How We Play is an exhibition of international best practices showcasing play spaces that offer young children diverse experiences and opportunities for interacting, exploring, creating, and growing.

The Community Design Collaborative put out a call for entries, inviting nonprofits, public agencies, artists, and architecture, landscape architecture, engineering, and planning firms to submit projects that represent international best practices in the design of outdoor play spaces.

The resulting exhibition showcases over 40 designs from Philadelphia and cities around the world for outdoor play spaces. Through these temporary and permanent, large and small, built and unbuilt projects, we hope to provide inspiring models for future play spaces, in Philadelphia neighborhoods and around the world.
ANDROPOGON ASSOCIATES LTD. *
HACKETT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Client: Friends of Horatio B. Hackett Elementary School & New Kensington CDC
Location: Philadelphia, PA

The Horatio B. Hackett School is located in a growing neighborhood — with a growing demand for green space. The conceptual design for greening Hackett takes its cue from the school's animal murals to create zones to run and jump, focus on learning, and filter and gather rainwater. Play spaces are designed to include children with special needs in the fun.

www.andropogon.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers:
Andropogon
Torcon

ARCHITECTURE + CIVIC ENGAGEMENT CENTER / WOODBURY UNIVERSITY TOWN-TOWN
Client: Los Angeles River Corp.
Location: Los Angeles, CA

This nomadic play environment is a simulated town. Several modules derived from iconic structures of communities are abstracted to form a variety of play structures. These include an apartment building, a house, a school, a factory, an office structure, and a water tower. Each architectural structure doubles to provide a unique play experience for children on which to slide, climb, crawl, and slip through. These modules are positioned tightly together to create a labyrinthian circulation space in which paths are discovered haptically.

The modularity of these units allows for adaptability in deployment. This temporary play town may be erected in available open space to form a large square area, or as smaller clusters of units. Ideally suited to tight urban areas with little or no green space for children, it provides a transformative temporary urban play environment. The illustrated project is a proto-type constructed of inexpensive plywood, lumber, and ready-made elements such as traffic cones. Design development would entail a greater level of detail in order to soften edges and surfaces. The project was created by fourth year architecture students in the Architecture + Civic Engagement Program at Woodbury University in Los Angeles.

www.acec.architecture.woodbury.edu

Consultant:
LA-Más
**3 ATELIER BARDA**

**THE SHAMROCK SQUARE CAROUSEL**

Client: City of Montréal, Rosemont La Petite-Patrie Borough

Location: Montréal, Québec Canada

**PROJECT |** The intervention aimed at enhancing Shamrock Avenue’s pedestrianization project in Montreal, and even attempt at redefining its status as a public square. It was therefore essential to conceive a uniting public installation in this pivotal place, between the St-Laurent Boulevard and the Jean-Talon Market. By involving citizens and foreseeing future urban developments through various festive events, the objective was to create a vibrant environment and attempt to reveal this square’s possibilities in view of redefining it as a point of interest in Little Italy. Delighted with the citizens’ experience, the borough will repeat the adventure the summer of 2015. The Shamrock carousel will live a second edition.

**CONTEXT |** Arousing the image of the fairground carousel as much as that of the bandstand, its figure is emblematic of the sociability and animation of our public places. With its refined but recognizable form, the installation evokes amusement, sense of unity and conviviality to all users, all the while creating a familial atmosphere for the entire neighborhood. The purpose was also to anchor the carousel in a daily ritual, and not solely as a unique experience or event. Therefore, throughout the summer, a series of events animated by Atelier Barda, such as The Shamrock fair, the outdoor screenings of The Western spaghetti weekend, and the water games of Jean Talon Beach have punctuated the square. Neighbors and passersby have appropriated this space dedicated to rest and repose; taking a break at the carousel in the square becomes a ritual, just as going to the market or the park.

www.atelierbarda.com

Consultants:

Atelier Gris

Latéral Conseil

Expérience Bois

**4 BROWNSPRAGUE LLC**

**THE BALES OF WOODMERE, AKA THE WOODMERE STRAW MAZE**

Client: The Woodmere Art Museum

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Every fall, since 2010, the Woodmere Art Museum displays a straw bale maze (aka play sculpture) on their prodigious front lawn in celebration of the Harvest and Harry Potter Festival, and the installation remains in situ from September to December. Located near the western boundary of Chestnut Hill, the Woodmere estate provides a rolling park like setting and a welcome destination for visitors from across the region. Its front lawn is bordered by Germantown Avenue and Bells Mill Road which are visually accessible to its stage like front lawn, in which the museum’s Victorian mansion provides a memorable backdrop. In five short years, the fall installation has grown from a humble hay maze into an anticipated celebration of folly. This annual play catalyst received its first sponsor after the 2013 season.

Play Things

*A context such as a maze or game presents a prescribed form of engagement. It dictates experiences by presenting a path - Structured Play.

*A context with no explicit direction suggests an open engagement, the terms are decided by the user - Unstructured Play.

*Both types of play promote adaptive behaviors and mental states of happiness.

*Play can occur without props however environments and materials often act as a catalyst for play.

Over time our generative element, the bale, has changed from a standard size bale (24x48x16) to a six string straw bale of enormous mass (48x84x36) each weighing over 800 pounds dry, almost a half ton. We deploy 84 bales each year, almost 34 tons (67,200 lb.) of straw. The enormous bales are well suited to withstand the elements and large crowds for an extended period of time. After closing, the exhibit is removed, the bales re-enters the local agrarian marketplace as an ingredient for mushroom mulch and animal bedding, remarkably they retain a value.

The design is simply a set of blocks. 84 identical blocks that can be arranged into an infinite number of compositions. The assembly of blocks help to contain three elements: A large red ball, a group of inflated inner tubes and a large collection of rings (aka hula hoops) in varying diameters. There are no rules nor instructions.

www.brownsprague.com | www.woodmereartmuseum.org

Consultant:

Hougar Farms

**5 COLLABORATIVE VOLUNTEER TEAM* MEREDITH SCHOOL**

Client: Meredith Home and School Association & Queen Village Neighbors Association

Location: Philadelphia, PA

Meredith’s chain link fence and concrete surfaces do not reflect its commitment to innovative education and the community. School and neighborhood leaders want a schoolyard that offers educational and environmental education in a “backyard” setting and fosters community pride. A big feature of the conceptual design is a bioswale planted between the playground and parking lot—complete with a boardwalk that allows for natural play.

Firm volunteers:

Duffield Associates, Inc.

