

Push Play-Finding Common Ground

*2025 Montana Opioid Abatement Trust
Grants*

Helping Hands Fund

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Application Form

Region Selection

To collaborate with someone else on this request, click the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner.

Project Name*

Push Play-Finding Common Ground

You may only select one Abatement Region, if you are applying for funding from more than one region you will need to fill out and submit a separate application for each region.

Select Multi County Abatement Region OR Metro Region*

Select the Multi-County Abatement Region **OR** the Metro Region you are requesting grant funds from. Click [HERE](#) for a detailed map of Multi-County Regions and Metro Regions.

Lake County Metro Region

Application Overview

About the Organization/Program*

Give a brief description of the Organization/Program/Project. Include the mission statement and the services provided.

Creating outdoor play spaces that bring families together, support physical movement, promote intergenerational connections, and embrace community culture; while contributing to improved health outcomes, guide the Push Play Project. With the installation of accessible, safe, free, appealing, and well-maintained spaces, the project will stimulate a new focus on physical movement and family engagement, leading to improved long-term health outcomes around chronic diseases, obesity, and behavioral health for the Flathead Reservation and Lake County. Families will learn ways of incorporating physical activity into their lives, positively impacting their bodies, mind, and spirit. By building spaces in different communities and offering family activities, while maintaining a strong, cross-agency collaboration, Push Play will become an integrated movement, bringing people together as a preventive step in eradicating the destructive influence of drug and alcohol abuse. Venues will be used for gatherings, reinforcing prosocial practices where physical activity is a fundamental component. Through direct interaction at the sites, relationships will develop, encouraging partnership, reducing alienation, and helping all residents feel welcome. Push Play started in 2022, with a Leadership Team representing education, law enforcement, healthcare, Lake County, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and non-profits. The program is housed at the non-profit, Helping Hands, who has assisted with over 70,000 requests since 2004, providing support with food, bus tickets, transportation, medication, utilities, personal items, lodging and more. With partners including Early Foundations Home Visiting and SAFE Harbor, Helping Hands also co-facilitate the Young Child Wellness Council, a group focused on improving the early childhood network of services in the community. Headwaters Foundation and private donors have helped fund the initial development of Push Play.

What category does the program fit into*

Check the category/categories the program fits into. You may select more than one option.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of approved opioid remediation uses

Prevention

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule A - select all that apply

G. PREVENTION PROGRAMS

Exhibit E List of Opioid Remediation Uses

Schedule B - select all that apply

B. SUPPORT PEOPLE IN TREATMENT & RECOVERY

C. CONNECTIONS TO CARE

G. PREVENT MISUSE OF OPIOIDS

H. PREVENT OVERDOSE DEATHS & OTHER HARMS (HARMS REDUCTION)

J. LEADERSHIP, PLANNING, & COORDINATION

K. TRAINING

How does the program meet the Opioid Remediation Guidelines*

In detail, describe how the program fits into the approved Opioid Remediation Guidelines selected in the above question.

Please be specific

Prevention is one of those words which has different interpretations. Is it an action? A theory? A process? At an early age, most people understand drug or alcohol use can be unhealthy. Public campaigns share images of drug misuse. Family members talk about a relative who went to treatment or jail. People see others struggle with the consequences of substance abuse, whether it is a criminal, housing, employment, family, or financial issue. Children hear of a friend having to move in with grandma or go to foster care because of their parent's involvement with opioids. Why do witnesses to terrible outcomes choose to use drugs? Adventure? Despair? Ignorance? All could apply. What solutions exist? One of the best methods is redefining prevention with new strategies promoting pro-social engagement while leading a cultural shift around not choosing opioids as a solution. How? By offering alternative opportunities for connection and healthy living; promoting personal empowerment and developing spaces focused on movement and community. Supporting families and

children in finding human connection, reducing loneliness, and improving mental health. Building points of intersection that encourage lifetime practices for better health while facilitating a stronger sense of community. These are the steps for prevention as part of Push Play. For this project, grounded on eradicating opioid use on the Flathead Reservation and Lake County, prevention is about creating spaces for intergenerational gatherings, mentoring tribal and non-tribal partnerships, helping individuals overcome trauma, and leading collaboration across all sectors of the community. Partnering with other agencies, Push Play will develop a yearly schedule of community events at different locations to reduce alienation, build relationships, instill a sense of adventure, provide healthy choices, model physical movement, and offer prosocial connections for the prevention of opioid, alcohol, and other drug misuse.

