

Community Engagement and Co-Design Roadmap

Playful Learning Landscapes is based on an iterative and adaptive community engagement and co-design model. By centering the community in every step of the process, we make sure each playful learning installation is uniquely designed to reflect a community's culture, values, and goals. This not only builds trust and collaboration but also creates a sense of pride and ownership, making the projects more meaningful and impactful in the long run. Follow this roadmap to ensure that the community is at the core of every design.



1 Engage the Community

GOALS

- Define the community.
- Introduce the project and its purpose.
- Generate awareness and excitement within the community.
- Build trust with the community.

TOOLS FOR ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

Community Meetings:

- Host in-person or virtual meetings to share a meal, build relationships, and introduce the project.
- Offer playful learning workshops to community members to deepen understanding throughout the co-design process.



Marketing Materials

- Share accessible, visually engaging content for community members to spread awareness on social media (Instagram, Facebook).
- Distribute postcards or flyers to local businesses and central community organizations.

Pop-Up Events and Installations

- Visit possible installation locations or high-traffic community areas to spark interest and collect initial feedback.
- Create a Play Wall to understand how kids and families like to play together.



2 Collaborative Co-Design

GOALS:

- Identify a location for the playful learning installation.
- Early co-design should focus on the community's culture, values, and their hopes for their community in the future.
- Later co-design should use an iterative process wherein the community, playful learning experts, and designers create ideas, share them back with the community, and continue to cycle through the process until the design is complete.



TOOLS FOR CO-DESIGNING WITH COMMUNITIES

Co-Design Workshops

- Use the Playful Learning Landscapes Community Engagement Board Game to identify locations and learn more about community values and culture. The Playful Learning Landscapes How to Choose a Location tool is also helpful at this stage.
- Facilitate hands-on sessions that use playful learning activities to imagine possible design elements. Create your dream park with craft materials! Draw a superhero – what is their superpower?

Interactive Design Posters

- Create physical or digital boards for community members to vote on. What is your favorite part of the design? What is not included that should be included?
- Share stories about how different community members would use the space as designed. How would a toddler use the space? How would an elder use the space? Based on these stories, which elements are important to keep? What elements should be added or removed?

3 Prototyping and Finalizing

GOALS

- Get feedback from children and families on design elements before finalizing the design.
- Incorporate feedback into the designs before a final community presentation.

TOOLS FOR PROTOTYPING

Identify Elements for Testing

- Identify elements in the design that should be included in prototype testing. Which elements of the design might be too difficult or too easy for kids? Which elements are necessary for kids to intuitively understand about the design?
- Create low-cost versions of these elements for testing. For example, you can create a test abacus with pool noodles and dowel rods, or you can test children's knowledge of street signs with cardboard signs on paddles.





Play Parties

- Plan a play party to test the prototype elements! Advertise and work with the community to ensure good attendance and be sure to provide snacks!
- As children and families engage with the prototypes, note their responses. What worked well? What did not work well? What excited the community the most? Incorporate this feedback into the final design.

4 Implementation, Evaluation, and

GOALS

- Ensure the project meets the community's expectations and needs.
- Conduct evaluations to measure the project's impact on kids and families and usage.
- Establish a maintenance plan for the installation's long-term success.

TOOLS FOR PROJECT WRAP-UP

Opening Celebration

- Host a launch celebration or ribbon cutting to celebrate the installation with the community.
- In addition to the community, invite other interested parties, including city officials and local media.

Evaluation

- Use the Playful Learning Landscapes Community Evaluation Toolkit to identify what and how the community would like to evaluate the project.
- Insights may be used by the community for press releases, media content, and future grant applications.

Community Champions:

- Work with the community to identify champions who will help to maintain the site long-term.
- Collaborate with the fabricator and the community to identify anticipated maintenance needs. For example, some installations might need a paint refresh every two years and the fabricator can identify specific paint colors in advance.



Maintenance