Terra Studio

www.cdesignc.org

Individual volunteers:

Donald Logan

Charles Oropallo

Amy Yaskowski

**6 COLLABORATIVE VOLUNTEER TEAM* NORTH LIGHT COMMUNITY CENTER**

Client: North Light Community Center & Manayunk Development Corporation

Location: Philadelphia, PA

In this conceptual plan, simple elements enhance a community center’s play space and shares lessons about the surrounding watershed and environment. A winding "rain poem path" forms a walkway, celebrates the environment, unifies the space, and serves as a memorial to student who loved reading and poetry. A rain garden with a boardwalk manages stormwater, provides an attractive green border to the neighborhood, and supports a new environmental learning lab.

Firm volunteers:

Becker & Frondorf

Duffield Associates, Inc.

www.cdesignc.org

Individual volunteers:

Zachary Cebenka

Katarina Dudas

Joanne Schonfeld

*conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative
Encouraged by a district-wide effort to improve schoolyards, supporters of Mitchell School requested a design for a “dusk to dawn” schoolyard. The design team’s proposal, one of the first to introduce green stormwater infrastructure and other natural elements into a city schoolyard, included an environmental education area with an amphitheatre, native tree farm, and watershed demonstration area.

www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteer: Composite Inc.

Based on a community-driven vision of Dobson Elementary School’s outdoor space as “not just a schoolyard, but a common ground,” the volunteer team responded with a versatile master plan that will manage stormwater runoff and include new green features like a learning grove, a picnic grove, and a woodland walk as well as a basketball court, playground, and performance stage.

www.confairdesign.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers: Confair Design
Individual volunteer: Sapana Tapade
Allied Construction Services

A dynamic new playground that will act as a place for learning, thinking, resting, playing, and growing at the Morton McMichael School, a public k-8th grade school in the Mantua neighborhood of Philadelphia has grown out of an intensive collaboration between Drexel University and the school community. Play areas, gardens and other sustainable features will maximize multiple opportunities for STEAM enrichment, and build social capital and ownership among children and families. Funded by the Philadelphia Water Department, Drexel and local foundations, the new schoolyard will improve the quality of life for the school and neighborhood by providing necessary green space to support imaginary play and nourish young minds outdoors.

The creative participatory process to bring this project to fruition includes design charrettes and classroom lessons about community, climate, and local watersheds for children and the neighborhood. Delivered and explored through an interdisciplinary approach to design and research, the work done to envision the new spaces includes faculty and students from the Department of Architecture & Interiors, School of Public Health and College of Engineering; McMichael teachers, children and parents; and local community groups and artists.

In order to measure health impact, Public Health students
are collecting recess physical and social activity data on the existing and new schoolyard to better understand the anticipated increase in physical activity and its impact on obesity, which is a chronic health concern in the community—the outcomes can be used for other programs seeking funding for play. Construction is projected for June 2016. www.drexel.edu

Consultants:
Drexel University, Department of Architecture and Interiors
EDesign Dynamics
Drexel College of Engineering

10 DUFFY|SEBRA ARCHITECTURE *
MCCALL ELEMENTARY

Client: McCall Home and School Association
Location: Philadelphia, PA

A conceptual design for open space offers McCall Elementary School a coordinated strategy for greening and connecting the 6th and 7th Street sides of its schoolyard. The larger 7th Street side combines areas for active play with quieter places like a softscape corner and a peace path. The 6th Street side gains new life with outdoor classrooms for science and art. Opening up the entrances with windows, new signage, and planting will perk up the school’s nondescript entrances and link the two sides of the schoolyard.

www.duffysebra.com | www.cdesignnc.org

Firm volunteers:
Duffy|Sebra Architecture
International Consultants, Inc.
Thomas C. Faranda, P.E.
Wolfe Scott Associates, Inc.

Individual volunteers:
Nicholas Chaya
Alissa McCann
Charles Oropallo
Sydney Stewart
Ian Stewart

11 E.W. RHODES ELEMENTARY
RHODES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL / PLAYSCAPE / TRANSFORMATIVE LANDSCAPE

Client: E.W. Rhodes Elementary School
Location: Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia University alumni are working with Rhodes elementary School and the Swampoodle neighborhood to develop an outdoor play space for their school yard. Currently, this former highschool site only provides a sea of broken asphalt for the children to run and play. We are working to evolve the space into playscape for recess and the community.

We are developing the project through three key areas - Theory of play, community and design. We are working within the theory of play in order to understand our approach and set up design parameters. The participation of Community is inclusive and integral to the process and ultimately the outcome of a successful park. And design – besides evolving from within a design/build studio – promotes an understanding of layered parameters and approaches cultivated into a singular idea.

We have been thinking about and working through this project as a Playscape to emphasize a park vs a playground – playgrounds tend to have preconceived imagery and outcomes. The idea of a playscape allowed us to think about how the space may be used by multiple user groups with varying agendas at different times of year and didn’t confine us to a particular look and function.

Our narrative approach to this project is to create an artificial extension to the preexisting natural environment, in which the vertical members imitate a wooded environment while varying scales of disc shapes imitate topographic changes that encourage both physical and mental growth.

www.ewrhodesplayscape.wix.com/ewrhodesplayscape

12 ELEFHERIOS PISKITZIS ARCHITECTS
ECOTECH PLAYGROUND

Client: Municipality of Cholargos - Papagou, Attica, Greece
Location: Cholargos - Papagou, Attica, Greece

Designing the new child’s playground in the square of National Resistance in the Municipality of Cholargos – Papagou, Athens, Greece, was an urban challenge. The adoption of green technology and water recycle was among the main design parameters of the new public space. Through these the kids, the new generation of citizens, will learn from an early stage about the green technology, renewable sources of energy, recycle, reuse of rain water collection & sustainability.

The playground divided in two spaces by a special designed rubber resistance floor where the colour indicate the suitable space for the childs. In the area of the child playground there are small rain water collectors shaped like up-down umbrellas to collect the rain water for irrigation needs. The lighting columns also provide free internet access through wifi and usb chargers for cell-phones and tablets. Thus the design includes a water installation, which does not require regular maintenance like a classical fountain. The aqua dome creates an umbrella of water, offering to the visitor passive cooling and sound proof and at the same time a harmonious visual effect. The aqua dome is a vertical installation where water creates a water curtain, allowing visitors to enter the interior and come into contact with water, without getting wet. The lighting of the aqua dome is provided by led technology, switches in various colors, causing beautiful optical illusions with the reflection of light flowing on the water.

www.episkitzis.wix.com/arch

Consultant:
George Koliopanos

13 FRIDAY ARCHITECTS/PLANNERS INC. *
NICTOWN SPORTS COURT

Client: Nicetown Community Development Corporation
Location: Philadelphia, PA

Niceotwncd plans to use an empty, 3-acre right of way beneath the elevated Roosevelt Boulevard to make the neighborhood more walkable, active, and fun. Our conceptual plan lays out a versatile community sports court with basketball courts, a soccer field, a skate park, rain gardens, a public green, and a plaza for food trucks and seasonal farm stands.