New Program or Existing*

Is the funding intended for a new program or to expand an existing program?

A proposed supplement or expansion to a program.

Fiscal Information

Requested Amount*

\$70,000.00

Program Budget*

How will the funds be allocated? Attach a detailed line item budget breakdown for the program. If the funds are intended for a multi-year program please specify the amount budgeted for each year.

Push Play Project Budget.pdf

Source of Funding*

Does the program currently receive funding from another source? If yes, please explain in detail. (i.e. amount, funding source, etc.)

Grant funding is intended for the creation or expansion of opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery projects. The money is **NOT** meant to replace or supplant existing funding.

Under the guidance of the Push Play Leadership Team, the project has made great advancements in the last two years in procuring funding and community support for the development and installation of new recreational spaces in the community. With financial support from the Headwaters Foundation, private donors, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, the project is in the final stages of the development and installation phase at the location in Ronan. It is in the planning and development phase for work in the

Polson community. Along with the funding that has been received, the project has also received substantial support with the donation of land, site development, and ongoing maintenance from partners including the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Lake County, the City of Ronan, and the City of Polson. The project has also started local fundraising in the community. To date, the project has received \$400,000 in funding and over \$500,000 of in-kind donations including land, site development, installation, equipment, and technical support. New site development will reflect the project's ability to generate additional funds in the next year. Funds from the Opioid Abatement Trust will support creation of Push Play sites in the Polson, St. Ignatius, and Pablo communities.

Do you have a Fiscal Agent*

Yes

Fiscal Agent Contact Info

Fiscal Agent Name*

Helping Hands Fund

Fiscal Agent Email Address*

helpinghandsfund1@gmail.com

Program Abstract

Program Description*

Describe the objectives of this project. Provide a detailed overview of the program, including its purpose, priorities & objectives, and intended results.

Push Play will serve the 33,000 residents of the Flathead Reservation and Lake County, as well as surrounding counties and tourists traveling to Glacier Park. The local community is struggling to turn the tide on opioid and other drug misuse, alcohol abuse, health disparities, mental health challenges, high suicide rates, and chronic ailments. It will have a connected series of spaces in 5 communities across the Reservation, where signage will highlight the links between sites, while encouraging people to use other locations. Overall, the plan is to complete at least three play areas by 2027. Consideration was given to accessibility, population, security, and maintenance. When setting up each site, the team will incorporate the natural world, local culture, and historical factors in the design. Equipment being used has a 25-year life cycle. Carrying out the plan will involve building community awareness, promoting local support, securing funding, and addressing logistical details. As a grassroots effort, with an all-volunteer team, the project is using the knowledge of its leadership group, while working with experts for identifying equipment, following best practices for installation, and all technical considerations. This approach makes the best use of resources, reduces costs, and ensures it is community driven. Over the last year, Phase 1 was put in motion by finalizing the Ronan site details, establishing long-term operation plans, securing equipment, raising community awareness and

fostering supportive relationships between tribal and non-tribal agencies for project completion. With the installation of accessible, safe, free, and well-maintained spaces, Push Play will stimulate a new focus on physical movement and family engagement, leading to improved long-term health outcomes and reduced opioid and drug misuse. Venues will be used for gatherings, reinforcing prosocial practices where physical activity is a fundamental component. Families will learn ways of incorporating physical activity into their lives, positively impacting their bodies, mind, and spirit. By building spaces in different communities and offering family activities, while maintaining a strong, cross-agency collaboration, Push Play will become an integrated movement, bringing people together as a preventive step in eradicating the destructive influence of drug and alcohol abuse and developing a more active lifestyle. Through interaction at the sites, relationships will develop, encouraging partnership, reducing alienation, and helping all residents feel welcome. Concentrating energy on an affirming movement that demonstrates healthy interaction, models open communication and fosters friendship across populations is needed to tear away current barriers. Sharing space is a basic and impactful way of facilitating dialogue, recognizing core values, discovering universal connections, and finding humanity in life's journey.

Specific Goals*

What are the specific goals of the program? List several goals the program hopes to accomplish and how the program intends to meet these goals.

