

DRAFT
City of Pleasanton's
All-Abilities Playground Master Plan



INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground Master Plan

Prepared for



CITY COUNCIL

Karla Brown, Mayor

Julie Testa, Vice Mayor

Valerie Arkin, Councilmember

Jack Balch, Councilmember

Kathy Narum, Councilmember

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Steven Berberich, Regular Member

Charles Deckert, Regular Member

Joanie Fields, Regular Member

Rameshu Immadi, Regular Member

Michael Vickers, Regular Member

Mary Hekl, Alternative Member

Sadie Brown, Youth Member

STAFF

Nelson Fialho, City Manager

Heidi Murphy, Director, Library and Recreation

Michele Crose, Assistant Director, Library and Recreation

Matt Gruber, City Landscape Architect

Sarah Hosterman, Assistant City Landscape Architect

Giacamo Damonte, Parks Maintenance Superintendent

Prepared by



Jeff Ferber, Principal

Gina Chavez, Manager of Landscape Architecture

Marisa Peltier, Senior Landscape Architect

Ramzy Bejjani, Designer

January 5, 2022

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT OVERVIEW	9
1.1 Project Background	10
1.2 All-Abilities Playground	11
1.3 Purpose	14
1.4 Goals and Objectives	14
1.5 Introduction to the Site	16
1.6 Site Analysis	18
DESIGN PROCESS	21
2.1 Intro to Process	22
2.2 Stakeholder Meetings	22
2.3 Parks and Recreation Commission #1	22
2.4 Public Workshop #1	23
2.5 Community-wide Survey #1	23
2.6 Design Alternatives	24
2.7 Parks and Recreation Commission #2	34
2.8 Human Services Commission	34
2.9 Youth Commission	34
2.10 City Event	35
2.11 Public Workshop #2	35
2.12 Community-Wide Survey #2	36
2.13 City Council Meeting #1	36
2.14 Developing the Final Conceptual Plan and Cost Estimate	38
2.15 Parks and Recreation Commission #3	39
2.16 City Council #2	39
FINAL CONCEPTUAL PLAN DESCRIPTION	41
3.1 Character and Design Intent	42
3.2 Description of Plan Features	45
IMPLEMENTATION	51
4.1 Funding Context and Options	52
4.2 Potential Phasing	53
4.3 Operations and Maintenance	53
4.4 Conclusion	54

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

Figures & Charts

Fig. #1 Vicinity map of Pleasanton	viii
Fig. #2 Map of Ken Mercer Sports Park	10
Fig. #3 All-Abilities Playground Existing Conditions	16
Fig. #4 Public Outreach Character Image Board	25
Fig. #5 Draft Concept Alternative #1	26
Fig. #6 Perspective Rendering of Draft Concept Alternative #1	28
Fig. #7 Draft Concept Alternative #2	29
Fig. #8 Perspective Rendering of Draft Concept Alternative #2	31
Fig. #9 Formal plan of Concept Alternative #1	32
Fig. #10 Formal plan of Concept Alternative #2	33
Fig. #11 Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground Final Conceptual Plan	43
Fig. #12 Perspective Rendering #1 of Final Conceptual Plan	44
Fig. #13 Enlargement of Entry Area	45
Fig. #14 Enlargement of Central Playground	46
Fig. #15 Enlargement of Sensory Zone	47
Fig. #16 Enlargement of Active Zone	48
Fig. #17 Perspective Rendering #2 of Final Conceptual Plan	49



Fig. #1 Vicinity map of Pleasanton

Introduction and Project Overview



1.1 Project Background

Pleasanton's Parks and Recreation Master Plan was prepared in 2014 to help identify existing facilities and make recommendations for future community recreation opportunities. These recommendations identified the need for facilities that are inclusive of all populations and utilize inter-generational design and programming.

In late 2017 Pleasanton residents with special needs family members approached City staff and expressed the need for an all-abilities playground in the Pleasanton community. These families were driving to surrounding communities to visit such

parks and wanted a local all-abilities playground to call their own. In early 2019 the Parks and Recreation Commission and City Council adopted an all-abilities playground as a top priority. During 2019-2020 City staff visited neighboring all-abilities playgrounds in Dublin, Livermore, Walnut Creek, Concord, San Ramon, Hayward, Palo Alto, and Redwood City to become familiar with the features, amenities, and spatial design of these facilities. Staff also explored potential sites in Pleasanton to locate the all-abilities playground. Ultimately, the Parks and Recreation Commission recommended and the City Council approved the design process for an all-abilities playground at Ken Mercer Sports Park.

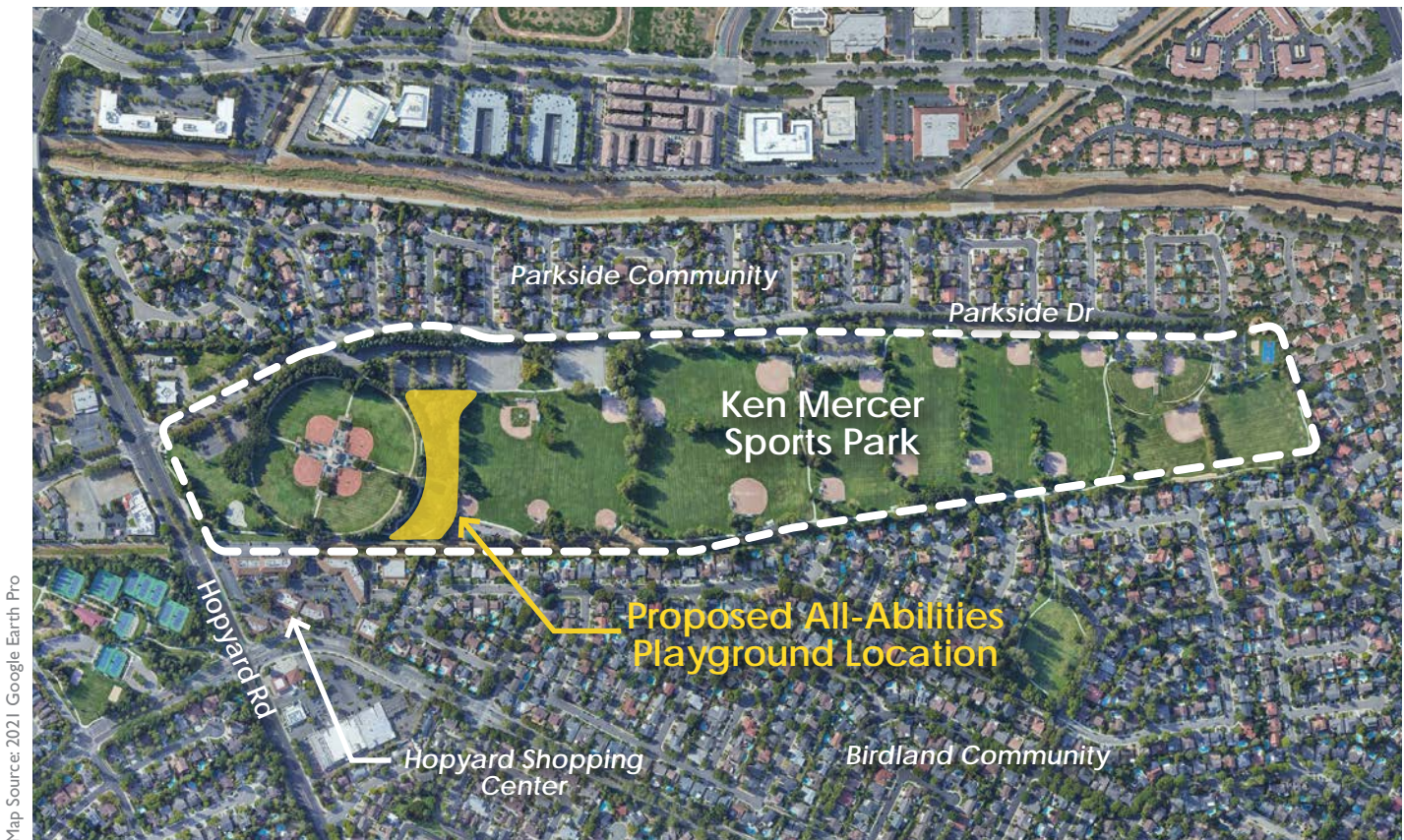


Fig. #2 Map of Ken Mercer Sports Park

1.2 All-Abilities Playground

DEFINITION

The term “all-abilities” describes a space that is designed to be both accessible and inclusive.

Accessible playground design is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Code, as summarized in the ‘Accessible Play Areas’ booklet published by the United States Access Board. This guide outlines ways to create a general level of playground usability for children with disabilities, such as requirements that certain quantities and types of play components be located along an accessible route. Accessible routes comply with ADA guidelines for elements including the material, width, and slope of the path of travel. An all-abilities playground goes beyond ADA guidelines by using an inclusive design process to focus on more than just physical access to a space.

Inclusive is defined as “including or covering all.” While inclusive playgrounds are often primarily designed to offer play experiences for those with disabilities such as impaired mobility, hearing/vision, sensory disorders, etc.—a truly inclusive playground also considers other groups in our



Mia's Dream Come True, an inclusive playground in Hayward, CA.

society such as the elderly, teenagers, those from other cultures, and those without disabilities.

The goal is that no group feels singled out as having a playground designed explicitly for them, nor without them. Inclusive design brings people together to participate and play alongside one another.

In order to achieve a high level of inclusivity and accessibility, the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground design process was guided by the 7 Principles of Universal Design that were developed by the University of North Carolina's Center for Universal Design:

- **Equitable Use:** access to uses by people of all abilities.
- **Flexibility in Use:** to accommodate a wide range of uses.
- **Simple and Intuitive Use:** use of spaces is easy to understand.
- **Perceptible Information:** information is communicated effectively.
- **Tolerance for Error:** hazards are minimized.
- **Low Physical Effort:** amenities and play features can be used efficiently.
- **Size and Space for Approach and Use:** appropriate size and space is provided for approach and use.