www.fridayarc.com | www.cdesignnc.org

Firm volunteers:
Friday Architects/Planners Inc.
International Consultants, Inc.
Ruggiero Plante Land Design

Individual volunteers:
Michael Williams

14 GILMORE & ASSOCIATES, INC. *
KELLEY SCHOOL

Client: William D. Kelley School & Eagles Youth Partnership
Location: Philadelphia, PA

North Philadelphia’s Kelley school has an inspiring deep blue mural, artificial turf for recess football and volleyball games, and new play equipment. The Collaborative added a gateway over an underground stormwater infiltration bed, with a entrance line up for class and a diagram of the solar system. Other fun touches include graphics painted on the pavement—collegiate banners where students line up for class and a diagram of the solar system.

www.gilmore-assoc.com | www.cdesignnc.org

Firm volunteer:
Gilmore & Associates, Inc.

* conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative.
15 GROUNDSWELL DESIGN GROUP
SUMMERFEST
Client: Delaware River Waterfront Corporation
Location: Philadelphia, PA

Summerfest, is designed to give children of all ages freedom to imagine, explore, and interact; to push boundaries, take risks, overcome fears, be curious, and learn from it all. The central feature is the roller rink, designed to engage all ages. It includes a pergola that provides a place to rest, fix your skate, or take #selfies. Planted with native species and strung with lights and vintage skates, it creates interest and shade. Its presence also gives skaters chances to cut through and opportunities to choose their own path; build confidence/independence.

Summerfest is also a natural playscape, connecting Philadelphians to unstructured play. Clusters of Birches, Pines, and Oaks create nooks throughout seamlessly blending natural and industrial materials, a nod to the history of the Delaware as a working river. They generate a light mist every five minutes cooling the space and adding an element of surprise. Piles of boulders and tree trunks provide different sensory textures; their various angles and heights encourage children to test their abilities/take simple risks. It encourages interaction between children, where one child struggles the other lends a hand in support. Learning to play together is crucial to social development.

Play is a critical part of Summerfest, our goal is to create opportunities for continued learning; to create opportunities for physical/motor skills as well as intellectual, social, and emotional development. We want to empower all to choose how to play.

www.groundswelldesigngroup.com

16 KONTSEPTUAL INC. ARCHITECTS + INTERIOR PLANNERS
INTERACTIVE LETTERS
Client: YAK Academy
Location: Arlington, MA

Kontseptual Architects developed a play space for an afterschool educational center in Arlington, MA. The concept behind the design was to develop interactive letters that could be used for learning while walking, sitting, climbing and having fun. In this design the word ‘KIDS’ forms a three dimensional tunnel. Imagine children are able to climb the stairs behind ‘K’, peak out of letter ‘I’, slide down the letter ‘D’, and relax by letter ‘S’, as all parents chat with each other while sitting on the extension of the ‘S’.

The design shown was built for indoors, but could also be applied for outdoor play. The material used comes in colorful sheets of HDPE, High Density Polyethylene, a form of plastic that could be cut and shaped into anything. The ‘KIDS’ representation is only one of many possibilities, and any word and letter could become interactive. Each outdoor space could get a unique and individual identity based on its location and what it is trying to portray. With ‘Interactive Letters’ children can learn while also having fun, and so can the adults.

www.kontseptual.com
HERRON PLAYGROUND

Client: Philadelphia Department of Public Property
Location: Philadelphia, PA

This site was transformed from an acre of asphalt and concrete with an abandoned pool to a playground and sprayground that focus on interactive play elements integrated into new green infrastructure. Electronic elements in the play equipment are programmed to encourage climbing, shimmying and balancing to tap an array of lights that are activated in play equipment—a physical ‘Simon’ game. Supplemented by climbing rocks, bouncers and an engaging sprayground, this park has become a favorite for young and old alike.

www.langan.com

Consultants:
Betsy Caesar
Wick Fisher White
Becker & Frondorf

MCKINLEY SCHOOL

Client: William McKinley School & Norris Square Neighborhood Project
Location: Philadelphia, PA

McKinley already has a basketball court and running track, but the Collaborative stepped in to add more green space and fun. Our conceptual design replaces a swath of asphalt with a rain garden, adds shade trees, and enhances play space for preschool and primary grade students. In addition, teachers can bring class outside with an elevated stage, seating, and picnic tables.

www.langan.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers:
Langan
International Consultants, Inc.

SEGER PARK PLAYGROUND

Client: Friends of Seger Park Playground & Central Philadelphia Development Corporation
Location: Philadelphia, PA

In 2008, Seger Park was a popular urban park showing significant wear and tear. Its supporters wanted to restore vibrancy and beauty to the park’s large shade trees, a community flower garden, two play areas, a dog park, and basketball and tennis courts. The Collaborative’s volunteers put together a conceptual master plan and broke improvements into phases to support a successful fundraising campaign.

www.langan.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers:
Langan
Torcon, Inc.

GREENING STANTON

Client: Edwin M. Stanton School Advisory Council & SOSNA
Location: Philadelphia, PA

E.M. Stanton Elementary School in Southwest Center City has become the focus of a neighborhood campaign to recognize and enhance a strong community school. A Collaborative volunteer team helped the community develop a plan for greening Stanton’s crumbling asphalt schoolyard, adding a entrance pergola, stage, a nature play garden, and a science garden.


Firm volunteers:
Locus Partners
JFS Engineering, PC
ThinkGreen LLC

THE BEECHWOOD BLANKET AT COXE PARK

Client: Friends of Coxe Park & Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation
Location: Philadelphia, PA

Tucked into the Logan Square neighborhood, bounded by row houses in the 2100 block of Cherry Street, sits Coxe Park a deeply loved playground. Designed in the early 1970s by modernist architect Norman Rice, the park has been a place of play for generations of Philadelphia children. Over the years, ad hoc replacement and modifications to play equipment led the neighborhood group, Friends of Coxe Park (FCP), to become concerned over child safety. Working with Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, FCP sponsored an invited visioning competition that included stakeholder meetings and community feedback. LRSLA Studio, Inc. created the winning entry, ‘Beechwood Blanket at Coxe Park,’ a design that respects the past, imagines the future and preserves a treasured neighborhood oasis of play.