Goals:

- Complete Push Play installations on the Flathead Reservation and Lake County in at least 5 communities by 2027.
- Reduce opioid, drug, and alcohol misuse.
- Increase levels of physical movement.
- Encourage family engagement, and intergenerational connections.
- Reduced levels of youth alienation, depression, and suicide ideation.
- Positive relationships developed between tribal and non-tribal community members.
- Better quality of life and health outcomes for the community.
- Provide a yearly calendar of events at Push Play locations.
- Deliver an Annual Push Play Awareness Campaign.
- Improved mental health and outlook on life.
- Build a renewed sense of “neighborhood” for all residents.

The installation of the sites is underway, with the first one to be completed in Ronan by fall of 2025. New play equipment is being placed at Boettcher Park in Polson. Site identification is ongoing for other Polson sites. Completion of planning for those locations will be done by the fall of 2025, with installation in 2026. Initial steps for setting up space in Pablo is underway with installation in 2026. Development of sites in St. Ignatius and Arlee is in the early stages. All on the Leadership Team, as well as staff from the Ronan, Polson, Lake County, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe are committed to guiding the project to its completion. Together they will continue planning sessions to finalize site details and themes, carry out fundraising, and host outreach events as the sites become operational.

An Awareness Campaign to foster involvement, raise understanding, and generate a shared vision for long-term change is ongoing. The team will have a schedule of events at Push Play locations, in partnership with tribal and non-tribal organizations, schools, and other agencies, to build patterns of connection between all people, beginning with completion of the first venue. To promote increased levels of physical activity, the team will have game times, family competitions, and other programs that encourage the community to take steps to better health. Having different programs involved, including youth, adults, and elders will support reductions in opioid, drug, and alcohol misuse, develop stronger tribal and non-tribal relationships, while offering youth a community connection and pro-social activities to reduce feelings of alienation and suicide ideation.

Evaluation Method*

Describe how you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and what the method for evaluation will be.

Evaluation will be based on both process and outcome measures. The Leadership Team has set specific objectives to assess core process steps such as completion of installation, delivery of an awareness campaign, facilitating site events, conducting outreach, and provision of actions to bring tribal and non-tribal groups closer. Measuring outcomes is more challenging and will be based on quantitative data reflecting site use and community participation, along with qualitative data based on the experience of participants. Qualitative tools including observation, participant comments, and surveys will be collected throughout the year. To gauge project success and outcome attainment, data answering key questions will be used. Has the project created new opportunities for physical movement and intergenerational connections? Are pro-social events taking place to help curb opioid, drug, and alcohol misuse? Do youth have a voice in the activities taking place? Is the community enjoying the new spaces? How does the design reflect local culture and the

community? Has programming contributed to reductions in depression and suicide ideation? Within the Leadership Team, two individuals are highly experienced with evaluation and will coordinate data collection. Methods used include event surveys, focus groups, and community conversations. Data on health outcomes will be retrieved from agencies such as Tribal Health and public databases. The biggest challenge will be accurately assessing behavioral health changes, in a short time frame. The group recognizes the need for data on this topic as part of the evaluation but is cognizant of the fact that the long-term shift in physical movement and thus improved behavioral health outcomes is going to take a longer period to show real change. Another challenge will be developing ways to measure improved relationships within tribal and non-tribal communities, as well as specific structural changes supporting the inclusion of families and children. Tools for these areas will be developed in the first year. Surveys and participant input will be gathered from community activities. As a program serving a rural community, it is common for the “evaluation” to come after the fact, when people are talking at another event, after a church gathering, in a local restaurant, on the street, at a ball game or from one relative to another. All sources are important as they capture people when they are being most honest.

Data Source*

What information are you going to collect or use to demonstrate you have accomplished your goals?

The team will use a master calendar reflecting completion of the sites, facilitation of community events, and promotional activities. Over the year, the calendar will be a simple way of looking at project milestones, outcomes, and goal attainment. By partnering with different programs, the Leadership Team will be able to collect monthly data on use and levels of participation by these partners. They will also keep records from each event they host at the sites. Daily community participation will be more difficult to assess. However, the team plans on using cameras and spot observations to help measure general community use. From the law enforcement community, who is part of the Leadership Team, they will also be able to get input regarding use, as the sites are monitored on a regular basis by the police for safety and security reasons. Information from interviews, community meetings, and community focus groups will also be used to develop an accurate picture of what has been accomplished.

Awareness*

How do you plan to create awareness of this program? Briefly describe what action the program plans to take to create awareness in the community.

