

Congratulations! You've undertaken the exciting task of planning a new playground. Healthy, active lifestyles are important at any (and every) age, and playgrounds provide an ideal place for community members to gather, converse, and play!

At this point you're probably wondering where to begin. Planning for a playground may seem overwhelming at first, but we're here to help. Whether you're planning for a city park, daycare, neighborhood, church, or school, our handy *Playground Planning Guide* will help get you started.

Playgrounds: Budget Breakdown

While each playground project has unique aspects to it, most clients can expect certain costs when planning for their new playground. We've created a "cheat sheet" to help answer the famous question: "How do I budget for this?"

7%-15% Freight

- Time of Year
- Location
- Fuel Rates
- Size of Product

22%-40% Installation

- Location
- Local Labor Rates
- Site Conditions
- Product(s)

20%-50% Product

- Design Complexity
- Materials Used
- Layout of Structure
- Installation Method

20%-50% Surfacing

- Type of Surfacing
- Size & Layout
- Surfacing Thickness
- Preparation Needed

OTHER ITEMS TO CONSIDER

- Shade
- Site Amenities
- Ground Preparation
- Containment Borders
- Utility Locations
- Restoration after Construction

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1. Determine Your Budget

Knowing your budget is very important when beginning the playground planning process. Even if you're not entirely sure of the exact number (or if it could change depending on grants, etc.), having at least a rough idea of your available budget will be extremely helpful. This will allow our playground experts to select appropriate equipment for your

project. We can also propose structures in different ranges to give you options and flexibility.

Typical playground budget breakdown:

- 20-50%: Product
- 20-90%: Surfacing
- 22-40%: Installation
- 7-15%: Freight

Other items to consider:

- Old structure removal, if necessary
- Site preparation
- Shade
- Park furniture
- Borders & Ramps

Keep in mind that the percentages vary widely on some of these items (particularly safety surfacing) because there are a range of options available. Don't let this alarm you though; we'll help you choose those options that are most appropriate for your project and budget.

2. Find the Right Location

In addition to determining your budget, you'll also want to decide on the perfect location for your new playground. Is this a completely new play area, or will the new play equipment be replacing existing structures? If so, you'll want to factor the removal of old structures into the final project cost.

Knowing the size of your play area will also help determine which structures are best suited for your project. If space is tight, we may recommend one of our "space saver" layouts that packs a ton of play value into a smaller footprint. This is important because each piece of equipment has a designated "use zone" which ensures structures are placed at an appropriate distance from one other (and other things like trees) so that they can be used safely.

Don't have a perfect square-shaped area to work with? Not to worry, many people have the same concern! We're experienced with designing creative solutions for a variety of traditional and non-traditional spaces. If your chosen area is long and skinny, has a slope

to it or other irregularities, we will work to design a playground that works perfectly with your space.

3. Know Your Audience

In addition to knowing your budget and available space, it's important to consider who will be using the play equipment. This is a huge factor in determining which play equipment is right for your project. Choosing playground equipment designed for your target age group ensures children are appropriately challenged while reducing the risk of injury.

Will the play equipment be for a daycare center and strictly used by children under the age of 5? Is it the new playground for a primary school? Or will this playground be the centerpiece of the community park and therefore needs to accommodate all ages, toddler through adult? Knowing who will be using the equipment will help us select the perfect structures for your project. We even offer adult outdoor fitness equipment, which has become increasingly popular among parks and community walking trails.

Many play structures are also wheelchair accessible and ADA compliant, making it easier than ever to create an inclusive play experience for everyone. Accessibility will also play a role in which type of surfacing you choose, as some are more conducive to wheelchairs and strollers than others.

4. Dream Up Your Perfect Playground!

Now that you know your budget, location, and who will be using the playground, it's time for real fun to begin! Are you looking for a traditional play structure with a variety of slides and climbers? Or does your project call for something more modern, like an obstacle course with various ropes-style challenges? Or maybe a themed playground like a pirate ship or castle would be right at home in your selected location.

You'll also want to consider other items to complete your play area, like freestanding play equipment, benches, and picnic tables. If you can dream it, we can build it.

5. Lay Out Your Timeline

The first question to ask when establishing a timeline is when does the playground need to be completed? Having this date in mind will help set the expectations of everyone who will be involved in the project. Working backward from the target date, you'll want to make sure there's enough time to:

- Communicate your vision to our playground specialists
- Allow our designers time to create some awesome layout/equipment proposals
- Share those options with your community/client/team
- If necessary, return to the design process
- Confirm the design and proposed equipment
- Complete and place the order
- Allow for transit time (can be anywhere from 2-8 weeks, depending on equipment)
- Remove old/existing equipment, if needed
- Install the new equipment (a few days to a few weeks, again depending on equipment – and weather!)
- Certify the site
- Open the playground to be enjoyed by the community!

6. Get In Touch

If you've already completed the first 5 steps, well done! Perhaps you have a fairly solid vision of what the new play area should look like. Or maybe you really have no idea where to go from here. That's ok too! Wherever you are in the process, we are here to help.

If you can provide us with answers to steps 1-4, we'll get to work creating a custom project proposal to fit your needs. And of course, at any time during the planning process you're welcome to reach out to us at (317) 776-7830 , and we'll be happy to address your questions.

Our team of experts will work with you from initial planning through installation and beyond. Our goal is to ensure the process goes as smoothly as possible from start to finish so your community can enjoy the new playground for many years to come. After all, we build fun!

If you have any questions, please contact Commercial Recreation Group at 317-776-7830 or info@CRGplay.com.

Thank you.

Travis Goebel
Owner