The design took shape in response to community desires and needs. The park’s original paving pattern, when abstracted, is reminiscent of a tartan picnic blanket. It informs the design’s conceptual framework and site features. The plan weaves together three distinct areas and program elements. Coxe Plaza at the north end is a multi-functional gathering space with amphitheater seating to attract passersby along Cherry Street. At the park’s center, Beechwood Blanket, is an innovative open space that engages children in creative play. Tartan patterned mounds and fringe-like climbing structures promote movement and active imaginations. Kite Plaza to the south incorporates an existing sculpture of Benjamin Franklin, and is an intimate social space for contemplation for both children and adults.

www.lrsla.com
MASER CONSULTING P.A. *
ZANE NORTH SCHOOL
Client: Zane North PTA & Perkins Center for the Arts
Location: Collingswood, NJ
An elementary school in Collingswood, NJ sought a strategy for adding plants and trees, environmental education, and new recreational choices to its unshaded, mostly asphalt playground. Our conceptual design shows how unused space between the basketball court, kickball field, and play area can be landscaped to create a quarter-mile walking path, Gaga pit and amphitheater, and secret garden.
www.maserconsulting.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers: Maser Consulting P.A.
Ann Rothmann Structural Engineering LLC
Nason Construction, Inc.
Individual volunteers: Michael Hill
Matthew Michelson

METCALFE ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN
ABINGTON FRIENDS SCHOOL: PHASE II: AFS OUTSIDE
Client: Abington Friends School
Location: Jenkintown, PA
We are currently working with the Abington Friends School to design a much larger outdoor learning environment, AFS Outside. We are students of play in all its complexity and rewards. AFS Outside will be as central to the school’s curriculum as its classrooms and labs. AFS is committed to an interdisciplinary, student directed environment – inside and out. We share its understanding of the power of play to create resilient, critical thinkers, engaged with their environment and community.

Disciplines of study don’t appear in discrete locations. Physics and poetry collide with history and geology in a pile of boulders. Water runs through physical sciences, humanities, and the arts.

Our plan for AFS Outside sets the stage for young students to be the masters of their own learning; testing their bodies, engaging all their senses, and exploring the complexities of their social world. AFS Outside is set on one acre of land bounded by the lower school, a wooded seasonal stream bed, and open fields. It will serve children in grades 1 through 6.

www.metarchdesign.com

Consultants: CVM Construction Management
Duffield Associates
Viridian Landscape Studio

NIPPAYSAGE
LABYRINTH
Client: Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
Location: Montreal, QC, Canada
A playful installation inserted in the city fabric invites a large public to participate in a game. The Montreal Museum of Fine Art is presenting the brand-new installation that will transform Du Musée Avenue into a pedestrian mall for the fourth year in a row. Created by NIPPAYSAGE (Montreal), the winner in the MMFA’s call for invitational tenders, and produced with support from the City of Montreal, this installation invites passers-by to explore a 600-m2 maze. Designed in relation to Mount Royal, like a green belt that reflects the decorative textures of the mountain, the maze also serves as a fun way of (re)discovering the twenty-two works in the Museum’s Sculpture Garden.

This outdoor playful installation is an opportunity for the MMFA to highlight the presence of public art in the city.
www.nippaysage.ca
**25 NIPPAYSAGE**

**THE POOL**

Client: Partenariat du Quartier des Spectacles

Location: Montreal, QC, Canada

Public swimming pools in Montreal are little islands of life, movement and refreshment. They are the theatre of summer, a place for relaxation and play in contrast to Montreal’s hot and humid urban reality. In summer 2011, a virtual swimming pool was set up at Place Émilie-Gamelin, a large public plaza in the center of the city. Equipped with playful furniture reminiscent of water fun, the swimming pool hides in its pixels an enormous hopscotch court, numerous chess boards and a giant tangram puzzle. The installation is designed to accommodate large crowds during festivals and special events including the park summer program organised by Le partenariat du Quartier des Spectacles.

www.nippaysage.ca

---

**26 OLIN**

**11TH STREET BRIDGE PARK**

Client: 11th Street Bridge Park

Location: Washington DC, US

OLIN’s winning design for the 11th Street Bridge Park Competition uses play as a vehicle for environmental education. Spanning the length of the Anacostia River with a series of rooms and active zones, the park takes advantage of the unique opportunity to highlight river ecology by incorporating a range of programmed play elements. At the 21st Century Play Space, “molecular topography” and sculptural elements create a rich environment for imaginative investigation.

Swaths of native plants encourage self-guided exploration of riparian ecology. An environmental education center immediately adjacent to this space allows children and adults to nurture their curiosity and develop a deeper appreciation for and understanding of the natural world. Adjacent to the bridge entry, a large splash pond surrounded by a wet and dry meadow mimics the ecology of the vernal pool; temporary ponds that create rich, diverse, distinct wetland habitats. The rolling topographic pool bottom and water jets enhance the children’s experience with changes in surface and scale. Kayak, canoe, and paddleboat docks allow visitors to directly engage with the river and the waterfall below as the structure collects surface river water and drops it back into the river. A large accessible play net, similar to a dragon’s spine, including a rain garden, an amphitheater, and a dragon’s head fashioned from ramps, slides, and climbing nets.

The fountain is surrounded by a ribbon-like bench that visitors explore by climbing on, over, and under. In the winter, this area transforms into a skating loop, enjoyed by visitors of all ages. Inspired by the site’s waterfront heritage, the design evokes the history of the site’s waterfront heritage, and it has quickly become a beloved destination for Washington D.C. families. The park attracts adults and children alike, providing opportunities for both learning and play.

Located on the southern end of the park, the fountain, with its water jets that glow at night, is one of the park’s biggest draws. The fountain is surrounded by a ribbon-like bench that visitors explore by climbing on, over, and under. In the winter, this area transforms into a skating loop, enjoyed by visitors of all ages. Inspired by the site’s waterfront heritage, the design evokes the history of the space with a linear rain garden and three pavilions reminiscent of floating barges. Signage along the rain garden educates visitors on the site’s history and the garden’s current function as a way to capture, treat and reuse runoff. A pavilion provides a stage for children’s theater and musical performances, and a scrin fountain serves as a place to cool off and as a wading pool for younger children.

