

## **ACE AGE Awards Submission 2018 Entry Form**

**Category:** Category 8: Best Building Project - General Contractor (Under \$10M)

**Contractor:** PCL Construction Services, Inc., Kimberly Boshart, kmboshart@pcl.com

**Project Name:** Re-Imagine Play at Paco Sanchez Park, Phase I

### **Project Description:**

As the first phase in a larger development of Paco Sanchez Park, PCL constructed a unique play experience called Re-Imagine Play, focusing on an interactive community play experience. Work also encompassed site grading and hardscape improvements to expand park drainage and pedestrian accessibility. The 30-acre Paco Sanchez Park is surrounded by Denver neighborhoods identified as underserved for parks and recreation amenities. The need for meaningful access to recreation, coupled with overwhelming community support, made this the ideal setting to locate the project.

Re-Imagine Play is an innovative concept that goes beyond the traditional playground. It is intended to be a multi-generational activity and play area that gives park users of all ages the opportunity to remain active and enjoy a healthy lifestyle. As the name “Re-imagine Play” suggests, each feature of the park represents a new intersection of play, meant to stimulate the mind as well as the body. Modeled like an obstacle course, the park’s equipment requires each player to think about how they’re playing and what they’re physically doing. The design for Re-Imagine Play takes advantage of the site’s existing topography to provide a series of challenges and experiences throughout the park. Rich colors and patterns celebrate the heritage of the neighborhood with a musical theme that pays homage to Paco Sanchez’s legacy as the first Spanish language disc jockey in Denver.

### **Excellence in Project Execution and Management/Team Approach:**

Given the unique nature of the park’s features, each one being a custom designed and built play element, construction execution required thorough planning. Structural and safety elements had to be adapted to individual play components. PCL had to consistently coordinate with the City and County of Denver and design-architect, Dg Studios to balance the design with available budget. PCL absorbed every design fluctuation within the initial GMP without having to issue

any change orders. The only change order from the City came toward the end of Phase I with the incorporation of preconstruction for Phase II.

Some logistical obstacles arose specifically regarding the Mic tower. Each one of the 20,000 custom pieces was fabricated in Texas and Minnesota and scheduled for delivery prior to December 2017. PCL and CCD officials performed regular factory visits to verify production and quality. Unfortunately, a fabrication delay still occurred resulting in a major delay in the construction of the play area overall. PCL had to re-sequence significant sections of the schedule as to not fall behind and maintain the overall project CPM schedule.

In the end, Phase 1 of the project was completed within budget and almost three full months ahead of schedule. Further, the project achieved Final Acceptance within one month of substantial completion, which is practically unheard of in this industry. Heather Runkel, Sr. Park Project Manager for the city, said, “through the construction process, when issues and challenges on the project came up Cory Dahl, the Project Manager, and Chad Wheeler, the Project Superintendent, were able to collaborate with us and the design team to provide options and ideas on how to best address the concern and keep the project moving forward. PCL’s input was invaluable in [the city’s] efforts to deliver this project on time and on budget.”

#### **Construction Innovations/State-of-the-Art Advancement:**

The primary play feature is a 40 ft tall Microphone (Mic) Tower resembling a vintage microphone, in honor of Paco Sanchez being Denver’s first Spanish-language radio station DJ. The one-of-a-kind Mic Tower is composed of 20,000 custom fabricated steel pieces, designed specifically for this park. The tower is bolted with 120 anchor bolts to a table-top structure in the foundation consisting of four 20 ft tall and 3 ft wide cylinders fastened to a 2 ft thick disc. The biggest challenge of the project was making sure all these individually fabricated, complex equipment pieces not only fit together correctly, but fit the overall theme and style of the park.

Other complimentary play features include five unique slides, several swing sets, and a xylophone play bridge. Of the 5 slides, the cast-in-place concrete gramophone slide was by far the most complex. From the original design, it was difficult to conceptualize how each piece

would come together. Ultimately, the team decided to over-pour the concrete so they would have room to cut and manipulate the pieces. This process allowed the team to see how and where the next transition piece would fit once poured and shaved. Another challenge arose in terms of the tight tolerances surrounding the slide: the concrete had to achieve a certain slope to be considered a slide, but it couldn't exceed playground safety limitations. Upon completion, the concrete slab was too sticky to slide down, so the team had to polish it down to the micro-level—comparable to that of a car wax.

### **Environmental/Safety:**

Due to the existing topography, it was a challenge to achieve ADA accessibility and simultaneously minimize impacts on critical tree root zones. Our team worked tirelessly with the City's Department of Forestry to shrink the tree protection radius to limit the amount of hand work required to excavate. The typical procedure of digging around the tree's critical root zone using an AirSpade would not work, since this site is a former landfill and asbestos was a concern. Therefore, PCL utilized a hydrovac trailer operation as well as a Certified Asbestos Building Inspector (CABI) to ensure any contamination was identified and contained. PCL kept a CABI on site for all earthwork and excavation activities. During construction, it was expected that at least remnants of asbestos contamination (ACS or ACM) would be discovered during excavation, but project staff did not anticipate finding an intact irrigation system constructed out of asbestos pipe decaying in the middle of the construction site. The decrepit irrigation pipe spanned over 200 feet, and because of the egregious contamination, project staff had to dig out the pipe by hand as to not cause further contamination of the site. Ultimately, PCL removed the pipe and surrounding contamination by deconstructing the pipe, section by section, bagging, manifesting and properly disposing of the pipe at DADS, thereby containing all asbestos. Despite these and other complications, the project was such an overwhelming success that PCL's contract was amended to include the remainder of the park renovations.

### **Excellence in Client Service and/or Contribution to Community:**

Paco Sanchez Park lies in the middle of a severely underserved community. Though there was technically a park in that location it was known only for hosting delinquent activity. Gang violence, drug abuse, and homelessness created an infamous reputation for Paco Sanchez Park.

Every piece of equipment prior to this project was in disrepair—or simply not there at all due to arson and vandalism. Upon completion, Paco Sanchez Park has been reclaimed by the rightful benefactors—the children. Families in the surrounding community have not only lost a major hub for dangerous activities, but they have gained a haven for recreation. Heather Runkel, Sr. Park Project Manager for the city, stated upon selection, PCL, “...immediately came to the table as a true partner in the project beginning with pre-construction services and provided high-level value-based service throughout the construction process...Following the completion of the first phase of the construction, [the city] felt that the project turned out even better than what we have envisioned—this is a testament to the level of dedication and professionalism that we received from PCL. I highly recommend the services of PCL Construction, Inc. and look forward to working with them on the completion of Phase 2 of Paco Sanchez Park as well as again on future projects.”

From the subcontractors to the government officials, everyone involved with and impacted by this project was relentlessly committed to its success. Residents in the adjacent communities even took it upon themselves to act as a neighborhood watch force for the project, alerting the management staff to any site issues that arose after hours. The overwhelming support for this project from the top down demonstrates what a truly special contribution Paco Sanchez Park is to the greater Denver community.

**Photos:**









