



# PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION

Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

## MEETING SUMMARY

**PROJECT: Gateway Park and Urban Plaza Inclusive Playground**

**DATE: June 2, 2015**

**TIME: 5:30 PM to 7:30 PM**

**LOCATION: Sacramento Elementary School, 11400 NE Sacramento St.**

### Meeting Goals:

- Understand the design team's approach to the inclusive playground
- Provide feedback and suggestions to maximize the principles of inclusive design within the project scope and budget
- Improve design to maximize "play value" for all users

**Participants:** Bob Earnest; Andrew Long; Jennifer Wilde; Cody Goldberg; Carly Schmidt; Susan Cushman; Jessa Sweany; Jackie Putnam; Karen Justice; Xochil Springer

**Staff:** George Lozovoy, Project Manager, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, Community Engagement Manager, Elise Scolnick, Community Engagement Coordinator, Art Hendricks, Diversity and Inclusion Manager

**Place Consultant Team:** Colleen Wolfe; Mauricio Villarreal; Miguel Camacho Serna; Michelle Mathis; Carol Kekez

### 1) Introductions

- a) The group introduced themselves and the facilitator reviewed the agenda and purpose of the meeting. Each participant stated their interest in the inclusive playground.

### 2) Explanation of Process and 2010 Master Plan

- a) George Lozovoy, Project Manager, gave a brief overview of the Gateway Park and Urban Plaza planning process and how the inclusive playground became part of the project. He also reviewed the definition of inclusive play and inclusive design.

### 3) Presentation by PLACE on the Approach to Inclusive Play Area Design

- a) Mauricio Villarreal, Landscape Architect, PLACE, gave an overview of how the design team approached their work as they designed the playground. The team used their prior experience in designing Harper's Playground in Arbor Lodge, as a beginning model and expanded the design from that point.

### 4) Review of Play Area Elements with the Focus Group:

#### Administration

1120 S.W. 5th Ave., Suite 1302  
Portland, OR 97204  
Tel: (503) 823-7529 Fax: (503) 823-6007

PortlandParks.org  
Amanda Fritz, Commissioner  
Mike Abbaté, Director



a) The facilitator led the group through an exercise where the designer gave a more in-depth description of each play element, then the group made suggestions, comments and critiques of the element. There were four questions the group was asked to respond to, given their review of the Inclusive Principles, which were provided to them prior to the meeting. The questions were:

- i) How would the playground be used?
- ii) Are the range of abilities being accommodated (sight, mobility, hearing, cognitive)?
- iii) How well does the design meet the inclusive play principles?
- iv) What would improve the score?

The first question resulting in the following responses:

- The playground would be a new draw to the community.
- It would be a destination place for the entire city.
- It would attract more families and teens.
- More after-hours use
- More eyes on the park

Then, each element was ranked by the participants on a continuum that measured the degree of inclusiveness reflected by the design. Below are the comments and ranking of each element.

1 = meets minimum standards 5 = most inclusive

<b><i>Play Element</i></b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Ranking</b>
<i>Climbing Forest</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a tipi-like structure;</li> <li>• Allow entrance into the space from above and below</li> <li>• Create opportunities for through-movements</li> <li>• Consider how adults with differing abilities might use the space</li> <li>• Allow for transfer between different play elements</li> <li>• Consider a rail for assistance is moving through this element</li> <li>• Allow use of the ground and ledge to climb</li> <li>• More than a 5% grade would require railings</li> </ul>	4
<i>Forest Play</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This could be the quiet play space</li> <li>• Provide shade here</li> <li>• Good place for shadow play/light play</li> <li>• Move this area away from the sand play area to minimize sand on the play surface</li> <li>• Add in a hollowed out area, such as log or boulder for space for kids to feel sheltered in. Make sure it is visible for safety.</li> </ul>	2-2.5

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide varied net heights throughout</li> <li>• May not be as easily navigable by those that are wheelchair-bound as other play elements due to nets. This limits inclusiveness.</li> </ul>	
<i>Sand &amp; Water Discover Area</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30-inch tabletop is good to allow kids in chairs to play with those standing</li> <li>• Provide a rinse-off area</li> <li>• Use colored concrete to change surface</li> <li>• Use dot tiles or other cues to help identify surface changes for the blind</li> <li>• A crank for the water is better than a pump (range of motion/effort needed)</li> <li>• Provide a sign to encourage people to leave the sand in place</li> <li>• Planks can help to keep sand in place/aid in clean up</li> </ul>	3.5 to 4.5
<i>Boulder Hill &amp; Slide</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good area for autistic individuals, quiet</li> <li>• Both climbing zones provide quiet areas, less action</li> <li>• Provide a hollowed out boulder or other visible sheltered area</li> <li>• Consider what the best surfacing is for this area: concrete, rubberized or other. Consider the impediments to getting up the hill in a wheelchair</li> <li>• Consider the orientation and sightlines for the bridge</li> </ul>	4.5
<i>Building Imagination Zone</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strength and dexterity are needed in this element</li> <li>• Have raised elements within this zone</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for building forts</li> <li>• Provide crawling places</li> <li>• Concern about loose parts. If they are a problem, they are easy to remove from the site</li> <li>• Loose parts may impede ADA accessibility.</li> </ul>	3
<i>Play Plaza</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have elements that require the interaction of multiple kids</li> <li>• Pendulum swing</li> <li>• Have multiple instruments</li> <li>• Call and response for instruments: there is a benefit to having them grouped together, more face-to-face interaction</li> <li>• Provide a drinking fountain at this location</li> <li>• Consider noise for surrounding neighbors. (It appears adjacent neighbors at this end of the park are mostly businesses).</li> </ul>	5
<i>Quiet Swing &amp; Spin</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have a variety of swing types per pod</li> <li>• Make this element multi-sensory</li> <li>• Provide tactile strips/dots and signage (Braille?) to warn sight-impaired people of swings</li> <li>• Suggest monkey bars here, both straight and arched</li> <li>• Provide areas of higher challenge for older kids</li> </ul>	4
<i>Skate Spot</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Call it a "skate cell" instead of "spot"</li> </ul>	Not applicable,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate skaters from the walkway. Prevent them from jumping onto paths, impeding pedestrians/bikers</li> <li>• Provide warnings for this area that are tactile, visual and auditory</li> </ul>	unable to rate*
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\*Group felt that it took a certain level of skill for anyone to use the skate spot, no matter their abilities, hence the inability to rank on inclusiveness.

**5) Next Steps:**

- a) The group agreed that the exercise was helpful in identifying what play elements work and those that could work better. The design team will go back to work with the input provided. Suggestions will be considered within the scope and budget of the project.
- b) The project manager gave an estimated timeline for the project, indicating opening is slated for spring of 2017.
- c) The project manager discussed the types of drawings that would be prepared, asking how helpful they would be. The group asked that the revised drawings be circulated via email to for their review. There was no request for a follow up meeting by the focus group.

**6) Adjourned**

- a) The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 PM.