Artist David Hess designed a series of whimsical looping sculptures positioned on all three blocks of the park, inviting children to test their climbing and motor skills. In these and many other ways, Washington Canal Park is a place that encourages learning, fun, and invention within a flexible and elegant composition.

www.theolinstudio.com

Consultants:

OMA
Arup
ETM Associates
Tetra Tech
L’Observatoire International
Cecilia Alemani

---

**27 OLIN**

**SOUTHWARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: DRAGON GREEN**

Client: School Advisory Council, Southwark Elementary School & East Passyunk Crossing Civic Association and Town Watch

Location: Philadelphia, PA

A bright-yellow dragon silhouette is the most striking feature in this conceptual design to enliven an asphalt schoolyard in South Philadelphia. The dragon doubles as a soft play surface and running track. Spaces for outdoor learning and active play are cradled by the dragon’s spine, including a rain garden, an amphitheater, and a head fashioned from ramps, slides, and climbing nets.

www.theolinstudio.com | www.cdesignnc.org

Firm volunteers:

Olin
The FGX Group

---

**28 OLIN**

**WASHINGTON CANAL PARK**

Client: Canal Park Development Association, Inc

Location: Washington DC, US

Washington Canal Park has no formal playground. Instead, this important civic space weaves play into all aspects of the visitor experience; a yearlong survey of park visitors found that it has quickly become a beloved destination for Washington D.C. families. The park attracts adults and children alike, providing opportunities for both learning and play.

Located on the southern end of the park, the fountain, with its water jets that glow at night, is one of the park’s biggest draws. The fountain is surrounded by a ribbon-like bench that visitors explore by climbing on, over, and under. In the winter, this area transforms into a skating loop, enjoyed by visitors of all ages. Inspired by the site’s waterfront heritage, the design evokes the history of the space with a linear rain garden and three pavilions reminiscent of floating barges. Signage along the rain garden educates visitors on the site’s history and the garden’s current function as a way to capture, treat and reuse runoff. A pavilion provides a stage for children’s theater and musical performances, and a scrin fountain serves as a place to cool off and as a wading pool for younger children.

Artist David Hess designed a series of whimsical looping sculptures positioned on all three blocks of the park, inviting children to test their climbing and motor skills. In these and many other ways, Washington Canal Park is a place that encourages learning, fun, and invention within a flexible and elegant composition.

www.theolinstudio.com

Consultants:

STUDIOS Architecture
Nitsch Engineering
Vika Capitol, Inc.
Ateleir Ten
Joseph R. Loring & Associates
SK&A Structural Engineers
David Langdon

* conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative
ONOFF
BOULEVARD

Client: KanalPLAYGROUND
Location: Brussels, Belgium

For the 2014 Kanal Playground festival in Brussels, Belgium ON/OFF were asked to consider play in the city. We responded with the BOULEvard, a large mobile playground which rolls its way through the streets and squares of the city.

The Route:

The BOULEvard is put together as a tensegrity structure, using large plastic tubing as the core struts and high tension rope as the method of connection. The BOULEvard structure is robust, flexible, and safe- making it perfect for rolling through the city. It overcomes the thresholds and barriers put in place for cars and bikes by rolling over them and squeezes out of every tight spot.

www.onoff.cc

THE PARENT-INFANT CENTER
MAGIC CIRCLE NATURE PLAYGROUND

Client: The Parent-Infant Center
Location: Philadelphia, PA

Our vision was to connect children attending our early childhood program, and those living nearby, in our urban neighborhood of West Philadelphia to the natural world by providing an unstructured nature play area with endless opportunities for exploration and discovery.

In the summer of 2012, with a grant and technical assistance from Nature Explore, we began to transform our play space, which had been suffering from soil compaction, drainage issues and inhibited grass growth. A beautiful wooden arbor with vines growing up the sides serves as the entrance to the playground. Children and their families learn about storm water runoff and erosion through seeing our rain garden with its carefully selected plants and special soil to help with water absorption.

Tree stumps and a wall of big boulders invite children climb on them and to connect with nature while enhancing gross motor skills. Our large garden provides daily hands-on opportunities to dig and plant and learn about growing healthy foods. Our loose parts area offers branches and sticks of various sizes to spark imaginations and pretend-play. Children dig deep holes and rivers in the dirt digging area and gear up in the rain to jump in puddles, squish dirt through fingers, and cook in the mud kitchen. Our open-air stage encourages spontaneous performances of music and dancing. Families from throughout our community often spend their playtimes on weekends and summer evenings exploring, learning and playing on our Magic Circle playground.

www.parentinfantcenter.org

Consultants:
Nature Explore Design Services
Think Green LLC
---

**+FARM**

**PLUB BLUBBLY**

**Client:** River School  
**Location:** Brooklyn, NY

Plub Blubly is a layered imaginative kid-directed playland built with a nonsensical “plub” set upon a soft “blubly” landscape. It is an environment where children choose the activities that make up their time, learning to direct themselves and elaborate on their interests. Plub Blubly softens grade oriented praise driven schooling by engendering free play, where kids can do what they want, and the learning is the byproduct not the focus.

A “plub” structure is a non-program space where kids learn to negotiate both their physical and social environments through play, they can gain a sense of mastery over their world, by inventing and sharing together. Inside plub there are no instructions or coaches, even adult access into the structure is difficult (though very transparent) it encourages children to engage in both physically and socially challenging situations to help them learn to control their emotions. They role play, crawl, hide, climb and only the child knows the right dose to administer - not interfering parents.

A “blubly” terrain is wickedly active with uneven swales and smooth landings. It is made of exterior grade foam pads that allow children to bump, and roll in unpredictable ways and there is grass to sit or kick a ball.

We believe that free play is a massive amplifier in the development and emotional growth and health of children and adults, our priority is to soften the instructed ruling of children’s lives. As studies show children’s free time play steadily declining and depression rising (keeping them from becoming confident adults) we recommend a daily dose of “plub blubly” to grow their happiness.

www.plusfarm.org

---

**PORT**

**CITY LOOP**

**Client:** Denver Department of Parks and Recreation  
**Location:** Denver, CO

City Loop is a proposal for a new multi-generational civic space within Denver’s City Park. The distributed, fully accessible half-mile-long mobility loop (ideal for walking, running, rolling, riding) creates a continuously re-definable circuit of engagement and activity. The vibrantly colored surface of the mobility loop is paralleled by a kinetic tube that bends, folds, inflates and twists into a variety of activity pods. These pod enclosures and frames draw activity from the mobility loop and the park beyond by creating distinct micro-environments for play and social interaction. However, the physical form of the pods is intentionally abstract, inviting engagement by people of all ages and abilities. This thickened perimeter of movement, activity, planting and social interaction also serves to frame a large, 8-acre central lawn that allows for the kinetic activities of the Loop to extend to the interior of the site area.

The project promotes public health on many levels – physical, social, cultural – while serving to enhance the physical beauty of the existing park. The varied, flexible and diverse nature of the City Loop proposal offers a 21st century view of what a public landscape can be and strives to establish a new precedent in contemporary civic amenities for the City of Denver.

www.porturbanism.com

**Consultants:**  
Indie Architecture  
Latitude 39

---

**PUBLIC WORKSHOP**

**JUMP-O-LINES, SUPER LOUNGERS AND BUILDING A NEW SCHOOL THROUGH PLAY.**

**Client:** Western School For Science And Technology  
**Location:** Phoenix, AZ

What began as a project placing the students of a new middle/high school at the forefront of creating outdoor amenities--a path and seating--to physically connect their building with its sister school, quickly grew into something much more joyful and significant. The act of design and tinkering became a more powerful connector than any path. It forged new relationships between the two schools; short circuited social cliques; drew parents to the school who never participate due to significant cultural barriers; revealed unseen skills and assets within the students, parents and administration; and forged deeper relationships between children and their parents.