DESIGN APPROACH

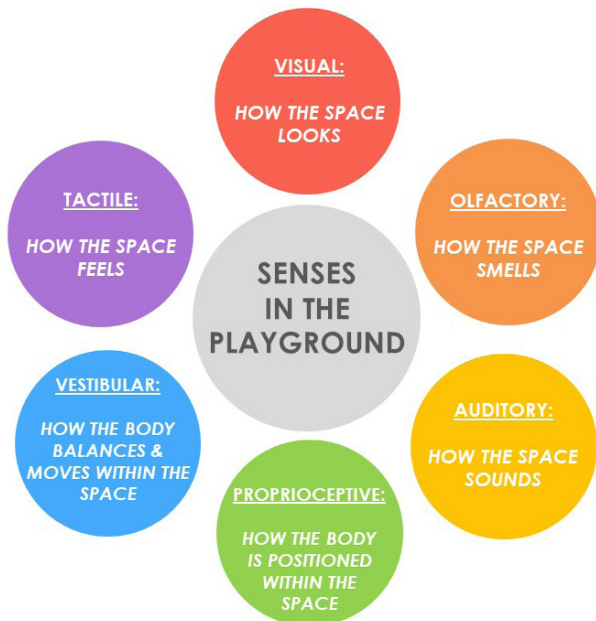
Inclusive playground designs can vary in their magnitude from simple, off-the-shelf play structures with ramps to fully accessible custom playground structures integrated into the surrounding site. Whatever the scale of the project, there are certain playground features that create the most successful inclusive play spaces.

The inclusive design approach for this project incorporates the following design features:

I. Experiences to stimulate the senses

Successful inclusive design focuses on how the user perceives the space to look, feel, smell and sound. It includes play experiences that focus on how the body balances and moves within the space and how the body is positioned within the space.

- Visual experiences set the tone of a welcoming space such as colorful surfacing, playful themes, and spacious play areas.
- Olfactory senses are stimulated through fragrant plant material and trees.
- Auditory stimulation is heightened through musical equipment and features that create a cause-and-effect action.
- Proprioceptive and vestibular senses are activated through equipment that requires jumping, bouncing, and back-and-forth movement, such as swings, spinners, and bouncers.
- Tactile senses are stimulated through different textured materials, allowing for a dynamic experience of the surrounding environment.



A diagram explaining how all-abilities playgrounds can engage a variety of human senses through design.



Imaginative play feature at Kennedy Park in Hayward, CA.



Quiet space integrated into the playground.



Large picnic area for group gathering

2. Imaginative Play Spaces

The incorporation of themed play structures and areas for performances creates an environment where playground visitors can realize their limitless imagination and potential.

3. Quiet and Calm Spaces

In a park bustling with activity, these spaces provide a balance where park visitors can find a soothing respite. This is especially important for some groups with special behavioral conditions.

4. Art and Culture

Features such as sculpture, mosaics, chalk art, and interpretive panels expose park visitors to the diversity of their own community through creative expression.

5. Group Activities and Communal Amenities

These are the backbone of any public space. They allow groups of all sizes to gather for planned events or spontaneous interactions.



Welcoming art pieces at Mia's Dream Come True Playground in Hayward, CA.

1.3 Purpose

The All-Abilities Playground Master Plan is intended to provide the City of Pleasanton with a starting point for the successful design and construction of a premier all-abilities playground. The work phases for any given project will vary, but the end goal is always the same – a project that is built successfully, on time, and within the given budget.

For this project, the workflow will consist of the Conceptual Design Phase, which includes public outreach, the entitlement process, and the design of the Final Conceptual Plan. This phase is followed by Design Development, where the approved Final Conceptual Plan begins to come to life through further design, engineering, and the selection of features and materials.

The next phase is Construction Documentation, in which technical drawings, specifications, and construction cost estimates are created. This package is used for the bidding and construction stages of the project.

This Master Plan chronicles the first phase of the project, the Conceptual Design Phase. It catalogs the extensive public outreach and feedback that was received, describes the Design Alternatives, and details the Final Conceptual Plan.

1.4 Goals and Objectives

The goal for the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground is to provide a family-friendly community space that values inclusivity, diversity, the preservation of the natural environment, and reflects the spirit and character of the Pleasanton community.

An extension of this goal is to create this space locally, within the heart of Pleasanton, so that residents do not have to travel outside of the area to find inspiring inclusive play opportunities.

A significant amount of public outreach took place in the early stages of the project to identify community priorities and solidify this goal. This public outreach is described in detail in Section #2 of the document.



A child climbing a play structure at an all-abilities playground.

The following list of design objectives stems from the feedback received during the public outreach phase:

1. **Promote inclusivity** through a variety of play experiences that range from gentle to challenging.
2. **Stimulate the senses** through movement, music, games, smells, and tactile experiences.
3. **Ensure the preservation** of mature trees, shade, and park-like feel.
4. **Celebrate the history, culture, and diversity** of the community through interpretive experiences, materials, and public art.
5. **Support physical activity** through fitness equipment and walking opportunities.
6. **Encourage gathering** with picnic areas, gathering nodes, and observation seating.
7. **Maximize safety** through open routes, clear lines of site, and perimeter fencing.
8. **Inspire creativity** through unique play equipment, imaginative spaces, and childlike themes.
9. **Emphasize sustainability** through thoughtful construction methods, efficient materials, and low maintenance practices.



Word Cloud reflecting community answers to the question, “What reflects the spirit and character of the Pleasanton Community?”

1.5 Introduction to the Site

City staff reviewed several potential sites for the All-Abilities Playground. At the January 9, 2020 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the commissioners voted 5-0 to recommend that City Council explore Ken Mercer Sports Park as a potential site for the playground. On September 1, 2020, City Council recommended to proceed with the design of the playground at Ken Mercer Sports Park.

The site chosen for the playground sits on the west side of Ken Mercer Sports Park between the softball complex and the youth baseball fields. The linear site is approximately three acres and stretches from the parking lot on the north to the

trail bordering the Pleasanton Canal on the south. There is a chain link fence separating the softball outfield to the west while the project site is open to the youth baseball field turf to the east. Along the western edge is a ten-foot-wide concrete path that connects to the park-wide loop system, as well as to the park maintenance yard to the south. The path is used by pedestrians, cyclists, and maintenance trucks. On the northeast corner of the site there is a public restroom that does not meet current ADA code requirements. The restroom is also adjacent to the parking lot which serves the sports complex and eventually will support the playground as well. The active parking lot has 120 parking spaces, while the adjacent overflow parking lot has 82 spaces.



Fig. #3 Aerial map of existing conditions of the All-Abilities Playground. The yellow line indicates the site boundary.

There are many existing utilities on the site, including electrical, drainage infrastructure, sewer, and water. There is an existing fire hydrant that connects to a recycled water line along the northeastern portion of the site, in addition to a 12” water transmission line and its corresponding easement. See Section #1.6 for further information on this water line.

A 3,000 square foot playground exists in the center of the site, surrounded by a grove of mature oak trees. The play equipment is over 20 years old and has reached the end of its life cycle. At the front of

the site near the parking lot is a large group picnic area set within a grove of mature sycamore trees. In addition to these two defined spaces, there are vast stretches of rolling lawn and trees throughout the site. A redwood tree grove buffers the softball field from the project site on the southwest edge and a grove of pistache trees buffers the youth baseball field on the southeast corner. There are other tree species including eucalyptus, sweetgum, and pines spread throughout the site. There is also a pine tree that is growing horizontally along the western path that is very popular amongst children.



Existing, non-ADA compliant restroom.



Existing playground and oak tree grove.



Horizontal pine tree popular among the park's youth.



Existing picnic area and sycamore tree grove.

Overall, the site setting is lush, green, and very pleasant. It is far-removed from the bustle of city traffic, leaving only the sounds of kids playing and practicing sports, parents cheering when games are happening, and people socializing along the paths.

1.6 Site Analysis

A thorough site analysis of the project area was conducted through multiple site evaluations, existing background documents, and specialized site investigations. The analysis documented the physical environment including vegetation, topography, subsurface soil conditions, utilities, solar exposure, climatic influences, and site user behavioral patterns.

The first specialty site investigation conducted was the Topographic Survey which was prepared by a local licensed surveyor dated May 10, 2021. It recorded land contours, locations of tree trunks and canopies, above ground utilities, the restroom footprint, concrete surfaces, curbs, and adjacent parking stalls. A Geotechnical Investigation Report dated August 6, 2021 was also prepared to document subsurface conditions including soil

characteristics, seismic parameters, and foundation and footing recommendations. The third and final specialty study prepared was the Tree Assessment by a licensed arborist dated June 2021. It includes a thorough assessment of each tree including location, trunk diameter, heritage classification, health and condition, suitability for preservation, and specific observations.

One feature of the site that will require continuing investigation is the location of the 12” water transmission line. During the Conceptual Design Phase, the designers and City staff determined that there are two divergent as-built record drawings, each locating the water line and its corresponding easement in different locations. As of the date of the Preferred Plan completion, this discrepancy has not been resolved and further topographic investigation is required to locate the pipe.

In addition to the physical site, behavioral aspects were studied at the park. These evaluations occurred at different times of the day and week to observe a wide variety of use patterns. Although park use was significantly lower during mid-week



Existing signage at the parking lot entrance of the site.



