

# MONTGOMERY AWARDS

Excellence in Planning and Design

2022 Award Winner



## Whites Road Park Accessible Playground Upper Gwynedd Township

Whites Road Park Accessible Playground, part of a Lansdale Borough park located in Upper Gwynedd Township, received a 2022 Montgomery Award for sustained vision, accessible and inclusive design, and community collaboration and

impact. The new playground was designed in collaboration with Upper Gwynedd Township as part of an overall vision for the park to meet the needs of children of all ages and abilities while improving stormwater management and ADA access.



Source: Lansdale Borough

## Sustained Vision

Lansdale Borough has demonstrated a commitment over the years to improving Whites Road Park to address today's environmental challenges and ensure that the popular park continues to meet the needs of the public. The new playground is located adjacent to the existing park trail system and just across from a picnic grove, making it an integral part of the park. The renewal and expansion of the playground is just one part of the borough's sustained recreational and environmental vision for the park. Other recently integrated improvements include a streambank restoration project along a tributary of the Towamencin Creek, which involved planting more than 750 trees. Future improvements being considered for the overall park are the addition of a comfort station and a picnic pavilion.

The careful siting of both the playground and accessible parking area ensured the borough was able to maximize the preservation of existing mature trees. This allows the new playground to immediately feel like an established part of the park. In particular, because the access drive to the ADA parking was designed to be a narrow gravel driveway, minimal tree removal was required and allowed for meadow planting along the property line abutting a residential neighborhood.

The redevelopment of the playground also allowed the borough to incorporate the latest stormwater management into the design. Underdrainage beneath the new play areas directs stormwater to the adjacent rain garden, which is planted with a meadow mix.

## Accessible and Inclusive Design

As part of its planning for Whites Road Park, the borough identified a need to replace outdated playground equipment that was no longer serving the community and seized this opportunity to implement an accessible and inclusive playground design. The new play equipment is designed to meet the needs of children of all ages and abilities within the same space. A family with children of different age groups and abilities can all find engaging activities in this one small playground. In addition to play structures for children aged 2–5 and 5–12,



Source: Lansdale Borough



the expanded playground incorporates animal climbers, a musical play area, a climbing structure, a spinner play area, and a Bankshot Basketball area. A quiet grove for children with sensory challenges is tucked behind the sandbox area.

The play surfaces around each zone are all designed for access and safety but vary in color and materials, adding to the visual interest of the playground. A 4-foot-wide pervious paved walking path connects the various play zones to provide access throughout the playground and create an alternate walking route. Benches are strategically placed along the perimeter of this path so that adults and caregivers can relax close by while overseeing their children. In addition, a new ADA parking area with space for three vehicles was incorporated into the design of the playground to ensure equitable access to the new facilities for those with mobility challenges.

## Community Collaboration and Impact

Lansdale Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township have a history of collaborating on Whites Road Park. The park, owned by Lansdale Borough but located in Upper Gwynedd Township, is poised to serve the recreational needs of residents of both communities. In addition to grant funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), Upper Gwynedd Township also partnered with the borough to coordinate and partially fund the construction of the new accessible playground.

Upper Gwynedd Township coordinated the development of a pedestrian trail to the park as part of the development of a new residential community off of Allentown Road as well as the ADA access drive, which also serves as a new pedestrian connection to the park from the Green Street neighborhood of the township.

The Whites Road Park Accessible Playground is an exceptional result of a sustained vision focusing on community needs and environmental stewardship. This popular playground, thoughtfully designed for access and inclusion, welcomes everyone and has been quickly embraced by the residents of both Lansdale Borough and Upper Gwynedd Township. The borough's sustained vision, consideration of community needs, and successful collaboration have created a recreational asset that brings new life to this portion of Whites Road Park. The park will continue to evolve as the two municipalities envision additional amenities to serve the needs of their communities.



## Location

400 Whites Road  
Upper Gwynedd Township  
Montgomery County

## Project Data

### Land Use

Municipal Park

### Tract Size

33 Acres (Playground: +/- 1 Acre)

### Zoning

R-2 Residential District

### Parking

3 Handicapped-Accessible Spaces

## Key Features

- Accessible and Inclusive Design
- Collaborative Effort
- Environmentally Sensitive/Sustainable Design
- Open Space Preservation
- Site Planning

## Owner/Developer

Lansdale Borough  
1 Vine Street  
Lansdale, PA 19446

## Landscape Architect/Engineer

Remington & Vernick Engineers  
555 Croton Road, Suite 401  
King of Prussia, PA 19406



*This quiet grove designed for children with sensory challenges is tucked behind the sandbox area.*

## Community Partner

Upper Gwynedd Township  
1 Parkside Place  
North Wales, PA 19454

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The program acknowledges the high-quality work and commitment of communities, organizations, and professionals.

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