These outcomes are typical in Public Workshop projects but in this case were made uniquely rich by a creative process that placed tinkering and adventure play next to our normal outcome driven design-build process. Adventure play is always a part of our design process but here an ever evolving temporary adventure playground and the design of “Super Loungers” – providing needed movable-shaded-climbable seating – existed by side by side throughout. Together, they presented the administration with a clear illustration of what their future STEM curriculum could be, one that grows out of the needs and interests of its low-income Hispanic students.

In 2015/2016 we will design-build with the school community an ever-changing outdoor workshop/adventure play space that will become the center point for the middle school science/math curriculum. This workshop will also serve as a basecamp for the high school STEM curriculum which will focus on service learning community design-build improvements.

www.publicworkshop.us

---

**ROCKWELL GROUP**

**IMAGINATION PLAYGROUND**

**Client:** Rockwell Group  
**Location:** New York, NY

Imagination Playground was conceived and initiated by Rockwell Group to develop a wider variety of public play options for children. It is based on the idea that unstructured, child-directed free play encourages collaboration and creativity. Fundamental to the concept are a set of oversized foam blocks, sand and water features, and play associates who manage the blocks and other loose parts.

After five years of research, Rockwell Group partnered with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation to develop a fixed-site playground. Constructed in 2010 on the site of a former parking lot in lower Manhattan, Imagination Playground at Burling Slip references the commercial activity that had occurred at South Street Seaport. The 12,000 SF park features custom play equipment, including masts, pulleys, and a cascading water channel, bounded by a sinuous ramp along the perimeter of the site. An amphitheater provides an area for storytelling and theatrical productions.

Since the opening of our first park, the Imagination Playground concept has evolved into portable Imagination Playground kits located at more than 3,000 sites worldwide; UNICEF’s P.L.A.Y. program that has deployed our portable playgrounds to rural areas in Haiti and Bangladesh; PLAY WORK BUILD, an ongoing exhibit at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C.; and a fixed-site park under construction at Betsy Head Park in Brownsville, Brooklyn, scheduled to open in Spring 2016.

www.rockwellgroup.com | www.imaginationplayground.com

---

*conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative*
From the blank slate of a 1-acre asphalt parking lot, Linwood Park emerged as a public park with a mission. Rooted in the ecology of Southeastern Pennsylvania’s Piedmont and inspired by neighborhood desire for unstructured free play and learning landscapes, Linwood offers multiple opportunities for discovery and interaction. The design reintroduces the former ridgeline between two watersheds, creating a bold and lively landform. The edge of the landform features a colorful, curving low wall that undulates across the site, providing an array of seating, a stage for performances, a track for bicycles or a canvas for chalk art.

Through a participatory design process, the Landscape Architect involved adults and children in hands-on charrettes and outdoor spatial exercises to develop design ideas. The goal was to create a unique place that merged civic and recreational activities, and offered myriad platforms for play in this historic, urban neighborhood just outside Philadelphia. The curving wall has become the iconic image of the park, and the gesture that is continually reinterpreted by kids of all ages for all kinds of activities.

 Unlike traditional urban parks where areas for play are clearly separated (sometimes with fencing or other barriers), Linwood offers its entire landscape for exploration. The variety of textures (rocks and boulders in the dry stream, diversity of native grasses and flowers in the rain garden, four different paved surfaces) and topography in a relatively small space, combined with hard and soft surfaces, make Linwood highly conducive to creativity and imaginative play. 

www.saltdesignstudio.com

Consultants:
Studio Gaea
Yerkes Associates

Greene Street Friends, a Quaker co-educational day school located in the historic Germantown section of Philadelphia, was interested in creating a new campus identity that encouraged deep green thinking and promoted environmental awareness on their urban property. Our volunteer team proposed ways for Greene Street to demonstrate sustainable practices on campus with respect to water, soil, plants, and structures. Key strategic principles of the plan included: restoring nature in play, reintroducing a fabric of native plants and habitats, managing stormwater ecologically and fostering outdoor educational opportunities.

www.saltdesignstudio.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers: Salt Design Studio
Nason Construction

Individual volunteers: Sarah Endriss
Kristen Ford Haaf
Tom Halliwell
**SIKORA WELLS APPEL**

**WILLIAM DICK SCHOOLYARD**

**Client:** The Trust for Public Land  
**Location:** Philadelphia, PA

As part of Philadelphia’s Green 2015 initiative, The Trust for Public Land in partnership with The Philadelphia School District, Philadelphia Parks & Recreation, and the Philadelphia Water Department, began the re-design of the William Dick Elementary Schoolyard (WDS). This was the pilot project of the initiative with a goal of creating 500 new acres of publicly accessible green space by 2015. The intent of the initiative is to provide access to open spaces in underserved communities, improve green infrastructure, infiltrate more stormwater and provide safe places for children to play. The 2-acre Schoolyard lot was almost entirely paved — a harsh environment in very poor condition with few amenities and unsafe play conditions. Our firm was hired to facilitate an interactive design process with students, faculty, and community members to help transform this space.

The design process began with participatory design events led by the project team. The team met with students, faculty and community members for ten weeks to discuss various aspects of the site. The outcome of this process was a site plan that included a rain garden to manage on-site and off-site stormwater, a running track, a new playground, an outdoor classroom, new hard-surface sport courts, and a new synthetic turf field. Throughout the documentation process, the design team engaged the community at WDS. This community driven design process is an example of how working together as a team has transformed a sea of asphalt into a green infrastructure oasis and amenity for the Strawberry Mansion community.

www.sikora-wa.com  

**Consultants:**  
KS Engineers  
Promatech

---

**SIKORA WELLS APPEL**

**THE POP-UP POOLS PROJECT**

**Client:** Philadelphia Parks and Recreation & Fairmount Park Conservancy  
**Location:** Philadelphia, PA

Philadelphia has more free outdoor public pools per capita than any other city in the country. The city’s seventy outdoor pools are open during a small window in the summer and are the city’s original “pop-up” parks. They offer communal play spaces, relief, and exercise opportunities in diverse urban neighborhoods that have limited access to open space. However, Philly’s pools offer little more than a body of water surrounded by unshaded concrete.