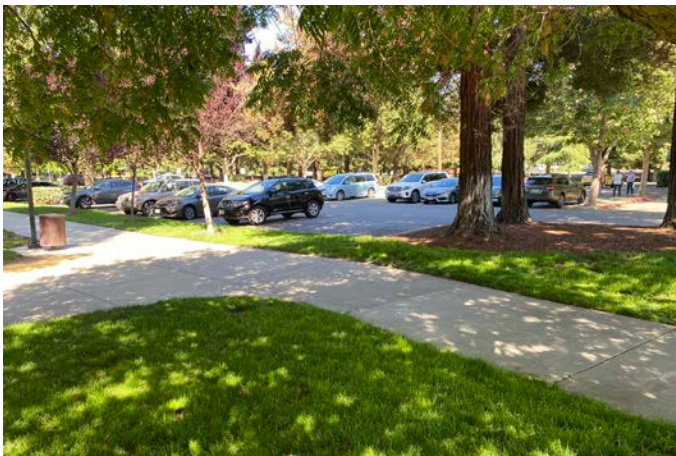
Lawn area adjacent to the picnic area.

work hours, there was never a time observed in which the park was empty. There was a consistent stream of walkers, joggers, cyclists, dog walkers, ball players, and children playing. Activity increased during the weekday evenings, and many of the soccer fields were utilized for youth sports practice.

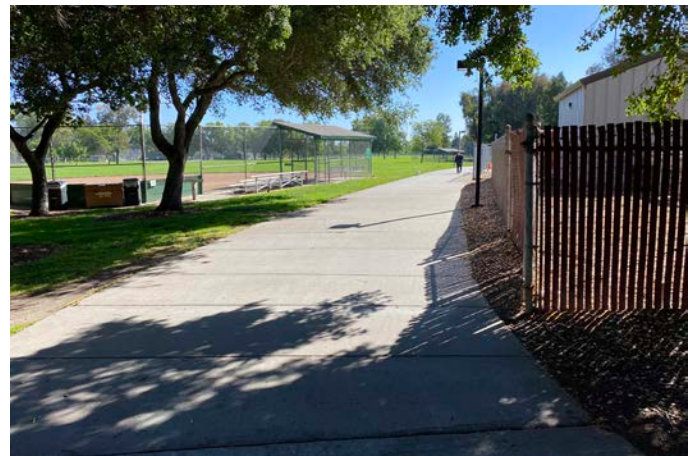
On weekends, especially tournament weekends, the park was packed with teams, spectators, and other park users, significantly impacting parking facilities. Although the park was very busy during

these times, it did not feel overcrowded. There was plenty of seating, shade, walking, and recreational space available.

The physical and behavioral aspects of the site helped inform the suitability and siting of uses desired by the community.



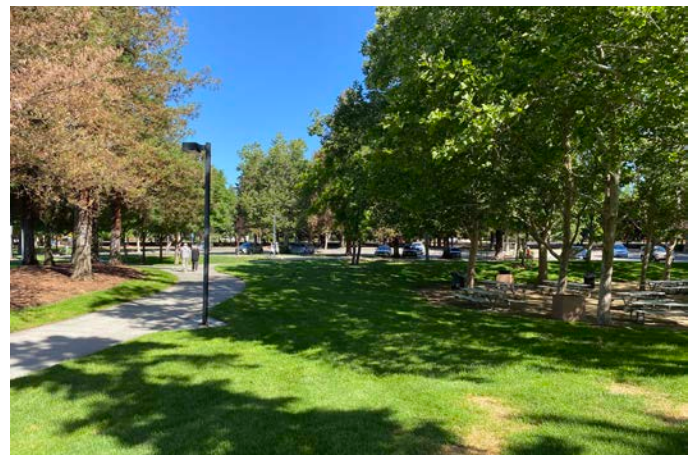
Existing parking lot.



Existing path between the youth baseball field and maintenance corp yard.



One of the existing lawns on site.



Existing path leading to the parking lot.



Image Credit: Chuck Deckert

Photo of a Pleasanton family reviewing concepts at Public Outreach Workshop #2

Design Process

2.1 Intro to Process

The design of the All-Abilities Playground was guided by a community-driven process, and outreach was conducted in two stages. The first phase of outreach activities drove the Conceptual Design process and was comprised of a series of stakeholder meetings, commission meetings, public workshops, online surveys, public emails, and public hearings. The feedback from these events was the basis for the design of the two Concept Plan Alternatives.

In the second phase of community outreach, the two Concept Plan Alternatives were presented to the public, community stakeholders, and City staff via workshops, meetings, surveys, and hearings. Their responses were integrated into the design of the Final Conceptual Plan.

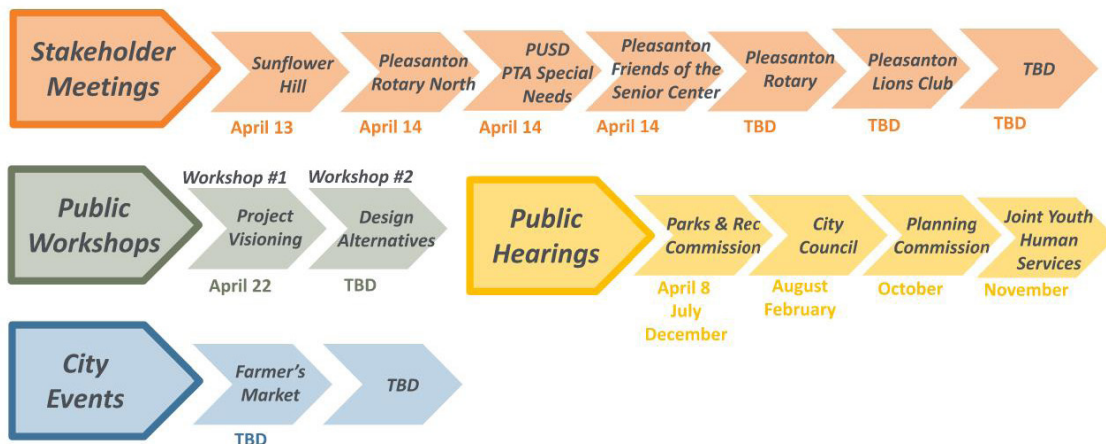
2.2 Stakeholder Meetings

Stakeholder meetings were held in April 2021 to obtain initial feedback from a range of groups with a particular interest in the project. These included City staff, Sunflower Hill administrators, the Pleasanton Unified School District PTA Special

Needs Committee, Friends of the Senior Center, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Pleasanton North Rotary Club. Each group was shown a presentation that included the project overview, site context, inclusive design principles and elements, and character images of potential amenities. The designers then facilitated a discussion in which participants provided feedback on the items shown, as well as their perspective on what should and should not be included in Pleasanton’s All-Abilities Playground. Detailed notes were taken of each discussion and collated to guide the next phase of the design process.

2.3 Parks and Recreation Commission #1

The Parks and Recreation Commission was involved in the Master Planning process from the beginning. In early April 2021, the design team provided a process plan including project background and overview, site conditions, project schedule, outreach strategy, inclusive design principles, ideology for the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground, and character images of potential amenities. The presentation was followed by a discussion period in which commissioners provided feedback on the process proposed by the design



Proposed community outreach approach shared with the Parks and Recreation Commission in April 2021.

2.6 Design Alternatives

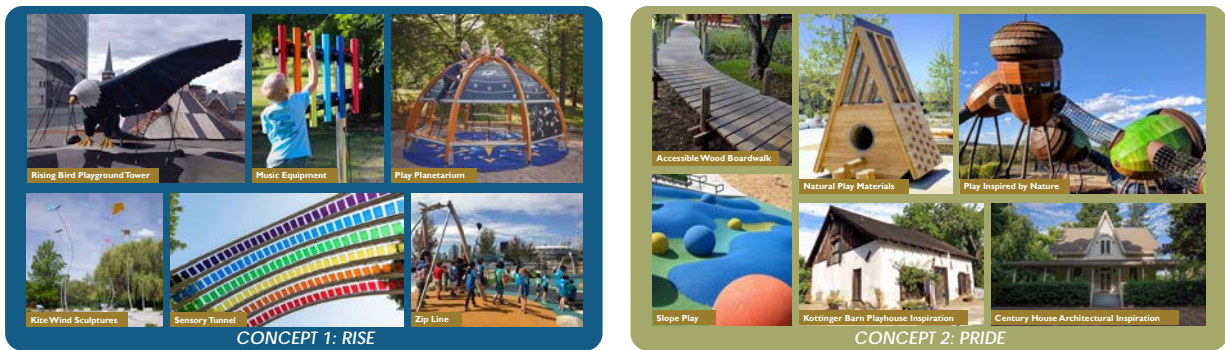
An abundance of valuable feedback was received from the Stakeholder meetings, City staff, Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting #1, Public Workshop #1, and the Community-Wide Survey #1. Comments, concerns, emails, wants, and needs were thoroughly read and recorded. Before designing a pair of Draft Concept Alternatives, a list of Design Program Elements was created. Program Elements are physical features and activities that make up a space. This list includes Program Elements that came directly from outreach feedback.

DESIGN PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- *Reservable picnic/party areas*
- *Security cameras/video streaming*
- *Hourglass system to monitor swing usage*
- *Landmarks for wayfinding*
- *Lockers*
- *Bubbles*
- *Emergency phone*
- *Area for chalk art*
- *Accessible drop-off zone*
- *Areas for service dogs (dog fountain, mutt mit)*
- *Entry sign/arch, inspired by the arch in downtown Pleasanton*
- *Visual and audio impairment accommodations*
- *Simple language and imagery*
- *Rocking benches at quiet areas*
- *Quiet areas with enough spaces for adults*
- *Water play*
- *Sensory garden with fragrant plants*
- *Play features for children younger than 3 years*
- *Limited entry points with perimeter barrier*
- *Natural elements for risk taking*
- *Chess/checkers tables*
- *Exercise equipment*
- *Community bulletin board*
- *Space for informal gathering*
- *Tactile features*
- *Observation seating*
- *Water features near the quiet areas*
- *Bike racks*
- *Restroom*
- *Play equipment for toddlers to teens, including slides, spinners, see-saws, climbers, zip-line, etc.*
- *Group picnic structure*
- *Walking loop path*
- *Gathering/socialization areas*
- *Bank-shot basketball*
- *Perimeter fence*
- *Art sculptures – kinetic art, public art*
- *Site furnishings – picnic tables, benches, Adirondack chairs, etc.*

After review of these Design Program Elements, it was determined that some were not feasible due to security, staffing, or maintenance concerns, such as lockers, bubbles, and a water feature. The rest of the elements were incorporated into two design alternatives.

