

ACE AGE Awards Submission 2020 Entry Form

Category: Category 10: Best Building Project - General Contractor (Under \$10 Million)

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Project Name: Re-Imagine Play at Paco Sanchez Park

Overview Statement:

PCL has been working with the City and County of Denver to complete the iconic Paco Sanchez Park since 2018. In September 2020, Phase II, the final phase of the 30-acre community-centric park was completed.

Paco Sanchez Park serves as Denver's neighborhood destination in an area identified as underserved for park and recreation amenities. The need for meaningful access to recreation, coupled with overwhelming community support, made Paco Sanchez Park the ideal setting to locate the project. The park is accessible by car or the proximate light rail station and is within biking distance to the Platte River Trail with a connecting path.

Designed to be more than just a park, it is built around "Re-Imagining Play," 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 determine their own idea of play, fostering continued education and thought as they move from play feature to play feature. 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. The park will stand as a tribute to its surrounding community and history for years to come.

Solutions of Special Projects:

Aside from the typical obstacles associated with park projects being built entirely outside, Paco Sanchez Park presented the team with its own unique set of challenges.

Over the project duration, there were 46 weather days, totaling three to four times the average expected weather days. This required our team to think proactively to maintain the anticipated schedule by resequencing during the downtime and increasing manpower to accelerate the schedule.

The park was constructed on an old landfill and required fulltime Certified Asbestos Building Inspectors (CABI) onsite while performing soil disturbing activities. This resulted in additional resequencing when regulated asbestos contaminated soil was encountered. The PCL team's goal was to avoid disturbance of the landfill by working with landscape architect, Dig Studio, to rethink construction, inclusive of extensive import fill and utilizing helical piers. However, when avoidance was not possible, the team was ready to implement plan "b" to maintain schedule during the abatement process.

The landfill also posed the obstacle of methane gas, requiring the team to install a methane mitigation system to vent the hazardous gases. This system was designed to prevent exposure within the building components of the park, including the classroom, recreation kiosk, and mechanical room. The storm water improvements onsite also required additional consideration to ensure the water could not percolate into the landfill and expose other potential hazards. This required extensive work with liners, maximizing sheet flow rather than retention to eliminate further contamination and exposure.

A testament to the team's coordination and communication efforts, Phase II of the project was delivered 10 days ahead of schedule.

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 was in constant communication with the City and County of Denver and landscape architect, Dig Studio to balance the design within the established 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 Phase II.

PCL believes in the success of any project is built on the solid partnering approach of all team members. PCL's relationship with the City and County of Denver and Dig Studio allowed us to get the project within their budget and value engineer it to start construction. PCL's longstanding relationship with the City and understanding of their processes, allowed the team to sequence the project in a way that aligned with the City's funding availability, and resulted in the addition of various components into the job without affecting schedule.

During the September 2020 ribbon cutting, Happy Haynes, Denver's Deputy Mayor, described PCL's commitment to the community and partnership. She said, "The PCL team has just been amazing partners and dreamers. This took more than just the drawings and following the materials. It took a real labor of love and we really owe a great debt of gratitude and thanks to PCL Construction for bringing that to this project."

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

Perhaps the most unique part of Paco Sanchez Park is its play features. Built to promote creative thinking, they encourage each user to think critically about how each feature is played-on. 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 park is also home to Denver's first gravity rail, a roller coaster that is self-propelled around one of the numerous play pods. Other features include a fog nozzle splash pad, and a kiosk building that acts as a recreation kiosk for rentals including soccer nets, frisbees and sports balls. The plaza flows into a skate park and basketball court as well.

The recreation kiosk is comprised of eight different colors of glazed masonry placed in a specific pattern, further reflecting the park's colorful and energetic theme. There was only one opportunity to get the pattern right, requiring layout and quality oversight. This detailed work took the kiosk three times longer to erect than a standard masonry building. Now, the kiosk and surrounding plaza serves as a gathering place for park visitors.

Environmental/Safety:

Safety is always PCL's top priority, a value carried through this project. In the 66,996 hours worked there were zero lost time hours and no recordable injuries. PCL attributes this to our comprehensive safety plan that was implemented on site including daily Pre-Job Safety Instructions, Job Hazard Analysis', pre-task planning and hazard identification. This, in conjunction with safety orientations for everyone onsite, including visitors, further prove PCL's commitment to safety on every site.

The existing topography made it a challenge to achieve ADA accessibility while minimizing 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.

Since the park was being built on top of an existing landfill, PCL utilized a hydrovac trailer operation as well as a Certified Asbestos Building Inspector (CABI) to ensure any contamination was identified and contained. Our team also discovered an intact irrigation system constructed out of asbestos pipe decaying in the middle of the construction site. The pipe spanned over 200 feet, and because of the egregious contamination, required our team dig out the pipe by hand as to not cause further contamination. Ultimately, PCL contained all asbestos by deconstructing the pipe, section by section, bagging, manifesting and properly disposing of the pipe at DADS.

Excellence in Client Service and/or Contribution to Community:

Paco Sanchez Park stands as a direct reflection of the community it serves. Elementary schools in the surrounding area were involved in the planning of the park, given a blank piece of paper, and told to draw what their "ideal park" would look like. This type of community involvement resulted in the vibrant colors on display across the site. Serving as a new destination for visitors across Colorado, the park was voted as one of Denver's "Best New Playgrounds," by the Denver Housewife and was a key highlight of the Greater and Greener Conference.

From subcontractors to government officials, everyone involved with and impacted by this project was relentlessly committed to its success. 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.

In the September 2020, ribbon cutting, Happy Haynes, said, “It warms my heart to know that a park that was once so underutilized has been transformed into a destination. This redesign park will play a transformative role in how our children and families connect with the outdoors. Each time you visit this park, you will experience something new.”

Photos









