Land of Imagination

Playground for Children of All Abilities

Howarth Park
Santa Rosa, CA
Purpose

- The Land of Imagination playground was a collaboration of the City of Santa Rosa, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, Sonoma County Foundation, and the Santa Rosa Community.
- Goal of the Land of Imagination is to be a destination play area accessible to people of all abilities.
- The play area creates an exciting and dramatic place where children and adults with and without disabilities can play together.
Play Area Design

- Synthetic resilient surfacing in user areas and around play equipment provide maximum access.
- Multiple sensory cues and play events are located throughout the play area to provide a rich and varied play experience.
- A variety of levels of physical challenge are incorporated in order to accommodate all abilities.
Reflecting Santa Rosa’s History

Distinct play areas each depict significant eras of Santa Rosa history:

• Prehistoric
• Native Americans
• Old West Settlers
• Rancho Santa Rosa
• Modern Times
Prehistoric Dig

Emphasizing quiet, exploratory play
Deep Digging

- Area contains four to six feet of sand to mimic an archeological dig.
- Fossil images are on rocks, walls, and below the surface.
- A transfer station allows wheelchair access into the sand.
Volcanic Sand Table

• By pushing one button, water bubbles out of the volcano.
• Provides wet sand for modeling activities.
• Emits a cloud of fog every ten minutes.
• Children can sit or stand at table, allowing for wheelchair access.
Accessible Swings

- Across the path from the sand play area.
- Surface below swings is a synthetic resilient material to provide greatest possible access for parents and children.
- Low field stone retaining wall around the area provides separation from the lawn area and informal seating.
Native Village
Exploring Native American culture and respect for nature
Drums and Bark Huts

- Two sturdy drums for children to play with.
- Drums provide children with a different type of sensory play experience.
- Bark huts have wide, accessible openings.
Rope Bridge

- Rope bridge over a “river” allows children to practice bravery skills.
- Resilient pathway and entrance to structure allows access by parents and those using wheelchairs.
Rancho Santa Rosa

Walking in the footsteps of the early settlers
Bell Tower

• Mission style bell tower provides sounds to summon the villagers.
• Musical panel is mounted low to accommodate different access needs.
• Musical panel is harmonically tuned so that children can create music.
Wagon Train

- Play structure depicts a settlers’ wagon train.
- Front part of wagon is wheelchair accessible.
- Rear structure is a slide that ends in a sand play area.
Water Features

- Pig trough water feature includes running water and is located low to the ground for easy wheel-up access.
- Sprouting Water Orchard provides water play that is accessible to children of all abilities at the touch of a button.
Western Town

Imaginative play in the spirit of the old west
Two sided street that provides stores, a bank, a jail, and a view of the animal petting area.

Ramps up to the store front walkway provide easy access.

Each building was purchased by a different local business.
Modern World

Focusing on active play in a contemporary setting
Composite Structure

- Four towers with climbing in between.
- Ramp allows children in wheelchairs to get up onto the structure.
- Transfer platforms allow children to get from wheelchairs onto the structure.
- Activity panels, talk tubes, and message boards provide a variety of sensory experiences.
Net Climber

• Large octagonal net provides an exciting climbing opportunity for older children.

• Resilient pathway to the structure allows access for parents and children using strollers or wheelchairs.

• Bark under the net climber is an accessible surface.
Accessible Picnic Area

- Group picnic area provides easy access for people of all abilities.
- Picnic tables include benches where the middle section has been removed to allow those using wheelchairs to roll up to the table and be included at the center of activities.
Providing a setting for children of all abilities to discover, learn, and have fun.

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