Two Draft Concept Alternatives were created for internal city review, and staff input then informed the two Concept Alternative plans that were presented to the community, Concept Alternative #1 - Pleasanton's Rise Playground and Concept Alternative #2 - Pride of Pleasanton.



COMMON AMENITIES



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
CHARACTER IMAGE BOARD
PLEASANTON, CA



Fig. #4 The character image board that was used during the public outreach process to gauge the community's interest in various all-abilities playground elements.

CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE #1 – PLEASANTON’S RISE PLAYGROUND

The design for Concept Alternative #1 takes inspiration from childlike themes, colors, and imagination to create a space that is inspiring for children and adults alike. Pleasanton’s Rise Playground is a series of play spaces with their own unique theme and purpose. When combined, the experience of visiting Rise Playground will encourage visitors to “rise” like the sun, the moon, and the stars. Themes of bravery, confidence, and the joy of lifting-up others resonate throughout the playground.



Fig. #5 Draft Concept Alternative #1

ENTRY:

The entry area features a reconfigured parking lot with additional spaces and an ADA drop off area, in addition to a brick entry plaza with a decorative gateway arch. The existing picnic area beneath the sycamore tree grove is preserved and includes enhancements to the accessibility of the space.

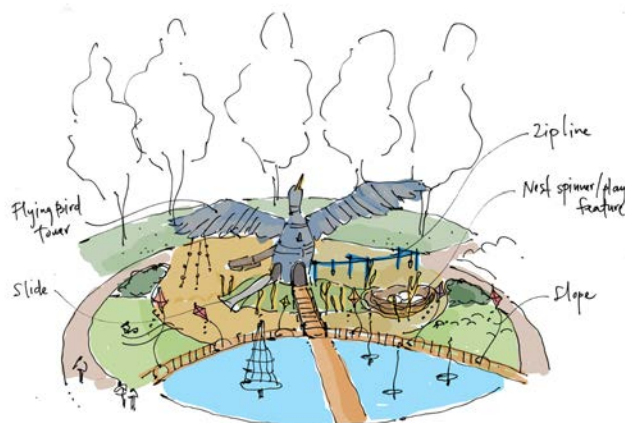
Image Credit: City of Pleasanton Twitter



The entry sign to downtown Pleasanton. The playground entry arch is inspired by this arch in downtown Pleasanton.

CENTRAL PLAYGROUND:

The central playground features an entry plaza with tile mosaics and donor opportunities. The sky-themed entry playspace includes cloud mounds, climbers, and kite wind sculptures. Beneath this area is the focal point of the playground, a large radiant bird structure with slides, climbers, and a zip line. Surrounding this play structure are swings, a sensory garden, and a spinner area.



Sketch of radiant bird play structure.

SENSORY AREAS:

The Star Sensory play area features a play planetarium climber and freestanding sensory elements. The Rainbow Road music zone showcases colorful rubber surfacing and a multitude of instruments. Separating these 2 spaces is a sensory tunnel beneath the oaks and star-shaped pods for quiet areas to recharge. A tactile sand area separates this space from the central play area.



Image Credit: Lappset

An example of a sensory play structure, the “play planetarium” by Lappset.

ACTIVE ZONE:

At the south end of the playground is an active area featuring fitness equipment, a large climber for teens and a Crescent Plaza featuring a bankshot basketball court and other game tables. Adjacent to this space are medium group picnic areas beneath the pistache tree grove.

Surrounding the playground is a perimeter loop path that is 12’ wide along the northeast side of the park for maintenance vehicles. This path connects to a new, ADA accessible restroom which will feature amenities for the special needs community.



Fig. #6 Perspective Rendering of Draft Concept Alternative #1

CONCEPT ALTERNATIVE #2 – PRIDE OF PLEASANTON

The design for Concept Alternative #2 took inspiration from the park’s lush setting and undulations. It imagines a serene but playful space that utilizes a variety of natural materials, artistic imagery, and cultural influences. It celebrates all that makes Pleasanton the community that it is – its beautiful scenery, its diversity, and its history.



Fig. #7 Draft Concept Alternative #2

ENTRY:

The entry area features a reconfigured parking lot with additional spaces and an ADA drop off area, in addition to a brick entry plaza with a decorative arch feature. The existing picnic area beneath the sycamore grove has been reconfigured to serve as two separate spaces – an area for game tables and a smaller group picnic area.

CENTRAL PLAYGROUND:

The central play space takes advantage of the site’s natural undulations and features a sloped play area with climbers and slides. An accessible play structure atop a grassy mound acknowledges the history of the Pleasanton community with agrarian themes of hops and the Meadowlark Dairy. Surrounding this structure is a shadow play shade shelter, swings, and spinners.



Sketch of birdhouse play structure.

SENSORY AREAS:

A nature-themed sensory play area near the oak and redwood tree groves includes grassy mounds, boulders, wood climbers, and a tactile sand play area. Adjacent to this area is a gathering lawn and open mulch area featuring the horizontal pine tree.

EVENT AREA:

This concept features a large shelter with architecture reminiscent of the Century House. This area is envisioned as a large group picnic area or an event space for plays and other performances.



Image Credit: PleasantonWeekly and Mike Sedlak

Photo of the historic Century House, which inspired the architecture of the event area for this concept.

ACTIVE ZONE:

An inclusive challenge course provides a competitive space for both children and adults alike. This is adjacent to the bankshot basketball court with picnic tables and a flexible lawn area. Fitness equipment is located in nodes along the walking loop.

As in Concept Alternative #1, the playground is ringed by a perimeter loop path that is 12’ wide along the northeast side of the park for maintenance vehicles. This path connects to a new, ADA accessible restroom which will feature amenities for the special needs community.



Fig. #8 Perspective Rendering of Draft Concept Alternative #2



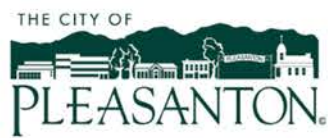
PLEASANTON'S RISE PLAYGROUND

This inspirational playground encourages bravery, confidence and the joy of lifting up others. Through a variety of play and sensory experiences that encourage inclusion, it inspires all who visit to "rise" up like the birds in the wind, the sun, the moon and the stars.

Accessible "Rising Bird" playground tower featuring nest, slides and zip line

LEGEND

- 1 Accessible Drop-Off Zone
- 2 Accessible Restroom
- 3 Existing Large Group Picnic Area
- 4 Walking Loop
- 5 12' Wide Maintenance Route
- 6 Feature Play Space w/ Accessible Bird and Nest
- 7 Accessible Zip Line
- 8 Play Slopes
- 9 Swings with Harness Seats
- 10 Belt and Tot Swings
- 11 Sensory Garden with Fragrant Plants – Olfactory Sensory Feature
- 12 Entry Play Space with Kite Wind Sculptures and "Cloud Mounds"
- 13 Service Dog Area with Mutt Mitt and Dog Fountain)
- 14 Community Bulletin Board / Entry Kiosk
- 15 Ramp to Picnic Area
- 16 Entry Plaza with Pleasanton Arch, Brick Walls, Seating, and Bike Racks
- 17 Public Art
- 18 "Sun Plaza" with Tile Mosaic, Donor Walls, Chalk Art Area and Seating
- 19 Sand Play Area – Tactile Sensory Feature
- 20 Natural Zone under trees with Rocking Benches
- 21 Small Group Picnic Area
- 22 Gathering Chairs
- 23 Horizontal Pine Tree
- 24 Additional Path
- 25 Brick Seat Walls
- 26 "Star" Sensory Play Space – Tactile & Visual Sensory Features
- 27 Star Quiet Pods
- 28 Sensory Tunnel through Oak Grove – Visual Sensory Feature
- 29 Spinning / Bouncing / Rocking Zone – Proprioceptive and Vestibular Sensory Features
- 30 Medium Group Picnic Area
- 31 "Rainbow Road" Music Area – Auditory Sensory Feature
- 32 Fitness Equipment Zone - Inclusive for All Ages
- 33 Teen Play Space with Challenge Climber
- 34 "Crescent Plaza" with Bankshot Basketball and Game Tables - Chess and Ping Pong
- 35 Flexible Lawn Area
- 36 Controlled Entry Points
- 37 Softball Netting



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
 PLAYGROUND CONCEPT 1
 PLEASANTON, CA

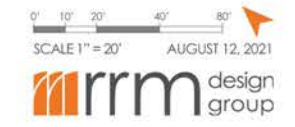
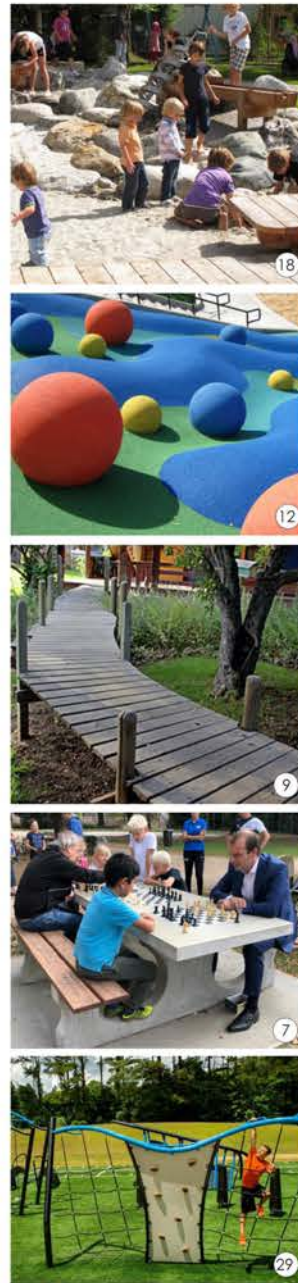
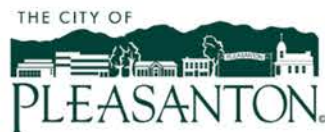