Voices of the community, representing all populations and ages will be the focal point for the Push Play Awareness Campaign. For a rural area, with many small communities, the best way of raising awareness about any topic is through conversation. Chatting at the salon. Gossiping over lunch. Or solving the world's troubles with a cup of coffee. The Leadership Team is committed to delivering this campaign the old-fashioned way-by word of mouth. That is the ideal promotion, as it spreads from one person to the next, requires no special skills, and is inexpensive. Storytelling brings people together, bonding them through common experiences, successes, hardships, and milestones from their individual journey. For the campaign, the team wants to promote involvement, raise understanding of project goals, develop community support, and generate a shared vision for long-term change around opioid and drug misuse, alcohol use, health practices, personal empowerment, racial divisions, and intergenerational interaction. Within the Push Play Leadership Team is a group representing agencies, services, and communities from across the Flathead

Reservation. Using this basic approach as the foundation for outreach will be a meaningful way the Leadership Team can initially promote the project to their staff, partners, and stakeholders. Through their vast professional network, this group is connected to healthcare, county government, tribal government, law enforcement, education, the business sector, agriculture, early childhood services, the faith-based community, and non-profits. Once it has been shared, the next circle of people will carry on the promotion as they share it with their friends, family, and associates. Working directly with the community, the Leadership Team and their partners will be able to raise understanding of the mission of Push Play. Along with utilization of existing relationships, the Leadership Team will expand the circle to other clubs, churches, businesses, and organizations. They will work with this network to develop seasonal and annual events to take place at Push Play locations to encourage stakeholder use. Along with sharing messages in person, the project will use radio, newspapers, mailings, and social media to connect with a broader segment of the community. Those on the Leadership Team have different social media platforms which will be part of the Awareness Campaign dedicated to informing the younger population.

Additional Documents

Tax Exempt Organization*

By clicking this box you are confirming the applying organization is a tax exempt organization.

Yes

Tax Exempt Determination Letter*

Please upload a copy of the Organization 501(C)(3) Tax Exempt Determination Letter.

Helping Hands Non-Profit Letter.pdf

Use this section to upload or explain any additional information regarding the program/organization. ie. a detailed budget projection, program/organization history, etc.

Upload #1

Lake County Leader Push Play Article April 2025.pdf

Upload #2

Push Play Map Ronan Location.pdf

Upload #3

Additional Information

A clear understanding of the long-term impact of historic trauma and the loss of self-identity, culture, and tradition experienced by Native people in the United States, including the Salish and Kootenai of the Flathead Reservation is continuing to evolve as more research is completed. At this time, the research that has been finished for tribal populations around the world shows that the change in community structure for tribal people being relocated or forced from their traditional homes, along with efforts forcing assimilation have had negative multi-generational influence on self-identity, sense of self-worth, levels of despair, chronic depression, and personal happiness have been profound. This is a challenge and a reality that is a daily concern for all people living on the Flathead Reservation and Lake County because so many families are related, children attend school together, the shared healthcare system, and all the layers that force interaction, regardless of one's tribal or non-tribal affiliation. Tackling this problem head on is a challenge as well. No one wants to be the one saying racism is a problem. No one wants to point the finger at others. No one wants to be labelled for speaking out. As a result, this festering community wound makes its way through the schools, businesses, churches, and everywhere people connect. Helping the community move forward to heal some of the pain, while recognizing the history that has brought us to 2025, is a major goal but it won't happen without action. Push Play is one part of the solution that can contribute by bringing people together in a healthy way that is affirming and models a sense of hope for the future.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Push Play Project Budget.pdf
- Helping Hands Non-Profit Letter.pdf
- Lake County Leader Push Play Article April 2025.pdf
- Push Play Map Ronan Location.pdf

Push Play Project Budget 2025-2026

Line Item	Description	Cash Amount	In-Kind Amount
Ronan Site Use and Development	Preparation of ground including putting in fill to create a space for the Push Play installation.	\$15,000	Development-\$40,000 Location-\$60,000
Polson Site Use and Development	Preparation of ground including putting in fill to create a space for the Push Play installation.	TBD These sites are to be finalized over the summer of 2025.	TBD Project will seek in-kind support for development. Three sites have been identified with the City of Polson and the CSKT who will be providing ongoing maintenance. Location-\$90,000
St. Ignatius Site Use and Development	Preparation of ground including putting in fill to create a space for the Push Play installation.	TBD These sites are to be finalized over the summer of 2025.	TBD
Pablo Site Use and Development	Preparation of ground including putting in fill to create a space for the Push Play installation.	TBD These sites are to be finalized over the summer of 2025.	TBD
Polson Site Equipment and Installation	Purchase of all equipment and installation at location by professionals.	TBD These sites are to be finalized over the summer of 2025. The project also has received \$100,000 toward the costs of equipment for Polson sites. Funding of \$15,000 has been provided by Push Play to support new equipment at Boettcher Park in partnership with the City of Polson	TBD
Ronan Site Equipment and Installation	Purchase of all equipment and installation at location by professionals.	\$280,000	\$10,000 for help with installation.
Pablo Site Equipment and Installation	Purchase of all equipment and installation at location by professionals.	TBD. The support of this area is to be finalized over the summer of 2025.	TBD
St. Ignatius Site Equipment and Installation	Purchase of all equipment and installation at location by professionals.	TBD. The support of this area is to be finalized over the summer of 2025.	TBD

