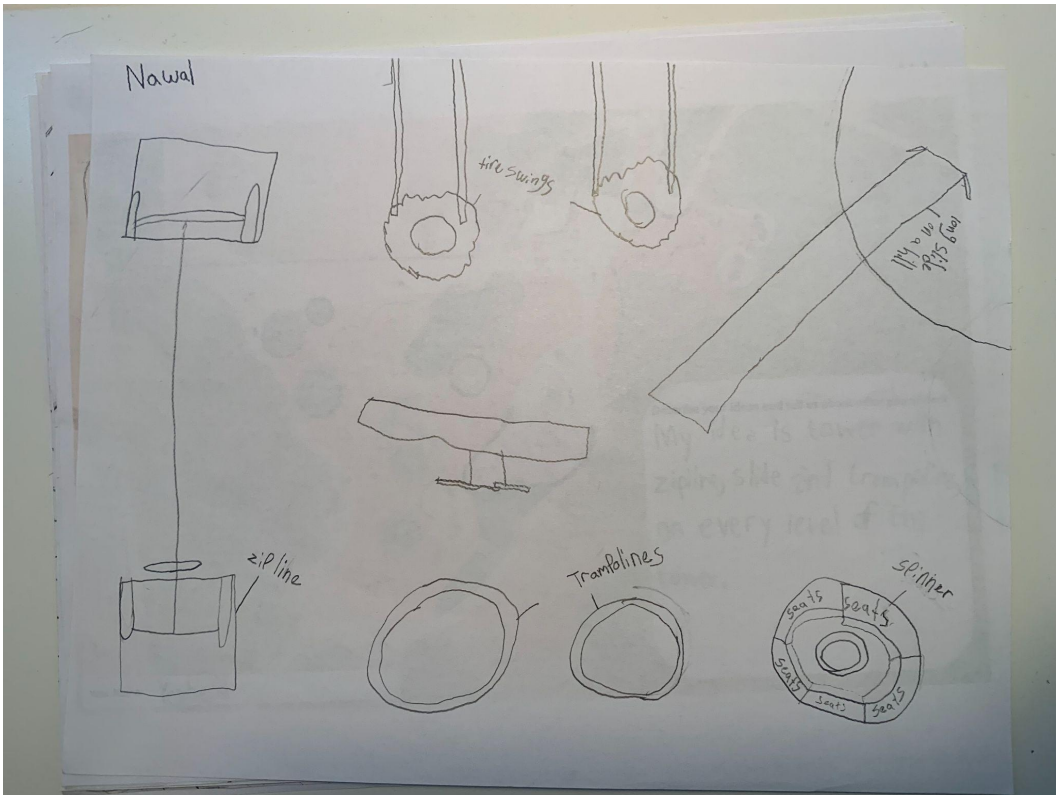
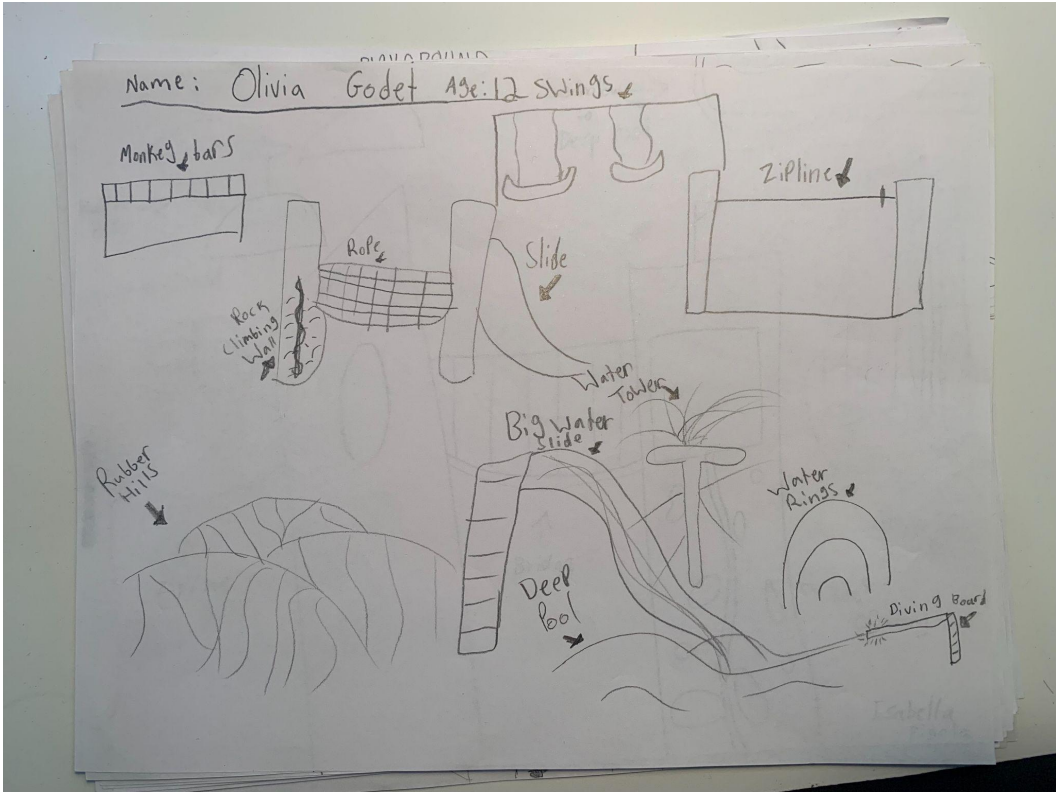
- Ziptracks
- Hillside Slide and Steppers
- Group Disk Swing
- Spinners
- Balance and Post Play