Fig. #9 Formal plan of Concept Alternative #1



LEGEND

- ① Accessible Drop-Off Zone
- ② Accessible Restroom
- ③ Walking Loop
- ④ 12' Wide Maintenance Route
- ⑤ Flexible Lawn Area
- ⑥ Medium Group Picnic Area
- ⑦ Game Tables – Chess and Ping Pong
- ⑧ Playground Entry with Park Sign, Pleasanton Arch, and Brick Walls
- ⑨ Accessible Wood Boardwalk through Sycamore Trees
- ⑩ Elevated Picnic Plaza with Shade Trellis, Seating and Access to Hill Slides
- ⑪ Accessible Playground Feature celebrating Pleasanton Community
- ⑫ Gentle Play Slope with Undulations in Surface
- ⑬ Play Slope with Climbers and Slides
- ⑭ Natural Zone under trees with Rocking Benches
- ⑮ Public Art
- ⑯ Nature Play Area with Artificial Turf Mounds and Wood Climbers
- ⑰ Planter Areas with Native Plants and Educational Signage
- ⑱ Sand and Water Play Area – Tactile Sensory Feature
- ⑲ Artistic Shade Shelters with Shadow Play – Visual Sensory Feature
- ⑳ Swing Zone with Belt, Tot, and Harness Seats
- ㉑ Fitness Equipment Nodes along Walking Loop
- ㉒ Small Group Picnic Area
- ㉓ Quiet Pods in Varying Sizes
- ㉔ Wood Sensory Boardwalk Beneath Oak Grove - Visual Sensory Feature
- ㉕ Group Picnic Shelter/Event Stage Area – Century House Architectural Character
- ㉖ Large Group Picnic Area/Flexible Event Use
- ㉗ Realigned Path to meander around Horizontal Pine
- ㉘ Horizontal Pine Tree
- ㉙ Inclusive Challenge Course
- ㉚ Bankshot Basketball with Picnic Tables
- ㉛ Controlled Entry Points
- ㉜ Softball Netting
- ㉝ Observation Seating



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
 PLAYGROUND CONCEPT 2
 PLEASANTON, CA



Fig. #10 Formal plan of Concept Alternative #2

2.7 Parks and Recreation Commission #2

On August 12, 2021 the initial community outreach results and concept alternatives were presented to the Parks and Recreation Commission. The presentation started with a recap of the project process to date including the results from the stakeholder meetings, Public Workshop #1, and Community-wide Survey #1. The two Concept Alternatives derived from the community feedback were then presented. The plan features and related concept imagery were presented in detail for each of the alternatives. As part of the plan presentation, a parking study was shared that illustrated ideas to add accessible parking. Following the concept presentations, next steps in the design process were reviewed. And finally, a discussion took place in which Commissioners provided detailed feedback on each of the concepts and the features included. Overall, both options were very well received but most commissioners favored Concept #1.

2.8 Human Services Commission

On September 1, 2021, the design team presented the All-Abilities Playground to the Human Services Commission. The presentation included a project overview, the project process to date, the initial community outreach results, and the two Concept Alternatives. Similar to the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the Commissioners were ‘walked’ through each of the plan alternatives. Verbal and image-based descriptions were provided for each concept, as well as general amenity images that would be common to both alternatives.

Following the conceptual design presentation, next steps in the process were laid out and finally a discussion to obtain feedback took place. The Commissioners provided detailed thoughts on the character and features of each concept. The overall consensus was a preference for Concept #2.

2.9 Youth Commission

On September 8, 2021, the design team presented the All-Abilities Playground to the Youth Commission. The same presentation that was shown to the Human Services Commission including project overview, project process to date, initial community outreach results, and the two Concept Alternatives was shared. The overwhelming majority of the Commission supported Concept #1 with some Pleasanton-centric elements from Concept #2 recommended to be interwoven into the design.



Finish the playground scene!
Add things to fill the playground like slides, swings, a treehouse - anything you want!

An example of a children’s activity used at workshops.

2.10 City Event

On September 18, 2021, the design team presented the Concept Alternative Plans at a Farmer’s Market booth. The two concept plans were mounted on 30” x 42” boards and displayed at the front of the booth. There was also a character image board of the proposed park amenities and play features set up on an easel to support the discussions. The plans were described to dozens of passersbys. For those that wished to share specific comments, notes were taken on a large flip chart and recorded digitally following the meeting. Support for the concept alternatives was evenly split.

2.11 Public Workshop #2

On Saturday morning, September 25, 2021, the second Public Workshop was held at Ken Mercer Park to present and gather feedback from the community on the Concept Alternative Plans. A Ballistic soccer tournament was taking place that day, and there were numerous families in the park. A shade tent and tables were set up in the project location adjacent to the main path to increase visibility. Large boards with the Concept Alternative Plans and character imagery were displayed on tables and easels. A constant stream of families and residents visited the setup. The concepts were described to small groups and individuals by City



A family commenting on the concept alternatives at Workshop #2.

staff and the design team. Participants were given a dot to express their preference for either Concept Alternative Plan. Additional community comments were written on a large flip chart during the event and later recorded digitally. In total, 127 responses were received during the event. Preference for the plan alternatives was split with a slight lean toward Concept #1. Amenities that were particularly popular among participants include basket ball hoops, a walking/exercise loop, chess boards, and a sand pit. Participants also expressed a preferences to save as many trees on site as possible and include Pleasanton specific elements in both concept alternatives.

2.12 Community-Wide Survey #2

The second community-wide survey was released on the day that Public Workshop #2 was held. A QR code was provided at the event which directed participants to the survey posted on the project web page. The survey contained questions to solicit feedback on preference between the two Concept Alternative Plans, as well as common amenities to both alternatives. 144 responses were received



Potential All-Abilities element: a trampoline to provide users with an opportunity to experience movement in a different way.

and there was an almost even split between the two Alternative Concept Plans. The most popular feature across both plans was a large accessible play zone featuring a nature related focal piece with integrated slides, climbers, and a zipline. Other popular features and amenities included picnic areas, an accessible restroom, a variety of swing types, musical elements, an inclusive challenge course, walking/fitness loop, and observation areas with comfortable seating for all people.

2.13 City Council Meeting #1

On October 5, 2021, the Conceptual Plan Alternatives were presented to City Council. Similar to the Commission meetings, the presentation began with a project overview and the project process to date summary. Then the initial outreach results were displayed highlighting the community's highest priorities. Next, the two Concept Alternative Plans were presented and an explanation was given as to how the concepts reflect the community's input. Each concept was accompanied by a three-dimensional rendering of a key design feature, as well as character images



Potential All-Abilities element: a sensory tunnel to engage multiple senses.

illustrating various features throughout the plan. Several slides of character images were included to communicate play features and amenities common to both designs. Following a presentation of the Concept Alternative Plans, feedback on the plan alternatives gathered from community outreach was summarized. These outreach events included the Farmer's Market event and Public Workshop #2 in the park. Photos of these events along with summaries of the input received were discussed. A key points slide indicating overall plan preference and preferred amenities to date was shown.

Finally, a discussion ensued in which each Council member shared their thoughts and preferred alternative. The Council consistently supported Concept #1, the Rise Concept, due to its

whimsical, imaginative, colorful, and activity focused design. They directed the design team to find an alternative to the bird as the focal feature. They also recommended adding more accessible parking, ensuring as much shade as possible be included, that existing tree canopies remain, plentiful seating be provided, challenge and fitness courses be integrated, quiet spaces be woven in, and all the senses be engaged. A final comment from the mayor encouraged the team to continue to pursue creativity and imagination in the final design but to also be cognizant of the budget and long-term maintenance of the playground.



Community members and city staff discussing the concept plans at Community Workshop #2.

2.14 Developing the Final Conceptual Plan and Cost Estimate

FINAL CONCEPTUAL PLAN

There was an abundant amount of feedback received from Parks and Recreation Commission #2, Human Services Commission, Youth Commission, the Farmer's Market event, Public Workshop #2, the Community-Wide Survey #2, and City Council Meeting #1. Each of these groups had valuable input on the design alternatives, and throughout the outreach process much of the preference for the alternatives was split with a lean toward Concept #1. In general, children tended to lean towards Concept #1, while adults had a slight preference for Concept #2. In the end, City Council members reviewed the concepts and public feedback and their preferred choice was Concept #1: Pleasanton's Rise Playground.

Utilizing the feedback received from the outreach, the design team and City staff came up with a list of modifications to the design of Concept #1. Some of these modifications included elements that were popular in Concept #2 and are as follows:

- *Add 1 additional ADA parking space (6 total). The concept alternatives both included 5 ADA parking spaces. Concerns about limited parking was a common theme among feedback received.*
- *Rethink the Bird. The central bird structure was determined to not fit the design theme, and other options should be considered. Staff and the design team agreed to explore a butterfly-themed structure, as requested by some members of the public and city council.*

- *Replace the Teen Climber with the Challenge Course. The challenge course of Concept #2 was a popular element that garnered more positive feedback than the large teen climber.*
- *Include the Stage and Artistic Shelters from Concept #2. Both the stage area and the shadow-play shade shelters were popular features of Concept #2.*
- *Relocate Fitness Equipment along Path. The fitness equipment along the walking loop was a popular element of Concept #2.*
- *Small Spatial Changes. It was requested that small edits be made to the maintenance path and the size of the bankshot basketball area.*

In addition to these modifications, the design team made small changes to the central play area to better fit the existing grading of the site. The Sun Plaza and entry space were reconfigured to provide an enhanced and more straightforward entry experience.