INTERNAL REVENUE SERVIC.
P. O. BOX 2508
CINCINNATI, OH 45201



DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

AUG 21 2008

Date:

HELPING HANDS FUND
PO BOX 1094
POLSON, MT 59860

Employer Identification Number:
81-0504570
DLN:
17053171336008
Contact Person:
GARY MUTHERT ID# 31518
Contact Telephone Number:
(877) 829-5500
Accounting Period Ending:
December 31
Public Charity Status:
170(b)(1)(A)(vi)
Form 990 Required:
Yes
Effective Date of Exemption:
January 2, 2004
Contribution Deductibility:
Yes
Addendum Applies:
No

Dear Applicant:

We are pleased to inform you that upon review of your application for tax exempt status we have determined that you are exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions to you are deductible under section 170 of the Code. You are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequests, devises, transfers or gifts under section 2055, 2106 or 2522 of the Code. Because this letter could help resolve any questions regarding your exempt status, you should keep it in your permanent records.

Organizations exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Code are further classified as either public charities or private foundations. We determined that you are a public charity under the Code section(s) listed in the heading of this letter.

Please see enclosed Publication 4221-PC, Compliance Guide for 501(c)(3) Public Charities, for some helpful information about your responsibilities as an exempt organization.

RECEIVED
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STATE
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Letter 947 (DO/CG)

Lake County Leader



Push Play Project aims to build, enhance playgrounds

by [BERL TISKUS](#)

Reporter | April 24, 2025 12:00 AM

Small children, laughing as they swing, zip down slides, and clamber over jungle gyms at local playgrounds, are a part of life that makes everyone smile.

Parents like playgrounds because they help de-wiggle their youngsters as they learn to climb a rope hand-over-hand or go up the ladder to the slide “all by myself” or exhort their parents to push harder. Moms and dads run after escaping toddlers and persuade kids not to eat rocks.

The Push Play Project of the Flathead Reservation Lake County is “on a mission to create safe, accessible spaces that promote physical activity and family engagement, all to improve long-term health in our communities,” according to the organization’s website, pushplayrlc.org. At the same time, the group believes active kids are healthier kids, and that Push Play “is a pathway to help address chronic diseases, obesity, and behavioral health.”

The impetus originated about a decade ago with the 0-5 of Flathead Reservation/Lake County, an organization that came together to look at ways of supporting families and pre-school children, said board member Dana Grant.

Then, 0-5 brought their members and other community leaders together to form the Push Play Leadership Team. In addition to Grant, members include Jennifer Rolfsness, Eleanor Vizcarra, Carole Lankford, Tom McDonald, Gale Decker, Kate Stinger, Sjaan Vincent, George Simpson, Stephanie Gillin and Betsy Wade.

“We have representatives from across the community, from tribal leadership to county leadership, to schools, nonprofits, and education. Everyone's coming together,” Grant said.

Then, in 2022, came much-appreciated funding from the Headwaters Foundation, an organization that “puts families at the center of creating solutions to improve health in Western Montana,” according to its website.

That’s a perfect match for the Push Play team, which used those resources for some strategic planning, carefully considering accessibility, availability, population, maintenance, security and community needs.

Since then, the group has continued fundraising and worked on logistics with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the communities in Lake County.

With the largest populations centered in Ronan and Polson, that's where Push Play began work. Near the Ronan Skatepark, which is across from the Mission Valley Boys and Girls Club, a Push Play Park will be installed in June.

In Polson, the aging playground equipment at Boettcher Park will be replaced in a collaborative effort between the City of Polson and Push Play. That refurbishment is already in progress, with the wood chips and mat being removed to make way for new equipment.