Which water play do you like best? Choose your 3 favourite.

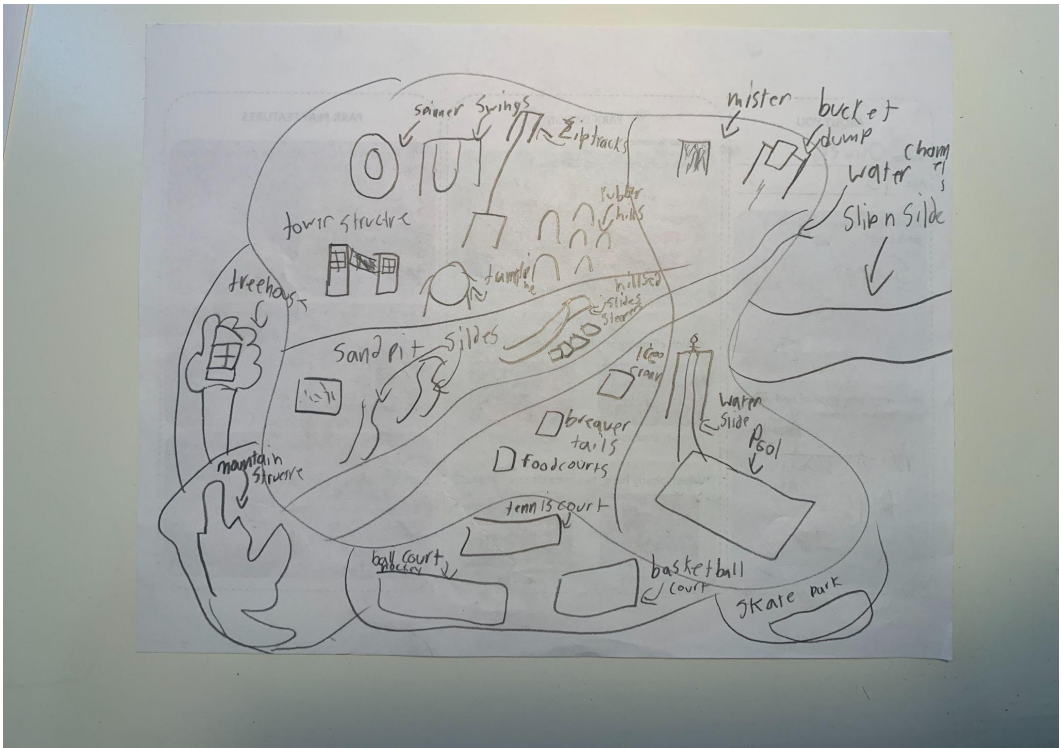
- Water Jets
- Water Bubblers
- Water Rings
- Bucket Dump
- Water Channel
- Tall Sprayer

mist





Centennial Playground and Water Play Area
 In-Class Youth Workshop Summary



Centennial Playground and Water Play Area

In-Class Youth Workshop Summary