COST ESTIMATE

A Conceptual Level Cost Estimate was created to obtain budgetary numbers for the construction of the playground. Conceptual estimates are preliminary in nature due to the large amount of unknowns in the design, such as accurate grading, stormwater and utility information, custom equipment and footing design, etc. Because of this, a 25% design contingency has been added to the estimate. The conceptual level cost estimated for the construction of this 2.5 acre playground is approximately \$7.5 million dollars.

2.15 Parks and Recreation Commission #3

This section to be written after the meeting.

2.16 City Council #2

This section to be written after the meeting.



Image Credit: Chuck Deckert

Photo of a Pleasanton family reviewing concepts at Public Outreach Workshop #2

Final Conceptual Plan Description



3.1 Character and Design Intent

The design for the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground aims to create a family-friendly community space that values inclusivity, diversity, and the preservation of the natural environment.

COMMUNITY SPACES

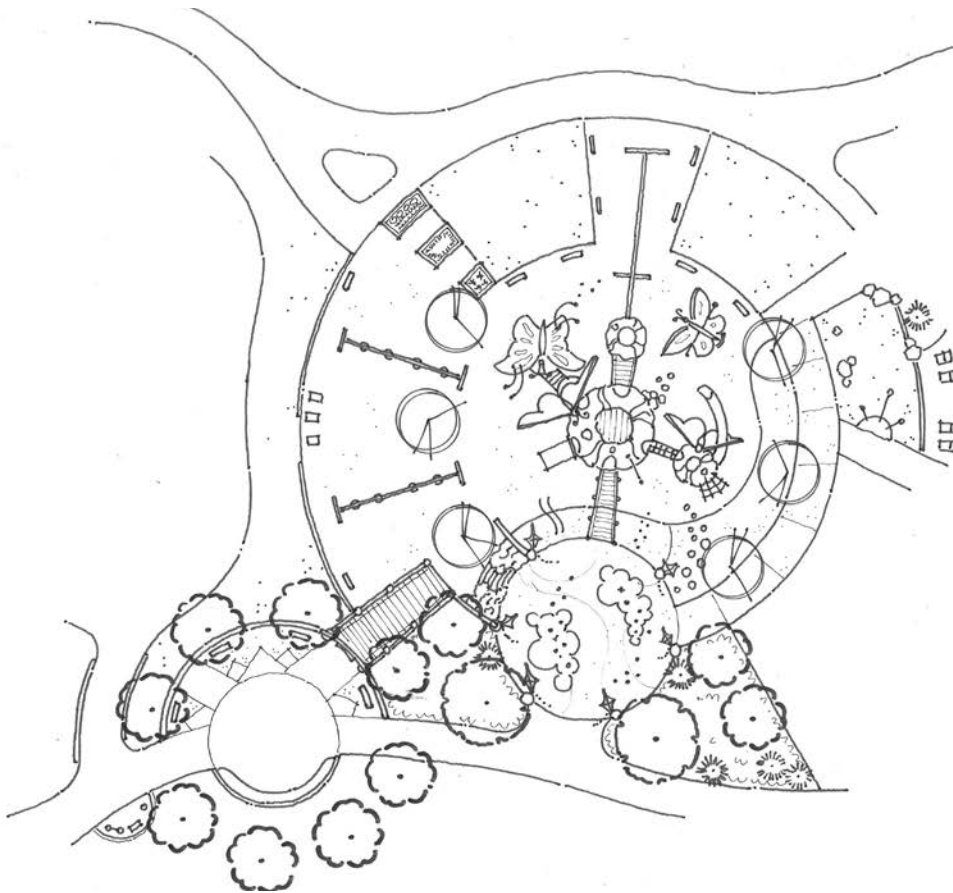
The design includes three communal space types: spaces to gather, spaces to play and spaces to recreate. These three types of spaces form the foundation of a healthy community.

INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

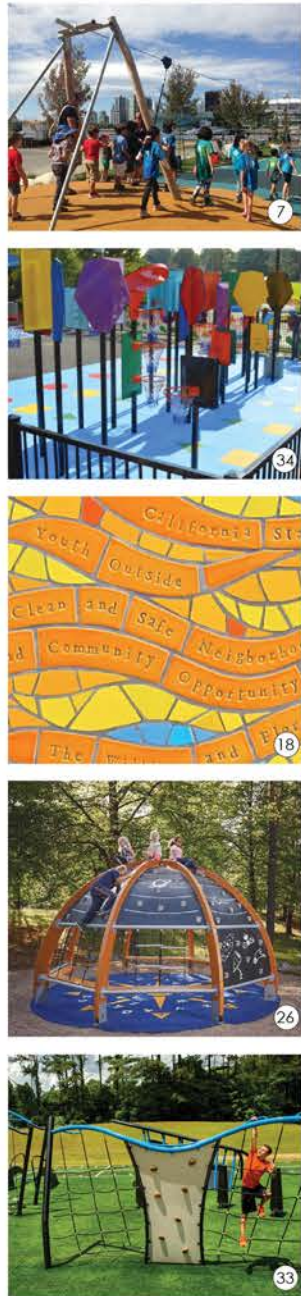
The playground features a variety of equipment and activities that are easy to use and understand. It celebrates art and culture through public art, interactive sculptures, and includes universal themes of acceptance and belonging through its “Rise” theme, colors, shapes, sounds, and visual experiences.

PRESERVATION OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

The design preserves as many existing shade trees as possible and promotes sustainable design practices, low maintenance materials, and plants.



A sketch of the playground's center, redesigned to incorporate community and stakeholder feedback.



PLEASANTON'S RISE PLAYGROUND
 This inspirational playground encourages bravery, confidence and the joy of lifting up others. Through a variety of play and sensory experiences that encourage inclusion, it inspires all who visit to "rise" up like butterflies in the wind, the sun, the moon and the stars.

LEGEND

- 1 Accessible Drop-Off Zone
- 2 Accessible Restroom
- 3 Existing Large Group Picnic Area
- 4 Walking Loop
- 5 12' Wide Maintenance Route
- 6 Feature Play Space w/ Butterfly Structure
- 7 Accessible Zip Line
- 8 Play Slope
- 9 Swings with Harness Seats
- 10 Belt and Tot Swings
- 11 Sensory Garden with Fragrant Plants – Olfactory Sensory Feature
- 12 Entry Play Space with Kite Wind Sculptures and "Cloud Mounds"
- 13 Service Dog Area with Mutt Mitt and Dog Fountain
- 14 Community Bulletin Board / Entry Kiosk
- 15 Ramp to Picnic Area
- 16 Entry Plaza with Pleasanton Arch, Brick Walls, Seating, and Bike Racks
- 17 Public Art
- 18 "Sun Plaza" with Tile Mosaic, Donor Walls, Chalk Art Area and Seating
- 19 Sand Play Area – Tactile Sensory Feature
- 20 Natural Zone under trees with Rocking Benches
- 21 Small Group Picnic Area
- 22 Gathering Chairs
- 23 Horizontal Pine Tree
- 24 Nature Play Area
- 25 Brick Seat Walls
- 26 "Star" Sensory Play Space – Tactile & Visual Sensory Features
- 27 Star Quiet Pods
- 28 Sensory Tunnel through Oak Grove – Visual Sensory Feature
- 29 Spinning / Bouncing / Rocking Zone – Proprioceptive and Vestibular Sensory Features
- 30 Medium Group Picnic Area
- 31 "Rainbow Road" Music Area – Auditory Sensory Feature
- 32 Fitness Equipment Zone
- 33 Challenge Course - Inclusive for All Ages
- 34 "Crescent Plaza" with Bankshot Basketball, Chess and Ping Pong Tables
- 35 Raised Stage Area with Artistic Shade Canopies and Lawn Seating
- 36 Perimeter Fence with Entry Gates
- 37 Softball Netting



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
 FINAL CONCEPTUAL PLAN
 PLEASANTON, CA

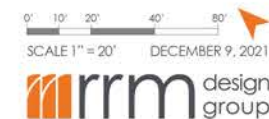
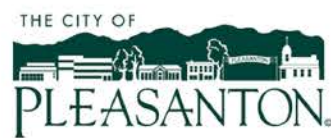


Fig. #11 Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground Final Conceptual Plan



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
CHARACTER SKETCH
PLEASANTON, CA



Fig. #12 Perspective Rendering #1 of Final Conceptual Plan

3.2 Description of Plan Features

ENTRY AREA

The proposed parking lot improvements include 6 ADA parking spaces and an accessible drop-off area. An entry plaza features brick paving, clinker brick walls, and an entry arch that is reminiscent of the downtown Pleasanton Arch. A public art sculpture sets the tone of a playful, inviting space and an accessible ramp takes users to the existing large group picnic area beneath the sycamore grove. This space is being preserved as-is and will feature furnishing replacement and enhancements to improve the accessibility of the space. A new restroom is proposed in the location of the existing restroom and will feature upgrades to better serve the special needs community, such as ample space and an adult changing table.