The Pop-Up Pool project uses relatively low-cost, high-impact design interventions to transform underutilized public spaces into catalytic, civic open spaces. For Francisville Playground, the pilot project for this initiative, these interventions included a cedar deck lounge with palm trees, lush plantings, moveable tables and chairs, oversize games, shade umbrellas, and active programming.

A winner of the Knight Cities Challenge, the Pop-Up Pool project will ultimately transform several of the city’s public pools into unique and vibrant summertime civic spaces, enhance the experience of play, provide opportunity through direct employment and engage residents in reimagining the potential of public space in their communities. The larger goal is to see if an easy-to-implement and highly replicable placemaking strategy, relying on quick wins and on-the-ground results to build momentum, can provide a leaner, scalable, and equitable model for transformative public space investments that generate positive change in communities.

This project will install one pilot Pop-Up Pool site in Summer 2015 with the program expanding to three sites, one of which may be a repeat of the pilot site, in Summer 2016.

www.sikora-wa.com | www.instagram.com/popuppools

**Consultants:**  
Group Melvin Design  
Mizu Contracting  
Power Corps

---

**SMITH MEMORIAL PLAYGROUND**

**BUILD ADVENTURE**

**Client:** Smith Memorial Playground  
**Location:** Philadelphia, PA

In 2013, the US Green Building Council hosted its annual conference in Philadelphia and awarded Smith Memorial Playground a Legacy Project grant to support a design project that would demonstrate sustainability and make a lasting contribution to the City. Smith partnered with Alex Gilliam and Public Workshop - a “cheerleader of possibility” that creates uniquely engaging opportunities for youth and their communities to shape the design of their cities - and set out to create an “adventure-inspired playground” designed and built by youth.

To start, Public Workshop’s Building Heroes, a team of high school and college aged youth, built a giant cardboard submarine and asked families on visits to Smith where they’d like to go in it. A chalkboard on Smith’s Playground collected responses. And then the fun began! Over the course of summer 2013, hundreds of kids of all ages contributed ideas and picked up tools during dedicated and drop-in build days to construct a wild and wonderful topography made of recycled materials. With a wooden whirlpool “beach,” a “forest” of 2x4s, and “mountains” of berms, the new Build Adventure play area is a launch pad for the imagination, providing space and inspiration for children to engage in open-ended, active, loose parts play.

Build Adventure is located in the middle of Smith’s 6.5 acre Playground, under one of Smith’s largest trees; it draws Smith’s audience to a formerly under-used area and connects kids to our natural environment in ways that traditional play equipment simply cannot.  

www.smithplayground.org

**Consultant:** Public Workshop

---

*conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative*
for the City of Philadelphia because it returns open space to Greenfield School at 22nd and Sansom Street, Center City Philadelphia. This project is particularly important to meet the site to manage small storm events and return water to the soil mantle. It is the first Philadelphia School District of Greenfield Committee to transform a site as a living laboratory that teaches children about micro-climates and other aspects of the natural hydrological cycle. Infiltrating into the soil, providing nourishment for the vegetation and recharging the aquifer, these small storms and reintroduce the water back into the Pennsylvania receives approximately 45 inches of rainfall each year. At Greenfield School, urban fill conditions presented a challenge to creating a stormwater management strategy that would effectively handle the water runoff. The Greening of Greenfield School plan showcases multiple stormwater management technologies within a vibrant atmosphere of play and learning.

PHASE I: Phase I (west end) consists of a bioswale with check dams to slow run-off, rain gardens, and infiltration beds. The project advanced the Community Design Collaborative's initial concepts by designing a sustainable schoolyard which utilizes an array of stormwater measures such as rain gardens, green roofs, and porous pavements. Viridian gave the project a high priority target for greening. The goal is to retrofit critical components in a green stormwater infrastructure program, presenting a model for other schools to follow.

HOW WE PLAY

Component of a living landscape: reconnecting soils, water, vegetation to return ecosystem function to the city. Equally significant, the project didactic schoolyard for education through programming provided by project partners.

Water Best Practices:
- Use Porous Pavements
- Use Infiltration Beds
- Reduce Flow to Sewers
- Protect and Restore Hydrology
- Use Engineered Soils to Meet Programming Needs
- Rejuvenate Existing Soils Before Importing New
- Minimize Disturbance
- Provide Soil Testing

Number of herbaceous perennials: 503

Vegetation:
- Avoid Utility Conflicts
- Use Ecological Approach to Planting
- Protect Existing Vegetation

Soil Placement during Construction of Phase I & Phase II Infiltration Beds:

Can infiltrate 11 in/hour

Play Surface:
- Porous
- Non-porous

Cross Section of Infiltration Swale at West Play Yard showing Evapotranspiration by Trees:

Soil Best Practices:
- Provide Soil Placement Specification
- Provide Adequate Volumes And Depths
- Use Engineered Soils to Meet Programming Needs
- Rejuvenate Existing Soils Before Importing New
- Minimize Disturbance
- Provide Soil Testing

The play parks are comprised of both a youth and teen zone. The youth zone features naturalistic planted hillsides inscribed with play “rooms” and providing prospect over Memorial Hall, Kelly Pool, and the Smith Memorial. A multipurpose path circumscribes the park, in Summer, a scrim of water where families can cool off, and in Winter, a skate circuit. Adjacent to Kelly Pool, water jets, open lawn, a small pavilion, and shaded picnic grove provide welcoming recreational space. A wet meadow at the base of Smith Memorial provides opportunity for nature exploration, while releasing stormwater to the existing rain garden across 41st Street.

Two sentinel oak trees and rich plantings signal entry into the teen zone, with a central open plaza and amphitheater seating that provides opportunities for cultural events. An elevated lawn plinth with moveable benches flanks the opposite side of the plaza. Webs of climbing nets and raised platforms encourage active play. Finally, a series of oversized swings set in a field of meadow grasses recall the “aerial chair”, an iconic emblem of the Centennial Expo.

www.studiobryanhanes.com

CLIENT: Fairmount Park Conservancy
LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA

The 1876 Centennial Exposition celebrated 100 years of US independence, bringing ten million visitors to Philadelphia. The site of the expo today is a vast, open park land in various stages of disrepair. The Centennial District Project will create nodes of family recreation between the existing amenities, strengthening the district’s identity. Successfully executed, the project will serve as a catalyst for increased investment and future development throughout the park and surrounding neighborhood.