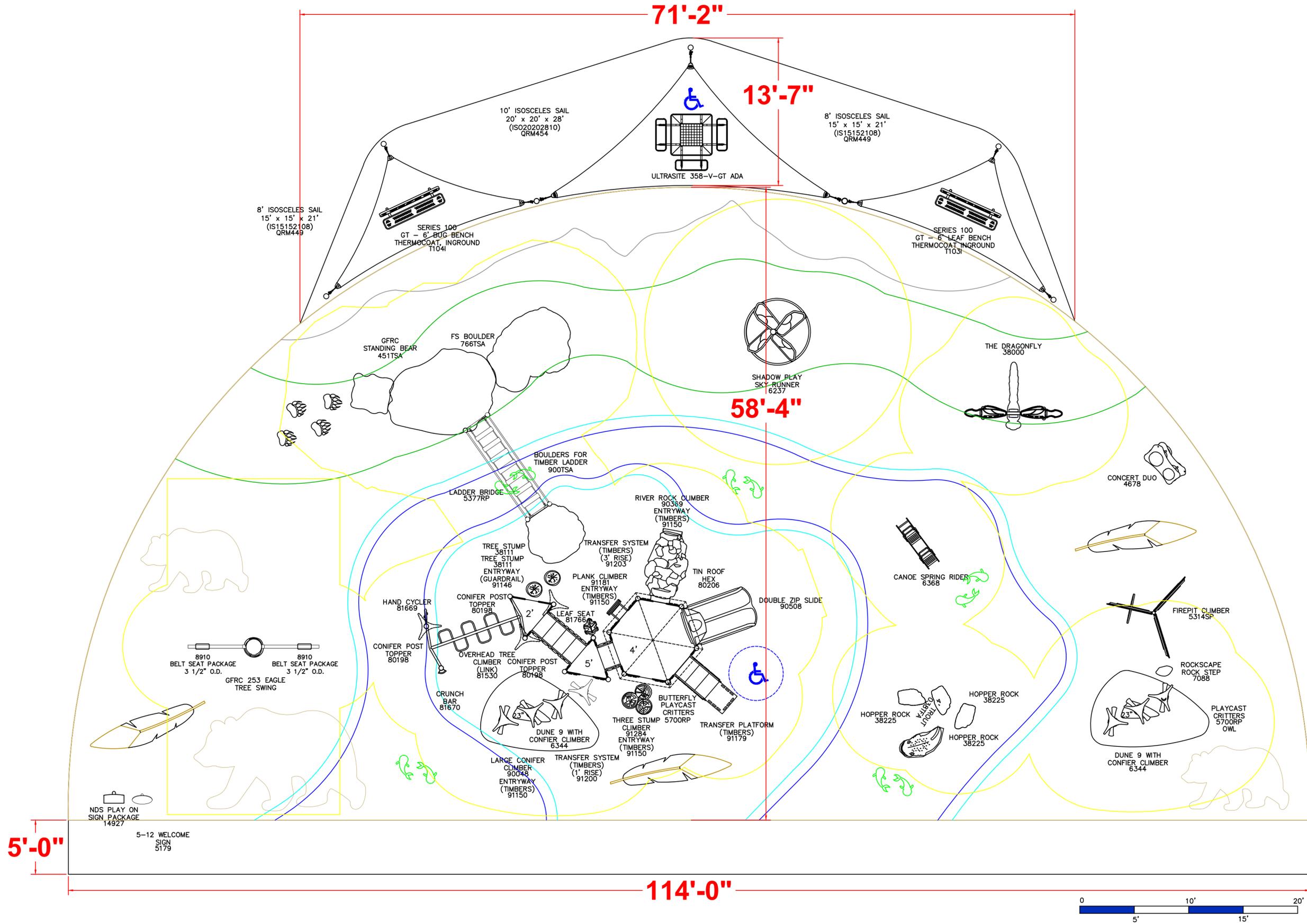
Grant said Push Play has a big national partner that will install the playgrounds. They are great to work with and even give the project a little break on cost, he added.

But Push Play isn't stopping there. Salish Point is a place the leadership team wants to do some work; Arlee, St. Ignatius and Pablo are also on the list. To donate, go to the website pushplayfrlc.org.

With such a large area to cover, the Push Play plan includes three phases of implementation, over the next five years.