Fig. #13 Enlargement of Entry Area

CENTRAL PLAYGROUND

The Sun Plaza serves as the entry point for the central playground space. This lively plaza features an entry kiosk/community bulletin board, decorative tile mosaics, donor walls, an area for chalk art, and seating. A playful welcome arch signals the entrance onto the boardwalk to the lower playground level. Perched above this central space is the sky-themed play area with white cloud mounds and blue sky climbers, all encircled by whimsical kite wind sculptures. A turf slope with a variety of climbers connects to the lower playground featuring the playground's focal point: a large multi-level custom structure. This imaginative structure features large, colorful butterflies among stumps and other whimsical characters. A central stump is large enough for accessibility and sensory play with smaller slides and play events focusing on inclusivity. Smaller stumps connected by tunnels and ramps offer multiple levels for more challenging play experiences like taller slides and climbers. An accessible zip-line is located at the top of the structure and takes users of all-abilities through the existing large eucalyptus trees. Multiple types of swings are located in this area, including those with accessible harness seats, tot bucket seats, belt seats and dish seats. A sensory garden with raised planters and fragrant smelling plants borders the edge of this playspace.

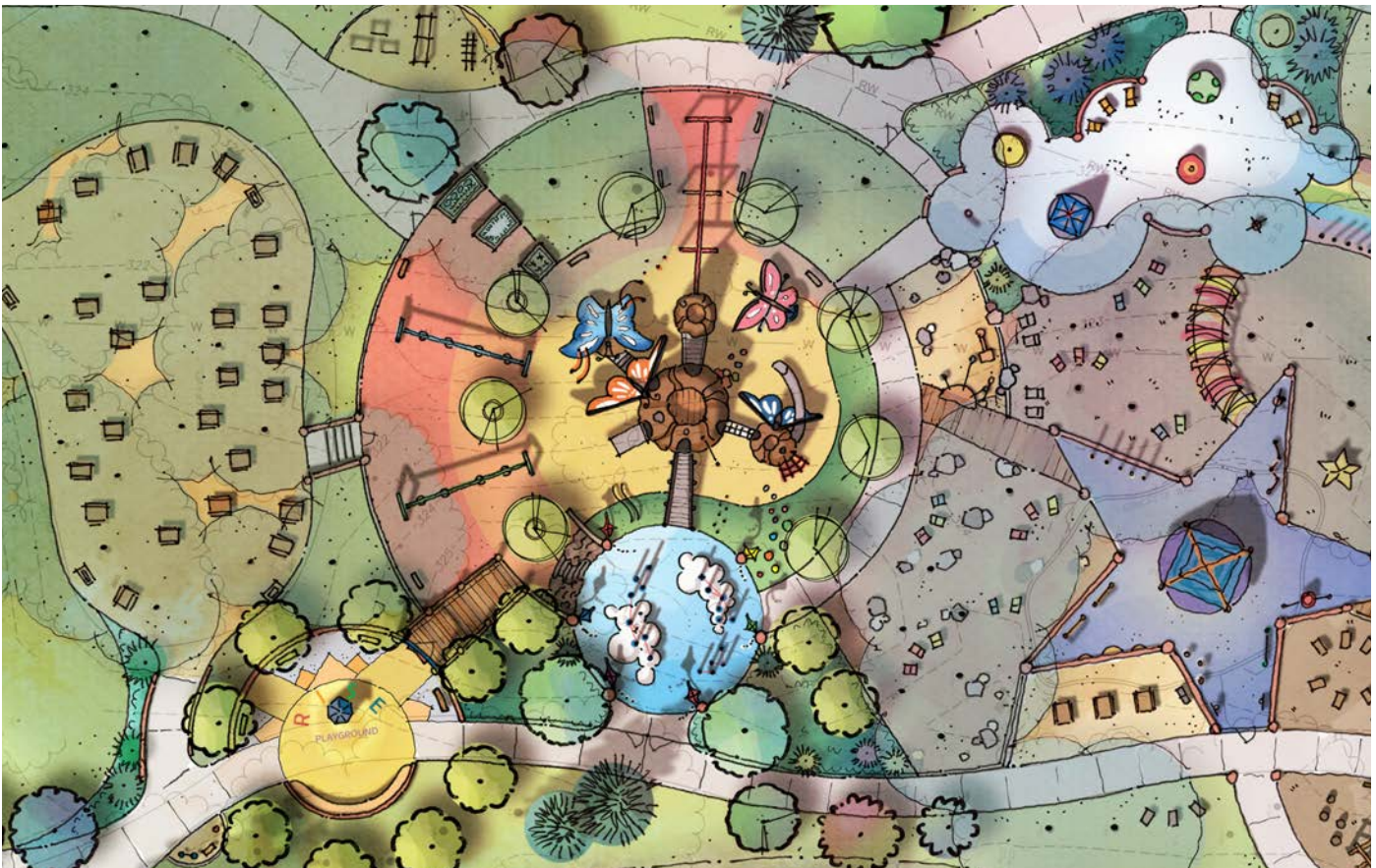


Fig. #14 Enlargement of Central Playground

SENSORY ZONE

Adjacent to the central play space on the edge of the redwood and oak tree groves sits a tactile sensory sand play area featuring sand tables, chutes, and natural boulders. A boardwalk that travels through the sand area takes users to the Star Sensory Playspace. The focal feature in this area is a planetarium-themed dome climber that also serves as a gathering space and learning environment. Encircling the planetarium are freestanding sensory features that make interesting sounds, images and patterns. A small group picnic area and rocking benches beneath the redwood grove provide spaces for community and socialization.

To the north of the Star Sensory Playspace is the existing oak grove with proposed oak trees to replace those deemed for removal in the arborist report. Beneath this canopy there are star-shaped quiet pods with seating areas inside. These structures vary in size and are designed for children and/or caregivers to sit inside for some separation from the playground. A sensory-rich tunnel connects this area to the vestibular sensory zone which features a variety of spinners, bouncers and other moving equipment. Adjacent to this zone is the rainbow road music area. The colorful rainbow surfacing is full of a variety of different types of musical equipment such as chimes, drums, and xylophones.

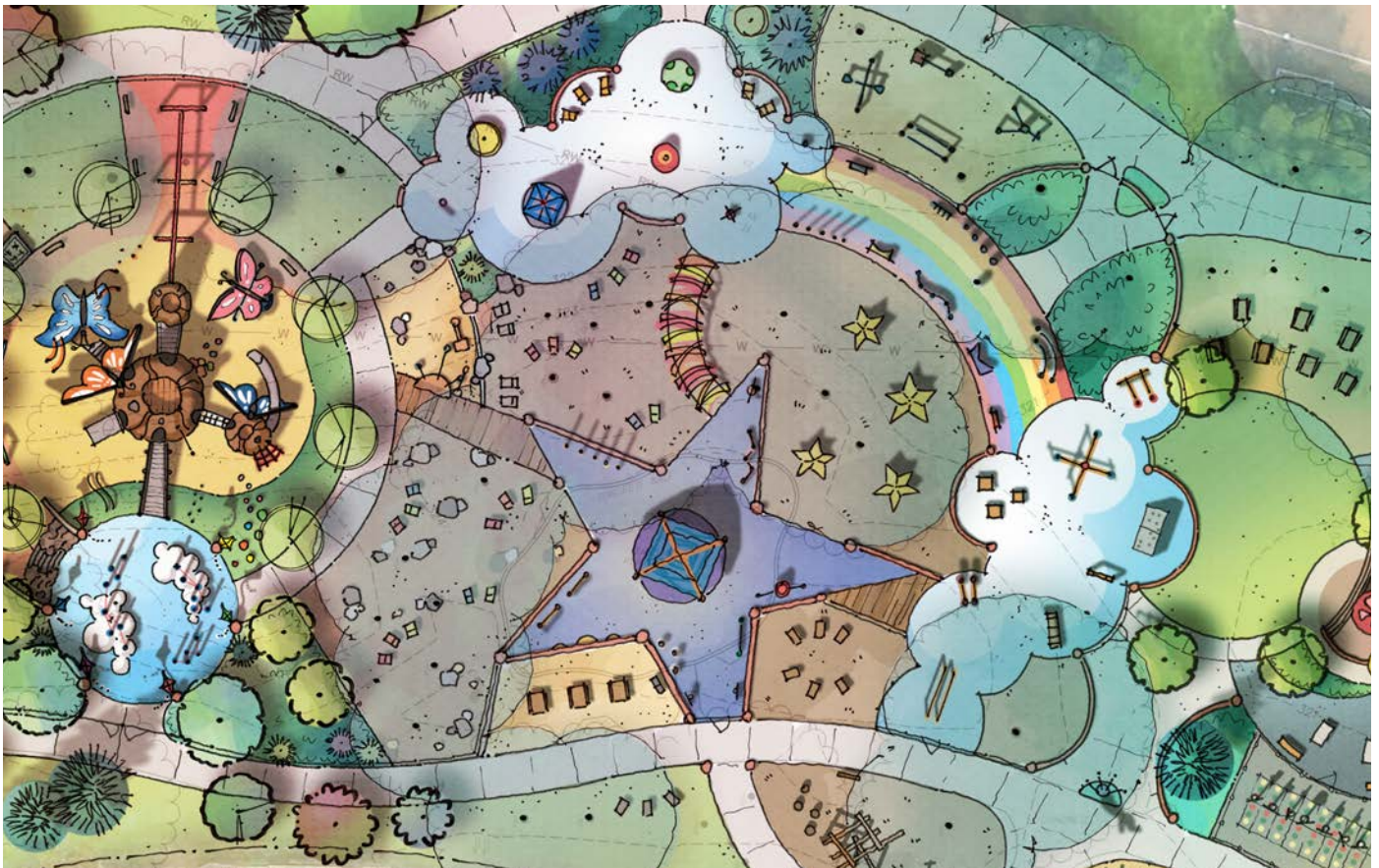


Fig. #15 Enlargement of Sensory Zone

ACTIVE ZONE

The southern portion of the park features the active recreation space. A challenge course includes obstacles that are designed to connect people of all ages and backgrounds together. These courses create an outdoor space to get fit and spark friendly competition. A large circular turf area serves as a passive recreation space or viewing area for the small, raised stage structure. This stage offers a flexible area for both picnicking and small events such as plays and small band performances. Artistic structures with colorful shadows decorate this space and provide shade. Adjacent to this area is the Crescent Plaza featuring game tables and an inclusive bankshot basketball court.