The play parks are comprised of both a youth and teen zone. The youth zone features naturalistic planted hillsides inscribed with play “rooms” and providing prospect over Memorial Hall, Kelly Pool, and the Smith Memorial. A multipurpose path circumscribes the park, in Summer, a scrim of water where families can cool off, and in Winter, a skate circuit. Adjacent to Kelly Pool, water jets, open lawn, a small pavilion, and shaded picnic grove provide welcoming recreational space. A wet meadow at the base of Smith Memorial provides opportunity for nature exploration, while releasing stormwater to the existing rain garden across 41st Street.

Two sentinel oak trees and rich plantings signal entry into the teen zone, with a central open plaza and amphitheater seating that provides opportunities for cultural events. An elevated lawn plinth with moveable benches flanks the opposite side of the plaza. Webs of climbing nets and raised platforms encourage active play. Finally, a series of oversized swings set in a field of meadow grasses recall the “aerial chair”, an iconic emblem of the Centennial Expo.

www.studiobryanhanes.com

Consultant:
DIGSAU

CLIENT: Center City District
LOCATION: Philadelphia, PA

The efforts at Sister Cities Garden build on the successes of the recent renovations at Logan Square and breathe fresh life and activity into a nearly forgotten corner of this great space in the heart of Philadelphia. There is power in simplicity; through the provision of flexible space and natural materials, like rocks, water, soil, and plants, learning and enrichment are supported. Multiple water features, exuberant gardens, and an attractive cafe invite neighbors, families, tourists, and professionals into the space throughout the day. The children’s Discovery Garden engages great numbers of families with diverse, nature-based play and environmental education through programming provided by project partners.

www.studiobryanhanes.com

CLIENT: Brian and Victoria Clarke
LOCATION: Bethesda, MD

A playroom for two toddlers transformed a high ceiling shed roofed existing sunroom into a environment with multiple simple and complex play opportunities. The visual theme is based on animals in the wild and uses abstract natural elements to connect with the nature, to create activity areas include a “play board”
on the floor and an art wall between the vines on the tall wall, to provide storage space in the form of animal themed toy chests and to allude to “adult” art with the Matisse inspires pin-up friendly painted homasote wall collages on the side walls.

www.t-associates.net

43 TEND LANDSCAPE INC. COXE PARK SURPRISE...DELIGHT...DISCOVERY.
Client: Friends of Coxe Park & Philadelphia Parks and Recreation
Location: Philadelphia, PA

In early 2015, TEND landscape inc. was invited by the Friends of Coxe Park and Philadelphia Parks and Recreation to participate in a design competition to reimagine Coxe Park in Philadelphia’s Logan Square neighborhood. This small, but well-loved public space nestled within the dense fabric of historic and modern row homes, was the result of urban renewal in the 1970s. Designed by Philadelphia-based architect Norman Rice as a series of rooms on several levels, it has been heavily used over the years, and is in need of an update.

Coxe Park must simultaneously function as a playground, front yard, gathering space, and pass through. Our design approach takes inspiration from an existing sculpture of Benjamin Franklin that references his famous kite experiment. Just as Franklin’s experiment was one of discovery, the new park is meant to surprise and delight through discovery. Bold, interactive art, perhaps not readily recognizable as playable, offers unexpected opportunities for fun. The main features – an illuminated wall resembling clouds, and tilted, folded planes, reminiscent of a kite – invite climbing, sliding, porch, and jumping. Colorful safety surface subtly directs activity from one end to the other.

The original small rooms are replaced with a generous space, lushly planted at the edges. Passive and active recreation is merged, but both are accommodated, tempting users of all ages to engage. Park boundaries, partially dissolved, are reconfigured to rise up as a terrace, angle to manage stormwater, and visually draw in the public while signaling private zones.

www.tendlandscape.com

44 THE TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND WILLIAM CRAMP SCHOOLYARD
Client: The Trust for Public Land on behalf of the School District of Philadelphia
Location: Philadelphia, PA

The Trust for Public Land educates elementary students about the basics of design thinking and then challenges them to apply what they learned to an important capstone project – the design of their own schoolyard. Growing up in an area of the city known as “the bad lands,” students show, through design, that the school is good, safe and welcoming. Students from the William Cramp School designed the schoolyard to “show their parents that the school is trustworthy.” Their design literally brings the vibrant resources of the school outside.

From the music classroom to the woven chain link fences, every square inch of the schoolyard will be an engaging touchpoint of pride. The music classroom provides a place for musical expression by incorporating playful, yet sturdy musical instruments to the schoolyard. The mundane chain link fence that separates the schoolyard from the street will be remade as a canvas for a legacy art project, where each graduating class will develop a panel to eventually complete the fence, surrounding the school itself with pride, trust and welcome.

The entire schoolyard is a place for play and exploration. For that reason, there is not one specific “playground”, rather traditional play is dispersed among painted islands, running paths and nautical icons that celebrate the ship building namesake of the school. Dispersion of play not only encourages large motor physical activity, it allows students to use the entire schoolyard for imaginative play.

We think these students did a wonderful job in using play as a way to show that the school is a good land and are thrilled to be opening the schoolyard this fall.
www.tpl.org

Consultants:
AKRF Inc.
PlayCare

45 VIRIDIAN LANDSCAPE STUDIO *
GREENING GREENFIELD
Client: Greenfield Home and School Association
Location: Philadelphia, PA

In 2006, a group of public elementary school parents and teachers proposed a green schoolyard to enhance their environmental education program. A conceptual design and preliminary cost estimate helped jumpstart their fundraising campaign and led to the full development of the project. Greening Greenfield inspired other school groups to pursue greening projects and the city to incorporate green schoolyards into its open space and stormwater management strategies.

www.viridianls.com

Consultants:
Meliora Design
SMP

46 VIRIDIAN LANDSCAPE STUDIO *
KELLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, LEA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clients: West Philadelphia Coalition of Neighborhood Schools, The Enterprise Center Community Development Corp. & Hansberry Garden and Nature Center
Location: Philadelphia, PA

KELLY | A nonprofit neighborhood garden and nature center teamed up with Kelly School to bring more nature, better nutrition, and physical activity to students and the surrounding community. The Collaborative organized a design charrette for the stakeholders of this green schoolyard near the center of Germantown. Their ideas led to the “Kelly Green”, a healthy place for kids and adults with natural habitat and food gardens linked by a walking trail.

LEA | Parents, students, teachers, and neighbors of this West Philadelphia elementary school placed special emphasis on greening the playground, where students line up to enter the school and play each day. The Collaborative’s conceptual plan led to a $242,000 stormwater improvement management grant from the Philadelphia Water Department and several additional small grants for environmental and community improvements.

www.viridianls.com | www.cdesignc.org

Firm volunteers: Viridian Landscape Studio
Individual volunteer: Aaron Roche
Meliora Design
SMP

* conceptual design was provided by a team of volunteer design professionals through a Design Grant from the Community Design Collaborative