According to the website, "Our vision is to have a connected series of Push Play spaces throughout our communities where signage will help visitors understand the links to each site, while encouraging people to use different venues. Our team will consider ways to connect the natural world, local culture, historic factors, community lore, and other meaningful information into each design."

Push Play will serve the 33,000 residents of the Flathead Reservation and Lake County, as well as the surrounding counties and tourists traveling to Glacier Park, who might want to stop let the children play, and enjoy the Mission Valley.



**Zero to Five
Ronan Site
Ronan, MT**
Representative
Great Western Recreation

SALES REP
TAGGART CASTLETON
714-331-8895
TAGGART@GWPARK.COM

Total Elevated Play Components	7	Required	-
Total Elevated Play Components Accessible By Ramp	-	Required	-
Total Elevated Components Accessible By Transfer	8	Required	5
Total Accessible Ground Level Components Shown	20	Required	3
Total Different Types Of Ground Level Components	8	Required	3

This play equipment is recommended for children ages
5 - 12

Minimum Area Required:
-
Scale: -
This drawing can be scaled only when in an 18" x 24" format

IMPORTANT: Soft resilient surfacing should be placed in the use zones of all equipment, as specified for each type of equipment, and at depths to meet the critical fall heights as specified by the U.S. consumer Product Safety Commission, ASTM standard F 1487 and Canadian Standard CAN/CSA-Z-614

Drawn By:
SLB/KD
Date:
11/4/2024
Drawing Name:
113241-01-Opt3



LAKE COUNTY

106 4th Ave. E.

Polson, Mt. 59860

Montana Opioid Abatement Trust

Via email to:

Steff McGowan

Program Director

Info@montanaopioid.org

December 3, 2025

Greetings:

The Lake County Metro Region met on November 13, 2025, to review current funding applications.

After much consideration, the Lake County Metro Region is requesting that the Montana Opioid Abatement Trust move forward with funding the following applications:

Push Play-Finding Common Ground

\$70,000.00

c/o Helping Hands Fund

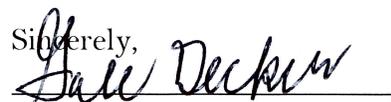
Salish Kootenai College Center for Prevention & Wellness Health & Wellbeing Initiative

\$51,000.00

c/o Salish Kootenai College

We do understand that you may need further information to support the funding of the Push Play Project, as it is not a request to fund ordinary remediation uses, please see the attached document for reasons why we believe this project suits the parameters of funding.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Gale Decker,

Chairman, Board of Commissioners

On behalf of the Lake County Metro Region

How Push Play Helps Prevent and Address Opioid Addiction

1. Promotes Protective Factors Against Substance Use

- Research consistently shows that **physical activity and family engagement** are protective factors against substance abuse. By creating **accessible, safe, and appealing spaces**, Push Play encourages healthy routines that reduce risk behaviors.
- Physical movement improves **mental health**, reducing anxiety and depression—two major drivers of opioid misuse.

2. Builds Community Connection and Reduces Isolation

- Addiction often thrives in environments of **alienation and lack of social support**. Push Play combats this by creating venues for **gatherings and prosocial activities**, fostering relationships and a sense of belonging.
- Strong social networks are critical for both **prevention and recovery**, as they provide accountability, encouragement, and alternatives to substance use.

3. Addresses Root Causes Linked to Opioid Use

- Chronic diseases, obesity, and behavioral health challenges often correlate with substance misuse. By promoting **long-term health outcomes**, Push Play tackles these underlying issues.
- Families learn practical ways to integrate physical activity, improving **body, mind, and spirit**, which strengthens resilience against addiction.

4. Creates a Cross-Agency Support System

- Push Play is not just a recreation initiative—it's a **community-wide movement** involving education, law enforcement, healthcare, tribal leadership, and nonprofits.
- This collaboration ensures that prevention and recovery efforts are **integrated**, connecting individuals to resources like Helping Hands, SAFE Harbor, and early childhood wellness programs.

5. Provides Safe Spaces for Recovery-Oriented Activities

- For individuals in recovery, having **safe, substance-free environments** is essential. Push Play venues offer spaces for **healthy socialization**, reinforcing positive habits and reducing relapse risk.
- Activities at these sites can be incorporated into **recovery plans**, offering structured, meaningful engagement.

6. Long-Term Impact

- By embedding physical activity and family engagement into community culture, Push Play creates a **sustainable prevention model**. This reduces future opioid misuse and supports those rebuilding their lives after addiction.