A medium group picnic area is located beneath the existing pistache tree grove and provides picnicking at the southern end of the playground. This area is adjacent to the walking loop that travels around the perimeter of the playground. Three laps around this loop is equal to one mile. Fitness equipment nodes are located along the northeast edge of this path to enhance the exercise experience.

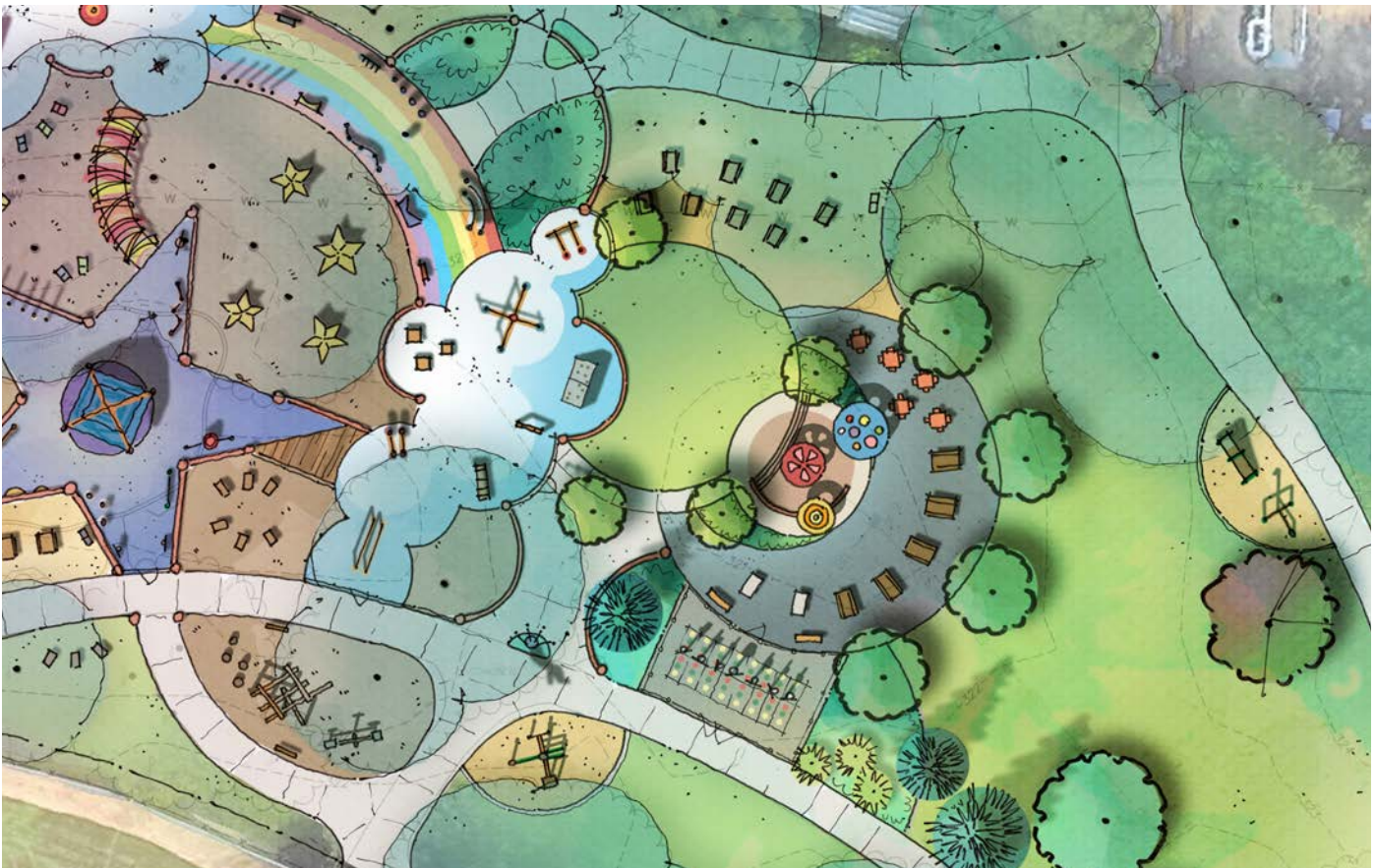
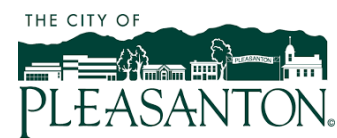


Fig. #16 Enlargement of Active Zone



ALL-ABILITIES PLAYGROUND AT KEN MERCER SPORTS PARK
CHARACTER SKETCH
PLEASANTON, CA



Fig. #17 Perspective Rendering #2 of Final Conceptual Plan

Implementation

4

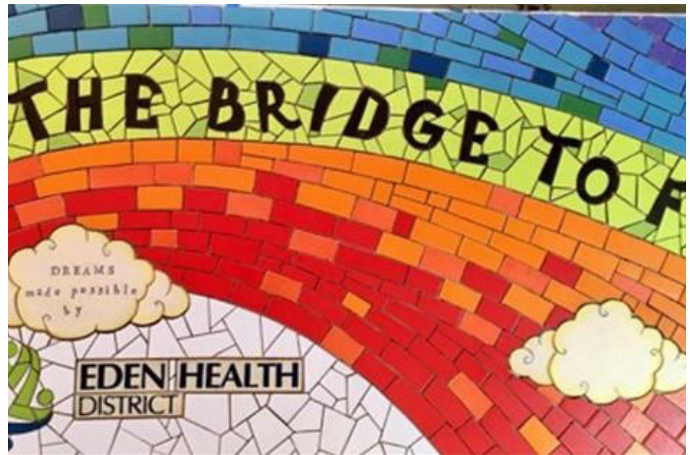
4.1 Funding Context and Options

At this early stage in the design process, funding has not yet been allocated for the All-Abilities Playground. It is common practice to develop a final conceptual plan before construction funding is available and to use the graphics created as a part of the design process to help raise funds. Having a plan provides a tangible product that allows the community to envision what the playground will

look like. Once people see how their community park can be transformed, they are much more likely to participate in fundraising efforts. Now that the plan has been created, the first step towards implementation will be to create a fundraising strategy that involves setting quantifiable goals, researching databases, identifying grant opportunities, and identifying public and private sources. There are strategies to tie park elements to donors in creative, elegant ways. Such design



Fire Truck donated by Hayward Fire Department at Mia's Dream Come True Playground.



Tile mosaic incorporating a corporate sponsor at Mia's Dream Come True Playground.



Airplane swings sponsored by Kaiser Permanente at Mia's Dream Come True Playground.



Individual sponsor names and organizations on 'book' bindings at the entrance to Mia's Dream Come True Playground.

strategies exist at the individual level as well as at the corporate level, in which large, singular park features are sponsored by larger entities. The key to raising funds will be to inspire people. Now that the community is fully invested in the design, the City of Pleasanton can build on this momentum and continue to develop the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground.

4.2 Potential Phasing

Ideally, the City would be able to build the All-Abilities Playground all at once. However, if full funding is not immediately available, the project could be implemented over several years in strategic phases. The construction phasing order would primarily be dictated by available funding and priorities identified by the City. Certain improvements that relate to the entire site will need to be prioritized. Such improvements include utility infrastructure like stormwater drainage and electrical service. Other site related improvements that would take priority include accessible parking and drop-off areas, as well as an accessible restroom.

The Final Conceptual Plan is designed so that the project could be easily divided into separate spaces and corresponding phases. For example, the entry, large front picnic area, and central playground area could be grouped into one phase. The sensory play and picnic areas could be a separate phase, as could the performance stage and active game/challenge course zone. The walking trail and fitness equipment could be their own phase or incorporated into other phases. Overall, a detailed strategy based on funding, community priorities, and best construction practices would need to be developed.

4.3 Operations and Maintenance

A well thought out operations and maintenance plan is key to the long-term success of the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground. The City's maintenance staff were critical stakeholders throughout the design process. They helped the design team understand how the park currently operates and best practices moving forward with the design. The conversation focused on every day maintenance operations and long-term maintenance items that come up less frequently. Routine items include waste disposal, restroom cleaning, mowing, irrigation, and planting upkeep. Less frequent items that come up involve equipment repairs and replacement, pest control, tree pruning or removal, planting, and mulch replenishment.

Selection of materials influences the frequency and intensity of the maintenance that will be required. As this relates to play equipment, durable materials that take vandalism into account are crucial. Also, the selection of a reputable play equipment supplier that has a long-standing history is important because parts will need replacement over time. Having a responsive company that can source parts in a timely manner will make the operation of the park much more efficient. When designing the irrigation, City standards will be used to ensure that the design matches the rest of the park. This will standardize operation practices and help streamline ordering of equipment. Plant selection will be based on low water and maintenance practices. Also, planting areas will be designed to discourage pedestrian cut-through traffic.

The project site is adjacent to the maintenance corp yard. As a result, a 12-foot wide maintenance path that is separate from the current path was added to allow for direct maintenance truck circulation between the parking lot and the corp yard. As the design continues to take form and become more specific, the design team will work closely with the operation maintenance team to develop best practices for the Pleasanton All-Abilities Playground.

It is recommended that the City calculate the additional staff hours and maintenance equipment required to properly maintain the All-Abilities Playground and include the need for additional staff hours and material costs into their operating budget.

4.4 Conclusion

Text to come following remaining commission and council meetings.

INTENTIONALLY BLANK

